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Students' Perceptions on the Application of e-CLIP Model

Kiki Juli Anggoro

Walailak University Language Institute

Abstract: This research aimed to reveal students' perceptions on the application of e-CLIP Model. e-CLIP stands for content and language integrated pedagogy via electronic communication and is an educational innovation in Thailand. This research was conducted in two schools in Secondary Educational Service Area 39 Thailand for one semester long. One school was a large sized school located downtown, while another was a small-sized school situated uptown. The data were mainly collected through observations and focus group interviews. The collected data were analyzed through content analysis. There was reduction administered to opt which data were important. After that, the data were categorized into several groups. The findings exposed the diverse perceptions of the students. The students from each school showed positive responses to the deployment of e-CLIP Model. The students mostly attested appreciation for the teachers' application of content-based English and digital literacy. Nonetheless, there were several noticeably different perceptions between students from the big downtown School And those from the small uptown school.

Keywords: component, e-CLIP Model

INTRODUCTION

In 21st century, it is significant for the educational institutions in a country to generate graduates who own high mastery in operating computers, communicating in foreign languages, recognizing dynamics in the society, performing data analysis, and organizing their own businesses [2]. As a result, educational innovations are continuously established. In Thailand, there is an innovation called e-CLIP which works under the Office of Basic Education Commission (OBEC) in the country. e-CLIP stands for Content and language Integrated Pedagogy via electronic Communication. It signifies the assembly of teaching materials and language performed through the deployment of information and communication technology [3]. This innovation is plotted to assist teachers' indelible development [5]

Ref. [3] pointed out that e-CLIP comprises of a number of principles including the comprehension on the course indicators, strategies of learning management, competence to utilize English associated with materials in the curriculum 4) English fluency skills of instructors 5) assessment to keep establishing the earlier four principles as teachers own a crucial role in deciding the quality of education [1] and they are also the roots from where good quality education grows [4]. Comprehending the benefits that this innovation, e-CLIP has been implemented in several schools around Thailand, including in Secondary Educational Service Area 39.

Secondary Educational Service Area 39 covers two provinces in Lower Northern Thailand, namely Phitsanulok and Uttaradit. E-CLIP has been utilized by instructors in the area to improve their teaching. This paper presents information about the perceptions of students of carefully selected teachers who applied e-CLIP in the area.

The students came from two different schools. One school was a large-sized school containing a total of 2155 students and was located downtown. The other school was a small-sized school with a total of 200 students and was situated uptown.

This paper points out the diverse perceptions of the students from each school. This research was the continuation of a prior research which focused on exploring the role modelling of the purposively selected e-CLIP teachers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

There was a total of 7 teachers who were previously selected. Four teachers instructed at Wangphikul Vittayasuksa School or School A. These teachers were labeled as Teacher A1, Teacher A2, Teacher A3, and Teacher A4 who taught Math, Biology, English, and Thai respectively. The three others taught at Janokrong School or School B. These teachers were labeled as Teacher B1, Teacher B2, and Teacher B3 and they were in charge of computer subject.

The teachers in each school were purposively chosen through recommendations from various sources such as Secondary Educational Area Office 39 Thailand, experts from Naresuan University, and Thai Teacher Council. A number of teachers also had received an award from Thai Government for their works. The students of these 7 teachers were the ones studied for this paper. The data were gathered through frequent classroom observations from November 2016 to February 2017. Focus group interviews were also administered to gain further data. The students who joined the focus group interview sessions were purposively selected in accordance with the observation results and the teachers' recommendations. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed. The collected data were analyzed through content analysis. There was reduction done to opt which data were important. The data were then grouped into three major topics in relation to e-CLIP, namely content, language, and pedagogy and electronic media. The following figure (figure 1) presents the concept of e-CLIP.
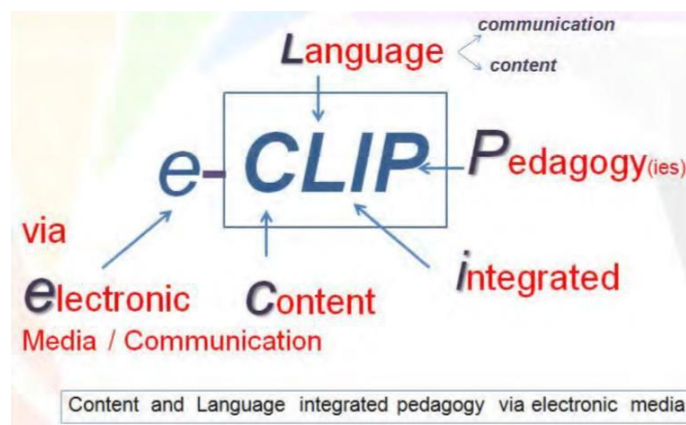

Figure 1

DESCRIPTIONS ON SCHOOL A AND SCHOOL B

School A and School B had several distinct characteristics. School A was a small-sized school, while School B was a large-sized school. School A was located in an uptown area, while School B was situated downtown. Both schools owned proper ICT infrastructure. Each room was equipped with at least one computer and one projector. Nonetheless, wifi in School A was available only in a few spots around the school, while in School B, internet was easily accessed. Students at School A were not formally allowed to bring mobile phones to school, while it was permitted at the other school. Several students in School A did (do) not own a phone to begin with. School A was attended by students mostly from lower income families, while School B was full of pupils generally from middle class families. Even though it did not possess an English or international program, School B hired 4 foreigner teachers, while School A had none.

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS AT SCHOOL A

Content

During the focus group interview, the students were asked to give their general thought about the subjects. A number of students said that several subjects were difficult especially Math.

Most participants stated that it was hard for them to comprehend content in Math subject. The fact that it was a tough subject did not necessarily mean that they hated the subject. In fact, most students stated that they liked it because the classes were fun. There were also a few students who shared that Mathematics was easy for them. During the observations, it was discerned that the responses of students varied, particularly in big classes. Big classes in School A meant 25 to 30 students. In big classes, there were students who were busy talking with their friends during the lesson. These students regularly sat at the last two rows in the room. In contrast to them the students who sat at the first three rows looked like they pay attention well. There was a considerable number of active students who asked and answered questions. In other subjects including Biology, English, and Thai, the students' reactions and responses were also varied. In each class, there were students who looked more interested and active than others. On the other hand, it was also noticed, particularly in big classes, that there were a few students who were not engaged to the lesson.

In case of small classes, the students had tendency to pay attention more during the presentation of the content. It was also easier for the teachers to supervise their pupils.

In relation to content, all the informants during the focus group interview stated that it was important for them to own textbooks. However, several stated that they enjoyed studying from the books, while others were unsure and said it was normal. A student pointed out that the books were necessarily as a guidance to find further media like videos online. Several students brought up online information. They informed that they enjoyed it when the teachers showed them other sources of information from the internet.

During classes, each teacher integrated other information which were not directly related to the lesson. For instance, Teacher A1 occasionally showed videos about Buddhism and meditation; Teacher A2, a3, and a4 sometimes brought up current issues and gave general advises to their pupils. During the focus group interview, the students stated that it was important for them to be presented those kinds of information. A number of students expressed that the added activities made them feel relaxed. One student further explained that she enjoyed it when the teacher played videos when they were tired.

Language

Based on the observations, the teachers tried to integrate content-based English in the classrooms. The teachers spoke English during certain parts of the lesson. In the classroom, the students looked interested when the teachers used English. For instance, when a teacher opened and closed the lesson in English, the students responded more loudly and powerfully. When asked about it, all respondents confessed that they liked the integration of English. Even though a number of students admitted that English was difficult for them, they informed that the use of English was fun. Several students also said it excited them when the teacher spoke English.

A number of informants told that the use of English was among the most fun activities in the classroom. Others explained that when the teacher spoke English, they became awake and paid attention more. The informants also pointed out that they understood the English words and expressions that the teachers used. When they did not comprehend, they asked their friends or the teachers. The teachers would explain in Thai.

When asked whether or not they liked speaking English, a few students stated that they did not because it was difficult for them. Most said that they liked speaking English. They also brought up that the teachers made them less scared to speak English because they had become more used to it. A student further expressed that at that moment she felt like she did not care about making mistakes anymore when speaking English. In addition, the students mentioned that they became more motivated to speak English because their teachers used English.

When asked for their opinions on whether or not it was important for the teachers to speak English, all the students responded positively. In general, the students recognized that English was the international language and would be useful to use in ASEAN community. Most students agreed that through the use of content-based English in the classroom, they were able to learn and practice new English words. They were also more used to listening to English words and expressions and that lowered their anxiety to make mistakes. Several students said it made the class more fun. Therefore, they wanted the teachers to continue speaking English. One student even said that she wanted full English application. Another said that she wished other teachers applied English like the four teachers.

Pedagogy and Electronic Media

In addition to the use of English, when asked about the most fun activities in the classroom, the students mentioned a number of activities. For Math class, the students mentioned watching videos. For Biology class, the students preferred watching videos and having quizzes. For English class, the students said playing crossword puzzle, testing, remembering vocabularies, and watching their own recorded videos. For Thai class, the students enjoyed looking at beautiful power point slides as well as watching videos and movies. Out of all the activities, it could be seen that watching videos seemed to be enjoyed by all the key informants.

The students also brought up the use of internet in the class. In English class, the students informed that the teacher surfed the internet to translate words or find the right pronunciation of several words. Based on the observation, Teacher A1 also often utilized internet to play online videos. The students always paid attention well when videos were used. Teacher A3 was also found to seek for further

information by using his mobile phone to show to the students. The students gathered around and paid attention carefully.

Because of the size of the school, the students and teachers knew each other well. As a result, most students had close relationship with the teachers. According to the students, it was important to have such a relationship. In the classroom, the students said that they were not afraid to ask questions or to simply interact with the teachers. During the observation, the same situation was also noticed. Nevertheless, the students informed that answering questions was a different case.

The communication between the teacher and the students also happened online outside the class occasionally. Several students stated that a number of teachers created a line group. A student further explained that they regularly asked about their assignments. They also discussed their life problems sometimes. The informants stated that it was convenient to communicate online.

When asked whether or not they wanted the teachers to record their teaching and upload the videos to an online platform, the informants supported the idea. They further expressed that because they were used to using internet, it would be easy for them to access the videos and study.

At the end of the interview, the students were asked to point out the things they wanted the teachers to continue doing. In addition to English, several informants mentioned the use of videos and internet. They also pointed out that the teachers taught them well already.

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS AT SCHOOL B

Content

The three teachers taught the same subject, computer. Teacher B1 taught the M5 students, while Teacher B2 and Teacher B3 separated responsibilities to teach M3 students. Each class was approximately 40 students. In the 2nd semester, Teacher B1 focused her class on studying about code block, while Teacher B2 and Teacher B3 instructed about CAI. During the class, the students of each teacher had diverse reactions and responses.

During the focus group interview, the students had varied ideas on whether or not the subject was easy. There were several students who said that it was easy. A student further explained that computer is a common thing and he was used to operating it on daily basis. Several students considered the class to be hard because they studied mainly code blocks. A student pointed out that he did not like the program. There were also a number of students who stayed neutral and expressed that sometimes it was hard, yet occasionally it was easy too. A student further expressed that at the beginning of a topic, it was easy, but the deeper they studied, the more difficult it got.

During the observations, it was discerned that while several students were paying attention, others were busy surfing internet to play games or watch videos. When asked about this issue, they expressed that occasionally they were disinterested because of the difficult content. They further blamed the teachers' speedy explanation. Nonetheless, several students stated that even though the teachers spoke fast, they explained step by step and they were happy with it.

All the materials for this subject was uploaded to Edmodo, a social network like Facebook, but specifically designed for teachers and students. As a result, the students did not have a printed-out book.

When asked about this, the students stated that Edmodo made them more convenient to access the materials. They further explained that, through the use of the online platform, they were able to read the materials anytime and anywhere they preferred. Several students also highlighted that Edmodo was easy to use and they had operated it since their first year at the school.

Language

The students at School B had diverse ideas about the integration of content-based English during the lessons. Several students expressed that it was good that the teachers spoke English. A student said it was okay. An informant said it was difficult and they could not understand. She further explained that when they did not comprehend, the teacher asked them to find the meaning on Google translate. In some cases, it was the teacher who opened the Google translate. When asked whether or not the use of English limit their understanding, all the students said no. They further stated that it was okay because English and computer were somehow related.

According to the students, speaking English was normal. A student explained that what made it hard might only be the fact that the structure of the language was different from that of Thai. When asked for their opinions about the teachers' application of English, the students said that they were used to it and that it was already something normal for them. However, they conveyed that they preferred the teachers to speak English partly in class rather than using Thai for the whole duration of the class. It was because several computer languages could not be translated to Thai.

When asked whether or not they were confident to speak English, a student informed that he was confident even though his grammar was not good. When asked whether or not the fact that teachers used English made them want to speak the language too, several students said yes and others said a little or sometimes. A student further informed that when the teachers spoke English, sometimes he also wanted to use the language orally.

The students were asked whether or not they wanted the teachers to continue to speak content-based English during her class. All informants answered in affirmative. One student even demanded the application of English completely. Several students pointed out the benefits of English mastery in the future and they said they were glad that Teacher B1 gave them chances to practice English in her class. When asked whether or not they wished other teachers to integrate English, they mainly supported it. They explained that if the other teachers did so, they would practice speaking more often.

Pedagogy and Electronic Media

Based on the focus group interview, the students stated that they generally enjoyed the learning activities in the classroom. They also were required to be active following the teacher's instructions. They explained that concentration was needed as they had to listen and type at the same time during the lesson. They informed that they were glad that the teachers taught step by step.

The informants were also asked whether or not they would enjoy if the teachers recorded her class and uploaded the video to an online platform. The students gave positive responses. They stated that it would be good. Another further explained that if they could not understand, they would simply watch and re-watch the videos. In short, they stated that they would be able to understand the content more easily.

The informants admitted they did not have close relationship with the teachers. However, they were not scared to ask questions during the class. It was also noticed that the several students asked questions frequently. However, they confessed that they were a bit scared when they were the ones being asked. They said that they were afraid to answer incorrectly.

During her class, Teacher B1 gave bonus points to students who could finish certain tasks the quickest. During this competitive session, the students looked serious. All of them seemed to work to gain the points. When asked about this, the informants confirmed that they were excited and interested during the session. They seemed to enjoy competition. In case of Teacher B2 and b3, the students were seen to enjoy Kahoot. Kahoot is a game-based quiz with exciting and engaging music and visuals. The students paid attention when answering questions on Kahoot and the discussion was full of laughter.

In relation to Edmodo, the students expressed that it was something normal for them already. They further explained that they had been using the online platform since M1. Nevertheless, they did recognize the importance of it. They conveyed that it was important for their study as they could download materials about code block easily and quickly. Also, they could upload their assignments conveniently.

CONCLUSION

The students showed various responses to the use of e-CLIP Model. In general, the students at School A were found to be more excited than those at School B when it came to the use of content-based English and electronic media. Students at School A were mostly delighted to practice speaking English and learned through electronic media during the classes. Also, they demanded the teachers to continue applying the model and wished other teachers would do so as well. The students at School B indicated that they were alright with the model and were glad to practice their English as well as to use an online platform such as Edmodo and kahoot. Though they did not show much excitement, they did highlight that the integration of English and electronic media was important.

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