

DEVELOPING A HEALTH VOCABULARY THROUGH A CRITICAL THINKING PROCESS IN THE HEALTH PROMOTION NURSING COURSE.

Hathaichanok Buajaroen

Faculty of Nursing

Nakhon Pathom Rajabhat University

hathaichanoknpru@gmail.com

Abstract

The objective of this study was to investigate the use of a critical thinking process in the development of a health related vocabulary of forty-five students enrolled in the Health Promotion Nursing course.

Data were obtained through the use of an assessment of the students' Basic English, the utilization of journals containing articles on nursing related health promotion, memo record drawing the develop new vocabulary each week until 60 new words were recorded, and reflection based on the critical thinking development in used classroom activities. A final examination was used to assess the students' new vocabularies.

It was found that the vocabulary development of the students varied with critical thinking abilities and their ability to use English. Drawing vocabulary and memo recording were found to be excellent strategies to develop English vocabulary skills related to the content in health promotion nursing. Ninety-three percent of students passed the vocabulary final examination. Reflections of the students indicated that they found the process exciting, increased their love to learn English and that it could be useful to memo all vocabulary to understand the content of health promotion course. The process development with drawing allowed wonderful ideas and thinking related in content to emerge.

Introduction

The inclusion's interview examination data from three years ago indicated that the first year nursing students had low Basic English skill, even though they got a good grade in English from high school. They were unable to read nursing article fluently, struggling with pronunciation during conversation, and having difficulty to translate vocabulary related to health subject.

According to the curriculum plan, nursing students will be gradually introduced to core courses in nursing each year. Therefore, the courses that the students have to attend will involve technical terms and academic vocabularies in English which the good basic knowledge of English will be expected. The second year students, however, still have weak basic knowledge of English and not interested in gaining knowledge.

The previous course evaluation showed that nursing students did not do the journal translation assignment the way it should have been done. They used Google translation program to translate the journal and copy the sentences without rewriting them or make them more sensible.

Active learning is a new technique that suitable for Z generation. Teaching vocabulary through drawing picture technique will develop critical thinking and improve Basic English skill especially vocabulary knowledge which would help students to understand the content and can summarize articles from nursing journal used in this course.

The objective of this study was to investigate the use of a critical thinking process in the development of a health related vocabulary of forty-five students enrolled in the Health Promotion Nursing course.

Literature review

Active learning is a model of instruction that focuses the responsibility of learning on learners. It was popularized in the 1990s by its appearance on the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) report (Bonwell & Eison 1991). In this report they discuss a variety of methodologies for promoting "active learning". They cite literature which indicates that to learn, students must do more than just listen: They must read, write, discuss, or be engaged in solving problems. It relates to the three learning domains referred to as knowledge, skills and attitudes (KSA), and that this taxonomy of learning behaviors can be thought of as "the goals of the learning process" (Bloom, 1956). In particular, students must engage in such higher-order thinking tasks as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Active learning engages students in two aspects – doing things and thinking about the things they are doing (Bonwell and Eison, 1991). In an active learning environment learners are immersed in experiences within which they are engaged in meaning-making inquiry, action, imagination, invention, interaction, hypothesizing and personal reflection Cranton (2012).

Vocabulary retention has been defined as "the ability to recall or remember things after an interval of time. In language teaching, retention of what has been taught (e.g. grammar rules and vocabulary) may depend on the quality of teaching, the interest of the learners, or the meaningfulness of the materials" (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). As it is obvious in the domain of vocabulary learning, the problem is not just in learning second language words; rather in remembering them. Bahrick (1984) states that how well people remember something depends on how deeply they process it. Therefore, various procedures have been recommended to facilitate vocabulary retention. Concentration on features of the new word and its textual environment is supposed to facilitate retention. Learning in context depends on repeating, recycling, and re-presenting vocabularies as well as re-noticing them by the learner. It has been suggested (Hedge, 2000) that retention is related to the condition in which the meaning is inferred and the more analysis involved, the better the retention. There is, yet, another aspect to the condition of inferring meaning of the word which enhances vocabulary retention. That is, retention depends in some way on the amount of mental and emotional energy used in processing a word and readers have developed certain strategies that could assist emotional and mental processing such as meta-cognitive strategies. Critical reading strategies might be another series of strategies that can boost the level of mental and emotional involvement of the learners with the word meaning because readers try to analyze the author's values and beliefs and evaluate them against their own.

Underpinned idea of the fallibility of inferring the meanings of unknown words from pictures, and suggestion of using both pictorial and written annotations, target vocabulary items can be provided with their equivalent pictures and written annotations. Jiang (2004) asserted that adult L2 learners could draw on the mature conceptual and lexical systems of their native languages (L1s), in part because target vocabulary items usually have corresponding words in L1s. Moreover, the various vocabulary-teaching strategies developed in this study need to be variably applied to ESL students according to their proficiency levels. That is, whereas pictures and L1 equivalents and controlled fill-in tasks are more appropriate at the beginning and intermediate levels, less controlled tasks such as compositions and retellings may be more suitable for the advanced level.

The creation of images while one reads text serves as an aid to understanding and remembering. Individuals asked to create mental images of events described in sentences learn two to three times as much as those who just read the sentences aloud (Anderson, & Freebody, 1981).. As shown by the previous section, images serve as one of the codes in the dual coding theory; however, the importance of imagery and its strong research base warrants its own detailed discussion. According to the physiologists there are three ingrained learning styles of perceiving new information, so-called VAK styles: visual, auditory and kinaesthetic.

Research methodology

Data were obtained through the students' English test result from language centre, the utilization of nursing journals related health promotion, the new vocabulary each week, the students' log which reflected the critical thinking development from classroom activities. A midterm and final examination were used to assess the students' new vocabularies.

The research cycles were

1) First cycle:

The assignment was to find the article about Health Promotion from Journal of Nursing. The students should find at least 60 vocabularies throughout the course. Each week, they had to translate 4 words and write down what they had learnt. Their vocabulary development would also be assessed throughout the course by pop up test, midterm and final examination.

Many students stated that they would not be able to remember vocabularies after the examination. The technique then had been adjusted.

2) Second cycle:

The drawing picture of vocabulary meaning technique had been used in this cycle. A few students asked not to draw picture as they thought some words could not be described as a picture. The drawing contest was used as a motivation tool as there was a reward for the best describing picture.

Result

The result will be described in 3 parts

Part I: A general data

The sample comprised of 45 second year nursing students – 43 female and 2 male - with averages GPA 2.75 – 3.78 (as shown in table 1)

Table 1 General data

General data	Frequency	Percentage
1. Sex		
Mal	2	4.44
Female	43	95.56

Total	45	100.00
2. GPA		
> 3.50	10	22.22
3.49 -3.00	28	62.22
2.99 – 2.50	7	15.56
< 2.49	-	
Total	45	100.00

Part II: A critical thinking process in the development of a health related vocabulary

The critical processes have 2 cycles

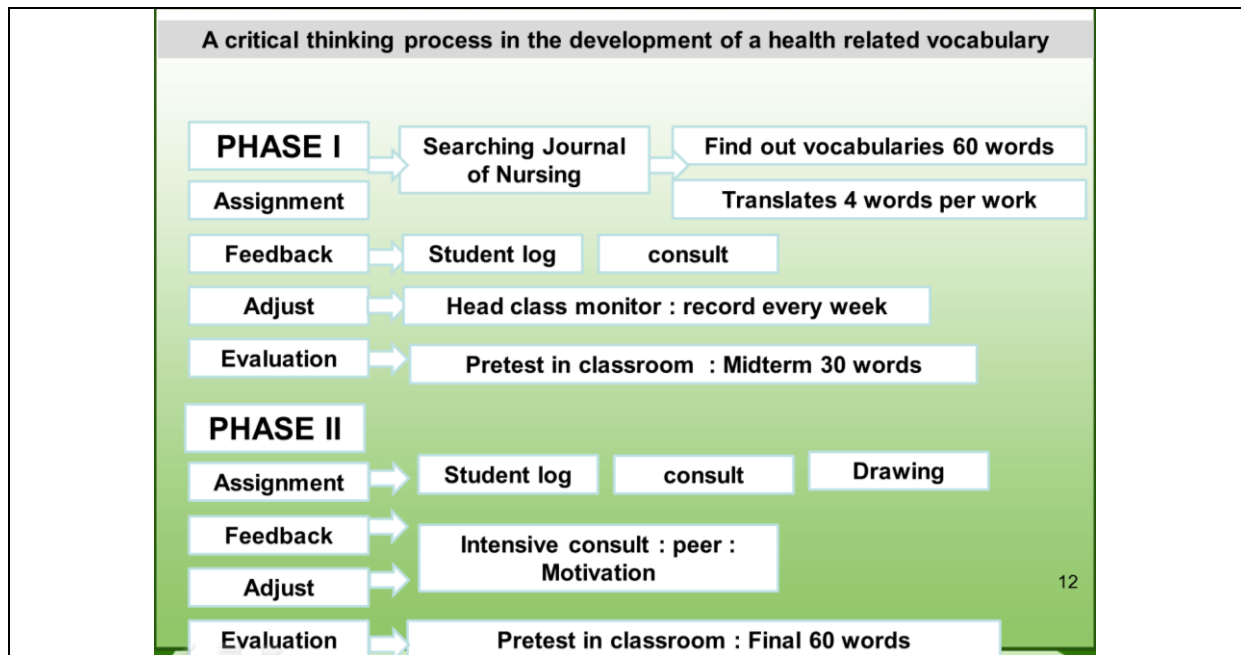
1) First cycle: From observing and assessing the students' behavior and their reactions of learning English, it showed that students had an enthusiasm to do the given assignment but had a little knowledge of Basic English.

Assessment: The assignment was to find the article about Health Promotion from Journal of Nursing. The students had an eager to look for a research article journal of nursing at the library and submitted to the instructor for approval. Most of the students chose the articles about illnesses and diseases which were the opposite of Health Promotion; hence, the example of Health Promotion articles had been posted on LMS and Facebook. After having the article, the students had to 1) finding 4 vocabularies per week (60 vocabularies throughout the course); 2) giving Thai meaning of each word by drawing picture and recording to their diary; 3) submitting diary every week; 4) testing vocabularies knowledge during classroom activities; and 5) having midterm examination (30 words).

Students reflected that they were unable to memorize vocabularies after class. Some of them mentioned that the drawing technique was time consuming and some words could not be described as picture. But the midterm examination result showed otherwise as many of the students' scores were above 80 percent.

2) Second cycle:

The drawing contest was used as a motivator to driven the students to participate more in the learning process. The reward would be given to the most popular vote for the best describing picture. This technique revealed that the students could recall the vocabulary meaning better, even so, there was one student who unable to describe meaning of vocabulary as a picture. The peer sharing technique was adopted for this student to inspire how to interpret from word to picture. The final examination result was impressive as the scores were above 93 percentages.



Part III: The lesson learned.

It was found that the vocabulary development of the students varied with critical thinking abilities and their ability to use Basic English. Drawing vocabulary and students log were found to be excellent strategies to develop English vocabulary skills related to the content in health promotion nursing. Three months will be emerged the critical thinking ideas related content of health promotion.

Ninety-three percent of students passed the vocabulary final examination. Reflections of the students indicated that the learner process was excited increased their love to learn English and that it could be useful to memo all vocabulary to understand the content of health promotion course. They found their own ability the vocabulary development when they look other memo. They emerged varied ideas with critical thinking abilities underpin their ability to use English, drawing vocabulary and memo recording. The assignments are excellent strategies to develop their English vocabulary skills related to the content in health promotion nursing.

Discussion

Ninety-three percent of students passed the vocabulary final examination are reflected effectiveness assignment to encourage the ability to recall or remember things after an interval of time. Like as in language teaching, retention of what has been taught may depend on the quality of teaching, the interest of the learners, or the meaningfulness of the materials” (Richards & Schmidt, 2002).

Reflections of the students indicated that they found the process exciting, increased their love to learn English and that it could be useful to memorize all vocabulary to understand the content of health promotion course. Absolutely, the creation of images while one reads text serves as an aid to understanding and remembering (Sadoski, Goetz, & Kangiser, 1988). Individuals asked to create mental images of events described in sentences learn two to three

times as much as those who just read the sentences aloud (Anderson, 1971). Then the process development with drawing allowed wonderful ideas and thinking related in content to emerge.

Suggestion

1. Promoting a critical thinking process in the development of a health related vocabulary on other nursing classroom practice and student learning
2. Enabling opportunities to apply various active teaching strategies and skills with a critical thinking process in the development of a health related vocabulary
3. Promoting successful collaborative professional development on classroom pedagogy across a range of school subject areas
4. Engaging students more actively and directly in their own learning and classroom activities.
5. Instructors should be proposed the result to academic committee of faculty for adjust evaluation academic domain in nursing curriculum to measure language skill.

References

Anderson, R. C., & Freebody, P. (1981). Vocabulary knowledge. In J. Guthrie (Ed.). *Comprehension and teaching: Research reviews* (pp. 77-117). Newark: International Reading Association.

Bahrack, H. P. (1984). Semantic memory content in permastore: Fifty years of memory for Spanish learned in school. *Journal of Experiment Psychology: General*, 113(1), 1-31.

Bloom, B.(1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals*. New York: McKay.

Bonwell, C.; Eison, J. (1991). *Active Learning: Creating Excitement in the Classroom* AEHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 1. Washington, D.C.: Jossey-Bass.

Cranton, P. (2012). *Planning instruction for adult learners* (3rd ed.). Washington, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Jiang, N. (2004). Semantic transfer and its implications for vocabulary teaching in a second language. *Modern Language Journal*, 88, 416-432.

Jiang N. (2010). Linking Research and Practice: Effective Strategies for Teaching Vocabulary in the ESL Classroom *tesl Canada journal2revue tesl du canada* 127 Vol.28, No 1 winter.

Hedge, T. (2000). *Teaching and learning in the language classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Henrikson, B. (1999). *Three dimensions of vocabulary development*. Cambridge University Press.

Hulstijn, J.H. (1992). Retention of inferred and given word meanings: Experiments in incidental vocabulary learning. In P.J. Arnaud & H. Bejoint (Eds.), *Vocabulary and applied linguistics* (pp. 113-125). London: Macmillan.

Hulstijn, J.H., & Laufer, B. (2001). Some empirical evidence for the involvement load hypothesis in vocabulary acquisition. *Language Learning*, 51, 539-558.

Khabiri M. and Pakzad M. (2012) The Effect of Teaching Critical Reading Strategies on EFL Learners' Vocabulary Retention . *The Journal of Teaching Language Skills (JTLS)* 4(1), Spring.

Mukoroli, Joseph. (2011). "Effective Vocabulary Teaching Strategies For The English For Academic Purposes Esl Classroom" MA TESOL Collection.

Marisa Cohen. (2009). "The Effectiveness of Imagery Interventions on the Vocabulary Learning of Second Grade Students". *NERA Conference Proceedings*.

Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. (2002). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (3rd Ed.). London: Pearson Education.

Sadoski, M. (1998). Mental imagery in reading: A sampler of some significant studies. Retrieved from <http://www.readingonline.org/research/Sadoski.html>.

Sadoski, M. (2005). A dual coding view of vocabulary learning. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 21, 221-238.

Sadoski, M., Goetz, E.T., & Fritz, J.N. (1993). Impact of concreteness on comprehensibility, interest, and memory for text: Implications for dual coding theory and text design. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 85, 291-304.