

ENHANCING ENGLISH READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS OF UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS THROUGH COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIC READING INSTRUCTION

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ABSTRACT

This quasi-experimental research aims to 1) investigate the effectiveness of Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction on students' English reading comprehension and 2) explore the satisfaction of students toward learning by using Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction. The sample group of this research was randomly selected 45 eleventh grade students who enrolled in the English Reading and Writing 3 (En32205) course in the first semester of academic year 2022 of Bandugwittaya School, Udonthani Province. The research instruments consisted of 1) reading comprehension test (pre-test and post-test), 2) three lesson plans, and 3) the questionnaire asking for the satisfaction of the students toward learning by using Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction. The data were analyzed by using means of standard deviation and t-test (Dependent Sample). The results showed that 1) students' post-test scores after receiving collaborative reading instruction were higher than the pre-test scores at the significant level of .05, and 2) the satisfaction of the students toward learning by using Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction was at the high level. It can be concluded that students' comprehension was improved and have a good attitude toward learning by using Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction.

Keywords: English reading comprehension skills, Collaborative Strategic Reading, Reading instruction, Collaborative Reading

INTRODUCTION

In Thailand, English has touched almost every single aspect of life, such as education, seeking knowledge, livelihood and creating understanding of cultures and visions of the world community. It is included as a basis for Grade 12 students' evaluation in foreign language learning as stated in the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008) (Ministry of Education, 2008). English has four language skills, but the most precious one to be mastered is reading skills. Riani (2013:1) states that for many students reading plays an important role. In enhancing students' English ability. Reading is a function as a tool to access information. It means that reading is a complicated process of extracting meaning from written texts and in order to be able to read, information sources are needed. The information sources should be comprehensible and interconnected. That reason is able to be the basic of belief that reading is one of the English skills that should be mastered well by the students.

Reading comprehension is the main function of the skill of reading because it is a process of readers interacting and constructing meaning from the text, implementing the use of prior knowledge, and the information found in the text (Pardo, 2004). In order to graduate, upper secondary students should be able to identify the main idea, analyze the essence, interpret and express opinions from reading feature articles and entertainment articles, as well as provide justifications and examples for illustration (Ministry of Education, 2008). Thus, reading comprehension tend to be the important skill that students need to be developed.

The Ordinary National Educational Test (O-NET) is a standardized test taken by all students in Thailand. In analyzing the O-NET paper test, reading comprehension appears to be an important part because there are about 30 reading items which considered as a major part of the test. However, the average English score of Grade 12 students in academic year 2019 – 2021 was lower than 50 percent of the total score. The latest O-NET score announcement of academic year 2021 results for 1 19,742 test takers shows that the average score in English subject was 25.56, which, obviously, was also lower than 50 percent (“O-NET Statistic”, n.d.). It can be seen that reading comprehension is a significant skill that students need to develop, in part, because it comprises that majority part of the key national standardized test.

With regard to the study of grade 11 students at Bandungwittaya school in Udonthani province, the achievement of students in English subject was, prior to the study, lower than the school’s target, which requires that at least 65 percent of students are able to achieve the grades of three or higher. Furthermore, the school administration’s goal is that mean score on the O-NET national test in English subject earned by its students be higher than the mean score at the national level. From the school perspective, it is the duty of its teacher to develop students’ English abilities through instructions in the classroom in order to achieve these aims. Based on classroom observation, the majority of the students in the study had difficulties in reading; for example, they do not understand the messages that a given writer conveys in the story or the meaning of vocabulary used in the passage. This may be caused by the students’ lack of background knowledge and ability to use reading strategies to help them understand the story, the teacher’s instructions, the instructional media, and classroom atmosphere which does not facilitate students’ learning.

Concerning the lack of application of reading strategies, teaching and learning problems of reading abound. The students’ reading problems accumulate, if not solved in time. Thus, it is very important to find solution to students’ reading problems.

Moreover, in previous studies, the researchers tried to identify the best reading strategies for improving students’ reading comprehension. Many of them applied collaborative reading strategies, such as Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) in their research (Janette, et al.1996 and 1998; Gani, Yusuf, & Susiani, 2016; Kongwat, 2019; Rattanaeng, 2011; Nosratinia & Fete, 2017; Vaughn & Klingner, 1999). From these research studies, suggestions of the four strategies in teaching reading comprehension were given. They were: preview (brainstorming or prior knowledge), click and clunk (identify the difficulty and understanding material), get the gist (find out or identify the main idea(s) and information(s) and wrap up (ask and answer questions) of the story from English textbooks that they read. The four strategies are related to students' interaction with other people as the effect of CLT movement in English language teaching. Thus, the results illustrated that Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) positively affected students’ reading comprehension. The findings indicated that CSR can be

implemented to enhance reading comprehension among various age groups and levels of proficiency. Furthermore, the primary purpose of collaborative reading is to engage students in co-constructing meaning from texts through the use of small group discussion. It has been concluded that this instruction encourages interactive learning, which creates a positive learning atmosphere and causes students to enjoy and engage in their study of English reading. For example, one research study about the Effectiveness of Collaborative Reading in Tertiary Level EFL Teaching in Iran revealed that the reading comprehension of low-level reading proficiency students was enhanced through the use of collaborative reading (Momtaz, 2012).

To conclude, significant research studies have proven that collaborative strategy reading instruction could be considered as a strategy that could solve the reading problems. The present research is designed to explore the result of enhancing English reading comprehension skills of upper secondary school students through collaborative strategic reading instruction to develop students' comprehension and encourage students' involvement and become better engaged in the lesson. Moreover, it is believed that integration of collaborative strategic reading instruction in the classroom can enhance 21st century teaching and learning. Therefore, applying collaborative reading strategic instructions in the classroom that suit the students' performance may increase their reading ability and enhance their reading comprehension.

OBJECTIVE

1. To investigate the effectiveness of Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction on students' English reading comprehension.
2. To explore the satisfaction of students toward learning by using Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction.

METHODOLOGY

Research Framework

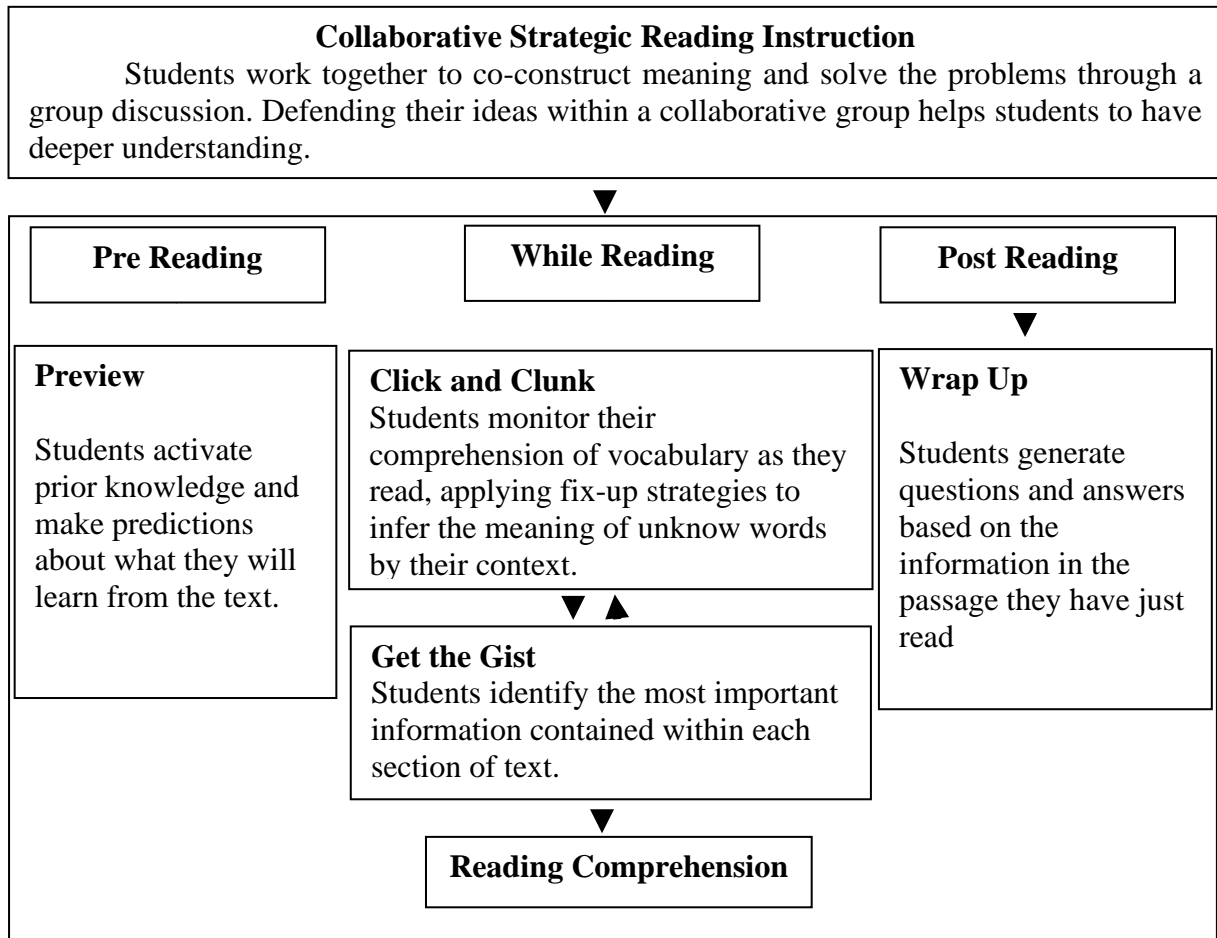


Figure 1: Research framework for Collaborative Strategic Reading Instruction

The researcher applied Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction to the experimental class. This research focused on treatment to the experimental class by implementing Collaborative Strategic Reading in teaching reading and then the researcher observed the result through test.

Population and Sample

The setting chosen for this study was Bandungwittaya School, in Udonthani province which is located in the northeast of Thailand. Bandungwittaya school provides an education ranking from lower secondary level to upper secondary level.

The population involved in this study was 450 eleventh grade students, Bandungwittaya school, Udonthani Province, Thailand. They were studying in the first semester of the academic year 2022.

The samples in this study were 45 eleventh grade students' room 5/1, Bandungwittaya school, they enrolled in English for Reading and Writing 3 (En32205) course in the first semester of academic year 2022. There were 45 students consist of 35 females and 10 males between the ages of 16 and 17. There were selected by purposive sampling.

Instruments

3 instruments were used to investigate the effectiveness of collaborative strategic reading instruction to enhance the students' achievement in reading comprehension skills and to explore the satisfaction of the students' learning by using collaborative strategic reading instruction.

1. Reading Comprehension Test

This reading comprehension test adapted from British Council based on students CEFR level which is B1 to assess participating students reading comprehension before and after using collaborative strategic reading instruction. The test appropriates with the students' level as well as students are familiar with the type of questions used in the test which are multiple choices and matching. Furthermore, the numbers of the questions in this test were suitable to the time arrangement in the experiment period.

2. Lesson Plans

Three lesson plans were developed to teach students in 6 weeks. Each lesson contains with two periods of 100 minutes. Thus, one lesson plan will be covered within two weeks. In addition, three experts were invited to validate the content validity of the lesson plan using three scales (-1 means the item is not appropriate; 0 means 'I am not sure'; and +1 means the item is appropriate) on an index of item objective congruence (IOC).

3. Questionnaire for the Satisfaction of the Students

This questionnaire adapted from Yamashita (2007), and the participants were required to answer the 5-point Likert scale questionnaire items by choosing a number from 5 ("I strongly agree") to 1 ("I strongly disagree"). In addition, three experts were invited to validate the content validity of the lesson plan using three scales (-1 means the item is not appropriate; 0 means 'I am not sure'; and +1 means the item is appropriate) on an index of item objective congruence (IOC).

Data Collection

The data were collected for eight weeks from June to July, 2022. The procedures were as follows:

1. The 45 participants were each asked to sign a consent form to participate in this research study, and then took the pre-test a week before starting the first lesson. They had to choose the correct answer after they finished reading each passage.
2. After conducting the pre-test, the researcher utilized collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) with the participants over six weeks, once a week, 50 minutes per session.
3. After all the lessons were completed, a post-test was given to the same participants to investigate the results of collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) with regard to reading comprehension.

Data Analysis

After the experiment was completed, the result of the collaborative strategic reading instruction was evaluated.

Research Question 1: How is the effectiveness of Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction on students' English reading comprehension?

The research instrument used to answer research question 1 was the English reading comprehension test based on the stories constructed by the researcher. The independent variable was Collaborative Strategic Reading Instruction. The dependent variables were students' English reading comprehension test score and students' satisfactions toward Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction.

The data obtained from the English reading comprehension test was statistically analyzed by using the criteria of effectiveness at 80/80. The analyses yielded a result which determined whether Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction affect English reading ability of eleventh grade students.

Research questions 2: What are students' satisfactions toward learning by using Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction?

The research instruments used to answer the research question 2 is questionnaire. The data obtained from the questionnaire for eliciting students' satisfactions toward learning by using Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction were analyzed by using \bar{x} and S.D. and were analyzed qualitatively by content analysis in order to collect students' satisfactions.

RESULTS

The findings of this research are presented, based on the research questions, as follows:

Research Question 1: How is the effectiveness of Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction on students' English reading comprehension?

Paired-sample t-test was employed to investigate whether there was significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores.

Table 1: The comparison of pre and post-test of the participants, analyzed by a Paired Sample t-test

	Mean (M)	Min	Max	SD	t	Sig (2-tailed)
Pre-Test	12.85	9	14	4.05	11.97	.000*
Post-Test	19.50	15	24	3.78		

Note. $P < *.05$

After implementing the collaborative strategic reading instruction, students' mean score of the post-test (M=19.50) was higher than the mean score of the pre-test (M=12.85). According to the table above, the lowest pre-test score was 9 and the highest was 14, whereas the lowest post-test score was 15 and the highest was 24. The mean difference was 6.65. These results show that there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores, at the significance level of .05. Thus, it can be inferred that the students' reading comprehension was improved after implementing the collaborative strategic reading instruction.

Research Question 2: What are students' satisfactions towards learning by using Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction?

According to the research question 2, What are students' satisfactions towards learning by using Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction? The research instrument used in this study was questionnaire for eliciting students' opinions. For the opinion questionnaire, it was

distributed after the instruction. The students' opinion toward learning by using Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction indicated that students had positive opinions toward learning by using Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

In academic settings where English is taught as a foreign language, the instruction which seem to be importance for students is reading instruction. A variety of instructional strategies have been developed in response to the need for effective reading ability instruction (Klingner and Vaughn, 1996). Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) is a set of instructional strategies designed to help students comprehend a story easily. The previous research indicated that CSR instruction facilitates students' reading ability. For example, Klingner and Vaughn (2000) stated that after students receiving CSR instruction, the students demonstrated high levels of academic engagement and skillfully assisted each other with word meanings, main idea, and understanding text. Moreover, Klingner et al. (2004) found that students in CSR classrooms improved significantly in reading comprehension when compared with the students who were not received CSR instruction. Also, Vaughn et al. (2001) stated that students made significant progress in both understanding text and learning content. The same with Thai classroom context, Kongkool (2005) found that students' English reading comprehension scores were higher than before receiving CSR instruction. As a result, the discussion on Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) instruction, English reading ability, were as follows;

Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) instruction

According to CSR instruction step, this consisted of 4 steps: preview, click & click, get the gist, and wrap- up (Klingner and Vaughn 2000). The first step is preview which students can use their background knowledge to help them predict what they are going to read. Therefore, it can boost students' motivation to read. The second step is click & clunk which students can help each other to make sense with the unknown words by using fix-up strategies. This step is very suitable for EFL students. The third step is get the gist which can help students comprehend the story easily. From this step, students can share their idea about what is the most important idea, place, or things in the story. The last step is wrap-up which can help students to summarize what they read by making questions from the stories.

English reading ability

Since reading ability is one of the purposes that encourage students to read, it needs interactive between the students' background knowledge and the story. Therefore, the students play an important and active role in constructing meaning based on the purpose in reading, background knowledge, and the overall setting (Carrell, 1989). In CSR classroom, students have an opportunity to interact with their background knowledge, reading strategies, and cooperative learning which can help the students to comprehend the story effectively.

As a result, the findings in this study supported the results of the previous studies. It was found that learning by using Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction had an effect on students' reading ability due to the scores of the effectiveness of the instruction. For the students' satisfactions towards learning by using Collaborative Strategic Reading instruction, the results from the questionnaire indicated that students had a positive opinion toward the instruction. The findings imply that CSR instruction motivate students in reading the story and

enhance reading ability. Also, the instruction gave the opportunity to learn new knowledge such as reading strategies and vocabularies from the stories, and provided students to do the group activities. Similar to Klingner and other (2001), they stated that CSR instruction can increase students' motivation and self-esteem. Students will know how to interact with people.

By considering the results that the use of Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) can improve the students' reading comprehension achievement and the students' active participation in the teaching learning process of reading. Some suggestions were proposed to the English teacher and the future researchers. It is suggested that English teacher use Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) as alternative strategy in teaching reading to improve the students' reading comprehension achievement and the students' active participation. Thus, the future researchers of the English teacher who are more likely to experience the similar problems are suggested to conduct further classroom action research dealing with those problems to improve the quality of the students' reading comprehension achievement and the students' active participation during the teaching learning process of reading.

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