

A QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION OF METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES IN THAI
STUDENTS' ENGLISH ACADEMIC READING

A THESIS
BY
ORRANUCH AEGPONGPAOW

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Arts Degree in English
at Srinakharinwirot University
January 2008

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AN ABSTRACT

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This study aimed to investigate metacognitive strategies used in Thai students' English academic reading in these areas: (a) what metacognitive strategies the students used, (b) how they used these metacognitive strategies, (c) how the differences in the use of metacognitive strategies between students of high and low English reading proficiency, and (d) what the reading difficulties that impeded the students' reading comprehension. The participants in this study were 20 third-year Thai students enrolled in the Bachelor's Degree program at Srinakharinwirot University. They were divided into two groups – high English reading proficiency and low English reading proficiency. Interviews, observations through think-aloud sessions, and journal entries were used to collect data. The results revealed that the students had awareness and control of their metacognitive strategies in their reading process. They used metacognitive reading strategies to plan, monitor, and remediate their comprehension such as scanning the text, paying attention to the main points, and focusing on the key words. The findings also showed that in their academic reading the participants with high English reading proficiency used metacognitive strategies more often than the participants with low English reading proficiency. In addition, both high and low reading proficiency students knew various effective reading strategies, but the group with low English proficiency could not apply them to enhance their reading comprehension. Additional findings revealed that Thai students have the following reading difficulties: (a) vocabulary problems, (b) grammatical

structure problems, (c) problems related to the organization of a reading passage, and (d) problems related to the length of a reading passage. The findings provided significant evidence that metacognitive strategies are crucial for Thai students' English in their academic reading. Metacognitive strategies should be applied to enhance their reading comprehension and to resolve difficulties while reading English academic texts of Thai students.

การวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพเพื่อศึกษายุทธวิธีหรือปัญญาในการอ่าน
งานเขียนทางวิชาการของนิสิตไทย

บทคัดย่อ

ของ

อรนุช เอกพงษ์เผ่า

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา
ตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ
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การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษายุทธวิธีอภิปัญญาของนิสิตไทยในคำถามงานวิจัยดังต่อไปนี้ (1) ยุทธวิธีอภิปัญญาอะไรที่นิสิตใช้ในการอ่าน (2) นิสิตใช้ยุทธวิธีอภิปัญญาอย่างไร (3) นิสิตที่มีความสามารถทางการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษระดับสูงและนักศึกษาที่มีความสามารถทางการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษในระดับต่ำมีความสามารถในการใช้ยุทธวิธีอภิปัญญาแตกต่างกันอย่างไร และ (4) ปัญหาในการอ่านที่เป็นอุปสรรคทำให้การอ่านของนิสิตไม่ประสบความสำเร็จคืออะไร กลุ่มตัวอย่างที่เข้าร่วมงานวิจัยชิ้นนี้ประกอบด้วยนิสิตไทยจำนวน 20 คนที่ศึกษาในระดับปริญญาตรี ที่มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒประสานมิตร ซึ่งจัดแบ่งออกเป็น 2 กลุ่ม คือ นิสิตที่มีความสามารถทางการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษในระดับสูง และนิสิตที่มีความสามารถทางการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษในระดับต่ำ เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการเก็บข้อมูลในงานวิจัยชิ้นนี้คือ การสัมภาษณ์แบบเจาะลึก การสังเกตกลุ่มตัวอย่างโดยผู้วิจัย และการเขียนบันทึกของกลุ่มตัวอย่าง ผลการวิจัยพบว่า นิสิตมีความตระหนักและมีความสามารถในการใช้ยุทธวิธีอภิปัญญาในกระบวนการอ่าน เช่น การอ่านเนื้อหาคร่าวๆ การมุ่งความสนใจที่ประเด็นเนื้อหาหลัก และการมุ่งความสนใจที่สำคัญ เพื่อวางแผน ควบคุมและแก้ปัญหาในกระบวนการอ่าน นอกจากนี้ผลงานวิจัยพบด้วยว่า ในการอ่านทางวิชาการนิสิตที่มีความสามารถในการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษในระดับสูง ใช้ยุทธวิธีทางอภิปัญญาในการอ่านมากกว่านิสิตที่มีความสามารถในการอ่านทางภาษาอังกฤษระดับต่ำ นอกจากนี้ยังพบว่า นิสิตที่มีความสามารถในการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษในระดับสูงและนิสิตที่มีความสามารถในการอ่านระดับต่ำรู้ยุทธวิธีในการอ่านที่สัมฤทธิ์ผลต่างๆ แต่นิสิตที่มีความสามารถในการอ่านระดับต่ำ ไม่สามารถประยุกต์ใช้ยุทธวิธีทางการอ่านต่างๆ เพื่อประสิทธิผลทางการอ่านได้ ผลงานวิจัยยังพบว่านิสิตไทยมีปัญหาทางการอ่านดังต่อไปนี้ (1) มีปัญหาทางด้านคำศัพท์ (2) มีปัญหาทางด้านโครงสร้างไวยากรณ์ (3) มีปัญหาที่เกี่ยวกับการอ่านเค้าโครงรูปแบบของงานเขียน (4) มีปัญหาเกี่ยวกับความยาวของบทความที่อ่าน งานวิจัยชิ้นนี้ชี้ให้เห็นเด่นชัดว่า ยุทธวิธีอภิปัญญามีความสำคัญสำหรับนิสิตไทยในการอ่านงานเขียนทางวิชาการ ยุทธวิธีอภิปัญญาควรนำไปใช้ในการอ่าน และแก้ปัญหาที่เกิดขึ้นในขณะที่อ่านบทความทางวิชาการต่าง ๆ ของนิสิตไทย

The thesis titled

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by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

In Thailand, English is taught as the first foreign language, and it is more in use than other popular foreign languages, such as French, Japanese, or Chinese. This predominance of English over other languages happens because Thailand is presently in the process of shifting from a traditional economy to a market economy, a trend towards globalization that allows foreign investment in the country. Thus, in order to perform business transactions, Thai citizens need to communicate in English with overseas investors.

Not surprisingly, most multinational companies with offices in Thailand prefer recruiting employees with a very good command of English. That is, the employees should be able to write, read, and understand contracts or exchange e-mail messages with superiors, colleagues, or customers. Furthermore, the Thai Government is campaigning to attract visitors to Thailand in order to stimulate tourism. This promotion increases the number of tourists in the country and reinforces English as the chosen medium of communication between Thais and foreigners.

Because of its importance, English has been part of the national curriculum since 1895 (Ministry of Education, 2002). In the former curriculums, English was an elective course from elementary to upper secondary levels (Ministry of Education, 2006; Satyarakwit & Chinnamethipitak, 2007). However, Thailand has been, and still is, highly shaped by a changing world dominated by western economies using English for communication. This caused the national curriculum to be revised in 1978 and 1996, and the main focus of language teaching changed to teaching language for communicative

purposes (Ministry of Education, 2006; Soranastaporn, Chantarasorn, & Chumpavan, 2002). It is stated in the Thai National Act of 1999 that Thai students are required to study English from grades 1 to 12. The teaching of English in the new curriculum emphasizes the integration of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills to meet the realistic needs of the country.

Reading is an important part of the four necessary language skills for acquiring knowledge and gathering information for those learning English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL), for academic success, and for professional development (Wei, 2005). The main objective of English language education at primary and secondary school levels is to teach students to read English books and to encourage them to keep up with global development, especially in the area of information technology (IT) (Wei, 2005). Students at the university level need to understand textbooks, articles, or magazines written in English to acquire knowledge and gather information for both their careers and their academic studies (Wei, 2005). For these reasons, the ability to read and understand English effectively is regarded as the most important skill for ESL/EFL students at all levels.

Reading plays an important role in language learning, but ESL/EFL educators have found that most students cannot read English texts effectively (Aebersold & Field, 1997). The problems impeding students' reading success come from the inappropriateness of the reading materials, the misunderstanding of grammatical structures, difficulties with vocabulary, and the lack of background knowledge from the readers' part (Aebersold & Field, 1997; Dagostina & Carrifio, 1994; Nuttall, 2000). According to these educators, the reading materials used in schools may not meet the students' need and do not facilitate their reading. Long sentences in academic texts may be too difficult for readers to understand because their grammatical structure contains a

variety of clauses and complex forms. Furthermore, texts containing a lot of unknown words may be equally difficult for readers to grasp, and the lack of background knowledge on what they read may cause problems to students in understanding the idea presented in reading passages.

The educators in Thailand investigated the reading ability of Thai students and of employees at the workplace and found that the reading ability of Thais were at a low level. Wongsuwan (1992), for example, found that Mathayomsuksa 6 (Grade 12) students in the demonstration schools affiliated to the Ministry of University Affairs both in Bangkok and in the provinces had reading problems in the following areas: (a) sentence structure, (b) vocabulary in context, and (c) paragraph organization. The results of the study conducted by Sucompa (1998) also indicated that Rajamangala Institute of Technology (RIT) language teachers and students in tourism had difficulties with English reading because they could not read and write English correspondence or e-mail messages properly.

Similarly, Songsiri (1999) found that Mathayomsuka 6 (Grade 12) students at Protpittayapayat School had poor reading skills in the following three areas: (a) vocabulary, (b) grammatical rules, and (c) background knowledge. Jesdapornpun (2001) also found that 18 technical staff at Samart Comtech had problems in reading English texts in the following three areas: (a) unknown words, (b) limited background knowledge, and (c) lack of understanding of grammatical structures.

The results of the cited studies revealed that Thai students and employees had difficulties in reading English texts. The major reading difficulties are: low understanding of sentence structure, poor vocabulary in context, weak paragraph organization, and limited background knowledge in what they read. All of these impede Thais' reading achievement.

Metacognitive Strategies in Reading

Metacognitive strategies are regarded as a part of the effective strategies that enhance learners' reading ability (Cohen, 1998). To be able to read effectively and intelligently, students need to refine their reading ability by integrating their prior knowledge, language proficiency, and metacognitive strategies with the understanding of words and sentences in a text (Hammadou, 1991). Metacognitive strategies involve thinking about what one is doing while reading, checking the outcome of problem-solving techniques, planning how to use an effective strategy, controlling the effectiveness of an action plan, testing, revising, and evaluating one's learning strategy (Block, 1992; Salataci & Akyel, 2002). These strategies should play their roles in reading tasks as they can help learners plan, organize or control, and evaluate or remediate the reading process (Chumpavan, 2000; Cohen, 1998; Li & Munby, 1996; Urquhart & Weir, 1998).

According to Keene and Zimmerman (1997), there are eight metacognitive strategies. First, experienced readers will prepare an action plan while they are reading. That is, they are aware of their own thinking and understanding. In-depth readers concentrate on their own thinking process and can select strategies before, during, and after their reading. Then, these experienced readers will gather knowledge from their past experiences, habits, beliefs, and events and situations concerning society or the world in general to create connections with reading texts in order to access them more easily.

Second, experienced readers will try to understand the important part of a reading text. While reading, they constantly evaluate the importance of a text at three levels of understanding: the word level, the sentence level, and the paragraph level (Alderson, 2000).

Next, experienced readers use self-questioning. They ask themselves questions before, during, and after the reading of a text in order to ascertain its meaning, support their understanding, and guess its content.

Additionally, experienced readers often draw up pictures in their mind using the five senses (sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste) to promote emotions while they are reading. They use this strategy in reading short stories to imagine the characters. Moreover, according to Anderson (200), experienced readers can combine the important information in the reading text with their personal background knowledge to create inference beyond a written text.

Retelling or synthesizing the reading text using the reader's own words is also important in a reading process. When experienced readers read, they gain information, think about it, and express the author's meaning with their own words (Flemming, 1997).

Finally, experienced readers use a variety of fix-up strategies to remediate reading problems and extract meaning from a text (Duffy & Roehler, 1993). The fix-up strategies include inferring, asking questions, determining importance, and synthesizing. These strategies help experienced readers to better comprehend what they are reading in academic texts.

In conclusion, metacognitive strategies are effective tactics that skilled learners use to enhance their reading ability. These strategies combine planning, monitoring, and checking the process of reading. All of these strategies may help readers understand a text being read.

Purpose of the Study

In Thailand, very few studies investigating the role of metacognitive strategies used in reading by university or college students can be found. Therefore, the main purpose of this study was to investigate what metacognitive strategies students at the

university level use in their academic reading and how they use them. In addition, the differences in the use of metacognitive strategies between students with high English proficiency and students with low English reading proficiency, and the difficulties that these students encountered when reading academic texts were also investigated.

Research Questions

This study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What metacognitive strategies do third-year English major students at Srinakharinwirot University (SWU) use in reading English academic texts?
2. How do third-year English major students at SWU apply those metacognitive strategies?
3. How differently do third-year English major students at SWU with high and low English reading proficiency use metacognitive strategies?
4. What difficulties do third-year English major students at SWU encounter when reading English academic texts?

Significance of the Study

The findings obtained from this study provide information about what students' reading strategies are, and whether these strategies are effective or not. Such information could be used as a guideline for teachers to find the best technique for teaching effective reading. In addition, the findings could be useful for students who want to improve their reading skills by helping them to select effective reading strategies. Providing that the findings of this study are suitable for teaching reading courses, they should be added to the existing English programs.

Methodology

Participants

Selection of the university.

Srinakharinwirot University was selected as an ideal university for this study because of the following reasons:

Firstly, to be admitted to public universities, high school students are required to take the examination administered by the Ministry of University Affairs (Office of the National Education Commission, 1999). The students may select to take the examination administered by the university that they hope to attend. Srinakharinwirot University is one of the well-known public universities that students hope to attend and one they add to their preference list.

Secondly, the English courses offered at Srinakharinwirot University (SWU), especially the courses offered in the Department of Western Languages, Faculty of Humanities, focus on helping students to improve their English proficiency (Srinakharinwirot University Operation Center, 2007). The students enrolled in the English courses at SWU are expected to be able to use English both communicatively and academically.

Therefore, with these two reasons, the researcher selected Srinakharinwirot University to participate in this study. In addition, the Department of Western Languages of SWU gave permission to the researcher to conduct this study with their students.

Selection of the participants.

Third-year students majoring in English in the Department of Western Languages at Srinakharinwirot University in Bangkok in the academic year 2005 were asked to participate in this study. The researcher asked to see the University's student list. It was found that the total number of third-year English major students at SWU was

approximately 80, of which 20 were randomly selected. They were divided into two groups: (a) students with high English reading proficiency and (b) students with low English reading proficiency. Each group counted 10 participants.

Instrumentation

Interviews.

Interviews were used to collect data before observing the participants' reading in think-aloud sessions. The 16 interview questions were developed by the researcher to investigate the metacognitive strategies of the participants. They were evaluated by the thesis adviser to determine their appropriateness and were then revised using her comments and suggestions.

Observations through think-aloud sessions.

After the interview, the students were asked to read two passages in the think-aloud sessions, as their reading process was observed. The researcher used the same questions as the ones she used in the interview to ask the participants to explain what their reading strategies were and how they used them.

For the participants to read, two academic reading passages were selected from a reading book for EFL students. The first passage contained approximately 550 words, and discussed the plagiarism habits of Australian students, while the second passage of approximately 940 words treated of eating disorders. The thesis adviser was asked to review the selected passages to verify their level of difficulty and to confirm that they were an appropriate choice for the participants. It was agreed that the selected passages were appropriate for this study.

The think-aloud sessions or the observations lasted about 60 minutes. All interviews and think-aloud sessions were taped, and the recording was transcribed by the researcher immediately after each interview and think-aloud session.

Journal entries.

The participants were asked to write a journal to record their reading strategies, which they submitted to the researcher a week after the interviews and the observations through the think-aloud sessions. They were asked to describe the reading strategies that they used as they were reading English academic textbooks, journals, and novels by themselves, without the presence of the researcher.

Data Collection Procedures

The data for the study were collected through the interviews, the think-aloud sessions, and the journals written by the participants, in which they recorded their reading strategies. To avoid ambiguities, all data were rechecked with the participants and their consistency was examined.

Data Analysis

The data collected for this study were coded according to the following four research questions:

1. What metacognitive strategies do third-year English major students at Srinakharinwirot University (SWU) use in reading English academic texts?
2. How do third-year English major students at SWU apply those metacognitive strategies?
3. How differently do third-year English major students at SWU with high and low English reading proficiency use metacognitive strategies?
4. What difficulties do third-year English major students at SWU encounter when reading English academic texts?

The data were then coded into the following three categories: (a) the kinds of metacognitive strategies used and their method of application, (b) the differences in the use of metacognitive strategies by English major students at SWU with high and low

English reading proficiency, and (c) the kinds of difficulties the students encountered in their reading.

Confidentiality of the Participants

The participants were informed that their names and personal data would not appear in the study or be included in the data analysis. All information was destroyed immediately after the study was completed.

Limitations of the Study

The participants of this study were limited to the third-year university students in the Department of Western Languages at Srinakharinwirot University in Bangkok, Thailand. This study was also limited to students majoring in English who completed two of the three required English reading courses offered in the English program for undergraduate students at the University. The students were informed in advance of the day and time of the interview and of the observation. The students who were not willing to participate in the study were not included and replaced by students who accepted to participate.

Organization of the Study

Chapter I of the study introduces its background and problems. Chapter II presents a review of the related literature and research studies pertaining to the subject of this thesis. Chapter III details the methodology of this research. Chapter IV analyzes the results of the study, while Chapter V discusses these results and suggests recommendations for further studies.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the theoretical and research literature related to reading problems and to the metacognitive strategies students use to succeed when reading academic texts. It is subdivided in the following parts:

1. What is Reading?
2. Factors that Influence Reading in Second and Foreign Languages
3. Reading Problems for Students of English as a Second or Foreign Language
4. Studies Related to the Reading Problems of Thai Students
5. Reading and Learning Strategies to Enhance Reading Ability
6. Metacognitive Strategies in Reading
7. Studies Related to the Investigation of Metacognitive Strategies in Reading

What is Reading?

It seems that reading is not completely understood or cannot be described easily (Aebersold & Field, 1997; Taverner, 1990; Urquhart & Weir, 1998). In the early 1960s, educational psychologists argued various definitions for reading, but it still was difficult to define it exactly.

However, they outlined two main possible wide meanings, that is, (a) reading is the decoding process of syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic knowledge, and (b) reading is

“the whole parcel of cognitive activities” carried out by a reader in contact with a text (Urquhart & Weir, 1998, p. 17).

Later on, in the 1970s, reading was pervasively defined as “a means of extending experience” (Taverner, 1990, p. 4). In other words, reading is concerned with the past experiences reflecting the readers’ interest and their reading motivation. Hence, an easy way to describe reading in general terms was that it involves a reader, a text, and the interaction between the two (Aebersold & Field, 1997).

The reader or the individual is the first factor of the learning process. Readers are unique in that they differ in the way they apply their individual experiences towards what they read. They need to be aware of themselves as readers and base their reading process on their past knowledge acquired in their learning of both how to read and how to apply their reading to their everyday use. In addition, they need to know what memories they themselves have about the sum of their life experiences gathered from the family, community, school, society, and culture while they learned to read.

The next factor in the reading process is the text. There are many types of texts everyday readers read such as books, labels on medicine containers, instructions on street signs, advertisements on television, and so on. To succeed in their reading comprehension, readers need to realize the differences in the language considerations in different written materials – the organization of information, grammar, cohesion, and vocabulary.

According to Aebersold and Field (1997), reading is “what happens when people look at a text and assign meaning to the written symbols in that text” (p. 15). While reading, readers have an interaction with the text at hand, applying to it an area of knowledge such as content, formal knowledge, and linguistic knowledge. The interaction

between readers and a text is constantly changing, depending upon the readers' comprehension of what they read. That is, if readers possess more complete knowledge about what they read, they can better understand the text being read.

In summary, it is difficult to define exactly what reading is because this definition depends on each individual's purposes in reading. However, a general definition accepted by various educational researchers is that reading is the connectivity of a reader, a text, and the interaction between the two.

Factors that Influence Reading in Second and Foreign Language

In teaching English as a second language (L2) or English as foreign language (FL), to help their students comprehend a text the reading teacher must understand the key factors that affect the students' reading ability. According to Aebersold and Field (1997, pp. 21-34), the key factors that influence students' reading ability are as follows:

1. *Cognitive development and cognitive style orientation.* The age and level of cognitive or mental development of the learners when beginning their learning of L2 or FL influence their flexibility in learning a language. Teachers must be aware of their students' cognitive style and cognitive development to help them build a personal learning style that will include a variety of strategies, and to remediate effectively their reading difficulties (Aebersold & Field, 1997).
2. *Reading performance and competence in their L1.* The levels of L1 students' reading proficiency have an influence on the development of reading skills in L2. Even if there is no evidence that skilled readers have more potential in L2 reading ability than poor readers, the skilled L1 readers who have flexibility in their reading ability and adapt their reading strategies to remediate their reading

problems more successfully transfer their own critical thinking process in L2 reading than poor readers do (Aebersold & Field, 1997; Koda, 2004).

3. *Metacognitive knowledge.* Metacognitive knowledge is the combination of students' ability in discussing, describing, giving the rules for their own native language, and commenting on how they use their learning ability. Not surprisingly, skilled readers having good command in their metacognitive knowledge see more improvement in their reading process than poor readers do (Aebersold & Field, 1997).
4. *L2 or FL proficiency.* Students' second language proficiency influences their reading performance. L2 reading problems come from readers' inadequate knowledge of the target language. In other words, readers can better understand a target text if they have a high level of reading proficiency in the target language. Adequate knowledge of the target language helps them solve difficulties in reading target texts (Aebersold & Field, 1997).
5. *Degree of difference between L1 and L2.* The degree of difference between a first or native language (L1) and a second language (L2) is evaluated within the L1 and L2 writing system and rhetorical structure and the individual's purpose of reading. When a target text is too difficult and shows great differences between the native language and the target language, it becomes more difficult for L2 readers to comprehend it (Aebersold & Field, 1997).
6. *Cultural orientation.* Cultural orientation involves "the students' reading attitudes towards a text and the purpose of their reading, the types of their reading skills and the strategies they use in L2, the belief about the reading process, their knowledge of text types in their L1, and their background knowledge in L2" (Aebersold & Field, 1997, p. 34). These factors are main influences on students'

reading in L2 or FL. When readers in L2 have adequate knowledge of their cultural orientation in reading, it is useful for them to enhance their understanding of a text at hand.

Additionally, according to Urquhart and Weir (1998), there are three factors that reflected on reading attainment: (a) word recognition, (b) language, and (c) background – or world knowledge. Word recognition itself is categorized into three areas: lexis (letter pattern), phonics (letter sounds), and semantics (word meanings which involve strings of letter patterns and letter sounds or strings of the relationship between lexis and phonics). Language itself is concerned with three parts of the linguistic knowledge: (a) syntax (grammatical arrangement of words in a sentence), (b) cohesion (linguistic devices that hold together the words in the sentence strings), and (c) text structure (the underlying organization of the rhetorical devices of a written text such as problem-solution, cause-effect, chronology, and so on). Finally, background or world knowledge refers to the individual experiences that facilitate readers' understanding of a text.

In addition, according to Ruddell and Ruddell (1995), six key factors that enhance effective reading achievement are (a) word analysis, (b) language knowledge, (c) prior or background knowledge, (d) reading motivation, (e) text interaction, and (f) effective comprehension strategies. Word analysis involves knowledge in lexis, phonics, and the semantic meaning of words. Language knowledge is the linguistic knowledge that helps readers infer meaning from relational or lexical elements within sentences. Background knowledge is related to literacy and prior knowledge drawn up from personal experiences concerning the text being read. Reading motivation is the intellectual curiosity that helps readers make better sense of what they read. Text interaction is the reading process by which a reader uses their language knowledge related to word meanings, sentences, and

story structure to enhance their understanding of the reading passage. Additionally, effective comprehension strategies are formed by the personal tactics that successful readers normally use to help them better understand what is being read.

In conclusion, there are many educators proposing a variety of key factors that influence readers' reading achievement. Understanding the factors that influence reading in L2 may help teachers to develop teaching plans for their reading classroom in order to improve their students' proficiency.

Reading Problems for Students of English as a Second or Foreign Language

Along with listening, speaking and writing, reading is regarded as an important part of the four language skills necessary for acquiring knowledge and gathering information for those learning English as a second language (ESL) or as a foreign language (EFL). In high schools, the main goal of English language education is to teach students to read English books, and to encourage them to keep up with global development, especially in the area of information technology (IT). At university level, students need to understand textbooks, articles or magazines written in English. They read to gain knowledge and gather information for both their academic studies and their careers. Thus, the ability to read and understand English effectively is regarded as the most important skill for university or college students. Even though reading plays a vital role in all EFL/ESL students' academic lives, teachers and researchers have found that most students fail to read English effectively (Aebersold & Field, 1997; Wei, 2005). The problems students are confronted with come from the reading materials themselves, the confusion regarding grammatical structures, difficult vocabulary and the lack of background knowledge (Aebersold & Field, 1997; Dagostina & Carrifio, 1994; Nuttall, 2000). The reading materials used in schools may not interest the students, making reading difficult for them (Aebersold & Field, 1997). Added to this, the grammatical

structure making up long sentences may be too difficult for readers to understand (Dagostina & Carrifio, 1994; Nuttall, 2000). For example, sentences in newspapers and academic texts are grammatically more complex than the ones in short stories because they contain a variety of clauses and complex structures, whereas sentences in short stories are often simpler and, thus, more easily understood. In addition, students have reading problems when they encounter unknown words (Chadavimol, 1998; Dagostina & Carrifio, 1994), especially if these are key words. Furthermore, students need some background knowledge on a text in order to understand it (Alderson, 2000; Dagostina & Carrifio, 1994). When learners possess more background knowledge on what they read, they can understand the main idea and more easily retain the information.

In brief, reading is one of all four necessary language skills that play an important role in EFL/ESL students' lives. However, it is found that ESL/EFL learners cannot succeed in reading because they have reading difficulties in four areas, that is, inappropriate reading materials, complex grammatical structure in academic texts, unknown words, and lack of background knowledge. All of these four difficulties may interfere with the proficiency of EFL/ESL readers in their English academic reading.

Studies Related to the Reading Problems of Thai Students

In Thailand, the results of various studies investigating reading ability indicate that Thai students have low levels of reading proficiency. Wongsuwan (1992) conducted a study to determine the reading problems of Mathayomsuksa 6 (Grade 12) students in the demonstration schools affiliated to the Ministry of University Affairs. Four hundred and ninety-six students were selected for the study: 266 students from Bangkok and 230 students from other provinces; 272 of them were science students and 224 art students. A reading test was used as an investigative instrument. It was found that science and art

students in Bangkok and in the provinces reached an average level in three main areas of reading ability: (a) sentence structure, (b) vocabulary in context, and (c) paragraph organization. It was also found that there was no significant difference between Bangkok students and students in the provinces in mean scores in sentence structures, but there were significant differences in vocabulary in context and paragraph organization.

Sucompa (1998) conducted a study to investigate the needs and problems in using English in the tourism industry in Thailand and at the campuses of the Rajamangala Institute of Technology (RIT). The participants included four groups: (a) 394 workers in the tourism industry, (b) 95 employers or owners of travel agencies, (c) 20 English language teachers, and (d) 135 students in tourism. All participants were requested to complete questionnaires to collect data that determined content, method, and duration of the course “Technical English for English for Tourism” for higher certificate students at RIT. SPSS was used to analyze the percentage, means, and standard deviation of the participants’ responses to the questionnaires. It was found that workers and employers in the tourism industry, owners of travel agencies, and students in tourism had difficulties with English. All participants pointed out that speaking, reading and listening were more important than writing and translation. It was also found that RIT language teachers and students in tourism believed that tourism students had difficulties with English reading and writing since they could not properly write English correspondence or e-mail messages.

Songsiri (1999) conducted a study to investigate the English reading skills of Mathayomsuka 6 (Grade 12) students. Twelve students from six classes at Protpittayapayat School were selected to test their reading ability. They were also interviewed to investigate their attitude towards English reading. It was found that these students had below satisfactory level of English reading proficiency. Only 1% of the

students earned good grades (80%-87%), and 67.5% of them were graded as poor (23%-47%). The students were poorly skilled in vocabulary, grammatical rules, and background knowledge. However, in investigating their attitude, it was found that they felt positive towards English reading and that they were highly interested in improving their English reading skills.

Similarly, Jesdapornpun (2001) conducted a study to investigate problems related to English reading shared by 18 technicians at the company Samart Comtech. It was found that all the participants had difficulties with unfamiliar words and with understanding meaning from sentences and passages. When they encountered unfamiliar words, they consulted a dictionary to translate them. However, they stated that consulting a dictionary did not help them better understand the text. Additionally, it was found that the participants had limited background knowledge on their reading and that grammatical structure was the main problem that obstructed their extracting meaning from the text.

It can be concluded from the results of these studies that high school and college students were unable to read effectively because they had problems with the following: (a) vocabulary in context, (b) sentence structure, (c) paragraph organization, and (d) background knowledge. All of these reading problems impeded their reading achievement.

Reading Strategies to Enhance Reading Ability

According to Koda (2004), all readers, whether poor or experienced, encounter reading difficulties. To solve these, they must understand the nature of their reading problems and know how to solve them. In addition, Koda points out that experienced readers normally apply their own effective reading strategies to remediate their reading problems and to develop an in-depth understanding of a reading passage.

Consequently, in recent years, educational researchers (e.g. Richardson & Morgan, 2000; Urquhart & Weir, 1998, and so on) proposed a number of reading strategies to improve learners' reading ability. These reading strategies are as follows:

1. *Previewing*. Previewing a text is a strategy that readers use in preparing a reading activity to recall their own knowledge about the text and its structure. This technique helps readers predict what they are going to read and helps them adjust an appropriate personal framework to facilitate their understanding of the reading (Aebersold & Field, 1997).
2. *Skimming*. Skimming is a reading technique that looks for the general ideas or the main point of a passage, without studying it in details. This technique is commonly used at the start of a reading activity in order to grasp the whole picture of a text (Urquhart & Weir, 1998).
3. *Scanning*. Scanning involves reading selectively in order to enhance specific reading objectives. Here, readers quickly scan a text by looking at particular words, phrases, sentences, headings, the table of contents, and so on (Urquhart & Weir, 1998).
4. *Predicting or anticipating*. This reading strategy is used to guess the content of a text. Readers may ask themselves questions by using their background knowledge or experiences in order to guess what the text is about (Urquhart & Weir, 1998).
5. *Rauding*. Rauding involves the knowledge of sentence integration, namely the lexical and semantic assessing of each word (Carver, 1990). Readers use additional requirement that the meaning of each word by integrated into the meaning of the sentences to comprehend complete thoughts contained in each sentences in the story being read (Carver, 1990). This reading technique helps

readers understand more completely the message that the writer intended to communicate.

6. *Determining essential information or identifying a stated main idea.* Determining the essential information of a text is a reading technique that concentrates on the main points of the reading content. This strategy helps readers determine the main points of a passage (Chumpavan, 2000; Li & Munby, 1996).
7. *Summarizing.* Summarizing is the technique of constructing a summary from a text by preserving its meaning (Irwin & Doyle, 1992). Readers summarize to review in their mind the main points of a text. This technique helps them memorize what they are reading, conceptualize the main point of a text, and transfer it into their own language (Keen & Zimmerman, 1997; Richardson & Morgan, 2000).
8. *Reviewing.* Readers review a reading text by outlining it and trying to see the relationships in its content. Outlining helps them understand difficult texts and involves taking notes of the specific information that they want to remember. In addition, readers may check short-term memory retention by trying to recall the main and supporting points of a text (Richardson & Morgan, 2000).
9. *Rereading or repeated reading.* Repeated reading is a technique by which readers repeat some words and phrases and review a passage after its first reading. It helps them better recall the information and understand more details (Alber-Morgan, Ramp, Anderson, & Martin, 2007).
10. *Using prior knowledge.* Readers relate the context of what is being read to familiar mental representations using prior knowledge or experiences which have been recalled from their world knowledge or personal experiences. Tapping into

this prior knowledge helps readers better understand the text being read (Chumpavan, 2000; Li & Munby, 1996; Urquhart & Weir, 1998).

11. *Making Inference.* Readers draw inferences on the basis of inconclusive evidence or insufficient information. When readers infer, they use “available information to guess meaning, predict outcomes, and fill in missing information” (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 138). This technique helps them draw conclusions through critical analysis, and facilitates their making predictions, building new ideas, and finding new meanings that may be implied in the text at hand.
12. *Imaging.* Imaging is a reading strategy in which readers use visual mental images to understand the information of a text. This technique helps readers form visual images on the content of the text at hand (Cohen, 1998; Collins & Cheek, 1993).
13. *Categorizing questions.* Categorizing questions is a technique that readers use to recheck their understanding of a reading passage. It helps them better grasp the main point as well as evaluate their own understanding (Aebersold & Field, 1997; Richardson & Morgan, 2000).
14. *Elaborating.* Elaborating is a reading technique by which readers relate the new information of a reading passage to their prior knowledge. It helps readers accommodate new information and better assert the additional data supporting their background knowledge (Richardson & Morgan, 2000).
15. *Evaluating.* Evaluating is a reading strategy performed after reading. Readers give their opinions and comments, recognize alternative views, and offer rational positions concerning the text. This technique helps readers check and evaluate the accuracy of their understanding, recheck what they are confused about, and find solutions to solve the problems (Collin & Cheek, 1993).

16. *Paraphrasing.* Paraphrasing is a reading strategy in which readers use the knowledge of their native language and of the second language to comprehend the information of a text. Normally, this strategy is used widely in translating a word or phrase into one's native language (Alderson, 2000).

According to Cohen (1998), the reading strategies provided in reading classrooms help students to improve their reading comprehension. Effective reading strategies include plans for solving problems encountered in constructing meaning and the mental processes that readers use to understand what is being read (Duffy & Roehler, 1993). However, successful and unsuccessful students use different strategies in their reading. More successful readers build their own strategies and use them along a variety of the reading strategies mentioned above (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).

Metacognitive Strategies in Reading

In the latest decades, some educational psychologists interested in developing readers' cognitive process combined reading strategies with metacognitive strategies (e.g. Cohen, 1997; Hummadou, 1991; Li & Munby, 1996; Muñoz-Swicegood, 1994; O'Malley & Chamot, 1995; and Rubin, 1993). According to these educators, students can be taught independently to employ specific reading strategies during the reading process, especially in metacognitive processes – those process in which readers carefully “consider thoughts in problem solving situations though the strategies of self-planning, self-monitoring, self-regulating, self-questioning, self-reflecting, and self-reviewing” (Muñoz-Swicegood, 1994, p. 83).

In addition, according to Hummadou (1991), reading comprehension involves understanding words, sentences, and a text, and a complex integration of the readers' background knowledge, language proficiency, and metacognitive strategies.

Metacognition, therefore, is considered by these educators to be a necessary element for enhancing reading tasks (Cohen, 1998; Rubin, 1993).

Metacognition refers to thinking about what one is doing while reading. It includes checking the results of the problem-solving techniques, planning how to use an effective strategy, controlling the effectiveness of an action plan, testing, revising and evaluating one's learning strategy (Block, 1992; Salataci & Akyel, 2002).

According to Rubin (1993), metacognition involves "both students' knowledge about their cognitive processes and their ability to control them" (p. 11). She pointed out that successful readers activate learning and controlling strategies for their learning success. That is, when successful readers use metacognition for getting information on learning, they know what to do, how to do it, and when to do it properly.

Metacognition consists of three basic parts: (a) developing a plan of action, (b) monitoring or controlling the plan, and (c) evaluating the plan (Pressley, 2002). Firstly, readers develop a plan of action before they read a text. For example, they might evaluate what they need to do first. Next, while they are reading the context, readers using metacognition monitor this plan of action. They may ask themselves what important information they need to remember or what they need to do if they cannot understand the context. Finally, when these proficient readers evaluate their plan, they ask themselves how they might apply the reading strategies to other reading problems or whether they need to go back and resolve any misunderstanding.

Besides, metacognition involves the ability to use strategies to solve problems when learners have difficulties in their learning (Conley, 1992). It is "thinking about the learning process, planning for learning, monitoring the learning tasks, and self-evaluating the learning tasks after the tasks have been completed" (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 8). Metacognition allows learners to control their own cognition by structuring a plan,

forming a strategy, monitoring or organizing, and evaluating the learning process. Thus, metacognitive strategies involve “pre-assessment and pre-planning, on-line planning and evaluation, and evaluation and post-evaluation of learning activities and of language events. Such strategies allow learners to control their own cognition by coordinating the planning, organizing, and evaluating of the learning process.” (Cohen, 1998, p.7)

According to Cohen (1998), the metacognitive strategies of reading are divided into three parts: (a) pre-reading (planning) strategies, (b) while-reading (monitoring) strategies, and (c) post-reading (evaluating) strategies.

The pre-reading strategies are related to scanning and guessing what a text is about. It helps them decide which books or articles are appropriate to the specific purpose of their reading. After they decide whether the reading material is suitable, readers may guess the information from its context, think about its topic, and ask themselves questions (Cohen, 1998).

The while-reading strategies are related to self-questioning, self-monitoring and problem-solving (Cohen, 1998). In self-questioning, readers pay attention to their reading by asking themselves questions on the significance of the text. In self-monitoring they concentrate on their strategy and check their comprehension. And with problem-solving, readers can find solutions to their reading problems.

The post-reading strategies involve evaluation and response to evaluation. Skilled learners can evaluate their strategy by asking themselves what they are trying to do, how well they use this strategy, or what else they can do concerning the passage. All of these questions help them evaluate whether their course of action is effective, and respond accordingly (Alderson, 2000).

According to Keene and Zimmerman (1997), metacognitive readers use the following eight metacognitive strategies when they read: (a) planning for action before,

during and after reading, (b) using background knowledge (c) deciding what is important, (d) self-questioning, (e) creating mental pictures, (f) inferring, (g) retelling or synthesizing, and (h) using fix-up strategies for reading problems.

The first, planning for action, happens before, during, and after the reading process. Proficient readers have an action plan to manipulate their thinking and comprehension. Their planning goes as the following:

1. Rephrase the headings or title as a question to give them a reading direction.
2. Examine the subheadings, illustrations, and so forth, as a direction to identify significant information in the selected reading.
3. Read the introductory paragraph, the summary, and the questions for study at the end of the selection.
4. Read the first sentence of every paragraph, which contains generally, though not always, the main idea of the paragraph.
5. Evaluate their reading by answering questions that arise from reading the text.
6. Write a brief summary of what they read from skimming information in the text.

(Patricia, 2001, p. 3)

All these techniques help the readers identify or understand the basic framework of the selected text and interpret or evaluate what is written. These techniques related to the readers' action plan occur throughout their reading process – including before and after, and help them understand and remember the information.

Second, what is called prior or background knowledge comes from the readers' past experiences, habits, beliefs, and events and situations concerning society or the world at large, and creates connections with reading texts (Keen & Zimmerman, 1997; Ruddell & Ruddell, 1995). In addition, according to Ruddell and Ruddell (1995), proficient readers possess literary background and prior knowledge of the story, on which they draw

upon to identify the story schema, such as folktale, which is helpful in inferring the meaning of storytelling necessary for the understanding of a story and its outcomes. Therefore, proficient readers may construct knowledge structures in their memory, which organize their environment and experiences, and allow them to adapt to new experiences (Ruddell & Ruddell, 1995). Furthermore, while using their background knowledge, readers can add information that is not explicitly provided in a text by connecting this new information to the existing one. This technique helps readers to understand and remember information more easily (Keen & Zimmerman, 1997; Ruddell & Ruddell, 1995).

Determining the key information of a reading passage is related to identifying its main idea, topic sentences, and key points (Alderson, 2000; Patricia, 2001). According to Patricia (2001), reading passages normally combine the following:

1. The main idea. The main idea refers to the key information of the passage being read.
2. Topic sentence. The topic sentence refers to the main idea being presented in a paragraph.
3. Supporting sentences. The supporting sentences involve specific details, facts, evidences, and explanations to ascertain and to give credibility to the writers' point of view.
4. Transitional devices. The transitional devices refer to connective devices (e.g. conjunction words such as *in addition*, *furthermore*, *however*, and so forth), that move the authors' information from one angle to another. They also bridge one paragraph to the next by creating a logical development of information.

When readers understand the chain of the framework of a reading passage, they may better determine and understand its key information or main points. In addition, readers may better summarize the entire content.

In addition, self-questioning refers to the many questions that readers ask themselves while reading in order to clarify their understanding (Chumpavan, 2000). Proficient readers tend to engage in this technique to determine whether they understand what they are reading (Chumpavan, 2000, Li & Munby, 1996). Similarly, Harvey and Goudvis (2000) stated that the purpose of self-questioning is to “construct meaning, enhance understanding, find answers, solve problems, find specific information, acquire a body of information, discover new information, propel research efforts, and clarify confusion” (p. 22). Readers, for instance, while reading the first sentence in the EFL academic textbook, may ask themselves, “What is ‘plagiarism?’” They then read the sentence and the paragraph again to guess the meaning of this word and consciously predict that it refers to “steal or use the ideas of others.”

This technique may occur throughout the reading process – before, during, and after (Keen & Zimmerman, 1997). In pre-reading, proficient readers may use this strategy to anticipate what the upcoming text is about. They may also use this strategy to clarify confusion that occurred while reading or to recheck whether or not they understand accurately. Finally, they may ask themselves questions to evaluate and conclude the information they have just read, whether their understanding is accurate. If they find themselves still confused, they may reread the text to ascertain their understanding.

Additionally, according to Keen and Zimmerman (1997), imaging or visualizing often is an effective technique that makes the text come alive as it draws pictures in the readers’ mind. According to the Cambridge International Dictionary of English (1995), the term “imagery” or “imaging” refers to the use of words, pictures, films, and so forth,

in order to describe ideas or situations. When proficient readers use imagery to help them understand a text, they often draw pictures in their mind using the five senses – that is, sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell in order to pay attention to their emotions while they read (Keen & Zimmerman, 1997). In general, readers use this technique in reading short stories in order to help them imagine the characters, scenes, or situations. In addition, this technique may increase readers' level of motivation because when they imagine pictures, the story becomes alive.

Inferring is a reading process that goes beyond the literal meaning of a text. According to Keen and Zimmerman (1997), to infer is to go beyond literal interpretation and to open a world meaning by using background knowledge and experiences in order to reach beyond a simple understanding of the written texts.

In addition, still according to Keen and Zimmerman (1997), we may infer the information of a text by creating “an original meaning, a meaning born at the intersection of our background knowledge (schema), the words printed on a page, and our mind's capacity to merge that combination into something uniquely ours” (p. 149). In other words, this technique combines the readers' background knowledge (schema) with the text and helps them draw conclusions through critical analysis, and predict new ideas and new meanings implied or not stated directly in the reading passage (Alderson, 2000; Keen & Zimmerman, 1997; Harvey & Goudvis, 2000).

Retelling or synthesizing is more than summarizing the parts. It requires critical thinking involving the whole text. According to Keen and Zimmerman (1997), synthesizing occurs before, during, and after the reading process since this technique involves asking questions, predicting, imaging, organizing and discussing the information, and determining the key points of this information. That is, when proficient readers synthesize a text, they use all the strategies mentioned above to help them. In

addition, when they do this, they may create a new set of information by adding opinions, predictions or evaluations that go beyond the reading message.

Finally, fix-up strategies are effective tactics that proficient readers use to help them reach high levels of comprehension – word level, sentence level, and text level. According to Miller (2002), for readers to develop their schema, mental images, and lower their anxiety when they meet with problems in reading, they may need to use these fix-up strategies – inferring, asking questions, determining what is important, and synthesizing the text being read.

In addition, according to Miller (2002), these strategies need to be taught systematically overtime by reading teachers. That is, teachers should use these strategies as an instructional framework or as guidelines to help their students strengthen their understanding and solve problems in reading.

In summary, metacognitive strategies are useful techniques combining various reading strategies. Readers may use these strategies to help them effectively plan, monitor, evaluate, and remediate their comprehension before, during and after their reading process.

Studies Related to the Investigation of Metacognitive Strategies in Reading

Educators both in foreign countries and in Thailand have conducted studies investigating the effectiveness of metacognitive strategies in reading comprehension. They found that metacognitive strategies influence students' reading proficiency.

Ra-Ngubtook (1993), for example, conducted a study to compare the effectiveness of 'direct' and 'embedded' metacognitive learning strategy training in English reading comprehension in upper high school students. Direct metacognitive learning strategy training involves traditionally teaching students to improve their metacognitive learning in their daily reading course. Embedded metacognitive learning strategy training also

teaches students to improve their metacognitive skills, but by adding metacognitive lessons within the frame of the traditional reading course. Teachers may choose to add metacognitive lessons during group reading activities, or they may decide to do this in a traditional reading course. In this study, both models were used as training practice for two groups of Mathayomsuksa 5 (Grade 11) students. The findings showed that both direct and embedded metacognitive training models were not significantly different in raising reading comprehension. However, it was found that the mean scores of the students instructed by the direct training model were higher than those of the students in the embedded training model. This study showed that metacognitive strategies were helpful for improving students' reading proficiency. Therefore, to help students increase their reading comprehension, metacognitive strategies should be investigated.

Li and Munby (1996) performed a qualitative research on metacognitive strategies. The research was conducted with two native speakers of Chinese, one male and one female, both graduate students in the Social Sciences Master's Degree program at Queen's University, Canada. The participants were chosen for their low background knowledge of Western social sciences, a constraint that compelled them to use problem-solving strategies when reading. Interviews, think-aloud sessions and journals were used to evaluate these two students' reading comprehension. The study found that, in their reading, the students used personal background knowledge, translation, self-questioning, summarization and prediction. It was also found that one student used key words and the other used Chinese to resolve problems when reading difficult passages. Furthermore, when the passages were hard to think about in English, these EFL students immediately reverted to their own language. Therefore, the researchers concluded that the participants used metacognitive strategies to succeed in their comprehension.

Chumpavan (2000) investigated the metacognitive strategies that two Thai students used in learning English as a foreign language (EFL). These participants had enrolled in the Bachelor's and Master's Degree programs in Communication and Economics at Illinois State University. Interviews, field observation via think-aloud sessions, and the participants' journals were used to gather information on the students' metacognitive reading strategies. It was found that while they were reading, they were also planning, monitoring and remediating their reading comprehension. Therefore, Chumpavan concluded that the participants used metacognitive strategies such as prior knowledge and experience, grammatical knowledge, self-questioning and summarization to facilitate their reading comprehension. She also found that the participants did not use translation in their reading process because it was very time-consuming. Furthermore, unfamiliar words in sentences and paragraphs, and grammatical structure problems were the main reading problems for these participants.

Dhieb-Henia (2003) conducted a study to investigate the reading processes of EFL/ESL students while they were reading articles related to biology. Two groups of 34 and 27 students enrolled in biology classes in two science institutions were selected. Institution A was to be the experimental group using metacognitive training. Institution B was the control group, using the control method or traditional teaching. In addition, 12 students from group A were added in retrospection, that is, the action of looking back on the past actions to investigate whether using metacognitive strategy training was more effective than group B who using traditional training did. All participants were tested by using a tailor-made instrument specially designed by the researcher over material presented in a pre-test and a post-test that framed the training program. The study found that training in the use of metacognitive strategies increased the reading efficiency of the participants.

Phakiti (2003) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between the test takers' use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies in EFL reading test performance. Qualitative and quantitative data analyses were performed in the study. Three hundred and eighty-four students from a northern Thai university were asked to participate. They were tested with 85 multiple-choice questions on reading comprehension in the final examination of the fundamental English course. After the test, 75 students were categorized as highly successful (test score of 70% or above), 256 as moderately successful (test score between 46% and 69%), and 53 as unsuccessful (test score of below 45%). Eight test-takers, four from the highly successful group and four from the unsuccessful group, were then randomly selected to be interviewed after their reading activity. The findings showed that the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies increased the students' reading test performance. It was also found that highly successful students made use of metacognitive strategies more often than the moderate and unsuccessful test-takers.

Finally, Huy (2005) conducted a study to investigate the effects of extensive reading on the subjects' perceptions about their reading ability and metacognitive strategies. Six students majoring in computer science at the Saigon Institute of Information Technology in Saigon, Vietnam, were asked to participate in the study. Pre- and post-questionnaires were used to explore the students' perception about their own reading ability and use of metacognitive strategies while they performed extensive reading. Semi-structured pre- and post-interviews were also used to obtain further information. All the students, furthermore, were asked to write their reflections about their reading experience and performance during the seven weeks of the study. The findings revealed that extensive reading played a vital role in facilitating the students' reading ability and increased their motivation in reading. The findings from the pre-

questionnaire and pre-interview also showed that the students had some knowledge about metacognitive strategies before extensive reading, but that they did not select the proper strategies to facilitate their reading ability. In turn, the findings from the post-questionnaire and post-interview showed that extensive reading gave more chance for the students to practice and to select effective cognitive and metacognitive strategies to enhance their reading achievement. In addition, the findings showed that both types of strategies were useful for improving the participants' extensive reading.

The conclusions from all these investigations pinpoint to the fact that metacognitive strategies play an important role during the reading process of ESL/EFL students. These strategies help learners plan, organize, control or monitor, and evaluate their reading. Therefore, it would be beneficial to investigate, as the present study does, the importance of metacognitive strategies in Thai students' reading ability.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study was to investigate: (a) what metacognitive strategies the participants used in their reading, (b) how they applied each metacognitive strategy, (c) how Thai students with high English reading proficiency and students with low English reading proficiency used metacognitive strategies differently, and (d) what reading difficulties impeded the participants' understanding in their academic reading.

This chapter describes the key elements of the research methodology of this study, namely: (a) the selection of the university and the selection of the participants, (b) the instrumentation, (c) the procedures for data collection, (d) data analysis, (e) the validity of the research methodology, and (f) its reliability.

Participants

Selection of the University

In Thailand, the admission to study in State universities is determined by using the scores of the applicants who take the entrance examination administered by the Ministry of University Affairs. As per the request of the Ministry, before taking the examination, each applicant needs to list a choice of 4 universities she or he wishes to attend to. Srinakharinwirot University (SWU) is one of the favorite universities that applicants hope to attend to and add to their preference list.

In addition, according to the SWU's website (2007), when it was established in 1949, it counted 13 faculties. It is well-known and preferred by students who hope to attend at the university level. Every year, approximately 13,500 students enroll at this university (Srinakharinwirot University Operation Center, 2007).

Furthermore, Srinakharinwirot University offers English courses for all major students. Especially, the courses offered in the Department of Western Languages, Faculty of Humanities, focus on improving students' language proficiency to meet the need of the country (Srinakharinwirot University Operation Center, 2007). The students enrolled in the university hope to attain a high level of English language proficiency. For these reasons, the researcher chose students at SWU as participants in this study. Also, the university gave permission to the researcher to conduct a study with their students.

Selection of Participants

The participants in this study were composed of 20 Thai students majoring in English in the Bachelor's Degree Program at SWU. The researcher asked the Department of Western Languages at SWU to examine the list of third-year students majoring in English. It was found that they numbered 80, of which 20 were selected as participants. The researcher then contacted the students attending two required courses in the second year of the English program, Reading Techniques (EN 221) and Analytical and Critical Reading I (EN 321), offered by the University in the academic year 2005, and asked to see their final grades at the end of the semester. Following this, the researcher divided the participants in two groups – one group was comprised of students with high English reading proficiency and the other group with students of low English reading proficiency. The students who, in their final grades, had earned A, B+, and B formed the high English reading proficiency group, and students who had earned C+, C, D+, D and E were assigned in the low English proficiency group. The high English reading proficiency group was formed of 10 students attending EN 221. As for the low English proficiency group, only seven students were found in EN 221, so the researcher looked for three more students in EN 321 to reach the number of ten students. The selected students in both

levels of proficiency were contacted by phone to ask for their participation in the study. Their participation was voluntary.

Instrumentation

The instruments employed in this study to collect the data comprised (a) interviews, (b) observations through think-aloud sessions, and (d) journal entries. What follows is a description of the methodology that was applied to the use of these three research tools.

Interviews

Qualitative research interviews focus on “understanding the complexity of human world by means of conversations” (Wang, 2002). This technique is a powerful investigative tool and helps researchers produce very rich and valuable data (Punch, 2005; Wang, 2002). It facilitates access to peoples’ experiences and their conceptions of experiences. Furthermore, interviews help the participants feel confident in providing information and assist a researcher in approaching the participants’ cognitive reading process. As a result, in this study, interviewing was employed as a major instrument in order to obtain information on the metacognitive reading strategies of the participants.

The participants of the study were interviewed on their everyday use of reading strategies by being asked 16 interview questions as guidelines (see Appendix A). For their convenience and to promote their self-confidence, the questions were asked in their native Thai language. All data were transcribed by the researcher immediately after each interview. To prevent any ambiguities in the transcription, the researcher asked the participants to clarify the data over the phone.

Observations through Think-Aloud Sessions

Another method for data collection was observing all the participants through think-aloud sessions. Think-aloud sessions are “readers’ verbal self-reports about their thinking process – to obtain information about how they attempt to construct meaning from texts” (Wade, 1990, p. 442). This technique is commonly used in qualitative studies in order to clarify and support further information obtained from interviewing the participants.

In this study, the researcher applied this technique to understand the participants’ reading process. Thus, the participants were requested to read two English passages selected from an academic reading book for EFL students, entitled “IELTS Preparation and Practice: Practice Tests with Annotated Answer Key”, on the pages 19 and 34-35, of which Sahanaya and Hughes, published in 2002. The first passage was entitled “Call for Online to Beat Internet Cheats,” which discussed ways to fight against students’ plagiarism in Australia. The second one was entitled “Eating Disorders,” and was related to two eating disorders – Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia Nervosa. The length of the first passage was approximately 550 words. The second one counted approximately 940 words. The two passages were different in length in order to determine whether this difference had any effect on the participants’ reading ability. The chair of the thesis committee was asked to read the selected passages to ascertain that their level of difficulty and their length were well suited to the participants’ reading abilities and to approve of their topics.

The researcher observed the participants as they were reading and asked the same questions in the interview (open-ended questions such as ‘Can you tell me what you do first when you read?’) to prompt them to describe their reading strategies. The native Thai

language of the participants was used to help them feel comfortable and understand better while communicating with the researcher. Each personal observation through a think-aloud session lasted between 60-80 minutes. If there were any ambiguities concerning their reading strategies, the participants were asked to clarify them during the interviews and the observations through think-aloud sessions later, through telephone calls.

Journal Entries

All participants were asked to write a journal to describe their strategies when they were reading by themselves. The reading materials the participants wrote about were unspecified and could have been academic journals, newspapers, magazines, or general textbooks. The purpose of writing these journals was to investigate if the participants used the metacognitive strategies they mentioned in the interviews and think-aloud sessions. The consistency of the findings among these three instruments was later examined.

Data Collection Procedures

The data were collected from February 20 to March 5, 2006. The procedure for the interviews went as follows: the researcher conducted one face-to-face interview with each participant who described his or her reading strategies by answering 16 open-ended questions that the researcher wrote on a form used as a guideline (see Appendices A and C). The interviews were audiotaped and the recordings were transcribed by the researcher immediately after each interview. If ambiguities arose concerning their reading strategies, the participants were asked to clarify them either while they were interviewed or over the telephone after the interview.

Observations through think-aloud sessions were also performed in this study to monitor the participants' metacognitive reading strategies as they were reading English

academic texts. After the interview, in one-on-one sessions, the researcher provided each participant with two passages and asked questions after each paragraph for the participant to report on his or her reading strategies while reading (see Appendix D).

The interviews and observations through think-aloud sessions lasted 120 minutes per participant. That is, the interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes and the observations through think-aloud sessions 80 to 90 minutes. All data were audio-recorded and transcribed immediately after each meeting. To avoid ambiguities, all data were rechecked with the participants.

After all interviews and observations through think-aloud sessions, the researcher asked each participant to start writing a journal to record her or his reading strategies (see Appendix E). The journal entries concerned their reading such materials as academic English textbooks, scientific journals, newspaper, novels, and so forth. The consistency of all the data obtained for each participant through the interview, observation, and journal was examined.

Data analysis.

Coding is an effective method to analyze the data of verbal protocols such as interviews and observations (Green, 1998). Coding is “the relationship between what are termed task-independent process categories and performance on the task in question” (Green, 1998, p. 69). Thus, the data collected for this study were coded according to the following research questions:

1. What metacognitive strategies do third-year English major students at Srinakharinwirot University (SWU) use in reading English academic texts?
2. How do third-year English major students at SWU apply those metacognitive strategies?

3. How differently do third-year English major students at SWU with high and low English reading proficiency use metacognitive strategies?
4. What difficulties do third-year English major students at SWU encounter when reading English academic texts?

The data were categorized into three groups (a) the kind of metacognitive strategies used and the way these strategies were used, (b) how English major students at SWU with high and low English reading proficiency use metacognitive strategies differently, and (c) the kind of problems the participants encountered in their reading. All ambiguous answers were rechecked with the participants. The Thai transcription of the data was translated into English by the researcher, and a native speaker of English was asked to verify its accuracy. Some examples of transcriptions from the interviews and the observations through think-aloud sessions are provided with the findings presented in Chapter IV.

Confidentiality

To protect the participants' personal information, they were informed that the data collected would be kept confidential, that the audiotapes of the interviews would be stored safely, that their real name would never appear in the study, and that the data would be destroyed after the study was completed.

Validity

In the present study, the research questions were formulated based on the metacognitive theory and a review of the related literature. The questions to be asked in the interviews and think-aloud sessions were examined by the thesis adviser beforehand to ascertain their validity and appropriateness. Their relevancy to the purpose of the study

was also confirmed. All the questions were recognized as valid and appropriate by the thesis adviser.

Furthermore, to ensure the validity of this study, the participants were asked to verify the accuracy of the transcriptions and, if any inaccuracies were found, to clarify them immediately after the interview or later over the phone.

Reliability

With regard to the reliability of the data collected for this study, the researcher used interview questions (see Appendix A), two reading passages (see Appendix B), the transcriptions of the interviews and observations through think-aloud sessions of each participant, and journals written by participants to ensure their consistency (see samples in Appendices C, D, and E). All three instruments were categorized following the Keen and Zimmerman's categories of metacognitive strategies and a review of the related literature. Furthermore, the thesis adviser was asked to examine the accuracy of the data, examine the steps of data analysis, and give valuable alternative insights on data analysis and categorization.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to investigate what metacognitive strategies third-year university students use in their English academic reading and how they apply these strategies. The differences in the use of metacognitive strategies between students of low English reading proficiency and students of high English reading proficiency, and the difficulties they were faced with in their English academic reading were also investigated. Therefore, this study was conducted to answer the following research questions:

1. What metacognitive strategies do third-year English major students at Srinakharinwirot University (SWU) use in reading English academic texts?
2. How do third-year English major students at SWU apply those metacognitive strategies?
3. How differently do third-year English major students at SWU with high and low English reading proficiency use metacognitive strategies?
4. What difficulties do third-year English major students at SWU encounter when reading English academic texts?

The data were collected by interviewing 20 third-year students majoring in English in the Department of Western Languages at Srinakharinwirot University in Bangkok, Thailand, in the academic year 2005. These participants included ten students of high English reading proficiency and ten students of low English reading proficiency. The data were collected through personal interviews, observation through think-aloud sessions, and journal entries. In the interviews, open-ended questions were used as guidelines for each participant to investigate his or her reading strategies. The data from

the interviews and the observations through think-aloud sessions were then transcribed, and the consistency of all three instruments was also examined.

This chapter presents the findings derived from the analysis of these data, following the order of the four questions listed above. Some examples chosen from the transcripts of the interviews or the observations and from the journal entries are provided. The original interviews and observations were transcribed in Thai language and subsequently translated into English by the researcher. A native speaker of English with an excellent knowledge of Thai language was asked to confirm the accuracy of the translation.

The Metacognitive Strategies the English Major Students at SWU Used and How Each Was Used by Them in Their Reading

The data were analyzed combining Research Questions 1 and 2 and showed that participants in this study actively used various metacognitive strategies in order to understand their English academic reading. According to the participants, the reading strategies that they used included scanning the text, using mental linkage, paying attention to the main points, determining the topic sentences, focusing on the key words, using background knowledge, guessing meaning from contextual clues, consulting the dictionary, using grammatical structure, rereading, summarizing after reading, translating English into Thai, and asking oneself questions.

Scanning the Text

The participants in this study previewed what they were about to read by looking at the title and looking for the headings; they then thought about them and tried a rough scanning of the English academic texts. They thought that scanning the text was helpful for them to predict the message that the author wanted to communicate, to get some ideas

of what they were going to read, and to understand the overview of their English academic reading texts.

Student 2: At first, I scan all the passage to find the main idea. Then, I read it once again to get the details. (Think-aloud)

Student 5: I will scan the title, headings, and table of contents first, and then look at the topic sentence of each paragraph. (Interview)

Student 13: First, I scan the whole information of the text to see what it is about. And I ask myself if I know about this or not. (Interview)

Using Mental Linkage

The participants in this study thought that it was necessary to look at the title of the book and read the table of contents before reading. After scanning through the passage, the participants created a mental image of the text from its title. Then, they used a mental image to predict what was going on while they were reading the text. They thought that picturing and linking mental images to what they were reading helped them understand the text better, and have a higher level of motivation in reading. The participants added that they always used this strategy when they read novels and books.

Student 4: Firstly, I read the topic and try to understand it first, and I imagine what it could be about. (Interview)

Student 9: After reading, I imagine and think about the important information of the passage. (Think-aloud)

Student 15: After reading the title, I will start reading immediately. But if I read a title that I understand well, I will guess what the text might be about. (Interview)

Paying Attention to the Main Point

The participants realized that it was necessary to find the main idea of a reading text. While they were reading, they tried to look for the main idea. Thus, they underlined the key sentence that they believed contained this main idea or the key information of each paragraph. They said that they looked at the first sentence of a paragraph to find its main idea because they had been taught to do so in the reading course. If the main idea was not found in the first sentence, they tried to define it by themselves. After finding it, they looked at the supporting details of the passage. They found the main idea by using the five wh- questions – who, what, when, where, and why, while reading. They thought that it helped readers understand the overall picture of the passage, while knowing the supporting details defined it better.

Student 2: I look for the topic of the passage to know what this passage is about; then I read the main idea for each paragraph and maybe skip the supporting details if they are too hard to understand...I think the main idea is the most important...It's the main theme of the passage, which is what it is talking about. Supporting details are helpers to help readers understand the passage better. (Think-aloud)

Student 5: When I read, I try to get details from the passage by looking at its theme. In my opinion, the main idea is more important than the supporting details because the main idea gathers the whole paragraph into one sentence. It is the key information which the writer wants to tell the readers. The supporting details explain the main idea further. They help readers more easily understand the

details of the main idea, and they are described in more than one sentence. (Interview)

Student 9: I generally look for the main idea and the supporting details and the most important part for me is the main idea. It's a sentence or group of sentences that tells us about the main point of the passage or what the writer wants to present, while the supporting details are details that explain and give further information on the main idea...I focus on the main idea because it gives us the key information of the passage. (Think-aloud)

Determining the Topic Sentences

According to the participants in this study, the main idea was important. Thus, they also realized that the topic sentence was a necessary piece of information in their English academic reading. They found that the first sentence of each paragraph mostly formed the topic sentence. They underlined it in each paragraph in order to read it again after their first reading. If they could not find the topic sentence of a paragraph, they would guess the main idea by themselves. If they had difficulties reading each paragraph, they would read the topic sentence again, but more intentionally, and then read the supporting details again to understand what the paragraph was about.

Student 1: I also look at the topic sentence. Mostly, it's the first sentence of each paragraph. It is the most important within the paragraph. It tells the readers what will be found in it. (Interview)

Student 2: While reading, I tried to find what the topic sentences of each paragraph were. If I could not find it, I would conclude the whole information of the paragraph by myself. (Journal entries)

Student 10: The topic sentence is the first sentence of each paragraph in the passage, which is like the introduction of all details in those paragraphs...I focus on the main idea first in order to know the writer's idea and read the supporting details to understand his opinion clearly. (Interview)

Focusing on the Key Words

While the participants were reading, they underlined some repetitive words, words that were likely related to the title of the passage, and some words that might be important and facilitate their understanding. The participants linked the key words to their prior knowledge. They said that this technique was helpful to memorize what they were reading and to focus strictly on the main point and key words. They also said that when they underlined the key words, they did not lose their concentration because they focused only on these words linking them to the main idea of each paragraph.

Student 3: I will mark the words or sentences which I don't understand and try to read the article again to find out their meanings...I just mark or underline the repetitive words and unknown words; and then try to read their context to catch the meaning of the context. (Think-aloud)

Student 5: I focus on the theme of the story. Furthermore, I look for the important words or sentences in it, and find the key words to answer in my mind the questions related to the questions words – who, what, when, where, why, and how. (Think-aloud)

Student 10: I will recall the title of the passage and remember it and see its equivalent in the passage itself. Then, I try to understand its topic. (Interview)

Using Background Knowledge

The participants of the study said that background or prior knowledge was very important for reading, especially in the English academic texts. When they had prior knowledge of the reading passage, they could predict the information it contained. In addition, it was easy for them to grasp the ideas of the English academic text. Furthermore, the participants said that their personal background knowledge helped them better understand the idea of a text and also increased their interest in the text at hand. They found that they had difficulties in reading if they did not possess any background knowledge.

Student 7: When you have background knowledge of what you are going to read, it gives you a positive advantage to understand the context more easily, especially in technical articles such as science or history articles. (Interview)

Student 9: I use my personal background knowledge or experiences to help me understand the context more easily because when I have some knowledge of the story before I read it I can understand the information better. (Interview)

Student 10: My personal experience can help me easily understand the whole passage. In comparison, for a passage for which I have no background knowledge, I still can understand it, but I waste a lot of time trying to do this. (Think-aloud)

Guessing Meanings from Contextual Clues

While reading, participants in this study guessed the meaning of unknown words from contextual clues, by looking at connections in the sentences around these words. If they could not guess the meaning of these unfamiliar words, they would determine

whether these were key words of the sentence or passage. If they were important words and needed to be understood, the participants looked them up in the dictionary. However, if they were not necessary words, the students skipped them and simply concentrated on the key word forms of the sentences – subject, verb, object, and complement.

Student 1: I try to guess the meaning of unknown words by looking at the words before and after the sentences to find out and guess a suitable meaning for these unknown words, or by using a dictionary. (Interview)

Student 8: If I really understand the words, I will skip them and try to understand the contextual clues around the unknown words...I try to read the context around the unknown words again and again until I understand them. (Think-aloud)

Student 16: When I see unknown words, I will read clues around them. If I cannot really understand them through the contextual clues, I will check their meaning by using the dictionary and find out their synonyms in order to remember them. (Interview)

Consulting the Dictionary

Consulting the dictionary is an easy reading technique that helps readers to find the meaning of unknown words. The participants thought that, for English academic reading, if they could guess the meaning of unknown words from the text, it was not necessary to look up the meaning in the dictionary. Thus, they tried to guess the meaning of new words from contextual clues or by looking at the sentences in the text. If these various strategies could not solve their vocabulary problem, they would finally consult the dictionary. They added that consulting the dictionary was an easy way for them to understand the meaning of new words but that it was time-consuming.

Student 4: Mostly, if they are the subjects or verbs of a sentence and I cannot understand the text without skipping them, I would look in the dictionary. However, the use of a dictionary depends on whether I can understand the whole text without those unfamiliar words. If it is difficult and I cannot skip the unknown words, I have to consult the dictionary. (Interview)

Student 15: The dictionary is important sometimes when the contextual clues are not enough to clarify my understanding...When I find difficult words, I use the dictionary to find their meaning. (Think-aloud)

Student 20: If I have reading problems, I will look for the meaning of unknown words in the dictionary or guess their meaning from the context. Using the dictionary is quite important sometimes because if the unknown words are really important and I don't understand what the passage is about, it is necessary to use the dictionary to find their meaning. (Think-aloud)

Using Grammatical Structure

According to the participants, they did not much focus on grammatical structure. In general, they would read through the whole paragraph or passage and try to understand the main theme of what they were reading. However, they accepted that grammatical structures could help them understand a text better when they read a very long and difficult English academic text. Thus, when they read English academic texts containing long and complex sentences, they took time to find the head noun, subject, verb, and object of those sentences. They said that if they did not separate the clauses and find the subject, verb, object and complement of each clause, it was too difficult for them to

understand the text. However, while reading books and other texts of which they have background knowledge and which did not include complex sentences, they did not rely on the use of grammatical structure as much as they did with specified academic texts.

Student 2: Sometimes, I use grammatical structure to define the subject, verb, and object in the complex sentences, because if I read them straightaway, I cannot understand them. (Interview)

Student 5: When I face some long sentences and I do not know what the head noun, verb, and complements of those sentences are, I have to find them by separating them into what they are. But, when I read general books I do not do this; I just grasp the main point of the passage. (Think-aloud)

Student 10: I rarely rely on the use of grammatical structure when reading books. But when I read academic texts, I use it sometimes if the text is hard to understand because it combines difficult and complex sentences. (Interview)

Rereading

The participants in this study reread the English academic texts as soon as they finished the first reading. Sometimes, they did not reread the whole text but only the sentences they had underlined in each paragraph. They said that they reread only these sentences to save reading time. The researcher also found that the participants read again after finishing their first reading to get clearer ideas and to make sure they accurately understood the important idea.

Student 2: I will read roughly, then read the passage again asking myself questions when I do not understand the context. After reading it thoroughly again, I try to clarify my understanding. (Think-aloud)

Student 7: After reading, I will review the main idea of the article to confirm whether I clearly understand the context. (Think-aloud)

Student 8: After reading, I will read the passage again and again until I believe I understand it better. (Interview)

Student 15: After the first reading, I reread this article or use the dictionary to find the words of which I didn't know the meaning. (Journal entries)

Summarizing after Reading

After the first reading, the participants summarized the information of the passage in order to ascertain the accuracy of their understanding. The participants said they summarized the important information of the passage in their mind using Thai language. In addition, after rethinking and summarizing the main point of the passage and knowing what they were still confused about, they then reread the passage. The participants in the study said this technique was helpful to facilitate their comprehension. After summarizing, if they recognized that they still misunderstood some parts, they reread those parts to clarify their understanding.

Student 3: After reading, I try to summarize the main point of the article. However, if I don't understand something, I will reread it. (Interview)

Student 5: After reading, I asked myself about the story to check my understanding. Then, I summarized the story in my own words in my mind. (Journal entries)

Student 8: I tried to summarize the main idea in my head. Then, I would begin to scan it again. (Journal entries)

Student 10: In my mind, I will rethink about what I've learnt or remembered from the passage...It helps me confirm whether I understand the whole passage or not. (Interview)

Student 14: After I finish my reading, I will list the main points of the passage in my mind. (Think-aloud)

Translation

According to the participants, translation was used when they could not understand what they directly read in English. The participants read the passage in English and shifted their thought from English to the Thai language. They also said that they did not translate word by word from English to Thai, but that they read throughout a paragraph and summarized into Thai the overall meaning of what they had read. However, they also mentioned that it was time-consuming to translate a passage into Thai, and that it blocked the continuity of their reading. They added that if the passage was easy and did not have too many difficult words, it was not necessary to translate it.

Student 4: Translating in Thai depends on the difficulty of the article or the essay. If it's easy to understand in English, it is unnecessary to translate it. If it's a difficult one, I need to translate it. (Interview)

Student 5: If the sentence is easy and the writing style is not complex, I don't translate it into Thai. On the other hand, if a sentence is too complicated, I need to translate it. (Interview)

Student 8: I translated some parts of an article into Thai, but not often. I translated it when the sentences confused me or when my concentration had broken down. (Journal entries)

Student 19: Sometimes, I translate it when it includes very long sentences, complicated grammar, and difficult words. I translate because it helps me understand the passage more clearly. (Think-aloud)

Self-Questioning

The participants in the study said that they used self-questioning to clarify their understanding before, during, and after the reading process. Before reading, they mentally asked themselves questions to anticipate what the academic texts would be about. While reading, they then asked themselves questions to confirm the accuracy of their guessing. In addition, when they had problems while reading long complex sentences, they asked themselves who, what, when, where, why, and how questions to help them define the main point of the passage. After the first reading, they asked themselves more questions to recheck their understanding.

Student 8: I ask myself questions when I sometimes don't understand the sentences. Also, after I finish reading, I summarize the context by asking myself wh-questions, just 2 or 3 questions. It helps me understand what the article is about. (Interview)

Student 9: I asked myself questions when I cannot understand a paragraph and I tried to read it again until I understand it. (Journal entries)

Student 10: I asked myself what the main point is or what the story was about. It helped me focus on the passage well. (Journal entries)

The Differences in the Use of Metacognitive Strategies between SWU English Major Students of High and of Low English Academic Reading Proficiency

The participants in this study, of both high and low English reading proficiency, knew what effective metacognitive strategies enhanced their comprehension in reading

English academic texts. However, differences were found in the use of each metacognitive strategy between participants of high and of low English reading proficiency. The following illustrates these differences between these two groups:

Scanning the Text

Before reading, the low English reading proficiency group scanned the text to form an overall picture of its content by looking at the title, and they then continued to read the passage slowly to get the main ideas. Contrasting with this group, the participants of the high English proficiency group looked at the title of the passage, thought about how this title related to their knowledge and experiences, and then predicted the content of the passage. After predicting what the passage was about, these participants looked at the first sentence of each paragraph to understand the overall key information of the reading passage. Then they slowly continued to read.

Student 8 (LPG): Firstly, I try to know what the scope of a passage is and what it is about by roughly reading it. (Interview)

Student 10 (LPG): First, I will scan the whole passage to find what it is about. Then, I continue to read the text at hand slowly. (Think-Aloud)

Student 3 (HPG): Before I read the essay, I scan the whole of it and mark the words or sentences I don't know or understand. (Journal entries)

Student 7 (HPG): I will scan the title and then look at the topic sentence of each paragraph...Actually I thoroughly read the passage only without looking for the main idea and the supporting details. (Interview)

Using Mental Linkage

In terms of mental linkage, the participants of the low English reading proficiency group hardly used any to predict what the author was discussing in the passage. They stated that they normally did not rely on this strategy because it was difficult for them to predict the content of a text. Therefore, they simply read the English academic texts and tried to comprehend the information slowly. Whereas the participants with high English reading proficiency used this strategy more often than the other group. They stated that when they drew up the information from English academic texts they could understand it better. While reading and using mental linkage, they tried to create a visual relationship among the various thoughts, knowledge, and experiences they related to the text being read. They added that this strategy helped them understand better what they were reading.

Student 5 (LPG): After reading the title, I will start reading immediately. But if I read a title that I know well, I will guess what the text might be about. (Think-aloud)

Student 7 (LPG): After reading the title of the passage, I continue to read the information of the passage slowly...I think it's hard for me to think about the information of the passage. For me, to read the passage and try to follow its information slowly is enough to understand it. (Think-aloud)

Student 4 (HPG): First, I read the title or heading and try to understand it, and I imagine what it could be about. (Interview)

Student 9 (HPG): Today, I read a novel. When I read, I tried to imagine all the protagonists. I think it helped me understand this novel better. (Journal entries)

Paying Attention to the Main Points

With respect to paying attention to the main points, the participants in the low English reading proficiency group used this strategy less often because it was difficult for them to search for the main points. In addition, they stated that finding the main points took a long time. Therefore, they preferred to read and follow slowly the information contained in the English academic texts. Opposed to this, the participants in the high proficiency group gave much credit to this strategy because it helped them understand more easily the concepts of the English academic texts they were reading. They said that finding the main idea of a passage was the most important strategy in reading because when they found it they could understand the whole information of a text.

Student 3 (LPG): When I read I never look for the main idea and the supporting details. It depends on the topic. If I don't know the topic such as medical news or scientific news, I will concentrate more on the supporting details because it's hard to find the main idea.
(Interview)

Student 8 (LPG): I never look at both the main idea and the supporting details. I just read what comes in the passage. However, I think the main idea is more important than the supporting details because it tells me what the author is writing about. If I know the main idea, it's easy to understand the passage. (Think-aloud)

Student 5 (HPG): When I read, I try to get the details of the passage. I try to get the theme of the passage. I think the main idea is more important than the supporting details because it takes each paragraph into only one sentence. It tells what the passage is

about. The main idea is an important sentence that the writer wants to tell the readers, and the supporting details explain the main idea further. They make the readers understand the main idea clearly and they form more than one sentence. (Think-aloud)

Student 9 (HPG): I generally look for the main idea. The most important for me is the main idea. It's a sentence or a group of sentences that tells us about the main point of the passage or what the writer wants to present, while the supporting details explain and give further information on the main idea. (Interview)

Determining the Topic Sentences

In terms of determining the topic sentences, the participants in the low English reading proficiency group looked at the first sentence of each paragraph to understand the key information of this paragraph. They stated that in the English reading course, they were taught that the first sentence of a paragraph usually represents the topic sentence of that paragraph. However, when they found that the first sentence was not the topic sentence, they continued to read to the end of the paragraph, not paying attention to what the topic sentence was. Opposed to these participants, the participants of the high English reading proficiency group tried to determine what the topic sentence was by looking at the first sentence of each paragraph first, but if they found that this first sentence was not the expected topic sentence, they looked further down at the middle and at the end of the paragraph. In addition, when they could not find any topic sentence in a paragraph, they tried to conclude its overall key information by themselves.

Student 7 (LPG): I look for the topic sentence of each paragraph. Generally, it's the first sentence of each paragraph. (Interview)

Student 8 (LPG): I think the topic sentence is the first sentence of each paragraph ... It [the topic sentence] is a statement that helps the readers know what each paragraph is about and wraps the writer's idea in one sentence. (Interview)

Student 9 (LPG): I search for the topic sentence of each paragraph every time that I read general textbooks. However, if I didn't find what the topic sentence was, I would stop looking for it [topic sentence] and continue to read the textbook. (Journal entries)

Student 1 (HPG): I also look at the topic sentence. Mostly, it's at the beginning of each paragraph. It is the most important sentence within the paragraph. It tells the readers what will happen in it. (Interview)

Student 6 (HPG): When I read, I focus on the topic sentence of each paragraph and on the first paragraph because it is the main sentence which tells the readers what the paragraph will be about. It's often the first sentence of the paragraph...In addition, when I have a reading problem, I will read more carefully the topic sentence and the supporting details to understand what the article is about. Moreover, I will check in the dictionary the vocabulary that I don't understand or know. (Think-aloud)

Student 9 (HPG): I try to look at the topic sentence at the beginning of each paragraph. If I cannot find it, I look at the other sentences in the paragraph or conclude it by myself. (Interview)

Focusing on the Key Words

With respect to the technique of focusing on key words, the participants with low English reading proficiency did not use it while reading a passage. They did not waste time underlining or highlighting words in the text at hand. Instead, they preferred to read through to the end of a passage only because they said that it was less time-consuming. In contrast, the participants with high English reading proficiency highlighted and underlined some important words related to the title and some synonyms or words that were often repeated in the passage. They said that this strategy motivated their reading and helped them focus on the important points of the passage because they paid more attention to those underlined words and thus better retained the information of the text being read.

Student 1 (LPG): I think it's not necessary to mark or underline the words because it wastes time when reading a passage. Just understanding the reading content is enough for understanding an academic text. (Interview)

Student 4 (LPG): I just read the passage and try to understand the content slowly. Just reading the passage slowly, I can understand its concept. (Think-aloud)

Student 3 (HPG): I marked the words or sentences which I didn't understand and tried to read the article again to find out their meaning... I just marked or underlined the words and tried to read their context to catch the meaning of the context. (Journal entries)

Students 5 (HPG): I focused on the theme of the story. In addition, I looked for the key sentence of the story, and I would find the key words

such as who, what, when, where, why and how. This helped me better concentrate on the passage. (Journal entries)

Using Background Knowledge

With respect to using background knowledge, the participants with low English reading proficiency commented that when using this strategy, they could understand better the information of a reading passage. Therefore, they tried to understand a text and predict the meaning of unknown words by relating their prior knowledge or experiences to the text being read. However, if they did not have any knowledge or experiences about the text, they would read only the information that they knew well by skipping unknown words, phrases, and unclear sentences. In turn, the participants with high English reading proficiency realized that background knowledge and experiences were very important in their English academic reading, though they also paid attention to other reading strategies to understand a text. They stated that when they had no background knowledge on a text, they varied their reading strategies, using, for example, grammatical structure or guessing meanings by using contextual clues. They said that their background knowledge helped them increase their reading interest and better supported their understanding of a text. They also added that when they did not understand some words, they could use their background knowledge to guess their meaning.

Student 3 (LPG): I think it's helpful because we will use our personal background experience to judge or analyze what we read.
(Interview)

Student 9 (LPG): When I have some knowledge about the story I read, it helps me understand what it is about. Especially if it's an interesting story, it helps me concentrate better and I understand the text better. (Journal entries)

Student 2 (HPG): I can understand the passage quite more easily if I have some background knowledge on what I read. Like in the first passage, I know the word “plagiarism.” And in the second passage, I have some knowledge about anorexia and bulimia. Thus, I can read and understand the text more easily. (Think-aloud)

Student 9 (HPG): I use my personal background knowledge or experience to help me understand the text because when I have some prior knowledge about the story, I can understand it better. (Think-aloud)

Guessing Meaning from Contextual Clues

With respect to guessing meaning from contextual clues, the participants in the low English reading proficiency group used this strategy to remediate their vocabulary problems in their English academic reading. When they faced unknown words, they looked for the connections around these words to guess a suitable meaning. If they could not predict the meaning of unknown words, they looked up the words in the dictionary. In contrast to this group, the high English reading proficiency group said that guessing the meaning of unknown words from contextual clues was helpful for them, but when they could not guess a suitable meaning, they skipped those words if it was not necessary to understand them or they tried other strategies such as using grammatical structure, consulting the dictionary, and determining the topic sentences.

Student 1 (LPG): I tried to guess the meaning of unknown words by reading what comes before and after them, to think of a suitable meaning for them or by using the dictionary sometimes. (Journal entries)

Student 4 (LPG): First, I guessed the meaning of the text around the words or opened the dictionary sometimes when I didn't know the words. (Journal entries)

Student 1 (HPG): First, when I find unknown words, I will guess their meaning and guess the meaning of the text. I then check the text around the words and try to guess their meaning. (Think-aloud)

Student 5 (HPG): When I have reading problems, I use the context around the unknown words to help me use those words whether they have a positive or negative meaning. I may also check whether the unknown words have a prefix or suffix and try to guess their meaning from the prefix and suffix and root word. (Think-aloud)

Consulting the Dictionary

In terms of consulting the dictionary, it was found that the participants in the low English proficiency group used this strategy very often. They said that this was the easiest way for them to find the meaning of words correctly and precisely. Therefore, when they encountered unknown words, they immediately checked their meaning in the dictionary. On the other hand, the participants in the high proficiency group tried to avoid consulting the dictionary, and they used other strategies to find the meaning of unknown words. After guessing the meaning of unknown words, they looked in the dictionary to verify whether their guessing was accurate. They stated that looking for every unknown word in the dictionary was time-consuming and that it interfered with the continuity in reading.

Student 2 (LPG): Usually, I look in the dictionary when I find unknown words...The dictionary is important for reading because there are many difficult words. (Interview)

Student 8 (LPG): I always use the dictionary when I cannot understand or guess the meanings of the confusing words. Actually, the use of a dictionary is very important for me because when I cannot understand the confusing words I cannot read the others. (Interview)

Student 1 (HPG): I do not consult the dictionary, because it will slow down my reading. I will guess the meaning of unknown words by looking at the relationships in the passage or by trying to understand the whole passage. (Think-aloud)

Student 4 (HPG): I mostly open the dictionary. When I see unknown words that are key words and I cannot understand the text without skipping them, I look in the dictionary. However, using a dictionary depends on whether I can understand the whole text even if I skip those unknown words. If it's difficult and I cannot skip those words, I have to consult the dictionary. (Interview)

Using Grammatical Structure

With respect to the use of grammatical structure, it was found that the participants in the low English reading proficiency group did not use this strategy to help them understand complex sentences. They said that separating the subject and the predicate in each sentence was difficult for them to do. On the contrary, the participants of the high English proficiency group tried hard to understand complex sentences by using

grammatical structure as a support to solve the problems of sentence structure. They commented that using grammatical structure helped them understand “who does what?” and “what does what?” in the reading passage.

Student 1 (LPG): I just read though the end of the passage. I do not use the knowledge of grammatical structure. I think it's not necessary for me to do that. Just reading line by line is enough ... I think separating what the subject, the verb, the object, and the complements are in each sentence was difficult for me to do. (Think-aloud)

Student 3 (LPG): I think that grammatical structure cannot help understand a reading passage. When I see complex sentences, I just read through to the end of the paragraph and just understand the whole paragraph. I think it's enough for me to understand the passage. (Interview)

Student 5 (HPG): When I read long sentences and I do not know what the head noun, verb, and complements of those sentences are, I have to find them by separating the subject, verb, object, and complements. (Interview)

Student 7 (HPG): I use grammatical structure to understand the reading passages, especially in academic reading. I think long sentences that contain various verbs and complements are difficult to understand. Separating subject, verb, and object helps me understand the sentence more easily. (Think-aloud)

Rereading

In terms of rereading, the low English reading proficiency participants reviewed the English academic texts after their first reading by rereading all from beginning to end. They stated that the second reading was to gain the whole information of the text and better understand its content. On the contrary, the high English reading proficiency participants reviewed the English academic texts after the first reading by rereading only the underlined topic sentences of each paragraph and by paying attention to some confused parts. They stated that the second reading was to summarize and recall precisely the key information.

Student 6 (LPG): When I have reading problems, I will read the confused part again and try to understand it. (Interview)

Student 7 (LPG): I always stick to these words or the confused part and try to understand them. However, if I really cannot understand, I will skip them and try to understand the contextual clues around the words. If I still do not understand after the first reading, I will reread it. (Think-aloud)

Student 4 (HPG): After the first reading, I usually read the passage again. However, if I have no time, I will read only the underlined sentences to grasp the idea of the passage. (Interview)

Student 5 (HPG): When I have a reading problem, I continue to read until the end of the passage. Then, I go back and read again where I have reading problems to find the meaning. (Interview)

Student 6 (HPG): After the first reading, I reviewed the main idea of the article to check whether I understand clearly. (Journal entries)

Summarizing after Reading

In terms of summarizing, the participants of the low English reading proficiency group occasionally used this strategy after the first reading. However, they said that they preferred to reread the whole content of the difficult English academic texts, because they found it difficult to summarize them. On the contrary, the participants of the high English reading proficiency group used this strategy more often. They stated that they summarized the information after the first reading so as to get its main points and to recheck their understanding. If they still had difficulties with some parts after their summarization, they then reread the passage.

Student 2 (LPG): After the first reading, I would review the textbook again to get more information. (Journal entries)

Student 3 (LPG): Never. I just read through the passage and I will reread it after the first reading if I cannot understand it. (Interview)

Student 6 (LPG): Yes, I summarize it and think about the kind of knowledge I get from the passage. If it's a difficult passage, I will reread it all to try to understand it. (Interview)

Student 3 (HPG): After the first reading, I tried to summarize the main point of the passage. After I knew what I didn't understand, I reread it to find its meaning. (Journal entries)

Student 10(HPG): I will rethink about what I've learnt or what I remember from the passage. It helps me to confirm whether I understand the whole of it or not. (Think-aloud)

Translation

Translation was an effective strategy used more often by the participants in the low English reading proficiency group than by the ones in the high English reading

proficiency group. The participants in the low proficiency group liked to rely on spontaneous translation when they did not understand an English academic text. They believed that thinking about the English content into their own language helped them better understand the information than when they did not translate it. Whereas the participants with high English reading proficiency avoided translating into Thai all the words of English academic reading passages because it was time-consuming. If they could understand the text in English, they avoided using this strategy. Instead, they used other strategies such as determining the topic sentences or guessing meaning from contextual clues to help their understanding.

Student 2 (LPG): Yes, I translate a passage into Thai, quite all of the passage, because it is quite complex in grammatical structure. I then translate from English into Thai in order to help me better understand the passage. Thus, I have to translate it to make sure that I understand it correctly. (Think-aloud)

Student 5 (LPG): I always translate into Thai because English is not my native language. If I do not translate into Thai, I will not understand the meaning, especially in a difficult specific context.

(Interview)

Student 4 (HPG): Translating English into Thai depends on the difficulty of the article or essay. If it's easy to understand, it's not necessary to translate. If it's a difficult one, I need to translate it into Thai.

(Interview)

Student 5 (HPG): If the sentence is easy and the writing style is not complex, I don't translate into Thai. On the other hand, if the sentence is too complicated, I need to translate it. (Think-aloud)

Student 8 (HPG): I translated some parts of an article into Thai, but not often. I translated into Thai when the sentences confused me or when I could not understand the English academic text at the moment. (Journal entries)

Self-Questioning

With respect to self-questioning, the participants in the low English reading proficiency group did not ask themselves questions as often as the participants with high English reading proficiency. They occasionally used this strategy when they were confused in some parts of the text being read. It is then that they asked themselves questions to clarify their understanding. However, they said that it was not always necessary to use this strategy because they preferred to comprehend the text at hand by reading it slowly. On the contrary, the participants with high English reading proficiency used this strategy more often. They said that when asking themselves questions they can pay more attention to what they read. They further stated that this strategy helped them to understand more easily the key information of the English academic texts.

Student 3 (LPG): Sometimes, I ask myself questions when I face unknown words and I find their answers. If I don't know the answers, I will stick to those unknown words until I know their meaning. However, I prefer reading to the end of the passage and review the confused part later. (Interview)

Student 10(LPG): I often ask myself questions when I don't understand some parts of a paragraph. I then reread it and try to grasp its main point. If I cannot find the main idea of the paragraph at that time, I will read through to the end of the passage and after

this first reading, I will go back to find the meaning ... But I think it's not important to do this. (Think-aloud)

Student 8 (HPG): I ask myself questions when I want to check my understanding of a passage. Most of the questions are the 5 wh- questions, such as who, what, when, where, why, and how, to know the main point of the passage. And after the first reading, I will again ask myself questions to summarize it. (Interview)

Student 10(HPG): I always ask myself questions to concentrate on what I read. Especially when I don't understand a long and complex sentence, I will ask myself questions to find its meaning. (Think-aloud)

Problems in English Academic Reading

Following the researcher's observations and interviews of the participants, it was found that they had various problems in their reading. They mentioned vocabulary problems, grammatical structure problems, problems related to the organization of the passage, and to the length of the text. The following is an analysis of the data related to the participants' reading difficulties:

Vocabulary Problems

According to the participants, vocabulary was the biggest difficulty in English academic reading. They said that when they were confronted with a lot of unknown words in a reading passage, it was difficult for them to understand it. They also took a long time to find suitable meanings to these words. To solve this reading problem, they developed their own strategies. In general, they guessed the meaning of the new words

from contextual clues, by looking at the connectives around the words, and by using their prior knowledge.

Student 1: Unknown words, because there are many unknown words in English academic texts. Some of them, I have to try to guess their meaning from their context. (Interview)

Student 20: It's all about the vocabulary that I've never learned before. It's difficult for me to understand the passage. (Think-aloud)

Grammatical Structure Problems

Grammatical structures are sometimes a problem in English academic reading. The participants said that it was difficult to understand the structure of complex sentences. If the complex sentences were long and the participants had no background knowledge of the passage, grammatical structure interfered with their reading. The participants said that reading consisted of understanding the main point of the text at hand. However, they added that if they had to understand the deeper meaning of a whole text, they needed to understand its grammatical structures to figure out the meaning of some complex sentences.

Student 5: It's not a big problem if grammatical structure is basic and not difficult to understand. On the other hand, when there are long sentences or complicated grammatical structures, it can sometimes create reading problems to me. (Interview)

Student 15: Sometimes, grammatical structure is a problem when it's complicated and the sentences are too long. (Think-aloud)

Problems Related to the Organization of the Passage

The organization of a passage was also a problem in academic reading. When the participants read a passage that was not well-organized, it was difficult for them to find

the main point. If they read long and complex sentences and the academic text was not well-organized, they took a long time to understand it because it was hard to grasp its main point. On the other hand, a well-organized passage was helpful for the participants who then understood it more easily. The participants said that when they read well-organized writing, they could understand it and find the main point without much difficulty. In the researcher's observation, when the participants read a passage that was not well-organized, their motivation in English academic reading decreased.

Student 4: A poorly organized text makes it more difficult to understand its main idea. (Interview)

Student 13: A well- organized passage helps me understand it faster. When I read a long passage that is not well-organized, it's difficult to find its main point. (Think-aloud)

Problems Related to the Length of the Passage

According to the participants in this study, the length of a passage affected their interest. They had difficulties with reading passages that were very long. When they read long sentences, their attention and their motivation in reading decreased. The participants said they also easily missed the main point of a reading passage when they read passages that were too long. When they did not understand some paragraphs, they ignored them, and read the other ones.

Student 2: A passage that is too long and uninteresting bores me and decreases my attention. I just read to the end of the passage, without rereading, not even once. (Think-aloud)

Student 19: A story that is more than half a page is too long, boring, and hard to concentrate on. It's also difficult to find its main point. (Interview)

Summary of the Chapter

The results of this research showed that the participants in the study used metacognitive strategies to plan, to control, and to evaluate all their reading processes – before reading, during reading, and after reading. In all, they used 13 metacognitive strategies – scanning the text, using mental linkage, paying attention to the main points, determining the topic sentences, focusing on the key words, using background knowledge, guessing meaning from contextual clues, consulting the dictionary, using grammatical structure, repeated reading, summarizing after reading, translating from English to Thai, and self-questioning. These strategies facilitated their understanding. In addition, it was found that the participants with high English reading proficiency used various metacognitive strategies to help them understand academic texts. Opposed to them, the participants of the low English reading proficiency group used few metacognitive strategies to help them with their reading. Additional findings showed that there were various reading difficulties that students struggled with in their reading – vocabulary problems, grammatical structure problems, and problems related to the organization of the passage and to the length of the text. All of these reading difficulties interfered with the participants' reading comprehension, decreased their motivation in reading, and increased their reading time.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the participants' use of metacognitive strategies while they read English academic texts. The participants were composed of 20 third-year students majoring in English in the Department of Western Languages at Srinakharinwirot University in Bangkok, Thailand. The data for the study were obtained through interviews of the participants, observations through think-aloud sessions, and journals. In the interview, open-ended questions were used as guidelines for each participant to investigate her or his reading strategies. The data from the interviews and the observations were then transcribed and the consistency between the three instruments was examined.

1. What metacognitive strategies do third-year English major students at Srinakharinwirot University (SWU) use in reading English academic texts?
2. How do third-year English major students at SWU apply those metacognitive strategies?
3. How differently do third-year English major students at SWU with high and low English reading proficiency use metacognitive strategies?
4. What difficulties do third-year English major students at SWU encounter when reading English academic texts?

This chapter discusses the findings derived from the analysis, following the order of the four research questions listed above. Recommendations for further studies are given at the end of the chapter.

Discussion for Research Questions One and Two:

Metacognitive Strategies the English Major Students at SWU Used and

How Each Was Used by Them in Their Reading

The data found in the current study show that the participants were well aware of their reading tools and that they could control their cognitive activities while reading English academic texts. The findings obtained from the interviews, think-aloud sessions, and journal entries reveal that the participants used their metacognitive strategies to plan, to control, and to remediate their comprehension in their reading process. The findings of the current study are consistent with the findings of previous studies which state that second or foreign language learners use metacognitive strategies to facilitate their academic reading (Chumpavan, 2000; Dhieb-Henia, 2003; Li & Munby, 1996; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Ra-Ngubtook, 1993).

The current study revealed the significance of metacognitive strategies for students in their English reading process. This finding is consistent with Chumpavan (2000) who investigated the metacognitive strategies used by Thai students studying at Illinois State University in the U.S. The participants had been in the U.S. for more than two years, and their English was highly proficient. The study, set in an environment where English was used as a second language, focused on the kind of metacognitive strategies the students used and on how they used them. She found that the participants applied their metacognitive strategies to plan, to monitor, and to remediate their reading comprehension.

Similarly, this current study confirms the claim from the previous studies that the participants used their metacognitive strategies to facilitate their understanding of English academic reading and varied their reading strategies to help them understand English academic texts. They mentioned that they resorted to the following 13 metacognitive

reading strategies to enhance their reading comprehension: scanning the text, using mental linkage, paying attention to the main points, determining the topic sentences, focusing on the key words, using background knowledge, guessing meaning from contextual clues, consulting a dictionary, using grammatical structure, rereading, summarizing, translating from English into Thai, and self-questioning. All of these techniques were helpful for them to understand English academic texts.

With respect to pre-reading activities, the participants in the current study previewed the reading passage by looking at the title and thinking about it, by quickly reading the table of contents, by scanning the text, and by using background knowledge and mental linkage to predict the content before reading.

In terms of while-reading activities, in the current study, the participants read the academic reading passage using a wide range of metacognitive strategies to enhance their understanding. These metacognitive strategies included using personal background knowledge and experiences to understand the text at hand, and using self-questioning to anticipate the content and to clarify their understanding of it.

While reading, the participants faced difficulties, but they were able to facilitate their understanding by using various problem-solving metacognitive strategies such as focusing on the key words to increase their concentration; paying attention to the main points and determining the topic sentences for each paragraph in order to find the main information; using grammatical structure to understand the meaning of the content; using contextual clues and consulting the dictionary to guess the meaning of new words; and translating from English into Thai to facilitate their understanding of long and complex sentences. All of these strategies are problem-solving techniques that enhanced their reading comprehension.

With regard to post-reading activities, the participants in this study performed a self-evaluation after reading an academic passage. They summarized and reread it to help them understand more information and recheck their understanding.

Overall, it was obviously revealed in this study that the participants performed self-regulation in reading English academic passages. They used their cognitive process to plan, to control, and to remediate their comprehension.

Additionally, the results of this study are similar to the results of another one conducted by Li and Munby (1996) which concluded that academic strategies do not exist independently but that they relate to the particular content of reading. The participants were able to vary their reading strategies in accordance to how well they understood their reading materials and how difficult the materials were. Similarly, the participants in the current study used much more metacognitive strategies to understand difficult texts, whereas they used fewer metacognitive strategies if they read texts with less complicated grammatical structure.

In conclusion, metacognitive strategies play a vital role for students' English reading achievement. Each student developed her or his own reading skills by using metacognitive strategies to manage self-regulation actively towards achieving an effective reading process of English academic texts.

Discussion for Research Question III:

The Differences in the Use of Metacognitive Strategies between SWU English Major Students of High and of Low English Academic Reading Proficiency

The results from the present study revealed differences in the use of each metacognitive strategy between students with high English reading proficiency and students with low English reading proficiency. It can be seen from the findings of the

present study that the students with low English reading proficiency group knew what effective metacognitive strategies enhanced their reading ability. However, they failed to apply each metacognitive strategy effectively. To comprehend English academic texts effectively, they preferred making use of easier metacognitive strategies such as translating from English into Thai, consulting the dictionary, rereading the information, rather than developing more complex metacognitive strategies.

The plausible reasons for this come from their low reading competence, a negative attitude towards the text being read, low reading motivation, and a lack of out-of-class reading practice. Additionally, they could not control their cognitive thinking to enhance their reading ability as the participants with high English reading proficiency did. All of these factors made them unable to develop their critical thinking process in reading so as to understand the text more deeply.

In contrast, to facilitate their understanding of English academic texts, the participants with high English reading proficiency made better use of metacognitive strategies. It can be concluded from the findings in the present study that to enhance their reading ability effectively, they knew what metacognitive strategies they needed to use and how to use each of them. The main possible reason for this might come from their good control of their cognitive processes in reading. Therefore, they varied their metacognitive reading strategies to understand the text at hand and effectively solve their reading problems. In addition, their high level of language competence, more out-of-class practice, and a positive attitude towards what they read might have affected their reading attainment. Therefore, a greater development of students' English academic reading ability should also improve their existing cognitive thinking, motivate them to have a positive attitude towards what they read, and persuade them to increase their reading time outside the classroom. All of these should improve students' reading proficiency.

Discussion of Research Question IV:

Problems in English Academic Reading

The findings in this study are consistent with the research findings from Chumpavan (2000), who states that vocabulary and grammatical structure problems were the main obstacles met by second language students in their reading. A lot of unknown words and complex grammatical structures make it much more difficult for students to understand academic texts.

Similarly, the participants in this current study were also found to have difficulties when they faced a lot of unknown words and complicated grammatical structures. Most of them indicated various difficulties in their English academic reading, but the majority reported that unknown words were their biggest problem. They had to use various metacognitive strategies to help them guess the meaning of these new words such as finding relationships in the context around these words, recalling their background knowledge, or consulting the dictionary to recheck and clarify the accuracy of their guessing. The plausible cause of difficulties in vocabulary might stem from their lack of reading practice outside the classroom, especially of reading of technical texts pertaining to science, medicine, and so on. Thus, it was difficult for them to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words.

With respect to grammatical structure, the possible explanation for the participants' difficulties in reading passages with embedded grammatical structure might be their lack of language competence. The participants might not have been proficient enough to understand long complex sentences. Thus, they were rarely concerned with grammatical structure. Instead, they compensated their lack of understanding by thoroughly reading a passage and by only grasping the key information. These methods impeded their understanding because they could not get clear ideas of a whole passage.

Additionally, the participants in this study reported further two reading problems, that is, problems related to the organization of a passage and problems related to the length of a passage, both of which interfered with their understanding English academic texts. The participants found that when they read a passage that was very long and not well-organized, it was difficult for them to sharpen their understanding. They had to concentrate hard and pay a lot of attention to the passage being read.

The plausible cause of problems related to the organization of a passage and problems related to the length of a passage and the ensuing decrease in the students' concentration and motivation in reading might be their lack of reading practice outside the classroom. Thus, when they read very long or not well-organized English academic texts, the participants easily lost concentration and developed a negative attitude towards the text being read. Consequently, when they were weary of reading very long and unorganized passages with complicated grammatical structure, they did not clearly understand what they were reading. All of these aspects interfered with the participants' reading enhancement.

Implications of the Study

From the findings in the present study, it can be seen that metacognitive reading strategies are helpful to enhance students' reading ability effectively. Therefore, they should be implicated in diagnostic reading courses in order to encourage students to facilitate their understanding of English academic texts. For instance, when students are faced with unknown words, English instructors should suggest them to look for the connectives around these words and help them predict a suitable meaning before looking for the definitions in the dictionary.

In addition, familiarizing students with the use of various effective metacognitive strategies in English academic reading will help them develop their cognitive process and thus their choice of effective metacognitive strategies and will decrease their mistakes or difficulties in reading, because when cognitive thinking processes are developed, readers select the metacognitive strategies that solve their reading difficulties and facilitate their understanding of English academic texts.

Recommendations for Further Studies

Recommendations for further studies are presented as follows:

1. This study was conducted with 20 third-year students studying at Srinakharinwirot University, Bangkok. In further studies, a larger number of participants should be asked to participate to ascertain the reliability of the present study.
2. In further studies, age and gender differences should be investigated in order to understand better how these variables influence students in their choice of metacognitive strategies and how they apply each of them.
3. Students majoring in other fields, such as nursing, computer science, and sciences, should be asked to participate in further studies to see if the results are comparable to the ones concluded with students majoring in English.
4. Vocabulary is the main reading problem; thus, further studies should investigate what strategies help language learners to solve vocabulary problems and to retain vocabulary.
5. Metacognitive strategies play an important role in student learning. In further studies, the use of metacognitive strategies in other language skills, such as listening, writing and speaking, should be investigated, to confirm that these skills are enhanced the same way as English academic reading was in the present study.

Conclusions

This study aimed to investigate the use of metacognitive strategies by English major students at SWU in their English academic reading. It focused on the kind of metacognitive strategies the participants used in their academic reading and how they applied these strategies. In addition, the differences in the use of metacognitive strategies between students with high and low English reading proficiency, and the difficulties they faced were also examined.

Data were collected from three instruments – interviews, observations through the think-aloud sessions, journals written by participants. The participants in the study counted 20 third-year university students majoring in English in the Department of Western Languages at Srinakharinwirot University in Bangkok, Thailand, in the academic year 2005. The findings were crucial in providing information about the use of metacognitive strategies in English academic reading. The participants in the study consciously applied metacognitive strategies to plan, to monitor, and to remediate their reading comprehension. In addition, the use of metacognitive strategies was effective in solving their reading problems. The findings assure the evidence that metacognitive strategies are crucial in English academic reading for Thai students.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

Interview Questions

1. What do you do first when you read?
2. When you read, do you look for the main idea and the supporting details? What is the most important for you: the main idea or the supporting details?
3. Could you determine the differences between the main idea and the supporting details?
4. What is a topic sentence?
5. What do you focus on while you read this article?
6. What do you do if you have a problem in understanding what you are reading?
7. What should you do when you see unfamiliar words?
8. What do you do when you finish reading?
9. After you read, do you mentally summarize what you read?
10. Do you think the use of dictionary is important when you read? If so, please explain why. If not, please also explain why.
11. Do you translate the articles or the passages you read into Thai? How often? And please explain why you need to translate into Thai.
12. Do you think grammatical structure is a problem for you when you read? If so, please explain why. If not, please explain why.
13. When you do not understand the difficult words, what do you do?
14. Do you use your personal background experience to help you understand the text? If so, please explain why. If not, please also explain why.
15. Do you use self-talk or ask yourself questions while reading? If so, how often, and explain why.
16. What problems do you have when you read?

APPENDIX B

Reading Passages I and II

READING PASSAGE I

**Call for Online Essays to
Beat Internet Cheats****Jane Richardson**

Academics are being encouraged to require all students to submit their essays and assignments electronically, to make it easier to beat web cheats at their own game.

The University of Melbourne's academic board has approved a tough university-wide attack on the contemporary plague of electronic plagiarism. The Melbourne action follows other moves nationally that indicate the extent of university anxiety about online cheating in an era when a 'whatever you can get away with' attitude often prevails.

The Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee is assessing plagiarism software that can detect whether student work has been downloaded in part or entirely from the net. And an Australian Universities Teaching Committee project is investigating the scale of the problem and issues in the online assessment of student work.

The Melbourne academics want the university to set up its own anti-plagiarism website with constantly updated information on electronic checking software and an essay bank for cross-checking. The academic board's report on plagiarism says Melbourne has not tried to quantify the extent of electronic cheating, but states that it clearly exists and has the potential to undermine confidence in student assessment.

The board says that despite existing anti-cheating strategies, such as regular rewording of questions and changes to require reading and research, the problem of electronic plagiarism is acute where large numbers of students are doing the same exercise or where students are able to submit essays on questions of their own choices.

The board's report lists existing plagiarism-detection methods such as the University of California's commercial website (www.plagiarism.org) where lecturers pay to have student essays checked against each other and a database of student papers and web materials. But Melbourne's academics believe it is possible for students to rephrase and restructure material to beat this type of system.

'Moreover, there is an increasing sophistication of electronic translators which paraphrase plagiarized material, hence making its detection more difficult,' the report says.

'This solution potentially requires the instructor to check up to five websites for each essay: a not insignificant task where large classes are concerned.'

The Melbourne academics believe the knowledge that student work will be checked on cheat-detector websites will help to deter cheats. The report says a holistic rather than 'catch and punish' approach works best and it sets out procedures and penalties for students caught cheating, ranging from redoing the assignment to facing academic misconduct charges.

Melbourne's head of computer science Leon Sterling said yesterday electronic cheating was an issue in computer science departments worldwide.

'Sometimes people just don't pose programming assignments because they worry it's too easy to copy. We think that's the wrong way to teach. But we regularly run comparison software to check if students' assignments are similar,' he said.

Professor Sterling's department already requires students to submit work electronically. He said it was often small, telltale signs that gave away the plagiarism – abnormal spacing, or changing the names of variables, but then including comment that referred to the old names.

Professor Sterling said the university was making it clear to students that ‘just taking someone’s file, editing it and submitting it as your own isn’t acceptable to us here’.

(Sahanaya & Hughes, 2002, p.19)

READING PASSAGE II

Eating Disorders**Anorexia Nervosa*****Definition and Epidemiology***

Anorexia nervosa is characterised by a weight loss leading to a body weight of at least 15% less than normal for age and height. In addition, there is an intense fear of gaining weight, a disturbance in the perception of body shape (e.g., feeling fat when thin), a denial of the seriousness of the low weight and the absence of normal menstrual cycles.

Who is at Risk?

The risk group for anorexia nervosa is young women aged 15-25 years. Girls with poor body image and who frequently diet or use extreme weight control techniques are particularly at risk. However, it is important to note that it also affects both younger and older age groups and men. In Australia, the prevalence of anorexia in teenage girls has been estimated at approximately 1 in 1,000, making it an unusual disorder.

Other potential risk factors are activities that require lean body mass such as ballet dancing, gymnastics and modelling. Presence of a chronic illness such as diabetes, and family history of anorexia also increase risk. In the United States and United Kingdom there appears to be a higher incidence of anorexia nervosa in children of middle to upper-middle class families. This trend is not as obvious in Australia.

Onset of Anorexia Nervosa

Very often anorexia nervosa starts with dietary restriction of particular food types (e.g., meat or fat in foods) and/or kilojoule restriction. Eating patterns become gradually more restrictive. This may be accompanied by an abnormal increase in exercise. Often

family and friends are unaware of the severity of weight loss for some time and usually there is considerable reluctance in the individual to seek medical or psychological advice.

Psychological Problems

Even though people diagnosed with anorexia clearly have difficulties with eating, psychological problems are usually vitally important. These individuals tend to have very low self-esteem and lack confidence in their friendship groups. While they feel pressured to perform well, they lack a sense of control over their lives. It has been suggested that restricting food intake is one way to regain a sense of control and confidence over life. It is ironic that severe weight loss is typically counter-productive to these aims.

Nutritional Issues

As weight loss progresses the effects of starvation are evident. Most physiological and biochemical changes are created by the nutritional deprivation. There is poor circulation, increased sensitivity to the cold, heart and kidney problems, along with poor concentration and mood changes.

As starvation progresses the preoccupation with food and eating increases, so that much of the day may be occupied with thoughts of food and related issues. Eating behaviours are frequently abnormal and may involve rituals, difficulties in making decisions about food and unwillingness to eat food prepared by others or unless the precise composition of the food is known.

If anorexia develops before growth has been completed, growth will stop during the period of starvation; puberty will be delayed if it has not already been reached. Absence of menstruation and the associated estrogen deficiency, together with restricted calcium intake in adolescents who have not attained peak bone mass, may result in permanent skeletal abnormalities, and in risk of stress fractures in groups such as dancers and athletes. Regular moderate exercise appears to protect against loss of bone density.

Bulimia Nervosa

Definitions and Epidemiology

Bulimia nervosa is characterised by recurrent episodes of binge eating followed by purging behaviour, such as vomiting or excessive exercising. This is a rapid consumption of a large amount of food in a discrete period of time associated with a lack of control. In addition, binges are followed by attempts to control the effects of the binge on weight by either purging (e.g. vomiting or taking large quantities of laxatives) or by restricting kilojoule intake or by engaging in vigorous exercise. There is persistent over-concern with body shape and weight and beliefs regarding self worth are associated with body shape. People with bulimia nervosa may be of a wide range of weights.

Who is at Risk?

The risk group for bulimia nervosa is women 15-30 years old. In contrast to anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa is a frequently occurring problem at approximately 2-4% of the at-risk population. While not being as life-threatening as anorexia, bulimia does cause enormous physical and psychological distress and is associated with suicide attempts. The risk of bulimia is spread through all occupations and socio-economic groups. The risk factor common to all people who develop bulimia is strict dieting for weight control.

Onset of Bulimia Nervosa

Dieting is an extremely common phenomenon in women in our society – in fact, it is a way of life for many. When people diet, they very often become so hungry they cannot resist bingeing and then feel guilty and disgusting with themselves. Following a binge they will often reinstitute their diet and a little later binge again. In desperation, following a binge many people resort to more extreme purging methods. Thus the binge/purge bulimic cycle becomes a habit.

Psychological Problems

People who become bulimic often start with low self-esteem and feel very dissatisfied with their bodies. It is not surprising, however, that when they develop the symptoms of bulimia their level of self-hate and disgust increases. This is often associated with severe depression and even suicidal thoughts. People with bulimia may become socially withdrawn. Because the person with bulimia does not have the outward appearance of ill-health it is possible for someone to have bulimia for many years without their work colleagues or even family being aware of a problem.

Nutritional Issues

The most serious nutritional problems in bulimia are related to electrolyte losses, particularly potassium and chloride, which are lost in large amounts through vomiting or laxative use. Low potassium levels can cause weakness, dizziness and heart failure. Problems with fluid balance, dehydration and fluid retention may also occur. The medical problems related to bulimia may be severe and life-threatening.

(Sahanaya & Hughes, 2002, p.34-35)

APPENDIX C

Samples of Interview Data

บทสัมภาษณ์

นิสิต A

- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: สิ่งที่น่าจะเป็นสิ่งแรกเมื่อเริ่มต้นอ่านคืออะไรคะ
- นิสิต A: คือ จะอ่านชื่อเรื่องและก็พยายามเข้าใจชื่อเรื่องก่อน และก็อ่านข้อมูลทั้งหมดต่อไป
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เวลาอ่านน้องได้ดูที่ใจความหลัก (main idea) กับใจความรอง (supporting details) ของเนื้อเรื่องที่อ่านหรือไม่คะ แล้วน้องคิดว่าอะไรสำคัญกว่ากันระหว่างใจความหลักและใจความรอง
- นิสิต A: ค่ะ หนูก็จะดูทั้ง main idea กับ supporting details ทั้ง 2 ส่วนมีความสำคัญทั้งหมด โดยหนูจะขีดเส้นใต้ส่วนที่เป็นใจความสำคัญของแต่ละย่อหน้า เพื่อช่วยให้หนูได้มองเห็นใจความสำคัญของเรื่องที่อ่านได้ดียิ่งขึ้น
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: ระบุความแตกต่างระหว่าง main idea และ supporting details ให้พี่ฟังหน่อยได้ไหมคะ
- นิสิต A: ได้ค่ะ คือในแต่ละ essay หรือ article จะมี 1 ใจความหลักของแต่ละเนื้อเรื่อง และในแต่ละ paragraph ก็จะมี supporting details หรือใจความย่อยๆ ซึ่งมาสนับสนุน main idea อีกทีหนึ่งค่ะ ซึ่งโดยทั่วไปแล้ว topic sentence ของแต่ละย่อหน้าก็จะเป็น main idea ของย่อหน้านั้นๆ ด้วยค่ะ ส่วน supporting details เป็นตัวสนับสนุนใจความหลัก ซึ่งจะให้ข้อความขยายอื่นๆ ที่มีสนับสนุนใจความหลักให้มากขึ้นและช่วยทำให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจเรื่องที่อ่านดีขึ้นอีกด้วยค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: Topic sentence คืออะไรคะ
- นิสิต A: โดยทั่วไป ไปด้วยนี้มันจะอยู่ที่ประโยคแรกของแต่ละ paragraph ที่อ่านค่ะ มันคือ main idea หรือ ใจความหลักของย่อหน้าที่อ่านนั้นค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เวลาที่อ่าน น้องมีจุดสนใจในการอ่านบ้างไหมคะ
- นิสิต A: มีค่ะ ก็จะดูตรงใจความหลักของแต่ละย่อหน้าที่อ่านค่ะ แต่ถ้าเรื่องที่อ่านมันยากเกินไปก็จะดูเฉพาะแก่นของเรื่องที่อ่าน แต่ถ้าเรื่องที่อ่านง่ายก็จะสนใจเนื้อหาที่อ่านทั้งหมดเลยคะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: ในกรณีที่น้องกำลังอ่านแล้วมีปัญหาในการอ่านเกิดขึ้น น้องจะทําอย่างไรคะ
- นิสิต A: ก็โดยทั่วไปก็จะขีดเส้นใต้ใจความสำคัญไว้ค่ะ ถ้าเกิดไม่เข้าใจย่อหน้าไหนก็จะกลับไปอ่านอีกครั้งหนึ่งค่ะ แต่ถ้าเรื่องที่อ่านมีประโยคที่ยากและโครงสร้างประโยคซับซ้อนแบบนี้ ก็จะแบ่งโครงสร้างประโยคออกก่อนค่ะ ก็แบ่งพวก subject, verb, object, และ complement ค่ะ มันทำให้เข้าใจประโยคพวกนี้ดีขึ้นค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เวลานั้นเจอคำที่ไม่คุ้นเคย ไม่เคยเจอมาก่อนทําอย่างไรคะ

- นิสิต A: ก็ถ้าบางคำที่ไม่เข้าใจนั้น มันเป็นส่วนขยายของประโยคก็จะข้ามๆ ไปค่ะ แต่ถ้าคำที่ไม่คุ้นนั้นมันเป็น subject หรือ verb ของประโยคที่อ่านแล้วก็ไม่สามารถข้ามไปได้ ก็จะเปิดดิกฯ ค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: แล้วเวลาอ่านจบแล้วทำอย่างไรคะ
- นิสิต A: ก็กลับไปอ่านใหม่อีกทีหนึ่งค่ะ เพื่อที่ว่าจะได้เข้าใจยิ่งขึ้นในบางส่วนที่อ่านแล้วยังไม่ค่อยเข้าใจ มันก็ช่วยให้จำเรื่องที่อ่านดีขึ้นค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: แล้วหลังจากที่น้องอ่าน น้องได้สรุปใจความสำคัญในเรื่องอ่านอีกทีไหมคะ
- นิสิต A: ที่ทำปกติก็จะอ่านใหม่อีกรอบค่ะ แต่ถ้ามันเป็น article หรือ essay ยากๆ ก็จะสรุปใจความสำคัญอีกทีหนึ่ง ก็จะเขียนออกมาเป็นข้อย่อยๆ จำพวก สาเหตุ – ผลลัพธ์ ปัญหา-ทางแก้ และก็ลำดับเหตุการณ์ต่างๆ พวกนี้ค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องคิดว่า การใช้ดิคชันนารีจำเป็นในการอ่านหรือไม่คะ สมมุติว่าถ้าจำเป็น มันจะเป็นเพราะอะไรคะ แล้วถ้าไม่จำเป็น ทำไมถึงไม่จำเป็นคะ
- นิสิต A: มันจำเป็นค่ะ คือ การใช้ดิคฯ ขึ้นอยู่กับว่าหนูเข้าใจข้อความที่อ่านทั้งหมดโดยที่ไม่รู้คำศัพท์ยากๆ หรือเปล่าค่ะ แต่บางครั้งก็จะเปิดดิกฯ เพื่อที่จะตรวจสอบดูว่าคำศัพท์ที่เดาความหมายไว้นั้นเดาถูกหรือเปล่านั้น
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เวลาที่น้องอ่านบทความ หรือว่าเนื้อเรื่องต่างๆ ไปนี่น้องได้แปลเป็นไทยไหมคะ แล้วถ้าแปลนี้แปลบ่อยไหม ช่วยอธิบายด้วยนะคะว่าทำไมน้องถึงจำเป็นต้องแปลเป็นภาษาไทยด้วย
- นิสิต A: หนูแปลไม่บ่อยนะคะ ก็จะขึ้นอยู่กับความยากของเรื่องที่อ่านค่ะ ถ้าเรื่องที่อ่านมันเข้าใจง่าย ก็ไม่จำเป็นต้องแปลเป็นไทย แต่ถ้าเป็นเรื่องที่เข้าใจยาก ก็จำเป็นต้องแปลเป็นภาษาไทยค่ะ คือ การแปลนี้มันช่วยให้เข้าใจเรื่องที่อ่านได้ง่ายขึ้นค่ะ แต่มันก็เสียเวลาเยอะเหมือนกันค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: แล้วโครงสร้างประโยคซับซ้อน เป็นปัญหาในการอ่านไหมคะ ถ้าเป็นทำไมถึงเป็นปัญหาคะ ถ้าไม่เป็น ทำไมถึงไม่เป็น ช่วยอธิบายด้วยค่ะ
- นิสิต A: คือ ถ้าโครงสร้างประโยคมันซับซ้อนก็ต้องใช้ความพยายามเยอะขึ้นในการทำ ความเข้าใจมันค่ะ ก็ต้องแบ่งโครงสร้างประโยคออกเป็น head noun, verb, และ object มันก็ช่วยให้เข้าใจประโยคยากๆ นั้นได้ง่ายขึ้นค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: แล้วเวลาเจอพวกคำศัพท์ยากๆ น้องทำอย่างไรคะ
- นิสิต A: ก็ถ้าบางคำนั้นมันเป็นแค่ส่วนขยายของประโยคก็จะข้ามไปค่ะ แต่ถ้ามันเป็นประธาน หรือว่า กริยา ของประโยคแล้วก็ไม่สามารถเข้าใจได้ถ้าข้ามไปก็เปิดดิกฯ ค่ะ หรือไม่บางทีก็จะพยายามเดาเอาจากบริบทที่อยู่รอบๆ คำศัพท์นั้นๆ ค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องได้ใช้ความรู้ที่มีอยู่ก่อนแล้ว (personal background knowledge) กับเรื่องที่อ่านบ้างไหมคะ ถ้าใช่ ทำไมถึงใช้คะ แล้วถ้าไม่ใช่ ทำไมถึงไม่ใช่

- นิสิต A: ใช่ค่ะ คือ ถ้าเรามี background เกี่ยวกับเรื่องที่อ่าน ก็จะทำให้เราเข้าใจเรื่องที่อ่านได้ดีขึ้นค่ะ แต่ถ้าเราไม่มีความรู้เกี่ยวกับเรื่องที่อ่านมาก่อนเลยเราก็จำเป็นที่จะต้องทำความเข้าใจเกี่ยวกับเรื่องที่อ่านมากขึ้นไปอีก
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เวลาอ่านนี่น้องได้ถามตัวเองเวลาอ่านบ้างไหมคะ ถ้าทำ น้องทำบ่อยไหมคะและเพราะอะไรถึงถามตัวเองคะ
- นิสิต A: ก็...บางทีก็จะถามตัวเองบ้าง เพื่อที่จะ recheck ว่าเข้าใจในเรื่องที่อ่านหรือเปล่า อย่างถ้าไม่เข้าใจบางอย่างในเรื่องที่อ่านก็จะย้อนกลับมาอ่านส่วนนั้นอีกครั้งหนึ่งค่ะ มันก็ช่วยให้เข้าใจเรื่องที่อ่านดีขึ้น
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: ปัญหาในการอ่านที่น้องเจอมีอะไรบ้างคะ
- นิสิต A: ปัญหาหลักเลยก็น่าจะเป็นคำศัพท์ค่ะ และก็โครงสร้างประโยคซับซ้อนพวกนี้ค่ะ โดยทั่วไปก็จะเจอเวลาอ่านบทความวิชาการค่ะ เพราะมันมีโครงสร้างประโยคที่ซับซ้อนค่ะ แล้วก็คำศัพท์เฉพาะ technical terms เยอะมาก อีกร่างงานเขียนที่เขียนไปเรื่องที่ไม่มีการจัดรูปแบบการเขียนที่ดีก็ทำให้อ่านแล้วเข้าใจยากด้วยค่ะ เหมือนกันค่ะ

Interview Data

Student A

- I: What do you do first when you read?
- A: I read the title and try to understand it first. Then, I read all the information further.
- I: When you read, do you look at the main idea and the supporting details? And what is the most important for you between the main idea and the supporting details?
- A: Of course, I look for the main idea and the supporting details. Both are important. I will underline what the main points of each paragraph to help me better concentrate on the key information of the passage.
- I: Can you determine the differences between the main idea and the supporting details?

- A: Yes, one essay or article has one main idea and each paragraph has minor ideas which support the main idea; the topic sentence of each paragraph usually is the main idea of that paragraph. The supporting details support the topic sentence. They provide further details supporting the topic sentence and help readers gain better understanding.
- I: What is a topic sentence?
- A: Usually, a topic sentence is the first sentence of a paragraph and it is the main idea of that paragraph.
- I: What do you focus on while you read?
- A: I focus on the topic sentence of each paragraph. If the passage is too difficult, I will focus only on the main point of the passage. In turn, if the passage is easy, I will focus on the general information of the passage.
- I: What do you do if you have a problem in understanding what you are reading?
- A: I usually underline the topic sentence. If I can't understand one paragraph I will reread it. And if the passage contains complex sentences and complicated grammatical structure, I will divide the sentence structure into subject, verb, object, and complement. This technique helps me understand complex sentences more easily.
- I: What do you do when you see unfamiliar words?
- A: If some words are just modifiers which give only additional information, I will pass them. If they are the subjects or verbs of that sentence, and I can't understand the text without understanding them, I will look them up in a dictionary.
- I: What do you do when you finish reading?
- A: I reread because I want to clarify my understanding of the parts that I'm confused about. And this helps me memorize the information of the passage better.

- I: So after you read, you mentally summarize what you read?
- A: Normally, I will reread the passage. But, if it is a difficult article or essay, I will summarize it by listing the items such as cause and effect, or problem and solution, and the chronological order in the passage.
- I: Do you think the use of the dictionary is important when you read? If so, please explain why. If not, please explain why.
- A: Yes, it's important. The use of a dictionary depends on whether I can understand the whole text without those unfamiliar words. I sometimes open the dictionary to recheck whether my guessing is correct.
- I: Do you translate the articles or passages you read into Thai? How often? And please explain why you need to translate into Thai.
- A: I don't often translate an English passage into Thai. I think it depends on the difficulty of the article or essay. If it is easy to understand, it is not necessary to translate it into Thai. If it's a difficult one, I need to translate to help me understand the passage better. But it's time-consuming.
- I: Do you think grammatical structure is a problem for you when you read? If so, please explain why. If not, please explain why.
- A: Yes, if the grammatical structure is complicated, it requires more effort to understand. I have to divide complex sentences into head noun, verb, and object. This helps me understand a complex sentence more easily.
- I: When you do not understand the difficult words, what do you do?
- A: If some words are just complements of the sentence, I would skip them. If they are the subjects or verbs of that sentence, and I can't understand the text without understanding them, I look them up in a dictionary. Sometimes, I try to guess their meaning by looking at the connections around them.

- I: Do you use your personal background experience to help you understand a text? If so, please explain why. If not, please also explain why.
- A: Yes, personal background helps me understand a text better. If I don't have any knowledge about what I read, I have to try harder to understand the passage.
- I: Do you use self-talk or ask yourself questions while reading? If so, how often, and explain why?
- A: Sometimes I use self-talk to recheck my understanding. If I cannot understand something in the passage, I will review those parts after the first reading. It's a way to help me understand the text better.
- I: What problems do you have when you read?
- A: The main problem is that I cannot understand some unknown words and complicated grammatical structure. It usually occurs with a formal essay, an article which use both complicated grammar structure and a lot of technical terms. Also, a poorly organized text makes it more difficult to understand.

นิสิต B

- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: ชั้นแรกเวลาที่น้องเริ่มอ่านน้องทำอย่างไรคะ
- นิสิต B: ชั้นแรกเลยก็จะเริ่มอ่านคร่าวๆ ก่อนค่ะ แล้วก็ค่อยหาว่าใจความสำคัญของเรื่องที่อ่านคืออะไรคะอ่านคร่าวๆ ก็ช่วยให้เข้าใจเรื่องที่อ่านโดยรวมๆ ค่ะว่ามันเกี่ยวกับอะไรบ้าง ก็ถ้าเวลาอ่านคร่าวๆ นี่ถ้าหากมีส่วนไหนที่ไม่เข้าใจก็จะข้ามไปก่อนค่ะ เพราะยังงี้ก็ต้องมาอ่านละเอียดอีกรอบหนึ่งอยู่แล้วค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เวลาที่อ่านนี้ น้องได้หาใจความสำคัญ (main idea) หรือใจความย่อย (supporting details) หรือเปล่าคะ แล้ว 2 อันนี้จะไหนสำคัญสำหรับน้องมากกว่ากันคะ
- นิสิต B: ดูนะ หนูว่า main idea สำคัญมากกว่านะค่ะเพราะว่าจะบอกว่าเรื่องที่อ่านเกี่ยวกับอะไร ส่วน supporting details ก็จะเป็นข้อความที่เพิ่มขึ้นเพื่อช่วยให้เข้าใจ main idea ดียิ่งขึ้นค่ะ แต่ท้ายที่สุดแล้ว main idea ก็สำคัญที่สุดค่ะ เพราะมันช่วยให้เราเข้าใจประเด็นสำคัญของเรื่องที่อ่าน

- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องสามารถแยกความแตกต่างระหว่าง main idea กับ supporting details ได้หรือเปล่าคะ
- นิสิต B: Main idea จะบอกถึงวัตถุประสงค์ของผู้เขียนคืออะไร แล้วก็บอกเรื่องที่เราอ่านโดยรวมแล้วเกี่ยวข้องกับอะไรบ้าง ส่วน supporting details จะให้ข้อมูลและรายละเอียดต่างๆ ที่สนับสนุนและอธิบายว่า main idea คืออะไรและมีความสำคัญอย่างไรคะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องคิดว่า topic sentence คืออะไรคะ
- นิสิต B: คิดว่า...topic sentence เป็นประโยคที่ทำให้ผู้อ่านรู้ว่าย่อหน้า (paragraph) ที่อ่านพูดถึงอะไร คือจากที่เรียนในวิชา reading โดยทั่วไปแล้วมันจะอยู่ที่ประโยคแรกของแต่ละ paragraph ค่ะ มันจะตอบคำถามว่า ใคร ทำอะไร ที่ไหน เมื่อไหร่ อย่างไร ซึ่งถ้าเราไม่เข้าใจ topic sentence เราก็อาจดูที่ supporting details แทนได้ เพื่อที่จะอ่านข้อมูลเพิ่มเติมเพื่อให้เข้าใจข้อมูลที่อ่านมากขึ้นคะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เวลาอ่านแต่ละครั้ง มีจุดสนใจเป็นพิเศษในการอ่านไหมคะ
- นิสิต B: คือ คิดว่า ไม่มีนะคะ ก็อย่างที่บอกว่าอ่านตามเรียงตัวอักษรไปเรื่อยๆ แต่บางทีก็อาจจะมีบางคำที่เป็นคำเฉพาะที่อาจจะดูบ้าง ที่เป็นคำสำคัญที่ไม่อาจข้าม หรือว่าผ่านไปได้อะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เวลานั้นมีปัญหาเกิดขึ้นในการอ่าน น้องทำอย่างไรคะ
- นิสิต B: ก็จะติดอยู่ที่คำนั้น แล้วก็พยายามที่จะเข้าใจมันให้ได้คะ แต่ถ้าสมมุติว่าไม่สามารถที่จะเข้าใจมันได้จริงๆ ก็จะข้ามไป แล้วก็พยายามเดาความหมายของคำที่ไม่รู้นั้นจากบริบทที่อยู่รายล้อมคำนั้นอยู่
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: แล้วในกรณีที่น้องไม่เจอคำที่ไม่เคยรู้จักมาก่อนเลยน้องทำอย่างไรคะ
- นิสิต B: ก็จะเปิดดิกฯ ค่ะ แต่ถ้าไม่สามารถเปิดดิกฯได้ ก็จะพยายามเดาความหมายของมันออกจากตัวบริบทที่อยู่รอบๆ คำที่ไม่รู้จักนั้นเอา
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องทำอย่างไรหลังจากอ่านจบคะ
- นิสิต B: ก็ถ้าอ่านแล้วไม่เข้าใจก็จะกลับอ่านใหม่อีกครั้งหนึ่งคะ แล้วก็ถ้ามีเวลาเยอะก็จะอ่านใหม่ทั้งหมดเลย แต่ถ้าไม่มีเวลาก็จะอ่านทบทวนเฉพาะส่วนที่เป็นประเด็นสำคัญของเรื่องเท่านั้น
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: หลังจากอ่านจบ น้องได้สรุปใจความสำคัญของเรื่องที่อ่านในใจไหมคะ
- นิสิต B: ทำคะ คือ หลังจากอ่านครั้งแรกจบนี่จะมีข้อมูลมากมายอยู่ในหัว ก็เลยจำเป็นที่จะต้องสรุปใจความสำคัญมันออกมา เพื่อที่จะจำเรื่องที่อ่านได้ดีขึ้นคะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องคิดว่าการใช้ดิคชันนารีมีความจำเป็นในการอ่านไหมคะ ถ้าจำเป็น ทำไมถึงจำเป็นคะ ถ้าไม่ ทำไมถึงไม่จำเป็น ช่วยอธิบายด้วยคะ

- นิสิต B: แนนอนคะ มันจำเป็นมากเลยสำหรับหนูนะคะ เพราะว่าหนูไม่สามารถอ่านแล้ว
เข้าใจเรื่องที่เราอ่านได้ทั้งหมดคะ ซึ่งหนูก็จะติดอยู่ที่คำที่ไม่เข้าใจอยู่อย่างนั้นคะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องได้แปลเรื่องที่น้องอ่านเป็นภาษาไทยไหมคะ บ่อยไหม แล้วทำไมถึงแปล ช่วย
อธิบายด้วยคะ
- นิสิต B: บางครั้งก็แปลคะ จะแปลเมื่อเจอโครงสร้างประโยคที่ซับซ้อนคะ การแปลเป็นไทย
ช่วยให้เข้าใจเรื่องที่เราอ่านได้ดีขึ้นคะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องคิดว่าโครงสร้างไวยากรณ์เป็นปัญหาในการอ่านของน้องไหมคะ
- นิสิต B: สำหรับหนูนะคะ ไม่เป็นปัญหา ปัญหาที่สำคัญที่สุดของหนู คือ คำศัพท์มากกว่า
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: แล้วอย่างเวลาน้องเจอคำศัพท์ยากๆ น้องทำอย่างไรคะ
- นิสิต B: ก็จะเดาความหมายของคำศัพท์เอาจากบริบทที่อยู่รอบๆ คำศัพท์นั้นคะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องได้ใช้ความรู้ที่มีอยู่แต่ก่อน (personal background knowledge) ช่วยในการ
อ่านไหมคะ ถ้าใช่ ทำไมถึงใช่คะ ถ้าไม่ใช่ ทำไมถึงไม่ ช่วยอธิบายด้วยคะ
- นิสิต B: ใช่คะ เวลาที่เรามีความรู้เกี่ยวกับเรื่องที่เรากำลังอ่าน มันจะช่วยทำให้หนูเข้าใจเรื่อง
ที่เราอ่านได้ชัดเจนยิ่งขึ้น แต่ถ้าไม่มีความรู้เกี่ยวกับเรื่องที่อ่าน หนูก็ต้องพยายามใน
การทำความเข้าใจเรื่องที่อ่านมากขึ้นไปด้วยคะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องได้ถามตัวเองในระหว่างเวลาที่อ่านบ้างไหมคะ ถ้าทำ แล้วทำบ่อยไหม ช่วย
อธิบายเหตุผลด้วยนะคะ
- นิสิต B: ก็จะถามคำถามตัวเองบ้างบางครั้งคะ ซึ่งมันก็ช่วยทำให้ตั้งใจอ่านเนื้อเรื่องมากขึ้น
แต่ถ้าเป็นเรื่องที่ง่าย ก็จะไม่ถามคะ เพราะว่าสามารถเข้าใจเรื่องที่อ่านได้ติดอยู่แล้ว
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: ปัญหาในน้องเจอในการอ่านมีอะไรบ้างคะ
- นิสิต B: หนูไม่แน่ใจคะ คือ หนูมักจะวิตกกังวลเกี่ยวกับคำศัพท์ที่หนูอ่านแล้วไม่เข้าใจเสมอ
คะ แล้วก็จะใช้เวลาานมากในการทำความเข้าใจความหมายของคำนั้นคะ

Student B

- I: What do you do first when you read?
- B: Firstly, I will scan the passage thoroughly and I then find out what the main point
of the passage is. Scanning the passage helps me understand its overall
information. If there are some parts that I do not understand when I scan the
passage, I will skip them because I have to read the whole passage closely again.
- I: When you read, do you look for the main idea and the supporting details? What is
the most important for you?

- B: Yes, I do. I think the main idea is more important because it tells us what the passage is about. On the contrary, the supporting details are added information that helps me clearly understand the main idea. But in the end, the main idea is the most important to help us understand the main point of the passage.
- I: Can you determine the differences between the main idea and the supporting details?
- B: The main idea tells the author's purpose and tells the scope of the paper. And the supporting details give information and details to support and explain what the main idea is and how important it is.
- I: What is a topic sentence?
- B: I think a topic sentence is a statement that leads a reader to know what each paragraph will talk about. As I was taught in the reading course, it normally is found in the first sentence of each paragraph. It tells us all these questions, that is, what, when, where, why, and how. If I do not understand the topic sentence, I can look at the supporting details to understand the information more clearly.
- I: What do you focus on when you read?
- B: I think I don't focus on anything. Normally, I read word by word. However, I think I may have focused on some specific words because I try to understand and don't want to skip them.
- I: What do you do if you have a problem in understanding what you are reading?
- B: I stick to that problem and try to understand it. However, if I think I really can't understand it, I will skip it and try to guess the meaning of the unknown words from the connections around them.
- I: What do you do when you see unfamiliar words?

- B: I will use the dictionary. If I can't, I will try to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words from the contextual clues around them.
- I: What do you do when you finish reading?
- B: If I don't understand, I will read it again. Also, if I have a lot of time, I will reread the whole passage. If not, I will only pay attention to the main point of the passage.
- I: After you read, do you mentally summarize what you read?
- B: Yes, I do. After the first reading, a lot of information on the passage is in my mind. Thus, the summarization of the key information of the passage is a way to organize better memorization.
- I: Do you think the use of a dictionary is important when you read? If so, please explain why. If not, please also explain why?
- B: Exactly, it is so important to me because I can't understand completely. I always get stuck on the words that I don't understand.
- I: Do you translate the articles or the passages you read into Thai? How often? And please explain why.
- B: I do sometimes. I will translate into Thai when I don't understand an unfamiliar sentence structure. It is helpful for me to make the reading clearer.
- I: Do you think grammatical structure is a problem for you when you read?
- B: For me, grammatical structure isn't a problem. My problem is unknown words.
- I: When you do not understand difficult words, what do you do?
- B: I try to guess the meaning of unknown words by using the contextual clues around the unknown words.
- I: Do you use your personal background knowledge to help you understand the text? If so, please explain why. If not, please also explain why.

- B: Yes, I do. It helps me to understand a passage clearer when I have some knowledge about what I am reading. If not, I have to try harder to understand the passage.
- I: Do you use self-talk or ask yourself questions while reading? If so, how often, and explain why?
- B: Sometimes, I ask myself some questions. It helps me to read more carefully. However, if the passage is easy, I do not ask myself questions because I can understand it clearly.
- I: What problems do you have when you read?
- B: I'm not sure but I always worry about the words that I don't understand and I take a lot of time to understand their meaning.

APPENDIX D

Samples of Observations through Think-Aloud Sessions

ถอดบทสัมภาษณ์

นิสิต C

- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: สิ่งแรกที่น้องทำเมื่อเริ่มต้นการอ่านคืออะไรคะ
- นิสิต C: จะดูที่ thesis statement ก่อนค่ะ จากนั้นก็ดูชื่อเรื่องว่ามันเกี่ยวข้องกับอะไร ที่ทำแบบนี้เพราะว่าตอนเรียนภาษาอังกฤษอาจารย์สอนว่า ส่วนใหญ่ main idea มักจะอยู่ตรงย่อหน้าแรกของเนื้อหาเป็นส่วนใหญ่ค่ะ ก็เลยอ่านส่วนนี้เป็นส่วนแรกเพื่อดูว่า main idea ของเรื่องที่เราอ่านคืออะไร แต่บางครั้งก็ไม่ได้ดูหัวข้อเรื่องก่อนนะจะอ่านเนื้อเรื่องคร่าวๆ ก่อนแล้วก็จะเดาว่าเรื่องเกี่ยวกับอะไรค่ะ ซึ่งวิธีนี้นั้นก็จะช่วยทบทวนความเข้าใจในการอ่านอีกทีหนึ่งนะคะ สรุปความในเรื่องที่เราอ่านค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องได้ดูที่ main idea และ supporting details ของเนื้อเรื่องที่เราอ่านหรือเปล่า
- นิสิต C: ใช่ค่ะ ดูค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: แล้วน้องคิดว่าสิ่งไหนสำคัญที่สุดค่ะ main idea และ supporting details
- นิสิต C: ในความคิดของหนูนะค่ะ คือ supporting details พวกรายละเอียดปลีกย่อยต่างๆ ค่ะ เพราะว่า main idea มันจะบอกแค่ใจความสำคัญของเนื้อหาที่เราอ่าน ซึ่งมันยังไม่สามารถทำให้เราเข้าใจเนื้อหาทั้งหมดได้ค่ะ แต่ถ้าเราดูที่ supporting details เราสามารถเข้าใจเนื้อหาทั้งหมดของเนื้อเรื่องที่เราอ่านได้โดยอ่านจากคำอธิบายรายละเอียดปลีกย่อยต่างๆ และพวกตัวอย่างต่างๆ ที่ยกขึ้นมาอ้างในส่วนของ supporting details ที่เป็นรายละเอียดพวกนี้ค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: ช่วยอธิบายความแตกต่างของ main idea และ supporting details ให้ฟังอีกครั้งได้ไหมคะ
- นิสิต C: ค่ะ main idea คือ ส่วนที่อธิบายรายละเอียดทั่วไปของเนื้อเรื่องที่เราอ่านต่างๆ จะบอกเนื้อหาโดยรวมกว้างๆ ว่า เนื้อเรื่องที่เราอ่านเกี่ยวข้องกับอะไร ส่วน supporting details จะเป็นส่วนที่ขยายความเพิ่มขึ้น และอธิบายรายละเอียดต่างๆ ให้ชัดเจนมากยิ่งขึ้น
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: สำหรับ passage A นี้ main idea ของเรื่องนี้คืออะไรคะ?
- นิสิต C: เอ่อ...เป็นเรื่องเกี่ยวกับวิธีการป้องกันการคัดลอกผลงานของนักเรียนในประเทศออสเตรเลียค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: แล้ว topic sentence คืออะไรคะ อย่างในย่อหน้าที่ 2 นี้ topic sentence คืออะไรคะ
- นิสิต C: ไม่แน่ใจนะค่ะ มันน่าจะเป็นใจความสำคัญของย่อหน้าที่อ่านนั้นๆ ค่ะ ส่วนย่อหน้าที่ 2 ของเรื่องนี้น่าจะเป็นประโยคแรกของย่อหน้านี้ค่ะ เพราะว่าประโยคอื่นๆ มันจะอธิบายรายละเอียดปลีกย่อยต่างๆ และก็สนับสนุนให้ประโยคแรกมันเข้าใจเด่นชัดมากยิ่งขึ้น

- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เวลาอ่าน มีจุดสนใจในการอ่านบ้างไหมคะ
- นิสิต C: มีค่ะ ก็จะดูพวกคำต่าง ๆ ที่มันเกี่ยวข้องกับชื่อเรื่องที่เราอ่านอยู่ค่ะ แล้วก็จำไว้ อย่างเรื่องที่เราอ่านนี้เกี่ยวกับการขโมยความคิดของนักเรียนในออสเตรเลียก็จะจำคำว่า plagiarism ไว้ในใจ แล้วก็ดูคำอื่นๆ มาช่วยสนับสนุนให้เข้าใจคำนี้ชัดเจนมากยิ่งขึ้นค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: ถ้าหากเวลาอ่านแล้วเจอปัญหาในการอ่านทำให้อ่านไม่เข้าใจ น้องทำอย่างไรคะ
- นิสิต C: ปัญหาที่มีก็คือ คำที่ไม่คุ้น คำศัพท์ยากพวกนี้ค่ะ วิธีแก้ก็คือ จะเปิดดิกชันนารี อังกฤษ - อังกฤษนะคะ แต่ถ้าในกรณีที่ไม่สามารถเปิดไม่ได้ก็จะดูพวกบริบทที่อยู่รอบๆ คำศัพท์ยากนั้นค่ะ แล้วก็ลองเดาความหมายใกล้เคียงของศัพท์นั้นดู
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เวลาเจอคำที่ไม่คุ้น ไม่เคยเจอมาก่อนเลยนี่น้องทำอย่างไรคะ
- นิสิต C: อย่างที่บอก คือ ถ้าเปิดได้ก็จะเปิดดิกฯ ค่ะ มันก็ช่วยให้รู้ว่าคำที่ไม่รู้จักมันแปลว่าอะไร แต่ว่าในกรณีที่เปิดไม่ได้ ก็จะดูที่บริบทที่รายล้อมคำนั้นค่ะ และก็จะวิเคราะห์ว่าคำนี้เป็นคำสำคัญหรือเปล่า ถ้าดูแล้วมันเป็นคำที่สำคัญ เป็น key words ในประโยคนั้นก็จะเปิดดิกฯ หรือไม่ก็เดาจากบริบทที่รายล้อมรอบๆ คำที่ไม่รู้นั้นค่ะ แล้วก็ลองเดาความหมายดูค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: หลังจากที่เราอ่านจบแล้วทำอย่างไรคะ
- นิสิต C: พออ่านจบ ก็จะสรุปใจความสำคัญของเรื่องที่เราอ่านอีกทีหนึ่งค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: สรุปความเพื่ออะไรคะ
- นิสิต C: โดยปกติหนูจะสรุปทุกครั้งหลังจากที่อ่านจบค่ะ เพราะว่าถ้าอ่านเสร็จแล้วไม่สรุปรายละเอียดอีกทีหนึ่ง ก็จะลืมหมดค่ะ แต่ถ้าสรุปทันทีหลังจากที่อ่านจบจะช่วยให้จำรายละเอียดในเรื่องที่เราอ่านได้ดีขึ้นค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องคิดว่าพจนานุกรมมีความจำเป็นในการอ่านไหมคะ อย่างในเรื่องแรกนี่พจนานุกรมจำเป็นไหมคะ
- นิสิต C: จำเป็นค่ะ เพราะว่าเรื่องแรกนี่เป็นเรื่องที่ยากค่ะเพราะว่ามีคำศัพท์ใหม่ๆ ที่ไม่รู้เยอะมากค่ะ อย่างเช่น assessing, sophisticated และคำอื่นๆ อีกเยอะเลยคะ แต่โดยปกติก็จะไม่เปิดดิกฯ นะคะ คือ จะเปิดเมื่อเจอคำศัพท์ที่ไม่รู้จักจริงๆ ที่เปิดดิกฯ เพราะจะทำให้เข้าใจความหมายที่ถูกต้องของคำนั้นได้จริงๆ ค่ะ แล้วก็ช่วยยืนยันด้วยว่าคำที่เราไม่รู้เนี่ย เราเดาความหมายได้ถูกต้องหรือไม่ค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เวลาอ่าน passage A มีการแปลจากอังกฤษเป็นไทยหรือเปล่าคะ
- นิสิต C: แปลค่ะ แต่จะไม่ใช้แปลแบบคำต่อคำนะคะ จะอ่านจนจบทั้งย่อหน้านั้นก่อน แล้วค่อยลอง paraphrase ออกมาอีกทีหนึ่งค่ะ วิธีนี้จะช่วยฝึกการแปลจากอังกฤษเป็นไทยด้วยค่ะ แต่ถ้าในกรณีที่มันเป็นบทความยากๆ อย่างงานเขียนทางวิชาการนี่ก็จะ

- แปลจากอังกฤษเป็นไทยอย่างเดียวค่ะ เพราะว่าการแปลเป็นภาษาไทยของเราเอง ช่วยให้เข้าใจเนื้อเรื่องที่ได้ดีกว่าอ่านเป็นภาษาอังกฤษอย่างเดียวค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องคิดว่า โครงสร้างไวยากรณ์เป็นปัญหาหนึ่งของการอ่านหรือเปล่าคะ
- นิสิต C: ไม่ค่ะ หนูคิดว่าปัญหาหลักของการอ่านไม่เข้าใจน่าจะเป็นปัญหาด้านคำศัพท์ มากกว่าค่ะ พวกคำศัพท์ทางวิชาการ ศัพท์เฉพาะทาง พวกศัพท์วิทยาศาสตร์ ฟิสิกส์ แบบนี้มากกว่าค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เวลาเจอคำศัพท์ยากที่น้องอ่านแล้วไม่เข้าใจ น้องมีวิธีแก้ไขอย่างไรคะ
- นิสิต C: ก็จะลองแยกรากศัพท์ ดูโครงสร้างคำศัพท์นั้นๆ ค่ะ ลองแยกพวก prefix suffix อย่างคำว่า definition ก็จะแบ่งเป็น define + tion แล้วก็ลองเดาดูว่า มาจากคำว่า define ที่เป็นคำกริยา และ definition เป็นคำนาม แล้วก็ลองเดาความหมายดูค่ะ ซึ่งถ้าหากเดาความหมายได้ก็จะไม่จำเป็นต้องเปิดพจนานุกรม
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องคิดว่า personal background experience มีส่วนช่วยในการอ่านเนื้อเรื่องหรือไม่คะ
- นิสิต C: มีมากค่ะ ซึ่งมันสำคัญมากๆ เลยค่ะ ยกตัวอย่างเช่น ในเนื้อเรื่องแรกนั้นะคะ หนูมีความรู้เกี่ยวกับคำว่า plagiarism มาก่อนเพราะอาจารย์เคยสอนในห้องเรียน ซึ่งถ้าไม่มีความรู้เกี่ยวกับคำนี้มาก่อนเลย ก็อาจจะไม่เข้าใจเรื่องที่อ่าน หรือไม่เข้าใจ ชัดเจนว่า plagiarism มันมีความสำคัญอย่างไรค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: มีการถามคำถามตัวเองในระหว่างที่อ่านหรือเปล่าคะ
- นิสิต C: ก็ถามบ้างค่ะ โดยเฉพาะเวลาที่เจอคำศัพท์ที่ไม่คุ้นมาก่อนก็จะถามตัวเองเพื่อเช็คตัวเองดูว่า เข้าใจความหมายของคำนี้หรือเปล่าค่ะ ซึ่งการถามคำถามตัวเองแบบนี้ ก็ช่วยให้เข้าใจเรื่องที่อ่านดีขึ้น
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เวลาอ่านงานเขียนทางวิชาการ น้องมีปัญหอะไรบ้างคะที่ทำให้อ่านงานเขียนทางวิชาการแล้วไม่เข้าใจ
- นิสิต C: หนูคิดว่า น่าจะเป็นคำศัพท์ที่ไม่เคยพบมาก่อนที่มีเยอะมาก และก็น่าจะเป็นเนื้อเรื่องที่เขียนไม่มี organization ค่ะ ซึ่งทำให้อ่านแล้วทำความเข้าใจตามเนื้อเรื่องที่อ่านได้ยากค่ะ

Student C

- I: What do you do first when you read?
- C: I look at the thesis statement first and look at the title to know what it is about. I do this because English teachers have taught that usually the author tells the main point of the passage in the first paragraph; thus, I read this part for grasping the

general information. However, sometimes I do not read the title because I want to read the passage thoroughly and first make a prediction on what it is about. This technique helps me recheck my understanding and helps me summarize easily the general information.

I: Do you look at the main idea and the supporting ideas of the passage?

C: Absolutely, yes.

I: What is the most important between the main idea and the supporting details?

C: It should be the supporting details because the main idea tells us only the main point of the passage so that we don't know clearly the whole information. But looking at the supporting details, we can understand the entire details of the passage when reading the various explanations and examples given by those supporting details.

I: Please explain to me the differences between the main idea and the supporting details.

C: The main idea is the general information of the passage. It tells us about the overall passage, what it is about. The supporting details give us more information and also more complete explanations.

I: What was the main idea of passage A?

C: Umm...It was about how to avoid the plagiarism of students in Australia.

I: What is a topic sentence? And what was the topic sentence in the 2nd paragraph? And how do you know it?

C: I'm not sure. It should be the main point of a paragraph. I think the topic sentence of the 2nd paragraph is the first sentence of the paragraph. I know this because the other sentences give us further information and support the first sentence in order to understand it more clearly.

- I: Do you have any focusing point when you read the passage?
- C: Yes, I do. I look at words relating to the title of the passage, and keep these words in my mind. For example, when I read this passage I know that it should be about the plagiarism of students in Australia. I then focus in my mind on the word 'plagiarism' as a main point and look for further supporting details to help me understand the text better.
- I: What do you do when you have a problem in understanding what you read?
- C: I have some difficulties with some unknown words of the passage A. To solve this problem I consulted the English-English dictionary. But, if I cannot open the dictionary, I will look at the relationships with the unknown words and try to guess an approximate meaning.
- I: What do you do when you face unfamiliar words?
- C: If I can open the dictionary, I will open it to help me know the meaning of those unknown words. If not, I will look for contextual clues and justify whether they are significant words. After the confirmation, if they are significant or key words of the paragraph, I will look up the dictionary or look for connections around them to guess their meaning.
- I: What do you do after you finish reading?
- C: After reading, I will summarize the key information of the passage.
- I: Why do you have to summarize the passage?
- C: Generally, I have to summarize a passage because when I read it without summarization I might forget it all after the first reading. If I summarize it after the first reading, it helps me better memorize the information.
- I: Do you think the dictionary was important for reading passage A?

- C: Yes, the dictionary was important because this passage was a difficult text with a lot of new words such as ‘assessing’, ‘sophisticated’, and so on. But, I normally would not open the dictionary. I open the dictionary when I see unknown words because I would understand their correct meaning. It helps me confirm whether my guessing is correct.
- I: Did you translate the passage A into Thai?
- C: Yes, I did but I preferred to paraphrase the whole paragraph rather than translating it word by word because I wanted to practice my translating English reading into Thai. However, I would translate into Thai only if it was a difficult text like an academic reading passage because translating into Thai helped me understand more clearly because Thai is my language.
- I: Do you think grammatical structure is a problem for you when you were reading?
- C: No. I think the main problem in reading should be a vocabulary problem, like some difficult academic words in science or physics, and so on.
- I: What do you do when you do not understand the difficult words?
- C: I split those unknown words into their base forms such as prefix and suffix; for instance, the word ‘definition’, I will then divide it into ‘define + tion’ and guess that it comes from ‘define’ in verb form and ‘definition’ in noun form. Then, I try to guess the meaning of those unfamiliar words. If I can guess their meaning, I will not consult the dictionary.
- I: Do you use your personal background experience to help you understand the text?
- C: Absolutely. It is very important for me. For example, concerning this passage, I have had some knowledge about ‘plagiarism’ which my teacher taught in class. If I have no knowledge about this word before, I would not understand it clearly because I would not have correctly known the importance of plagiarism.

- I: Do you use self-talk or ask yourself questions while reading?
- C: Yes. Sometimes, I do it. Especially when I see unknown words I may ask myself questions to recheck my understanding of those meaning. It also helps me understand the passage better.
- I: What problems do you have when you read an academic text?
- C: I think it should be a combination of a lot of unknown words and the passage is not well organized; thus, it is hard for me to follow the information.

นิสิต D

- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: สิ่งแรกที่ทำเมื่อเริ่มอ่านคืออะไรคะ
- นิสิต D: ค่ะ จะอ่านชื่อเรื่องก่อนค่ะ แล้วก็ เริ่มอ่านเนื้อเรื่องคร่าวๆ ทั้งหมดค่ะ แต่ตอนแรกจะไม่ได้เน้นตรงไหนก่อนเลยนะคะ เพราะว่ายังไม่รู้ว่าเรื่องที่อ่านมันเกี่ยวกับอะไรเลย จะอ่านผ่านๆ ไปก่อนเฉยๆ ค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เวลาอ่านได้ดู main idea กับ supporting details ในเรื่องที่อ่านไหมคะ
- นิสิต D: ไม่ค่ะ จะแค่อ่านผ่านๆ ไปเฉยๆ ค่ะ พออ่านเสร็จแล้วก็จะมาสรุปใจความสำคัญของเรื่องที่อ่านเองหลังจากที่อ่านเสร็จแล้วอีกทีค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องคิดว่า สิ่งไหนสำคัญมากกว่ากันคะ ระหว่าง main idea กับ supporting details
- นิสิต D: หนูคิดว่า supporting details สำคัญมากกว่าค่ะ เพราะว่าถ้าเราดูแค่ใจความสำคัญของเรื่องที่อ่าน เราไม่สามารถเข้าใจรายละเอียดต่างๆ ของเรื่องที่อ่านได้ค่ะ ดังนั้นน่าจะเป็น supporting details ที่อธิบายรายละเอียดต่างๆ เกี่ยวกับเนื้อเรื่องที่อ่านซึ่งช่วยให้เราเข้าใจเรื่องที่อ่านดียิ่งขึ้นค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: ช่วยอธิบายความแตกต่างระหว่าง main idea กับ supporting details ให้ฟังหน่อยได้ไหมคะ
- นิสิต D: ได้ค่ะ main idea คือ ใจความสำคัญของเนื้อเรื่องที่อ่าน แต่บางครั้งใจความสำคัญในเรื่องที่อ่านจะมีหลายอันและทำให้เราไม่สามารถเข้าใจเนื้อหาทั้งหมดได้ เราจึงจำเป็นต้องดูที่ supporting details เพื่อที่จะเข้าใจรายละเอียดอื่นๆ ในเรื่องที่อ่าน โดย supporting details จะเป็นข้อความที่เสริมขึ้นมาเพื่อช่วยให้เราเข้าใจ main idea และใจความสำคัญในเรื่องที่อ่านชัดเจนมากยิ่งขึ้น
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: ในเรื่องที่ 2 นี้ main idea ของเรื่องนี้คืออะไรคะ

- นิสิต D: Main idea ของเรื่องนี้คือ เรื่องเกี่ยวกับโรคที่เกิดจากการกินอาหารที่ผิดปกติ ซึ่งมีด้วยกัน 2 โรค คือ anorexia กับ bulimia
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: Topic sentence คืออะไรคะ แล้วในย่อหน้าแรก topic sentence คืออะไรคะ
- นิสิต D: คือ ประโยคแรกของย่อหน้านี้จะ เพราะว่าหัวข้อที่ขึ้นต้นบอกว่า เกี่ยวกับ definition แล้วประโยคแรกของย่อหน้านี้ก็ให้ความหมายของโรค anorexia ด้วย ซึ่งมันสัมพันธ์กันกับหัวข้อที่กำหนดไว้ค่ะ ส่วนประโยคอื่นๆ จะให้ข้อมูลเพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับโรค anorexia ค่ะ ซึ่งมันน่าจะเป็น supporting details ค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เวลาอ่านมีจุดสนใจอะไรในการอ่านคะ
- นิสิต D: ในเรื่องนี้จะดูที่หัวข้อ 2 อันค่ะ คือ โรค anorexia กับ bulimia แล้วก็อ่านรายละเอียดอื่นๆ ที่อธิบายอยู่ได้หัวข้อย่อยต่างๆ นั้นค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: ในเวลาที่ย่านแล้วเกิดปัญหาอ่านแล้วไม่เข้าใจ น้องทำอย่างไรคะ
- นิสิต D: หนูว่า ปัญหาในการอ่านเกี่ยวกับมีคำศัพท์ที่ไม่รู้เยอะมากค่ะ ก็จะเปิดดิกฯ เพื่อที่จะเข้าใจความหมายของคำที่ไม่รู้นั้นค่ะ แต่ถ้าเกิดว่ามีความรู้เกี่ยวกับคำศัพท์นั้นมาบ้างก็จะเปิดดิกฯ เหมือนกันค่ะ แต่เพื่อตรวจสอบดูว่าคำที่เราเดาความหมายนั้น เดาถูกหรือเปล่า
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องทำอย่างไรเวลาเจอคำที่ไม่คุ้นเคยมาก่อนคะ อย่างเช่นคำว่า “nervosa”
- นิสิต D: ก็จะข้ามค่ะ เพราะว่าหนูคิดว่ามันน่าจะเป็นชื่อของโรคใดโรคหนึ่งค่ะ โดยหนูจะดูข้อความที่อยู่รอบๆ คำนี้แทนค่ะ แต่ถ้าเป็นที่ไม่รู้คำอื่นๆ ก็จะอ่านไปจนจบเรื่องทั้งหมดก่อนค่ะ แล้วก็ค่อยมาเช็คความหมายของคำที่ไม่รู้นั้นหลังจากที่อ่านจบค่ะ ถ้าที่คำนั้นเป็น key words ค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องทำอะไรหลังจากอ่านจบแล้วคะ
- นิสิต D: ไม่ทำอะไร คือ เหมือนกับเป็นการเพิ่มความรู้เกี่ยวกับเรื่องที่รู้อยู่แล้วมาให้มากขึ้นเท่านั้นค่ะ แต่ถ้าเป็นเนื้อเรื่องอื่นๆ โดยทั่วไปถ้าอ่านจบก็จะสรุปความอื่นที่หนึ่งค่ะ เพื่อให้จำรายละเอียดสำคัญๆ เกี่ยวกับเรื่องที่อ่านได้ดีขึ้นค่ะ แต่ถ้าเป็นกรณีที่ย่านตำราเรียน ก็จะอ่านทวนอีกครั้งหนึ่งค่ะ แล้วก็สรุปใจความสำคัญเกี่ยวกับเรื่องที่อ่านเพื่อที่จะจดจำรายละเอียดต่างๆ ได้ดียิ่งขึ้น
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องเคยมีความรู้เกี่ยวกับเรื่อง B นี้เกี่ยวกับโรค bulimia กับ anorexia มาก่อนหรือเปล่านั้นคะ
- นิสิต D: ใช่ค่ะ หนูเคยอ่านบทความเกี่ยวกับโรคที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการกินอาหารที่ผิดปกติมาก่อน และเพื่อนก็เคยมีประสบการณ์เกี่ยวกับโรคเหล่านี้ด้วยค่ะ ดังนั้นทำให้เวลาอ่านเรื่องนี้ก็ทำให้ค่อนข้างเข้าใจเรื่องนี้ได้ดีมากค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องคิดว่า background knowledge มีความสำคัญต่อการอ่านงานเขียนทางวิชาการหรือไม่คะ

- นิสิต D: ใช่ค่ะ ถ้าหากไม่มีความรู้เกี่ยวกับเรื่องที่เราอ่านมาก่อนเลย เรื่องที่อ่านนั้นมันก็จะเข้าใจได้ยากขึ้นค่ะ แต่ถ้าเรามีความรู้ในเรื่องที่ได้อ่านมาก่อน เราจะสามารถเข้าใจเรื่องที่เราอ่านได้ดีมากขึ้น นอกจากนี้มันยังทำให้เราสนใจในเรื่องที่เราอ่านมากยิ่งขึ้นด้วยนะคะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องมีการถามตัวเองในเวลาที่อ่านไหมคะ
- นิสิต D: ก็จะถามว่าเรื่องที่เราอ่านนั้นมันเกี่ยวกับอะไร แล้วก็เราได้อะไรจากเรื่องที่เรากำลังอ่านนี้ค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องคิดว่า การใช้ดิกชันนารีมีความจำเป็นสำหรับการอ่านไหมคะ
- นิสิต D: สำหรับเรื่องนี้ค่ะ ไม่จำเป็นค่ะ เพราะว่าหนูเคยมีความรู้เกี่ยวกับโรคเหล่านี้มาก่อนแล้ว แต่ถ้าเปรียบเทียบกับเรื่องแรก คิดว่าเรื่องแรกการเปิดดิกฯ มีความจำเป็นนะคะ เพราะว่ามีคำศัพท์ยากเยอะมาก ดิกชันนารีช่วยให้เข้าใจเรื่องที่เราอ่านและเข้าใจความหมายของคำศัพท์ที่ไม่รู้ต่างๆ ด้วยค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องได้แปลสิ่งที่อ่านจากอังกฤษเป็นไทยไหมคะ
- นิสิต D: โดยปกติค่ะ จะอ่านโดยที่พยายามเข้าใจเรื่องที่เราอ่านเลยโดยไม่แปลจากอังกฤษเป็นไทยค่ะ แต่ถ้าเป็นงานเขียนทางวิชาการที่มีคำศัพท์ยากเยอะมาก และโครงสร้างไวยากรณ์ที่ซับซ้อน ก็แปลค่ะ เพราะว่าไม่สามารถอ่านแล้วทำความเข้าใจได้ในทันทีค่ะ จึงจำเป็นต้องพยายามแปลจากอังกฤษเป็นไทยบ้าง ซึ่งการแปลก็ช่วยให้เข้าใจงานเขียนทางวิชาการได้ดีขึ้นค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: คิดว่าการใช้โครงสร้างไวยากรณ์มีความจำเป็นในการอ่านไหมคะ
- นิสิต D: ไม่นะคะ เพราะว่าแค่อ่านเนื้อเรื่องให้เข้าใจโดยรวมก็เพียงพอแล้วค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เวลาไม่เข้าใจคำศัพท์ยาก ทำอย่างไรคะ
- นิสิต D: ก็จะลองเดาความหมายของคำศัพท์ยากนั้นดูค่ะ โดยดูจากคำบริบท ตัวช่วยต่างๆ ที่อยู่รอบๆ คำศัพท์ยากนั้นค่ะ แต่ถ้าเป็นคำที่น่าสนใจที่เคยเจอคำนี้มาก่อนแต่จำไม่ได้ว่าแปลว่าอะไร ก็จะเป็นพจนานุกรมเพื่อตรวจสอบความหมายอีกทีหนึ่งค่ะ
- ผู้สัมภาษณ์: ช่วยอธิบายอีกครั้งได้ไหมคะว่า ปัญหาอะไรที่น้องมีเวลาอ่านงานเขียนทางวิชาการ
- นิสิต D: ปัญหาใหญ่ก็คือ คำศัพท์ที่ไม่คุ้นเคยมาก่อนค่ะ ซึ่งโดยส่วนตัวแล้วคิดว่าการใช้ความรู้ทางโครงสร้างไวยากรณ์ภาษาอังกฤษไม่ได้ช่วยให้เข้าใจเนื้อหามากขึ้นนะคะ การรู้คำศัพท์มากๆ มีประโยชน์ในการอ่านมากกว่าความรู้ทางโครงสร้างไวยากรณ์ค่ะ

Student D

I: What do you do first when you read?

- D: I read the title of the passage, and read all information through the passage. But I do not focus on anything first because I don't know what the passage is about.
- I: Do you look at the main idea and the supporting details of the passage?
- D: No, I just read it thoroughly and I will conclude the whole information of the passage by myself after the first reading.
- I: What do you think it was the most important between the main idea and the supporting details?
- D: I think the supporting details are more important than the main idea because only looking at the main idea I cannot correctly understand the general idea of the passage. It might be the supporting details that give some explanations on the passage. It helps me understand the reading passage better.
- I: Can you explain the differences between the main idea and the supporting details?
- D: Yes. The main idea is the key information of the passage. However, sometimes there are a lot of key points in a passage, and then we cannot understand the whole of it correctly. We have to look at the supporting details to understand the other information, and the supporting details are added information that helps me understand more clearly the main idea or the main point.
- I: What was the main idea of this 2nd passage?
- D: The main idea of this passage was about the eating disorders which included two diseases, that is, anorexia and bulimia.
- I: What was the topic sentence in the 1st paragraph?
- D: It was the first sentence of this paragraph. I knew this because the heading of the paragraph was the definition and the first sentence of this paragraph gave the meaning of anorexia. It was associated with the heading. Also, the other sentences gave further information on anorexia, thus, they should be the supporting details.

I: What do you focus on while reading this passage?

D: In this passage, I look at the headings, that is, the two diseases, anorexia and bulimia. Then, I look at what are under the subheading and read more information there.

I: What do you do when you had a problem understanding what you read?

D: I think my problem concerns a lot of unknown words. I will look up the dictionary to understand their meaning. However, I also have some knowledge about some new words; thus, I opened the dictionary to recheck whether my guess is correct.

I: What do you do when you saw unfamiliar words such as “nervosa”?

D: I skip it because I think it may be the name of a disease. I then look at the information around this word instead. For other unknown words, I would read the passage through before and recheck their meaning after the first reading if they were key words of the passage.

I: What do you do when you finish reading?

D: I do not do anything because it’s like extra information for me only. But, in general, I will summarize all information again to help me better memorize the key information of the passage. Anyway, if I read textbooks, I may reread the passage and I will then summarize its key information to memorize the information better.

I: Did you have any background knowledge about passage B on bulimia and anorexia?

D: Yes, I did. I had read about eating disorders before. And my friends have some experience about these diseases. So, I understood this passage fairly well.

I: Do you think background knowledge was important for academic reading?

D: Yes. Academic texts are difficult for me to understand all information correctly if I don't have some knowledge about it before. But when I have some knowledge about the texts, it helps me understand the passage better. Also, it increased my interest.

I: Do you use self-talk when you read?

D: I ask myself what the passage is about and I also ask myself what knowledge I gain from it.

I: Do you think the use of the dictionary is important for reading?

D: For this passage, it was not important, because I knew about the diseases before. When I compared it to the first passage, opening the dictionary was important because it had a lot of difficult words. But in general, looking up the dictionary helps me better understand the text and the meaning of the unknown words.

I: Do you translate what you read into Thai?

D: As usual, I read the passage and tried to understand it without translating it into Thai. But if it is an academic text which is full of unknown words and complicated grammatical structure, I may translate it because I cannot understand it when I read instantly. So, I try to translate from English into Thai slowly. This tactics helps me better understand difficult academic texts.

I: Do you think the use of the grammatical structure is important when you read?

D: No, I don't think so. I think just reading a passage thoroughly is enough for my understanding.

I: What do you do when you did not understand the difficult words?

D: I try to guess the meaning of difficult or unknown words by looking at the contextual clues around them. However, if they are interesting words that I may

have seen before but I could not remember those meaning, I would open the dictionary to recheck my understanding.

I: Please tell me again what problems you have when you read academic texts?

D: The main reading problem is the unknown words. For me, I think the use of English grammar do not help me understand the text better. Knowing lots of words should be more helpful for me than knowing grammatical structure well.

นิสิต E

ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เมื่อเริ่มอ่านสิ่งแรกที่ทำคืออะไรคะ

นิสิต E: ก็อ่านไปจนจบเลยคะ คือ คนอื่นโดยทั่วไปจะอ่านหัวเรื่องแล้วก็จะอ่านเนื้อหาจนจบใช่ไหมคะ แต่หนูจะอ่านไปจนจบเรื่องก่อนแล้วค่อยมาอ่านหัวเรื่อง เพราะว่า เมื่ออ่านเนื้อหาเราก็จะสามารถเข้าใจได้ในทันทีอยู่แล้วคะว่า ใจความสำคัญของเรื่องที่เราอ่านคืออะไรคะ

ผู้สัมภาษณ์: หมายความว่า หนูดู main idea และ supporting details ในการอ่านเนื้อเรื่องใช่ไหมคะ

นิสิต E: ใช่คะ

ผู้สัมภาษณ์: แล้วอะไรสำคัญที่สุดสำหรับน้องคะ ระหว่าง main idea กับ supporting details แล้วน้องสามารถอธิบายความแตกต่างระหว่าง main idea กับ supporting details ได้ไหมคะว่าแตกต่างกันอย่างไร

นิสิต E: สำหรับหนูคิดว่า main idea สำคัญที่สุดคะ main idea จะเป็นใจความสำคัญที่บอกเราว่าเรื่องที่อ่านเกี่ยวกับอะไร supporting details จะช่วยให้เราเข้าใจ main idea หรือใจความสำคัญของเรื่องที่อ่านมากขึ้น แต่บางครั้ง supporting details อาจจะสำคัญมากกว่า เพราะว่าหากเราไม่รู้เรื่องที่เราอ่านเกี่ยวกับอะไร แต่ถ้าไม่มีคำอธิบายตัวอย่างเพิ่มเติม ก็จะยากที่จะเข้าใจเนื้อหาที่อ่านได้ว่าผู้เขียนต้องการจะสื่ออะไรถึงเราได้คะ

ผู้สัมภาษณ์: Main idea ของ passage A คืออะไรคะ

นิสิต E: โดยรวมแล้ว เรื่องนี้เกี่ยวกับปัญหาของนักเรียนที่มีการโกงงานเขียนโดยใช้อินเทอร์เน็ต และอาจารย์จึงพยายามหาวิธีป้องกันการโกงของนักเรียนโดยใช้โปรแกรมทางอินเทอร์เน็ตในการตรวจสอบการบ้านของนักเรียนคะ โดยในเวลาที่

อ่านนี่หนูจะอ่านไปแล้วสามารถเข้าใจได้ในทันทีเลยคะว่าพวกนักเรียนกำลังทำงานเขียนกันขึ้นคะ

ผู้สัมภาษณ์: โดยทั่วไปแล้ว topic sentence คืออะไรคะ

นิสิต E: Topic sentence คือ ข้อความสำคัญที่จะแสดงถึงความหมายโดยรวมของย่อหน้านั้นๆ ค่ะ

ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เมื่ออ่าน passage A น้องมีจุดสนใจอะไรในการอ่านหรือไม่คะ

นิสิต E: พอรู้ว่าผู้เขียนกำลังพูดถึงอะไรอยู่ หนูก็จะมองหารายละเอียดอื่นๆ มาสนับสนุนความเข้าใจที่มีอยู่เพิ่มขึ้นอีกคะ อย่างเช่น เนื้อเรื่องบอกว่า มีปัญหาเกิดขึ้นกับนักเรียนที่มีการทำงานเขียนกันขึ้น หนูก็จะมองรายละเอียดเพิ่มเติมเพื่อมาสนับสนุนถึงสาเหตุของปัญหาที่เกิดขึ้นและหาวิธีการแก้ไขกับปัญหาที่เกิดขึ้นนี้

ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เวลาอ่านแล้วเกิดปัญหาอ่านแล้วไม่เข้าใจ น้องทำอย่างไรคะ

นิสิต E: น่าจะเป็นพวกคำไม่รู้จักมาก่อนนะคะ ก็จะเดาความหมายเอาจากเนื้อหาต่างๆ ที่อยู่รอบๆ คำไม่รู้จักเหล่านั้นคะ

ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องทำอย่างไรเวลาเจอคำที่ไม่รู้จักนะคะ

นิสิต E: ก็จะย้อนกลับไปดูที่หัวข้อของเนื้อหาอีกทีหนึ่งคะ แล้วพยายามเดาความหมายของคำนั้น อย่างเช่น เนื้อเรื่องแรกนี้เกี่ยวกับศัพท์ทางการแพทย์ แต่หนูไม่รู้ศัพท์บางคำในเรื่องนี้ ก็จะเดาคำศัพท์นั้นว่า น่าจะเป็นชื่อโรค อาการต่างๆ หรือไม่ก็เป็นศัพท์เฉพาะทางการแพทย์ อย่างนี้เป็นต้นคะ โดยที่เมื่อเรารู้ว่าเรื่องที่อ่านเป็นเรื่องทางแนวใด ก็จะทำให้สามารถเดาความหมายของคำที่ไม่รู้จักนั้นได้ง่ายขึ้นคะ

ผู้สัมภาษณ์: หลังจากอ่านจบแล้วทำอย่างไรคะ

นิสิต E: โดยส่วนตัวแล้วนะคะ หลังจากอ่านครั้งแรกเสร็จ ก็จะสรุปในหัวก่อนคะว่า เรื่องที่อ่านเกี่ยวกับอะไร ถ้าไม่สรุปรายละเอียดต่างๆ ในหัว หนูก็จะไม่สามารถเข้าใจรายละเอียดปลีกย่อยต่างๆ ที่กระจัดกระจายอื่นๆ ได้ และก็ไม่สามารถเข้าใจได้ว่าเรื่องที่อ่านเกี่ยวกับอะไร แต่ถ้าสรุปเรื่องที่อ่าน จะทำให้หนูสามารถตรวจสอบความเข้าใจในการอ่านได้ หากมีส่วนยังไม่เข้าใจบางส่วนเรื่องที่อ่าน หนูจะย้อนกลับมาอ่านส่วนนั้นอีกครั้งหนึ่งเพื่อให้เข้าใจเรื่องที่อ่านได้ชัดเจนยิ่งขึ้น

ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องคิดว่า การใช้ดิกชันนารีจำเป็นในการอ่านไหมคะ

นิสิต E: ไม่คะ ไม่จำเป็น หนูคิดว่าไม่จำเป็นที่เราจะต้องนำดิกชันนารีไปทีไหนก็ตามนะคะ หนูจะเปิดดิกชันนารีเมื่อคำนั้นเป็นคำที่สำคัญที่จะต้องรู้ความหมายของคำนั้นจริงๆ แต่โดยทั่วไปการใช้ดิกชันนารีก็ไม่จำเป็นคะ

ผู้สัมภาษณ์: มีการแปลบทความที่อ่านหรือเนื้อเรื่องที่อ่านเป็นภาษาไทยบ้างไหมคะ

นิสิต E: โดยปกติจะไม่แปลจากอังกฤษเป็นไทยนะคะ เวลาที่อ่านเนื้อหาภาษาอังกฤษหนูจะอ่านและซึมซับข้อมูลทางภาษาอังกฤษนั้นอย่างช้าๆ ถ้าหากจากอังกฤษเป็นไทย

คำต่อคำ ก็อาจจะแปลผิดได้ค่ะเพราะบางคำมีมากกว่า 1 ความหมาย และการแปลจากอังกฤษเป็นไทยใช้เวลาในการแปลเยอะมาก ดังนั้นการแปลจึงไม่จำเป็นสำหรับหนูค่ะ

ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องคิดว่า โครงสร้างไวยากรณ์เป็นปัญหาหนึ่งในการอ่านไหมคะ

นิสิต E: ถ้าเนื้อหาง่ายและไม่มีโครงสร้างประโยคที่ซับซ้อนมากมายนักก็ไม่สำคัญค่ะ แต่ถ้าในการอ่านงานเขียนทางวิชาการหรือการอ่านนวนิยายที่มีคำศัพท์ยากเยอะมากและมีโครงสร้างไวยากรณ์ที่สลับซับซ้อน มันก็ยากที่จะอ่านแล้วเข้าใจได้ค่ะ

ผู้สัมภาษณ์: เมื่อน้องไม่เข้าใจคำศัพท์ยาก น้องทำอย่างไรคะ

นิสิต E: ก็จะดูจากรากศัพท์ หรือ word form และเดาความหมายค่ะ แต่ถ้าไม่สามารถเดาความหมายได้ ก็จะพยายามสรุปความหมายโดยรวมของประโยคนั้น โดยดูจากประโยคต่างๆ ที่อยู่รอบๆ คำศัพท์ยากนั้นแทนค่ะ

ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องได้ใช้ background knowledge ช่วยทำให้เข้าใจการอ่านได้ดีขึ้นหรือเปล่าคะ ถ้าใช่ ทำไมถึงใช่คะ ถ้าไม่ใช่ ทำไมถึงไม่ใช่คะ

นิสิต E: ไม่แน่ใจนะคะว่า background knowledge จำเป็นหรือเปล่า แต่ถ้าเราฝึกอ่านหนังสือ หนังสือพิมพ์ และหนังสืออื่นๆ บ่อยๆ เราก็จะสามารถเข้าใจเนื้อหาได้ดีกว่าคนที่ไม่ฝึกฝนการอ่านนะคะ อย่างในกรณีที่หนูมีความรู้ในเรื่องที่อ่านนี้มาบ้าง ก็ทำให้หนูเข้าใจเรื่องที่อ่านนี้ดีขึ้น แล้วก็อ่านได้เร็วขึ้นด้วยค่ะ

ผู้สัมภาษณ์: น้องได้ถามตัวเองในระหว่างการอ่านไหมคะ

นิสิต E: ค่ะ หนูถามตัวเองเวลาอ่านเสมอค่ะ เวลาอ่านหนูจะมุ่งความสนใจไปที่เนื้อหาที่อ่านเพื่อที่จะตอบคำถามว่า ใคร ทำอะไร ที่ไหน เมื่อไหร่ อย่างไร ซึ่งคำถามเหล่านี้จะอยู่ในหัวเสมอค่ะ วิธีการนี้ช่วยให้หนูเข้าใจเนื้อหาที่อ่านได้ดีและจับประเด็นสำคัญในการอ่านได้ดียิ่งขึ้นด้วยค่ะ

ผู้สัมภาษณ์: ปัญหาในการอ่านที่เจอมีอะไรบ้างคะ

นิสิต E: เวลาอ่านเนื้อหาที่มีความรู้ในเรื่องที่อ่านบ้างแล้วนั้น ปัญหาหลักจะเป็นปัญหาด้านคำศัพท์ค่ะ แต่ถ้าอ่านเนื้อหาที่ไม่มีความรู้อะไรเลยในเรื่องที่อ่าน ปัญหาก็คะเยอะมากขึ้นค่ะ เช่น ปัญหาด้านคำศัพท์ โครงสร้างไวยากรณ์ต่างๆ และอื่นๆ อีกค่ะ

Student E

I: What do you do first when you read?

E: I read thoroughly. Generally, other people may read the title and then read all the passage, but I read all the passage first because when I read it I instantly know what the main idea is.

I: Do you mean that you looked at the main idea and the supporting details of the passage?

E: Yes.

I: What is the most important for you between the main idea and the supporting details? Can you tell the differences between the main idea and the supporting details of a reading passage?

E: The main idea is the most important for me. The main idea is the key information telling us what the passage was about. The supporting details helped us more clearly focus on the main idea or the key information. However, sometimes the supporting details may be more important because if we know only what the passage is about but do not have any other explanations or examples, it might be hard for us to understand correctly the message that the author tells us.

I: What was the main idea of the passage A?

E: Overall the passage was about the problems of students that cheated on their essay by using the internet and of the teachers trying to prevent this cheating by using an internet program to recheck their students' homework. When I read it, I clearly understood that the students were cheating.

I: What is a topic sentence in general?

E: A topic sentence is the key information that introduces the whole idea of a paragraph.

I: What did you focus on while you read passage A?

E: When I knew what the author was talking about, I looked for the other information supporting my understanding. For example, the passage told us that there are problems with students cheating, so I looked for more information supporting the cause of the problem and looked at what the solution was.

I: What do you do if you had a problem in understanding when you are reading?

E: It should be unknown words. So I may look at the context around these words to guess their meaning.

I: What do you do when you see unfamiliar words?

E: I go back to read the heading of the passage and try to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words. For example, if the passage is about the medical field, but we do not know some words in the passage, I may guess that the unfamiliar words would be names of diseases, symptoms, or some technical terms in medicine. When I know what kind of passage is or what the feel of the passage is, I would guess the meaning of unfamiliar words.

I: What do you do when you finish reading?

E: Personally, after the first reading, I will summarize in my mind what the passage was about. If I do not mentally summarize the information, I may not correctly understand the scattered information and I may not understand what the passage was about. If I summarize the information, I can recheck my understanding of it. If I have some problems in some parts of my reading, I could reread those parts to clarify my understanding.

I: Do you think the use of the dictionary is important when you are reading?

E: No, it is not important. I think it's not important to carry the dictionary anywhere. I may open the dictionary when the words are really important to know the meaning of unknown words. But, I think it is unimportant in general.

I: Do you translate the articles or the passages you read into Thai?

E: In general, I do not translate the texts from English into Thai. When I read an English passage, I will slowly absorb the information. If we translate word by word, we may mistranslate because some words had more than one meaning. Also,

it takes a lot of time to translate into Thai. Thus, it is not important for me to translate.

I: Do you think grammatical structure is a problem for you when you read?

E: If it is easy and do not combine a lot of complicated sentence structures, it is not important. In turns, if the reading texts are an academic text or a novel that are full of difficult words and complicated grammatical structure, so it may also be hard to understand directly, grammatical structure may be a problem for me to understand the information.

I: When you do not understand the difficult words, what do you do?

E: I look at their root or the word form and guess their meaning. If I don't guess their meaning, I will conclude the whole meaning of the sentence by using the sentences around the difficult words instead.

I: Do you use your personal background experience to help you understand a reading passage? If so, please explain why. If not, please also explain why.

E: I am not sure whether it is important or not. But, when we more practice reading books, newspapers, and so on, we will better concentrate and better understand a passage than people who did not practice. For example, I have some knowledge about this passage, and it helps me understand the text better and read it faster too.

I: Do you use self-talk or ask yourself questions while reading?

E: Yes, I always ask myself questions. When I read, I concentrate on the passage in order to answer the following questions, i.e. what, when, where, why, and how. These questions normally stay in my mind. This technique helps me understand the passage and better grasp its main point.

I: What problems do you have when you read?

E: When I read a passage about which I have some background, the main reading problem is the unknown words. On the contrary, if we read a passage of which we knew nothing about, we would have a lot of problems such as unknown words, grammatical structure, and so on.

APPENDIX E

Samples of Journal Entries

Student F

Today, I read an English textbook. I scanned the table of contents to find a specific chapter. Before I read the reading content, I read the heading and the introduction of the chapter. I then read the information in the chapter. It was a slightly difficult text because it contained a lot of difficult words I didn't understand, such as *denotative*, *connotative*, *figurative*. However, I continued to read until the end of the paragraph and tried to guess the meanings of those difficult words by looking at the relationships between them. In case, they [the unknown words] were less significant words such as adjectives and adverbs, I skipped them. If they were key words of the sentence and I really didn't know their meaning, I looked them up in the dictionary. It helped me ensure that I understood precisely the true meaning of these words. In this chapter, I translated some phrases or sentences into Thai because it was difficult to read and understand in English. After finishing the first reading, I summarized it and listed some questions I was confused about and read some parts of this chapter again to make sure that I could understand accurately the overall information.

Student G

Today, I read a novel, which was a very difficult and thick one. Before I read, I scanned the context of the novel, and then I tried to predict what the text was about. Then, I read all the information in this novel. It was descriptive, so I read through the end of the chapter III. This novel contained very difficult words that I could not understand. So, I tried to guess the meaning of those words by separating the word forms – prefix, suffix and root words. In any case, if I still could not find their meaning, I opened the dictionary to find a more appropriate and suitable meaning. However, I sometimes found the meaning of some unknown words; I still opened the dictionary to make sure whether or

not I understood it accurately. As I mentioned, this novel was a very difficult one, so I reread it twice to try to understand its meaning more correctly.

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