

Opinions Towards the Use of Reciprocal Teaching Strategy in English Reading of Thai Lower Secondary Level Students

ความคิดเห็นต่อการใช้กลวิธีการสอนแบบแลกเปลี่ยนบทบาท
ในการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนไทยระดับมัธยมศึกษาตอนต้น

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Abstract

Reciprocal Teaching Strategy (RTS) is an interesting strategy for reading activities which helps develop English reading abilities. This study investigated Thai lower secondary school students' opinions on the use of RTS while reading in English. The investigation was conducted with 40 students enrolled in the eighth grade at a public school in the Huaiyot district of Trang province. The non-probability sampling method was utilized. The participants were in an intact class which was an already-formed group with a similar English proficiency level. Quantitative data were collected through opinion questionnaires and calculated with means and standard deviations. Qualitative data were obtained from open-ended questions in the questionnaires, interviews, and the teacher's logs. It was found that most students agreed with the use of the reciprocal teaching strategy in English reading; that is, they had positive opinions on using RTS stages of predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing and the exchange of leading roles in a discussion group. It can be inferred from the findings that RTS can be an engaging tool in a reading class and can enhance students' inspiration to improve their English reading skills and to develop more positive attitudes when reading texts in English.

Keywords: opinions on the use of RTS, reciprocal teaching strategy, English reading, lower secondary school students

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บทคัดย่อ

กลวิธีการสอนแบบแลกเปลี่ยนบทบาทเป็นกลยุทธ์หนึ่งที่น่าสนใจสำหรับกิจกรรมการอ่านซึ่งช่วยพัฒนาความสามารถในการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษ การศึกษานี้สำรวจความคิดเห็นของนักเรียนไทยระดับมัธยมศึกษาตอนต้นเกี่ยวกับการใช้กลวิธีการสอนแบบแลกเปลี่ยนบทบาทในการอ่านเรื่องภาษาอังกฤษ กลุ่มตัวอย่าง คือ นักเรียนจำนวน 40 คน ที่ลงทะเบียนเรียนในระดับชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 2 โรงเรียนของรัฐแห่งหนึ่งในอำเภอห้วยยอด จังหวัดตรัง สุ่มกลุ่มตัวอย่างโดยไม่ใช้ความน่าจะเป็น ซึ่งได้มาโดยการเลือกจากห้องเรียนที่มีอยู่แล้วและมีผลการเรียนรายวิชาภาษาอังกฤษใกล้เคียงกัน ข้อมูลเชิงปริมาณได้มาจากแบบสอบถามความคิดเห็น สถิติที่ใช้ในการวิเคราะห์ ได้แก่ ค่าเฉลี่ยและส่วนเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน ข้อมูลเชิงคุณภาพได้มาจากคำถามปลายเปิดในแบบสอบถาม การสัมภาษณ์ และบันทึกการสังเกตของครู ผลการสำรวจความคิดเห็นของนักเรียนต่อการใช้กลวิธีการสอนแบบแลกเปลี่ยนบทบาท พบว่า นักเรียนส่วนใหญ่เห็นด้วยกับการใช้กลวิธีการสอนแบบแลกเปลี่ยนบทบาทในการอ่านเรื่องภาษาอังกฤษ กล่าวคือ นักเรียนมีความคิดเห็นเชิงบวกต่อขั้นตอนการเดาเรื่อง การตั้งคำถาม การตรวจสอบความเข้าใจ และการสรุปเรื่อง ตลอดจนการแลกเปลี่ยนบทบาทการเป็นผู้นำในกลุ่มอภิปราย จึงสรุปได้ว่าการใช้กลวิธีการสอนแบบแลกเปลี่ยนบทบาทสามารถเป็นเครื่องมือที่น่าสนใจในชั้นเรียนการอ่านเรื่องภาษาอังกฤษ และอาจช่วยเพิ่มแรงบันดาลใจของนักเรียนในการพัฒนาทักษะการอ่านเรื่องภาษาอังกฤษ และพัฒนาทัศนคติเชิงบวกมากขึ้นเมื่ออ่านข้อความภาษาอังกฤษ

คำสำคัญ

ความคิดเห็นต่อการใช้กลวิธีการสอนแบบแลกเปลี่ยนบทบาท กลวิธีการสอนแบบแลกเปลี่ยนบทบาท การอ่านเรื่องภาษาอังกฤษ นักเรียนระดับชั้นมัธยมศึกษาตอนต้น

Introduction

In a knowledge-based society, reading plays an important role. It is a way to find out new information or learn new things when most resources are written in English. The Office of the Education Council (2017) emphasizes that reading has become an important skill for learning in the 21st century since it is a tool to encourage lifelong learning because it is regarded as one of the most important abilities for learners to access a huge quantity of information on a variety of subjects. As a result, reading skill improvement is seen as a primary objective of English instruction. The use of strategies for teaching reading comprehension by English teachers is infrequent (Wibisono et al., 2019; Wibowo et al., 2020). Wibisono et al. (2019) also claimed that in reading, students faced difficulties in identifying the main ideas of the texts, and the reading teaching was monotonous since the teachers seldom applied varying strategies in reading activities. Previous research has demonstrated that the level of English reading competence among Thai students is unsatisfactory since they face difficulty with English reading comprehension (Uraiman, 2012; Chomchaiya, 2014). Thai schools' pedagogical teaching was a significant factor. One claim is that many instructors taught children to read only by translating materials for them (Sawangsamutchai & Rattanavich, 2016). In addition, Tamrakitkun (2010) and Rawengwan and Yawiloeng (2020) mentioned that Thai students were bored and unmotivated because Thai English teachers still used teacher-centered methods in teaching English. They became passive

learners to absorb information without engaging with the information received and sharing opinions with others in reading activities. Kongkerd (2013) emphasized that Thai English teachers often read aloud and asked students to follow sentence by sentence and then answer questions. Based on the researcher's teaching experience, students at the lower secondary level are unable to summarize and identify important information when reading in English because they may not be properly trained to improve their reading abilities. Consequently, Thai students were limited in reading and thinking independently. From this limitation, there needs reconsideration of how to apply appropriate strategies in English reading class.

Teachers need to think carefully and choose the most appropriate methods and techniques. According to Fahas (2021), it was claimed that choosing a good technique needs to be considered based on the students' abilities and their needs so that their interest can be increased. Some experts recommended certain teaching strategies to improve reading skills. One method is Reciprocal Teaching Strategy (RTS). Palinscar and Brown (1984), Cotterall (1990), and Allen (2003) suggest that RTS helps readers understand texts and they can observe their advancement. According to Meyer (2010), the use of RTS also promotes higher-order thinking skills by encouraging students to reflect on their cognitive processes while involved in reading activities. Interestingly, students' questioning and answering during reading can contribute to the enhancement of both reading comprehension and critical thinking skills. RTS encourages students to actively participate in collaborative discussions in which they can share their opinions and interpretations in groups. These interactions facilitate the development of reading abilities (Tolongtong & Adunyarittigun, 2020)

It uses a sociocultural strategy to model, explain and teach strategies in a sociable and supportive atmosphere. "Predicting", "questioning", "clarifying", and "summarizing" are the four processes of RTS to improve reading comprehension and critical thinking skills. To provide further explanation, "predicting" is using prior knowledge to discuss or predict what the text might be about. Readers can later check their guesses while reading. Next, "questioning" helps students identify the main ideas and important information by asking questions about the content in the text to check their understanding. Then, "clarifying" means students identify unclear or difficult parts of the reading text. Finally, "summarizing" indicates whether students understand the text by summarizing the main ideas and important information. According to Ghorbani et al. (2013), the teacher (for this study, also the researcher) takes on the primary responsibility of modeling the four strategies, which are predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing in the early stages of using RTS. The teacher, or dialogue leader, teaches and models these strategies to improve students' comprehension skills. After modeling, students take turns leading group discussions and applying the strategies to other parts of the text. The teacher serves as a facilitator providing guidance and feedback. Students are trained to take on and share most of the tasks and thinking when the teacher fades from modeling. (Palinscar & Brown, 1984).

It is expected that reading comprehension and reading attitudes of students could be improved after using this strategy. This study aimed to experiment with the use of the Reciprocal Teaching Strategy in a reading class and to investigate the students' opinions towards reading in English after using RTS. This study could provide useful information for English teachers to improve

students' reading comprehension and critical reading with the use of RTS. Also, it is expected that RTS can be used for students' self-learning to comprehend various reading passages and to encourage their lifelong learning.

Objective and Research Question

The purpose of the study was to examine Thai lower secondary level students' attitudes and opinions about the use of Reciprocal Teaching Strategy in reading class. The research question addressed was: What are the students' attitudes and opinions towards the use of RTS in reading class?

Research Methodology

This study aimed to investigate students' attitudes and opinions on the application of the Reciprocal Teaching Strategy in reading class. Participants, instruments, treatment, data collection, and data analysis are described in this section.

1. Participants

The researchers employed a non-probability sampling technique. The study included 40 Mattayomsuksa 2 students from a population of four hundred and seventy-two who were grouped into the same homogeneous class at a public school in Huaiyot district, Trang province. They were in an intact class with similar English ability levels.

2. Instruments

The research instruments used to collect data consisted of RTS teaching materials, opinion questionnaire, interviews, and teacher's logs.

2.1 RTS Teaching Materials

The reading materials were adapted from a coursebook that was mandated by the Ministry of Education to be used with students enrolled in Mattayomsuksa 2 at a public school located in Trang, Thailand. The researcher chose 12 different sections from the textbook and then modified or added to those sections with various activities and practice exercises to make them suitable for the aim of this study. Twelve lesson plans were created to use Reciprocal Teaching Strategy. The first two passages were used for RTS training and the others were used for RTS practice. The topics of the 12 reading passages include:

Reading A Life in 2100 (For the 1st RTS training)

Reading B Life-savers! (For the 2nd RTS training)

Reading 1-10 (For RTS practice)

Reading 1 What's your best friend like?

Reading 2 Email of the week

Reading 3 Penpal exchange

Reading 4 Animals at risk

- Reading 5 African safari
- Reading 6 Strange but true!
- Reading 7 Robot World
- Reading 8 Red Nose Day
- Reading 9 The footprints in the snow
- Reading 10 Three British heroes

Teaching materials and lesson plans were examined by the three experts who were experienced English language teachers to ensure content validity and they were revised as advised. The IOC was found to be 0.95.

2.2 Opinion Questionnaire

The opinion questionnaire was designed to obtain students' opinions about the use of Reciprocal Teaching Strategy in reading class. There were 20 questions in Part A that examined students' attitudes after the use of Reciprocal Teaching Strategy. It had five scale values: 5 (strongly agree), 4 (agree), 3 (moderately agree), 2 (disagree), and 1. (strongly disagree). Part B included 4 open-ended questions. The questionnaire was translated into Thai to prevent students' misinterpretation. To ensure the content validity of the questionnaire, the items were verified by three experts and revised as suggested. The IOC level was found to be 0.86. The revised questionnaire was piloted with 30 Mattayomsuksa 2 students who were not involved in the main study. This group shared a similar language level with students in the main study. The reliability of the opinions questionnaires was 0.85 (See Appendix).

2.3 Interview Questions

The objective of the interview was to interact with group members to obtain qualitative information regarding the students' perspectives towards English reading via RTS. The questions were like those in the opinion questionnaire but they were in the form of open-ended questions. To ensure the content validity of the interview questions, they were verified by three experts and then revised as advised (See Appendix).

2.4 Teacher's Logs

The teacher's logs were used to document the researcher's observations of how students apply the four stages of RTS: predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing. It displayed how well the students performed during a reading class with RTS. It was also to discover if there were any problems while doing the reading activities. The structural form of the log was approved by the three experts (See Appendix).

3. The Treatment

This is quasi-experimental research. The treatment was conducted within a single academic term. Within each week, the class met for 90 minutes. It was divided into two phases.

First, the participants were trained on how to use RTS for reading the first two passages during the first two weeks. The teacher modelled the use of each strategy in reading activities from predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing. This was provided as a scaffolding stage to assist students and familiarize them with RTS use.

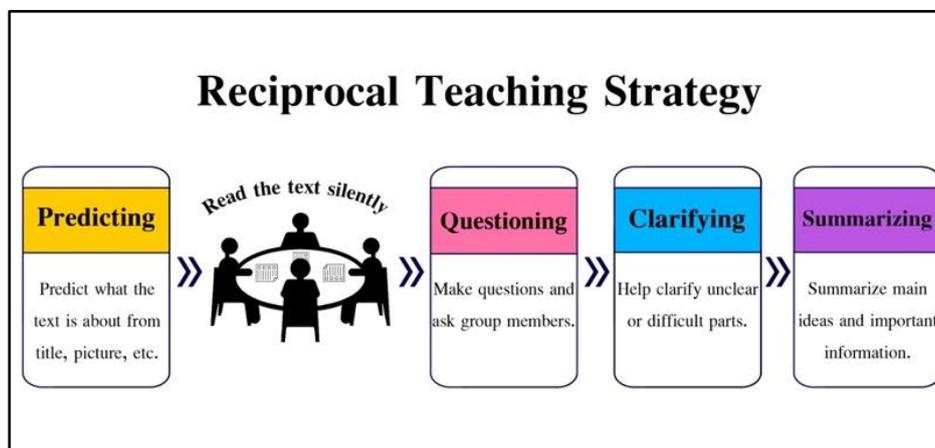
For the second phase, the participants were divided into 10 groups each consisting of 4 voluntary members. One member of each group acted as the leader of group discussions and led members to practice reading with the RTS process. Each week before class, the teacher asked 10 leaders from each group to get the reading text and helped them prepare as group leaders of the week. The following are the procedures for group work:

- Before reading the text, each leader asked the group members to anticipate the content of the text from the titles, pictures, or context. Then, everyone wrote down what they thought would happen.
- Everyone in each group, including the leaders, read the text in silence.
- Each leader made questions regarding the text, and group members contributed by providing answers and discussing their predictions. During the discussion, group members jotted down the responses.
- Each leader, along with the members of the group, contributed to the clarification of ambiguous or challenging sections within the reading text.
- Each leader asked group members to summarize the main ideas and important information.

The RTS procedure was repeated when each group was assigned to read the next text. Another member of the same group took a new role in leading the group discussion of the next text. Each member of a group took a role in leading the group discussion at least twice during the semester. The following figure shows the process of RTS in class.

Figure 1

The stages of Reciprocal Teaching Strategy (RTS)



During the reading process, Group members were allowed to communicate their ideas in both Thai and English. The teacher moved from group to group to monitor their discussion and to provide assistance if needed including observing and taking notes on the students' use of RTS.

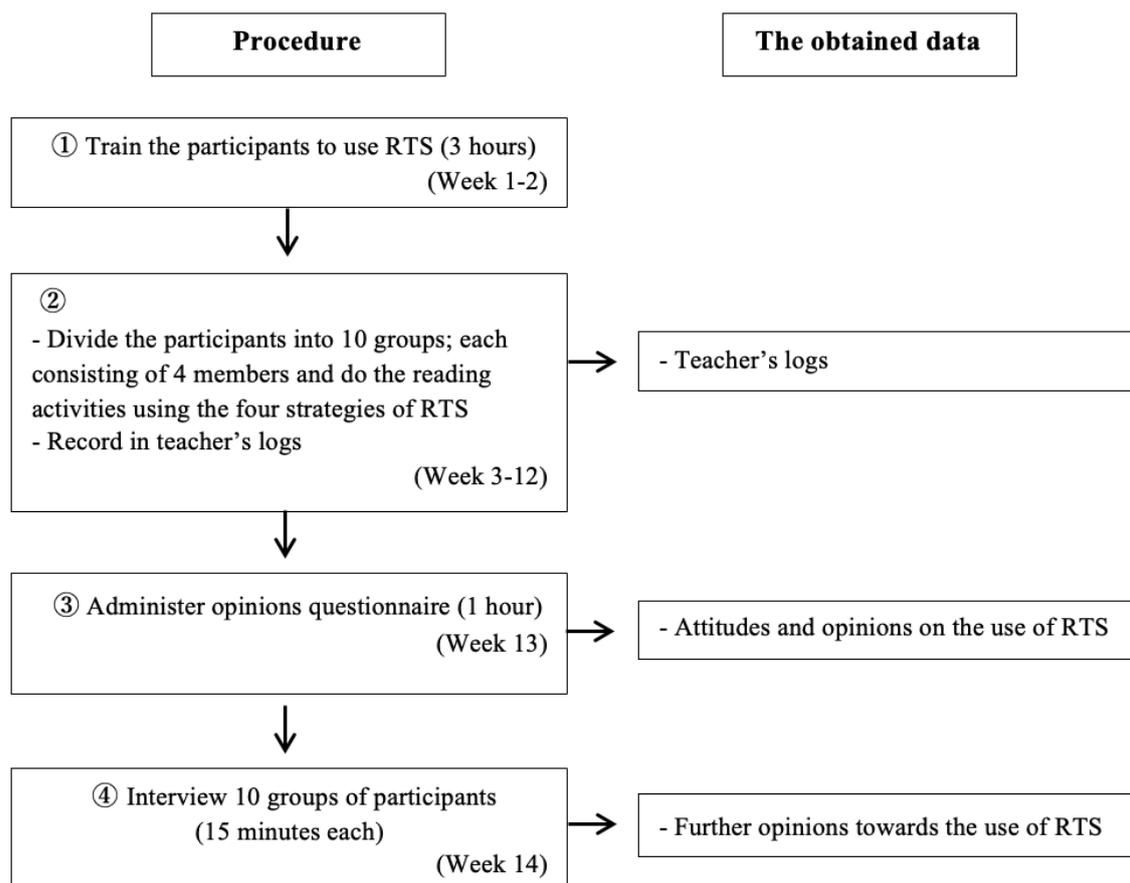
4. Data Collection

The data collection procedure can be described as follows.

During the treatment, observations on the use of the RTS stages were made and recorded in the teacher's logs weekly. At the end of the treatment, all participants were asked to complete the opinion questionnaire. One week later, the ten groups were asked to participate in the group interviews. A 15-minute interview was conducted with each group in Thai. The treatment and data collection process is summarized in Figure 2.

Figure 2

The Treatment and Data Collection Procedure



5. Data Analysis

Data from the opinion questionnaire were calculated with means and standard deviations.

Data from the open-ended questions, the interviews and teacher’s logs were analyzed, interpreted, and summarized.

Findings and Discussion

1. Students’ Opinions towards the Use of RTS in Reading Class

After using RTS, students were asked to respond to the opinion questionnaire and reflected their opinions in the interviews. The results are presented as follows.

Table 1

Students’ Opinions towards the Use of RTS

Statements	Mean	S.D.
2. I could understand English passages better when I read with my friends.	4.45	.68
1. I enjoyed reading English passages when I read with friends.	4.35	.80
14. RTS helps me finish reading the text.	4.10	.70
4. “Predicting” helped me understand English passages.	4.08	.70
20. I think other teachers should use RTS in reading classes.	4.03	1.00
13. RTS made me become an active reader.	3.98	.80
19. I will continue using RTS when I read.	3.98	.80
3. “Predicting” activated my background knowledge before reading.	3.95	.70
12. Being a group member makes me happier than being a group leader.	3.95	1.00
15. RTS helps me understand the whole text.	3.95	.90
5. “Questioning” helped me check my own understanding of the English passages.	3.90	.70
16. RTS helps me remember more words.	3.90	.90
17. RTS helps me think more critically.	3.90	.80
7. “Clarifying” helped me comprehend the difficult parts of English passages.	3.88	.90
9. “Summarizing” helped me focus on the main idea and important information of the English passages.	3.83	.70
18. RTS encourages me to read more.	3.83	.80
8. “Clarifying” helped me understand the correct meaning of the difficult or unknown words, phrases, or sentences.	3.68	.80
6. “Questioning” helped me to develop critical thinking skills.	3.65	.80
11. Being a group leader helps build up my confidence.	3.45	1.00
10. I like being a group leader.	3.38	1.10
Total	3.91	0.86

* Levels of agreement:

4.21-5.00 = strongly agree 3.41-4.20 = agree 2.61-3.40 = moderately agree
1.81-2.60 = disagree 0.00-1.80 = strongly disagree

As seen in Table 1 reorganized by the top mean ranks of students' opinions, "I could understand English passages better when I read with my friends" (item 2) was the students' opinion that they agreed with the most while the least was "I like being a group leader" (item 10). Overall, the results indicate that students "agree" with the use of the Reciprocal Teaching Strategy in English reading ($\bar{x} = 3.91$, $SD = 0.86$). Based on the results, it could be claimed that students had positive attitudes towards the use of RTS. Their opinions as shown in Table 1, triangulated with those from the interviews, the open-ended questions, and the teacher's logs, can be further drawn, classified, and discussed as follows.

2. Opinions towards Different Stages of RTS

The first stage is the "predicting" strategy. Students "agreed" that it activated their background knowledge before reading (Item 3: $\bar{x} = 3.95$, $SD = 0.70$) and helped them understand English passages (Item 4: $\bar{x} = 4.08$, $SD = 0.70$). From the group interviews, most students reported that they could use their background knowledge, titles, or pictures to predict the content of the passages. The predicting strategy encouraged them to easily guess what the reading texts were about. Some students mentioned that it was hard to guess about the reading text because of the lack of background knowledge. Also, it was observed that the predicting strategy was successful in engaging students in responding; that is, students actively attempted to guess the contents of the texts (Teacher's logs). The following statements from the open-ended questions and the interviews support these findings:

I liked to predict the content of the texts with friends. We helped each other to look for what the text was about but I did not enjoy predicting alone because it was too hard for me to guess the content within a limited time, particularly during tests.

(Student 17, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

We could better understand the text when we tried to predict what the text was about from pictures or titles before starting a reading.

Sometimes, we could not guess the content of the texts from the title since we did not know the meaning of the words, but pictures of the texts helped us to predict the content.

(Group interviews, personal communication, March 12, 2020)

The second stage is the "questioning" strategy. This helped students check their own understanding of the English passages (Item 5: $\bar{x} = 3.90$, $SD = 0.70$) and helped them to develop critical thinking skills (Item 6: $\bar{x} = 3.65$, $SD = 0.80$). Combined with results from the interviews and the teacher's logs, it can be concluded that most students felt happy asking questions about the main ideas or important information of the reading texts. Some group leaders looked nervous while leading their groups to answer the questions (Teacher's logs). This stage made them understand the texts and improve their analytical thinking. However, some students found that it was not easy to cover all the

important information of the reading texts. Students' quotes from the interviews and the open-ended questions are displayed as follows:

I enjoyed sharing the ideas or points of views in asking and answering the questions from the reading texts.

(Student 24, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

I felt relaxed to answer the questions when the group leader asked the questions. On the other hand, when it was my turn, I struggled with creating various questions to ask my group members to check their understanding of the reading text.

(Student 1, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

The questioning strategy gave us a chance to analyse interesting issues in order to answer the questions correctly and also enhance our analytical thinking.

(Group interviews, personal communication, March 12, 2020)

The third stage is the “clarifying” strategy, which helped them comprehend the difficult parts of English passages (Item 7: $\bar{x} = 3.88$, $SD = 0.90$) and helped them understand the correct meaning of the difficult or unknown words, phrases, or sentences (Item 8: $\bar{x} = 3.68$, $SD = 0.80$). It was observed that most students enjoyed clarifying the difficult parts (Teacher’s logs). Students mentioned that the clarifying strategy worked well because they could understand the English texts clearly and could identify the main ideas of the English texts. Students’ additional opinions from the interviews and the open-ended questions are as follows:

I thought that the clarifying strategy was useful since it made me clear about confusing things from the reading texts such as the meanings of words.

(Student 34, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

I learned many new words from the reading texts when the group leader led to clarify the difficult parts of English texts.

(Student 2, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

We liked this stage because we can recheck our understanding whether it was correct.

(Group interviews, personal communication, March 12, 2020)

The last stage is the “summarizing” strategy. Students “agreed” that it helped them focus on the main idea and important information of the English passages (Item 9: $\bar{x} = 3.83$, $SD = 0.70$). Most students took the view that they comprehend more by summarizing the main points of the reading text (Group interviews). Also, the summarizing strategy guided them to realize that they did not have to understand every part of the reading texts. Consequently, it

was found that some groups could not cover all the reading text content (Teacher's logs). The following quotes from the open-ended questions confirmed these findings.

Summarizing the texts helped me understand the important information easily and quickly.

(Student 16, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

RTS helped me to feel more confident when I had to reach a conclusion for the English reading texts about what the main idea or important detail was.

(Student 39, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

3. Opinions towards Group Working Guring RTS

It was found that students enjoyed reading English passages when they read with friends (Item 1: $\bar{x} = 4.35$, $SD = 0.80$). Students could understand English passages better when they read with their friends (Item 2: $\bar{x} = 4.45$, $SD = 0.68$). They also like being a group leader (Item 10: $\bar{x} = 3.38$, $SD = 1.10$). Being a group leader helps build up their confidence (Item 11: $\bar{x} = 3.45$, $SD = 1.00$). Being a group member makes them happier than being a group leader (Item 12: $\bar{x} = 3.95$, $SD = 1.00$). Most students felt happy and satisfied reading various reading texts in groups. They looked relaxed reading texts with friends (Teacher's logs). They opined that reading with group members helps improve their reading ability (Group interviews). This made them understand the main points or important information of the reading texts. The quotes from the open-ended questions are shown below:

I enjoyed reading the reading texts in the group.

(Student 9, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

I felt confident when reading texts with friends.

(Student 4, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

I liked working in my group because I can share information and opinions and we can help each other.

(Student 35, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

4. How RTS Makes Better Readers

Based on the findings, RTS made students become active readers (Item 13: $\bar{x} = 3.98$, $SD = 0.80$). RTS helped students understand the whole text (Item 15: $\bar{x} = 3.95$, $SD = 0.90$) and finish reading the text (Item 14: $\bar{x} = 4.10$, $SD = 0.70$). Moreover, RTS helped students think more critically (Item 17: $\bar{x} = 3.90$, $SD = 0.80$) and helped students remember more words (Item 16: $\bar{x} = 3.90$, $SD = 0.90$). Most students thought that RTS made them become better readers since they could understand some difficult parts of the texts or find the main ideas with the stages of RTS (Group interviews). Some students' opinions from the open-ended questions are presented below:

I could understand the texts and identify main ideas when I read them with the use of RTS.

(Student 28, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

RTS made me read the texts analytically.

(Student 13, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

RTS helped me know my own reading strategies. This made me understand the whole text or main ideas easily when I read the reading texts using appropriate strategies such as reading texts with friends.

(Student 31, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

5. How RTS Becomes Inspirational for Readers of the English Language

According to the findings, it can be concluded that RTS encouraged students to read more (Item 18: $\bar{x} = 3.83$, $SD = 0.80$) and continued using RTS when reading in English (Item 19: $\bar{x} = 3.98$, $SD = 0.80$). Most students thought other teachers should use RTS in reading classes (Item 20: $\bar{x} = 4.03$, $SD = 1.00$). Most students mentioned that they still apply RTS in their English reading (Group interviews). Some excerpts from the open-ended questions are shown below:

I liked to read the texts with the use of RTS because I enjoy sharing ideas with group members.

(Student 38, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

I learned difficult new words after reading with RTS.

(Student 25, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

RTS helped me improve both analytical thinking and metacognitive awareness.

(Student 6, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

6. Problems and Challenges

Although most students responded positively towards RTS, some problems were found. Firstly, being a group leader became an issue during RTS. As seen in Table 1, being a group leader was perceived with the lowest score (Item 10: $\bar{x} = 3.38$, $SD = 1.10$) because several students did not like being a group leader. It was found that some students felt uncomfortable to lead group members in reading the texts (Teacher's logs). While some students enjoyed being a group leader, more than half felt uncomfortable. According to the interviews and the open-ended questions, the following are quotes from the students:

I did not like to be a group leader. I was not confident in myself when group members stared at me while I was speaking.

(Student 12, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

I felt bad when my friends did not listen to what I tried to describe during the RTS process.

(Student 33, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

We felt pressured when we had to help group members understand the passages. We were afraid of making some mistakes especially with difficult passages.

(Group interviews, personal communication, March 12, 2020)

However, some enjoyed being leaders as shown in the following report:

Being a group leader gave me the courage to speak up or share the ideas confidently in front of my friends.

(Student 19, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

I was satisfied to be a group leader because it made me more active to prepare myself before starting reading activities.

(Student 6, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

However, it could be noticed that students who acted as group leaders were quite nervous while they were leading group members to read the passages only in the first three weeks, and they gradually became more confident later (Teacher's logs). Secondly, some students viewed that the four stages of RTS were quite complicated (Group interviews). The following are examples of students' views:

I did not want to memorize what to do in the reading process.

(Student 7, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

It took too much time to follow the procedures from predicting to summarizing. One text took 90 minutes. For me, I could read 2 - 3 reading texts within this time.

(Student 24, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

When considering the group interviews, some students stated it was boring to read easy texts with RTS because it wasted time. However, most students felt happy because RTS could help them comprehend difficult texts even if they spent more time reading.

Interestingly, some students suggested something that might be useful for teaching reading as follows:

Working with the same group to read ten reading texts using RTS was quite boring, so I would prefer to work with other groups when I read a new text.

(Group interviews, personal communication, March 12, 2020)

Games should be applied as an activity for "questioning" to ask and answer the questions from the reading texts for more challenging and joyful learning.

(Student 40, personal communication, March 5, 2020)

Discussions

Based on the findings, it can be inferred that students had positive opinions regarding RTS and perceived it as a helpful reading strategy. A similar result was found by Ramadan (2017) and Rawengwan and Yawiloeng (2020) that students hold positive attitudes towards reading comprehension using Reciprocal Teaching Strategies. They considered the four strategies useful in facilitating reading comprehension. As a result, they learned how to make guesses about the content of the reading texts using their prior knowledge or titles and pictures, to ask and answer questions, to clarify any confusing information or difficult words, and to summarize the main ideas of the texts or important information. The use of the four stages of RTS took place within the social context of the classroom, which consisted of two primary interactions: the first was between the teacher and the students, and the second was between the students themselves. Students were observed to cooperate and to actively contribute during group work. This is relevant to Soranastaporn and Ratanakul's findings (2000) who claimed that students had opportunities to share their ideas with others and develop their reading comprehension. Many enjoyed being a group leader and building self-confidence by helping their peers. This finding corresponds with the previous study showing that more capable students provided less capable students with guidance and support (Adunyaritigun, 1999). Finally, students in this study mentioned that they would apply RTS in the future when reading English texts. This result shows that RTS can be an essential reading tool for fostering autonomous readers to encourage their lifelong learning. This implication is consistent with Palincsar's (2013) findings who claimed that RTS helped motivate students to apply relevant strategies to be successful readers.

Conclusion

Students have positive opinions towards the use of RTS at all stages: predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing. The findings show that most students enjoyed reading texts in English through RTS, especially reading texts in groups because they could share knowledge or opinions from those reading activities. It is useful for them to listen to various points of view from their group members. Moreover, "questioning" is a meaningful stage of RTS to motivate them to dig into the texts so that they improve their analytical thinking. As a result, RTS should be an effective strategy for English teachers to apply in reading class as it can be viewed as a supportive learning tool which can produce autonomous readers carrying on their lifelong learning.

Implications from the Study

This study implies that the use of four strategies in the RTS should be explicitly taught in English reading classes. Students should be given enough time to practice each strategy, apply the RTS in reading tasks, and take the role of discussion leader. The teacher gradually minimizes support when students apply RTS in English reading by themselves. Among the 4 strategies, there should be an emphasis on questioning, as different kinds of questions indicate various levels of critical thinking. Training students to formulate questions of different cognitive levels is essential for the development of comprehension and

critical thinking. To add pleasure and interest to the questioning strategy, games or competitions are recommended.

Recommendations for Future Studies

1. The study found that students took turns as leaders for group discussions, resulting in different reactions and perceptions. Further research should explore how role differences impact learning and acquisition.

2. The study also found that students worked in the same group for the entire semester, which may constrain their learning experience. Further research should consider group members' rotation to improve the learning experience.

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APPENDICES

Opinion Questionnaire

“Opinions toward Reciprocal Teaching Strategy (RTS)”

Part A: Tick in the box where it is appropriate with you.

Levels of agreement: 5 = strongly agree 4 = agree 3 = moderately agree
2 = disagree 1 = strongly disagree

Items	Levels of agreement				
	5	4	3	2	1
1. I enjoyed reading English passages when I read with friends.					
2. I could understand English passages better when I read with my friends.					
3. “Predicting” activated my background knowledge before reading.					
4. “Predicting” helped me understand English passages.					
5. “Questioning” helped me check my own understanding of the English passages.					
6. “Questioning” helped me have the critical thinking skills.					
7. “Clarifying” helped me comprehend the difficult parts of English passages.					
8. “Clarifying” helped me get the correct meaning of the difficult or unknown words, phrases, or sentences.					
9. “Summarizing” helped me focus on the main idea and important information of the English passages.					
10. I like being a group leader.					
11. Being a group leader helps build up my confidence.					
12. Being a group member makes me happier than being a group leader.					
13. The RTS made me become an active reader.					
14. RTS helps me finish the text.					

Items	Levels of agreement				
	5	4	3	2	1
15. RTS helps me understand the whole text.					
16. RTS helps me remember more vocabulary.					
17. RTS helps me think more critically.					
18. RTS encourages me to read more.					
19. I will continue using RTS when I read.					
20. I think other teachers should use the RTS in reading classes.					

Part B: Respond to the following questions in writing.

1. What are your general opinions/impressions about this practice method?
.....

2. What do you like about this practice?
.....

3. What do you dislike about this practice?
.....

4. What suggestions would you like to make?
.....

Interviews Questions

Group

1. Do you think that RTS is helpful to you in reading texts in English? How?
2. Do you like or dislike it? Why? Why not?
3. What do you think of each stage of RTS practice? How does each stage help you comprehend the text in English or develop your critical thinking ability?
4. Do you think other teachers should use the RTS in reading classes? Why? Why not?
5. How much are you satisfied with your role as the leader? Why?
6. How much are you satisfied with your role as a group member? Why?
7. What did you find as the problems or difficulties in using this method of reading practice?
8. What did you enjoy the most?
9. What did you enjoy the least?
10. In what way do you think you have improved yourself? (Reading ability, Thinking ability, Leadership skills, Communication, Cooperative learning, etc)

Teacher's logs

Date:

Time:

Title of the reading text:

Group

Predicting:

.....

Questioning:

.....

Clarifying:

.....

Summarizing:

.....

Remarks:

.....