

English Vocabulary List for Grade 10 Thai Students

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Abstract

There is no availability of English vocabulary list for Grade 10 students in Thailand. This study, therefore, aimed: 1) to clarify English vocabulary expectation of Grade 10 defined in the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008) and 2) to create an English vocabulary list for Grade 10 students. Five steps adopted in obtaining the list were: 1) clarifying the vocabulary expectation of Grade 10, 2) gathering running words from three samples of English course texts of Grade 10, 3) identifying the total running words with New General Service List (NGSL) through *AntWordProfiler* for the first list, 4) validating the first list by three English experts of Grade 10 to confirm the appropriateness of words and ranks and 5) creating the final list. From analyzing of 89,288 running words, it was revealed that 2,023 word families were found in three sample texts and only 1,123 word families obtained at least six repetitions, although Grade 10 expectation is 2,600-2,750 words. The remaining words of NGSL and words with lower than six repetitions, therefore, were validated by experts and added to the list in order to meet the expectation. Implications of the 2,780 words of Grade 10 vocabulary can be made for use in pedagogy and research.

Keywords: English vocabulary list, Grade 10 Thai students, high-frequency words, New General Service List

Introduction

Vocabulary is one of the key components to be successful in language learning. As Wilkins (1972) stated if there is without grammar, very little can be conveyed, but if there is without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed. Several researchers mentioned that there are high relationships between vocabulary and the four language skills – listening, speaking,

reading and writing. Especially, for English as foreign and second language learners, the learners' language abilities are heavily depended on their vocabulary knowledge. For that reason, vocabulary knowledge is needed as a root for language development opportunities in every skill (Hu & Nation, 2000; Laufer, 1992; Nation, 2005; Staehr, 2008).

In Thailand, the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 proposed by Ministry of Education (MOE) is not only required for the four language skills in learning English, but expected for the number of words to be known in each level as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Vocabulary Expectations of Each Level in Schools

Level	Expected Words	Learning Time (Hrs.)	Focused Skills
Grade 1 to Grade 3	300-450	120	Listening & Speaking
Grade 4 to Grade 6	1,050-1,200	360	4 skills
Grade 7 to Grade 9	2,100-2,250	720	4 skills
Grade 10 to Grade 12	3,600-3,750	960	4 skills

(After MOE, 2008)

Table 1 presents the number of words to be known by students at each level. Grades 1-3 students are required to understand concrete words whereas Grades 4-12 students are to learn concrete and abstract words including quality and property of the words. Moreover, Grades 10-12 students are especially required to learn words with different levels of usages.

Despite 960 hours for learning English in schools, Grades 1-12 students are still struggling with English and failed to meet the basic requirements in English. For example, on the Ordinary National Education Test (O-NET) of Grades 6, 9 and 12, students' average scores of English were lower than 50 percent in the past years due to inadequate English vocabulary knowledge (Chawwang, 2008; National Institute of Educational Testing Service [NIETS], 2016, 2017; Supratranont, 2005; Suwadit & Wongsathorn, 2015).

To improve the situation, it is suggested vocabulary to be focused more in the classroom. Besides, a vocabulary list is the pedagogical driven to develop students' lexical knowledge as well as to prepare them for the national tests, but the vocabulary list is omitted in the current curriculum. English teachers have to assume the list on their own, which may be slightly different from each other, and this worries them when students take the national tests. From past years, there have been evidences of vocabulary lists for primary and secondary levels, e.g. Grades 1-3 (He & Seepho, 2010; Ngamphong, 2014), Grades 4-6 (Suwadit & Wongsothorn, 2015), Grades 6, 9 and 12 (NIETS, 2012) and Grades 7-10 (Ngiwline, Wongsothorn & Anugkakul, 2015). Unfortunately, there is still no availability of vocabulary lists for Grades 10 and 11 students.

Though English vocabulary expectations presented in Table 1 are given, the expectations of each grade are not mentioned clearly. Thus, it was interesting to know Grade 10 vocabulary as this level is the starting and the root knowledge of three years for high school levels. Two questions arose as:

- 1) How many words should be known by Grade 10 students to meet the purpose of the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551?
- 2) What are the English words for Grade 10 students?

Literature Review

This section presents English types, well-known word lists and previous research.

Types of English Vocabulary

Nation (2001) categorized English vocabulary into four types. The first type is high-frequency vocabulary. This type is the most frequently used in everyday usage such as *eat*, *sleep* and *go* (West, 1953) and also the most percentage of text coverage in varieties of genres. Becoming mastery in high-frequency vocabulary is beneficial for language learners. Academic vocabulary is the second type, which is a group of necessary words for academic settings and mostly found in upper secondary schools and university texts, such as *abandon*, *abstract* and *academy* (Coxhead, 2000). This type is counted approximately 10 percent of running words in English and is required after language learners mastering in high-frequency words. The third type is low-frequency vocabulary. This type is a large group of words that are hardly used and uncommonly occurred in everyday usage, e.g. *obeyance*, *realizational* and *ungrouped* (Nation, 2012). Though they are the largest group of words, they make up only about 5 percent of running words in English (Nation, 2001). Thus, they are not deserved to be explicitly learned, but teachers should train students to use strategies to acquire them. The last type is technical vocabulary. This type is a group of words that are in the technical terms and commonly found in a specific field such as engineering, economic and politic fields. They make up approximately 5 percent of running words in English (Nation, 2001). All in all, technical words are worthless for those who are not in the specific field to explicitly learn them.

Well-known Word Lists of English Vocabulary

English vocabulary lists are calculated from the four main types of English vocabulary, usually separated by high and low-frequency vocabulary which the most frequent word comes first. The unit uses in a list called word family which members of each word family are depended to the related root, i.e. *MAKE*, *MAKES*, *MADE* and *MAKING* are under a word family which is *MAKE* (Browne, Culligan & Phillips, 2013). The four well-known lists are provided below.

General Service List

West (1953) created the General Service List (GSL) of 2,284 or roughly of 2,000 word families of highly useful vocabulary for English language learners. The 2,000 word families were taken from a general corpus of written English during the 1938 to 1949 and separated into two 1,000 word levels. However, GSL is no longer feasible for an analysis that goes beyond 2,000 high-frequency words of GSL.

Academic Word List

Coxhead (2000) created the Academic Word List (AWL) of 570 word families which are mostly found in upper secondary schools and university texts. The AWL is grouped into 10 sublists ranking from the most to the least common words. Each sublist comprises of 60 words, except sublist 10 which has only 30 words.

New General Service List

Browne et al. (2013) modified the New General Service List (NGSL) from West's GSL, which has a small number of words and is considered outdated for the vocabulary in the list. Thus, NGSL was designed for the most frequent words for second language learners of English. The list consists of 2,801 or roughly of 2,800 word families of high-frequency vocabulary and separated into three levels – 1,000, 1,000 and 801 words. The 2,800 word families were carefully chosen from Cambridge English Corpus, a more up-to-date corpus. NGSL are not taken every word of GSL into the list and some words of the AWL are also presented in this list.

New Academic Word List

Apart from developing NGSL in 2013, Browne et al. also developed the New Academic Word List (NAWL) to tightly fit the publication of NGSL. NAWL is 960 word families from a 288 million word academic corpus. Similarly to NGSL, NAWL provides a more coverage than the original AWL.

Overall, the four well-known lists are grouped as the original and the new lists. West's GSL and Coxhead's AWL are the original lists whereas NGSL and NAWL is the new lists that modified and developed from the original lists to be more modernize and to add and take off some vocabulary concerning to today sources.

Previous Research

The vocabulary lists have been conducted by a number of researchers. Primarily, vocabulary was gathered from English course materials to create the vocabulary lists and to meet the vocabulary expectations defined in the current curriculum. For example, in 2016, the English Language Institute (ELI) under the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC) created the vocabulary lists for Grades 1-6 students by gathering words from English course texts of Grades 1-6, which those texts were exhibited on the OBEC website during that period. The number of vocabulary expectations and the number of words in the ELI's lists for Grades 1-6 students are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Vocabulary for Primary Levels

Grade	Expected Words	Words in the List	Accumulating Words
Grade 1	150-200	155	155
Grade 2	250-300	159	314
Grade 3	350-450	154	468
Grade 4	550-700	258	726
Grade 5	750-950	254	980
Grade 6	1,050-1,200	253	1,233

(After ELI, 2016)

Table 2 clarifies vocabulary expectations and number of words given in the lists by ELI (2016). The number of vocabulary expectations of each grade defined by ELI were met the MOE's expectations. Furthermore, for Grades 2-6 lists, the number of words in the lists provided more words than the maximum number of the expectations. Words that appeared once in the ELI's lists were not mentioned again assuming that students learned from

previous years or would learn in following years. For instance, Grade 3 students need to know the ELI's lists for Grades 1, 2 and 3 students, which are 468 words provided.

For secondary levels, the vocabulary lists was hardly studied. NIETS (2012) and Ngiwline et al. (2015) were two studies mentioned about the vocabulary lists for secondary school students. In 2012, NIETS released the vocabulary lists for Grades 6, 9 and 12 students to service and to be used as a guide on educational testing. There were 2,100, 3,192 and 3,453 words identified from English course texts of Grades 6, 9 and 12. However, three limitations were found as: 1) the materials were selected from one grade, but national tests by NIETS are the representative of each level. Thus, the samples should be taken from each grade in that level, 2) the lists were not presenting by cumulative words, i.e. *airport* was in the lists of Grades 6 and 9, but not in Grade 12 whereas *gallery* was in the lists of Grades 6 and 12, and 3) the number of words in the lists did not match the MOE's expectations and did not identify with any well-known wordlist for EFL/ESL, so some words were under the same word family. Likewise, some words were not highly useful words for EFL/ESL. For the study of Ngiwline et al. (2015), the list was gathered from 3 series of English course text of Grades 7-9 and identified with GSL/AWL for the first list and then validated by three English experts for the final version. Finally, this list for Grades 7-9 students consists of 1,789 word families.

From previous study, vocabulary analysis programs such as RANGE and AntWordProfiler were used to find for word frequencies and to analyze those words with well-known word lists. Grades 1-6 vocabulary were primarily identified with GSL (He & Seepho, 2010; Ngamphong, 2014; Suwadit & Wongsothorn, 2015) whereas for secondary levels, only GSL is not enough to analyze those words, thus the study of Ngiwline et al. (2015) used GSL and AWL.

In summary, the vocabulary lists for primary levels were done by various researchers (ELI, 2016; He & Seepho, 2010; Ngamphong, 2014; NIETS, 2012; Suwadit & Wongsothorn, 2015), but the studies for secondary levels were only done by NIETS (2012) and Ngiwline et al. (2015). At present, there is still no availability of vocabulary lists for Grades 10 and 11 students.

Methodology

In creating the English vocabulary list, materials and instruments were employed as well as procedures and data analysis.

Materials

Three English course texts of Grade 10, namely New World 4 (Santos, 2015), Eyes Open 1 (Goldstein, Jones & Heyderman, 2016) and Upstream 4 (Evans & Dooley, 2013), were randomly selected as research materials for creating the vocabulary list for Grade 10 students. The three sample texts met the Thai national standard of foreign language learning of the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 and were in the list of the fourth exhibition in the Academic Year of 2018 on the OBEC website.

Instruments

Two instruments used to analyze the vocabulary list were *AntWordProfiler* and the validating form.

AntWordProfiler

Anthony (2013) released *AntWordProfiler* for profiling the vocabulary level and complexity of texts. This modern version of vocabulary programs comes with numerous extra features and works with any word lists; it is not limited to the three lists given in the website, which includes: BNC/COCA, GSL/AWL, and NGSL/NAWL. The program can be downloaded at <http://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antwordprofiler/>.

Validating Form

The validating form was written for three English teaching experts of Grade 10 to confirm the appropriateness of words and ranks that had lower repetitions than six times. As Gardner (2008) ascribed that the word with at least six repetitions is considered to be the threshold at which vocabulary is acquired. Thus, those words with lower repetitions were concerning to keep or to change due to the experts' opinions.

Procedures

To create the vocabulary list, the procedures were presented as shown in Figure 1.

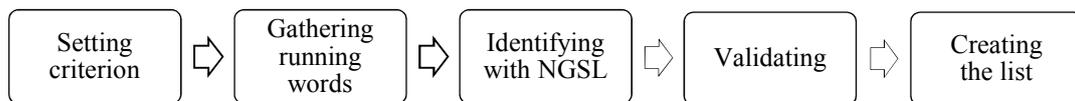


Figure 1 Procedures for creating a vocabulary list for Grade 10 students

Figure 1 presents five procedures involving in constructing the list were:

- 1) Clarifying the vocabulary expectation of Grade 10 by using MOE's expectations as a criterion
- 2) Gathering running words from the three sample texts, namely New World 4, Eyes Open 1 and Upstream 4
- 3) Identifying the total running words with NGSL through *AntWordProfiler* for the first list
- 4) Validating the first list by three English teaching experts of Grade 10 to confirm the appropriateness of words and ranks
- 5) Creating the final version of English vocabulary list for Grade 10 students.

Data Analysis

There were two analyzing steps. Firstly, the data was analyzed with NGSL via *AntWordProfiler* and ranked by word frequencies, from the highest to the lowest. The remaining words that were not found in common with NGSL were added to the list, ordering by NGSL rank, to achieve the vocabulary expectation of Grade 10. Secondly, the first list was validated by three English experts using the Index of item Objective Congruence (IOC).

Results

Evidences were found for the two research questions: 1) how many words should be known by Grade 10 students to meet the purpose of the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551? and 2) what are the English words for Grade 10 students?

Vocabulary Expectation for Grade 10 Students

To answer research question 1, according to the MOE's expectations (see Table 1), a calculation of the vocabulary expectations of each grade had been made as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Vocabulary Expectations of Grades 1 to 12

Level	Grade	MOE's Expectation	Words to Know		Between
			in a year	in each grade	
Lower Primary Education	Grade 1	-	125	~125	50-200
	Grade 2	-	125	~250	175-325
	Grade 3	300-450	125	~375	300-450
Upper Primary Education	Grade 4	-	250	~625	550-700
	Grade 5	-	250	~875	800-950
	Grade 6	1,050-1,200	250	~1,125	1,050-1,200
Lower Secondary Education	Grade 7	-	350	~1,475	1,400-1,550
	Grade 8	-	350	~1,825	1,750-1,900
	Grade 9	2,100-2,250	350	~2,175	2,100-2,250
Upper Secondary Education	Grade 10	-	500	~2,675	2,600-2,750
	Grade 11	-	500	~3,175	3,100-3,250
	Grade 12	3,600-3,750	500	~3,675	3,600-3,750

Table 3 clarifies the calculation of vocabulary expectations of each grade in Thai schools. From Grades 1-12, the vocabulary is accumulating from more than 300 words and when students complete Grade 12, they are expected to know about 3,800 words. Considering words to know in a year, the number of words increases for each level, but not at the same amount. The range of 150 words for each expectation, presented in the last column, is applied in every grade similarly to the range of each level of the MOE's expectations. To conclude, Grade 10 students should know at least 2,600 words to meet the purpose of the current curriculum and 2,750 words are the maximum.

Grade 10 Vocabulary

To answer research question 2, the findings of total running words, identified vocabulary and vocabulary in the list were exposed.

Total Running Words

From the three sample texts, there were 89,288 running words in total, which 16,171, 32,085 and 41,032 running words were in 12 units of New World 4, 8 units of Eyes Open 1 and 10 units of Upstream 4 respectively.

Identified Vocabulary

For Grades 1-8, the expectations are under 2000 words (see Table 3), so only GSL is enough for validating the whole list whereas the lists of Grades 9-12 are not. As this

present study focused on Grade 10, the expectation of Grade 10 is 2,600-2,750 words, thus NGSL, which is the 2,801 most frequent words for second language learners of English, was used to be the first validation for the first list. By identifying 89,288 running words with NGSL through *AntWordProfiler*, there were 2,023 word families found in the 2,801 word families of NGSL as presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Number of Identified Vocabulary

NGSL	Running Words	Word Families
Found	78,989 (88.47)	2,023 (72.22)
Not found	10,299 (11.53)	778 (27.78)
Total	89,288 (100)	2,801 (100)

Table 4 shows the findings of identified vocabulary. There were 88.47 percent of total running words and 72.22 percent of word families found appearing in the three sample texts and NGSL.

Vocabulary in the List

From the identified vocabulary, there were 727 words missing to meet the maximum number of the vocabulary expectation of Grade 10 (2,750 words). To create the first vocabulary list, the remaining 778 word families of NGSL were added. The first list was, then, consisted of 2,801 word families ranging from 5,071 to 0 repetitions. Within the first list, 1,678 words with lower than six repetitions were validated by experts for the final list whereas 1,123 words with at least six repetitions remained the same for the final list. The validating score has to be more than 0.5 to be acceptable. As a result, there were 21 words excluded such as *inflation*, *compensation* and *controversial*. The final list consists of 2,780 words in total, including 1,123 words from the first list and 1,657 words from the IOC result. The vocabulary ranks of the final list were not ranging from 5,071 to 0 repetitions. The ranks of those 1,657 words were adjusted to IOC results. For example, *equivalent* was in rank 1645, but after validating its average rank moved to rank 1896. For the samples of Grade 10 vocabulary, see in the Appendix.

Discussion

Discussion for the findings includes two parts which are vocabulary expectations for Thai students and vocabulary list for Grade 10 students.

Vocabulary Expectations for Thai Students

The number of vocabulary expectations of Grades 1-12 clarified in this study is similar to that of Ngamphong's (2014) and ELI's (2016). Ngamphong (2014) suggested the vocabulary expectations for Grades 1-3 whereas ELI (2016) was clarified Grades 1-6, of which the number of the words met the MOE's expectations. However, there was no evidence for the number of vocabulary expectations for secondary levels. This present study, then, clarified and calculated the vocabulary expectations up to Grade 12.

Vocabulary List for Grade 10 Students

The results of this study revealed that 2,023 word families were found in the 2,801 word families of NGSL. As previous evidences, the list of the 500 words for Grades 1-3 found 437 words in common with GSL (He & Seepho, 2010) and the list of 2000 words for Grades 4-6 found only 745 words in GSL (Suwadit & Wongsothorn, 2015). Thus, learning English only from the given materials is not sufficient for the most-frequency words for EFL/ESL. More words should be added in the list to meet the vocabulary expectations. The first vocabulary list for Grade 10 students, therefore, consisted of 2,801 words, of which 2,023 identified words (72.22 percent) were in rank 1-2023 and 778 missing words of NGSL (27.78 percent) were in rank 2024-2801. For the final list, there were 2,780 words because 1,678 words that obtained lower than six repetitions validated by experts and 21 words were excluded. The vocabulary lists by Ngiwline et al. (2015) and Suwadit and Wongsothorn (2015) were also validated by experts, which words with lower than six repetitions were not considered to keep for the candidate word list because they were not the threshold vocabulary (Gardner, 2008). Finally, the total number of English vocabulary in the final list was a little bit higher than the maximum number of vocabulary expectation of Grade 10 similarly to the ELI's vocabulary lists that provided more words than the MOE's expectations (ELI, 2016).

Implications

Two implications from this present study are: 1) English vocabulary list for Grade 10 students can be used as a guideline in pedagogy and research as studying only English course texts are not adequate to meet the vocabulary expectation of Grade 10, thus the vocabulary list for Grade 10 students consists more words beyond words found appearing in the three sample texts and 2) the first 100 ranks cover 64.82 percent of running words from the three sample texts meaning that they are needed to explicitly learn for Grade 10 students. Though these 100 words might be in the most high-frequency words for Grades 1-9 students, they are still taken into account for teaching and learning of English for Grade 10 students. Teachers can make different lessons from those words according to the students' level, i.e. rank 34 (*like*) can be verb, adjective and preposition. Teachers can teach about parts of speech by using the sample sentences found in the texts and so on. Within these 100 samples, content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs) and function words (pronouns, determiners, prepositions, and auxiliary verbs) are mixed. The first 20 ranks are all function words, which the top 5 (*the, be, a, you* and *to*) are accounted for 20 percent of Grade 10 vocabulary. Paying more attention to these words, the English scores of Grade 10 students could be up to 20 percent because there are high significant correlations between vocabulary knowledge and language achievement (Treffers-Daller & Milton, 2013). For the content word, it starts at rank 21 (*use*), but at rank 23 (*at*), it is the function word again.

Limitations and Recommendations

This study compared Grade 10 vocabulary with only one well-known wordlist which is NGSL. Thus, the recommendation for this study is to validate the list with other well-known wordlists. Another recommendation is to classify Grade 10 vocabulary into themes defined by the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551, which will make the list more

convenient. Besides, there is still no evidence of a vocabulary list for Grade 11 students. If that list is created, then the list for Grades 1-12 is completed.

Conclusion

Because vocabulary expectations of each grade are unclear, this study, therefore, clarified the vocabulary expectations of each grade presented in Table 3. Moreover, when the current curriculum was proposed, the vocabulary list was not released to support its expectations. Due to this limitation, previous researchers created the vocabulary lists to meet the MOE's expectations. Unfortunately, there are still no vocabulary lists for Grades 10 and 11 students. Thus, it was interesting to know the vocabulary list for Grade 10 students as this level is the starting of high school levels. To construct the vocabulary list for Grade 10 students, Grade 10 vocabulary was gathered from three samples of English course texts of Grade 10. The first list was analyzed by *AntWordProfiler* with NGSL and then validated by three English experts of Grade 10 for the final list. Finally, the list consists of 2,780 words, which these words can be made for use in pedagogy and research.

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Appendix

Samples of English Vocabulary List for Grade 10 Thai Students

Rank	Word	Rank	Word	Rank	Word	Rank	Word	Rank	Word
1	the	21	use	41	when	61	where	81	help
2	be	22	go	42	word	62	shop	82	verb
3	a	23	at	43	look	63	some	83	could
4	you	24	she	44	people	64	take	84	play
5	to	25	about	45	how	65	very	85	know
6	i	26	can	46	think	66	new	86	up
7	in	27	will	47	from	67	buy	87	yes
8	and	28	that	48	one	68	because	88	past
9	do	29	this	49	so	69	correct	89	more
10	have	30	or	50	as	70	out	90	find
11	of	31	get	51	time	71	question	91	come
12	not	32	write	52	say	72	who	92	by
13	it	33	read	53	which	73	money	93	talk
14	they	34	like	54	see	74	answer	94	thing
15	he	35	make	55	complete	75	year	95	ask
16	for	36	sentence	56	all	76	school	96	why
17	we	37	there	57	would	77	work	97	study
18	what	38	but	58	good	78	text	98	picture
19	with	39	if	59	friend	79	no	99	present
20	on	40	listen	60	want	80	then	100	give
Note: for the whole list of the vocabulary, please contact tanmonsinee@gmail.com									