A STUDY OF READING COMPREHENSION SKILL OF
THE FIRST-YEAR CEIC STUDENTS

BY

MR. WORRAPRAT MONGKOL

AN INDEPENDENT STUDY PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN CAREER ENGLISH FOR
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION
LANGUAGE INSTITUTE
THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC YEAR 2017
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INDEPENDENT STUDY PAPER

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ENTITLED

A STUDY OF READING COMPREHENSION SKILL OF
THE FIRST-YEAR CEIC STUDENTS

was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts in Career English for International Communication

on March 18, 2018

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A STUDY OF READING COMPREHENSION SKILL OF THE FIRST-YEAR CEIC STUDENTS

Mr. Worraraprat Mongkol

Master of Arts

Career English for International Communication

Thammasat University

Associate Professor Nitaya Yuangsri

2017

ABSTRACT

This study examined the reading comprehension ability of first-year CEIC students in Thammasat University. Quantitative research was conducted among 16 students of the Language Institute. The results demonstrated that most of the students had high reading comprehension ability. There was a difference between the inferential skill in the first passage and the second passage. In conclusion, this finding showed that the students should improve inferential skill and vocabulary knowledge. They need to read many kinds of texts. This is one of the reading techniques that can help students develop their reading comprehension ability.

Keywords: Reading comprehension ability, CEIC students, quantitative research

Ref. code: 256058211040572BCQ
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation to my advisor, Associate Professor Nitaya Yuangsri, for devoting her time and making valuable suggestions that aimed to improve this research.

I also want to thank Assistant Professor Supakorn Phoocharoensil, Ph.D. for supporting my data collection and giving good advice about how to persuade the students to do the reading comprehension test.

I appreciate the help of Associate Professor Supong Tangkiensirisin, Ph.D., who advised me on how to select the TOEFL ITP test and how to design the reading test.

My special thanks are also extended to Mr. Mark Zentz for checking the grammatical correctness in this paper. I would also like to thank LITU staff members Ms. Siriwon Ritruamsup and Ms. Pafun Rattanasing, who are responsible for informing students about the procedures and the form of the IS.

Mr. Worraprat Mongkol
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviations</th>
<th>Terms</th>
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<tr>
<td>CEIC</td>
<td>Career English for International Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for the Social Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI</td>
<td>Direct instruction in reading comprehension group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Most Thai students from many schools and universities communicate in English with foreigners. English language consists of four main skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. These skills are important for understanding English. In this study, the researcher focuses on reading comprehension skill.

Reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning in a text. It also consists of knowledge and experiences such as life experiences, content knowledge, and background knowledge. Moreover, the ability to interpret texts accurately helps readers read effectively (Snow, 2002).

According to this definition, readers should use certain reading techniques in order to gain new knowledge and vocabularies from a text. Furthermore, they will also comprehend the hidden messages that writers want to convey. These techniques can strengthen the reading skills of readers.

Based on the above explanation, it is a reader’s job to find ways to understand the overview and main point of a text. Therefore, the researcher decided to undertake research aimed at identifying the levels of reading comprehension of Thai graduate students and determine how well they understood passages.
1.2 RESEARCH QUESTION
What is the level of the reading comprehension ability of first-year CEIC students?

1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY
To identify the level of reading comprehension ability of first-year CEIC students

1.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS
Reading comprehension skill is the ability to read texts and the process of constructing meaning in a text.

Passages refer to academic texts that the students read in order to gain new knowledge.

CEIC students mean students attending a Master of Arts in Career English for International Communication program at Thammasat University.

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY
The number of participants was sixteen students. This study focused on the different levels of reading comprehension ability. Their ability was measured by reading test scores including 1. finding the main idea, synonyms and referencing pronouns 2. guessing the meaning of words 3. making inferences from a paragraph 4. interpreting authors' messages.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY
The results of this study will reveal the students' weaknesses in reading. They will then be able to learn from their mistakes and understand English texts more clearly.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter focuses on the three main points of the reading comprehension ability as follows: (1) reading strategies, (2) theories of reading, and (3) related studies.

2.1 READING STRATEGIES

Pani (2004) defined reading strategies as analytical thinking that enables readers to understand a text. Good readers use strategies more frequently and effectively than poor readers. Five reading strategies are discussed as follows.

2.1.1 SCANNING STRATEGY

Pugh (1978) defines scanning as a process of identifying specific information from a text. The information might be a name, definition, place or other details, so the readers focus on a piece of information quickly.

2.1.2 SKIMMING STRATEGY

Brown (1994) states that skimming is a quick reading technique for getting the general meaning of a passage. Readers can obtain the main idea of an author by identifying the key point of some paragraphs in a text.
2.1.3 SELF-QUESTIONING STRATEGY

According to Rosenshine (1997), readers should create questions while reading a text. Then, they need to combine their own information with important details in the text so they can comprehend the details more clearly.

2.1.4 VISUALIZING STRATEGY

This strategy helps readers imagine pictures in their mind when they read a text. Moreover, they can remember the previous story that they have just read (Harvey and Goudvis, 2000).

2.2 THEORIES OF READING

Theories of reading relate to the skills that readers use to organize authors’ ideas in each paragraph in a text and interpret the main point of authors. Following are some theories of reading.

2.2.1 BOTTOM UP MODEL

The bottom up model is a traditional skill. Readers try to get the meaning of all the words in a sentence until they understand the main idea of a paragraph. Therefore, they acquire this skill in order to read texts fluently (Smith, 1975).

2.2.2 BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Another theory that relates to reading skill is the psycholinguistic model, which states that readers predict meaning based on their background knowledge. Therefore, the readers should know the syntax of a language and vocabulary well (Ruddell, 1976).
2.2.3 REFERENCING SKILL

Halliday and Hasan (1976) state that referencing skill relates to connections between two sentences. The readers should know words like *it*, *they*, *etc* for understanding the major details of each sentence.

2.2.4 TOP DOWN MODEL

Readers can also use the top down model to find the main idea in a passage. In this model, readers analyze authors’ messages so they can understand the whole text (Anderson, 1977).

2.2.5 INTERPRETATION SKILL

Diane (2001) explains that interpretation skill refers to textual analysis by readers. They analyze many points of an author’s messages, which enables them to interpret and understand the right messages.

2.2.6 SYNONYMS

Maja (2009) explored synonyms, which are words that have the same meaning as other words. Readers can use context clues to guess the meaning of the word. Consequently, the readers can match the word with another word that has a similar meaning in a text.

2.2.7 INFERENCE SKILL

According to Eileen (2017), readers can make inferences to understand an author’s indirect messages. Therefore, readers need to understand what the author thinks in order to clarify the hidden messages.
2.2.8 MAIN IDEA

The main idea is the main point of a passage. Authors intend to communicate it to readers, but it is not simple to understand. There are two types of main ideas: stated and implied main idea (Kelly, 2017).

2.2.8.1 STATED MAIN IDEA

The main idea is stated directly by an author, so readers can notice it easily. It identifies what a paragraph is about and can be called the “topic sentence”.

2.2.8.2 IMPLIED MAIN IDEA

An author may not state the main idea directly. Readers then need to find key words and sentences in order to interpret the author’s messages. Furthermore, readers should read between the lines.

As there are two kinds of main ideas, understanding the main idea clearly is an important skill. Furthermore, readers should know how to find the main idea. This technique will help them organize key sentences in each paragraph (Lisa, 2017).

2.3 RELATED STUDIES

In this part, six related studies are discussed.

Robert and Anna (1991) conducted research on the effects of cooperative learning and direct instruction with respect to reading comprehension strategies for main idea identification. This study mainly focused on the main idea identification from reading materials. Third and fourth grade students were divided into two groups: A direct instruction in reading comprehension group (DI) and a control group. The first group of students had better understanding of reading comprehension than the second group of students and had higher scores on the main idea test.
Kate, Jane, Marcia and Peter (2001) investigated comprehension skill, inference-making ability, and their relation to knowledge. They aimed to find out how differences in word decoding, vocabulary and inference skill affected reading comprehension. The results showed that skilled comprehenders had a higher level of reading comprehension than less skilled comprehenders because the former were better in terms of these three skills.

Maria and Norbert (2006) investigated vocabulary acquisition from extensive reading. The researcher distributed a vocabulary test that was related to extensive reading to a group of French students. The test consisted of words' spellings, meanings and grammatical characteristics. The results indicated that the students understood the words' spellings quite well, but they didn't understand the meaning and grammar part clearly.

Tuula (2007) investigated how the reading comprehension skill of the students during the first six school years developed. The results of the study showed the students in the first two school years had many problems about reading fluency and vocabulary. Furthermore, the students still had great difficulty understanding many types of texts after the first six school years; thus, poor reading comprehension skill in the second grade affected reading ability in the sixth grade.

Paris (2007) examined reading comprehension skill as it relates to pictorial information. The researcher provided pre-test and post-test texts for students. They obtained low scores in the pre-test texts, but they got higher scores in the post-test texts, indicating that they understood the main idea of the text, inferred from the information and drew conclusions from the text. As a result, it was determined that they had average reading comprehension.
Janice, Rebecca and Richard (2008) investigated children's reading comprehension ability focusing on word decoding skill. The researchers distributed a multiple-choice test and collected it from the children. The results showed that the children had average reading comprehension and were able to analyze the major details of texts.

Roebl and Shiue (2009) investigated the reading comprehension ability of students at St. John's University. The reading skill that was evaluated was the ability to understand the main point and major details of a passage. The researchers divided the students into two groups: an experimental and a control group. Both groups were taught in order to be able to develop background knowledge, make predictions and interpret texts. The researchers distributed a reading test to the students. In conclusion, the experimental group had high reading comprehension, but the control group had average reading comprehension. The first group understood the overview and main idea more than the second group.

Cekiso (2012) focused on the reading comprehension ability of 60 Grade 11 English Second Language (ESL) learners. The researcher divided them into two groups: an experimental and a control group. The first group had knowledge of reading strategies, but the second group didn't have it. The reading strategy of the study included two main strategies: interacting with texts and understanding the meaning of texts. Both groups had low reading comprehension based on a pre-test. The results of the post-test on reading comprehension indicated that the experimental group had higher mean scores than the control group.

Huan and Yi-Chun (2013) conducted research aimed at understanding EFL learners' perceptions of the use of bottom-up and top-down reading strategies during the reading process. The participants were six senior high school students in central
Taiwan. The researchers used qualitative analysis, interviewing the students about their application of the reading strategies in order to understand the students' feelings and thoughts concerning English reading comprehension. The results of this study revealed that lexical recognition and grammatical knowledge were necessary for better reading comprehension of the students. Furthermore, their use of bottom-up and top-down reading strategies enhanced their reading comprehension.

Andi (2015) investigated the effectiveness of the skimming-scanning strategy with respect to improving students' reading comprehension in the second grade at SMK Darussalam Makassar. The researcher divided the students into two groups: an experimental group and a control group. A reading comprehension was distributed to the two groups. The results showed that the experimental group had better understanding of the skimming-scanning strategy than the control group.
CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter is divided into four parts: (1) the participants, (2) the instrument, (3) the procedures, and (4) the data analysis.

3.1 PARTICIPANTS

The participants of this study were students in one of the three sections of Career English for International Communication program at Thammasat University. Quantitative data collection was done using convenience sampling for selection of the participants (Kemper et al., 2003). There were a total of 16 students chosen because they were willing to participate in this study.

3.2 INSTRUMENT

A multiple-choice test consisting of two passages and twenty-one items was used as the instrument in this study. The two passages were on human vision and lichens. There were 10 items relating to the topic of human vision and 11 items for the topic of lichens. The passages were retrieved from Jiratikul, K. (2015).

3.3 PROCEDURES

3.3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Reading theories were used as a basis for testing the reading comprehension of the students below. The reading comprehension test consisted of two passages.
3.3.1.1 THE READING COMPREHENSION TEST OF THE FIRST PASSAGE HAD 10 ITEMS INCLUDING:

Main idea in number 1.

Interpretation skill in number 2, 6 and 10.

Inference skill in number 3 and 8.

Synonyms in number 4, 7 and 9.

Referencing skill in number 5.

3.3.1.2 THE READING COMPREHENSION TEST OF THE SECOND PASSAGE HAD 11 ITEMS INCLUDING:

Interpretation skill in number 10, 17 and 18.

Synonyms in number 11, 12, 16 and 19.

Inference skill in number 13 and 14.

Bottom-up model in number 15.

Referencing skill in number 20.

3.3.2 DATA COLLECTION

The researcher distributed and collected 16 copies of the reading comprehension test in one classroom. The test consisted of two passages. The researcher explained how to do the test to the students.
3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher applied the theory of score division in this study. The theory was retrieved from research methodology relating to Reading Comprehension: Statistical Analysis of Test Results for Primary and Secondary Schools (Renata, 2007). Therefore, the researcher sought to determine the reading ability of the students by dividing it into three levels: 1. low reading comprehension, 2. average reading comprehension and 3. high reading comprehension.

The following were the measurements used to determine the reading comprehension ability of the first-year CEIC students. The total score was twenty-one, with the scoring scale elaborated on below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>Low Reading Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-14</td>
<td>Average Reading Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-21</td>
<td>High Reading Comprehension</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the test scores were obtained, they were calculated using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) in order to determine the reading ability of the students.
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

This chapter presents the data analysis of the test scores from the two passages on human vision and lichens. Moreover, the reading comprehension test examined readers' analytical and inferential skills. The researcher used the SPSS program to calculate the outcome of the test scores, which identified the differences of the reading skills of the students.

4.1 INFORMATION OF TEST RESULTS

TABLE 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Result</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid 5.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
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<td>6.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.3</td>
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<td>43.8</td>
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<td>13.00</td>
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<td>6.3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
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<td>14.00</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>6.3</td>
<td>56.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>75.0</td>
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<td>16.00</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From this table, the overview showed a significant difference with regard to the reading comprehension of the students. The lowest score on the reading comprehension test was 5 or 6.3%. The highest score was 20 or 6.3%. Three participants obtained a score of 15 or 18.8%. 
The data showed that most of the students had higher levels of reading comprehension than lower levels of reading comprehension.

HISTOGRAM 1: THE MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF THE FIRST-YEAR CEIC STUDENTS

The histogram showed that the mean score was 12.69. The standard deviation score was 4.301. The data illustrated that most students were quite good at reading skill and understood the main point of a text.
4.2 SCORING SCALE FOR THE FIRST PASSAGE

4.2.1 SCORING SCALE FOR MAIN IDEA

TABLE 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>StudentScoreforMainIdea</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results in table showed that four students (25%) didn’t score any points and 12 students (75%) received a score of one. According to this result, most of the students (75%) had high skill for the main idea.

HISTOGRAM 2: SCORING SCALE FOR MAIN IDEA
This histogram indicated that the mean score was 0.75. The standard deviation score was 0.447.

4.2.2 SCORING SCALE FOR INTERPRETATION

TABLE 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpretation Score of The Students</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>18.8</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the table indicated that one student (6.3%) wasn't able to score any points, five students (31.3%) received a score of one, seven students (43.8%) received a score of two and three students (18.8%) received a score of three. According to this result, most of the students (43.8%) had average interpretation skill.

HISTOGRAM 3: SCORING SCALE FOR INTERPRETATION
This histogram indicated that the mean score was 1.75. The standard deviation score was 0.856.

4.2.3 SCORING SCALE FOR SYNONYMS

TABLE 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synonym Score of the Students</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>18.8</td>
<td>18.8</td>
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<td>6.3</td>
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<td>43.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results in the table showed that three students (18.8%) didn’t get any points, one student (6.3%) received a score of one, seven students (43.8%) received a score of two and five students (31.3%) received a score of three. According to this result, most of the students (43.8%) had average skill for vocabulary.

HISTOGRAM 4: SCORING SCALE FOR SYNONYMS
This histogram showed that the mean score was 1.88. The standard deviation score was 1.088.

4.2.4 SCORING SCALE FOR INFERENCE

TABLE 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inference Score of The Students</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>2.00</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results in the table showed that three students (18.8%) didn't get any points, three students (18.8%) received a score of one and 10 students (62.5%) received a score of two. According to this result, most of the students (62.5%) had high inferential skill.

HISTOGRAM 5: SCORING SCALE FOR INFERENCE
This histogram illustrated that the mean score was 1.44. The standard deviation score was 0.814.

**4.2.5 SCORING SCALE FOR REFERENCING SKILL**

**TABLE 6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referencing Score of the Students</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results in the table showed that two students (12.5%) didn’t get any points and 14 students (87.5%) received a score of one. According to this result, most of the students (87.5%) had high referencing skill.

**HISTOGRAM 6: SCORING SCALE FOR REFERENCING SKILL**
This histogram showed that the mean score was 0.88. The standard deviation score was 0.342.

4.3 SCORING SCALE FOR THE SECOND PASSAGE

4.3.1 THE SCORING SCALE FOR THE MAIN IDEA

TABLE 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students Score for Main Idea</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>25.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.00</td>
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<td>37.5</td>
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<td>6.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results in the table showed that four students (25%) didn’t get any points, five students (31.3%) received a score of one, six students (37.5%) received a score of two and one student (6.3%) received a score of three. According to this result, most of the students (37.5%) had average skill for the main idea.

HISTOGRAM 7: SCORING SCALE FOR MAIN IDEA
This histogram showed that the mean score was 1.25. The standard deviation score was 0.931.

4.3.2 SCORING SCALE FOR SYNONYMS

TABLE 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students Score for Synonym</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results in the table showed that three students (18.8%) received a score of one, five students (31.3%) received a score of two, five students (31.3%) received a score of three and three students (18.8%) received a score of four. According to this result, an equal amount of the students (31.3%) received scores of two and three, so they had average vocabulary skill.

HISTOGRAM 8: SCORING SCALE FOR SYNONYMS
This histogram showed that the mean score was 2.5. The standard deviation score was 1.033.

### 4.3.3 SCORING SCALE FOR INFERENCE

#### TABLE 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>StudentsScoreforInference</th>
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<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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<td>16</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results in the table illustrated that 6 students (37.5%) didn’t get any points, six students (37.5%) received a score of one, and four students (25%) received a score of two. According to this result, an equal amount of students (37.5%) didn’t receive any scores and received a score of one, respectively, indicating that they had low inferential skill.

### HISTOGRAM 9: SCORING SCALE FOR INFERENCE
This histogram indicated that the mean score was 0.88. The standard deviation score was 0.806.

4.3.4 SCORING SCALE FOR GUESSING THE MEANING OF WORDS

TABLE 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students Score for Guessing the Meaning of Words</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results in the table revealed that six students (37.5%) didn’t get any points and 10 students (62.5%) received a score of one. According to this result, most of the students (62.5%) had high skill for guessing the meaning of words.

HISTOGRAM 10: SCORING SCALE FOR GUESSING THE MEANING OF WORDS

Ref. code: 25605821040572BCQ
This histogram illustrated that the mean score was 0.63. The standard deviation score was 0.5.

4.3.5 SCORING SCALE FOR REFERENCING SKILL

TABLE 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students Score for Referencing Skill</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
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<td>25.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results in the table showed that four students (25%) didn’t get any points and 12 students (75%) received a score of one. According to this result, most of the students (75%) had high referencing skill.

HISTOGRAM 11: SCORING SCALE FOR REFERENCING SKILL

Ref. code: 25605821040572BCQ
This histogram showed that the mean score was 0.75. The standard deviation score was 0.447.

4.4 THE CONCLUSION OF READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY OF THE STUDENTS

4.4.1 THE RESULTS OF THE TOTAL SCORE OF READING SKILLS

There were an equal number of students who had average and high reading skills. Seven students had average reading skills. Seven students obtained high reading skills. Most of the students understood the main idea and minor details of the passages. Few students were unable to analyze the major and minor details.

4.4.2 THE READING COMPREHENSION LEVELS OF THE STUDENTS FOR THE FIRST PASSAGE

There were different levels of reading comprehension in the five reading skills, which were (1) finding the main idea, (2) synonyms, (3) interpreting texts, (4) inferring from paragraphs, and (5) referencing skill. Most of the students obtained high skills for the main idea, inference, and referencing. On the other hand, they had average interpretation and vocabulary skill. Therefore, the students analyzed the main idea quite well, understood indirect messages and linked a noun with a pronoun clearly. In addition, they found synonyms and interpreted texts well.

4.4.3 THE READING COMPREHENSION LEVELS OF THE STUDENTS FOR THE SECOND PASSAGE

The significant differences in their reading comprehension levels indicated that some of the students obtained high skills for guessing the meaning of words and referencing. Furthermore, most of the students had average skills for the main idea and vocabulary. Some students could not infer from some paragraphs of the passage clearly.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter consists of a summary of the study, summary of the finding, the discussion, the conclusion and recommendations for further research.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

This part summarizes the objectives, subjects, instrument and procedures of the study as follows.

5.1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study was to examine the reading comprehension ability of first-year CEIC students after they took reading tests. The researcher investigated the differences in their levels of reading comprehension skill. The different levels consisted of low, average and high reading comprehension.

5.1.2 SUBJECTS, INSTRUMENT AND PROCEDURES

The participants of this study were 16 students in the Career English for International Communication program at the Thammasat University Language Institute during academic year 2016.

In this study, the research instrument was a reading comprehension test including two passages that were about human vision and lichens. There were 21 items for the two passages. The main point of the first passage's test was the main idea, interpretation, vocabulary, inference and referencing skill. Moreover, the main point of the second passage's test was the main idea, vocabulary, inference, guessing the meaning of words and referencing skill.
This study was quantitative research. The data collection took only one day. The researcher distributed and collected the reading tests from the students in one of the three sections. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze and evaluate the data of the test results with descriptive statistics including percentages, frequencies, mean, minimum and maximum score and standard deviation (S.D.).

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The researcher summarizes the findings of this study as follows:

5.2.1 OVERVIEW OF THE READING COMPREHENSION TEST OF THE STUDENTS

There were 16 students who participated in this test. Two students (12.6%) had low reading comprehension. Seven students (44%) obtained average reading comprehension. Seven students (44%) had high reading comprehension. Furthermore, none of the students obtained a zero score. According to this result, most of the students had good fundamental reading skills when they read English texts.

5.2.2 RESULTS OF READING SKILLS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

In this study, there were six reading skills that were related in the test. The skills were main idea, interpretation, vocabulary, inference, referencing and guessing the meaning of words. Most of the students understood the main point of the passages, interpreted authors' messages correctly, found similar words in many contexts, inferred indirect messages from a paragraph of a passage, replaced words with pronouns correctly and could define vocabulary in a paragraph.
5.3 DISCUSSION

5.3.1 READING COMPREHENSION SKILL OF THE STUDENTS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the reading comprehension ability of the students at Thammasat University. The results of the study indicated that the students had high reading comprehension ability. The following are related studies that the researcher's findings support.

The findings confirmed the study of the reading comprehension skill with pictorial information of the first grade students by Paris (2007), who provided a reading comprehension test about finding the main idea and making inferences for students. The results showed that they had average reading comprehension, so they understood the main idea, and inferred from the information in the text well.

This findings confirmed the study of the reading comprehension ability that focused on word decoding skill from 510 children of 27 different school districts in Colorado. Janice, Rebecca and Richard (2008) distributed a multiple-choice test to the children. The results demonstrated that they had average reading comprehension, so they could analyze the major details of texts.

The findings are in line with the study of Roebl and Shiue (2009), who investigated the reading comprehension ability of students in StJohn's University. The researchers distributed a reading comprehension test to the students. This test was about the main point and overview of texts. The results showed that they had average reading comprehension. They were quite good at understanding the main point and major details of the text.

The findings are also in line with the study of Cekiso (2012), who examined the reading comprehension ability of 60 Grade 11 English Second Language (ESL) learners. The researcher distributed a reading comprehension test that included awareness of reading strategies to the learners. The results indicated that they had
average reading comprehension. They had good understanding of interacting with texts and analyzing the main idea of texts.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study focused on reading texts that required scientific knowledge. Moreover, the researcher did not conduct qualitative research that included interviews regarding the reading techniques used by the students. The researcher only obtained quantitative research data.

5.5 CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, most of the students had high reading comprehension in that they were quite good at interpreting the main idea and major details, finding synonyms, inferring from paragraphs and replacing a pronoun with a noun. Consequently, the students could analyze important details and interpret the authors' purpose from several kinds of texts.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The recommendations for further research are based on the findings as follows:

5.6.1 Future studies should include more questions about the main idea and the authors' purpose.

5.6.2 Further research should include interviews on the reading techniques used by some participants.

5.6.3 Further research should divide the students into two groups, i.e., an experimental group and a control group, in order to compare their reading comprehension ability. The experimental group should include students who have knowledge of reading theories, while the control group should be made up of students who don't have this knowledge.
REFERENCES


Nasrin (2013). The Effect of Summary Writing as a Critical Reading Strategy on Reading Comprehension of Iranian EFL Learners. *Introduction*. 2, pages 129-131


APPENDIX

THE READING COMPREHENSION TEST

This is an example of reading comprehension of TOEFL test that can assess reading comprehension ability of the first-year CEIC students. This test will show the results of their reading comprehension.

THE FIRST PASSAGE

37. The tulip tree, appreciated for its beauty, is also useful for making timber.
   A  B  C  D

38. The rate of interest can be defined as the gross rate of growth of capital in a contractual obligation.
   A  B  C  D

39. On the one hand, photovoltaic cells are relatively expensive; on the contrary, they are completely nonpolluting.
   A  B  C  D

40. No amphibian lays eggs that have shells, and therefore amphibian eggs must be deposited in a moist place.
   A  B  C  D

Section 1: Reading Comprehension
Directions: Read each passage as carefully and rapidly as you can. Then choose the best answer for each question.

Questions 1–10

Human vision, like that of other primates, has evolved in an arboreal environment. In the dense, complex world of a tropical forest, it is more important to see well than to develop an acute sense of smell. In the course of evolution, members of the primate line have acquired large eyes while the snout has shrunk to give the eye...
The red flag is black to the bull. Horses live in a monocromic world. Light visible to human eyes, however, occupies only a very narrow band in the whole electromagnetic spectrum. Ultraviolet rays are invisible to humans, though ants and honeybees are sensitive to them. Humans have no direct perception of infrared rays, unlike the rattlesnake, which has receptors tuned into wavelengths longer than 0.7 micron. The world would look eerily different if human eyes were sensitive to infrared radiation. Then, instead of the darkness of night, we would be able to move easily in a strange shadows world where objects glowed with varying degree of intensity. But human eyes excel in other ways. They are, in fact, remarkably discerning in color gradation. The color sensitivity of normal human vision is rarely surpassed even by sophisticated technical devices.

1. What does the passage mainly discuss?
   (A) Ultraviolet rays
   (B) Human vision
   (C) Sight and smell
   (D) The environment of primates

2. Why does the author mention the 'tropical forest', in line 2?
   (A) To explain why primates have developed keen vision
   (B) To suggest that primates need to see only the color green
   (C) To give an example of environmental change
   (D) To indicate where large-eyed primates can be found

3. What does the author mean by stating that "the red flag is black to the bull" (lines 6)?
   (A) Bulls are attracted to red objects.
   (B) Bulls do not notice flags.
   (C) Bulls attack all flags.
   (D) Bulls do not see the color red
4. The word 'monochrome' in line 6 is closest in meaning to which of the following?
   (A) Monotonous  (B) Ultraviolet
   (C) One-dimension  (D) One-color

5. In line 9, 'them' refers to which of the following?
   (A) Human eyes  (B) Ultraviolet rays
   (C) Humans  (D) Wavelengths

6. According to the passage, which of the following can detect wavelengths of light longer than 0.7 micron?
   (A) Bulls  (B) Ants
   (C) Horses  (D) Rattlesnakes

7. The word 'eerie' in line 11 is closest in meaning to which of the following?
   (A) Strangely  (B) Increasingly
   (C) Slighty  (D) Superficialy

8. It can be inferred from the passage that humans could move more easily at night if they ________.
   (A) had a narrower field of vision  (B) were color-blind
   (C) had infrared vision  (D) lived in an arboreal environment

9. The word 'surpassed' in line 15 is closest in meaning to which of the following?
   (A) Recorded  (B) Exceeded
   (C) Found  (D) Provided

10. According to the passage, the ability of humans of distinguishing color differences is ________.
    (A) average  (B) weak
    (C) excellent  (D) variable
THE SECOND PASSAGE

Questions 10–20

Lichens, probably the hardiest of all plants, live where virtually nothing else can—just on rugged mountain peaks but also on sunbaked desert rocks. They are usually the first life to appear on a mountainside that has been scarred bare by an avalanche.

Unlike other members of the plant kingdom, lichens are actually a partnership between two plants. The framework of a lichen is usually a network of minute hairlike filaments that anchors the plant. The other component is an alga (similar to the green film of plant life that grows on stagnant pools) that is distributed throughout the fungus. Being green plants, algae are capable of photosynthesis—that is, using energy from the Sun to manufacture their own food. The fungi are believed to supply water, minerals, and physical support to the partnership.

Lichens are famous for their ability to survive through water shortage. When water is scarce (as is often the case on a mountain), lichens may become dormant and remain in that condition for prolonged periods of time. Some lichens can even grow where there is no rain at all, surviving on only occasional dew—the moisture that condenses on the surface of the plants at night. Unlike most other plants, lichens are little affected by the strong ultraviolet rays in the mountains.

Lichens use little energy, for they grow slowly. Some grow so slowly that they are called "time stains." You may find lichens that are centuries old; certain of these lichen colonies have been established for an estimated 2,000 years.

For decades, scientists wondered how the offspring of an alga and a fungus got together to form a new lichen, it seemed unlikely that they would just happen to encounter one another. It was finally discovered that in many cases the two partners have never been separated. Stalklike "buds" that form on certain lichens are broken off by the wind or by animals; they are blown to a new location.

10. Which of the following questions does the passage answer?
   (A) Where can the oldest lichens be found?
   (B) How long does it take for lichens to establish themselves?
11. The word “hardest” in line 1 is closest in meaning to _________.
   (A) most unusual  (B) most basic
   (C) most abundant  (D) most vigorous

12. The word “framework” in line 6 is closest in meaning to _________.
   (A) structure  (B) fragment
   (C) condition  (D) environment

13. The author mentions “the green film of plant life that grows on stagnant pools” (lines 7 – 8) in order to explain _________.
   (A) how the sun affects lichens
   (B) why plants depend on water
   (C) where fungi become algae
   (D) what algae are

14. It can be inferred from the passage that lichens use less energy and grow more slowly when _________.
   (A) the environment is polluted
   (B) they are exposed to ultraviolet rays
   (C) they are very old
   (D) the supply of water is inadequate

15. Which of the following terms is defined in the passage?
   (A) “anchors” (line 7)
   (B) “stagnant” (line 8)
   (C) “dew” (line 15)
   (D) “ultraviolet” (line 17)
16. The word “prolonged” in line 14 is closest in meaning to ____________
   (A) precise          (B) extended
   (C) approximate      (D) regular

17. All of the following are mentioned in the discussion of lichens EXCEPT ____________
   (A) They are capable of producing their own food.
   (B) They require large amounts of minerals to prosper.
   (C) They are a union of two separate plants.
   (D) They can live thousands of years

18. What does the phrase “lichen colonies” (line 20) suggest?
   (A) Nothing but lichens live in some locations.
   (B) Many lichens never live together in one area.
   (C) Lichens displace the plants that surround them.
   (D) Certain groups of lichens have never been separated.

19. The word “encounter” in line 22 is closest in meaning to ____________
   (A) lose          (B) support
   (C) meet          (D) create

20. The word “they” in line 25 refers to ____________
   (A) partners      (B) buds
   (C) lichens       (D) animals

Questions 21 – 30

The first peoples to inhabit what today is the southeastern United States sustained themselves as hunters and gatherers. Sometimes early in the first millennium A.D., however, they began to cultivate corn and other crops. Gradually, as they became more skilled at gardening, they settled into permanent villages and developed a rich culture,
BIOGRAPHY

Name                                              Mr. Worraprat Mongkol

Date of Birth                                  April 20, 1991

Educational Attainment                          Bachelor Degree in Humanities and Social Sciences, Burapha University

Work Position                                  Public Relation Officer

Work Experiences                               Public Relation Officer in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
                                                Assistant Coordinator in Allianz Global Assistance Services (Thailand) Co., Ltd.