

ABSTRACT

EXPLORING THAI TEACHERS' CONCEPTUAL BELIEFS ABOUT READING AND THEIR INFLUENCES ON INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

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Theories of reading have altered throughout history. Originally, reading was understood as a process of knowledge transmission, but currently, reading is viewed as a process of meaning construction. The changing conceptualizations about the reading process have emphasized the active role of readers among second language (L2) students and altered perspectives on L2 reading instruction in a more constructive way. An unawareness of the changing conceptualizations of L2 reading may be the main obstacle to the professional development among teachers of L2 reading. This study aims to explore Thai teachers' conceptual beliefs about reading, instructional practices in L2 reading classrooms, influences of teachers' beliefs about reading on instructional practices, and their perceptions of the roles of L2 reading teachers.

Four Thai participants teaching English (L2) reading at a private university in Northern Thailand participated in the study. Primary data sources included in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document reviews. A coding system was used to analyze the data.

The research revealed that two participants hold transmission beliefs about reading while two others have beliefs that gear toward transactional beliefs about reading. In addition, these beliefs about reading are found to be related to teachers' instructional

practices. L2 reading classrooms of teachers who hold transmission beliefs about reading were teacher-directed and focused on vocabulary while classrooms of teachers who hold transactional beliefs were student-centered and emphasized classroom discussions.

Teachers who hold transmission beliefs about reading see themselves as a controller of classroom activities and an arbiter of interpretation, while teachers who have transactional beliefs about reading perceive themselves a facilitator of teaching and learning activities and students' reading processes.

This study suggests classroom visits and knowledge sharing among teachers of L2 reading are needed. In addition, the university needs an effective professional development program focusing on current theories of L2 reading and teaching methods. Regarding L2 reading instruction, both text-based and reader-based knowledge should be the foci of L2 reading classrooms, and more explicit instruction of strategic reading is needed.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Theories of reading and reading instruction have gradually moved away from perceiving reading as a *meaning-transferring* to *meaning-constructing* process (Straw & Bogdan, 1993). Early theories, often referred to as *transmission models of reading* (Straw & Sadowy, 1990), view reading as part of a communication process where readers are passive recipients of the author's information. As such, successful readers need to memorize and recite an author's work. Subsequent theories, usually referred to as *transactional models of reading* (Rosenblatt, 1994), distinctively propose that the author is not the only source and locus of the meaning of a text. Rather, readers bring their personal and academic experiences, interests, and cultures to interact with texts and actively construct their personal interpretations.

Despite the changing conceptualizations of reading among scholars, a number of studies reveal that both transmission and transactional theories have important roles on belief systems and instructional practices of current teachers of reading (Chiou, 2004; Farley, 1995; Kuzborska, 2011; O' Brien & Norton, 1991; Richards, Gallo, & Renandya, 2001). The relationship between teachers' beliefs about reading and their instructional practices have long been studied, and several researchers agree that teachers possess personal beliefs about reading, which explicitly and implicitly guide their classroom decision making, expectations for students, and reading instruction (Deford, 1985; Richards, 2001; Richardson, 1996; Straw & Sadowy, 1990). Thus, exploring teachers'

underlying conceptual beliefs about reading becomes essential to gain insights into their teaching practices and rationales behind their classroom actions.

In Thailand, based on the Thai Library Integrated System (Thailis), the official database of theses, dissertations, and research conducted by graduate students and educators in Thailand (last accessed January 2014), reading has received the most attention from Thai researchers, compared to other areas of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). However, most studies focused merely on examining the effectiveness of a pedagogical approach and suggested an alternative teaching methodology that best fits EFL teaching and learning within Thai contexts (e.g., Ramkomut, 2008; Subanrat, 2011; Tanjitanont, 2008). No studies have focused on investigating teachers' existing instructional practices, nor how their belief systems may influence such practices. This gap in the literature results in the lack of understanding of what the current practices and beliefs of Thai EFL teachers of reading are. A mere focus on changing teachers' pedagogical practices in reading classrooms without examining their existing conceptual beliefs may not result in enduring and consistent changes in teachers' classroom practices, especially when a new pedagogical approach is not congruent with their underlying belief systems (Lonberger, 1992; Richardson, 2003). As such, research on Thai teachers' conceptual beliefs about reading and their actual instructional practices is needed.

In addition, numerous studies have revealed that Thai undergraduate students have difficulties comprehending English texts (Adunyarittigun, 1996; Pookcharoen, 2009; Prapaisit, 2003). To respond to the problem, several studies have been conducted by Thai researchers to address the problem (Kantatip, 1994; Israsena, 2007). Findings from these studies suggest Thai teachers of English reading change their roles from a classroom controller to a facilitator. The call for the changing role of teachers corresponds to

Thailand's latest educational policy, which attempts to move classroom instruction away from teacher-centered learning and rote memorization toward student-centered learning (Fry, 2002). However, several recent studies on English language teaching in Thailand reveal that the teacher-centered pedagogical approach still prevails among Thai EFL teachers (Dumteeb, 2009; Israsena, 2007; Prapaisit, 2003; Saengboon, 2002; Waelateh, 2009).

Currently, it remains unclear why many Thai EFL reading teachers still depend on traditional ways of teaching EFL. Though there is an urge from both empirical research and educational policy, several EFL Thai teachers still fail to strengthen students' active roles and create interactive learning (Dumteeb, 2009; Foley, 2005; Tapinta, 2006). Since scholars suggest that teachers' beliefs about reading drive classroom actions and influence the teacher change process (Fang, 1996; Harste & Burke, 1977; Richardson, 1994, 1996; Straw & Bogdan, 1993), there is a need to explore Thai EFL teachers' beliefs about reading and investigate how these perceptions influence their choices of instructional practices. The results of this study offered insights into Thai instructors' pedagogical preferences and rationales behind their instructional practices. The results serve as a starting point for the improvement of EFL teacher education and professional development programs in Thailand and may facilitate Thai policy makers' efforts in encouraging Thai EFL reading teachers to challenge their existing beliefs about reading and infuse reading instruction methods suggested by more recent reading theories.

Problem and Purpose Statements

An increasing number of researchers and educators suggest that reading is a social activity; accordingly, instruction should emphasize interactive learning (Gambell, 1993;

Goodman, 2003; Straw & Bogdan, 1993). As such, teachers of reading need to encourage interactions between students and texts, students and teachers, and among students themselves. However, the literature (Farley, 1995; Kuzborska, 2011; Rosenblatt, 2004; Schraw & Bruning, 1996) indicates that many pre-and in-service teachers still perceive reading as a passive part of a communication process in which the reader is merely a recipient of the information sent by the author through a text. This narrow perception of reading, then, results in their limited view of reading instruction.

In Thailand, several studies reveal that English teachers at all levels still adopt the skills-based approach to guide their classroom practices (Nonkukhetkhong, Baldauf, & Moni, 2006; Saengboon, 2002; Sitthitikul, 2006; Thongmark, 2002), though the pedagogical approach has never been empirically proven successful with Thai students. Since there is no research on Thai teachers' conceptual beliefs about the reading process, whether such skill-based English reading instructions of Thai teachers are the results of their personal beliefs about reading remains questionable.

In addition, teaching and learning English in Thailand may be influenced by its unique cultures, religious traditions, and social norms and values. Teachers in Thai society are ascribed high status and viewed as givers of knowledge and wisdom, whereas learners are perceived as inexperienced and less knowledgeable (Foley, 2005; Laopongharn & Sercombe, 2009). The Thai value that students are passive and dependent on teachers corresponds with North American studies of teacher participants who prefer skills-based or bottom-up models of reading instruction. However, research conducted with teachers in North America may not accurately portray Thai teachers' beliefs and practices because Western and Asian cultural contexts are much different. In addition, to date, no studies relevant to Thai teachers' beliefs about reading have been published in the

Thai Library Integrated System (Thailis). Accordingly, it may not be appropriate to make any assumptions regarding Thai teachers' beliefs about the reading process. This study, therefore, aims to explore Thai university instructors' conceptual beliefs about the reading process and their instructional practices in reading comprehension classrooms in an EFL context.

Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. What conceptual beliefs do Thai university instructors hold about the reading process in an English-as-a-foreign-language context?
2. What instructional practices are applied by Thai university instructors who teach reading in an English-as-a-foreign-language context?
3. How do Thai university instructors' conceptual beliefs about the reading process influence their instructional practices in an English-as-a-foreign-language context?
4. How do Thai university instructors see their roles as teachers of reading in an English-as-a-foreign-language context?

Conceptual Framework

This study is framed around two theoretical strands: teachers' beliefs and models of the reading process. This section provides a snapshot of the conceptual framework. In Chapter 2, more theories and related empirical studies will be further discussed.

Teachers' Beliefs

Richardson (1994) defines beliefs as “an individual’s understandings of the world and the way it works or should work, [which] may be consciously or unconsciously held, and guide one’s actions” (p. 91). Teachers’ beliefs are formed by their experience, failures, successes, as well as their previous schooling and instruction. These beliefs can be implicitly or explicitly reflected in classroom practices (Pajares, 1992; Richardson, 1994). O’Brien and Norton (1991) concluded that beliefs about reading combine pedagogical and theoretical elements. In order to make a successful change in their practices, teachers need to incorporate the theory underlying the new practices into their belief systems. Exploring how teachers and professionals think about the reading process helps educators gain insight into teachers’ implicit theories that may guide their behavior. Also, these beliefs and theories can be modified to accept new and different research-based practices (Anders & Richardson, 1994). Thus, the framework for the study is based on the assumption that teachers hold systematic beliefs about reading that are shaped through their personal and academic experiences, and these beliefs guide their instructional practices in reading classrooms.

The next section explains four conceptualizations of reading: transmission, translation, interactive, and transactional (Straw & Sadowy, 1990). These four theories of reading result in different reading instructional practices.

Models of the Reading Process

Based on Straw and Sadowy (1990), theories of the reading process proposed through different historical periods may be categorized into the following models: transmission, translation, interactive, and transactional. Through the transmission lens,

reading is part of a one-way communication from the writer to the reader. Readers are perceived as recipients of the author's messages. The translation theories are slightly different in that they argue that authors are not the controller of the meanings of texts. Rather, readers have more control over the meanings of the texts as a translator. However, these two models perceive reading as "a basic notion of *communication*" (Straw & Bogdan, 1993, p. 3). In other words, meaning is fixed and delivered from the author to the reader through a text. As such, both models similarly assume that the purpose of reading is to arrive at the predetermined meaning (Straw & Sadowy, 1990). Accordingly, in this study, these two traditional models were combined and referred to as transmission. Early theories of reading such as Gough's (1972) view of reading, the skills-based model, the word-based model, and the LaBerg-Samuels (1974) model of automatic information processing fall into the transmission model of reading.

Eventually reading theorists defined reading as more than a passive action on the part of the reader. Interactive models of reading, such as those proposed by Rumelhart (1977) and Ruddell and Spieker (1985), brought the active role of readers to educators' attention, though they still propose that meanings reside in texts. Rumelhart (2004) suggested that reading is both "a *perceptual* and *cognitive* process" (p. 1149). In other words, readers need to make use of their sensory, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic knowledge in order to comprehend texts. Readers, as "active theory builders and hypothesis testers" (Ruddell & Unrau, 2004, p. 1463), construct different understandings of texts drawing upon the interaction among readers' schemata, texts, and reading contexts. The interactive theories of reading serve as a necessary step toward the transactional models in which more productive perceptions of reading are proposed (Straw & Sadowy, 1990). Rosenblatt (2004) argued that reading is a transaction that involves "a

particular reader and a particular pattern of signs, a text, and occurring at a particular time in a particular context” (p. 1369), and that the meaning does not reside “ready-made *in* the text or *in* the reader but happens during the transacting between the reader and the text” (p. 1369). While reading, people consciously or unconsciously adopt different stances – *effere*nt (i.e., reading that aims to extract public meanings) or *aesthetic* (i.e., reading for personal meanings) which influence their interpretations of texts. Readers’ stances can be, but are not always, determined by kinds of texts.

These last two views – interactive and transactional – share the similarity that readers’ knowledge, experience, and interpretative strategies account for reading comprehension, though the transactional view puts a greater emphasis on readers’ purposes and the reading context. According to these similarities, these more recent models were merged and called the transactional view of reading in this dissertation. Table 1 summarizes the different assumptions underlying the two different views of reading that guide this study.

Weaver (1994) explained that these two views of the reading process lead to different curricula and instructional practices. Teachers holding the transmission views usually employ bottom-up models of reading instruction in their reading classrooms (Straw & Sadowy, 1990). In these reading classrooms, to prepare students for reading comprehension, teachers spend a significant amount of time with teaching, practicing, and testing vocabulary and sentence structure. Since teachers’ primary concern is students’ reading readiness, teaching focuses on developing stages of reading (Weaver, 2002). In addition, reading comprehension is measured by students’ abilities to remember or recall the information from texts (Haynes & Carr, 1990) or the abilities to arrive at the meaning that matches or is similar to teachers’ interpretations (Cairney, 1990).

Table 1

Summary of Two Theoretical Views Toward the Reading Process

| Reading Components | Transmission View | Transactional View |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| Reading Processes | Reading is a linear, bottom-up process. Readers combine meaning sequentially from letters, words, and phrases, in order to comprehend the whole text (Gough, 1972). Proficient readers are able to both decode and comprehend texts simultaneously while beginning readers can do only one task at a time (Laberge & Samuels, 1974). | Readers use their linguistic and experiential resources including socio-cultural and personal history, interest, and present situation, as well as cues existing in the text to construct meanings (Rosenblatt, 2004). |
| Readers' Roles | Readers are passive receivers or consumers of the author's texts and meanings. Readers elicit meanings of texts by using their lexical and structural knowledge of the language. | Readers are active participants seeking to make meaning by transacting with a text. They construct meaning of the text drawing on their linguistic-experiential reservoir (Rosenblatt, 1993). |
| Definition and Purposes of Reading | Reading is to extract the author's intended meaning and comprehend the author's thoughts. | Rosenblatt (1988) wrote that reading purposes may be described as a continuum. While one end focuses on the efferent reading or extracting information, the other end reflects the aesthetic reading or reading literary texts. In other words, reading purposes determine the reader's stance, efferent or aesthetic. |
| Sources and Flexibility of Meaning | Meaning resides solely in the text and is transmitted directly from the author to the reader (Weaver, 2002). There is the only single correct meaning of the text. | Meaning does not reside either in text or in the reader alone, but is constructed during the reading event at a particular time in a particular social or cultural context. The same text may mean differently when read by different readers. Even within the same readers, texts can be interpreted distinctively across reading situations (Rosenblatt, 1994). |

While transmission theories focus on teaching text-based strategies to students so that they are able to extract the author's intended meaning, transactional theories encourage readers to bring their prior knowledge to the text and transform the author's meanings into their own interpretations (Weaver, 1994). Based on transactional theories, reading readiness and comprehension are taught simultaneously through the actual reading (Goodman, 2003). In addition, classroom interactions are important since they provide students opportunities to challenge their personal interpretations and realize other possible meanings of texts (Dias, 1990; Rosenblatt, 2004). Alderson (2000) also suggested that informal assessments, such as classroom conversation between teachers and students and students' self-assessments, are usually utilized to elicit reading comprehension. Since there is no one correct interpretation, teachers make judgments on the reasonableness of students' opinions and interpretations of texts as well as students' arguments for or against their points of view are considered (Alderson, 2000).

In conclusion, this study explored Thai foreign language teachers' views of the reading process, whether their views reflect the transmission model or lean toward transactional theories. Instructional practices in reading classrooms were observed to elicit how teachers' views of the reading process influence their instructional practices such as classroom instruction, teachers' roles, expectations for students' roles as readers, and reading assessments.

Significance of the Study

While there is a growing body of research on teachers' beliefs about the reading process and their instructional practices in North America, none have been conducted with

Thai teachers at any level of education. No relevant studies have been published in the Thailis Digital Collection (last accessed January 2014).

This study intends to fill this gap in the research literature by exploring Thai university instructors' conceptual beliefs about the reading process and their instructional practices in reading comprehension classrooms in an English-as-a-foreign-language context. The results of the study may encourage Thai university instructors to re-examine their explicit or implicit models of reading and the influence these beliefs have on their English reading comprehension classrooms. In addition, Pitiyanuwat (2012) argued that teacher education programs in Thailand give first priority to technical aspects of education such as teaching methods and assessments. The relationship between teachers' theoretical beliefs and their classroom actions may encourage curriculum leaders of teacher education programs in Thailand to give more attention to theoretical concepts behind classroom practices. Data may also suggest research-based pedagogical implications for teacher education programs.

Research Methodology

A qualitative research design (Merriam, 2009) was used to explore Thai university instructors' theoretical beliefs about reading and their instructional practices in English reading comprehension classes. Samples were four Thai university instructors who teach English reading comprehension at Crystal Pond University (pseudonym), located in Northern Thailand. Criterion-based sampling (Mertens, 2010) was used to select teacher participants.

Data collection included in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document reviews. Teacher in-depth interviews were conducted prior to and after

classroom observations. Each interview took 30 to 60 minutes. Classroom observations covered approximately five to seven 90-minute class sessions for each instructor. For document reviews, teacher-made exercises, quizzes, and examinations were collected.

An open coding system (Merriam, 2009) was utilized to analyze the data. The process was divided into three phases: establishing categories, sorting categories and data, and constructing central themes.

Delimitations

This research focuses on four university instructors from a single private university in Northern Thailand. The eight-week data collection includes interviews, classroom observations, and document analyses. This descriptive study aims to investigate the influence of teachers' conceptual beliefs about reading on their instructional practices in intermediate or advanced English reading classrooms. This study does not measure teachers' instructional effectiveness.

Limitations

Two limitations of this study are the length of the data collection period and the use of a single case study. First, only five to seven class sessions of each instructor were observed. Classroom activities and interactions which occurred in these observed classrooms might not portray the overall reading instruction of the participants. This limitation might affect the analysis of teachers' beliefs and their instructional practices to some extent. Second, instructors participating in this research were selected from the same university. Therefore, findings about the influence of teachers' beliefs on their instructional practices derived from this study may be limited to contextual factors such as

school cultures, academic resources, students, and peers. Accordingly, the transferability of this study is minimized.

Assumptions

The study included an interview which depends largely on informants' self-reporting as one of the data collection methods. It is assumed that each instructor honestly answered all questions during the interviews. In addition, the researcher assumed that classrooms observed would represent participants' actual and natural instructional practices.

Definition of Terms

Belief refers to “an individual’s understandings of the world and the way it works or should work, may be consciously or unconsciously held, and guide one’s actions” (Richardson, 1994, p. 91). The words *belief* and *view* are used interchangeably in this dissertation.

English as a foreign language is the use of the English language in countries where English is not spoken as a native or national language. In these countries, English is not the main language of communication but is crucial to having a good job and social privileges. English is considered as a foreign language (EFL) in Thailand because the country was never colonized by an English speaking colonial power.

Reading comprehension refers to “a process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language” (Snow, 2002, p. 10).

Models of reading describes the interaction between reader and text. Specifically, the models explain “the sequence of operations that occur in reading and the sources of

information consulted during the course of each operation” (Mitchell, 1982, p. 128). In this study, the term is used interchangeably with *theories of reading*.

Schema refers to the organized knowledge we have about a category (Weaver, 2002).

Second language learner refers to a group of students who receive their education in their native language, but who also receive second language instruction as a required part of their curricula, personal interests, or needs for acquiring additional skills for future careers (Bernhardt, 1991).

Text is defined as “a compilation of graphic symbols written to convey a message or to entertain” (Anders & Evans, 1994, p. 139). Accordingly, besides textbooks, all written materials used in classrooms will be considered as texts in this proposed study as well.

Organization of the Study

This study consists of six chapters. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the study. Chapter 2 reviews related literature about teachers’ beliefs about reading and their influences on reading instruction, theories of reading, and research designs and tools utilized in previous studies. Chapter 3 concentrates on research methodology. Methods of data collection as well as data analysis are included. Chapter 4 provides information on English teaching in higher education in Thailand as well as a discussion on socio-cultural contexts that may impact teachers’ beliefs and instructional practices. Chapter 5 focuses on the findings and analysis. Chapter 6 includes conclusions, implications, and recommendations for future research about teachers’ beliefs about reading and reading instructional practices.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the literature which provides a background for this study. Theoretical aspects and empirical studies related to the following topics are discussed respectively:

1. Teachers' beliefs about reading and their influences on instructional practices
2. Research designs and data collection methods in previous studies
3. Theories of the reading process
4. Reading in a second language

Teachers' Beliefs about Reading and their Influences on Instructional Practices

The literature suggests that teachers possess belief systems about reading and reading instruction that are shaped by their personal characteristics and professional experiences, such as participation in staff development programs. Understanding teachers' beliefs serves as a starting point for gaining insights into teachers' thought processes, classroom practices, and changes in either (Richardson, 1996). Since teachers have a strong impact on students' learning processes, improving students' academic achievement begins with understanding teachers' beliefs (Boggs & Szabo, 2009; Pajares, 1992).

Teachers' Conceptual Beliefs about Reading

Teachers hold conceptual belief systems about reading instruction and those beliefs may guide their instruction and decisions in reading classrooms (Deford, 1979). Deford created the Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP) to measure teachers' belief systems about reading instruction, and phonics, skills, and whole language conceptions of reading instruction were the foci of her TORP survey.

The phonics orientation reflects the beliefs that reading instruction is associated with letters, sound, morphemes, as well as the relationship between sounds and letters. The skills orientation emphasizes that, in reading instruction, word analysis, reading skills, and vocabulary are taught separately from reading comprehension. The whole language orientation proposes that reading is a process of making sense of print, and that readers' background knowledge plays an important role in these meaning-constructing processes.

After Deford's study, a number of researchers reported that teachers hold personal beliefs about reading and reading instruction (e.g., Garrett, 2007; Lan, 1999; Richards, 2001). Notably, the conceptual beliefs of a majority of teachers participating in those studies were consistent with the skills-based approach. For example, Richardson, Anders, Tidwell, and Lloyd (1991) found that the majority of the 39 teachers surveyed viewed reading as a skills-based process and believed that students need to be proficient in the subskills of reading (e.g., word identification and phonological awareness) before they can comprehend texts. To these teachers, the ultimate goal of reading was to extract the author's intended meaning. Richards (2001) revealed that out of 24 school teachers, nine held phonics orientation, perceiving the relationship between sounds and graphic symbols, as a critical focus of reading instruction. The rest of the participants were skills-oriented, arguing that reading consisted of a set of ordered, hierarchical skills. In addition, reading

instruction needed to emphasize the mastery of word analysis skills as it assisted students' decoding processes. In addition, Garrett (2007) conducted a qualitative study, employing classroom observations and interviews with parents, students, and teachers across first, third, and fifth grades. Teacher participants agreed that the purposes of reading were learning or gaining information as well as pleasure and recreation, while the latter purpose was most frequently stated among parents and students. Since these teachers' descriptions and purposes of reading were similar to those of the teachers who participated in previous studies, these teachers, accordingly, held the skills theoretical orientation of reading. According to these studies, teachers similarly viewed reading as a bottom-up, linear process and perceived that students moved from words to sentences in order to comprehend a whole text. They did not mention reading comprehension skills such as summarizing, analyzing, and synthesizing while describing their reading instruction. It might be assumed that these teachers' classrooms focused mostly or merely on basic skills of reading such as word identification, vocabulary, fluency, and phonics and spent no or little time on reading comprehension.

It appears that most studies on teachers' beliefs about reading were conducted within contexts of teaching English reading to native speakers. Lan (1999), however, conducted a study in Taiwan, with four Taiwanese teachers who taught Chinese literacy to Taiwanese elementary students. Personal interviews and two-week classroom observations were employed in order to examine teachers' beliefs about literacy instruction and classroom practices. Findings were that these teachers believed literacy instruction needed to begin with a discrete skill in the lesson and later move on to sentences, phrases, and new words. Lan (1999) concluded that to these teachers, "teaching was an integrated process that started from whole to parts and then the parts were pieced

to become whole again” (p. 21). However, though these Taiwanese teachers’ beliefs portrayed the balanced literacy instruction of language structures and reading comprehension, these teachers depended extensively on their textbooks, which placed a great emphasis on word analysis exercises and teacher-fronted instructions and discussions. Their beliefs in textbook and teacher-centered approaches may have influenced their expectations for students’ comprehension of texts. For example, students’ interpretations that were different from those of teachers might not have been acceptable. By shying away from Western contexts, Lan’s study offered a new insight into Asian teachers’ beliefs about reading and literacy instruction.

In addition, in-service teachers’ beliefs about reading as well as those of pre-service teachers have received attention from scholars. Many researchers have included pre-service teachers in their studies, aiming to investigate how a teacher education program influences student teachers’ beliefs about reading.

Wham (1991) conducted a study with 35 college seniors in a teacher education program to examine the relationship between undergraduate reading methods courses and pre-service teachers’ theoretical orientations to the reading process. The study found that 89% and 91% of these pre-service teachers held the skills orientation when measured at the beginning and the end of the semester respectively. Wham concluded that the teaching method courses, which emphasized the wholistic approach, provided only a modest influence on pre-service teachers’ theoretical orientations, and the student teaching experience seemed to reinforce students’ existing skills orientation.

Similarly targeting pre-service teachers’ beliefs, Evans (1995) examined the influence of classroom experience on theoretical beliefs about reading with five interns enrolled in a teacher education master’s program. Participants’ belief systems were

assessed four times during their intern year by using the TORP (Deford, 1979) profile.

The interns' beliefs started in the lower end of the skills orientation before rising toward the middle level of the same orientation by the second TORP administration. The mean scores changed slightly but still remained at the middle of the skills orientation by the third and fourth administrations of the TORP. Evans concluded that the change of beliefs about reading among these interns during the second test period was the result of their experiences in classroom observations. However, the researcher did not discuss in detail how or why classroom observation might reinforce participants' beliefs in the skills orientation. It is possible that after observing actual reading classrooms, these interns learned strengths and weaknesses of particular teaching strategies. They may have compared observed reading instructions with their personal beliefs about the reading process and reading instruction before improving their pre-existing beliefs or adopting a new instructional paradigm.

Asselin (2000) conducted a qualitative study with pre-service teachers enrolled in a 12-month teacher education program in Canada. The study aimed to explore pre-service teachers' beliefs about reading and literature as well as the influence of such beliefs on their literature-based reading instruction. Data were collected through self-reflecting journals created by the participants. The results of the study revealed that these student teachers held an interactive view of reading (i.e., both textual features and readers' schemata count for reading comprehension). Eighty-three percent of students wrote that text meanings might vary across readers due to their different backgrounds and experiences, and seventy-seven percent of students stated that pleasure reading should be part of reading instruction. However, since the study did not measure participants' beliefs before classroom discussions and reader-response activities, it is questionable whether

participants' interactive views of reading were the result of the literature-based reading instruction class or students' prior beliefs.

In contrast to Asselin's (2000) study, Lonberger (1992) administered questionnaires to 37 pre-service teachers on the first and last day of a reading methods class. These student teachers wrote responses to the following questions: What is reading? How do you believe young children learn to read? How would you teach a young child to read? The teachers' responses were then classified into the following models of reading: top-down (i.e., readers make sense of reading drawing upon their existing knowledge and experience), bottom-up (i.e., reading is a decoding process), and interactive (i.e., both textual characteristics and readers' schemata are important to comprehend texts). Results indicated that prior to course participation, these pre-service teachers perceived reading as an interactive process; however, their responses about how young children learn to read reflected a bottom-up model. For the subsequent set of responses, the teachers' interactive view of reading remained, but their perceptions on how young children learn to read had changed from a bottom-up to top-down process. The author concluded that the reading class played an important role in improving pre-service teachers' beliefs about reading.

According to the previous studies, teaching methods courses, classroom observations, and actual teaching experience appear to influence pre-service teachers' beliefs about the reading process and reading instruction to some extent. Teacher education and teacher internship programs should be more cautious about the curricula and teaching experiences provided for student teachers. Richardson (2003) suggested two approaches to change teacher education classes. First, student teachers should be encouraged to examine their existing beliefs and understanding about teaching and learning. Second, students need to be engaged in real practice situations so that they can

observe how knowledge and philosophy learned through their teaching classes become concrete in practice.

Teachers' Conceptual Beliefs about Reading in a L2

Though teachers' beliefs about the reading process within a first-language (L1) reading context have been extensively studied, there is insufficient research that includes second or foreign language teachers as participants. Graden (1996) examined the beliefs about reading and reading instruction of 12 secondary foreign language teachers from three public schools in North America. Data were gathered through teacher interviews, audio-taped classroom observations, and observational field notes. Graden found that some teachers possess traditional views toward the reading process, perceiving reading simply as decoding. To these teachers, reading was to derive meaning from the text. The researcher further discussed that these teachers missed the critical concept that reading is a social process, and that readers' interpretations of texts are influenced by their cultures.

Farley's (1995) ethnographic study investigated two college teachers' beliefs about reading in an introductory foreign language literature class at a major midwestern university in North America. Data were collected through teacher and student interviews, non-participant observations, and document reviews. The participants were assistant professors teaching both graduate and undergraduate literature classes. Farley compared these two teachers' beliefs about reading to skills-based and constructivist models of reading. Findings of the study revealed that the first professor perceived reading as a bottom-up and skills-based process, while the other professor's approach was consistent with the constructivist model (i.e., reading is a meaning-constructing process). The first professor believed that grammatical and lexical knowledge was crucial to students' ability

to read; therefore, reading comprehension would be taught in the intermediate or higher language courses, not in beginning classes. The second professor believed that students' motivation, reading contexts, and students' expectations and background knowledge influence students' interpretations of texts. Her literature class placed an emphasis on both linguistic elements and literal meanings of texts.

University teachers need to encourage students to be active, independent readers and learners by developing students' higher-level skills such as analyzing and synthesizing (Simpson & Nist, 2002). Farley's (1995) study raises a concern that a university instructor's beliefs and instructional practices can be dominated by a bottom-up and skills-based model of reading. University instructors who hold a bottom-up or skills-based model may base their classroom instruction largely on linguistic structures and believe that reading comprehension is evidenced when the reader is able to grasp the author's intended meaning. The following section discusses in detail the relationship between teachers' conceptual beliefs about reading and their instructional practices.

Influences of Teachers' Beliefs about Reading on Instructional Practices

A number of studies revealed a significant relationship between teachers' beliefs about reading and their instructional practices and suggest that reading instruction can be predicted from teachers' conceptual beliefs about reading (Deford, 1979; Farley, 1995; Kuzborska, 2011; Richardson et al., 1991).

Kuzborska (2011) conducted a qualitative study to examine Lithuanian professors' beliefs about reading and how those beliefs influenced their instructional practices. Eight university instructors who taught English for Academic Purposes (EAP) participated in the study. Data were gained through lesson observations, document data, and video-

stimulated recall. In Kuzborska's study, teachers were video- and audio-taped. Later, they viewed and listened to the tape and explained rationales behind and purposes of their classroom activities. The results of the interviews and classroom observations reflected that the eight instructors viewed reading as a skills-based approach. Kuzborska also found that such beliefs of the skills-based approach had a relatively strong influence on these teachers' instructional practices. In their classrooms, these instructors emphasized vocabulary, translation, and word level meanings as the foci of text discussions. In addition, the translation of English words into the students' first language was found throughout the teachers' lessons. The researcher concluded that these English instructors' classroom practices are congruent with their theoretical beliefs; as such, teachers holding different theoretical beliefs are likely to employ different approaches to literacy instruction.

Richardson et al. (1991) also found a relatively strong relationship between teachers' stated beliefs about the reading process and their classroom practices. Such a relationship enabled the researchers to predict some classroom behaviors of 39 elementary teacher participants while teaching reading. However, there was one teacher whose classroom instruction did not reflect her beliefs in the literature-based approach of reading. The researchers assumed that the inconsistency between beliefs and practices might indicate that the teacher was in the process of changing her beliefs. It was possible that the changes in beliefs might precede changes in practices.

The findings of these studies suggest that teachers of reading should be aware of their own conceptual beliefs about reading since such belief systems may explicitly or implicitly guide their instructional practices. Schools should provide teachers exposure to alternative beliefs and instructional practices in order to encourage them to challenge and

improve their existing belief systems. However, the beliefs teachers hold about reading may not be easily changed through suggestions from supervisors, publications, or peers (Tidwell & Mitchell, 1994). Thus, effective staff development programs are needed in order to change or improve teachers' beliefs about reading and their subsequent classroom practices. Staff development programs might focus on the following areas: teachers' background theories, beliefs and understandings of the teaching and reading process, theoretical frameworks derived from current research, and alternative practices that reflect both teachers' beliefs and research knowledge (Richardson et al., 1991).

The previous studies show that teachers' beliefs about the reading process have a considerable impact on their instructional practices. On the other hand, some researchers report that districts, schools, and reading programs seem to be more influential on classroom instruction than the teachers' beliefs. Richards (2001) examined the beliefs about reading and reading instruction of 24 elementary and secondary teachers. Her study found that the majority of the teachers viewed reading as a phonics- or skills-based process, and their instructional practices seemed to reflect their beliefs; however, school-mandated reading programs appeared to have a stronger impact on these teachers' pedagogy.

Research Design and Data Collection Methods in Previous Studies

Since the influence of teachers' beliefs about reading on their instructional practices has not been agreed upon among researchers, future studies on the topic are still needed. Because belief systems are complicated and mostly implicit (Richardson, 2003), researchers should be cautious about their research designs and employ various data collection methods that best measure teachers' beliefs about reading. Research designs

and data collection methods of previous research on the influences of teachers' beliefs about reading on their instructional practices are further discussed in this section.

Quantitative Research Designs and Data Collection Methods in Previous Studies

Most classic researchers on teachers' beliefs about reading adopted a quantitative research design to guide their studies, and the TORP (Deford, 1979) survey was frequently used as the tool to examine teachers' theoretical orientations about reading. However, the TORP may not accurately measure teachers' beliefs because some items in the survey are dated, ambiguous, and do not address diversity (Richards, 2001; Wham, 1991). Currently, the TORP survey receives less attention from researchers, and the studies on teachers' beliefs have shied away from the quantitative research paradigm toward qualitative research designs.

Deford (1979) conducted a study to develop and validate the Deford TORP survey to determine teachers' orientation to reading instruction. The TORP Likert-scale survey was conceptually based on three models of reading, phonics, skills, and whole language, and consists of 28 items reflecting practices and beliefs about reading instruction. Deford concluded that the TORP was a reliable, valid instrument to identify teachers' theoretical orientation to reading.

However, several researchers (Aimers, 1986; Evans, 1995; Richards, 2001; Wham, 1991) who adopted the TORP survey to use in their studies noted that the TORP survey restricts teachers' responses because aspects of reading instruction in the TORP do not address students' diversity and do not support current theoretical perspectives about reading. In addition, Evans (1995) revealed that the use of the TORP, which is a closed survey, could not reveal sources of these teachers' beliefs. Similarly, Wham (1991) used

the TORP to examine the relationship between reading methods courses in teacher education and pre-service teachers' theoretical orientations to the reading process. Wham found that the relationships between teachers' beliefs and their teaching behaviors were ambiguous. Wham suggested future studies use classroom observations and interviews in order to add clarity to the written responses on the TORP.

Richardson (2003) also suggested using the anthropological belief interview that involves "open-ended conversations in which the interviewer becomes the students of the interviewees' language and thinking" (p. 97). Hence, future studies on this topic should employ a qualitative research approach to add insights into the influence of classroom experience on student teachers' theoretical orientations. Therefore, future studies need to include other data collection methods such as interviews, classroom observations, and document reviews to confirm teachers' beliefs about reading.

Qualitative Research Designs and Data Collection Methods in Previous Studies

More recent research on teachers' beliefs appears to shift from a quantitative to qualitative research paradigm, focusing on how teachers make sense of their classrooms (Richardson, 1996). Qualitative research tools such as interviews, classroom observations, and document reviews are primarily used among recent studies (Farley, 1995; Graden, 1996; Kuzborska, 2011).

Farley (1995) adopted an ethnographic research design to investigate two college teachers' beliefs about reading in a foreign literature classroom. Farley employed two major data collection methods to reveal teachers' beliefs about reading: classroom observations and interviews with teachers and students. Ten class sessions were observed, and interviews with teachers were conducted several times. The strong relationships

between teachers' beliefs and their instructional practices were evidenced by extensive descriptions of the two teachers, their stated beliefs, classroom practices, and students' responses. Farley adopted a qualitative research design to guide her study based on the assumption that teachers' belief systems are frequently implicit; one cannot assume that teachers will explicitly explain their beliefs about reading. Accordingly, a teacher's theoretical understanding about reading can be understood through observing how the teacher integrates reading into his or her classes.

Graden (1996) conducted a qualitative study with 12 secondary French and Spanish teachers to investigate how language teachers' beliefs about reading instruction are mediated by their beliefs about students. Data were collected through teacher interviews, audio-taped classroom observations, and observational field notes. Data collection methods were divided into three phases: initial interviews, classroom observations, and subsequent interviews. The initial interviews focused on teachers' demographic data as well as their beliefs about reading. Subsequent interviews that were conducted after classroom observations aimed to explore teachers' beliefs and rationale behind their practices. Classroom observations covered two or three reading lessons. Findings from this study support the proposition that teachers' practices are generally consistent with their beliefs.

Kuzborska (2011) used a qualitative research design to explore links between Lithuanian teachers' beliefs about reading and practices. The researcher included lesson observations, video-stimulated recalls, follow-up semi-structured interviews, and document data analyses. Kuzborska categorized teachers' conceptual beliefs about reading into one of the following approaches: skills-based, whole-language, and metacognitive strategy. The findings of the study indicated that these teachers' beliefs

were dominated by the skills-based approach. Reflecting teachers' traditional beliefs about the reading process, their classroom instruction focused largely on translation practices. The results obtained from the interviews and classroom observations contribute to the discussion about teachers' beliefs, influences of the beliefs on their instructional practices, foci and purposes of their reading lessons, and preferred learning strategies.

These qualitative studies provide rich information about participants' demographics, interview responses, classroom behaviors, and research settings. These descriptions provide useful information for readers to compare their own schools, settings, and teachers with those who participated in the studies before making the decision to adopt or apply findings and suggestions from the research to their own situations.

In conclusion, it is essential for a study of teachers' beliefs to employ several methods of data collection in order to reveal teachers' beliefs about reading. Data obtained from a research tool, especially a self-reporting survey, such as the Deford TORP survey, may mislead the analyses of teachers' beliefs. The paper-and-pencil approach may not be an effective measure for specific teachers' beliefs and behaviors. Future studies may consider a mixed-method or qualitative research design.

Theories of the Reading Process

This section delineates the evolution of reading theories, major models of the reading process, and the influences of reading models on pedagogical approaches to reading instruction. Four major movements within the history of conceptualizations of reading, *transmission*, *translation*, *interactive*, and *transactional/constructionist* (Straw & Sadowy, 1990), are discussed. These different theories of reading are represented through

models of reading, which reflect distinctive viewpoints toward the processes and purposes of reading.

Transmission and Translation Theories

The transmission theories of reading, which were proposed during the late 18th century, appear to be the most conservative conceptualizations of reading (Straw & Sadowy, 1990). Such theories suggest that the author utilizes texts to transfer information, knowledge, or meaning to the reader, and the primary purpose of reading is the need to communicate. This *container* view of reading portrays reading as transferring or shifting information from text containers to readers' minds (Hynds, 1990). According to this transmission view, authors are perceived as the source and locus of meaning, while readers are passive recipients of the meaning. Shortly before the turn of the century, scholars and researchers paid more attention to the skills that people brought to the act of reading, and the authorial dominance was shifted to the text dominance and reading was conceptualized as translation rather than transmission (Straw & Sadowy, 1990). Through the translation theories of reading, texts, not authors, came to be viewed as the locus of meaning, and readers are active *translators* of texts, not just passive recipients of the information. It is believed that the readers' task is to extract meanings which reside within the structure and style of texts. A major concern of the translation theories is on the individual words in a text. Straw and Sadowy (1990) further explained that the translation theories consider text as an "accumulation of the meanings of the individual words, suggesting that the words themselves carried the meaning in a text" (p.28). Though the transmission and translation theories disagree on the place and locus of meaning, these two early waves of theories

similarly assume that reading comprehension is achieved through an analysis of the features of texts and a translation of that analysis into meaning (Straw & Sadowy, 1990).

Bernhardt (1991) explained that transmission and translation theories view reading as a cognitive process, as a meaning-extracting process. Therefore, models proposed through this cognitive lens attempt to explain how print information in texts is perceived by a reader and processed into meanings. Bernhardt further argued that these models view texts as “the most critical feature in the understanding of reading” (p. 7); consequently, they focus heavily on the characteristics of print as the center of the reading process. These models are, then, text-based in nature. One critical element of the cognitive view of reading is that the act of reading consists of linear, individual processing steps which are separate and measurable. This view of reading implies that all readers can be successful at reading if they follow such processing steps. The following section discusses some examples of such models.

The LaBerg-Samuels Model of Automatic Information Processing

The LaBerg-Samuels Model of Automatic Information Processing (LaBerg & Samuels, 1974) is frequently categorized as a bottom-up, text-based model of reading because its primary emphasis is on word identification and the process of extracting meaning from the visual input from a text (Straw & Sadowy, 1990). The LaBerg-Samuels model of reading consists of four processing stages in a linear fashion. The reading process starts with the sensory surface where the graphic input is perceived from left to right. The visual information, then, moves to the *visual memory* (VM) where text patterns such as lines and curves are processed and combined to form letters. After that, the input flows to the next stage, *phonological memory* (PM), where auditory representations of the

visual codes are processed. The process of reading completes at the *semantic memory* (SM) where individual word meanings are produced and comprehension takes place. The *episodic memory* (EM) or readers' general experiences and knowledge of the three memory systems (VM, PM, and EM) facilitate all processing stages. Within each of these memory systems, processing usually takes place from smaller units to larger units (LaBerg & Samuels, 1974).

Another important concept of the automaticity model is that reading primarily requires two tasks: decoding and comprehending. In fluent readers, the decoding process happens automatically; therefore, they can comprehend texts. As a result, they are able to simultaneously perform these two tasks. For readers who are not proficient in the target language, they can do only one task at a time since they need to switch their attention back and forth from decoding to comprehending texts. See Figure 1.

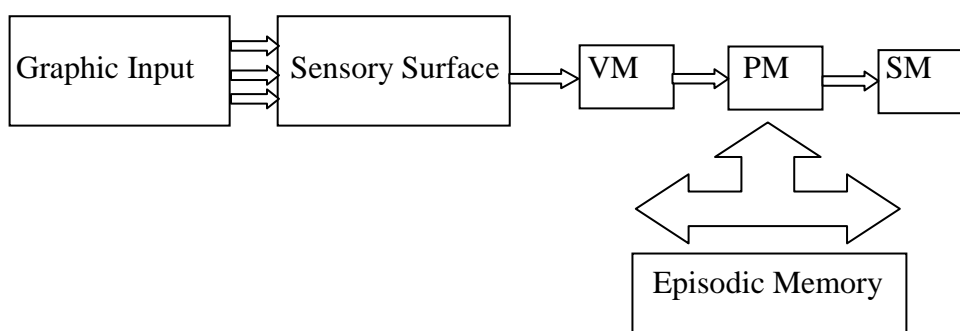


Figure 1. Adapted Automaticity Model. (adapted from Samuels, 2004).

Gough's One Second of Reading

Gough's (1972) model is another example of linear, text-based models, reflecting the translation assumptions about reading. Gough explained that the reading process occurs letter-by-letter, and readers make sense of these letters in their mental systems. Gough stated that readers transform graphemic information perceived by the *visual system* and register it as an *icon* before it is converted into characters by a character register. The character, then, is changed, respectively, into phonemes and lexical items and stored in the *primary memory*. The lexicons, then, serve as input flowing into a magical system called *Merlin* where readers apply their knowledge of syntax and semantics to form the deep structure. Finally, the deep structure moves to a mental device called the Place Where Sentences Go When They Are Understood (TPWSGWTAU) and forms meaning. See Figure 2.

These two models of reading assume that meaning wholly resides in texts; therefore, the ability to understand text characteristics is considered essential. Based on these bottom-up models, meaning is extracted from parts to whole, starting from letters and moving to words, sentences, and paragraphs to finally ending with the whole passage in a linear fashion.

Influences of Transmission/Translation Models on Reading Instruction

Bottom-up models of reading seem to be consistent with the part-centered skills approach of teaching to read (Weaver, 1994). The phonics-oriented and skills-based approaches to reading instruction appear to be influenced by the transmission or translation models of reading. These are discussed in this next section. While the first

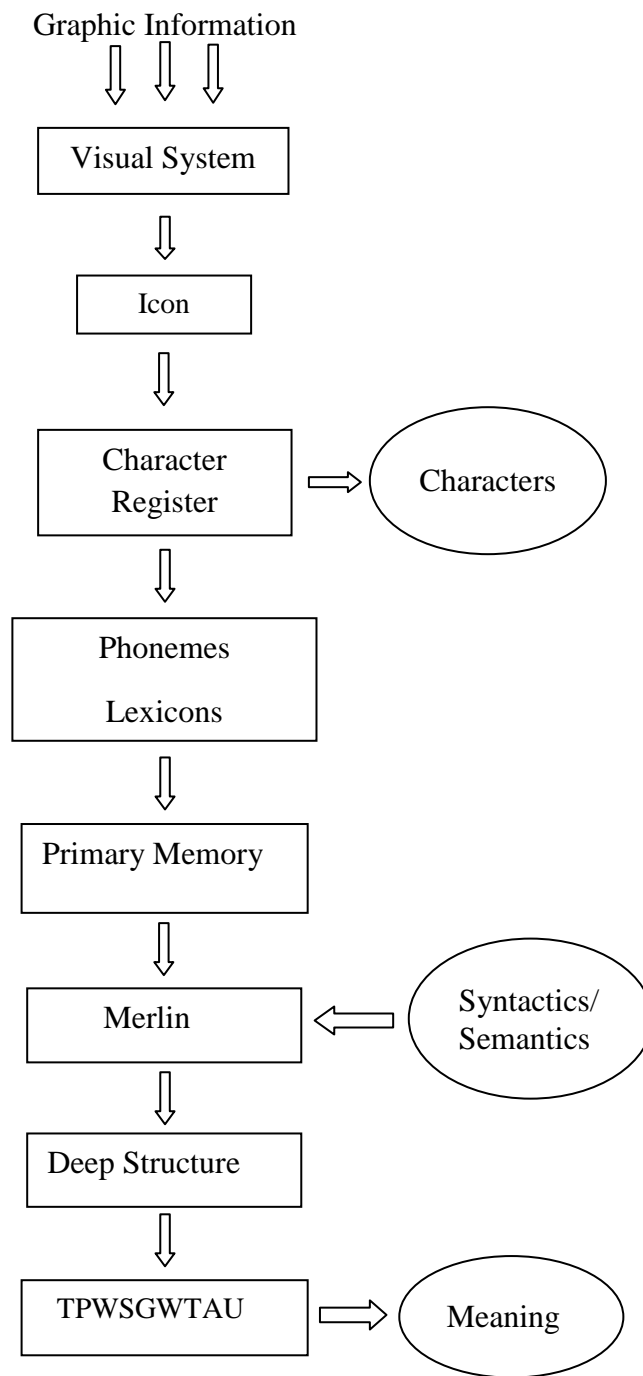


Figure 2. Adapted Gough's One Second of Reading Model (adapted from Rumelhart, 2004).

method is generally found in beginning language classrooms, the latter is usually used in intermediate or advanced courses.

Phonics-oriented reading instruction emphasizes the appropriate decoding of sounds from graphic symbols; therefore, the letter-sound relationship is viewed as the basis of instruction. After this, students' ability to develop the relationship between sounds of speech and their graphic symbols determines their success in reading. The relationships between sounds and symbols become the capstone of learning to read (Harste & Burke, 1977). This model assumes that students must be taught sequential series of separate subskills, such as letter recognition, phonological awareness, and word recognition. Typically, these subskills are taught separately through drills and exercises. After students are proficient in these subskills, teaching for reading comprehension, such as identifying main ideas and supporting details, summarizing, and analyzing, will take place. Thus, in these classrooms, decoding and comprehension are taught separately (Farley, 1995). Samuels (2004) argued that practicing the subskills of reading is essential for students to develop automaticity in reading. When a student can use these subskills effectively, the decoding process will happen automatically. Then, the student is able to focus on comprehending and recalling contents of texts.

Phonics-oriented reading instruction, which depends on the encoding of the text into phonological symbols or internal speech, may not apply directly to second language reading instruction (Barnett, 1989). Since most second-language learners are not proficient speakers of the language, they do not have a fully developed phonological system when they learn to read the target language of study. Barnett concluded that this may be the reason why teaching reading to second-language learners is often based on the skills-oriented instruction.

The skills approach to reading instruction places an importance on word analysis skills and the syntactic structure of the target language as a preparation for reading comprehension (Barnett, 1989; Farley, 1995). Deford (1985) explained that teachers who employ the skills-based model of reading emphasize the mastery of word analysis skills in order to facilitate students' decoding process. According to the skills approach, learning to read starts with acquiring a set of hierarchical skills. Perhaps this may be the reason why textbooks used in second-language reading classrooms often contain reading passages that are lexically and structurally simplified to match the learners' language competence (Farley, 1995). In these classrooms, a list of vocabulary is selected from reading texts and taught out of the reading context, and grammar is usually taught separately in order to facilitate students' decoding process (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Interactive Theories

While transmission and translation theories pay attention merely to text characteristics, the interactive theories propose readers' experience, concepts, interests, lifestyle, and socio-cultural background as other critical factors influencing the reading process. The interactive models of reading attempt to take into account both the textual characteristics and the readers' traits, such as knowledge and experience, in order to explain the reading process (Goodman, 2003; Rumelhart, 2004). A close match between readers' knowledge and textual information results in greater comprehension. Also, readers do not depend only on decoding skills to identify the meanings of words, but also employ syntactic or semantic knowledge to make sense of a text (Straw & Sadowy, 1990). Therefore, in order to comprehend the text, readers do not necessarily need to be proficient in decoding skills or have prior knowledge about words. This argument challenges the

bottom-up theories stating that readers need to be proficient in vocabulary and syntax of the target language prior to demonstrating reading comprehension.

Interactive theories view reading as a process that requires the integration of various sources of knowledge. Both lower-level processing skills (e.g., word recognition, phonological and morphological awareness, and syntactic knowledge) and higher-level processing skills (e.g., metacognitive skills as well as prior knowledge and experience) contribute to reading comprehension. In this sense, the term *interaction* refers to an interaction among these various sources of knowledge and skills within a reader. In addition, Rumelhart (2004) mentioned that reading is a cyclical perceptual and cognitive process, and readers employ sensory, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic information in order to comprehend texts. Thus, the term interaction may also refer to an interaction between readers and texts.

Rumelhart's Interactive Model of Reading

Rumelhart (1977) explains that readers' perceptions and comprehension of texts depend on multiple levels of lexical and grammatical knowledge. Readers can compensate for their challenges in one or more areas by hypothesizing the meaning of texts based on other areas of knowledge. For example, when readers fail to recognize a word in the decoding process, they can employ semantic or syntactic knowledge to help predict the meaning of the unfamiliar word (Stanovich, 1980). According to Rumelhart, readers' schemata (i.e., all types of knowledge that are stored in memory) affect the way readers interpret texts. Rumelhart proposed that readers construct a hypothesis of textual meaning based on their visual analysis as well as their semantic and syntactic processing systems. The hypothesis is then sent to the message center where it is confirmed or

rejected based on the other sources of knowledge (e.g., readers' prior knowledge and contextual clues) (see Figure 3).

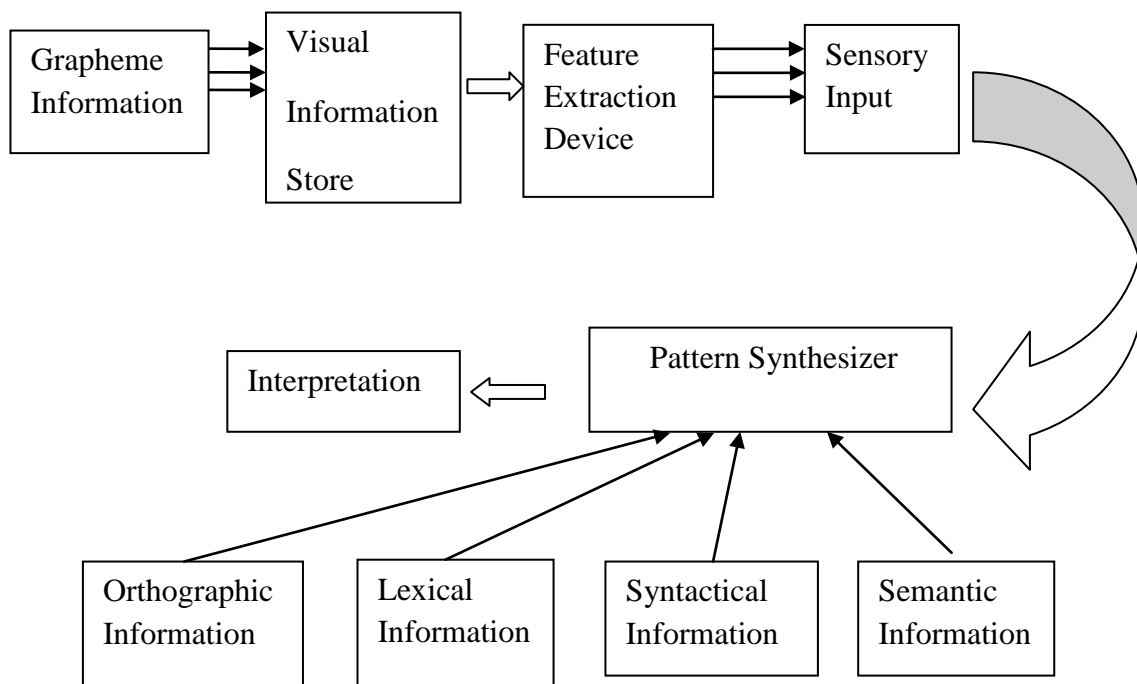


Figure 3. Adapted Interactive Reading Model. (Adapted from Rumelhart, 2004).

Goodman's Model of Reading

Goodman's original psycholinguistic model of reading explained that the author assigns meaning to the text; however, in order for readers to arrive at the meaning, the model puts an emphasis on readers' linguistic and world knowledge. In this model, texts consist of three cue systems: grapho-phonetic cues (the sound-letter relationship), syntactic cues (the syntax of the passage), and semantic cues (the meanings of the words) (Goodman, 1975). Successful readers employ their syntactic and semantic knowledge to interact with these semantic and syntactic cues in order to develop hypotheses about the

meaning of texts. For these readers, graphic cues and sound-symbol knowledge may be utilized later to confirm these hypotheses. Therefore, readers are less dependent on the print and phonics of the text. Goodman's miscue analysis, which compares observed and expected responses of people reading aloud, provides a key assumption about reading: the way people read and interpret is influenced by their experiences, interests, views, and social and cultural backgrounds. Goodman, thus, concluded that reading must be viewed from its social context.

Influences of Interactive Reading Models on Reading instruction

The interactive theories of reading have had a tremendous impact on reading instruction for both first and second language learners (Nassaji, 2003; Perfetti & Marron, 1998). The theories direct educators away from the teaching of component skills, particularly sound-letter skills toward instruction that emphasizes students' mental processing of syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic information. In addition, the theories encourage both educators and reading experts to realize the role of an active reader.

Goodman and Goodman (1981) developed a holistic approach to reading instruction based on the interactive theories of reading. Their approach suggests that for adult language learners, reading instruction needs to focus on meaning, emphasize extensive reading, and create an environment which accepts and encourages risk taking. Comprehension strategies, which focus on the use of graphic, syntactic, and meaning cues, are taught in the real language context. Since reading comprehension does not depend solely on a student's knowledge of the language, but also on knowledge of the world, reading instruction should place emphasis on developing students' background of the reading topic. Jones (1982) proposed that pre-reading classroom activities are essential as

they help relate what students are going to read with their existing schemata. Ruddell and Unrau (2004) stated that the activation of students' prior beliefs and knowledge that relates to the reading topic facilitates students' meaning-constructing processes.

In addition, Ruddell and Unrau (2004) provided seven key assumptions of the interactive model of reading instruction, which reflect the strategy-based instruction. First, readers are considered active theory builders and hypothesis testers. Second, readers' environments influence their reading performance. Third, the growth of reading competence is driven by students' needs to obtain meaning. Fourth, reading ability is influenced by readers' oral and written language proficiencies. Fifth, readers construct meaning by drawing upon the combination of their understanding of texts and culture which is embedded in the text. Sixth, meaning is dynamic. Seventh, teachers are considered to be facilitators of students' meaning construction process. Clearly, these assumptions suggest that learners are key figures in the meaning construction process. Ruddell and Unrau also suggested that students need to be equipped with cognitive and metacognitive strategies that assist in monitoring, re-reading, and checking comprehension. Lastly, Ruddell and Unrau concluded that teachers should provide opportunities for students to discuss, confirm, or reject their interpretations with peers rather than depending upon the absolute authority of teachers.

Transactional Theories

The interactive theories serve as an important step to valuing readers in the act of reading. This notion becomes more evident in the most recent conceptualizations of reading in transactional or constructive theories (Straw & Sadowy, 1990). Transactional theories propose that "meaning is situated in the dynamic relationship among the reader,

text, and context, rather than in the text alone or solely with the author” (Schraw & Bruning, 1996, p. 293). This core assumption distinguishes the transactional model from other theories of reading. Through the transactional lens, a text means different things to different readers regardless of the author’s intention or textual characteristics (Schraw & Bruning, 1996). Due to the different purposes of reading and reading contexts, readers’ interpretations of texts vary.

Rosenblatt’s Transactional Model of Reading and Writing

In her transactional theory of reading and writing, Rosenblatt (2004) explained that the reader and the text are “two aspects of a total dynamic situation” (p. 1369). Thus, the meaning neither resides solely in the text nor the reader but derives from the transaction between the reader and the text. While reading, people pay attention to some specific parts of the text that match their situation, purposes, and their linguistic-experiential reservoirs. Therefore, meaning is unique to each individual. Even within the same reader, the meaning of a text can vary across reading events. Rosenblatt further suggested that language is not a static code; therefore, her transactional theory treats a text as neither an isolated entity nor overemphasizes the author’s role. At the same time, language is not a self-contained system, so Rosenblatt’s theory does not overemphasize a reader’s role or personal aspects.

In addition, Rosenblatt (2004) stated that every reading act is a transaction involving a particular reader and a particular context. Meaning is constructed during the transaction, so even the same reader reading the same text at a different time may arrive at different interpretations. Readers’ situations, purposes, and linguistic-experiential reservoirs (i.e., accumulated knowledge of the language, culture, history, etc.) as well as

symbols in texts enter into the transaction and affect readers' interpretations. According to Rosenblatt's theory, readers' purposes and acts of reading are represented through the efferent-aesthetic continuum. Efferent reading, which covers the first half of the continuum, refers to reading for public meaning. The other half of the continuum is aesthetic reading, where readers involve their feelings, ideas, emotions, and personalities to interpret and respond to texts. Efferent and aesthetic stances of reading determine readers' processes of selective attention (i.e., people pay most attention to reading sections that are relevant to their particular needs, goals, and interests of reading).

Goodman's Transactional Sociopsycholinguistic Model of Reading

Goodman revised his 1967 psycholinguistic model of reading and renamed it the transactional socio-psycholinguistic theory. According to Goodman (1994, 2003), reading is not a linear, but cyclical process, which includes four cycles: visual, perceptual, syntactic, and semantic. During the construction of meaning, readers may leap ahead of the cyclical process to tentative conclusions; however, the conflict information that readers encounter later in the text will force readers to construct a new meaning. Adhering to this theory, Goodman proposed that both readers and texts are transformed as a result of reading. In other words, reading causes a change within the readers themselves, as well as the texts they read. First, readers' schemata and values are altered through reading comprehension. Second, texts are changed in the sense that readers construct personal texts that run parallel to the actual texts. These personal texts are developed consistent with the schemata readers bring to the transaction process. Similar to Rosenblatt's transactional theory, Goodman emphasizes the roles of readers' purposes and intentions in reading comprehension in his revised model. Goodman supported Rosenblatt's idea

saying that because of these different purposes and intentions, the same reader may get different meanings from the same text when he/she reads it at different times.

It might be concluded that the transactional models of reading share four core assumptions. First, most words have more than one possible meaning, and a specific meaning is determined when words transact with one another in a text. Second, meaning is neither in the text nor the writer but constructed during a reading event. Third, readers make sense of texts due to their schemata. Fourth, readers are key figures in the meaning-constructing process.

Influences of Transactional Models on Reading Instruction

Rosenblatt (1993) suggested that reading instruction should take place within environments and activities where students are motivated and encouraged to draw on their linguistic-experiential reservoir as they create meaning. Reading and writing should, therefore, not be taught separately, as linguistic habits and semantic approaches gained in one skill can benefit the other (Rosenblatt, 1988). In addition, classroom discussions are essential in order to help verify students' understandings of texts. Through group discussions, "students become aware of the need to pay attention to the author's words in order to avoid preconceptions and misinterpretations" (Rosenblatt, 2004, p. 1390). When students share responses with peers and see that their interpretations from the same text differ, they can return to the text to discover the information that helps confirm or reject such different ideas. In the transactional model of learning to read, Rosenblatt (2004) argued that teachers are no longer "a conveyor of ready-made teaching materials" (p. 1390). Rather, teachers are considered facilitators, helping students create their personal responses to texts.

Based on Rosenblatt's transactional theory, Brown, El-Dinary, Pressley, and Coy-Ogan (1995) proposed their transactional strategies approach to reading instruction. The approach is transactional in three senses: (a) readers are taught that text meaning occurs during the transaction between texts and readers; (b) meaning emerges through transactions between group members, instead of being determined by each individual; (c) students' reactions during interpretive discussions influence the teachers' instructional actions. Based on these assumptions, students are taught a few but powerful strategies thoroughly so that they "understand, remember, and respond personally to text" (Brown, et al., 1995, p. 256). Strategies taught can include predicting and verifying predictions based on text content or background knowledge, visualizing important information, associating information in text with background knowledge, and monitoring whether a text is making sense. However, scholars have noted that teachers need professional development support in order to apply the transactional strategies approach in their reading classrooms because several teachers may find giving up control and letting students lead strategies discussions challenging" (Brown et al., 1995).

Reading in a Second Language

In order to have a better insight into the teaching of reading in second language, it is essential to investigate differences between first (L1) and second language (L2) reading (Nassaji, 2011). This section starts with a discussion of L1 versus L2 reading processes. Next, the L2 reading process is analyzed in light of two theories of second language acquisition: Cummins's developmental interdependence theory and Clark's linguistic threshold hypothesis. Bernhardt's second-language reading model and a review of literature on second-language reading instruction are also included in this section.

Differences Between L1 and L2 Reading

L2 learners need multiple sources of knowledge and skills to learn to read in their second language (Grabe, 1991; Koda, 2004; Nassaji, 2003). Both lower- and higher-level processing skills contribute to success in L2 reading. Therefore, successful L2 readers need to be able to make use of L2 vocabulary, phonemic awareness, semantic and syntactic knowledge, schemata, as well as cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies. Given the emphasis on readers' knowledge of the language and reading skills, learning to read in L1 and L2 may not seem radically different (Nassaji, 2011). However, Grabe and Stroller (2011) warned that while learning to read in the second language, L2 learners must face several challenges, such as L2 linguistic difficulties and L1 transfer effects. Thus, the scholars suggested L2 educators and researchers take into account the following differences between L1 and L2 reading when working with second language learners: linguistic and processing demands, individual and experiential factors, and sociocultural and institutional influences.

Regarding linguistic and processing differences, Grabe (2009) argued that L1 and L2 readers vary in terms of morphological knowledge and syntactic structure of the language. L1 readers start learning to read after their development of oral language proficiency, so they have enough linguistic resources to support reading comprehension. In contrast, many L2 readers begin learning to read when they do not have sufficient knowledge of L2 vocabulary and grammar. These L2 learners need to develop their linguistic knowledge and reading comprehension skills simultaneously. Thus, for them, reading is likely to be a tool for developing oral language skills instead of gaining information or comprehension (Nassaji, 2011). In addition, differences between L1 and L2 linguistic resources, such as phonology, orthography, morphology, and grammar, may

facilitate or interfere with L2 reading to some extent (Grabe & Stroller, 2011). For example, readers who have limited L2 proficiency may extensively depend on L1 resources to carry out L2 reading tasks. The heavy reliance on L1 resources may delay L2 reading processes or interfere with comprehension. In the meantime, L1 reading abilities are likely to support L2 comprehension when readers' L1 and L2 linguistic resources are similar (Grabe, 2009) or when readers have sufficient L1 and L2 proficiency (Grabe & Stroller, 2011). Koda (2004) stated that it remains unclear what knowledge and skills are transferred from a first to a second language as well as how they facilitate the L2 reading process. However, effects of language transfer cannot be seen as irrelevant to the development of L2 reading.

The second distinction between L1 and L2 reading deals with readers' individual and experiential differences. L2 reading comprehension is influenced by readers' individual experiences such as prior L1 reading instruction, amounts of exposure to L2 reading, practices from home and community, and cultural issues for literacy uses. Such individual and educational experiences influence readers' motivation to read in their second languages, attitudes toward L2 texts, self-esteem, emotional responses to reading, interest in reading, and willingness to persist when encountering challenges (Grabe, 2009). These factors subsequently shape readers' perceptions of how well they can read in L2.

Third, Grabe and Stroller (2011) noted that socio-cultural and institutional differences may influence second language reading development. First, L2 readers are likely to bring their L1 concepts about texts to their L2 reading processes. For example, in some countries, texts are perceived as unchanging and highly valued sources of truth; however, in many other countries, texts are considered as interpretations of realities and fact with which readers may or may not agree. In addition, L2 reading may be shaped by

readers' prior L1 institutional experiences, such as national exams, national curricula, classroom management, and educational resources. These cultural and institutional concepts may influence how learners employ L2 reading strategies (Koda, 2004).

In sum, Grabe and Stroller's discussion on the differences between L1 and L2 reading (i.e., linguistic and processing, individual and experiential, and socio-cultural and institutional) shed light on how complicated L2 reading processes are and what should concern L2 educators. Considering these differences, it appears that "there is no straightforward blueprint for how a teacher should adapt instruction for all L2 contexts" (Grabe & Stroller, 2011, p. 55). Pedagogical approaches proven successful within L1 environment may not always be efficiently applied to L2 reading classrooms. Teachers need to adapt reading instruction to best suit their L2 contexts and meet their L2 learners' needs.

Developmental Interdependence and Linguistic Threshold Hypotheses

Two theories of second language acquisition, the developmental interdependence hypothesis (DIH) (Cummins, 1976) and the linguistic threshold hypothesis (LTH) (Clarke, 1980), provide insights in how second-language learners learn to read and how the language transfer may affect their L2 reading processes. Two different explanations for the effects of the language transfer are discussed.

The developmental interdependence hypothesis proposes that there is a common underlying proficiency across languages (Cummins, 1979). In other words, regardless of the differences of surface aspects of languages, language skills, especially those that involve highly cognitive abilities, such as literacy and academic skills, are shared. Therefore, in L2 reading, learners do not need to relearn cognitive language skills attained

through the development of L1 reading. Cummins (1979) also noted that the language transfer is likely to occur when L1 and L2 writing systems are similar; however, it is possible that this transfer may take place regardless of differences between L1 and L2 orthographies (Wagner, Torgesen, & Rashotte, 1994). Cummins added that the DIH theory may apply to academic skills, a cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP), rather than to basic language abilities, such as word knowledge and phonological awareness. In addition, the transfer of such skills is likely to facilitate the L2 reading process only when learners have sufficient L1 proficiency. However, the required level of L1 proficiency that allows the transfer of L1 remains questionable. In addition, the theory is criticized as classism because it conceptualizes language development specific to the school setting, and higher level language proficiency portrays the language use of educated classes (MacSwan & Rolstad, 2005).

Based on the DIH, two assumptions about L2 reading instruction can be made (Grabe, 2009). First, since L1 literacy and academic skills can transfer automatically to L2 reading, second-language learners need to learn only L2 vocabulary and sentence structure to be able to cope with reading in a second language. Second, readers who have low L2 language proficiency can still successfully perform L2 reading tasks by relying on their L1 academic reading skills. Grabe (2009) disagreed with the assumptions and noted that though some skills, such as reading strategies and metacognitive awareness, may transfer across languages, other skills that are essential for L2 reading (e.g., vocabulary knowledge as well as morphological and syntactic knowledge) depend on second language development. In other words, L2 language proficiency is important.

While Cummins's DIH theory emphasizes L1 reading abilities, Clark's linguistic threshold hypothesis gives importance to learners' L2 proficiency. The LIH challenges

Cummins's developmental interdependence hypothesis, which assumes that L1 cognitive reading skills automatically transfer to L2 reading when students reach a certain level of L1 proficiency. On the contrary, Clarke (1980) proposed that though learners have matured in their first-language reading, L1 cognitive and reading skills do not facilitate L2 reading unless they attain a sufficient level of L2 proficiency. Thus, limited L2 proficiency may prevent the transfer of L1 cognitive language skills to L2 reading. However, the theory does not provide empirical evidence to explain what critical level of L2 proficiency will allow L1 transfer (August, 2006). Though studies support that there is a strong relationship between L2 proficiency and L2 reading abilities (Bernhardt & Kamil, 1995; Yamashita, 2002), Grabe (2009) noted that "the evidence is complicated" (p. 148). In addition, reading development of L2 children, adolescents, and adults are different, particularly in terms of what cognitive skills transfer from first to second language reading and when the transfer takes place. Thus, the process of learning to read in L2 varies across types of second language learners.

Bernhardt's Constructivist Model of Second Language Reading

Reading models discussed in earlier sections are primarily based on first-language reading. The L1-based reading models are helpful for explaining reading processes in general; however, they do not explain the unique character of L2 reading because the cross-linguistic nature of L2 reading is not taken into account (Nassaji, 2011). In addition, L1-based models are consistent with the core assumption that reading occurs after the development of oral language skills. This is not always true about L2 reading because many second-language learners may begin learning to read when their oral language proficiency is not fully developed. Bernhardt's second-language reading model takes into

account L2-specific factors that are absent in L1-based models, such as L2 proficiency, differences in syntactic and vocabulary knowledge, and L1 to L2 linguistic distance (Nassaji, 2003).

Bernhardt (1991) developed the constructivist model of second language reading based on the interactive model of first language reading. From her study with 300 second-language readers of French, German, and Spanish, Bernhardt explained that readers' knowledge of text-based features (i.e., word recognition, phonemic-graphemic features, and syntax) and extra-text-based features (i.e., intra-textual perception, prior knowledge, and metacognition strategies) contribute to the construction of meaning. In other words, reading is both text- and reader-driven. Bernhardt noted that readers' lack of knowledge of text-based features affect their comprehension in varying degrees due to their levels of L2 proficiency. Less proficient readers are likely to depend on their extra-text-based features of the reading to comprehend the text. However, when their L2 proficiency increases, they focus more on the textual features.

Based on the constructivist model, Bernhardt (1991) suggested five principles of L2 reading instruction. These principles, however, have been proposed in accordance with reading instruction for adult second-language learners who have well-developed L1 proficiency and literacy concepts.

1. Teachers need to allow students to construct meaning of a text consistent with their beliefs and world knowledge.
2. Students' reading difficulties may not be predetermined by teachers but can be observed from the actual reading or during reading instruction.
3. Readers' misunderstandings arise from various sources, which can be both text- and knowledge-based in nature.

4. Reading instruction should focus on individual readers and texts.
5. Second-language reading instruction needs to be direct. Observed reading difficulties of students need to be analyzed, and instruction should deal specifically with the problematic part of a text.

In conclusion, L2 reading instruction needs to be both teacher- and student-centered (Bernhardt, 1991). Instruction needs to be learner-oriented in order to best solve learners' specific comprehension problems and meet learners' needs. At the same time, instruction needs to be teacher-controlled so that students are equipped with reading strategies and language resources in order to cope with second-language reading.

Previous Research on Reading in a Second Language

The literature suggests that both lower- and higher-level reading processing skills contribute to the success of L2 reading. Thus, teachers need to emphasize both skills and integrate them into their classroom instruction (Bernhardt, 1991; Guo, 2011; Nassaji, 2003). Nevertheless, several studies show incongruity between current views of second-language reading and L2 classroom instruction (Farley, 1995; Fitzgerald, 1995; Johnson, 1992; Kim, 2010; Sitthitikul, 2006).

Nassaji (2003) investigated the role of syntactic and semantic processes, word recognition, and grapho-phonetic processes on reading comprehension with 60 English-as-a-second-language (ESL) graduate students. Nassaji found that word recognition contributed to the distinction between skilled and less-skilled readers in addition to syntactic and semantic processing skills. These findings suggest that efficient word recognition processes may predict the success or failure of L2 reading comprehension; therefore, it should never be ignored even among highly advanced ESL readers. Nassaji

(2003) also found that orthographic processing skills were an important characteristic of successful readers, since participants were likely to rely more on orthographic codes than phonological processing skills. Grabe (2009) explained that reading comprehension cannot happen without rapid and automatic word recognition of a range of words. When people read, they pay attention to content words in order to understand texts. Thus, L2 readers who cannot efficiently use their word-recognition processing skills are likely to struggle to comprehend texts.

In addition to the importance of L2 linguistic resources, Qian (2002) conducted a study with 217 ESL university students to examine the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension. As scores on vocabulary knowledge and reading for comprehension were highly intercorrelated, Qian concluded that there was a relatively high correlation between the two variables. Cheng (1993) investigated Taiwanese college students who experienced difficulties in reading technical texts in English. Three significant areas of students' confusion were related to syntactical problems. Syntactic problems were also reported by Al-Arfaj (1996). The researcher found that limited grammatical knowledge was most frequently reported by Saudi beginning EFL students as a source of English (L2) reading difficulties.

Besides textual features, previous studies revealed that L2 readers also need to deal with reader-driven features, such as prior knowledge, metacognitive awareness of reading comprehension skills, and interest (Bernhardt, 1991). For example, Kim (2010) investigated the effects of prior knowledge of 108 Korean high school EFL students on L2 reading comprehension. He found that insufficient prior knowledge was likely to cause difficulties when students completed recall protocols. Similarly, Chen and Graves (1995) conducted their study with 240 Taiwanese college students to investigate the effects of

providing background knowledge of American short stories on English (L2) reading comprehension. Their study showed the positive effects of providing background knowledge on students' comprehension of the American short stories and attitudes toward English reading.

Based on the literature, both textual-driven and reader-intrapersonal features are important elements of L2 reading processes and need to be a focus in L2 reading instruction. Nevertheless, research on L2 reading instruction reveals the discontinuity between the current views of reading and actual ESL/EFL classroom practices.

The teaching of reading in ESL/EFL classrooms is likely to focus extensively on lower-level skills such as word recognition and oral reading (Fitzgerald, 1995). Instruction is often word-oriented and teacher-centered; consequently, many L2 learners depend heavily on word-by-word decoding and translation strategies when approaching an L2 text (Brown, 1992; Kim, 2010). Fitzgerald (1995) reviewed research on ESL reading instruction in the United States and found that ESL reading instruction from the lower-grade to adult level is likely to emphasize word recognition and oral reading. Fitzgerald concluded that many ESL teachers do not focus on comprehension in reading instruction because they perceive that the development of oral language is primary in reading abilities, and they are not familiar with current theories of reading and their instructional implications.

Several studies conducted within Asian classrooms are also similar to Fitzgerald's findings. For example, Kim (2010) explored the influence of EFL reading instruction on Korean students' usage of English (L2) reading strategies. Five intermediate EFL adult students participated in the study. Kim found that because English reading classrooms in Korea focused extensively on linguistic skills, students usually relied on word-by-word

translation when approaching English texts. Participants accepted that they were frustrated and bored with reading in English. In addition, students had few opportunities to engage in reading with personal pleasure because their English reading materials were limited to school work or functional purposes. The students viewed reading as a skills-oriented process, and their self-evaluation as readers was related to the amount of their vocabulary knowledge and English proficiency. In Thailand, Sitthitikul (2006) interviewed six EFL university Thai students and observed their English reading classrooms in order to investigate how English reading was taught within a Thai university context. Findings indicated that the model of instruction used with these students was primarily based on instructor-led lecture and teachers' translation. Saengboon (2002) conducted research on the beliefs of Thai EFL teachers about English language teaching. The qualitative data indicated that teachers' translation was common in English reading classrooms in Thailand. Saengboon added that students had little or no interactive responses with the texts while reading for comprehension. Similar to Korean students participating in Kim's study (2010), these Thai students considered vocabulary as the major element in reading texts and paid serious attention to every unknown word. Tapinta (2006) interviewed 14 Thai university students about their awareness of knowledge, usage, and control of English reading strategies. The results of the study showed that the bottom-up reading instructional approach was commonly used in these students' English reading classrooms. The teaching of reading generally involved introducing and improving knowledge of vocabulary and sentence structure; consequently, most participants viewed reading as a bottom-up process. The students interacted passively with texts and strove to understand every unknown word in order to extract the writer's intended meaning. Sethapun (1992) noted that EFL reading instruction in Thailand focuses extensively on

individual words and phrases. As a result, Thai students depend heavily on dictionaries when approaching English texts because they believe that unknown vocabulary is the main source of reading difficulty.

In sum, despite the changing conceptualizations of reading among researchers and scholars, the text- and skills-based theories still have much influence on current EFL/ESL teachers' belief systems as evident in their instructional practices. Such reading instruction may negatively influence students' beliefs about reading and their subsequent reading processes.

Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the literature that is relevant to teachers' beliefs about the reading process and their influences on instructional practices, L1-based models of reading and their instructional applications, research methodology used in previous studies, theories of second-language acquisition, and research on second-language reading. Chapter 3 will concentrate on the research methodology which was employed in this study. Methods of data collection and data analysis will be discussed.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Teachers hold beliefs or theoretical orientations toward the reading process that influence their decisions and judgments in reading classes (Harste & Burke, 1977; Lonberger, 1992). Understanding teachers' theoretical orientations enables researchers to gain insight into teachers' classroom practices as well as to the rationale behind their instructional choices. This study explores Thai university instructors' conceptual beliefs towards the reading process and their instructional practices in reading comprehension classrooms in an English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) context. The results of this study will foster Thai university instructors' awareness of their conceptual beliefs about reading that may implicitly influence their instructional practices in EFL reading classrooms. The following research questions will be addressed:

1. What conceptual beliefs do Thai university instructors hold about the reading process in an English-as-a-foreign-language context?
2. What instructional practices are applied by Thai university instructors who teach reading in an English-as-a-foreign-language context?
3. How do Thai university instructors' conceptual beliefs about the reading process influence their instructional practices in an English-as-a-foreign-language context?
4. How do Thai university instructors see their roles as teachers of reading in an English-as-a-foreign-language context?

This chapter discusses the following topics respectively: the research design, sample and sampling methods, data collection procedures, data analysis, and validity issues.

Research Design

If you want to understand the way people think about their world and how those definitions are formed, you need to get close to them, to hear them talk and observe them in their day to day lives (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 35).

The quantitative research paradigm had long dominated the educational research community until the 1980s when qualitative research became popular (Lee & Yarger, 1996). The shift from a quantitative to qualitative research paradigm corresponds to the switch on areas of interest of research about teachers' attitudes and beliefs. In the mid-century, the focus of teacher-attitude research was on developing attitude inventories to predict the relationships between teacher attitudes and behaviors. However, recent research attempts to understand teacher thinking, beliefs, planning, and the decision-making process (Fang, 1996; Richardson, 1996). This may suggest that the quantitative research approach, which depends heavily on numerical data and measurements, does not provide adequate and accurate information about teachers' cognitive processes. Rather, teachers' in-depth and individual information obtained through qualitative research methods, such as interviews, observations, and document reviews, may contribute to a deeper understanding of teachers' beliefs and thinking processes.

Since this study is primarily concerned with exploring teachers' perceptual beliefs about reading and their influences on teachers' instructional practices, the qualitative research approach was considered a more appropriate choice. This study falls into the qualitative research approach for four reasons. First, the nature of the research questions themselves places the study into the qualitative research paradigm (Lee & Yarger, 1996;

Mertens, 2010; Yin, 2003). All research questions in this study primarily investigate how Thai teachers perceive reading and how their perceptions impact their instructional practices. As such, the goal of this study is not to “develop predictive indicators of teacher effectiveness” (Richardson, 1996, p. 107), but to understand the nature of teachers’ thinking and points of view. The research questions and the goal of this study are consistent with an important goal of a qualitative study, which aims to understand how people perceive and make sense of situations and problems and how this understanding influences their behaviors (Maxwell, 2005; Mertens, 2010).

Second, this study aims to provide information that will benefit the professional development of English reading teachers at a particular university. Accordingly, this study focuses on the depth of the data within a specific group of teachers of reading, rather than a wide range of information from a large-scale study. Merriam (2009) stated that the qualitative research approach puts an emphasis on the depth of data collection. Qualitative methods such as open-ended interviews and observations provide findings that are more detailed and variable (Patton, 2002). Given the alignment of the goal of this study with the strength of the qualitative research approach, the qualitative research methodology was utilized to frame the study. In addition, it is essential for this study to take contextual factors into account because teachers’ beliefs and instructional practices are highly influenced by organizational cultures, students’ levels of proficiency, school resources, and classroom contexts (Richardson, 2003). Maxwell (2005) argued that the qualitative approach, which emphasizes the understanding of particular settings, offers more potential for informing educational practitioners.

Third, this study does not aim to evaluate participants’ beliefs and their instructional practices; rather, it emphasizes acquiring information that helps improve the

professional development of teachers in a research site. Its aim to improve, rather than evaluate teachers' beliefs and classroom practices (Maxwell, 2005), led the study into a qualitative research design.

Fourth, the review of the literature reveals that predetermined measurements of teachers' beliefs in quantitative research do not validly reveal teachers' beliefs about reading. Several quantitative studies report that the use of survey questionnaires and close-ended interviews to measure teachers' beliefs may not provide adequate information for analyzing and identifying teachers' beliefs towards reading (Aimers, 1986; Evans, 1995; Wham, 1991). Teachers' beliefs are varied and unique due to their educational and personal experiences. The measurement of teachers' beliefs which are derived from the literature and predetermined by a researcher in the quantitative research approach may not accurately represent teachers' actual beliefs (Aimers, 1986; Lan, 1999; Richardson, 1996). Therefore, the qualitative research design, which enables researchers to gain insight into participants' beliefs and their circumstances from participants' perspectives, (Harklau, 2005; Madden, 2010; Mertens, 2010; Tedlock, 2005) was considered an appropriate research approach for this study.

Sample and Sampling Methods

This section begins with general information about Crystal Pond University as well as the department of English. Next, sampling methods and confidentiality issues are discussed.

The Research Site

Crystal Pond University (pseudonym), located in Northern Thailand, was chosen to be the research site of the study. The institute has been established for 37 years and was founded by Christian Thailand. The university is a member of the Association of Christian Universities and Colleges in Asia and the Association of Southeast Asian Institutions of Higher Learning. Crystal Pond University is a typical liberal arts institution in Thailand with approximately 6,000 students. Both Thai and English programs are offered in the undergraduate and graduate levels. Based on the university's 2009-2010 Achievement Report, there are 422 full-time instructors. Out of these instructors, 20.02%, 74.05%, and 5.92% hold doctoral, master's, and bachelor's degrees respectively. The majority of students are from all provinces in Thailand. Ninety-five percent of students are Buddhist, and the rest are Christian and Muslim. International students count for approximately 3% of the total students, and most are from the United States, China, Myanmar, Pakistan, and India.

The English department is under the Faculty of Arts and has two core curricula: one designed for students in an English bachelor's degree program and the other for non-English-major students. The first curriculum covers a four-year syllabus which aims to provide students with a knowledge of English language studies. After completing core requirements, students choose their specialized fields, including English literature, English linguistics, business English, translation, and English language teaching. For the non-major students' curriculum, the English department offers two fundamental English and two English for specific purposes courses. There are 26 full-time instructors: one instructor holds a doctoral degree in curriculum and instruction, and the others hold a master's degree in teaching English as a second or foreign language, English linguistics,

literature and creative writing, or curriculum and instruction. The instructors, both males and females, range in age from 25 to 55 years old.

Crystal Pond University was chosen to be the research site for three reasons. First, the researcher has worked as an instructor in the English department at the university for eight years and has been funded by the university to pursue a doctoral degree in the United States. Such a relationship increases the possibilities for the researcher to gain permission to conduct the study at the university. Second, some instructors who hold old-fashioned beliefs and instructional practices may be intimidated to share such beliefs and classroom experiences with strangers. The researcher chose to conduct the study in the English department at Crystal Pond University where the researcher has a professional relationship with most of the instructors teaching there. By having a prior relationship with the researcher, the participants may feel more comfortable during in-depth interviews and classroom observations. Last, Thai researchers have revealed that Thai undergraduate students have difficulty comprehending English texts (Adunyarittigun 1996; Saengpakdeejit, 2009). This is a problem at Crystal Pond University. In the university, English courses usually rank first or second in the number of those that students repeat. Since reading comprehension takes the greatest portion of midterm and final examinations in most English courses, students who have difficulty in reading are likely to fail their English classes. Classroom implications derived from findings of this study may be transferred to other universities that share similar contexts and problems.

Participants

The study was conducted with four Thai university instructors who teach English reading comprehension within an English-as-a-foreign-language context in the English

Department at Crystal Pond University. Criterion-based sampling (Mertens, 2010) was utilized to select the participants using the following criteria:

1. Only instructors who are teaching an intermediate or advanced English reading class for English-major students were selected. Since students' limited English proficiency may interfere with the degree to which instructors' beliefs influence their practices, instructors teaching beginning English reading classes were not included.
2. Only tenured instructors were included in the study, as their instructional practices are not influenced by mentors, such as those who are in non-tenure-track positions. Tenured instructors are more likely to be candid about their teaching. In addition, the discovery of in-depth information about beliefs and instructional practices are less likely to impact their teaching career.
3. Only instructors who have a close relationship with the researcher were selected in order to reduce their reactivity, described by Maxwell (2005) as the influence of a researcher on the setting or individuals. By having a prior relationship with the researcher, the participants were more comfortable unveiling their beliefs and preferred instructional practices.
4. Only instructors who were willing to participate in the study were included.

After the researcher gained permission from Crystal Pond University to conduct the study, instructors who match the first three criteria were approached individually. The researcher verbally informed the instructors about the purpose of the study, data collection methods, and confidentiality issues. The instructors who were willing to participate in the study were asked to sign an informed consent form (Appendix A), which explained

benefits and potential risks they may experience during the study as well as their rights to withdraw from participation in the research.

Confidentiality

Names of participants will not be used in any publications of the study.

Pseudonyms were assigned to each participant and were used throughout the study. Data obtained were coded. Identifying information linked to such codes was kept in a separate file, and only the researcher was able to access the file. Mertens (2010) mentioned that the coding method helps increase the privacy and confidentiality of the individuals in the research study. After the data analysis was completed, field notes, audio and video tapes, interview transcripts, and other materials related to data collected were destroyed. In addition, member checks (Merriam, 2009) were conducted with the participants, with some requesting the removal or altering parts containing their unique information which might enable a reader to identify them. Lastly, the data collected was used only in this study and was not shared with other people except for the dissertation committee.

Data Collection

Data collection methods included in-depth interviews, direct classroom observations, and document reviews. This section delineates these three methods respectively.

In-Depth Interviews

Interviewing permits a researcher to learn what people perceive and how they interpret their perceptions (Weiss, 1994). In this study, interviewing enabled the

researcher to gain insights into Thai university instructors' conceptual beliefs about reading and how such perceptions affected their classroom decision making and practices.

An in-depth interview was divided into two phases, before and after classroom observations. The semi-structured Pre-Observation Interview Guide (Appendix B) was utilized in the pre-observation interview. Merriam (2009) explained that the semi-structured interview is guided by a list of questions or issues that relate to research questions; however, the wording and the order of the questions is flexible. The pre-observation interview was open-ended and primarily focused on topics related to informants' beliefs about reading and their instructional practices. The interview included questions such as, "What is the best metaphor for reading? Explain." "How does the participant define *reading comprehension*?" "What does it mean to be a good reader?" "What facilitates or hinders reading comprehension?" There were follow-up questions during the interviews. Questions used in the pre-observation interview were piloted with instructors in the English department at the same university who were not selected to participate in the study. Interviews in the pilot study were analyzed as to whether findings addressed the research questions. The researcher and the instructors who provided responses in the pilot study discussed the clarity of questions and their experiences during the interview.

The post-observation interview was more structured. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) suggested a highly structured interview be used in a later stage of data collection because such an interview helps the researcher to develop a better understanding of particular topics that emerge during preliminary stages of data collection. As such, the Post-Observation Interview Guide, which was constructed after the pre-observation interview and completion of each classroom observation, varied across the informants. For example,

in the post-observation interview, the instructors were asked to extend ideas they previously mentioned in the pre-observation interview. The informants were also asked to explain their purposes of specific teaching and learning activities that were observed in their classrooms.

Both pre-and post-observation interviews were arranged outside of the English Department and teachers' school hours. Each interview took approximately 45-60 minutes, and an audio recorder was utilized during the interview.

Direct Classroom Observations

The direct classroom observation was employed for four purposes. First, it helps validate findings attained from the interview. Second, the direct classroom observation may implicitly reveal beliefs about the reading process that instructors do not mention during the interview. Third, the direct observation allows the researcher to examine the influence of the instructors' beliefs on their instructional practices in real classroom contexts. Fourth, data attained from the observation may serve as a reference point for the post-observation interviews.

Lichtman (2010) suggested that researchers should identify specific topics to study before conducting their observation. The predetermined topics enable them to focus on particular groups of people, settings, and activities that are central to their research questions. Therefore, a classroom observation guide (Appendix C) that loosely describes classroom activities and aspects to be focused on during the observation was utilized in this study. The observation guide focused on classroom activities the instructors used in the pre-, during-, and after-reading activities (e.g., vocabulary instruction or types of questions used by instructors) and instructional aspects such as classroom interactions,

instructor's feedback, and instructors' expectations for students. Patton (2002) suggested that the observation focuses on "the setting that was observed, the activities that took place in that setting, the people who participated in those activities, and the meanings of what was observed from the perspectives of those observed" (p.262). Besides activities and aspects mentioned in the observation guide, the direct observation also took into account physical classroom settings, informal classroom activities and interactions, and how the researcher made sense of observed classrooms, teaching and learning activities, instructors, and students.

The researcher took on the role of an observer as participant. Researchers may participate in activities that occur in research settings; however, they take their role of gathering information more seriously (Merriam, 2009). During the direct observations, the researcher sat in the back of a classroom, developing the relationship with instructors and students, but was not directly involve in teaching and learning activities. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) suggest that researchers should refrain from participating because they may become too involved with participants and forget their original intention, which is to observe and make sense of those observed behaviors. Five to seven 90-minute classroom sessions of each instructor were observed. Field notes and video recording were employed.

Document Reviews

Lichtman (2010) argued that documentary materials created by participants represent their thoughts, ideas, and meanings; consequently, such material provides "a window into the human mind" (p. 173). Syllabi, teacher-made exercises, quizzes, and examinations are expected to reflect actual perceptions of instructors toward their subjects,

expectations for students, as well as their perceptual beliefs regarding the reading process. Therefore, all teacher-made exercises and quizzes used in classrooms throughout the period of data collection were gathered. Examinations were collected after the exams were administered.

Data Analysis

The constant comparative method (Merriam, 2009) guided the data analysis process of this study. Based on Merriam, the coding system is divided into three phases: category construction, sorting categories and data, and constructing central themes. In addition, NVivo 9, a computer software program, was used to aid documentation and data analysis.

Phase I: Category Construction

The data analysis was an on-going process and started after the first interview was transcribed. Corbin and Strauss (2008) suggest researchers not wait until the end of the data collection in order to analyze qualitative data; otherwise they will be frustrated working with a big pile of data gathered when the data collection is completely finished. Thus, the analysis started immediately after the first pre-interviews with all four teachers were completely transcribed verbatim, recorded as word documents, and imported into NVivo software. It is worth noting that the interviews, which were conducted in the Thai language, were not translated into English since the researcher believes that working with the original data helps develop a deeper understanding of each participant. The translation might be misleading and would not capture the interviewees' authentic intentions and meanings. However, the interview sections appearing in the dissertation were translated

into English, and all other data collection sources were in English, such as transcripts of classroom observations, the researcher's memos, and reviewed documents. In addition, codes and categories were all in English.

In this first phase, the researcher read the first interview transcript. While reading, the researcher inserted the possible codes (called nodes in the NVivo program), notes, and other comments that are relevant for answering the research questions. These codes were either from the exact words of the participant, the researcher's own words, or key concepts from the literature. After that, these codes were organized into categories depending on their recurring patterns. Patton (2002) explained that categories should be judged by two criteria. First, the data that belongs in a certain category must hold together in a meaningful way. Second, differences among categories must be clear. Thus, some codes were turned into major categories while some become subcategories.

The same coding and categorizing process were repeated with the second interview transcript. Then, the two lists of categories derived from the first and second interview transcripts were merged into a master list of categories which reflected the regularities or recurring patterns in the study. After that, the master list of categories was revised. For example, all redundancies were removed and unclear categories were renamed. The master list of categories was used later as an outline or classification system for assigning codes and categories for the subsequent data collected. The master list included categories such as beliefs about the reading process, teaching mode, teacher role, student role, roles of texts, methods of evaluation, classroom interactions, teachers' feedback, and goals of teaching.

Phase II: Sorting Categories and Data

After the master list of categories was completely developed, the researcher began sorting categories and data. Within the constant comparative data analysis, the open coding system starts with the category construction where raw data is inductively analyzed into codes and categories. The deductive approach is used later in the sorting process when the researcher looks for more evidence to support the final set of categories (Merriam, 2009). Based on the master list of categories, codes and categories were assigned deductively to the rest of the data. Throughout the sorting process, the master list of categories was modified to reflect the data. As the analysis of the data evolved, some categories remained such as teachers' beliefs about the reading process, teacher roles, student role, and teaching mode while others, such as teachers' feedback, classroom interaction, and methods of evaluation turned into subcategories. In addition to the sorting process, NVivo was a great advantage because the software helped gather parts of transcripts assigned the same nodes (codes) into the same place. NVivo software also offers links to return to the original track of the data (e.g. the date of the interview or respondents' pseudonyms).

Phase III: Constructing Central Themes

After all interview scripts, field notes, and documents were coded and sorted, categories and subcategories were integrated in a meaningful way in order to answer research questions. Merriam (2009) suggested that a visual presentation of how these categories or concepts are related to one another be used to capture the relatedness of the findings. With the aid of NVivo, a concept map to develop insights into the relationships of the categories across the types of data was created. The concept map displayed how

these relationships relate to the research questions and the conceptual framework. Based on the insights gained through concept mapping, central themes, which addressed all research questions, were identified. The central themes evolved from existing categories and reviews of the literature.

Validity Issues

Maxwell (2005) mentioned that qualitative researchers generally deal with two broad types of threats of validity: researcher bias and reactivity. Though it was impossible to eliminate such threats, the researcher attempted to minimize their influences on the collection and analyzing of data.

Researcher Bias

Researcher bias happens when data is selected to fit the researcher's existing theory (Maxwell, 2005). Maxwell does not suggest researchers eliminate their theories or beliefs but encourages them to understand how their values and expectations might affect their studies and interpretation of data. For this study, the researcher aimed to reveal Thai university instructors' theoretical beliefs about the reading process. Based on literature reviews on teachers' beliefs, the researcher expected that these instructors held some perceptual beliefs about the reading process and such beliefs would guide their instructional practices in a certain way. The researcher was conscious of the expectation and avoided its influence when collecting and analyzing the data.

In addition to the researcher bias, a process called member checking was used. Throughout the study, participants were asked to examine whether the preliminary analysis of their own words or actions was true. Some participants provided additional or

alternative explanations for their instructional practices, and the researcher changed or added the information according to their requests when they made sense. When there was a disagreement, the researcher and the participants talked and sought agreement. For example, Tantipat would like the researcher to add students' English proficiency levels as another reason for her emphasis on vocabulary in her reading classrooms. She argued over the researcher's explanation that vocabulary is the main basis that led her instructional practices. Tantipat's request was added into the researcher's memo, and the analysis of the data was based on the modified memo. This member checking helped identify the researcher's bias and lessen the possibility of misinterpreting what participants say or do (Maxwell, 2005).

Another strategy used to reduce the researcher bias was peer examination, which refers to a researcher asking colleagues to comment on findings as they emerge (Merriam, 2009). After the data analysis was completed, the researcher asked two Thai university instructors teaching English as a foreign language at Crystal Pond University and at a public university in North Thailand to read and code two sets of interview transcripts based on the master list of categories. Later, the researcher and the two instructors discussed interpretations of the interview transcripts. If there was a disagreement among the researchers and the two peers, the researcher looked for more evidence to accept or reject their interpretations.

Triangulation using multiple data collection methods was employed to increase the validity. Triangulation reduces the risk of chance association and biases due to a specific method; however, methods that are triangulated must not have the same biases and sources of invalidity (Maxwell, 2005). In this study, the researcher used the in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document reviews to confirm emerging findings.

Classroom observations provide a check on what is reported in interviews which may be distorted by personal bias and the emotion of informants, and the interviews allow the researcher to confirm her understanding of observed behaviors (Patton, 2002). In addition, document analysis provides data that is stable, not influenced by the presence of a researcher (Merriam, 2009). By using the three methods of data collection, the researcher developed an accurate understanding of the data attained.

Reactivity

Participants' reactivity is usually considered a critical threat to validity (i.e., the influence of the researcher on the setting or participants) in qualitative educational research, where classroom observations and in-depth interviews are common research instruments (Maxwell, 2005). Maxwell noted that interviewers and interview situations always influence what respondents say. Since this study was conducted at a Thai university which is the researcher's future workplace, participants might feel insecure and reluctant to share beliefs or experiences that were contradictory to university culture, the norms within the English Department, English curricula, or senior instructors' practices. Instead of reporting their actual beliefs, it was possible that the participants might distort their answers to meet the expectations of their workplace. Also, the presence of the researcher in classrooms may alter participants' regular instructional practices to some extent. For classroom observations, being observed can make people self-conscious and generate anxiety; accordingly, their regular behaviors may be changed while being observed (Patton, 2002). To deal with this limitation of the qualitative research approach, the researcher selected only tenured instructors as the discovery of in depth information about beliefs and instructional practices may be less likely to impact them. These tenured

instructors may be more willing to share their actual beliefs and instructional practices. In addition, in order to reduce reactivity, only instructors who had a prior relationship with the researcher were selected. These participants might feel more comfortable unveiling their actual beliefs and preferred instructional practices. Finally, to minimize participants' reactivity during classroom observations, data collecting did not start from the first week of classroom observations, but waited until the participants became familiar with the presence of the observer and the video recording. Classroom observations were conducted throughout the second half of the semester. This intensive, long-term observation can help lessen participants' reactivity (Maxwell, 2005).

Limitations

Two limitations were found in this study. First, because of the time constraint, only five to seven classroom sessions of each instructor were observed. Teaching and learning activities and interactions, which occurred in these classrooms, may not precisely portray participants' instructional practices. This limitation might affect the analysis of data regarding the influence of instructors' theoretical beliefs about the reading process on their instructional practices to some extent.

Second, all participants were Thai instructors teaching at the same university. Yin (2003) suggested that conclusions and findings derived from a single-case study might not be powerful since they are influenced by the uniqueness or a condition surrounding the case. This limits the generalizability of a single case study. To deal with this limitation, the researcher carefully documented the research site and participants. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) suggested that extensive descriptions of settings or subjects in a qualitative study

help readers consider whether findings of such research fit into their general themes, teachers, or settings.

Conclusion

This study explored four Thai university instructors' conceptual beliefs about the reading process and their instructional practices in reading comprehension classrooms in an EFL context. This study was guided by the qualitative study design and criterion-based sampling was used to select participants. Three data collection methods involved in the present study were in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document reviews. A constant comparative method was utilized in order to analyze the data.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH CONTEXT

This study was designed to reveal the mindset of Thai teachers' beliefs about the reading process, and how these influence their teaching practices in English reading classrooms. The research site is a private university in Chiang Mai, a province located in Northern Thailand. Four Thai teachers who were teaching reading in English in the university participated in this study. This chapter sets the scene of the research by describing the context of the study, providing a better understanding of teaching and learning English at the university level in Thailand.

In order to describe the research context, this chapter touches on the following areas: teaching English at the university level in Thailand, how Thai culture may influence teachers' beliefs and practices, participant profiles, and descriptions of the reading courses observed.

An Overview of English Language Teaching at the University Level in Thailand

According to the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Thailand (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2006), an expected learning outcome is that students should be able to communicate in both Thai and English effectively. Thus, in order to ensure that students will be proficient users of English upon completing a bachelor's degree, the Ministry of Education requires undergraduate students to take 12 credits of the English language; six in the general education curriculum and the

other six in English for specific purposes. These requirements extend the 12 years of English instruction that students complete during their primary and secondary education (Office of the National Education Commission, 2001). Students determined to be entering a university without sufficient English proficiency may need remedial English courses to ensure that they attain the necessary language and study skills needed in order to succeed in their bachelor's degrees. For English majors, the English department can decide whether or not they should take the same compulsory English classes as students from other faculties (Wiriyachitra, 2001).

Thai classrooms are commonly designed with rows of desks and chairs facing a whiteboard. Teachers usually stand at the front of the classroom and, accordingly, become the center of attention. A typical classroom is usually equipped with teaching aids such as a computer, an overhead or LCD projector, a large whiteboard, and an internet connection. English is taught in either a small or large classroom depending on the university policy. The number of students typically ranges between 45 and 60 (Wiriyachitra, 2001). Students are usually expected to answer questions, engage in discussions with teachers or peers, take notes, work in small groups or dyads, and complete reading comprehension exercises (Dumteep, 2009). Waelateh (2009) described English classrooms in a Thai university as follows:

It was obvious that faculty members and students seemed to have a demarcation with the faculty member in the front. It is an explicit division of space and role between the faculty member and students. Students' seats were aligned in straight rows and columns, with the faculty member's desk positioned at the front of the room. (p.113)

The description of such classrooms is congruent with the teacher-centered classroom that Nunan (1999) labeled as the traditional mode of classroom organization in Thailand.

In many primary and secondary schools, Thai teachers hesitate to adopt English as the medium of instruction and predominantly use Thai in their English language classrooms (Klanrit & Sroinam, 2012; Kwangsawad 2001; Prapaisit, 2003). However, English is used as the language of instruction in English classrooms at the university level, and teachers usually expect students to use English to complete all kinds of tasks, such as classroom discussion and group or pair work (Chuarayapratib, 2005; Dumteep, 2009). This dramatic change in the language of instruction from one level to the next is likely to place an enormous strain on students, especially freshman students who are not ready to function in classrooms using English as the medium of instruction.

In addition, classroom interaction in this English as a medium of instruction type classroom in Thai universities is mostly one-way communication from the teacher to the students. Several studies noted that in Thailand, frequently entire class periods in English classrooms, even at the university level, are dedicated to the teacher first explaining the lesson and then asking questions (Chuarayapratib, 2005; Dumteep, 2009; Nonkukhetkhong et al., 2006; Thongmark, 2002). The research also reported that it is typical for Thai students to quietly take notes and listen to the teacher attentively. Nonkukhetkhong et al. (2006) explained that the Thai students' silence is caused by either their fear of making mistakes or having an unfavorable attitude toward speaking English. Thus, Thai students choose to wait for answers from teachers. The lack of student interaction in classroom can be understood in relation to Thai values and culture. Therefore, the next section focuses on Thai values and cultural norms that may influence teaching and learning in Thailand.

Thai Cultural Context

This section discusses two salient characteristics of Thai culture which appear to have an enormous influence on Thai teaching and learning: Thai hierarchical status within the society and Thai tendencies for quietness or shyness.

Foley (2005) noted that the people of Thailand and other Asian countries place a very high value on hierarchical status, which is earned by increasing age and education. Teachers are highly respected, typically considered as being knowledgeable, and regarded as authority figures. Thus, Thai students may feel uncomfortable asking questions or disagreeing with teachers because it may be implicitly inferred that students are questioning the teachers' knowledge and position. Based on the researcher's teaching experience and personal point of view, the beliefs that teachers are always right and that questioning the teacher is a disrespectful classroom behavior, could negatively affect student to teacher interactions in Thai classrooms. For example, students may be afraid to ask questions or share their opinion, especially when their comments are not congruent with those of the teacher.

Nonkukhetkhong et al. (2006) agreed with Foley's comments that Thai values and culture have much influence on Thai teaching and learning. They noted that traditional Thai teachers expect students to be obedient, passive, and respectful to teachers, and consider good students to be those who listen attentively and take notes very carefully. Teachers with this point of view are unlikely to adjust themselves to a learner-centered classroom environment, where students, instead of teachers, are the main players. The concept that teachers are givers of knowledge may hold back students' autonomous learning since students usually perceive their roles merely as receivers of knowledge. The difference in understandings about learner roles may inhibit engaged learning and the

development of self-directed learning skills among Thai learners. For example, in a reading class, students may wait for the translation from teachers and not attempt to construct their own meaning of reading passages. Obviously, when students do not attempt to overcome reading difficulties on their own, they may never develop self-monitoring reading strategies. Teachers in such a traditional reading classes may expect all students to arrive at one single meaning already determined by the teachers or the teacher's manual.

While shyness is often considered an unfavorable trait and a sign of incompetence in the Western culture, it plays a positive role in Thai culture (Chaidaroon, 2003, Fieg, 1989, Knutson, Komolsevin, Chatidetu, & Smith, 2002). Indeed, Chaidaroon (2003) argued that for the Thai, shyness is considered a strategic choice to attain respect and maintain social harmony. Thai people opt to present themselves as shy and humble persons in order to avoid confrontation, competition, and conflict. Chaidaroon further explained that Thai people do not ask for help or speak of their achievement, but it is the responsibility of their interlocutors to be sensitive to their needs or intentions. Speaking up in classrooms can be interpreted as being boastful or arrogant. In order to avoid what may be considered as unpleasant behavior, Thai students may choose to be quiet. Some Thai teachers may make the situation even worse when they perceive students' silence as a common feature of Thai classrooms and see no need to encourage classroom interaction.

Participant Profiles

Four female teachers who were teaching English reading courses at Crystal Pond University in the second semester of the 2012 academic year participated in the study. Sasinee taught both Reading I (AE 203) and Analytical Reading (AE 216). Araya,

Chalatorn, and Tantipat taught either one of these reading courses. Pseudonyms are used in order to keep participants' confidentiality. All teachers voluntarily participated in the study.

Araya

Araya is 47 years old. She received her bachelor's degree (BA) in English from a public university in Chiang Mai, Thailand and started her teaching career at a high school in Chiang Mai as a full-time English teacher. After her fourth year of teaching at the high school, she resigned from the school to pursue a master's degree (MA) in Teaching English at a well-known public university in Bangkok, Thailand. Upon completion of her study in 1994, she continued her teaching career at Crystal Pond University, where she has been assigned to teach several reading and writing courses for both students in general and English major students. Araya is the most experienced teacher among the participants. She has been teaching at Crystal Pond University for approximately 18 years. At the time of the data collection, Araya was the coordinator of AE 216, which is the most advanced reading course. She developed approximately 90% of the course syllabus, 100% of course materials, 100% of quizzes, and 50% of midterm and final examinations. In the same semester, she taught two other required courses for English major students- Intensive English and Writing II.

Sasinee

Sasinee is 32 years old. She received her BA in English and MA in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) from Crystal Pond University. While pursuing her MA, she also worked as a part-time teacher at a private university in Chiang Mai and was

assigned to teach several Business English courses. She also taught the Thai language to foreigners as a part-time job. Her teaching career at Crystal Pond University started immediately upon the completion of her MA in 2005. She has been teaching at the university for approximately seven years, but started teaching reading courses for students majoring in English just three years ago. When the data were collected, she was the coordinator of AE 203 and developed almost 100% of the course syllabus and 75% of course materials. She wrote 70% of quizzes and 50% of midterm and final examinations. In the same semester, she also taught two other major required courses: Business English and Intensive English.

Chalatorn

Chalatorn is 35 years old. After receiving her BA in English from Chiang Mai University in 1998, she worked as a full-time English teacher of third graders at an elite private school in Chiang Mai. However, she reports not feeling comfortable working with small children because she finds it very difficult to manage their behavior. Thus, she resigned from the job and furthered her study in an MA program (TEFL) at Crystal Pond University. Chalatorn completed her MA in 2003, and has been teaching at Crystal Pond University since then. When the data collection took place, Chalatorn was teaching three courses, GE 109 (Fundamental English for general students), AE 203, and AE 216. She has been teaching AE 203 for three years, and this semester was her first time teaching AE 216. Though she was not the coordinator of any reading courses, she was a key person in developing course syllabi and materials. For AE 203, Chalatorn developed 25% of course materials. She also wrote 15% of quizzes and 25% of midterm and final examinations.

For AE 204, she prepared 25% of supplemental reading materials and exercises and wrote 50% of midterm and final examinations.

Tantipat

Tantipat is 40 years old. She received her BA in English from a public university in Chiang Mai. Later, she worked as a full-time teacher at a private high school in Chiang Mai for approximately seven years before running her own language-tutoring center for three years. She then returned to be an English teacher at the same private high school before deciding to pursue her MA degree in TEFL. Since her completion in 2010, she has been a full-time English teacher at Crystal Pond University. At the school, she taught fundamental English, which focused primarily on English grammar and reading.

According to Tantipat, the main goal of teaching at a secondary level is to prepare students for the university entrance examinations, which extensively measure students' knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary. Therefore, she perceives teachers' need to emphasize these two critical areas of the English language in their classrooms. Tantipat also mentioned that teaching English at a secondary school is far different from teaching the language at the university level because teachers need not worry about the entrance examinations. She believes university teachers have more freedom in selecting content and teaching methods, even though they need to tailor their courses to meet students' needs and adhere to university policies. At Crystal Pond University, Tantipat has taught Fundamental English for general students and two other courses: Intensive English and Reading II for English major students. When the data collection took place, it was her first time teaching AE 203. Tantipat wrote 15% of quizzes and 25% of both midterm and final examinations.

Course Descriptions

This research studies beliefs and practices of teachers who were teaching reading courses for English major students at the Crystal Pond University in the second semester of the year 2012. One participant taught both Reading I (AE 203) and Analytical Reading (AE 206), and the others taught either one. Both AE 203 and AE 206 are required courses for English major students.

Reading I (AE 203)

Reading I is designed specifically for second-year English major students. However, some senior students who fail the course in a previous year may retake the course. AE 203 is a three-credit course, requiring three hours of lecture a week, which is 45 hours a semester. Each classroom period lasts for 90 minutes and meets twice a week. The coordinator of the subject provides most supplemental classroom materials; however, each instructor can provide some other materials to serve their students' needs. As indicated in the course syllabus, by the end of the semester, students should be able to use clues to understand metaphors, idioms, and colloquial expressions; identify types of organization of texts and use them to help identify main ideas; differentiate fact from opinion; recognize the chronology of events in a story; identify topics and main ideas in multi-paragraph passages; read difficult material using comprehension and vocabulary strategies for interpretation in context; make inferences and draw conclusions based on clues in the text; and summarize a passage both in prose and outline styles. AE 203 is also described in its syllabus as an English course that aims to develop skills in reading for interpretation, prediction, sequences, drawing conclusions, and summarizing text.

In addition, for the required textbook, all three teachers agreed to use *Essential Reading 4* published by Macmillan Groups. The textbook is written for upper-intermediate university students, and includes 12 chapters. AE 203 covers only the first six chapters which includes language, local culture, food, film, fashion, and controversy. The remaining chapters are covered in Reading II (AE 204), which is the continuation of AE 203. Each chapter usually starts with an exercise that activates the students' prior knowledge and familiarizes students with new vocabulary that reappears in the chapter's reading passage. The pre-reading exercise is followed by a reading of approximately five to ten paragraphs. The readings cover topics such as "The Tragedy of the Tiger," "Strike the Pose in Tokyo," "A Thousand Years of Foot Binding," and "Time to Legalize." After reading a passage, students are given exercises to promote reading comprehension and to review vocabulary and grammar. The post-reading exercises come in a variety of forms, including multiple choice, true or false, fill-in-the-blank, matching, and answering open-ended questions. Each chapter usually ends with a speaking activity such as one that requires students to discuss the answers to questions with their partners.

In addition, assessments consist of final and midterm examinations (45%), quizzes (15%), classroom assignments (10%), external reading (10%), presentations (15%), and classroom discipline (5%). Students who earn 80-100 points get an A, 75-79 get a B+, 70-74 get a B, 65-69 get a C+, 60-64 get a C, 55-59 get a D+, and 50-54 get a D. Those who earn less than 50 fail the course.

Analytical Reading (AE 206)

In order to take Analytical Reading (AE 206), students are required to pass two prior reading courses: AE 203 and AE 204. The course was designed for third-year

English major students; however, students who fail the course in a previous semester may retake it. The course is three credits and meets three hours a week, for a total of 45 hours a semester. Each class period lasts 90 minutes, and the class meets twice a week. Two teachers were teaching this course when the data collection took place. Both teachers volunteered to participate in the present study. According to the syllabus, upon completion of the course, students will be able to use all reading strategies acquired from prior reading courses (AE 203 and AE 204). They will improve their reading proficiency; effectively analyze reading passages through examination of the vocabulary in context, transition words, punctuation clues, sentence structure, and sentence comprehension; understand the implications of the information or comments that are made and consider the author's purpose and tone; form their own ideas and opinions on aspects of the topic discussed; and discuss and criticize reading selections in both oral and written responses. AE 206 is described as a continuation of Reading II (AE 204). It is a course designed to help students further develop skills in reading using a variety of articles containing complex sentence structures, with an emphasis on analysis and discussion.

During the semester, Araya and Chalatorn, teachers of AE 206 decided not to require a specific textbook. Instead, they used articles selected from various issues of *Reader's Digest*, magazines, and newspapers. Selected reading passages involved various topics such as *Families feeling the strain of change*, *Rights we must exercise responsibly*, *Why, oh why, these uncalled-for wai* (Thai way of paying respect)?, and *The happiest man in Thailand*. As coordinator of the course, Araya selected all reading passages, and Chalatorn was responsible for developing supplemental exercises for the passages.

Student learning was assessed by quizzes (15%), midterm and final examinations (45%), external reading (10%), classroom discussion (25%), and classroom discipline

(5%). Interestingly, in AE 206, classroom discussion was an integral part of classroom assessment, while this form of evaluation did not exist in AE 203. Araya, the coordinator of AE 204 mentioned that since she believes students would develop critical thinking skills when they have an opportunity to exchange opinions with peers and teachers, she incorporated classroom discussion into the evaluation of student learning.

For the standardized grading criteria, students who earn 80-100 points get an A, 75-79 get a B+, 70-74 get a B, 65-69 get a C+, 60-64 get a C, 55-59 get a D+, and 50-54 get a D. Students who earn less than 50 fail the course.

Conclusion

Chapter 4 set the scene for this study and presented the background necessary to understand teaching and learning English in Thailand in light of Thai values and culture. The chapter was divided into four major parts: an overview of teaching English at the university level, the Thai cultural context, participant profiles, and course descriptions. The next chapter presents findings and analyses about the participants' beliefs about reading.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND ANALYSES

This chapter addresses four research questions: What conceptual beliefs do Thai university instructors hold about the reading process in an L2 context? What instructional practices are applied by Thai university instructors who teach reading in an L2 context? How do Thai university instructors' conceptual beliefs about the reading process influence their instructional practices in an L2 context? How do Thai university instructors see their roles as teachers of reading in an L2 context? The first section of the chapter presents the research findings of four participants' beliefs and presuppositions about L2 reading as a whole. The second section reveals common instructional practices of each participant. In this section, teachers who share commonalities of beliefs and instructional practices are grouped together. In the third section, the influences of instructors' beliefs about reading on the participants' instructional practices are investigated and whether the participants' instructional practices correspond to their beliefs about reading. The last section examines instructors' perceptions of their roles as teachers of L2 reading.

The participants were four university instructors teaching reading in English (L2) at Crystal Pond University located in Northern Thailand. Data were drawn from 21 private interviews, 24 classroom observations, and document reviews. It is worth noting that a translated version of the participants' interview transcripts is used in this chapter.

Teachers' Beliefs about Reading in an L2 Context

This part consists of two major sections. The first section reports on participants' belief systems and presuppositions about L2 reading, especially within a second-language (L2) context. These belief systems are categorized into four major themes: definition and purposes of reading, sources of meaning, the process of L2 reading, and the reader's role. Richardson (1994) referred to belief as an individual's understandings of the world. With respect to this definition, the first section reveals the participants' personal understanding of L2 reading. In addition, all participants accepted that they were not familiar with any of the prevalent reading theories, and their entire understanding of L2 reading was derived from their direct experiences with Thai (L1) and English (L2) reading instruction when they were students, their opinions and attitudes, and second-language teaching experiences. Thus, their understanding about reading emanates from their personal beliefs and experiences and is not influenced by any reading theories.

The second section presents the analyses of participants' beliefs about L2 reading which are reported in the first section. The analyses are conducted with respect to the transmission and transactional theories of reading presented in Chapter Two. The analyses explore and identify which theory of reading can best describe each participant's view of L2 reading.

Research Findings on Participants' Beliefs about Reading in an L2 Context

This section reports four key findings of participants' beliefs about reading, especially in a second language: definition and purposes of reading, sources of meaning, the L2 reading process, and the reader's role. The major data were drawn from one-on-one interviews and classroom observations. Document reviews (course syllabus,

classroom materials, and exam papers) provided additional evidence. The conceptual beliefs about reading held by Araya, Sasinee, Tantipat, and Chalatorn are reported.

Participant I: Araya

When the data collection took place, she was the coordinator of Analytical Reading (AE 206) and took a major part in developing the course syllabus, selecting course materials, and writing quizzes. She also wrote 50% of midterm and final examinations. Araya taught two sections of AE 206 in the semester; however, classroom observations were conducted in only one of the two sections because she did not feel comfortable having the researcher present in the other section. She stated that she felt embarrassed as students in the section were not active and rarely participated in classroom discussions. The teacher used English as the medium of instruction.

Araya's beliefs about the definition of and purposes of L2 reading. For Araya, reading is like traveling, allowing readers to explore places, culture and customs, as well as realities through other people's eyes. Interestingly, she said that traveling and reading are similar as both enable people to grow up. Through both activities, she believes people broaden their minds, develop their thoughts, and change for the better. Araya added this definition of L2 reading:

Because language and culture cannot be separated, reading in a second language is an act of understanding the world through another language. L2 readers do not develop only their L2 language, but also the culture of the target language.

Araya defined reading in general and in an L2 context as a learning activity to attain new knowledge. Asked to explain what she actually meant by *new knowledge*, Araya replied that the new knowledge is not limited only to the knowledge that a reader

directly derives from an article or an author, but also from the insights or enlightenment that a reader comes to during the reading process. She explained:

A reader may come up with a new insight or develop a new perspective after he or she has analyzed the author's information and synthesized it with his or her existing knowledge or experiences. This is what I meant when I talked about new knowledge.

For Araya, reading in both L1 and L2 is learning and analyzing the author's points of views and how the author supports or casts doubt upon his or her arguments, as well as the reader's development of a personal insight into a text. Her definition of reading addresses both the author's intended information and the reader's self-developed meaning.

For purposes of L2 reading, Araya reported that these aspects depend on the situations and L2 readers' goals; however, for students, the major goal of reading should be to achieve academic success. Araya added that L2 readers approach the text differently when they read for different purposes. She gave an example from her students.

If you tell students to read an English article to prepare for classroom discussion, they would not read an assigned reading carefully. They may just skim and scan the text. However, if you tell them that you will have a test on the article, they will focus on almost every paragraph, sentence, and individual words.

She added that the L2 reading process can vary for the same person when he or she reads for different purposes. In short, she compared the reader's purpose to the steering wheel of a car; the goal controls the reading process.

Araya's beliefs about sources of meaning. Araya believes that both the reader and the author contribute to the meaning-constructing process, so she understands that both are important sources of meaning. In her first interview, Araya was uncertain whether the author, the text, or the reader had more control over the meaning-constructing process, but her beliefs on the source of the meaning became more obvious in a later interview where she said:

I do not think that meaning is absolutely set by the author, and it is not the reader alone who controls the meaning of the passage. I would rather say both the author and the reader take a significant part in constructing the meaning of a passage.

Araya emphasized that the gap between the author's and the reader's meaning is even larger for L2 reading. She believes that both the author and the reader are likely to bring in their own social values and culture to their writing or reading event.

First- and second-language readers are likely to comprehend the same text differently because second-language readers may not share the same social background with the writer as first-language readers do. For example, when Thai people read an article written by a western author about either the Thai or Western education, Thai readers' understandings of the article may be different from the author's intended information because of differences of Asian and Western cultures about education.

Thus, she thinks the author, the text, and the reader are important source of meaning, especially for reading in L2.

In addition, Araya seems to be open to multiple interpretations. This is evident from her statement that a reader has to count on prior knowledge and experiences to understand the author's argument and that an L2 reader goes beyond the literal meaning of the words to construct their personal meaning which reflects their own attitudes and thoughts. She gave the following example:

When foreign and Thai people read about a Thai political conflict in an English news article, they will have different understandings of the news piece. For example, they may infer different causes of the problem; accordingly, they will suggest different solutions. The different interpretations of the same news article do not mean that Thai people are poor readers, but it is because they bring different political backgrounds to make sense of their reading.

Based on classroom observations, when Araya asked her students factual and inferential questions about an English text, she usually had a predetermined answer in her mind; however, she did not expect students to totally agree with her when it came to personal responses to a text. Araya concluded that teachers of second-language reading should keep in mind that reading comprehension occurs when a reader becomes involved

with a text. She added that to claim that one comprehends a text, he or she must be able to present their opinion about the textual information obtained from reading.

Araya's beliefs about the process of L2 reading. Araya described L2 reading as an interactive process between the reader and the text; thus, the meaning that an L2 reader attains represents both the original information (the textual meaning) and a reader's understanding of the text. Araya does not view L2 reading a linear process of translation because she believes readers do not directly infer and interpret meaning from visual signs in a text. Her representation of the process of L2 learning is illustrated in Figure 4. She defined reading as a reciprocal process between the reader and the text:

The relationship between the L2 reader and the L2 text is reciprocal and occurs within a particular situation. First, the reader uses his/her L2 language abilities such as syntax, vocabulary, and grammar to interpret visual signs in the text and develop ideas. Then, the reader associates such ideas to experiences and background knowledge to make assumptions and understand the text. Then, the reader needs to go back to the text in order to prove his or her assumptions or clarify understanding. The reader may need to refine the assumptions made earlier if they do not match with the incoming information.

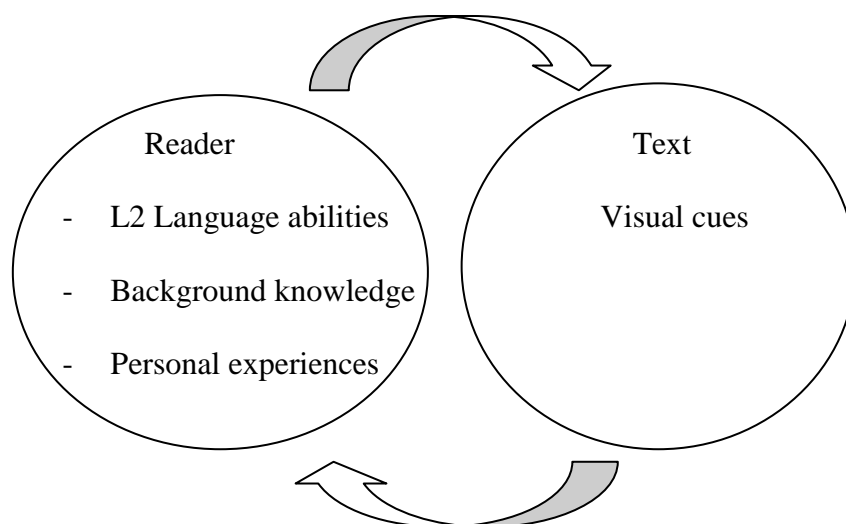


Figure 4. Araya's Reciprocal Model of L2 Reading Process.

In addition, Araya uses the term *the continuum of meaning* to expand her understanding about the meaning that the L2 reader may attain. “While one end of the continuum represents the meaning postulated by the author, the other end is the reader’s assumptions.” She explained that the meaning intended falls somewhere along the continuum depending on a reader’s purpose for reading and the type of text. She gave the example that when a student reads an English textbook to prepare for his or her examinations, the meaning the student attains should fall closely to the end of the continuum which represents the author’s meaning; however, if he or she were reading an English entertainment gossip news piece during leisure time, the student’s interpretation is likely to lean toward the other end of the continuum, which associates more with the L2 reader’s attitudes, feelings, and experiences. Thus, based on Araya’s ideas, L2 reading comprehension reflects not only the author’s information, but also the L2 reader’s perception of a L2 text.

Interestingly, Araya believes that the meaning-construction process depends largely on types of L2 texts involved as well. She mentioned that:

It possibly depends on the genre of the L2 text as well. When reading an expository essay, the L2 reader is inferior to the author as the author takes a more important role in creating the meaning of the passage. But, the L2 reader gains more control when he or she reads a non-expository type of text, such as a novel or work of fiction.

Since she has taught English to students from diverse ethnic backgrounds, such as Chinese, Turkish, and Karen (a minority group found primarily in Thailand and Myanmar), she emphasized that cultural background has a huge impact on students’ interpretations and reading comprehension, especially when they read a non-expository kind of L2 texts, such as a short story or a novel.

In addition to the meaning-construction process, Araya perceives that L2 reading comprehension is not simply a result of the combination of the translation of each single words. She noted that:

I do not expect students to understand every word or every sentence in an English text since students do not need to know every word to attain the main idea of the passage. This is impossible when people read in a second or foreign language. I do not want to discourage my students by doing that. Reading is not like working on a jigsaw puzzle and that if you miss a piece of it, you will not be able to complete the picture.

Araya's beliefs that L2 reading comprehension is not simply attained through the combination of the translation of words, phrases, or sentences are also inherent in her course syllabus and examinations. Based on the AE 206 course syllabus developed by Araya, this English reading course concentrates on L2 reading strategies as well as analytical skills, and classroom discussions were a core learning activity. English vocabulary and sentence structure are part of the course objectives, but not a major focus. In Araya's examinations, most questions asked for the main idea of a passage and students' opinions on an issue in a reading. There were no questions related to evaluating student knowledge of a specific L2 word; however, a few questions evaluated the student's use of context clues to guess the meaning of a particular English expression.

Araya's beliefs about the reader's role. For Araya, L2 reading is both a passive and an active activity. She believes the L2 reader is passive during the first step of reading before adopting an active role later. She mentioned in one of her interviews that:

Inevitably, in the beginning of the process, L2 reading is passive as the reader has to read for the author's intended meaning. Later, the L2 reader draws upon his or her schemata, such as background knowledge and experiences to analyze the received meaning, synthesizes it with his or her existing knowledge, and finally evaluates the trustworthiness of the attained information.

Based on Araya's ideas, these latter tasks of the L2 reader make L2 reading an active process. Her reason is that after a reader receives meaning from a text, he or she analyzes the new information as to whether it makes sense within the scope of his or her pre-existing knowledge. As such, L2 reading is an active activity.

In addition, Araya's tests and examinations correspond to her beliefs that L2 readers engage with an L2 text both passively and actively. Questions on her exams usually asked for both factual information, in which its answer could be found directly in the text, and for students' opinions toward the text. For example, on her midterm examination, she asked students to list some reasons why a character in the reading passage refused to sell his house to Tesco Lotus (a hypermarket chain). In this same question, she also required students to express their opinion of whether the listed reasons made any sense to them. In another question, she asked students to explain the writer's attitude towards the Korean government's support of the usage of the English language and also asked if students agreed with the writer. Araya explained her rationale for asking such questions because L2 reading tasks do not stop when an L2 reader understands information from a text or an author. The thinking process continues as a reader considers whether the stated information is true, reliable, and appropriate. Therefore, she emphasized, a good question tests both the passive and active roles of a reader.

Summary. Araya believes that L2 reading is an interactive process between the L2 reader and the L2 text and that meaning constructs reciprocal manner. In addition, Araya views reading as both passive and active, depending on the reader's purpose and types of L2 texts. She perceives that the reader takes a passive role when he or she reads for factual information in an expository text, but adopts an active role, where he or she reads for entertainment.

Participant II: Sasinee

She has been teaching at Crystal Pond University for approximately seven years. At the time of the data collection, she was the coordinator for AE 203(Reading I) and developed most of the course syllabus and classroom materials. Sasinee described herself as an enthusiastic teacher, and she usually applies various learning activities in her reading classrooms such as language games, presentations, and discussions in order to motivate students as well as encourage class participation.

Sasinee's beliefs about the definition of and purposes of L2 reading. Sasinee perceives that L2 reading is like wandering around in a circle, and located at the center of the circle is the correct meaning of an L2 text. She explained that reading comprehension increases the closer the L2 reader gets to the correct meaning. She added, in contrast, that the farther one walks away from the correct meaning, the less one comprehends the text.

Based on the interviews with Sasinee, reading is an act of receiving messages from the author. Sasinee considers the author's message as the main idea of a text; thus, when an L2 reader can identify the main idea of the passage, it means that he or she has arrived at the author's meaning and succeeds in reading. Sasinee emphasized that:

Getting the meaning of what we [readers] are reading is at the heart of the reading process. I always ask my students to find the main idea of every paragraph because it helps increase their chance at arriving at the correct main idea of the whole text later.

Her belief that addressing the author's intended meaning is the ultimate goal for an L2 reader is also evidenced by her AE 203 course syllabus. Her course objectives are basically text-based. For example, her course syllabus states that students are required to use context, syntactic, and semantic clues to guess the meaning of difficult words, metaphors, and idioms; make inferences and draw conclusions based on text clues; and

differentiate facts from opinions. The development of students' reading comprehension skills, such as analytical reading, is not included in the syllabus.

When asked about the purposes of L2 reading, Sasinee replied that there are several, including receiving news, communicating, and studying. However, she emphasized that all kinds of reading share the same ultimate purpose: reading is to receive the information or messages from the author.

In conclusion, Sasinee perceives reading as an act of extracting meaning from a text. Then, because meaning is already constructed by the author and conveyed to the reader via the text, reading is passive. In addition, Sasinee thinks that no matter what types of reading are involved, there is only one correct meaning of a text, and the ultimate purpose of the reader is to arrive at the correct meaning conveyed by the writer.

Sasinee's beliefs about sources of meaning. Sasinee perceives the author as the only person who controls the meaning of a reading passage. Sasinee believes that a reader lacks knowledge and seeks this from the text. During one interview, she explained that:

I always told my students that reading was difficult because when we [readers] are reading, we [readers] are receiving knowledge or the information from the author. Readers do not have such knowledge, and we [readers] are learning from the author.

Additionally, Sasinee does not perceive the L2 reader's prior knowledge and personal experiences as important sources of meaning. Based on her opinion, L2 readers' schemata provide information that may either increase or hinder L2 reading comprehension. She explained that:

If an L2 reader depends too much on prior knowledge and experiences in comprehending a L2 text, he/she is likely to miss the author's points. The meaning is in the text, and the reader should pay more attention to the text. It is better to count on textual clues than on prior knowledge.

Sasinee observed this about reading within an L2 context:

When students read an English text, they need to understand the words in the text, not interpret the text from their assumptions prior knowledge. It is unlikely that second-language readers would share the same knowledge with the author who is the native speaker of the language of the text. An L2 reader needs to depend on text in order to arrive at the author's intended messages, not their prior knowledge.

In conclusion, Sasinee argues that meaning resides wholly in the text. She thinks that the reader plays no important role as a source of meaning because the reader lacks knowledge, and the reader's schemata may be misleading and contribute to errors in comprehension.

Sasinee's beliefs about the process of L2 reading. Sasinee described reading in an L2 as a process of receiving the author's information from an L2 text. She explained that reading incorporates a series of steps that includes making predictions, anticipating the text, verifying, and refining; however, all steps are central to the text. Her explanation of the L2 reading process is as follows:

An L2 reader starts from using the title of a reading passage or illustrations to predict the meaning in what he or she is reading. Then, he or she makes predictions; after that, he or she verifies and finally refines his or her understanding. All steps are based upon clues from words and sentences in the text, especially the last two steps.

In addition, Sasinee's strong belief that L2 reading is a meaning-extraction process leads her to perceive that the vocabulary and syntax of the target language are critical in the L2 reading process and for L2 reading comprehension. In one of her interviews, Sasinee mentioned the importance of word recognition skills:

An efficient L2 reader knows a lot of vocabulary, as words contain meaning and provide hints about the main idea of the passage. It is likely that a reader will miss the main idea if the L2 text contains many unknown words.

In another interview, Sasinee argued that L2 syntax knowledge is critical to reading comprehension. Her argument is:

Students need to obtain enough grammar of English (L2) because it is the most important thing to help them understand a text. Students cannot understand a text

simply by putting together meaning of words. They need grammatical knowledge of the English language in order to make sense of a sentence.

Sasinee said L2 readers' personal experiences may help increase reading comprehension occasionally, but readers should not take them as superior to understanding derived from a text. She added that students who have high levels of English language proficiency can identify the main idea of the text without having prior knowledge of the Chinese tradition. Therefore, she thinks schemata do not have an important role in the reading process.

In short, Sasinee believes that the L2 reading process incorporates predicting the meaning of text as well as verifying and refining predictions based on textual clues. According to this belief, Sasinee perceives that an efficient L2 reader has a wide range of L2 vocabulary knowledge and sufficient L2 language proficiency. She explained that these language competencies help L2 readers make use of textual clues efficiently in order to predict the author's intended meaning or the main idea. She said L2 word and linguistic competencies also help a L2 reader verify and refine his or her predictions about meaning of a text. Her reading process is illustrated in Figure 5.

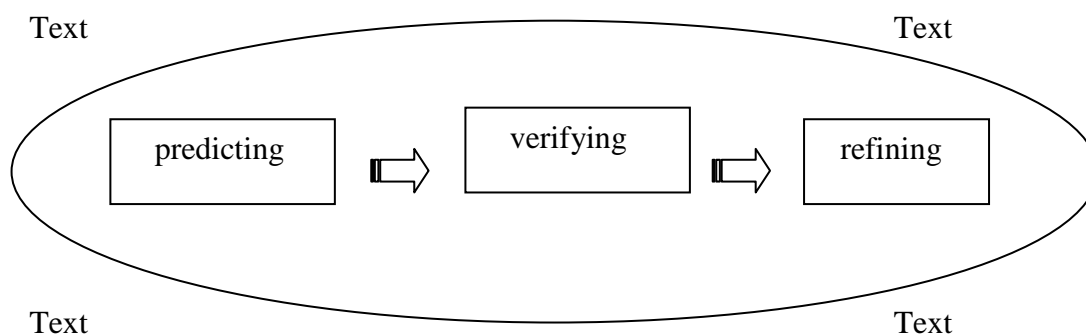


Figure 5. Sasinee's Model of L2 Reading Process.

With respect to her beliefs about the L2 reading process, Sasinee reported that a reader's insufficient background knowledge of a reading topic is a major challenge. When asked to focus on difficulties in L2 reading, her primary concerns are the reader's range of vocabulary and use of L2 reading strategies to overcome reading difficulties caused by unknown words and complicated sentence structure. Sasinee claimed that:

My students are confused when encountering unknown English words and technical terms. They are discouraged and tend to give up reading when facing many difficult words simultaneously. Reading in English is more difficult for students when a text contains compound and complex sentences.

Sasinee pays more attention to vocabulary than linguistic competency in her AE 203 reading though she perceives that both challenge her students. She explained that vocabulary is the foundation of L2 reading; without knowledge of L2 vocabulary, the reading process is not efficient.

Related to her belief that limited vocabulary knowledge can pose a burden to L2 readers, Sasinee believes that an efficient L2 reader has a wide range of lexical knowledge. This is evidenced by her conversation with students about the purpose of assigning an external reading. Sasinee explained readers are passive.

If you [students] want to be good at reading in English, you need to read a variety of written materials. The required textbook [*Essential Reading 4*] is not the only source of English. The more you read English texts, the more your English vocabulary increases.

Sasinee's beliefs about the reader's role. According to Sasinee, readers are passive receivers of information. She also states that a reader's responses to the texts should be derived from the information or evidence in the text.

In many of her interviews, Sasinee mentioned that the writer's main job is communicating his or her ideas to the reader through the text; therefore, the reader's major task is to extract the writer's ideas. In addition, Sasinee explained that the reader is naïve,

while the author is an expert of the content he or she writes about. These statements demonstrate her beliefs that the reader takes an inferior role to the author, and portrays the reader as a passive learner. Sasinee said that, “Generally, authors are scholars or experts in the topic they are writing about. So when we [readers] are reading a text, it is like we [readers] are learning from the authors.”

Sasinee’s perception that a reader is a passive receiver of the author’s information is also evident from observations of her classroom. Sasinee usually asked factual questions in her classrooms to check students’ comprehension, and she always referred to parts of texts where she believed the author’s meaning, purposes, or tone was presented. Her questions were such as What does the author mean here? How does the author feel toward this issue? Why does the author have the sentence or the expression here? When Sasinee asked her students to share their opinions, feelings, and attitudes toward what they were reading, she also asked them to refer to words, sentences, or paragraphs in a reading passage as sources that would help them form their responses.

Summary. Sasinee believes that reading is a meaning-extraction process in which a reader anticipates and makes predictions out of textual clues and other visual signs provided in a text. She perceives that meaning is constructed and controlled by the author and that it is the reader’s responsibility to arrive at the author’s meaning.

Participants III: Tantipat

Tantipat is 40 years old and has an MA in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL). She taught high school students for about seven years before starting to work at Crystal Pond University in 2012, and she claims that her teaching experience with young children had a considerable impact on her current beliefs and classroom practices. The

semester that the data collection took place was her first time teaching the AE 203 course.

In her last interviews, she shared that if she taught this course again the following year, she would spend more time teaching reading strategies and less time on vocabulary.

Tantipat's beliefs about the definition of and purposes of L2 reading. Tantipat compared L2 reading to the root system of a tree. She said that the root system is the foundation of a tree, and its strength determines the growth rate and size of a tree. She added that reading is similar to a tree's root system as it is foundational to second-language learning, and the strength of L2 reading ability determines the second-language development of a person. In addition, Tantipat said that L2 reading is the act of receiving information from a text, which entails a set of sequencing characters representing the author's thoughts and information. "People know what the author thinks through reading his or her text," she claimed.

For purposes of L2 reading, Tantipat shared that people read in an L2 in order to seek knowledge, and the ultimate goal of the readers is to apply acquired knowledge in everyday life. Tantipat mentioned that early and intermediate L2 readers may not reach the ultimate goal because their limited language proficiency may result in limited understanding of an L2 text; therefore, they do not effectively link what they are reading to real life.

When asked to focus on students' purposes for reading, especially within an L2 context, Tantipat stated that there are similarities and differences between readers who are not students and readers who are students. She said:

Both readers in general and students read to obtain knowledge and make use of this acquired knowledge in their everyday lives. However, students mostly read for academic purposes, not for everyday life. Specifically, L2 learners read to obtain and develop knowledge of the target language, such as vocabulary, expression, and linguistic competency.

In conclusion, for Tantipat, second language reading serves as a foundation for the development of the target language, and students read mostly for academic purposes and to enlarge their vocabulary and linguistic competencies. She believes that reading is the act of extracting the author's thoughts and information, and the reader's knowledge of L2 vocabulary and grammar are central to L2 reading comprehension.

Tantipat's beliefs about sources of meaning. According to the interviews with Tantipat, she seems to believe that meaning is wholly situated in a text; thus, the text determines meaning. Tantipat argued that though the author is the person who creates the text, some authors do not effectively communicate their intended information through their writing. Tantipat explained:

The reader does not always obtain the author's intended information, especially when the author does not have good writing skills. So meaning depends on the text and the reader's ability to decode the written symbols into the oral language and receive the meaning.

She added that reading is not a face-to-face communication, so a reader as the recipient of the information cannot ask for more details than those the author includes in the text.

Therefore, "readers depend totally on a text, not the author," Tantipat stressed.

Tantipat discussed the impact of the L2 reader's background knowledge on the received meaning as follows:

Second-language readers may use their background knowledge to predict about an L2 reading text, to conceptualize the text, or to comprehend the text beyond the surface meaning. However, the reader's prior knowledge does not change the meaning of a text.

In addition to the effect of the L2 reader's prior knowledge, Tantipat thinks that if the reader can associate his or her prior knowledge or personal experiences to the received knowledge, this knowledge will become part of one's long-term memory. Tantipat

believes that the connection between the new and existing information helps the reader accept and store additional information in long-term memory. She argued:

They [readers] receive the information and memorize it. However, the stored information would either be kept as short- or long-term memory depending on how much they can relate their background knowledge to the text comprehension.

In conclusion, Tantipat views the text as the only source of meaning. She thinks that the reader's schemata have an impact on the reader's conceptualizing and long-term memory, but not on the meaning of the text. In her opinion, meaning is fixed and can be found in the text.

Tantipat's beliefs about the process of L2 reading. Tantipat described L2 reading as a linear process composed of four major steps. First, an L2 reader starts from the phonological level, in which a reader associates letters with sounds and makes sense of the meaning of a word. Second, an L2 reader joins together the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences to understand the main idea or to receive the information from a text. Third, an L2 reader analyzes the obtained information based on his or her background knowledge, attitudes, and other socio-cultural factors. Tantipat stressed that before an L2 reader can accurately analyze an L2 text, he or she has to completely understand the main idea of the text. In the final step, an L2 reader applies the obtained and analyzed knowledge to his or her daily life. She ended her explanation by stating that the first two steps of L2 reading are universal because they are governed by language rules, while the latter steps are unique to each L2 reader.

In addition to the L2 reading process, Tantipat believes that an L2 reader does not necessarily complete all four steps of the reading process. She explained that a novice L2 reader who does not excel in L2 vocabulary and grammar cannot perform the third and fourth steps, analyzing and applying. Tantipat argued that L2 readers can still claim

reading comprehension if they can identify the main idea of the passage, no matter what their abilities in analyzing and applying are. For her, while the first two steps of the reading process are most crucial for the extraction of meaning from a text, the latter two steps simply provide some additional knowledge to a reader. Tantipat's illustration of her reading process is shown in Figure 6.

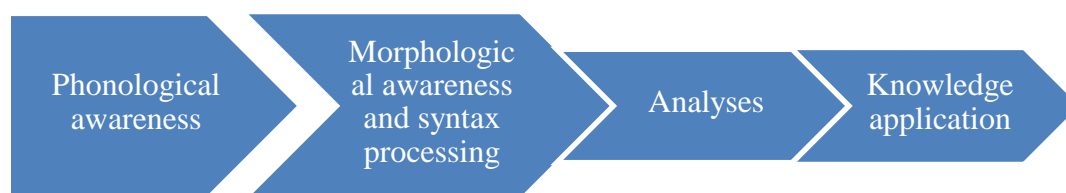


Figure 6. Tantipat's Model of L2 Reading Process.

In addition, Tantipat's beliefs about the L2 reading process are congruent with her beliefs about reading difficulties within an L2 context. She reported that a reader's limited L2 vocabulary and linguistic competencies are most important, while lack of background knowledge comes second. In the first and second interview, Tantipat said that intermediate L2 readers have insufficient knowledge of L2 vocabulary and linguistics to comprehend meaning of a text.

In conclusion, Tantipat believes that the steps of L2 reading are separate and sequential: phonological awareness, morphological awareness and syntax processing, analyzing, and applying. She believes that the latter two steps, analyzing and applying, will add only some extra knowledge, but not meaning to the L2 reader. In addition, she said that she would claim success in teaching L2 reading if her AE 203 students could associate English letters with sounds, recognize the meaning of English words, and make

sense of words, phrases, and sentences even if her students do not efficiently apply analyzing and application skills.

Tantipat's beliefs about the reader's role. The interviews revealed Tantipat's belief that L2 reading is both passive and active. Tantipat believes that an L2 reader adopts a passive role in the first two steps of reading because the steps are text-based in nature, but an L2 reader becomes active in the last two steps because he or she has to analyze and apply the received knowledge based on his or her unique experiences. She explained:

For the early two steps of reading, L2 readers become passive receivers of the information from the author by decoding written words into a L2 spoken language. In the latter steps, when the L2 reader develops a realization or a reading concept, he or she adopts an active role in analyzing the information and applying it to the real world.

In addition to the L2 reader's active role, Tantipat explains that an active reader presents personal points of views toward a text and exchanges his or her perceptions with others in classroom discussions.

Summary. Tantipat believes that L2 reading is a necessary foundation for other L2 skills, especially writing and speaking. She also believes that the L2 reading process consists of four sequential steps: phonological awareness, morphological awareness and syntactical processing, analyzing, and applying. She concluded that a L2 reader is passive when applying his or her phonological, morphological, and syntax knowledge to identify the main idea of a text during the first two steps, but during the last two steps, the reader become more active when utilizing his or her higher level of thinking skills to analyze and apply the obtained knowledge to the real world.

Participant IV: Chalatorn

Chalatorn is 35 years old, and she has an MA in Teaching English as a Foreign Language from Crystal Pond University. She has spent a considerable amount of time teaching English to undergraduate students. The semester that the data collection took place, Chalatorn taught both AE 203 and AE 206. Classroom observations were conducted within both courses. However, only two periods of Chalatorn's AE 206 classroom were observed. The rest of the classroom observations were conducted in her AE 203 reading class.

Chalatorn's beliefs about the definition of and purposes of L2 reading. Regarding her beliefs about L2 reading, Chalatorn mentioned that currently, reading in English (L2) is not limited to an actual text written in English, and it occurs anywhere, such as in a phone message, in an email, and in text chatting. She added that because English is used widely in Thailand, such as in advertisements, the tourism industry, and in academic conferences, reading in an L2 takes place everywhere and all the time, but Thai people may not realize it.

According to Chalatorn, the definition of reading varies with the reader and is an act of making sense of print and the author's information. She said:

For example, reading for a student is probably the memorization of the information in the text. But for people who are reading a novel, reading can be a relaxing event to appreciate the beauty in the literature.

When the researcher asked Chalatorn what she actually meant when she said people made sense of print, she replied that a reader has to use his or her linguistic competence, personal experience, and existing knowledge to assign meaning to a text. She added that the reader also evaluates whether the meaning derived is reasonable, logical, and trustworthy.

Chalatorn incorporated a L2 reader's schemata as part of her definition of reading.

This is inferred from her statements that a L2 reader is influenced by his or her schemata, and L2 reading is more than decoding written symbols. She explained:

Reading is activating what is already known about the language and the world to make sense of a text. L2 reading requires both the reader's L2 linguistic competence and understanding of the world so that the reader can end up with insightful interpretations. The L2 competencies and world knowledge contribute to the reader's comprehension.

She concluded that L2 reading is not simply the translation of written symbols into spoken words, or the combination of meaning of words. She stressed that L2 reading should be defined as a complicated mental process involving the interaction between the information received from a L2 text and what an L2 reader already knows or has experienced.

For purposes of L2 reading, Chalatorn mentioned that it is not easy to list all readers' purposes since people read in L2 for many reasons including to gain knowledge, to communicate with others, to get directions, and to relax. Chalatorn referred to her own reading to expand the idea. She said that when she reads an English novel for pleasure, she does not focus on language elements, but becomes involved with the story and shares emotions with the characters. On the other hand, she shared that when she prepares a lesson for a classroom, she focuses on words, sentences, or paragraphs in a story to find some useful hints or clues that may help her students understand the story.

In conclusion, Chalatorn believes purposes of L2 reading govern the way an L2 reader reads. Thus, even for the same person, the L2 reading process may vary if the reader has different purposes for reading. Chalatorn emphasized that purposes of L2 reading, not the types of L2 texts, affect the way L2 readers read.

Chalatorn's beliefs about sources of meaning. Chalatorn contended that the meaning of a text is developed from the information in the text and what L2 readers bring to the reading event, such as prior knowledge, interest, attitudes, bias, culture and customs, etc. She explained that both the L2 reader and the L2 text play a significant role in second- language reading comprehension and interpretations.

She used one of her reading classrooms as an example. Chalatorn said that when she had her students read about punk fashion, students who were interested in this type of fashion and had some prior knowledge actively participated in an after-reading discussion and answered most questions about the passage correctly. She added, "But students who had no ideas about punk fashion read the passage slowly basing their entire understanding on textual clues." Chalatorn concluded that because her students had different prior knowledge and experiences, they approached and interpreted the text differently.

Chalatorn concluded that a text is not the only source of meaning. She believes a text can be interpreted differently by readers who have different personal biases, attitudes, educational background, and prior knowledge. Therefore, she thinks that the author, the text, and the reader are all sources of meaning.

Chalatorn's beliefs about the process of L2 reading. Chalatorn believes that the L2 reading process consists of three major components: textual processing, mental processing, and conceptualizing. She explained that the reading process is cyclical and occurs simultaneously.

According to Chalatorn, first, the L2 reader depends on his or her L2 morphological and syntactical knowledge to process the written symbols. Chalatorn further explained that the information received from the textual processing goes through mental-level processing, where L2 readers' prior knowledge, beliefs and attitudes, and

motivation influence how readers comprehend an L2 text. She added that the reader's purposes in reading influences how deeply the reader analyzes and synthesizes the information received from surface-level processing.

In the next step of the L2 reading process, Chalatorn explained that the L2 reader forms a concept and generates insights into a text by drawing on personal experiences and existing knowledge of the topic. Chalatorn noted that the L2 reader has to reread the text or read for further information to verify assumptions. Chalatorn's conceptualization of the L2 reading process is presented in Figure 7.

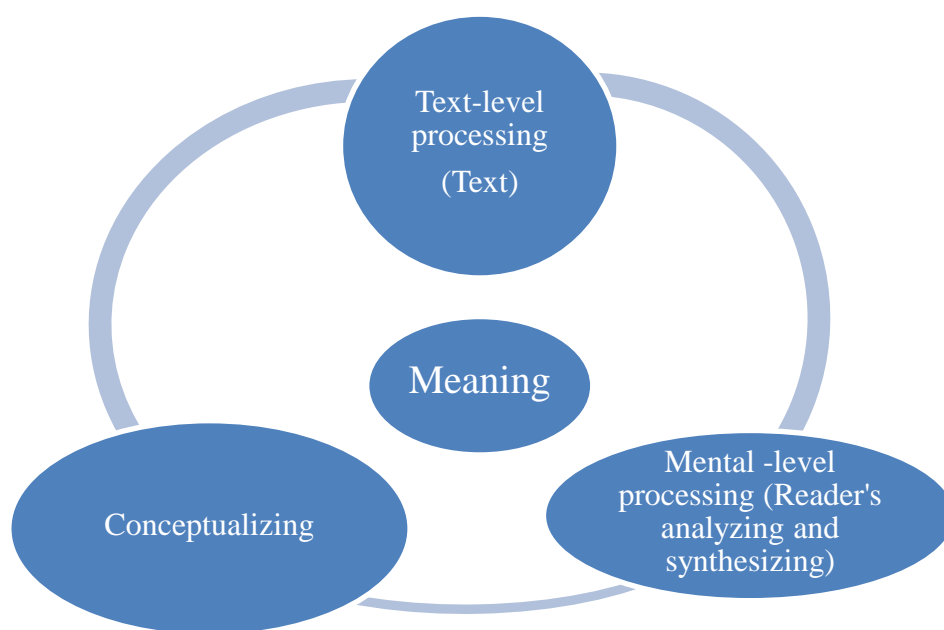


Figure 7. Chalatorn's Model of L2 Reading Process.

When discussing challenges of reading in an L2, Chalatorn states the frequency of unknown words in a text, syntactic complexity, and a reader's lack of background knowledge are in L2 reading comprehension. First, Chalatorn explained that there is a

minimal chance for people to encounter unknown words when they read in their L1, and when they are confronted with a difficult word, they could easily guess the meaning of the word from its context clues. She believes that it is more difficult for an L2 reader to learn words from the context, especially when words in the immediate context are also unknown.

Secondly, Chalatorn reported that complexities of sentence structure may affect the sentence processing step in the L2 reading process. She gave an example:

Thai readers who are not knowledgeable on the passive voice structure in the English language will encounter difficulties when reading an English text carrying many passive-structured sentences, even he or she knows every single word in the text.

Chalatorn believes that L2 learners need an extensive exposure to L2 print so that they acquire broad vocabulary and linguistic knowledge.

Lastly, Chalatorn explained that L2 readers' background knowledge is another important challenge of L2 reading. Chalatorn emphasized, "Lack of background knowledge obstructs L2 readers' conceptualization and reading comprehension to some extent."

In conclusion, Chalatorn's understanding of the L2 reading process consists of three levels: text, mental, and conceptualization. Chalatorn views vocabulary, linguist competency, and schemata as important challenges.

Chalatorn's beliefs about the reader's role. Chalatorn said that for many people, reading is passive, but in her opinion, reading, especially in the second or foreign language is an active process. She has two reasons for assigning an active role to the reader. Her first reason is that both the author and reader bring in knowledge and personal bias and attitudes to a text. In an interview, she explained that:

A reader is not an empty tank that the author can transfer his or her knowledge into, but a reader brings in attitudes, bias, culture, religion, personal experiences, and so on to a reading event as well. I believe that the author's information does not simply sink into the reader's mind, but is analyzed and synthesized with readers' existing knowledge and personal attitudes. The process may happen without conscious awareness. Some readers do not even realize their active roles in the reading process.

Her second reason for considering readers as active constructors of meaning is that L2 readers need to apply reading strategies, such as taking notes and drawing mind maps when they are reading. Chalatorn said that these active reading activities encourage the active role of a reader.

Summary. Chalatorn believes that the definition of and purpose of reading varies among readers, so it is impossible to identify one single definition or purpose. In her opinion, L2 reading is a complicated process, which requires a reader's active role in processing L2 words and sentences as well as in conceptualizing the ideas. She also believes that meaning is created by both the author and the reader.

Araya and Chalatorn: Moving Toward the Transactional Theory of Reading

Based on findings reported in previous sections, Araya's and Chalatorn's beliefs about reading appear to move toward the transactional theory, though some of their beliefs are still congruent with the transmission theory. This is evident in their beliefs about the definition of and purposes of second language reading, sources of meaning, the L2 reading process, and readers' roles, which are revealed through personal interviews, classroom observations, and document reviews.

Analyses of Araya's and Chalatorn's Beliefs about Definition of and Purposes of L2 Reading

Three core beliefs of the transactional theory of reading are illustrated throughout Araya's and Chalatorn's interviews about their beliefs toward definitions of reading and the reader's purposes. These are that reading is a constructive and selective process where the reader, the author, and the text take important roles (Goodman, 1992; Rosenblatt, 1988), that reading is the transaction between a particular reader and a piece of information in a text (Rosenblatt 1988), and that the reader's purpose determines the process of reading.

First, throughout their interviews, Araya and Chalatorn neither overemphasize the importance of the L2 reader or author, nor the L2 text when defining reading. They never mention that the reader or the author or the text has a more important role than the other. Araya argued that all take a significant part in contributing meaning to the text. According to Araya, both L2 readers and the text are equally important because L2 readers bring personal resources to reading, and textual meaning provides startling ideas. Araya concluded that both have a considerable impact on the newly constructed meaning in the L2 reading process, and both make complementary contributions to the meaning constructed.

Chalatorn seems to share Araya's beliefs that L2 reading is not merely decoding. Her perception that L2 reading is a complex process that requires the active role of L2 readers is evidenced through her statements. She argued that L2 reading is not the translation of one to another language in order to receive the author's information; instead, L2 reading comprehension reflects both the readers' understanding and perception of

textual information. L2 reading is not to seek, but to construct meaning. In one of Araya's interviews, she said:

A teacher of second-language reading should not view L2 reading as a translation of L2 written symbols into the L2 spoken language, nor of one language into another language; otherwise, their teaching of reading will focus only on vocabulary and grammar.

Chalatorn explained that L2 reading is more complicated than translating because while a translator focuses his or her translation on the perceived original messages of the author, a L2 reader incorporates personal bias and attitudes, direct experiences, and existing knowledge into his or her interpretation.

Second, when defining L2 reading, Araya and Chalatorn are aware that both the author and L2 readers assign meaning to a text, and that meaning resides both in the text and the reader; therefore, the participants do not perceive second-language reading as a meaning-extracting process. Araya and Chalatorn emphasized that both the text and the reader influence L2 reading comprehension. Araya believes that the reader and the text are reciprocally related. The text, which consists of written symbols, provides basic information and initiates ideas in the reader, and this initial information helps the L2 reader select part of their schemata, which is related to the content provided in the text. At the same time, the L2 reader's schemata provide guides for the L2 reader to comprehend or make sense of such the ideas derived from the L2 text. She further explained that the decoding process or the reader's schemata alone cannot lead to the comprehension. These beliefs are evidenced in several interviews. For example, when asked about her opinion on the importance of L2 readers' background knowledge, Araya explained:

L2 readers make assumptions based on the information provided in the text. These assumptions are then shaped by the readers' background knowledge. Next, L2 readers seek more information from the text to help them justify and verify these assumptions. Considering this relationship between the L2 reader and L2 text, I think background knowledge influences the way L2 readers interpret the text. In

the same way, textual information influences the reader's assumptions or predictions.

Though Araya never uses the word transaction in her interviews, her definition of second-language reading reflects two core concepts of the transactional theory of reading: meaning is not ready-made by the author, but occurs when people are reading, and both the reader's knowledge and textual information play important roles in the reading process.

Chalatorn contended that L2 readers' understandings and perceptions of textual information are mutually related. She said, "It seems like both [the reader and the text] fill in each other's gap, and both contribute to the reader's comprehension." Thus, Chalatorn views L2 reading not as the process of the decoding written symbols into verbal words, but as an interactive process between the reader and the text.

Both participants believe that when people read, either in their L1 or L2, there is an interaction between the text and the reader, and meaning is an outcome of this interactive process. In addition, the two participants believe that L2 reading is not a decoding process, where the reading comprehension depends totally on the reader's abilities in decoding written symbols into verbal words or one language into another language.

Both participants give importance to the reader's purpose of L2 reading as an important factor that determines the process of L2 reading. Araya compared purposes of L2 reading to a steering wheel that guides the reading process. She reported that even with the same person, the purposes for reading vary. Araya's beliefs about the importance of the reader's purpose comply with Rosenblatt's transactional concept (2005).

Besides purposes of reading, Araya states that types of texts determine the L2 reading processes; however, this is different from what Rosenblatt (2005) noted. Araya explained that for a non-literary text, meaning is determined by the author, so all efficient

L2 readers should come up with one similar meaning. She explained that in the opposite way, for a literary text, such as a poem, the reader gains more control over the meaning of the text; therefore, there are opportunities for different readers to come up with different interpretations.

Analyses of Araya's and Chalatorn's Beliefs about Sources of Meaning

Based on the interviews, Araya and Chalatorn seem to agree that the author, the text, and the reader are all valuable sources of meaning. The two participants perceive that the author and the text introduce some ideas to L2 readers, but L2 readers' schemata shape their perceptions and comprehension. The beliefs about various sources of meaning are also regarded as a crucial principal of the transactional theory (Goodman, 1992; Rosenblatt, 2004; Weaver, 2002)

Though holding these same beliefs about various sources of meaning, Araya and Chalatorn have different opinions about the flexibility of interpretations. While Araya perceives that meaning should be fixed for L2 non-literary reading, Chalatorn believes that multiple interpretations of both L2 non-literary and literary texts are possible. With respect to her belief that meaning is likely to be affected by the reader's schemata, Araya would be expected to believe that the meaning of a reading passage is not fixed and can be multifaceted. However, when asked whether a text can have several correct interpretations, Araya answered that meaning in general is fixed, and there can be several acceptable interpretations only in a literary text. Her answers about one fixed meaning in a non-literary text reflects a core concept of the transmission theory, which explains that meaning is determined by the writer (Gough, 1972).

Araya's understanding that a non-literary text carries one single meaning may be a result of her strong belief in the influence of types of L2 texts on L2 readers' purposes and the L2 reading process. As discussed earlier, Araya thinks that a L2 reader gains more control over the meaning when he or she reads a L2 literary text, such as a poem or a piece of fiction, but that the reader's control does not come into play when a L2 non-literary text is involved. Therefore, she believes that an L2 literary text is open to literary analysis and conveys a unique interpretation to each individual reader, but that the interpretation of a L2 non-literary text is static and entirely controlled by the text or the author.

On the other hand, Chalatorn perceives the L2 reading process as depending less on types of L2 texts and more on purposes of L2 reading. In addition, she considers it possible for L2 readers to come up with different meanings, no matter what types of L2 texts are involved. Chalatorn gave the example of two readers who read the same news piece about a severe car accident and had different perceptions about the accident. Chalatorn explained that when reading the same L2 expository text, L2 readers may share the same surface meaning of the text, but will develop different insights or understandings. However, though Chalatorn believes that there is no one fixed meaning in any text, she emphasized that there would be some shared meaning that could be attained by every proficient reader.

In conclusion, Araya's and Chalatorn's beliefs about various sources of meaning are consistent with the core concept of the transactional theory, which perceives that both the reader and the text significantly contribute to the constructed meaning. However, it seems that Chalatorn moves one step further to the transactional theory than Araya. While Araya states that varieties of acceptable interpretations happen only within an L2 literary

text, Chalatorn states that no matter what types of L2 texts are involved, several alternative interpretations are possible.

Analyses of Araya's and Chalatorn's Beliefs about the L2 Reading Process

Araya's and Chalatorn's belief that L2 reading is a meaning-construction process and requires the interaction between the L2 text, the L2 reader, and the reading context are similar to principles of the transactional theory proposed by many reading scholars (Goodman, 1994; Whitmore, Martens, Goodman, & Owocki, 2005; Rosenblatt, 2004). The participants appear to believe that a L2 text is not self-contained; rather, it offers basic information for meaning. The participants believe the L2 reader needs to interact with a text in order to assign meaning to a text.

Araya and Chalatorn perceive that the L2 reading process requires more than sequential steps of decoding written symbols into the spoken language. In relation to their assumptions that reading is not a linear process consisting of separate steps of decoding, Araya and Chalatorn perceive that L2 reading comprehension does not occur at the peak of the L2 reading process, nor is it the final result of a decoding or translating process. Instead, they agree that reading comprehension is significantly related to the way the L2 reader perceives meaning through his or her own socio-cultural lens.

For challenges of reading in an L2 context, both Araya and Chalatorn are concerned about vocabulary, syntactic knowledge, and schemata. They recognize both texts and readers' knowledge as critical factors in the reading process. Their concerns are congruent with an interactive model of L2 reading (Bernhardt, 1991). Bernhardt explained that in order to be a successful L2 reader, people need more than the knowledge of L2 language, such as words and sentences, because they have to access implicit

information inherent in the text, which is created for a particular social group. The sociocognitive view of reading is a synthesis of reader-based and text-driven perspectives, which proposes the text as an important input, and the reader's selection and use of knowledge is critical. Bernhardt emphasized that the two influence, supplement, and support each other. Accordingly, Araya's and Chalatorn's beliefs about the challenges of reading represent the transactional view of reading.

Moreover, Araya perceives her students as intermediate learners whose L2 language proficiency is not fully developed; thus, they rely heavily on their knowledge of vocabulary and schemata when reading. Araya assumes that students will depend less on L2 vocabulary and schemata, but more on L2 linguistic competency when their knowledge of the second language grows. The beliefs are similar to the sociocognitive model (Bernhardt, 2000), which explains that L2 learners who have insufficient L2 proficiency depend on their schemata or knowledge more than their linguistic knowledge while reading, but proficient L2 readers rely more on their linguistic knowledge.

In addition, Araya frequently translated difficult words from English into Thai for her students though the translation interrupted her reading instruction to some extent (Araya's instructional practices are discussed later in this chapter). Araya's extensive concern with the students' level of L2 vocabulary resembles a characteristic of the transmission theory in an L1 reading context, where word recognition receives high priority in the reading process (Gough, 1972). However, the evidence may not be enough to say that Araya's belief is congruent with the transmission theory of reading. First, vocabulary is widely recognized as the key to reading success as vocabulary knowledge correlates directly with reading comprehension (Koda, 2004; Nassaji, 2003; Verhoeven, 2000). Even in an L1 reading context, some contend the ability to recognize words may

be one of the best indicators of reading ability levels (Perfetti, 2007). Thus, it is concluded that Araya's emphasis on vocabulary is a common belief of L2 teachers. Secondly, as observed in her reading classroom, Araya translated only select terms which she thought contribute the more important meaning to a text. Therefore, her heavy concern with vocabulary and translations during classroom instruction are not considered as key indicators of text-based beliefs in the transmission models of reading.

In conclusion, Araya's and Chalatorn contend that L2 reading is a recursive and/or cyclical process of constructing meaning. They do not perceive that L2 reading consists of linear, sequential steps of a decoding and word-recognition process. As a consequence, these perceptions of the L2 reading process support the hypothesis that Araya's and Chalatorn's beliefs about reading in L2 are more similar to the transactional than the transmission view of reading.

Analyses of Araya's and Chalatorn's Beliefs about Reader's Roles

With respect to the belief that L2 reading is a process of constructing meaning, Araya and Chalatorn believe that the L2 reader is not a passive recipient of the author's messages. In contrast, the participants perceive that the L2 reader actively creates meaning while engaging with the L2 text. For Araya, though L2 reading is a passive act in the beginning of the L2 reading process, it becomes active later in the process in analyzing and synthesizing. In similar fashion, Chalatorn stated that L2 readers are not like an empty container that can be filled with new information. She argued that the reader makes sense of the textual clues through the lenses of their experiences and attitudes.

In conclusion, Araya's and Tantipat's beliefs about L2 reading resemble more of the transactional theory than the transmission view of reading. First, they do not simply

view L2 reading as the transferring of the author's information to the reader, but as an active act of assigning meaning to a text. Second, the participants consider the reader's L2 linguistic and world schemata as important sources of meaning, in addition to the textual information. Third, they perceive that L2 reading is not a linear process of decoding, but a cyclical process of meaning-construction. Fourth, the participants agree that L2 reading is active in nature.

Sasinee and Tantipat: Staying Static with the Transmission Theory of Reading

According to the findings reported in the previous sections, Sasinee's and Tantipat's beliefs about L2 reading reflect more of the transmission than the transactional theory of reading. This is evident throughout their arguments about the definition and purposes of L2 reading, the L2 reading process, readers' roles, and sources of meaning.

Sasinee's and Tantipat's Beliefs about Definition of and Purposes of L2 Reading

According to the previously reported findings, both Sasinee's and Tantipat's beliefs about definitions and purposes of L2 reading are similar to the tenets of the transmission theory. First, they have strong beliefs that L2 reading is an act of receiving or extracting the author's information; thus, the main purpose of L2 reading is to seek the author's knowledge. Second, their definitions of L2 reading comprehension do not give importance to L2 readers' schemata or to socio-cultural contexts.

First, based on their interviews, both Sasinee and Tantipat agree that the author uses a text as a media platform to transfer messages to the reader, and at the heart of reading is the extraction of messages. The participants similarly believe that L2 reading is

an act of attaining the author's intended messages, and the ultimate goal of reading is to arrive at the absolute correct meaning of a text. The participants define L2 reading as a process of transmission of the messages from the author to the reader through the text, and there is no significant interaction between the reader, the text, and the author.

Second, they do not consider the L2 reader's schemata and context as a critical part of L2 reading comprehension. Both Sasinee and Tantipat seem to overemphasize lexical and syntactical knowledge as the only indicators of reading comprehension. Sasinee concluded that students need to excel in these two elements of a target language to become efficient readers; however, she did not mention the L2 reader's schemata as a key to success. Sasinee's unawareness of the L2 reader's schemata infers that she may regard knowledge, experiences, and personal attitudes and bias of an L2 reader as inferior to L2 lexical and syntactical knowledge in order to comprehend a text. Like Sasinee, Tantipat also gives little attention to a L2 reader's schemata. She mentioned that only a proficient L2 reader links his or her schemata to what he or she reads. Thus, it can be inferred that Tantipat perceives the reader's schemata as merely an additional benefit, but not the main source of interpretation.

Analyses of Sasinee's and Tantipat's Beliefs about Sources of Meaning

Sasinee and Tantipat believe that meaning resides ready-made within an L2 text and that L2 reading is the extraction of meaning from a text. Both participants believe that a text carries only one single meaning.

Sasinee believes that the author is the locus of control and that the text, which contains the author's knowledge, is the only source of meaning. Though she perceives that L2 readers' prior knowledge and personal experiences occasionally help increase L2

reading comprehension, she does not recognize them as sources of meaning. Tantipat's beliefs about sources of meaning are slightly different from Sasinee's, in that she thinks the text is the only source of meaning, and not the author. However, both participants similarly perceive that meaning is wholly derived from the text and that L2 readers' schemata serve only to increase a reader's comprehension and long-term memory of the new knowledge. In addition, they perceive that L2 reader's schemata do not have a significant role in the meaning attained because meaning is both already determined by the author and embedded in the text.

Sasinee and Tantipat view meaning as fixed and static. Sasinee's text-based view is made apparent when she states that a passage carries only one correct meaning. Sasinee mentioned that all efficient readers come up with one similar interpretation when reading the same text. She added, "After having students read an article, I expect them to come up with meaning which is similar to mine or to the one suggested in the teacher manual." Sasinee reported that if students' interpretations are different from her expected answer, she will assume that students do not comprehend the text. In respect of her beliefs that meaning is fixed, Sasinee denied that a reading text can be interpreted differently by the same reader when he or she reads the same text more than once. Tantipat perceives that L2 readers' prior knowledge and experiences have an impact on the way they employ or select reading strategies, but not on the attained meaning. Though she allows some degrees of flexibility of students' interpretations, she said that correct interpretations must share some similarities with her own pre-determined one.

Analyses of Sasinee's and Tantipat's Beliefs About the L2 Reading Process

The two participants' views of the reading process as textual-based are similar to two transmission models of reading: the simple view and the Automaticity model. Three main tenets of the transmission models are found in Sasinee's and Tantipat's explanation about the L2 reading process.

First, Sasinee and Tantipat consider that reading consists of decoding and linguistic comprehension and is text-based. They agreed that a series of reading steps (predicting, verifying, and refining; phonological awareness; morphological awareness, analyses, and application) and word difficulties are most critical to the L2 reading process. Their beliefs correspond to transmission models, which define reading comprehension as the product of skills in decoding and linguistic comprehension (Gough, 1972; Samuels, 2004). The transmission reading models propose that decoding and linguistic comprehension are crucial components of the reading process and are substantially related to reading comprehension (Hoover & Gough, 1990; LaBerg & Samuels, 1974). Another similarity among these text-based models is that they focus primarily on the cognitive aspects; thus, they imply that weak reading is a result of a lack of decoding skills and linguistic comprehension or either one (Hoover & Gough, 1990). In addition, the participants' L2 reading models and the transmission models are similar because they do not adequately address the social and cultural aspects of reading; accordingly, the reader's schemata and a reading context has none or little role in reading comprehension.

Second, the two participants share a similar view with the transmission theory that the reading process consists of sequentially separate steps, and if readers follow such steps, they will be successful in reading. Sasinee claims that L2 reading incorporates of four separate steps – predicting, anticipating, verifying, and refining – while Tantipat

proposed four separate steps of the L2 reading process – phonology, morphology and syntax, analyzing, and applying. The two participants think that if their students follow such reading steps, all will become efficient L2 readers. This simple view of reading is congruent with early transmission models of reading, which perceive reading as the information-processing process, and propose that reading steps are not unique to particular readers, but are rather generalizable (Hayes, 1989). Sasinee's and Tantipat's beliefs about generalizable steps in L2 reading reflect Bernhardt's (2000) comments regarding the transmission models of reading, that the transmission models portray the reading process as a computer program and implicates that the sum of each processing step constitute an act of reading; thus, if "each reader performs in this manner, the output will be the same successful product" (Bernhardt, 2000, p. 8).

Third, in addition to challenges of reading in a second language, both Sasinee and Tantipat state that the learners' level of L2 vocabulary and linguistic comprehension play a critical role in L2 reading and are the most important indicators of L2 reading success. The participants perceive that meaning is conveyed through words, and that L2 reading comprehension is the output of a word-decoding process. They emphasized that before students can read for comprehension in an L2, they need to have high proficiency levels in English vocabulary and linguistics. Sasinee mentioned that critical and analytical thinking skills are not the foci of AE 203, which is just an introductory course to reading in English. She reported that instruction focused on critical and analytical L2 reading skills should be delayed until students have developed the necessary L2 vocabulary and ability to apply reading strategies.

In conclusion, Sasinee and Tantipat do not appear to be aware of the influence of the reading context and social background on a L2 reader's reading process. They

perceive these two factors as less important than the text-based factors of L2 vocabulary and linguistic knowledge. Thus, their beliefs toward the L2 reading process seem to lean toward the transmission theory.

Analyses of Sasinee's and Tantipat's Beliefs About the Reader's Role

Sasinee and Tantipat share the core philosophy of the transmission reading theory that reading is a passive act and the reader adopts a passive role as a receiver of the information in the communication process (Dole, Duffy, Roehler, & Pearson, 1991; Nunan, 1991). For Sasinee, L2 readers are passive in nature because they do not create knowledge but, instead, receive such knowledge from the author. Sasinee's beliefs about the passive role of L2 readers are made obvious in her statement in one of her classrooms. She told her students that readers are naïve, while the authors are experts; accordingly, readers receive knowledge and learn from the author.

For Tantipat, even though she believed that L2 readers are both passive and active, she gives less importance to the active than the passive roles of the reader because she does not expect her students to be able to excel in these two steps. In addition, Tantipat mentioned that a successful L2 reader does not necessarily complete the last two steps of reading (analyzing and applying), which require the L2 reader's active role. This statement implies her belief that the first two steps (phonological awareness and morphological and syntactical awareness) provide enough information for a second-language reader to comprehend a L2 text. This implies that in her opinion, the L2 reader's passive role is superior to the active role in the reading process.

In addition, Tantipat explained the active role of readers as being when a reader has the chance to actively present and discuss their opinions towards the text with peers.

Tantipat's explanation about the role of L2 readers does not reflect the active role of readers as proposed in the transactional theory.

In conclusion, the findings and analyses of Sasinee's and Tantipat's beliefs about L2 reading reflect that these two participants are intensely influenced by the transmission view of reading. They view L2 reading as a passive act of receiving the author's knowledge. Second, they perceive that an L2 text is the only source of meaning, and that meaning is static. Third, they perceive that the L2 reading is a meaning-extraction process, which consists of a series of steps for an L2 reader to decode written signs into verbal sounds and one to another language. Fourth, the reader's role in expressing their opinion is passive in the sense that a reader does not take part in constructing meaning in a reading text.

Common Instructional Practices

This section addresses the second research question: what instructional practices are applied by Thai instructors in an English reading classroom? The first subsection describes the instructional practices of Araya and Chalatorn, which are categorized under the theme of developing text-based understanding into personal realizations. The second subsection reveals the instructional practices of Sasinee and Tantipat which are categorized under the theme of reading as decoding/extracting the author's meaning. Using descriptive data and citing excerpts from classroom observation transcripts, the researcher report common instructional practices of each participant.

Developing Text-Based Understanding into Personal Realizations

This subsection presents Araya's and Chalatorn's common instructional practices in the pre-, during-, and after-reading steps. It also discusses how the two teachers develop text-based understanding and encourage personal realizations among students.

Araya: Classroom Overview

Classroom observations took place in a section of Analytical Reading (AE 206). Araya did not require students to buy a textbook, but assigned students to read passages from various authentic English sources, such as newspapers, magazines, the Internet, and commercial textbooks. Classroom observations were conducted when the instructor used the following reading passages as the main material for classroom discussions: "A Hunger for English Lessons," "Thailand Court Upholds Hiring Policy Barring Physically Disabled," and "Why, Oh Why, These Uncalled-For Wai?"

There were 18 students in Araya's classroom. Because this study does not attempt to reveal students' beliefs or responses, they were not asked to sign a consent form; accordingly, students' discourse and responses are not transcribed or presented in this study. For the classroom arrangement, students and the instructor sit in a circle. While students sat close to one another, there were some observable spaces besides the instructor's seat; thus, Araya inevitably became the center of attention. This may be explained by Foley's (2005) statement that the people of Thailand place a very high value on teachers because they are considered as being knowledgeable and regarded as authority figures. Thus, Thai students may feel uncomfortable sitting close to the teacher. For classroom instruction, Araya used whole-class discussions as the main classroom activity.

Araya: Common Instructional Practices

This subsection delineates a typical pattern of Araya's instructional practices in her AE 206 reading classrooms. Excerpts from her classroom observation transcripts are used in addition to the descriptive information of Araya's common instructional practices.

Pre-reading: activating students' prior knowledge and experiences. Araya spent approximately 15 minutes introducing the passage by asking students to observe the topic of the passage and inviting students to share their experiences or what they knew about the topic with classmates. Araya reinforced this by pre-reading classroom discussions; thus, students who have some ideas about the reading topic gain more knowledge from peers, and those who have none or little knowledge would attain at least some initial ideas. After that, she asked students to finish reading the passage at home. The following example from a classroom observation transcript illustrates Araya's instructional practices during the pre-reading discussion.

On that day, the article "Thailand Court Upholds Hiring Policy Barring Physically Disabled" was used as the main source material of the classroom discussion. The article was about Sirimit, a disabled lawyer, who was fighting for his dream to work as an assistant judge and for the rights of people with disabilities. Sirimit was determined to apply for an assistant judge position; however his application was turned down because the Judicial Commission said that he has an unsuitable physical condition.

After distributing the article to students, Araya asked them to observe the title and the subtitle. Then she asked her students to look at the only picture with the article and the caption under it. Araya initiated the pre-reading classroom discussion by asking her students questions that were associated with their personal lives and about any direct experiences connected to people with a disability. Araya asked, "Does anyone in this

room know a disabled person? If you do, please share with your friends any disadvantages or difficulties for a disabled person living in our community.” Then, she used students’ responses to her questions as a springboard for discussions on social prejudice against disabled people in Thailand. She said:

OK, your friend has just mentioned that his cousin was insulted by neighbors because he is a disabled person. What do you think about this? Have you ever noticed any problems disabled people meet with daily in Thai society, or even in our university?

After the question, Araya tried to direct classroom discussions toward the rights for disabled people in terms of their careers. Araya said, “OK, how about their jobs? Are there any particular jobs that you think people with disabilities cannot do or should not apply for? What do you want to share about careers for people with disabilities?”

After the pre-reading discussion, Araya ended her class by assigning students to read the passage at home and to be ready to discuss the passage in the following class. In addition, Araya usually provided three to four guided questions for students to answer when they read the passage at home. Araya gave her rationale for providing these questions as wanting her students to interact with the text and focus on factual information so when it comes to classroom discussion in the following period, students would be ready to discuss with peers critically.

During reading: teaching comprehension – developing text-based into personal interpretations. Based on classroom observations, Araya has two main objectives for teaching reading comprehension: fostering students’ text-based understanding and encouraging their personal interpretations. Araya used a whole-class discussion as the main classroom activity in order to reach these two objectives.

In order to foster students’ understanding of text-based information, Araya employed three main strategies during the while-reading activities. First, she discussed

the meaning of difficult words and key phrases in each paragraph, both their general and context-based meaning. Second, she used both literal and inferential questions to lead students to the main point of each paragraph. Finally, she asked students to summarize the passage and identify the main idea of the whole passage. Araya used each strategy where it was appropriate and not in a chronological order.

First, Araya ensured that students understood difficult words used in the article by translating some technical terms into the Thai language, such as *the Judicial Officials Governing Act*, *the Constitution*, and *bar* (as a verb). Her other teaching strategies for vocabulary instruction include asking for a synonym from students and using paraphrases. Araya mentioned that some unknown words are keys to reading comprehension, so they can be misleading and might impede students' reading comprehension. The following paragraphs show an example of how Araya taught vocabulary in the passage. The fourth and fifth paragraphs of the article are discussed below.

Paragraph 4:

The Commission, he said, cited Article 26 in the Judicial Officials Governing Act which *bars* the employment of people with an unsuitable physical condition. "That's all that is said in the article. It's so *subjective*, what is unsuitable and what not," said Sirimit [underline added]. (Suttisiltum, 2003, p. 12)

For the word *subjective*, Araya said, "The word *subjective* is very important in this paragraph. Ok, when something is subjective, it is based only on somebody's attitude, opinion, or feelings." Then, Araya asked students to give some examples of subjective topics to concept check whether they understand the word correctly.

For the word *bar*, Araya asked students about the part of speech for the word *bar* in the paragraph because she said that students know what the word means as a noun, but they may not realize that the word can be used as a verb as well. After that, she gave her students synonyms of the word *bar*.

Paragraph 5:

It took about two years for Sirimit's documents *appealing* that decision to reach the Constitutional Court. He *had pinned high hopes* on the Court's decision over whether Article 26 in the Judicial Officials Governing Act *violated* the charter's human rights clauses. (Suttisiltum, 2003, p. 12)

Araya paraphrased the phrase *pinned high hopes on*:

He had pinned, this is an English expression. If you pinned high hope on something or on somebody, it means that you expect that the thing or the person can help you. It means that the person or the thing is reliable. So he had pinned high hope on the court, it means that he expected that the court could help him.

Second, Araya focused on the meaning of key phrases and sentences and, finally, key ideas of the whole paragraph by using literal and inferential questions. Based on classroom observations, Araya employed both literal and inferential questions to enhance students' reading comprehension. Araya asked the following questions when she taught paragraph 4:

- Do you [students] notice the underlined sentence? Can you tell me what Sirimit said that is subjective?
- What does Sirimit mean to say according to the sentence? And how did Sirimit feel?

Third, after Araya ensured that students had a clear understanding of key words and sentences, Araya always asked for some volunteers to summarize or paraphrase a paragraph. She said that by using paraphrasing, the teacher knows how deeply her students understand the passage and which part of the paragraph is problematic for them. Araya occasionally helps her students reorganize their ideas after their summarizing or paraphrasing.

In order to encourage students' personal interpretations, after assessing students' literal comprehension, Araya takes it a step further by inviting students to construct and

share their personal interpretations with peers through whole-class discussions. In addition, when Araya invites students to share their interpretations, she encourages them to provide text-based evidence. Araya said that she would like her students to use the text as a springboard to make inter-textual and personal reflections.

Araya used the following questions to invite students to share what they thought the text meant.

- What do you think the word ... means?
- Why do you interpret the expression like that? Help me bridge your interpretation with a particular part of the passage.
- Does anyone have similar/different interpretations to/from ... (name of student)?

When a student misunderstood the text, she did not correct his or her understanding right away, but would encourage the student to reconsider the text. She usually asked:

- Did you see the sentence...?
- Did you notice paragraph (paragraph number), where it says...?
- I think the information in paragraph (paragraph number) may be helpful if you are not clear on this topic.

After-reading: reviewing and reflections. The main activities in the post-reading step are writing a summary and a reflection journal. Araya provided some guided questions for students in order to write a journal. The questions were such as:

- What bias did you notice from the passage?
- What does the author think about the issue? How about you? Do you agree or disagree with him/her? Support your ideas with either personal reasons or factual information.

- According to the writer's bias, why does the writer have such a bias or opinion towards the issue?

Chalatorn: Classroom Overview

During the semester that the data collection was conducted, Chalatorn taught both AE 203 (Reading I) and AE 206 (Analytical Reading) in the semester; however, the majority of classroom observations were taken in her AE 203 classroom. Thus, findings and analyses are based extensively on her instructional practices in the AE 203 classroom. Classroom observations for AE 203 took place when the following reading articles were used as the main materials of classroom discussion: "Strike the Pose in Tokyo," "A Thousand Years of Foot Binding," "Controversy," and "Time to Legalize." All articles are from the required textbook, *Essential Reading IV* (Miles, French, Gough, & McOvoy, 2007).

English was the only language of instruction. There were 32 students in her AE 203 classrooms. For the classroom seating, students sat in a row of 10-12 desks. The teacher explained that she had assigned students to sit in a circle, but it was impossible because of the limited room space. Chalatorn conceded that the traditional classroom seating did not encourage student participation, but she coped with the problem by having students sit and discuss in a small group.

For the overview of her classroom instruction, Chalatorn used classroom discussion as the main activity in all steps of instruction. A variety of classroom materials including video clips, worksheets, and an excerpt of a news article were all used throughout the period to initiate small-group and whole-class discussions.

Chalatorn: Common Instructional Practices

This subsection describes the typical pattern of Chalatorn's instructional practices in her AE 203 reading classrooms. It presents how Chalatorn teaches English reading for comprehension within the pre-, during-, and after-reading steps. Excerpts of her classroom observation transcripts are used in an addition to descriptive information of Chalatorn's common instructional practices.

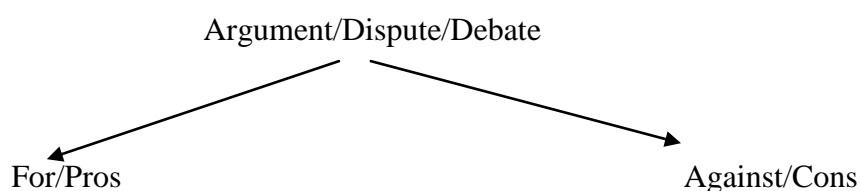
Pre-reading: activating students' prior knowledge and teaching vocabulary.

Chalatorn said that pre-reading classroom activities are for preparing students to have sufficient knowledge about a reading topic and vocabulary used in a text prior to the reading experience. She did not separate the two objectives into two certain steps, but rather taught them simultaneously. The following classroom activities are frequently used in this pre-reading step: a whole-class discussion, a small-group discussion, watching a video clip, brainstorming, and mind mapping.

An excerpt of a classroom observation transcript, where controversy was used as the central topic of classroom discussion is selected as an example of her reading instruction within this pre-reading step. On that day, Chalatorn used two main activities to activate students' prior knowledge and vocabulary about controversy: a whole-class discussion of a controversial issue in Thailand and a small-group discussion of a controversial topic. Chalatorn said that with these two activities, students would gain some ideas of (a) what a controversy is, (b) how people support or cast doubt about one's arguments, and (c) vocabulary used for debating over a controversial issue.

Chalatorn started the lesson by writing the word *controversy* on the blackboard and asked students whether they knew the meaning of the word. She just touched on some simple ideas of the phrase, not deeper connotations, before directing students to give an

example of an outstanding controversial issue in Thailand. “Alright, now, let’s discuss a controversial issue, a hot issue in Thailand? Can you think about any hot issues Thai people have been talking about?” After listening to students sharing their controversial issues, Chalatorn called students’ attention back to her controversial topic, wearing a university uniform. She used it as a model for making an argument for her students. She said to her students, stressing the capitalized words “this (wearing a university uniform) is a kind of DISPUTE or DEBATE.” Then, she wrote the following diagram on the board:



Chalatorn explained that, “If you [students] have arguments for something, it means you [students] AGREE or DISAGREE with something.” (The capitalized words were stressed.)

She also said:

OK, when you [students] have arguments for something, you call them PROS, and when you [students] have arguments against something you called them CONS. Pros are arguments used to promote an issue, and cons suggest points that are against it.

Then, she asked students to provide pros and cons of wearing a university uniform and invited students to share with class whether they agreed with their peers’ arguments.

By using this whole-class discussion, Chalatorn states that students learn the basic ideas of controversy and how to make arguments, as well as vocabulary that they may encounter when they read about a controversial issue.

After a discussion about wearing a university uniform, Chalatorn had students watch a clip video presenting a debate over the contribution of video games to youth violence. Then she distributed a reading article which discusses the same theme to students. After approximately 15 minutes, Chalatorn said to students:

Let's discuss in a group of four to five students the writer's attitude towards video games. What do you think is the writer's point of view? What made you think the writer has a negative or positive attitude toward video games? Can you give me a key word or sentence? What is his reason? And what evidence did he use to support his argument?

Her other questions included:

- Look at paragraph two. What is discussed here?
- Does this paragraph offer a negative or positive opinion towards playing a video game?
- From what paragraphs does the writer provide evidence to support his argument about playing a video game?
- Why does the writer argue about the advantages of playing a video game in the fourth paragraph?
- How did the writer end his writing?

Chalatorn ended her pre-reading classroom instruction by having students share what they learned from their groups with the whole class.

In conclusion, Chalatorn uses the pre-reading step to activate students' prior knowledge about a topic and prepare vocabulary that students may encounter in a text or use in the post-reading discussion. She occasionally taught students to recognize common text structures in order to help students to anticipate how the author may present the main idea and supporting details.

During-reading: fostering text-based understanding and encouraging personal interpretations. Chalatorn seems to share similar perceptions with Araya that during-reading activities are for both fostering students' text-based comprehension and

encouraging their personal interpretations. Slightly different from Araya, instead of using only a whole-class discussion, Chalatorn also included small-group discussions in the during-reading steps in order to serve the two objectives. Guidelines for discussions were occasionally provided.

Unlike Araya, Chalatorn did not separate fostering students' text-based understanding and encouraging students' personal interpretations apart. Instead, she used small-group and whole-class discussions to reach these two objectives simultaneously.

In small group discussions, Chalatorn focused both on fostering students' text-based understanding and encouraging personal interpretations. She ensured that students would focus on text-based information by asking students to identify the main idea of each paragraph, and of the whole passage as well as to underline key words. In addition, she assured students' personal interpretations by inviting them to find an agreement on the main ideas and share their interpretations as well as personal responses within their groups. An example of her instructional practices within the during-reading step is presented through an excerpt of classroom observations where controversy is used as the topic of classroom discussion.

After the pre-reading step, Chalatorn assigned students to read the article "Is Graffiti Art?" as their homework. The article is an interview transcript with a graffiti artist. The interviewee expresses his opinion about being a graffiti artist and why he prefers to be a graffiti artist. The article is in a question-answer pattern; however, the questions are omitted.

On the day that the classroom observation took place, Chalatorn asked her students to identify the main idea of each paragraph. She used an exercise in the textbook which asked students to match the interviewer's questions with each paragraph as a guideline for

students to identify the main idea. Chalatorn told her students that once they could match the interviewer's questions to the interviewee's answers, it would be easier for them to identify the main idea of each paragraph. After students finished identifying the main idea, Chalatorn asked students to choose their own group of five to six students and encouraged them to share and discuss their answers by saying:

After you identify the main idea of each paragraph, talk to your friends about which question fits best to a specific paragraph. What do you think the correct answer is? If you do not agree with your peers' interpretations, tell them what you think and what makes you think that way. Finally, find an agreement within your group about the main idea of each paragraph and of the whole passage.

When students discussed in small groups, Chalatorn moved around the classroom and stopped at every group to listen to the discussion. She usually urged students to defend their interpretations as well as to use their friends' ideas to reconsider their own understanding. She asked her students questions such as:

- How about you? What do you think is the main point in this paragraph?
- What is your reason for matching the question with the third paragraph?
- Do you (all group members) all agree that XXX (a sentence) is the main idea of the passage?
- Why did you say that he has a negative attitude?
- Could you please explain to your friends why you think this sentence is the main idea of the paragraph?
- Is there anyone else who agrees or disagrees with Supranee (pseudonym)?
Why?

Chalatorn states that through a small-group discussion, she can encourage students to focus on both the textual information and personal interpretation. She concluded that a small-group discussion offers students a good opportunity to share with peers their

personal interpretation, responses, and reflections. At the same time, she said, students can extend their personal understanding by considering the views of peers and, thus, reinforcing their own interpretations. She said as a result, students become more confident in their interpretation when it comes to a whole-class discussion.

Moreover, Chalatorn said that a whole-class discussion promotes both textual and personal understanding towards a text. She contended that when students' interpretations are not mutual, they will reread the text and look for textual evidence that they can use to cast doubt on their friend's interpretation and support their own meaning. By attempting to detect a source of misinterpretation, Chalatorn said, "students' text-based understanding will increase because they would read the text more attentively and carefully." Besides, she added, a whole-class discussion would promote her point of view that meaning can vary if the readers hold different viewpoints and schemata. Chalatorn said that "if they interpret the text differently, it is not always that one of them will be correct and the other will be wrong."

In addition, the teacher's interruptions during the whole-class discussion were occasionally observed. Chalatorn explained that in Thai society, Thai students normally view teachers as knowledgeable, and whatever teachers say is true. Chalatorn was worried that if she told her students what the text meant, her opinion would have an influence on students' interpretation to some extent.

After-reading: reflection journal. Journaling is used regularly as an after-reading activity in Chalatorn's reading class because she believes that it is the most effective way for students to organize and analyze the information attained from the passage as well as to discuss and support their own interpretations. There are three elements Chalatorn requires students to include in their journal: main ideas and major supporting details,

interesting ideas or events, and the student's personal insights developed from classroom discussions. Chalatorn said that she has two main objectives for this post-reading activity. First, she would like to ensure that students grasp the main idea of a reading passage. Second, she would like to make sure that students have enough evidence to support their own version of interpretation.

According to Chalatorn's instructional practices, it is concluded that Chalatorn gives importance to students' personal interpretation of a text. She does not ignore the accuracy of text interpreting because she encourages students to share, discuss, compare, and contrast their interpretations with peers. If disagreement occurred, Chalatorn tried not to interrupt students' discussions, but urged students to consider alternative interpretations, whether they were acceptable according to textual clues and whether they made logical sense to them. Then, students would reconsider and verify their own interpretation according to their discussions with peers.

Reading as Decoding/Extracting the Author's Meaning

This subsection presents an overview of Sasinee's and Tantipat's reading classrooms. Their common instructional practices in the pre-, during-, and after-reading steps are also discussed.

Sasinee: Classroom Overview

Sasinee taught one section of AE 203. In the semester that the data collection took place, Sasinee, as the coordinator of AE 203, and the other teachers who taught this course selected *Essential Reading 4* (Miles et al., 2007) to be the required text book for AE 203. Sasinee used the textbook as the main source of reading, and it directed her classroom

instruction. The following subsection describes Sasinee's typical day in her AE 203 classroom.

Classroom observations started in August, 2012. The language of instruction was both English and Thai. There were 28 students. Classroom interaction was mostly one way: from the teacher to students. Classroom discussions were usually dominated by the teacher. There was no interaction among students. Sasinee views this phenomenon as normal because she thinks that students' English proficiency is limited and so they have difficulty retelling or discussing what they have read. For classroom arrangement, students sat in a row of approximately six to eight students. The teacher stood in front of the class, leading classroom activities and classroom interaction.

Sasinee: Common Instructional Practices

This subsection delineates a typical pattern of Sasinee's instructional practices in her AE 203 reading classrooms. This part presents how Sasinee started her lessons and introduced her students to a reading passage, taught reading comprehension, and ended her reading lessons. Excerpts from her classroom observations' transcripts are used in addition to the descriptive information of Sasinee's common instructional practices.

Pre-reading: teaching vocabulary and grammar. Sasinee taught in-text vocabulary and grammar in her pre-reading steps; however, only vocabulary instruction was evident during classroom observations. For vocabulary instruction, she usually gives a synonym for unknown words; otherwise, she would translate them into Thai. For grammar, Sasinee described her grammar instruction as inductive. She said that she would present students with in-text sentences and asked them to notice how the grammatical concept is used.

The following example is taken from a classroom observation transcript in which students were assigned to read the article, “Time to Legalize.” The passage presents an argument over the legalization of drug use. In the article, two people, one is an anti-drug campaigner and the other is a pro-legislation advocate, give their points of view on this pressing issue.

Sasinee started the lesson by asking students to look up the meaning of unfamiliar words from a dictionary. Though she had already assigned students to read the article at home, she said that she was not sure whether students would be well prepared for class. Sasinee asked students, “Skim and scan the reading passage and underline all unknown words. Then, look it up in a dictionary and make sure that you choose the right meaning for this particular text.” Several times, Sasinee translated difficult words into Thai, such as *legalize* and *controversy*; then, she gave students synonyms and parts of speech. She said:

OK, you underlined the word *legalize*. What part of speech is it? Is it a verb, right? What does it mean? It means to make something legal or to make something right. What does the word *controversy* mean? It means *argument*. What part of speech is it? Remember that it is a noun.

Sasinee continued explaining the rest of students’ unknown words. After that, she moved to the during-reading step.

During-reading: extracting the author’s meaning out of the text. During the during-reading step, Sasinee gave first priority to extracting meaning of a text by asking literal questions and paraphrasing in order to guide students to the meaning of a text sentence by sentence. These two strategies were used throughout the during-reading step. An excerpt from her classroom transcript is used as an example of her instruction.

During the while-reading step of the lesson, “Time to Legalize,” Sasinee made sure that students understand every sentence by moving through the text sentence by sentence, asking literal questions, and paraphrasing some complex into simple sentences.

What does an aging rock star do to get back a little bit of the publicity he so desperately misses? Last Sunday, we were exposed to yet another tabloid *exclusive* with a well-known face from the 1960s. And no surprise – it’s yet another version of a familiar story: excessive drug-taking then complete rehabilitation in a private clinic. Now he’s clean and hopefully the fee for the story will pay for some of that treatment. But what about the man, or woman, or even child on the street? What happens when they become addicts? Unlike celebrities, they can’t afford treatment. Their addiction can cost them their jobs and their homes, and sever ties with their friends and family. Last week, a government report suggested drug addiction among Britons is greater than ever. We asked anti-drug campaigner John Milhouse and Steven Bunnings, a pro-legislation advocate, to give their points of view on this pressing issue. (Miles, French, Gough, & McAvoy, 2007, p. 61)

Sasinee started by asking students to focus on the first paragraph and asked them what problem was mentioned in the text. After that she used literal questions to lead students to her expected meaning. Her questions included:

- Based on the first paragraph, who used the drug?
- What percentage of road deaths is caused by the drivers under the influence of drugs?
- Is it mentioned that he is an anti-drug campaigner?
- What did he say about drug-use?
- Who agrees with drug-use?
- Who are in the anti-drug use group?
- Who cannot afford the drug treatment?

When students could not answer her questions, Sasinee assumed that they had problems with vocabulary and complex sentence structure, so she paraphrased sentences or a paragraph for them.

OK, they just mentioned two situations. In the first situation, the author mentioned rock stars, singers, and celebrities. OK, the first situation is grouped or called “celebrity,” and the second group includes normal people like us, right? Like men or women or even children on the street. So they just mentioned two groups of drug addicts. Do these groups share the same or different experiences? The key word is “unlike.” Their situations are different. But the second group’s situation is more difficult. Why? It is because they can’t afford the treatment.

Sasinee explained more about the first paragraph for her students:

They use money from the fee. They get money from the newspaper and pay for the treatment. But for this group, they have to probably sell their house or they lose their job. It may affect their relationship between their friends and their family as well.

Sasinee asked students questions and paraphrased the text from the first until the last paragraph. The two strategies were used alternatively.

After-reading: reading comprehension exercises. Sasinee ended her lesson by asking students to work on reading comprehension exercises provided after a reading passage in the textbook. She asked students to complete the exercises either individually, in pairs, or in a small group. After students completed the exercises, she stood in front of class and asked for some volunteers to give the answer for each question, and if their answers were wrong, she would correct them. In addition, in the after-reading comprehension exercises, questions were usually related to factual and referential information. Open-ended questions where students can express their own feeling and opinions were rare.

In conclusion, Sasinee started her classroom instruction by preparing students’ in-text vocabulary and grammar structure. During reading, she emphasized the meaning of the text sentence by sentence. At the end, in the post-reading step, Sasinee ensured that students had a clear understanding of a text by having them work on after-reading comprehension exercises.

Tantipat: Classroom Overview

Tantipat taught one section of AE 203. This was her first time of teaching AE 203. According to Tantipat, the textbook should be used as the main source of classroom reading and classroom activities. She said that she designed her lesson according to the teacher manual provided by the book publisher. Classroom observations were conducted when the instructor used the following reading passages as the main materials of classroom discussions: “Foot Binding” and “Time to Legalize.” The language of instruction was both English and Thai. Classroom interaction was mostly one way: from the teacher to students. Students’ questions and responses were rare.

There were 28 students. Classroom discussions were usually dominated by the teacher while students were quiet. There was not much interaction among students.

For classroom arrangement, there were 31 students sitting in five rows of approximately five to eight students. The teacher stood in front of class, leading classroom activities.

Tantipat: Common Instructional Practices

This subsection delineates a typical pattern of Tantipat’s instructional practices in her AE 203 reading classrooms. Excerpts from her classroom observations’ transcripts are used in addition to the descriptive information of common instructional practices.

Pre-reading. Tantipat did not have particular classroom activities for the pre-reading step. She assigned students to read a text at home. In the following period, she asked questions about the text, which is categorized in this study as a during-reading activity.

During-reading: extracting the author's meaning out of the text. Tantipat used questioning as the only teaching method within the during-reading step. Most questions targeted surface-level knowledge, and a few asked students' opinion about the knowledge gained. The following paragraphs show how Tantipat used questioning throughout this during-reading step.

Tantipat assigned students to read the passage "A Thousand Years of Foot Binding" at home. The following period, she moved from one paragraph to another paragraph asking factual questions about the text in order to monitor students' reading comprehension. Her questions included:

- Where did the foot binding take place?
- How did the foot binding start?
- Can you tell the name of the organization that has an important role in the struggle to foot binding?
- How did the practice of foot binding come to an end or stop?
- Do you agree with the author that women could not share equal status or be useful when their feet were bound? What do you think about this?

If no one answered her questions, she called on some students or answered the question by herself. When students gave the wrong answer, she corrected it.

After-reading: vocabulary review and oral presentation. Tantipat used two teaching methods: vocabulary review and students' presentation during the after-reading step. The vocabulary review was done first and was followed by students' oral presentation about the information they had learned from the text.

First, Tantipat reviewed in-text vocabulary and parts of speech by writing words on the whiteboard and asked students to find words in a text that shared the same or similar

meaning with words on the whiteboard. For example, Tantipat listed the following words on the whiteboard: tie, performance, clearly, obedient, reputation, satisfaction, expand, tolerate, and unexplainably. She asked students to find their synonyms from the text “A Thousand Years of Foot Binding” and write them on the whiteboard. After that, she gave the correct answer by explaining each word to students. She explained the words

performance and *unexplainably* as follows:

Try to find the word which is similar to the word *performance*. First of all, I think you should know the part of speech of the word. It may help you to find its synonym in the passage easily. *Performance* is a noun. So the word in the passage that has the similar meaning as the word *performance* is *practice*. This is the synonym of the word *performance*.

Can you find a word or adverb that has the same definition as *unexplainably* or *mysteriously*? What part of speech is it? It is an *adverb*. OK, it is explicably.

According to Tantipat, vocabulary instruction is important in an English reading course because words contain a unit of meaning; therefore, the more English words students know, the better they can understand the meaning of an English text. She added that when students analyze the sentence structure to obtain the meaning, parts of speech help because they convey meaning and the function of words.

The next classroom activity was students’ oral presentations about the knowledge they had gained from the text. According to Tantipat, the only grading criterion for the oral presentations is how precisely students can retell or summarize a text. However, students’ presentations were much like a story, in a retelling fashion, because students just read their summary of the passage in front of class. There were not questions either from the presenters or the audience. In addition, Tantipat did not give any feedback or comments to students after their presentations.

Conclusion

Araya and Chalatorn emphasized students' engagement with a text by allowing students to use their schemata to interpret a text. They also used small-group and whole-class discussion as a main classroom activity to stimulate the active role of readers. However, the teachers were considerably concerned with textual difficulties, such as vocabulary, as an important obstacle of L2 reading comprehension. Sasinee and Tantipat are very concerned about textual difficulties, especially vocabulary and sentence structure and focused on these two language elements in every step of teaching.

Links Between Teachers' Beliefs About Reading and Instructional Practices in an L2 Context

Teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning are frequently regarded as an important factor influencing instructional practices such as choice of teaching method and classroom management (Asselin, 2000; Davis, Konopak, & Readence, 1993; Richardson, 2003; Weaver, 2002). Because teachers feel accomplished when they can implement classroom practices that are consistent with what they believe as good and important teaching (Ravitz, Becker, & Wong, 1998), these participants also impart their beliefs about reading into their instructional practices. In this section, the influences of the participants' beliefs about reading, transmission and transactional, on the participants' instructional practices are discussed. Do the participants' common instructional practices correspond to their particular beliefs about reading? If so, in what ways do the participants' beliefs about reading guide their classroom practices?

The Influences of Araya's and Chalatorn's Transactional Beliefs on Instructional Practices

This section examines the influence of Araya's and Chalatorn's transactional beliefs about reading on instructional practices. The open coding analysis with the help of the NVivo software program revealed that the instructional practices of Araya and Chalatorn – lesson structure, teaching orientation, and enhanced activities – corresponded to their beliefs about reading in an L2 context. This section presents the summary of the two teachers' transactional beliefs about reading and then discusses how such beliefs correspond to the two teachers' instructional practices in lesson structure, teaching orientation, and enhanced classroom activities.

The Summary of Araya's and Chalatorn's Beliefs about Reading

Araya and Chalatorn's beliefs about reading gear toward the transactional beliefs about the reading process. The summary of their beliefs are presented in Table 2. In short, Araya and Chalatorn believe that L2 reading is an active, transactional process in which the reader transacts with the text and creates personal interpretation. These beliefs seem to influence the teachers' lesson structure (pre-, during-, and after-reading), preferred teaching orientations, and enhanced instructional activities.

Discussion on How Araya's and Chalatorn's Beliefs Correspond to Instructional Practices

First, according to transcripts of their classroom observations, the two teachers planned their lessons into three separate, but related steps, and all encouraged students' creation of personal interpretation. This particular structure of their lessons seems to result from their beliefs that both the reader and the text are important sources of meaning.

Table 2

Summary of Araya's and Chalatorn's Beliefs about Reading

| Reading components | Araya's beliefs | Chalatorn's beliefs |
|---|--|---|
| Definition of and purposes of reading | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reading is a learning activity to attain new knowledge: both the author's information and personal insights. 2. Reading purposes vary, but for students, the main goal of reading is seeking academic success. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reading is an act of making sense of print and the author's information. 2. Reading purposes are several; including for gaining knowledge, communicating, and relaxing. |
| Sources of meaning | Both the reader and the author contribute to the meaning construction process. | Both the reader and the text (or the author) play a significant role in second language reading comprehension. |
| The process of reading in an L2 context | L2 reading is not the linear process of translation, but it is a process that requires a reciprocal relationship between the reader and the text. | The reading process is cyclical and consists of textual processing, mental processing, and conceptualizing. The L2 reader performs these three processes simultaneously while reading in an L2. |
| Roles of the reader | The reader may take either an active or passive role depending on the reader's purpose for reading and the relevant textual genres. | The reader is active, no matter what the types of texts, because he or she brings in their schemata into the interpretation of a text. |

In the pre-reading step, because the two teachers consider background knowledge as an important source of readers' personal interpretation, their instructional activities, classroom discussion, and questioning are designed to activate students' prior knowledge about a text. Araya usually asked students to share their experiences about a text with the whole class so students would gain more knowledge during this pre-reading discussion, then they could use this shared knowledge to help comprehend the text. While Araya emphasized students' prior knowledge of the content, Chalatorn activated both knowledge of the content and in-text vocabulary in this pre-reading step. Chalatorn used both small-group and whole-class discussion to ensure that students had sufficient background knowledge of the content and in-text vocabulary before actual reading. For the vocabulary instruction, she taught vocabulary in context.

Believing that reading is not a process of decoding written signs into verbal sounds or the combination of words, Araya and Chalatorn did not focus on pronunciation and did not ask students to look up the meanings of difficult words from a dictionary, but let students guess the meanings of the words from the context. Sometimes, they just skipped a difficult word if it did not affect the overall meaning of a text.

In the during-reading step, because Araya and Chalatorn believe that meaning is not static and totally controlled by the author or the text, they offered an opportunity for students to develop personal meanings and share such meanings with peers. The two teachers did not determine whose interpretation was right or wrong, but asked students some questions that led them to a discussion of which particular meaning was not related to the particular text. Students needed to defend their own interpretations by referring to the particular textual information, personal experience, or knowledge of the reading text.

Some students who misunderstood a text needed to reread the text and refine their interpretations.

In the after-reading activities, both teachers asked students to write a reflective journal to summarize the text, explaining their insights from the reading as well as present their personal ideas about the text. Since they believe that readers' schemata is an important element in the reading process, especially in an L2 context where the author and the reader may not share similar knowledge and culture, they allowed students the autonomy to present their reflective thought in their reflective journals.

In a review of Rosenblatt's work, Roen and Karolides (2005) pointed out that the transactional theory reminded us that the teacher is not an authority representing meaning, but is the person who provides an incentive for a discussion that encourages a "democracy of voices" (p. 60), which will lead to group and individual understanding. Because both Araya and Chalatorn gave importance to the active role of the reader as reflected in the transactional theory, they employed the student-oriented teaching method, which diminishes their role as the authority figure and strengthens students' active role instead. There are two pieces of evidence for this claim. First, Araya and Chalatorn offered students opportunities to interpret a text based on their prior knowledge and experiences, although students may need to verify their personal interpretations or refine them later after a discussion with peers. The second piece of evidence is their questioning strategy. The two teachers did not ask a lot of literary questions which focus on extracting the denotative textual information, directing students to an expected meaning. Most of their questions were open-ended, expecting students to analyze the text based on both the textual information and students' schemata.

Third, because the two teachers do not believe that reading comprehension results from translation or a combination of words, but rather, comprehension occurs when the reader transacts with a text, vocabulary instruction is not the main activity in their classroom. Araya and Chalatorn's classrooms were dominated by classroom discussion (small group and whole class), which encouraged students to learn to create and support their personal interpretation with good textual evidence and prior knowledge. Though Araya sometimes used the translation strategy, she translated only important words that carried key ideas of a text.

In conclusion, transactional beliefs about reading in an L2 context influence Araya and Chalatorn to structure their lessons in a way that encourages the construction of personal interpretation. They also opt for student-oriented teaching as it promotes the active role of students as well as of readers. Furthermore, such beliefs influence them in selecting different types of classroom discussion as favored classroom practices.

The Influences of Sasinee's and Tantipat's Transmission Beliefs on Instructional Practices

This section examines the influence of Sasinee's and Tantipat's transactional beliefs about reading on instructional practices. The open-coding analysis with the help of the NVivo software program revealed that the instructional practices of Sasinee and Tantipat – lesson structure, teaching orientation, and enhanced activities – corresponded to their beliefs about reading in an L2 context. This section begins by presenting a summary of the two teachers' transactional beliefs about reading and then discusses how such beliefs correspond to the two teachers' instructional practices.

Summary of Araya's and Chalatorn's Beliefs about Reading

The summary of Sasinee's and Tantipat's beliefs about reading, which are consistent with the transmission theory of reading is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Summary of Sasinee's and Tantipat's Beliefs about Reading

| Reading components | Sasinee's beliefs | Tantipat's beliefs |
|---|--|---|
| Definition of and purposes of reading | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reading is an act of receiving messages from the author. 2. The ultimate purpose of reading is to receive the information or messages from the author. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reading is foundational to second language learning and is the act of receiving information from an L2 text. 2. The purpose of reading is to seek knowledge and as such, apply the acquired knowledge in everyday life. |
| Sources of meaning | The author is the only reliable source of meaning because he or she is an expert in what he or she writes about. | Meaning is wholly situated in a text; thus, the text determines meaning. |
| The process of reading in an L2 context | L2 reading is a meaning-extraction process. L2 vocabulary and syntax play a critical role in reading for comprehension. | L2 reading is a linear process composing of phonology, morphology, meaning analyses, and knowledge application. Since the process is linear, the reader's must be proficient in each single step; otherwise, he or she cannot apply the next step effectively. |
| The reader's role | Readers are passive receivers of the author's information. | Readers are passive in the initial steps, but are active in the last two steps of the reading process. For a novice reader, they may take only a passive role because they cannot perform the last two steps of the reading process. |

In short, Sasinee and Tantipat believe that L2 reading is a passive, transmission process in which the author transfers knowledge to the reader. These beliefs influence Sasinee's and Tantipat's lesson structure, preferred teaching orientations, and enhanced instructional activities.

Discussion on How Sasinee's and Tantipat's Beliefs Correspond to Instructional Practices

First, because Sasinee and Tantipat believe that reading comprehension is the extraction of textual information in essence, their lessons were planned based intensively on the text. All class activities were designed to help students cope with textual difficulties, both vocabulary and grammar. In addition, students' prior knowledge was not considered as a critical aspect in any step of teaching.

Believing that reading comprehension totally depends on the reader's abilities in decoding meaning from written symbols, and failures of reading comprehension occur at the lexical and sentence levels, Sasinee devoted the pre-reading step to prepare students' knowledge of in-text vocabulary and grammar. Sasinee claimed that students need to understand all words and grammar in a text before the actual reading in order to lessen the textual difficulties and increase reading comprehension. To prepare students' knowledge of vocabulary, Sasinee asked students to look up words in the dictionary, translating from English to Thai for them, and giving synonyms. These teaching strategies, especially using a dictionary, reflect her beliefs that reading comprehension is a result of the combination of word meaning or the meaning extraction process, and reader's schemata does not have a prominent role in the reading process. Reading, then, is a process of extracting meaning from the text.

Tantipat did not have a specific pre-reading step, she just assigned her students to read the text at home. Because Sasinee and Tantipat believe that L2 readers' abilities in decoding meaning of an L2 text are the most important determiner of reading success, in the during-reading step, they focused extensively on evaluating students' abilities to extract the textual information from word and sentence levels, such as retelling the story, identifying the key information, and locating references. In order to practice this style of evaluation, both Sasinee and Tantipat employed the questioning strategy and only literal questions were included. They agreed that word and sentence comprehension difficulties can affect the text-level comprehension, so they believe that intervention at the word and sentence level might improve students' abilities in L2 reading. Sasinee focused on meaning of words, parts of speech, and grammar structure while moving through each paragraph in her during-reading step. She used a questioning strategy to evaluate the students' reading comprehension at the word and sentence levels. Tantipat also employed the questioning strategy to teach reading comprehension in the during-reading step. She asked factual questions, moving from sentence to sentence. In addition, because vocabulary is believed to be a key component of the reading process, in the during-reading step, both teachers spent most of their class hours on explaining vocabulary.

Because Sasinee believe that students comprehend a text when they can retell a story and answer factual questions about a text, in the after-reading step she usually had students write a summary of the text in their own words. After that, she would have students work on after-reading exercises in the textbook, which mostly focused on the surface meanings of a text. The exercises considered by the teachers as important are those which ask students to look for explicit information and opinion. The rest of the exercises are devoted to vocabulary and grammar skills. The exercises focus only on

surface meanings, do not involve the readers' prior knowledge, or promote students' analytical ability, and they reflect Sasinee's beliefs that reading is the extraction of meaning from a text, and meaning resides only in the text.

The following are examples of after-reading exercises:

Her name was Yukari Tanabe and she turned up at the airport with a cheery wave, exuberant greetings, and none of the Japanese formality I had expected. In fact, this was only the first contradiction of stereotypes that I encountered. (Miles et al., 2007, p. 51)

Question: When the writer first met Yukari he...

- a. Had not expected that she would meet him at the airport.
- b. Was surprised by the way she behaved towards him.

The teenagers hanging out in isolated groups along the bridge that connects Harajuku station to Yoyogi Park were happy to pose for photographs. "If they're lucky, they'll appear in a fashion magazine," Yukari explained. The hope of gaining celebrity was their main reason for being there. (Miles et al., 2007, p. 51)

Question: What are we told about the teenagers on the bridge?

- a. They felt separated from normal society.
- b. They were hoping to become famous.

In Tantipat's classroom, she usually ended her lessons with a vocabulary review and students' story-retelling. This is similar to Kuzborska's study (2011) which found that teachers who perceive that meaning resides in the text only and that reading is a passive activity to establish meaning with little or no inference from his or her prior knowledge asked a lot of factual questions in their classrooms.

Second, because the two teachers believe that successful L2 readers require advanced language skills and only advanced L2 readers, such as the teacher, will be able to reach the correct meaning, they do not encourage students to adopt an active role as reader. They believe that students need the teacher's help in order to comprehend the text correctly. Sasinee said, "Therefore, students cannot read without our [the teacher's] directions." Tantipat said, "The teacher has to lead them to the correct meaning; otherwise, students who are novice learners of English may miscomprehend an English text."

Consequently, both teachers employed teacher-oriented instruction in their reading classrooms. This is evidenced by the following prevalent teaching strategies. First, the teachers were the leader of classroom discussion by asking questions leading students to the key points. Second, students were not allowed to interpret the text differently from the teachers' expected meaning. When there was a variation of meaning, the teachers usually directed students to their expected meaning.

Third, because Sasinee and Tantipat perceive reading as a decoding process and pay much attention to sentence-level comprehension, a discussion of vocabulary with the whole class was the prevalent mode of instruction in all Sasinee's and Tantipat's observed classrooms. Since prior knowledge was not taken as an important factor in the reading process, the two teachers did not have a certain activity involving the use of prior knowledge in comprehending a text.

Instructors' Perceptions of Their Roles as Teachers of L2 Reading

This section reveals how participants perceive their roles as teachers of L2 reading. The data was coded deductively into two categories: facilitator and leader (or arbiter). The interviews and classroom observations reveal that two teachers, Araya and Chalatorn, perceive themselves as facilitators of their students, while Tantipat and Sasinee view themselves as the leaders of classroom activities and the arbiter of text interpretation.

Araya and Chalatorn: Teachers as the Facilitators of the Reading Process

Araya and Chalatorn view themselves as the facilitators of their students in order to read an L2 context effectively. This is evidenced through the interviews and their instructional practices. First, Araya and Chalatorn frequently used the words facilitate,

support, encourage, and promote when explaining their roles in reading classrooms.

Araya explained, “A good teacher of reading has to encourage students to read between the lines.” To be able to do this, Araya said that a teacher has to cope with students’ reading abilities and attitudes toward reading. She said, “I think my role is to foster students’ critical reading skills and create a classroom atmosphere that encourages reading habits.” Chalatorn believes that the teacher is a key person in the classroom in creating and offering opportunities for students to understand and interpret a text according to their prior knowledge, culture and customs, and personal experience. She added that students comprehend a text better when they discuss the meaning with friends than being directed by the teacher, and most importantly, students will learn to read without the teacher’s advice and finally become an independent, responsive, and reflective reader.

Second, as seen in classroom observations, the two teachers created a classroom environment of a community of learning and interpretation where students are offered an opportunity to take charge of their reading and interpreting. They think that such an environment will foster independent reading skills and support students in becoming highly motivated readers.

For example, in Araya’s classroom, she usually asked questions that created a forum for discussion of meaning. She did not judge students’ interpretations as to whether it was right or wrong. Her facilitator role was observed from her questions and feedback for students. Here is an excerpt from “Strike the Pose in Tokyo” (Miles et al., p.51):

Now, it’s well known that the Japanese are the greatest consumers of Burberry and Louis Vuitton, but I had little idea of the youth trends that dominate urban shopping areas. As an outsider, I was surprised by the sight of women carrying teddy bears, not to mention their platform boots. Yukari was clearly amused by my confusion and was kind enough to give me a brief lesson, which I will attempt to relay as accurately as I can.

Araya initiated classroom discussions by the following guided questions:

- What made the author surprised when he or she visited shopping areas in Japan?
- What do you think about the fashion trend in Japan?
- Do you share the same feeling as the author? Why or why not?

Here is her feedback when students misunderstood the paragraph:

- You have made a good point on Japanese fashion trends, but can you make a connection to what you have just said with the paragraph?
- Why do you think the author has a negative attitude about Japanese fashion trends?

Here is an excerpt from the passage, “Strike the Pose in Tokyo” (Miles et al.,

2007):

First of all, there seem to be two main ways to dress for the under 40s – you either go for the *kawaii* (cute) look, or *bodikon* (body-conscious). The former means you attempt to look much younger than you are – by wearing a school uniform, for example. It means that your accessories are of the Hello Kitty brand, and that you wear long white socks and frilly dresses. *Bodikon*-dressers, however, go for the sexy-manga action girl look. According to Yukari, both looks were actually a way for women to express their female independence, but I think I would have to spend much longer in Japan to understand this. (p. 51)

Araya initiated classroom discussions by the following guided questions:

- Which look do you prefer: *kawaii* or *bodikon*? How would you dress up to look that particular way?
- In your opinion, what did Yukari actually mean when she said both *kawaii* and *bodikon* looks were a way for women to express their female independence? What do you think about her saying this?

Here is her feedback when students misunderstood the paragraph:

- OK, how about we all read the first two sentences again and discuss what the phrase *the under 40s* mean?

- What do you think female independence is based on your own understanding? We may understand the words differently. Why don't we share what each of us think the female independence is.

Chalatorn also sees herself as a facilitator. First, she offered turns for students who hesitated to share their understanding of a text. In her classrooms, some students who were outstanding in English tended to speak more than those who were less proficient. Chalatorn then invited students who hesitated to share their interpretation to take part in classroom discussion. Second, she accommodated students' different learning styles by many teaching strategies. For example, she drew a mind map to conclude what was discussed in class when she noticed that some students were still confused after the discussion. Third, she did not expect every student to share one correct meaning; instead, she encouraged them to explore a diversity of perspectives. Chalatorn used students' responses to the text as a springboard in classroom discussions of text interpretation. This is an excerpt of her classroom observation transcript.

Chalatorn: We have been talking about tight shirts and short skirts as uniform. What's your idea about this issue? Let's start from someone here. Let's hear from someone here.

Students: (answer the question)

Chalatorn: So you dislike the idea of improper uniform, right? (Turning to another student) How about you? You are so fashionable. What do you think about this? Do you like the idea?

Students: (answer the question)

Chalatorn: But I saw many female students wear tight shirts. You don't like the idea, do you? (Chalatorn made sure that she correctly understood students' answers). Does anyone else have any ideas about improper uniform dress?

In conclusion, Araya and Chalatorn perceive themselves as the facilitators of their students in order to comprehend an L2 text. In classrooms, they positioned themselves as

the arrangers of classroom activities, and let students monitor their reading process independently.

Sasinee and Tantipat: Teachers as the Leader and the Arbiter
of the Text Interpretation

Sasinee and Tantipat perceive themselves as the leader of classroom activities and the arbiter of the text interpretation. This is evidenced through the interviews and their instructional practices.

In the interviews, Sasinee and Tantipat emphasized that a teacher of reading acts as the controller, the leader, the investigator, and the judge. They usually used verbs such as to lead, to judge, to control, to direct, to explain, to monitor, and to guide when describing teachers' responsibilities in a reading class. Tantipat explained that a teacher of reading, especially in an L2 context, must help students deal with unknown words and complicated sentence structures and has to explain the text until students have a clear understanding of the text. Therefore, she said that translation from L2 to L1 is sometimes inevitable. Similarly, Sasinee mentioned that a teacher of reading has to explain difficult vocabulary and structures in an easy way to help students cope with textual difficulties; at the same time, he or she has to lead students to the correct answer and correct students' misunderstanding of a text. Both instructors agree that a teacher is the arbiter or judge of the textual interpretations if they vary among students or differ from a teacher's expectation.

Their perceptions that a teacher of reading is the leader of classroom activities and the judge of text interpretation are also evidenced through classroom observations. First, the two teachers are the center of attention in every classroom activity. In Sasinee's classroom, most of the class hour is devoted to the teacher's explaining of vocabulary and

paraphrasing a sentence or a paragraph. In addition, Sasinee gained control over students' classroom discussions by asking questions and correcting students' answers. Similarly, Tantipat spent most of the class hour asking students questions and giving feedback (whether they understand the text correctly). Classroom discussions taking place in these two teachers' classrooms are in the asking-answering fashion. In the after-reading step, vocabulary review and students' presentation, Tantipat dominated classroom activities because she was the one who led all of the activities by asking questions, correcting students' answers, and calling students' names out to write synonyms of words on the board.

Second, these two teachers spent most of their time directing students to their expected interpretation of a text. Sasinee believes that it is too soon to rush AE 203 students to get too deeply involved with a text and develop an insight from what they are reading. Tantipat was concerned that students' inefficient use of reading strategies and weak language skills may impede their analytical reading skills; thus, they need a teacher to guide them to the correct meaning of a text. For example, several times Sasinee paraphrased a paragraph for students. Tantipat asked questions that directed students' attention to the part that she thought contained the main idea of the text.

In conclusion, Sasinee and Tantipat perceive themselves as leaders of their English reading classrooms and the arbiters of textual interpretation because they believe that students will never reach the correct meaning of a text without their supervision. They also contend that students are not proficient users of English; thus, students cannot get heavily involved with a text, and their students' English language proficiency is too low to be engaged and reflective readers.

Conclusion

The findings, which are based on interviews, classroom observations, and document reviews, reveal that two of the participants' opinions differ from the transmission theory and align with the transactional theory. In contrast, the other two participants' beliefs appear to remain fixed within the parameters of the transmission theory. Their instructional practices seemed to be influenced by their beliefs about reading as well. While the two teachers who hold the transactional theory of reading emphasized student engagement in a text and perceived themselves as a facilitator of the reading classroom, the other teachers holding the transmission beliefs focused extensively on textual information and viewed themselves as the leader of classroom activities and the arbiter of text interpretation.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

This final chapter presents a summary of findings from Chapter 5. This summary leads to four implications for teaching development programs and L2 reading instruction in the context of the Crystal Pond University. Limitations of this study and recommended directions for future research are discussed at the end of the chapter.

Conclusions

The purposes of this study were to examine teachers' beliefs about L2 reading, instructional practices in an L2 context, the influences of such beliefs on reading instruction, and teachers' perceptions of their role as a teacher of L2 reading. The participants were four Thai teachers who teach English (L2) at Crystal Pond University, a private university in Northern Thailand.

The study was guided by four research questions: (1) What conceptual beliefs do Thai university instructors hold about the reading process in an English-as-a-foreign-language context? (2) What instructional practices are applied by Thai university instructors who teach reading in an English-as-a-foreign-language context? (3) How do Thai university instructors' conceptual beliefs about the reading process influence their instructional practices in an English-as-a-foreign-language context?, and (4) How do Thai university instructors see their roles as teachers of reading in an English-as-a-foreign-language context? Transmission and transactional theories of reading were used in order to

frame the study and analyze findings. First, this study revealed that teachers at Crystal Pond University hold different conceptual beliefs about the reading process in an English-as-a-foreign-language context. Their beliefs depend extensively on their teaching experiences as well as their own English education.

Sasinee and Tantipat appear to hold transmission beliefs about the reading process. To them, L2 reading is a decoding/translation process (Gough, 1972; Samuels & Kamil, 1988). The other two, Araya and Chalatorn, hold transactional beliefs, perceiving that L2 reading is a meaning-construction process (Goodman, 2003; Rosenblatt, 2004).

This research pointed out that the current problem about teachers' unawareness of the changing trend of the reading concept (Bernhardt, 1991; Rumelhart, 2004; Straw & Sadowy, 1990, Nassaji, 2003) also occurs in Thailand. Insufficient exposure to world knowledge appears to be an important problem among the teachers of English reading in Crystal Pond University. None of the participants mentioned teacher professional training programs regarding the teaching and learning of L2 reading. According to the interviews, there is no teacher training which focus specifically on the current theories of reading in an L2 context or the teaching and learning of L2 reading. These teachers reported that their beliefs are influenced by their teaching experience and personal experience with English education when they were young. It could be concluded that teachers' insufficient exposure to the current theories of reading and the changing trends of L2 teaching and learning are the main obstacles for teacher development in the context of Crystal Pond University. In addition, a lack of knowledge prevents teachers from challenging their existing beliefs and opening their minds to accept the new concepts of reading. Second, two participants' instructional practices are text-driven while the other two are both text-

and reader-driven. However, neither group of participants exploits the teaching of reading strategies.

Two teachers of L2 reading at Crystal Pond University implemented the text-based approach in their reading instruction, emphasizing vocabulary and asking factual questions, though students' schemata are not counted as part of the reading instruction. The instruction of vocabulary did not emphasize vocabulary strategies, such as guessing words from the context or syntax clues, but usually included the translation of words, giving synonyms, and simplifying phrases. In addition, teaching reading comprehension was in a question-answer fashion, and almost all questions focused on literal information. Their English reading classes were similar to the skills-based model of reading instruction described by Richards and Rodgers (2001). First, the teachers often lexically and structurally simplified an article in a reading passage to match the learners' language competence. Second, in their classrooms, a list of vocabulary was selected from reading texts and taught apart from the reading context, and grammar was taught separately in order to facilitate the students' decoding process. Reading instruction in all pre-, during-, and post-reading steps was heavily text-driven and teacher-directed.

The other two participants' instructional practices were both text- and reader-driven, encouraging students to generate personal meaning of a text based on both textual information and students' schemata (e.g. prior knowledge, culture and customs, and religions). The teachers did not ask students to simply relate prior knowledge to any prediction about a text, but encouraged students to interpret a text in light of their existing knowledge, beliefs, and experiences. Classroom discussions were used as the main activity in almost every step of reading instruction (pre-, during-, and after-reading) in order to activate students' prior knowledge and encourage students to verify their

assumptions about a text with peers. Vocabulary was a focus only if it held important meanings in the text; therefore, the instruction of vocabulary was not separated into steps but occurred when students were delving into the meaning of a text. Grammar was not taught directly, but assimilated into a discussion of text meaning.

Neither group of teachers exploited the direct instruction of reading strategies. Teachers who taught AE 206 expected students to have learned all the reading strategies from lower reading courses, AE 203 and AE 204. However, teachers of AE 203 were concerned extensively with vocabulary so they tried to increase students' lexical knowledge and did not have time left to teach reading strategies. Though there is a course between AE 203 and AE 206, AE 204, it is impossible that students would be able to learn and practice reading strategies effectively within the duration of only one course.

Third, there is a link between the teachers' beliefs about L2 reading and instructional practices. The findings of this study concur with the results of previous studies which show that teachers' beliefs about the reading process have a considerable impact on their instructional practices (Deford, 1979; Farley, 1995; Kuzborska, 2011; Richardson et al., 1991). This study reveals that teachers of L2 reading at Crystal Pond University teach in accordance with their beliefs about L2 reading, which were formed by their direct experiences with L2 reading instruction when they were students as well as their L2 teaching experiences.

Teachers who perceive that L2 reading is a bottom-up and translation process did not include students' schemata as an important part of teaching, but focused on vocabulary, translation, and meaning at the word level as the foci of classroom discussion. In addition, these teachers implemented transmission pedagogy. Those who perceive reading as a transactional process believe that reading is a meaning-construction process

and that students' schemata is important. They encouraged students to interpret a text in the light of their personal experiences in all pre-, during-, and after-reading steps of instruction. They used classroom discussion as the main classroom activity to discuss and verify students' interpretation and insights.

Fourth, two teachers at the Crystal Pond University perceive that they control the L2 reading process for the students in their classroom and that they are the arbiter of meaning, while the other two perceive themselves as the facilitators of classroom activities in the meaning-construction process.

Both the interviews and classroom observations revealed that two teachers, Sasinee and Tantipat, at Crystal Pond University perceive reading as a passive act in which readers receive the information from the writer or the text. They passed on their beliefs of the passive roles of readers to their students. Since they perceive students as passive readers, they positioned themselves as the controller of the reading classroom and the arbiter of meaning in a text.

Though one of the teachers, Tantipat, mentioned that reading is active, she seemed to perceive the active role of L2 readers differently from transactional theorists (e.g., Goodman, 1994; Rosenblatt, 2004; Weaver, 2002). While Tantipat argues that the active role of readers focuses on the physical responses of readers, such as expressing opinions and participating in discussions, the active role of the reader in the transactional theory refers to the active involvement of the reader with print and meaning (Goodman, 1994), and the contribution of the readers' schemata to the meaning-construction process (Rosenblatt, 2004; Weaver, 2002).

The interviews and classroom observations also revealed that the other two teachers, Araya and Chalatorn, perceive themselves as the facilitators of classroom

activities and of the students' meaning-construction process. Concurring with the core concept of the transactional theory of reading, these two teachers explained that reading is active because readers draw on their past experiences in order to select the best interpretation from various alternatives occurring to them (Rosenblatt, 2004). In addition, the participants agree that reading is not a solitary act where a reader tries to uncover the single main idea hidden in a text. Therefore, a reader is not a "passive consumer of authoritative interpretations" (Faust, 1994, p. 25).

Because of these beliefs, Araya and Chalatorn position themselves as the facilitators. For example, in classroom discussions, these teachers encouraged students to connect their schemata with reading topics. Teachers' questions did not directly guide students to specific information or meaning, but urged students to develop insights from a whole text. They did not judge or correct students' interpretations; instead, they encouraged students to discuss their interpretations with peers. When there was a misunderstanding, they did not immediately correct it, but gave an opportunity for open discussion by posing questions about the misunderstood section and allowing students to discuss it. Araya and Chalatorn also implemented different instructional practices (e.g., small-group and whole-group discussions, as well as mind maps) to serve the different needs of students.

Implications

First, knowledge sharing among teachers of L2 reading and effective professional development are necessary for teachers of L2 reading in Crystal Pond University. The study revealed that not all teachers of L2 reading in Crystal Pond University hold the transmission view of reading; thus, collaborative culture, such as a discussion on teaching

methods and classroom materials can broaden teachers' perspectives about teaching and learning (Becker & Riel, 1999; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Wenzlaff & Wieseman, 2004).

If these teachers have an opportunity to share knowledge and teaching experiences, there is the possibility that the teachers who possess traditional view towards reading will reconsider their beliefs and adjust to the current mode. However, the findings indicate that teacher participants at Crystal Pond University did not seek to learn from each other and do not have opportunities to share their philosophies and instructional practices even though they taught the same course.

There should be opportunities for knowledge sharing among the teachers of L2 reading so that they may have a chance to explore their own and their peers' beliefs about L2 reading. This knowledge could result in a change in teachers' beliefs and practices and increased effectiveness in the teaching of L2 reading. According to the participants, there is a knowledge management (KM) workshop at the end of every semester in the English Department, but the content of the workshop focuses only on problems that have occurred during the semester and on solutions to these problems. There is no specific KM workshop where teachers freely talk about and exchange their personal beliefs and instructional practices with peers. In addition, high quality professional development opportunities need to be offered for the teachers of L2 reading in Crystal Pond University for them to achieve a solid grounding in both theory and instructional practice of teaching and learning of L2 reading.

Though some participants reported that they have joined English seminars and workshops related to the teaching and learning of English conducted by book publishers and the Ministry of Education, they have also claimed that pedagogies suggested by these workshops and seminars are not applicable to practice. Because an understanding of

alternative instructional practices alone cannot change teachers' classroom practices as long as teachers do not believe and understand the core theory grounded in such pedagogies (Almarza, 1996; Kuzborska, 2011; Richardson, 1994), professional development programs that encourage teachers to reconceptualize their personal theories of L2 reading are needed. If Crystal Pond University wants its teachers to move further from traditional modes of teaching, the university needs to provide them professional development opportunities, such as seminars or workshops, regarding current theories of L2 reading and universally best practices of L2 reading instruction. These academic experiences are not only to make teachers aware of alternative pedagogical approaches, but also to encourage them to evaluate new theories and pedagogical approaches.

“While workshops can implant interest in an innovation, teachers are likely to need further support at an individual level” (Mohamed, 2006, p.276). The university may further enrich the opportunities for the teachers of L2 reading to develop themselves by offering them study grants to participate in short courses or to pursue a doctoral degree focused on L2 reading. These teachers, when they graduate, will become a great source of knowledge about current theories and instructional practices of L2 reading, and act as mentors for future teachers in this field of language teaching.

Second, L2 reading instruction should pay attention to both text-based and reader-based knowledge, and explicit instruction of strategic reading is needed. Study findings suggest that instructional practices that are teacher-directed and based on teacher-selected workbook exercises need to be evaluated since they are not scientifically proved as an efficient L2 reading instructional practice (Block, Parris, Reed, Whiteley, & Cleveland, 2009). Teachers whose instructional practices focus too extensively on text-based features should be made aware that both readers' knowledge of text-based features (i.e., word

recognition, phonemic-graphemic features, and syntax) and extra-text-based features (i.e., intra-textual perception, prior knowledge, and metacognition strategies) contribute to the success of L2 reading (Bernhardt, 1991).

Block et al. (2009) suggest two phases of transactional learning theory that are applicable in interpreting the findings of this study: readers' internalization about a text and investigation of peers' multiple perspectives, which emphasizes both the reader and the text. First, teachers provide opportunities for students to read a text silently so they have an opportunity to transact meaning with the text. Second, students could have group discussions that would lead them to investigate other perspectives. This implementation of the transactional learning theory encourages students' use of schemata in order to comprehend the text and allows students to verify their personal understanding and adjust it when their interpretation seems wrong. In addition, questions asked in class should not target only surface information, but should include open-ended questions, which permit students to read and analyze the text in light of their schemata. Questions should not be asked line by line or paragraph by paragraph, but should be asked after students have finished reading the whole text focusing on the main idea and students' insights from the text. Teachers' concerns about specific vocabulary or phrases should be decreased while students' overall comprehension of a text should be a focus.

Moreover, it is suggested that reading instruction at Crystal Pond University needs to enhance both lower-levels of reading strategies (text-based) and higher-level processing (reader-based) skills in both AE 203 and AE 206 classrooms. L2 reading classes need to equip students with both lower- and higher-level processing skills including L2 vocabulary, phonemic awareness, semantic and syntactic knowledge, schemata, as well as cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies (Grabe, 1991; Koda, 2004; Nassaji, 2003).

In other words, reading instruction needs to be both text and reader driven (Brown et al., 1995). As both lower-levels of reading strategies and higher-level processing contribute to reading success (Goodman, 1994; Goodman & Goodman, 1981), teachers of reading at Crystal Pond University should consider both elements as foci of their reading instruction.

In addition, teachers of L2 reading at Crystal Pond University should adopt explicit teaching of comprehension reading strategies (Duke, 2001; Serafini, 2004) to use in their classrooms. The explicit teaching of comprehension strategies, such as summarizing, asking and answering questions, paraphrasing, and finding the main idea, is an effective way to help students overcome difficulties (Grabe, 2004; Graham & Bellert, 2004; Manset-Williamson & Nelson, 2005, U.S. Department of Education, 2014); therefore, teachers of L2 reading at Crystal Pond University should provide students with explicit instruction in comprehension strategies. Classroom instruction may include teachers' modeling and scaffolding in order to support students to engage with texts strategically. Students will gradually be less dependent on teachers and become a strategic reader.

Third, teachers should be given opportunities and be encouraged to examine their own and peers' beliefs about L2 reading and the influences of such beliefs on their instructional practices. The participants revealed that the English Department at Crystal Pond University has tried to encourage teachers to replace the traditional pedagogy of L2 reading (e.g., translation and teacher-direction) to more current instruction pedagogies (e.g., cooperative learning and student-centeredness). Findings of this study suggest that school teachers should be reminded that changes in L2 instructional practices are ineffective and inconsistent if they are introduced without changes in teachers' perceptions about the reading process (Richardson et al., 1991).

However, the beliefs teachers hold about reading may not be easily changed through suggestions from supervisors, publications, or peers (Tidwell & Mitchell, 1994). Thus, it is important for the English Department in Crystal Pond University to provide opportunities and encourage teachers of L2 reading to explore their peers' beliefs about L2 reading before reexamining their personal beliefs about L2 reading as well as the influences of such beliefs on their instructional practices. The English Department may encourage teachers to take turns visiting and observing each other's reading classrooms. Classroom observations need to be carried out often enough until an observer understands their peers' theoretical perspectives of L2 reading that underpin their instructional practices. After that, these teachers of L2 reading should have opportunities to discuss the differences and similarities between their beliefs about L2 reading and the influences of such beliefs on students. Such discussions among teachers of L2 reading will facilitate an exchange of their beliefs about L2 and effective L2 instructional practices. In addition, discussions should be based on scientific evidence such as current research regarding the L2 reading process and the teaching and learning of L2. Discussions among teachers of L2 reading should continue the whole semester.

Fourth, classroom visits should be conducted among teachers of L2 reading at Crystal Pond University. In the context of Crystal Pond University where teachers receive little pressure from the university and have freedom to implement any teaching methods, teachers' perceptions on the teacher role become one of the most influential factors guiding instructional practices and classroom management. If university administrators would like teachers to adopt new ideas and instructional practices such as the learner-centered teaching, they have to ensure that their teachers' perceptions on the teacher role correspond to theories underpinning those desired pedagogical practices.

Because “encouraging teachers to reflect on their existing beliefs and behaviors could help them become more receptive to alternative perspectives” (Kuzborska, 2011, p.102), teachers who teach L2 reading at Crystal Pond University should visit other teachers’ reading classrooms. Classroom visits will allow these teachers to observe how other teachers position themselves in their classrooms. Their peers’ classrooms may reflect their own beliefs and instructional practices as well as the influences of such beliefs and practices on students’ learning and reading processes. The success and failures of peers will encourage the teachers to reconsider their own perceptions of the teacher’s role. Teachers’ awareness of their personal perceptions and their influences on L2 teaching and learning will lead to a consistent attempt to change or modify their instructional practices.

Last but not least, there is a need for consideration of cultural influences in teachers’ perceptions and knowledge base because it may be cultural factors that prevent teachers from engaging learners as collaborators in a transactional model of reading instruction. Educational policy makers or school administrators should carefully consider the following two salient characteristics of Thai culture: Thai hierarchical status within the society and Thai tendencies for quietness or shyness. Findings, first, suggest that the perception that *teachers know best* dominates two teachers’ beliefs, and such belief appears to lead them to the transmission mode of teaching. In addition, findings reveal that students’ quietness and shyness may be another challenge for teachers to implement the transactional model in their reading classroom. Classroom observations show that when students were very quiet, some teachers decided to take the teacher-centered role in order to avoid the *dead air*, or the quiet period. The findings suggest that Thai culture appears to have an enormous impact on Thai teaching and learning practices. Policy

makers and school administrators need to consider such cultural issues before promoting a change in instructional practices from Thai teachers.

Limitations and Recommended Directions for Future Study

Because this study was conducted under a limited budget and time period, there are four limitations regarding its research design and findings. The following paragraphs delineate these limitations and include suggestions for future research on teachers' beliefs about the L2 reading process.

First, this study included only teachers as participants. Thus, it is questionable how teachers' beliefs about L2 reading affect students' beliefs and their reading process. Future research may be conducted to address this question.

Second, because the study does not focus on students, it does not provide the information regarding the effectiveness of each approach- transmission or transactional. Thus, the present study is not able to suggest which approach should be applied to reading classrooms in Thai universities. The result of the study which was based only on the analysis of teachers' beliefs and practices does not give a concrete discussion on the effects the study on reading instruction. Future research may include assessment of students as participants in order to reveal which approach is more effective in the Thai context.

Third, because the four teachers do not teach the same reading course, teachers' expectations of their reading courses and the differences of students' level of English proficiency might affect teachers' expectations and instructional practices to some extent. Therefore, it is suggested that future study include participants who teach the same reading

courses so that findings of the research would not be influenced by teachers' expectations and levels of students' L2 proficiency.

Fourth, this study focuses only on the beliefs of teachers who taught foundational L2 reading courses; thus, it is also important to consider how Thai teachers who teach L2 literature perceive the L2 reading process and how their beliefs impact their L2 literature classrooms where interpretations of literary texts should involve readers' biases, feelings, prior knowledge, culture, etc. It would also be interesting to investigate whether teachers of L2 fundamental reading and L2 literature share similar or have different beliefs about L2 reading, as well as to find out how students adjust their thinking and reading process to meet teachers' expectations in fundamental reading and L2 literature courses.

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APPENDIX A
CONSENT FORM

CONSENT FORM

I agree to participate in the research project titled “Exploring Thai university instructors' conceptual beliefs about reading and their influences on instructional practices” being conducted by Patchara Boonteerarak, a doctoral student at Northern Illinois University. I have been informed that the purpose of the study is to explore teachers' beliefs about reading and how such beliefs may guide instructional practices in English reading comprehension classrooms.

I understand that if I agree to participate in this study, I will be asked to do the following: answer questions in approximately six to eight interview sessions (45-60 minutes); be observed while teaching in English reading comprehension classrooms (five to seven 90-minute classroom sessions); and provide classroom materials (texts, exercises, quizzes, and exams).

I am aware that my participation is voluntary and may be withdrawn at any time without penalty or prejudice, and that if I have any additional questions concerning this study, I may contact Patchara Boonteerarak, (66-53-243-177) and, Dr. Mayra C. Daniel, (1-815-753-8379). I understand that if I wish further information regarding my rights as a research subject, I may contact the Office of Research Compliance at Northern Illinois University at (815) 753-8588.

I understand that this study will offer insights into Thai instructors' beliefs about the reading process and pedagogical preferences, and rationales behind their instructional practices. The results of the study will help improve teacher education and professional development programs in Thailand. The results of the study may help encourage me to re-examine my personal beliefs about reading and the influence these beliefs have on my classroom instruction.

Regarding potential discomforts, I have been informed that during this study, I could feel uncomfortable to share personal beliefs about reading which are different from organizational norms and to be observed in classrooms. However, I understand that all information gathered during this experiment will be kept confidential by being stored on password protected laptop. Audio recordings will be erased after being transcribed, and video recordings will be destroyed after the researcher defends her dissertation. A pseudonym will be used instead of my real name, and findings of the study will not be shared with any third parties. I also have been informed that the reporting and analysis of the data will only be presented in terms of aggregate data and general patterns for which it does not identify a certain piece of data with one specific individual.

I realize that Northern Illinois University policy does not provide for compensation for, nor does the University carry insurance to cover injury or illness incurred as a result of participation in University sponsored research projects.

I understand that my consent to participate in this project does not constitute a waiver of any legal rights or redress I might have as a result of my participation, and I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent form.

 Signature of Subject

Date

 Agreed to be audio-taped

Date

APPENDIX B

PRE-OBSERVATINO INTERVIEW GUIDE

The Pre-Observation Interview Guide (Translated Version)

Part I: Instructors' Theoretical Beliefs about the Reading Process

1. Can you please tell me about yourself? What reading classes are you teaching? What do you think I should know about you?
2. In your opinion, what is reading? How would you define reading?
3. In your opinion, what is the best metaphor for reading?
4. How do you define reading comprehension?
5. What are the ultimate goals of reading?
6. What do you think might facilitate or hinder reading comprehension?
7. What does it mean to be a good reader? What are characteristics of good readers?

Part II: Instructional Practices in English Reading Classes

8. Can you please describe your reading class on a typical day?
9. When you are planning for a reading lesson, what are your concerns?
10. What are your concerns about students in your English reading class?
11. If you were to serve as a mentor for a new English reading instructor at your university, what would be your suggestions for this individual?
12. In the teaching of reading, what do you consider to be your successes and failures?
13. What are the ultimate goals of your English reading instruction?

(Thai Version)

แบบสัมภาษณ์

ตอนที่ 1 ความเชื่อเกี่ยวกับกระบวนการอ่าน

1. กรุณาแนะนำตนเอง รวมถึงวิชาการอ่านที่คุณสอน
2. ในความคิดเห็นของคุณ “การอ่าน” หมายความว่าอย่างไร
3. คุณคิดว่า “การอ่าน” เปรียบเสมือนกับอะไร เหตุใดจึงคิดเช่นนั้น
4. การอ่านเพื่อความเข้าใจในทัศนคติของคุณ เป็นอย่างไร
5. ในความคิดเห็นของคุณอะไรคือวัตถุประสงค์สำคัญของการอ่าน
6. ปัจจัยใดที่ช่วยส่งเสริมการอ่านเพื่อความเข้าใจ และปัจจัยใดที่จะเป็นอุปสรรคในการอ่านเพื่อความเข้าใจ
7. ในทัศนคติของคุณการเป็นผู้อ่านที่ดีเป็นอย่างไร และผู้อ่านที่ดีควรมีคุณลักษณะอย่างไร

ตอนที่ 2 การเรียนการสอนการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษ

8. ห้องเรียนการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษของคุณเป็นอย่างไร กรุณาอธิบายกิจกรรมและบรรยากาศโดยทั่วไป
9. ขณะที่คุณวางแผนการสอนการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษ คุณมักจะคำนึงถึงสิ่งใดเป็นสิ่งสำคัญ
10. ขณะที่คุณสอนการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษ สิ่งใดที่คุณมักจะกังวลใจเกี่ยวกับนักศึกษา
11. ถ้าคุณต้องเป็นที่ปรึกษาของอาจารย์ฝึกหัดที่จะต้องสอน การอ่านภาษาอังกฤษในมหาวิทยาลัยของคุณ คุณจะแนะนำอาจารย์ท่านนั้นในเรื่องอะไร และแนะนำอย่างไร
12. อะไรที่เป็นครุชนิ่งซึ่งว่าคุณประสบความสำเร็จ หรือ สัมเหลว ในการสอนการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษ
13. เป้าหมายสูงสุดในการสอนการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษของคุณคืออะไร

APPENDIX C

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION GUIDE

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION GUIDE

Instructor:

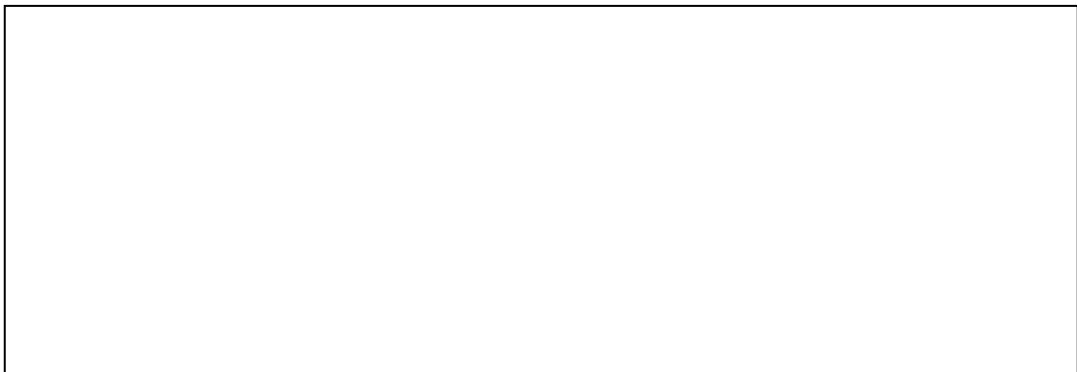
Course Title:

Time:

Lesson:

Classroom Settings

Picture



Notes: _____

Observer's comments:

| Observed classroom behaviors/activities | Descriptive Fieldnotes | Reflective Fieldnotes (Observer's comments) |
|---|------------------------|---|
| Pre-Reading Activity | | |
| While-Reading Activity | | |
| Post-Reading Activity | | |
| Classroom Interaction | | |
| Vocabulary Instruction | | |

| Observed classroom behaviors/activities | Descriptive Fieldnotes | Reflective Fieldnotes (Observer's comments) |
|--|------------------------|---|
| Types of Questions Used by the Instructor | | |
| Instructor's Feedback | | |
| Instructor's Expectation for Students' Reader Role | | |
| Instructor's Role | | |
| Classroom Environment | | |