

(English Immersion Education 〈Geography and History〉)

Studies of Implementing English Immersion Education

—Exploring Teaching Skills by Utilizing Supplementary Materials in Geography and History—

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I The Reason for the Theme

The second language is used as an instrument rather than the purpose in immersion education. Children in immersion school are supposed to acquire the second language in a process of learning contents of the subjects. In the English immersion program, which is the Okinawa Prefectural Board of Education is planning to introduce, the goal is to enhance both students' English ability and academic abilities in other subjects.

The Course of Study for Geography and History sets its goal as follows: Have students understand and recognize the historical process by which our nation and the world reached its present state and characteristics of each region's about life-styles and culture, and develop awareness and qualities that are needed to be a member of democratic and peaceful nation and society, and who can act independently in an international society.

It is meaningful to learn geography and history, subjects that deal with various regions in the world and the relationship of the world to Japan within the English immersion program, considering the goals of the Course of Study.

However, in reality, it is very difficult for students to understand the technical terms and the content of geography and history in English and achieve the same academic goals as they learn in regular Japanese classes. Teachers who teach geography and history in English must find effective ways for students to enhance their abilities of English and the subjects.

This report aims to investigate effective teaching methods by utilizing various supplementary materials to have students understand the content-based class utilizing the theories that I have learned in this English Immersion Education training and the process of practicing simulation classes.

II The Content of the Research

1 Utilizing Supplementary Materials in English Immersion Education

(1) The Significance of Utilizing Supplementary Materials

There are varieties of supplementary materials: supplementary readers, workbooks, chronological tables, graphs, newspapers, magazines, CDs, PC software, DVDs and so on.

Osamu Muroi (2002) states that teachers must utilize useful and proper supplementary materials and use them coming up with their original idea in order to teach effectively.

By utilizing supplementary materials in geography and history class, I expect the effects as follows:

- ① Students can organize what they learn in class.
- ② Teacher can motivate students to study by using materials that appeal to their interests.
- ③ Help students understand content by presenting specific materials and data.
- ④ Students will be able to read and understand social phenomena from various point of view.
- ⑤ Teacher can present and have students understand historical events and people and the state of various regions in the world.
- ⑥ Students can expand their reading comprehension through materials.
- ⑦ Students will be able to express their opinion by utilizing materials.

(2) Utilizing Supplementary Materials in the Content-based Class

In the content-based class, teachers should consider that students can improve their English and choose effective materials.

However, it is difficult to choose appropriate materials that correspond with students' abilities and interests.

Hitoshi Muranoi (2006) says that to give a lot of comprehensive input to students is the most important thing in language acquisition. He also says that input should be related to the learners' lives, future, and interests because the learners must continually take in a lot of input.

In a content-based class, utilizing supplementary materials that appeal to students effectively is very important to achieve the goal of enhancing both English ability and the subject being taught.

2 Utilizing Supplementary Materials Considering the Second Language Acquisition Theory

(1) Cognitive Process in Language Acquisition

In the English immersion program, teachers must enhance both students' English ability and their knowledge of the subject although the teachers don't have experience of teaching English. It will work effectively for teachers to consider the second language acquisition process when teaching in content-based instruction.

According to Muranoi (2006), the input of the target language that is taken in by the learner is gradually established as knowledge of language, through the process of Noticing, Comprehension, Intake, and Integration, and finally the learner can acquire ability to output. He describes the cognitive process as follows: at first the learner notice and pays attention to new language items (Noticing). Secondly, the learner understands the meaning and function of the items (Comprehension). Next, the learner assimilates them inside of himself or herself (Intake), and the learner stores knowledge of the language as long-term memory (Integration). Then, finally the learner can acquire ability to use the language.

(2) Teaching Procedure Considering the Process of the Second Language Acquisition

Muranoi (2006) also states that it will work effectively on cognitive process of the second language acquisition if the teacher teaches using the procedure of PCPP (Presentation, Comprehension, Practice, and Production) in content-based instruction, and there is no need to drastically change his or her regular teaching style.

If teachers utilize supplementary materials using the procedure of PCPP, it will work effectively in teaching both the content and English in the content-based learning. Figure 1 shows the contents of PCPP and the example of teaching procedure by PCPP.

PCPP	Explanation of PCPP	Example of Teaching Procedure
Presentation	Introduction to topics. Present new items.	(Introduction) Present pictures that are related to the topic
Comprehension	Understanding the content by listening and reading.	(Development ①) Have students understand the content by using maps or chronological tables
Practice	Practice using the target language to enhance ability.	(Development ②) Q&A or group work
Production	Confirm how much students understand in the target language, using summaries, task activities, etc.	(Consolidation) Answer the questions in worksheets and summarize the lesson

Figure 1 : Teaching Procedure by PCPP * Modified Muranoi (2006)

3 Utilizing supplementary materials in geography and history English immersion class

(1) Challenges that are needed to be resolved in actual class

If the English immersion program is introduced in a high school in Okinawa, teachers will have to use textbooks that are authorized by the Ministry of Education after translating those books into English and make teaching plans following the actual syllabus in the school. When teachers translate textbooks, they need advice from ALTs and English teachers and must use easy and natural English expression.

However, teaching geography and history in English will take much more time than regular Japanese class because teachers need to explain the technical terms that are difficult for students to understand. Besides, teachers have to paraphrase the difficult words and make sure that students understand English and the content. So, teachers need to make time allotment flexible in their teaching plans.

(2) Some ideas about utilizing supplementary materials in class

In classes, teachers have to present lessons smoothly and have students understand English. Through practicing simulation classes, I feel that teachers in

Goals of Today's Class

to understand

- various forms of nations.
- a nation is formed by the **three factors**:
sovereignty, territory, and citizens.

Figure 2 : An Example Slide

the English immersion program should prepare for lessons to utilize teaching materials as follows:

- ① Select the contents and handouts carefully.
- ② When teachers use the presentation slides, they should try to make them simple and not include too much information .
- ③ Have students prepare for class. Teachers should hand out English translated textbooks, word lists, worksheets for preparation before classes.
- ④ Make worksheets easy for students to fill out or write down. It is better to use selective or true or false questions.
- ⑤ Make word lists so that students can quickly check the words that they don't know. Put key words on word lists and try not to use too many words.
- ⑥ On word lists, put easy explanations in English besides the Japanese meaning, so that students can understand phrases in English. Table 1 shows an example of a word list.



Figure 3 : An Example Slide

Table 1: An Example of a Word List

Words	Meaning	意味
dictatorship	rule, control, or leadership by one person with total power	独裁
Colony	country ruled by another	植民地

III Simulation Classes and Considerations

I taught simulation classes at Okinawa International University in September 2007 and at Kyuyo Senior High School in January 2008.

1 Simulation Class at Okinawa International University

I taught a Geography B simulation class in English to eleven students in Okinawa International University. The students majored in English and they were taking the teacher training course. I used presentation slides as the main teaching material and explained the content using a world-map.

(1) Lesson: Nations in the Modern World

(2) Goals of the class

- ① To have students understand various forms of nations.
- ② To have students understand that a nation is formed by sovereignty, territory and citizens.

(3) Teaching procedure (50 minutes)

Procedure	Students' activity	Teacher 's activity	Materials
Introduction (5 minutes)	Confirm today's topics and goals.	Explain today's topics and goals.	slides
Development (40 minutes)	Q&A about national flags. Understand various forms of nations in the world. Understand that a nation is formed by sovereignty, territory, and citizens. Understand the difference between independent nations and non-independent areas. Pair-work: Find what nations are the colonizing nations of non-independent areas.	Show students some national flags and ask questions about the nations. Explain various forms of nations in the world. Have students notice that most official names of nations tell the form of the nations. Explain the three factors of a nation. Have students understand territory consists of land, territorial airspace, and territorial waters. Have students think what sovereignty is. Give clear direction how to do the activity.	pictures atlas worksheets worksheets slides worksheets map atlas cards

	Understand the roles of the United Nations.	Have students understand why the United Nations was organized.	slides
Consolidation (5 minutes)	Answer the questions about today's lesson.	Ask questions about today's lesson and confirm students achieved today's goal.	slides

(4) The result of the survey and consideration

I took a survey after the simulation class and received eleven replies. Figure 4 shows how much students understood in the lesson. I also asked students what materials were useful to understand the lesson and Figure 5 shows the result.

From the survey, I see the visual aids were especially effective in improving students' comprehension of the content.

I consider the pictures that I used in the class reflected the characteristics of the regions and the simple content of the presentation slides helped students organize what they learned easily. Explaining with world-map also helped students to understand.

I also asked students how much they understood technical terms like "sovereignty", "federal states" or "commonwealth." 82% answered that they understood completely or understood mostly. 18% answered that they couldn't understand well. The students' abilities of English were high and most of them could understand the content in English. However, in actual English immersion class in a high school, teaching will be more difficult.

Teachers need to explain difficult words in easy English without using word lists. Table 2 shows comments by students for the simulation class.

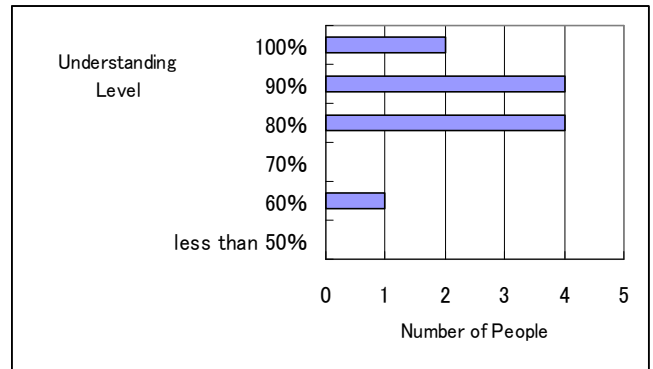


Figure 4 : How much of the lesson did you understand?

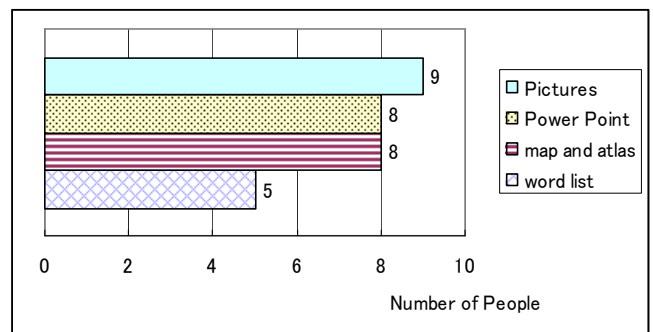


Figure 5 : Useful Material for Understanding the Lesson

Table 2 : Comments by Students

- I could enjoy the lesson very much.
- Operation of the Power point was a little fast, but on the whole, the lesson was easy to understand.
- Teacher should ask more questions to students so that students speak up. It was good to show the goals of the class at first.
- I think the lesson was good. Learning geography in English is not so difficult. But I think it took too a long time for the first half of the lesson.

2 Simulation Class at Kyuyo Senoir High School

I taught a World History A simulation class in English to forty students of the International English Course at Kyuyo Senior High School in January 2008. A week before the class, I gave students English translated textbooks, word lists, and handouts that included a summary of the lesson to prepare for the English immersion class. I also handed out vocabulary check sheets that listed 102 words in the English translated textbook, and asked the students to check the words they knew the meaning of. I received 38 replies for the vocabulary check sheets. The average number of words that they knew was 41. As Figure 6 shows, and from

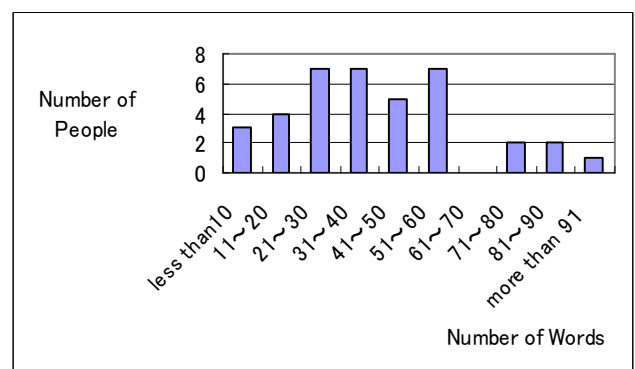


Figure 6 : Results of the Vocabulary Check

my observation, students' knowledge of vocabulary varied. Most students didn't understand meaning of the words like "imperialism," "financial capital," and "monopoly." Although I tried to use easy expressions in translation, most students thought the words in textbook were difficult. For example, I translated 解放 as "freeing" instead of "emancipation," but nearly 70% of the students didn't understand the meaning.

(1) Lesson: "The World Becomes Unified"

(2) Goals of Class

- ① To have students understand how imperialism formed.
- ② To have students think of the effect of competition for colonial expansion by major World Powers.
- ③ To have students understand how population moved globally from 19th century to early 20th century.

(3) Teaching Procedure (50 minutes)



Photo1: Simulation Class at Kyuyo High School

Procedure	Students' Activity	Teacher's Activity	Materials
Introduction (7 minutes)	Confirm today's topics and keywords. Q&A about spread of language in the world. By answering questions to gain interest in the lesson.	Present today's topics and keywords. Ask questions about spread of language in the world. Have students notice a relation between colonization and language.	slides map
Development (33 minutes)	Understand how monopoly formed and the reason why powerful western nations expanded colonization. Understand the concept of imperialism. Notice that the collision among imperialist nations developed into World War I . Understand the situation in China and Africa reviewing what they have learned. Understand how people moved globally in 19 th century.	Have students understand how monopoly formed . Have students think about why people, goods, and capital began to move globally. Explain the concept of imperialism. Have students understand that the reinforcement of military power led to collision and World War I . Confirm that students understand what they have already learned about China and Africa. Have students understand the economic and political factors of immigration in the 19 th century.	slides worksheets slides worksheets slides worksheets map
Consolidation (10 minutes)	Summarize the lesson by doing pair work. Confirm answers of worksheets.	Give clear direction on how to do activity. Answer the questions on worksheets.	cards worksheets

(4) Results of the survey

I took a survey after the simulation class and received 37 replies. I asked students whether they had prepared for the class; 22 students answered they had and 15 students answered they hadn't. Although 86% of the students said the English translated textbook was difficult, 73% of them said they could understand the lesson. I also asked what material helped to understand the content. As figure 7 shows, more than half of the students answered that word lists and presentation slides were useful.

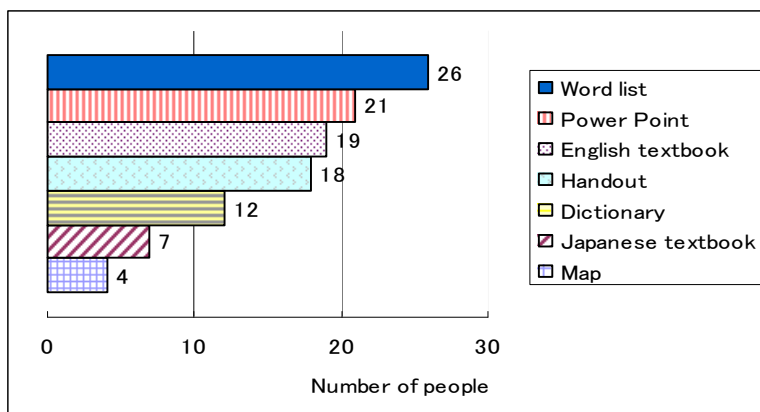


Figure 7 : Useful Material for Understanding the Lesson

As Figure 8 shows, there is a gap in comprehension between students who prepared for the lesson and students who didn't prepare.

I asked students whether they understood technical terms like “imperialism” or “monopoly,” and 62% of students answered they understood completely or understood mostly. Table 3 shows comments by students for the simulation class.

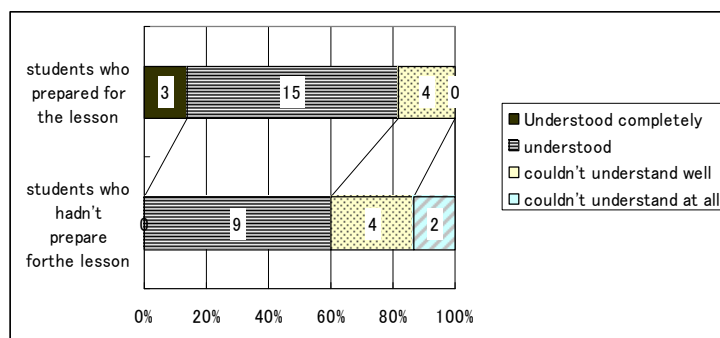


Figure 8: Did you understand the lesson?

Table 3 : Comments by Students

- At first I was anxious because the lesson was all English, but it was good.
- Power Point presentation helped comprehension and other materials were useful, too.
- I could concentrate more than regular world history class because I listened more carefully.
- I could understand the lesson more than I expected because the lesson was mainly taught by PowerPoint presentation.
- I wanted the teacher to have students speak more English. But I enjoyed the lesson. I want to learn in immersion class again.
- It was interesting to learn about the world in English. But the vocabulary was difficult.

(4) Consideration

From the survey, I see that utilizing supplementary materials, especially visual aids and word lists, helps understanding of the lesson, even if it deals with difficult topics. Words like “imperialism” and “monopoly” are difficult for students to understand, even in Japanese. I used many pictures in the presentation slides and those were effective to understand the content. Students were highly motivated in learning, so they utilized the word lists to check the meaning of words that they couldn't understand. Most of the students who prepared for the lesson said the handouts that included a summary of the lesson were useful in understanding the lesson. In the English immersion class, students must prepare for class and teachers must motivate students to prepare for class.

In reflection, I should build up my vocabulary to help my explanation of difficult technical terms in easy English.

It was the first time for students to learn in an English immersion world history class. Students were not used to speaking English. Teachers must make students feel comfortable to ask questions and answer teachers' questions in English.

IV Conclusion

I practiced simulation classes only one time each; at Okinawa International University and Kyuyo Senior High School. However, throughout simulation classes, I could explore what I had learned during training for English immersion education. I was able to see that it is possible to have students understand classes in English, even if it dealt with difficult topics, by utilizing various supplementary materials. I also found that materials helped improve students' English abilities and that visual aids are especially important in content-based classes.

It is essential to encourage output for second language acquisition. In immersion education, it is important to encourage students' output and teachers need to study effective ways of improving their functional abilities in English.

Teachers can encourage output by utilizing supplementary materials. For example, have students engage in cooperative learning, discussion, or they can write papers after reading news, newspaper, or articles in magazines. The teachers can also introduce role-play after students watch videos, etc. Teachers need to choose and utilize supplementary materials that appeal to students' interests and lower their affective filters to encourage output.

Moreover, it is anticipated that the English abilities of students are varied. Teachers must consider how to support students who can't keep up with classes.

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