

USING YOUTUBE TO IMPROVE EFL READING COMPREHENSION AMONG VOCATIONAL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT: In Thailand, YouTube has not been widely used for educational purposes especially in Narathiwat. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of using YouTube on EFL reading comprehension among vocational students. A quasi-experimental design was adopted. Two groups of first year vocational students at Narathiwat Technical College were purposefully assigned to the experimental and the control groups. The instruments used in this study were pre-test and post-test. Students in the experimental group were taught reading comprehension using YouTube and the students in the control group were taught using conventional method. The results showed positive effects of using YouTube. Therefore, YouTube should be considered as an effective instructional tool for improving English reading comprehension and as an important teaching resource in English classrooms.

KEYWORDS: YouTube, EFL, Reading comprehension, Quasi-experimental design, Conventional method

1. INTRODUCTION

English has been accepted as a global language as it is connecting individuals and nations across the globe. It is spoken by 700 million people round the world (Crystal, 2003), and it is also regarded as a prestigious language. Wilkins and Urbanovic (2014) said that many families are interested to send their children to study abroad where they can practice English because they believe that by having high proficiency in English can provide them a better job. In Thailand, English has been taught as a foreign language (EFL) because Thai people do not use English as an official language. Students are only exposed to English in the classroom and most of English classes are taught in Thai language. As a result students' command in English is not satisfactory. Related to this, Thai students are weak in English reading comprehension (Chomchaiya, 2014; Kasemsap & Lee, 2015; Sawangsamutchai & Rattanavich, 2016; Uraiman, 2011).

Reading is regarded as one of the important language skills for academic success but Ministry of Thai Education (2013) reported that English reading skill of Thai students mostly at level 2 out of 5 levels. Regarding this, the Thai government tries to support English language education at all levels but Thai students' level of English is much lower than their regional neighbors such as Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore (Noom-ura, 2013). The weaknesses of reading comprehension are caused by both students and teachers. This study emphasizes on students reading comprehension in Narathiwat, southern part of

Thailand. The uniqueness of students in this province is language because the majority of them have to learn four languages; namely Thai, Malay, Arabic, and English.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS

Reading is one of the four important language skills for academic success and professional development (Dorkchandra, 2010). Unfortunately, there are many factors affecting students' EFL reading comprehension in Thailand regarding both teachers and students. As Kongkerd(2013) reported that Thai English teachers prefer to use conventional method to teach reading. For example, students are asked to read aloud sentence by sentence, section by section, then translate the passage and end with answer the teacher's questions. According to Chomthong (2014) claimed that Thai English teachers use Thai language as a medium in teaching EFL. In addition, they are also have a very heavy workload. Most of them teach more than 16 hours per week, responsible for extra work such as general or administrative affairs of the school. They also teach students at different levels and other subjects along with English. This scenario can affect English language teaching and causes inadequate time for the teachers to prepare learning materials.

Majority of students in Narathiwat learn four languages; Thai, Malay, Arabic, and English. They believe that among these four languages, English is less important to them because they do not use it in their daily life (Jehdo, 2009). Students think they study English for the sake of passing the examination. Even though Thai students spend twelve years studying English in primary and secondary schools but the results are unsatisfactory (Noom-ura, 2013). There are serious problems concerning the standard of English language in Thailand. According to the latest result of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA, 2012), Thailand was ranked at 50th in English proficiency.

Table 1.1
The latest result of Program for International Student Assessment in 2012

| Ranking | Country Names | Reading Mean Score |
|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 0 | OECD average | 496 |
| 2 | Singapore | 542 |
| 17 | Viet Nam | 508 |
| 50 | Thailand | 441 |
| 52 | Malaysia | 398 |
| 64 | Indonesia | 396 |

Sources: <http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2013/dec/03/pisa-results-country-best-reading-maths-science>

Table 1.1 shows the latest result of Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2012 among 65 participating countries. This result selected only ASEAN member countries. Thailand rank at 50th out of 65 countries.

Based on these pressing problems elaborated earlier, previous researches were conducted mostly to find out the problems in teaching and learning EFL in Thailand (Chomthong, 2014; Hayikaleng, 2011; Simpson, 2011; Tamrackitkun, 2010), but few of them have worked on how to help students in improving their level of English as well as to find out ways in motivating and making students interested in learning EFL especially reading skills. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effects of using YouTube on EFL reading comprehension among vocational students.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To investigate whether there is a significant difference in the achievement on reading comprehension (using LOTS questions) between the experimental group and the control group.
2. To investigate whether there is a significant difference in the achievement on reading comprehension (using HOTS questions) between the experimental group and the control group.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. Is there a significant difference in the achievement on reading comprehension (using LOTS questions) between the experimental group and the control group?
2. Is there a significant difference in the achievement on reading comprehension (using HOTS questions) between the experimental group and the control group?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) is one of the most acceptable taxonomies in education field. Numerous researchers adopted this theory for their purposes of study because it starts from a basic model of thinking skills to the highest level of thinking skills. According to Bloom (1956), intellectual skills are developed over a sequence of stages, from the basic to the complex one. Bloom's taxonomy highlighted on six levels of thinking that students' progress while learning or acquiring knowledge. These six levels are remembering, understanding, and applying are categorized under lower order thinking skill (LOTS) while analyzing, evaluating, and creating are under higher order thinking skills (HOTS).The teacher should encourage learners to use HOTS in order to create the habits of thinking. Higher order thinking is very important to prepare young generation to face challenges in the 21st Century workforce. HOTS helps students to activate their schema when individuals facing unfamiliar problems, doubts, and questions. Students should be encouraged to give ideas about what they read, and relate it to their own experiences. Therefore, in a reading class, the teacher plays an important role in bridging the gap between new information and existing schemata to enhance text comprehension. Bloom's Taxonomy Domain is helpful to guide students in the process mentioned. The following figure shows the six levels of Bloom's Taxonomy Domain.

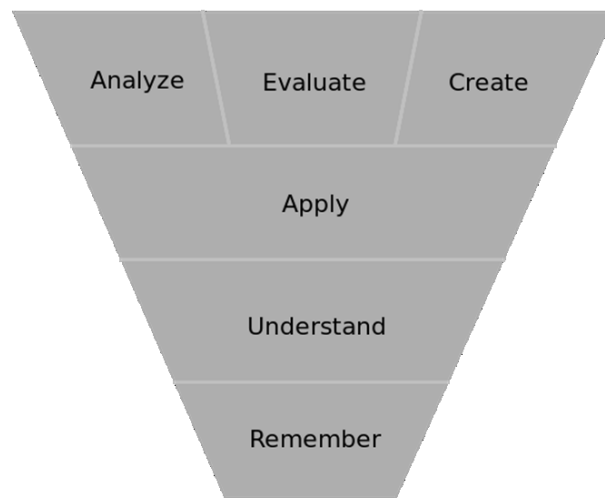


Figure 2.1: The Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001)

In relation to this, YouTube can be one of the tools which can activate students' schema. YouTube is a popular web video sharing site and one of the most common websites founded in 2005. Many EFL learners use YouTube as a means to develop their reading comprehension skill. Therefore, it is clear that YouTube has an enormous possibility to increase the development of language learning for students especially reading skills (Alwehaibi, 2015). At the same time, YouTube enables teachers to link the students to the real life nature. YouTube plays a major role in improving the process of language learning and YouTube is a useful resource for language learning which help learners to remember easily.

Balan (2012) evaluated a study on the effects of video and static visuals on students' reading comprehension and motivation to investigate whether the use of video could increase experimental group's reading comprehension scores compared to the control group who were taught using static visuals. The participants were 80 students from two secondary schools. The finding indicated that using video is significantly improved students' comprehension performance at the literal and critical level.

June, Yaacob and Kheng (2014) carried out their study on assessing the use of YouTube videos and interactive activities as a critical thinking stimulator for university students. The samples were 50 mixed background students from a public university in Malaysia. The finding showed that YouTube videos were improving their critical thinking skills. The students have a strong interest in the learning process and were able to understand lectures better by using YouTube.

Another study done by Fee and Budde-Sung (2014) to investigate the effects of using video in various classes. The samples were 236 undergraduate management students from two large universities in Australia. The result suggested that YouTube video influences the students' learning and enjoyment. The researchers also suggested that YouTube can be used as practical guidelines and a pedagogical tool for teachers to improve EFL learning.

The recent study done by Alwehaibi (2015) on the impact of using YouTube in EFL classroom on improving EFL students' content learning. The participants were 96 of second year college students at the department of curriculum and instruction in the faculty of education at Princess Noura University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of assimilating YouTube into EFL class to enhancing college students' learning of the content of the course. The finding revealed that YouTube should be considered as an effective instructional tool for enhancing EFL college students as well as an important teaching instrument to use in classrooms to improve critical thinking.

Jaturongkachoke and Chanseawrassamee (2013) presented their study on the influence of YouTube on skill development presentation. The objective of the study was to examine the effect of using YouTube on the presentation skill development. The samples were 195 MBA students in a 36-hour intensive English course in June 2012. The findings revealed that most of students agreed that using YouTube is one way to improve their English skills.

Singhkhachorn (2014) conducted the study on development of learning and teaching English by social network to investigate Thai students' achievement of learning. The samples were 60 students from research in communication course, D6 group, Bansomdejchaopraya Rajabhat University in 2012. The results indicated that students suggest to have the lessons in a model of video www.youtube.com. English class became more enjoyable and improvable when the teacher used YouTube in the teaching-learning practice.

Based on previous studies in Thailand indicate that the use of YouTube is not wide separate in Thailand. Only a few researchers have done their studies on YouTube (Jaturongkachoke & Chanseawrassamee, 2013; Singhkhachorn, 2014). These studies were conducted in Bangkok, which is a big city and none of them do in a small town especially in Narathiwat. Therefore, it is suggested that the English teacher should be creative to use motivating media and technique to make the teaching-learning process enjoyable. Using YouTube is a challenge for teaching and learning process. Moreover, YouTube can lead to an increase in students' motivation (Woo, Herrington, Agostinho, & Reeves, 2007) and promote thinking skills (June, Yaacob & Keng, 2014). The researcher hopes that YouTube can be assisted the improvement among Thai students. It can motivate students to learn more efficiently and productively.

3. METHODOLOGY

The participants of the study consist of 67 first year students from Narathiwat Technical College. The researcher uses quasi-experimental design. The instruments used in this study were pre-test and post-test. All quantitative data were analyzed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 22.0. In the first stage, scores for reading comprehension from the pre-tests will be collected from both experimental and control group and analyzed using the independent samples t-test. This is to determine whether the comprehension scores for the experimental group and the control group are equivalent before the study is carried out. After that, the post-test scores for reading comprehension from both groups were analyzed using the independent samples t-test to examine the effect of intervention.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Is there a significant difference in the achievement on reading comprehension (using LOTS questions) between the experimental group and the control group?

Table 4.1a: Comparison of the mean scores for LOTS questions in the pre-test

| Group | N | Mean | SD | Mean Difference | t-value | df | p-value |
|--------------|----|-------|------|-----------------|---------|----|---------|
| Experimental | 33 | 17.91 | 1.07 | -.06 | -.23 | 65 | .82 |
| Control | 34 | 17.97 | 1.11 | | | | |

Level of significance is at $p < 0.05$

The results in table 4.1a show the mean score for the reading comprehension (using LOTS questions) in the pre-test. The mean score for the Experimental Group was 17.91 while the Control Group was 17.97. Findings from the independent samples t-test revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean score for reading comprehension (using LOTS questions) between the Experimental Group and the Control Group in the pre-test ($t = -.23$, $df = 65$, $p = .82$)

Table 4.1b: Comparison of the mean score for LOTS questions in the post-test

| Group | N | Mean | SD | Mean Difference | t-value | df | p-value |
|--------------|----|-------|------|-----------------|---------|----|---------|
| Experimental | 33 | 20.70 | 1.24 | 2.40 | 9.09 | 65 | .00 |
| Control | 34 | 18.29 | .91 | | | | |

Level of significance is at $p < 0.05$

The findings in table 4.1b explain the mean score for the reading comprehension (using LOTS questions) in the post-test. The mean score for the Experimental Group was 20.70 while the Control Group was 18.29. Findings from the independent samples t-test revealed that there is a significant difference in the mean score for reading comprehension (using LOTS questions) between the Experimental Group and the Control Group in the post-test ($t = 9.09$, $df = 65$, $p = 0.00$). It shows the improvement of mean score after using YouTube. These findings are in line with Fee and Budde-Sung (2014); Jaturongkachoke and Chanseawrassamee (2013) and Singkhachorn (2014) who stressed that YouTube can improve the process of learning.

2. Is there a significant difference in the achievement on reading comprehension (using HOTS questions) between the experimental group and the control group?

Table 4.2a: Comparison of the mean scores for HOTS questions in the pre-test

| Group | N | Mean | SD | Mean Difference | t-value | df | p-value |
|--------------|----|------|-----|-----------------|---------|----|---------|
| Experimental | 33 | 6.30 | .47 | .13 | 1.05 | 65 | .30 |
| Control | 34 | 6.18 | .52 | | | | |

Level of significance is at $p < 0.05$

The results in table 4.2a simplify the mean score for the reading comprehension (using HOTS questions) in the pre-test. The mean score for the Experimental Group was 6.30 while the Control Group was 6.18. Findings from the independent samples t-test revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean score for reading comprehension (using HOTS questions) between the Experimental Group and the Control Group in the pre-test ($t = 1.05$, $df = 65$, $p = .30$).

Table 4.2b: Comparison of the mean score for HOTS questions in the post-test

| Group | N | Mean | SD | Mean Difference | t-value | df | p-value |
|--------------|----|-------|-----|-----------------|---------|----|---------|
| Experimental | 33 | 10.76 | .66 | 4.29 | 28.56 | 65 | .000 |
| Control | 34 | 6.47 | .56 | | | | |

Level of significance is at $p < 0.05$

The findings in table 4.2b show the mean score for the reading comprehension (using HOTS questions) in the post-test. The mean score for the Experimental Group was 10.76 while the Control Group was 6.47. Findings from the independent samples t-test revealed that there is a significant difference in the mean score for reading comprehension (using HOTS questions) between the Experimental Group and the Control Group in

the post-test ($t = 28.56$, $df = 65$, $p = 0.000$). It shows the improvement of mean score after using YouTube. These findings also support the findings of Alwehaibi (2015); Balan (2012) and June, Yaacob and Kheng (2014) who revealed that YouTube can improve critical thinking.

CONCLUSION

This study has implications on the teaching of reading comprehension in the English language (EFL) classroom. According to Subadrah and Norain (2004) said that reading is a complex process which involves the feeling, opinion and cognition of the readers. Reading comprehension also requires experience, vocabulary and background knowledge. Using Bloom's taxonomy questions both LOTS and HOTS questions during reading is helpful in order to recall students' background knowledge. More importantly, the teacher should also apply YouTube as an authentic tool for students to increase their opinions and activate students' schema to construct the meaning and to provide critical thinking. Related to this, previous studies have shown that there is a positive relation between YouTube and students' achievement. The results from the current study indicated that the subjects in the Experimental Group showed significant achievement compared to the Control Group. Secondly, the Experimental Group also showed a significant improvement in LOTS and HOTS comprehension achievement scores compared to the Control Group. The findings of this study also serve as a guide to the Ministry of Education, in particular to the Teacher Training Division to encourage all language teachers to use YouTube for teaching language class.

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