



ผลของการสอนการอ่านโดยใช้ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างคำถามและคำตอบ (QAR) และกลยุทธ์การอ่านที่
เกี่ยวข้องที่มีต่อความสามารถในการอ่านเพื่อความเข้าใจของนักเรียนมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 5
EFFECTS OF READING INSTRUCTION USING QUESTION-ANSWER RELATIONSHIPS (QAR) AND ITS
RELATED READING STRATEGIES ON READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY OF ELEVEN GRADE
STUDENTS

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การวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาผลของการใช้ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างคำถามและคำตอบ (QAR) ร่วมกับ
กลยุทธ์การอ่านที่เกี่ยวข้องที่มีต่อความสามารถในการอ่านเพื่อความเข้าใจของนักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 5 และศึกษา
กลยุทธ์การอ่านที่นักเรียนในกลุ่มคะแนนสูงและกลุ่มคะแนนต่ำใช้ในวงจรการอ่าน (Reading Cycles) กลุ่มตัวอย่างในการ
วิจัยคือนักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 5 โรงเรียนนวมินทราชูทิศมัธยม จังหวัดนครสวรรค์ จำนวน 44 คน เครื่องมือที่ใช้ใน
การวิจัย คือ 1) แบบทดสอบวัดความสามารถด้านการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อความเข้าใจ 2) แบบบันทึกการเรียนรู้ของ
นักเรียน 3) การสัมภาษณ์ที่แสดงถึงกระบวนการตอบคำถามและการใช้กลยุทธ์การอ่านของนักเรียน สถิติที่ใช้ในการวิจัย
ได้แก่ ค่าเฉลี่ยร้อยละ ค่าส่วนเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน ค่า t-test และการวิเคราะห์เนื้อหา (Content Analysis)

ผลการวิจัยพบว่า 1) ค่าเฉลี่ยของแบบทดสอบวัดความสามารถด้านการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษหลังเรียนมีแนวโน้มการ
พัฒนาทักษะการอ่านและตอบคำถามดีขึ้นกว่าค่าเฉลี่ยของแบบทดสอบวัดความสามารถด้านการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษก่อน
เรียนโดยมีนัยสำคัญที่ระดับ 0.05 2) นักเรียนจากกลุ่มคะแนนสูงสามารถระบุชนิดคำถามได้ถูกต้องและเลือกใช้กลยุทธ์การ
อ่านที่เกี่ยวข้องได้เหมาะสมกับคำถามแต่ละชนิดของ QAR ในวงจรการอ่าน ในขณะที่นักเรียนจากกลุ่มคะแนนต่ำสามารถ
ระบุบางชนิดของคำถามได้ และมีปัญหาการเลือกกลยุทธ์ที่เหมาะสมมาใช้ จึงทำให้ไม่สามารถใช้กลยุทธ์การอ่านได้
หลากหลายในวงจรการอ่าน ทั้งนี้ความสามารถในการใช้ภาษาและการขาดความรู้ทั่วไปถือเป็นอุปสรรคต่อความสามารถใน
การวิเคราะห์และตอบคำถามบางชนิดของนักเรียนทั้งสองกลุ่ม อย่างไรก็ตามนักเรียนส่วนใหญ่มีความคิดเห็นที่ดีต่อการ
อ่านภาษาอังกฤษและมีความสนใจในการตอบคำถามการอ่านเพิ่มขึ้นอย่างมาก

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Abstract

The objectives of this study were 1) to study the effects on reading instruction using Question-Answer Relationships (QAR) and its related reading strategies on the reading comprehension ability of eleventh grade students, and 2) to explore the reading strategies that the students from high and low reading ability groups used in reading cycles. The sample included 44 eleventh grade students studying at Nawamin Trachutit Matchim School in Nakhon Sawan. The instruments used in this study were 1) the English reading comprehension pre- and post-tests, 2) student logs, and a 3) semi-structured interview to find out the process of answering questions and the reading strategies the students used. The data were analyzed using mean scores, standard deviation, a paired sample t-test and content analysis.

The findings revealed that 1) the mean score of the reading comprehension post-test was higher than the mean score of the pre-test at the significant level of 0.05; 2) the students from the high reading ability group could specify each type of question concisely and choose its related reading strategies to align with each of the QAR questions in reading cycles appropriately. Meanwhile, the low reading ability students could specify only some types of the questions and had trouble selecting the proper related reading strategies. Therefore, they could not use various strategies. In addition, the command of English and background knowledge hindered the ability to analyze and answer some questions for some students in both groups. However, the students had a positive attitude towards English reading and the interest in answering reading questions had increased considerably.

คำสำคัญ: การสอนการอ่าน/ ความเข้าใจการอ่าน/ กลยุทธ์ด้านคำถาม/ ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างคำถามและคำตอบ/ กลยุทธ์ที่ใช้ในการอ่าน/ วงจรการอ่าน

KEYWORDS: READING INSTRUCTION / READING COMPREHENSION / QUESTIONING STRATEGY / QUESTION-ANSWER RELATIONSHIPS / READING STRATEGY / READING CYCLES

Introduction

Reading is useful for language acquisition. For instance, reading can expand students' vocabulary knowledge, improve spelling and punctuation, and provide good models for their own writing (Harmer, 2007). Consequently, students who study English as a foreign language should try to develop their reading ability in order to gain new knowledge and more abstract concepts, do well in school and succeed in language acquisition. Because of such importance, getting students to read English texts is one of the main tasks of teachers since many students need to be able to read and comprehend texts in English either for study purposes, for their future careers or simply for enjoyment. Several reading studies conducted with Thai students at both university and high school levels revealed that they were considered being at low levels of English proficiency and had difficulties in reading English (Chawwang, 2008; Chomchaiya & Dunworth, 2008; Oranpattanachai, 2010). Moreover, those findings also indicate that the English teachers do not explicitly talk about reading process or strategies but mostly focus on translation and factual information in the text instead. This traditional reading instruction leads to considerable class time consumption. Since reading is strategic skill, students must have a strategy for comprehending the reading text and dealing

with reading tasks especially answering reading comprehension questions (Roe et al., 2001). Questioning is one of the most important dimensions of teaching and learning since it gives teachers a chance to find out whether their students understand the content and it allows students to monitor their own comprehension (Gattis, 2002). There are several types of questions that teachers should focus through reading cycles (before, during, and after reading a text). A questioning strategy utilized in developing reading comprehension skills is what Taffy Raphael refers to as Question- Answer Relationships or QAR (Nuttall, 2005). With QAR, teachers can help students become strategic while dealing with a text and questions simultaneously. The QAR strategy explicitly shows the relationship between questions and answers, how to search for information in a text according to different types of questions. It is clear that teachers should provide students with information on QAR and some reading strategies associated with them. Therefore, with the practice of Question Answer Relationships (QAR) strategy and its related reading strategies, students can become more familiar with different types of reading questions and consciously select the related reading strategies appropriately in order to answer each type of questions correctly.

Although Question Answer Relationships (QAR) could offer reading benefits to students, the number of research studies relating to the use of QAR strategy together with its related reading strategies to improve students' reading comprehension ability in Thailand is very rare. This study therefore tried to investigate how reading instruction using Question Answer Relationships (QAR) and its related reading strategies affected reading comprehension ability of eleven grade students and what reading strategies the students from the high level group and the low level group used in reading cycles.

Objectives

- 1) To study the effects of the reading instruction using Question-Answer Relationships (QAR) and its related reading strategies on reading comprehension ability of eleven grade students.
- 2) To explore the reading strategies that eleven grade students from both high and low reading ability group used in reading cycles.

Scope of the study

The population of this study was eleven grade students at Nawamin Trachutit Mutchim School in Nakhonsawan who studied "Reading and Writing" class in the second semester, academic year 2013 for 12 weeks. The study investigated 44 students as an experimental group. The independent variables were Question-Answer Relationships (QAR) and reading strategies. The dependent variable was students' reading comprehension ability.

Definitions of terms

Question-Answer Relationship (QAR)

QAR developed by Traffy Raphael is a questioning strategy which is used to improve students' reading comprehension. It emphasizes that there is a relationship between questions, texts, and reader's prior knowledge (T. E. Raphael, 1986). This strategy helps students understand four different types of questions based on the source of information essential for the answer. To measure the understanding of QAR strategy, reading passages with various types of question were used to direct students to choose possible answers from the text or from their own knowledge. The researcher generally had the students both answer questions and generate questions according to those in QAR.

Reading strategies

Reading strategies are tools used for improving reading comprehension (Park, 2010). In QAR, there are many reading strategies that students can use for answering each type of questions. The researcher taught the possible reading strategies suitable for each type of QAR questions and then the students worked through the text by categorizing reading questions, choosing the reading strategies and answering questions.

Reading cycles

Buehl (2009) suggested that the QAR can actually be used as a strategy for before, during, and after reading instruction or so called reading cycles. At the beginning, students are likely to encounter 'In My Head' questions, designed to prompt students to think about relevant prior knowledge. These include both 'On My Own' questions and 'Author & Me' questions.

During reading, the QARs are 'Author & Me', 'Right There', and 'Think & Search' which help students define a term, provide facts or supporting details, and locate specific information (Right There), integrate information from different parts of the text (Think & Search), and interpret information from the text with their own background knowledge (Author & Me).

After reading, most QARs are 'Author & Me' or 'Think & Search' since students make text-to-self connections, link what they have read to the themes and issues, and connect across sets of related texts.

Research Method

The method in the study aimed to explore the effect of reading instruction based on QAR and its related reading strategies in reading cycles. Firstly, the sampling design and,

research instrument, and research procedure are presented. Then, the analysis design and the results are described. After that, the discussions and recommendations for future research are shown.

Sampling design

The samples of this study were 44 eleven grade students at Nawamin Trachutit Mutchim School in Nakhonsawan. The students were investigated as an experimental group. It should be noted that the levels of reading ability of the participants were categorized into three groups; low reading ability students, middle reading ability students and high reading ability students based on their pre-test scores. The level of reading ability that a student was placed based on the reading ability of the whole group and the researcher adopted the percentile ranking formula to divide the groups. Students who obtained 9 scores or lower were classified as low reading ability group (30th percentile). Students who got scores between 10 and 13 belonged to a middle reading ability group. Those who scored 14 or higher are classified as high reading ability group (70th percentile). However, this study focused on the difference use of reading strategies between low reading ability students and high reading ability students.

Research Instruments

The researcher adapted some reading passages accompanied by multiple choice questions, true/ false questions and fill-in the blank questions to use in the pre-test and post-test in order to measure the students' reading comprehension ability. The six lesson plans proposed by Hollas, Forsten, Grant and Reynolds (2008), Raphael, Highfield, and Au (2001), the NSW Department of Education and Training (2010), and Dole (1991) were developed to emphasize on a reading instruction based on QAR and its related reading strategies in reading cycles. The participants studied each category of QAR questions and its related reading strategies and then went through reading passages and related questions for responses. After each lesson, it was required that students complete a student learning log to investigate what they had learned in that day's lesson, what strategies they used and what probable problems they had with the learning activities. The semi-structured interviews were carried out with audiotape recording after the students had completed the course. A set of questions were designed as an interview framework for eliciting how students worked on reading questions, what reading strategies they used in reading cycles and some possible problems in addition to what they mentioned in the student learning logs.

Research Procedure

The process of conducting this study were divided into two phases, which were: 1) the preparation of reading instruction based on Question-Answer Relationships (QAR) strategy by Taffy Raphael in the 1980s, and 2) the implementation of reading instruction based on QAR strategy and reading strategies in reading cycles.

Phase 1: Preparation of reading instruction

The first step in this phase is to specify the samples. The eleven grade students from Nawanmin Trachutit Mutchim School in Nakhonsawan were selected by purposive sampling which relied on convenience sampling. Then, the basic concepts and related documents about teaching reading using QAR were explored. The studied topics were Question-Answers Relationships and its related reading strategies proposed by Taffy Raphael in the 1980s. After that, the six lesson plans and some research instruments were constructed. The instruments included the English reading comprehension pretest and posttest, the six student logs, and a set of eight semi-structure interview questions. The information from the basic concepts was compiled and became a theoretical framework for the development of QAR instruction and research instruments. After developing the reading instructions and the instruments, the research instruments were verified by the experts to check the effects. Then, the pilot study was conducted with 12 students. Finally, the instruments were revised based on the information gained from the pilot study.

Phase 2: Implementation of reading instruction

The pretest was administered to the students in order to measure students' reading comprehension ability before the treatment. During the implementation, the students participated in reading instruction based on QAR and its related reading strategies for 10 weeks. They were engaged in the three phases of the instruction namely QAR strategy, the reading strategies related to each type of QAR questions, and reading cycles. In the end of each unit, the students wrote student logs. At the end of the implementation, all of the students did the posttest in order to examine the effects of reading instruction based on QAR and its related reading strategies. The student logs were translated and analyzed qualitatively in order to explore the reading strategies the students from both high reading and low reading ability groups used through reading cycles and some attitudes or problems they might have. Besides the student logs, the semi- interview were constructed to confirm and triangulate the information from the student logs.

Table 1 Steps in teaching QAR procedures and reading strategies

READING CYCLES	PROCEDURES	READING STRATEGIES
BEFORE READING	<p>-Teacher has students preview the titles, sub-titles and pictures to give them an idea for what to think about as they read.</p> <p>-Students identify On My Own questions and discuss what reading strategies should be used to answer them.</p>	Students think about what they already know and what they have read before and make connections to the preview activity.
DURING READING	<p>-After answering and discussing On My Own questions, students look for Right There questions and discuss the most effective strategies to use.</p> <p>-They read the text to locate the information for the questions.</p>	Student scan and look for key words.
DURING READING	Students carry on with Think & Search questions by using the appropriate reading strategies. In this step, students can go back to the questions in Step 2, if they are not sure.	Students skim the text to find the main idea and look for important information. Summarize the correlation and clarify. They sometimes have to identify text types too.
AFTER READING (A)	Students are still able to answer Think & Search questions if they cannot answer promptly during reading in Step 3	Students might change the strategies they use earlier.

AFTER READING (B)	Students use the strategies to answer Author & Me questions.	Students make inferences, think about the author's style and make predictions.
AFTER READING (C)	Students discuss the answers to the questions and summarize the content they learn and talk about the reading strategies they use in the student log.	N/A

Results

The findings of the study were summarized in two main aspects: English reading comprehension pretest and posttest and reading strategies that the students from high reading ability and low reading ability use through reading cycles.

English reading comprehension tests

Table 2 Comparison of students' pretest and posttest scores

	Mean scores	Number of student	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	11.59	44	4.025	0.667
Posttest	17.66	44	4.103	0.619

($p < .05$)

From Table 2, the students' posttest mean scores ($\bar{X} = 17.66$) on the English reading comprehension test were higher than the pretest mean scores ($\bar{X} = 11.59$). The mean difference was -6.068 with the standard deviation of 3.158 and the t-values was -12.747 with a degree of freedom of 43 ($n=44$). Also, the result revealed that there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest mean scores at a significant level ($p < .05$). Therefore, the hypothesis stating that the posttest mean scores of eleventh grade students are higher than the pretest mean scores at the significance level of .05 was accepted. In other words, the students' reading comprehension ability significantly improved after receiving the reading instruction based on QAR and reading strategies.

Table 3 Number of students fall into each score ranking according to their pretest and posttest scores.

Score ranking	Number of students		Percentage	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
0-10	20	2	45.45%	4.54%
11-20	23	30	52.27%	68.18%
21-30	1	12	2.27%	27.27%
Total	44	44	100%	100%

It is clear that all three score rankings the majority of students did the pretest and gained between 11 and 20 scores, whereas there was only one student who passed the pretest with the highest score. After the treatment, the number of students who got between 11 and 20 scores increased dramatically. The same situation occurs with the number of students who gained high marks between 21 and 30. The number of students rose from 1 to 12. However, the number of students who gained less than 10 scores significantly declined from 20 to 2.

Table 4 Comparison between pretest and posttest scores of low reading ability students

		Mean scores	Number of students	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Low ability	Pretest	11.59	44	4.025	0.607
	Posttest	17.66	44	4.103	0.619

($p < .05$)

The results in Table 4 indicate that the low reading ability students made a significant improvement on their reading comprehension after 12 weeks of the treatment at a significant level ($p < .05$). The mean score of the posttest was $\bar{X} = 17.66$ which is higher than the pretest mean score ($\bar{X} = 11.59$) with the mean difference of -6.068 .

Table 5 Comparison between pretest and posttest scores of high reading ability students

		Mean scores	Number of students	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
High ability	Pretest	16.2143	44	3.55568	0.9503
	Posttest	20.5	44	3.276	0.875

($p < .05$)

The results in Table 5 suggest that the high reading ability students also developed their reading comprehension ability at a significant level ($p < .05$). The mean score of the posttest ($X = 20.50$) was higher than the pretest mean score ($X = 16.2143$) with the mean difference of -4.28571 .

Student logs

Most of the students could clarify the information they learned from today's lesson. Most of them said they determined the types of questions first and then plan steps for answering questions before, during and after reading. After that, they chose the reading strategies appropriate for that type of questions. The students from high reading ability group mentioned that they used as many strategies as possible appropriate for each type of questions. They found that the combination of the strategies increased the possibility of finding the answers. However, those in low reading ability group revealed that they did not use all of the strategies suggested by the teacher if it was not necessary. Moreover, they used reading strategies besides those suggested in the worksheet. The problems found in the student learning logs were quite unique but it could be concluded that most students were confused between some types of questions such as between Author & Me and Think & Search because they thought they could answer the questions using part of their experience but actually they just needed to gather some information across the text. Moreover, they said before reading activity was the most difficult when they had no idea or when they were not familiar with the topic they were going to read about. However, a few thought that the after reading questions were more difficult to answer than other types because they had to understand the whole passage in order to make a conclusion which was not easy for them who had language problems.

Interviews with high reading ability and low reading ability students

From research question two, what reading strategies that high reading ability and low reading ability students use in reading cycles are. The research instrument used in this study was the semi-structure interview. Students from both group said that the reading instruction based on QAR and its related reading strategies helped them understand the passage better and be able to answer questions methodically. Apparently, the high reading ability students could reasonably explain how they used the reading strategies with each type of questions.

One of the students mentioned that *“I solved the problem by assuming that it was Right there and then I matched key words with those in the passage. When I did not find the information I wanted or it was not comprehensive, I started to look across paragraphs until I found the answer. After that, I changed the type of questions and reading strategies from scanning and looking for key words to skimming and looking for important information, clarifying and summarizing”*.

On the other hand, the students from low reading ability group mentioned that some of the strategies were difficult to follow such as making inference, thinking about main ideas, and making predictions. They could choose appropriate reading strategies for each type of QAR questions but they said they did not use as many strategies as they should. Moreover, they felt frustrated when they had to deal with some types of questions. This was because they had the problem with the language use and lacked background knowledge.

One of the students stated that *“Even if I understand QAR and its related reading strategies, I cannot answer questions because I cannot translate the passage well. But if the passage is quite easy, I can answer many questions”*.

Another student said *“I know I can find answers for right there in one sentence in the text by using scanning and looking for key words. If I deal with think & search questions, I searched for the answer across the text and then summarize it. For author & me questions, the answer is based on both the passage and my own experience so I make inference and decide on the answer. However, I put much effort to think about vocabulary and how to write my answer in full sentences for on my own questions. In this point, I do not read the passage”*.

Discussions and Recommendations for Future Research

Discussions

The findings of this study suggest some pedagogical implications. First, reading strategies are procedures that active learners use to better understand what they read and it can also facilitate the search for source of information. Therefore, the combination of QAR and reading strategies is essential for students' reading comprehension and should be included in reading instruction. This study indicates that it is very beneficial to students to use reading strategies appropriately according to types of questions. The more appropriate strategies they use, the more comprehension. Good readers should use a combination of strategies according to the task before, during, and after reading (The NSW Department of Education and Training, 2010). This study suggested that the QAR can actually be used as a strategy for before, during, and after reading instruction or so called reading cycles. However, because high and low proficient students perceived reading differently, reading materials need to cover a range of genres and vary in readability levels. This way, teachers provide an opportunity for students to progress at their own reading comprehension abilities. It is also important that EFL reading educators explicitly teach students to become aware of their strategy use. For instance, through thinking aloud method, students can observe how and when the strategy should be employed.

The second implication deals with the question types. While reading a text, the teacher should not encourage students to ask only one type of question but should provide a variety of questions which influences students' higher level of thinking. Educators have developed several structured questioning techniques and they suggested that Question Answer Relationships (QAR) strategy enables students to ask and answer four types of questions about what they read (Stafford, Wilson, Sanabria, 2012). The purpose of teaching the QAR strategy is to show students that questions and answers have a variety of sources and that learning about questions and answers will help them become better at understanding and answering questions (Iowa Department of Education, 2004).

The last implication concerns both Question-Answer Relationships and reading strategies play a significant role in promoting students' reading comprehension. Yoosabai (2009) revealed that Thai students had a very low level of reading proficiency. There are many reasons for their reading problems such as a large class size, limited reading strategies, and the teaching methods for reading comprehension in classrooms. As a result, it is important that teachers recognize an impact of creating a positive reading activity for students to be more interactive with the text. Questioning can assist in making meaning from a text since it involves several types of questions to motivate students to predict what to be learned or what can be found from the reading passage. Therefore, teachers can use

questioning models to enable students to classify types of questions and to support comprehension instruction.

Recommendation for Future Research

According to the findings of the present study, some research recommendations can be made regarding the duration of reading instruction, the reading assessment, the sample of population, and the variety of classroom activities.

First, as shown in the limitation of this study, a long-term study of the effect of QAR and reading strategies in Thailand should be conducted to observe its impact on students' reading comprehension. Particularly, the reading research on questioning strategies should be conducted to examine changes in low reading comprehension abilities since Thai students struggle in asking and answering questions about the text.

Secondly, since students' progress vary according to their levels of reading comprehension, a standardized language proficiency test and the reading tasks may not capture every aspect of students' progress in reading comprehension. Different methods of assessment should be used to examine changes in students' reading comprehension. Generally, the reading tests and reading tasks used to assess reading comprehension focus heavily on answering questions instead of asking questions. Thus, it is recommended that students should be required to ask questions to explicit their comprehension about the text.

The third recommendation concerns the sample of population. Since this is one group pre-test, post-test experimental design, the results showed only the reading comprehension ability of students who receive the treatment. However, a comparison between two different groups of the sample with the same language use and reading comprehension ability should be done in order to compare the effects on English reading comprehension ability.

Fourth, more planned activities of reading instruction using QAR and reading strategies should be done in more research by having students answering more questions for the types they find very difficult for them to deal with. Moreover, they should work on the text more actively by asking each type of questions. By this way, students practice both asking and answering question skills in order to enhance their reading comprehension ability.

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