The effect of vocabulary development through narrow of second-grade learners

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Abstract

This research aims to investigate the effect of vocabulary development before and after teaching through narrow reading, survey the satisfaction with narrow reading among learners in terms of vocabulary development, and interview teachers with regard to experimental group development and the vocabulary development of learners. The participants in this study consisted of 40 learners in the first semester of the 2021 academic year at Chumchonwatsripachantakham School, Prachin Buri Province, Thailand. They were selected by cluster random sampling. The research instruments in the study were lesson plans based on vocabulary development through narrow reading, vocabulary, reading comprehension tests, satisfaction questionnaires about the study, and interviews with teachers regarding development. The data collection of this study employed online learning. The learners were assigned the pretest before using the treatment. They were taught vocabulary by the narrow reading technique and took the posttest after the treatment to investigate their vocabulary development and reading comprehension. The findings revealed the advantages of vocabulary development through narrow reading and satisfaction with the vocabulary competency of the learners. The open-ended questionnaire on the satisfaction of the learners indicated that learners had knowledge of the vocabulary used in the study. The interview responses of teachers implied that the vocabulary ability of learners had been enhanced. Consequently, narrow reading enabled vocabulary improvement as the satisfaction of learners and teachers interview effectively.

Keywords: Vocabulary development, reading comprehension, narrow reading

1. Introduction

In the 21st century, language is an essential part to communicate with people around the world for enhancing the capability of communication in daily life as education, livelihood, and creating understanding of cultures and vision of the world community. English is an international language for increasing the diverse cultures and viewpoints in the world community, conducive to friendship and cooperation with various countries. The development of English skills is the most important for improving the capacity of the people who use English language in their daily life. English language is widely used as a second language or foreign language in many countries and become an increasingly influential language to connect with other people in the world. As Asean Economic Community (AEC) was founded in December 2015 by ten members who joined forces to create a single market and industrial base, a highly competitive region with equitable economic development and full integration into the global economy, English language is the main language to communicate with the countries in ASEAN. It evidenced that it is crucial for Thailand to develop English language for Thai citizens with the requirement of English language competency and to provide them the occasions in the future. Therefore, Thailand has realized the importance of English language to enhance the ability to use language skills in their lives. This means Thai learners have to improve the

English abilities. The vocabulary knowledge has crucial role for language learners. Richards and Renandya [1] concluded that the fundamental component of language proficiency was vocabulary, which served as the foundation for how well pupils listened, spoke, read, and wrote. The Panel [2] concluded that vocabulary instruction consisted of direct (explicit) and indirect vocabulary instruction (implicit) for increasing vocabulary capacity. Implicit and explicit are the parts of main method of vocabulary teaching and an appropriate approach for solving the problem of learners. Regarding explicit learning as direct learner attention [3], explicit instruction and learning were provided the target involving vocabulary breadth, elaborating vocabulary, and building fluency that extended the learners' perception of high frequency, general academic vocabulary, and crucial technical vocabulary. Reber [4] conducted that implicit learning was a process in which subjects acquire information about a complicated, rule-governed stimuli environment without wanting to and without realizing what they have learned. In the research, he regarded implicit learning as the process of nature perception of learners. The process of learning vocabulary affected the reading skills of English. Rupley [5] concluded that the reader's text processing and interaction with the author were aided by vocabulary knowledge, which promotes the formulation and validation of concepts and learning. Many researchers advised that the implicit process should continue with narrow reading because learners are exposed to numerous authentic texts on the same topic (narrow reading).

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Similarly, Krashen and Brown [6] concluded that the narrow reading strategy was to read texts by a single author or on a particular subject of interest, ensuring understanding and natural repetition of vocabulary and grammar.

As discussed previously, the researcher believed that this technique would help learners acquire the essential knowledge and improve the problem of vocabulary learning and readability effectively by connecting vocabulary competence and reading ability to their daily life skills. The researcher determined to conduct the research for improving the vocabulary competence by applying narrow reading with second grade learners at Chumchon Wat Sri Pachantakham School, Prachinburi Province. As education development plan of Prachinburi Primary Educational Service Office 1, it has a mission to enhance the outcome of education to achieve international standards by developing English language performance of learners to a higher level. Moreover, the schools of Prachinburi Province have the Local Assessment System Test (LAS) for measuring the ability of learners. Chumchon Wat Sri Pachantakham School (C.W.S.), a large primary school with seven hundred twenty-four learners, has the school-based curriculum development and is a sufficiency economy learning center located in Prachantakham District, Prachinburi. Therefore, the researcher selected second-grade learners of Chumchon Wat Sri Pachantakham School as the experimental group for improving vocabulary development and preparing for LAS testing of Prachinburi Primary Educational Service Office 1 mission. The researcher believed that narrow reading could enhance learners to the highest potentiality and be appropriate to learners.

2. Objectives of the Study

2.1 To investigate the effect of vocabulary development before and after teaching through narrow reading technique.

2.2 To examine satisfaction towards vocabulary development of learners.

2.3 To examine teachers' opinions toward the vocabulary development of learners.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Vocabulary acquisition language

Richards and Renandya [1] claimed that vocabulary was the main component of language proficiency and provided the basis for how well students listened, spoke, read, and wrote. Furthermore, the term "vocabulary" refers to the "words we must know in order to communicate successfully."; words in speaking (expressive vocabulary) and words in listening (receptive vocabulary). Krashen [7] mentioned the input theory of language learning. First, learners were interested in the understanding of the word. Second, the words should contain terms which were just outside the learners' accomplishment. Third, the learners could not feel troublesome with the foreign language.

3.2 Explicit vocabulary instruction

In accordance with National Reading [2], explicit vocabulary instruction is efficient for learning vocabulary that students have executed definition or other quality of words to be learned. Ellis [8] stated that explicit instruction referred to attempts to intervene the process of interlanguage development. Explicit instruction or formal instruction improved text understanding and information usage [2]. In the goal of building a large recognition vocabulary, Decarrico [9] described that explicit instruction integrated a new word with old, providing a number of encounters with a word and promoting a deep level of processing.

3.3 Implicit vocabulary instruction

Implicit learning was first investigated by Reber [4]. He explained a process during which subject acquire knowledge about a complex, rule-governed stimulus environment without intending to and without becoming aware of the knowledge they have acquired. In the research, he regarded implicit learning as the process of nature perception of learners.

Hunt and Beglar [3] stated that implicit learning was the one of enlarging and strengthening of vocabulary breadth, and would be complicated and evolved with vocabulary. Decarrico [9] mentioned that implicit vocabulary learning occurs when the mind is focused elsewhere, such as understanding a text or using language for communicative purposes. The point of an implicit was "attract learner attention" and "minimize any interruption to the communication of meaning" [10].

3.4 Narrow reading

The narrow reading strategy was the strategy of reading with one author or about a single topic interest which increased reading comprehend and natural reception of the words and grammar of learners [6].

Stephen [11] stated that narrow reading will be more enjoyable because it is restricted to what the reader really wants to read. It will be more comprehensible, because the reader will already have a great deal of background knowledge and will gain more background knowledge by reading. In addition, he argued that narrow reading had more advantages. First, writers had favorite expressions and distinctive style which topics had their own vocabulary and discourse, narrow reading provides a built-in review. Second, background knowledge was an enormous supporter of comprehension.

3.5 Vocabulary and readability

Koda [12] concluded that successful comprehension was heavily dependent on the knowledge of individual word recognition, and the relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension that not only first language and also second language learners. Moreover, Hirsch [13] stated that proper reading comprehension required a person to know 90 to 95 percent of the words in a document. Knowing that percentage of terms assisted the reader to have confidence in what was being stated and, as a result, properly estimating what the familiar words mean.

4. Conceptual Framework

In the study, narrow reading was an independent variable. Vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and

Table 1. The comparative relation of mean scores of pretest and posttest.

Group	Time	N	Mean	SD	T-test
Experimental group	pretest	40	14.15	2.160	29.756
	posttest	40	25.18	5.480	

the satisfaction of learners toward vocabulary development and teachers' opinion on experimental development were dependent variables.

5. Research Methodology

The study was an experimental research design that was conducted with ninety-eight second grade learners (four classes) at Chumchon Wat Sri Prachantakham School, Thailand. The sample of the study was forty learners (two classes) selected by cluster random sampling. They were taught vocabulary with five lesson plans through the narrow reading method. The learners were asked to do the pretest and posttest on vocabulary competence and reading comprehension before and after the experiment. Moreover, learners were asked about satisfaction and the teachers were interviewed.

5.1 Research instruments

The instruments of this study consisted of (a) five lesson plans based on vocabulary development through narrow reading, (b) English vocabulary and reading comprehension tests, (c) learners' satisfaction questionnaires, and (d) teachers' interview form. The experiment was conducted through online learning.

5.2 Data collection

The study was an experimental design that applied the one-group pretest-posttest design.

5.3 Instrument development

The Index Objectives Congruence (IOC) was used to evaluate the lesson plans by the three experts for improving the difficulty of language content and activities in the lesson. After that, they were trailed with learners.

5.4 Data analysis

For the study, the data were analyzed as followed:

1. The pretest and posttest scores of the vocabulary development and reading comprehension test were analyzed for mean scores and standard deviations. Moreover, the mean scores of pretest and posttest were analyzed by the dependent t-test to investigate whether there was a statistically significant difference in the vocabulary development in the experimental group before and after the study.

2. The data from the questionnaires about learners' satisfaction with the vocabulary development through narrow reading were analyzed and interpreted according to Likert and Best [14].

3. The interview data were analyzed by using content analysis. The researcher summarized the data from the interviewing and discussed the data descriptively.

6. Data Analysis

6.1 The learners' vocabulary development before and after teaching through narrow reading

The comparison of the learners' vocabulary development scores before and after teaching through narrow reading had been conducted in the study.

The result in the Table 1 showed a significant difference of vocabulary development competence between pretest and posttest of the second-grade learners at .05 level. The mean score of the posttest (M = 25.18, SD = 2.480) was higher than the pretest.

It can be concluded that learners' posttest score signifies the vocabulary development of learners. The pretest and posttest mean scores were different at 10.68 in average. The findings revealed that the learners' vocabulary competency through narrow reading was greatly higher than before the experiment.

6.2 The learners' satisfaction with the vocabulary development

The overall learners' satisfaction with the contents and the benefits of the vocabulary development were highly positive. The learners' satisfaction showed that the procedure of vocabulary development through narrow reading was suitable. Moreover, the examples of open-ended questions in the second part are as followed:

Student 1 "Vocabulary and stories were interesting to me and I could answer reading comprehension questions."

Student 2 "I could find the same vocabularies in each story and answer the meaning of the words."

Student 3 "I enjoyed with the jigsaw activity which I matched the correct picture and vocabulary with my friends."

6.3 The teachers' opinions toward the vocabulary development of learners.

In the study, the researcher interviewed two teachers who taught using narrow reading. The interview can be concluded that teachers' opinion also is consistent with the learners' results. All teachers answered that "learners had gained vocabulary from the lesson," "learners had shared the meaning of vocabulary with their friends," and "learners can answer the researcher's questions clearly."

7. Discussion

7.1 The learners' vocabulary development before and after teaching through narrow reading

The study was examined the effectiveness of narrow reading on vocabulary learning development and reading comprehension of second grade learners. The score of the learners' posttest (M = 25.18) was higher than the score of learners' pretest (M = 14.50). The pretest and posttest score was different at 10.68 in average.

The finding of the study was in line with the results of the study [15] titled the Effect of reading of interest on reading comprehension and incidental vocabulary learning: A case of narrow reading. The focus of the study was reading comprehension and incidental vocabulary learning development of learners. The finding of the study indicated that narrow reading

could enhance reading comprehension and facilitate incidental vocabulary learning.

7.2 The learners' satisfaction with the vocabulary development

The learners' satisfaction showed highly positive (M = 4.8) about the content and the benefit (M = 4.62). According to the learners' satisfaction, they believed that narrow reading helped develop vocabulary and reading comprehension increasingly. In the open-ended question, learners reported the vocabulary and contents they learned in the classroom. The comments in open-ended questions signified that learners were capable of gaining the knowledge in the study.

The result of learners' satisfaction was supported the research of Rai sa-nguan and Sukying [16]. They explored narrow reading and EFL learners' vocabulary learning in a Thai Buddhist university. The proposes of the study were to investigate the effect of narrow reading on vocabulary learning in a Thai university learning context. It also sought to explore the students' overall attitudes toward the narrow reading approach. The finding showed that after the treatment of narrow reading, most participants incrementally developed their knowledge of the target words than the control group. In addition, the questionnaires indicated that learners were interested and satisfied with narrow reading and they got improved after the treatment.

7.3 The teachers' opinions toward the vocabulary development of learners.

The result of teachers' interview revealed that the learners were improved and increased their vocabulary development so that learners had shared reading comprehension to the teachers and their friends. Moreover, the improvement of learners' reading comprehension was evidenced by learners could answer the researcher's questions clearly. In addition, learners were more confident to speak English in the study. The obstacle to the vocabulary development of learners was the individual difference in English competency level. The result is consistent with Kang [17] who explored the effect of narrow reading on L2 comprehension and vocabulary acquisition with sixty-eight EFL learners (between 17 and 18 years old) from two South Korean secondary schools. The participants were separated into the groups of the narrow reading experimental group and the control group. The instruments were pre- and post-tests, reading texts (based on narrow reading), and the interview questions for learners. The finding presented that the experimental group using narrow reading significantly obtained higher posttest scores than the control group.

As the discussion of the study, it can be concluded that narrow reading approach influenced the development of reading and vocabulary performance of learners.

8. The Implications of the Study

As previously stated, vocabulary knowledge was an essential factor in English learning for improving English ability. Therefore, educators in English teaching might be more concerned with vocabulary development of learners according to individual learning, diversities, and learners' ability. Moreover, vocabulary competency can be the connector to other English language skills such as readings. Educators, therefore, should provide learning materials or other approaches for vocabulary development to learners.

9. Recommendations for Future Study

In the study, there were some recommendations for further study that the research might be developed and improved in two aspects. First, the period of the study could be longer than five lessons in eight weeks. The population for data collection might be increased for data effectiveness. The contents of the study might be diversified for learners to choose their story interestingly. Second, it would be interesting to study long-term memory for vocabulary learning of learners for investigating how long learners memorize the word after the experiment. Moreover, it could be possible to find out how many words learners could remember, including spelling, meaning, and pronunciation.

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