

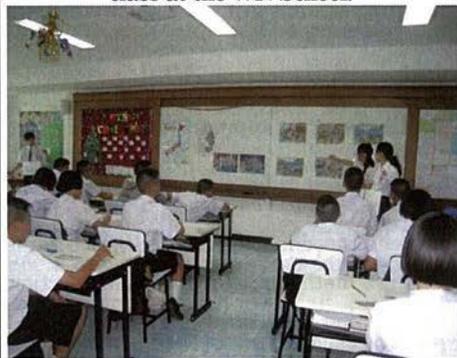
2012 Report on the Puan Program: Hints for teaching about the Japanese culture in English

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1. Introduction

The Puan Program, or “Friendship Program,” was started in 2003 and sends students from the Iwate University Faculty of Education English Department to secondary schools in Thailand to conduct teaching practice for approximately two weeks. In this teaching practice, students conduct content-based lessons, teaching about aspects of the Japanese culture, in English (See Unher, Yamazaki & Hall, 2007, and Hall, 2010, for a more

Picture 1: Student teachers conducting a class at the WN School.



detailed explanation of the program). In January 2012, the English Department sent three students to the Wat Nuannoradit School (hereafter, the WN School), which is coeducational, and two students to the Stri Wat Absornsawan School (hereafter, the SWA School), which is an all-girls school, to teach for a period of four days. Both schools are secondary schools which, in Thailand, means that they begin from the equivalent of the first year of Japanese junior high school to the last year of Japanese high school. I have described both schools in detail in the 2010 Report of the Puan Program (Hall, 2010). Professor Tomoko Yamazaki of the English Department supervised the student-teachers at the SWA School, and I supervised the student-teachers at the WN School. Because I spent most of my time observing WN classes, I will limit my discussion to classes at that school.

The student-teachers had the challenge of teaching about the history of tsunamis in Japan to students with whom they shared no common language other than the target language of the class, English. Compared to previous

teaching practices at the WN School, the 2012 classes were more successful in getting a higher percentage of students to participate in class activities. I will argue that the reasons behind their success were that the student-teachers kept the students busy with individual or pair work, presented the content in an interesting and comprehensible way, and also devoted time for language focus in addition to learning about tsunamis. It should be noted, though, that since the context of the WN and SWA Schools differ, the characteristics of a successful class at each school might also differ. This paper is written for students who will teach in the Puan Program or for people interested in teaching content-focused lessons which use the target language exclusively.

2. The context

2.1 Choosing an appropriate teaching methodology

As discussed in the introduction, the teaching methodology that student-teachers' classes would most closely resemble can be classified as content-based instruction (CBI). According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), CBI is a methodology in which instruction is organized around the content or information that learners will acquire. In CBI, learners use the target language as a means of acquiring new information. Although understanding and communicating meaning is prioritized in CBI, there is also a place for language-focused activities. Within CBI, language-focused activities can include language skills improvement, vocabulary building, discourse organization, and synthesis of content materials and grammar (Stoller, 1997, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2001, pp.212-213).

CBI can be considered an appropriate methodology for our English Department student-teachers at the WN School. The national curriculum of English education in Thailand is based on the *Four Cs* shown below. Because the student-teachers from Japan do not share a common language with the Thai students and their classes are designed to teach about aspects of Japanese culture, they can be most helpful in assisting with *connection of English with other subjects, community, and culture*.

The Four Cs of English Education in Thailand

- Communication skills
- Connection of English with other subjects
- Community: use English in and outside school
- Culture: understand the culture of other countries.

2.2 Using past experiences at the WN School to improve the 2012 practice

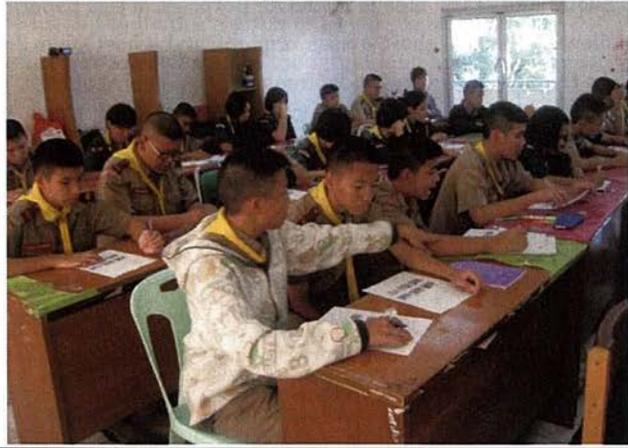
2012 was the second time that English Department students had visited the WN School, the first time being in 2010. In that year, two student-teachers, “Shota” and “Taro” (pseudonyms for purposes of this paper), taught about the following themes: ghost stories, origami, and school life in Japan and Thailand. The theme they covered most frequently was ghost stories. The general outline of the class was 1) Self Introductions; 2) Warm-up: “What’s this?” quiz (3 – 4 questions); 3) Telling ghost stories; 4 Conclusion. Taro and Shota’s ghost story classes can be considered successful as many students enthusiastically participated; this was evident in observing their involvement in the tasks that Taro and Shota designed as well as the frequency in which they answered the teachers’ questions. Both Taro and Shota also thought of various innovative ways to tell the story and interesting post-story activities (See Hall, 2010, for a detailed description). Nevertheless, there were also some problems. The main one was that many students did not pay attention during the warm-up and ghost stories. During the telling of the stories, a lot of noise would emanate from the classroom and it was not from the storytellers! Thus, when Taro and Shota tried ideas such as stopping the ghost story at the half-way point and asking the students to work in groups to act out the rest of the story or to arrange the lines of the story in the correct order, many students did not perform the tasks.

What were the reasons for this? It is my hypothesis that the following factors relating to the context and the lesson planning itself might have contributed to the problems. First, classrooms without air-conditioning have their windows and doors wide open. Therefore, when teachers speak they have to speak over the sounds from the school courtyard and other classrooms. In this situation, it can be very difficult for teachers to make themselves heard. Second, group work can be problematic. One obstacle is the layout of the classroom. In many Japanese junior and senior high school classrooms,

student seating is assigned and classroom desks are arranged in organized rows and columns. Thus, when a teacher asks students to put four desks together to make a group, it is obvious which students go in a certain group. In the WN School, classrooms consisted of horizontally arranged long tables with little room for students to maneuver to sit closer together. This can make it difficult for a group of 4 students to form a group (Picture 2).

Also, after making groups, usually half the students in a given group would be on-task and the other half would be off-task; it seemed like some learners in

Picture 2: Long horizontal table layout.



some classes needed practice for doing group work. Although I am sure that WN School students are capable of doing group work with some initial guidance, it is too demanding on the student-teachers to not only teach the WN School students about the content but also coach them on how to do group work.

Third, during the warm-up game in Taro and Shota's class, only a few students were called to the front of the class to participate while the others watched. Additionally, when listening to the ghost stories, many times students were only expected to listen. In both instances, most students did not have a concrete task to perform. Rather, they were expected to watch some of their friends do the quiz game or listen to the story. In this situation, many students seemed to become distracted easily. Lastly, Taro and Shota never focused on the language of their story. They did not pre-teach words

beforehand nor did they review any vocabulary or phrases afterwards. It is quite possible that without the language focus, the Thai students could not understand the story.

Although I have devoted significant space to the problematic areas of Taro and Shota's lesson, I want to reiterate that overall the lessons were successful. Furthermore, some classes featured fascinating English discussions between students and teachers about Japanese society that I had yet to witness in my experience teaching in secondary schools in Japan. The shortcomings with their class can be contributed to me, the teacher trainer, because I did not understand the context well enough to give them the kind of advice necessary to avoid the above problems. In 2012, with a better understanding of how to teach at WN School, I thought that the following guidelines for planning the lessons would help the student-teachers encourage greater student participation in their classes:

1. **Level:** Level-wise, the WN students are similar to Japanese students. Anything in English that Japanese students would not understand will also not be understood by the WN students. Therefore, do not give the WN students a type of task that most Japanese secondary school students could not perform. When thinking of the degree of difficulty, activities should not be too easy, because then they will be boring, but they should not be too difficult either, because some students might give up.
2. **Helping students understand:** Create as many visual aids as possible and practice using gestures to help students understand the content of the class. Also, beforehand you should plan how you will arrange the blackboard. Lastly, all visual aids or worksheets should be completed before going to Thailand, because you might not have the time to make teaching materials during your teaching practice.
3. **Interest:** Conceive of a way to introduce the content that will whet the appetite of the students.
4. **Keeping students occupied:** Keep the students busy through individual or pair work throughout the entire class. If students have nothing to do, they will become distracted.

5. **Managing student learning:** Avoid group work unless you are used to teaching at the school or you are teaching a class of very advanced students.
6. **Language focus:** Practice or review the language that is necessary for understanding the content, it will help students process the content more deeply.

3. Teaching about Japan's history of tsunamis at the WN School

3.1 Introducing the teachers: Ai, Mina, and Shinsuke

According to Golombek (1996), teachers' experience cannot be separated from their teaching knowledge. In other words, our past experiences as English learners can have a profound effect on how we teach (Borg, 2006). With this in mind, before presenting about the tsunami class at the WN School, I will give a brief profile of the English Department student-teachers who taught there. As with Taro and Shota, the names that I use will be pseudonyms. Before the student-teachers started their practice, I asked them to write a profile about themselves and answer the following questions:

- What was English education like at your junior and senior high schools?
- How did you study English at university?
- Why did you enter an education university and what are your goals for the future?

The first student-teacher, Ai, was a third year elementary school course major. First, she wrote that at high school, her oral communication class and speaking class were helpful and reading class was not. At university, speaking classes with native speakers had been very useful and she thought that speaking with correct pronunciation would be very important for her as a teacher. She entered an education university to become an elementary school teacher and she aimed to teach students "the pleasure of communicating with each other in English."

The second student-teacher, Mina, was also a third year elementary school course major. She wrote that in her junior high school she had many chances to speak English doing such activities as singing a song, participating in a speech contest, and engaging in group work and pair work. In high school,

however, she studied mostly grammar and did a lot of translation, which she did not believe was very helpful. She wrote that in university such activities as discussions and writing her opinion on various topics have helped her improve her English. In the future, she wants to be an elementary school teacher, and for this she wants to know more about various countries so she can talk about her experiences abroad with her students.

The last student-teacher, Shinsuke, was a fourth-year student in the junior high school course. He said that when he was in junior high school, he learned English as if it was a game and he performed well in the class. High school English, on the other hand, was not interesting for him because classes focused on grammar and were teacher-centered. At Iwate University he has studied English by reading books which he believes has improved his ability to read more difficult texts and expand his vocabulary. He entered the university to become an English teacher and finds teaching to be intrinsically interesting. He hopes to have more experiences abroad because he believes that more knowledge of different cultures will enrich his classes.

The common points of the teachers' profiles are that they found learner-centered communicative learning to be more rewarding than teacher-centered grammatically focused classes. Furthermore, all expressed a desire in either teaching communicative English or teaching about different cultures in their future classes. Actually, it has been noted that many novice teachers before starting their careers want to teach the kind of communicative English they experienced in university. Nevertheless, when they begin their careers, their teaching differs greatly from this ideal (Farrell, 2009).

It is of course desirable that our student-teachers would want to conduct interesting and thought-provoking English lessons full of interactive communication. Good teachers, however, have to reconcile their ideals with the reality of their contexts which includes, among other things, the teachers' English language ability, teaching skills, and social background, as well as the students' learning needs and learning styles, their social background, and the school environment (See Hall, 2011, chapter 10, for a discussion on the relationship between context and teaching). Additionally, although the student-teachers seemed to be negative about grammar instruction, learning grammar and vocabulary plays an essential role in foreign language

development. How were Ai, Mina, and Shinsuke able to reconcile their teaching ideals, teaching communicative English and communicating with students, with the reality of their context and the students' needs? We will explore this question next.

3.2 Preparing for their teaching in Japan

Before going to Thailand, student teachers for the WN and SWA Schools met a total of 5 times with the Iwate University Puan Program supervisors for pre-practice preparation. Pre-practice preparation can be divided into the following four stages: 1) Orientation about Thailand, Bangkok, and the schools; 2) Choosing a topic and material for the lesson; 3) Adapting the material; and 4) Planning and practicing the class. The student-teachers from both schools performed stages 1 to 3 together but performed stage 4 separately.

3.2.1 Choosing the topic and material

2011 was a year of unprecedented natural disasters in both Japan and Thailand. Since we thought the topic of natural disasters would be fresh in the Thai students' minds given recent events, we chose to focus on Japan's experiences with tsunamis. We then had to consider the best way to introduce this topic to secondary school students. We decided that telling about the tsunami from the perspective of those who had witnessed it would be easier for students to understand. The format for the lesson would be adapted from a textbook I frequently use for university freshmen English classes: *Global Stories* by John Spiri (2011). Each textbook unit features 6 pictures and a story accompanying the pictures that the teacher reads. The story consists of one or two sentences per picture. Students listen to the story and eventually write out the sentences for each picture.

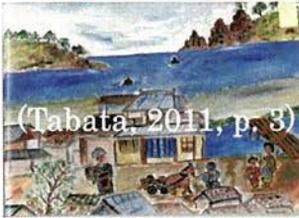
For our story of the tsunami, we used a picture book written by Yoshi Tabata (2011), titled "Tsunami," in which she recounts her experience surviving the Showa Sanriku Tsunami of 1933 in the village of Taro (now under the jurisdiction of Miyako City) in Iwate. Mrs. Tabata has been telling this story over many years so that people of Taro do not forget the village's history of tsunamis and also understand their danger. The idea behind using

this picture book was to inform students of Japan's history of tsunamis and the dangers.

3.22 Adapting the material for the class

The picture book contained 9 pictures, and the student-teachers' first task was to choose 6 pictures. After choosing the pictures, the next challenge was writing the story in simplified language that the Thai students could understand. This proved to be problematic. In one of our orientation sessions, the student-teachers attempted to tell the story as it was written in the book (the story is written in both English and Japanese) for a demonstration lesson. The problem with this was that the text for each page was long and contained words as well as cultural information that the Thai students were likely to not understand. We therefore advised the student-teachers to significantly reduce the length of the text and think of how they can make the story easier to understand through their own acting-out and gestures, using visuals, and giving students

Figure 1: Pictures used from the tsunami story

 <p>(Tabata, 2011, p. 3)</p>	<p>Narrator: The year was 1933. Yocchan lived in the village of Taro. She lived with her parents, grandparents and brother.</p> <p>Yocchan: "Hi, I'm Yoshi. Please call me Yocchan. I love Taro village and my family. I'm so happy!"</p> <p>Narrator: Yocchan's grandfather always talked about the tsunami to Yocchan.</p> <p>Grandfather: "Yocchan, when an earthquake happens, run away, because a tsunami might come soon after."</p>
 <p>(Tabata, 2011, p. 9)</p>	<p>Narrator: On the night of March 3, Yocchan felt a big shake.</p> <p>Yocchan: "Oh no! It's an earthquake! I have to run away!"</p> <p>Narrator: She ran to the top of Mt. Akanuma with her grandmother. It was very cold, about 3 degrees.</p>

 <p>(Tabata, 2011, p. 11)</p>	<p>Narrator: When they returned to the house, Yocchan's grandmother said: Grandmother: "A tsunami might come... Get ready!" Narrator: Soon after that, they heard a loud bang from the sea. They ran back to Mt. Akanuma with no shoes!</p>
 <p>(Tabata, 2011, p. 13)</p>	<p>Narrator: Yocchan was able to reach the top of the mountain. Where was her family? Yocchan: "Grandma! Mom! Where are you?" Grandma: "Yocchan! I'm here!" Yocchan: "Where is my mother?" Grandma: "I can't find her."</p>
 <p>(Tabata, 2011, p. 15)</p>	<p>Narrator: The next morning, Yocchan returned to the town. The houses were not there any more and she could smell garbage. Yocchan: "This is so terrible. I don't like Taro any more." Narrator: Yocchan wanted to leave Taro forever.</p>
 <p>(Tabata, 2011, p. 19)</p>	<p>Narrator: Yocchan found her mother. She was in the temple, and she had injured her legs. Yocchan: "Mom, are you OK?" Mom: I'm OK. Narrator: Yocchan knew her mother was not OK. She said: Yocchan: "Hey, sea! I hate you!"</p>

background information. After this, the 5 student teachers and myself collaborated in rewriting the text to match the pictures. The finished product is shown in Figure 1. In the story, Yoshi Tabata is depicted as "Yocchan," and all the pictures are from Tabata (2011).

3.23 Planning and practicing for the class

After the story was sufficiently modified for the Thai students, the next challenge was planning how to use it: how can a story of the tsunami of 1933 be presented in a way that will (1) attract the interest of the students, (2) be relevant to the 2011 tsunami, and (3) be comprehensible to the students?

First, the student-teachers planned to do a true-false activity about Japan at the beginning of the class to give an overview of the country. The true-false questions they initially made are shown in Table 1. The last question would lead to the main topic, the earthquake and ensuing tsunami that Japan suffered last year. We decided to change the style of the activity as well as the questions to better attract the interests of the WN students. An activity that catches the interest of students is not too easy but not too difficult; it is challenging but doable (Dörnyei, 2001). We decided that the original questions were too easy and needed to be made more difficult. Table 1 shows the revised questions to be more difficult.

Table 1: Original true/false questions and revised questions

Examples of original T/F questions	Examples of revised questions
1. The capital city of Japan is not in Tokyo.	1. What are Japanese chopsticks made of? A. Iron B. Wood
2. Japan is in summer now.	2. Where is Tokyo Disneyland?
3. (Pointing to an area of Japan on a map) This area has a lot of snow in winter.	A. Tokyo B. Chiba
4. Last year, there was a big earthquake in Japan.	3. Which group is a popular singing group in Japan? A. AKB46 B. AKB48

We also thought that the activity should have more of an element of suspense. Therefore, for each question the student-teachers gave the WN students two options to choose from. Before the first question, the WN students would stand. Those students who answered the first question correctly were allowed to continue to stand and those who were incorrect had to sit down. We thought it would be suspenseful for students to see how long they could remain standing. In addition, we thought that even those students who lost would be interested to see which of their friends would be able to answer all the questions correctly.

The next challenge was to think about how to transition from the general trivia about Japan to the earthquake and tsunami. First, after the trivia, one of the student-teachers planned to say the following: "As you can see, there are a lot of interesting places in Japan like Tokyo Disneyland. However, last year was not an easy year in Japan. Do you know what happened in Japan last year? Last year a big earthquake and tsunami hit Japan. On March 11,

we had a big earthquake and tsunami. So I'll tell you how dangerous the big earthquake and tsunami were.”

After the above introduction, the student-teachers planned to give the students basic information about the 2011 Tohoku Earthquake and tsunami so they could understand the scope of its power. They decided on the connection quiz in Figure 2 in which they would give basic information about the tsunami, and students would match the items on the left with the figures on the right. The quiz appeared on a worksheet for the WN students.

Figure 2: The connection quiz used to give basic information about the 2011 Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami

I Connection Quiz		
1. The time of the earthquake	•	3.11
2. Kilometers of coastline hit by the tsunami	•	37.9
3. The number of houses Destroyed by the tsunami	•	14:46
4. The date of the earthquake	•	353.654
5. The height of the tsunami	•	825

After the connection quiz, the student-teachers planned to introduce the story of the tsunami. The transition between the general information about the tsunami and the tsunami story was not completely mastered until after the student-teachers had conducted the lesson two times in Thailand. However, the basic idea was that student-teachers would say that the tsunami of 3/11 was not the first time Northeastern Japan had experienced such a disaster, and then introduce Yoshi Tabata as *Yocchan* in 1933 and the village of Taro, where her story took place. The student-teachers then planned to act out the story. WN students would watch the teachers' performance and then write the order of the six pictures from the story in their worksheets (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Picture ordering task in the worksheet

II Order Quiz

A  B  C 

D  E  F 

Your answer

→ → → →

The activity that followed the story can be considered the language focus of the lesson. The tsunami story was printed on the back side of their worksheet and certain words of the story were omitted. Students had to listen to the story one more time and fill in the blanks (see Figure 4). Initially, the student-teachers planned to have the Thai students write the whole text for each picture, as is done in *Global Stories*. After some discussion, though, we

Figure 4: Extract of gap filling exercise on the worksheet.

Narrator...N Grandfather...Gf Yocchan...Y Mother...M Grandmother...Gm

N ... The year was 1933. Yocchan lived in the village of (). She lived with her parents, grandparents, sister and brother.

Y ... Hi, I'm Yoshi. Please call me Yocchan. I love Taro village and my family. I'm so happy!

N ... Yocchan's grandfather always talked about the () to Yocchan.

Gf ... Yocchan, when an earthquake happens, run away. Because a tsunami might come soon after.

realized that there would likely not be enough time for this and elected to omit words rather than the entire text, to ensure that we could finish the class on time. Lastly, after the filling-in-the-blank exercise, a discussion was planned. The student-teachers, however, did not decide on how to hold the discussion until after they arrived in Thailand.

Overall, before going to Thailand, the WN School student-teachers had planned their class in detail, practiced their class, made all the teaching materials they would need, and had even printed out all the worksheets they would need before going (the student-teachers knew the number of classes they would teach before going and thus could calculate roughly the number of worksheets that they would need). This preparation enabled students to focus on teaching and using the teaching materials once they were in Thailand, rather than making teaching materials and worksheets.

3.3 Conducting the class

The student-teachers taught a total of seven classes between January 9th and 11th, 2012. The outline of their class is given in Table 2. Overall, the lesson had 7 stages. In the remainder of this section, I will discuss what actually happened in each stage of the lessons.

Table 2: Outline of Ai, Mina, and Shinsuke's class	
Goal: Students learn about the 2011 Earthquake and Tsunami and understand the danger of tsunamis.	
①	<p>Self introductions: Teachers introduce themselves and show their name in Chinese characters.</p> <p>Materials: Teacher name cards in Japanese and English, map of Japan.</p>
②	<p>Japan quiz: Students play a quiz game where they are given a question about Japan and choose between two options. Those who get the answer wrong must sit.</p> <p>Materials: Cards showing options A and B.</p>



③	<p>Overview of 2011 Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami: Students must listen for important facts about the Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami.</p> <p>Materials: Worksheets, big cards showing the answers.</p>	
④	<p>Introduce Yoshi Tabata and Taro Village: Teachers discuss Mrs. Tabata and Taro village to provide background to the Tsunami story.</p> <p>Materials: Pictures of Mrs. Tabata and Taro</p>	
⑤	<p>Acting out the Tsunami story: The teachers act out the tsunami story and students order the pictures to the story.</p> <p>Materials: Worksheet, pictures of the story to put on the blackboard/ whiteboard.</p>	
⑥	<p>Filling in the blanks of the story: The teachers tell the tsunami story one more time and students fill in the blanks in the worksheet.</p> <p>Materials: Worksheet, blackboard/ whiteboard for writing the answers.</p>	
⑦	<p>Reflection: Students answer the question, "What will you do if a tsunami comes?" and time permitting, present their reflections.</p> <p>Materials: Reflection cards</p>	

In the first stage, or the teachers' self-introductions, the student-teachers always started the lesson with a lot of energy, particularly Shinsuke who gave a self-introduction in a similar manner as Taro had done in 2010. In their introductions, the student-teachers said their names, showed the Chinese characters of their name, and said where they were from. After introducing themselves, they showed the Chinese character side of their name card and asked students to say their names. In 2010, I was told by a teacher from the WN School that it is very important for students to know the teachers well so that they can feel comfortable participating in the class. Taro and Shota in 2010 gave more information about themselves, for example, their favorite kind of Thai food, etc. Although the 2012 student-teachers revealed less personal information, it did not seem to have a negative effect on students'

willingness to participate in the class.

The second stage was the Japan quiz. This activity seemed to be very popular in all the classes. However, there were some questions that the Thai students did not understand in the initial classes. One question was, “*How many World Heritage sites does Japan have?*” After the first class, we discussed that it was highly likely that the Thai students did not understand the phrase “World Heritage.” Therefore, in the next class, after Mina asked the question, Shinsuke told the WN students that the Thai historic city of Ayutthaya is an example of a World Heritage site. The important lesson from this is that teachers should anticipate the words that students will not understand and be prepared to explain them.

In the third stage, the student-teachers gave an overview of the 2011 Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami, and the students did the connection quiz. As in Stage 2, in the first two classes, WN students had a difficult time matching a particular item with its corresponding data (i.e. drawing a line from “Kilometers of coastline hit by the tsunami” to “825”). In the second class I observed, approximately half of the students had not even started drawing lines until the teachers gave the answers. After the class, we determined that the teachers should give more hints about the meaning of the key words. For example, when they say the word “coastline,” they should point to the Tohoku coastline on the map of Japan.

In the fourth stage, the student-teachers introduced Taro and Mrs. Yoshi Tabata. In the first class, the student-teachers discussed only the most recent tsunami that had hit Taro but not Taro’s history of tsunamis. This made the transition from the 2011 tsunami to Mrs. Tabata’s experience in 1933 difficult to follow. In the ensuing classes, Shinsuke discussed Taro’s history of tsunamis and introduced Mrs. Tabata as someone who had survived the first tsunami. This made the transition much smoother.

In the fifth stage, the student-teachers acted out Mrs. Tabata’s tsunami story. Mina served as the Narrator and Ai and Shinsuke served as the actors. As with the other stages, in the first two classes, it was apparent that the WN students were having a difficult time matching a particular scene to a picture that the student-teachers acted out. Walking around the classroom, I saw that approximately one third of the students were not writing their answers in the

worksheets. Thus, in the ensuing classes, it was decided that after each scene, the teachers would stop and give students hints about which picture matched which scene. In this way, more students were able to write answers in their worksheets.

In the sixth stage, the teachers retold the story while the students read along and wrote the missing words into the blanks. In the first two classes, the student-teachers acted out the story a second time for this activity. However, after the third class a WN teacher said that it would save the teachers energy and also time if they read the story rather than acted it out. After the student-teachers made this change, they were able to devote more time to the last stage, reflection.

The fill-in-the-gap exercise was a means for the WN students to understand the story better as well as to ensure that the story would not be forgotten. By seeing the words written on the paper, the students could confirm what they had just listened to. Furthermore, I observed students asking each other the meaning and spelling of words that they were expected to write. The gap-filling exercise also served as a way for the WN students and teachers to keep a record of the class. In three of the seven classes, the WN English teachers told the students to keep the handouts because they would review them later. Thus, the exercise was a useful way to integrate the tsunami class content with the normal class content.

The last stage was not planned until the student-teachers arrived in Thailand. In their first class, the student-teachers verbally asked the WN students, "What did you think about today's class?" The WN students, as one with teaching experience would imagine, were hesitant to answer this question. After trying this once, the student-teachers decided to change their question to, "What will you do if a tsunami comes?" and have the Thai students write their answers. In some classes, there was not enough time for the reflection, and the reflection was thus completed in 4 of 7 classes.

4. Analysis and conclusion

As evident from their profiles, communicating in English has been very influential on Ai, Mina, and Shinsuke's philosophy of teaching. However, the classes they conducted at the WN School featured little free English

discussion between students and students or students and teachers.

Considering the situation, though, I would like to argue that this type of class was appropriate. First, the student-teachers were novice teachers doing their first English in English class, teaching classes of 50 students of various English levels. In this case, it is necessary to encourage the student-teachers to teach a kind of class that is within their range of developing pedagogical skills to conduct, and which most of the WN students can follow. Thus, a class in which teacher talk is planned and rehearsed beforehand, and where teaching materials are created to help students understand the content, is more likely to succeed than a class with more spontaneous discussion.

Altogether, the 2012 classes were more successful in keeping the WN students concentrating on the lesson. First, the general information quiz, connection quiz, picture ordering task and gap-filling task were not necessarily communicative but they did succeed in keeping the students busy and involved in trying to understand the content. Second, the tasks were achievable for the Thai students but were not too easy. Third, the student-teachers created many visual aids and skillfully used them to assist the WN students' understanding. Fourth, individual tasks and pair-work meant that student-teachers could focus on delivering the content rather than trying to manage groups. Fifth, the student-teachers conceived of an interesting way to introduce Japan, the history of tsunamis of Taro Village, and Mrs. Tabata's tsunami story. Lastly, the ending of the class gave the WN students a chance to review the language that they had heard in the story. Thus, there was a language focus.

5. Limitations of the report

There was neither a questionnaire given to WN students nor any formal means of evaluating their in-class work, so the reasons for the classes' success are based solely on my observations. Furthermore, the WN School represents only one context, and the elements for a successful class at other schools such as the SWA School might differ. Nevertheless, for student-teachers who will attempt CBI, it is my hope that Ai, Mina, and Shinsuke's experience can serve as a helpful reference when planning classes.

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