

## The Use of Picture Word Inductive Model Focusing on Chinese Culture to Promote Young Learners' English Vocabulary Acquisition

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### ABSTRACT

As the foundation of English, the vocabulary difficulty should be removed first with effective instructions to develop learners' English ability in order to meet the request of Thailand's national curriculum. In addition, because English is used as a medium of intercultural communication and one component of language learning, diverse cultural contents should be combined with English teaching. Therefore the purpose of this study is to examine the effects of using picture word inductive model (PWIM) focusing on Chinese culture to promote young learners' English vocabulary acquisition. This pre-experimental study with a pre-test and post-test design was conducted on grade six students for six weeks at private schools, Muang District, Nakhon Ratchasima Province in Thailand. The instruments in this study were lesson plans based on picture word inductive model using Chinese culture and English vocabulary acquisition test. After analyzing the data using mean ( $\bar{x}$ ), standard deviation (S.D.) and t-test, the findings showed that the post-test mean score of English vocabulary acquisition of grade six students who had learned English through picture word inductive model focusing on Chinese culture was significantly higher than the pre-test one at the .05 level. The study indicates that using picture word inductive model focusing on Chinese culture is an effective instruction in promoting young learners' vocabulary acquisition as it provides learners attractive visual support to widen and deepen the application of the vocabulary and cultural knowledge.

## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

English has undoubtedly been viewed as a global language by its speakers all over the world. At a regional level, English has not only become a lingua franca in the Association of South-east Asian Nations, it has also been regarded as an official language. To acquire English knowledge from textbooks, newspapers and websites which from the English-speaking countries lead Thai people to develop English ability to communicate with people from other countries. Therefore, to drive to meet international, national, regional and institutional expectations, English has been put in Thailand's national curriculum.

As the foundation of English learning, vocabulary plays a vital role to master other skills in English learning.

Graves (2006) defines vocabulary as the entire stock of words belonging to a branch of knowledge or known by an individual. Without sufficient vocabulary in mind, it is tough for learners to express, comprehend and communicate. The

more effective and creative teaching strategies in vocabulary instruction, the more likely they will experience success with the content. It is necessary for teachers to provide learners effective ways to learn English vocabulary.

Calhoun (1999) developed picture word inductive model (PWIM) as the strategy in teaching English vocabulary. The model uses pictures containing familiar objects, actions and scenes to draw out words from learners' listening and speaking vocabularies. It is designed to capitalize on learners' natural ability to think inductively and make generalizations about the meaning of words, the ideas and the concepts that are represented in the picture. It enables learners to have interest in following teaching and learning process. It can be used as a guide for learners in gaining vocabularies and comprehending texts.

In addition, language has a setting. In any race, to speak means to choose a particular way of entering the world and sustaining relationships with those we come in contact with. The process of learning a second or foreign language is not only requiring an individual to practice linguistic forms but

also necessary to become familiar with the culture (Triandis, 1994). In the core curriculum, Language for Communication, Language and Culture, Language and Relationship with Other Learning Areas, and Language with Community and the World are the four fields of the Learning Area of Foreign Language (Ministry of Education, 2008). With the emergence of the ASEAN Community and the world globalization, where English is used as the main language of communication, the integration of cultural contents in English class should be emphasized. Therefore, in learning English as a second or foreign language, it is necessary to provide learners cultural context so as to obtain awareness and proficiency in intercultural communication.

Hence, taking English as a tool to explore culture and integrating cultural contents with picture word inductive model are a combination for mutual benefit. To widen learners' cultural knowledge, and develop their English ability, it could be operated in class at the same time to catch the interest of learners in language learning.

### Statement of the Problem

In the English curriculum under the National Education Act of 2008, currently in use, Thai students are required to study English from grade 1 to grade 12 (Ministry of Education, 2008). Although Thai students have started English learning since they were in primary level, the achievement is still doubtful. The National Institute of Educational Testing Service (NIEFTS), a public organization in charge of preparing the national tests, announced the results of the exams taken by more than 1.3 million of the sixth and ninth grade students in Ordinary National Education Test.

(O-NET) in 2019. The average scores of Grade 6 and Grade 12 students in English was 39.24 and 29.45 out of 100 respectively (O-NET reports, 2019). According to the report of the world's largest ranking of countries and regions by English skills in 2018, Sweden and Netherlands ranked first and second, Singapore was third and Thailand was the 64<sup>th</sup> of 88 countries/regions, the 16<sup>th</sup> of 21 in Asia. The EPI score was 48.54, which is labeled of low proficiency (EF EPI, 2018). In 2018, Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) showed that the average score of Thai students was 78 while the international average score was 83. Compared with people in ASEAN countries, the English score of Thai participants was just a little higher than the average score of Cambodia and Laos (Test and Score Data Summary for TOEFL, 2018). Upon examining the English class, many researchers pointed that the general problems or difficulties in English learning for Thai students are the unknown English words. This may be because vocabulary has been recognized as crucial to language use in which insufficient vocabulary knowledge of the learners led to difficulties in second language learning (Asgari and Mustapha, 2011) and the most challenging task that every learner faced to acquire another language is to master vocabulary (Nyikos and Fan, 2007). Many Thai students cannot express their thoughts exactly or efficiently because of the limited vocabulary in their mind. Therefore, it is necessary to consider ways to help learners to solve the problems effectively. Picture word inductive model

develops the sight vocabulary directly. It leads learners to classify their new words and to build the concepts that will enable them to unlock words they have not seen before. It stimulates learners' ability to think inductively, makes them interested in learning and guides them to imagine their ideas to acquire vocabularies, make sentences and paragraphs.

As a favorite destination for Chinese tourists, more and more Chinese are traveling in Thailand. According to the Association of Thai Travel Agency (ATTA), Thailand received 32.27 million overseas tourists in 2018 and 41 million expected in 2019. Chinese visitors surpassed 10.5 million in this figure, making up 27.5% of the total. In the latest report in May from ATTA (2019) about the tourism statistics for 15 major nationalities, China occupied 58.87%, and the second country is Japan, 4.99%. Since 2013, the number of Chinese tourists visiting Thailand have ranked among the highest, and so was the growth in numbers of Chinese tourists. There were a series of activities supported by the Ministry of Culture to celebrate Chinese New Year in popular areas in Bangkok. Chinese elements like red lanterns, dragon and lion dances were showed and Chinese food was sold there. In spite of the economic advantages, the arrival of Chinese tourists brings "culture shock" (Tunkeunkunt, 2016). It can be read in news reports about culture shock happened between Chinese tourist and Thai people. The main reason caused the misunderstanding and barriers is the lack of the understanding of different cultures and communication without appropriate cultural contents.

To broaden learners' English vocabulary and diverse cultural knowledge in helping them to acquire a high level of English and culture understanding, this study aims to examine the effects of using picture word inductive model focusing on Chinese culture to promote young learners' English vocabulary acquisition.

### Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are as follows. Firstly, it compares students' English vocabulary acquisition scores before and after learning English via picture word inductive model focusing on Chinese culture. Secondly, it examines the effects of using picture word inductive model focusing on Chinese culture on English vocabulary acquisition of grade six students. This study can be significant to both English learners and teachers. It could promote learners' English vocabulary acquisition and help teachers in constructing the lessons which related to picture word inductive model and Chinese culture.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Picture Word Inductive Model

Picture word inductive model (PWIM) was designed by Calhoun (1999) to teach beginning readers. PWIM is "an-inquiry-oriented language arts strategy that uses pictures containing familiar objects and actions to elicit words from children's listening and speaking vocabularies (Calhoun, 1999, p. 21). It is used to enable students to think inductively,

learning words, sentences and paragraphs by building sight vocabularies (Calhoun, 1999). To enable language learners become powerful in language learning is the ultimate goal of picture word inductive model (Calhoun, 1999).

In picture word inductive model, "young students are presented with pictures of relatively familiar scenes. They 'shake out' the words from the picture by identifying objects, actions, and qualities they recognize. 'Shake out here is to make students find out the words that can be used to describe the items or actions in the exposed pictures. A line is drawn from the object out of the chart paper, where the word or phrase is written, thus connecting the items they identified to words already in their naturally-developed listening/speaking vocabularies" (Joyce, Weil & Calhoun, 2009, p.131). The picture word inductive model cycles generally last two to six weeks. PWIM instructional sequence is:

1. Select a picture.
2. Ask students identify what they see in the picture.
3. Label the picture parts identified. (Draw a line from the identified object or area, say the word, write the word; ask students to spell the word aloud and then to pronounce it.)
4. Read and review the picture word chart aloud.
5. Ask students to read the words (using the lines on the chart if necessary) and to classify the words into a variety of groups. Identify common concepts to emphasize with the whole class.
6. Read and review the picture word chart (say the word, spell it, say it again).
7. Add words to the picture word chart and to the word banks.
8. Lead students into creating a title for the picture word chart. Ask students to think about the information on the chart and what they want to say about it.
9. Ask students to generate a sentence, sentences, or a paragraph about the picture word chart. Ask students to classify sentences; model putting the sentences into a good paragraph.
10. Read and review the sentences or paragraphs.

(Calhoun, 1999, p.23)

Learners can connect the items and actions in the picture and it is visible for them to notice the transition from spoken language to written language. It capitalizes on learners' ability to think inductively. It makes learners interested in learning and guides learners' imagination to develop their idea to acquire vocabularies, sentences and paragraphs. To sum up, learners have the capability to make the generations that reveal to them the conventions of language after learning through picture word inductive model.

## **Culture**

Thompson (1990) gave a definition of culture, which is "the pattern of meaning embodied in symbolic forms, including actions, utterances, and meaningful objects of various kinds, by virtue of which individuals communicate with one another and share their experiences conceptions and beliefs." (Thompson, 1990, p. 132) Moreover, Stangor (2004) stated

that culture is a large social group made up of individuals who are normally in geographic proximity with each other and who share a common set of descriptive and proscriptive norms, including important principles, such as religious and family values and other moral beliefs.

There is a semiotic relationship among communication, culture, teaching and learning, because "what we talk about; how we talk about it; what we see, attend to, or ignore; how we think; and what we think about are influenced by our culture... and help to shape, define, and perpetuate our culture" (Samovar, Porter & Mc Daniel, 2006, p. 326). Thinking and learning are always rooted in a cultural setting and always dependent upon the utilization of cultural resources. Culture provides tools to search the meaning and to convey the understanding to others. Communication cannot exist without culture, culture cannot be conveyed without communication and teaching and learning cannot happen without culture or communication.

The force of globalization pushes us to adjust in this era of dynamic social transformation and the enormous pressure that media content, electronic labor and capital flowing seamlessly across the nations. Culture affects the individual both consciously and unconsciously. In addition, based on the intricate connections between English and culture, taking English as a tool to explore the diverse cultures from different groups, adding cultural contents in English teaching can make the language learning plentiful.

## **Language Acquisition**

Gass and Selinker (2008) stated that how one defines acquisition depends on what one is looking at. Language acquisition is a process which can take place at any period of one's life. There are two ways to develop one's language ability, language acquisition and language learning. Language acquisition is responsible for oral understanding, the capability for creative communication and for the identification of cultural value. As the traditional approach to study language, in language learning, attention is focused on the written form. The form is more important than communication in language learning (Schütz, 2017). There is a distinction between language learning and language acquisition. Language learning is a process under the direct instruction about the rule of language. Acquiring language for students happens subconsciously. This is similar to the way they acquire their first language. They are unaware of grammatical rules during the process. Schmitt and McCarthy (1997) stated that the students' acquisition can learn the meaning of new words by studying them with pictures instead of definitions. It will be easier to understand the new words and keep in mind if students can visualize them. Pictures or visual images in teaching, visual scaffolding is "an approach in which the language used in instruction is made more understandable by display of drawings, pictures or photographs that allow learners to hear English words and connect them to the visual images being displayed" (Herrell & Jordan, 2008, p. 19). Capture the attention and apply the effective approach enable the English vocabulary easier to understand.

## METHOD

### Population and Samples

The population of this study comprised 150 grade six students who were taking bilingual course from private schools, Muang District, Nakhon Ratchasima Province in Thailand, academic year 2018. The samples for this study were selected by cluster-random sampling. The samples were 30 grade six students who were taking bilingual course at Sarasas Witaed Korat School, Muang District, Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand, in the second semester of academic year 2018.

### Experimental Design

This research was pre-experimental design: one-group pre-test and post-test design. It was conducted at Sarasas Witaed Korat School in the second semester of academic year 2018. The experimental design is shown below.

### Instruments

There were two categories of research instruments in this study: experimental instruments and data collection instruments. The experimental instruments were three lesson plans based on PWIM focusing on Chinese culture. The data collection instruments were the pre and post English vocabulary acquisition test that based on the English curriculum for grade six students and related to Chinese culture.

### Data Collection

Before learning, the 30 students in grade six were given a pre-test in order to examine their pre-existing knowledge relating to English vocabulary and Chinese culture. Then, during the treatment, the three lesson plans of PWIM focusing on Chinese culture were conducted. The implementation lasted for six weeks. There were 3 Chinese cultural topics, Chinese New Year, Chinese hot pot and Chinese

dumplings. Each lesson plan was taught for four hours, two hours a week. Finally, after the treatment, the students were asked to take the English vocabulary acquisition test as the post-test.

### Data Analysis

The data obtained from the English vocabulary acquisition pre-test and post-test was analyzed using mean ( $\bar{x}$ ), standard deviations (S.D.) and t-test for dependent.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study examined the effects of using picture word inductive model focusing on Chinese culture to promote young learners' English vocabulary acquisition. The data obtained from 30 students was analyzed using the software of SPSS. The findings are showed according to the objectives of the research.

### The Comparison of Students' English Vocabulary Acquisition Scores before and after Learning English via Picture Word Inductive Model Focusing on Chinese Culture

Referring the first objective of this research, Table 1 demonstrates the result from the grade six students' pre-test and post-test scores in English vocabulary acquisition test.

As shown in Figure 1, before learning English vocabulary through picture word inductive model focusing on Chinese culture, the highest pre-test score of English vocabulary acquisition among students was 30 points (one student), and the lowest score was 14 points (one student). After learning English through picture word inductive model using Chinese culture, the highest post-test score of English vocabulary acquisition of students was 40 points (one student), and the lowest score was 21 points (one student). It can be figured out that all samples obtained higher scores in the post-test than in the pre-test.

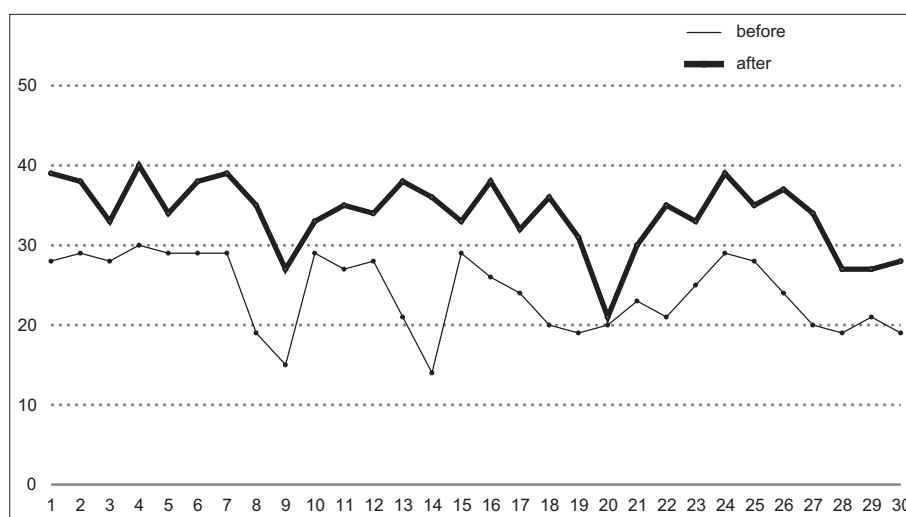


Figure 1. The grade six students' pre-test and post-test scores in English vocabulary acquisition. (Total score = 40 points)

**Table 1.** Experimental design

O <sub>1</sub>	X	O <sub>2</sub>
Represents the measurement of the students' English vocabulary acquisition before learning English via PWIM focusing on Chinese culture.	Represents the experiment of teaching English via PWIM focusing on Chinese culture.	Represents the measurement of the students' English vocabulary acquisition after learning English via PWIM focusing on Chinese culture.

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics for the results of pre-test and post-test in English vocabulary acquisition

Mode of assessment	n	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	t	p
Pre-test	30	24.067	4.719	11.866*	0.000
Post-test	30	33.833	4.472		

\* $p < .05$

**The Effects of Using Picture Word Inductive Model Focusing on Chinese Culture on English Vocabulary Acquisition of Grade Six Students**

To respond the second objective of this research, Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics for the results of pre-test and post-test in English vocabulary acquisition of grade six students.

The statistics in Table 2 reveal that the mean score of students' English vocabulary acquisition after learning English through picture word inductive model focusing on Chinese culture was 33.833 higher than that before. *T* value was analyzed as 11.866 with *p* value of 0.00, which was lower than the labeled at 0.05. It confirmed the significant increase of students' English vocabulary acquisition after the experiment.

It could be concluded from the results of the objectives in the research that the English vocabulary acquisition of grade six students was improved after taking the lessons through picture word inductive model focusing on Chinese culture. Moreover, the results indicated the effectiveness of using picture word inductive model focusing on Chinese culture to promote young learners' English vocabulary acquisition.

**Discussion**

The results obtained in this experimental research demonstrated that the English vocabulary acquisition of grade six students was improved after taking the lessons through picture word inductive model focusing on Chinese culture. It confirmed that using picture word inductive model focusing on Chinese culture had a significant impact on promoting young learners' English vocabulary acquisition. The findings of this study are consistent with the results of the researches conducted by Novia (2015) and Meliasari (2018). These studies revealed that there was a significant difference achievement between students who were taught by using picture word inductive model and that of those who were not. The core of teaching and learning procedure is to make it possible for students understand the materials they have. As the learning subject, students are the starting point to decide and measure what materials to select, how to use the

materials to guide the learning in class. Schmitt and McCarthy (1997), as well as Herrell & Jordan (2008), supported that applying picture enables the English vocabulary learning easier to understanding. For picture word inductive model, the fundamental tenet is the use of "picture as a stimulus for language experience activities to teach young students to read and write" (Joyce, Weil & Calhoun, 2009, p. 130). In this study, the richness of the picture had been taken into consideration because the more contents were available in picture, the more students could develop their thinking and ideas. The pictures of Chinese New Year, Chinese hot pot and Chinese dumpling were demonstrated to students to explore the vocabularies about food, decoration, festival activities etc.

The model respects students' ability to think inductively and students have the opportunity to participate in class activities. Instead of deductive instruction about language rules, the class started with the demonstration of pictures. Students enjoyed making word chart, exploring categorizing the vocabularies, checking their understanding, reading relevant background paragraphs and sharing their work. After the cycle of picture word inductive model, students' growing storehouse of words, syntactic forms and the transition to print were facilitated (Joyce, Weil & Calhoun, 2009).

Campbell L. and Campbell B. (2008) explained that background knowledge acts as mental hooks in lodging of new information and is the basic block to build the content and skill knowledge. The cultural contents used in this research were interesting and fruitful. The long history, the similarities and affection between Thailand and China make it comparatively easy to choose Chinese cultural contents to approach the culture learning skills. The cultural lessons in the research were constructed using Chinese cultural topics, which were highly possible that exposed, experienced or known by students. During the teaching, the photos of Chinese culture, the videos related to the cultural contents, cultural activities and further reading materials built high connection for students to link their prior knowledge to the topics, skills and competencies. It can be verified that cultural content teaching was an effective strategy from students' achievement in cultural knowledge.

As for the weakness of this research, one student did not achieve big difference after the experiment due to the limited attendance in class.

**CONCLUSION**

This study focuses on the use of picture word inductive model focusing on Chinese culture to promote young learners' English vocabulary acquisition. It examines the effects of

using picture word inductive model focusing on Chinese culture on English vocabulary acquisition of grade six students. It was a one-group pre-test and post-test design. The research was conducted in a bilingual class of 30 grade six students as sample for six weeks. English vocabulary acquisition tests were used to collect the data. The results of this study indicated that using picture word inductive model to teach English vocabulary is supportive for promoting young learners' English vocabulary acquisition. Chinese cultural content used in teaching could motivate students to extend cultural knowledge and enhance their communicative skills. The findings show some reasons of how the use of picture word inductive model focusing on Chinese culture can promote young learners' English vocabulary acquisition. Picture word inductive model causes learners to collect information, to explore, to organize the concepts. In this study, learners played the role to explore and the teacher just a supporter to give help rather than the center. The teaching activities followed the picture word inductive model instructional sequence activated and motivated learners to participate in the class. Moreover, it provided learners with opportunities to apply what they received. The selection of Chinese cultural topics which related to learners' lives can guide them to connect learning with their life experiences and prior knowledge. It could get learners participated and have a better and easier understanding. Therefore, the outcome of learning was effective and successful.

The findings from this study produced some recommendations for the further study as reference. 1) Further study should examine the effects of picture word inductive model on other contents or other subjects. 2) Different levels of samples should be conducted in the further study to examine whether the achievements differ.

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