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ผลของการสอนการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษอย่างมีวิจารณ์ญาณโดยใช้วรรณกรรม ที่มีต่อความสามารถในการอ่าน
อย่างมีวิจารณ์ญาณของนักเรียนมัธยมศึกษาตอนปลาย

EFFECTS OF CRITICAL READING INSTRUCTION USING LITERATURE ON CRITICAL READING ABILITY
OF UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยนี้มีจุดประสงค์เพื่อ 1) ศึกษาผลของการสอนการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษอย่างมีวิจารณ์ญาณโดยใช้วรรณกรรม ที่มีต่อความสามารถในการอ่านอย่างมีวิจารณ์ญาณของนักเรียนมัธยมศึกษาตอนปลาย 2) ศึกษาความคิดเห็นของนักเรียนมัธยมศึกษาตอนปลายที่มีต่อการสอนการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษอย่างมีวิจารณ์ญาณโดยใช้วรรณกรรม กลุ่มตัวอย่างในงานวิจัยประกอบด้วยนักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 6 จำนวน 55 คน เครื่องมือวิจัยที่ใช้เก็บข้อมูลได้แก่แบบทดสอบความสามารถในการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษอย่างมีวิจารณ์ญาณโดยใช้วรรณกรรมก่อนและหลังเรียนและแบบสอบถามความคิดเห็นหลังเรียน การวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลเชิงปริมาณใช้เพื่อหาค่าเฉลี่ยและส่วนเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน

ผลการวิจัยพบว่า 1) คะแนนความสามารถในการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษอย่างมีวิจารณ์ญาณโดยใช้วรรณกรรมหลังเรียนของนักเรียนสูงกว่าคะแนนก่อนเรียนอย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติที่ระดับ $p < 0.05$ นักเรียนสามารถปฏิบัติตามขั้นตอนได้อย่างถูกต้อง และทำแบบทดสอบหลังเรียนได้คะแนนสูงกว่าก่อนเรียนในทุกหัวข้อ ซึ่งประกอบไปด้วยการอนุมาน การแยกแยะความจริงและความคิดเห็น การแยกแยะจุดประสงค์และน้ำเสียงของผู้เขียน และการหาใจความสำคัญ 2) นักเรียนมีความคิดเห็นในเชิงบวกต่อการสอนการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษอย่างมีวิจารณ์ญาณโดยใช้วรรณกรรม จากแบบสอบถามพบว่า นักเรียนสามารถพัฒนาทักษะการอนุมาน การแยกแยะความจริงและความคิดเห็น การแยกแยะจุดประสงค์และน้ำเสียงของนักเขียน และการหาใจความสำคัญอยู่ในเกณฑ์ดี อย่างไรก็ตาม นักเรียนยังคงมีปัญหาเกี่ยวกับการแยกแยะความจริงและความคิดเห็น และการแยกแยะจุดประสงค์และน้ำเสียงของผู้เขียน อย่างไรก็ตาม นักเรียนมีความคิดเห็นว่าการใช้วรรณกรรมในการสอนการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษอย่างมีวิจารณ์ญาณสามารถพัฒนาความสามารถในการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษอย่างมีวิจารณ์ญาณได้

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Abstract

The study aimed 1) to examine the effects of critical reading instruction using literature on the critical reading ability of upper secondary school students; 2) to examine the students' opinions toward critical reading instruction using literature. The participants in the study were 55 Mathayom Suksa Six students. The instruments to collect data were critical Reading pre-test and post-test and questionnaire asking students' opinion after the instruction. Descriptive statistics as mean and standard deviation was used to analyze the data.

The results revealed that 1) the students' critical reading ability posttest scores were higher than pretest at a significant level ($p < 0.05$). Students are able to follow instructional framework and receive higher score in every aspects of critical reading ability, which are drawing inference, distinguishing facts and opinions, determining purpose and tone, and separating important information. 2) Students had positive attitude toward critical reading instruction using literature. The average rank reading students' understanding toward drawing inference, distinguishing facts and opinions, determining purpose and tone, and separating important information was good. However, students did have problems regarding some critical reading abilities such as distinguishing facts and opinions and determining purposes and tones. However, students agreed that using literature in critical reading class could improve critical reading ability.

คำสำคัญ: การสอนการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษอย่างมีวิจารณญาณโดยใช้วรรณกรรม/การอ่านอย่างมีวิจารณญาณ

KEYWORDS: CRITICAL READING INSTRUCTION USING LITERATURE / CRITICAL READING ABILITY

Introduction

At present, we live in globalization world. It is undeniable that English language becomes more and more essential to Thai's society. Since English is an international language and Thailand is part of global community, where there is no barrier between time and space. Learning English language could help people communicate with others around the world because knowledge of the use of English language can help people expand their world views, and provide greater opportunities to seek friends or better careers for their future's life.

In present days, much success depends on being able to communicate, share, and use information to solve complex problems, to adapt and response to new demands and changing situations, and to command and expand the power of technology in order to create new knowledge and innovation. Hence, new standards and criteria for what students should be able to achieve are replacing the basic skill competencies and knowledge expectations of the past. To meet these challenging circumstances, schools must be transformed in the ways that help enabling students to acquire the creative thinking, flexible problem solving, collaboration and innovative skills they will need to be successful in work and life (Pacific Policy Research Center, 2010).

Critical reading is the skill is essential to 21st century, the century where technology and communication are widespread. The 21st century skills deal with the thinking process that enables students to solve complicated problems, to share concepts, to generate ideas, and to apply new information in their everyday life (Beers, 2012). According to Sweet & Snow (2003), reading reasonably and critically becomes exceptionally important to students in the elementary levels because it provides the foundation for further learning in secondary school. It is significant for students to be able to read texts critically, because critical reading not only helps students improve the learning skills such as vocabulary and reading, but also help them reach real understanding of texts along with thinking with reasonable and questioning mind (Jones, 2002). Furthermore, Razaghi et al (2011) pointed out the benefits of critical reading ability that: first, it enables students to analyze the context in deeper level, therefore, students gain deep understanding and enable to engage with the text; second, it enables students to connect the reading text to their personal experience, concepts, and ideas; third, it helps students gain confidence when providing reasonable feedback. From the benefits mentioned above, critical reading, therefore, depends on critical thinking because all critical thinking skills, which are flexibility, a clear purpose, organizational pattern, time and effort, asking questions and finding answers, and coming to logical and reasonable conclusion, can be applied in critical reading (Pirozzi, 2008).

Critical reading is the process of reading that goes beyond just understanding a text. Critical reading often involves asking questions about the reading in order to achieve various interpretation and evaluation skills. Pirozzi (2008) provides definition regarding critical reading

ability as an ability to use interpretation and evaluation skills. The activities in order to achieve critical reading ability include separating important information (main ideas and supporting details), finding context clues, drawing inference, distinguishing between facts and opinions, determining authors' purpose and tones, and applying in real situation in order to solve problems.

Nevertheless, educators have concerned about the level of student's literary and cognitive thinking abilities in secondary school (Gray & Fellow, 2005). A large number of high school students appear to be unable to read critically or comprehend reading materials using evaluating skills (ACT, 2006). Bosley (2008) stated that high school normally teaches students to read for receptiveness and to read only for information. Many freshman students have not been taught to read actively or critically in order to build knowledge while they read. Many students have not learned to encounter the texts with a questioning mind that encourages them to make assumptions. Students often read at surface, or literal level, they tend to give up reading rather than trying to engage in the text when they are faced with difficult task, and simply accepted the ideas given there. Furthermore, the materials in reading classes only offer life stories that lack of potentiality to encourage students to read and think critically (Khatip & Alizadeh, 2012).

Literature is one of the teaching tools used in critical reading instruction. It is widely used among many teachers since it provides many advantages. First, literature represents various aspects of language learning such as syntax, lexis, and pragmatic. It also provides figurative language, which allows students to interpret and evaluate (Berardo, 2006; Khatip, 2011; Van 2009). Second, literature promotes motivation to read further since it includes many interesting things, which cause learners to be more enjoyable when engaging in reading (Khatip, 2011). Furthermore, literature enables learners to change perceptions and attitudes including promoting cultural awareness. Since literature consists of diverse themes, characters, and storylines, it gives opportunities for learners to see and understand real-world situations (Ghosn, 2002; Van, 2009). Last, Literature helps promoting critical thinking ability among language learners (Ghosn, 2002; Van, 2009). It provides the opportunity for children to question, interpret, connect, and explore including involving students in problem-solving tasks in order to solve conflicts through the imaginary characters in invented critical situations in the stories. Students

are challenged to identify conflicts in serious circumstances when they are elaborating on different themes, plots, characters, symbols, and point of views that enable them to think critically (Ghosn, 2002; Khatip, 2011).

Therefore, in this study, the critical reading instruction using literature was conducted in order to help students improve their critical reading ability. Critical reading instruction using literature was designed by incorporating concepts of the above methods and a lesson was constructed into four steps by adapting terms from Pirozzi (2008). The terms consist of *Previewing, Understanding, Evaluating, and Applying*. This adjusted model for this study was aimed to promote critical reading ability at every stage of learning.

Objectives

1. To examine the effects of critical reading instruction using literature on the critical reading ability of upper secondary school students.
2. To examine the students' opinions toward critical reading instruction using literature.

Methodology

Research Design

In this study, a quasi-experimental single group design was used along with pre-test and post-test of critical reading. The pre-test and post-test of critical reading were analyzed as quantitative measurement. Furthermore, questionnaires were used to ask student's preference regarding their favorite genres of literatures and to examine the students' opinions toward critical reading instruction using literature.

Population and Participants

The population of this study was upper secondary school students from Thai private secondary school in Bangkok. Purposive sampling was used to get a private school as the sample. Assumption College Thonburi satisfied the selection criteria for the school is under the supervision of the Office of the Private Education Curriculum, Ministry of Education, and meets the same standards as others private school in Bangkok. The participants in the study were 55 Mathayom Suksa Six (Grade 12) students who enrolled for the course of Thematic English, first semester, Academic Year 2015.

Research Instruments

There were two parts: the instructional design, and data collection instruments. For the instructional design, conceptual framework (as in Figure 1) and developing of the lesson plans are presented as follows:

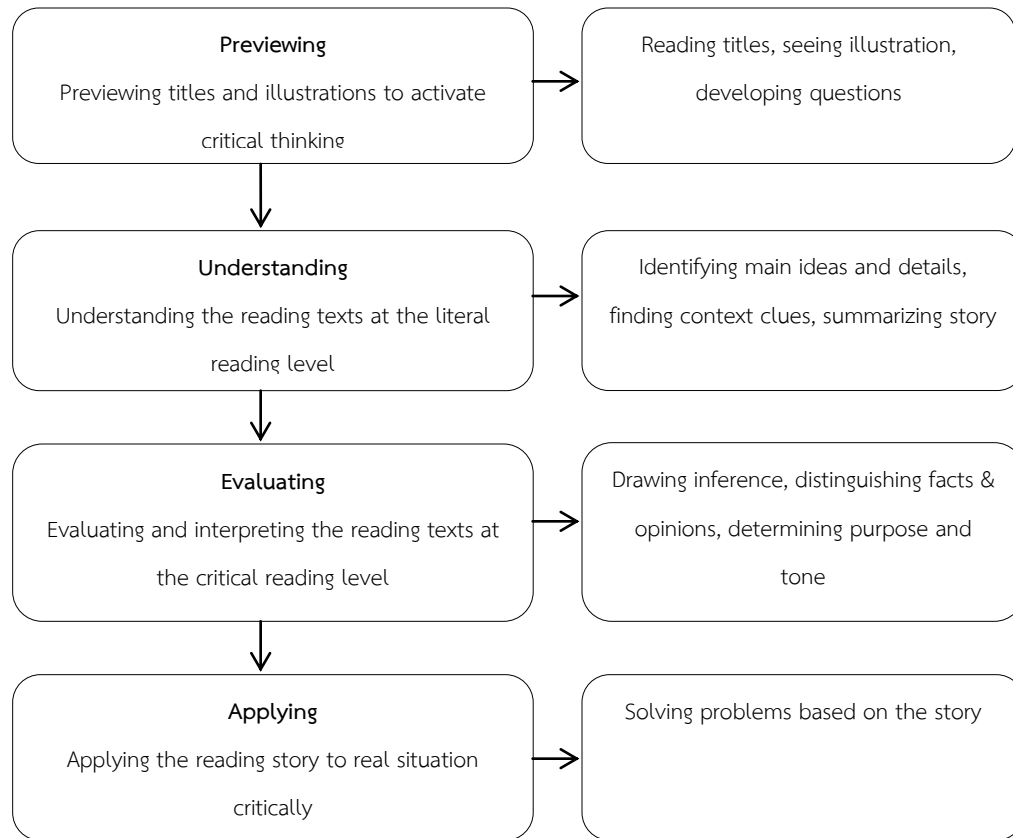


Figure 1 Conceptual framework of critical reading instruction using literature (CLAST website, 2007; Pirozzi, 2008)

From Figure 1, the critical reading instruction using literature consisted of four steps. First is *Previewing*. Students were asked to read titles, see illustrations, and develop questions from both titles and illustrations including predicting the answers. The *Previewing* step helped students to be familiar before reading the text and activated critical thinking. Second is

Understanding. Students were asked to read and understand the text at literal reading level by identifying main ideas and supporting details, finding context clues, and summarizing the story. This step helped preparing student before reading the text at critical reading level. Next is *Evaluating* step. In this step, students were asked to interpret and evaluate the figurative languages from the text at critical reading level by drawing inference, distinguishing facts and opinions, and determining purpose and tone. Last is *Applying*. Students were asked apply the reading story to real situation along with solving problem based on experience and critical thinking.

The questionnaire asking students' preferences in content genres was used in order to select appropriate instructional materials for students. The questionnaire survey was adapted from Hutavadhana (2008). Students were asked to choose ten most interesting genres under the question "What kind of story or text do you enjoy reading? Choose ten." Literary genres in terms of content to be selected included biography, diary and journal, adventure, humor, heroes, fable, fairy tale, horror/thriller, mystery, drama, travel literature, fantasy, poetry, animal stories, crime/detection fiction, historical fiction, science fiction, and non-fiction (Adapted from Hutavadhana, 2008). The three most favorable genres that students chose consisted of fantasy, fable, and horror.

For the lesson plans, it consisted of three units. Each unit had three different stories according to students' favorite reading genres. Each stories enabled students to achieve each abilities of critical reading, which are drawing inference, distinguishing facts and opinions, and determining purpose and tone of the author. The sample of the first lesson plan was 'The Wizard of Oz'. In *Previewing* step, which took 40 minutes, students were told regarding the background of the story and were asked to see the picture and predict the story by answering and developing questions. In *Understanding* step, which took 110 minutes, students were introduced how to find main ideas, supporting details, and context clues. Then, students were asked to read the texts, separate important information, find context clues, and summarize the texts in students' own word. In *Evaluating* step, which took 50 minutes, students were asked to draw inference and discuss the answers in the classroom (distinguishing facts and opinions was taught in the second story, and determining author's purpose and tone is taught in the third story). In *Applying* step, which took 50 minutes, students were introduced the process of solving

problems. Then, students were given question as ‘Choose one of the following characters in the story (Dorothy, Tin Woodman, Scarecrow, Cowardly Lion, or Toto) and identify his/her problem, what they want from the wizard of Oz, and his/her solution in life using five steps of solving problems.’. Students were asked to write short answer using critical thinking, personal experience, and knowledge of the story they had read in the previous class. All of the worksheets were collected to examine students’ improvement and participation in the classroom.

For the data collection instruments, it consisted of pre-test/post-test of critical reading ability and questionnaires asking students’ opinion after the instruction.

The pre-test and post-test of critical reading ability was adapted from The College Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST). The critical reading ability test was adapted in order to be suitable for upper secondary school students. The test consisted of two parts, which were multiple-choice test and writing test. The multiple-choice test measured both literal and critical reading abilities. These abilities included identifying main ideas and supporting details, drawing inference, distinguishing facts and opinions, and determining purpose and tone. The writing test measured students’ critical reading ability regarding applying the reading story to real situation and finding possible solution based on personal experience and critical thinking. There were 15 items for the multiple-choice test and one question for the writing test. The total score of the test was 20 points.

The questionnaire asking students’ opinions toward critical reading instruction was used at the end of the lesson in order to get the students’ reflection regarding critical reading instruction using literature. The questionnaire consisted of ten questions. Students were required to indicate their response to each statement. Five Likert Scale, which are strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree, was used to measure students’ attitudes or opinions

Data collection Procedures

Data collection was divided into 3 stages, which are the data collection before the experiment, during the experiment, and after the experiment.

The first stage was data collection before the experiment. First, the questionnaire asking students’ preference in content genre will be provide to the students in order to select the

suitable reading materials for students. Then, critical reading pre-test was given to the students before the instruction.

The next stage was data collection during the experiment. In this stage, the lesson plans were developed as instructional materials. The duration of the experiment was 8 weeks. Each unit was used two weeks to complete, and each lesson last 50 minutes as normal period of class time.

The last stage was data collection after the experiment. After the instruction, critical reading post-test was given to students. Then, the questionnaire asking students' opinion toward critical reading instruction was provided in order to ask students' response toward the instruction.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the questionnaire asking students' preference. The data was analyzed as percentage to see which genre that students preferred to read the most. The first three genres that students favored the most were used to select the reading materials. T-tests were used to analyze the results of critical reading ability. Pre-test and post-test of critical reading were compared to see whether critical reading instruction affected critical reading ability of the students or not. Furthermore, descriptive statistics was used to analyze the questionnaire asking student's opinions toward critical reading instruction after finishing the instruction.

Results

Research question 1: To what extent can critical reading instruction using literature improve critical reading ability of upper secondary school students?

The quantitative data from the tests were analyzed to prove whether there was a significant difference between pre-test and post-test mean scores of the students. The students' pre-test and post-test mean scores along with standard deviation were shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of the pretest and posttest scores

Topic/scores	Full score	Highest	Lowest	Pre-test		Post-test	
		score	score	X	S.D.	X	S.D.
Drawing inference	5	5	3	1.45	0.77	4.33	0.72
Distinguish facts and opinions	3	3	2	0.65	0.58	2.31	0.47
Determine purpose and tone	3	3	2	0.98	0.71	3.09	0.62
Separate important information	4	4	2	0.71	0.60	4.91	0.29
Apply to critical reading	5	5	4	1.13	0.86	4.91	0.29
Total	20	-	-	3.80	1.27	12.04	1.00

The results from Table 1 shows that out of the full mark of 20, the post-test mean scores ($X = 12.04$, $S.D. = 1.00$) of the students' critical reading test were higher than the pre-test mean scores ($X = 3.80$, $S.D. = 1.27$). Therefore, the analysis indicated that there was significant difference between students' pre-test and post-test mean scores at a significant level ($p < 0.05$). These findings provided evidence that the students improved critical reading ability after receiving critical reading instruction. Furthermore, Table also presents each aspects of critical reading ability taught to students. It can be seen that each aspects of post-test scores is higher than pre-test scores.

Research question 2: What are students' opinions toward critical reading instruction using literature?

Table 2: Questionnaire asking students' opinion toward critical reading instruction using literature

Statement	Numbers of students				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Able to find main ideas & supporting details.	46	9	-	-	-
2. Able to summarize story.	49	6	-	-	-
3. Able to find context clue.	41	12	2	-	-
4. Able to use inference.	48	4	3	-	-
5. Able to distinguish facts and opinions.	30	21	4	-	-

Statement	Numbers of students				
6. Able to determine tone of the author.	29	19	7	-	-
7. Able to determine purpose of the author.	29	19	7	-	-
8. Able to develop & answer questions from story.	43	12	-	-	-
9. Able to relate the texts to personal experience.	50	5	-	-	-
10. Able to solve problem with possible solutions.	51	4	-	-	-

From Table 2, it presents that students have positive attitudes toward critical reading instruction using literature. It can be seen that students are able to apply the texts to their personal life and are able to solve to problems with possible solution the most, following by the ability to summarizing the story, developing question, finding context clues, and drawing inference. However, students still have some problems regarding distinguishing facts and opinions and determining purpose and tone of the author. Students commented in the questionnaire that ‘it was quite hard to determine purpose and tone, there should be more exercise’, and ‘I spent too much time to read in order to distinguish fact and opinion’ Nevertheless, students commented positively regarding the literatures they had read that ‘it was good to read something you like.’, ‘The story was not boring and I was very enjoying reading the story’, and ‘Reading something I like helped me read better.’

Discussions

From the questionnaire, many students provided feedback as ‘The story was not boring and I was very enjoying reading the story’, ‘Reading something I like helped me read better.’, and ‘The Wizard of Oz was very fun, I wanted to read more about it.’ It indicates that literature motivates students to read further and helps improving critical reading ability. The idea of using literature for developing critical reading and thinking skills is supported by various researchers in the field of reading. Using literature in the classroom not only encourage students to read, but it also allows students to read and think critically regarding story and characters including opening discussion, predicting circumstances, and developing questions from the story. (Khatip, 2011; McMillan &Gentile, 1988; Van, 2009)

Recommendations

Recommendations for pedagogical implications

The finding of the study indicates that critical reading instruction using literature helps improving students' critical reading ability. According to Hutavadhana (2008), he stated that the use of literature can be beneficial in reading and writing classroom. Therefore, the critical reading instruction using literature may further integrate both critical reading and writing skills. The findings also represented that, in the last section of the test, students were asked to write in order to apply the situation in real life and solve the problem, it can be seen that students receives almost full scores, because they are able to understand the text critically, which helps students write to express their opinions better.

Moreover, the researchers may expand the area of literatures in both fiction and non-fiction. Each genres of literature contains different advantages. In this study, students were asked to read about fable, fantasy story, and horror story. If the researchers select other kinds of literature genres, it may help promoting abilities of critical reading differently.

Recommendations for further studies

First, critical reading needs to be enhanced with critical thinking. However, it is seemed that critical thinking is new for the upper secondary school students. They are not familiar with the class discussion along with thinking and developing questions when engaging in reading activities. Therefore, critical thinking should be taught from the younger age by using appropriate activities that are suitable to children in order to prepare students to read at higher level of comprehension.

Furthermore, it is seemed that interesting literature motivate students to read further and engage in reading activities. Therefore, teachers should select appropriate literature using in the reading class. The need analysis regarding asking students' favorite genres of literature should be done before the instruction. Selecting suitable materials may help learners' critical reading ability and creating good environment in the classroom.

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