

The Application of Immersion Model Approach to English Writing Teaching in High School

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ABSTRACT. *Immersion model is a teaching method to create the language context and use the target language teach directly and let students lost themselves in class. In order to explore whether the teaching approach of "Immersion Model" can facilitate high school learners' English writing. The author conducted an experiment study in two classes, an experimental class and a control class. The result showed that the achievement of experimental class have made progress compared with the control class. And the students in the experimental class had paid more attention to English writing process and were more motivate to learn. The experiment reveals that "Immersion Model" is feasible to develop learners' ability of English writing in the high school.*

KEYWORDS: *Immersion Model; Senior high school; English writing*

1. Introduction

English is the most widely used language in the world. In China, children need to study English from Grade 3 in primary school. Senior high school English teaching objectives are cultivate students' English comprehensive ability and let students further understand the purpose of learning English, develop self-access learning. Immersion model is a new model, established by Canadian in 1960s in the writing teaching, as well as in the second language teaching. The teaching method suggests that the object language should use as much as possible in class. In China, many educationists do research on immersion model and apply in college study. They are few research discussing the impact of immersion program in senior high school.

This thesis aims to analyze the writing problems among senior high school

students and investigate whether applications of immersion model in English writing are helpful for improving students writing ability.

2. Literature review

2.1 Definition of Immersion Model

Immersion model refers to students spend half or entire time soaked with the environment of target language when students stay at school [1]. Foreign language is not only the content of the study but also play the role of the study tools [2]. Lu Xiaoyong claimed that Immersion model gained considerable attention and highly praise from people since it comes to the top [3]. In the course of the learning, students could not speak mother language but the target language. Other subjects are not only providing natural foundations and environment, but also offer motivation and comments of talking. Immersion model copy children's mother tongue acquisition process, develop the language ability with cognitive and communication competences' increasing.

Since 1980s, Canadian second language teaching model composed of three types. There are early Immersion teaching, mid-term Immersion teaching and the later period [4]. According to the time of studying the target language, early Immersion teaching refers to immerse students from kindergarten or Grade one or two in primary school [5]. In the light of the age, it can be spilt into three gradation stages. First is taken from birth to kindergarten. The second is about 10 years old. The last is from the middle school. On the basis of immersion times, it can divide into full immersion and partial immersion [6]. Full immersion means students entirely soaked in the second language context. And gradually decrease the immersion time. Partial immersion is half principle.

Man-made English context is the most noteworthy feature of Immersion model from other teaching methods. Mother tongue is no longer playing a role of interlanguage but tools among immersion class [1]. Educators use English teaching knowledge, which talks about the target language fusing with the subject in class. For one thing, educators set up a study environment of relaxing and democratic, therefore, students can speak their minds freely. For another, educators build a rule

of reward and punishment, for take steps to press students using target language to express their thoughts in class.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Implicit learning is the process of learners obtaining rules automatically. In other words, human being has no conscious of what is the rule and how to master the rule [7]. Explicit knowledge covers how to pronounce, how to make sentences and how to use grammar. Implicit knowledge includes how to distinguish the semantics from different intonation and how to know the unfamiliar words in the reading. In writing, it reflects how to choose words and make sentences.

3. Research design

Immersion model was applied to English writing in high school for ten months. The objects of the study are 93 students of grade 2 in senior high school. Prior to the application, a piece of writing is assaying to complete by students and the teacher mark the papers according to standards criteria.

Students wrote two compositions as the representatives for comparing. One composition is written in the first class and the other is written in the last class. Afterward the author analyses the results and came to a conclusion.

Questionnaire is an instrument that for collecting materials in Social Investigation. The function of the questionnaire is to raise man's points for a specified question. In this empirical study, the questionnaire has 9 questions.

3.1 Research Procedures

Teacher distributes questionnaire to learners and collect data in pre-reading. And all participants in the study do an English writing test in the first class. The requirement is according to the test The perfect score is 25 points, then compare it with the post test and draw a conclusion.

Immersion model is applied in the experimental class. The control class is taught by traditional teaching style. The atmosphere of the class should be relaxed and

make students feel happy. On the basis of pre-writing, students have certain knowledge about the writing topic and writing content. Immersion model will lay emphasis on building an active atmosphere. The teacher guides how to write the first draft and how to avert problems that may meet during writing. In immersion model, the teaching atmosphere is democratic and amicable, accordingly, students can exchange ideas with others. After the training, the teacher does a test again. All participants need to complete a composition again. After examination, the author marks examination papers and collects data carefully. Then the author compares the post-test data to the pre-test data and contrasts whether they make progress or not.

4. Data analysis and discussion

4.1 Analysis of Questionnaire Data

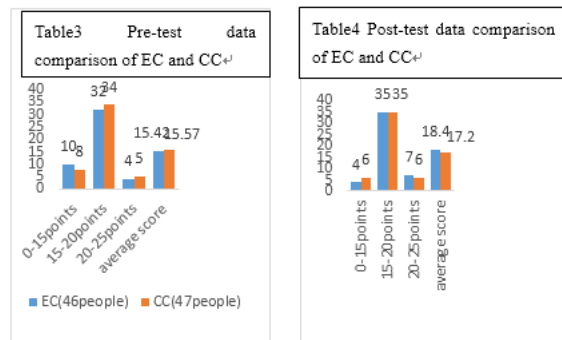
Before the teaching experiment, students did a questionnaire in the first class. We can know participants' attitude toward English and other information from the data of the questionnaires. We know just few students have the interest in English writing and 44% students argued that English is difficult in accordance with the question 1 and 2. 22% of 93 students write at least one composition in a week, 32% students write in a month, 39% students maintained that they do not know how to write when they were writing.

4.2 Comparison Analysis of Pre-test and Post-test of English Writing

In this empirical study, students need to write a composition in the first class and the other is write in the last class. The author will illustrate the collected information from students' compositions of two classes students. There are many phenomena in the test period. First of all, most students did not get used to making outlines and draft. Students are just writing in the answer sheet, which puts them in a dilemma later. Furthermore, they have ideas in minds, but it is difficult for them to translate it into English. They write Chinese in papers and interpreted in English, which cause students have not enough time to complete the composition. In the course of the post-testing period, the author found that most students in the experimental class performance are superior to the control class do. The first thing they did is analyzing

the title, make outlines and develop arguments of the writing theme. Thereafter they make drafts and write on the answer sheet. Because the immersion model apply in class, they obtain language sense of English, they are easy to express their minds in English. It is great for learners to save time and keep tidy of the answer sheet.

EC stands for the experimental class and CC stands for the control class. Table 3 claims that every aspect between 15-20 points is very similar. As for average score, EC is 15.42 and CC is 15.57. Table 4 indicates that post-test scores of the experimental class and different from the control class. It is apparent that students among two classes have made progress. Besides, EC has distincting progress than CC. In pre- test, the lowest score in EC is 6 points while the lowest score in post-test is 7 points. From this chart, we find that in EC the percentage of excellent score has increased and the number of disqualifications has decreased from 10 to 4. The gap between two classes of average score is larger than previous one and the experimental class average score is higher than control class by 1.2 points.



4.3 Discussion

From the collected, we can observe that all the students have made progress, but EC has made greater progress than CC. From the answer sheet, there are many differences between pre-test and post-test in EC. First, the article is well-structured than pre-test. Readers are easy to understand main ideas. Second, there are existing fewer Chinglish in post-test. Students obtain language sense of English and English thinking. And they use English to communicate in class. Because of Immersion model, students have the habit of speaking English in class and in life. Immersion

model helps learners establish their confidence in learning English and increase their interests to learn English.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Major Findings

Firstly, immersion model in English writing has influenced on improving learners' English writing. The experimental class claims that two classes students improved their English writing ability and the experimental class has made greater progress than control class.

Secondly, immersion model cultivates students' English sense. Under immersion model, the phenomenon of Chinglish has improved. Most students can express their views in authentic English.

Thirdly, immersion model improves learners' comprehensive ability of English. Immersion model is a teaching mode not only in terms of writing but in all aspects of a language learning.

5.2 Suggestions for Further Research

A growing number of people are groping for the influence of the immersion teach on second language learning. After the reflection on empirical study and sum up the experience, there are suggestions for further study. The experiment researchers should encourage students and help them to establish confidence in learning English. Secondly, experiment researchers can collect the objects of the study from various levels to collect data.

5.3 Limitations of the Research

Firstly, only 93 learners took part in this study, the size is small. All participants are from the same grade of a school. The author did not compare students of other grades and other school students.

Secondly, there is not all English environment actually in class. Due to the

limitations of students ability, the author has to explain something both in English and Chinese.

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