

English Reading Comprehension of Students at International Theravada Buddhist  
Missionary University

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## Abstract

The study is titled “English reading comprehension of students at International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University”. The objectives of this research were 1) to study the difficulties of English reading comprehension of students at International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, Yangon, Myanmar, 2) to find out how to solve students' English reading comprehension problems at International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, Yangon, Myanmar. The research used both quantitative and qualitative methods. The study collected data from 60 second-year students through questionnaires and conducted in-depth interviews with five teachers to gather their opinions and suggestions.

The findings indicated that the highlights critical issues affecting students' reading comprehension are primarily linked to a lack of interest, poor reading habits, and limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge. Many students rely on teachers or peers for answers instead of engaging with the material themselves. Additionally, students lack effective reading strategies and techniques, which are essential for understanding texts. Observations revealed that teachers often focus more on grammar than on teaching reading skills, with some displaying a lack of enthusiasm and competence in teaching reading. Overall, both student-related factors and deficiencies in teaching practices significantly contribute to challenges in reading comprehension.

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The suggestion to further research the study recommends was the importance of investigating various English language skills among university students, specifically focusing on writing, speaking, and listening abilities. It highlights the need to explore and improve students' vocabulary to enhance their communication clarity and effectiveness. Additionally, it underscores the significance of phonics as a foundational element in English learning, aiding students in the correct pronunciation and writing of words.

**Keywords** - English, reading, comprehension, student, teacher, skills, improve

## Introduction

Reading in English is a very useful tool to have access to a very wide range of literature. Through reading in English everyone would be able to understand the world better. The relationship between background knowledge and reading comprehension has been explored extensively. These investigations have demonstrated that reading comprehension has been facilitated through the background knowledge of the topic of a text. It is assumed that reading abilities and general knowledge contribute to reading comprehension and reading speed. At the same time, as skilled readers, with little sphere of knowledge, can balance their lack of knowledge by being dependent on their general reading skills, poor readers with poor reading skills can compensate for this and have some stability in reading comprehension through their high general knowledge. All students learn comprehension at varying rates and need differing amounts of guidance to increase comprehension. Some students need little to no help comprehending while others struggle to attend long enough to accurately restate what they have heard or read. As teachers, we strive to help individual students increase their reading comprehension. Many students have difficulty comprehending what they read. All schools need to have some sort of remedial reading program provided to help struggling students. Low reading skills affect both reading fluency and comprehension for elementary school students. Spiro, R. Bruce, B & Brewer (1980)

Out of the four major language skills, reading is one of the instruments for the communication of thoughts from one person to another, and it is a means to gain several things. For instance, by reading newspapers, magazines and other sources one can learn about the current social, economic and political situation of the world. Reading skills become very important in the world of education. By reading, students may get beneficial information that is not given by teachers in the classroom. Furthermore, almost 50% of the national final examination items consist of reading skills. Therefore, the students should be trained to have good reading skills. Harmer states, that, reading is useful for language acquisition because it is needed for a career, for study purposes, or simply for pleasure. Reading and understanding are the important things that we need to use in our daily lives. Jeremy Harmer (1998)

This document focuses on development and considers the language skills and cognitive resources that play a part in developing reading skills, including the important roles of inference and deduction (reasoning). It also examines how explicit teaching of certain strategies such as recognizing degrees of importance can support the development of reading skills. This document only briefly touches on teaching approaches that help develop reading skills. Reading skills is a highly interactive process that takes place between a reader and a text. Individual readers will bring variable levels of skills and experiences to these interactions. These include language skills, cognitive resources and world knowledge. Any act of reading occurs within a particular society culture and emotional context. This consists of elements such as the student's home culture, their previous experiences of reading skills and being read to, their expectations that reading skills should carry meaning, their motivation, their view of themselves as a reader, the purpose of reading skills the text, the culture value placed on development reading skills and reading environments the reader experiences. The purpose of this document is to concentrate on looking closely at the development of development reading skills.

This view of reading, skills is the product of word recognition skills and the development of reading skills the word on the page is vital to reading skills if a student cannot read the words, then they will quite obviously be unable to extract meaning from the read

word. Once read words are recognized they can be understood if they are in the students' oral words that are not already in the students should have oral read start to acquire aspects of their meaning from the context within which they have been read; that is, reading gradually becomes a major source of vocabulary development. Once the words are recognized, they can be input into the language comprehension systems to understand what a read conveys. It is well recognized that students vary in the ease with which they can decode. They also vary in their development, and consequently in their reading skills. An effective reader has good word reading and good language skills. Carral (2007)

Reading skills comprehension research has a long and rich history. There is much that we can say about both the nature of reading comprehension as a process and about effective reading skills comprehension instruction. Most of what we know has been reading since. Why have been able to make English reading skills so much progress so fast we believe that part of the language skills behind this steep learning of reading skills has been the lack of controversy about teaching comprehension. Unlike decoding, oral reading, and reading skills readiness, those who study English reading skills comprehension instruction have avoided much of the acrimony characteristic of English reading skills in other aspects or reading. As it should be, much reading on the process of reading comprehension has been grounded in studies of good readers. We know a great deal about is reading skills good readers do when they read. To can a term from the decoding debate reading skills, comprehension instruction should be balanced. By this, we mean that good comprehension instruction includes both explicit instruction in specific comprehension strategies and a great deal of time and opportunity for actual reading, writing, and discussion of text. Tovani (2004) The components in our approach to balanced comprehension instruction are a supportive classroom context and a model of English reading skills comprehension instruction. Is important to much reading skills to comprehension is a highly interactive process that takes place between a reader and a text. Individual readers will bring variable levels of English reading skills and experiences to these interactions. These include language skills, cognitive resources and world knowledge. Any act of reading occurs within a particular society's cultural and emotional context. This

consists of elements such as the students' want to read more, their previous experiences of reading and being read to, their expectations that reading should carry meaning, their motivation, their view of themselves as English reading skills, the purpose for reading the text, the cultural value placed on reading and the reading environments the reader experiences. While the purpose of this document is to concentrate on reading skills so much and look closely at the development of comprehension skills, this broader context and its influence should be borne in mind. Aarnnoust (1999)

Teachers understand what is involved in comprehending and how the factors of reader, text, and context interact to create meaning, they can more easily teach their students to be effective readers. Teachers can support their students to become competent comprehenders by teaching decoding skills, helping students build fluency, building and activating background knowledge, teaching vocabulary words, motivating students, and engaging them in personal responses to text. Although it varies for each student, several factors can interfere with reading comprehension. Besides school and home-related factors for poor reading comprehension, the learners are a factor in the effectiveness of reading comprehension outcomes.

## **Objectives of the Study**

Objectives of the study are as follows:

1. What are the difficulties of English reading comprehension of students at International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, Yangon, Myanmar?
2. What are the ways to solve the problems of English reading comprehension of students at International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, Yangon, Myanmar?

## **Research Methodology**

This research is research. The research methodology is quantitative and qualitative method. (mixed methods) The research area is at the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, Yangon, Myanmar. The population is 60 Number of students. The people sample group is second-year students. Number of 60 people using the selection

method of only second-year students in the class. The research tools are four types: 1) Reading skills test - The first major data collecting and in the process the researcher adapted a standard test from the internet which had a general knowledge passage, as prepared for second-year students. 2) Questionnaire - The plan is for the researcher to choose to set closed-ended questions to maintain uniformity of response. 3) Interview - The researcher needed to validate English teachers' responses through interviews, therefore, 5 teachers participated in the interview. 4) Classroom observation – the researcher plans classroom observation for this study it helps the researcher to cross-check the results that will be collected by the above tools. The data was collected by SPSS Between April to the month November B.E. 2024 Bring quantitative data and qualitative data Use document research, analyse, synthesize data and then write a descriptive narrative.

## Results of the Study

1. To study the difficulties of English reading comprehension of students at International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, Yangon, Myanmar, the results showed the inductive analyses of the empirical results along with the study and review of related literature have provided insight into reading comprehension. According to the empirical findings gained from the inductive analysis data, the interpretive conclusions have been drawn as follows:

1. It is also possible to conclude that most students have reading comprehension problems due to a lack of interest and poor reading habits. This is likely to show that student-related factors are very serious.

2. Regarding the interest and motivation for reading, most teachers motivated their students to participate and try to do the exercises the textbook intended to do. However, students do not pay much attention to answering the questions individually or by group; rather expect the final answer from the teacher or a few clever students in the classes.

3. Most of the students seem to have limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge. Concerning student's vocabulary, it was seen as one of the serious factors that cause comprehension problems. Unless one has strong word power, he/she is likely to be limited in

understanding texts. They also seem to lack reading strategies and reading techniques, which are very important for their comprehension skill. In the classroom observation, it was seen that teachers did not apply the required reading skills, and they seemed to give more focus on grammar and covering the textbook.

4. The last point that the researcher wants to make as a conclusion that, the poor teaching skills of some English language teachers. Some English teachers who were observed in the classroom seem to be bored with teaching reading, lack skills in teaching reading skills or neglect the reading exercises and focus on grammar part.

2. To find out the way to solve the problems of English reading comprehension of students at International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, Yangon, Myanmar, the study found that English reading comprehension skills are vital for students' academic and thesis and individual success. The text outlines effective strategies for improving students' English reading comprehension skills and discusses how students perceive their challenges in this area. Key points include:

Effective Strategies:

1. Vocabulary Development: Collecting and understanding vocabulary related to specific subjects.
2. Sentence Structure: Learning various styles of sentence structure to enhance comprehension.
3. Paragraph Analysis: Read each paragraph to grasp its essence or theme.
4. Regular Practice: Engaging in consistent study and practice in English reading to improve comprehension skills.
5. Structured Remediation: Implementing structured reading remediation and literature-based teaching methods to enhance both reading comprehension and writing skills.
6. Personal Reading: Reading English essays and stories, and revisiting books multiple times to reinforce understanding.
7. Student Perceptions: Students need to identify their strengths and weaknesses in English reading comprehension. They recognize their challenges, such as confusion about

meanings and expressing their ideas clearly. To address these challenges, students should focus on developing:

Receptive Skills: Understanding and interpreting texts.

Expressive Skills: Effectively conveying their ideas.

Students believe that obtaining a good teacher, making personal efforts, and utilizing appropriate learning materials are essential for overcoming their challenges. Additionally, learning to identify main points, summarizing passages, and practicing reading exercises are perceived as beneficial for enhancing their English reading comprehension skills.

### **Body of New Knowledge**

The findings indicated that the highlights critical issues affecting students' reading comprehension are primarily linked to a lack of interest, poor reading habits, and limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge. Many students rely on teachers or peers for answers instead of engaging with the material themselves. Additionally, students lack effective reading strategies and techniques, which are essential for understanding texts. Observations revealed that teachers often focus more on grammar than on teaching reading skills, with some displaying a lack of enthusiasm and competence in teaching reading. Overall, both student-related factors and deficiencies in teaching practices significantly contribute to challenges in reading comprehension.

### **Conclusion**

The study emphasizes the need for an approach to improving English reading comprehension among students at International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, in Yangon, Myanmar. By means addressing the realistic of English reading comprehension, students can expand to confidence and proficiency for their academic success and further education. The recommended solutions, based on founded language learning theories, involve learning surroundings.



## Suggestions

This research has found the importance thing is English reading comprehension can be applied to students and should be given importance to further researchers for the next research issue, research should be done on the issue of Study to know students' English writing and speaking and listening skills abilities in university. And to understand students' vocabulary in English, improving vocabulary in English can communicate more clearly and effectively.

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