

Student Understanding of the Philosophy of Content Based Approach in a General English Course

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Content based courses would cover the essential aspects of language learning when students and teachers share the same belief about the acquisition of language. In this project, a content based program was used in teaching a general English course in a university and the effectiveness of the program was examined by questionnaires given to two groups of the students. As a result, the importance of agreement between the teacher and students by providing appropriate teaching, which was also specified, was emphasized.

Purpose of study

In teaching English courses that are not specified their teaching contents and methods, instructors of the courses usually wonder which types of courses will benefit the target students. Their primary choice of the approach affects every aspect of the course. Instructors have to make decisions about their teaching philosophy, approach, methods, syllabus, teaching contents, and the role of teachers and students, etc., for their course design (*cf.* Richards, *etal.*,1985). When content based approach is chosen for a specific group of students, for example, the course should operate as an integrated system that effectively work for the acquisition of the target language by the students. An English course will never be complete, however, without the mutual trust by an instructor and students in the use of a specific approach. Trust will directly affect students' motivation. English courses in Japanese universities usually last a whole year even though semester system that separates the course into halves for separate credits has been in operation. In this situation, the continuous motivation by the students is a key to the success of the course. In this paper, the realization of the mutual understanding of the introduction of a course where content based approach is the leading force is discussed.

Method

Two groups of subjects who took English IB in the year 2003 and 2004 answered the questionnaires asking the effects of the courses that are based on the type of content based approach. Questionnaire 1 was answered after the whole course of 2003 finished and Questionnaire 2 was answered after the first semester that started in April 2003 and ended in July 2003. The answers were compared to clarify the differences of the apprehension of the program. In addition to the comparison, initial questionnaire about syllabus given at the beginning of the course was analyzed.

Subjects

There were two groups of subjects. The first one was the group of students that took English IB at Keio University in 2003. Thirty-nine students answered the questionnaire. The second group was the one that finished the first half semester of the same course in 2004.

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Description of the course

The Contents of the Syllabus were presented in the guide book for the orientation meeting

April 2003

Purpose of the period

The purpose of this period was to introduce the philosophy of the teaching, the learning contents and motivate the students to start learning in the new type of method.

Introduction

L2 knowledge

The introduction of the course began with the discussion on the identification of L2 knowledge. This was an attempt to let them grasp the overview about the learning contents that might have been different from their assumption about L2 knowledge. This was an attempt to motivate students by presenting innovative idea.

Intelligence and English learning

This presentation is for the students to know aspects of intelligence and the use of strategies that might facilitate the activation of different parts of intelligence to deal with the complex work of language acquisition. Seven aspects of intelligence by Gardner, 1985 was introduced.

Content based approach

English IB allows teachers their original plan about the use of approaches and methods as well as their teaching contents. Understanding by the students of the content based approach should be important unless they might be skeptical about the course.

Teaching philosophy of the course

The teaching philosophy of the course was presented focused on the teacher's assumption about the L2 acquisition. Linguistic items might be learned or acquired through the activities including reading, listening, speaking, discussing, presenting their idea on the subjects and writing.

Syllabus

A Content based syllabus was presented for the needs assessment awaiting. The students were required to discuss the syllabus presented.

Needs assessment

The needs assessment was not successful by way of discussion, then they were asked to write down their idea about the syllabus.

Contents

Learning Strategies

Learning strategies (*cf.* Oxford, 1990) were introduced in order to activate the past memory of their own learning. The main topics were about their learning strategies and the mechanisms of language acquisition with the use of the learning strategies. This was an introduction to the language learning theories.

Teaching method

Lecture and discussion

In the first lecture, the teacher gave a lecture about the topics above. After that, discussion was the main procedure to deepen their understanding of the articles. English and Japanese were used as media of communication in each of the situation.

May

Purpose of the period

The most important point at this period was to let the students know about the areas of the studies of applied linguistics. Along with the point, the enforcement of the motivation on the part of the students by presenting new techniques to deal with the presented problems was intended. Group cohesion was to be strengthened to use positive effects of group dynamics.

Contents

The effects of language learning strategies were discussed among small groups.

Method

The article by Oxford, 1990 (*ibid.*) was used for jigsaw reading activity.

Problem

One student claimed that the pace of the progress was too slow and would reduce the quantity of learning. The teacher's attempt to use group dynamics was not well understood by the student.

Measure

Reducing the opportunity of discussion and increasing the lecture part and teacher lead discussion. A test was given to check and assess the level of the members. The test result showed the level was high enough to spend certain amount of time.

Further problem

Some students lost interest in contributing to the class. That might come from the reason that those students just did not follow the faster pace kept by the teacher and lost the opportunity to present their idea in front of the other students.

June

Purpose

After the six times of the classes, the purpose of the lecture was to make students focus on the

learning contents. In order to make them so, language learning theories that support the use of language learning strategies*¹ were introduced to introduce the innovative idea of increasing the quantity of reading articles and ignoring language form for a while.

Contents

The Natural Approach by Krashen, *et al*, 1983 was chosen to let the students read an article with typical style of theories. The pieces of discussion done by that time was to be supported by learning theories for the practicing of academic writing.

Method

The individual activity of writing after the presentation of academic style of writing was added to the reading and the discussion.

Problem

Those who managed to follow the class with the help of the opportunity of negotiating their understanding in the discussion part of the class began to have less opportunity for the managerial reasons. They began to lose their interest in the teacher lead lecture part of the class.

Measure

The individual activities were taken to make them engage in the English learning activity. Those were not effective at the spot, but for the specific students that had basic writing skills later wrote their paper and handed in.

July

Purpose

The total amount of reading and writing had to be increased for the reasons of exposure to the target language and the practice of reading and writing academic language.

Contents

Krashen's, (*ibid.*) "hypothetical model" of language acquisition as main article and "interlanguage and the natural route of development" by Ellis (*ibid.*) to support the hypotheses were dealt with.

Paper

Writing assignment was given to the students. Any theme related to the topics dealt during the first semester could be chosen.

August

A social gathering at a restaurant was held to make a core of human relationship in the class.

Problem

Only four students attended the meeting.

September

Purpose

Academic use of language was to be learned through higher level of reading.

Contents

“The role of the first language” and “Individual Learner Difference” in Ellis (*ibid.*) were assigned.

October

Contents

“The Role of the First Language” and “Individual Learner Difference” in Ellis (*ibid.*) had been still used as main texts.

November

Contents

“Acting and Conversing” in Wardhaugh. 1986.

December

“Acting and Conversing” in Wardhaugh (*ibid.*) had been still used as a main text.

Assignment

Approximately 8 hours of the recording of the reading aloud of the chapters.

January

Contents

Review of the course. Questionnaire

March

The second social gathering at a restaurant was held to make and maintain the core of human relationship in the class and in the class of the next year 2004.

April in 2004

Introduction of the course

Gardner’s “Aspects of Intelligence and Language Learning” were introduced in order to justify the use of various methods for the content based program. A questionnaire for needs assessment was given. The Natural Approach by Krashen (*ibid.*) and Oxford (*ibid.*) were assigned for the first few months. Krashen’s five hypotheses were explained by the teacher and discussed.

May

“Interlanguage and the Natural Route of Development” in Ellis (1985) was dealt with when Krashen used the term interlanguage. Franken, 1980^{*2} was introduced in discussing Affective filter hypothesis.

June

Learning strategies were the topic of discussion. The students discussed the strategies they had used by that time. They shared the strategies among the small groups and then among the whole class. The mechanisms of language acquisition were discussed by reading about the language acquisition theories.

Problem

The students did not actively participate in the discussion, and the teacher very often had to give his comments. To this problem the teacher did not have a good idea to take any measure.

July

The students were required to summarize their strategy use and readings supporting their idea with the articles they had read by the time. Review of the first semester was given in the form of the lecture.

Problem

- 1) Some students did not even try the writing assignment in classes.
- 2) Very often, some students did not bring textbooks and could not join discussion or begin their writing assignment in the classes.

Solution

To this problem, the teacher gave copies, which might have two effects. One was to give the students the teacher's image of flexibility, and the other was to lose the opportunity to encourage their attention to their study.

August

Meeting

9 students attended. Four of them were the second year students who took the course in 2003. The second year students knew the purpose of the meeting sharing the information about learning the same course at the same university and deepening the trust toward the teacher among the first year students.

Attitudinal change

The initial questionnaire and the one given after the first semester finished were compared for the analysis of the attitudinal change by the students.

Table.1: Level of the students

Total 35 students in 2004

Step Test

| | | | | | |
|--------|---|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Grade | 3 | pre-2 nd | 2 nd | pre-1 st | 1 st |
| Number | 7 | 5 | 11 | 4 | 1 |

TOEIC (Step Test)

| | | | | |
|--------|------------------------|----------------------------|---------|----------------------------|
| Score | 510 (2 nd) | 630 (pre-1 st) | 660 (-) | 875 (pre-1 st) |
| Number | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

Table.2: Experience

Experience in English Speaking Countries, ToEIC Score, (Step Exam)

6 weeks in college, 630, (pre-1st)

1 year from 5-6 years old, 510, (2nd)

1 year from 18-19 years old, -, (-)

2 years from 12-14 years old, 875, (pre-1st)

4 years from 2-6 years old, -, (pre-2nd)

4 years and 6 months 9-14 years old, -, (pre-1st)

Table 3.: Field of interest

Field of interest

American literature, Archaeology, Art (3), Chinese Language, Classic literature, Comparative culture (2), Education (4), English language, English literature, European history, (3), French Literature (4), Geography, History (3), Human science (5), International Politics, Japanese literature, Language, Linguistics (7), Literature (2), Music (2), Natural science, Politics, Psychology (8), Religions, Sociology (5), Symbolism,

Table 4. Future:

Future

Actor, Communication, Education (teacher (6), French teacher,) (7), Graduate School (2), Librarian, Literary person (2), Musician, Psychologist, Travel agent (2), Use of English (mass media 1) (9), Welfare (3), Not decided (3)

Table 5.: Contents

Preferred Contents for the class

Teaching methodology (5), Approach to English learning (speaking 2) (11), Culture, English language (3), Language (3), Language acquisition theories (6), Rod Ellis, Practical English (reading 1) (7), Japanese language, First language transfer, PC, ToEIC

Questionnaire after the first semester in 2004 and after the whole year in 2003

Is content based approach effective for:

Table 6. : Reading

1) reading in 2004

| | | | | | | |
|------------|---|-----|-----|------|------|-------|
| Evaluation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total |
| Number | 0 | 2 | 2 | 19 | 7 | 30 |
| Ratio (%) | 0 | 6.7 | 6.7 | 63.3 | 23.3 | |

In 2003

| | | | | | | |
|------------|-----|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Evaluation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total |
| Number | 1 | 4 | 14 | 11 | 9 | 39 |
| Ratio (%) | 2.6 | 10.3 | 35.9 | 28.2 | 23.1 | |

List 1.: Reasons in 2004

Reasons

2

Students do not read in the class. Good point is they draw upon the knowledge acquired in reading in writing.

The amount of reading is too small in this class.

3

Increasing one or two hours a week will make the class more effective.

The approach might have the opposite effect when the articles are too specific.

4

Students have a lot of reading assignment. (2)

The level of the assignment is high. (2)

Reading logical discourse gives sense of reading fluency.

Level of the vocabulary is high.

Students encounter new vocabularies.

Focus is not on form but on contents.

Rephrasing used in the academic articles will promote understanding.

This class provides opportunities to get used to reading.

5

Students have a lot of reading assignment. (4)

Students make effort to read about unfamiliar field.

Students begin to think in English.

Reading logical discourse gives sense of reading fluency.

Focus is not on form but on contents. (2)

Table 7.: Listening

Listening in 2004

| | | | | | | |
|------------|-----|------|------|------|-----|-------|
| Evaluation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total |
| Number | 1 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 1 | 29 |
| Ratio (%) | 3.4 | 41.4 | 31.0 | 20.7 | 3.4 | |

In 2003

| | | | | | | |
|------------|------|------|------|------|-----|-------|
| Evaluation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total |
| Number | 6 | 10 | 18 | 4 | 1 | 39 |
| Ratio (%) | 15.4 | 25.6 | 46.2 | 10.3 | 2.6 | |

List 2.: Reasons in 2004

Reasons

1

Students need practice opportunity for “input” in the class.

Students depend too much on articles.

2

The listening materials were too fast to follow. (3)

The listening practice tried in the class will have good effects.

It depends on the effort made by the individual.

Listening does not depend on methods but on practice.

Students did not have opportunity to practice listening.

The direct effects are not expected in the method.

Native pronunciation will be necessary.

Listening should be learned in communication.

Writing semantic maps is good for listening training.

3

Students are not taught in English.

If opportunity increases, it will be effective. (3)

Students need basic listening ability to make the program effective.

4

Students listen to the other students speaking in English. (2) L1 transfer might happen, though.

When listening opportunity increases, it will work.

5

Listening for contents is effective.

Listening is the base for communication.

Table 8.: Writing

Writing in 2003

| | | | | | | |
|------------|-----|------|------|------|-----|-------|
| Evaluation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total |
| Number | 1 | 5 | 9 | 13 | 3 | 31 |
| Ratio (%) | 3.2 | 16.1 | 29.0 | 41.9 | 9.7 | |

In 2004

| | | | | | | |
|------------|-----|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Evaluation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total |
| Number | 2 | 7 | 15 | 11 | 4 | 39 |
| Ratio (%) | 5.1 | 17.9 | 38.5 | 28.2 | 10.3 | |

List 3.: Reasons in 2004

Reasons

1

Students had no opportunity to write in the class.

2

Students had little opportunity to write in the class. (4)

Students wrote only about the review of the class.

3

Students will learn writing when writing is taught in the class.

Students had no opportunity to write in the class.

Academic style of writing has a clear structure.

4

Level of readings is high.

Careful reading of academic articles will affect writing.

Writing assignment will be very good for writing practice. (2)

Writing in English will be easier than writing in Japanese if learned well.

Writing has a learning burden, but is a good training.

Students will learn by writing about what they learn in the class.

5

Writing assignment will be very good for writing practice.

Students will learn by writing about what they learn in the class.

Table 9: Speaking

Speaking in 2003

| | | | | | | |
|------------|---|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Evaluation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total |
| Number | 0 | 6 | 14 | 5 | 6 | 31 |
| Ratio (%) | 0 | 19.4 | 45.2 | 16.1 | 19.4 | |

In 2004

| | | | | | | |
|------------|------|------|------|-----|---|-------|
| Evaluation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total |
| Number | 11 | 11 | 15 | 2 | 0 | 39 |
| Ratio (%) | 28.2 | 28.2 | 38.5 | 5.1 | 0 | |

List 5.: Reasons in 2004

Reasons

2

The students have little chance to speak in English in the class.

Content based approach itself will not be enough for output.

It depends on the learners' effort.

I am not up to the level of the speaking practice.

I do not have a partner to speak with.

3

Speaking practice will work if it is done in the class. (2)

Speaking in English in the class will be too hard. (2)

Speaking is better than not speaking, but I am not sure I am speaking good English. (2)

I speak Japanese when I should speak English.

4

Continuous speaking practice will work.

Speaking in the class time should be strictly kept.

Summarizing the lecture in oral English is very good.

It is hard but effective.

5

Discussing in English will work. (2)

Listening will facilitate speaking.

The students speak in English in the class.

The students will acquire speaking ability.

Table. 10: Level of assignment

Level of the reading assignments

1 (Too easy) – 5 (Too difficult)

| Evaluation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total | Mean = 3.8 |
|------------|---|---|------|------|------|-------|------------|
| Number | 0 | 0 | 9 | 16 | 4 | 29 | |
| Ratio (%) | 0 | 0 | 31.0 | 55.2 | 13.8 | | |

Table. 11: Quantity of assignment

Quantity of the reading assignments

1 (Too small) – 5 (Too much)

| Evaluation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total | Mean = 3.8 |
|------------|---|-----|------|------|------|-------|------------|
| Number | 0 | 1 | 10 | 15 | 5 | 31 | |
| Ratio (%) | 0 | 3.2 | 32.3 | 48.4 | 16.1 | | |

Table. 12: Interest in assignment

Interest in the reading assignments

1 (Negative) – 5 (Positive)

| Evaluation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total | Mean = 4.0 |
|------------|---|---|------|------|------|-------|------------|
| Number | 0 | 0 | 12 | 8 | 12 | 32 | |
| Ratio (%) | 0 | 0 | 37.5 | 25.0 | 37.5 | | |

List 6.: Necessary Improvement in 2004.

Necessary improvements

No change is necessary. (8)

PC on the desk should be removed.

Write on the blackboard in order.

Concrete examples help understanding.

Ask every student to speak. Students do not speak out voluntarily. (2)

Good but I would like to read more in the class.

Don't change the plan presented in the previous class.

The class progresses too fast to follow.

Listening materials are too fast to understand.

Teacher does not need to read aloud in explaining about the articles.

I want handouts of summary of the topics.

We need more opportunity to discuss the topics in the class.

I want to learn academic writing in a concrete fashion.

Some themes are too difficult for me to understand.

Summarizing the points of the issues presented in the class is too hard.

Sometimes I am lost. I need a whole picture of the issues. (3)

Some more explanation of each topic will help.

Handouts are too many.

List 7.: Good points of the class in 2003

Learning contents in English was my first experience and it made me feel I am practically using English.

(2)

Student centeredness of the class was good.

Teacher's personality was good.

Teacher's gentle manner was everything.

Teacher's affection toward students was felt.

Teacher's manner of presentation was good.

The atmosphere of the class was attractive.

The atmosphere of the class was relaxing and enjoyable.

I became able to read books written in difficult English.

I became able to use academic English.

Newest researches were introduced. (2)

Understanding the topics holistically was good.

I could learn both English and applied linguistics.

Learning the process of language acquisition motivated me to learn about education.

I could learn the mechanisms of language acquisition, which is practical. (2)

I am interested in linguistics.

I could learn something I don't even think about by myself. (2)

I could have another perspective about languages.

The class was substantial and I could learn a lot.

The materials were noble.

The materials were interesting. (3)

The teacher clarifies the meaning of articles I never understand alone.

I could positively attend the class.

Discussion in pairs and in groups was good.

I could understand the topics by discussion.

I could read a lot of articles.

In 2003

List 8.: About the syllabus

The syllabus was good. (5)

I hope it was a two year course.

There seemed to be a gap between the syllabus and the progress.

The speed of the progress was good. (2)

The speed of the progress was too fast. (2)

The speed was sometimes fast and sometimes slow. (2)

We should be informed which parts would be read analytically and which parts would be read holistically.

The speed was good, but sometimes the teacher covers more or less the reading assignments.

Sometimes I could not follow the class but the class was a good place to motivate myself to read a lot.

The speed seemed too fast because the materials were too difficult for me. (2)

Sometimes I could not follow because I did not read assignments. (3)

Sometimes I was lost because the topics were complicated.

I could follow the class in the first semester, but after I gave up reading assignments, I was lost in the second semester.

The second semester was too hard.

Some issues were discussed too much and some were not enough.

I wanted more explanation of technical terms.

I wanted to learn academic writing. (2)

If I could have read assignments, I learned a lot.

The teacher should force the students reading assignments. (2)

I want the teacher continue to give assignments.

List 9.: Method

I wanted more opportunity of discussion (7)

I wanted more group work. (3)

Students did not read assignments, so the teacher should cover it.

There were too many reading assignments. (2)

When the discussion stops the teacher can lead the discussion.

The teacher could lead the discussion some more.

Discussion will be activated after the teacher's presentation of the contents.

Discussion should be had after the complete understanding of the topics by the participants.

Discussion gave me the feeling that I participated the class.

I wanted my teacher prepare a glossary.

The students' presentation of the topics was good.

Variety of methods used in this class made the class interesting. (2)

List 10.: Topics and articles

Topics of the reading assignments were very good. (6)

The main textbook was expensive (about 4000 yen) but very good. (4)

Materials were of the high level but interesting. (4)

Reading for specific purposes was hard but seemed better than reading literatures. (2)

Topics related to psychology were also interesting.

Applied linguistics is a practical field open for everybody. (2)

The textbook was too difficult and I gave up understanding it. (2)

Reading articles usually for graduate students are too hard for us. (3)

Materials were too difficult but I began to understand the contents later. (2)

Reading assignments, the vocabularies especially, were too academic.

Reading assignments were too many.

Too many reading assignments demotivated me.

I will be motivated to read assignments when easier books are read in the class. The materials were interesting, though.

Topics were sometimes too complicated and hindered me from participation to the discussion.

Krashen was easy but Ellis was difficult.

Ellis was good but Krashen could be eliminated.

Ellis was too difficult and I lost my confidence of my English.

I wanted to learn about language rather than linguistics. (3)

Reading about applied linguistics without basic knowledge was hard. (2)

I could not understand the articles without the teacher's presentation.

I could never read in the field without the teacher's guide.

In 2004

List 11.: Good points

The teacher is gentle and it is good.

Teacher's presentation was very much comprehensible.

Writing reports and tests in English was good.

I enjoyed discussion.

I want the teacher continue the interesting and comprehensible lecture.

Discussion was good. (2)

Applied linguistics is interesting.

Student centeredness is good.

The teacher's attitude to communicate each student was good.

The environment where students were allowed to give their opinion freely was good.

Discussion

To make a content based course be successful, the following issues should be taken in mind:

The level of the students and materials

To the subjects in this report, the levels of the materials as reading assignments seemed a little too difficult to read by themselves. (See Table 10. 69% of the subjects replied the materials were difficult or too difficult.) This might have lead to the necessity of the discussion and the group works. (See List 9, where 7 students wanted more opportunity of discussion, and 3 students said they liked group works.) In consideration of the class management, though, the level was ideal. (See List 10. Four students replied that Materials are of the high level but interesting.)

The quantity of reading assignments

64.5% of the subjects answered that the number of the reading assignments was many or too many. This indirectly leads to the difficulty of the class. If the quantity increases, they have to spend much time to prepare for the next class. If they can not prepare for the class the class becomes difficult to understand. In this sense quality and quantity must be well balanced to make the content based method successful.

Choice of topics

The students' range of interest is wide and varied at the beginning of the course as is shown in Table 3. This might be because they had no prior knowledge about applied linguistics. The plan of their future life also is not fixed and varied. (See Table 4.) The choice of the topics for the content based approach always puts pressure on the teachers in the sense that teaching the teachers' strong field might not always be of the interest to their students, especially when they teach general English courses for the first and the second year students. For the teachers' perspective, presenting something that introduce the enjoyment of studying in specific fields to their new students will guide them to appropriate state or setting of mind as university students as the teaching of the basic grammatical items of English, and analytical reading will be good bases for the further study. Assuming, however, that the classes that depend on content based philosophy could fulfill the needs from the both sides, it must be worth trying. The results of the questionnaire tell that there is no request about the topic contents themselves (See List 6.) even though there are a lot of requests about the control of the speed of the progress of the class, level of the materials and the amount of the reading assignments. (See List 10.) To conclude this, teachers should worry more about the quality and the quantity of the materials than topics themselves even if the contents are a little too specific (See List 7, in which two students stated that they could learn something they did not even think about by themselves, or another student stated that he could have never read in the field without the teacher's guide.), even though generalizing this conclusion seems to be dangerous depending on the topics. (See List 10, in which two students answered they wanted to learn English rather than linguistics) This is another and very important issue to discuss in this paper.

Contents versus language

As is pointed out in the previous section, students' belief about language learning is raised by the habitual experience of learning at schools. In schools, the teachers' focus is, to a large degree, on the teaching of form rather than discussing contents that may include the automatic analysis and generalization of the rules of the target language. The difference is how we teach grammar. In both cases grammar is taught. The problem is that students do not understand that they are being taught English – grammar being included – while they are discussing on the topics, writing about the contents, and reading the assignments. Except for the previous two students who answered they wanted to learn English rather than linguistics after the whole year, no student showed negative response about the contents. This at the same time shows that the assumption that English could be taught by the natural activity of gaining information should be emphasized during the course.

Construction of the syllabus

In this specific program at Keio University a preventive measure was taken to the previous problem of gaining agreement from the students about the use of the content based syllabus. As were mentioned at the beginning of this paper, the language acquisition theories were introduced as the contents as well as providing the opportunity to give analyses about the learning experience by the students according to the theory. These worked as the expected measure as well as the interesting contents of applied linguistics. (See list 10, where many positive reactions to the use of applied linguistic readings were presented.)

Activeness of classroom management

The class management should be activated by the presentation of new knowledge in various ways. (See List 9, in which two subjects answered that the variety of methods used in the class made the class interesting. The deviation from the ordinary school English classes will be covered by every aspects of the teaching. (See List 7 and List 11. Teacher's personality, the manner of teaching, the atmosphere of the class, variation of the materials, comprehensibility, student centeredness, *etc.* were pointed out.) In this project, Jigsaw reading activities and many kinds of study skills were introduced when language learning strategies were discussed as an example of the variation of teaching.

Language

About reading, 86.6% of the students after the first semester answered that the content based program was effective in learning reading. 51.3% of the students after the whole year answered likewise. The cases of the low scores was suggested in the questionnaire that there were not enough opportunities to read English in the class (See List 1.). This is from the student perspective. From a teacher's point of view, however, assigning reading should be promoted to provide good opportunities to read more in quantity. As is pointed out, the level of the reading assignments should be controlled. Two students in List 2 answered that the materials were too difficult for them and they gave up reading them.

About listening, only 24.1% of the students after the first semester, and 12.9% of the students

after one year replied they improved listening ability. (See Table 7.) These results suggest the importance of teaching independence in studying. Several students answered they were not given listening training in the class in List 2. In the limited time space of the class it was natural that enough time for training skills was not available. The training should be given outside the classroom. The teacher should have told about the importance of the training outside the class.

In the case of writing, training at home will be possible if they were given writing assignments. In writing reports in English, they were forced to write in English, which gave the students the impression that they studied a lot. In 2004, when the questionnaire was given, there was no writing assignment by the time, but after the whole year of the course, they wrote a few reports in 2003, which lead to the difference in the evaluation. In 2004, 51,6% and in 2003, 38.5% of the students answered they improved writing skills.

Speaking as is described by the students, for example, "The students have little chance to speak in English., I do not have a partner to speak with., or speaking practice will work if it is done in the class." may suggest, that the ways of training speaking should be shown to the students. In 2004, therefore, an innovative method called Monologue Method was developed and was under the test. The test of the effectiveness of the Monologue Method will be reported in the next project.

Notes

1. Richards, 1990., O'Malley, 1990., Oxford, 1990. introduced by Ellis, 1985. Ellis quoted O'Malleys' description of learning strategies as "special ways of processing information that enhance comprehension, learning, or retention of information", Richards' as "good language learners seem to be successful as they have better understanding of and control over their own learning than less successful learners."

2. Robert. E. Franken, 1980., *Human Motivation*. Thomson Learning. This book is written according to the idea of componential approach to human motivation. The theory explains human activity is explicable in terms of three aspects such as "biological", "cognitive", and "learned" factors. This book mediates fields such as psychology, neurology, behaviorism, etc., which separately deals with the human motivation.

<References >

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