The Effects of Using Photo Story for Developing Reading Skills at Loei Rajabhat University

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Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the effects of using a teaching technique, based on Photo Story, on student acquisition of reading skills at Loei Rajabhat University, Thailand. The quasi-experimental research design was implemented as a three-credit reading course, with three hours of instruction per week, during the first semester of 2013. Forty-six English major students participated in this study, with twenty-one in an experimental group and twenty-five in a control group. The study employed pre and post tests comparisons. The experimental group received instructional interventions, based on using Photo Story, while the control group attended conventional lectures. Both groups were administered tests to measure their English reading proficiency, their motivation, reading attitudes, and in the case of the experimental group, their overall satisfaction of the interventions administered was also measured. Test results for reading proficiency indicated that the Photo Story based instructional technique was not a statistically significant improvement over conventional lectures. However, the development of reading skills within each group was comparable. Concerning motivation and attitudes, there were also no statistically significant differences between the two groups. Finally, regarding satisfaction of the interventions, the experimental group was satisfied with the Photo Story instructional technique.

Keywords: Photo Story, Reading Skills, Reading Proficiency

Introduction

English reading competence is a difficult skill for second language learners or L2 learners because it requires metacognition, which is the ability for learners to orchestrate their own learning in order to help them make sense of texts. Second language learner is termed herein as being any language learned in addition to one’s mother tongues, especially in the context of second language acquisition. “Second” can refer to any language that is learned subsequent to the mother tongue and also it can refer to the learning of a third or fourth language (Kobayashi and Rinnert, 1992). In this context of reading competence in English, L2 learners need to have syntactic knowledge, morphological knowledge, socio-cultural knowledge and general world knowledge, without which, their reading skills will be impeded. In Thailand, reading skills are taught nationwide in primary and secondary school. After which, tertiary education provides various reading courses such as Reading for Comprehension, General Reading in English, and Reading for Specific Purposes. English major students in particular are required to develop a higher level of competence in critical and advanced reading courses. However, when teaching these courses, lecturers often find that many learners are unable to grasp the main idea of simple paragraphs, or to identify the important details contained. Thus the teaching of reading skills is evidently still problematic in Thai classrooms. It is possible that student cultural backgrounds may be at fault here, and yet it may equally be possible that the problem lies with English language instructors themselves, who must be responsible for developing their own teaching techniques. This research was an investigation into a new instructional technique, based on using Photo Story, in order to
The Effects of Using Photo Story for Developing Reading Skills at Loei Rajabhat University

identify what relationships lie between this method as an instructional technique and student motivation, attitudes, and the acquisition of reading skills, with a view to identifying a potentially innovative and new response to the needs of today’s EFL learners.

Rationale

According to Areeluck Meejang, Naresuan University, there were about 203 research projects undertaken in the field of reading skills from 1994-2004. To become a proficient reader, the EFL learner must be exposed to a variety of texts and must develop various strategies, as well as metacognitive awareness. However, today in Thailand, university students not only have very limited exposure to English texts, but also to Thai textbooks as well. A survey by Matichon Newspaper in 2009 showed that the average Thai reads only about 5 books per year compared to 40-60 books per year for Singapore and Vietnam. If this situation persists then development in Thailand is likely to lag behind its neighbors in a variety of fields. Therefore, it is high time that this issue was placed at the forefront of educational development. After a literature review, the researcher collated findings which suggested that a cooperative learning approach can be very influential in the language classroom, and that motivation also plays a vital role in determining attitudes. Research also showed that these combined factors will tend to influence the degree of effort that learners are willing to make in order to acquire a second language. In the search for a more effective teaching technique, these findings prompted the researcher to focus on cooperative learning approaches, as well as highlighting the importance of monitoring any effects on participant motivation. Previous research has also shown that learners tend to accommodate new technology very quickly. Photo Story is an innovative computer based training approach, which the researcher hoped might help to stimulate learners, improving their motivation and helping them to develop more positive attitudes. The researcher therefore designed a new learner-centered English reading course, based on using the Photo Story computer program as an instructional technique, whereby students were given the opportunity to set their own learning goals. The effectiveness of this course then became the subject of this quasi-experimental research study.

Four research questions represent the foci of this study:

1. Does the Photo Story instructional technique result in an improvement in reading comprehension?
2. Does the Photo Story instructional technique result in an improvement in motivation?
3. Does the Photo Story instructional technique result in a positive attitude adjustment?
4. Are learners satisfied with the Photo Story instructional technique?

Literature Review

Reading Strategies and Processes

Reading is a thinking process which requires readers to draw on their experience of the world and their lives, as well as their knowledge of how language works, in order to help them make meaning from the print on
the page. The meaning does not lie in the words themselves; we give meaning to words when we use our knowledge to process them. Hedge (2000) explains six types of knowledge that help learners make sense of texts. These are syntactic knowledge, morphological knowledge, general world knowledge, socio-knowledge, topic knowledge, and genre knowledge. Syntactic knowledge is knowledge of syntax that might suggest functions of the word, for example, whether a word is a noun or a verb. Learners can guess the base words, which words are derived from, by using morphological knowledge. General world knowledge helps learners to guess the meaning of words from knowledge of the field that the word relates. Socio-knowledge helps in a similar way, by interpreting the meaning of words from different cultural backgrounds. Topic knowledge helps suggest possible meanings of words from the related context, for example, in a text about rural life, topic knowledge might suggest the possibilities for the father’s occupation. Finally, genre knowledge might help the learner realize, for example, if they know that the text is from a science fantasy novel, that the story is set in the future. The fore mentioned types of knowledge may furthermore be categorized into 2 main groups, linguistic or syntactic knowledge, and schematic knowledge. Syntactic and morphological knowledge are included in the former, whereas general knowledge, socio-cultural knowledge, topic knowledge, and genre knowledge are included in the latter. These two groups also correspond with two well-known reading processes, known as top-down and bottom-up. Top-down explains the reading process whereby readers use general and background knowledge to help make sense of the text, whereas bottom-up process explains how readers use linguistic knowledge (e.g. syntactic, morphological knowledge) to do the same.

Forrestal (1987) describes reading strategies which readers employ in order to guide their comprehension and interpretation of texts. The first of these is called predicting, whereby readers read sufficiently large chunks of text in order to correctly interpret the meaning as they read. Readers use their knowledge of language and what they know about the topic in order to make predictions; but sometimes their predictions are wrong, and so they must constantly confirm and check their understanding. The second strategy described by Forrestal splits up reading into a process with various stages. The first stage is pre-reading. This is the setting of reading goals prior to the actual task of reading. According to Forrestal, readers should write out their reading goals along with anything they already know about the subject of the text, what they think or feel about it, and should discuss this with a friend. The next stage is the first-pass reading of the text. This should provide the reader with an overview of the text itself, as well as any feelings he or she might have about it. During this stage, the reader should try to answer his or her questions, which were set during the pre-reading stage. As he or she reads, the reader must also ask him or herself what the main ideas represented in the text are. The reader should try to make sense of the text, but should also keep on reading, even when he or she does not understand parts of it. The next stage is reflecting, which is where the reader must examine whether the text has been appropriate for what he or she wanted to know, or if he or she still needs to find answers elsewhere. The reader must ask him or herself what he or she has understood so far by assessing three things. These are knowledge, i.e. what new knowledge has the reader gained? Reaction, i.e. does the reader agree with what he or she has read? And feelings, i.e. did the reader enjoy the text? Learners should discuss their ideas and feeling about texts with a partner or group. The next stage is to re-read the text, which gives the learner the opportunity to expand on his or her understanding.
of the text, and to concentrate on any areas that he or she is still not clear about. As the reader re-reads
the text, he or she should think about whether the text is making more sense, and which parts he or she
still does not understand. The reader should ask him or herself if the main ideas in the text are becoming
clearer. Re-reading should be undertaken at a quick but comfortable pace, and can be repeated if time
allows. The reader should keep his or her questions in mind, and should highlight any parts which he or
she thinks are important, or that he or she does not understand. The next stage is called applying and
responding, which entails an assessment of what effects the text has had on the reader. The reader should
assess how the text fits in with other texts that he or she has read. If the text is for an individual or public
audience, and whether he or she responded to the text as the writer had intended. The reader should ask
him or herself how the text made him or her feel. After checking to find out if that the text has answered
all of his or her reading goals, the reader should write out a summary of what he or she has read. The last
stage is to perform an evaluation, whereby the reader should consider how well he or she has participated in
the learning experience, if the experience was enjoyable, and if not, if it is the reader or the writer who is at
fault. Finally, the learner should close the learning activity by sharing his or her findings and views with a
partner, teacher, or group. If possible, the reader should also access his or her performance during the entire
process from written notes.

The Co-operative Learning Approach and the Photo Story (CBI)

Co-operative learning is an instruction method whereby learners collaborate in small groups to maximize
each other’s learning, and to achieve mutual goals. It has been among the most popular teaching methods,
and has been shown to have positive effects on various outcomes (Johnson and Johnson, 2002). Instruction
consists of techniques that require positive interdependence among learners through both competitive and
cooperative interactions. Several studies have shown the effectiveness of such co-operative learning techniques
with university students in EFL reading classes. Using co-operative learning techniques in English, reading
instruction can foster opportunities for students to interact with peers and encourage rapid development
of reading comprehension with lower levels of learners anxiety (Gillie and Ashman, 2000). Integration of
interactive exercises and appropriate reading content is a responsibility that the instructor must undertake.
Careful consideration must also be given to deciding which learners should collaborate with each other, as
well as how to manage the classroom during co-operative activities. A careful balance must be maintained
between focus on reading content and co-operative skill building. In this paper, the researcher employs a
computer program called Photo Story, together with a co-operative learning method in order to build positive
interdependence, face-to-face interaction, social/interpersonal skills, group processing, and the opportunity
for equal success, all of which are intended to encourage students as they create a reading product called a
Photo Story.

The Photo Story program enables learners to share knowledge with each other as they build up a reading
product, and it is hoped that this will provide additional encouragement for the learners as they carry out
their learning activities. The project is not only intended to fuel learner passion in reading, but also introduces
them to project co-working. Beyond that, Photo Story incorporates multimodal techniques together with
learner visualization in order to make the resultant reading products more meaningful to the learner.

Photo Story is a free software application, which allows users to create visual stories from their own digital photos. The idea is to convey a unified story through a set of photographs and then publish that story as a product. Photo Story is owned by Microsoft Corporation and runs on Microsoft Windows. It can be downloaded and used for free from the Microsoft Download website by anyone with a licensed copy of Microsoft Windows.

**Motivation in the Language Classroom: Types of Motivation and Improving Language Skills**

Every student is interested on something. The important task for the teacher is to be able to identify these interests and to incorporate them into instructional procedures. When students do what they are interested in, they pay close attention and are able to accomplish the tasks that are set. Attention and motivation are closely related in a number of ways, and both have a primary effect on learning processes. Both attention and motivation influence the amount of productive time that the learner spends on a task. Ellis (1997: 75-76) claims that motivation for second language acquisition is influenced by attitudes and affective states, which play a role in determining the degree of productive effort that L2 learners are willing to commit. He identified four types of motivation; these are instrumental motivation, integrative motivation, resultative motivation, and intrinsic motivation. And of these four, instrumental motivation seems to play the most significant role. Instrumental motivation is when learners make an effort to learn L2 for some functional purpose, such as to pass a test, or to get a better job. Integrative motivation is when learners choose to learn a particular L2 because they are interested in the people and culture represented by the target language. Resultative motivation refers to additional motivation that arises as the learner experiences success in L2 language acquisition, although this factor can in some instances also result in a drop of motivation instead of an increase. Finally, intrinsic motivation is motivation that arises as a result of curiosity, which can ebb and flow as a result of other factors such as learner interests and the extent to which the learner feels personally involved in learning activities.

Motivation is a highly complex phenomenon, and the fore mentioned types of motivation should be seen as complementary rather than distinct and oppositional. That is to say, L2 learners can simultaneously derive their sum total motivation from any combination of the fore mentioned types. Motivation is also dynamic; it is not something that a learner has or does not have, but rather something that varies from one moment to the next.

**Methodology**

This section presents information on the research design, research tools, and the treatment, which were used in this study. This study used a mixed-method approach by combining surveys and a quasi-experimental methodology. A summary of data is presented in Table 1.
Table 1 Summary of data collection strategies

| Phase          | Activities                      | Participants                  | Data collection strategy |
|----------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Learners Questionnaires | Close-ended survey on need analysis | 361 second year students     | Surveys                  |
| 2. Research groups     | 2.1 Reading proficiency          | an experimental group         | Survey/pre-tests         |
|                       | 2.2 Motivation surveys/Reading attitudes | a control group               |                          |
| 3. Intervention        | 3.1 Using Photo Story            | an experimental group         | Products/tests           |
|                       | 3.2 Using Conventional Lectures  | a control group               |                          |
| 4. Comparison          | 4.1 Reading proficiency          | both groups                   | Surveys/post-tests       |
|                       | 4.2 Motivation surveys           | both groups                   |                          |
|                       | 4.3 Reading attitudes            | both groups                   |                          |
|                       | 4.4 Satisfaction of the intervention | experimental group only     |                          |

Phase 1: Learner Questionnaire

The first tool used in this study was a questionnaire designed to measure attitudes toward learning English. The population was comprised of sophomore students at Loei Rajabhat University. Information about the purpose and ethical concerns of the research were provided in the introduction to the questionnaire. Analysis of the questionnaire indicated that learner attitudes were detrimental to the acquisition of a language skill known as social concerns, and also detrimental to the acquisition of reading skills.

Phase 2: Research Groups

This quasi-experimental research study was implemented in a sophomore general reading course during the first semester of 2013. This is a three credit half-semester course. The sample group comprised of forty six sophomore students who had registered to take the general reading course, with the researcher as their instructor. These students were split into two groups, an experimental group (n=21), and a control group (n=25). The experimental group was to receive instruction based on the Photo Story technique, whilst the control group was to receive their instruction using conventional lectures. Both teaching techniques (the Photo Story technique and the conventional lecture technique) employed the same cooperative learning aspects, the same tests, the same instructor, and the same study materials. The only difference between how the two groups were treated was in using the Photo Story software program verses conventional lectures. In this phase, pre-tests were administered to both groups in order to measure their reading proficiency prior to administering any treatments. Quizzes were provided to check learner reading outcomes. The experimental design for the study is shown in Table 2.

X1: The experimental group received interventions based on an instructional technique including cooperative learning methods and using the Photo Story software application.
Table 2  Experimental design for the study

| Group               | Instructional method                      | Pre-test | Treatment | Post-test |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Experimental group  | Cooperative learning using Photo Story    | O₁       | X₁        | O₃        |
| Control group       | Cooperative learning using conventional lectures | O₂       | X₂        | O₄        |

X₂: The control group received interventions based on an instructional technique including cooperative learning methods, but otherwise based on conventional lectures.

O₁ and O₂: Pre-tests included a reading proficiency test and a motivation survey.

O₃ and O₄: Post-tests included the reading proficiency test, the motivation survey, a reading attitudes survey, and a perceptions survey.

O₃ only: The experimental group also took a survey to measure their satisfaction with the Photo Story instructional technique.

**Phase 3: Intervention**

Cooperative Learning Instruction with Photo Story

The experimental group received cooperative learning instruction, using Photo Story. The students were sorted into heterogeneous groups of three, and in the first week of the intervention, the researcher spent 10-15 minutes every week guiding and assessing the experimental group in their exposure to the Photo Story software application. This was done through a process of explanations and discussions. Eight interventions in the form of guided Photo Story based activities took place over eight weeks. The first week activity included a classroom discussion, with a demonstration of how to access the free Photo Story program from the internet. The week 2 activity comprised of instruction on reading comprehension, finding the main idea of paragraphs, and designing articles using Photo Story. After that, weeks 3-8 were co-working activities based around the students designing and presenting their own reading products. The researcher acted as a facilitator during each intervention by helping to clarify confusing texts, resolving misunderstandings, offering general feedback, and facilitating in group discussions. At the end of the eight interventions, students were examined both individually and in their groups using a reading proficiency quiz, which was developed by the researcher.

Cooperative Learning Instruction using the Conventional Lecture Method

The control group received cooperative learning instruction using conventional classroom lectures. This was a mixed approach, with both teacher-centered and learner-centered activities. The students were asked to preview a text for each unit prior to classroom instruction, in which the instructor explained the text, paragraph by paragraph, with focus on semantics. The instructor maintained interaction with learners by asking questions and leading classroom discussions. At the end of each unit the students took tests
individually.

Instrumentation

The reading proficiency test was included in both pre-tests and post-tests for both groups, in order to measure reading skill acquisition. This test contained 40 multiple choices items about identifying main ideas in tests. These test items were developed by another researcher, but were examined to find their content validity before being used in this research.

Phase 4: Comparison

The reading proficiency test was once again administered at the end of the treatment in order to determine the outcome from the two instructional techniques. Along with the reading attitudes test, and the perceptions test, the motivation questionnaire was also re-administered, in order that any changes in motivation after the intervention could be analyzed. Finally, a satisfaction survey was administered to the experimental group in order to gain feedback about their reaction to the Photo Story based instructional technique.

Results

Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test Results for Reading Skills

An analysis of reading proficiency differences within the two groups, before and after treatments, is presented in tables 3 and 4. The reading proficiency difference between the two groups is presented in table 5. Post-test results for the experimental group were higher than pre-test results with a statistical significance of 0.01. Post-test results for the control group were higher than pre-test results with a statistical significance of 0.01. There was no statistically significant difference between the two groups.

| Tests    | N | Score | X  | ∑ D  | ∑ D²   | t-test |
|----------|---|-------|----|------|--------|-------|
| Pre-test | 21| 40    | 23 | 99   | 713    | 6.156** |
| Post-test| 21| 40    | 27.71 | 99 | 713    | 6.156** |

Comparison of Motivation Surveys before and after the Intervention

An analysis on the motivation survey between the two groups is shown in table 6. Motivation levels were comparable across pre-test and post-test, and across both groups. The experimental group showed strong agreement with the following items, in both the pre-test and post-test:
Table 4  Pre-test and Post-test Differences in the Control Group  
(Independent Samples T-test)

| Tests  | N  | Score | X   | ∑ D | ∑ D^2 | t-test |
|--------|----|-------|-----|-----|-------|--------|
| Pre-test | 25 | 40    | 24.52 | 101 | 578   | 7.568** |
| Post-test | 25 | 40    | 28.56 |     |       |        |

**p < 0.01

Table 5  Comparison the Two Groups after Treatment  
(Independent Samples T-test)

| Group         | X     | S^2   | n   | t-test |
|---------------|-------|-------|-----|--------|
| Experimental  | 27.71 | 1.615 | 21  | 0.999** |
| Control       | 28.56 | 6.255 | 25  |        |

**p < 0.01

**Item** 2: ‘I believe having good English skills can help me to get ahead in life.’

**Item** 7: ‘I believe English is the most important language next to Thai.’

**Item** 8: ‘English is important for me.’

The experimental group showed strong disagreement with the following items, in both the pre-test and post-test:

**Item** 10: ‘To avoid being last in class, I work hard in learning English.’

**Item** 20: ‘The university expects me to work hard in learning English.’

The control group showed strong agreement with the following items, in both the pre-test and post-test:

**Item** 2: ‘I believe having good English skills can help me to get ahead in life.’

**Item** 8: ‘English is important for me.’

**Item** 17: ‘I believe having good English skills is crucial to success in life.’

The control group showed strong disagreement for the following item, in both the pre-test and post-test:

**Item** 26: ‘My teacher praises me in class, so I work in my English.’

**Comparison of Post-test Reading Attitudes**

An analysis of post-test reading attitudes between the two groups is shown below in table 7. After the treatment, both groups placed high importance on reading attitudes, both in terms of reader behavior and essence of reading. Both the experimental and control group showed weak agreement for item 50 (‘I read a book or a text to feed my brain minimally an hour a day.’)
### Table 6  Comparison of the Motivation Surveys

| Survey             | Round               | Pre-test | Post-test |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------|-----------|
|                    |                     | \( \bar{X} = 4.25, \text{S.D} = 0.30 \) | \( \bar{X} = 4.21, \text{S.D} = 0.22 \) |
| Experimental N = 21| Item with high scores 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 29 | Item with high scores 2, 7, 8, 17, 27 |
| Group              | Item with low scores 10, 24 | Item with low scores 10, 20 |
| Control N = 25     | \( \bar{X} = 4.26, \text{S.D} = 0.27 \) | \( \bar{X} = 4.24, \text{S.D} = 0.28 \) |
|                    | Item with high scores 2, 8, 6, 17, 29 | Item with high scores 2, 8, 9, 17, 25 |
|                    | Item with low scores 10, 26 | Item with low scores 11, 26 |

### Table 7  Comparison of Post-test Reading Attitudes

| Survey             | Round               | Reader behavior | Essence of reading |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
|                    |                     | \( \bar{X} = 3.54, \text{S.D} = 0.22 \) | \( \bar{X} = 3.97, \text{S.D} = 0.35 \) |
| Experimental N = 21| Item with high scores 40, 41, 43 | Item with high scores 45, 47, 48 |
| Group              | Item with low scores 38 | Item with low scores 50 |
| Control N = 25     | \( \bar{X} = 3.46, \text{S.D} = 0.28 \) | \( \bar{X} = 3.87, \text{S.D} = 0.44 \) |
|                    | Item with high scores 37, 38, 42 | Item with high scores 47, 48, 49 |
|                    | Item with low scores 39 | Item with low scores 50 |

### Satisfaction with the Photo Story Based Instructional Technique

| Questionnaire Item                                      | X    | S.D. | interpretation |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------|------|----------------|
| 1. The Photo Story program is interesting               | 3.93 | 0.54 | Agree          |
| 2. The Photo Story program is useful                     | 4.32 | 0.61 | Agree          |
| 3. The Photo Story is a complicated online program      | 2.28 | 0.60 | Disagree       |
| 4. The Photo Story program is appropriate for English language instruction | 3.89 | 0.63 | Agree          |
| 5. After working on the Photo Story program, my English language improves | 3.96 | 0.64 | Agree          |
| 6. Being able to implement the knowledge from the Photo Story for self-development | 4.07 | 0.54 | Agree          |
| 7. Being able to transfer knowledge of the Photo Story to other people | 4.18 | 0.72 | Agree          |

Satisfaction with the Photo Story instructional technique is presented in table 8. The results show that the students strongly agreed with item 2 (‘The photo Story program is useful’), and item 7 (‘Being able to
transfer knowledge of the Photo Story to other people’). However, they disagreed with item 3 (‘The photo story is a complicated online program’), which can be interpreted as meaning that the program is in fact simple to use.

Conclusions and Discussion

Conclusion

In answer to the research questions in Section 1:

1. This quasi-experimental research study found no difference between the experimental and control groups with regards to the acquisition of reading skills. However, post-test results showed an improvement from pre-test results for both groups, with a statistical significance of 0.01.

2. Surveys showed no differences in motivation between pre-test and post-test both within and between each of the groups.

3. After the intervention, neither group showed any difference regarding reading attitudes (reader behavior and essence in reading), although the attitude of both groups was a positive one.

4. The experimental group was satisfied with using Photo Story as an instructional technique.

Discussion

As regards the lack of difference between the two groups in the acquisition of reading skills, this could be because there was an insufficient quantity of participants in each group. In addition, it is very easy for an instructor to manipulate interventions through teaching plans, and this is something that the instructor, in the role of researcher, must pay close attention to. And it is uncertain to what extent this factor might have skewed the results of the research. However, both groups do show an improvement between pre-test and post-test results, whether by using the Photo Story as an instructional technique or not. Cooperative instruction techniques were used in both groups, whereby both teachers and learners successfully integrated interactive exercises and co-operative activities. The control group expressed that they were indifferent as to whether or not they would use the Photo Story program.

Participants from both groups showed no difference in terms of motivation, both in the pre-test and the post-test. The experimental group strongly agreed in both the pre-test and the post-test with items 2, 3, and 8 (‘I believe having good English skills can help me to get ahead in life.’, ‘I believe English is the most important language next to Thai.’, and ‘English is important for me.’). This may be interpreted as showing that they comprehend and perceive the importance of the English language. Thus being the reason why they confirmed the importance of English as a target language for L2 acquisition. In addition, in both pre-tests and post-tests, participants in both groups disagreed with item 10 (‘I avoid being last in the class and work hard in learning English.’). This may be interpreted as showing that the learners have an intrinsic motivation to learn English, and are less affected by other kinds of motivation. According to Ellis (1997), learners will
do best when there is an arousal of curiosity, which will ebb and flow as a result of learner interests. Thus, it should be the job of English instructors to find ways to encourage intrinsic motivation.

In addition, the control group strongly agreed in both pre-tests and post-tests that items 2, 8, and 17 (‘I believe having good English skills can help me to get ahead in life.’, ‘English is important for me.’, and ‘I believe having good English skills is crucial to success in life.’). This can be interpreted to show that they also comprehend and perceive the importance of the English language. However, they disagreed with the statement in item 26 (‘My teacher praises me in class, so I work hard in my English.’). This indicates that in spite of general acceptance that motivation plays an important role in the classroom, the instructor rarely motivated participants in the control group; instructors should keep such things in mind.

For both groups, the survey on reading attitudes (reader behaviors and essence of reading) was not undertaken as a pre-test, but only as a post-test. For both aspects (reader behavior and essence of reading) participants indicated that they do enjoy reading, that they read to learn new things or ideas, and that they have developed good reading habits. Both groups strongly agree that concentration is the most important aspect when reading, and that they implement what they read in their daily lives. However, both groups also indicated that their daily reading time is very low, corresponding with the 2009 survey by the Matichon Newspaper, which claimed that Thais read only 5 books per year. It thus ought to be the role of instructors to motivate learners and try to encourage more frequent reading, as is found in Singapore and Vietnam, where the average is 40-60 books per year.

Participants in the experimental group were all satisfied with using the Photo Story program and agreed that it is easy to use. Photo Story is a multimedia program with several interactive functions for learners to play with and enjoy, and is relevant to producing meaningful products in response to learning needs. Instruction should not be limited to explanations, which can soon be forgotten, but must include activities designed to help learners internalize concepts by making functional use of them. When learners comprehend, they are able to classify, discuss, report, explain, indicate, etc. Reading has only one objective, which is comprehension. And that comprehension plays an important part in cognitive learning (Bloom, 1956).

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