ความวิตกกังวลในการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษและความวิตกกังวลในการเรียนภาษาโดยใช้คอมพิวเตอร์ในการเรียนแบบผสมผสาน

โศภณิศ โนอินทร์[*] และสุดสรวง ยุทธนา

คณะมนุษย์ศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยนเรศวร

*corresponding author e-mail: phasai17@hotmail.com

บทคัดย่อ

      งานวิจัยฉบับนี้มีจุดประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาความวิตกกังวลในการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษ และความวิตกกังวลในการเรียนภาษาโดยใช้คอมพิวเตอร์ในการเรียนแบบผสมผสาน กลุ่มเป้าหมายคือนิสิตสาขาวิชาชีววิทยา ซึ่งเคยผ่านการเรียนในรายวิชาการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษเชิงวิชาการ จำนวน 75 คน รูปแบบการวิจัยนี้เป็นการออกแบบการวิจัยแบบผสมผสาน เครื่องมือที่ใช้ คือ แบบสอบถามความวิตกกังวลในการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษ แบบสอบถามความวิตกกังวลในการเรียนภาษาโดยใช้คอมพิวเตอร์ และแบบสัมภาษณ์จากการสนทนากลุ่ม ผลการวิจัยพบว่านิสิตมีความวิตกกังวลในการอ่านภาษาอังกฤษในระดับปานกลางด้วยค่าเฉลี่ย 3.47 และนิสิตยังมีความวิตกกังวลในการเรียนภาษาโดยใช้คอมพิวเตอร์ในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษในระดับปานกลางด้วยค่าเฉลี่ย 2.63 อีกด้วย นอกจากนี้ยังพบว่านิสิตมีการรับรู้ที่หลากหลายในการเรียนออนไลน์ ซึ่งแบ่งออกเป็น 2 ประเด็นหลักคือประโยชน์และความกังวล สำหรับประเด็นของประโยชน์แบ่งย่อยออกเป็นการเรียนรู้ด้วยตนเอง สิ่งที่อำนวยความสะดวกในการเรียน และการให้ผลป้อนกลับโดยทันที สำหรับความกังวล ได้แบ่งประเด็นย่อยออกเป็นข้อจำกัดในการเข้าถึงข้อมูลและความยากลำบากในการอ่าน

คำสำคัญ: ความวิตกกังวลในการอ่าน ความวิตกกังวลในการเรียนภาษาโดยใช้คอมพิวเตอร์ในการเรียนแบบผสมผสาน การเรียนแบบผสมผสาน การรับรู้

English reading anxiety and computer-assisted language learning anxiety in blended learning

Sopanit No-intra[*] and Sudsuang Yutdhana

Faculty of Humanities, Naresuan University

*corresponding author e-mail: phasai17@hotmail.com

Abstract

      The purpose of this study was to investigate students' English reading anxiety and CALL anxiety in blended learning. The participants consisted of 75 third-year students majoring in Biology who enrolled in the Reading Academic English course. The research design of the study was the mixed methods design-the explanatory sequential design. The instruments used in the study were the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS), the CALL Thoughts Survey, and the focus group interview. It was found

that students had English reading anxiety at the moderate level with the mean score of 3.47. In addition, students had CALL anxiety when they used e-learning at moderate level with the mean score of 2.63. It was also found that students' perceptions were classified in two main points: advantages and concerns. Self-paced learning, learning facility, and providing immediate feedback were indicated in advantages. The limited accessibility and reading difficulty were indicated in concerns.

Keywords: Reading anxiety, Computer-assisted language learning anxiety, Blended learning, Perception

Introduction

The use of the Internet is widespread today. People use the Internet for different purposes: entertainment, checking and getting information, buying products online and so on. Some people use the Internet to learn languages. However, using the Internet for educational purposes requires additional skills from the student, new attitudes towards learning, and learners need to adopt new roles and responsibilities in this new learning environment.

The Internet provides an easy access to four skills, which are necessary for language learning. It is known that English is the most commonly used common language in the world, and nobody can argue of the online community with the importance of foreign languages, especially English as a lingua franca. Therefore, it is vital to learn English, and it becomes easier when the Internet is used as a tool to learn in the virtual learning environment. On the Internet, Reading involves more of readers' interpretations of texts and of the writer's stance than in a paper reading environment; when a third factor, Internet technology, is involved, reading also becomes a selective process that requires special skills to scrutinize the Internet's abundant visual and non-textual features (Coiro, 2005 as cited in Huang et al., 2009). Educators recognize that the computer technology and language learning programs may enhance the language acquisition from both independent and collaborative learning environments, and the language experiences as well. (Kung, 2002 as cited in Wang, 2008).

Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) is an instructional method which is used in learning environment to enhance students' proficiency by using computer. CALL provides multimedia of video, sound, graphics, and texts, which allow learners to be exposed to the target language and its culture and also facilitates comprehension in listening and reading (Chun & Plass, 1997 as cited in Chen, 2008). The CALL programs are popular in foreign language learning today because of its benefits to the learners to enhance their language proficiency. Moreover, learners can study anytime and

anywhere. Teachers and learners can take advantages from various activities on network. Besides, computer can promote learning interaction between learners and teachers. Finally, computers can help classroom teaching with a variety of shared materials and approaches on the network.

As CALL is applied in learning environments, forms of using the computer for learning include e-learning and blended learning. Blended learning, which e-learning is integrated to a course, is an effective and low-risk strategy for today's learning. With computer, a wide variety of materials and activities can be applied to a course. Students will not get bored easily, and they may become more active (Wang, 2008).

However, while learners are interactive with computer, unpleasant side effects may occur; for example, frustration, confusion, anger, and anxiety. For foreign language online reading, learners may be faced with both foreign language reading anxiety and computer anxiety. Tanyeli (2009) mentioned that when the native language is not English, learners usually have fears and worries about not succeeding to learn. Nevertheless, it is the students who motivate themselves with the help of their institution and lecturers to overcome their anxieties.

There have been relatively few discussions of anxiety and second language reading; for example; in one study scholars found that reading in a foreign language is indeed anxiety provoking to some students, and it is a specific anxiety type distinguishable from general foreign language anxiety that has been linked to oral performance. Moreover, it is found that the levels of reading anxiety vary by the target language and seem to be related to the specific writing systems. Besides, it increases with their perceptions of the difficulty of reading in foreign language (Saito et al., 1999).

Computer anxiety is a phenomenon when using a computer. Some researchers, on previous studies, investigated the relationship between computer anxiety and computer experiences, while other looked into the relationship with age, gender, culture, attitudes, computer performance, self-efficacy, or cognitive abilities. (Mahar et al., 1997; McIlroy et al., 2001; Beckers & Schmidt 2001; 2003; Beckers et al., 2006; Tekinarslan, 2008). Today, integration of the CALL towards language learning is widely practical in Thailand. Teachers and students are exposed to this environment in teaching and learning process. At present, there are a few studies relating to foreign language reading anxiety and CALL anxiety in Thailand. Therefore, it is interesting to investigate the issue on Thai students. Therefore, the current study was intended to investigate students' English reading anxiety and CALL anxiety in blended learning.

Research Questions

1. To what extent did students have English reading anxiety in blended learning?

2. To what extent did students have CALL anxiety when they use e-learning ?

3. What were the students' perceptions towards using e-learning in their reading course?

Research Methodology

Participants

The participants for the current study consisted of 75 third-year students majoring in Biology, who enrolled in the Reading Academic English course in the first semester of the academic year 2011 at Naresuan University, Phitsanulok. They were selected through the purposive sampling technique.

Research Instruments

1. The Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS): It was developed by Saito et al. (1999). The scale consisted of 10 items referring to the feeling about reading. It was scored on a 5-point Likert Scale, ranking from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree".

2. The CALL Thoughts Survey: This instrument was modified from the Computer Thoughts Survey (CTS) (Rosen & Weil, 1987). The instrument consisted of 20 items on a 5-point Likert Scale, ranking from "not at all" to "very much".

3. A focus group interview: an interview protocol was used in order to explore in-depth perceptions of students towards using e-learning in their blended learning. A group of seven students was selected according to their frequency of e-learning use.

Collection of Data

In order to answer the research questions for this study, the mixed methods design by Creswell et al. (2003 as cited in Creswell & Clark, 2011, p. 57) was used. The explanatory sequential design is a mixed methods design in which the researcher begins by conducting a quantitative phase and follows up on specific results with a second phase. The second qualitative phase is implemented for the purposes of explaining the initial results in the more depth (Creswell & Clark, 2011)

The Reading Academic English course was taught in the first semester of 2011 for 15 weeks, but only the first seven weeks were included in the research. All 75 students were exposed to the traditional face-to-face in-class instruction and the e-learning for their supplementary activities. After the seventh week of the reading course, the students were asked to complete the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS) and the CALL Thoughts Survey for both language anxiety and computer anxiety. After that, seven respondents were selected to ask about their perceptions

towards using e-learning in their reading course by frequency of e-learning use above the average time. The reason for follow up with qualitative research in the second phase was to illustrate the depth for quantitative data and to realize the diversity of the respondents views as well.

Data Analyses

Data analysis focused on the English reading anxiety and CALL anxiety in a blended learning. In order to analyze the data, students were asked to complete the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS) to answer the research question number one. For the research question number two, students were asked to answer the CALL Thoughts Survey. Focus group interview was asked to answer the research question number three.

For statistical analysis the responses were coded and analyzed. Statistical methods which were used in analyzing the data were percentage, mean, and standard deviation (S.D.). All of them were used to analyze and present the level of reading anxiety and CALL anxiety. Furthermore, to reveal in-depth perceptions of students towards using e-learning in their reading course, focus group interview was used in the study. Data obtained from the interview protocol was reported by themes raised by the interview respondents.

Research Findings, Discussions, and Conclusions

1. Finding One and Discussion: To what extent did students have English reading anxiety in blended learning?

All 75 participants were asked to complete the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale to answer the research question 1. The result was showed on Table 1. The statistics of Mean and S.D. were presented to separate students' anxiety into groups by the mean value.

Table 1 Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Questionnaire

Item	Statement	Mean	S.D.	Meaning
1	I get upset when I'm not sure whether I understand what I am reading a passage. (N=75)	3.57	.918	High
2	When reading a passage, I often understand the words but still can't quite understand what the author is saying. (N=75)	3.64	.765	High
3	When I'm reading a passage, I get so confused I can't remember what I'm reading. (N=75)	3.61	.820	High
4	I feel intimidated whenever I see a whole page of English in front of me. (N=75)	3.57	.989	High

Table 1 (Continue)

Item	Statement	Mean	S.D.	Meaning
5	I get upset whenever I encounter unknown grammar when reading a passage. (N=75)	3.72	.909	High
6	When reading a passage, I get nervous and confused when I don't understand every word. (N=75)	3.72	.924	High
7	It bothers me to encounter words I can't pronounce while reading a passage. (N=75)	3.72	.952	High
8	I am worried about all the new symbols that I have to learn in order to read a passage. (N=73)	3.15	.938	Moderate
9	I don't feel confident when I am reading in English. (N=73)	3.10	.767	Moderate
10	I am not satisfied with the level of reading ability in English that I have achieved so far. (N=73)	3.11	.906	Moderate
	Overall	**3.47**	**.582**	**Moderate**

The result of this research question was consistent with the view on the previous background knowledge of the foreign language reading anxiety. Various reasons were involved with reading anxiety for second language learners. Young (2000) examined several interacting variables including anxiety, comprehension, self-reported comprehension, text features, and reading ability with four different non-literary reading passages such as magazines, newspaper, etc. The finding reported a significant relationship between second language reading anxiety and second language comprehension with two of four passages utilized in the study (as cited in Brantmeier, 2005). Moreover, Saito et al., (1999) indicated that unfamiliar scripts and writing systems and unfamiliar cultural material seem to have great potential for eliciting anxiety. They also revealed that anxiety increased with students' perceptions of the difficulty of reading in a foreign language as well. Similar to the finding in Vande Berg's research, (Berg., 1993 as cited in Horwits., 2001). found that the unfamiliar cultural concepts and writing systems encountered in her introductory French literature class (Sellars, 2000 as cited in Horwits, 2001; Brantmeier, 2005). also mentioned in a study on reading anxiety that reading anxiety is a distinct variable in foreign language learning. Students with higher levels of overall foreign language learning anxiety reported higher levels of reading anxiety. Sellars also found a negative relationship between reading anxiety and second language reading comprehension when students read a magazine article Tanyeli (2009) proposed that learners usually have fears and worries about not succeeding to learn when the native language is not English. In addition, MacIntyre & Gardner (1989) reported that anxiety affects learners at every stage of learning during language learning, whether during input, processing, or output.

Finding Two and Discussion: To what extent did students have CALL anxiety when they use e-learning?

To illustrate the CALL anxiety, all participants were asked to complete the CALL Thoughts Survey. The statistics of mean and standard deviation (S.D.) were carried out to find the answer.

Table 2 Computer-Assisted Language Learning Anxiety Questionnaire

Item	Statement	Mean	S.D.	Meaning
1	I am going to make a mistake on e-learning system.	3.04	.845	Moderate
2	Studying on e-learning is boring.	2.65	.707	Moderate
3	I don't know what I am doing on e-learning.	2.15	.711	Low
4	I did not enjoy using e-learning.	2.75	.595	Moderate
5	I don't like learning through e-learning.	3.00	.717	Moderate
6	I feel stupid when using e-learning.	2.23	.879	Low
7	My classmate will notice if I make a mistake on e-learning.	2.43	.975	Moderate
8	Using e-learning won't shorten my work.	3.21	.843	Moderate
9	I am totally confused with using e-learning.	2.65	1.020	Moderate
10	I know I can't use e-learning.	2.44	.775	Moderate
11	I don't want to learn through e-learning.	2.59	.775	Moderate
12	I hate this e-learning system.	2.55	.990	Moderate
13	I'm afraid I'll wreck the program.	2.12	.986	Low
14	I can't get help if I get stuck.	2.71	.882	Moderate
15	What if I hit the wrong button?	2.83	1.178	Moderate
16	This e-learning isn't interesting.	2.77	.815	Moderate
17	I'm too embarrassed to ask for help.	2.00	.959	Low
18	Others have learned this but I can't.	2.04	.761	Low
19	I feel overwhelmed by how much I don't know.	3.63	.866	Moderate
20	I won't be able to get the computer to do what I want.	2.92	1.112	Moderate
	Overall	2.63	.428	Moderate

N=75

Educators recognize that the computer technology and language learning programs may enhance language acquisition from both independent and collaborative learning environments, and language experiences. (Kung, 2002 as cited in Wang, 2008). This study used e-learning the to reading academic English course to see the extent of CALL anxiety of the students.

From the result of this research question, it could be discussed that there was a relationship between computer anxiety and computer-related variables which reflected the negative reactions to computer technology which has been found in some educators' studies on the relationship between computer anxiety and computer experiences; in addition, some looked into relationship to age, gender, culture,

attitudes, computer performance, self-efficacy, or cognitive abilities as well (Mahar et al., 1997; McIlroy, et al., 2001; Beckers & Schmidt., 2001; 2003; Beckers et al., 2006; Tekinarslan, 2008).

In today's society, the use of technology and the Internet is rapidly increasing in teaching language environments. Language teachers use the World Wide Web as the effective instructional materials especially in teaching language and culture (Chen, 2008). Students today have grown up on computers and are familiar with using the Internet, and teachers are increasingly aware of integrating technology into the instruction for meaningful learning (Koehler et al., 2004). Besides, it has been consistently found in research that computer anxiety can affect learner acceptance of computer-based training support tool and it can mediate the effect of perceived ease of use of e-learning as well (Wagner & Flannery, 2004 as cited in Chien, 2008). Moreover, Marzban (2011) referred to his study that students who were taught by CALL instructional techniques significantly outperformed the students who were taught by the traditional teacher-centred methods of teaching reading comprehension, which invest the total time of the class on the structural analysis of the passages, rigid vocabulary memorization, and translational exercises which are congruent with viewing reading as a passive skill.

This could be concluded that students revealed the CALL anxiety at the low level because of today rapidly increasing of the use of technology and the Internet. Most of the students usually use computer and the Internet in their daily life. As can be seen from this research, the arguments above could be supported the result of this research question.

Finding Three and Discussion: What were the students' perceptions towards using e-learning in their reading course?

In order to illustrate the answer for this research question, seven participants were asked about their perceptions towards using e-leaning in the reading course by the focus group interview. The information from the interview protocol was translated in two main points: advantages and concerns.

Advantages

Even though using e-learning as a supplementary was not wide spread enough for today learning and also the students may not familiar with this technique of teaching; however, the participants of this study still presented various ideas on the advantages. Three categories on the advantages were specified as self-paced learning, learning facility, and providing immediate feedback.

1. Self-paced learning

Self-paced learning can promote getting new vocabularies, getting reading techniques on reading and so on during the respondents used e-learning as follows. The participants realized the advantage of using technology and they agreed that e-learning helped them to enhance their learning because they could learn on their own pace and time. In addition, they could learn new vocabularies from e-learning which help promote their reading ability. Besides, they got different techniques from reading articles through e-learning such as finding the topic and the main idea from a reading passage, and also a technique in quick reading. Participant 6 said, *"It was convenient that we could review it again after doing exercises in class. It helps us to memorize the content and have a chance to do more exercises."*

2. Learning facility

The participants of this study perceived ease of use of the e-learning during using e-learning as a supplementary to a reading course. It facilitated learning by providing a tool to translate a vocabulary, and it facilitated strategy practice during learning online as well. For face to face interaction in a classroom, instructors helped them on their reading when problems occurred; in contrast, there was no instructor with them when they read by themselves at home on e-learning. Fortunately, there was a translator program on e-learning for them when they had some problems in reading.

3. Providing immediate feedback

Normally, the participants received the immediate feedback in specific objective in their learning. They could revise and recheck their assignments from the immediate feedback. For this study, there was an immediate feedback by score on their reading exercises. Participant 5 said, *"It was convenient to know the answers and also the competence level right away after finishing an exercise."* Similarly, Participant 7 said, *"We knew immediately that if we understood the chapter content from an exercise."*

Briefly described the advantages, all ideas of each topic on the advantages: benefits of e-learning, ease of use, and immediate feedback had showed that the participants perceived several positive perceptions of using e-learning as a supplementary to a reading course.

The perception on the advantages of using e-learning on this research is relevant to researches in the past. Singhal (1999). (as cited in Huang et al., 2009). proposed that the study on hypertext reading strategies among university students found that after Web-based reading instruction, students' reading comprehension improved and their use of reading strategies also increased. Moreover, it has been found in a research that computer anxiety can affect learner acceptance of computer-

based training support tool and it can mediate the effect of perceived ease of use of ne-learning as well (Wagner & Flannery, 2004 as cited in Chien, 2008).

Concerns

Using e-learning in English reading course was quite new technique for students. Having some concerns during the course was not surprised. Ideas on this topic were presented by the participants in two categories: limited accessibility and reading difficulty.

1. Limited accessibility

Accessibility was important for e-learning. Students had to use a computer to log into e-learning to learn and practice their reading on the Internet for the reading course. However, for this study, there were some problems to access into e-learning about a computer and the limited accessibility. Some students did not have computer or the Internet at home. They got in trouble to do online exercises; then they had to manage their time to use the Internet at the Internet café. Therefore, some of them could not do the exercises in time due to the limitation of time to do the exercise. Moreover, the participants forgot the period of time to do an exercise because the given time to do each exercise was not the same. The last problem on accessibility was about a problem of password for logging into e-learning. They could not use the same password to log in to do an exercise.

2. Reading difficulty

Some concerns were shown during reading an English article on e-learning. Students read English article and did the exercises on the computer screen. Two different concerns were about feeling dizzy when reading on a computer screen and the other concern was about translation of a new vocabulary on the reading article. Participant 2 said, *"I felt dizzy when I scrolled the screen up and down while reading."* There was another idea from Participant 3 with concern about translation as she said, *"I had no confidents to translate the reading article into Thai by myself when reading on e-learning."*

Obviously, most of these concerns were problems of designing the e-learning program. There was only one problem on translation. Nevertheless, using the Internet or technology in blended learning should be careful for being a selective choice for an effective learning or teaching process. It should not cause some concerns as presented on this research. (Archer et al., 1999. as cited in Garrison & Kanuka, 2004). proposed that the Internet has been considered to be a disruptive technology that requires a careful consideration of the educational goals, structures, and process (In addition, for online reading, it also becomes a selective process that requires special skills to scrutinize the Internet's abundant visual and non-textual features (Coiro, 2005 as cited

in Huang et al., 2009). For more effective process, scholars proposed that the use of the Internet in learning required some technological skills and knowledge from both teacher and learner (Warshauer, 1997 as cited in Simsek, 2008). In consequence, consideration of other factors which could cause learning or teaching process is significantly important for not only the blended learning, but also for other learning process.

Overall, the participants revealed their perceptions of using e-learning as a supplementary to the reading academic English course in a blended learning in the positive attitudes. Some concerns were presented; nevertheless, they were not about the anxiety of using e-learning at all. These argued Fuller's view of using e-learning that computer anxiety played a significant role in a learning process. Individuals with high computer anxiety are likely to remain in that state of high computer anxiety in the future, and experience greater anxiety with repeated exposure to computers. They are at risk for resisting the use of computer technology and an inability to gain learning benefit over the anxiety cost of an e-learning environment (Fuller et al., 2006 as cited in Chien, 2008).

Using e-learning as a supplementary to English reading course was quite a new trend and was not yet wide spread today. It was regularly for having some advantages and also some concerns on this study. From this study, the participants reported more ideas on advantages than concerns, and most of the concerns were not about the problems of using e-learning in a reading course. It was concluded that using e-learning in a reading course would be an effective choice for instructors.

Recommendations

The current study investigated students' English reading anxiety and CALL anxiety in blended learning. Using blended learning as a supplementary to an English reading course is quite new technique for language learning today. However, it is not too hard for new generation to use a computer or e-learning to help promote or enhance their learning with less or without anxiety. As Internet and technology are noteworthy for today and future learning, it is hard to decline these educational aids. Using the Internet in an instruction is an excellent choice to enhance students' knowledge and proficiency not only in language learning, but also in other subjects. Nevertheless, for further studies, instructors or researchers should be careful of difficulties of using the Internet or e-learning in any blended learning such as the limited accessibility and designing the e-learning program. In addition, more qualitative as well as quantitative studies should be conducted to explore foreign language reading anxiety in various groups of students especially integrating the Internet to a

foreign language course is noteworthy for today learning. All findings would benefit the teachers, instructors, and researchers to achieve their goals.

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