Chapter IV

Results and Analysis

This chapter deals with the results of the study. The data obtained from the test and questionnaire distributed to the subjects are analysed and interpreted, using the SPSS/ PC+. The reliability of the test when conducted with the subjects is 0.91 (Appendix F). The 120 subjects who had already taken Tor Sor 012-013 courses (Business English Courses) in the academic 1998 year were asked to take the reading comprehension test and to complete the questionnaire after they finish taking the test. Ten English teachers (three from ChiangMai Rajamongkol Technology College, three from ChiangMai Commercial College, two from Srithana Commercial College, and two from ChiangMai Vocational College) were interviewed when the data were collected. Percentage and mean were used to analyse the data.

1) The findings reveal that the student reading ability is 45 percent of the total score as the table below indicates.

Table 1: Mean and percentage of total scores in reading comprehension

Students	$\bar{X}$	Percentage
120	12.15	45

2) The test results also show that the student reading abilities on determining the main ideas, identifying factual details, inferring information within the text, recognizing general business vocabulary for that level, and guessing unfamiliar words from context are 46.40, 50.86, 42.60, 44.40 and 38.60 percent respectively.

Table 2: Mean and percentage of total scores on each reading comprehension subskill

Reading subskills	Scores	$\overline{X}$	%
1. determining main ideas	5	2.32	46.40
2. identifying factual details in a text	7	3.56	50.86
3. inferring information in a text	5	2.13	42.60
4. recognizing general business vocabulary for that level	5	2.22	44.40
5. guessing meanings of unfamiliar words	5	1.93	38.60
Total	27	12.16	45.00

3) The results from the questionnaire are described under the following headings:

3.1 Student self-evaluation on their ability in reading and understanding business English texts.

3.2 Factors affecting student achievement and/or failure in reading and understanding English for business purposes which are divided into five main subheadings: 1) students, 2) teachers, 3) teaching techniques, 4) environments, and 5) teaching aids.

Table 3: An analysis of student problems in reading and understanding business English texts

1. Difficulty in reading and understanding...	Mean	SD
1.1 vocabulary and idioms in business English texts	3.51	0.88
1.2 short sentences in business English articles	3.20	0.95
1.3 long sentences in business English articles	3.51	1.11
1.4 details of shorter business English texts such as those in faxes or letters	3.36	0.97
1.5 details of longer business English texts such as those in the internet or newspapers	3.45	1.13
1.6 main idea of shorter English articles	3.24	0.85
1.7 main idea of longer English articles	3.51	1.06
1.8 sequence of the events in business English texts	3.40	0.92
1.9 main ideas of various kinds of business letters	3.22	0.85
1.10 different forms of business English letters	3.03	1.07
2. Difficulty in concluding the type of letter	2.93	0.93
3. Difficulty in interpreting what the writer's purpose is in writing the particular letter	3.12	0.92
4. Difficulty in understanding English texts by using prior knowledge	3.20	0.90
5. Difficulty in using grammatical knowledge to comprehend the text	3.38	1.15
Total	3.29	

Mean levels: 1.00 - 1.80 = have no difficulty; 1.81 - 2.60 = have very little difficulty; 2.61 - 3.40 = have difficulty; 3.41 - 4.20 = have much difficulty; 4.21 - 5.00 = have too much difficulty

From Table 3: In terms of business English, the students have much difficulty in reading and understanding vocabulary and idioms (Mean = 3.51), long sentences in business articles (Mean = 3.51), main idea of longer English articles (Mean = 3.51), details of longer texts (Mean = 3.45), have difficulty in reading and understanding the sequence of the events in the text (Mean = 3.40), the use of grammatical knowledge to comprehend the text (Mean = 3.38), details of shorter business English texts (Mean = 3.36), main idea of shorter English articles (Mean = 3.24), main ideas of various kinds of business letters (Mean = 3.22), short sentences in business articles (Mean = 3.20), the use of prior knowledge to understand the text (Mean = 3.20), the interpretation of what the writer's purpose is in writing the particular letter (Mean = 3.12), different forms of business English letters (Mean = 3.03), and the conclusion on the type of letter (Mean = 2.93) respectively.

Table 4: An analysis of factors affecting students' achievement and/or failure in reading business English texts

Student attitudes:

In your opinion, English is...	Mean	SD
1. useful and required in learning business	4.52	0.71
2. useful and required in working	4.48	0.74
3. useful and required in daily life	3.75	1.02

Mean levels: 1.00 - 1.80 = very little; 1.81 - 2.60 = little; 2.61 - 3.40 = average; 3.41 - 4.20 = a lot; 4.21 - 5.00 = the most

From Table 4: The statistics reveal that English is useful and required the most in learning business (Mean = 4.52), in working (Mean = 4.48), and useful and required a lot in daily life (Mean = 3.75) respectively.

Table 5: Reading strategies students use before reading

How often do you use the following strategies before reading?	Mean	SD
1. notice numbers, pictures, or tables	3.70	0.83
2. notice the type of English articles or letters	3.53	0.85
3. read through the conclusion of the text	3.14	1.05

Mean levels: 1.00-1.80 = rarely; 1.81-2.60 = occasionally; 2.61-3.40 = sometimes;

3.41-4.20 = often; 4.21-5.00 = very often

From Table 5: Before reading, the students often notice numbers, pictures, or tables

(Mean = 3.70), often notice the type of English articles or letters (Mean = 3.53), and

sometimes read through the conclusion of the text (Mean = 3.14) respectively.

Table 6: Reading strategies students use while reading

How often do you use the following strategies while reading?	Mean	SD
1. guess meanings of unfamiliar words	3.78	0.98
2. underline key points of the text	3.41	1.02
3. notice sentence structures in the text	2.99	1.05
4. take note key points of the text	3.10	0.98
5. skim in order to find the main ideas	3.35	1.14
6. scan in order to identify supporting details	2.90	1.11

Note:

Mean levels: 1.00-1.80 = rarely; 1.81-2.60 = occasionally; 2.61-3.40 = sometimes;

3.41-4.20 = often; 4.21-5.00 = very often

From Table 6: While reading, the students often guess meanings of unfamiliar words

(Mean = 3.78), often underline important points of the text (Mean = 3.41), sometimes

skim in order to find the main ideas (Mean = 3.35), sometimes take note key points

of the text (Mean = 3.10), sometimes notice sentence structures in the text (Mean = 2.99), and sometimes scan in order to identify supporting details (Mean = 2.90) respectively.

Table 7: Reading strategies students use after reading

How often do you use the following strategy _after_ _reading?_	Mean	SD
1. Summarize the English reading text	2.90	1.11

Note:

Mean level: 1.00-1.80 = rarely; 1.81-2.60 = occasionally; 2.61-3.40 = sometimes;

3.41-4.20 = often; 4.21-5.00 = very often

From Table 7: After reading, the students sometimes summarize the English reading text (Mean = 2.90).

Table 8: Analysis of teacher language in the classroom

In your opinion, you prefer a teacher who...	Mean	SD
1. speaks only English in the classroom	3.02	1.03
2. speaks only Thai in the classroom	2.75	1.25
3. speaks both Thai and English in the classroom	4.01	0.92

Note:

Mean levels: 1.00 - 1.80 = very little; 1.81 - 2.60 = little; 2.61 - 3.40 = average;

3.41 - 4.20 = a lot; 4.21 - 5.00 = the most

From Table 8: The students prefer the teacher to speak both Thai and English in the classroom a lot (Mean = 4.01), to speak only English in the classroom in average (Mean = 3.02), and to speak only Thai in the classroom in average (Mean = 2.75) respectively.

Table 9: Analysis of teaching techniques students prefer before reading

Before reading, how much do you prefer the teacher to stimulate you to read by...	Mean	SD
1. guiding them to the topic by discussing	3.92	0.83
2. explaining the business terms	4.10	0.87
3. explaining the idioms in the text	4.18	0.84
4. explaining the complex structures in the text	4.04	0.90
5. asking them questions guided to the text	3.83	0.89
6. explaining the English directions	3.95	0.97
7. instructing how to differentiate the type of texts	3.93	1.01
8. instructing students to read through the conclusion	3.80	0.95
9. instructing students to understand numbers, pictures, tables, or notice signs in the text	3.70	1.00

Note:

Mean levels: 1.00 - 1.80 = very little; 1.81 - 2.60 = little; 2.61 - 3.40 = average;

3.41 - 4.20 = a lot; 4.21 - 5.00 = the most

From Table 9: Before reading the business English text, the students prefer teachers to explain the idioms (Mean = 4.18), explain the business terms (Mean = 4.10) to explain the complex structures (Mean = 4.04), to explain the English directions (Mean = 3.95), to instruct how to differentiate the type of texts (Mean = 3.93), to guide them to the topic by discussing (Mean = 3.92), to ask them the questions guided to the text (Mean = 3.83), to instruct them to read through the conclusion (Mean = 3.80), and to instruct them to understand numbers, pictures, tables, or notice signs (Mean = 3.70) respectively.

Table 10: Analysis of teaching techniques students prefer while reading

While reading, how much do you prefer teacher to...	Mean	SD
1. instruct you to notice the punctuation, abbreviation, symbol, and spelling in context	3.87	0.82
2. instruct you to recognize the types of letters or articles	3.87	0.96
3. instruct you to use your prior knowledge while reading the text	3.99	0.82
4. instruct you to guess the meanings of unfamiliar words from the text	3.80	1.05
5. instruct you to skim to find the main idea in the text	3.47	1.05
6. instruct you to underline the key points in the text	4.00	0.92
7. let you and other students help one another while reading by discussing about the text in pairs or in groups	3.56	1.01
8. let you make questions from the text	3.54	0.97
9. instruct you how to translate the English text into Thai	3.69	1.09

Note:

Mean levels: 1.00-1.80 = very little; 1.81-2.60 = little; 2.61-3.40 = average;

3.41-4.20 = a lot; 4.21-5.00 = the most

From Table 10: While reading business English texts, the students prefer teachers to instruct them how to (1) underline the key points (Mean = 4.00), (2) use their prior knowledge while reading the text (Mean = 3.99), (3) notice the punctuation, abbreviation, symbol, and spelling in context (Mean = 3.87), (4) recognize the types of letters or articles (Mean = 3.87), (5) guess the meanings of unknown words from the text (Mean = 3.80), (6) translate the English text into Thai for students (Mean = 3.69), (7) help one another while reading by discussing about the text in pairs or in groups (Mean = 3.56), (8) make questions from the text (Mean = 3.54), and skim to find the main idea in the text (Mean = 3.47) respectively.

Table 11: Analysis of teaching techniques students prefer after reading

After reading, how much do you prefer teachers to...	Mean	SD
1. ask you the questions from the text	3.95	0.93
2. ask the questions relating to your attitude or your daily life	3.74	0.93
3. instruct you to summarize the text	4.00	1.10

Note:

Mean level: 1.00-1.80 = very little; 1.81-2.60 = little; 2.61-3.40 = average;

3.41-4.20 = a lot; 4.21-5.00 = the most

From Table 11: After reading, the students prefer teachers to instruct them to

summarize the text (Mean = 4.00), ask them the questions from the text (Mean =

3.95), and ask them the questions relating to the student's attitude or his/her

daily life (Mean = 3.74).

Table 12: An analysis of environments

How much do the following environments motivate you to study business English?	Mean	SD
1. the size of business English classroom (not too big or too small)	3.69	0.98
2. class size with 30-35 students	3.60	1.11
3. air-conditioner and enough light without noise	4.18	1.02
4. right position of board and teaching equipment such as bulletin board, overhead projector, etc.	4.26	1.01
5. parents, relatives, and friends' encouragement	4.21	0.81
6. English media such as warnings, advertisements and words in magazines, newspapers, or television	4.08	0.86

Note:

Mean levels: 1.00-1.80 = very little; 1.81-2.60 = little; 2.61-3.40 = average;

3.41-4.20 = a lot; 4.21-5.00 = the most

From Table 12: In studying business English, the environment which motivates the student achievement and/or failure in learning the most is the right position of board and teaching equipment such as bulletin board and overhead projector (Mean = 4.26), The environments which motivate the student achievement and/or failure in learning a lot are (1) parents, relatives, and friends' encouragement (Mean = 4.21), (2) air-conditioner, enough light without noise (Mean = 4.18), (3) English media such as warnings, advertisement, and words in magazines, newspapers, or television (Mean = 4.08), (4) the moderate classroom size (Mean = 3.69), and (5) the amount of 30-35 students in the classroom (Mean = 3.60).

Table 13: Analysis of teaching aids

What do you think towards the following teaching aids? or How much do you prefer towards them?	Mean	SD
1. Tor Sor 012-013 textbooks (Business English textbooks) have the content you prefer.	3.68	0.82
2. The content in the textbooks used in Tor Sor 012-013 are difficult.	3.66	0.96
3. supplementary documents taken from business texts, magazines, and newspapers	3.70	0.83
4. realia of business documents such as letters, internet, and faxes	4.02	0.84
5. shorter business English context such as notices, advertisements, warnings, and instruction in using tools or equipment	3.95	0.86
6. word cards with English business terms	3.53	0.92
7. modern technology equipment such as an overhead projector, slide projector, a computer, a video, and a CD-ROM	4.09	0.97

Note:

Mean levels: 1.00-1.80 = very little; 1.81-2.60 = little; 2.61-3.40 = average;

3.41-4.20 = a lot; 4.21-5.00 the most

From Table 13: In terms of teaching aids, the students prefer a lot (1) the modern

technology equipment such as an overhead projector, a slide projector, a computer, a

video, and a CD-ROM (Mean = 4.09), (2) the realia of business documents such as

letters, internet, and faxes (Mean = 4.02), (3) the shorter business English context

such as signs, advertisements, warnings, and directions in using tools or equipment

(Mean = 3.95), (4) the supplementary documents taken from business texts,

magazines, and newspapers (Mean = 3.70) and (5) the word cards with English

business terms (Mean = 3.53) respectively. Besides, the students feel that Tor Sor

012-013 textbooks (Business English texts) have the contents they prefer (Mean =

3.68), but the contents are difficult for them (Mean = 3.66).

Interviews

Ten business English teachers from four target commercial schools (three from

ChiangMai Commercial College, three from ChiangMai Rajamongkol Technology

College, two from ChiangMai Vocational College, and two from Srithana Commercial

College) were interviewed in three main areas 1) teaching techniques, 2) teaching aids,

and 3) teaching problems. The results are summed up as follows:

1. Teaching techniques

1.1 Determining the main idea:

Some teachers let the students read and understand the text silently in order to find

what the text is about by noticing the words often seen in the texts. The other

teachers ask the questions from the text after reading to guide the students to the main point of the text.

1.2 Identifying factual details within a text:

Some teachers let the students read and note the key points which they feel important in the text. The other teachers ask the students to do the exercises in their textbooks. They are answering from the passage, matching the words to the meanings, filling the blanks the correct words given, and translating the words or phrases. Besides, some teachers tell students to translate the text into Thai.

1.3 Guessing the meanings of unfamiliar words from context:

Some teachers ask the students to look for the meanings of words they are not sure of from dictionary. Students learn the meanings of words which are already defined in their texts. Thai meanings of vocabulary are already provided in the text. Consequently, teachers rarely teach the students to guess the meanings of unfamiliar words from context. They feel students are already familiar with the words in the text.

1.4 Recognizing general business vocabulary for that level:

Some teachers ask the students to memorize the words and phrases appeared in their business English textbooks and teach them how to pronounce those words. The other teachers assign the students to recite the words and terms and memorize them before giving them dictation on the words in class.

1.5 Inferring information from the text:

Teachers ask questions like...What is the type of this letter?, What is the tone of the writer in writing this letter? in order to evaluate that the students understand the text after reading. The teachers ask the students the questions given in the textbook.

2. Teaching aids and materials

Teachers use both the school business English textbooks and documents drawn from outside such as brochures, word cards, pictures, tables, graphs, business letters, articles and classified advertisements from magazines and newspapers.

3. Problems in teaching business English reading

3.1 Students have poor prior knowledge in English.

3.2 Students' scope of vocabulary is limited so they have difficulty in reading and understanding of English texts.

3.3 Students know the meanings of the vocabulary but cannot comprehend the content of the passage.

3.4 Students have no interest in learning English.

3.5 Students prefer the translation method in studying English.

3.6 Time limitation in teaching as the students study business English only 3 periods per week.

3.7 Business terms appeared in students' textbooks are too long and difficult for them to memorize.

3.8 Students have no opportunity to use business English words or phrases in the real situation or in their daily lives.

3.9 Students read only the letters or articles in their textbooks. They are not

interested in reading English texts from other sources.

3.10 Teachers speak more Thai to students than English while teaching as they are

convinced of the students' comprehension in the text if the translation

method is used.

3.11 Teachers do not teach English reading techniques to students because of time

constraint and lack of appropriate exercises to support the use of each

technique.