

**INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTENSIVE READING ON
STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY AT 4/3 GRADE IN SONGSERM WITTAYA
SCHOOL SONGKLA THAILAND**

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ABSTRACT

English speaking is important aspect in learning language. English is one of the international languages. English has been taught in every country especially in Thailand. English language teaching has been conducted in Thailand for more than a century. It was started in the reign of King Rama III (1824 -1851) by an American missionary. Although English was taught more than a century, it has been consider as the most difficult skill to master by the students especially in Songserm Wittaya School Songkla, Thailand. The researcher found that almost all of student unable to speak English well. However, there is little bit difference in class 4/3 grade; they can speak English little bit better than the other class. It happened because they like reading. Through that situation, the researcher do a research entitles "Investigating The Effectiveness of Intensive Reading on Students' Speaking Ability at 4/3 grade In Songserm Wittaya School Songkla, Thailand".

The problem of the research shows how is intensive reading effective on students' speaking ability? The design of the research is descriptive qualitative research. The research subject is the student of Sonserm Wittaya School at 4/3 grade which has 30 students (4 male and 26 females). The data collected by a questioner for intensive reading and an interview for speaking.

Speaking has five aspects; those are accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. The researcher uses Arthur Hughes 'statement in scoring speaking ability. The higher score will be 4+ and the lower score will be 0. By using intensive reading the student can find not only meaning in that text but also can see the structure of the text and find new vocabulary for speaking.

The results of this study in general revealed that most of the student in Songserm Wittaya School at 4/3 grade, 50% of them are good in speaking English through intensive reading. Clearly seen from the analysis of their speaking aspect (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension) in the interview section and questionnaire of intensive reading 50% of the participant can speak English through intensive reading.

Key Words: Speaking Ability, Intensive Reading

INTRODUCTION

English is one of the international languages. There are many countries which still use English as their subject in language and teaching, especially in Thailand. English language teaching has been conducted in Thailand for more than a century. It was started in the reign of King Rama III (1824 -1851) by an American missionary (Darasawang, 2007). Although English has been taught in Thailand for more than a century, the English there is still low. Thais' level of English proficiency is low in comparison with many countries in Asia (e.g. Malaysia, Philippines, and Singapore), (Wiriyaichitra, 2002).

Mastering speaking is not easy, from what the researcher have seen as an English teacher working in Songserm Wittaya School in Songkla Thailand over four months; the researcher was surprised that English was still poor there. The students were unable to answer the easy question such as "What are you doing?" Meanwhile, there was little bit different in class 4/3. The student can speak English a little bit better than the other class. The researcher started to observe the way

English taught there. The researcher asked permission to the teacher who handled that class to do observation about the technique that was used in English language teaching. English taught every Wednesday and Friday. The time allocation was 50 minutes. On the first meeting, the researcher saw the teacher asked her students to read previous chapter together while stand up before they began new lesson. When the researcher did the observation, the lesson was in chapter 2, the topic was recreation. The teacher asked the student to read what in that book intensively, it means they should understand the meaning, which make them can find new vocabulary for their speaking. Base on the observation, the techniques used by the teacher in teaching speaking at Songserm Wittaya School especially in 4/3 grade was intensive reading.

This research paper is going to look at how is intensive reading effective on students' speaking ability at 4/3 grade in Songserm Wittaya School Songkla-Thailand. According to Algozaly and Ahmed (2015) intensive reading can greatly improve and reinforce students' speaking skill. This is obvious when they grasp the meaning of reading text, that is to say the

idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs which we formed in the written text can also be expressed in the oral communication. Moreover, they assured that intensive reading increases students' command of vocabulary which they need and enable them to develop the oral communication.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Speaking Ability

There are many definitions of speaking that have been proposed by some experts in language learning. In language teaching and learning, speaking is considered a skill to practice and master. In this light, Nunan puts it that "speaking is the productive oral skill. It consists of producing systematic verbal utterance to convey meaning". It means speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving processing information. According to Oxford Dictionary of Current English (2009) says that speaking is the action of conveying information or expressing ones' thoughts and feelings in spoken languages while according to Thornbury (2006) Speaking is so much a part of daily life that people take it for granted.

Ability is possession of the means or skill to do something (Oxford

Dictionary, 2009). It can say that ability comes from training or practicing. Speaking ability is a matter which needs much effort. No matter how great an idea is, if it is not communicated properly, it cannot be effective. To speak English well and casual, the students obviously have to try to speak it in the way the native speakers do.

The Aspects of Speaking

According to Brown (2000:268), there are two aspects of speaking skill: accuracy and fluency. Accuracy means that the speakers are required to use the correct vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. While fluency means that the speakers are required to be able to keep going when speaking spontaneously. In this case, the researcher will discuss one by one of the speaking aspect.

a. Fluency

Fluency in speaking is the aim of many language learners. Signs of fluency include a reasonably fast speed of speaking and only a small number of pauses and "ums" or "eers". Fluency is extent to which speakers use the language quickly and confidently, with few hesitations or unnatural pauses, false starts, word searches, etc, (Nunan, 1999:55).

b. Pronunciation

Pronunciation is the way in which a language or a particular word or sound is spoken, (Oxford dictionary, 2008; 352). By the mid-1980s with greater attention to grammatical structure as importance elements in discourse, to a balance between fluency and accuracy, and to the explicit specification of pedagogical tasks that a learner should accomplish, it become clear that pronunciation was a key to gaining full communicative competence, (Brown, 1999: 283).

c. Grammar

The process of describing the structure of phrases and sentences in such a way that we account for all the grammatical sequences in a language and rule out all the ungrammatical sequences is one way of defining grammar, (Yule,2010:81). It can say that grammar is to arrange the correct meaning of sentences based on the context; in addition, it is used to avoid misunderstanding in each communicator.

d. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a foundation of a language. To create meaningful utterance or sentences, it needs to use appropriate vocabulary to express

something. According to Hynes (Ed.2010:54) there are two kinds of vocabulary acquisition: direct and indirect. Direct learning occurs when students are explicitly taught vocabulary for a specific purpose. Indirect learning occurs when students acquire vocabulary by hearing it in school or at home, or by reading. In other words, the requirement for students who want to have a good speaking ability is mastering vocabulary. Vocabulary means all the words that a person knows or uses. It means the appropriate diction which is used in communication, (Oxford dictionary, 2008; 495)

Intensive Reading

According to Harmer (1998:68) reading also provides opportunities to study language: vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and the way we construct sentence, paragraphs and texts, reading power relies on continuous improvement in vocabulary knowledge that provides oral communication and gives students self-confidence to practice English. According to Patel (2008:113) reading is an active process which consists of recognition and recognition and comprehension skill. Reading has many kinds, one of them are reading intensive. According to

Brown (2000: 312), intensive reading calls students' attention to grammatical forms, discourse markers, and other surface structure details for the purpose of understanding literal meaning, implications, rhetorical relationship, and the like.

However, there are further roles teachers need to adopt when asking students to read intensively, those are organizer, observer, feedback organizer and prompter, (Algozoly and Ahmed, 2015).

a. Organizer

Organizer here means, the teachers need to tell students what their reading purpose is, and give those clear instructions about how to achieve it, and how long they have to do this.

b. Observer

Observer means here is when teachers ask students to read on their own teachers need to give them space to do so. This means restraining themselves from interrupting that reading, even though the temptation may be to add more information or instructions. While students are reading teachers can observe their progress since this will give them valuable information about how well they are doing individually and collectively, and

will tell teachers whether to give them some extra time or, move to organizing feedback more quickly than teachers had anticipated.

c. Feedback organizer

When students have completed the task, teachers can lead a feedback session to check that they have completed the task successfully. Teachers may start by having them compare their answers in pairs and then ask for answers from the class in general or from pairs in particular. Students often appreciate giving paired answers like this since, by sharing their knowledge, they are also sharing their responsibility for the answers.

It is important to be supportive when organizing feedback after reading if teachers are to counter any negative feelings students might have about the process and if teachers wish to sustain their motivation.

d. Prompter

When students have read a text teachers can prompt them to notice language features in that text. Teachers may also, as controllers, direct them to certain features of text construction, clarifying ambiguities, and making them aware of issues of text structure

which they had not come across previously. Harmer (2001: 210-213).

The Procedure to Get Intensive Reading Value

In this study, the researcher finds out the students' intensive reading through a questionnaire. The students were asked to read the questionnaire very carefully and choose the best answers based on their experiences. The researcher gave multiple choices for the question and every multiple choices have score. There are seven questions for every student. The question ask them about the activity while they read the English book, the time that they take for read and English book, the thing that they use to understand when they do not understand the meaning in that word, the feeling when they read and English book and so on. The researcher also explains to the participant that the data of this research would be used for any other uses.

METHOD

The research design used by the researcher to conduct this thesis is descriptive qualitative research. According to Arikunto (2013:3) descriptive research is designed to reveal the current status of a phenomenon and directed toward the

time of the study and to describe what actually exists.

Subject

The subject of this research is the students of Songserm Wittaya School Songkla Thailand, especially in 4/3 grade. There are 30 students, 26 females and 4 males.

Instruments

There were two instruments used in this study. The first is questionnaire and the second was interview. Interview was designed for speaking ability, while the questionnaire was designed for intensive reading. There were seven multiple choice questions which should be answer by the students' base on their experience.

Data Analysis Technique

After collecting the data, the researcher analyzes the data. To analyze the data, the researcher used descriptive qualitative to analyze data. In short, the steps in analyzing the data are: the researcher collects the data through interview for speaking score and for intensive reading the researcher uses multiple choice then analysis using SPSS program. After selecting the data, the researcher displays those data into good sentences. After displaying data, the conclusion is draw. In this research,

the researcher was using Arthur Hughes statements (2003; 131-132) for analysis speaking score.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

For the analysis of intensive reading the researcher uses multiple choice questions. Here were the result.

1. Students' activity in Reading English Book

Do you like read an English book?			
NO	OPTI ONS	FREQU ENCY	PERCEN TAGE
1.	Love it	17	56.7%
2.	Like it	9	30%
3.	Little a bit like it	4	13.3%
4.	Dislik e	0	0
TO TAL		30	100.0%

Based on the result of questionnaire about the students who love read an English book was higher option than the other option, 56.7 % from 17 respondents. It means they love read an English book. No doubt that that the more you read, the better a reader you would become. The second option

was "Like it "option, 9 (30%) respondents. In the third option was "Little a bit like it" 13.3% from 4 respondents. And no one said dislike read an English book. The researcher also tried to find the kind of English books that usually student in 4/3 grade read. Here was a table that shows their answer.

2. The kind of English book that students read

What kind of English books do you usually read in your spare time?			
NO	OPTI ONS	FREQU ENCY	PERCEN TAGE
1.	Englis h Novel	5	16.7%
2.	Englis h Comic	18	60.0%
3.	Englis h Maga zine	3	10.0%
4.	Englis h Schoo l Handb ook	4	13.3%

TO TAL		30	100.0%
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Based on the result of questionnaire above, it can be means that an English comic was the favorite one, 60.0% from 18 respondents. Neuroscientific research by Berns, ed. (2013) indicates that reading stories actually has a noticeable effect on brain function. In reading comic books children are engaging with highly complex and structured narrative forms. Whether they realize it or not, their emergent visual literacy promotes thinking skills and develops wider met cognitive abilities. This study showed how reading a compelling comic changed participants' neuron activity not only while they were reading but also for several days after they finished the comic that was assigned to them.

3. The time that students use to spent to read an English book

How long do you usually read that English book?			
NO	OPTI ONS	FREQU ENCY	PERCEN TAGE
1.	Less than an hour	2	6.7%

2.	An hour	3	10.0%
3.	More than an hour	8	26.7%
4.	As I like	17	56.7%
TOT AL		30	100.0%

Based on the result, “as I like it “answer was the high one, 17 respondents (56.7%). The respondents like to read an English book as the way they want. From the answer that the research got, some of the participants said than they had anything else that should they do. Reading was just only one of their hobbies. There are some disadvantages of too much reading. For instance, when people spend a lot of time reading books, they eyesight will become myopic, which is another word nearsightedness. Second, people who spend a lot of time reading books will cause them more likely to be antisocial, which is one of the biggest issues for some people. Last, I would think too much reading will cause behavioral and mental problem, which cause some people to easily forget things and don't

really care about what's going on in their surroundings.

They tried to learn new words when they read but, sometimes they did not understand their meanings. From 30 respondents, 19 (63.3%) respondents said that they sometimes did not understand the story or information but sometimes they did, and 11 (36.7%) respondents said that they usually understand the meaning of the story.

4. The understanding of the students when they read an English Book

When you read a story or other information in English language do you understand it?			
NO	OPTI ONS	FREQU ENCY	PERCEN TAGE
1.	Yes. I always underst and the story or inform ation	0	0
2.	usually underst and the story or	11	36.7%

	inform ation		
3.	Someti mes I underst and the story or inform ation but someti mes I don't.	19	63.3%
4.	I often don't underst and the story or inform ation.	0	0
TO TAL		30	100.0%

When they did not understand the meaning, they also need a dictionary to get the meaning. It can be seen that they really want to know the meaning. From 30 respondents, 17(56.7%) respondents said that they always use

dictionary when they did not understand the meaning. Here are the answers;

5. The uses of a dictionary

Do you use a dictionary when you cannot understand words?			
NO	OPTI ONS	FREQU ENCY	PERCEN TAGE
1.	Alway s	17	56.7%
2.	Usuall y	9	30.3%
3.	Somet imes	4	13.3%
4.	Rarely	0	0
TOT AL		30	100.0%

One of my respondents told me that when she cannot understand what the scene was about because of a word, she searched for its meaning in dictionary then, she wrote it down in a notebook with its meaning. Whenever she came across these notes the next time, she read them once and recollects the usage. Some of them also tried to guess the main ideas of the text on the basis of pictures. From 30 respondents, 17(56.7%) respondents said that they always tried to guess the main ideas of the text on the basis of pictures .They tried to find the meaning by looking at

the picture, charts or figures that already have been there. The picture, charts or figures that had been printed in some stories had its meaning. The student would understand easily when they look at the picture; charts or figures before they started read the story.

5. The students' guessing the mean idea of the text

Do you try to guess the main ideas of the text on the basis of pictures, charts or figures?			
NO	OPTI ONS	FREQU ENCY	PERCEN TAGE
1.	Alway s	17	56.7%
2.	Usuall y	9	30.3%
3.	Somet imes	4	13.3%
4.	Rarely	0	0
TOT AL		30	100.0%

The last question was about their feeling when they read an English book. One person (3.3%) said that she loved read an English book, 16(53.3%) said that they liked read an English book, 13(43.3%) said that they little a bit liked read an English book and no one dislike read an English book.

6. The students' feeling when they read an English book

How do you feel when you are reading an English book?			
NO	OPTI ONS	FREQU ENCY	PERCEN TAGE
1.	Love it	1	3.3%
2.	Like it	16	53.3%
3.	Little a bit like it	13	43.3%
4.	Dislik e	0	0
TOT AL		30	100.0%

Reading a book will help the student find new words. Just by reading and understanding its meaning from the context, the student can build quite a large passive English vocabulary. The student can use that new vocabulary while speaking English. To achieve that, the students should have to practice speaking English with others, so that they can develop natural ability to speak effortlessly and fluently.

In speaking analysis there are five aspect that the researcher used to find speaking score, there were accent, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and

comprehension. Every aspect there is 6 points. The higher will get 6 rating score will the lower will get 0 rating score. The research told that there were two students got 4 rating score, thirteen students got 3 rating score, three students got 3+ rating score, four students got 2 rating score, and eight students got 2+ rating score.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUTION

In speaking there are five aspects that really important in speaking, those are accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. In this study, the researcher found that 86% of students in Sonnserm Wittaya in 4/3 grade love and like read an English book and 60% of student said that an English comic is the favorite one. This is obvious when the student read an English comic they grasp the meaning of a reading text, that is to say, the idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs which formed in the written text. It can also be expressed in the oral communication. Moreover, intensive reading increases students' command of vocabulary which they need and enable them to develop the oral communication. If they do not understand the meaning, they also used a dictionary to help them. It could be seen from their reading questionnaire

that 56.7% of student in 4/3 grade use dictionary to find the meaning.

When we talk about accent in that class, they have similar accent in speaking English. In this case, the students are difficult in pronouncing English word. They are trying to speak English face the same roadblocks. According to Ackrapong (2009) some sounds are difficult for Thai learners to produce. Every student often confuses the lateral alveolar approximant /l/ with the alveolar approximant /r/. When they pronounce 'L', they will say 'ew', the letter W has a V sound like the word 'when' become 'Ven' and there is no TH sound in their language. There's no audible difference between R's and L's. Rabbit is pronounced, *Labbit*. Leader is pronounced, *Reader*. The words 'flute' and 'fruit' sound the exact same to Thai student. According to Attapol Khamkhien (2010) most of the Thai learners did not possess satisfactory competence in English pronunciation. Although one of them is not really good in accent, they still can answer what the researcher asked in interview section.

When students read an English book intensively, they not only find the meaning but also see the structure of the grammar. However only few of them

use it. Students in Songserm Wittaya School are the creative one. They like doing handicrafts. Every walls of their class full of the picture of their handicraft which is hang on the wall. One of the interesting handicrafts is part of grammar pattern but it is just hanging on the wall, never use it. They know about grammar and they memorize it. They memorize the entire pattern, but their teacher never told them to use it in implementing speaking subject. When they speak English, they seldom use grammar rule. They just said as they like. The subject can be deleted if assumed known between the addresser and addressee (Ackrapong, 2009).

For their fluency and comprehension, they are good in both of them although requires occasional repetition or rephrasing in every sentence. They could understand what the researcher said but it need more repetition or rephrasing and slow way or using body language to make them get it in every question.

. The results of this study in general revealed that most of the student in Songserm Wittaya School at 4/3 grade, 50% of them are good in speaking English through reading an English book intensively. Clearly seen from the

analysis of their speaking aspect (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension) in the interview section and questionnaire of intensive reading 50% of the participant here can speak English through intensive reading.



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