

การพยากรณ์ความสามารถในการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อความเข้าใจสำหรับ นักศึกษาระดับปริญญาตรี โดยใช้กลวิธีการอ่าน

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บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษาวิจัยครั้งนี้เกี่ยวข้องกับกลวิธีการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษาและความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างกลวิธีการอ่านกับความสามารถในการอ่าน วัตถุประสงค์ของการศึกษาวิจัยครั้งนี้ คือ 1. ศึกษากลวิธีการอ่านที่นักศึกษาใช้เมื่อต้องอ่านบทความภาษาอังกฤษ 2. ศึกษาความสัมพันธ์ของแต่ละกลวิธีกับความสามารถในการอ่าน และ 3. ศึกษากลวิธีการอ่านแต่ละกลวิธีเพื่อใช้พยากรณ์ความสามารถในการอ่าน กลุ่มตัวอย่างการวิจัยครั้งนี้ประกอบด้วยนักศึกษาชั้นปีที่ 2 จำนวน 95 คน จากคณะวิทยาศาสตร์ประยุกต์ มหาวิทยาลัยเทคโนโลยีพระจอมเกล้าพระนครเหนือ ซึ่งลงทะเบียนเรียนวิชาการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษ 1 ในปีการศึกษา 2558 เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการวิจัยครั้งนี้ประกอบด้วยแบบสอบถามกลวิธีการอ่าน และแบบทดสอบการอ่าน

ผลการวิจัยพบว่า นักศึกษาเกือบทั้งหมดใช้กลวิธีการมองเห็นภาพ ($\bar{X} = 3.13$ $sd = .56$) ซึ่งหมายถึงนักศึกษาใช้การสร้างภาพในใจ โดยอาจเป็นภาพของการกระทำ คนและสถานที่ เพื่อทำความเข้าใจเนื้อหาที่อ่าน กลวิธีอื่นซึ่งนักศึกษาใช้คือ การเดาความหมายจากบริบท ($\bar{X} = 2.98$ $sd = .53$) ในด้านความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างกลวิธีการอ่านและความสามารถในการอ่าน มีการวิเคราะห์สัมประสิทธิ์สหสัมพันธ์ระหว่างกลวิธีการอ่านต่างๆและคะแนนการอ่าน พบว่าคู่ที่มีค่าสัมประสิทธิ์สูงสุด คือ สรรพนามแทนคำนามและคะแนนความสามารถในการอ่านของนักศึกษา ซึ่งมีค่าเท่ากับ .343 ส่วนการพยากรณ์ความสามารถในการอ่านด้วยกลวิธี ได้ดำเนินการวิเคราะห์ถดถอย ซึ่งสามารถสร้างสมการถดถอยเพื่อนำมาใช้ในการพยากรณ์คะแนนการอ่าน ดังนี้

คะแนนการอ่าน = $32.419 + -3.927$ (กลวิธีการพยากรณ์เหตุการณ์) + -5.188 (ความคิดเห็น) + -4.979 (เปรียบเทียบความเหมือนและความต่าง) + 3.791 (ข้อเท็จจริง) + 4.177 (สรรพนามแทนคำนาม)

จากสมการที่กล่าวมาแล้ว เทคนิคการพยากรณ์เหตุการณ์ ความคิดเห็น การเปรียบเทียบความเหมือนและความต่าง ข้อเท็จจริง และสรรพนามแทนคำนาม สามารถใช้ในการเดาความสามารถในการอ่าน ผลการวิจัยพบว่า ตัวแปรอิสระแต่ละตัวหรือตัวแปรอิสระหลายตัวรวมกัน สามารถพยากรณ์ความสามารถในการอ่านได้อย่างมีนัยสำคัญ ที่ระดับ .05

คำสำคัญ : ความเข้าใจในการอ่าน กลวิธีในการอ่าน การพยากรณ์เหตุการณ์

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The Prediction of the English Reading Comprehension Ability of Thai Undergraduate Students Using Reading Strategies

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Abstract

This study concerns two key areas of students' English reading strategies and the relationship between their reading strategies and the predictors of their reading ability. The objectives are the following: 1) to examine the reading strategies used when Thai EFL students read English passages; 2) to investigate the relationships all of the students' reading strategies and reading abilities; and 3) to examine the extent to which the common reading strategies individually predict the students' reading abilities. The population was second-year students enrolled in a reading course in the Faculty of Applied Science at King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok in Thailand during academic year 2015 for a total of 95 students. The population selected as the sample of this study. The research instruments used in this research consisted of: 1) a reading strategy questionnaire and 2) a reading test.

The findings illustrates that almost all of the students used visualizing (\bar{X} = 3.13 sd = .56) which means that the students tried to see pictures (images) in their mind of actions, people and places to understand the reading text. Another strategy that the students used was guessing the meaning from the context (\bar{X} = 2.98 sd = .53). In terms of the correlation among the reading strategies and the students' reading ability, the highest correlation coefficient was .343 (the pronoun reference and the reading ability score). Regarding the prediction, the regression equation used to predict the score can then be written as follows:

Reading Score = 32.419+ -3.927 (predicting) +-5.188 (opinion) + -4.979 (compare contrast) +3.791 (fact) +4.177 (pronoun reference)

According to the above equation, predicting, opinion, compare contrast, fact and pronoun reference could be used to predict reading ability. As a result, the independent variables were able to individually or in combination significantly predict the reading ability at the .05 level.

Keywords : reading comprehension, reading strategies, prediction

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1. Introduction

In today's global world, the importance of English cannot be denied or ignored since English has been playing a major role in many sectors, including medicine, engineering, and education. English has also become the medium of instruction in the Thai education system because it enables students to communicate internationally, which means that students that are good in English are able to find good jobs related to their fields. Thai people need to be proficient in English in order to be able to communicate with foreigners and to gather information from textbooks, newspapers, journals, and Internet resources that mostly originate from English-speaking countries. Rapidly-developing technology has also led the Thai people to use English as a tool for accessing modern technology. Moreover, English is increasingly important in Thailand because of the proliferation of international businesses and multinational companies. Therefore, in order to prepare the Thai people for the world of business and industry, English is considered to be one of the most essential tools.

One of the most important English skills is reading, and this includes Thai students of science and technology. In terms of skills, reading happens to be the most important because it is regarded widely as a way to acquire knowledge. These students are supposed to be highly qualified scientific and technological personnel that can help push Thailand forward to a society of scientific and technological independence. Furthermore, the ability to deal with English texts is regarded by students as an influence on their career options and educational continuation. It is not unusual to find science and technology students that are unable to read in a comprehensive and autonomous way in this important foreign language. Thus, it is the teachers' task to help students develop independent reading ability, and enhancing this ability should be

considered the major goal of teaching (Akkakoson & Setobol, 2009).

Science and arts students both have problems in reading, and problems with sentence structure; that is, they are not able to understand sentences clearly. Moreover, limited vocabulary knowledge also affects their reading comprehension. Insufficient knowledge of vocabulary and sentence structures causes problems in reading comprehension. Vocabulary knowledge is used to guess the meaning of words while the knowledge of sentence structures is used to determine word order in sentences and the patterns of the language (Chawwang, 2008).

Preceding from the above observations, that is, that Thai students encounter various problems in reading comprehension, this present study seeks to investigate students' reading problems at the university level focusing, specifically on cognitive reading strategies. This research emphasizes on the investigation of the relationship between each reading strategy and reading ability and then exams the extent to which the common reading strategies individually predict reading abilities and exams the reading strategies used when Thai EFL students read English passages. The researcher expects that the findings will be significant in several ways. First in terms of theoretical significance, the findings can contribute to curriculum development-the data can be included when designing a course or preparing lesson plans. In addition the findings can better promote the courses provided for students. By understanding the reading strategies of the students enrolled in the courses, instructors should be able to adjust the content to match student preferences and maximize their learning. Finally, the findings from this research can be included in course books for teaching EFL students reading.

Reading problems have been recognized as one of the main problems of Thai students, and in

order to solve this problem, many experts have stated that reading strategies can be used and these reading strategies can encourage readers to comprehend the reading passages. McNamara (2009) for example stated that reading strategies not only can be used to understand texts, but they can also be used to solve reading problems and help readers be better readers and “comprehenders.” In order to help readers succeed in reading comprehension, the Texas Education Agency (2002) summarized that good readers use various strategies to comprehend the texts they read before, during, and after reading a text.

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) in Sahan (2012) categorize reading strategies as metacognitive, cognitive, and social/affective. Metacognitive strategies are higher-order executive skills that entail planning for, monitoring, or evaluating the success of a reading task. Cognitive strategies refer to the steps or operations used in learning or problem-solving that require direct analysis, transformation, or synthesis of the learning materials. Social/affective strategies, which are exemplified as cooperating and asking for clarification, have to do with the ways in which a learner chooses to interact with other learners and native speakers. From the advantages of the reading strategies mentioned, this research emphasizes using cognitive strategies to examine the relationship between the reading strategies that the students use and their reading ability. The researcher also recognizes that cognitive strategies are useful tools in assisting students with reading problems. Among the cognitive strategies in reading identified by Oxford (1990 cited in Ratna, 2014) are skimming and scanning techniques, using resources for receiving and sending information by using resources, reasoning deductively, analyzing expressions, analyzing contrastively, translating, transferring, taking notes, summarizing and highlighting. The cognitive reading strategies mentioned above are also in line with those

identified by O'Malley and Chamot (1990), which include resourcing, repetition, grouping, deduction, imagery, the keyword method, elaboration, transfer, inferencing, note taking, and summarizing. The use of cognitive reading strategies in reading can help someone become a proficient reader. This idea is supported by the theories of cognitive reading strategies and the results of studies conducted by Ozek and Civelek (2006), Ghonsooly and Eghtesadee (2006), and Hamdan, Ghafar, Sihes & Atan, (2010).

Ratna (2014) also concluded in her study that cognitive reading strategies should be taught to EFL students, especially poor readers that do not use cognitive reading strategies. In other words, the lecturers need to teach the students types of cognitive reading strategies and explain the function of each cognitive strategy. Then, not only cognitive reading strategies but also other strategies can be considered good reading strategies because those strategies can help students grasp the understanding of the text they read.

Griva and Anastasiou (2009) in Pangsap (2012) investigated the awareness of reading strategy use and reading comprehension among poor and good readers. The results indicated that both good and poor readers used a variety of cognitive strategies, and good readers used reading strategies much more frequently than poor readers. According to this, the researcher is interested in investigating the relationship between reading ability and reading strategies.

2. Research questions

The main research questions of the study are as follows:

2.1 What are the various strategies used when Thai EFL students read English passages?

2.2 Is there any relationship between each reading strategy and the students' overall reading ability?

2.3 To what extent can the deployment of reading strategies, individually or in combination, predict the overall reading ability of Thai EFL students?

3. Scope of the study

The scope and participants in the study are as follows:

3.1 The population comprises undergraduate university students enrolled in a reading course at King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok.

3.2 The students included in this research study English as a foreign language (EFL).

4. Related literature

The background literature related to the research is reviewed in the following section.

Reading Comprehension

Many researchers have conducted studies on reading comprehension. For example, Yovanoff, Duesbery, Alonzo, & Tindal (2005).states that reading comprehension consists of the language process and comprehension. Effective reading does not depend on the personal attributes of readers but there are a lot of factors that can effect reading ability. One of these factors is reading strategies which are also considered important.

Reading comprehension process means the ways of understanding the messages that the writers want to communicate with the readers. This process is not necessary to be used only in the academic area but the readers can apply it in their everyday life. Moreover, the reading comprehension process can be applied to other languages not only to the readers' first language (May & Rizzardi 2002). Students' achievement in reading comprehension forms the basis for their success in other courses (Bloom, 1976). There is research that has revealed that reading comprehension is directly related to the achievement in science (O'Reilly & McNamara, 2007) and mathematics (Vilenius-Tuohimaa, Aunola,

& Nurmi, 2008; Walker, Zhang, & Surber, 2008). In an attempt to teach reading comprehension skills that are regarded as having great importance, educators and teachers can use different strategies, methods, techniques and tools in reading comprehension activities.

Some researchers, such as Best, Rowe, Ozura, and McNamara (2005), state that reading comprehension is a skill that is critical in the educational success of all individuals. Without adequate reading comprehension skills, students can struggle in many subject areas. Reading comprehension is an important skill needed for all areas of school. Subjects, other than reading or literature, where comprehension skills are significantly important include science, social studies, and math. In the area of science, research indicates that many students comprehend science texts poorly. It has also been found that students lack the specific reading strategies to generate inferences that aid in the understanding of science texts.

It can be concluded that reading comprehension skills are important language processes needed for many subject areas, and if students lack comprehension skills it may be difficult for them progress in their reading efficiently.

Cognitive reading strategy

Some researchers have concluded that efficient readers utilize from five to nine cognitive strategies. The five major strategies are activating schemata, constructing and asking questions (prior and during reading), analyzing text structure or story structure, visualizing, and summarizing (Dymock and Nicholson 2010).

A number of studies about cognitive strategies have summarized that cognitive strategies are useful tools in assisting students with learning problems. The term "cognitive strategies" in its simplest form is the use of the mind (cognition) to solve a problem

or complete a task. Cognitive strategies may also be referred to as procedural facilitators (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987) procedural prompts.

Rosenshine, 1997) or scaffolds (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). A related term is metacognition, the self-reflection or “thinking about thinking” necessary for students to learn effectively (Baker, Gersten, & Scanlon, 2002).

Ratna (2014) has also concluded that research has revealed that the use of cognitive learning strategies in classroom instruction and learning is fundamental to successful learning. The types of cognitive reading strategies used in this study are for example resourcing, repetition, grouping, deduction, imagery, getting the idea quickly, elaboration, inferencing, note taking, and summarizing. (Oxford 1990, O’Malley & Chamot, 1990, Ozek & Civelek, 2006).

It could be concluded that cognitive reading strategies are very useful tools in assisting students with their reading problems.

Students’ reading problems

A great deal of research has explored the types of problems that college students experience, such as that of Yi and Zhang (2006) cited in Wutthisingchai (2011),, who analyzed the factors of English reading difficulties from a psycholinguistic perspective. There were four researchers concluded studies to prove whether lacking of linguistics knowledge, content and background knowledge would lead to the difficulties in reading abilities. Moreover, they suggested the ways to increase readers’ background knowledge and metacognitive ability. The results showed that lack of appropriate schema constituted a major reason for the Chinese college students’ reading difficulties. A clear picture was also drawn of the difficulty in their reading.

Brashdi (2002) studied the nature of the problems that students encountered in comprehending English texts and the way in which

they processed such texts. In this study, it was reported that vocabulary was the most difficult part of the students’ comprehension. Other comprehension problems included style of writing, speed of reading, difficulty in getting the main idea of the text, and not being given enough time for reading. Moreover, he also investigated the use of strategies in processing different text types by proficient and less proficient readers. It was found that the strategies used with different text types seemed to affect the kinds of strategies used by both groups of readers in processing the given story than the given comprehension passage, and proficient readers seemed to employ more types and frequencies of strategies used in processing both texts than the less proficient readers did.

From many researches we may conclude that students’ reading problems may stem from the lack of linguistic competence and vocabulary.

Reading Strategies used to solve problems

Many researchers have attempted to investigate reading problems and the way to solve these problems because reading ability is very important in our life. Chuenta (2002) investigated English reading problems and the needs of graduate students in her studies. The results showed that the top three problems of the participants were a lack of the ability to grasp the main idea, the inability to read quickly due to limited vocabulary, and the lack of the ability to use appropriate reading strategies. Moreover, there were many factors that affected the participants’ reading problems, such as too difficult texts, no time to read, lack of background knowledge, and being faced with technical terms, phrases, idioms, and unfamiliar words.

In conclusion, the problem in reading is based on the readers and the texts. Readers always lack prior knowledge and lack linguistic skills. However, some texts are linguistically complicated.

To solve reading problems, there are many strategies that can help readers understand what they are reading better.

5. Research Methodology

The purposive sampling technique was used with second-year undergraduate university students enrolled in a reading course during the second semester of academic year 2015 at King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok. They were students in the Faculty of Applied Science.

The research instruments used in this study consisted of 1) a reading strategy questionnaire and 2) a reading test.

The purpose of the questionnaire was to determine the reading strategies that the students use in reading general and academic passages. The students reported the reading strategies they used in the questionnaire items. The questionnaire was designed to direct the students' attention to reading strategies. The questionnaire items mainly focused on cognitive strategies, using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 4 (4 = always, 3 = regularly, 2 = sometimes, and 1 = never). The study focused on the students' reading strategies used for both general and academic passages.

The reading test consisted of 80 items with regard to the reading strategies, particularly cognitive strategies.

The data obtained from each research instrument were analyzed in order to answer the research questions. The analyses in relation to the research questions can be found in the following section.

1. What are the reading strategies used when Thai EFL students read English passages? The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed according to arithmetic mean (\bar{X}) and standard deviation (s.d.).

2. Is there any relationship between each reading strategy and the students' reading ability? The data obtained from the questionnaire and the reading test were analyzed by means of descriptive statistics (\bar{X} and s.d.) and Pearson product-moment coefficients.

3. To what extent can the reading Strategies individually or in combination predict the reading ability of Thai EFL students?

The data obtained from the questionnaire and the English test were analyzed using multiple regression analysis since this is an appropriate technique for the modeling and analysis of numerical data.

The strategies used in this research were skimming, scanning, finding the main ideas, supporting details, predicting, visualizing, guessing the meaning from context, association, drawing a conclusion, judging, identifying inferences, purpose, tone, fact, opinion, pronoun reference, sequence, compare/contrast, and cause and effect.

6. Results

In accordance with the research questions, the findings that were gathered were compiled as follows.

Research question 1: What are the various strategies used when Thai EFL students read English passages?

Table 1 Descriptive statistics of groups of reading strategies

Reading strategies	\bar{X}	SD
Skimming	2.97	.50
Predicting	2.98	.64
Scanning	2.82	.56
Main idea	2.87	.54
Supporting details	2.71	.57
Opinion	2.56	.57
Guessing the meaning	2.98	.53
Association	2.87	.59
Drawing conclusion	2.92	.49
Cause effect	2.86	.44
Compare/contrast	2.81	.57
Visualizing	3.13	.56
Sequence	2.87	.61
Purpose	2.62	.66
Tone	2.72	.56
Fact	2.62	.60
Judging	2.69	.63
Identifying inferences	2.82	.52
Pronoun reference	2.81	.59

According to the answers to research question 1, Table 1 illustrates that almost all of the students used visualizing (\bar{X} =3.13 s.d. = .56). This suggests that the students tried to envisage pictures (images) in their mind of actions, people, and place in order to understand the reading text. Another strategy that the students deployed was guessing the meaning from the context (\bar{X} =2.98 s.d. = .53). It can be said that the students prefer using contextual clues to understand the meaning of unknown words so that they can continue reading and understand the text.

The next strategy concerns prediction (\bar{X} = 2.98 s.d. = .64). Students make predictions by asking themselves the question, “What will happen next?” This will assist them in improving their comprehension of the passages they are reading. The researcher also found that the students used skimming (\bar{X} =2.97 s.d. = .50) and scanning (\bar{X} = 2.82 s.d. = .56).

Research question 2: Is there a relationship between each of the reading strategies and the students’ reading abilities?

Table 2 The correlation coefficients of all reading strategies and reading ability

Reading Strategies		Correlations
Skimming:	Correlation	.166
	Sig (2 tailed)	.103
Predicting:	Correlation	.018
	Sig (2 tailed)	.864
Scanning:	Correlation	.011
	Sig (2 tailed)	.917
Main idea:	Correlation	.074
	Sig (2 tailed)	.473
Supporting details:	Correlation	.182
	Sig (2 tailed)	.074
Opinion:	Correlation	.071
	Sig (2 tailed)	.492
Guessing the meaning:	Correlation	.230
	Sig (2 tailed)	.024
Association:	Correlation	.116
	Sig (2 tailed)	.258
Drawing conclusion:	Correlation	.162
	Sig (2 tailed)	.114
Cause effect:	Correlation	.252
	Sig (2 tailed)	.013
Compare contrast:	Correlation	.069
	Sig (2 tailed)	.507
Visualizing:	Correlation	.125
	Sig (2 tailed)	.221
Sequence:	Correlation	.177
	Sig (2 tailed)	.084
Purpose:	Correlation	.044
	Sig (2 tailed)	.668
Tone:	Correlation	.007
	Sig (2 tailed)	.947
Fact:	Correlation	.248
	Sig (2 tailed)	.014
Judging:	Correlation	.010
	Sig (2 tailed)	.926
Identifying inference:	Correlation	.112
	Sig (2 tailed)	.277
Pronoun reference:	Correlation	.343
	Sig(2 tailed)	.001

The data obtained from the questionnaire and the reading test were analyzed by means of descriptive statistics (\bar{X} and s.d.) and Pearson product-moment coefficients.

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between each independent variable and reading ability at the .05 level. (H1: $r \neq 0$)

In terms of the correlation among the reading strategies and reading ability, the highest correlation coefficient was .343 (the pronoun reference and the

reading ability score). However, the lowest correlation found was opinion ($r = -.071$). This suggests that opinion does not have any effect on the students' understanding of whether they know the opinion of the writer.

Research question 3: To what extent can the reading strategies individually or in combination predict the reading ability of Thai EFL students?

Table 3 Model summary of the multiple regression analysis model summary

Model	R	R Squared	Adjusted R Squared	Std. Error of The Estimate
1	.635 (a)	.403	.251	7.101

The data obtained from the questionnaire and the reading test were analyzed using multiple regression analysis since this is a technique for the modeling and analysis of numerical data.

Hypothesis 2: The independent variables can individually or in combination significantly predict reading ability at the .05 level. (H2: at least one $B \neq 0$) The relationship between the reading ability score and the independent variable is positive at a moderate level. The R-Square was .403, which means that the independent variables could explain

40.3% of the variance in the score. The standard error of the estimate was 7.101.

Predicting, opinion, compare/contrast, fact, and pronoun reference were the predictor variables where the t-value was statistically significant at the .05 level. (Predicting ($B=-3.927$, $t=-2.452$, $p= .017$), opinion ($B=-5.188$, $t=-2.926$, $p=.005$), compare contrast ($B=-4.979$, $t=-2.353$, $p=.021$), fact ($B=3.791$, $t= 2.522$, $p=0.14$), and pronoun reference ($B=4.177$, $t=2.589$, $p= .012$)).

Table 4 Coefficients of the regression model coefficients (a) a dependent variable: reading scores

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error
1	(Constant)	32.419	7.679		4.222	.000
	skimming	3.420	1.861	.211	1.838	.070
	predicting	-3.927	1.602	-.309	-2.452	.017
	scanning	.189	1.581	.013	.120	.905
	main idea	-1.236	1.946	-.083	-.635	.527
	supporting details	3.420	1.846	.236	1.853	.068

Table 4 (Continued)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error
1	opinion	-5.188	1.773	-.360	-2.926	.005
	guessing the meaning	1.355	1.740	.088	.779	.439
	association	.153	1.636	.011	.093	.926
	drawing conclusion	2.407	2.012	.144	1.196	.235
	cause effect	2.726	2.128	.149	1.281	.204
	compare/contrast	-4.979	2.116	-.346	-2.353	.021
	visualizing	1.773	2.152	.123	.824	.413
	sequence	3.488	1.876	.258	1.859	.067
	purpose	-1.179	1.497	-.095	-.787	.434
	tone	-.366	2.059	-.025	-.178	.859
	fact	3.791	1.503	.279	2.522	.014
	judging	-1.442	1.575	-.112	-.915	.363
	identifying inferences	-.171	1.860	-.011	-.092	.927
	pronoun reference	4.177	1.614	.299	2.589	.012

The regression equation used to predict the SCORE can then be written as follows:

Reading Score = 32.419+ 3.927 (predicting) + -5.188 (opinion) + - 4.979 (compare contrast) + 3.791 (fact) + 4.177 (pronoun reference)

According to the above equation, predicting, opinion, compare/contrast, fact, and pronoun reference increase by -3.927 with the standard error of 1.602 (predicting), -5.188 with the standard error of 1.773 (opinion), - 4.979 with the standard error of 2.116 (compare/contrast), 3.791 with the standard error of 1.503 (fact), and 4.177 with the standard error of 1.614 (pronoun reference).

From the results, Hypothesis 2, which posits that the independent variables can individually or in combination significantly predict reading ability at the .05 level. (H2: at least one B≠0), was verified.

7. Discussion

The issues arising from the findings of this study are discussed in this section of the article.

1. The reading strategies mostly used by the students when reading English passages was the visualizing strategy. This indicates that the students tried to form pictures in their mind based on the text. Being able to create images while reading appears to be an essential element of reading comprehension. In fact, without visualization, students may not comprehend the text clearly. Allen (2013) have noted that visualizing has a way of strengthening reading comprehension skills as students gain a more thorough understanding of the text they are reading by consciously using the words to create mental images. As students engage in more deliberate practice with this skill, the act

of visualizing text is likely to become internalized and spontaneous. Students that visualize as they read will potential not only have a richer reading experience but will be able to recall what they have read for longer periods of time (Harvey & Goudvis 2000). Visualizing text as it is being read or heard also creates personal links between the readers, listeners, and the text. Readers that can imagine the characters they read about, for instance, may become more involved with what they are reading. This would make for a more meaningful reading experience and promote continued reading.

Another strategy mostly used by the students was guessing the meaning from the context. The students tried to use context to understand the meaning of the unknown words so that they could continue reading. Confronted with texts, language learners may be stuck by a shortage of vocabulary inventory and thus be unable to understand what texts are about (Rhalmi Mohammed 2013). This particular technique encourages students to understand the text and encourages them to continue reading.

2. There is a relationship between each of the reading strategies and the students' reading ability. The highest correlation coefficient was for the pronoun reference and the reading ability score. Students are able to follow the flow of the ideas and understand the passage if they are able to identify the pronoun references. In this case, the students' reading ability score will increase if they can understand what the pronoun reference refers to.

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be seen from the findings and observations that reading strategies are crucial to comprehension. On the part of classroom teachers, an understanding of the role of reading strategies in overall comprehension will go a long way to helping them appreciate the way that learners relate to text and to plan their classroom strategies accordingly.

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