The Use of Running Dictation Technique to Improve Mathayom 1 Students' Spelling Ability at Ban Koh Mee School

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Abstract

Spelling is a key functional component of writing, however, the conventional spelling test where the students only memorize and spell the words that teacher says are quite boring to the students. Students are also less motivated and not interested in memorizing words. Based on previous studies, running dictation had a positive effect on spelling ability. Thus, this study was to find out whether the running dictation technique is more effective than conventional spelling tests in improving students' spelling ability. The methodology of this study was qualitative research where class interviews were used and quantitative research method to find out pre-test and post-test, mean and t-test scores. The sample consisted of 28 students of Mathayom 1 students in Ban Koh Mee School. After getting the data, the researcher analyzed the data using SPSS 20 and paired t-test. The research findings showed that there was no significant difference between conventional spelling test and spelling test after running dictation. Several reasons might be the cause of the unexpected results, students' character and many words to memorize. Suggestions include focus on only one type of target words, set one control group and experimental group, and sample selection according to students' cooperation and readiness.

Keywords: running dictation, conventional spelling test

Introduction

English serves as an international language or lingua franca around the world. English is the most spoken language that people can use to communicate with each other. In Thailand, English is used as a foreign language but plays an important role in businesses in a global context, and for those who seek professional advancement (Talerngsrie, 2019). Although English has been taught in Thailand for a long time, and many schools have tried to improve their English curriculum, there are still problems of teaching and learning the English language in Thailand. Students lack confidence and also lack of opportunity to use English in their daily lives (Somdee & Suppasetseree, 2013)

In studying the English language, writing skill is important to master and apply in daily lives. It is one of the ways to communicate with others, to express ideas clearly and directly to readers. To master writing skill, it must first start with spelling words. According to Gentry and Gilet (1993) spelling is a tool for writing. Learning spelling helps writing to become easier, more expressive, easily read and understandable. Spelling is also one of the main elements of learning any writing system (Zakiyah & Husniah, 2017). According to Benyo (2014) spelling is necessary in written language, because any mistakes in spelling can lead to miscommunication. Therefore, correct spelling of words is crucial to convey the intended meaning.

Due to the importance of spelling in learning English, the English teacher in Ban Koh Mee school also gives spelling tests to Mathayom 1 students in a conventional way. Students are given the days to memorize the target words and then test spelling. Students are poor in spelling, also the conventional spelling test where the students only memorize and spell the words that teacher says are quite boring to the students. They are less motivated and not interested in memorizing words. In order to solve this problem, running dictation would be a good technique to let students get out of their seats and to memorize the words in a fun and active way (Nurdianingsih & Rahmawati, 2018) It is indeed suitable for Mathayom 1 students who like to run around the classroom, not just sitting down to learn. Furthermore, running dictation is a well-established activity which engages students in learning spelling. It is student-centered and appeals to students with a variety of learning styles (Milne, 2014)

Literature Review

1. Conventional Spelling Test

Conventional or traditional spelling test refers to an assessment that is used in the classroom to memorize a list of vocabulary words. Normally the teacher reads a small piece of text aloud and the students write down what is being said and memorized. Then, students need to check their text and correct the errors they made (Holly, 2022) Conventional spelling tests work well in the classroom because it can be done with any level depending on the text used, can be graded easily and require very little preparation. It increases students' ability to notice the spelling errors and absence of articles which they commonly make (Using dictation, n.d.)

Vocabulary lists and conventional spelling tests are often used in classrooms to teach English in Thailand since the primary step of English language acquisition is often seen to be strengthening vocabulary. Students are taught vocabulary by memorizing the spelling and repeating words spoken by their teachers, which are passive learning strategies (Kirkpatrick, 2012) Teachers traditionally focus on teaching children to memorize words

rather than helping children internalize effective spelling strategies (Loeffler, 2005) Furthermore, it is often difficult for students to memorize English vocabulary and it can be forgotten rapidly. Sometimes when the teacher says the words, the students are confused because they do not know what the teacher said. Besides, the students feel bored and less motivated with conventional spelling methods (Pratiwi et.al., 2021)

2. Running Dictation

Running dictation is a way of dictation that focuses off the teacher and onto the students themselves. It integrates listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. It is a good idea to start a class. Hess (2001) as cited in Yulia and Agustiana (2020) describes that it is the technique where the students work in groups to dictate the sentence. There is the runner and the writer in each group. The students as a runner must run to memorize the sentence that has been prepared by the teacher and back to his/her group, then the writer must write down what they heard. This makes students more enjoyable and excited in the learning process. Council (2008) as cited in Zakiah and Husniah (2017) running dictation is a fun technique that motivates students at higher and lower secondary level. Therefore, students do not get bored. It has also been applied in many teaching learning processes and successfully proves that it improves student's ability in any skill.

Milne (2014) stated that there are two phases in running dictation, dictation phase and the correction phase. For the dictation phase, a text is placed on the wall. Then, the students are then grouped in pairs. One of them is the writer and the other is the runner. The runner goes to read and remembers the text as much as possible, and then returns to the writer who listens and writes down what has heard. This cycle continues until the dictation is complete. For the correction phase, correction can be handled in different ways. Mile (2014) suggested that the students can check the text together and try to identify any errors. After that, the whole text is read to them while they check and correct. Finally, the students will be given the complete text to check the spelling again.

According to Nurdianingsih and Rahmawati (2018) steps of doing running dictation are first putting some copies of text on the wall, whiteboard or blackboard which are available in the classroom. Second, students are divided into groups. Third, a student in the group will be selected as a writer and the others will be runners. Fourth, the first runner has to run, read the text on the wall and remember it. Then, he comes back to his group and tells the writer about what he remembers. The writer writes it down. Fifth, the second runner takes turns to do the same activity that the first runner did before and the other runners also do it until the text has finished dictated. After all of the groups have finished, students in the group take the original text and do corrections for what they have written.

3. Spelling Ability

Spelling is the ability to arrange letters in the correct order to make words that are understood by others and considered as one aspect of literacy (reading, writing and spelling) (spelling, 2017) It is an essential ability to master a language because it allows the clear expression of thought in any written text (Okyere, 1990) It is a skill which requires a learner to possess a number of language abilities, including phonological, morphological, visual memory skills, semantic relationships as well as adequate knowledge of spelling rules (Staden, 2010) Writing a word in correct spellings is the first stage in vocabulary building. Correct spellings are necessary for clear communication. In addition, a sentence, a paragraph, a letter or an essay written in wrong spellings shows lack of competence in English (Bakshi, 2014)

To develop spelling ability, first it needs articulation. Articulation is the clarity of speech sounds and spoken language. A person needs to be able to say a word correctly in order to be able to write it. If a person cannot articulate a particular sound they may end up writing the word the way in which they say it. Second, phonological awareness. A person needs to be able to know how sounds go together to make words, the individual sounds in the word and be able to break words into their individual sounds. Knowing the syllables of a word will help to spell words with more than one syllable. Third, understanding spelling rules. Understanding spelling rules will help in attempting words. Fourth, recognition of 'sight words' (tricky words). These words are the words that frequently appear in a person's vocabulary that are unable to spell out. If a person is able to read these words, they will be more successful at spelling them (spelling, 2017)

4. Related Research

Several researchers in the past have conducted research on the running dictation and spelling ability. Zakiyah and Husniah (2017) conducted a research aiming to investigate the effect of running dictation towards students spelling in writing short functional text at SMP Islamic Qon among seventh grade students with a total 44 students. For this paper, the researchers chose the sample of the study through population sampling, with 22 students as control group and 22 students as experimental group. The data was collected by using pre-test and post-test. The result has shown that a running dictation strategy is effective on students' spelling in writing ability. The students were also motivated in learning writing.

Nurdianingsih and Rahmawati (2018) conducted research aiming to know whether or not the implementation of running dictation technique could be an effective technique in teaching writing skill. The data analysis technique is applied by using the t-test formula. The study compared between pre and post treatment which is using running dictation technique. The result shows that the implementation of running dictation can improve

students' writing, memorizing and communicating, and it also improves students' creativity during teaching and learning process.

Another similar research was conducted by Ahmad (2020) to find out the effect of using running dictation as a brand new approach for building writing skills for the tenth graders in Nablus private schools. The study sample consisted of 22 students for the experimental group and 22 students for the control group. The data was collected by using pre-test and post-test and analysed by t-test. The results showed in favor of the experimental group using a running dictation strategy.

Research Problem

Students in Ban Koh Mee school are poor in spelling. It is hard and less motivated when it comes to the spelling test section. The conventional spelling test where the students only memorize and spell the words that teacher says are boring to the students. They are not interested in memorizing words. As a reason, this study was conducted to find out whether another technique that is running dictation is more effective than conventional spelling tests in improving students' spelling ability or not.

Methodology

The methodologies used in this research were mix-method, qualitative research where class interview was used and quantitative research method where mathematical calculation was used to process the data to find out pre-test and post-test, mean and t-test scores. The study and details of research methodology were presented as follows:

1. Population and Samples

The population of this study was Mathayom 1 students in the second semester of academic year 2022 in Ban Koh Mee school. The sample in the study is 28 students. It was taken by using the purposive sampling technique. Mathayom 1 class was the only class in Ban Koh Mee School, so there is no control group in this research. Compared to Mathayom 2 and Mathayom 3 students, Mathayom 1 class consisted of the most students, so Mathayom 1 students were selected as the sample in this study.

2. Duration of the Study

The study was conducted in the months of November, December and January during the second semester of the academic year 2022 with a total of three pre-tests, three conventional post-tests and three running dictation post-tests.

3. Procedure of the Pre-test and Two Techniques

3.1 Pre-Test

Before starting the unit, students were required to have a spelling test for the target words. The teacher read the words loudly, students listened and wrote it on a

piece of paper. One mark was given to the one alphabet letter that was spelled correctly in a word.

3.2 Conventional Spelling Test

The target vocabulary words were taught first by the teacher in each unit. Students were taught how to read the words and the meaning of it. The target words were reviewed each time until the teacher finished the unit. After that, students were given two days to memorize the spelling and a spelling test was given to students to see how many alphabet letters that students can spell correctly. The teacher read the target words out loud, students listened and wrote it on a piece of paper. One mark was given to the one alphabet letter that is spelled correctly in a word.

3.3 Running Dictation

The target words were written on the paper and pasted on the wall. Students were divided into groups with 5 students. One student was the writer and other students were runners. The runners ran towards the paper to memorize the words, and ran back to the writer to spell the words. This cycle continues until all the words are written. Then, some time was given to students to check the words that they wrote. After running dictation, a spelling test was given again to check individually how many words they can spell correctly. The target words were read out loud, and were written on a piece of paper. One mark was given to the alphabet letter that was spelled correctly.

3.4 The Words Used to Test Students

The words that were used for this research were taken from the textbook Access 1. Access 1 is the textbook that was used to teach Mathayom 1 students. The words were taken from Module 4 in the textbook. 10 adjective words were chosen from unit 4a, 10 phrases were chosen from unit 4b and 6 similes were chosen from unit 4f. The adjective words were chosen because it was important for students to know how to spell and use these words, so that they can use it to describe people in daily life. The phrases and similes were chosen in unit 4b and unit 4f because learning phrases helped students to see the picture of the group of words, memorize the words and apply it better. Table 1 below shows the words that are chosen to test students.

Table 1: The vocabulary words used in this research.

Module 4		
Unit 4a My family	Unit 4b Day in, day out	Unit 4f Literature
1. cool	1. get up	1. as busy as a bee
2. kind	2. have breakfast	2. as quiet as a mouse
3. sweet	3. go to school	3. as slow as a snail
4. clever	4. have lunch	4. as wise as an owl
5. friendly	5. do homework	5. as playful as a kitten

Module 4		
Unit 4a My family	Unit 4b Day in, day out	Unit 4f Literature
6. noisy	6. do the shopping	6. as strong as an ox
7. funny	7. watch a drama	
8. naughty	8. go jogging	
9. caring	9. have dinner	
10. trendy	10. go to bed	

4. Data Collection

4.1 Pre-test

Pre-tests were done three times on 4 Nov, 14 Nov, and 2 Dec before the teacher started to teach each unit. The words were read out loud and students wrote the words on a piece of paper. One score was given to the alphabet letter that was spelled correctly. The pre-test format is shown in table 2 below.

Table 2: The pre-test format of the research.

Pre-test		
Unit 4a My family	Unit 4b Day in, day out	Unit 4f Literature
1. c _ _ _	1. g _ _ _ _	1. as b_ _ _ as a b_ _
2. k _ _ _	2. h _ _ _ b _ _ _ _ f _ _ _	2. as q _ _ _ _ as a m_ _ _ _
3. s _ _ _ _	3. _ _ _ _ s _ _ _ _ _	3. as s_ _ _ as a s_ _ _ _
4. c _ _ _ _ _	4. h _ _ _ l _ _ _ _	4. as w_ _ _ as an _ _ _
5. f_ _ _ _ _ ly	5. _ _ h _ _ _ w _ _ _	5. as p_ _ _ful as a k_ _t_ _
6. n _ _ _ _	6. _ _ s _ _ _ ping	6. as s_ _ _ _ _ _ as an _ _
7. f _ _ _ _	7. w_ _ _ _ a d_ _ _ _	
8. n _ _ _ _ ty	8. _ _ _ _ _ ging	
9. c _ _ _ _ _	9. h_ _ _ d_ _ _ _ _	
10. t _ _ _ dy	10. _ _ _ _ b_ _	
Total scores: 40	Total scores: 70	Total scores: 40

4.2 Post-tes

4.2.1 Conventional Spelling Test

Conventional spelling test was tested by 28 students in Mathayom 1 by memorizing and spelling the target words. The teacher read the target words out loud, and the students wrote. Target words orders were rearranged and not in the same order as pre-test. It was tested three times on 11 Nov, 21 Nov and 9 Dec after the teacher finished each unit. Total scores for target words in unit 4a was 40, unit 4b was 70 and unit

4f was 40.

        4.2.2 Spelling Test after Running Dictation

The same group of words were tested after running dictation with the same groups of students. This spelling test was done a month after students finished the conventional spelling test. Running dictation first, then students tested for the spelling test immediately to see whether their spelling ability improves or not. It was tested three times for different units on 15 Dec, 26 Dec and 9 Jan. Total scores for target words in unit 4a was 40, unit 4b was 70 and unit 4f was 40.

5. Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics and paired sample t-tests are used to analyse the data. The mean scores difference between pre-test and post-test score of two techniques are calculated. Then, paired t-tests are used to calculate the mean scores of two techniques from the same group by using SPSS Statistic 20 to know the significance of each technique.

Results and discussion

The mean scores difference between pre-test, post-test of conventional spelling test and spelling test after running dictation are calculated using SPSS 20 and shown in the tables below. Paired t-tests are used to calculate the mean scores of two techniques from the same group to know the significance of each technique.

1. Results

1.1 Gender of the students

Mathayom 1 in Ban Koh Mee school consists of 28 students which include 14 male students and 14 female students as shown in table 3.

Table 3: Gender of the students

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	14	50%
Female	14	50%
Total	28	100%

1.2 Mean Score

Table 4 shows the score of students in pre-test and post-test of conventional s

pelling test, and spelling test after running dictation in unit 4a. The sample of this research is expected to be 28 students, but due to the absence of students in some periods of class, so samples who have done all pre-test and post-test unit 4a are 22 students. With a total score of 40, the mean score of the post-test for the conventional

method (posttestC) is 16.95 and for the running dictation (posttestR) method is 17.64, both scores are higher than the pre-test which is 4.18 as shown in table 4.3.

Table 4: Score of students for pre-test and post-test unit 4a

No.	Pre-test	Post-test (conventional spelling test)	Post-test (spelling test after running dictation)
1	6	36	31
2	3	15	9
3	0	0	11
4	9	23	5
5	0	7	13
6	0	10	0
7	1	24	36
8	0	18	14
9	7	27	30
10	0	10	6
11	6	24	21
12	0	26	33
13	3	25	23
14	7	25	22
15	24	36	40
16	3	0	27
17	3	9	11
18	3	0	0
19	0	16	11

No.	Pre-test	Post-test (conventional spelling test)	Post-test (spelling test after running dictation)
20	0	0	5
21	17	39	40
22	0	3	0

Table 5: Mean score of pre-test and post-test unit 4a

Unit 4a	Mean
Pretest	4.18
PosttestC	16.95
PosttestR	17.64

For unit 4b, the score of pre-test and post-test of conventional spelling test, and spelling test after running dictation are shown in table 6 below. The sample of this research who joined all pre-test and post-test unit 4b is only 17 students out of 28 students, because there is high absenteeism due to the rainy season and also end of the year. With a total score of 70, the mean score of the post-test for the conventional method unit 4b is 26.41 and for the running dictation method is 29.12, both scores are higher than the pre-test which is 7.29 as shown in table 7.

Table 6: Score of students for pre-test and post-test unit 4b

No.	Pre-test	Post-test (conventional spelling test)	Post-test (spelling test after running dictation)
1	31	70	60
2	7	38	7
3	0	13	8
4	0	16	39
5	2	39	4
6	4	4	28
7	0	16	0

No.	Pre-test	Post-test (conventional spelling test)	Post-test (spelling test after running dictation)
8	6	24	27
9	0	0	31
10	11	28	32
11	0	23	44
12	33	57	50
13	12	64	64
14	3	36	50
15	0	10	22
16	12	11	29
17	3	0	0

Table 7: Mean score of pre-test and post-test unit 4b

Unit 4b	Mean
Pretest	7.29
PosttestC	26.41
PosttestR	29.12

For unit 4f, the score of pre-test and post-test of conventional spelling test, and spelling test after running dictation are shown in table 7. The sample of this research who joined all pre-test and post-test unit 4f is only 16 out of 28 students. The low attendance of students is due to the rainy season, flooding at home and in the year end mood. Three students with all pre-test and post-tests results with zero marks were omitted, leaving 13 students. With a total score of 40, the mean score of the post-test as shown in table 7 for the conventional method unit 4f is 9.44 and for the running dictation method is 9.31, both scores are higher than the pre-test which is 3.25.

Table 8: Score of students for pre-test and post-test unit 4f

No.	Pre-test	Post-test (conventional spelling test)	Post-test (spelling test after running dictation)
1	0	1	0
2	23	31	39
3	6	13	12
4	2	0	4
5	2	27	5
6	0	11	0
7	0	0	13
8	2	0	0
9	0	9	8
10	2	31	37
11	9	27	31
12	6	0	0
13	0	1	0

Table 9: Mean score of pre-test and post-test unit 4f

Unit 4f	Mean
Pretest	3.25
PosttestC	9.44
PosttestR	9.31

By comparing the mean score of these three units, it shows that students tend to spell better for 10 adjective words in unit 4a, followed by phrases in unit 4b and then similes in unit 4f. Phrases and similes are more challenging for students.

1.3 Paired T-test Results

Paired t-test was conducted using the SPSS 20 program to find out the significance difference between pre-test and post-test of two techniques and shown in table 4.4. From the table, the results showed that either conventional spelling test or spelling test after running dictation activity was significantly different than pre-test. All of the significance values were lower than 0.05, it meant both conventional spelling tests and running dictation were effective and improved students' spelling from a very low pre-

test to a more than 500% improvement.

Table 10: Paired t-test between pretest and post-test of two techniques

		Sig.(2-tailed)
Pair 1	Pretest4a-posttestC4a	.000
Pair 2	Pretest4a-posttestR4a	.000
Pair 3	Pretest4b-posttestC4b	.000
Pair 4	Pretest4b-posttestR4b	.000
Pair 5	Pretest4f-posttestC4f	.026
Pair 6	Pretest4f-posttestR4f	.036

Furthermore, paired t-test between post-test of conventional spelling (posttestC) and spelling after running dictation (posttestR) for unit 4a, 4b, and 4f was done to check the significance difference. From the result in table 11, all the significance values are higher than 0.05, with significance values 0.965, 0.475 and 0.950. If the significance value is higher than 0.05, there is no significant difference between these two techniques.

Table 11: Paired t-test between post-test of two techniques

		Sig.(2-tailed)
Pair 1	PosttestC4a-posttestR4a	.965
Pair 2	PosttestC4b-posttestR4b	.475
Pair 3	PosttestC4f-posttestR4f	.950

Discussion

The conventional and the running dictation technique both show improvement in students' spelling tests compared to the result before learning. These techniques are important in students' spelling progress. Conventional method increases students' ability to notice the spelling errors and absence of articles which they commonly make by memorizing (Using dictation, n.d.) whereas running dictation is more student-centered and appeals to students with a variety of learning styles (Milne, 2014). It is best if the running dictation techniques integrate in conventional learning, it makes the outcome even more perfect.

However, the running dictation technique is expected to have a greater effect in students' spelling tests (Nurdianingsih and Rahmawati, 2018) in this research, but the results show differently than what is expected. Several reasons might be the cause of the unexpected results. First, the character of the Mathayom 1 students. The students enjoy running dictation activities at first, but the second and third time, students feel bored with this activity and the spelling test. Some naughty students tend to create chaos in the classroom by adding the alphabet letter on the words or new words in the paper during the running dictation activity. Some also copy the words on their hands without memorizing the words properly and tell the writer. Some tend to sit down without doing anything because they feel less motivated to do it. Due to that, students cannot memorize well and the spelling test results don't show great improvement.

Second, there are many words to memorize. Although running dictation activities can help improve students' spelling ability and alphabet recognition, students still can't memorize all the words in a short time for the spelling test if there are many words. In addition, the spelling test after running dictation activity was done one month after students finished their conventional spelling test and without any review on vocabulary words. The students only depend on the running dictation activity to review the words they have learned one month before. Compared to the conventional way, the teacher reviews the vocabulary words each lesson for that unit before students have their conventional spelling test. By looking at these two techniques, it seems the running dictation technique is still better than the conventional way. It is because running dictation is done without reviewing the vocabulary words by the teacher and one month after the teaching is conducted, but the spelling test result after running dictation shows no significance difference than conventional way and both mean scores show slightly different only.

Conclusion and Suggestions

In conclusion, the spelling test after running dictation technique in this research doesn't show a significant difference compared to the conventional spelling test although previous research has shown and experimented the effectiveness of running dictation techniques towards spelling ability (Zakiyah and Husniah, 2017) This might be due to the uncooperativeness of students in doing the research, many vocabulary words that were used and techniques that were not suitable. The findings of this study have to be seen in light of some limitations. When conducting the study, insufficient sample size occurs due to the rainy season and flooding. The sample size is lower than expected. Moreover, there is no control group and experimental group in this study because there is only one Mathayom class in the school. These affect the precision of data in this research.

Few ways are suggested to improve the research. It would be better if the researcher focuses on only one type of target words, it's either a single word, or phrase or simile. Other than that, it is better to have two classes with the same level to do the research, one class is a control group and the other is an experimental group. Both are taught for the unit, do revision for the vocabulary words and both implement different treatments at the same time. Besides, students' readiness and cooperation to be a sample of research are also essential. Thus, selection of students with readiness and cooperation helps research to hit the jackpot.

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