



**GRADE 9 STUDENTS' USE OF READING STRATEGIES
IN AN ENGLISH STANDARD TEST**

BY

MR. THAMMANOON RATTANAMUNG

**AN INDEPENDENT STUDY PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULLFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
LANGUAGE INSTITUTE
THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY
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ENTITLED

GRADE 9 STUDENTS' USE OF READING STRATEGIES IN AN ENGLISH
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ABSTRACT

This study examines reading strategies used by Grade 9 students when taking the English Standard Test at Kasetsart University Laboratory School, Multilingual Program, Center for Educational and Development (KUSMP) in Chonburi. The research focuses on identifying the students' reading strategies and problems they encountered while completing the English reading comprehension part of the English Standard Test. The data were collected from twenty-seven mixed-ability Grade 9 students at KUSMP. The research instrument used was the interview divided into two parts: the reading strategy inquiry and the interview inquiring test taking problems. Quantitative results from the inquiry were analyzed using Microsoft Excel and reported in the forms of descriptive statistics (frequency distribution and percentage). The findings were categorized into three groups: cognitive, metacognitive, and compensating reading strategies. The second part of the interview examined students' problems when completing the English reading comprehension part of the test and also inquired about other strategies students thought they used in the test. The results reveal that the participants found reading and examination strategies useful when taking the English Standard Test. The results shed some light on how vital reading and examination strategies are to students when they perform a reading comprehension test.

Keywords: English Standard Test, reading strategies, secondary students

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

English is considered as the most important language in the world since English is a tool for global learning and communicative applications. In the era of globalization, most information, both academic and entertainment, presented in a variety of publications and on the internet, is in the English language. Additionally, English is worldwide accepted as the *lingua franca* of business and international communication. The trend of learning English as a foreign language (EFL) or English as a second language (ESL) along with one's mother tongue continues to grow around the world. In Thailand, English is a mandatory foreign language subject for Thai students in the basic educational level. Students from primary level to high school level have to study English and pass an examination as a requirement for graduation. Furthermore, English is one of the required subjects in the national examination for university admission.

Although English is a required subject in Thai school curriculums, the Thai educational system has failed in offering successful education in English. News reports show low rankings in English proficiency of Thai examinees compared to the examinees from other countries in ASEAN.

The Ministry of Education of Thailand has had a lot of campaigns and allocated substantial amounts of money to promote the English Standard Test to be merged with the school curriculum, using leading schools such as demonstration schools and provincial schools as the role model. The format of the English Standard Test consists of five parts: vocabulary, indirect listening and speaking ability, grammar, reading comprehension, and writing ability. The contents inside the test are taken from the core curriculum designed by the basic educational level that all students in Thailand are considered to have completely studied. From the last decade to the present, the trend of creating the English Standard Test is still the same just adjusted to make it more communicative and relevant to current events. But the statistics of the score results show that English is still in the low ranking compared to the other core subjects (ONET Test 2005 – 20012).

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There are several factors that cause students to perform poorly on the English Standard Test. These include lack of language competencies, insufficient vocabulary knowledge, negative attitudes towards learning English, and insufficient testing strategies. Since the above-stated factors affect some students and their results on the English Standard Test, these problems should be studied to find out the causes and create guidelines to help the students take the English Standard Test effectively.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Two objectives of the study are as follows:

1.3.1 To identify reading strategies used by Grade 9 students with different performance results of taking the English Standard Test at Kasetsart University Laboratory School, Multilingual Program, Center for Educational Research and Development (KUSMP).

1.3.2 To find what problems students encounter when taking the English Standard Test.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

1.4.1 What reading strategies do students use to apply when taking the English Standard test?

1.4.2 What problems do students encounter when taking the English Standard test?

1.5 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Definitions of terms of this study are as follows:

1.5.1 “Kasetsart University Laboratory School, Multilingual Program, Center for Educational Research and Development (KUSMP)” refers to the laboratory school located at 700/3, Moo 1, Klongtamru, Bangna-Trad Road, Muang Chonburi, Chonburi, 20000. The school initiates a multilingual program from primary to high school level.

1.5.2 “Students” refers to Grade 9 (Mathayom Suksa 3; M. 3) students at KUSMP.

1.5.3 “English Standard Test” refers to the paper test created for Grade 9 students taking the test. The school, KUSMP, has students in Grade 9 take the English Standard Test in the second semester annually.

1.5.4 “Strategies” refers to the techniques that students apply when taking the English Standard Test.

1.5.5 “Reading Strategies” refers to an action or sets of actions employed by readers in order to construct meaning from the context.

1.5.6 “Cognitive Strategies” refers to strategies which concern the mental manipulation or the transformation of new information, including repetition and the use of mechanical methods to acquire and gain information.

1.5.7 “Metacognitive Strategies (MET)” refers to strategies which involve overviewing, monitoring, planning, and evaluating the learning process of language in use and language learning in order to comprehend the language.

1.5.8 “Compensating Strategies” refers to strategies which involve the process of how to find the answers by using guessing methods from the context clues in order to comprehend the language.

1.5.9 “Language Learning Strategies” refers to techniques or learning processes that learners use to acquire the meaning of vocabulary when preparing for the English Standard Test effectively.

1.5.10 “Problems” refers to various English reading comprehension problems of Grade 9 (Mathayom Suksa 3; M. 3) students at KUSMP.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

In this study, the following issues are taken into consideration:

1.6.1 The population of the study includes Grade 9 (Mathayom Suka 3; M. 3) students at Kasetsart University Laboratory School, Multilingual Program, Center for Educational Research and Development. In total number of subjects were 120 students in academic year 2014. The sample covered 27 students out of 120 students coming from the mixed ability group of students.

1.6.2 The study mainly focuses on the strategies employed when students complete the reading part of the English Standard test. The strategies might include language learning, reading, and examination strategies.

1.6.3 The reason for choosing the target of students in Grade 9 as the subjects of the study is that they are the highest level in secondary school taking the English Standard Test at school annually.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings were limited only to Grade 9 (Mathayom Suksa 3; M. 3) students at Kasetsart University Laboratory School, Multilingual Program, Center for Educational Research and Development (KUSMP) during the second semester, academic year 2014. The other limitation is that the outcome of the study focuses on just one skill of English, reading comprehension.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

If this study finds that there is a relationship between language learning strategies and students' comprehension when taking the English Standard Test, it will be beneficial for both teachers and students. English teachers will consider and adjust their learning and teaching strategies of English with the students' language learning strategies in mind. Students will be able to apply language learning strategies in preparation for and when taking the English Standard Test systematically.

Moreover, teachers are able to plan and develop the learning and teaching methodology concerning the English Standard Test and prepare the students so that they will be more confident and capable when taking the English Standard Test.

1.9 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study is organized in the following order:

1.9.1 Chapter One is an introduction which consists of background, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, definitions of terms, scope of the study, limitations of the study, and significance of the study.

1.9.2 Chapter Two is the review of relevant literature that covers the topic of reading for comprehension, strategies for reading comprehension in the texts, problems in reading comprehension of students, and relevant research studies.

1.9.3 Chapter Three describes methodology, population and subjects, instruments, procedures and data analysis.

1.9.4 Chapter Four reports on the results of the study interpreted from the data collections.

1.9.5 Chapter Five provides a conclusions, discussions, and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the literature in three areas along with a summary: (1) definitions of reading comprehension, (2) reading strategies, and (3) relevant research.

2.1 DEFINITIONS OF READING COMPREHENSION

Reading is regarded as a multi-process dealing with constructing meaning from text in a wide range of contexts and various purposes. It is crucial to understand that decoding and reading words are part of the multi-process of reading (Adams, 1990). Reading for meaning consists of three main parts (Weaver, 1994). The first part of the reading is to pronounce and recognize words. The second part is to extract meaning from the words, and the third part is to interact with the texts. A lot of researchers agree with Weaver's third component of reading for meaning, which describes the interactive component of reading. For instance, Rumelhart (1997) explained the reading act as relevant to the readers, the texts, and the interaction between readers and texts. This is very similar to Alderson's and Urquhart's (1984) definition, declaring that there are two necessary aspects of reading: readers and texts. Furthermore, the reading comprehension level depends on the readers' background knowledge, language proficiency level, interests, the use of reading strategies, and cultural background knowledge about reading (Aebbersold & Field, 1997, p. 18).

Regarding comprehension, there are various definitions on different research studies. Vacca and Vacca (1989); Alvermann and Phelps (1998) believed that comprehension occurs when readers blend information from the texts and background knowledge they have had to produce the meaning. In the current research, reading is like an active and constructive procedure in which readers take part to reconstruct meaning from the contexts. Goodman (1970) viewed comprehension as one of the objectives of reading. There are three kinds of information in reading procedure: firstly, the graphic information, where readers visualize information. Then, both syntactic and semantic information are supplied when processing the visual input.

According to the explanation of Bernhardt and James (1987, p.66), comprehension is the processing of new information to the known information which is already stored in the readers' memory. It said that there are both new information and background knowledge combined to make readers' comprehension on the texts. It is similar to Koda's (2005)

statement, “comprehension occurs when the reader extracts and integrates various information from the text and combines it with what is already known” (p.4).

2.2 READING STRATEGIES

Reading strategies are the skills used for the readers to acquire the meaning in the text. The readers have to study the techniques to better comprehend a reading. Both teachers and researchers are willing to identify the activities that the readers use to comprehend the text. (Aebersold & Field, 1997, p. 15 – 16).

There are many aspects on reading strategies which the readers use it to comprehend the text successfully. These strategies are from Anderson et al. 1991; Barnette 1989; and Clarke 1979 as follows:

1. Recognize words quickly
2. Use text features (subheading, transitions, etc.)
3. Use title(s) to infer what information might follow
4. Use world knowledge
5. Analyze unfamiliar words
6. Identify the grammatical functions of words
7. Read for meaning, concentrate on constructing meaning
8. Use context to build meaning and aid comprehension
9. Guess about meaning of the text
10. Evaluate guessing and try new guessing if necessary
11. Monitor comprehension
12. Keep the purpose for reading the text in mind
13. Adjust strategies to the purpose for reading
14. Identify or infer main ideas
15. Understand the relationships between the parts of a text
16. Distinguish main ideas form minor details
17. Tolerate ambiguity in a text (at least temporarily)
18. Paraphrase
19. Continue reading even when unsuccessful, at least for a while

(cited in Aebersold & Giled 1997, p. 16)

According to the list above, it is not mentioned which strategies are most essential and who is likely to use them the most. However, the list continues to increase as more research into reading is conducted.

Oxford and Crookall (1989) declared strategies as techniques of learning behaviors, problem-solving or study skills which make more effective and efficient learning. In the learning of second language context, strategies can be useful in two ways: to make learning more effective and to develop comprehension. So reading strategies indicate how readers conceive a text, how they proceed to comprehend what they have read, and what they use to solve the problem when they do not understand the context.

Barnette (1988) categorized the effective reading strategies into two groups: text-level; and word-level. Text-level strategies use background knowledge, prediction, the use of topics and illustrations to comprehend, read for a purpose, skim and scan, which are related to reading the text as a whole or reading large parts of the text. Word-level strategies include guessing word meaning from the context clues, identifying words from the grammatical category, following referring words and recognizing meanings through word family and information.

Block (1986) indicates that there are two kinds of reading strategies: general comprehension and local linguistic strategies. General comprehension strategies include the following ten strategies

1. Anticipating content: Readers predict what content will occur in following sections of the text.
2. Recognizing text structure: Readers distinguish between main ideas and supporting details.
3. Integrated information: Readers relate new information to the previous ideas they have experienced.
4. Questioning information in the text: Readers question the particular content or the correctness of the content.
5. Interpreting the text: Readers make inferences, draw conclusions, or expect the results of the content.
6. Using general knowledge and associations: Readers use their own knowledge and experience to explain, evaluate, and react to the content from the text.
7. Commenting on behavior or process: Readers are aware of the reading process when trying to understand the content of the text.

8. Monitoring comprehension: Readers assess their degree of understanding of the text.

9. Correcting behavior: Readers change the facts when noticing that an earlier assumption, interpretation, or paraphrase is not correct.

10. Reacting to the context: Readers react to the surrounding information in the text.

Local linguistic strategies include of the following five strategies:

11. Paraphrasing: Readers use different words to produce content with the same meaning as the target material.

12. Rereading: Readers reread parts of the text both out loud and silently to comprehend the meaning from the text.

13. Questioning meaning of a clause or sentence: Readers question themselves when reading a clause or sentence they do not understand.

14. Questioning meaning of a word: Readers question themselves when reading a specific word.

15. Solving vocabulary problem: Readers use context clues, a synonym, or some other techniques to solve the word problem in order to comprehend a particular word.

Anderson (1999) supported the idea that the think aloud protocol or metacognitive skills are the necessary skills of the readers of second language use while reading. He believed these two strategies are the factors that influence reading comprehension. He categorized reading strategies into three main areas: cognitive reading strategies, metacognitive reading strategies, and compensating reading strategies.

Cognitive reading strategies involve the learners' interactions with material to be learned by manipulating it mentally or physically such as by making mental images, grouping items into correct categories, or taking notes on important information to be remembered. (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990) There are ten strategies under the line of cognitive strategies as follows; resourcing, grouping, note-taking, summarizing, deduction, imagery, orditory representation, elaboration, transferring, and inferring.

Metacognitive reading strategies concern the executive processes in planning to learn, monitor one's comprehension and production, and evaluate how well one has achieved a learning objective (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). Metacognitive strategies consist of seven areas as follows; advance organization, advance preparation, organizing planning, selective attention, self-monitoring, self-evaluation, and self-management.

Compensating reading strategies are communication strategies used by learners to compensate for limitations in their target language. Different kinds of learners have preferences for different kinds of learning strategies, for example female learners tend to prefer social and affective strategies and monolingual learners may favor compensation strategies. Guessing the meaning when you don't understand and using gestures are the classic examples of compensation strategies. These strategies are mostly used when learners take tests (www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/compensation-strategies).

Three of the reading strategies above were used to create the checklist in this research study for investigation the students' use of reading strategies in the English Standard Test.

2.3 RELEVANT RESEARCH

There is large number of researchers that have studied the area of reading strategies. The previous studies are mentioned in many aspects of reading strategies such as reading techniques in classroom, reading comprehension promotion in classroom, and examination, especially in second or foreign language. The following are some of the previous research studies on reading strategies of ESL / EFL students.

Wutthisingchai (2011) investigated the English reading comprehension problems in academic texts of Grade 11 students from different English programs at Thai Christian School, Thailand, academic year 2010. The participants were asked to do the questionnaire on students' perceptions of their English reading comprehension problems. There were two sections in the questionnaire. They consisted of general information and a survey of reading comprehension problems in academic texts. It was found that the participants were not sure in which areas they had reading comprehension problems. This prevented them from improving themselves in reading comprehension. One desire they voiced was that reading texts should be contemporary and relate to their background knowledge. The study showed that there were no differences in English reading comprehension problems in three different English programs in Grade 11 students at Thai Christian School, Thailand.

Chawwang (2008) investigated reading problems of Grade 12th students in Nakhonratchasima Educational Regions 1, 2, 3, and 7, Thailand, academic year 2006. The participants were asked to take a reading test to test their English reading ability. The test consisted of three parts: sentence structure, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. It was found that the reading ability of participants in three areas was very low. Most of them gave the wrong answers on the test. However, the findings results told that the students had

problems in all three areas of the reading test. Furthermore, the reading ability of the students in Science and Arts programs was also examined. The study showed that there were no differences in reading ability between the two groups.

Brashdi (2002) studied of the nature problems the students encountered in comprehension English text and the way they processed such texts. In this study, it was reported that the vocabulary was the most difficult part for students' comprehension. The other comprehension problem was concerned about the writing style, speed of reading, difficulty of getting the main idea of the text, and not having enough time for reading. Furthermore, he also investigated that there were students with high and low ability in use of strategies of reading. The proficient readers utilized more strategies than the less proficient readers.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes: (1) the population and subjects, (2) the instruments, (3) the procedures used in the data collection, and (4) the data analysis.

3.1 POPULATION AND SUBJECTS

The population of this study was Grade 9 students at Kasetsart University Laboratory School, Multilingual Program, Center for Educational Research and Development (KUSMP). The total number of students was 120. The students were grouped into four classes with mixed ability and gender group. According to the school policy, all of students in Grade 9 had to take the English Standard Test created by the teachers of English in Grade 9 in the second semester, academic year 2014.

A class of 27 Grade 9 students was employed as the participant group of the study. The class was randomly selected from the four classes of Grade 9 students at KUSMP. There were 14 female and 13 male students in the selected class.

3.2 INSTRUMENTS

There are two instruments of this study:

3.2.1 Interview 1 –The reading strategy inquiry

The first interview includes demographic inquiry and reading strategy inquiry. When the students were given their reading test results from the English Standard Test, the researcher used the checklist to identify the strategies the students recalled using. The students were asked to explain how they answered each items as the researcher used the checklist to record their responses. Afterwards, the researcher categorized the responses into three main groups of reading strategies—cognitive, metacognitive, and compensating—according to Anderson's concepts of reading strategies (2000).

The English Standard Test consists of five parts: vocabulary, indirect listening and speaking ability, grammar, reading comprehension, and writing ability. It was created by native English speakers teaching in Grade 9. The content areas in the test covered the content in Grade 7 – 9 English subjects. Students took the English Standard Test at the end of January. As mentioned earlier on, only the reading comprehension part in the test was the focus in this study. There were seven reading comprehension items with multiple choices.

The interview was written in English since the researcher was the person who used it when asking students about the reading part of the English Standard Test. In order to avoid mistakes and establish accuracy of the checklist in the reading strategy inquiry, the interview was approved by the advisor. After that, five students from Grade 9 at KUSMP were chosen for a pilot session. That was, the researcher had the three students individually recall the moment during of which they took the English Standard Test. This is the chance that the researcher practiced using the interview to help identify the strategies the students used in the exam. The researcher assessed whether the size of the number and range of strategies on the list was appropriate.

3.2.2 Interview 2 –The interview inquiring problems of taking the reading part of the English Standard Test

This instrument was used right after the first interview. The students were asked about their problems while taking the reading part of the English Standard Test. They were also asked about additional strategies or techniques that they used in the test. The interview comprised two open-ended items. The interview questions were translated into Thai, the students' native language, to make sure that the students understood what they were asked. The interview questions were checked by the research advisor who looked over the language comprehension. Individual pilot interviews with three students from Grade 9 at KUSMP were conducted to examine whether the students understood the questions the way the researcher expected. The researcher revised confusing and unclear words or phrases to make sure that the interview questions corresponded to the research questions.

3.3 PROCEDURES

3.3.1 Data Collection

As briefly mentioned before, the data collection features two main consecutive stages; the reading strategy inquiry and then the interview inquiring test-taking problems.

Twenty-seven students were asked to participate into this study within a month after the English Standard Test. They were asked to explain what they did when answering reading comprehension items in the test. The researcher used the checklist to record the strategies the students said they used during the test. The researcher explained the process of the inquiry to the participants beforehand to ensure that the participants understand the recall process.

In the second session, students were individually asked about the problems they had when answering the reading questions in the English Standard Test. This process aimed to

understand the students' perceived weaknesses when handling research comprehension questions. They were also asked about additional strategies or techniques that they thought they used in the test.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

The collected data were analyzed using the Microsoft Office Excel Program. Results from the reading strategy inquiry were interpreted into percentages, which made it easy for the researcher to see students' demographic data and use of reading strategies in the examination.

The data from the interview inquiring test-taking problems were analyzed qualitatively. Outstanding points and comments were interpreted and coded. The codes helped explain students' use of reading strategies, perceived problems in the English Standard Test, and additional strategies used in the test.

The interpretation of the findings provided a guide for improving and developing the English Standard Test as well as the pedagogy for Grade 9 students at Kasetsart University Laboratory School, Multilingual Program, Center for Educational Research and Development (KUSMP).

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter presents the findings of this study: grade 9 students' use of reading strategies in an English Standard Test at Kasetsart University Laboratory School, Multilingual Program, Center for Educational Research and Development, Chonburi. The objectives of the study were to investigate what reading strategies students used to apply when taking the reading comprehension part in the English Standard Test and the problems they encounter when taking the test and the other strategies the students used for taking the test. The overview of the findings is presented in this chapter, which were divided into four main parts as follows;

- 4.1 Background information of the students
- 4.2 The reading strategies the students used to apply when taking the test
- 4.3 The problems students encounter when taking the test
- 4.4 The other strategies the students used for taking the test

4.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE STUDENTS

Background information includes of gender of the mixed abilities students in Grade 9 who studied English with the native English teachers at Kasetsart University Laboratory School, Multilingual Program, Center for Educational Research and Development, Chonburi. Table 4.1 shows of student participants and as percentages.

Table 4.1

Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	13	48.15
Female	14	51.85
Total	27	100.00

According to Table 4.1, there were 14 female students (51.85%) while 13 students were male (48.15%).

4.2 THE READING STRATEGIES THE STUDENTS USED TO APPLY WHEN TAKING THE TEST

The second part of the result concerned three reading strategies: cognitive, metacognitive, and compensating that the twenty-seven students used to apply when taking the test. Three main strategy types were decoded after the students answered. Then the researcher took notes in the interview form. After that, the researcher transformed the note taking to check the strategy types used on the check list.

The students' answers covered using their knowledge of reading articles to do the test with the techniques they practiced in the class. These were decoded as cognitive reading strategies.

The students' answers covered using their knowledge of reading articles by planning, organizing, and rechecking the questions and choices along with the reading articles. These were coded as metacognitive reading strategies.

The students' answers covered using their knowledge of reading articles and guessing reasonably or unreasonably according to vocabulary words in the questions and choices. These were decoded as compensating reading strategies.

Table 4.2 shows the seven items in reading comprehension part of the English Standard Test. Each item shows how many students answered correctly or incorrectly and what reading strategies the students used to apply when taking the test and as percentages.

Table 4.2

The result of reading strategies students used to apply when taking the English Standard Test

Item of the Test	Students' Answer	Strategy Type			Total Student
		Cognitive	Metacognitive	Compensating	
1	Correct	7	5	-	12
	Percentage	(25.93%)	(18.52%)	-	(44.44%)
	Incorrect	8	2	5	15
	Percentage	(29.63%)	(7.41%)	(18.52%)	(55.56%)
2	Correct	8	8	-	16
	Percentage	(29.63%)	(29.63%)	-	(59.26%)
	Incorrect	2	2	7	11
	Percentage	(7.41%)	(7.41%)	(25.93%)	(40.74%)
3	Correct	1	5	-	6
	Percentage	(3.70%)	(18.52%)	-	(22.22%)
	Incorrect	1	6	14	21
	Percentage	(3.70%)	(22.22%)	(51.85%)	(77.78%)
4	Correct	2	13	1	16
	Percentage	(7.41%)	(48.15%)	(3.70%)	(59.26%)
	Incorrect	-	2	9	11
	Percentage	-	(7.41%)	(33.33%)	(40.74%)
5	Correct	2	4	2	8
	Percentage	(7.41%)	(14.81%)	(7.41%)	(29.63%)
	Incorrect	-	4	15	19
	Percentage	-	(14.81%)	(55.56%)	(70.37%)
6	Correct	3	6	10	19
	Percentage	(11.11%)	(22.22%)	(37.04%)	(70.37%)
	Incorrect	-	1	7	8
	Percentage	-	(3.70%)	(25.93%)	(29.63%)
7	Correct	3	6	6	15
	Percentage	(11.11%)	(22.22%)	(22.22%)	(55.56%)
	Incorrect	1	-	11	12
	Percentage	(3.70%)	-	(40.74%)	(44.44%)

Table 4.2 above shows the students' test results while using the three types of reading strategies as follows:

Item 1 shows that twelve students (44.44%) answered correctly. There were seven students who used cognitive reading strategies (25.93%) and five who used metacognitive reading strategies (18.52%). On the other hand, fifteen students (55.56%) answered incorrectly for this item. Of those, eight students used cognitive reading strategies (29.63%), five used compensating reading strategies (18.52%), and two used metacognitive reading strategies (7.41%).

Item 2 shows that sixteen students (59.26%) answered correctly. There were eight students who used cognitive reading strategies (29.63%) and eight who used metacognitive reading strategies (29.63%). On the other hand, eleven students (40.74%) answered incorrectly for this item. Of those, seven students used compensating reading strategies (25.93%), two used cognitive reading strategies (7.41%), and two used metacognitive reading strategies (7.41%).

Item 3 shows that six students (22.22%) answered correctly. There were five students who used metacognitive reading strategies (18.52%) and only one used cognitive reading strategies (3.70%). On the other hand, twenty-one students (77.78%) answered incorrectly for this item. There were fourteen students who used compensating reading strategies (51.85%), six used metacognitive reading strategies (22.22%), and only one used cognitive reading strategies (3.70%).

Item 4 shows that sixteen students (59.26%) answered correctly. There were thirteen students who used metacognitive reading strategies (48.15%), two used cognitive reading strategies (7.41%), and only one used compensating reading strategies (3.70%). On the other hand, eleven students (40.74%) answered incorrectly for this item. There were nine students who used compensating reading strategies (33.33%), and two who used metacognitive reading strategies (7.41%).

Item 5 shows that eight students (29.63%) answered correctly. There were four students who used metacognitive reading strategies (14.81%), two used cognitive reading strategies (7.41%), and two used compensating reading strategies (7.41%). On the other hand, nineteen students (70.37%) answered incorrectly for this item. There were fifteen students who used compensating reading strategies (55.56%), and four who used metacognitive reading strategies (14.81%).

Item 6 shows that nineteen students (70.37%) answered correctly. There were ten students who used compensating reading strategies (37.04%), six used metacognitive reading strategies (22.22%), and three used cognitive reading strategies (11.11%). On the other hand, eight students (29.63%) answered incorrectly for this item. There were seven students who used compensating reading strategies (25.93%), and only one used metacognitive reading strategies (3.70%).

Item 7 shows that fifteen students (55.56%) answered correctly. There were six students who used metacognitive reading strategies (22.22%), six used compensating reading strategies (22.22%), and three used cognitive reading strategies (11.11%). On the other hand, twelve students (44.44%) answered incorrectly for this item. There were eleven students who used compensating reading strategies (40.74%), and only one used cognitive reading strategies (3.70%).

Figure 4.1 displays the students' use of reading strategies under three main concepts as follows; cognitive, metacognitive, and compensating reading strategies that were applied while taking the test.

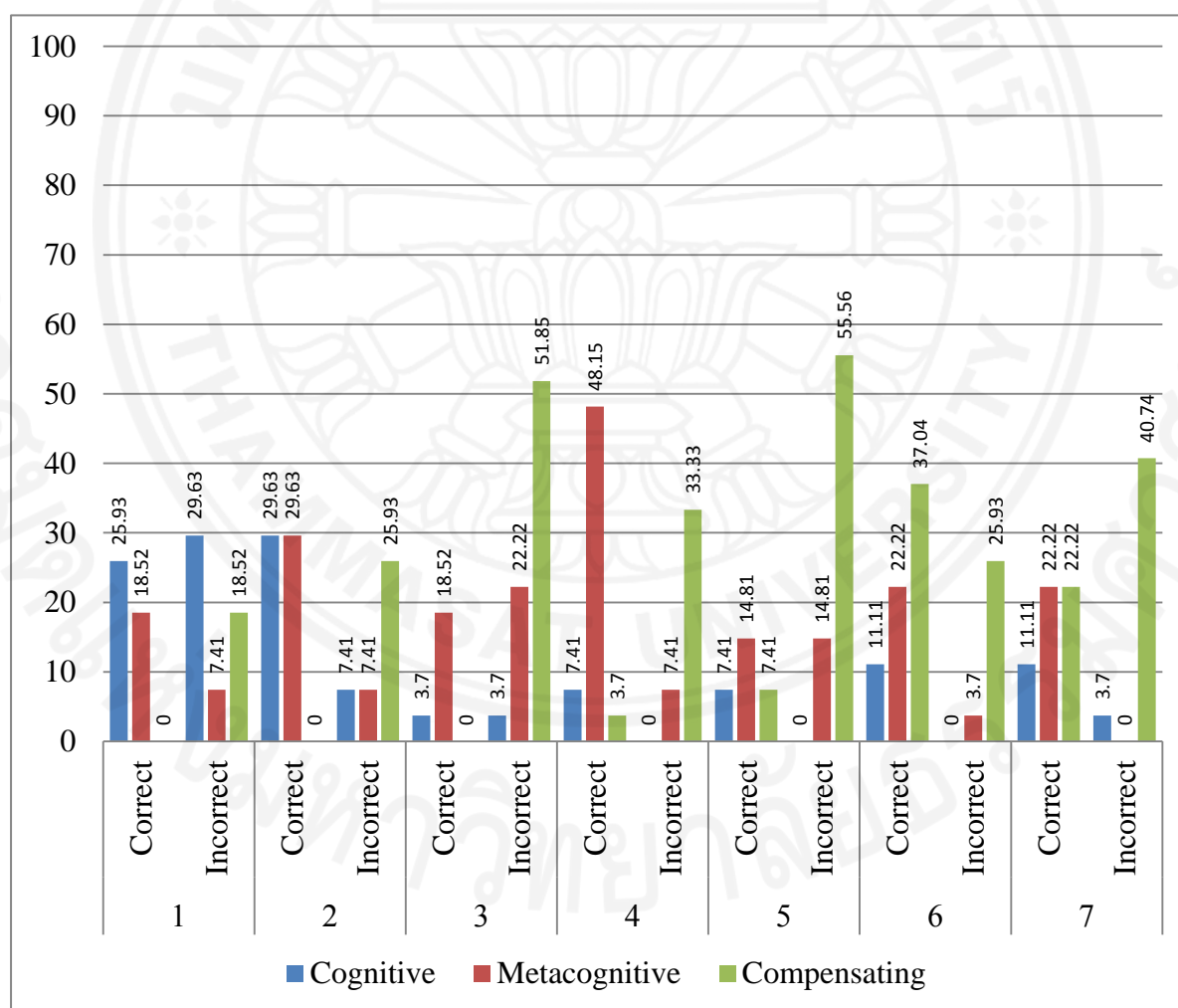


Figure 4.1 The result of reading strategies students used to apply when taking the English Standard Test

According to Figure 4.1, the highest result of reading strategies used to attain a correct answer were the metacognitive reading strategies. They also used cognitive and compensating read strategies. The highest result of reading strategies used that resulted in an incorrect answer were compensating reading strategies. They sometimes used cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies.

4.3 THE PROBLEMS THE STUDENTS ENCOUNTERED WHEN TAKING THE TEST

After the reading strategy inquiry, the researcher gave the students a break for five minutes. Then the researcher started to interview the students about problems encountered when the students did the test. The researcher took notes in the interview paper. Then, the students' answers were categorized into nine items. Table 4.3 shows the students' problems while taking the test and as frequency and percentage.

According to Table 4.3, item 2 shows the highest rank that seventeen students (35.42%) answered that they had not known the meaning of some vocabulary words. Item 5 shows the second highest rank that eight students (16.67%) answered that they could not have comprehended the questions, and therefore could not have selected a correct choice. Item 1 shows the third highest rank that five students (10.42%) answered that they could not have interpreted the article. At the same frequency in items 4, 7, and 9, there were four students (8.33%) who answered that they had known the vocabulary words but could not have understood the article as whole, they could not have finished the reading part in time, and they had found all of the choices similar, so they had not known which choice to choose. There were three students (6.25%) who answered in item 4 that they had not known the meaning of any vocabulary words. There were two students (4.17%) who answered in item 6 that they could not have interpreted the whole article and therefore made a wrong choice. Finally, there was one student (2.08%) who answered in item 8 that they had not liked English, so they had decided to make random guesses for every item. Interestingly, the vocabulary words are important to the participants because it is beneficial to use as a tool of reading the articles. The more they know the vocabulary words, the more they correctly choose the correct answers in the test.

Table 4.3

The result of the interview concerning the problems the students found in taking the test

Item	The problems the students found in taking the test	The Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	The student could not interpret the article.	5	10.42
2	The student did not know the meaning of some vocabulary words.	17	35.42
3	The student did not know the meaning of any vocabulary words.	3	6.25
4	They knew the vocabulary words but could not understand the article as whole.	4	8.33
5	The student could not comprehend the questions, and therefore could not select a correct choice.	8	16.67
6	The student could not interpret the whole article and therefore made a wrong choice.	2	4.17
7	The student could not finish the reading part in time.	4	8.33
8	The student did not like English, so s/he decided to make wild guesses in every item.	1	2.08
9	The student found all of the choices similar, so s/he did not know which choice to choose.	4	8.33
Total		48	100

4.4 THE OTHER STRATEGIES THE STUDENTS USED FOR TAKING THE TEST

After the reading strategy inquiry, the researcher gave the students a break for five minutes. Then the researcher started to interview the students about the other strategies the students used for taking the test. The researcher took notes in the interview paper. Then, the students' answers were categorized into five items. The students were asked when they had answered the previous question. Table 4.4 shows the students' use of other strategies for taking the test and as frequency and percentage.

Table 4.4

The other strategies the students used for taking the test

Item	The other strategies the students used for taking the test	The Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Reading the questions before looking for the answers from the article	18	32.14
2	Taking a wild guess when the student could not find the answer from the reading article	11	19.64
3	Looking for an answer that was closest in meaning to the information in the article	9	16.07
4	Skipping the items they couldn't do first and coming back to complete them in the end.	7	12.50
5	Going back and forth between the reading text, questions, and answer choices	11	19.64
Total		56	99.99

As can be seen in Table 4.4, the other strategies that students used are concerning examination strategies. The answers of the students were grouped into five items. Item 1 shows the highest frequency (32.14%) that eighteen students answered that they had read the questions before looking for the answers from the article. Items 2 and 5 show the second highest frequency (19.64%) - eleven students answered that they had taken a wild guess when they could not find the answer from the reading article (Item 2) and they had gone back and forth between the reading article, questions and answer choices (Item 5). Item 4 shows the third highest frequency (16.07%) that nine students answered that they had looked for the answers that were closest in meaning to the information in the article. Finally, in item 3, there were seven (12.50%) of students who mentioned that they had skipped the items they could not do first and then came back to complete them in the end.

The results reveal that the students used examination strategies while taking the reading comprehension part of the English Standard Test. The findings of the study will be summarized and discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents 1) a summary of the study, 2) a summary of the findings, 3) discussion of the results, 4) conclusions, and 5) recommendations for further research.

5.1 Summary of the Study

This section summarizes the objectives, participants, materials and procedures of the study below.

5.1.1 Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to investigate what the language learning strategies of Grade 9 students' use when taking the English Standard Test at Kasetsart University Laboratory School, Multilingual Program, Center for Educational and Development (KUSMP). Three objectives of the study are as follows:

- To identify the language learning strategies used by the students with different English achievement of taking English Standard Test.
- To find what problems students encounter when taking the English Standard Test.

5.1.2 Participants, Materials, and Procedures

5.1.2.1 Participants

The participants of this study consisted of 27 grade 9 students; 14 male and 13 female, who took the English Standard Test at Kasetsart University Laboratory School, Multilingual Program, Center for Educational and Development (KUSMP).

5.1.2.2 Materials

The research instruments in this study were the checklist of reading strategies; cognitive, metacognitive, and compensating reading strategies that the students' use when taking the test, and the interview, including two closed-ended questions.

5.1.2.3 Procedures

Before carrying out data collection, the interview questions and the interview were validated by an advisor and then piloted on three grade 9 students at Kasetsart University Laboratory School, Multilingual Program, Center for Educational and Development (KUSMP). The reading strategy inquiry and the interview were devised within a month. The data collected from the reading strategy inquiry and the interview were then analyzed. Descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage and the coding process were used in the data analysis.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The results of the study can be summarized as follows:

5.2.1 The participants' Background Information

The participants in this study were twenty-seven in grade 9 at Kasetsart University Laboratory School, Multilingual Program, Center for Educational and Development (KUSMP). They are thirteen male students and fourteen female students. They are in mixed ability group taking one class out of four classes.

5.2.2 The reading strategies

The reading strategies used by the participants include cognitive, metacognitive and compensating reading strategies. These strategies were spotted when the researcher employed the checklist in the reading strategy inquiry. The results reveal that metacognitive reading strategies were most frequently used by students who answered items correctly. Compensating reading strategies were used most frequently by students who answered test items incorrectly. The cognitive, metacognitive and compensating reading strategies were used by all participants of the study.

5.2.3 The interview

There are two main issues addressed in the interview:

5.2.3.1 The problems that the students encountered when doing the reading comprehension part of the test

There were nine areas which can be grouped by the students' answers in the interview session. The highest number of students answered that they had not known the meaning of

some vocabulary words. The second highest number of students answered that they could not have comprehended the questions, and therefore could not have selected a correct choice, and the third highest number students answered that they could not have interpreted the article. There were a few students who responded that they did not have enough time to complete the test and that they did not like English.

5.2.3.2 The strategies other than the reading ones that the students reportedly used in the test

There were five areas which can be grouped by the students' answers in the interview session. All five areas were under the category of examination strategies. They revealed that the students mostly tended to read the questions before looking for the answers from the article. Otherwise, the students tended to take a wild guess when they could not find the answer from the reading article, and they go went and forth between the reading text, questions and answer choices.

5.3 Discussions

This part discusses the main points of the findings related to the theories and previous studies.

5.3.1 Reading strategies

Using reading strategies is very useful for the learners of language learning because it is one of the keys of success for learners in many fields of study, not only for English language learners. Anderson (1991) highlights that "strategic reading is not only a matter of knowing what strategy to use, but also the reader must know how to use a strategy successfully and orchestrate its use with other strategies. It is not sufficient to know about strategies; a reader must also be able to apply them strategically" (pp. 468-469). This statement supports the thesis of this study - that participants should use reading strategies effectively when taking the English Standard Test. The more participants practice strategic reading processes, the more they gain points in the English Standard Test.

5.3.2 Examination strategies

The examination strategies are very effective for the learners who have to take any examinations. These strategies concern all subjects; the students have to learn how to prepare themselves to do the test. The examination strategies are used as a tool for the learners when

taking the test. In English reading comprehension, part of the English Standard Test, about five common examination strategies were found in this study. Learners tend to have better or worse results depending on how much they practice the strategies.

5.4 Conclusions

The following conclusions are brought from the discussion above.

5.4.1 This study focused on the uses of reading strategies and other strategies and problems when taking the reading comprehension part of the English Standard Test for grade 9 students at Kasetsart University Laboratory School, Multilingual Program, Center for Educational and Development (KUSMP) in Chonburi. The students at Kasetsart University Laboratory School, Multilingual Program, Center for Educational and Development (KUSMP), as the participants, agreed that language learning strategies are very important in any area included conducting the English test.

5.4.2 Most of participants agreed that reading strategies—cognitive, metacognitive, and compensating strategies—are beneficial for the students. They have to practice these strategies because they were the most necessary for their studies particularly since English is the world language in most fields of study.

5.4.3 The most significant problems in successful English reading comprehension are the meanings of the vocabulary words in the articles. The way to make students effective at reading is increasing their vocabulary comprehension.

5.4.4 Based on the participants' answers in the interviews, the examination strategies helped them do the test systematically.

5.5 Recommendations for further research

5.5.1 Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made for future research:

5.5.2 The results reveal what strategies, both reading and examination, tend to be used. The outcome might help English teachers decide what strategies they should use to train their students effectively.

5.5.3 The present study was carried out to investigate the testing strategies and problems of taking the English test for the students in secondary and high school level. It will be useful to the English teachers or an English department to use the findings from this study as guidelines for developing English tests for the students.

5.5.4 To collect data, this study was limited to the checklist and the interview results of the participants. Researchers can learn from this research methodology and develop alternative research methods for further study.

5.5.5 Hopefully, the results in this study act as a guideline for other researchers who are interested in conducting studies related to use of reading or examination strategies.



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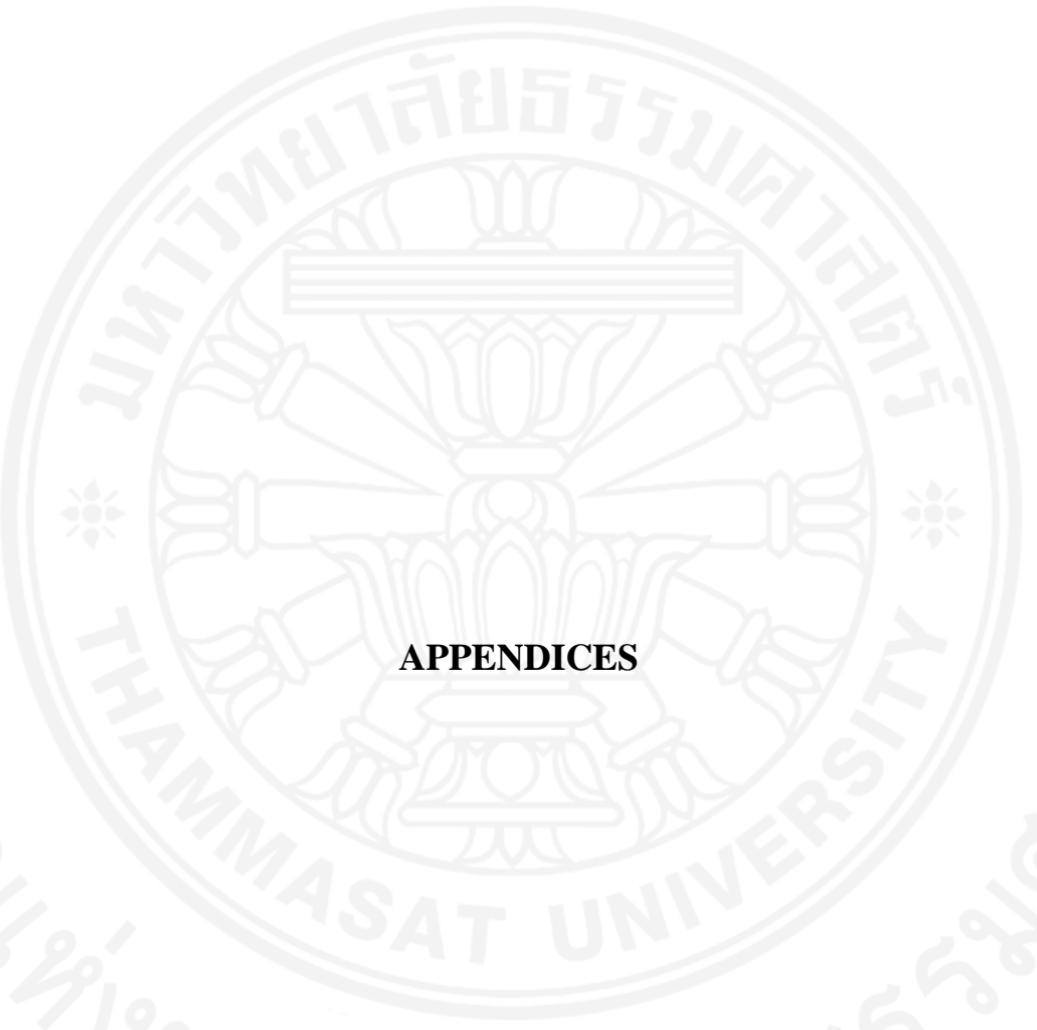
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The seal of Thammasat University is a circular emblem. It features a central five-tiered lotus flower. Above the lotus is a horizontal bar with three lines, and below it is another lotus flower. Radiating from the center are eight stylized arms or petals. The outer ring of the seal contains the text 'มหาวิทยาลัยธรรมศาสตร์' in Thai script at the top and 'THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY' in English at the bottom, separated by two small floral motifs.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

The Interview 1

Name:			Strategy	Tick	Strategy Type
Gender:					
Item	Correct	Incorrect			
1				<input type="checkbox"/>	Cognitive
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Metacognitive
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Compensating
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Others
2				<input type="checkbox"/>	Cognitive
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Metacognitive
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Compensating
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Others
3				<input type="checkbox"/>	Cognitive
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Metacognitive
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Compensating
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Others
4				<input type="checkbox"/>	Cognitive
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Metacognitive
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Compensating
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Others
5				<input type="checkbox"/>	Cognitive
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Metacognitive
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Compensating
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Others
6				<input type="checkbox"/>	Cognitive
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Metacognitive
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Compensating
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Others
7				<input type="checkbox"/>	Cognitive
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Metacognitive
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Compensating
				<input type="checkbox"/>	Others

Questions accompanying the interview 1

1. What did you do when you answered this reading comprehension question?
2. What were you thinking when you read this question?
3. Why did you feel this was the best answer?
4. How did you come up with this answer?

APPENDIX B

The Interview 2

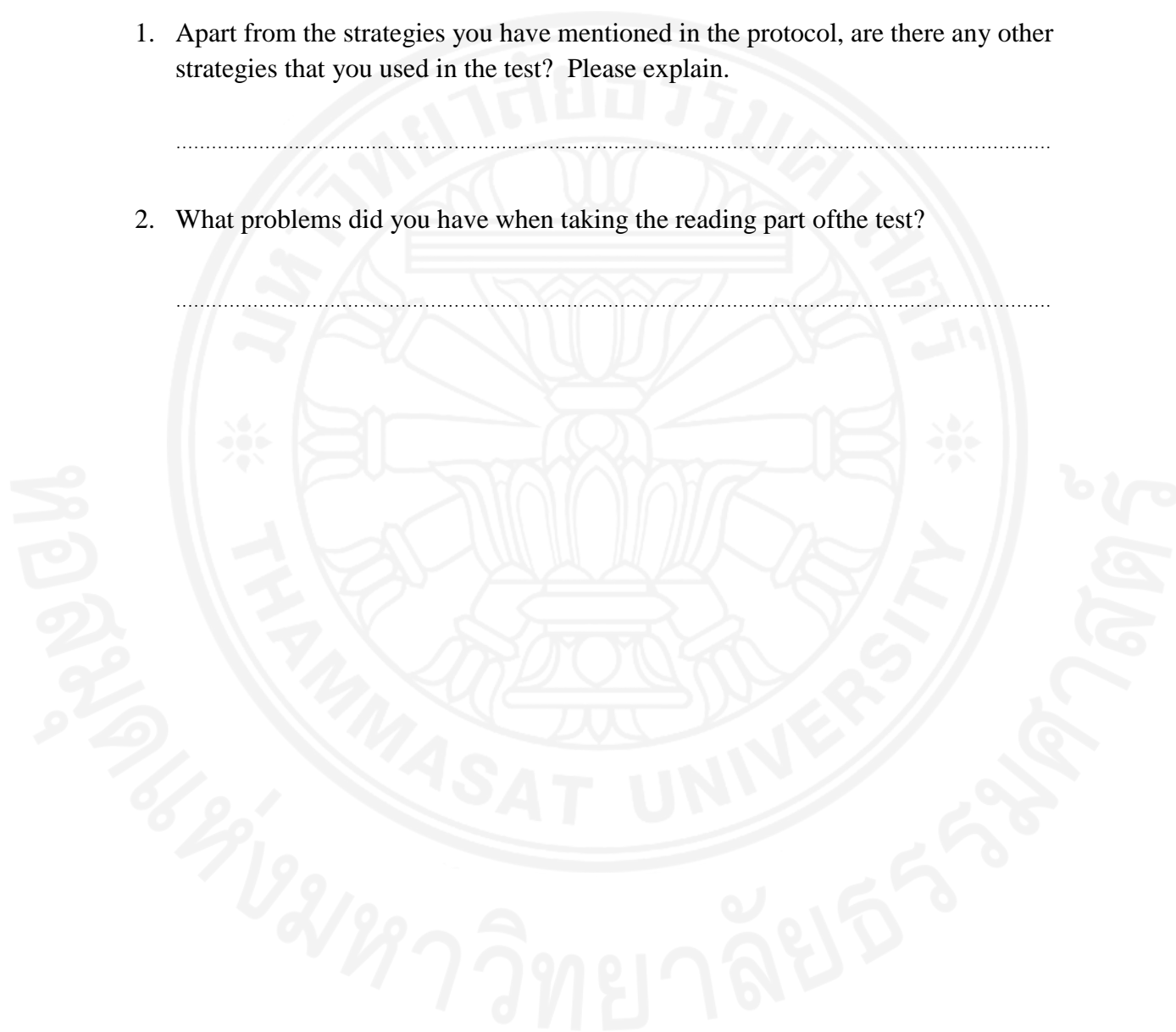
Questions

1. Apart from the strategies you have mentioned in the protocol, are there any other strategies that you used in the test? Please explain.

.....

2. What problems did you have when taking the reading part of the test?

.....



BIOGRAPHY

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