

การเสริมสร้างความสามารถในการอ่านและแรงจูงใจในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษโดยใช้เอกสารจริง

USING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS TO INCREASE ENGLISH READING ABILITY AND LEARNING MOTIVATION OF STUDENTS

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บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษานี้มีวัตถุประสงค์ เพื่อเสริมสร้างความสามารถในการอ่านและแรงจูงใจในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษโดยใช้เอกสารจริง โดยกลุ่มเป้าหมายที่ใช้ในการศึกษาคั้งนี้ ได้แก่ นักศึกษา ชั้นปีที่ 1 สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจ คณะมนุษยศาสตร์ และสังคมศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏกาญจนบุรี ที่เรียนรายวิชาภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อทักษะการเรียนรู้ ภาคการศึกษาที่ 2 ปีการศึกษา 2556 เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการวิจัย ได้แก่ แบบสำรวจความต้องการเรียนของนักศึกษา สื่อการเรียนรู้ แบบสอบถามแรงจูงใจในการเรียน แบบทดสอบก่อนเรียน และแบบทดสอบหลังเรียน ผลการวิจัย พบว่า การใช้เอกสารจริงในการสอนช่วยพัฒนาความสามารถด้านการอ่านและแรงจูงใจในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษาให้สูงขึ้น

คำสำคัญ : สื่อเอกสารจริง แรงจูงใจในการเรียน

ABSTRACT

This paper investigated using authentic materials to increase English reading ability and learning motivation of students. The subjects in the study were majoring in first year Business English, who were taking English for Study Skills course, in academic year 2013, second semester, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Kanchanaburi Rajabhat University. The study focused on the students' English reading ability and learning motivation. Data were collected from a questionnaire: students' need analysis, aspect on effectiveness of intervention strategy, and a motivation questionnaire, with a pretest and a posttest. The major finding indicated that the authentic materials could improve the English reading ability of the first year Business English students and the materials could motivate the students to read.

Keywords : authentic materials, learning motivation

Introduction and Background

Reading comprehension skills are important for students to become effective readers (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). To strengthen reading skills, learners of English tend to make greater progress in other areas of language learning. Reading should be an active, fluent process that involves the readers and the reading materials in building concept.

Teaching students how to utilize the skills and knowledge they innately possess from their first language, develop vocabulary skills, improve reading ability, and monitor students' improvement are just some of the elements that teachers must consider in preparing for an English language reading class. Learning to read in a second or a foreign language is a process that involves learning skills, learning new vocabulary and patterns, and cultivating the ability to transfer skills from the classroom to the real world, wherever English is used.

To develop English reading skills, one of the most useful techniques is using authentic materials from various sources i.e. Internet, printed materials. With authentic materials, the learners can be exposed to the real-life language experience and its use in its own community (Widdowson, 1990). They will not encounter the artificial language of the classroom (Berardo, 2006). The most important reason is about the students' motivation and interest (Cook, 1981). According to Guthrie and Wigfield (1997), motivation is defined in terms of "beliefs, values, needs and goals that individuals have."

However, from our English teaching experience, we found that the students do not recognize the importance of studying English; therefore, they show lack of motivation and interest in reading in English. Also, they have to do much reading in English for their studies and

life in reality. From these crucial reasons, we use authentic materials in English reading classes to motivate them and increase their reading ability. Nunan (1999) also suggests giving students their own choice of materials and the incorporation of student-produced materials as another component of authentic texts.

In addition, in Thailand, Thai government policy is to improve the English language capability of its people in order to get ready for the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) which began in 2015. In the Thai education system, English has been taught as a foreign language both as a local current subject for elementary school students and as a compulsory subject for junior and senior high school students. In Kanchanaburi Rajabhat University, general English subjects have been taught to the first year students. The English Department realizes that English is very important for Thai students, especially for Business English major students who are the target group. Researchers, therefore, would like to conduct the research about using authentic materials to increase English reading ability and learning motivation of the students.

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study were to improve the students' reading ability by using the authentic learning materials and to motivate the students to learn by using the authentic materials.

Methodology

1. Participants

The 45 subjects by purposive random sampling were first year Business English program students taking English for Study Skills, a general education course selected from the population of the first year students in Kanchanaburi Rajabhat

University in academic year 2013, second semester.

2. Instruments

1) The need analysis survey questionnaire

The questionnaire has two parts. The first part is about the reading materials and the second part is about the reading topics. The first part, including 8 reading materials, aims to explore students' reflections on their reading materials interest. The second part, which includes 12 reading topics, aims to explore students' reflections on their reading topic interest.

The questionnaire, was later submitted to three professors in the Business English Program to evaluate the items whether the scope of those items matched the study focus, the validity of the questionnaire scope. Subsequently, it was revised based on the professors' evaluation and suggestions.

2) The Pre- and Posttests

The pretest and posttest of English reading ability were designed to examine the subjects' reading ability. The pretest and posttest consisted of 30 items, 4 multiple choices. The results of the pretest and posttest were used to compare the students' reading ability before and after the treatment of intervention.

3) The Intervention

The Intervention designed as 6 reading tasks based on the students' preference of reading sources and topics, i.e. entertainment, romance, travel and tourism, adventure, comedy, and nature.

4) The Effectiveness of the Intervention Strategy Questionnaire

The questionnaire of 14 items aims to determine the effectiveness of the intervention. The questionnaire was given to the students after using the material.

The questionnaire items in both closed and open-ended questions, was later submitted to three professors in the Business English Program to evaluate the items whether the scope of those items matched the study focus, the validity of the questionnaire scope. Subsequently, it was revised based on the professors' evaluation and suggestions.

5) The Motivation questionnaire

The questionnaire of 36 items and open-ended questions aims to determine students' motivation in learning English. The questionnaire items in the Likert Scale (Likert, 1967) and open-ended questions, was then submitted to three professors in the Business English Program to evaluate the items whether the scope of those items matched the study focus, the validity of the questionnaire scope. Subsequently, it was revised based on the professors' evaluation and suggestions.

3. Procedures

The subjects, instruments and data analysis in this study are as follows:

1) The sample was given the survey need questionnaire to identify the preference of reading sources and topics.

2) The preference of reading sources and topics were formed to be the 6 tasks which were used for the study.

3) The sample received a pretest to identify their reading ability background.

4) The sample received 6 tasks formed to increase their reading ability and learning motivation.

5) The sample was given a posttest after the end of the study in order to evaluate reading ability.

6) The aspect of effectiveness of intervention strategy questionnaire was given after using the material to determine the effectiveness of intervention strategy.

7) The motivation questionnaire was given at the end of the course to determine the students' learning motivation.

Results

Data was collected from four sources: (1) students' need analysis, (2) aspect / scale for survey on effectiveness of intervention strategy, (3) pretest and posttest, and (4) motivation questionnaire.

1) Results of students' need for reading

The students' responses were collected and analyzed for mean and SD. The results of the students' opinions were interpreted, applying the ranking by Best (1981) as follows:

0.00 - 0.67 = the least

0.68 - 1.34 = moderate

1.35 - 2.00 = the most

At the beginning of the course, 45 students were asked to do the need analysis. All the students' need could be interpreted as moderate ($\bar{X} = 0.94$, $SD = 0.28$). Their need to read magazines was rated the highest ($\bar{X} = 1.22$). The next most popular reading materials were websites ($\bar{X} = 1.20$) followed by comics ($\bar{X} = 1.13$) and non-fiction books ($\bar{X} = 1.02$) as the third and fourth most popular reading materials. Fictions and newspapers ($\bar{X} = 0.93$) came fifth. The last two less popular reading materials were textbooks ($\bar{X} = 0.73$) and academic journals ($\bar{X} = 0.38$). The details are in Table 1 below.

| Reading materials | Opinion | | | Mean | SD | Opinion ranking |
|-------------------|---------|------|---------------|----------|------|-----------------|
| | dislike | like | strongly like | | | |
| non-fiction books | 5 | 34 | 6 | 1.02 (4) | 0.49 | moderate |
| fiction books | 11 | 26 | 8 | 0.93 (5) | 0.65 | moderate |
| magazines | 3 | 29 | 13 | 1.22 (1) | 0.56 | moderate |
| websites | 5 | 26 | 14 | 1.20 (2) | 0.62 | moderate |
| newspaper | 11 | 26 | 8 | 0.93 (5) | 0.65 | moderate |
| academic journals | 30 | 13 | 2 | 0.38 (7) | 0.57 | the least |
| textbooks | 17 | 23 | 5 | 0.73 (6) | 0.65 | moderate |
| comics | 11 | 17 | 17 | 1.13 (3) | 0.78 | moderate |
| Average | | | | 0.94 | 0.28 | moderate |

As for choosing topics for reading, the topics chosen could be interpreted as moderate ($\bar{X} = 1.05$, $SD = 0.08$). It was found that comedy was rated the highest ($\bar{X} = 1.44$). Slightly different from the others, entertainment ($\bar{X} = 1.31$), travel and tourism ($\bar{X} = 1.29$), and adventure ($\bar{X} = 1.27$) were the second, the third and the fourth place. The next four topics

with means of above 1.00 were romance ($\bar{X} = 1.20$), nature and animals ($\bar{X} = 1.16$), history ($\bar{X} = 1.11$), and crime and mystery ($\bar{X} = 1.00$). The last three less popular topics for reading were sports ($\bar{X} = 0.93$), business ($\bar{X} = 0.67$), and politics ($\bar{X} = 0.29$). The details are shown in Table 2.

| Topics | Opinion | | | Mean | SD | Opinion ranking |
|--------------------|-------------|----------|-------------------|-----------|------|-----------------|
| | no interest | interest | strongly interest | | | |
| sports | 14 | 20 | 11 | 0.93 (9) | 0.75 | moderate |
| entertainment | 5 | 21 | 19 | 1.31 (2) | 0.66 | moderate |
| adventure | 6 | 21 | 18 | 1.27 (3) | 0.68 | moderate |
| comedy | 3 | 19 | 23 | 1.44 (1) | 0.62 | the most |
| history | 8 | 24 | 13 | 1.11 (7) | 0.68 | moderate |
| crime and mystery | 9 | 27 | 9 | 1.00 (8) | 0.64 | moderate |
| politics | 33 | 11 | 1 | 0.29 (11) | 0.50 | the least |
| romance | 9 | 18 | 18 | 1.20 (5) | 0.75 | moderate |
| horror | 14 | 17 | 14 | 1.00 (8) | 0.79 | moderate |
| nature and animals | 5 | 28 | 12 | 1.16 (6) | 0.60 | the least |
| travel and tourism | 3 | 26 | 16 | 1.29 (4) | 0.58 | moderate |
| business | 21 | 18 | 6 | 0.67 (10) | 0.70 | the least |
| Average | | | | 1.05 | 0.08 | moderate |

2) The Aspect on Effectiveness of Intervention Strategy

The aspect on Effectiveness of Intervention Strategy was divided into 3 tables. The first one shows a normal Effectiveness of Intervention Strategy using mean and SD to interpret the data. Meanwhile, table 4 shows only one aspect about “like” on each topic. Therefore, the latest data were interpreted by percentage. The results of the students; opinions were interpreted, applying the ranking as follows: 0.00 - 0.75 = the least

0.76 - 1.51 = less

1.52 - 2.27 = much

2.28 – 3.00 = the most

For the normal Effectiveness of Intervention Strategy, the data could be interpreted as moderate ($\bar{X} = 2.19$, SD = 0.09). The first two aspects rated equally the highest were: The use of new reading material has helped me to view the learning of English more positively and I enjoy learning English ($\bar{X} = 2.44$). The next three highest which were slightly different were: The use of new reading material has

helped me to learn English better ($\bar{X} = 2.38$); I will continue using the new reading material on my own to improve my learning of English ($\bar{X} = 2.36$); and I enjoy reading in English ($\bar{X} = 2.33$). Also, there were 7 aspects which their means were still above 2 as follows in descending order: I am more satisfied with the reading lesson because the new reading material helps me learn it well ($\bar{X} = 2.28$); I enjoy learning English using the new reading material ($\bar{X} = 2.26$); I find the use of new reading material easy to learn ($\bar{X} = 2.23$); The reading materials are relevant to my life ($\bar{X} = 2.21$); I find the use of new reading material effective for learning; The use of new reading material has increased my motivation in learning English ($\bar{X} = 2.15$); and The use of new reading material makes a difference in the way I learn English ($\bar{X} = 2.13$). The use of new reading material equips me to use English more confidently and I like reading materials in my textbooks were the last two aspects rated the lowest ($\bar{X} = 1.92$ and $\bar{X} = 1.41$). The details are illustrated in table 3.

Table 3: Aspect on Effectiveness of Intervention Strategy

| Aspect | Opinion | | | | Mean | SD | Opinion ranking |
|--|-------------------|----------|-------|----------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| | strongly disagree | disagree | agree | strongly agree | | | |
| I find the use of new reading material effective for learning. | - | - | 33 | 6 | 2.15 (9) | 0.36 | much |
| I find the use of new reading material easy to learn. | - | 1 | 28 | 10 | 2.23 (7) | 0.48 | much |
| The use of new reading material makes a difference in the way I learn English. | 1 | 3 | 25 | 10 | 2.13 (10) | 0.65 | much |
| The use of new reading material has increased my motivation in learning English. | 1 | 3 | 24 | 11 | 2.15 (9) | 0.67 | much |
| The use of new reading material has helped me to learn English better. | - | 3 | 18 | 18 | 2.38 (2) | 0.63 | the most |
| The use of new reading material has helped me to view the learning of English more positively. | - | 2 | 18 | 19 | 2.44 (1) | 0.59 | the most |
| The use of new reading material equips me to use English more confidently. | 1 | 8 | 23 | 7 | 1.92 (11) | 0.70 | much |
| I am more satisfied with the reading lesson because the new reading material helps me learn it well. | - | 1 | 26 | 12 | 2.28 (5) | 0.51 | the most |
| I enjoy learning English using the new reading material. | - | 3 | 23 | 13 | 2.26 (6) | 0.59 | much |
| I will continue using the new reading material on my own to improve my learning of English. | - | 3 | 19 | 17 | 2.36 (3) | 0.62 | the most |
| I enjoy reading in English. | - | 2 | 22 | 15 | 2.33 (4) | 0.57 | the most |
| I enjoy learning English. | - | 1 | 20 | 18 | 2.44 (1) | 0.55 | the most |
| I like reading materials in my textbooks. | - | 24 | 14 | 1 | 1.41 (12) | 0.54 | less |
| The reading materials are relevant to my life. | - | 1 | 29 | 9 | 2.21 (8) | 0.46 | much |
| Average | | | | | 2.19 | 0.09 | much |

Meanwhile, interest, meaning and easiness were used to clarify each topic. We found entertainment, adventure, comedy, romance, nature, and travel rated highest in interest (66.67%, 51.28%, 69.23%, 41.03%, 48.72%, and 53.85%).

For history and crime, they were rated high in meaningfulness (66.67% and 61.54%). We didn't find any topic rated high in easiness. The results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 : Like

| Topics | Percentage | | |
|---------------|-------------|------------|-------|
| | interesting | meaningful | easy |
| entertainment | 66.67 | 17.95 | 15.38 |
| adventure | 51.28 | 35.90 | 12.82 |
| comedy | 69.23 | 12.82 | 17.95 |
| history | 25.64 | 66.67 | 7.69 |
| crime | 33.33 | 61.54 | 5.13 |
| romance | 41.03 | 30.77 | 28.21 |
| nature | 48.72 | 46.15 | 5.13 |
| travel | 53.85 | 30.77 | 15.38 |

3) Pretest and Posttest

Actually, there were 45 students in the project at the beginning. However, because of both personal and academic reasons, 39 subjects were still presenting the project. Mean, SD, and percentage were used to analyze the differences of the pretest and posttest scores.

Concerning the test, there were 30 items for the pretest and the posttest. Obviously, the posttest scores were higher ($\bar{X} = 20.03$, $SD = 3.25$), while the pretest scores were a little bit lower ($\bar{X} = 17.36$, $SD = 3.25$).

4) Motivation Questionnaire

The results of the analysis showed that in general, students' motivation after using authentic materials in reading class ($\bar{X} = 3.78$, $SD = 0.22$) was higher than before using the materials ($\bar{X} = 3.62$, $SD = 0.22$). However, some post motivation questions were rated lower than pre- motivation questions: 6) I recognize the relevance of learning English in my life.; 14) I find it interesting to learn and practice English skills.; 15) I persevere in learning English because it is essential to me.; 17) I believe having

good English skills is crucial to success in life.; 19) I enjoy learning anything that has something to do with English.; 24) English is an interesting language, so I want to be able to use it well.; 26) My teacher praises me in class, so I work hard in my English.; 27) I feel good when I see improvement in my English.; 28) I want to make my parents proud of my English ability.; 30) English is an indispensable language for me.; and 36) I look forward to attending my English classes.

Conclusion

In this research, we used authentic materials instead of using commercial textbooks to increase English reading ability and learning motivation of students. We collected data from questionnaire: students' need analysis, aspect on effectiveness of intervention strategy, and motivation questionnaire, also pretest and posttest.

We found that most students had a positive viewpoint toward the materials because the topics and sources which they studied were from their own actual interests. Data from the aspect survey on effectiveness of intervention strategy

and motivation questionnaire proved that the authentic materials could motivate the students to read. In addition, the pretest and posttest scored also showed that the authentic material could improve their English reading ability. As studying on using authentic materials for extension reading to promote English proficiency (Guo, S. C., 2012), it indicated a strong relationship between extensive reading and vocabulary development. Students thought that extensive reading also enhanced their overall English ability and knowledge.

During class observation, even though the authentic materials used in the research were revised and adapted, we still found it difficult for some students about guessing words' meaning. For each lesson, also, there were reading skills which were important and useful for their reading. We all agreed that the students should be given and taught about vocabularies in context background first followed by more reading skills which were relevant to their studies.

In conclusion, we found that authentic materials improved the students' reading ability and motivated them to learn.

Recommendation

Based on the results, we have made the following recommendations:

As for the number of participants, we may choose the section which has stable students or find ways to control the number of students.

Regarding lessons, there were 6 lessons for the research which might be too little for the research. Further research may extend the lesson to be 8-10 lessons, with more reading skills. Hence, the students can learn more topics of their interest and also reading skills which are crucial to their study.

We did not compare reading ability and reading motivation to other groups of students. Further research may compare these two figures to English major students from the Faculty of Education and others who are non-English major students.

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