

ผลของการเสริมกิจกรรมการอ่านอังกฤษต่อความสามารถเขียนอังกฤษของ
นักศึกษาพยาบาลชั้นปีที่ 3

The Effects of Supplementing English Reading Activities on the
English Writing Ability of Third Year Nursing Students

Received : 2019-04-04

Revised : 2019-12-02

Accepted : 2019-12-02

ผู้วิจัย ปรัชมน อักษรจรุง¹

Prachamon Aksornjarung¹

kinikukhan@gmail.com

รุ่งแก้ว พุ่มโพธิ์²

Rungkaew Phumpho²

บทคัดย่อ

เป็นที่รู้กันในเชิงลบว่าผู้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ (EFL) ในประเทศไทยด้อยกว่าผู้เรียนในกลุ่มประเทศประชาคมอาเซียนเมื่อคำนึงถึงความสามารถด้านภาษาอังกฤษ จากการสังเกตของผู้วิจัย นักศึกษาพยาบาลของมหาวิทยาลัยเอกชนแห่งหนึ่งในภาคกลางประเทศไทยถือว่ารวมอยู่ในกลุ่มความสามารถต่ำ การศึกษานี้ซึ่งใช้แนวคิดความเชื่อมโยงของการอ่าน-การเขียน มีจุดประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาผลของการใช้กิจกรรมการอ่านเสริมในวิชาการเขียนจะสามารถเพิ่มพูนความสามารถเขียน 2 ด้าน (ความสามารถเขียนโดยรวม และความซับซ้อนของประโยค) และจำนวนคำศัพท์ภาษาอังกฤษได้หรือไม่ โดยศึกษาว่าผู้เรียนถ่ายโอนความรู้จากประสบการณ์การอ่านไปสู่การเขียนหรือไม่ นักศึกษาพยาบาลชั้นปีที่ 3 จำนวน 60 คน ถูกเลือกอย่างเจาะจงจากประชากรนักศึกษาพยาบาลชั้นปีที่ 3 จำนวน 138 คน ซึ่งเรียนวิชาการเขียนอังกฤษกับผู้วิจัย กลุ่มตัวอย่างถูกจัดให้อยู่ในกลุ่ม ทดลองและกลุ่มควบคุม กลุ่มละ 30 คน กลุ่มทดลองอ่านบทความและทำกิจกรรมท้ายจำนวน 7 บทควบคู่กับการเรียนการเขียนในชั้น นักศึกษาทั้ง 2 กลุ่ม ทำข้อสอบก่อนและหลังการทดลอง ผลการวิจัยพบว่า ที่ระดับนัยสำคัญทางสถิติ $\alpha < 0.05$ กลุ่มทดลองมีผลการเรียนดีกว่ากลุ่มควบคุมในด้านคำศัพท์ (0.030^*) และความซับซ้อนของโครงสร้างประโยค (0.018^*) ตามลำดับข้อค้นพบในงานวิจัยนี้ได้ข้อมูลสนับสนุนทฤษฎีการเชื่อมโยงของการอ่าน-การเขียน

คำสำคัญ : การเชื่อมโยงของการอ่าน-การเขียน, ผู้เรียนไทย, กิจกรรมการอ่าน, ความสามารถเขียนภาษาอังกฤษ, นักศึกษาพยาบาล

¹ ผู้ช่วยศาสตราจารย์ สาขาภาษาอังกฤษ มหาวิทยาลัยคริสเตียน จ.นครปฐม

Assistant Professor Dr. in English Program Christian University

² อาจารย์ สาขาภาษาอังกฤษ มหาวิทยาลัยคริสเตียน จ. นครปฐม

Teacher in English Program Christian University

Abstract

Thai EFL (English as a foreign language) learners have notoriously known as being inferior to most of their ASEAN counterparts considering the English language proficiency. Based on the researcher's observation, nursing students at a private university in the central Thailand could be included in the marginal proficiency group. Adhered to a reading-writing connection framework, the study aimed to investigate the effects of the intervention of the writing course by supplementing with reading activities could improve the learners' two aspects of writing ability (the overall writing ability and the ability to use sentences of different complexity), and lexical repertoire, with the general objective to study whether the learners transfer the knowledge from their reading experiences to the writing. Sixty 3rd year nursing students were purposely selected from the population of 138 nursing students enrolling in the English Writing course taught by the researchers. Thirty participants were assigned to the experiment group and thirty to controlled group. The experiment subjects were assigned to read seven reading passages with following-up activities along with the writing course. A pre-test and a post-test were administered to both groups. It was found that statistically, at α 0.05, the experiment group performed statistically significantly better in lexicon (0.030*), and sentence complexity (0.018*), respectively. To certain extent the present study has added a piece of evidence to the theory of reading and writing connection.

Keywords: reading-writing connection, Thai learners, reading activities, English writing ability, nursing students

Introduction

Statement of the Research Problem

The English language has played a vital role globally for several decades since the founding of the United Nations (Crystal, 2003). In this digital society in particular, English is most widely used compared to other languages. The extent of significance English has been recognized as depicted by an authority of *World Englishes*, David Crystal, in his book as quoted below.

[P]eople all over the world, in many walks of life, have come to depend on English for their economic and social well-being. The language has penetrated deeply into the international domains of political life, business, safety, communication, entertainment, the media and education.... Several domains, as we shall see, have come to be totally dependent on it – the computer software industry being a prime example. (p. 29-30)

All world population, thus, seem to be required to have a certain degree of the English language proficiency. This situation has well been realized by the Thai Government. According to the Basic Education Core Curriculum (BEC), Thai learners study English for 12 years or more in the school system. In addition, a large number of non-Thai English teachers have been hired to teach English in both school and university levels. Despite no official number of non-Thai English instructors reported, an annual income acquired by a company was over ten million Baht simply running a non-Thai teacher recruiting agent (Isranews.org, 2561, pp. 1).

When the language has become a global language and the official lingua franca of the ASEAN since 2015, as declared in The ASEAN Charter, Article 34 (Association of South East Asian Countries, 2015), the organization to which Thailand is firmly affiliated as a founding member, English received even more attention in Thailand.

The present government, leading by Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, has launched a new policy; from November 2016 onward Grade 1 to 3 students are required to learn English for 5 hours a week (Frederickson, 2016). The English learning policy not only involves time but also financial investment. The government has allocated a generous budget for the Thai education, including English education (OBEC, 2017).

Despite the huge capital investment and the government's recognition of the importance of the language, it was reported recently that the English language competence or ability of Thai people was very low (Kaur, Young, & Kirkpatrick, 2016). An evidence was reported in the EF English Proficiency Index 2017 conducted by Education First Language Institute; Thailand ranked 16th out of 20 countries in Asia and 53rd out of 80 countries worldwide (EF EPT, 2017). The report of 2018 showed as low rank; i.e. Thailand was at the Low Level group, ranked 64 from 80 countries (EF EPT, 2018).

Concerning this issue, a large body of research studies covering all the four skills have been conducted in the Thai context. Related to the English writing skill, studies have focused on several areas. In the field of English language teaching (ELT), it has been well documented that writing is the most difficult skill for English learners to master (Widodo, 2006). Difficulties in teaching and learning writing are also reported (Tangpermpoon, 2008). Empirical studies on writing in the ELT covers several issues, including errors in writing, writing assessment, coherence in writing, new technology and writing, genre-based writing instruction, written discourse analysis, Genre-based writing instruction, as listed in Chuenchaichon (2015).

Rather considerable attempt has been made to improve the teaching and learning English writing and resolve problems involving writing. Techniques in teaching writing have interested a number of researchers. Toh (2000) reported on a practical writing workshop for Thai teachers of English in a rural area in Thailand. It was proposed in the workshop project to employ the genre approach to help teachers look beyond structural elements like vocabulary, punctuation, and spelling. In another study, Kaewkasi & Aksornjarung (2013) investigated the effects of two types of direct corrective feedback (DCF) on writing by a group of Thai EFL university students to find out the proper way of giving feedback to writing. Most recently, in a quantitative based study, Boonyaratanasontorn (2018) investigated the use of writing strategies of a group of college EFL learners. The problems in writing English of the sample groups were also examined in the same study were the problems in writing English of the sample group. She reported that the subjects experienced several types and degrees of writing problems. In addition, grammar was found the most problematic for the subjects.

A more recent concept in teaching composition is integrating reading and writing in the writing class to enhance the learner's writing ability. Three approaches were advanced to explain the connection of reading and writing, namely rhetorical relations, procedural connections, and shared knowledge (Tierney & Shanahan, 1991, cited in Fitzgerald & Shanahan, 2000). In this vein, there is literature confirming that a number of ESL / EFL researchers advocate for teaching the two skills together.

Nonetheless, to date research on reading-writing connection involving Thai EFL nursing learners has not been conducted. Besides English proficiency of the Thai as a whole, English language ability has been a big challenge for nursing students. Like those nursing students learning English as a second language (ESL), those learning the language as a foreign language (like Thai, Japanese, etc.) have also found facing the challenge (Malu & Figlear, 1998). Li, Chen & Duanmu (2010), for example, reported that the nursing students in Australia had difficulties with comprehending lectures and academic texts, writing academic English, and using technical terms. In particular, while performance in the hospital context, they were found encountered difficulties with communicating in English with people involved. In a qualitative study, Miguel, & Rogan (2012) found that, aside

from pronunciation, those ESL nursing students needed to improve literally all aspects of the English language ability--grammar, sentence structure, spelling, terminology, abbreviations, and writing.

The present study, thus, aims to investigate the effect of intervention of writing class by supplementing reading activities. The results are expected to shed certain light on this instruction approach to the Thai teachers of EFL writing.

Objectives of the Research

1. To examine whether the use of English reading activities improve learners' English writing skill.
2. To examine whether the use of English reading activities result in learners' incidental English vocabulary learning.
3. To examine the subjects' attitudes supplementing reading activities to the English writing course.

Conceptual Framework

The concept of reading and writing connection / relationship the present study adhered to is the Shared Knowledge Approach (Fitzgerald & Shanahan, 2000), as quoted below.

Shared knowledge and cognitive processes between reading and writing.... [R]eading and writing are constellations of cognitive processes that depend on knowledge representations at various linguistic levels (phonemic, orthographic, semantic, syntactic, pragmatics). Reading and writing are connected, according to such views, because they depend on identical or similar knowledge representations, cognitive processes, and contexts and contextual constraints (Fitzgerald & Shanahan, 2000, pp. 40).

In this instance reading is the facilitating mode for writing (Rijlaarsdam & Bergh, 2005). Recent research suggests that readers and writers share five kinds of knowledge when they compose.

1) Information knowledge. This includes world knowledge and concepts that a reader needs from the texts and from their own background of experience to comprehend the text; and the information that the writer has and uses the text to convey it. The information gained in reading benefits writing and, at the same time, writing gives and clarifies this information.

2) Structural knowledge. This knowledge has been traditionally taught through writing programs. It comprises knowledge of structure of discourse and writing formulas (problem- solution frames, cohesion and coherence devices, etc.). Writers usually produce texts with structure and readers use this structure when they convey meaning.

In this knowledge, however, it is difficult to assess the reading and writing effects as separate processes.

3) Transactional knowledge. This knowledge involves the conceptualization of a text as a medium of communication between author and reader and makes people consider the audience which also influences the writer's topic choice and revision. On the other hand, readers make use of it by investigating and questioning the author's purpose and style.

4) Aesthetic knowledge. This knowledge implies certain alliterate styles, interjections, length which echo in the readers and writers ears and affect their choices.

5) Procedural knowledge. This knowledge makes readers and writers aware of their writing/ reading process which helps them make conscious decisions about revising and the strategy to use in rereading (Rubin and Hansen, 1984).

To sum up, by orienting the students to read in search of meaning, the type and amount of reading material to which they are exposed will influence their choice of topic, writing style and vocabulary while writing. Writers make use of reading in a number of different ways: as they develop drafts, as they review their notes during writing, as they compare their style with that of other authors, as they work and evaluate their arguments (Tierney & Leys, 1984).

Expanded from the concept, several reading-writing connection models were advanced. Kroll (1993), for instance, maintained that initial research suggests a correlation between reading and writing ability in second language learning and the transfer of reading/writing skills across languages. It was also suggested that teachers establish mediating links between students and the academy: devising a sequential, recursive syllabus based on reading and writing, and finding writing tasks that foster critical thinking and which maximize the students' interaction with the text.

Based on the transfer of skills hypothesis, three models of reading – writing connection are advanced: 1) directional, 2) non-directional, and 3) bidirectional model. Each of these models indicates a different relationship between the development of reading and writing skills.

Eisterhold (1993) confirmed the relationship between first language reading and writing indicates that better writers tend to be better readers, better writers read more than poorer writers, and better readers produce more syntactically mature writing than poorer readers. To this end, the researchers aimed to examine whether supplementing reading activities would have positive effects on EFL adults learners' writing ability and vocabulary.

Literature Review

A large body of reading-writing connection research studies have been conducted in the ESL context. Results of those reading-writing connection in the ESL context supported the positive correlation of the two skills, which is not reviewed in this article

due to space limitation. Presented below, thus, is a brief review of recent related studies in the EFL context.

Parodi (2007) conducted a large scale study having four hundred and thirty-nine grade eight learners participating. The purpose of the study was to investigate the connection between reading and writing from a discourse and cognitive perspective. Participants were administered four tests. It was found that there was a significant coefficient between reading and writing of argumentative texts in all the psycholinguistic levels analyzed was found.

Another study, Habibi, Salleh, & Singh (2015) studied the effect of integrating reading in writing tasks to enhance the English writing skills of EFL Iranian students studying in an international school in Malaysia. It was found that after the reading intervention the participants' writing skills improved significantly.

In addition to studies conducted with school graders and university learners, there are also studies that investigated the reading-writing connection in the English learning of learners at the vocational level. Mokhamar (2016), for example, examined the effects of combining reading and writing skills on paragraph writing of Palestine vocational college students. It was found there were a significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and that of the control one in writing paragraph. The experimental group had more improvement in their scores than the control group did. Hence, results showed that integrating reading and writing skills can positively affect students' writing ability

Those are cross-sectional studies aimed at investigating the effect of reading on writing ability. Reading-writing connection was also investigated employing longitudinal design. Ahmed, Wagner, & Danielle (2014) investigated long term relations between reading and writing skills at the word, sentence and text levels. Latent change score models were used to compare unidirectional pathways (reading-to-writing and writing-to-reading) and bidirectional pathways in a test of nested models. Measures of reading included pseudo-word decoding, sentence reading efficiency, oral reading fluency and passage comprehension. Measures of writing included spelling, a sentence combining task and writing prompts. It was found that a reading-to-writing model better described the data for the word and text levels of language, but a bidirectional model best fit the data.

In the Thai context, the reading-writing connection has not interested much attention of writing instructors or researchers. Kirin (2010) investigated the correlation of extensive reading and English writing ability of a group of non-English major students. The subjects were assigned to read abridged books weekly for 15 weeks, with varying amount of reading at the readers' willingness. They wrote an essay every five weeks. It was found that those who read smaller amount, characterized as 'High' group, did not improve their writing ability, while those characterized as 'Low' performed better. In

other words, a marginal degree of connection between the two skills was found, which was insufficient to support other previous studies.

The present study, although somewhat similar to that of Kirin in terms of experiment, was conducted in the context of ESP (English for Specific purpose). Results of the present study, therefore, was expected to add to the existing body of research in this area in relation to Thai ESP learners.

Research Methodology

Research Procedure

The present study was carried out at a small private university in the central part of Thailand. The context of study was a lower-intermediate writing course taught by the researchers. The course was organized as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: English writing Course Outline

Week	Contents
Week 1	Course Orientation & Part of Speech
Week 2	Part of Speech (Cont.) & Basic Sentence patterns (declarative, negative and interrogative)
Week 3	Sentence Structure (Simple Sentences)
Week 4	Sentence Structure Compound Sentences
Week 5	Sentence Structure Complex Sentences
Week 6	Writing Process
Week 7	Paragraph Writing , Paragraph Components
Week 8	<i>Midterm Exam</i>
Week 9	Descriptive Paragraph (Describing People)
Week 10	Descriptive Paragraph (Describing Places)
Week 11	Narrative Paragraph
Week 12	Argumentative Paragraph
Week 13	Basic Essay Writing
Week 14	Basic Essay Writing (Continue)
Week 15	Basic Essay Writing (Continue)
Week 16	<i>Final Exam</i>

As shown in Table 1, the writing course was a 3-hour one-meeting per week course. Regarding the course contents, due to the fact that the students were considered having limited language proficiency, almost the whole time of the first half of the semester was devoted to the review of basic language elements—parts of speech,

sentence structure, etc.; the course materials were prepared by the researchers. Along the course students were required to do weekly exercises as well as two quizzes, besides the mid-term and the final examination.

Participants

The present study was carried out during the second semester of the 2018 academic year in Thailand. Restricted by the availability of the target group, the researchers employed a purposive selection technique. Sixty students chosen from the population of 138 third year nursing students, aged 20 to 24 years. All the participants enrolled in the' writing course conducted by the researchers. Thirty students were randomly assigned to the control and thirty to the experiment groups. They were rather homogeneous in that they were all third year nursing students, and only two (3.33 percent) out of 60 were male, as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Demographic Profile

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	2	3.33 %
Female	58	96.67 %
Year Levels		
First Year	0	0.00 %
Second	0	0.00 %
Third Year	60	100.00 %
Fourth Year	0	0.00 %

Instruments and data collection

Research instrument consisted of 1) a pre-post-test consisting of 2 parts: an essay writing test, and a vocabulary test; 2) a questionnaire asking about the subjects' background information and attitudes about English language learning and reading supplement (carried out in small group interview sessions for experiment subjects after the last reading supplement), and 3) seven reading passages with relevant exercises (for experimental subjects).

The pre-post-test consisted of a writing test and a vocabulary test. In the writing test the participants were requested to write an essay of 250 words on a topic related to health science. Regarding the vocabulary test, to assess their vocabulary repertoire, they were given a list of 50 words selected from the seven reading tasks, which were selected based on the rationale that all the 60 subjects were nursing students. Thus, all the passages and selected words included in the vocabulary test involved general health. As they were third year students, all the participants were assumed to have

exposed to the selected words in other nursing courses. They were requested to write the meaning of each word in Thai, their mother tongue language.

The reading passages, selected from On-line sources, were about health issues. The exercises following each reading assignment varied according to the contents of the passages. Comprehension questions were asked in all of the reading assignments. Some contained information arrangement exercise, for instance. The test items in the vocabulary test administered as the pre-and post-test were selected from the reading passages. In the essay writing test the sample group was asked to write an essay of 200-250 words on *how to keep oneself healthy*.

As for the subjects' attitudes towards the reading supplement, an open-ended questions were given in small group interview sessions. The question for the group interview was: *What are your opinions or attitudes towards the reading tasks supplementing your English writing course?* The interview sessions were conducted by the major researcher at the interviewees' time availability. Audio recording were made for the subsequent coding and analysis carried out together by the two researchers.

Data Analysis procedure

Data analysis consisted of the analysis of the quantitative data obtained from the writing and vocabulary tests. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviation) were computed to answer the research questions. The data obtain from the questionnaire, which consisted of closed and open-ended questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics (demographic information) and qualitative analysis (information from the open-ended question).

The essay writing scores were rated by the researchers using the criteria adapted from a published grading rubric (<http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/criteria.pdf>), as shown in table 3.

Table 3: Writing elements under investigation

Element rated	Contents covered
Organization	Coherence, logically organized, transitions used between ideas and paragraphs, overall unity of ideas.
Content	Synthesis of ideas, in-depth analysis and evidence of original thought and support for the topic.
Paragraph development	The main points developed, quality and quantity support, extent of critical thinking.
Grammar and mechanics	Sentence types, Spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors including fragments, comma splices, and run-ons.
Style	Variety in sentence structure, diction, rhetorical devices, and coordination.

Two raters (researchers) graded each essay according to the criteria in Table 3. Scores on paragraph and essay its organization, level of content, and paragraph development were employed to assess the subjects' overall writing ability. Grammar and mechanics, and style, on the other hand, were used to identify the sentence complexity in the writing. In grading the essays, the first rater was not allowed to make any comments or remark on each essay to avoid opinion leading. Upon finishing, the scores of each subject from the two raters were combined and divided by two to reach the mean score. If the scores of any essay given by the two raters differed more than 4, the particular essay would be reread by the two raters and rerated until a consensus was reached to ensure rater reliability.

In addition to the quantitative data analysis, a qualitative data analysis was conducted using the data sought from the open-ended question of the question: *What are your opinions or attitudes towards the reading tasks supplementing your English writing course?*

Summary of Results

Findings

Through the quantitative and qualitative data analysis, two conclusions were reached: a) reading is connected to writing in certain aspects, and b) reading connected to an increase in number of vocabulary, as reported below. In addition, students' attitudes toward the reading supplement were found positive.

Reading-writing connection

To answer the two research questions, the data collected were analyzed using descriptive analysis. Percentages of the focus contents were calculated, followed by a subsequent analysis to identify the means. A series of t-test was also conducted to identify the difference between means of the scores of the aspects under investigation performed by the controlled and experiment groups. Presented below are the results reported according to the research questions.

Research question 1: Does the use of English reading activities improve learners' English writing skill?

To answer Research Question 1, researchers examined two aspects of essay writing: the overall writing ability (OWAb), and syntactic complexity (SCpx). The OWAb was rated according to the grading rubric aforementioned (<http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/criteria.pdf>).

Table 4: Post-test scores on the three aspects under investigation of the Control and Experiment Groups

	Control group	Experiment group	t	P
	\bar{X} (SD)	\bar{X} (SD)		
OWAb	13.07 (1.44)	13.68 (1.31)	-1.73	0.088
VR	12.63 (1.30)	13.33 (1.12)	-2.23	0.030*
SCp	13.00 (0.92)	13.58 (0.93)	-2.45	0.018*

∞ 0.05

Table 4 shows the means scores (\bar{X}), standard deviation (SD) of the overall writing ability (OWAb), syntactic complexity (SCpx), and vocabulary repertoire (VR) performed by the two sample groups. It is shown that there was no significant difference between means of the OWAb performed by the two groups after the intervention, $P = 0.088$, ∞ = 0.05. In contrast, a statistically significant difference was found in the means scores of vocabulary repertoire between the experiment and control groups, 0.030*, ∞ 0.05. Likewise, a statistically significant difference was found in the means scores of sentence complexity between the experiment and control groups, 0.018*, ∞ 0.05. In other words, the experimental group scored better than their counterpart in two aspects under investigation: vocabulary and sentence complexity.

Reading-vocabulary connection

Research question 2: Does teaching English writing by using reading activities affect in learners' incidental English vocabulary learning?

To answer Research Question 2, we ran a statistical test to find whether there was any change in the learners' vocabulary repertoire (VR). Results of the test are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Comparison of Pre-Post-test vocabulary scores of the experiment group

	\bar{X}	SD	t	P
Pre Voc	10.90	1.45	-13.72	0.000*
Post Voc	13.33	1.12		

∞ 0.05

Table 5 shows that the experimental subjects performed better in the post-test than the pre-test. The means scores of the pre-and post-test on vocabulary were 10.90 and 13.33, respectively.

Students' View toward Reading supplement

To determine the subjects' attitudes towards supplementing reading activities to their actual writing course, they are requested to answer a questionnaire and attend a group interview. Besides demographic information, we reached the answer to an open

ended question in group of three interviews: *What are your opinions or attitudes towards the reading tasks supplementing your English writing course?*

It was found that the subjects had positive attitudes. The responses were grouped into three categories. The first involved the contents of the reading materials. They unanimously agreed that the tasks made them know more about health. They accepted that the tasks were interesting and concerning everyone's daily life. The second was related to the subjects' survival academically. They revealed that although they needed to spend time doing the tasks, the tasks made them read more and helped them prepare themselves for their exit examination. The last category reflected their English language learning. They admitted that although they realized the possible benefits of the tasks, they did not put enough effort to them because they did not have time; almost half of them confessed that they only did some of the reading tasks and copied the rest. One observation was that not all of the informants were articulate. However, they were willing to participate in the interview. Thus, the information obtained was rather fruitful.

Discussion

The hypotheses, paralleling with the research questions, were accepted. Results from the present study confirmed the reading-writing connection framework. The experiment group had to read along with taking the writing course while the controlled group took the same writing course without any reading supplement, performed better in vocabulary and syntax. They scored better in the post-test than their counterpart in the control group in two aspects: lexicon and sentence complexity, at $\alpha = 0.05$. (0.030*, and 0.018*, respectively). It could be interpreted that the syntactic structures and vocabulary they exposed to in the passages they read were shared in their writing. This supports the Shared Knowledge Approach (Tierney & Shanahan, 1991, cited in Fitzgerald & Shanahan, 2000). The vocabulary score results were also congruent with Krashen (1984) in which he advocates pleasure reading to enhance learners' writing ability. More importantly, the experimental group was found using lexical items from the passages they had read in the reading passages assigned to them; it can be a piece of evidence to support the shared knowledge framework, one of the reading –writing connection theories.

The only aspect that no significant difference was found between the mean scores of the experimental and controlled subjects was the *Overall Writing Ability*. This might be due to the reading passages which were authentic news articles, not strictly written following the 5-paragraph essay convention. It could be interpreted that the subjects only had additional exposure to reading experience and lexicon, but not formal

writing, the criteria of rating which was relevant to the objectives of the writing course both groups were taking.

Overall, results supported previous studies that reading enhanced writing. In a large scale study by Graham, S., Liu, X., Bartlett, B. (2017), for example, it was found that teaching writing had improved the preschool and graders' writing regarding overall measure of writing, specific measures of writing quality, and words writing. As for adult learners, our findings confirmed the results of a study by Parodi (2007) in which correlation was found between reading and writing argumentative essays of grade eight subjects.

Although the researchers in the present study found significant differences between means of the experimental and controlled subjects, they should have been more considerable provided certain factors were otherwise. One of those was the subjects' language proficiency. The subjects in the present study could be considered as marginal EFL learners, who had limited proficiency in all the four skills. These findings could be interpreted based on the input hypothesis which emphasizes that the learners are able to learn only when the input is comprehensible (Krashen, 1984). Due to their inadequate language proficiency, thus, the learner could minimally transfer the language features or the writing models from the reading passages they had experienced to their writing.

Recommendation

As reported above, significant differences were found between groups on the two aspects in question. However, no significant difference was found between the \bar{x} of the experimental group's pre-and post-intervention in all the aspects under investigation, it could be concluded that although supplementing reading activities to the writing class might improve the learners' vocabulary repertoire and writing ability should other factors, such as motivation, be controlled; The present study was limited to a group of limited English proficiency learner. It is, therefore, recommended that further research be carried out with learners having different language proficiency, or different research methodology.

References

- Ahmed, Y., Wagner, R.K., & Lopez, D. (2014). Developmental Relations between Reading and Writing at the Word, Sentence and Text Levels: A Latent Change Score Analysis, *Journal Education Psychology*, 106 (2), 419–434.
- Association of Southeast Asian Nations (2017). *Charter of the South East Asian Nations*. Jakarta, Indonesia. Retrieved September 2, 2018, from <https://asean.org/storage/2017/07/8.-July-2017-The-ASEAN-Charter-21th-Reprint-with-Updated-Annex-1.pdf>
- Boonyarattanasoontorn, P. (2018). An investigation of Thai students' English language writing difficulties and their use of writing strategies, *Journal of Advanced Research in Social Sciences and Humanities Volume 2* (2). Retrieved April 22, 2018, from <https://dx.doi.org/10.26500/ARSSH-02-2017-0205>.
- Chuenchaichen, Y. (2015). *A Review of EFL Writing Research Studied in Thailand in the Past 10 Years*. Retrieved February 3, 2018, from www.human.nu.ac.th/jhnu/file/journal/2015
- Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a Global Language*, (2nd Ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- EF EPI (2017). *EF English Proficiency Index 2017: How well does each country use English (Translation)* February 1, 2018, from <http://www.ef.co.th/epi>
- EF EPI (2018). *Special report*. Retrieved February 1, 2018, from <https://www.ef.co.th/epi/>
- Eisterhold, J. C. (1993). "Reading-Writing Connection: Towards a Description for Second Language Learners." In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second Language Writing: Research Insights for the Classroom*. Cambridge Applied Linguistics (pp. 88-101). Cambridge, M.A.: Cambridge University Press.
- Fitzgerald, J. & Shanahan, T. (2000). Reading and Writing Relations and Their Development, *Journal of Educational Psychologist*, 35 (1), 39-50.
- Fredrickson, T. (2016, June 6). More English for Prathom students. *Bangkok Post*. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from <https://www.bangkokpost.com/learning/easy/1003037/more-english-for-prathom-students>
- Graham, S., Liu, X., Bartlett, B. (2017). Reading for Writing: A Meta-Analysis of the Impact of Reading Interventions on Writing, *SAGE Journal*, 88 (2), 243-284. Retrieved July 1, 2018, from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3102/0034654317746927>.
- Habibi, H., Salleh, A.H., & Singh, M.K.S. (2015). The Effect of Reading on Improving the Writing of EFL Students. *Pertanika Journal. Social Science & Humanities* 23 (4): 1115 – 1138.

- Isranews (2561, 4 ตุลาคม). Dig into the Pockets of 3 Companies Supplying Foreign Language Teachers for Nakhon Pathom Kindergartn (translation). Retrieved July 1, 2018, from <https://www.isranews.org/investigative/investigate-procure/70004-inves-70004.html>.
- Kaewkasi, P. & Aksornjarung, P. (2013). The Effects of Two Types of Direct Corrective Feedback on EFL University Students' Writing, *Prince of Songkla University Journal of International Studies*, 3 (2), pp. 1-14.
- Kaur, A.; Young, D.; & Kirkpatrick, R. (2016). English Education Policy in Thailand: Why the Poor Results? In R. Kirkpatrick (Ed.) *English Language Education Policy in Asia*, (pp.345-361), Kuwait: Springer International Publishing. DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-22464-0_16.
- Kirin, W. (2010). Effects of extensive reading on students' writing ability in an EFL class. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, 7 (1), 285-308.
- Krashen, S. (1984). *Writing: Research, theory and applications*. Oxford: Pergamon Institute of English.
- Kroll, B., Ed. (1993). *Exploring the Dynamics of Second Language Writing*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Li, G., Chen, W., & Duanmu, J-L. (2010). Determinants of International Students' Academic: A comparison between Chinese and other international students. (Abstract). *Journal of Studies in International Education*, Retrieved 20 February, 2018, from <https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315309331490>.
- Malu, K.F. & Figlear, M.R. (1998). Enhancing the language development of immigrant ESL nursing students: a case study with recommendations for action. *Nurse Education*, 23 (2), 43-6.
- Microsoft Word - Written Communication Rubric.doc*. Retrieved 20 February, 2018, from <http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/criteria.pdf>.
- Miguel, C., Rogan F. (2012). Clinical expectations: what facilitators expect from ESL students on clinical placement. *Nurse Education Today*, 35 (6), 771-776.
- Mokhamar, N. W. (2016). The Impact of Integrating Reading and Writing Skills on Palestine Technical College Students' Paragraph Writing and Attitudes. MA Thesis, Faculty of Education, The Islamic University – Gaza. Retrieved June 2, 2018 from https://iugspace.iugaza.edu.ps/bitstream/handle/20.500.12358/20916/file_1.pdf?
- OBEC (2017). *Ministry of Education Announcement*. The Office of Basic Education Commission.
- Parodi, G. (2007). Reading–writing connections: Discourse-oriented research, *Reading and Writing* 20, 225–250.
- Rijlaarsdam, G., & Bergh, H. van den (2005). Effective Learning and Teaching of Writing: Student involvement in the teaching of writing, in G. Rijlaarsdam, & H. van den Bergh (Eds.), *Effective Learning and Teaching of Writing: Handbook of Writing*, pp.1-15. Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishing,

- Rubin, A., & Hansen, J. (1984). *Reading and Writing: How are the Two "R'S" Related Reading?* (Education Report, 51). Urbana Champaign: University of Illinois, Center for the Study of Reading.
- Tangpermpoon. T. (2008). Integrated Approach to Improve Students Writing Skills for English Major Students. *ABAC Journal*, 28 (2), 1-9.
- Tierney, R., & Leys, M. (1984). *What Is the Value of Connecting Reading and Writing?* Reading Education Report No.55, Champaign, IL: Center for the Study of Reading.
- Toh, G. (2000). Teaching Writing in Rural Thailand: Considering New Perspectives, *TESL Canada Journal*, 17 (2), 101-109.
- Widodo, HP (2006). Designing a genre-based lesson plan for an academic writing course', *English Teaching: Practice & Critique*, 5 (3), 173–199.