THE EFFECTS OF COMMUNICATIVE ACTIVITIES ON VOCABULARY

DEVELOPMENT OF KINDERGARTENERS

A THESIS

BY

SIRIN VUNGSANGOUNGIJ

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Master of Arts Degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

at Srinakharinwirot University

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AN ABSTRACT

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Sirin Vungsangoungij (2012). *The effects of communicative activities on vocabulary development of kindergarteners.*Thesis, M.A. (Teaching English as a Foreign Language). Bangkok: Graduate School, Srinakharinwirot University. Advisor Committee: Dr. Somsak Kaewnuch, Dr. Usaporn Sucaromana.

This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of using communicative activities in teaching vocabulary to kindergarteners. The sample group was one classroom of eighteen third-year kindergarteners at Tampirak Thonburi Kindergarten, Bangkok, selected by simple random sampling. They studied in an intensive English program for two years. The study was carried out in a period of six weeks during the second semester of the 2011 academic year, in which the kindergarteners studied with the native speaker for thirty periods. The teaching was an experiment of using eight activities: matching pictures and pictures, matching pictures and vocabulary, describing and drawing pictures, describing and rearranging pictures, surveying, playing hangman, bingo games, and dictation. The instruments used in this study were a pretest and posttest of the English vocabulary achievement test, a pretest and posttest of the vocabulary pronunciation test, 4 lesson plans based on communicative activities, and a researcher's log. The data from the achievement and pronunciation tests were analyzed using mean scores, standard deviations, and t-test for dependent. The data from the researcher's log were described qualitatively. The quantitative results showed that the students' ability in vocabulary was higher after studying through communicative activities.

การศึกษาผลการใช้กิจกรรมเพื่อการสื่อสารที่มีต่อการพัฒนาด้านคำศัพท์ของนักเรียนอนุบาล

บทคัดย่อ

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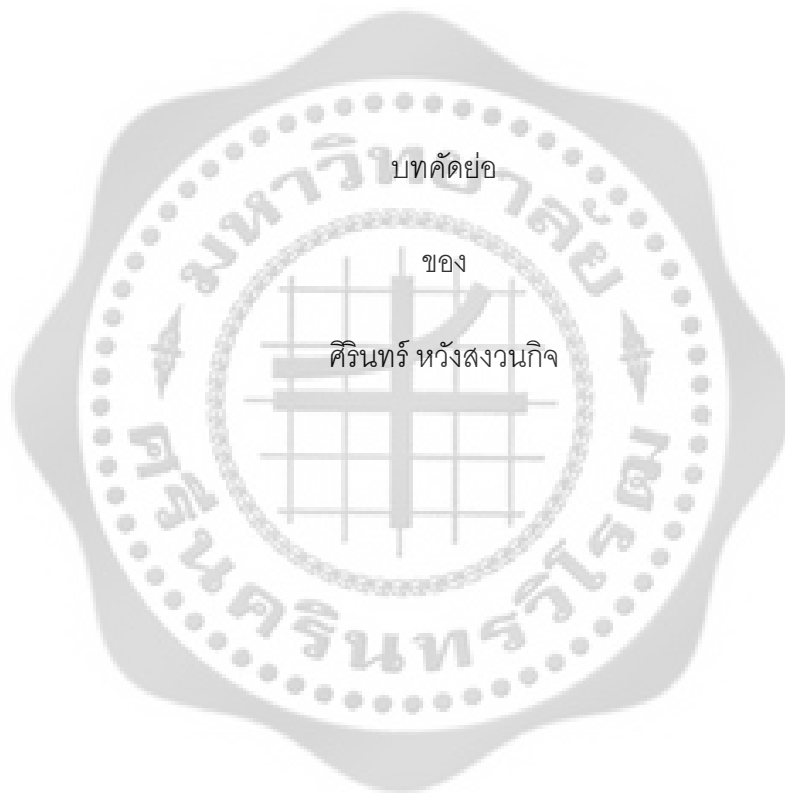
ศิรินทร์ หวังสงวนกิจ

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา

ตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตร์มหาบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ

ในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ

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ดร. สมศักดิ์ แก้วนุช, อาจารย์ อุสาห์ภรณ์ สุขารมณ์.

งานวิจัยนี้มีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อศึกษาผลการใช้กิจกรรมเพื่อการสื่อสารในการพัฒนา ความสามารถด้านคำศัพท์ของนักเรียนอนุบาล กลุ่มตัวอย่างคือนักเรียนชั้นอนุบาล 3 หนึ่งห้องเรียน จำนวน 18 คน โรงเรียนอนุบาลธรรมภิรักษ์ธนบุรี กรุงเทพมหานคร ปีการศึกษา 2554 ดำเนินการ ทดลองโดยวิธีการสุ่มตัวอย่างอย่างง่าย กลุ่มตัวอย่างเป็นนักเรียนที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษแบบเข้มมาเป็น ระยะเวลาสองปี การทดลองใช้ระยะเวลา 6 สัปดาห์ ในภาคเรียนที่สองปีการศึกษา2554 ซึ่งกลุ่ม ทดลองจะต้องเรียนกับครูชาวต่างชาติเป็นระยะเวลา 30 ชั่วโมง การทดลองในครั้งนี้ใช้กิจกรรมเพื่อการ สื่อสารจำนวน 8 กิจกรรมคือ กิจกรรมจับคู่รูปภาพกับรูปภาพ, กิจกรรมจับคู่รูปภาพกับคำศัพท์, กิจกรรมบรรยายและวาดภาพ, กิจกรรมบรรยายและเรียงรูปภาพ, กิจกรรมสำรวจ, เกมแขวนคอ, เกม บิงโก และกิจกรรมเขียนตามคำบอก เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการทดลองครั้งนี้คือ แบบทดสอบคำศัพท์ก่อน เรียนและหลังเรียน แบบทดสอบการออกเสียงคำศัพท์ก่อนเรียนและหลังเรียน แผนการจัดการเรียนรู้ที่ เน้นกิจกรรมเพื่อการสื่อสารจำนวน 4แผน และ บันทึกของผู้วิจัย สถิติที่ใช้ในการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลคือ ค่าเฉลี่ย ค่าเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน และ สถิติ t-test และข้อมูลที่ได้จากการบันทึกหลังสอนนำมาวิเคราะห์ เชิงคุณภาพ

ผลการศึกษาพบว่า ความสามารถด้านคำศัพท์ของนักเรียนอนุบาลโดยใช้กิจกรรมเพื่อการ สื่อสารหลังการทดลองสูงกว่าก่อนการทดลอง

The Thesis Titled

"The Effects of Communicative Activities on Vocabulary Development of

Kindergarteners"

by

Sirin Vungsangoungij

has been approved by the Graduate School as partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the Master of Arts degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language of

Srinakharinwirot University.

……..…………………………… Dean of Graduate School

(Associate Professor Dr. Somchai Santiwatanakul)

June ……., 2012

Thesis Committee: Oral Defense Committee:

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

English is a widely used international language, and it is becoming increasingly important in South East Asia. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) consists of 10 member countries. These countries cooperate with each other in economic growth, social progress, cultural development, technology, education, and in maintaining regional peace. They work together in order to develop their own countries in those areas. All the ten member countries have their own national languages, so they need a shared language for the purpose of communication. This language is English. According to Onwimon (2011), the members of the ASEAN mainly use English to communicate with each other. People in all member countries travel to the other member countries for different reasons; they go to work, study, conduct business and to holiday. English is used in all these activities to communicate with foreigners of different languages and cultures. Therefore, English is a very important foreign or second language for all ASEAN countries.

In Thailand too, English is important for Thai people in many ways; it is a tool for higher education, jobs, and businesses. Applicants for an educational program have to take an English examination before entering the program. One of the requirements for a job is usually English. English is the main language Thai companies use to communicate with each other and with other countries. Many Thai people learn English in order to communicate with foreigners. Hotel employees or

staff and shopkeepers employ English to communicate with tourists. So English is an important foreign language that all Thai people should know.

The importance of English is reflected in education. It is taught in every school, institution, and university. The current curriculum proposed by the Ministry of Education requires students to study English for 12 years from grade one to grade twelve (Ministry of Education, 2008). This policy is aimed at enabling learners to acquire the ability to use English for communicating in various situations, to seek knowledge, to engage in daily activities with others, and to pursue higher education. Learners will thus have knowledge and understanding of stories and cultural diversity of the world community, and will be able to creatively convey Thai concepts and culture to the global society. Schools are required to follow the English curriculum, which focuses on four skills—listening, speaking, reading and writing—to enable learners to communicate in English efficiently.

The reasons above prove that it is necessary to have a good education in English and that this education should be continuous, and in particular, learning English in a foreign context should start at an early age. Many linguists and educators such as Wiriyajittra (1989) and Cook (2001) believe that children are better at learning second languages than adults. Asher and Garcia (1969, as cited in Cook, 2001) state that children are thought to be better at pronunciation in particular. Krashen (1987, as cited in Akraratana, 2008) asserts that children acquire a second language the same way they acquire their mother tongue. They learn language unconsciously and naturally, and in this way, as we can observe, they can communicate easily. Niyomtam (1998) points out that the most important age for the development of language is 2-7 years old. At this age, children will have very good abilities to

recognize words and express ideas. It seems easy for children of this age to learn new vocabularies and try out words in different sentences. The fact is that most children of this age are now in preschool or kindergarten education. To promote a secure development in English, we, should start providing good and efficient education in this language for preschoolers.

However, one of many questions is "How do we teach preschoolers?" English is not taught in the same ways in all levels, although there is usually emphasis on listening, speaking, reading, and writing in all curricula. Pinyoanantapong (2010) says that one of the objectives of the kindergartens curriculum is to develop children's communication in listening and speaking (gesture and words). Accordingly at higher levels, the Ministry of Education requires that students in the lower primary levels develop their speaking and listening skills and develop their reading and writing skills in the higher primary levels (Ministry of Education, 2008). So education in kindergartens should provide a tool for all those skills, that is, vocabulary. Thus, it seems that emphasis on vocabulary skills is necessary for kindergarteners. However, kindergarteners are good at learning language integrated into activities (Ministry of Education, 2003). It is implied that it is appropriate as well as beneficial for kindergarteners to learn vocabulary along with activities. This should enable preschoolers to learn from direct experiences as well as to acquire knowledge and social skills.

The Ministry of Education does not require that English be taught in early childhood curricula; however, it is also taught in many kindergartens. This should be beneficial for preschoolers. In fact, literature in second language education reveals that the earlier children learn language the more successful they will be

(Angwattanakul, 1994). Many parents recognize the importance of the English

language so they support their children in learning it from an early level.

Jearranaipreprame (1999) points out that guardians of kindergarten students usually

have a desire to support their children learning English language in the early level.

Therefore, helping young children to learn vocabulary is important. This is to

say that vocabulary enables them to learn English. Without vocabulary, they will not

learn the four skills effectively. Confirmation that young children should learn

vocabulary is supported by many studies. Many linguists argue that learning a new

vocabulary or words is very important (Thornbury, 2002; Nunan, 2003). Wilkins

(n.d., as cited in Thornbury, 2002) states that "Without grammar very little can be

conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed (p. 13)." Dellar and Hocking

(n.d., as cited in Thornbury, 2002) assert that "If you spend most of your time

studying grammar, your English will not improve very much. You will see most

improvement if you learn more words and expressions. You can say very little with

grammar, but you can say almost anything with words! (p.13)" Many researchers

agree that vocabulary is crucial for learning languages. For example, Sripramong

(2004) states that English vocabulary is an important factor that helps students learn

English well. Sorpitpakdeepong (2001) says that learning vocabulary is associated

with the four skills; learners who have mastered a lot of vocabulary can communicate

well and properly. Senwanich (1998) asserts that Thai students cannot understand the

text they read because they do not understand vocabulary. Kanithanon (1987) points

to the fact that without fundamental concepts of vocabulary, including the meanings

and spelling, Thai students will encounter a variety of problems when writing an

English essay. In conclusion, learning vocabulary is very important because the

meaning and function of vocabulary helps people to understand and communicate with others correctly and appropriately.

In kindergartens, vocabulary is certainly important. From one to ten months after birth, infants start to express their emotions, produce sounds, imitate sounds they hear, and develop sounds of simple words, phrases and sentences (Niyomtam, 1998). The more new words they learn, the greater ability they have to communicate with others. At first, these words are simple, mainly names of things, people, and animals (Nessel, 1989 as cited in Ninwichien, 1992). Niyomtam (1998) says that to understand other people, children need to know words. Children develop their word knowledge from one word to two words and then put them into phrases and sentences. They learn more vocabulary faster when they enter school.

Children also learn vocabulary through daily activities. Fontana (1995, as cited in Malaroad, 2001) states that children learn language by listening and interacting. The expression of language helps them to learn language and communicate. In other words, real-life activities and interactions help them learn vocabulary as well as language better than reading and other forms of formal instructions. Parkbongkoj (1995, as cited in Sukserm, 2008) points out that children who do not interact with others would be delayed in their vocabulary development. For these reasons, the researcher believes that vocabulary is very important in kindergartens.

Not only the researcher but also many theorists confirm that vocabulary should be taught at the kindergarten level. Learning vocabulary includes spelling and pronouncing words, and also knowing their meanings. Researchers such as Bumpass (1963, as cited in Jearranaipreprame, 1999) and Wiriyajittra (1989) argue that early

childhood is the right time to learn language, particularly pronunciation. Young

children acquire language by imitating sounds from the surrounding environment.

They attempt to imitate the sounds they hear and combine sounds into words, and then

into phrases and sentences. At this age, the vocal organs are developing, so children

can imitate sounds very well. Children need to know simple vocabulary or words,

such as names of people, animals and objects, so that they can communicate with

parents or caretakers. Children like to mime and enjoy repetition. When they go to

school, they can pick up vocabulary very quickly from their teachers. They do not

feel embarrassed when they make mistakes and enjoy repetitive activities. Niyomtam

(1998) and Broughton (1980) claim that expressions and repetitive activities give

children a sense of assurance and achievement. In conclusion, young children can

learn and remember vocabulary well and quickly; they enjoy expressions and

repetitions, and they can pronounce words clearly.

The fact that children should learn vocabulary at a very young age is also

supported by the theory of second language acquisition. Krashen (1987, as cited in

Angwattanakul, 1994) explains that learning consists of language acquisition and

language learning. Children acquire language through direct communications, and

they do not pay attention to rules and principles of the language. They learn language

subconsciously. Children learning a second language do not know that they are

learning a second language. They do not know they are learning the language

structure naturally.

However, research about teaching language to young children can be

contradictory. Shaffer (1999, as cited in Akraratana, 2008) argues that young children

who live in environments in which there are both the mother tongue and the second

language are used will have no problem using the languages and can use both of them fluently, if they have been learning both languages accurately and appropriately. On the other hand, some researchers have revealed that learning a second language at an early age will confuse children because they have to know and remember names of things in two languages, and they have to learn the grammar systems of both languages at the same time. When the children get confused in languages, their speech development slows down, and they have difficulty adapting to society because they are not confident in using language to talk to people (Niyomtam, 1998).

Therefore, as a teacher teaching English in a kindergarten school, which offers an intensive English program, the researcher is interested in studying how kindergarteners develop their vocabulary knowledge and how learning vocabulary affects them. From the researcher's experience, some students cannot remember the meanings of new words if they are just told what they mean. Students' pronunciation ability is not consistent either; sometimes they could pronounce words correctly, but other times they pronounce them wrongly. Normally, students only practice speaking with the teacher, so when a student practice speaking with the teacher, the others have to wait for their turn. They usually cannot spell words. Students can not use the vocabulary in real communication because they do not have much time to practice communicating, or because they have not mastered sentence structures. If they have more opportunities to practice, they will pronounce words correctly and will be able to use vocabulary in their lives.

There are several approaches and techniques for teaching vocabulary such as teaching it through authentic materials, songs, pictures, and games. Each approach or technique may affect students differently. For example, Sorpitpakdeepong (2001),

and Sripramong (2004) state that students' retention of English vocabulary is longer after using vocabulary games. In her research titled The Use of Rhythmic Activities to Develop English Vocabulary Learning and Retention of Pratomsuksa 4 Students, Chotipong (2009) revealed that students taught by rhythmic vocabulary activities gained higher posttest mean scores than pretest mean scores. Janenoppakarn (2009) stated that the retention of English vocabulary and the achievement in English vocabulary learning of the students taught through the LINCES strategy were significantly high. The LINCES strategy is a teaching method that encourages students to focus on critical elements of the concept being taught through the use of visual imagery, associations with prior knowledge, the creation of keyword mnemonic device study cards, and to study the card to enhance comprehension and recall the concepts.

The researcher would like to conduct a study to explore the effects of using various classroom activities on preschoolers' vocabulary development. The communicative activity is a teaching method that can encourage students to use language and motivate them to communicate with others. The students have opportunities to use their vocabulary ability to exchange information among students. The communicative activities also have many types of activities that the teacher can adapt to use in the classroom appropriately. The researcher's investigation involves using multiple activities which include information gap activities, such as matching pictures and pictures, matching pictures and vocabulary, describing and drawing pictures, describing and rearranging pictures, surveying, playing games (hangman and bingo) and dictation. These activities can encourage students to develop vocabulary ability and skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, and spelling. Students

can practice their vocabulary and speaking through those information gap activities. For example, they can find a student who has the same picture or matching picture and word, so they have more opportunities to speak and use the vocabulary. Students can write or spell a word or draw a picture after they get the information or find their partner. Finally, they can also practice their listening and writing through the hangman, bingo, and dictation activities.

Research question

To what extent is teaching vocabulary through communicative activities useful for kindergarteners in term of their listening ability, recognizing meanings of vocabulary, spelling vocabulary, pronouncing vocabulary, and matching meaning with pictures?

Objective of the study

This study aimed at studying the effectiveness of using communicative activities in teaching vocabulary to kindergarteners.

Significance of the study

The results can be used as guidelines for kindergarten teachers to arrange activities suitable for their kindergarteners and improve their methods when teaching vocabulary to kindergarteners.

Statement of Hypothesis

The vocabulary's ability of kindergarteners is higher after being taught with communicative activities.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is as follows:

1. Population and sample group:

The population of this study consisted of forty-eight third-year kindergarteners, who had studied in an Intensive English Program at Tampirak Thonburi Kindergarten for two years. They were between five and six years old. The eighteen participants, one of three classes, were selected by convenience sampling.

2. Content and vocabulary use in this study

Content and vocabulary used in this study were drawn from the textbook called English Time 1. It consisted of fruits and vegetables, physical descriptions, occupations, and actions verbs.

3. Duration of the study:

The study was conducted in the second semester of the 2011 academic year at Tampirak Thonburi Kindergarten. It lasted for 6 weeks. The class met an hour a day. The total time of this study was 30 hours.

4. Variables of the study:

4.1 The Independent variable was the communicative activities

4.2 The Dependent variables was the ability in learning English vocabulary.

Definitions of terms

1. A communicative approach refers to a method of language teaching whereby students learn a language through communicating. It focuses on the learners' ability to communicate in the target language meaningfully, fluently and appropriately.

2. A communicative activity refers to an activity that encourages students to use language and interact with people. It focuses on the communication skills. A communicative activity can be a pair work activity, a group work activity, and a class work activity.

3. The vocabulary ability refers to the ability to listen and pronounce words of the target language understand and recognize the meanings of words of the target language, and spell them correctly.

4. Vocabulary development refers to the development reflected by the difference between pretest and posttest scores.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents the review of the relevant literature and research that form the background of this study. The subtopics are second language acquisition, teaching vocabulary, communicative activities, and related studies.

Second language acquisition

Saville-Troike (2006) defines the second language acquisition (SLA) as the process of learning another language after learning the native language or the first language or mother tongue. The target language may be the learning of the second, third, fourth or fifth language. The new additional languages are called a second language. Gass and Selinker (2001) say that the important aspect of the SLA is the learning of the native language first, then a non-native language later. The SLA may happen in natural situations or in classroom settings. For example, "Natural situation" happens when a child from Japan who lives in America "picks up" English as a result of playing with native English speaking friends. "Classroom settings" occurs when a student in England takes a class in French. In summary, second language acquisition refers to the learning of a non-native language after learning the mother tongue in the environment in which it is spoken.

Krashen (1987, 1988) explains that the Acquisition-Learning hypothesis consists of language acquisition and language learning. Language acquisition refers to learning a language subconsciously. Students do not learn rules of language formally but they learn them naturally. They use language for communication, so they are not

aware that they are learning, in contrast, language learning refers to learning a language consciously. Students mainly try to memorize the rules and knowledge of language. They learn language formally. They can explain the grammar's rules but cannot use the language in real communication. Many researchers confirm that children learn a second language just like they learn their mother tongue. They learn to listen and try to pronounce sounds. Next, they imitate sounds they hear, compare, conclude and match them with pictures or things. Then, they try to make their own words or sentences from their understanding. Finally, they expand their knowledge from learning and have more ability to use language (Malaroad, 2001 & Ninwichien, 1992). Gass and Selinker (2001) and Akraratana (2008) say that the language acquisition is appropriate for young children. The language acquisition is largely of an unconscious sort such as very young children learn how to form particular grammatical structures, but in a conscious sense they do not know the function articulately. To sum up, we can conclude that young children learn a second language subconsciously. They learn to listen first and speak later that is similar to the way they learn their mother tongue.

Previously, people believed that learning a second language in early childhood can confuse children and slow their speech development. Alternatively current thinking amongst, second language linguists believe that young children who live in an environment where a second language is spoken have a better ability to acquire the language than adults. There is evidence that children who know both languages, the mother tongue and the second language, get better scores in intelligence tests than children who know only one language (Akraratana, 2008). Similarly, in proficiency tests, concept formation tests, nonverbal intelligence tests and metalinguistic

awareness tests, it has been found that children who know both languages have equal scores or higher scores than children who know only one language. Lambert (1977, as cited in Malaroad, 2001) talks about additive bilinguals and subtractive bilinguals. Additive bilinguals believe that two languages is a good thing. Both languages can help and support each other to develop children's use of language. In this case, children do not replace the second language with the mother tongue. They might use both languages in their daily lives, so their languages gradually develop. In contrast, subtractive bilinguals state that children who are under pressure to use a second language and to avoid or abandon the mother tongue in their daily lives, might not fully develop in the mother tongue. People use languages as an instrument to transfer socialization to children. If children live in an environment of two languages that are taught in different ways, they may have problems in using both languages. On the other hand, if they learn both languages in the same way or with the same objectives, they can extend ideas and build a foundation for advanced learning (Vygotsky, 1978). Arguments on this side support the idea that young children learning two languages do not have many problems understanding them. Thus, children can learn vocabulary of a second language without much difficulty.

Claire and Haynes (1994, as cited in Akraratana, 2008) suggest methods teaching language to students who learn English as a second language as follows: firstly, students learn language better in a relaxing atmosphere, cheerful and challenging activities. Students should take part in classroom activities such as being involved in presentations, playing games, etc. Secondly, teachers should use gestures, demonstrations, and teaching materials to help students understand contents and languages. Thirdly, teachers should choose questions that encourage students to

answer. Questions should inform teachers of students' understanding. Teachers should ask for a short answer. However, if the question is too difficult, teachers should separate the difficult question into small steps, so that students can follow step by step to understand. Teachers should wait and allow students enough time to think and answer. 15 – 20 seconds is recommended for a second language. If students do not give the answer, teachers should be patient and ask the question again or ask in easier question or give them choices. Fourthly, If students do something wrong, teachers should correct. Do not let students repeat their mistakes and again. If they have problems with the pronunciation, teachers should practice the right pronunciation in a small group or individually. However, teachers have to use positive words to encourage students such as; great job, good guess, almost or thank you for trying. It will encourage them to keep trying. Fifthly, teachers should explain what they expect from students and explain how to do activities clearly. Sixthly, teachers should use activities in teaching such as; asking students to draw pictures to check their understanding and meaning. Teachers have to choose words or contents appropriate to students' level and the tasks should develop some skills too. Copying is a good activity for students. For example, teachers ask students to copy the alphabets, students should know how to write and practice writing. Before copying, students should pronounce and know the meaning of that word too. However, some activities may concern students' country or students' cultures. Seventhly, teachers should instruct students to reply to questions that they cannot answer by saying; I don't understand the question, I understand the question, but I don't know the answer or I know the answer, but I can't say it so that, they can express themselves.

Teaching vocabulary

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2002) defines vocabulary as a list of words with their meanings, especially in a book for learning a foreign language. Wikipedia (2008) indicates that vocabulary is all the words that a person knows or uses. Sangtanoo and Pongtat (1998) and Chotipong (2009) state that vocabulary is a word, phrase, or sound of a language. People use vocabulary as an instrument to convey knowledge and ideas between individuals in a society or nation.

The achievement in learning a language comes from the ability to understand its sound systems, structure or grammatical systems and vocabulary systems. Students need to understand the meaning and function of each word. Many linguists such as Stewick (1972), Thornbury (2002) and Nunan (2003) argue that in learning a new language, vocabulary is very important. Ghadessy (1979) and Zimmerman (1997, as cited in Janenoppakarn, 2009) say that learning vocabulary is more important than learning structure, because vocabulary is the foundation of language learning. If students possess an adequate vocabulary, they can instinctively make use of words and thus develop their ability to organize them into phrases or sentences. Sorpitpakdeepong (2001) states that learning vocabulary is associated with the four basic skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing, students who have learned a lot of vocabulary can communicate well and properly. It is an unavoidable conclusion that vocabulary is of primary importance in learning language. The vocabulary will help them to achieve their goals in learning languages. Students who understand more words will communicate much more effectively.

No one knows exactly which words or how many words must be learned. Students need to know or understand only words that they meet in the sentences they

read or hear. Allen (1983), Finocchiaro (1983) and Pongtongcharuen (1983) classify vocabulary by frequently used words as active vocabulary and passive vocabulary. Active vocabulary refers to vocabulary that students often find in listening, speaking, reading, or writing, students should use the vocabulary correctly, and it should be practiced frequently. Passive vocabulary refers to vocabulary that does not often appear in texts or in speaking. Words in this group may become a common vocabulary among high level students. However, the passive vocabulary can be developed into active vocabulary if students often review or use it (Akkramas, Hiraanburana, & Pibulchol, 2000). Vocabulary review can be done when teachers provide the students' opportunity to use vocabulary they have learnt previously and teachers encourage students to read more, so they will familiar with the new vocabulary. Moreover, Dale E. (1999, as cited in Sripramong, 2004) classify vocabulary by meanings as content words and function words. Content words refer to words that describe things. We can tell their meanings without knowledge about their structural functions.   Function words refer to words that become meaningful in a context. However, when put in a sentence a function word has a meaning and makes the structure of language complete. It may be a noun, a pronoun, or a preposition.

Mackey (1997) and Sangtanoo and Pongtat (1998) suggest how to choose vocabulary for teaching as firstly, teachers should choose words that students always see. Secondly, teachers should choose words from many sources. Thirdly, teachers should choose words that fit the situations. Fourthly, teachers should choose words that have many meanings. Lastly, teachers should choose words that are short, easy to learn, have clear meaning, are easily pronounceable, similar to students' mother tongue, and which students have background knowledge of. Similarly, Lado (1996, as

cited in Sripramong, 2004) suggests that teachers should use vocabulary that students are interested in and have experience of. The number of letters taken from the alphabet should be appropriate to the students' level. The amount of vocabulary in a unit should be suitable for students and they should be able to use the words in real life. McWhorter (1990, as cited in Chotipong, 2009) states that teachers should choose vocabulary that benefit students. The chosen vocabulary, for example, should help students to learn the content of the lesson easily. To sum up, we can conclude that the most frequently used words should be presented to the students. The vocabulary should be appropriate for the level of the students.

In teaching vocabulary, the objectives are teaching the pronunciation of a word, teaching the meaning of a word, teaching the structure use of a word (Van Syoc, 1963, Pojnanont, 1994, & Sangtanoo & Pongtat, 1998). Firstly, teaching the pronunciation of a word, teachers may choose to use phonetic symbols, or to use their own voice as a model for students to follow or imitate. Janenoppakarn (2009) suggests that teachers may ask a native English speaker to record new words. Next, teaching the meaning of a word, teachers may use body-language or performing actions, show objects or pictures, translate it in the language being taught, translate it in students' mother tongue and providing language context clues. Van Syoc (1963) and Nation (2001) suggest that if teachers use body-language to teach the meaning, teachers should check students' understanding, as it may not convey the meaning clearly. Van Syoc (1963) also supports the theory that bringing objects or toys to class can raise the students' interest. Haycarf (1978, as cited in Janenoppakarn, 2009) agrees that creating a context or situation which students can deduce the meaning is one of the best ways to teach vocabulary meaning. Lastly, teaching the structure use

of a word, teachers need to teach the spelling of a word, to talk about the structure of

words and what grammatical patterns it can fit into. Van Syoc (1963) states that one

of the best ways to teach the structure meaning of a word is to use it in drills.

Pojnanont (1994) indicates that teachers should teach how to spell the words with

various methods and encourage students to use vocabulary in sentences by filling in

the vocabulary in the blanks.

Nevertheless, teachers should bear in mind that vocabulary is learned gradually.

So students may need time to develop their vocabulary ability.

Communicative activities

Littlewood (1998), Harmer (2002) and Scrivener (2005) say that the

communicative activities refer to the activities that encourage and develop students'

ability to use language that they had learnt to communicate, to complete the task or

reach the goal. Similarly, Grant (1988) says that the communicative activities help

students to practice their language in the classroom so that they can use language in

their real life. According to Wiriyajitra (1989) and Aungwattanakul (1994), activities

should be interesting, challenging and entail real situations. Summary,

communicative activities are any activities that support and encourage students to use

language to interact with people.

According to Littlewood (1998), purposes of communicative activities divide

into four headings as follows: firstly, communicative activities provide students with

whole-task practice. It is often useful to distinguish between training in the part-skills

of which the performance is composed, and practice in the total skills. Providing

learners with whole-task practice in the classroom is through several kinds of

activities, and providing suitable structure to the student's ability. Secondly, communicative activities improve a student's motivation in using language. The students' motivation to learn is more likely to be sustained if they can see how their classroom learning is related to the objective and helps them to achieve it with increasing success. Thirdly, communicative activities also help students learn language naturally. Language learning takes place inside the students. It can take place only through natural process which occurs when a person is involved in using the language for communication. Lastly, communicative activities create a context which supports learning. It provides opportunities for positive personal relationships to develop among students, and between students and teacher. These relationships can help to humanize the classroom and to create an environment that supports the individual in his efforts to learn. To sum up, we can conclude that communicative activities provide students to use language for purposes, to develop learners' ability to communicate through language more than structures, to develop all communication skills, and increase students' motivation. However, there are many categories of communicative activities that teachers can adapt to use in the classroom.

Richards (2006) classifies communicative activities into three categories mechanical practice, meaningful practice, and communicative practice. Mechanical practice refers to a controlled practice activity which students can complete successfully without necessarily understanding the language they are using. The activity may be repetition drills, and substitution drills, designed to practice using a particular grammatical or other specific item. Next, meaningful practice refers to an activity in which students are required to make meaningful choices when practicing with the controlled language. Finally, communicative practice refers to activity that

focuses on practice using language within a real communicative context. Information is exchanged and the language used is unpredictable. The communicative practice is closest to real communication.

However, the three headings of Richards is similar to those given by Littlewood (Richards, 2006). He classifies activities into two kinds; pre-communicative activities and communicative activities (Littlewood, 1998, as cited in Richards, 2006). With pre-communicative activities, students are being schooled in the partial skills rather that the total skills of communication. These activities encourage students to produce language which is acceptable rather than to communicate effectively. Communicative activities can be separated into two categories as functional communicative activities which require students to use language resources to overcome an information gap or solve a problem. They involve mainly the sharing, and processing of information. These activities require students to use language to share information. And social interactional activities that require students to pay attention to the context and the roles of people involved. They provide students' with opportunities to use language in an appropriate social context, to create a variety of social situations, and relationships such as pair work, group work, having conversation, simulations and role-play.

There are several well-known communicative activities that give students' an opportunity to interact and practice language such as:

Information gap activity: The aim of the information gap activity is to exchange information. Normally this activity involves two students; one student has the information while the other does not. The students have to share the information that they have with others to complete the task or to achieve a goal. The students have

to use vocabulary and language they have learnt to exchange information. Both the speaker and the listener therefore need vocabulary knowledge. The speaker has to use the vocabulary knowledge to produce sentences to pass the information to the listener, and the listener needs the vocabulary knowledge to understand the information. This activity is appropriate for every level, because it encourages students to use language they have learnt to get more information and achieve a goal. The students can also evaluate themselves after finishing the activity. Students have fun and find the activity challenging. Examples of this kind of activity are describing and drawing pictures and describing and rearranging pictures.

Describing and drawing pictures. One student describes the picture and the others will draw it. They may not have the same picture. However, after they finish their drawing, they have to discuss the pictures with the class. This activity can motivate students a lot because a picture is a good way to encourage students to communicate (Pattison, 1987 inferred Nunan, 1995). Students have to know vocabulary to use vocabulary and language they have learnt to describe and draw pictures correctly.

Describing and rearranging. This activity can be a pair work or a small group work activity. One group has a set of unscrambled pictures. They have to rearrange the picture by listening to a member in group. Or the activity may involve the teacher as a narrator. Teacher divides story into as many sections as there are number of students in the class. Each student gets one section, after teacher has finished the story students move to rearrange the story (Richard, 2006). Both speaker and listener have to know the meaning of vocabulary so that the speaker uses the vocabulary to tell or

describe to the listener, and the listener has to know the meaning of the vocabulary so that after listening he/she can rearrange in the correct order.

Matching activity: This activity involves sharing information with restricted cooperation, so it is appropriate for beginning level students. It can be conducted in pair work, group work or with an entire class. This activity allows students to walk around the class to find a partner. It encourages learners to use vocabulary and language from the patterns they have learnt. Students have to use vocabulary and language to find words, phrase, and sentences or pictures that are appropriate with things they have. Students can form good relationships with classmates. This activity involves finding the vocabulary or word, phrase, sentence or picture that connects or matches with another picture. Sometime this activity can be finding and group of the same categories. An example of this activity is finding your partner.

Find your partner. The teacher gives a card to each student. There are two copies of each picture. Students have to ask and answer questions to find who has the same picture as themselves. This activity requires students to know the meaning, and spelling of vocabulary so that they can find, and match appropriately. Finding their partner requires matching pictures, and vocabulary through words, phrases, and sentences.

Surveys activity: Survey activity supports communication and the exchange of opinions. This activity allows students to get to know each other better because most of the questions involve asking for an opinion or personal information such as 'what is your favourite pet?' Students want to know whether their friends' favourite pets are the same as theirs or not, so they have to ask specific questions about this. This activity encourages students to be active, as they need to focus on using language,

asking for information to achieve the target. It also means that they may need to ignore grammar. This is a good opportunity to encourage students to use the vocabulary and language knowledge they have learnt. The survey activity encourages students to move around the class while performing the task. Sripramong (2004) found that moving activities helped students to retain English vocabulary. Students have an opportunity to move around the class to ask their friends so they have fun in this activity which aids them in remembering English vocabulary. In addition, the survey activity is a good opportunity for students to form relationships (Harmer, 2002). An example of this kind of activity is 'favourite colour', 'favourite food', etc.

Vocabulary bingo: This activity is a kind of game that suitable for both large and small classes. It can also used with beginner to intermediate learners. It helps students remember vocabulary in term of spelling and pronunciation, because students have to listen to the word from the teacher and then they find and cover it. So, this activity needs vocabulary knowledge from the students. Each student has a card containing a number of different words or pictures. Each student's card is different. The teacher says words from the cards. If a student has that word on their card, they have to cover it. The first student who can cover all the words shouts "Bingo" and is the winner.

Hangman: This activity is a well known spelling game. The teacher draws a number of dashes corresponding to the number of letters in a word that he/she has secretly thought of. The students call out suggestions of what the letters may be. If they are correct the teacher writes the letter down. If they are wrong he/she draws a scaffold or a hanged man in that section. The aim of this activity is to try to guess the word before the drawing is complete.

In conclusion, communicative activities are the activities that focus on using the language on objectives, students' needs and interactions. The students will have the opportunity to interact, and practice the target language meaningfully in real situation by using the activities and games. They also have several communicative activities that teachers can use in the classroom. However, teachers should choose the activities that are appropriate to the students' ability.

Related studies

Malaroad (2001) conducted a comparative study of the language concept between preschool children who learned formal language combined with local language and formal language only. The result of the research showed that the children who learned formal language combined with local language had higher scores in language concepts than the groups who learned formal language with significant difference at .01. The comparing of each aspect in language concepts indicated significantly different at .01 level.

Akraratana (2008) conducted a study titled "The Development of 6P English Language Learning Model for Thai Young Children Studying English as a Second language". The finding revealed that firstly, the development of 6P English Language Learning Model for Thai Young Children Studying English as a second language was appropriateness and used appropriately and effectively in the implementation. Secondly, the results from comparing means in Thai Young Children' English language ability, the samples group and the developmental group 2 were found to have higher English language ability with statistical significance at .01 level, and the developmental 1 group with statistical significance at .05 level. After the experiment

all 3 groups were found to have higher English language ability than before the experiment.

Lessow-Hurley (2000, as cited in Akraratana, 2008) found that the younger children learn language well. Especially, children younger than 5 years old can acquire a second language in the same manner they learn their native language.

Collier (1987, as cited in Akraratana, 2008) found that age and the second language acquisition are related. The younger children learn a second language as well as the native language. They are good at pronunciation, listening, speaking, reading and writing.

In a study titled "The Effect of Children as Researchers Learning on the Speaking Ability of Yong Children" Sukserm (2008) found that the means of speaking ability of young children before and after children as researchers learning were different with statistical significance at the level of p<.05 both in general and in individual areas of words, sentences and discourse. The results of the study showed that the speaking ability in general were at 92.2%, and in the areas of words were at 86.6%, sentences were at 80.1%, and discourses were at 85.8% respectively.

Sripramong (2004) studied the effect of using vocabulary games on retention ability while learning vocabulary of Prathomsuksa Five students also had positive results. The finding showed that the students' retention in learning English vocabulary games was at a high level.

Chotipong (2009) conducted a study titled "The Use of Rhythmic Activities to Develop English Vocabulary Learning and Retention of Pratomsuksa 4 Students" The findings were as follows: firstly, the students taught by rhythmic vocabulary activities gained higher posttest mean scores than the pretest mean scores with statistically

significant at the .05 level. Secondly, the students' vocabulary retention mean scores after the 2 weeks and 4 weeks experiment were not significantly different at the .05 level.

Preedawongsakorn (2004) studied how information gaps activities can develop Mattayom Sukas 2 Students' English speaking abilities and found significant development in the students' English speaking abilities after using information gap activities. The students' most developed speaking abilities were in the areas of exchanging information, talking according to the situation and using correct grammar.

Pojit (2004) studied on how games and communicative activities can enhance English speaking ability of Pratomsuksa five students at Wat Dishongsaram. The finding of the study revealed that after employing language games and communicative activities, the students' English speaking abilities increased at the .01 level of significance.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of using communicative activities, such as matching pictures and pictures, matching pictures and vocabulary, describing and drawing pictures, describing and rearranging pictures, surveying, playing hangman, bingo games, and dictation in order to help kindergarten student develop their vocabulary. This chapter provides information about the research design, participants, duration of the study, research instruments and construction of instruments, data collection procedure, and data analysis.

Research Design

This study was a pre/post experimental research design as shown in the Table 1.

Table 1 The research design

Pretest	Experiment	Posttest
T1	X	T2

Note: X = Treatment (vocabulary teaching by using communicative activities)

T1 = Pretest (administered before the treatment)

T2 = Posttest (administered after the treatment)

Participants

The participants in this study were selected by simple random sampling. They were 18 third-year kindergarteners in an intensive English program in the second semester of the 2011 academic year at Tampirak Thonburi Kindergarten. They had studied in an intensive English program for two years. Their age was between five and six years old. The course was taught by a native English teacher. The students had studied English with native English teachers for two years, so their English listening ability was relatively good.

Duration of the study

The study was conducted in the second semester of the 2011 academic year at Tampirak Thonburi Kindergarten, Bangkok. The study lasted for 6 weeks with 5 hours a week. Therefore, the total time of this research was 30 hours.

Research instruments and construction of instruments

The instruments used in this study were the English vocabulary achievement test, English vocabulary pronunciation test, lesson plans, and a researcher's log.

1. The English vocabulary achievement test and the construction

The researcher studied and selected the content and vocabulary following the curriculum of the school, which was developed from the English Time book 1. The vocabulary consisted of 4 topics including (a) Fruits and vegetables; apples, bananas, oranges, cucumbers, potatoes, carrots, (b) Physical descriptions; tall, short, thin, fat, old, young, (c) Occupations; teacher, doctor, nurse, police officer, mail carrier, firefighter, and (d) Action verbs; ride a bike, drive a car, climb a tree, play basketball,

draw a picture, sing a song. The researcher wrote 50 questions, which were sent to the specialists for the feedback. Then, the researcher revised and chose 30 questions, and piloted the test with students who were not simple random selected in this study. This test was used as the pre-test and post-test. It measured students' knowledge of vocabulary in terms of listening ability, recognizing meaning of words, and spelling ability. The test consisted of two parts. The first part contained 24 multiple-choice questions that tested listening ability and the ability to recognize meaning of words. The second part of the test contained six questions that tested spelling ability. The total score of this test was 30.

2. The English vocabulary pronunciation test and the construction

This test was constructed by the researcher. The researcher studied and selected the content and vocabulary following the curriculum of the school, which was developed from the English Time book 1. The vocabulary was in the four topics (a), (b), (c) and (d) above. The researcher studied and adapted the vocabulary pronunciation test from Malaroad (2001). The researcher prepared 24 word cards and 24 clear pictures cards, which were later checked by the specialists. Next, the researcher changed some pictures and piloted the test with students not assigned to this study. This test was used as the pretest and posttest. It measured students' abilities to pronounce and meaning matching. The test consists of two steps as follows: Firstly, the vocabulary pronunciations part. Each student had to randomly pick up 10 word cards from the total of 24 word cards and then pronounce each word (one point for each correct pronunciation). Secondly, the meaning matching part, students had to match words with the pictures (one point for a correct matching). The total score of this test was 20.

3. Lesson plans

The researcher studied the vocabulary and learning objectives of the English Time book 1. The researcher also studied the principle and the methodology of the communicative activities. Next, the researcher selected the content and vocabulary. The vocabulary consisted of 4 topics fruits and vegetables, physical descriptions, occupations, and action words. The researcher created and organized the lesson plans based on using communicative activities that had checked by the specialists. The specialists gave feedback, and then the researcher revised the adapted lesson plans and used them in the experiment. There were 4 lesson plans in total. Each lesson plan was used for 7 periods. Each period lasted an hour. Each lesson plan consisted of the following stages:

3.1 Warm up stage

Teacher shows a wall chart or pictures then talks or asks about what is happening in the pictures to refresh the prior knowledge of vocabulary, and language.

3.2 Presentation stage

Teacher introduces or presents new vocabulary and language focus and then checks students' comprehension of it.

3.3 Practice stage

Teacher uses controlled techniques and ask students to repeat. Students practice with the new vocabulary and language focus in controlled contexts, through substitution exercises or drills. The teacher focuses on accuracy, and corrects learners' mistakes.

3.4 Production stage

Teacher uses the communicative activities to encourage and motivate students to use the vocabulary and language. They often use their own content or information, in order to develop fluency with the new vocabulary and language.

4. A researcher's log

The researcher wrote the daily report during teaching time. The reports listed the researcher's comments regarding the use of vocabulary, pronunciation, participation, and the behavior of the experimental group in the activities. It also included the general conditions and the obstacles in the classroom.

Data collection procedures

The data collection included the following steps.

1. The researcher collected the scores from the pretest of the English vocabulary achievement test and the English vocabulary pronunciation test.

2. A native English teacher taught the students using the four lesson plans created by the researcher. It lasted 6 weeks, 5 hours a week. The total time was 30 hours. The researcher compiled a research's log every day.

3. When the teaching was completed, the researcher collected the scores from the posttest of the English vocabulary achievement test and the English vocabulary pronunciation test.

4. The data collection was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative method. Analyzing the pretest and posttest scores quantitatively and the research log qualitatively.

5. The researcher concluded the results of the study.

Data analysis

There were two types of data; firstly, the data obtained from the pretest, and posttest scores from the English vocabulary achievement test, and the English vocabulary pronunciation test were analyzed using mean scores, and standard deviations, which were computed into a t-test for dependent samples. These were analyzed by using SPSS (version 10.5) for windows. Secondly, the data that came from the researcher's log were analyzed qualitatively.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This chapter presents the results of the research. The 18 participants of the study were third-year kindergarteners in an intensive English program in the second semester of the 2011 academic year at Tampirak Thonburi Kindergarten, Bangkok. The research findings are presented in three sections. The first and second section deal with the results of the data analysis on the English vocabulary achievement test scores and the English vocabulary pronunciation test scores. The pretest and posttest scores from the two tests were analyzed using mean scores and standard deviations, which were computed and compared the data using t-test for dependent variable. These were analyzed by using the SPSS for Windows. The third section examines the findings from the researcher's log in describing qualitatively.

1. The results of the vocabulary achievement test

To examine the effect of using communicative activities on the English vocabulary achievement test, the raw scores of the pretest and posttest of the English vocabulary achievement test were shown in Tables 2 to 5. Then, the mean score and standard deviations of the pretest and posttest were compared in Table 6 resulting in a t-test for dependent samples. The data were analyzed by using the SPSS for Windows.

Table 2 The pretest and posttest raw scores of the listening part of the English vocabulary achievement test

No	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	*M*	*SD*
Pre	9	6	8	9	5	7	8	7	9	10	8	8	9	8	8	9	9	4	7.83	1.54
Post	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	10	12	12	12	12	11	11	12	12	12	11.78	.55

As shown in Table 2, the posttest raw scores of listening part of the English vocabulary achievement test were higher than the pretest raw scores. The mean score of the posttest was 11.78 ($SD = .55$) and that of the pretest was 7.83 ($SD = 1.54$).

Table 3 The pretest and posttest raw scores of the recognizing meaning of words of the English vocabulary achievement test

No	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	*M*	*SD*
Pre	5	2	3	6	2	6	4	6	7	1	6	7	5	6	1	5	6	4	4.56	1.98
Post	10	11	9	12	9	11	10	10	11	10	11	11	10	10	12	12	12	8	10.50	1.15

As shown in table 3, the posttest raw scores in the section on recognizing meanings were higher than the pretest scores. The mean score of the posttest was 10.50 ($SD = 1.15$) and that of the pretest was 4.56 ($SD = 1.98$).

Table 4 The pretest and posttest raw scores of the spelling part of the English vocabulary achievement test

No	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	*M*	*SD*
Pre	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	.06	.24
Post	6	4	3	5	3	6	6	4	6	5	6	5	6	6	6	5	6	6	5.22	1.06

As shown in Table 4, the posttest raw scores of the spelling part of the English vocabulary achievement test were higher than the pretest raw scores. The mean score of the posttest was 5.22 ($SD = 1.06$) and that of the pretest was .06 ($SD = .24$).

Then the researcher combined all pretest scores from the three parts (Tables 2-4) of each student, and did so with the posttest scores. The total raw score was 30 for both the pretest and posttest. The accumulated pretest and posttest scores are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 The pretest and posttest total raw scores of the English vocabulary achievement test

No	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	*M*	*SD*
Pre	14	8	11	15	7	13	12	13	16	11	14	15	14	14	9	14	16	8	12.44	2.83
Post	28	27	24	29	24	29	28	26	27	27	29	28	28	27	29	29	30	26	27.50	1.69

As shown in Table 5, the total score of the vocabulary achievement test was 30. The experimental group obtained higher scores in the posttest than in the pretest.

To confirm that the scores from the posttest were significantly higher than the scores from the pretest, the scores of the two tests were computed by the SPSS program, resulting in the means scores and standard deviations of two tests, and also a t-test for dependent samples. These scores are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 A comparison of mean scores on pretest and posttest of the English vocabulary achievement test

Sample Group	M	SD	t-test
Pre-test	12.44	2.83	27.32*
Post-test	27.50	1.69	

Note: * = p<.05

Summary, as shown in Table 5, the mean score of the posttest was 27.50 (*SD* = 1.69) and the mean scores of the pretest was 12.44 (*SD* = 2.83). In other words, the students got much higher scores. The t-test for dependent samples (27.32) demonstrated a significant difference between the pretest and posttest mean scores at the .05 statistical level. The results indicated that the kindergarteners improved their vocabulary ability after studying vocabulary with communicative activities.

2. The results of the vocabulary pronunciation test

Each student picked ten word cards, pronounced them, and matched them with the correct pictures. For each card, the student got two points if he/she could

pronounce it and match it with a picture correctly, so the total score was 20. The raw

scores of the pretest and posttest of the English vocabulary pronunciation test were

shown in Tables 6 to 8. Then, the mean scores and standard deviations of the pretest

and posttest were compared in Table 9 resulting in a t-test for dependent samples. The

data were analyzed by using the SPSS for Windows.

Table 7 The pretest and posttest raw scores of the pronunciation part of the English

vocabulary pronunciation test

No	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	*M*	*SD*
Pre	2	1	0	5	0	0	0	1	3	0	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	1.72	1.41
Post	10	10	10	10	8	9	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	9.78	.55

Table 7 showed that the posttest scores of pronunciation part were much higher

than the pretest scores. The mean score of the posttest was 9.78 ($SD = .55$) and that of

the pretest was 1.72 ($SD = 1.41$).

Table 8 The pretest and posttest raw scores of the meaning matching part of the

English vocabulary pronunciation test

No	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	*M*	*SD*
Pre	6	2	1	6	0	2	2	3	5	2	5	6	3	3	2	5	4	6	3.50	1.92
Post	10	10	10	10	8	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9.89	.47

As shown in table 8, the posttest raw scores of meaning matching part of the English vocabulary pronunciation test were higher than the pretest scores. The mean score of the posttest was 9.89 (SD = .47) and that of the pretest was 3.50 (SD = 1.92).

According to Table 7 and 8, the researcher combined both 2 parts raw scores of the English vocabulary pronunciation test. The total raw score was 20 which consisted of 10 scores for pronunciation part and 10 scores for meaning matching part. These scores are presented in Table 9.

Table 9 The pretest and posttest total raw scores of the English vocabulary pronunciation test

No	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	*M*	*SD*
Pre	8	3	1	11	0	2	2	4	8	2	7	9	6	5	4	8	6	8	5.22	3.14
Post	20	20	20	20	16	19	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	19	20	20	20	20	19.67	.97

As shown in Table 9, the total score of the vocabulary pronunciation test was 20. The experimental group obtained higher scores in the posttest than in the pretest.

To confirm that the scores from the posttest were significantly higher than the scores from the pretest, the scores of the two tests were computed by the SPSS program, resulting in the means scores and standard deviations of two tests, and also a t-test for dependent samples. These scores are presented in Table 10.

Table 10 A comparison of mean scores on pretest and posttest of the English

vocabulary pronunciation test

Sample Group	M	SD	t-test
Pre-test	5.22	3.14	21.79*
Post-test	19.67	.97	

Note: * = p<.05

As shown in Table 10, the mean scores of the posttest (*M* = 19.67, *SD* = .97) and the pretest (*M* = 5.22, *SD* = 3.14) were compared, showing that the students got much higher scores in the posttest. The t-test for dependent samples (21.79) demonstrated a significant difference between pretest and posttest mean scores at the .05 level. The results indicated that the kindergarteners improved their ability to pronounce vocabulary after learning through communicative activities.

3. The results from the researcher's log

The researcher's log, recorded that the students had to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills while doing the communicative activities. These communicative activities helped them learn and practice the vocabulary and language focuses. They also increased the students' understanding of how to use the target words in sentences. After doing the communicative activities, the students were adept in using vocabulary and gained more confidence in using the vocabulary and in pronouncing. The students had opportunities to pronounce the target words several

times, so their pronunciations were improved. The students enjoyed participating in activities, and had fun. They had many opportunities to work amongst their friends, to share the ideas and accept their friends' ideas. They had to listen and follow the rules of each activity. Some students did not understand how to do the activity. So the teacher had to explain again and help them to finish it. The classroom was in a state of disorder when some students were too interested in finishing their own tasks and did not want to listen to their friends.

In conclusion, the third-year kindergarteners developed their vocabulary ability in terms of listening skill, recognizing meaning of words, spelling skills, pronunciation and meaning matching after participating in communicative activities. The researcher's log showed that the students improved their vocabulary ability, pronunciation and spelling ability. They also gained more confidence in using vocabulary, in pronunciation, and in the sharing of ideas. They were able to follow the rules of activities and listened to the others' ideas.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This chapter concludes the study and discusses the findings of the research and limitations of the study. Also, pedagogical implications and suggestions for further research are presented.

Conclusion

The study examined the effect of using communicative activities, which included eight activities: matching pictures and pictures, matching pictures and vocabulary, describing and drawing pictures, describing and rearranging pictures, surveying, playing hangman, bingo games and dictation to help kindergarteners develop their vocabulary. The research question was "To what extent is teaching vocabulary through communicative activities useful to kindergarteners in terms of their listening, recognizing meanings of vocabulary, spelling vocabulary, pronouncing vocabulary, and matching meaning with pictures?" The instructional methods through the use of communicative activities instruction lasted six weeks, 5 hours a week, for a total of 30 periods, during the second semester of the 2011 academic year. The 18 participants in this study were third-year kindergarteners in an intensive English program at Tampirak Thonburi Kindergarten, Bangkok, selected by convenience sampling. They had studied in the intensive English program for two years. This course was taught by a native English teacher.

The instruments used in this study consisted of a pretest and posttest of the English vocabulary achievement test, a pretest and posttest of the English vocabulary

pronunciation test, 4 lesson plans based on communicative activities, and the researcher's log. Both tests consisted of 4 topics as follows: fruits and vegetables, physical descriptions, occupations and action verbs. The English vocabulary achievement test was administered by the researcher to measure students' knowledge of vocabulary in terms of listening ability, recognizing meaning of words and spelling ability. The first part of this test contained twenty-four multiple-choice questions that tested listening ability and the ability to recognize meaning of words. The second part of the test contained six questions which tested spelling ability. The total obtainable score of this test was thirty. The English vocabulary pronunciation test was administered by the researcher to measure students' abilities to pronounce and meaning matching. The test involved two steps. Firstly, each student had to randomly pick up ten out of a total of twenty-four word cards and then pronounce each word. Secondly, the students had to match the words with the pictures. A student got two points if he/she could pronounce the word and match it with a picture correctly, so the total obtainable score of this test was twenty. The researcher's log was a daily report that recorded the participation of students, the use of vocabulary, the students' pronunciation, the behavior of the students in the activities. It included the general conditions and the obstacles in the classroom.

Discussion of the research findings

The finding from the comparison of the pretest and posttest showed that the students' vocabulary improved after using communicative activities instruction. The mean scores of the English vocabulary achievement test and the English vocabulary pronunciation test in the posttest were significantly higher than the mean scores in the

pretest. The results from the English vocabulary achievement teat indicated that the third-year kindergarteners improved their vocabulary ability in terms of listening ability, recognizing meaning of words and spelling ability after studying with communicative activities significantly, and there was a significant difference between pretest and posttest. Previously, students did not know the meaning of the vocabulary and could not guess how to spell them, so they spent a considerable time doing the pretest. In the listening part, the teacher read each question twice, but many students could not do the test. So the teacher had to repeat the questions again. Some students raised their hands and asked for the meaning. They had no confidence in their ability to do the pretest. After finishing the pretest, everyone said the test was very difficult. Then, students studied with the communicative activities for 6 weeks and did the posttest. They could do the posttest more quickly. Students could catch the words at the first time. No one raised their hand and looked back at the previous part for spelling again. Students appeared more confident when they did the posttest. According to Littlewood (1998), Harmer (2002) and Scrivener (2005), communicative activities can develop students' ability to use language and give them more confidence in language use.

For the English vocabulary pronunciation test, each student spent approximately 12 minutes doing the test. Some students did not know the words but they could guess or match the picture, for example, the word "drive a car" students did not know the word "drive", but they did know "car". So they could not read it but they could match it with the correct picture. When students studied vocabulary with communicative activities, they were able to pronounce the words, knew the meaning of words, and practiced the words with the sentences. The activities helped them to

pronounce the words correctly, understand clear meaning, know the spelling of each word and be familiar with them. They were then able to complete the posttest quickly and with confidence. They could pick up 10 word cards and pronounce them immediately and were able to match words with the pictures without hesitation. Each student spent less than 7 minutes on average to do the posttest.

In the researcher's log, the researcher took notes or commented on how the students used vocabulary, pronounced words, participated in the activities, and also how they behaved while studying. The log also reported the general conditions and obstacles in the classroom.

The students improved their vocabulary ability after studying with communicative activities. This study tried out many kinds of activities that encouraged and developed students' ability to use language. The students had to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills while doing the activities. For example, in the matching activities, the students had to practice their listening skills, reading skills and pronunciation skills. In bingo activities, they had to practice their listening and writing skills. Van Syoc (1963) suggests that bringing objects or toys to class can raise the students' interest. In this study, the teacher used picture cards to explain the meaning of each word. So the students understood clear meaning, and communicative activities helped students learn and practice the target words. They also increased the students' understanding of how to use the target words in sentences. Angwattanakul (1994) says that communicative activities can help learners learn new vocabulary, pronunciations, and structures. After doing the communicative activities, the students were familiar with using vocabulary and gained more confidence in using it.

The students improved their pronunciation after studying with communicative activities. According to Van Syoc (1963), Pojnanont, (1994), and Sangtanoo and Pongtat (1998), teachers may use phonetic symbols or use their own voices as a model for students. In this study, the teacher used his own voice and phonetic alphabets as a model for students to imitate. Most of them could pronounce words correctly in the third or fourth period. Then they had to practice pronouncing words in many activities, such as in matching activities. The students had to ask their friends what they had. The students had opportunities to listen and pronounce the target words, so their pronunciations improved. Niyomtam (1998) states that speaking practice can help young children to pronounce words better. Asher and Garcia (1969, as cited in Cook, 2001) say that children are thought to be better at pronunciation in particular. The students in this study enjoyed the pronunciation practice in the activities. Practicing with communicative activities also helped the students gain more confidence in pronouncing words and familiarty in using language.

The students liked to participate in activities. All the classroom activities were fun to follow. The students were confident in speaking and showing ideas. In matching activities, most students could find their partners. The weaker students also found their partners, but quite slowly. However, they were quicker when they were familiar with the vocabulary. They looked embarrassed when they did activity for the first time, then they felt more confident the second time. These activities encouraged students to use vocabulary and language sentences from the patterns they had learnt. They enjoyed walking around and asking what their friends had. Similarly, surveying activities, students enjoyed walking around and asking for friends' information because they wanted to know their friends information. Students did the surveying

activity as real communications, they walked and asked for the information and conclude all the information they had. According to Aungwattanakul (1994), activities should be interesting, challenging and entail real situations. The students did the activities both alone and in groups. Communicative activities encourage students to work together. In describing and rearranging and hangman games, students had to practice their listening skills. They also had opportunities to work amongst their friends. They had to share the ideas and accept their friends' ideas. Pojit (2004) states that games and communicative activities can very well help students to work amongst friends, share ideas, and follow rules. In describing and drawing pictures, students practiced their listening, speaking and exercised imagination. They had fun when they drew pictures and guessed their friends' pictures. They also practiced the target vocabulary and patterns spontaneously, for example, when a student drew a nurse on the board, they asked 'Are you a nurse?' or a student drew bananas, they asked 'Do you like bananas?' Bingo games and dictations are good for learning spelling. Students enjoyed playing bingo games and they could evaluate themselves in dictations. In conclusion, teaching with communicative activities should be beneficial to students.

In the research classroom, some students might not understand how to do an activity. The teacher had to explain and help them. So teachers should always check their students' understanding of an activity before starting it. Some, kindergarteners are too interested in finishing their own tasks and pay less attention to their friends. They do not normally want to listen to others. This makes the teaching and learning chaotic. Teachers should orient their students well before starting an activity.

Limitations of the study

Some limitations of this study are as follows:

Firstly, the number of students for this study was rather small. There were only 18 students. Gaiwan (n.d.) says that a smaller sample size can lead to more errors. In contrast, there are fewer errors with bigger sample size. However, Harmer (2002) says that teaching a smaller size of class is better than a big class. The teacher can pay attention to each student and know each student's problems.

Secondly, there was only one group of students participating in this study. Therefore, a researcher can adopt a two-group design to make comparisons for a more reliable result.

Thirdly, there was only the researcher as an examiner. The results should come from the mean scores of three examiners to be more reliable.

Fourthly, teachers should explain or demonstrate to make sure that every student understands what they have to do in an activity.

Fifthly, during the research some students had many absences from school. Some students missed the presentation stage and some students did not practice sufficiently. If they continually came to school, they would get better results in the tests.

Pedagogical implications

The present study showed that using communicative activities could develop the students' vocabulary; therefore the teachers of English should try and include communicative activities in learning and teaching vocabulary. The finding of the study led to the following suggestions for the teachers of English. The teacher should

provide different kinds of communicative activities because of students' different abilities and learning styles. Also, the teacher should set much more time for practicing. Students needed to practice language through activities which are suitable for them.

In addition, the communicative activities can be applied in teaching vocabulary before teaching other English skills. The communicative activities can be used to enhance the vocabulary learning and help students to know the meaning and understand how to use the vocabulary in the sentences. After students have studied using communicative activities, they should be assigned writing tasks in order to practice writing sentences using the target vocabulary.

There are two kinds of communicative activities: individual activities and group activities. For the group activities, the teacher should set the students' groups which should have mixed-ability so the good students could help the passive and slower students. The cooperation increases interaction opportunities amongst students, and promotes autonomous learning. According to Johnson (1999, as cited in Leesakulwat, 2010), cooperative learning exists when students work together to accomplish shared learning goals. He also defined cooperative learning as the instructional use of small groups so that the students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning. Also, using cooperative learning may help students to develop their learning in the classroom.

Suggestions for further research

The suggestions for further research are as follows:

Firstly, further research should be expanded to study the results at other kindergarten levels, e.g., second-year kindergarteners. It would be interesting to find out whether the communicative activities could develop the students' vocabulary.

Secondly, this study only investigated third-year kindergarteners in an intensive English program. There should be a study of other programs as regular program because the findings could support the benefits of the learning English vocabulary through the communicative activities.

Thirdly, further research should be conducted to find out the retention of English vocabulary learning of the students taught through the communicative activities.

Finally, further research should be done to discover the students' attitude towards vocabulary learning through the communicative activities instruction.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

The vocabulary achievement test

The vocabulary achievement test
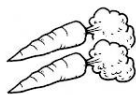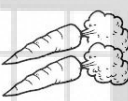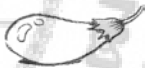
_____   _____
Name _____ Class _____

Part A: _Listening part_

Direction: _Listen and circle the correct answer._

(12 points)

1. A.   B.   C.   D.

2. A.   B.   C.   D.

3. A.   B.   C.   D.

4. A.   B.   C.   D.

5. A.   B.   C.   D.
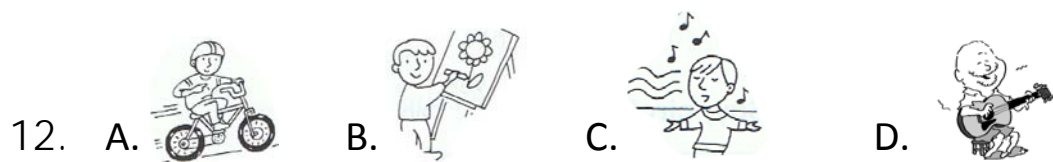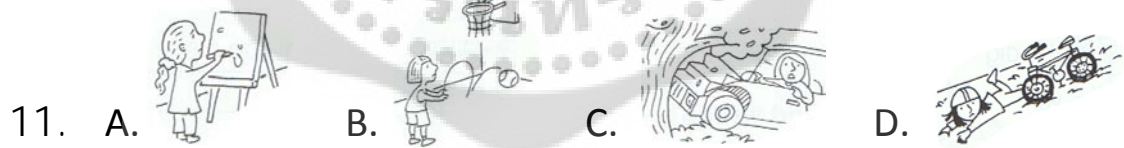
6.   A.   B.   C.   D.

7.   A.   B.   C.   D.

8.   A.   B.   C.   D.

9.   A.   B.   C.   D.

10.   A.   B.   C.   D.

11.   A.   B.   C.   D.

12.   A.   B.   C.   D.

Part B: *Recognizing meaning of word part*

Direction: *Read and circle the correct answer.*

(12 points)

13. I have cucumbers.

A.   B.   C.   D.

14. Do you like apples?
    Yes, I do.

A.   B.   C.   D.

15. I like oranges.

A.   B.   C.   D.

16. He's short.

A.   B.   C.   D.

17. She is fat.

A.   B.   C.   D.
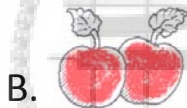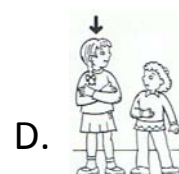
18. She is old.

A.   B.   C.   D.

19. He's a mail carrier.

A.   B.   C.   D.

20. She's a teacher.

A.   B.   C.   D.

21. Is she a police officer?
    Yes, she is.

A.   B.   C.   D.

22. I can climb a tree.

A.   B.   C.   D.

23. Can he sing a song?
    Yes, he can.

A.   B.   C   D.

24. She can't ride a bike.

A.   B.   C.   D.

Part C: *Spelling part*
Direction: *Fill in the blanks. (6 points)*

25.   c____cu____be____

26.   y____ ____n____

27.   fi____e____igh____er

28.   p____lic____ of____icer

29.   d____aw a ____ic____ure

30.   dr____v____ a ____ar

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

Answer

Part A: *Listening part*

Direction: *Listen and circle the correct answer. (12 points)*

1. D	5. A	9. C
2. A	6. B	10. C
3. C	7. D	11. B
4. D	8. C	12. B

Part B: *Recognizing meaning of word part*

Direction: *Read and circle the correct answer. (12 points)*

13. A	17. B	21. C
14. B	18. A	22. D
15. B	19. C	23. C
16. D	20. B	24. D

Part C: *Spelling part*

Direction: *Fill in the blanks. (6 points)*

25. cucumber	28. police officer
26. young	29. draw a picture
27. firefighter	30. drive a car

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

APPENDIX B

The vocabulary pronunciation test

The vocabulary pronunciation test

Part A: *Pronunciation part*
Direction: *Each student* picks 10 word cards and
pronounces each word. (10 scores)

apples

oranges

potatoes

bananas

cucumbers

carrots

short

young

fat

tall

old

thin

police officer

nurse

doctor

firefighter

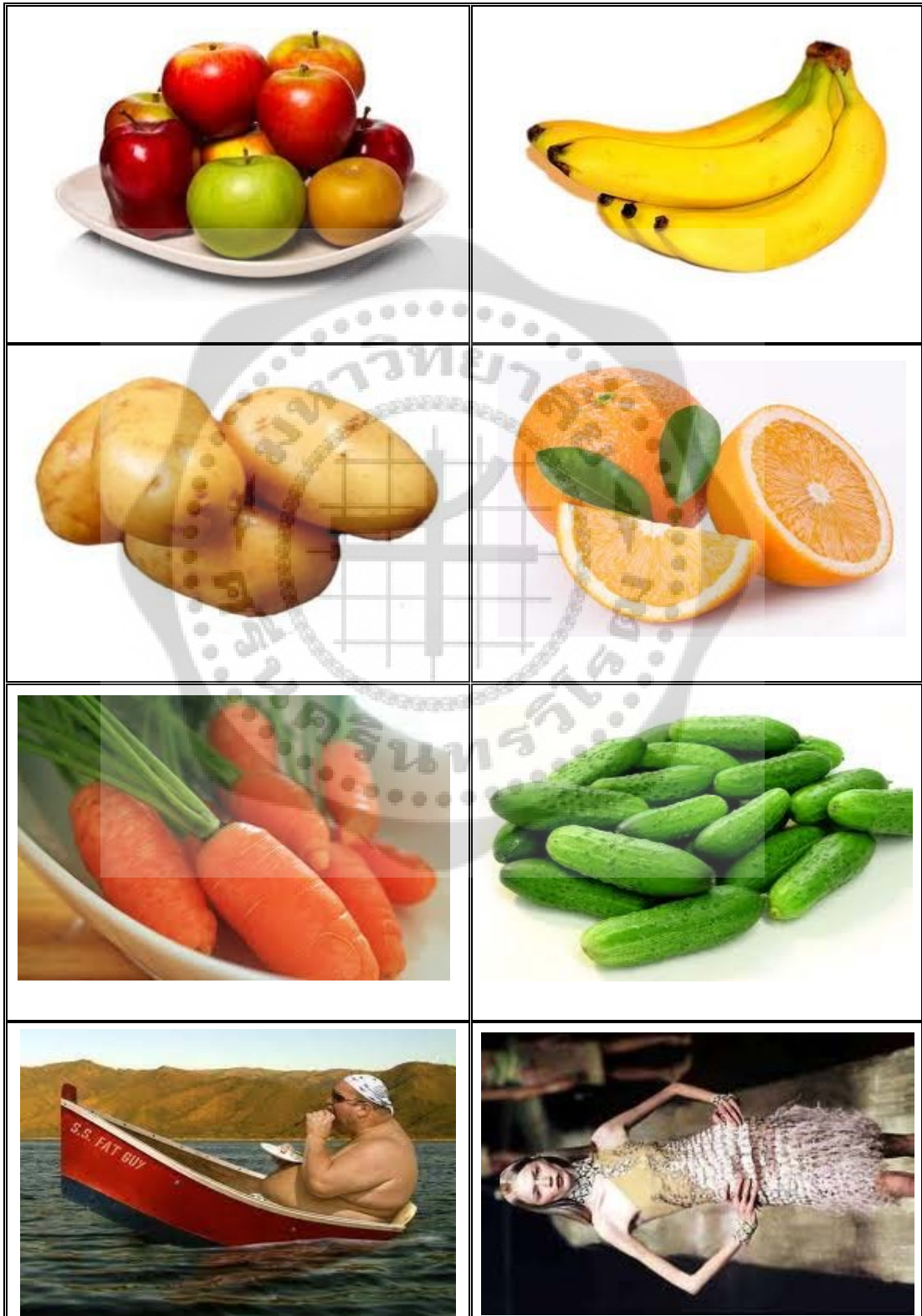mail carrier
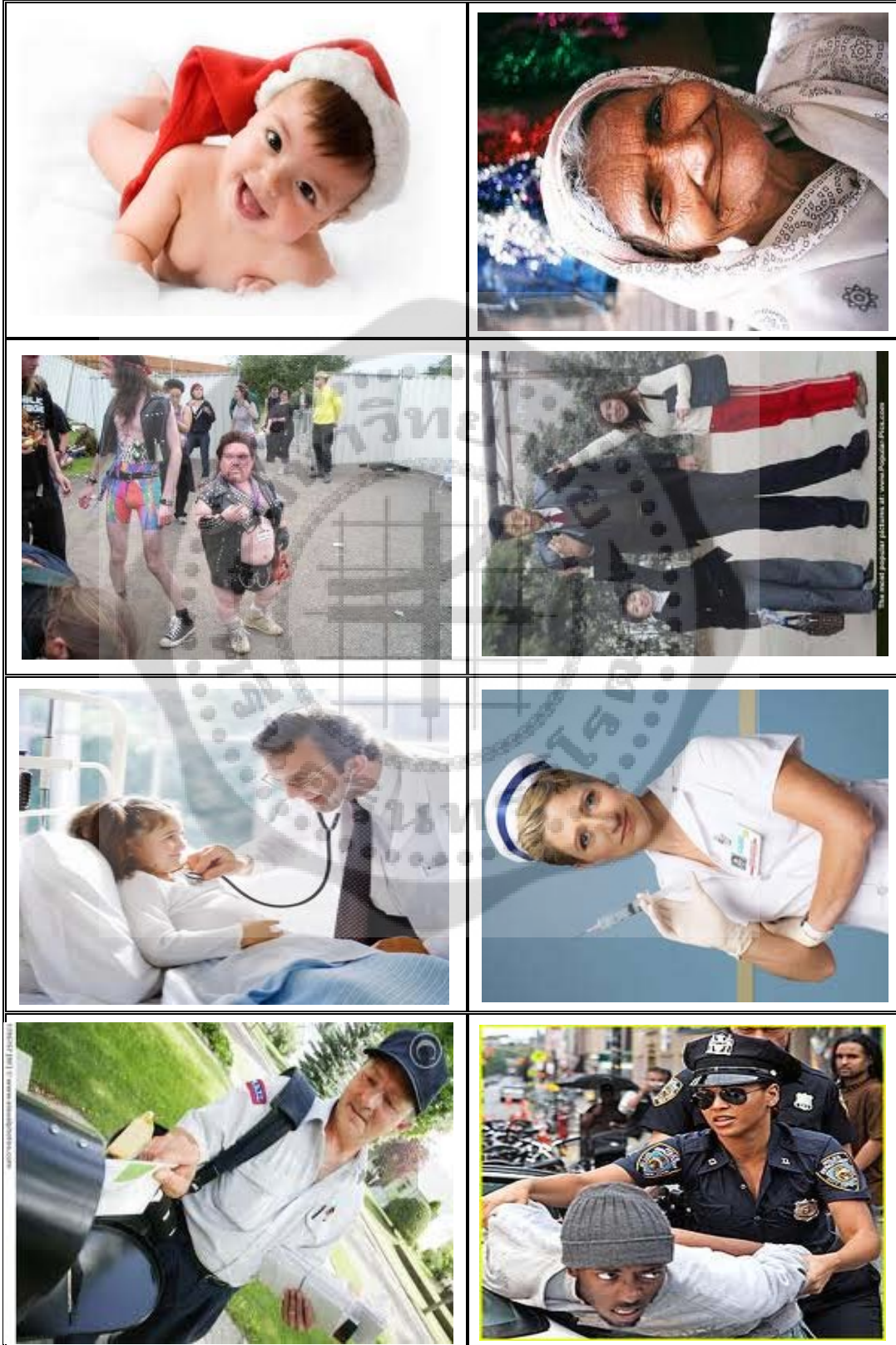
teacher

ride a bike

climb a tree

draw a picture

play basketball

drive a car

sing a song

Part B: *Matching o meaning part*
Direction: *Matching each* word cards to the correct picture. (10 scores)

APPENDIX C

Lesson plan

Lesson plan

Topic: Fruits and vegetables

Level: K.3

Duration: 7 hours

Objectives: 1. Students are able to pronounce the vocabulary of fruits and

vegetables correctly.

2. Students are able to tell the meaning of the vocabulary.

3. Students are able to spell the words correctly.

4. Students are able to match the pictures with the correct words.

Vocabulary focus:

apples, oranges, bananas, cucumbers, potatoes, carrots

Language focus:

I have _____.

I like _____.

Do you like _____?   Yes, I do. / No, I don't.

Materials:

1. Wall chart "At supermarket"

2. Fruit and vegetable flash cards

3. Worksheet activity 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Evaluation:

1.   Students' participation in activities.

2.   Dictation form

Procedure:

1. **Warm up**

   ➢ Class discus the wall chart of the supermarket.

2. **Presentation**

   ➢ Teacher shows the flash cards and pronounces the words.

   ➢ Students spell the words.

   ➢ Teacher puts the vocabulary in the sentence.

   For example, I have <u>apples</u>.

   I like <u>bananas</u>.

   Do you like <u>cucumbers</u>? (Yes, I do. / No, I don't.)

3. **Practice**

   ➢ Students repeat the words after teacher.

   ➢ Teacher shows a card and students say the words or students pick a
   card and say the word.

   ➢ Teacher writes fruits and vegetables words on the board then
   students listen to the teacher and find the correct word.

   ➢ Teacher shows a flash card then students spell and write the correct
   word on the board.

   ➢ Students stand in a circle then say fruits or vegetables they like and
   repeat what their friends like such as 1st student says I like apples,
   2nd student says I like bananas, 3rd student says ...

   ➢ A student chooses a card that he / she like and keeps it like a secret.
   The whole class asks as Do you like bananas?

4. Production

- ➢ Each student will be given a picture of fruits or vegetables in worksheet 1. Then they have to find the partner who has the same picture.

- ➢ Students listen to what teacher says and draw pictures on the board.

- ➢ Teacher divides students into 2 groups. Student from group A will get a picture from worksheet 2A Group B student will get a word card from worksheet 2B. Then they have to match picture and word card.

- ➢ Students have 10 minutes to do the survey activity in worksheet 3. Students walk around the class to find what fruits and vegetables they like or don't like. After finishing the activity, students discuss the information they get.

- ➢ The students get into pair. Each pair will be given a set of unscramble pictures in worksheet 4. Students arrange the pictures. Then, teacher tells a story, each group has to rearrange the pictures in the correct order.

- ➢ Students do the Hangman activity on the board with fruits and vegetables words. Students guess what letters may be.

- ➢ Students do the Vocabulary bingo in Worksheet 5 with fruits and vegetables words.

- ➢ Do the dictation in Worksheet 6.
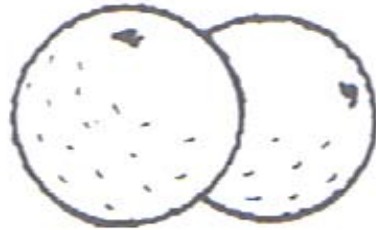
☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺
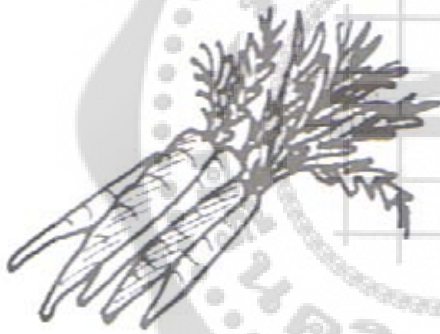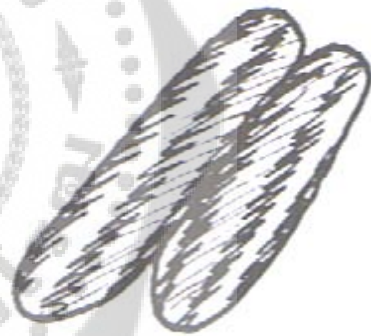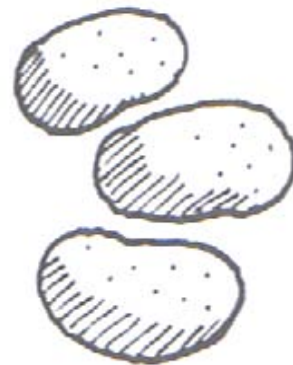
Wall chart: Supermarket

Worksheet 1: Matching pictures and pictures
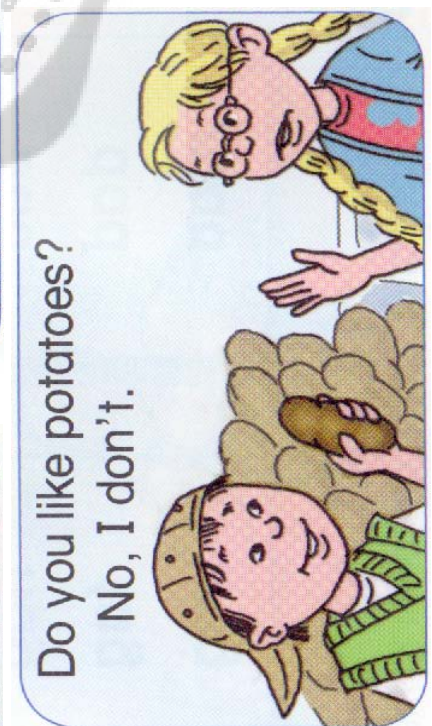

apples
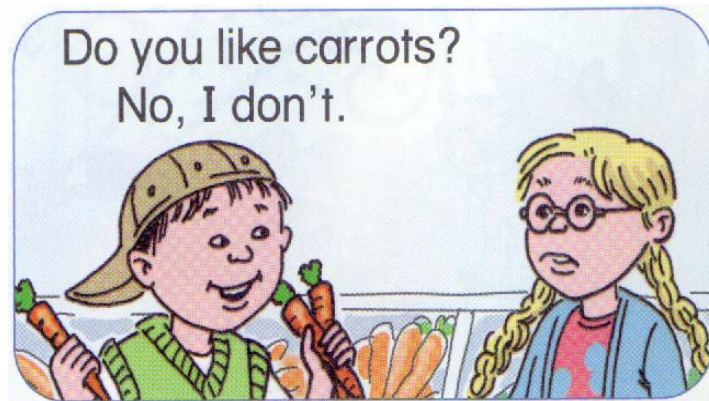
oranges

carrots

cucumbers

bananas

potatoes

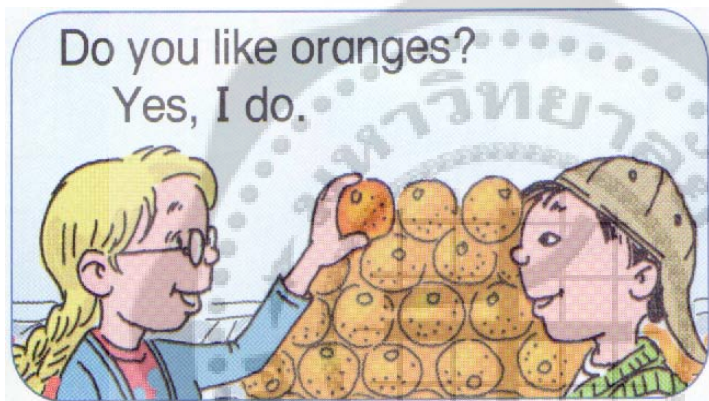Worksheet 2A: Matching pictures and vocabulary
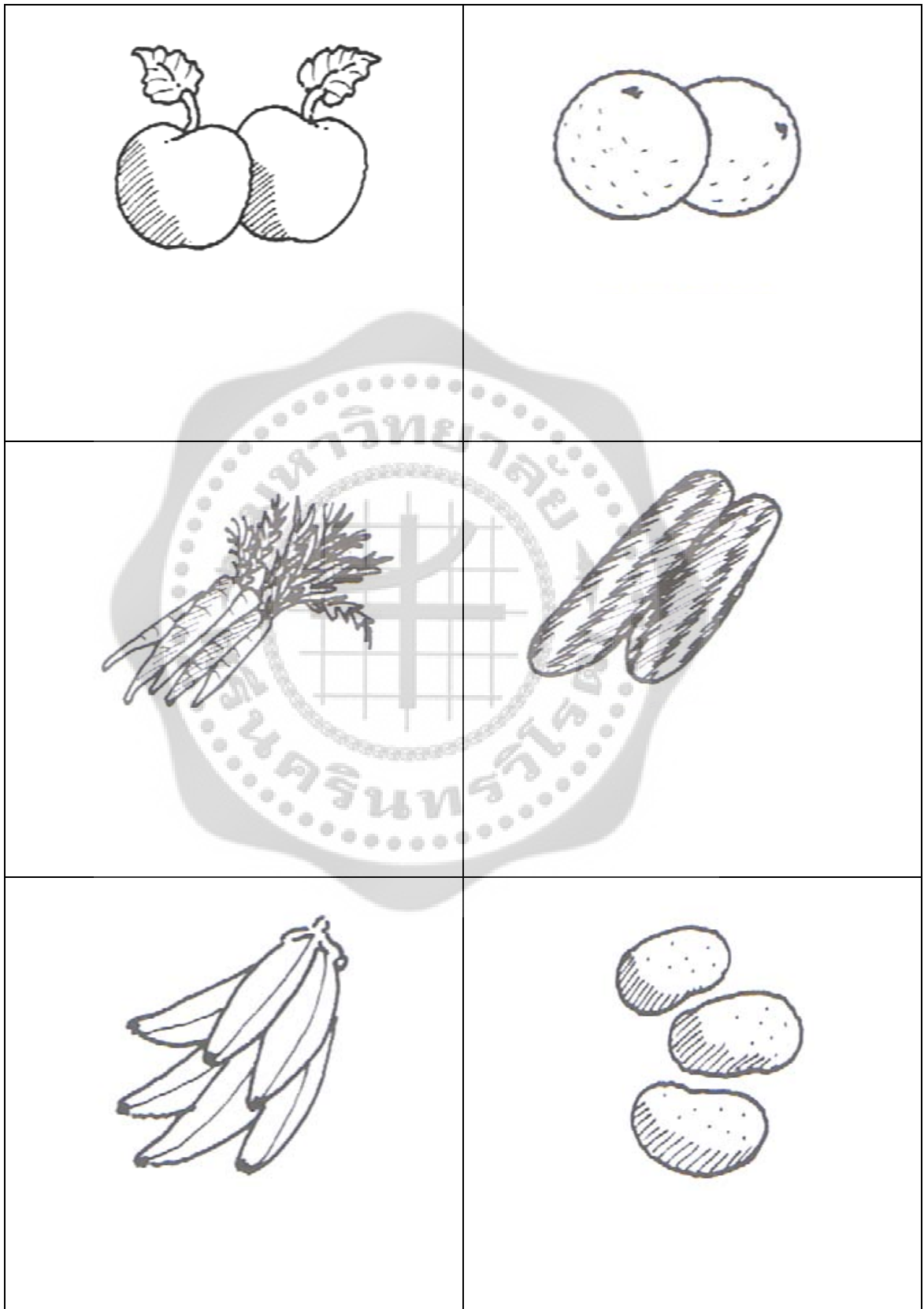
Worksheet 2B: Matching pictures and vocabulary

apples	oranges
carrots	cucumbers
bananas	potatoes

Name _____ _____

Name _____ Class _____

Worksheet 3A: Surveying. Draw ☺ or ☹

	apples	bananas	oranges
Name _____			
Name _____			
Name _____			
Name _____			
Name _____			
Name _____			

Name _____ _____

Name _____ Class _____

Worksheet 3B: Surveying. Draw 🙂 or ☹

	potatoes	cucumbers	carrots
Name _____			
Name _____			
Name _____			
Name _____			
Name _____			
Name _____			

Worksheet 4: Describing and rearranging pictures
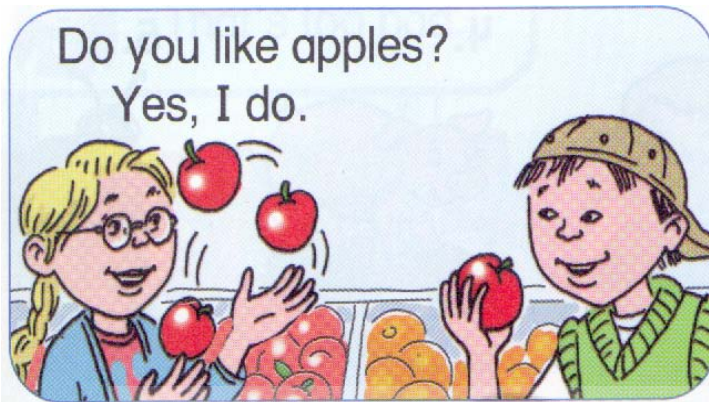
Worksheet 5: Bingo game
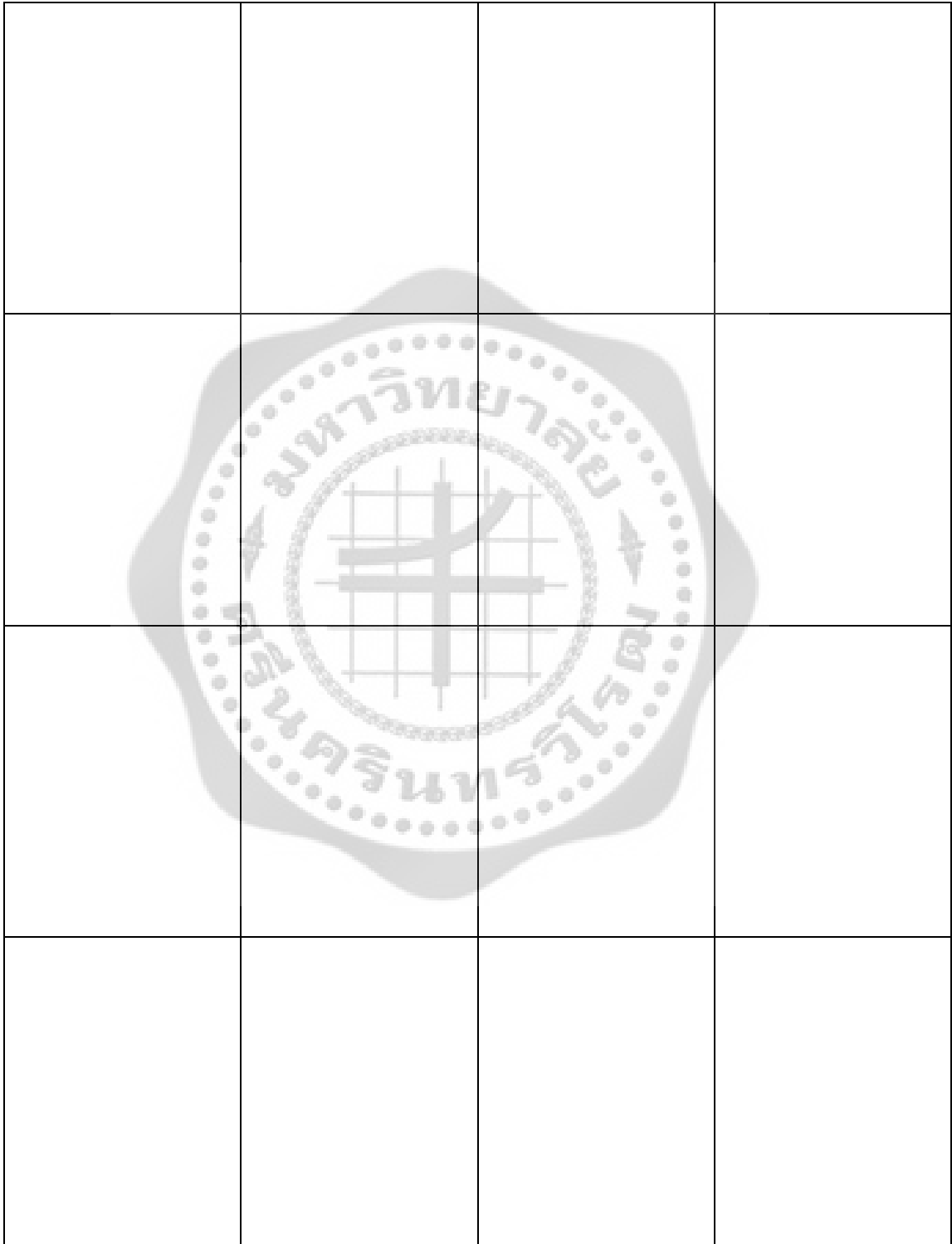
Worksheet 6 Dictation

_____   _____

Name _____ Class _____

1. _____   6. _____

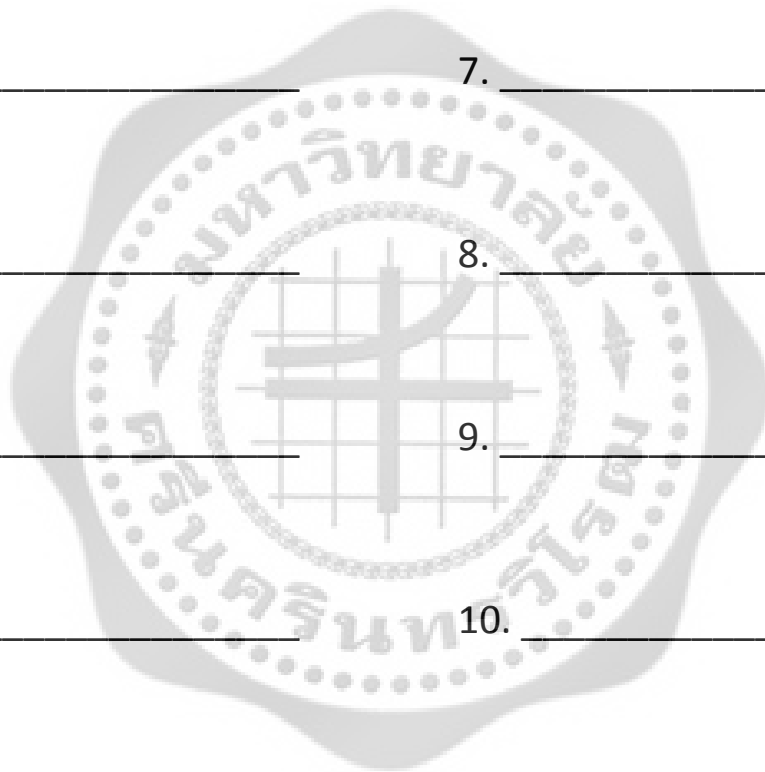2. _____   7. _____

3. _____   8. _____

4. _____   9. _____

5. _____   10. _____

APPENDIX D

Classroom environment

VITAE

VITAE

Name: Miss Sirin Vungsangoungij

Date of Birth: July 25, 1979

Place of Birth: Bangkok

Address: 140 Soi Ekkachai 81 Ekkachai Road, Bangbon, Bangbon, Bangkok
                         10150

Education Background:

    1999   Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Marketing Major
                from Bangkok University

    2012   Master of Arts degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language
                from Srinakharinwirot University, Bangkok