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การอ่านโดยใช้การฟังเพื่อเสริมสร้างความสามารถการอ่านของนักเรียนไทย ที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ

Reading while Listening to Enhance Thai EFL Students' Reading Abilities

พีรภัทร เมืองกลั่น¹ และ อาภัสรา ชินวรรณ^{2*}

Peerapat Mueangkulan¹ and Apasara Chinwonno^{2*}

บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษาแบบผสมผสานนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อ 1) ศึกษาผลการอ่านโดยใช้การฟังต่อความสามารถในการอ่านของนักเรียนชาวไทย 113 คน และ 2) เพื่อสำรวจการรับรู้ที่มีต่อการวิธีการอ่านโดยใช้การฟัง ข้อมูลเชิงปริมาณถูกเก็บรวบรวมจาก 1) แบบทดสอบความสามารถในการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษก่อนและหลังการสอนโดยใช้วิธีการอ่านโดยใช้การฟังและ 2) แบบสอบถามการรับรู้ของการอ่านโดยใช้การฟัง ข้อมูลเชิงคุณภาพได้มาจาก 1) การสัมภาษณ์แบบกึ่งโครงสร้าง ผลคะแนนก่อนเรียนและหลังเรียนพบว่านักเรียนมีความสามารถในการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษได้ดีขึ้นอย่างมีนัยยะสำคัญระดับ 0.05 หลังจากเข้าร่วมการอ่านโดยใช้การฟังเป็นเวลา 8 สัปดาห์ นักเรียนกลุ่มตัวอย่างมีการรับรู้เชิงบวกต่อการอ่านโดยใช้การฟัง โดยแบ่งออก 4 ด้านประกอบไปด้วย 1) แรงจูงใจต่อการอ่าน 2) การจดจ่อต่อการเรียน 3) ปริมาณการเรียนรู้ และ 4) การประเมินสื่อการอ่าน งานวิจัยนี้ได้นำเสนอการสอนโดยวิธีการอ่านโดยใช้การฟังเพื่อพัฒนาการสอนการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษ

คำสำคัญ : การอ่านโดยใช้การฟัง, การอ่าน, ความสามารถในการอ่าน

¹ นิสิตมหาบัณฑิตสาขาวิชาการสอนภาษาต่างประเทศ ภาควิชาหลักสูตรและการสอน คณะครุศาสตร์ จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

Graduate Student of Teaching English as a Foreign Language Division, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, E-mail: 6288005827@student.chula.ac.th

² อาจารย์ประจำสาขาวิชาการสอนภาษาต่างประเทศ ภาควิชาหลักสูตรและการสอน คณะครุศาสตร์ จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

Lecturer of Teaching English as a Foreign Language Division, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, E-mail: apasara.c@chula.ac.th

* Corresponding author

Abstract

This mixed-methods study aimed to investigate the effects of Reading While Listening intervention on 113 Thai EFL students' reading abilities and to explore their perceptions towards the intervention. Quantitative data were collected through the English Reading Ability Test before and after the intervention as well as completing the Perceptions of Reading While Listening Questionnaire after the intervention. Qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews. Results from the Paired Sample T-test revealed that students significantly improved their English reading ability after participating in the intervention for eight weeks. They reported positively upon four aspects on the basis of (1) motivation, (2) learning engagement, (3) amount of learning and (4) graded readers evaluation. Implications for teaching reading while listening are offered to support English reading instruction.

Keywords: reading while listening, reading, reading abilities

Introduction

Reading is a necessary skill for second language learning since it is a skill for acquiring new knowledge and information. Nearly 90% of the world's population can only read at a basic level (Grabe & Stoller, 2019). Moreover, several studies claim that reading difficulties affect 10% to 15% of English-speaking school-aged children (Al Dahhan et al., 2016). Children who struggle with reading perform poorly on measures of word reading and reading comprehension. Thailand is ranked 66th in the world for reading performance and Thai students scored 393 points in reading, which is below the OECD average score of 487 points (PISA, 2018). Furthermore, the Ordinary National Educational Test (O-net) (National Institute of Education Testing Service, n.d.) shows that the English subject score is very low. Therefore, to enhance students' reading performance, providing effective reading skills is important in reading classes.

Due to the reading difficulties, one of the supporting methods is to present a combination of auditory and written inputs. It is referred to Reading While Listening or assisted reading. The combination helped students improve their reading comprehension, reading speed, fluency, and vocabulary learning. Many studies have recommended that reading while listening improved reading rate and comprehension. Reading While Listening also seems to be effective because it helps students make stronger connections between form and meaning and develop a better sense of the rhythm of the language. Because of their difficulties with text segmentation and letter-sound correspondence, young L2 learners with low levels of

proficiency are likely to benefit from Reading While Listening. In an academic setting, students are often given many reading assignments in a short period of time. In addition, Reading While Listening tends to be related to reading fluency, which plays a role in reading comprehension. Reading fluency was defined as simultaneous decoding and comprehension. Decoding texts required several components, including rapid and automatic orthographic and phonological word recognition, syntactic parsing, and encoding meaning proposition encoding, while reading comprehension requires skills such as activating prior knowledge, drawing inferences, and evaluating the texts being read. Comprehension is impossible to achieve without rapid and accurate word recognition. When reading fluency is developed, the number of texts increases, which can lead to a higher level of comprehension. (Chang & Millet, 2015; Granena et al., 2015; Serrano & Pellicer-Sánchez, 2019; Tragant & Vallbona, 2018)

In this age of technology and the internet, students may be familiar with multimodal inputs that provide diverse modes of reading. There are numerous tools and settings, in particular, audio narration that enables a wide range of reading experiences (Larson, 2015). According to this perspective, another one challenge is the teaching reading instruction in the classroom that is always conducted the in the grammar translation method and limited in providing written input to Thai EFL students. Reading while listening should thus be an alternative medium to improve students' reading abilities.

Research objectives

1. To investigate the effects of Reading While Listening intervention on Thai EFL students' reading abilities
2. To explore the perceptions of Thai EFL students towards Reading While Listening intervention

Methodology

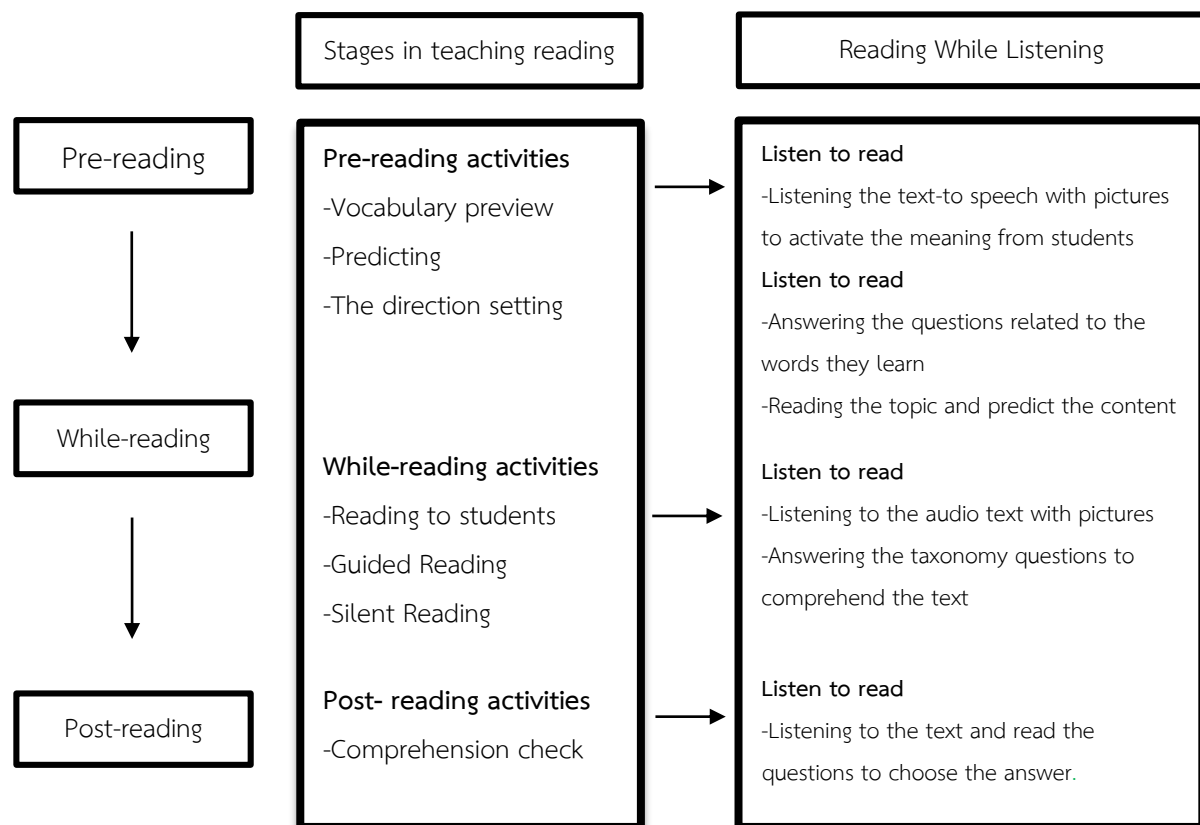
Research framework

Reading while listening intervention was adopted and designed based on Tragant and Vallbona's (2018) framework. It aimed to enhance Thai EFL secondary school students' English reading abilities. Figure 1 presents a research framework through three stages of the Reading while Listening Intervention, including a) pre-reading, b) while-reading, and c) post-reading.

Each teaching reading stage consists of specific activities for the integration of listening to read into the intervention.

Figure 1

Research framework for reading while listening intervention



In addition to the research framework, the Reading while Listening Intervention was designed with eight instructional plans in three units. The intervention comprised fifty minutes per one reading session using three steps: pre-reading activities, while-reading activities, and post-reading activities. The reading texts included ‘Trash as a souvenir’, ‘Smart people play it safe’, ‘The WEE man’, ‘Strange Dream’, ‘Good Luck Bad Luck’, ‘The voice’, ‘Messages from holidays’, ‘Adverts’ and ‘Taipei 101’ which were selected according to the survey topics of student interest prior to the main study.

In pre-reading activities, students were assigned to the key vocabulary using audio and pictures to provide comprehensible input, for example guessing meaning games to help students become familiar with vocabulary. In while-reading activities, students listened to the texts before reading the activities. After that, they read to answer comprehension questions. Then they are allowed to read with audio on their own. In post-reading activities, students

read and listened to the texts to answer post reading comprehension. Students also worked in group to find the answers from the texts. Figure 2 illustrated samples of the instructional materials.

Figure 2

Example of reading while listening instructional material



Contexts and Participants

Participants included one hundred and thirteen secondary school students in one public school in Bangkok. The school was located in the southeastern part of Bangkok Metropolitan Area. 113 students from the regular program in Class 2, Class 3 and Class 5 participated in fifty-minute sessions for eight weeks.

Research instruments

English Reading Ability Test

The English Reading Ability Test was constructed as a pre-posttest to measure students' English reading abilities before and after the Reading While Listening intervention. The test included 30 items for language (7 items), literal (15 items), and inferential (8 items) comprehension questions. The English Reading Ability Test, which was used in this study, yielded a total score of 30. It was validated by three language teachers prior to the main study.

Perceptions of Reading while Listening Questionnaire

The Perceptions of Reading while Listening Questionnaire was adopted from Tragant and Vallbona (2018). The purpose of the questionnaire was to examine students' perception after they participated in the Reading While Listening intervention. The questionnaire included 10 questions and was classified into four dimensions: (1) the motivation toward the session, (2) the level of engagement during reading sessions, (3) the perceived amount of learning, (4) the graded readers evaluation. Students rated each statement on a 4-point Likert scale in

which 4 corresponded to “A lot” and 1 corresponded to “Not much.” All items are translated in Thai using the backward translation method.

Data collection and analysis

At the beginning, students took the English Reading Abilities Test one week before instruction. After that, the eight lessons of Reading While Listening intervention were implemented. One week after completing the instruction, the participants took English Reading Abilities. Finally, students completed the questionnaire, expressing their perceptions towards Reading While Listening Intervention.

For the data analysis, it involved both qualitative and quantitative data analysis. Quantitative data was analyzed from the comparison of the student's reading ability after Reading While Listening Intervention. The pre- and post-test scores on the questions were compared using a pair-sample t-test to see if there are any differences in the students' English reading ability. Significance was set as $p < .05$. Secondly, the perception of students' reading while listening questionnaire was used. The scores from the posttest were employed to support the reading ability test and to find students' perceptions toward Reading While Listening intervention. Furthermore, as qualitative data, the researcher analyzed the content of interviews conducted with three students chosen at random to participate in the Reading While Listening intervention.

In this study, the results of the English Reading Abilities were compared to answer Research Question 1. The statistics of the paired sample t-test were then applied. The administration of questionnaire data collection was performed after the intervention for Research Question 2.

Results

Research question 1: To what extent do Thai EFL students improve their reading abilities after participating in Reading While Listening intervention?

Regarding the first question, English Reading Abilities which is to investigate to what extent do Thai EFL students improve their reading abilities after participating in Reading While Listening intervention, the overall findings are shown in Table 1. Results from the paired-sample *t*-test significantly indicate improvement of students' reading abilities after participating in Reading While Listening intervention.

Table 1

Results from the paired-sample t-test between the total score of pre-test and posttest (n = 113)

	<i>M</i>	Min	Max	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	df	<i>d</i>	Sig.
Pre-test	11.00	4	28	4.40	4.243	111	0.40	.00
Post-test	12.45	5	27	4.52				

According to Table 1, the pre-test mean score is 11.04 (*SD* = 4.40), while the post-test mean score is 12.45 (*SD* = 4.52) with a small effect size (*d* = 0.40). As a result, it can be inferred that students who participated in the intervention received significantly higher scores on their English Reading Ability Posttest.

Research question 2: What are the perceptions of Thai EFL students towards Reading While Listening intervention?

Regarding the second question, which is to investigate the perceptions of Thai EFL students towards Reading While Listening intervention, the perceptions were divided into four dimensions: 1) the motivation toward the session 2) the level of engagement during the reading session 3) the perceived amount of learning, 4) graded readers evaluation. The question items in the questionnaire and the results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics of the results of student perceptions of reading while listening (n = 113)

Item	Questions	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Level of frequency
Motivations toward the session				
1.	Did you like reading / listening to the session in English?	3.42	0.74	Quite a lot
Level of engagement during the reading session				
2.	Did you read/listen attentively?	3.46	0.74	Quite a lot
3	How motivated were you to do the activities?	3.15	0.92	Quite a lot
Perceived amount of learning				
4.	How much have the reading/ listening sessions helped you learn English?	3.36	0.70	Quite a lot
Graded readers evaluation				
5.	In general, did you like the reading material?	2.88	1.01	Quite a lot
6.	In general, what do you think about the level of difficulty of the books?	2.58	0.78	Fine

Table 2 reports the Mean scores, Standard Deviation, and the level of frequency of all items in the students' perceptions of Reading while Listening. The results from Table 2 show that the students reported positive perceptions upon the Reading While Listening Intervention.

It can be observed from the table that motivation toward the session achieved quite a lot level of frequency with a mean score of 3.42 ($SD = 0.74$). For the level of engagement during the reading, the 2 items show that it achieved quite a lot level of frequency with a mean score of 3.46 ($SD = 0.74$) in item 1 and 3.15 ($SD = 0.92$) in item 2.

For the perceived amount of learning, the results from item 4 gained quite a lot level of frequency with a mean score of 3.36 mean ($SD = 0.70$).

The last aspect is the evaluation of graded readers. Item 5 and item 6 received the lowest level of frequency with a mean score of 2.88 ($SD = 1.01$) in items 5 and 2.58 ($SD = 0.78$) in item 6 which means the reading materials are preferred, and they still manage their understandings.

Student perceptions of Reading While Listening Intervention

This section presents qualitative results from the semi-structure interview. The interviewees were six selected students according to students' pre-test and post-test score. The first three of students are high Below the findings are presented in four dimensions. Individual students are presented by number identifiers to preserve their anonymity.

Motivation toward the session

When considering the use of reading While listening intervention, students could express their positive thoughts on the reading session. They also express having fun with their friends in the classroom since they can read in a group with their friends.

Excerpt 1

Student #1: "The session was fun. I can read with my friends."

Student #2: "I liked the reading session because it helped my English pronunciation."

Student #3: "I liked it because I learned much English vocabulary from the session."

Student #4: "I liked this reading class. I had more fun than last year's reading class."

Student #6: "I liked the post reading activities because I didn't have to work alone."

Although positive comments were reported by the majority of the students, negative comments were also revealed in terms of text-concentration.

Excerpt 2

Student#5: “I think I’m in between. Because the text is long, I prefer reading on my own.”

Level of engagement during the reading session

The aspect of their engagement during the reading session was revealed from the students. The non-verbal input seems to be the focus while the students were reading the texts. Most of the students reported that in the while-reading activities, they concentrated more on the listening.

Excerpt 3

Student#3: “I needed to attentively listen to the text.”

Student#2: “I listened to the text, and I know how to correctly pronounce.”

Student#6: “I learned English pronunciation from the listening.”

Perceived amount of learning

The aspect of English learning was revealed from the interview. After they participated in the intervention, English pronunciation, English vocabulary, and comprehension were the majority aspects that they reported.

Excerpt 4

Student #1: “I could learn correct English pronunciation and new vocabulary.”

Student #2: “I liked the reading session because it helped my English pronunciation.”

Student #3: “I learned much English vocabulary from the session.”

Student #4: “I learned how to pronounce words and learn difficult words.”

Student #5: “I learned new vocabulary and English pronunciation.”

Student #6: “I think I learned new English vocabulary from the pre-reading activities and English pronunciation.”

Graded readers evaluation

The evaluation of the graded readers reported that most of the students were fine since most the texts were adopted from the textbook that were used in the class. Moreover, students were still able to manage their understanding.

Expert 5

Student #3: “The texts were not too difficult for me, I think”

Student #4: “I think the texts were ok.”

Student #6: “They were not too difficult.”

Overall, the interviews from after intervention were found to be positive due to four dimensions in the motivation toward the session, level of engagement during reading sessions, perceived amount of learning and evaluation of the reading materials.

Discussion

Reading while Listening to enhance English Reading Abilities

Reading ability involves rapidly recognizing vocabulary, develop and use a large recognition vocabulary as well as processing sentences to develop comprehension (Grabe, 2017). Reading while listening was designed to improve Thai EFL secondary school students' reading abilities. All elements in the Reading while Listening framework aimed to increase students' reading competence. The focus of this framework allowed students to read with assisted audio and multimodality to enhance reading ability. Students significantly improved their reading ability after reading while listening in this study. The written form and verbal input were incorporated into reading activities, such as listening to pre-reading and while-reading activities. In addition, the students perceived Reading While Listening as the means to support their comprehension by the aspect of word recognition, and pronunciation however the longer period of the intervention should be prolonged for more improvement. Many studies have claimed that reading while listening improved language skills. The combination of assisted and unassisted reading could benefit students' learning vocabulary and text comprehension (Tragant & Vallbona, 2018; Webb & Chang, 2014). Furthermore, text with images encouraged and supported students' comprehension. Multimodality in reading contexts tended to help students learn from texts more effectively. Images and videos can provide a rich experiential context for motivating students to read a foreign language. Renandya and Widodo (2018) suggested that the implication of Reading while listening encouraged students to extensively read on their own with better comprehension.

In the stages of reading while listening intervention, students began with a reading selection from their area of interest to engage in the text, master vocabulary, and predict the stories. In the post-reading activities, students were encouraged to read while listening on their own for comprehension. The combination of verbal and written inputs acted as scaffolded reading activities to assist students during the pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading stages of the Reading while Listening Intervention. Therefore, these stages might facilitate

language teachers to develop students' reading abilities and enhance them to read more successfully.

Student Perceptions of Reading While Listening Intervention

Reading while Listening shows overall positive perceptions from the students' responses. Several students expressed interests in taking part in many reading sessions. As a result of the Student Perception Questionnaire, they showed positive responses toward the reading intervention. These results were consistent with the previous study in the students, particularly those who disliked reading, found the reading while listening appealing because of its dual-input mode (Tragant et al., 2016).

Students reported the perceptions of learning English vocabulary, pronunciation, and comprehension. This indicates the benefit of dual input in the intervention. When students were frequently exposed to a large amount of language input, their word recognition skills expanded the ability to process written texts (Renandya, 2016). Moreover, students thought that overall reading materials were at the appropriate level. They concluded that they were able to understand texts with an assistance of the audio narration.

Pedagogical implications and conclusion

Pedagogical implications are drawn from the results to implement the Reading While Listening in EFL reading instruction. The teacher's first implication to select reading materials should be based on proficiency. Teachers may supplement the graded reading materials for secondary school students. For the development of reading materials for Reading While Listening, the study recommended that reading texts should be provided with diverse modes of verbal and written inputs, such as audio, audiovisual, images and others. The speed of the audio supported reading materials should be varied from slow to normal to meet students' level of reading speed language proficiency. In other words, it should not be too fast for students to listen so that they feel comfortable to listen and read by themselves. According to the student feedback, teachers should allow them to read while listening at their own pace.

Reading While Listening Intervention highlighted the implementation for the intensive reading instruction. Many previous studies reported the positive effects of Reading While Listening for language learners on listening rate and comprehension (Chang & Millet, 2015) and vocabulary learning (Chang, 2016; Webb & Chang, 2014). Most of students in this study seemed to enjoy the reading experience, especially when they participated in listening to the texts. It

can thus be added to EFL reading instruction that the combination of nonverbal input and written text gives students meaningful supports and experiences, especially for those who tend not to read English texts.

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