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Identifying Problems and Constructing Enhancement Methods for English Reading Skill of the Nursing Students at North Bangkok University

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Abstract

This independent study, entitled "Identifying Problems and Constructing Enhancement Methods for English Reading Skills of Nursing Students at North Bangkok University," aimed to: (1) identify the English reading problems encountered by nursing students when reading medical texts at North Bangkok University, and (2) develop enhancement methods to improve their English reading skills. The study employed a mixed-method research design and involved 280 nursing students enrolled in the 2025 academic year. Data were collected through a questionnaire assessing students' reading difficulties and a focus group discussion with three experts to validate the proposed enhancement methods. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, while qualitative data were analyzed through content analysis. The findings revealed that the students experienced the greatest difficulties in understanding medical terminology, applying grammatical knowledge, expanding vocabulary, and identifying main ideas and supporting details in reading texts. In addition, psychological factors such as anxiety, lack of confidence, and avoidance behaviors were found to impede their reading comprehension. To address these challenges, five enhancement methods were developed: (1) learner-centered instructional strategies, (2) instructor support, (3) appropriate English reading materials, (4) supportive learning environments, and (5) systematic teaching and learning evaluation. These methods were reviewed and validated by experts, yielding acceptable Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) values ranging from 0.66 to 1.00.

Keywords: Problem for English Reading Skill, Enhancement Methods for English Reading Skill, Nursing Student

1. Introduction

English reading comprehension has become essential in nursing education due to the globalization of healthcare. Nursing students must be able to read international medical literature, research, and clinical guidelines, most of which are published in English. In Thailand, this skill is vital for accessing updated medical knowledge and participating in the global healthcare community. At North Bangkok University, nursing students encounter

difficulties with English reading despite curricular support. Challenges include limited medical vocabulary, complex grammar, and difficulty identifying main ideas in healthcare texts. These problems reduce their ability to understand evidence-based practices and international nursing standards. Moreover, the presence of foreign patients in Thailand highlights the need for English proficiency to ensure accurate communication and effective care. Thailand's participation in the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) has intensified the demand for strong English literacy among nurses to cope with cross-border mobility and medical documentation standards. For these reasons, this study focuses on identifying English reading problems of nursing students at North Bangkok University and constructing effective enhancement methods. The outcomes aim to guide the improvement of English instruction in nursing education.

2. Literature Review

A number of studies have examined problems related to English reading comprehension, particularly in the context of second language learning, reading strategies, and their effects on academic and professional achievement. Adunyarittigun (2002) explored the characteristics influencing reading success and found that learners' prior experiences, language background, and ability to retell content affect comprehension outcomes. Similarly, Jesdapornpun (2001) reported that technical staff struggled with unfamiliar vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and complex text structures, emphasizing vocabulary limitations as a major barrier. Research has also highlighted the role of teaching strategies in improving reading proficiency. Aziz (2019) argued that teachers' creativity, pedagogical knowledge, and innovative classroom techniques significantly shape students' motivation and success in reading. Borman, Naphak, and Wajanathinaphat (2021) confirmed that activity-based learning improved nursing students' English reading, writing, and attitudes, with post-test scores significantly higher than pre-test results. In a similar vein, Kunlaka and Purivittayatheera (2017) showed that project-based learning enabled nursing students to integrate all four language skills, suggesting that experiential approaches can enhance English competency. Specific to medical and health sciences, Chaluaisaeng (2016) found that medical residents had difficulties with long, complicated sentences in journal articles despite familiarity with medical terms. Targeted interventions in analyzing sentence structures improved comprehension, confidence, and motivation. Likewise, Thongsook (2023) reported that science-oriented undergraduates had generally low English reading proficiency compared to Thai reading ability, indicating that language barriers rather than cognitive reading problems were the primary challenge. Research on reading habits and extracurricular practices also sheds light on learner difficulties. Chao (2013) reported that although most science undergraduates engaged in extracurricular reading, they still faced issues with vocabulary and comprehension strategies. Wutthisingchai (2011) found that secondary school students struggled to identify specific comprehension problems and emphasized the need for relevant and engaging reading materials. Similarly, Yimwilai (2008) revealed that English-major students faced challenges in finding main ideas, details, and references, with insufficient reading practice being a major cause. Other studies have examined the motivational aspects of reading development. Shanshan, Chularut, and Na Ayudhaya (2025) showed that problem-based learning (PBL) positively affected motivation in English reading, with female students demonstrating higher persistence. In a related study, Rungsaengpho, Japah, and Srakaew (2025) also confirmed that PBL significantly improved post-test reading scores and student satisfaction among education undergraduates. Siahaan and Simatupang (2022) further noted that students commonly relied on comprehension monitoring strategies to address vocabulary difficulties in reading tasks. Overall, previous research indicates that the main challenges in

English reading comprehension among Thai and international learners include vocabulary limitations, complex sentence structures, and insufficient exposure to authentic texts. At the same time, innovative pedagogical methods such as activity-based learning, project-based learning, and problem-based learning have been shown to improve reading skills, motivation, and confidence. These findings suggest the importance of combining effective teaching strategies with targeted interventions to address specific reading difficulties, particularly for nursing students who must engage with complex medical texts in English.

Thus, this study proposes the research objectives

1. To identify the English reading problems of nursing students when reading medical texts at North Bangkok University.

2. To construct the enhancement methods for the English reading skills the nursing students at North Bangkok University.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Participants

The participants of this study were 280 undergraduate students in nursing program at North Bangkok University in the academic year of 2025 at North Bangkok University

3.2 Research Instruments

The two main research instruments were: 1) a questionnaire was employed for the investigation of problems of reading skill of undergraduate students in faculty of Nursing at North Bangkok university. All items in the questionnaire were evaluated by the three specialists for the suitability and correctness in terms of the index of Congruence (IOC). All the items were found in the IOC of 0.66 and 1.0, meaning the questionnaire was suitable for the data collection, and 2) a set of questions for 3 focus group discussion meetings was used for the evaluation and approval of the proposed methods for the enhancement of reading skill of undergraduate students in faculty of Nursing at North Bangkok University. The proposed methods were then evaluated for its suitability and correctness by the three specialists through the content analysis method.

3.3 Analytical Method

This study applied a mixed-methods design that combined quantitative and qualitative analyses. Quantitative data were collected from 280 nursing students through a structured questionnaire measuring English reading comprehension difficulties. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean, percentage, and standard deviation, to identify common challenges such as vocabulary, grammar, and reading strategies.

Qualitative data were obtained through a focus group discussion with three experts in English teaching and nursing education. The proposed enhancement methods were reviewed for validity using the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC), with acceptable values ranging from 0.66 to 1.00. The expert feedback was analyzed through content analysis to refine and confirm the practicality of the enhancement methods. Together, these analyses provided a comprehensive understanding of students' reading problems and informed the development of effective solutions.

1) The problems of the English reading skill of the nursing students were collected through the questionnaire by the researcher herself. The data and information collected through the questionnaire were analyzed, interpreted and presented in terms of frequency count, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The Likert Rating Scales of the Questionnaire were as follows:

4.21-5.00 = the highest level of problems
3.41-4.20= the high level of problems
2.61-3.40= the moderate level of problems
1.81-2.60= the low level of problems
1.00-1.80= the lowest level of problems

2) The enhancement strategies for the English reading skill were constructed by the researcher, then it was approved for the correctness and suitability by the three specialists.

4. Findings

4.1 Problems of English Reading Skill of Nursing students at North Bangkok University

Table 1: Mean Scores of Reading Problems Skill of Nursing Students at North Bangkok University.

Items	n=280		Level of problems
	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	
1). I often do not understand medical terminology in English reading texts.	4.32	0.15	Highest
2) I have difficulty organizing ideas in English reading texts in class.	4.29	0.18	Highest
3 I feel anxious and hardly to identify the main idea of a passage.	4.30	0.16	Highest
4) Complex grammar makes English texts difficult to understand.	4.58	0.22	Highest
5) I cannot guess the meaning of unfamiliar words from the context.	4.33	0.15	Highest
6) Classroom reading practice time is insufficient to meet exam requirements.	4.40	0.17	Highest
7. I have trouble finding specific details in an English reading passage.	4.65	0.18	Highest
8). I often feel unsure whether I have understood a passage correctly.	4.65	0.18	Highest
9) I avoid reading English texts because they are too challenging	4.58	0.14	Highest
10) I lack confidence in my English reading abilities	4.66	0.22	Highest
11) Advanced grammar makes reading more difficult for me	4.52	0.20	Highest
12) I struggle to connect the meaning between different sentences in a passage.	4.51	0.20	Highest
13) I cannot summarize a text in my own words after reading it.	4.29	0.14	Highest
14) Words with multiple meanings confuse me during reading.	4.29	0.14	Highest
15) Try to read extra English materials outside of class to improve my skills.	4.29	0.14	Highest

4.2 Analysis

The analysis revealed that nursing students at North Bangkok University reported English reading difficulties at the highest level overall ($\bar{X}$ =4.35, SD =0.18) with item mean scores ranging from 4.31 to 4.66. The most serious problems included lack of confidence in reading ability($\bar{X}$ =4.66, SD =0.22) difficulty locating specific details in texts ($\bar{X}$ =4.65, SD=0.18), and uncertainty about comprehension accuracy ($\bar{X}$ =4.65, SD=0.18) These findings highlight both linguistic and psychological barriers that strongly affect reading comprehension. Other highly rated difficulties involved complex grammar structures ($\bar{X}$ =4.58), avoidance of reading due to perceived difficulty ($\bar{X}$ =4.58), and challenges in connecting sentence meanings ($\bar{X}$ =4.51), Students also struggled with medical terminology, contextual guessing of unfamiliar words, and summarizing texts in their own words. Collectively, these results suggest that nursing students face persistent challenges in mastering academic English reading, particularly in handling advanced vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension monitoring, all of which are crucial for success in nursing education and professional practice.

4.3 The Enhancement Methods of Reading Skill of Nursing Students at North Bangkok University.

Table 2: The enhancement methods of English reading skill for nursing students.

Category	Key procedure
learner-centered methods,	Strategy use, collaboration, and technology support to foster stronger reading comprehension skills among nursing students.
instructor support	Instruction Guided to practice and Encouragement Feedback and Correction, demonstrate reading techniques by thinking aloud and showing how to analyze authentic nursing texts.
appropriate English reading materials	Use of Authentic Texts, relevance. Contextual Vocabulary Support
supportive learning environments	Positive Atmosphere, Collaborative Interaction Access to Resources reading materials Encouragement and Motivation –
systematic teaching and learning evaluation	Ongoing Assessment, Variety of Evaluation Tools, Feedback Integration, Continuous Improvement

Based on the findings, the proposed methods were organized into five categories: 1) le arner-centered methods, 2) instructor support, 3) appropriate English reading materials, 4) sup portive learning environments, 5) systematic teaching and learning evaluation.

To overcome these difficulties, five categories of enhancement methods were propose d: learner-centered methods, instructor support, appropriate English reading materials, suppor tive learning environment, and systematic evaluation. Together, these methods emphasize acti ve student engagement, effective teaching support, use of relevant materials, a positive classro om atmosphere, and continuous assessment. The framework provides practical guidelines for i mproving English reading comprehension, which is essential for nursing students' academic success and professional readiness in global healthcare contexts.

5. Conclusion

Finally, the study investigated the problems of English reading skills among nursing students at North Bangkok University and developed appropriate enhancement methods to address these issues. The findings revealed that students faced significant challenges at the highest level, particularly in understanding medical terminology, complex grammar, and vocabulary with multiple meanings, as well as in identifying main ideas and specific details. Psychological barriers, such as anxiety, avoidance of reading, and lack of confidence, further hindered their reading comprehension. On the basis of theoretical analysis, this paper constructs a model to test the disclosure data of listed companies, and finds that philanthropy have a positive impact on corporate financial performance. On the basis of the above research, this paper further discusses the conduction mechanism between philanthropy and corporate financial performance. The research finds that: firstly, sales revenue plays a positive intermediary role between philanthropy and corporate financial performance; Secondly, media attention plays a positive intermediary role between philanthropy and corporate financial performance; Thirdly, government subsidies play a positive intermediary role between philanthropy and corporate financial performance.

6. Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that nursing students at North Bangkok University face English reading problems at the highest level, with mean scores ranging from 4.31 to 4.66. The most critical difficulties included a lack of confidence in reading ability, uncertainty in comprehension, difficulty in identifying specific details, and challenges in understanding complex grammar and medical terminology. These results are consistent with previous studies that highlighted vocabulary limitations, sentence complexity, and low confidence as major obstacles in English reading comprehension (Jesdapornpun, 2001; Yimwilai, 2008; Thongsook, 2023). The development of enhancement methods in five categories—learner-centered methods, instructor support, appropriate reading materials, supportive learning environment, and systematic evaluation—aligns with pedagogical approaches found effective in prior studies. For instance, activity-based and project-based learning were shown to significantly improve nursing students' reading, writing, and motivation (Borman et al., 2021; Kunlaka & Purivittayatheera, 2017). Likewise, problem-based learning has been associated with greater persistence and engagement in reading (Shanshan et al., 2025; Rungsaengpho et al., 2025). These findings confirm that interactive, student-centered, and context-specific strategies are essential for fostering reading proficiency. The emphasis on authentic and discipline-specific materials also reflects prior research that highlighted the challenges faced by medical and nursing students when reading professional texts. Chaluaisaeng (2016) demonstrated that even learners familiar with medical terms continued to struggle with long and complex sentence structures, suggesting that instruction must address both language form and content comprehension. In the present study, the proposed use of authentic nursing materials combined with strategy training and gradual text complexity directly responds to this need.

Overall, the results of this study contribute to the body of knowledge by confirming that English reading problems among Thai nursing students are multidimensional—spanning linguistic, cognitive, and psychological aspects—and require comprehensive, context-sensitive solutions. By integrating learner-centered approaches, instructor support, authentic materials, supportive environments, and systematic evaluation, this study offers a holistic framework to enhance English reading skills. Such a framework is vital for preparing nursing students to meet the demands of global healthcare, where access to up-to-date medical knowledge and communication with international patients are critical for professional competence.

7. Recommendations

7.1 For the application of the research findings into practice, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance nursing students' English reading skills: 1) Curriculum Development: Nursing curricula should integrate learner-centered activities and explicit reading strategy instruction. Emphasis should be placed on medical terminology, complex grammatical structures, and comprehension strategies that are directly relevant to nursing practice. This ensures that students not only improve their language ability but also develop skills applicable to their future professional contexts, 2**)** Instructor Training Teachers should receive professional development in scaffolding techniques, motivational strategies, and the effective use of authentic nursing texts. Well-prepared instructors can guide students more effectively, reduce learning anxiety, and promote confidence in reading complex English materials. 3**)** Material Selection: authentic and discipline-specific reading materials should be selected and organized according to levels of complexity. Nursing-related journals, case reports, and clinical guidelines should be gradually introduced alongside supportive resources such as glossaries, word banks, and online reading tools. This scaffolding approach builds students' competence step by step, 4**)** Learning Environment**:** A supportive classroom environment that minimizes anxiety and fosters collaboration is essential. Instructors should encourage group reading activities, peer discussions, and interactive tasks that allow students to engage actively with texts. Recognition of student progress further enhances motivation and persistence. 5) Systematic Evaluation: Continuous and varied assessment methods—such as comprehension tests, reflective journals, portfolios, and oral presentations—should be employed to monitor progress. Constructive feedback should be provided regularly, and the results of evaluations should inform adjustments to teaching methods and materials.

7.2 For further research, the follow-up research for the English reading skill of nursing students at North Bangkok University needs to be conducted. In addition, needs and problems of writing, listening and speaking skills of nursing students at North Bangkok University needs to be conducted.

7.3 For the limitation of the research, the enhancement methods for the English reading skills the nursing students at North Bangkok University need to be applied into practice and evaluated for their effectiveness. Due to the time limit of the research project, the enhancement methods for the English reading skills were evaluated and approved for their correctness and suitability through the content analysis method by the three specialists instead.

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