

Integration of Other Content Areas in English 8

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Abstract

This study determined the integration of other content areas in the second quarter English 8 lessons of teachers in the Municipality of Castilla for the school year 2023 - 2024. The study employed qualitative method and was descriptive in nature. Data collection included the content and thematic analysis of thirty-six Daily Lesson Logs (DLL) or Daily Lesson Plans (DLP), classroom observations, and interviews with twelve English 8 teachers. Integration of other content areas commonly occurred in the parts of establishing a purpose for the lesson, discussing new concepts and practicing new skills, and developing mastery. Science, Araling Panlipunan, Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao, MAPEH, and Mathematics were the integrated content areas. The reasons for integration involved the familiarity of the topic, ease of use, achieving multiple targets, teacher's preference, and reflection and motivation of learners. Various strategies were employed by the teachers in English 8 lesson, including the use of video lessons, pictures, graphic organizers, expository texts and sentences, games, and values integration. Based on these findings, a Lesson Exemplar was developed to aid and guide the teachers in creating a well-integrated daily English 8 lesson plans.

Keywords - Content Area; English 8 Lesson; Integration; Lesson Exemplar

Introduction

Content area integration emerged in the early 1900s, however, its philosophical origin could be traced back to the 1800s (Nollmeyer, 2016a). In this 21st century education, learning was centered on the development and exchange of knowledge and information. As defined, integration of other content areas was a technique used to strengthen learners in two or more content areas simultaneously, which helped the teachers to effectively deliver the learning competencies to the learners.

Teachers are vital in elaborating the content of the lesson to diverse group of learners through the help of integrated content. The prepared lesson of the teachers with an integration of other content area affects how learners interact which brought good results on their academic performance. The Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) which was the basis for all learning and development programs for teachers under the DepEd Order No. 42, S. 2107 (Department of Education, 2017), required teachers to undergo quarterly classroom observation following a tool. Teachers must meet nine (9) indicators for the school year 2023–2024, one of which was the indicator 1 which applying knowledge of content within and across the curriculum teaching areas.

Among the topics discussed on content knowledge and pedagogy during the conduct Learning Action Cell (LAC) Session and In-Service Training for Teachers (INSET), integrating other content areas brought common challenges to the teachers, particularly to the English 8 teachers. Apart from this, the Fairly Satisfactory overall performance level of the Grade 8 learners was alarming. Relatively, the lack of resources for integration and the limited number of teachers in the same grade level is another challenge. Technical assistance from the co-major was needed in planning for integration, effective delivery of the lesson, and

sharing of instructional sources.

With the task of achieving integrated content in each learning competency from the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) for English 8, the results of the performance level of the English 8 learners, and the challenges faced by English 8 teachers in the Municipality of Castilla, the researcher aimed in this study to identify the parts of the English 8 lesson where the teachers integrated other content areas, as well as their reasons and strategies for doing so. The reasons and strategies used in English 8 lessons helped the researcher to craft a lesson exemplar to assist the English 8 teachers in integrating other content areas.

Leckie and Wall (2017) specified integration as a tenet of middle level education, advocating for a curriculum that is exploratory, relevant, integrative, and meaningful for young adolescents. Focusing on the English content at the secondary level, learners needed to develop skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening to comprehend, describe, and interact with the environment.

As stated in the curriculum framework of English, the areas of language learning – the receptive, productive, and grammar and vocabulary skills - should be taught in an integrated way (K to 12 Curriculum Guide in English, 2013). To enable learners to connect to the world and to themselves in a various way, such as learning values and numeracy, each of the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) needed to be accomplished with the integration of other content areas. According to Bialach et. al. (2005), when learners had the opportunity to discover new knowledge and apply that knowledge, they were more likely to succeed.

English 8 teachers were challenged because the lessons needed to target the indicators in the Classroom Observation Tool (COT) to achieve high ratings. Therefore, the Daily Lesson Log (DLL) or Daily Lesson Plan (DLP) had to include strategies for applying knowledge of content within and across the curriculum. Fear et. al. (1998) discovered that it was the duty of teachers to integrate other content areas. In support, Vars (2001) stated that this could cover many standards and meet the needs of higher-order assessments.

With this, other content areas were found to be integrated into English content. For instance, Piacentini et.al. (2022), Liu (2021), and Kondrateva and Nazarova (2016) studied the integration of Science into English content and vice versa. On the other hand, Coral and Lleixà (2016) and Mitkovska and Popeska (2016) both focused on integration of Physical Education through the use of games to improve language and oral communication. Additionally, they used Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) based integration. Short (2017) and Savic (2021) demonstrated the use of strategic material to integrate science and mathematics in English language learners. Guryay and Ozbas (2013) and Yeara (2019) examined integrating social studies into the English content. Furthermore, the viewpoints of Sugiono (2022), Afifuddin (2022), and Ali (2017) provided insight into the possible integration of values education with English content.

Ajani (2021), Makhmudov (2020), and Villarta (2022) examined the roles and responsibilities of teachers in integrating other content areas and discussed challenges teachers faced when integrating other content areas. As a result, they offered resources as solutions to solutions to these challenges.

Objectives

This study was conducted to determine the other content areas integrated by teachers in the Municipality of Castilla within their English 8 lessons during the second quarter of the school year 2023–2024.

Specifically, it sought to (1) identify the parts where the integration of other content areas occurred, (2) determine the reasons of English 8 teachers in integrating other content areas in the identified parts of the lesson, (3) determine the strategies of the English 8 teachers in integrating other content areas, and (4) propose a material based on the results.

Methodology

The study employed a qualitative method to determine the integration of other content area in English 8 lessons and was descriptive in nature. Specific problems in the study were addressed using content and thematic analysis of the gathered data from the twelve (12) English 8 teachers from the eleven (11) public secondary schools and one (1) integrated school in the municipality of Castilla.

Data collection involved the analysis of thirty-six (36) collected Daily Lesson Logs or Daily Lesson Plans from the informants. Additionally, strategies were gathered from classroom observations and responses from unstructured interviews six (6) conveniently selected English 8 teachers. The findings of the study served as the basis for crafting a lesson exemplar to recommend strategies for integrating other content areas into English 8 lessons.

Results and Discussions

1. Parts of the English 8 Lesson where the Teachers Integrate Other Content Area

Allowing learners to gain a deeper understanding and acquire knowledge and skills from integrated other content areas is one of the objectives of the Language Arts and Multiliteracies Curriculum of the Department of Education's under the K–12 Basic Education Curriculum (Department of Education, 2016). Therefore, through the careful preparation of the Daily Lesson Log or Daily Lesson Plan of the English 8 teachers, other content areas were found to be integrated in the parts of Visual – Verbal Relationship Illustrations, Opinion-Marking Signals, and Positive and Negative Message lessons.

1.1 Visual – Verbal Relationship Lesson

The first learning competency in the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) in English 8 is explaining the visual-verbal relationships that are illustrated in tables, graphs, and information maps found in expository texts (Department of Education, 2020). Visual-verbal illustrations were ways of presenting information in a simple and attractive manner to catch the interest of the readers, specifically the learners. They could explain concepts easily using graphs, maps, tables, infographics, and charts.

Teachers were not only expected to teach visual-verbal relationships illustrations but also to integrate other content areas while attaining competency. In the lessons of the English 8 teachers, it was found that

Science, Araling Panlipunan, MAPEH, and Mathematics were used as an integration. The other content area was frequently integrated in the parts of discussing and practicing new concept and skills, developing mastery, establishing a purpose for a lesson, and evaluating learning.

1.2 Opinion-marking Signal Lesson

The second learning competency of second quarter English 8 MELCs is to use opinion-marking signals to share ideas. It is an indication or expression in language that suggests that the speaker is sharing personal opinion rather than providing factual information, using linguistics cues.

Opinion-marking signals are a useful tool for fostering a dynamic, inclusive learning environment in which learner feel free to express their opinions, interact with the content attentively, think critically, and speak confidently. Therefore, English 8 teachers used other content areas to clearly discuss the lesson and help the learners hone these skills.

It was found that other content areas integrated were Araling Panlipunan, Mathematics and MAPEH. They were mostly integrated into parts of developing mastery, establishing a purpose for the lesson and evaluating learning.

1.3 Positive and Negative Message Lesson

The last second quarter English 8 MELCs is expected to let the learners recognize signal words and expressions used to convey positive and negative messages. Good news makes up positive messages, while painful information is conveyed by negative messages. Analyzing a text for positive and negative messages requires taking tone, language, and context into account. Positive messages can be an affirmation, encouragement, and optimism while negative messages can involve discouragement, criticism, and pessimism.

In discussing this last learning competency in the second quarter's most essential learning competencies, the English 8 teachers were expected to help the learners recognize signal words and expressions used to convey positive and negative messages. Teachers were assisting the learners in grasping the underlying feelings and intentions in communication through recognizing positive and negative messages using other content areas integrated in the lesson.

In achieving these objectives, the integration of other content areas helped both the teachers and the learners. The integrated content areas included Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao, Araling Panlipunan, Science, and MAPEH. These integrations were found to be integrated in the part of establishing a purpose for the lesson, discussing new concepts and practicing new skills, reviewing previous lessons or presenting the new lesson and making generalization and abstraction about the lesson.

2. Reasons of the English 8 Teachers in Integrating Other Content Areas in the Identified Parts of the Lesson

The ability to demonstrate a clear, thorough, and extensive comprehension of the content area addressed in each lesson is a requirement for teachers. Likewise, the proficiency to make every learning opportunity a meaningful way to connect one lesson to another and to the real world is a necessity and is a duty of the teachers. Ajani, et. al (2021b) stated that the challenge of integration should be understood by the teachers because it is their roles and responsibilities. Teachers have the responsibility to help learners discover new things and keep them interested, therefore, the reasons of the English 8 teachers on how to strategized for integration was explored through the classroom observation and interview. The familiarity of the topic, ease of use, achieving multiple targets, preference of the teacher, and reflection and motivation of learners were the strategies used.

2.1 Familiarity of the topic

Engin and Seven (2005) confirmed that the text is easily understood by the learner because their knowledge of the content influences how they interpret it and helps them achieve good grades. Familiarity with the topic describes the degree of expertise, comprehension, and experience in a content. It includes having an understanding of the related resources to the topic. English 8 teachers used previously discussed stories, popular customs and traditions, and content area like Araling Panlipunan that are familiar to the learners. Familiarity with the topic is crucial as it allows the learners to effectively communicate, think critically, solve problems, and excel academically, it also contributes in achieving higher comprehension. Connecting to the prior knowledge is not only helpful in organizing new learning but also increases the interest of the learners in the topic.

2.2 Achieving Multiple Targets

To target two indicators in the classroom observation, English 8 teachers applied the essentialism theory by Mckeown, which encourages individuals to identify the essential things that truly matter (Zambrano, 2022). Additionally, targeting three learning competencies- developing foundational knowledge and skills of the English curriculum, and teaching learners about disaster preparedness - were also achieved through the integration of one content area.

2.3 Ease of Use

Activities with an aid of visual or other guided practice allow learners to have an in-depth understanding of the lesson. Learners find the activity easy to use when the necessary details in the activity were already provided and can be easily located. This enables the learners to finish the task easily. According to Drew (2023a), this support provided to the learners enables them to participate in increasingly expert activities and may result to impressive outcomes.

2.4 Preference of the Teachers

Integration can be based on the preference of the teacher. Some English 8 teachers prefer to integrate content areas like Araling Panlipunan because they themselves enjoy exploring a particular era or theme comprehensively, while others integrate science and math to learn the content along with the learners.

Integrating other content areas depends not only on the needs of the learners and the desired learning competencies but also on the discretion of the teacher. Nollmeyer (2013b) specified that teachers who have a strong interest in science may use that knowledge to create engaging units that integrate other content areas, and teachers who have a strong interest in social studies, art, music, or reading can base their integrated lesson plans on those content.

2.5 Reflection and Motivation

Reflection and motivation are essential components of the learning process, offering diverse perspectives and insights. John Dewey (1933) believed that reflection is a key ingredient to forming deeper connections with an experience, enabling learners to think deeply about their actions and emotions, such as reflecting on the video lessons watched and expository text read. Learners were motivated by their enjoyment of learning Mathematics while engaging in English lessons. When learners are driven by internal motivation, they are more likely to be curious, engaged, and inspired by the material they are learning (Di Domenico and Ryan, 2017). Using pictures and scenarios of social, political, and economic issues helps motivate learners; Al-Shammari (2021) stated that motivation was at higher levels when using authentic materials. Motivation is considered necessary and a prerequisite for learners' participation in the learning process, and participation serves as a means for learners to achieve good academic success (Saeed and Zyngier, 2012). In general, motivation and reflection are effective academic enhancers that help learners have a fulfilling and successful teaching-learning process.

3. Strategies in Integrating Other Content Areas in English 8 Lesson

One of the language teaching principles in the K to 12 Curriculum Guide of English for Grade 1 to 10 is integration in the areas of language learning, such as receptive, productive, and grammar vocabulary skills. It can be taught in an integrated way, whether it's through skill, content, theme, topic, or values integration. Integration is an effective teaching strategy vital in honing the skills of the learners. The use of relevant print and non-print resources from other content areas can provide multiple perspectives and meaningful connections. It was found that the strategies of the English 8 teachers in the three (3) most essential learning competencies of the second quarter were through the use of video lessons, pictures, graphic organizers, expository texts and sentences, games, and values integration.

3.1 Use of Video Lessons

In many classrooms, instructional video was considered one of the tools for effective content delivery (Brame, 2016). Teachers used this tool to develop learners' engagement, cognitive load, active learning, and in-depth understanding of the topic. English 8 teachers used science-related video to allow the learners grasp the idea and to develop mastery of the lesson. According to Drew (2023b), this support enabled the learners to participate in increasing expert activities. Apart from improving learners' engagement and effective learning, video lessons also allowed motivation. Learners became more engaged when they were motivated as it allowed new ways to make learning more fun and enjoyable and it allowed new ways to make learning more fun and enjoyable and it retained knowledge more successfully and effectively. Video lessons therefore, as a strategy for integration, provided an engaging and dynamic learning environment that supported a variety of learning styles, improved understanding, and encouraged participation and teamwork among the learners.

3.2 Use of Pictures

A picture was a depiction of a person, location, or object visually. Because they were simpler to recall and repeat, the use of pictures attracted and motivated the learners and has a greater impact than the use of words. With digital technology, teachers used visuals, specifically pictures as strategy to engage learners. Images were used to integrated Araling Panlipunan such as pictures of Korean people, customs and tourists' spots as the basis for motivation questions; pictures of beautiful places in the Philippines as the basis for creating sentences; and pictures of national heroes to introduce a topic. Showing pictures of toxic chemicals was a strategy to integrate science and pictures of sports as Physical Education content. If images were used in the lesson and into tasks, it could enhance the way information was presented, clarify concepts, and improve learners' knowledge and skills.

3.3 Use of Graphic Organizers

Graphic organizers were a means of introducing and assessing concepts in a manner that encouraged meaningful learning. Learners understood and remembered it better when it was presented in a non-linear text such as charts and graphs about religion, racial composition, and Asian countries were used as guided practice and figure interpretation as an integration of Araling Panlipunan. Graphic organizers therefore provide opportunity for the learners to actively participate and contribute to the learning process as they aided in retention and recall of concepts in the lesson.

3.4 Use of Expository Text and Sentences

The most popular type of text used to explain and instruct learners on a certain content was expository text. Learners benefited in a number of ways, including the development of their logical skills, support for their own arguments, identification of the concepts of the text, and becoming familiar with various writing structures. Expository text was used to integrate science content using text about layers of the earth, disasters, and early warning signs as basis for visual representation activity, and Mathematics used expository text with numbers and percentages to introduce the topic. Health composition was also integrated through the use of text about the number of deaths due to different illnesses. Analyzing the text imposed critical thinking on the learner like what Xu (2011) mentioned; it played a crucial role in imparting knowledge as it assisted the learners in understanding important ideas, improving comprehension abilities, and promoting analytical thinking skills and intellectual growth.

3.5 Use of Games

Teachers used games in the classroom because it increased learners' motivation and helped develop a sense of teamwork and collaboration (Massman, 2024). Utilizing games to enhance the learning process was highly effective; games required learners to solve complex problems. English 8 teachers uses text and dialogues about a place in the Philippines as a topic for a "Fact or Bluff" game, a strategy for integration Araling Panlipunan and MAPEH content. English 8 could be more enjoyable if the lesson was combined with games; it could inspire learners and affect how they engaged in class. Teachers should have given clear instructions on how to play the game and the objectives in order to get the best results from game-based learning in the classroom.

3.6 Use of Values Integration

One of the duties of the teachers was to teach moral principles that would enable the next generation to grow up with the essential moral growth. Teaching learners how to apply their knowledge to benefit themselves and society was the goal of values integration (Baig, 2022). Clarke and Openshaw (1971) in their General Theory of Teaching, stated that instruction was a process that was planned, carried out, and intended to bring about a change in learners' behavior. Process questions and values-related assessment questions in every activity enabled the teachers to integrate values in the lesson.

4. Proposed Lesson Exemplar

Lesson Exemplar was created from the results of the conducted classroom observations, interviews, and content and theme analysis of the existing DLP/DLL of the English 8 teachers. It was a more explicit, prescriptive lesson plan that offered precise instructions on how to teach a given subject or ability (Numerade, 2022). Each of the parts of the DLP/DLL had a suggested content area integration depending on the targeted learning competency, this was derived from the strategies used by the English 8 teachers in their lessons. Three lesson exemplars were crafted for each of the three most essential learning competencies from the second quarter of the English 8 content. The lesson exemplar was validated by one Master Teacher, and two Teacher III in English. As a guide also to the English 8 teachers in preparing their DLL/DLP, it allowed for facilitating learning through the use of well-connected pedagogical aspects of the indicator that were consistently aligned with learners' holistic development.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The integrated other content areas in the lessons of the English 8 teachers were found in the parts of Establishing a Purpose for the Lesson, Discussing New Concepts and Practicing New Skills, and Developing Mastery. The reasons for integrating other content areas included familiarity with the topic, ease of use, achieving multiple targets, teacher's preference, and reflections and motivations. The strategies of the teachers in integrating other content area in English 8 lessons included the use of video lessons, pictures, graphic organizers, expository texts and sentences, games, and values integration. The lesson exemplar passed the evaluation of the content validators and was recommended as the guide for English 8 teachers in preparing a lesson plan.

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