# An Assessment of English Reading Skill of Matthayomsuksa 3 Students

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## Abstract

The purposes of research were to study the problems of English Reading Skill and to find the ways to solve the problems of English Reading Skill at Klongmaungpittayacom school in Nakhon Ratchasima. This study was a mixed method between a qualitative and quantitative research. The sample group consisted of 63 students of Matthayom Sueksa 3 students at Klongmaungpittayacom school in Nakhon Ratchasima. Statistics used were percentage, mean, standard deviation (S.D.), interviewing qualified and experts in conversation groups 5 persons.

The results of the study showed that reading problems faced by students in learning resulting from students' reading behavior and students' elementary were high. In addition, the content (textbook), teaching aids and teaching methods had a significant effect on the reading problems. In the light of the findings of the study, researcher recommended holding training courses for the teacher to their students the reading skills in the right way in order to solve the problems of reading English skill.

**Keywords:** English Reading Skill, English Skill Problems, English Reading solving

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## Introduction

An English reading skill is one of four skills for students to study because English reading skill must come along with listening and speaking together because of students do not have the fundamental knowledge of listening and speaking then it is difficult to collect data to read. In fact, necessary information used as data for reading come from many sources such as formal documents, text books, newspaper, journal, and many other audio-visual aids such as radio, television, Tape – record, You Tube etc. (Eddie Wills M. ED 1986)

Reading is a necessary skill to be successful in life. People with high reading abilities seems to have principles that lead them to succeed. On the other hand, according to "All the skills students learn, reading is arguably one of the most important learning skills. Today, especially in the developed world, it is considered a fundamental skill required for success. Unfortunately, for many children with reading difficulties, learning to read is one of the most frustrating activities they will ever face. All too often, the barriers they face overshadow their desire to read, without proper guidance, they never overcome them." (Smith 1994)

Students can tell how their teachers teach reading. In their talk about reading, many of them explained that some school teachers ask the whole class to repeat after them, then one by one to sound out words. Sometimes they read for the class and then ask students one-by-one to read loudly. Sometimes they focus on every single word, how it is pronounced, and what it means. They are the authority that interrupts to give immediate correction. For many of them, student/student interaction is always looked at as a noise, confusion, and disturbance to them and to the other students' understanding. Just read fast with correct pronunciation, and you are a good reader. Based on this, one should conclude that there is a misunderstanding of what reading is and what the reading process is all about. Accordingly, students will find reading English a very complicated skill, and

therefore, they will have many problems with it. Poor readers realize this fact only when they encounter big reading assignments when they enter a university. (Younis 2005, p. 3)

In fact, the presence of reading problem cases in schools constitutes a serious problem at all levels of the academic ladder. Perhaps the need for remedial work, once it is present, constitutes such a pressing problem, it usually tends to receive more attention than preventing measures. It is not uncommon to find school administrators pointing with pride to their remedial programs while at the same time, little emphasis is placed upon avoidance of reading difficulty before it occurs. (Al-Kilani and Maqutash 2002)

Reading problems nearly occur on a continuum, meaning that there is a great number of students who experience reading difficulties. There are those students who are diagnosed with a learning difficulty. Also, there is an even larger group of students, who do not have diagnoses, but who need good reading assistance. Many students make effort and struggle with reading. A study estimated that about 10 million students have difficulties in reading. The good news is that 90 to 95 percent of reading impaired student can overcome their difficulties if they receive good and suitable remediation at early ages. (Kibby and Hynd 2001)

Proficient reading skill is leading to success. If students are not good readers, they are in danger for behavioral, social, academic and emotional difficulties. English teachers can help their students to get rid of failure in reading (reading difficulty) by intervening early and providing intensive and extensive instruction. Most teachers would love to help students make a daily habit of reading across a wide variety of texts. Moreover, good readers tend to be intrinsically motivated to read, and the amount of time they spend reading is highly correlated with their reading proficiency and overall academic success across all subject areas. Students who are less motivated to read, and who spend less time practicing their reading skills, often

experience frustrating academic difficulties. Motivation to read independently appears to be a key component of reading success and should be a goal of reading instruction. Teachers are not just responsible for providing instruction in the mechanics of text and reading, they also carry responsibility for instilling in all students a desire to read independently from a variety of sources. (Gersten and Geva 2003)

As a reading instructor, the researcher would like to study reading problems and the way to solve the problems of English reading skill of Matthayom Sueksa 3 students at Klongmaungpittayacom school in Nakhon Ratchasima. The result of this study can help reading instructors improve student reading skill and teaching methods.

## Objectives of Research

1. To study the problems of English reading skill of Matthayom Sueksa 3 students at Klongmaungpittayacom school in Nakhon Ratchasima.

2. To find the ways to solve the problems of English reading skill of Matthayom Sueksa 3 students at Klongmaungpittayacom school in Nakhon Ratchasima.

## Research Methodology

### Research Design

The current research is both qualitative research and quantitative research procedures. Thus, the way of data collection mainly emphasized on the result of making a survey by designing questionnaire, interviewing people, participant. Every stage of data collection is performed step by step to make things easier and useful to value the study.

Quantitative data is provided the participants' attitudes towards the reading aloud, the information obtained from the questionnaire was analyzed by mean and standard deviation (S.D.), and then it was interpreted. The data obtained from the questionnaire was tallied for frequency and calculated for the mean. This mean showed how they felt about reading-aloud.

Qualitative research provides for participant observation in the class when participants are making presentation and then analyzing its result gathered from Matthayom Sueksa 3 students at Klongmaungpittayacom School in Nakhon Ratchasima.

### Population and Sample of Study

The population of the study will be 63 students in Matthayom Sueksa 3 Students at Klongmaungpittayacom School, Chakkarat, Nakhon Ratchasima Province. They are taking an English course in the first semester of 2019-2020 academic years. Key Informants

The researcher selects 5 teachers who are teaching Thai language and English courses at Matthayom Sueksa 3 at Klongmaungpittayacom school, Chakkarat, Nakhon Ratchasima Province.

### Instruments for Quantitative Data Collection

Questionnaires are planned as major data collecting instruments for this study because it helped the researcher to get necessary information on students' feeling about their reading skill, their opinion and how it affected their academic results. It answered the research questions partially. The questionnaires were self-administered and close ended questions with amount of 21 questions. The researcher chose to set closed ended questions to maintain uniformity of response and there was space for to give their own free opinions too. The questionnaire was answered by all the students (who were 63 in number). The questionnaire consisted of cross check questions, with four choices for each. In this way the quantitative data were collected.

For collecting quantitative data, the researcher uses tools of questionnaire.

**Data analysis**

Statistical procedures used to analyze the processed data are descriptive statistics, percentages, and analytical statistics. It can be described as follows:

1. Exploring a variety of related documentary researches that help to analyze and synthesize the data.

2. Analyzing the data from questionnaire on assess the problems of English Reading directly from the levels of secondary School 63 students in Matthayom Sueksa 3 students at Klongmaungpittayacom which is consisted of respondents' general background, opinions and research suggestions.

3. Analyzing the data from in interview and note-taking about finding the ways to solve the problems of English Reading Skill in Matthayom Sueksa 3 students at Klongmaungpittayacom

## Results of Research

Findings are presented in response to the research questions as follow.

**Findings one:**

*Table 1* The problems from students' reading behavior.

| No | Statements | $\bar{X}$ | S.D. | interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Students' English textbooks are too difficult. | 2.68 | 1.01 | High |
| 2 | The student of English language has a limited vocabulary | 2.65 | 0.94 | High |
| 3 | Students have a weak self- confidence in their abilities to read | 2.68 | 1.09 | High |
| 4 | Students feel shame during the practice of reading, | 2.79 | 0.96 | High |
| 5 | English words seem difficult to pronounce. | 2.77 | 1.11 | High |
| 6 | English sentence seems rather difficult to do it correctly | 2.38 | 0.92 | Moderate |
| 7 | Not know what I am speaking | 2.60 | 1.14 | High |
| | **Total** | **2.62** | **1.02** | **High** |

*Table 2* The problems from students' elementary

| No | Statements | $\bar{\text{X}}$ | S.D. | interpretation |
|----|-----------|-----|------|----------------|
| 1 | I do not understand English grammar. | 2.60 | 0.95 | High |
| 2 | I do not understand text book | 2.38 | 1.09 | Moderate |
| 3 | My basic English reading skills from elementary school is poor. | 2.73 | 0.97 | High |
| 4 | I have bad experience about English reading. | 2.42 | 1.08 | Moderate |
| 5 | I do not like learning English reading. | 2.22 | 1.00 | Moderate |
| 6 | I do not have an effort of English reading. | 2.53 | 1.11 | High |
| 7 | I do not have the goal of English reading skills. | 2.65 | 1.00 | High |
| 8 | My vocabulary is poor. | 2.60 | 1.08 | High |
| | **Total** | **2.51** | **1.03** | **High** |

### Findings two:

*Table 3* The ways to solve the problems of English Reading Skill

| No | Statements | $\bar{\text{X}}$ | S.D. | interpretation |
|----|-----------|-----|------|----------------|
| 1 | Teachers should pronounce words clearly. | 2.57 | 1.02 | High |
| 2 | Students read texts repeatedly | 2.44 | 1.05 | Moderate |
| 3 | Students read text loudly to overcome shame during reading. | 2.47 | 0.99 | Moderate |
| 4 | Teachers should write words on the board to overcome student forgetting the forms of words. | 2.52 | 1.07 | High |
| 5 | Teachers should give students assignments that involve reading English at home. | 2.61 | 1.16 | High |
| 6 | Teachers should increase student' s English vocabulary. | 2.57 | 1.13 | High |
| | **Total** | **2.53** | **1.07** | **High** |

### In-depth interviews

The results drawn from the interview indicated that the subjects needed to read reports, journals, textbooks and research abstracts in the field of veterinary

medicine. The major purposes for reading these materials were to do reports, obtain further knowledge and deepen understanding of the lessons. According to the interview, the most serious problem of the subjects was that they were unable to understand unfamiliar general vocabulary. Furthermore, the subjects largely encountered difficulties in understanding complex sentences. The interview also revealed that the subjects generally consulted a dictionary to look up the meaning of unknown words. Without a dictionary, they used the context to guess the meaning. To interpret complex sentences, they separated embedded clauses from the sentence so that the bare structure was clarified. Furthermore, the subjects simplified complex sentences by translating them from English into Thai. One important strategy for reading the texts was the use of background knowledge which helped the subjects guess the meanings of unknown words and facilitate understanding of what they read. The other strategies that they used to improve their text comprehension were circling key words, underlining important information and summarizing each paragraph.

## Conclusion and Discussion

### Opinions on problems of English reading skill

Findings of the study clarified that reading problems were due largely to educational factors and there was no single cause for reading problems, the problems was due to a composite of related conditions. After analyzing the research findings, the researcher was able to conclude of the students problem faced in speaking English problems were included; students' English textbooks were too difficult, English language has a limited vocabulary, students have a weak self-confidence in their abilities to read, students feel shame during the practice of reading, English words seem difficult to pronounce. According to Richek, et al. (1996: 88), essential components of an effective reading include reading experiences and strategy instruction. Students should be encouraged to read more.

Nevertheless, students' elementary faced a lot of problems in reading the English academic materials. Interpreting general terms were perceived as the most serious problems, followed by problems of technical terms.  This is consistent with Anderson ( 1999)  who remarks that vocabulary deficiency can cause difficulties in comprehending texts.  The findings revealed that the key solution to these lexical problems was consulting a dictionary.  The subjects mostly consulted a dictionary when they came across unfamiliar words.  Meckhayai ( 1992)  reinforces that a dictionary is the most valuable tool for readers who need to read textbooks, or other materials containing technical language and difficult words.  However, the subjects' frequent use of a dictionary is incompatible with the results concerning the reading problems.  Most subjects confronted the difficulties in understanding general and technical terms even though they usually find word meaning from a dictionary. It is possible that they did not know how to employ this tool effectively. This might also lead them to a problem in selecting an appropriate meaning of words with various meanings.

**Opinions on the ways to solve the problems of English reading skill**

The  researcher  mentioned  different  ways  that  could  be  effective remedies for reading difficulty.  Most of these ways could be created by the teacher of English and the student in the learning process. The researcher chose difference ways to make students to learn such as:  students read texts repeatedly, students read text loudly to overcome shame during reading, teachers should write words on the board to overcome student forgetting the forms of words and teachers should increase student's English vocabulary. Therefore, one effective strategy for solving the lexical problems was the use of linguistic way for students as well.

However, teachers needed to identify and trained the students the use of ways that work for them during reading processes and advise the appropriate

strategies for them. In other words, teachers not only provide opportunities but also help students to be aware of the reading strategies available for reading academic materials (Gönen, 2015). How successful students perform is the product of teachers guiding them in and outside the classroom (Lemjinda & Nata, 2018). It is necessary for teachers to help shape the students' knowledge in the use of reading strategies and to develop their ability to self-monitor their understanding, adapt their reading strategies, reflect their knowledge during academic reading and increase their ability to learn independently.

## Suggestions

### Suggestions for the further study

Based on the result and information from the study, the researcher gives the recommendations for teachers, students and recommendations for the further study as the following:

### Recommendation for teachers

1) Teachers should select more sufficient reading materials in a way, which focus on all the major reading skills, if needed teachers can adapt the materials by adding up different reading activities to build students' reading skills.

2) Teachers should motivate students about significances of English reading.

### Recommendation for students

1) Students should help themselves for improving their reading skills. They have to find out their weakness and try to overcome them with the help of their teachers and peers.

2) Students should be made aware of the purpose of reading a text by their teacher.

### Recommendation for the further study

1) Precisely explore the effectiveness of other task-based programs in

developing students' reading skills as well as their fluency.

2) Further study should strive study as daily activity and should not look down on language like easy thing.

3) Suggestion for English reading skills or overcome the problems and find a better technique for effectiveness of English reading.

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