THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMPETENCY FOR UNDERSTANDING ENGLISH WORD MEANING FROM CONTEXT BY USING C (2) QU TECHNIQUE FOR TENTH-GRADE STUDENTS

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Abstract: The purposes of this research were to 1) compare the competency of understanding English word meaning from context for tenth-grade students before and after using C(2)QU technique, and 2) examine the tenth-grade students' satisfaction towards the teaching by using C(2)QU technique. The sample purposively selected for this one-group pretest-posttest design study was 41 tenth-grade students of a school in Bangkok. The data collection was conducted for 5 weeks using C(2)QU technique. The instruments consisted of 1) 5 lesson plans 2) a pretest and posttest of understanding English word meaning from context 3) the satisfactory questionnaire of the learning platform by using C(2)QU technique. The statics used to analyze the scores were 1) mean ($\bar{x}$), 2) Standard Deviation (S.D.), and 3) dependent t-test. The results of the study revealed that 1) the student's understanding of English word meaning from context after learning through C(2)QU technique was significantly higher at the .05 Level, and 2) the students' satisfaction towards the learning by using C(2)QU technique was generally at the highest level.

Index Terms— *C (2) QU technique, Vocabulary learning, context clue, EFL*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Over recent years of globalization, English is the most important-spoken language in the world because it is widely used in communication to access many sources of information and acquire new knowledge. Moreover, the English language is considered as a lingua franca of global communication (Lyons, 2021), especially, since Thailand has become a part of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Therefore, the Thai government has encouraged the Thai population to develop English language competency because it is an important factor in the efficiency of human resources. Also, English language skill is required in the global-employment market. As the result, Thai students need to improve their English competency to better compete in ASEAN and the international workforce.

However, according to the Ordinary Nation Education Test (ONET) of the academic year 2020, it shows that the average English score for twelfth-grade students is 29.94 which is lower than 50 and indicates their inadequate English proficiency levels (The National Institute of Educational Testing Service Public Organization, 2021). Several factors contribute to students' low English proficiency levels. In particular, their English language knowledge is limited, for instance, their vocabulary knowledge, grammatical rules or language functions are inadequate to comprehend English messages, or English lessons in the class are inapplicable to all students (Noom-ura, 2013).

There are similar essential components of language learning which are vocabulary, grammar, and sounds to enhance the deep understanding of language. Consequently, language learners should understand syntax and semantics. According to Bachman (1995), vocabulary knowledge is fundamental to reading comprehension. Moreover, Prom-In (2018), conducted a study to see the cause of ineffective English teaching to Thai twelfth-grade students, the result showed that the learner's lack of lexical knowledge is a barrier to reading comprehension performance. As the result, they are unable to both read and understand English text, therefore, teaching student English vocabulary is very important.

Wilkins said that if you don't have any grammatical knowledge, you are able to convey a little. In contrast, you won't able to convey without vocabulary knowledge (Wilkins, 1972). Also, no matter well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of the students are mastered, without words to express a wide range of meanings, communication in the second language just cannot happen in any meaningful ways (McCarthy, 1990). In addition, results from the Rong Sa-ad's study demonstrated that lexical knowledge is essential in requiring language learning, especially, in reading skills (Rong Sa-ad, 1998). In conclusion, vocabulary knowledge is the crucial foundation for learning a language as a second language or foreign language whether it be improving communication skills, accessing new information globally, or improving other skills.

However, it is impossible to retain the whole English vocabulary, inferring or deriving the meaning of unfamiliar words by using contextual clues would assist to identify the word's meaning. According to Silberstein, the ability to use vocabulary meaning inference by context clue is the dominant factor for successful reading comprehension (Silberstein, 1994: 107). Additionally, Hancock (1987) found that using context clues which are sentences before or following the unknown word in word recognition is easier for readers to figure out its meaning.

The researcher used the contextual clue strategy to develop the competency for understanding English word meaning from context by using C(2)QU technique [Context (2)- Questioning- Using] developed by Błachowicz (1993) with the participants in this study. This strategy is used as a model of presenting a new vocabulary to students by providing definitional and contextual information. It is a metacognitive process when students contemplate unknown words, they preview them by activating background knowledge and articulating with contextual clues to hypothesize the meanings (La-ongpol, 1999). Blachowicz and Fisher (2002) recommended C(2)QU strategy: C1- Present the new word based on clues in the surrounding meaningful contexts, such as a word, phrase, or sentence. C2- Provide more explicit context with some definitional information about a new word. Ask students to reflect on their first ideas and refine the hypothesis again. Q- Ask students a question that involves a meaning of a word. A teacher can give students more information in case they need more clues, explanations, or data on the word. U- Ask students to use the word in a meaningful sentence, or make a sentence with that word themselves.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1)   To compare the competency of understanding English word meaning from context for tenth-grade students before and after using C(2)QU technique
2)   To examine the tenth-grade students' satisfaction towards the teaching by using C(2)QU technique

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURES

A. The understanding of English word meaning from context

Vocabulary is an essential element because it plays a significant role in learning a second language. Thus, vocabulary knowledge is considered as a critical tool in successful second languages. There is one effective vocabulary strategy for improving learners' vocabulary ability which is the contextual guessing strategy enabling learners to comprehend reading and increase their vocabulary amount. Moreover, context clue strategies make an unfamiliar word more memorable and enhance of vocabulary retention (Kuptanaroaj et al, 2016).

Junjueawong (2020) stated that the contextual guessing strategy supports learners' vocabulary

development, and increases vocabulary extension effectively. When students encounter nonsense words, they might identify a word meaning through the context within the vocabulary, external context clues, and internal context clues. Consequently, students can apply a guessing word ability to identify unknown words with other information.

In addition, guessing word meaning from contexts strategy is widely used as a tool to improve students' vocabulary knowledge without requiring a dictionary or teacher. Many studies are revealing that the contextual clue strategy is effective to increase learners' vocabulary expansion by decoding word meaning from words, phrases, or sentences surrounding the unfamiliar word. Therefore, teachers have to explain and demonstrate the strategy process to students thoroughly. (Blachowicz and Fisher, 2005; Jittawat, 2000)

B. The learning through the use of the C(2)QU technique

Blachowicz and Fisher (2002) suggested C(2)QU for the contextual guessing strategy. Then, Ilter (2016) utilized C(2)QU with fourth-grade students to develop their vocabulary competency, and La-ongpol's (2002) research aimed to study of reading and writing achievement of sixth-grade students using the C(2)QU strategy which steps following,

Step 1 - C1 (Context) Present the unknown word with meaningful contexts and there are external and internal context clues to assist the student to guess the word's meaning. Ask students to read the text aloud and question them about the meaning of words, phrases, or sentences which are surrounding or following the unfamiliar word by using their prior knowledge. Guide students to convey the word's meaning by discussing it with classmates.

Step 2 – C(2)) (Context) Give more explicit context which has more context clues to reinforce the meaning of the target word. Ask students to reflect on the first hypothesis (from step 1) again. Then, ask them to define or refine their prediction related to the meaning of an unknown word after receiving the second context. Give or guide students with the necessary and clear information in case students have difficulty understanding the words and text clues.

Step 3 Q - (Question) Question students that involves the meaning of target words to ensure that students understand all messages correctly. Ask students to produce some definition or meaning for a word in order to see what they understand about new words. Make a discussion with students about the word's meaning to make an accurate understanding and let them use dictionaries to check their assumptions.

Step 4 U - (Use) Give students a chance to make meaningful sentences or contexts by using the new words that they have inferred, checked from a dictionary and considered the previous 3 steps given. Give them adequate time making meaningful sentences and accurate grammatical rules and also to practice reading, writing skill while monitoring their word-learning process. And allow them to use a dictionary to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word or going back into the C(2)QU loop again.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

C. Participants

The participants were 41 tenth-grade students whose study program was Science and Mathematics during the second semester of the 2022 academic year of a public school in Bangkok. All participants in this study studied English as a foreign language, and they were selected through purposive sampling.

D. Research instruments

There were 5 lesson plans, a pretest and posttest of understanding English word meaning from context, and a satisfactory questionnaire of the learning platform by using C(2)QU technique employed in this study.

The vocabularies and contexts presented through C(2)QU strategy in lesson plans were mostly extracted from the English student book. Moreover, 5 lesson plans, the pretest and posttest contents, and 13-item satisfaction questionnaires were verified by three experts to confirm their validity and reliability before implementation. The scores of the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) were between .66 – 1.00.

E. Data collection

1) Before the treatment conditions in this research study, the participants were requested to complete the pretest within 50 minutes.

2) The participants were taught for 5 weeks using C(2)QU technique by the researcher. There were exercises during lessons required to practice in step 4 Q – Question as individual works, pair works, and group works.

3) After 5 weeks of using the C(2)QU technique, the participants were given the posttest, which was comparable to the pretest, to complete within 50 minutes, and approximately 20 minutes to complete the satisfactory questionnaire, which was presented as a form of a 5-point rating scale. Lastly, the researcher recorded data to analyze.

F. Data Analysis

1) The participants' pretest and posttest scores were analyzed by the descriptive statistics in jamovi. (Version 2.2) to identify the students' C(2)QU ability, scores were analyzed to identify the mean score ($\bar{x}$), standard deviation (S.D), and pair-sample t-test.

2) The participants' satisfactory questionnaire scores were calculated by using Microsoft Excel 2019 which included mean score, and standard deviation (S.D). Then, participants' satisfaction is interpreted based on evaluation criteria as five levels developed by Ruangsuwan (1991) as the following:

4.50-5.00   refers to the highest level of satisfaction

3.50-4.49   refers to the high level of satisfaction

2.50-3.49   refers to a moderate level of satisfaction

1.50-2.49   refers to the low level of satisfaction

0.50-1.49   refers to the lowest level of satisfaction

5. RESULTS

The results are revealed based on the two hypotheses of the study:

Hypothesis 1: the student's competency of understanding English word meaning from context after using the C(2)QU technique will be significantly higher than before receiving C(2)QU instruction.

Table – 1: Participants' vocabulary pre-test and post-test scores.

Test	n	$\bar{x}$	SD	t	sig
Pretest	41	11.6	6.07	16.5	<0.001
Posttest	41	19.8	7.89		

* p < 0.05

Table 1 revealed that participants' posttest mean scores ($\bar{x}$ =19.8) were significantly higher than pretest mean scores ($\bar{x}$ = 11.6) at the .05 Level (P<0.05). It indicated that guessing word meaning from context clues through using C(2)QU develops students to improve their vocabulary competency according to their mean scores after receiving C(2)QU instruction. In another word, hypothesis 1 was accepted.

Hypothesis 2: the students' satisfaction with the learning by using C(2)QU technique will be generally at a high level.

Table – 2: Participants' satisfactory questionnaire scores towards the learning by using C(2)QU technique.

Components	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	level
1. Contents of teaching			
1) The content of teaching is interesting, modern, and proper.	4.93	0.26	highest
2) The English language level is appropriate to the learner's competency.	4.95	0.22	highest
3) The content of teaching articulates learning objectives.	4.93	0.26	highest

4) The C(2)QU technique can be used to understand English word meaning from context clues.	4.88	0.33	highest
5) The C(2)QU technique is explained thoroughly, and explicit examples of C(2)QU steps are provided.	4.90	0.30	highest
6) The contexts are obvious to infer the unfamiliar word meaning from context clues.	4.78	0.42	highest
7) The test is involved in the teaching content.	4.98	0.16	highest
summary	4.91	0.28	highest
2. Benefits of using C(2)QU technique			
1) The C(2)QU technique helps the learner infer and derive the meaning of unfamiliar words.	4.83	0.44	highest
2) The C(2)QU technique develops learners' vocabulary knowledge and increases vocabulary expansion.	4.93	0.26	highest
3) The C(2)QU technique facilitates learners' reading comprehension.	4.90	0.30	highest
summary	4.89	0.34	highest
3. Satisfaction towards learning by using C(2)QU technique			
1) Satisfaction with the using C(2)QU technique to develop the understanding of English word meaning from context clues	4.90	0.30	highest
2) Satisfaction with the C(2)QU teaching materials	4.90	0.30	highest
3) Satisfaction with the adequate period of learning by using the C(2)QU technique.	4.93	0.26	highest
summary	4.91	0.29	highest
summary three parts	4.90	0.30	

Table 2 revealed that the student's satisfaction with the learning by using the C(2)QU technique to develop the understanding of English word meaning was at the highest level ($\bar{x}$ = 4.90, S.D. = 0.30). Additionally, the satisfactory form was divided into three parts including, the content of teaching, benefits of using C(2)QU, and satisfaction toward learning by using the C(2)QU technique, the highest level of questionnaire parts was the content of teaching ($\bar{x}$ = 4.91, S.D. = 0.28), and also the satisfaction toward learning by using C(2)QU technique ($\bar{x}$ = 4.91, S.D. = 0.29), followed by benefits of using C(2)QU technique ($\bar{x}$ = 4.89, S.D. = 0.34). Therefore, hypothesis 2 was accepted.

6. DISCUSSION
The finding of this study indicates that the application of C(2)QU to derive the English word meanings from the context is a facilitative effect tool on learner's vocabulary proficiency referring to the participants' pre-test and post-test scores, revealing that the post-test scores were significantly different from the pre-test scores at .05 levels. Therefore, the result of this study is congruent with the research of Hibbard (2009); Mahmoud (2016); Wongwiwattana (2021), and the article presented by Anukakul and Pipatsrisawat (2021), whose studies were conducted to demonstrate the using contextual inference approach to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words.

Especially, the learning through C(2)QU instruction suggested by Blachowicz and Fisher (2002) for presenting new words by guessing from meaningful contexts is an explicitly well-managed step, and easy to follow process provides rich discussion during the class (Ilter, 2019; Junjueawong, 2020). In addition, La-ongpol (1999), who conducted a study of writing and reading achievement using C(2)QU strategies, stated C(2)QU emphasizes the metacognitive process in case of activating student's background knowledge and providing students with 2 meaningful contexts, which are surrounding a word, to lead to a hypothesis about the target word meaning. In another word, all four steps of the C(2)QU technique helps students deeply understand word meanings themselves by considering two contextual pieces of information in C(2), questioning and discussing keyword meaning in the Q step,

furthermore, creating the sentence and a target word consisted with accurate grammatical rules. Consequently, this strategy provides students with a well-known recognition and enhances contextual word knowledge of a target word (Mahmoud, 2016; Ilter, 2019).

The other study findings show that students' satisfaction toward the learning by using C(2)QU was at the highest level which is congruent with the study of Kuptanaroaj (2012), who explored students' satisfaction with the advantages of using word context strategies, he reported the first highest satisfactory questionnaire was using word context strategies can be integrated into other things and is an effective tool for word meaning inference. In addition, it would save time searching for the meaning of a word in the dictionary (Wongwiwattana, 2021).

7. CONCLUSION

According to the discussion, the C(2)QU technique improves and expands students' vocabulary knowledge. Therefore, it is effective and beneficial for word meaning inference from context clues. Plus, it facilitates students' successful reading comprehension and contributes not only to make self-learning but also use prior knowledge through metacognition in C(2)QU steps.

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