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# Guidelines for Improving the English Reading Skills of Matthayom Suksa 1 Students at Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School, Prachinburi Province

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## Abstract

The objectives of this research were: 1) to investigate the problems of English reading skill of students in Mattayom Suksa 1 and 2) to construct proposed guidelines for improving English reading skill. This research was conducted using a mixed-method research design. The research was conducted at Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School in Prachinburi Province. The respondents in this research were divided into two groups; namely, 1) 25 students at Mattayom Suksa 1, 2) 10 English teachers. In this study, two research instruments were employed for the collection of data and information; namely, 1) a questionnaire for investigating problems of English reading skill and 2) a set of interview questions for gathering additional information and validating the proposed strategies. The information and data collected were analyzed through statistical analysis and content analysis methods and then presented in terms of frequency count, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The findings indicated that: 1) the problems of English reading skill of students were found at a high level, particularly in vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension, and lack of motivation; and 2) the proposed strategies for the enhancement of English reading skill were categorized into five chapters; namely, strategies for learners, strategies for instructors, strategies for classroom management, strategies for teaching-learning materials, and strategies for evaluation of teaching-learning English reading skill.

**Keywords**: Guidelines, Improving, English Reading Skill

## 1.Introduction

Language is an essential communication tool that allows people to share concepts, information, and cultural values with others in different societies. With its widespread usage in commerce, education, research, and technology, English has become the most important international language in the world. Over the past decades, English has become the global lingua franca, facilitating communication among people from different linguistic backgrounds (Crystal, 2003; Graddol, 2006). As a result, proficiency in English is no longer optional but essential for academic success and future career opportunities. English language proficiency consists of four major skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, reading plays a particularly important role in academic contexts, as it serves as the primary means of accessing knowledge and information. Reading allows students to understand textbooks,

academic articles, instructions, and digital content, which are necessary for learning across all subjects. According to Nunan (2003), reading is a cognitive and interactive process that involves decoding written symbols and constructing meaning from texts. Similarly, Johnson (2008) emphasizes that reading comprehension is the core of reading ability, as true reading comes up only when learners can understand and interpret the meaning of a text. Reading abilities are even more important in the situation of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) since students frequently rely mainly on written materials because spoken communication opportunities are scarce. Reading promotes the development of other language abilities including writing and speaking in addition to improving vocabulary acquisition (Grabe, 2009). Additionally, reading presents students with real-world language structures, which aid in their internalization of grammar and enhance their general language competency. According to previous studies, reading is considered a fundamental ability that supports both academic success and lifetime learning (Anderson, 1999). Despite its significance, a lot of students fail to acquire proficient English reading abilities. Common issues include low motivation, a lack of reading strategies, a restricted vocabulary, and an inability to recognize major themes. Because they are unable to identify important terminology or comprehend sentence structures, students frequently have difficulty understanding texts. Furthermore, rote memorization and grammar training are frequently prioritized above comprehension and critical thinking in traditional teaching techniques, which limits students' capacity to interact meaningfully with texts (Harmer, 2007). Moreover, affective factors such as lack of interest and low confidence significantly influence students' reading performance. This negative attitude towards English learning can hinder students' willingness to practice reading and ultimately affect their language development. Furthermore, reading comprehension requires the integration of several cognitive processes, such as vocabulary recognition, decoding, and inferencing abilities. Snow (2002) asserts that interaction between the reader, the text, and the context is essential to optimal reading comprehension. In order to improve their comprehension skills, students need to be taught effective reading strategies including skimming, scanning, and predicting. Given the importance of reading skills and the challenges faced by students, it is necessary to conduct a systematic investigation of reading problems and develop effective strategies to improve students' reading performance. This study aims to identify the problems of English reading skills among students in Mattayom Suksa 1 and to propose practical strategies for enhancing their reading abilities in academic contexts.

## 2.Literature Review

Reading is widely recognized as one of the most essential language skills in English language learning, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts where exposure to authentic communication is limited. Reading is not merely the act of recognizing written symbols but involves a complex cognitive process in which learners actively construct meaning from texts through interaction between prior knowledge and textual information. According to David Nunan (2003), reading is an interactive process that requires learners to decode linguistic input and integrate it with their existing knowledge to achieve comprehension. Similarly, Andrew Johnson (2008) emphasizes that reading comprehension is the core of reading ability, asserting that without meaning construction, reading does not truly occur. This perspective aligns with the schema theory proposed by David Rumelhart (1980), which explains that comprehension is facilitated when readers connect new information with their existing mental frameworks or schemas. In addition, William Grabe (2009) describes reading as a strategic and purposeful activity that requires the coordination of multiple skills, including vocabulary knowledge, grammatical understanding, and inferencing ability. These theoretical perspectives indicate that reading is a multidimensional skill that integrates

linguistic, cognitive, and metacognitive processes.

From a linguistic perspective, reading proficiency depends heavily on vocabulary knowledge, grammatical competence, and discourse awareness. Vocabulary is considered one of the most critical components of reading comprehension because it directly influences the reader's ability to understand texts. Jeremy Harmer (2007) states that insufficient vocabulary knowledge is one of the main barriers to comprehension, as learners are unable to decode meaning effectively. Furthermore, grammatical competence enables learners to interpret sentence structures and relationships between ideas, which is essential for understanding complex texts. According to Stephen Krashen (1985), language acquisition is enhanced when learners are exposed to comprehensible input slightly above their current proficiency level, which can be effectively achieved through reading. In addition, discourse competence allows learners to understand how sentences are connected within a text to convey coherent meaning, as emphasized by Michael Halliday (1976), who highlights the importance of cohesion and coherence in language comprehension. Therefore, effective reading requires the integration of these linguistic components to enable learners to process and interpret texts accurately.

In conclusion, reading is a complex and multifaceted skill that involves the integration of linguistic, cognitive, and affective components. Theoretical frameworks and previous studies highlight the importance of vocabulary knowledge, grammatical competence, reading strategies, and motivation in developing reading proficiency. However, many students still face significant challenges in reading due to limited vocabulary, lack of strategies, and low motivation. These issues indicate the need for systematic and research-based approaches to enhance reading skills. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the problems of English reading skills and propose effective strategies to improve students' reading performance in the EFL context.

## 3. Research Objectives

The objectives of the research are:

1.To investigate problems of English reading skill of students in Mattayom Suksa 1

2.To construct proposed guidelines for improving English reading skill

## 4. Research Methodology

**Population /Sample group**

In this research project, Mattayom Suksa 1 at Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School was employed as a case study. The population and sample groups in this research project were divided into 2 groups, namely, 1) 25 students studying in the Mattayom Suksa 1 at Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School and , 2) 10 English teachers of Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School.

**Research instrument**

The two main research instruments were: 1) a questionnaire was employed for the investigation of English reading skill problems of students studying in Mattayom Suksa 1 at Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School. All questions/items in the questionnaire were approved by the three specialists in terms of correctness and suitability and were found in the range of IOC (index of congruence) 0.66-1.00 and 2) a set of questions for the 3 focus group discussion meetings for the evaluation and approval the guidelines for improving reading skill for students studying in the Mattayom Suksa 1 at Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School.

**Data Collection**

For this research project, the researcher himself collected the data and information from the sample groups. The sample groups were informed the purposes of the data collection, then the appointment was made by the researcher and the sample groups. The researcher mailed or submitted a letter of permission to the school director in advance to ask a permission to collect the data.

**Data Analysis**

The data and information collected were analyzed and then interpreted and presented in terms of frequency count, percentage, mean, standard deviation (S.D.). In addition, the information and data from the 3 focus group discussion meetings were analyzed through the content analysis method then used for the evaluation and approval of the guidelines for improving reading skill of students studying in Mattayom Suksa 1 at Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School. The criteria and definition of the range of the mean scores (Wongwanich, 2005) are 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

## 5. Findings

### Part 1: General Information

#### 5.1 Students

**Table 5.1: General information of students**

| General information | | Total(n)=25 | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | Percentage |
| **Gender** | Male | 12 | 48 |
| | Female | 13 | 52 |
| Total | | 25 | 100 |
| **Ages** | 13-14 | 25 | 100 |
| Total | | 25 | 100 |
| **Hours of learning English** | 2-3 hours/day | 25 | 100 |
| Total | | 25 | 100 |

According to table 5.1, in the student's sample group, there are 12 male (48%) and 13 female (52%). It was found that the sample group are in the age between 13-14 (100%). It was also found that all of the 25 students (100%) were assigned to learn English 2-3 hours per day.

#### 5.2 Teachers

**Table 5.2: General information of teachers**

| General information | | Total(n)=10 | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | percentage |
| **Gender** | Male | 3 | 30 |
| | Female | 7 | 70 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total | | 10 | 100 |
| **Ages** | 30-35 | 3 | 30 |
| | 36-40 | 3 | 30 |
| | 41-45 | 2 | 20 |
| | 45-50 | 1 | 10 |
| | 51 or above | 1 | 10 |
| Total | | 10 | 100 |
| **Education** | Bachelor Degree | 7 | 70 |
| | Master Degree | 3 | 30 |
| Total | | 10 | 100 |
| **Years of being a teacher** | 5-10 | 4 | 40 |
| | 10-15 | 3 | 30 |
| | 16-20 | 2 | 20 |
| | 21-25 | 1 | 10 |
| | 26-30 | 1 | 10 |
| Total | | 10 | 100 |
| **Hours of teaching English** | 2-3hours/day | 10 | 100 |
| Total | | 10 | 100 |

According to table 5.2, in the teachers sample group, there are 3 male (30%) and 7 female (70%). For the age, the teachers at the age of 30-35 are 3 (30%), at the age of 36-40 are 3 (30%), at the age of 41-45 are 2 (20), at the age of of 45-50 are 1 (10%), at the age of 51 or above is 1 (10%). For the education background, it was found that 12 teachers (70%) hold a bachelor degree, and 3 teachers (30%) hold a master degree. In addition, it is found that 4 teachers (40%) possess the working time 5-10 years, 3 teachers (30%) possess the working time 10-15 years, 2 teachers (20%) possess the working time 16-20 years, 1 teachers (10%) possess the working time 21-25 years, and 1 teachers (10%) possess the working time 26-30 years . All teachers (100%) are assigned to teach English for 2-3 hours a day.

**Part 2 Problems of English reading**

**Table 5.3 : Problems of English reading (Students)**

| **Items** | **n=25** | | **Level of problems** |
|---|---|---|---|
| | $\bar{X}$ | **S.D.** | |
| 1) I do not understand many English words when reading. | 4.40 | 0.15 | Highest |
| 2) I find it difficult to guess the meaning of words from context. | 4.32 | 0.13 | Highest |
| 3) I cannot understand long or complex sentences. | 4.22 | 0.12 | Highest |
| 4) I read slowly and cannot finish reading tasks on time. | 4.25 | 0.20 | Highest |
| 5) I have difficulty finding the main idea of a passage. | 4.31 | 0.12 | Highest |
| 6) I cannot understand details in reading | 4.26 | 0.12 | Highest |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| passages. | | | |
| 7) I often forget what I have read. | 4.20 | 0.15 | Highest |
| 8) I translate from Thai into English when reading. | 4.25 | 0.21 | Highest |
| 9) I feel bored or lose concentration when reading English texts. | 4.21 | 0.20 | Highest |
| 10) I do not have enough practice in English reading at school. | 4.21 | 0.18 | Highest |
| **Total** | **4.26** | **0.17** | **Highest** |

According to table 4.3, it is indicated that the students rated the problems of reading skill at the highest level at the range of $\bar{X}$ 4.21 (SD=0.18) – $\bar{X}$ 4.40 (0.15).

**Table 5.4 : Problems of English reading (Teachers)**

| Items | n=10 | | Level of problems |
|---|---|---|---|
| | $\bar{X}$ | S.D. | |
| 1) I do not understand many English words when reading. | 4.51 | 0.16 | Highest |
| 2) I find it difficult to guess the meaning of words from context. | 4.58 | 0.21 | Highest |
| 3) I cannot understand long or complex sentences. | 4.40 | 0.15 | Highest |
| 4) I read slowly and cannot finish reading tasks on time. | 4.65 | 0.19 | Highest |
| 5) I have difficulty finding the main idea of a passage. | 4.32 | 0.13 | Highest |
| 6) I cannot understand details in reading passages. | 4.26 | 0.14 | Highest |
| 7) I often forget what I have read. | 4.45 | 0.19 | Highest |
| 8) I translate from Thai into English when reading. | 4.46 | 0.19 | Highest |
| 9) I feel bored or lose concentration when reading English texts. | 4.30 | 0.15 | Highest |
| 10) I do not have enough practice in English reading at school. | 4.31 | 0.17 | Highest |
| **Total** | **4.27** | **0.16** | **Highest** |

According to table 4.4, it is indicated that the teachers rated the problems of reading skill

at the highest level at the range of $\overline{X}$ 4.26 (SD=0.14) – $\overline{X}$ 4.65 (0.19).

**Part 3: Guidelines for improving of English reading skill**

Guidelines for improving of English reading skill in the classroom were composed of 5 chapters namely, chapter 1: : For Learners of English Reading , chapter 2: For Instructors of English Reading, Chapter 3: For Classroom Management , chapter 4: : For Teaching – Learning Material English Reading, and chapter 5 For the evaluation of Teaching – Learning English Reading: All the 5 chapters were approved by the three specialists (One Thai professors and two English native speakers) in terms of correctness and suitability of the contents. The constructed guidelines for improving of English reading skill were accepted and approved by the 3 specialists, then it could be used as a guideline for improving of English reading skill.

## 6. Conclusion

The title of the research is "Guidelines for Improving English Reading Skill for students in Mattayom Suksa 1 at Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School in Prachinburi". The objectives of this research were: 1) to investigate the problems of English reading skill for students studying in Mattayom Suksa 1, and 2) to construct guidelines for improving English reading skill for students studying in Mattayom Suksa 1 at Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School.

In this research project, Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School was selected as a case study. The population consisted of 25 students and 10 English teachers in the academic year 2026, and the sample groups in this research project were divided into 2 groups, namely, 25 students studying in the Mattayom Suksa 1 at Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School, and 10 English teachers of Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School. The main research instruments were a questionnaire and a set of questions for a focus group discussion meeting to approve the constructed guidelines for improving English reading skills for students studying in the Mattayom Suksa 1 at Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School. In this research project, Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School was employed as a case study. The researcher selected Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School as a case study since the researcher has a connection with people there. This helped facilitate the data collection. For this research project, the researcher collected the data and information from the sample groups. The data and information collected were analyzed and then interpreted and presented in terms of frequency count, percentage, mean, and standard deviation (S.D.).

## 7.Discussion

It can be concluded that the students and teachers at Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School rated the problems of English reading skill of students in Mattayom Suksa 1 at the highest level. The statistical results indicated that the mean scores of the problems ranged between 4.21 and 4.65, reflecting a serious level of difficulty in reading skills. The major problems include limited vocabulary knowledge, inability to understand complex sentences, difficulty in identifying the main idea, lack of comprehension skills, slow reading speed, and insufficient reading practice. These findings are consistent with Nation (2001), who states that vocabulary knowledge is a key factor in reading comprehension, and learners with limited vocabulary are unable to understand texts effectively. Similarly, Huang (2021) confirms that vocabulary size significantly affects reading performance. In addition, the difficulty in understanding sentence structures reflects students' lack of grammatical competence, which is essential for interpreting meaning in texts (Harmer, 2007). Moreover, the findings revealed that students lack reading strategies, such as skimming, scanning, and predicting, which are necessary for efficient reading. According to Grabe (2009), reading

comprehension requires the use of strategic processing, while Pressley (2006) emphasizes that skilled readers actively apply strategies to monitor their understanding. The absence of these strategies leads to slow reading and poor comprehension among students. Another important issue identified in this study is the lack of motivation and interest in reading English. Students reported feeling bored and losing concentration during reading activities, which negatively affects their engagement. This finding is consistent with Dörnyei (2001), who highlights that motivation is a crucial factor in language learning, and Alvermann and Moje (2019), who emphasize that student engagement is essential for improving reading comprehension. Therefore, it can be concluded that the problems of English reading skills are influenced not only by linguistic and cognitive factors but also by affective factors such as motivation and attitude.5.3.2 Guidelines for Improving English reading skill for students in Mattayom Suksa 1 at Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School. The constructed "Guidelines for Improving English Reading Skill for Students in Mattayom Suksa 1 at Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School" are composed of five chapters, namely: Chapter 1: For Learners of English Reading, Chapter 2: For Instructors of English Reading, Chapter 3: For Classroom Management, Chapter 4: For Teaching–Learning Materials, and Chapter 5: For the Evaluation of Teaching–Learning English Reading. These guidelines were evaluated and approved by three specialists, indicating that they are appropriate and applicable for improving students' reading skills. The guidelines for learners focus on developing vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension skills, and the use of reading strategies. This is consistent with Nation (2001), who emphasizes the importance of vocabulary development, and Grellet (1981), who suggests that teaching reading strategies such as skimming and scanning can improve comprehension. In addition, the guidelines encourage students to practice reading regularly and engage in meaningful reading activities, which supports Krashen's (1985) concept of comprehensible input. The guidelines for instructors emphasize the role of teachers in supporting students' learning by providing clear explanations, guidance, and feedback. Teachers are encouraged to use student-centered approaches and interactive teaching methods to enhance students' engagement. This aligns with Richards (2006), who states that communicative and learner-centered approaches are more effective in language teaching. Furthermore, the guidelines for classroom management promote collaborative learning through group work and discussion activities, which help students share ideas and improve comprehension. This is supported by Nunan (2003), who emphasizes the importance of interaction in language learning. The guidelines for teaching–learning materials highlight the use of authentic and multimedia materials to increase students' interest and exposure to real-life language use, which is consistent with Grabe and Stoller (2011). Finally, the guidelines for evaluation focus on both formative and summative assessment to monitor students' progress and provide feedback. Continuous assessment helps teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses and adjust instruction accordingly. These findings suggest that the constructed guidelines provide a comprehensive and effective framework for improving English reading skills among students.

## 8.Recommendations

8.1 A research on the investigation of problems of English reading skill of students in Mattayom Suksa 1 at Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School in Prachinburi is suggested to be conducted.

8.2 The guidelines for improving the English reading skills of students in Mattayom Suksa 1 at Tessaban 1 Kabinratsadornamroong School in Prachinburi are suggested to be applied and further developed.

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