THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GRADES 8-12 STUDENTS' MOTIVATION FOR SELF-SELECTED READING IN ENGLISH AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AT BANGKOK CHRISTIAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, THAILAND

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which academic achievement is influenced by motivation for self-selected reading in English and reading achievement. This study was conducted using the survey method employing the researcher made Adolescent Motivation for Self-Selected Reading Questionnaire (AMSSRQ). Academic achievement data was collected from students' individual report cards for the first quarter of the academic year 2015-16. The sample of the study consisted of 83 eighth to twelfth grade students from Bangkok Christian International School, Bangkok, Thailand, in the first semester of the academic year 2015-16. Additionally, the relationship between motivation for self-selected reading in English and reading achievement, and reading achievement and academic achievement were investigated. Further to this the relationship between motivations for self-selected reading in English and general self-efficacy for learning and performance were also investigated. The hypotheses were tested using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. The results confirmed the hypotheses. There was a significant relationship between motivation for self-selected reading in English and reading achievement. In turn there was a significant relationship between reading achievement and academic achievement. Additionally, this study found a significant relationship between motivation for self-selected reading in English and general self-efficacy for learning and performance. The study concludes with recommendations for practice and future research.

Keywords: Academic Achievement, Motivation for Self-Selected Reading in English, Reading Achievement, General Self-Efficacy for Learning and Performance.

Introduction
The demand in Asia for a workforce proficient in English has become increasingly important with the integration of the ASEAN community in 2015. H.E. Le Luong Minh, Secretary General of the AEAN Community, described the English language as an *indispensable tool* that will allow nations to interact daily, and will build a

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common understanding and closer relationships between partner nations. (Le Luong Minh, 2013).

Today, English is taught widely as a foreign language in Thai public schools as part of the Thai National Curriculum, and since 1995 the government has officially authorized schools to develop bilingual departments, where a selection of core subjects are taught in the English language (Draper, 2012). In addition, and as alternative to bilingual programs, Thailand boasts many international schools that provide a complete educational experience in the English language. The vast majority of international schools in Thailand follow either the UK National Curriculum for schools or a US State curriculum. According to Techavijit (2007), the growth of international schools in Thailand has been *phenomenal* since their legalization in 1992, with the number increasing from five international schools in that year, to the current number of 120 international schools in 2016 (International School Association Thailand, 2016). This figure of 120 international schools may seem somewhat modest, and not hugely significant to the Thai education sector, especially when compared to many thousands of public schools across Thailand, however; the contribution made by the international schools to Thai society is significant, as many of the elite of the country are educated in international schools, a point noted by Hayden and Thompson (2008).

International schools in Thailand that deliver a US or UK curriculum, and that is the overwhelming majority, generally use instructional materials purchased in the US or UK that align specifically to the curriculum that is being delivered. These materials are designed specifically for use in the country of their origin, namely the US or the UK, by students native to that country. Using these materials in Thai international schools, out of their originally intended context, can present significant challenges for the non-native English speaking learner. For instance, a non-native English speaking student might well find the level of reading difficulty of grade appropriate US or UK textbooks too difficult, as the length and complexity of the sentences might well be beyond their reading level. Also, vocabulary might be difficult or unknown, and additionally the content, and especially the contexts created in the textbooks, may well at times be culturally unfamiliar and foreign to the non-American or non-British students. These significant challenges with text comprehension of academic reading can present a barrier to reading comprehension, student learning, and therefore ultimately, to student academic achievement.

Furthermore, as students' progress through high school coursework can often become more academically demanding and conceptually challenging, and instructional time devoted specifically to improving literacy levels might be limited, a view shared by Lyengar and Ball (2007). In many cases, high school Language Arts classes may well have little focus on fundamental reading strategies and basic vocabulary, as students are expected to have acquired this foundational knowledge and skills already in elementary and junior high school.

Research indicates that self-selected reading does positively impact reading levels. According to Cullinan (2000), there is a positive relationship between the amount of free reading students do and achievement in vocabulary and reading comprehension. In 2015, Lwin and Lynch conducted at study at Bangkok Christian International School (BCIS) which found a significant, positive relationship between

elementary level students' attitudes towards reading for pleasure in English and their academic achievement.

The current study looked into the benefits of self-selected reading in English, and the impact it has on both reading achievement in the form of Lexile reading levels, and academic achievement, for high school students of grades 8-12 at BCIS. In addition, this study examined the relationship between motivation for self-selected reading in English and levels of general self-efficacy for learning and performance, as the researcher believes that higher levels of motivation for self-selected reading will ultimately result in higher levels of general self-efficacy for learning and performance, and this in turn will lead to higher levels of academic achievement.

Research Objectives

Ten research objectives were developed to address the research problems, three of which were primary research objectives and seven of which were additional research objectives.

Primary Research Objectives

1. To identify the grades 8-12 BCIS students' levels of motivation for self-selected reading in English.
2. To identify the grades 8-12 BCIS students' levels of reading achievement (Lexile reading scores).
3. To determine if there was significant relationship between the grades 8-12 BCIS students' motivation for self-selected reading in English and their academic achievement.

Additional Research Objectives

4. To identify the grades 8-12 BCIS students' levels of general self-efficacy for learning and performance.
5. To identify the grades 8-12 BCIS students' levels of academic achievement.
6. To determine if there was significant relationship between the grades 8-12 BCIS students' motivation for self-selected reading in English and their reading achievement (Lexile reading scores).
7. To determine if there was significant relationship between the grades 8-12 BCIS students' motivation for self-selected reading in English and their general self-efficacy for learning and performance.
8. To determine if there was significant relationship between the grades 8-12 BCIS students' general self-efficacy for learning and performance and their academic achievement.
9. To determine if there was significant relationship between the grades 8-12 BCIS students' reading achievement (Lexile reading scores) and their academic achievement.
10. To determine if there was significant relationship between the grades 8-12 BCIS students' reading achievement (Lexile reading scores) and their general self-efficacy for learning and performance.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 outlines the conceptual framework for the study. The target group completed the Adolescent Motivation for Self-Selected Reading Questionnaire (AMSSRQ) which has three subscales to measure motivation for self-selected reading in English, and one additional subscale to measure general self-efficacy for learning and performance.

The motivation for self-selected reading in English subscales are reading interest, reading frequency and reading efficacy. Reading interest was developed from the pleasure hypothesis (Krashen, 2007, 1994), reading frequency from the comprehension hypothesis (Krashen, 2009, 2000) and reading efficacy from Cambria and Guthrie (2010), and social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1989).
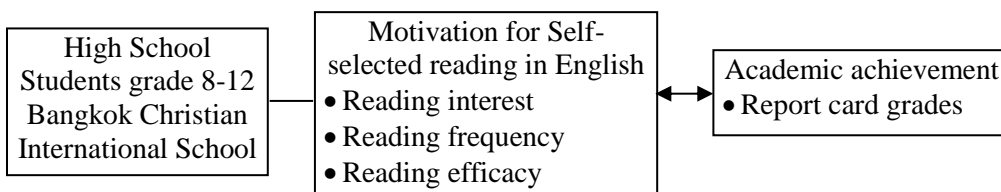
| High School Students grade 8-12 Bangkok Christian International School | Motivation for Self-selected reading in English
• Reading interest
• Reading frequency
• Reading efficacy | Academic achievement
• Report card grades |

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for Primary Objectives

The primary aim of this study was to test the significance of the relationships between motivation for self-selected reading in English and academic achievement as outlined in Figure 1. However, in addition, this study also tested for the significance of additional relationships as outlined in Figure 2. An important additional aim of this study was to test the significance of the relationship between motivation for self-selected reading in English and reading achievement, as well as, the significance of the relationship between reading achievement and academic achievement.

Further to this, motivation for general self-efficacy and performance was included in the study, and a subscale from the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire or MSLQ (*Pintrich*, Smith, Garcia & McKeachie, 1991) was used to test for this.
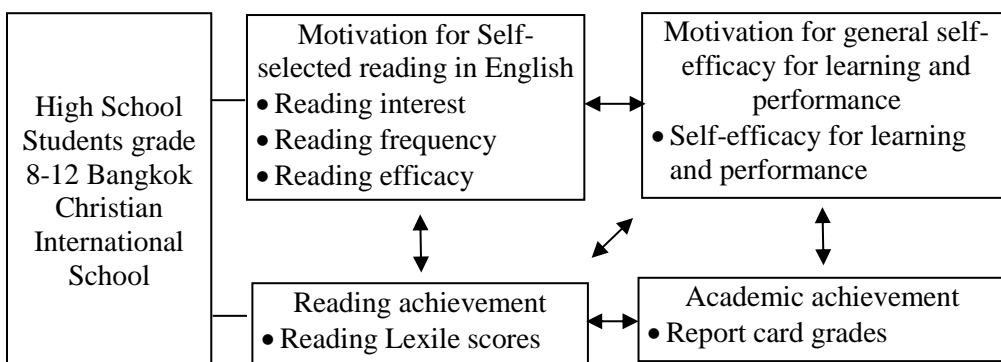
| High School Students grade 8-12 Bangkok Christian International School | Motivation for Self-selected reading in English
• Reading interest
• Reading frequency
• Reading efficacy | Motivation for general self-efficacy for learning and performance
• Self-efficacy for learning and performance |
| Reading achievement
• Reading Lexile scores | Academic achievement
• Report card grades |

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework for Additional Objectives

Literature Review

The Comprehension Hypothesis
The comprehension hypothesis (Krashen, 2009, 2000), described as *the centerpiece* of Krashen's language acquisition theory (Krashen, 2013a) claims that language is only acquired in one way, by receiving messages that are comprehensible. Krashen defined an individual's current level of language competence as *i* and claimed that when an individual is exposed to messages that are just beyond their current level, defined as *i+1*, acquisition will occur (Krashen, 1985). With reference to literacy development, the comprehension hypothesis claims gains in reading competency are made when an individual reads enough comprehensible texts at a level which the reader is developmentally ready to acquire (Krashen, 2000).

Krashen extended this point to claim that when an individual receives comprehensible input, the individual must acquire language because acquisition it is an involuntary act; there is no choice other than to acquire (Krashen, 2013a). The kind of reading input that results in acquisition can be described as *meaningful reading* (Krashen, 2000). Meaningful reading, consistent with the comprehension hypothesis, is reading that is at or just beyond the reader's current level. Reading at this level will expose readers to texts that will produce gains in vocabulary knowledge, the development of writing style, advancement in grammatical competency and improvement in spelling.

Self-Selected Reading
Self-selected reading (Krashen, 2012), sometimes referred to as i*ndependent reading* (Cullinan, 2000; Williams, Hall, Hendrick, Lamkin & Abendroth, 2013*), free reading, free voluntary reading* or *recreational reading* (Krashen, 2003, 2004) is a form of reading that can provide an excellent source of meaningful reading. Self-selected reading is not assigned reading (Cullinan, 2000; Krashen, 2004; Williams, et al., 2013). As the name suggests it is reading chosen freely by the reader. It can be reading undertaken within educational programs, and then is often referred to as *in-school* reading, but most often it occurs outside of an educational environment. In fact, a main goal of in-school, self-selected reading programs is to get students to read outside of school, when they are not required to do so (Williams et al., 2013).

Motivation for Self-Selected Reading
Motivation is well recognized as being a central, crucial factor in teaching children how to read. Readers who are highly motivated are described as *self-determining* (Gambrel, Palmer, Codling & Mazzoni, 1996). Highly motivated self-determining readers make opportunities to find texts and engage with them, and in many cases will perceive the value and importance of reading. Good readers need many skills to decode a text and bring meaning to it, however, skill in itself is not enough, good readers also have the desire to read, i.e., motivation.

Cambria and Guthrie (2010) describe it as the *skill and will* to read, and suggests that skill and motivation are connected, as skill in performing a task increases, levels of motivation to perform the task will usually also increase. Therefore, skill and motivation can be seen as potentially having a causal relationship, in that as one

increases, the other will also increase as a direct result. This can be applied to self-selected reading, and could provide a partial rationale for schools to devote academic class time to in-school programs such as sustained silent reading.

Pleasure Hypothesis
Krashen (1994, 2007) proposed that the path of pleasure is the only means of literary and language development. Krashen (2007), qualified this by stating that not everything that is pleasurable is beneficial for reading competency. Rather, anything that is truly beneficial for improving reading competency must be a pleasurable activity. Ponniah and Priya (2014), supported this assumption of the pleasure hypothesis. In their study, *aesthetic readers* (readers who read for pleasure) outperformed *efferent readers* (readers who read to gain meaning). This finding highlighted the motivational power of pleasure reading, and the significant impact reading for pleasure can have on developing language competency. Krashen (2013b) stated the importance of providing reading materials for sustained silent reading (SSR) programs that are *compelling*. Interesting reading is not enough, it must be the kind of age appropriate reading that individuals will really receive a high amount of pleasure from. For school age students this might mean: novels, comics books, graphic novels or magazines. Cremin (2007), stated that pleasure reading correlates positively with attitudes towards reading, and commented that educational programs need to develop children's intrinsic motivation to read.

Self-Selected Reading: Previous Research
Mason (2006), confirmed the positive impact of self-selected reading on TOEFL Test scores. The TOEFL Test is used to determine the academic readiness, in English, of students wishing to study at US universities and tests the following: listening, structure and written expression, reading comprehension and writing. In Mason's study, students simply read books of their free own choice – self-selected free reading; they met with no teachers or advisors, and undertook no formal study. The study indicated that students made average gains of 3.5 points per week by this self-selected free reading alone. Gains were not only made on the reading section of the TOEFL test, but across all parts: listening comprehension (2.2 points per week), Structures and written expression (3.6 points per week) and reading (4.6 points per week). Krashen (2013b) recommended this form of reading as a *wonderful way* to prepare for TOEFL Tests, describing it as possibly the most *powerful tool* we have within education, and potentially an important means of enabling students to transition from conversation to academic language competency (Krashen, 2003). Hanania and Gradman (as cited in Constantino, Lee, Cho & Krashen, 1997) also saw the value of self-selected reading in improving levels of academic English, by concluding that *extracurricular reading* was the *best predictor* of TOEFL scores for international students who took the test before studying in the United States.

Similarly, Lyengar and Ball (2007), in their report for the National Endowment for the Arts found that reading for pleasure strongly correlated with academic achievement, particularly in the area of Language Arts. Their report indicated a correlation between test scores in both reading and writing with reading for fun. The Lyengar and Ball report referenced findings from The Nation's Report Card, NEAP

2004, Trends in Academic Progress report (Perie, Moran, & Lutkus, 2005). The NEAP 2004 report presented the average national results for reading for 9, 13 and 17 years old students and at all three age levels, students who reported they read for fun every day or almost every day, had higher average reading scores than those who reported never or hardly ever reading for fun. The same was true of students who reported reading for fun once or twice a week.

Baştuğ (2014), conducted a study to determine the extent to which academic achievement is influenced by attitudes towards reading and reading achievement. Baştuğ found that there were direct and positive structural correlations between reading attitudes, reading comprehension and academic achievement. Baştuğ found that reading attitude significantly predicted reading comprehension, and in turn, reading comprehension significantly predicted academic achievement. Baştuğ concluded that his findings supported the *Matthew Effect*, based on the concept of the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. That means that highly motivated, proficient readers will continue to make advancements with their academic achievement and conversely poor, unmotivated readers will not make advances with academic achievement, with the result being that, the gap between the two groups will continually and progressively widen.

Self-Efficacy

Self-Efficacy is grounded within the theoretical framework of social cogitative theory (Bandura 1989), and refers to the beliefs an individual has about their capabilities to perform a task at a designated level (Schunk & Pajares, 2002). Self-efficacy can impact levels of academic achievement (Pajares, 2006), as it influences nearly every aspect of an individual's life. Self-efficacy impacts motivation, as well as the actual amount of effort individuals exert in a given activity, and it can influence thinking and behavior.

The perceptions of an individual's self-efficacy is shaped by interpreting information from four sources: *mastery experience*, *vicarious experience*, *social persuasions* and *physiological reactions* (Pajares, 2006). Mastery experience, is an internal assessment of one's success or failure related to a specific performed task. Simply put, the perception of success raises an individual's self-efficacy and the perception of failure lowers the perception of self-efficacy. Relating this to motivation for self-selected reading in English, it is easy to imagine that an individual who chooses a text, corresponding to their reading ability, and manages to read through it confidently, understanding the text in terms of both the vocabulary and meaning, would surely have their belief in their ability as a proficient, independent reader affirmed. This affirmation, if repeated over a period of time, would likely result in increased self-efficacy and higher levels of motivation for self-selected reading.

Background of the School

Students study the core subjects of English Language Art, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies four periods of 55 minutes each per week. Core subjects are mainly delivered through the medium of American, McGraw-Hill Glencoe series school textbook (McGraw-Hill Education, 2016). The school administration has noted that

these textbooks, being designed for American school children, present a serious challenge to text comprehension for some BCIS students, especially those with limited English proficiency. The BCIS administration believe the challenges these students face are often exacerbated as they progress through into High School, as the required reading becomes increasing sophisticated in terms of content and concepts. The school has made steps to address this situation through several initiatives.

In 2010, the school administration implemented a DEAR program (Drop Everything and Read). DEAR is a Sustained Silent Reading Program that is administered at BCIS for 15 minutes each day, immediately after the lunch recess. High School students read in their homerooms under the supervision of their homeroom teacher and have a great deal of autonomy over choice of reading material. In 2012, an additional literature class was added for middle school students. The aim of this extra literature class was to provide additional instructional time to equip middle school students with a range of foundational reading skills and strategies, as well as providing additional vocabulary instruction. Furthermore, in 2012, the school administration implemented schoolwide Lexile testing. High School students are Lexile tested four times each year. Students are encouraged to use the Lexile coding system to find reading material that is on or about their personal reading level, and individual students' Lexile scores are used to create a reading profile for each student. This individual student Lexile profile provides valuable information relating to the progress each student is making with their reading level.

Research Methodology
This was a quantitative, descriptive and correlational study. Data was collected from three research instruments: The Adolescent Motivation for Self-Selected Reading Questionnaire (AMSSRQ), Scholastic Reading Inventory™ (SRI) Lexile tests and BCIS High School academic report cards.

The AMSSRQ is a self-report instrument comprising 3 subscales with a total 29 items, it uses a 7-point Likert scale with responses ranging from *very true of me* to *not at all true of me*. Means and standard deviation were used to establish level of motivation for self-selected reading in English. Interpretation of the means and standard deviation was reported in the format of a 5-point scale from *very low* to *very high*.

The Scholastic Reading Inventory™ is a Lexile reading testing program administered at BCIS four times each academic year, and used to build a profile of individual students reading achievement. The SRI is a series of Lexile tests linked to the Lexile Framework® (MetaMetrics, 2016) consisting of 10 levels of tests, of progressively increasing difficulty, with two alternative tests for each difficulty level. All questions on every level of the test are identical in style and format. Students read a short paragraph from an authentic Scholastic text and respond to a close question with four possible multiple-choice answers (Scholastic Inc., 1999). The raw test score is converted into a Lexile score using the Lexile Framework®.

SRI Lexile tests are administered to BCIS student according to their reading level, and not by their grade level. Therefore, students in a particular grade level will not necessarily all take the same level of Lexile test; rather they will take the

appropriate level of test for their reading level. This is determined by their performance in their previous Lexile tests.

Means and standard deviation were used to establish level of reading achievement, and reported in the format of a 3-point scale consisting of *below grade level*, *on grade level* and *above grade level*. The scale was developed from a Scholastic produced student placement guide which determines placement by grade level (Scholastic, 2009).

Academic achievement in this study is the average of a student's individual percentage scores for all classes studied, as reported on the Quarter 1 Report Card, for academic year 2015-16. The subjects studied at each grade level (grades 8-12) are broadly similar. Students at each grade level studied the core subjects of Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. In addition, each grade level studied a foreign language class, Bible class, and in general, two elective classes. Elective classes include: Information Technology, English Practicum, Physical Education, Fine Art, Performing Arts and Home economics. Means and standard deviation were used to establish level academic achievement, and reported in the format of a 5-point scale from *fail* to *excellent*.

The sample for the study consisted of 83 high school students, grades 8-12, at Bangkok Christian International School in Bangkok, Thailand, during Semester 1 of academic year 2015-16. Questionnaires were completed between 14th September and 6th November 2016. SRI Lexile reading tests were conducted between 14th and 15th September and report card grades were collected from Quarter 1 report cards for the period of 5th August to 2nd October academic year 2015-16.

The data was analyzed using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (r) with the primary purpose of investigating the significance of the relationship between self-selected reading in English and academic achievement. However, the significance of a variety of relationships among these variables was tested for (refer to primary research objectives and additional research objectives above for details). An additional important aim of this study was to investigate the significance of the relationship between motivation for self-selected reading in English and reading achievement, and in turn, reading achievement and academic achievement. The purpose was to establish if, within the context of this study, motivation for self-selected reading in English could be used to predict reading achievement, and in turn, if reading achievement could be used to predict academic achievement.

Findings

From the analysis of data, the findings were as follows:

Primary Research Objectives
1. The respondents as a whole had a moderate degree of motivation for self-selected reading in English.
2. The respondents from grades 8, 9, 11 and 12 were reading on grade level, while respondents from grades 10 were reading below grade level.
3. A moderate, positive relationship was found between the respondents' motivation for self-selected reading in English and their academic achievement.

Additional Research Objectives

4. The respondents from grades 9, 11 and 12 had a high degree of general self-efficacy for learning and performance, while respondents from grades 8 and 10 had a moderate degree of general self-efficacy for learning and performance.
5. The respondents' levels of academic achievement from grade 11 and 12 is *excellent*, in grade 8 and 9 it is *good*, bordering on *excellent*, and in grade 10 the achievement is lower being *good*.
6. A strong, positive relationship was found between the respondents' motivation for self-selected reading in English and their reading achievement (Lexile scores).
7. A strong, positive relationship was found between the respondents' motivation for self-selected reading in English and general self-efficacy for learning and performance.
8. A strong, positive relationship was found between respondents' motivation for general self-efficacy for learning and performance and their academic achievement.
9. A strong, positive relationship was found between respondents' reading achievement and their academic achievement.
10. A strong, positive relationship was found between the respondents' reading achievement (Lexile scores) and their motivation for general self-efficacy for learning and performance.

Conclusion and Discussion

A primary aim of this study was to investigate the significance of the relationship between motivation for self-selected reading in English and academic achievement in grades 8-12 students at Bangkok Christian International school. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to analyze the data, and the results indicated a significant, albeit moderate, positive relationship between the two variables. Increased motivation for self-selected reading in English correlated with increased academic achievement.

This finding is consistent with a previous study at BCIS on elementary level students, in which a significant relationship was found between pleasure reading in English and academic achievement (Lwin & Lynch, 2015). Similarly, Lyengar and Ball (2007), in their report for the National Endowment for the Arts found that reading for pleasure strongly correlated with academic achievement, particularly in the area of Language Arts.

This study however took a broad view of academic achievement, defining it as a student's average report card percentage grade, calculated from all academic classes studied, therefore; the findings of this study suggested that reading achievement has a broader impact on academic achievement than just on Language Arts grades, or even core subject grades.

An additional important aim of this study was to investigate the significance of the relationship between motivations for self-selected reading in English and reading achievement, and in turn, reading achievement and academic achievement. The resulting data for the relationship between motivation for self-selected reading in

English and reading achievement indicated there was a significant, strong, positive relationship of the two variables. Increased motivation for self-selected reading in English correlated with increased reading achievement (Lexile reading scores). In terms of the relationship between reading achievement and academic achievement the resulting data indicated there was a significant, strong, positive relationship of the two variables. Increased reading achievement (Lexile reading scores) correlated with increased academic achievement.

These findings are consistent with Cullinan (2000), who found a positive relationship between the amount of free reading students do and reading achievement, particularly in regard to achievement in vocabulary and reading comprehension. Similarly, Mason (2006), found self-selected free reading beneficial for reading achievement. Furthermore, this study's findings are consistent with Baştuğ (2014) who found that reading comprehension in four core subjects correlated with academic achievement. Moreover, Baştuğ found that reading attitudes significantly predicted reading comprehension, and in turn, reading comprehension significantly predicted academic achievement. This study supports Baştuğ's findings and concludes that, in relation to this study, motivation for self-selected reading in English is potentially an important factor in predicting reading achievement, and that in turn, reading achievement is potentially an important factor in predicting academic achievement.

In regard to general self-efficacy for learning and performance, this study found that general self-efficacy for learning and performance correlated positively with increased motivation for self-selected reading in English, reading achievement and academic achievement. Therefore, for respondents in this study, these three factors were underlined as important in building respondents' confidence and belief in their own abilities to perform well in academic classes. In regard to reading achievement and academic achievement this finding was not wholly surprising, as the BCIS curriculum, especially in core subject classes, is largely delivered through the medium of McGraw-Hill American textbooks. The level of text difficulty in these books is quite high, especially for non-native speakers of English, and therefore, reading achievement would be expected to be a significant factor in predicting students' text comprehension ability, and therefore, their personal beliefs about their ability to perform well in academic classes. Likewise, academic achievement would be expected to correlate positively with general self-efficacy for learning and performance. However, it is interesting that there was a strong, positive correlation between motivation for self-selected reading in English and general self-efficacy for learning and performance. In and of itself, motivation for self-selected reading in English indicates only an attitude towards reading, and points to a particular habit of reading; it does not directly indicate a level of performance in reading in English. Therefore, it is quite possible that this particular finding adds further weight to the argument that motivation for self-selected reading in English, is a significant factor in predicting reading achievement, and therefore it correlates strongly and positively with general self-efficacy for learning and performance.

At BCIS, High School students participate in a sustained silent reading program, Drop Everything and Read (DEAR), for 15 minutes each day. The main purpose being to introduce students, especially non-readers, to the joy of reading for pleasure with the intention of fostering a genuine interest in meaningful reading through

interaction with interesting texts. However, anecdotal evidence from teachers suggested there is mixed response from students to this program, with some students reporting that the program is boring or pointless. The AMSSRQ item 'I like reading during DEAR time' received a neutral response with a mean score of 3.87, and with only 12% of respondents reporting a score of 7 *very true of me*. However, for those respondents who were motivated to read in English for pleasure the rewards were significant, and went beyond simply the intrinsic pleasure gained in reading something interesting, and translated to the academic reward of higher levels of reading achievement.

Recommendations

The recommendations of this study are intended for Bangkok Christian International School stakeholder groups – administrators, teachers, students and parents – to better understand the value and importance of self-selected reading in English in relation to student academic achievement. From this position of greater awareness, it is hoped that a schoolwide systematic approach to reading instruction, involving the wider school community will develop, which will ultimately result in higher levels of student achievement.

Recommendations for Administrators, Teachers and School Stakeholder Groups
The school administration should adopt improving student engagement with self-selected reading in English as an educational priority for BCIS. Professional development sessions must be planned and delivered to present the evidence for the benefits of self-selected reading in English, and crucially, teachers must be persuaded of the academic benefits in order to become positive advocates and role models within new and existing school plans, programs and initiatives.

School administration needs to purchase additional resources for the DEAR program, and make sure suitable high interest reading material is readily available in both the High School Library and in homeroom classroom libraries. Training needs to be provided in the use of tools and strategies that promote self-selected reading in English to students, and the effective implementation of their use, needs to be continually monitored and evaluated.

Teachers have the most crucial role in school in promoting self-selected reading in English to students, and must take responsibility for encouraging students to read of their own volition, and to support students in self-select reading material which is pertinent and relevant to their own interests. The engendering of a positive attitude in students towards self-selected reading in English relies in part on teachers becoming advocates of the benefits, and positive role models within school programs. Teachers and school administration have to develop new ways to incentivize, promote and reward student participation in self-selected reading in English, as well as improving the monitoring and rewarding of students for gains in reading achievement.

All faculty members need to share the responsibility of being the reading teacher, and develop course materials, supplementary materials and instructional strategies that ensure all students are comprehending the taught curriculum, irrespective of individual levels of reading achievement. Teachers have to give due consideration to the level of reading difficulty of assessments, both formative and summative, to

ensure that assessments are genuinely and equitably assessing student learning, and ensure that the course assessments themselves, do not partially become a test of reading comprehension, with only those students who have high levels of reading achievement being able to understand the questions and perform well.

Finally, the school must see partnering with parents as a vital component in getting students to engage in self-selected reading in English. School days are largely filled with structured academic study, and although there is a DEAR program operating at the school for 15 minutes each day, the main purpose of this program should be to whet the reading appetite of students so they continue with the habit of self-selected reading, independently and autonomously, in their leisure time, in the home environment. To this end, the school should disseminate information to parents on the value of self-selected reading in English. The school should also offer parenting workshops that prepare and equip parents to support the school in this important educational goal.

Recommendations for Future Researchers
This current study has a small sample size which limited the generalizability of the study, and therefore, broadening the study to other international schools in Bangkok, and across Thailand, would be beneficial to ascertain the validity of this study's findings and applications.

It would also be interesting to extend this research to other schools that offer different curricula, and which deliver their teaching and learning through a variety of different means and approaches to those employed at BCIS, to see if similar findings are produced in these settings.

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