Research Title:	A Survey of English Reading Strategies of 3rd-year English Education students at Buriram Rajabhat University
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Abstract

English is a widely used language all over the world and it is one of the most important tools for people to access information. In the present, the world has transformed into an information society. There are many things that can be done faster than the old days such as sending news or messages, calculating the math, buying utensils and so on. People need to access and exchange information for communication quickly and effectively. For readers, reading is the most important skill to understand in order to ensure success in academic learning and to make progress in language learning. Therefore, reading is an important part of academic studies, professional success, and personal development. This study aimed to investigate the English reading strategies used by 3rd-year English Education students at Buriram Rajabhat University while reading texts in English. The participants in this study were 28 3rd-year English Education students at Buriram Rajabhat University, who were studying in the second semester of the academic year 2021.

The questionnaire in this study was adapted from the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) developed by Mokhtari and Sheorey, (2002) with a 5-point Likert scale. The result showed that on average, the students frequently use the Bottom-up reading strategies for using reference materials, decoding the meaning and translating the texts, whereas the Top-down reading strategies for transferring information from the text to some kind of grid or matrix was less frequently used. The findings from this study can help teachers develop teaching methods and materials to improve and enhance student's reading strategies effectively.

Keywords: Reading Strategies, Bottom-up Reading Strategies, Top-down Reading Strategies, Questionnaires, Students

Introduction

Currently, economic and cultural change have transformed the world into an information society. People need to access and exchange information for communication quickly and effectively. English is a widely used language all over the world and as a tool for people to access information. It is an international language that is used as a communication tool in the gain of knowledge and understanding.

English reading is an important skill to learning English because reading makes it possible to perceive information from many media. It is very important when studying at a higher level. Therefore, learning to use appropriate strategies for reading help students succeed in their studies such as that of Reynolds (1994) cited in Phanthapongtam (2018). Also reading skills can improve other skills, for example, listening, speaking, and writing as well. People who practice reading skills and have reading experience can learn various information from everyday life effectively. Reading is the most critical skill for readers to master in order to be successful in academics and make progress in language learning. Therefore, to comprehend in context in reading academic aspect, "reading is regarded to be central means not only for learning new information but also gaining access to alternative explanations and interpretations." as that of Yukselir (2014) cited in Jaebgsaengthong (2010). Moreover, reading is one of the English skills that Thai students value highly. It's because most textbooks and information sources are published in English. Reading is the crucial instrument for acquiring knowledge in the borderless world, where any type of knowledge can be easily accessible. Teaching students to acquire English reading skills is crucial. In order to have effective methods of teaching reading, teachers need to select the appropriate method for students.

Therefore, reading is important and connects to our lives. The researchers need to know what reading strategies the students' use when reading English texts. This knowledge will help teachers to improve their teaching methods and materials in the future.

Research Objective

To investigate the English reading strategies used by the 3rd-year English education students at Buriram Rajabhat University.

Research Question

What English reading strategies do 3rd-year English Education students use?

Literature review

Reading definitions

Reading is a fluent process of readers combining information from a text and their own background knowledge to build meaning as that of Nunan (2003) cited in Wilda (2013). Reading is a complex conscious and unconscious mental process in which the reader uses a variety of strategies to

reconstruct the meaning that the author assumed to have intended, based on data from the text and from the reader's prior knowledge as that of Mikulecky (2011) cited in Wilda (2013). Based on Day and Bamford (1998) cited in Suebpeng (2017) defined reading involves the reader connecting information from the written message with previous knowledge to arrive at meaning and understanding.

In conclusion, reading is the ability to read text and understand its meaning. An individual's ability to comprehend text is influenced by their knowledge and skills, which are able to make inferences.

Reading strategies

According to Brantimeier (2003) cited in Suebpeng (2017) defined reading strategies are the comprehension processes that readers use in order to make sense of what they read. Reading strategies are self-directed actions where readers flexibly take control with a certain degree of awareness to retrieve, store, regulate, elaborate, and evaluate textual information to achieve reading goals as that of Erler & Finkbeiner (2007) cited in Wang (2016). Brown (2007) cited in Karami (2008) defined strategies as the specific methods of approaching a problem or task, modes of operation for achieving a particular end, planned designs for controlling and manipulating certain information.

In conclusion, reading strategies are the actions of how readers do when reading a text to enhance their reading skills or achieve particular goals.

Classification of reading strategies

Many experts of reading had classified the strategies of reading into various strategies which are Bottom-up reading strategies, Top-down reading strategies and interactive models as that of Goodman (1996) and Anderson (1999) cited in Suebpeng (2017). Other strategies were also classified by Salataci (2002) and Anderson (1999), and they are cognitive reading strategies (thinking) and metacognitive reading strategies (thinking about your thinking or planning). These models described how the readers process and use the strategies when they are reading the texts.

Cognitive Reading Strategies

According to Anderson (1999) cited in Suebpeng (2017) cognitive strategies is mental processes directly concerned with the processing of information in order to learn, which consists of three strategies as follows;

1. Comprehending Strategies consist of several processes which are; "identifying main ideas, author's attitudes or tones, summarizing main information, analyzing author's purposes, guessing the content of a text, translating message into native language, guessing meaning of unknown words using context clues, using dictionary to clarify indirect meaning, and making inferences based on the available information to connecting important ideas in text".

2. Memory Strategies are making use of typographical features such as bold face, italics, pictures, tables or figures in text. Then, re read the texts and take note, highlighting important

information or underlining main ideas. Moreover, recognizing previous words or information and simplifying or paraphrasing information also help readers remember what they read.

3. Retrieval Strategies are using background knowledge or experiences related to the topic or texts, connecting some new information in text with previously read text, using grammar structures or rules to comprehend meaning, applying knowledge of word stems, prefixes or suffixes, and recalling reading purposes.

Metacognitive Reading Strategies

The strategies that function to monitor the cognitive strategies are called metacognitive strategies. It includes three learning processes as that of Skehan (1993) cited in Suebpeng (2017):

1. Planning for learning is how the readers set the purposes or goals of their reading, and then keep purposes or goals in mind, work out what needs to be done, after that identify the expectations of the reading task and plan about steps before reading, and finally overview the passages before reading.

2. Monitoring of comprehension is checking if comprehension is needed when receiving across some new information, trying to concentrate or pay attention during reading, noticing when facing some confusions, and double-checking comprehension when encountering ambiguous information.

3. Evaluations of learning are approaching levels of text difficulty and reading demands, engaging in self-questioning while reading, and evaluating accuracy in reading such as via task completion performance

In addition, metacognitive strategies include "checking the outcome of any attempt to solve a problem, planning one's text move, monitoring the effectiveness of any attempted action, testing, revising, and evaluating one's strategies for learning. In other words, metacognitive strategies are used to plan, monitor and regulate the reading as it occurs.

Bottom-up reading strategies

Bottom – up strategies, Alexander & Fox (2008) emphasize skills and explain reading as decoding of individual sounds to derive the meaning of words. These strategies describe the word by word, sentence by sentence patterning of the text by the reader to create meaning.

According to Nunan (1991) cited in Suebpeng (2017) defined the Bottom-up theory rests on the central notion that reading is basically a matter of decoding a series of written symbols into their aural equivalents; translating from one symbolic representation (letters/graphemes) to another (sounds/phonemes) to derive meaning. She mentioned that there are 5 steps in Bottom - up reading; (1) letter and sound recognition, (2) morpheme and word recognition, (3) identification of grammatical structures, (4) sentence structures and (5) comprehend the full text.

In conclusion, Bottom-up reading is the ability to decode the letter, sound, word, and structures until the whole texts in which to comprehend the meaning of the texts and these strategies typically use lower-level reading processes.

Top-down reading strategies

The Top-down reading strategies are in the opposite place to the Bottom-up reading strategies.

Suebpeng (2017) defined the main bottom-up reading strategies that do not adequately explain the reading process, nor does it correctly guide reading instruction. Similarly, a top-down reading strategy that acknowledges the application of prior knowledge to the exclusion of decoding, and automatic processing of words does not give an adequate account of the reading process. In addition, both the bottom-up and top-down reading theories do not distinguish between reading at the beginning stages (learning to read) and reading at a more advanced level (reading to learn). The fact that fluent readers recognize words by sight does not mean that beginning readers should be taught in that way. Such differences between beginning and mature readers need to be accounted for by any theory of reading. Yet the top-down model sometimes fails to distinguish adequately between beginning readers and fluent readers.

Interactive Reading Strategies

The inadequacies of both Bottom-up reading strategies and Top-down reading strategies indicate that an appropriate explanation of reading cannot be obtained by any one theory. An interactive approach that integrates both theories posit readers process texts from several levels.

Stanovich (1980) cited in Suebpeng (2017) described the interactive Compensatory Model, which is a classic example of an interactive model, posits that deficiencies at one level can be compensated for by drawing on knowledge at other levels. For example, when readers lack the resources at the lower level, higher level processes, such as background knowledge takeover. Similarly, lower-level processes make up for deficiencies at higher levels. Second language readers would frequently apply higher level processing to compensate for lack of linguistic resources at lower levels if faced with difficult texts.

Suebpeng (2017) described the combination of Bottom-up and Top-down as obtaining the information of the text by decoding word by word and sentence by sentence, and providing information by activating the prior knowledge to overcome the texts.

In summary, different scholars have classified reading strategies in various ways. They are (1) Bottom-up reading strategies, (2) Top-down reading strategies, (3) Interactive reading strategies, (4) Cognitive reading strategies and (5) Metacognitive reading strategies. Although many experts have classified reading strategies differently, their classification has something in common. For example, some characteristics of Bottom-up reading strategies (translating messages into native language and using dictionary to clarify indirect meaning) and Top-down reading strategies (guessing meaning of unknown words using context clues and making inferences based on the available information to connect important ideas in text.) Moreover, many experts believe that reading strategies are very important for readers in order to enhance their reading skills.

Previous study

There are several research studies which have dealt with the students' use of reading strategies. Following is a brief review of the related studies.

Suebpeng (2017) investigated the English reading strategies used by grade 9 students at Nonkhor School while reading materials in English. The participants in this study were 30 grade 9 students at Nonkhor School. The findings showed that on average, using reference materials (e.g. a dictionary), decoding of the meaning and translating the texts into Thai were most frequently used, whereas transferring information from the text to some kind of grid or matrix was least frequently used. The findings from this study can help teachers develop teaching methods and materials in such a way that they enhance and improve these reading strategies.

Songsiengchai (2010) investigated reading strategies used by 73 third- year English major students and reading strategies used by high and low proficient students when reading online and printed academic texts, and to find out the differences in reading strategy use between high proficient and low proficient students. The results of the study were that the use of reading strategies in online academic texts is the same level. While reading printed academic texts, high proficient students used the strategies at the higher level. Low proficient students can apply these strategies less effectively. The finding suggested that to develop college students' reading ability, the students with low proficient level should be taught to employ reading strategies that high proficient students use to read both online and printed texts more frequently and automatically.

Chumworatayee (2007) determined the possible effect of the implementation of reading strategy instruction on Thai EFL adult learners' reading strategy awareness. The findings revealed that the one-semester implementation of reading strategy instruction could raise Thai EFL adult learners' awareness of reading strategies. The findings of the study have pedagogical implications for teachers in the realm of EFL reading strategy instruction. To help Thai EFL adult learners to become independent readers, teachers should provide them with explicit reading strategy instruction. As this study demonstrates, Thai EFL adult learners benefit from receiving a direct explanation of strategies; thus, teaching them reading comprehension strategies explicitly is a key for success.

In conclusion, those related studies revealed that reading strategies were important tools for readers to better understand what they are reading. They can be used to facilitate learning or comprehension. Additionally, many studies showed that readers used varieties of reading strategies to comprehend texts, such as using a dictionary, guessing the meaning of the words, concluding the main idea etc. to overcome their limitations of the language.

Because the importance of reading strategies is included in studying, traveling, and communicating which take part in our daily life. Therefore, this study was aimed at studying the English reading strategy used to comprehend the texts of 3rd-year English Education students. This study attempts to address the following question:

1. What reading strategies do 3rd-year English Education students use?

Methodology

Research Design

This study was survey research which investigated the use of English reading strategies. There was only one instrument in this study, the questionnaires. The questionnaire of this study was adapted from the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) developed by Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002), these were 20 items in this questionnaire and it was subdivided into two categories: Bottom-up reading strategies (10 items), and Top-down reading strategies (10 items).

Population and Samples

The population of this study was 3rd-year students who were studying English Education at Buriram Rajabhat University. The samples were 28 section 2 selected by cluster random sampling.

Research instrument

The research instrument of this study was a questionnaire designed specifically for the purpose of the study. The questionnaire was adapted from "The Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS)" which was developed by Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002). There are 2 parts in the questionnaire;

Part I: Personal Information, the responders have to fill their personal information by marking ✓ in the box of gender, section, and grade of reading critical class.

Part II: The use of English reading strategies, the responders have to fill their use of English reading strategies by marking ✓ in the box. There are 2 subcategories of this questionnaire: Bottom-up reading strategies and Top-down reading strategies. The questionnaire consisted of 20 items with a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5.

Data collection

The data was collected by using Likert scale, marking ✓ in the box. The responders, the 3rd-year English education students at Buriram Rajabhat University, received the questionnaire and filled in their information.

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Part I: Personal Information, the responders have to fill their personal information by marking ✓ in the box of gender, section, and grade of reading critical class.

Part II: The use of English reading strategies, the responders have to fill their use of English reading strategies by marking ✓ in the box. There are 2 subcategories of this questionnaire: Bottom-up reading strategies and Top-down reading strategies. There are ten items included in the Bottom-up reading strategies. These are item numbers 1-10. While the Top-down reading strategies are also ten items included. These are item numbers 2-20. The questionnaire consisted of 20 items with a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. The description of the scales was as follows:

Scale	Frequency
1	Never/almost never
2	Occasionally
3	Sometimes
4	Usually
5	Always/ almost always

Data Analysis

This study aimed to investigate the student's use of English reading strategies. The collected data from the questionnaire was analyzed by using descriptive statistics with frequency, percentage, mean score, standard deviation (S.D.) and usage level.

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Part I: Personal Information uses descriptive statistics with frequency and percentage.

Part II: The use of English reading strategies uses descriptive statistics with mean score, standard deviation (S.D.) and usage level. There are 2 subcategories of this questionnaire: Bottom-up reading strategies and Top-down reading strategies. The questionnaire consisted of 20 items with a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. The description of the scales was as follows:

Scale	Frequency
1	Never/almost never
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3	Sometimes
4	Usually
5	Always/ almost always

The average scores were interpreted using the interpretation key suggested by Oxford and Burry- Stock as cited in Mokhtari & Sheorey (2002) for general learning strategy usage:

(1) high (mean of 3.5 or higher)

(2) moderate (mean of 2.5 to 3.4)

(3) low (mean of 2.4 or lower)

Results and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the English Reading Strategies used by the 3rd-year English Education students at Buriram Rajabhat University.

Table 1: General Information about the Participants: Gender, Section, and Grade of Critical Reading Class

Personal Information	Frequency	Percent (%)
1. Gender		
Male	4	14.3
Female	23	82.1
Not specified	1	3.6
Total	28	100.0
2. Section		
Section 2	28	100.0
3. Grade of Critical Reading Class		
A	4	14.3
B+	15	53.6
B	5	17.9
C+	1	3.6
C	3	10.7
Total	28	100.0

According to Table 1, as indicated in this study focusing on 3rd-year English education students, section 2 at Buriram Rajabhat University. As shown, the participants are 82.1% female, 14.3% male, and 3.6% not specified. The majority of grades of critical reading class are B+ (53.6%).

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation (S.D.), and Usage Level of English reading strategies

Items	Statement	MEAN	S.D.	Usage Level
1	I take notes while reading to help me understand what I read.	4.11	.786	high
2	When text becomes difficult, I read aloud to help me understand what I read.	3.61	.916	high
3	I read slowly and carefully to make sure I understand what I am reading.	4.18	.863	high
4	I try to get back on track when I lose concentration.	3.93	.813	high
5	I underline or circle information in the text to help me remember it.	4.46	.838	high
6	I use reference materials (e.g., a dictionary) to help me understand what I read.	4.43	.690	high
7	When text becomes difficult, I pay closer attention to what I am reading.	4.07	1.016	high
8	I stop from time to time and think about what I am reading.	3.54	.838	high
9	I use typographical features like boldface and italics to identify key information.	3.57	.742	high
10	When text becomes difficult, I re-read it to increase my understanding.	4.07	.979	high
11	I think about what I know to help me understand what I read.	4.14	.705	high

12	I take an overall view of the text to see what it is about before reading it.	4.00	.720	high
13	I review the text first by noting its characteristics like length and organization.	3.86	.705	high
14	When reading, I decide what to read closely and what to ignore.	3.54	.793	high
15	I use context clues to help me better understand what I am reading.	3.82	.863	high
16	I paraphrase (restate ideas in my own words) to better understand what I read.	3.89	.832	high
17	I try to picture or visualize information to help remember what I read.	4.21	.787	high
18	I go back and forth in the text to find relationships among ideas in it.	4.04	.793	high
19	I check my understanding when I come across new information.	3.93	.663	high
20	I try to guess what the content of the text is about when I read.	4.00	.943	high

(Items 1-10 are the Bottom-up reading strategies. Items 11-20 are the Top-down reading strategies.)

According to Table 2, the students reported using all of the strategies with a high usage level. This showed that most of the students always used the strategies of item number 5 "I underline or circle information in the text to help me remember it.". The mean scores of these strategies were 4.46. On the other hand, most of the students rarely used the strategies of the item number: 8 "I stop from time to time and think about what I am reading." and 14 "When reading, I decide what to read closely and what to ignore.". The mean scores of these items were equal to 3.54.

The questionnaire of this study which were adapted from the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) developed by Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002), were subdivided into two categories: Bottom-up reading strategies (10 items), and Top-down reading strategies (10 items). Firstly, with reference to the Bottom-up reading strategies in this questionnaire, there were ten items included in this category. These were item number 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 ,7, 8 ,9 and 10. Surprisingly most of the items were reported being used at high level. The highest average score of 4.46 fell into the item number 5 "I underline or circle information in the text to help me remember it.". The lowest average score of 3.54 fell into the item number 8 "I stop from time to time and think about what I am reading.".

According to this questionnaire, the 2nd subcategory, with reference to the Top-down reading strategies, there were ten items included in this category. These were item number 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20. The highest average score of 4.21 fell into the item number 17 "I try to picture or visualize information to help remember what I read.". The lowest average score of 3.54 fell into item number 14 "When reading, I decide what to read closely and what to ignore.".

The results of the study revealed that on average most 3rd-year English education students at Buriram Rajabhat University always use the Bottom-up reading strategies. They usually underline or circle information in the text to help remember it. They also read slowly and carefully to make sure they understood what they were reading, using reference materials to help them to understand what they are reading, reading closely in words and sentences, and translating English to their native language. In addition, the results obtained from the study showed that the most frequent usage of strategies in the questionnaire were very high, this meant the participants employed various reading strategies when they read English texts.

Conclusion

This study was conducted to investigate the English reading strategies used by 3rd-year English Education students at Buriram Rajabhat University. The findings from the study could be used as a guideline for developmental reading instructions. The participants of this study were 28 3rd-year English education students at Buriram Rajabhat University. The data for the study were obtained from the questionnaire that emphasized on type and frequency used of the English reading strategies adapted from the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) which was subdivided into two categories: Bottom-up reading strategies and Top-down reading strategies. The collected data from the questionnaire responses were then computed and analyzed in terms of students' frequency usage of each reading strategy, percentage, mean, standard deviation (S.D.), and usage level. Based on this study it can be concluded that the overall reading strategies used by 3rd-year English Education students at Buriram Rajabhat University were not significantly different, as shown in the results of the overall mean. Although the bottom-up reading strategies were the highest level of usage, the top-down reading strategies were not quite different. It means that the students used a variety of strategies when they read English texts. In other words, students used interactive reading strategies to overcome the texts.

Recommendations and limitations for further research

This study had a limitation in that there are only 28 English education students. In future research, a larger number of samples should be asked to participate to see if the results are comparable to the one presented in the current study. The other limitation is that the outcome of the study focuses on just one skill of English, reading strategies. It could be better if the further study can investigate the strategies used comparing between two groups: the high proficiency students and the low proficiency students. Also, it would be better to use other methods to cooperate with questionnaires such as interviewing.