

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

This study was carried out to find out the factors affecting reading habits of English major undergraduates at Phetchaburi Rajabhat University with regard to English material. Therefore, this chapter reviews literature under the following headings:

2.1 Concept of Reading

2.2 The Importance of Reading

2.3 The Psychology of Interest and Competence in Reading with Regard to People of Different Ages

2.4 The Factors Related to the Promotion of the Reading Habit

2.5 Review of Related Studies in Thailand

#### **2.1 CONCEPT OF READING**

Several definitions of reading have been given by experts. The concepts of reading are:

Smith (1978) defined that reading comprehension as the reconstruction, interpretation and evaluation of what the author of written content means by using knowledge gained from life experience. Also, He stated that reading is an interactive process of the reconstruction of the meaning of a text.

Goodman and Niles (1970, p. 12) claimed that reading is a receptive language process. It starts with a writer that encodes a linguistic surface representation and ends with a meaning constructed by the reader. Therefore, there is an essential interaction between language and thought in reading. The writer encodes thought as language and the reader decodes language to thought.

Similarly, Lapp and Flood (1968, p. 5) stated that the definition of reading depends on each person's end goal. On the other hand, reading is a developmental skill by which each person can develop the definition of reading by themselves after they have already understood the reading components.

In addition, Grabe and Stoller (2002, p. 9) defined reading as the ability to construct the meaning from the message ended in the printed page and interpret the message in a correct way.

Therefore, reading can take a message from a book to the reader's perception. It needs a process of thought to help decoding the messages.

This research focuses on reading English text books, newspapers, brochures/pamphlets, magazines/journals and cartoon books.

## **2.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF READING**

Reading is an important skill for people to gain knowledge and it can be a most rewarding way to spend free time. According to Gray's study (as cited in Strang 1967, pp. 20-21), the close contact between different people and cultures makes communication necessary. Through reading, we can understand the common goals of people and the unique contribution of every country which simulates cooperation. Moreover, reading can build sound value and to arrive at a means and methods for creative living.

As a result, reading is very important for everyone. Readers can widen their knowledge just by reading a book.

## **2.3 THE PSYCHOLOGY WITH INTEREST AND COMPETENCE IN READING WITH REGARD TO PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT AGES**

A psychological study found that children and adults at different ages will have a different level of interest in reading. In addition, competence in reading also involves an interest in reading but competence in reading can be practiced because reading is a skill.

Lefranscois (2006) claimed that a human being has 2 needs.

1. Psychological needs: such as the need for affection, belonging, achievement, independence, social recognition and self esteem.
2. Physical needs: such as the need for food, water, sleep, rest, activity and sex.

If they are happy and have what they need, they will develop well physically and mentally.

Associate Professor Chaweewan Kuhapinan (ฉวีวรรณ คูหาภินันท์, 2542ก) explained that people of different ages have different levels of interest in reading.

1. Children aged 8-12 are interested in comparative words such as darker or bigger. They like to read books with many colorful pictures such as children's literature, fairy tales, and comic books.

2. Children aged 12-14 can learn to analyze books. They can deduce what is right or wrong in books they read and always find additional knowledge contained within the books. Boys are interested in science, astrology, history and computer games, whereas girls are interested in love stories or anything about the family.

3. Adolescents aged 15-20 focus on how to be well dressed and how to be good in class. They are interested in themselves so they like to know about things related to their daily lives and like to read magazines and cartoon books.

4. Early adults aged 21-40. People in this group have fully matured both in their physical and mental development. They like to gain a lot of knowledge, progress in their work and are interested in new technology. Females and males have different interests.

People of this age will continue to read because they find that there are many interesting things they should know. As they say “no one is too old to learn” (กัลยา ชวนมาลัย , 2539, น. 18)

In this study, the samples that are 19-23 years old are between adolescent and early adulthood. The findings show that people in this group are interested in any matter about themselves and their profession.

#### **2.4 THE FACTORS RELATED TO PROMOTION THE READING HABIT.**

Wood (2000) said that in 1997 a long –term study completed by the National Institutes of Health reported that one in five American children have difficulty learning to read. The good news is, however, that the reading ability of 96 percent of these individuals can be improved with help. One of the factors is that they didn’t live in an environment that promoted a reading habit when they were children.

Chaweewan Kuhapinan (ฉวีวรรณ คูหาภินันท์, 2542๗) explained that there are many factors that can have an affect to promote a reading habit. They are as follows:

##### **1. Reading Motivation**

To improve the reading habit there should be a reading motivation. It should start from family because members of a family have a close relationship together. If the members in the family realize the importance of reading and start the reading habit in the family without blaming the situation around and help to promote reading for their children, those children will develop a reading habit.

A study found that children who can read fast and have no problem with reading always live in a family that promotes the reading habit. There are 4 aspects which are as follow:

- 1.1 Parents regularly read books to children.
- 1.2 There are published materials provided in the house.
- 1.3 There is writing equipment that can promote reading such as pencils and paper.
- 1.4 Parents always take their children to a library and buy books for them as presents.

Also, Chambers (1992) claimed that another fact of reading is that it takes time. We read some messages, like familiar sings, so quickly, while we're doing other things and talking at the same time. But some books may not only take a long time to read but demand concentrated attention. Reading is best done in a place where the surroundings help concentration. For instance, busy activity going on around us can be distracting. And usually it's hard to read when there's a television nearby. Therefore, creating a reading environment best helps readers as they try to read. Perhaps it is worth emphasizing that reading areas are not just libraries where book stocks are kept. Some people need to talk and write and move when they are reading.

## 2. The interest in the material

Wiriya Sirising (วิริยะ สิริสิงห์, 2537) explained that the interest of material is actually concerns the content and the appearance. Material should be written in simple language for ease of reading and the readers will be bored reading if authors don't work hard to make the material interesting or have creative plots. Authors should consider that the material is created to fulfill the readers' interests and needs, not for their own ones.

The appearance can be a factor that influences whether the readers feel favorable or not towards the material. The material must look thin. Especially for beginners, they will choose their own book that looks short. For paper, it must be of good quality. In addition, type style should look easy to read. It must be black, crisp and clean. An easy look creates a good psychological effect.

## 3. The Reading Competency

Chuencheewee Chalernpatarakul (1998) explained that each person has their own level of understanding of what he or she has read. To comprehend in reading, readers

should have abilities to analyze what they are reading. There are many occasions when the reader meets words or phrases they do not understand. They may not enjoy reading and they may feel discouraged. Then, reading is no longer fun.

While reading, a good reader usually guesses to find the meaning of unfamiliar words from their knowledge. The techniques used in finding meanings are firstly, analyzing the word parts such as root or stem, prefixes and suffixes and context clues. Secondly, understanding the complicated grammar. It has been shown that sentences that are long and that contain difficult grammatical patterns often cause comprehension problems for readers. However, if the reader can tell which part of the sentence contains the main idea, and thus serves as the core to which all other information is added, they will have an idea what the sentence is about. Thirdly, understanding the main idea. Readers need to recognize “who” or “what”. If readers can find out what a paragraph is focusing on, this means they can find the “main idea” of it.

There are several ways that can help readers identify the main idea of a paragraph. Some techniques are finding topic words or key words, distinguishing general and specific ideas and identifying paragraph organization.

Fourthly, identifying the concept. The readers will enjoy the English language material if they can find the concept of the material. To find out the concept, they should have a good command of the English language. Finally, knowing the type of material readers read. There are many types of materials such as newspapers, fiction, non-fiction, etc. The readers who can classify the types of material means that they can understand what they read.

Actually, there are many factors that affecting the reading habit. However, this research will explore only 3 factors. They are: firstly, the reading environment. Secondly, the interest in the material and the last one being reading competency.

## **2.5 REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES IN THAILAND**

Based on her research, Atcha Chuenboon (อัชฌา ชื่นบุญ, 2544) stated that some factors relating to English reading comprehension are the competency in grammar, vocabulary, concept of reading, self-confidence and attitude towards reading English.

After conducting research with 554 students, the results showed that multiple correlation coefficient between some factors concerning structure, vocabulary, concept ,

self-confidence, attitude to English reading test and English reading comprehension was .414 at the .01 level of statistical significance. The score weight of student test, vocabulary tests, concept tests, self-confidence tests and attitude to reading English test were .008 to .180 and contributed to English reading comprehension at the .01 level statistical of significance.

The findings of Atcha showed that competency in English affects English reading comprehension. As a result, this research included the competency in English as a factor to investigate whether this factor can affect the reading habit of English language material among English major undergraduates at Phetchaburi Rajabhat University or not.

Chanya Chinsiriset (จรรยา อินศิริติเศรฐ, 2546) investigated factors affecting in learning of English Reading comprehension by Upper Primary Students in Khet Pathumwan, Bangkok and determined the impact of variables such as personal data, family environment and school environment on the adjustment in learning. From the findings, there were significant factors affecting the learning of English reading comprehension. Those factors are: attitude towards English learning, the relationship between students and their peer groups, parental support, study habits and male students. In addition, there were two factors with no significant correlation, socio-economic status and prathom sukka V level and learning of English reading comprehension.

The results of this work indicated that reading environment had an affect towards learning of English reading comprehension. Therefore, this research tested the factor of reading environment which might affect reading habit of English language materials.