

Factors Affecting the Promotion of a Reading Culture in Thailand ¹

Aurasri Ngamwittayaphong

1. Introduction: Thai people don't like reading

“Thai people don't like reading” is the social report that we have heard continuously via various media for decades. A survey of the people's book reading habits conducted in 2003 by the National Statistical Office, which was assigned by the government to gather basic information about this, found that out of the 57.8 million people over 6 years old, there were 35.4 million readers, or 61.2%, and 22.4 million non-readers or 38.8%. (Matichon, 2003). The National Statistical Office's 2008 report stated that outside study/work time, Thai people read approximately 39 minutes per day. (National Statistical Office, 2008). In 2009, the Thai government therefore declared **reading as a national issue** that must be seriously promoted. In fact, in the decade since the education reform of 1999 public and private agencies as well as business corporations have given importance and consistent support to reading promotion. However, reading seems to remain a minority interest and a social challenge that has not yet been solved and seems difficult to tackle.

This article will present information and opinions that the author obtained from research into what factors would be required to promote a love of reading among Thai people to the point that reading becomes part of their culture and lifestyle. The researcher's definition of “**reading culture**” is “the behaviour of continuous reading until it becomes a personal habit covering all areas of one's way of life (work, recreation, the search for knowledge and wisdom, communication, etc.), in which the reader sees the value and benefits of reading and hence also teaches or promotes reading to others”. The word “**reading**” in this article means not only the literacy or the ability to read books, but also reading that leads to the development of the readers' ability to think in various ways such as imagining, analyzing, criticizing interpreting, etc. because such reading is the only way to build people, build the nation and build the future of Thai society.

2. Retracing the movement to promote reading among Thai people

The research's literature review found that the Ministry of Education was the state agency with the main role as the important mechanism in reading promotion. This was because reading was a matter under their direct responsibility of providing education from the basic level to ensure all Thais' literacy and to enable them to use reading as a learning tool in

¹ Arranged and adapted from the research results of Aurasri Ngamwittayaphong, Kanittha Pavenayothin, and Kanokwan Sae-Jang “A study of factors enabling and inhibiting the creation of a reading culture: A case study of the Reading Culture Promotion Programme”, sponsored by: the Reading Culture Promotion Plan, The Thai Health Promotion Foundation (ThaiHealth), research conducted by: The Internal Monitoring and Evaluation Project in the Reading Culture Promotion Plan – Institute for Wholistic Management, 2010

higher levels. In the past decade, the Ministry of Education stated that they had succeeded in solving the literacy problem of Thai people nationwide but the essential remaining task was to encourage Thai people to read more.

The public sector's promotion of the reading habit among Thai people began seriously in 1999 as part of education reform. The Ministry of Education's reading promotion was in the form of annual programs/projects:

- 1) Programme to promote reading activities for children, youth and the general public
- 2) Programme to improve learning centres with projects to promote the development of library management services; support for core networks; living library development; and development of public libraries and learning resources.
- 3) Programme for public relations associates to promote reading

Apart from the Ministry of Education, the Thai government in 2005 also established a new agency, the Thai Knowledge Park (TK park), under the Office of Knowledge Management and Development (Public Organization), the Prime Minister's Office, to promote reading, thinking and learning via the creation of living libraries as the prototype of modern learning centres. In another key movement to promote the love of reading among Thais 32 organizations from the public and private sectors, including the business sector and non-governmental organizations united under the name "*Book Network for Children, Youth and Families*" to move forward the "books for children" strategy. This comprised four aspects: a strategy for book distribution to children; a campaign to promote the desire to read and reading behaviour; promotion of quality books at appropriate prices; and protection of children against harmful media and eradication of obstacles to reading. This network's drive led to an important change in 2009, when the Ministry of Education set up a committee for the promotion of reading to create a learning society. The Ministry also successfully proposed to the Cabinet on 5 August 2009 to set reading promotion as a national agenda item and to make April 2 of every year "Reading Day". The Ministry also assigned a sub-committee to formulate the three key reading promotion strategies.

- 1) To develop Thai people's reading ability
- 2) To promote Thai people to have a reading habit
- 3) To create an atmosphere and environment conducive to reading

The government also declared 2009-2018 the Decade of Reading and assigned the Committee for the Promotion of Reading as the driving mechanism for reading promotion.

3. Who Does What and How to Create a Reading Culture

With regard to the form or method of promoting reading among Thai people, it was found that, in the first phase, the Ministry of Education emphasized children in the school system, from the primary to higher secondary level. The mechanism to drive forward the reading promotion policy was therefore schools under the Department of General Education, which later came under the Basic Education Commission. In 2005, the target group was expanded to educational institutions under the Departments of Vocational Education and Non-formal Education while public libraries were established and operated under the supervision of the Department of Non-Formal and Informal Education (NFE). The

mechanisms to promote reading among more target groups expanded to vocational institutions and non-formal learning centres. Strategy activities were under the supervision of the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Education until the year 2009 when a structure to support reading promotion for the creation of a lifelong learning society was established and headed by the Committee for the Promotion of Reading.

Reading promotion guidelines in the first phase focused on creating activities directly promoting reading to engage the target group, students, to read more. Schools were used as the mechanism to create activities within school so that students would love reading and subjects taught in class were also used in the reading promotion process. For example, the arrangement of 15 minutes reading time for students throughout the school to read together, which could be on daily basis or on certain days as appropriate. Schools also created an environment conducive for regular reading such as setting up reading corners in classrooms, book recommendations, setting up exhibitions about books and reading, organizing reading or writing contests, awards to the best readers and reading schools, providing sufficient books for teachers, students and school personnel to choose etc. Many schools put these guidelines into ongoing practice but there were no figures to indicate exactly how many schools had implemented the project and what the results were.

Besides pushing for Thai people to love reading via schools, the government's role in reading promotion in the past decade also extended to obtaining the cooperation of the private sector, such as the collaboration with CP Seven Eleven Public Company Limited, Siam Cement Foundation etc. Many interesting activities therefore emerged, such as a project called "Bring Good Books to Thai Children" to publish good books at cheap prices so parents can access good books that children around the world had enjoyed reading; a project to promote authors of books for small children, and the "Book Start" project aimed to create a reading culture by instilling the love of reading from early childhood.

4. Proactive Work, Expanding Target Areas

The government's important mechanism in the proactive promotion of reading culture in the latter part of the past decade has been TK park, established in 2005 with the new idea and approach of making reading activities up-to-date, modern and creative – unlike the former image. TK park integrated reading with thinking and the search for knowledge by ways such as enlivening libraries to motivate people to seek knowledge, think and learn creatively for life through reading and other new and different activities. Besides direct services, TK park also arranged activities to promote factors supporting reading such as organizing librarian training, hosting living library contests, creating materials and children's books, gathering and developing a body of knowledge, and adopting the role of supporter in knowledge management, concepts and practical guidelines from reading promotion from numerous research studies.

The TK park therefore was the agency that systematically and comprehensively promoted reading, especially when compared with other agencies. This possibly resulted from the fact that the organization was established with a clear mission and a non-bureaucratic management approach. It was thus more independent and flexible in operating

creatively than under the bureaucratic system. A clear example was that while libraries in general had the image of being “repositories of books (which no one read)”, the TK park’s living library, located in the Central World Shopping Mall, was a good quality library attracting large numbers of people. The number of new members in 2007 increased to 21,693 and the daily service use rate by walk-ins and TK park members was as high as 296,147 in the same year. It also produced research demonstrating the reading issues in Thai society.

In addition to the role of TK park role, after the Thai government had declared reading as a national agenda item, the Health Promotion Foundation (ThaiHealth), which had an essential role in pushing this issue onto the national agenda, directly supported the establishment of the “Reading Culture Promotion Programme” as an important mechanism linking the public sector, civil society etc., who are stakeholders in creating books and organizing activities to reach children, youth and families. It also gave special importance to the promotion of reading among the underprivileged and community-level reading so that reading would help create spiritual well-being and learning, and build a reading culture in Thai society. The programme strategy included activities at various levels and forms such as collaboration with state agencies and the private sector to train reading promoters as change agents. The programme also supported production of materials and the distribution of quality, cheap books suitable for the development and needs of children, youth and families. It also supported organizations in various areas nationwide to organize reading promotion activities and support people’s access to good quality reading resources etc.

In conclusion, continuous attempts from organizations and agencies in society promoted a reading culture among Thai people. Four factors were given importance: the promotion of producing good books and materials; the creation of distribution channels to reach children, families and communities; the training of reading promoters; and reading promotion activities including research on these factors.

Information obtained from the literature review combined with a study of follow-up reports for the Reading Culture Promotion Programme, prompted the researcher to question whether the abovementioned factors were sufficient to create a reading culture among people in communities and whether there were other pieces to the jigsaw. In order to answer such questions, the researcher looked for additional information by an in-depth study of interesting cases under the Reading Culture Promotion Programme which were successful to a certain degree in the community.² The synthesis found some initial facts that further clarified details of the creation of a reading culture and indicated **factors that the researcher considered important to the creation of a reading culture**. However, since this research was limited in time and data, the researcher would like to present these findings as a conceptual framework or theoretical assumption, leading to further study about the creation of a reading culture.

² The “Creative Book Box” reading campaign by the Rabudbai Group in Ranong province and the “Where’s the folk tale?” reading campaign by the King Kan Bai Group in Uttaradit province, sponsored by: the Reading Culture Promotion Programme, Thai Health Promotion Foundation (ThaiHealth)

5. The Necessary Conditions in Promoting a Reading Culture

Necessary conditions mean the most important or essential factors to create the desired result. In this case, the desired result is a culture of reading, not only “reading” at the individual level, but also the creation of a culture of a group of people –a family or a community – therefore involving systems of value, belief, transfer, reproduction and innovation. The study found that the promotion of reading culture had two essential or necessary conditions, which must be seen as important and must be present in the work process of agencies organizing reading promotion activities.

5.1 Having a social relations structure supports reading activities

True and sustainable continuous reading needs support from the system of relations, which must be informal rather than formal, and free, comfortable and friendly – be it at home, school, library, reading corner etc. Although we already know that the physical space is related to reading, this study confirms that physical structures must have an atmosphere of social relations or informal relations, which make people feel comfortable and free and also feel that they are not being deliberately stimulated to read. People feel at ease in a friendly atmosphere and feel that they can read books without worrying that they might be criticized or that they have to read within a designated time period etc.

The study also found that projects which gave importance to the development of social relations in the reading promotion process at home, school, or mobile library, such as the Rabudbai Group’s project in Ranong, obviously helped the continuous and progressive development of the reading habit. Success was clearly shown in the social relations among family, friends, activity organizers etc., despite the fact that the physical resources of libraries, books etc., were simple and did not require a huge budget.

When considering the process of culture emergence and development in general, it was found that in order for something to be maintained as a culture, it must occur in the midst of people’s learning. People will transfer knowledge and learn from one another unknowingly in the manner of absorbing (value system, belief system). So reading promotion in schools, which often uses formal activities such as integrating reading into the subjects taught in class, well-arranged libraries, the arranging of specific reading times etc, does not guarantee the emergence of a reading culture, if the activities neglect to create relations among persons involved in the reading culture creation process. Moreover, if such activities take place within the teacher-student power relation, it will be difficult for reading behaviour to continue outside school, making continuous reading behaviour in people’s way of life, as stated in the definition, out of question.

From this synthesis, the promotion of reading culture must encourage the gathering of social groups at home, in school, in business establishments etc., with the condition that they must be informal, comfortable and free. Therefore, *it is not necessary that reading promotion must start off with reading activities such as the setting up of readers’ club, library activities etc.* Organizers should create reading behaviour through other activities or arrange activities focused on gathering the target group members by their topic of interest. Then organizers can

link reading to that activity, especially by making it in line with the needs and wants of the people's lifestyle (studying or taking an exam, career, entertainment etc.) and by holding it in an atmosphere of good relations among group members at home, in school, in the community, in business establishments etc.

We can also initially assume from the study that social relations have an influence on the creation of a reading culture because relations in a group help create fun in reading and support knowledge transfer and exchange as well as resulting in the expansion of ideas and imagination. It also often takes place unknowingly in the manner of absorption; hence the target group might not be able to say when they started to love reading.

5.2 Mechanisms support, stimulate and follow up reading

Another necessary condition linked with the one above (5.1) involves a mechanism comprised of persons with good relations with the target group, who encourage the target group to feel comfortable, not stressful or serious, and act in a friendly way during the reading activity. However, the study and initial conclusion indicated that, in order to bring about the reading culture, the individual mechanism to promote it must have certain characteristics:

(1) They must have a previous good relationship and familiarity with the target group. Parents or adults with whom the children were familiar or to whom they were close were appropriate persons. However, persons outside the family, if acquainted with them, could also be the reading promotion mechanism. Moreover, such familiarity (with family members or outsiders) must not only make the target group experience closeness and trust, but also see the aptitude, wants, habits, nature and context of the target group. This is because information about the target group is important in designing activities appropriate to the target group's nature and allows reading promotion activities to be more suitable for their condition (wants, likes, beliefs etc.). This would ensure a more sustainable creation, development and absorption of the culture. So support for the project from those who already have this social capital increases the chances of success.

(2) They must have a good understanding of the learning process and know that reading was one channel among many channels of human learning (such as listening, watching, doing etc.). Each channel has its strong and weak points and different appeal. From the case study, it was noticed that the activities by the Rabudbai Group showed an understanding of learning; hence it was able to promote the learning process through well-selected content and stimulation methods and generate a lot of reading in the target group. Especially when linked with an understanding of the target group's nature, habits and basic characteristics as mentioned in (1), it makes reading delightful, fun and impressive for the target group. If this occurs continuously, it can be absorbed as a system values reading, leading to behaviour, persistent values and culture.

(3) They must have abilities and skills in management enabling them to work according to plan and follow steps to create learning, and be flexible to change and able to solve problems arising from activities and the learning process by managing available

resources including the social capital and funds from outside organizations (such as the government, development organizations, business sector, local administrative organizations etc.). The case study of the Rabudbai Group found that the group had advanced management skills – not only in administration but also the ability to manage the learning process and recognize the importance of follow-up activities. These were important in adjusting various factors to be dynamic in inducing learning. The degree to which the activity organizer could adapt and apply depended on their understanding of the learning process and their ability to manage towards the goal.

6. Sufficient Conditions to Promote a Reading Culture

Even when necessary conditions are in place, a lack of sufficient conditions will negatively affect the chance of achieving the desirable result, because necessary conditions are able to achieve a result only when linked or integrated with sufficient conditions. This study found that the following sufficient conditions to promote a reading culture.

6.1 The existence of both direct and indirect activities to promote reading

“Activities” are regarded as the space that allows learning through the reading promotion mechanism, as stated in (5.2), to create learning. They also help the development of social relations among people. Hence activities are important in supporting and accelerating the development of relations and further learning. However, the study found that activities to promote the creation of a reading culture must have the following important characteristics.

(1) Activities must be varied in order to respond to the target group’s diversity; reading can be integrated harmoniously into these activities. The study found that activities did not need a direct emphasis on reading in name or in content. They could be activities that the target group was already interested in and then reading could be linked to the things that the target group liked or was interested in. Therefore the activity organizer must have the ability and skill to link the activity to reading and make use of other things that the target group is interested in and wants to learn.

(2) Activities must link reading to the nature of children, who were the target group in the case study. Activities are successful because the activity organizer had a good understanding of learning and the nature of children’s learning. Knowing that the children had curiosity and imagination, they organized activities that stimulated these characteristics and linked them to reading. They made reading the way to respond to curiosity and to expand children’s imagination; therefore reading behaviour occurred smoothly and naturally rather than by force, control, or assignment, which yielded a specific and unsustainable result. Methods of giving rewards or marketing tactics applied in some activities from the private sector did not yield similar sustainable results. Moreover, the result of linking reading to curiosity and imagination was that reading also became a tool to create and further stimulate the target group’s ideas and imagination. Reading in this case was not just to read words and read them well, but also to develop a person’s quality of thought and ability.

(3) Activities, in order to be successful, must analyze the family and community context so that they are appropriate and suitable for the specific conditions and are managed according to the context. Organizers should not just use the same activity over and over to anyone anywhere, but apply and adapt in a learner-centred manner. For the activity organizer mechanism to create an activity, they must have social relations and social capital with the target group and their context (family and community). Therefore it was hard for the training of reading volunteers to avoid developing the characteristics stated in (5.2). This is especially true when the aim is to get reading volunteers who do not just help people read words but also read to develop their quality of thought etc.

(4) The promotion of a reading culture, especially at the community level, must seek local support from individuals and organizations. If an activity can link to supporting factors in the community, the chance of success is greater. Therefore the activity mechanism, be it a person or an organization with funding, must have social capital in the form of trust from the community. Having that condition in place boosts the chance of the activity being sustainable. However, activities directly promoting reading might not be a sufficiently wide base to seek co-operation, therefore activities must link reading to other things that support community activities.

(5) The study quite clearly found that it would be hard for reading to become a culture, if reading promotion activities did not create an impact in people's minds such as delight, happiness or pride. Since it is human nature to pursue happiness, participating in activities must initially create delight and happiness; therefore activities directly aimed at promoting reading tended to be less successful, especially among target groups who were not familiar with reading or thought that reading was boring.

6.2 Sufficient Resources and Quality

The more diverse the quality of resources used in a reading promotion activity, the more chance there is to create continuous reading because the variety opens the space for more diverse thinking and imagining. This was especially true in the case of activities which organizers could link to reading to stimulate curiosity and imagination. Although sufficient resources are a matter of great importance, the study found that resources were a secondary factor. The case study showed that, to have the necessary conditions, social relations and effective mechanisms, helped promote reading behaviour more continuously than resource quality. In some case studies, handmade books that were not beautiful could better stimulate reading and create imagination. Therefore, giving the main emphasis to developing book quality might actually be less important than developing innovation in activities to promote social relations and reading. (A handmade book by a mother, for example, will have more impact on the child's mind according to a case study)

The data from abovementioned study results yields this figure:



Enabling Factors for Reading Culture

Necessary Conditions (grey box)

Sufficient Conditions (dashed line box)

1 : Structures Supporting Reading

Physical Structure

1. Physical environment conducive to reading
2. Accessible and attractive

+

Social Structure

1. Reading takes place in various levels of social relations (family, school, friends and etc) together
2. Relations are horizontal
3. Group members participate (in thinking, doing, developing and adjusting)

2. Amount of Resources (materials - activities)

Books, reading materials etc

1. Sufficient in number to meet demand
2. Variety of form and content
3. Good quality, suitable to age, development and maturity
4. Readers have the opportunity to select books themselves
5. New supplies are rotated on at the appropriate time

Reading Promotion Activities

1. Appropriate in number for participants and sufficient to meet demand
2. Appropriate to age, sex, educational background, life context and community context
3. Creative activities arranged to open more reading spaces

3. Mechanism to Support, Stimulate and Follow up Reading

Mechanism to Support and Stimulate Reading

1. Working team with clarity to push forwards and adjust activities
2. Process to analyze the context and situation to design appropriate activities
3. Target group and related parties participate in mechanism
4. Process to externalize lessons and exchange learning on mechanism to develop activities

+

Mechanism for Follow-up and Assessment

1. Process to follow up and promote potential and skills for activity mechanism
2. Activity to follow up the learning process in reading of activity participants
3. Follow-up and assessment process to be concluded periodically
4. Activities are improved and extended from the follow-up and assessment

The Culture of Reading

“The behaviour of continuous reading until it becomes the person’s habit covering all of his/her lifestyle areas, in which readers see the value and benefits of reading hence also teach or promote reading to others”

Behaviours and Values

- 1 Spending more time to read voluntarily
- 2 Expanding to read more diverse content
- 3 Changing the pattern of free time spending to reading
- 4 Using reading as a channel to seek knowledge by oneself
- 5 Spending more money on reading
- 6 Giving the books that one likes to others or giving books as presents to others
- 7 Membership of a reading club
- 8 Organizing reading promotion activities for others or having one’s own reading club
- 9 Regular participation in reading club activities
- 10 Organizing reading promotion activities for others

Necessary Conditions

7. Observations and Recommendations

The study of factors enabling a reading culture, through synthesis of data obtained from a literature review and monitoring and assessment of reading promotion activities as well as in-depth case studies, yielded some observations. The researcher therefore would like to make the following recommendations for activities to promote a reading culture.

7.1 The creation of a reading culture at the community level needs a deep understanding of the community context, hence the reading promotion mechanism, be it an individual or organization, must have knowledge and understanding of the community's learning process, community culture, and techniques for community work in order to create activities suitable to the real context of the community way of life. Undifferentiated operations based on the same blueprint or focusing only on the desirable activity (in this case, reading books) which ignore the community context and conditions narrow the chance of success.

In addition, some factors promoting reading are different from one another, especially between the reading promotion factors for individuals and those for communities. The latter are more difficult and complicated and depend greatly on knowledge and understanding of the community context.

7.2 The study found that various activities still had a rather unclear definition framework of the word "reading". Some suggested it was book reading while others included reading in other media such as the internet, digital materials etc. More importantly, the goal of reading was also unclear; some activities focused on literacy and reading words well or spending more time in reading, whilst the ultimate goal of reading promotion must make it clear that "reading" means reading that leads to development of the quality of life. It should be a channel of learning that enables individuals to "think and read" and take more responsibility for their own lives. In other words, reading should be for the development of people's knowledge and potential in various thinking skills (such as criticizing, analyzing, imagining etc.), which are important benefits that are better served by reading than by other learning channels (such as listening and watching).

This observation came from the research and literature review which found that a considerable number of activities gave weight to the promotion of literacy or reading fluently, to reading more pages, and to spending more time on reading. Although the reading skill is important, it is the basic duty of the education manager (the Ministry of Education), therefore other agencies should step beyond that to promote reading at the level of thinking, reading to open up a channel of learning etc. The lack of clarity in this point results in activities that lack any model to develop readers' thinking potential. Even the meaning of the phrase "reading culture" remained unclear because the word "culture" itself was still understood differently in many dimensions and connotations of meaning. There is therefore still the chance that there are different understandings. As for the author, reading at the level of being a culture is not reading by the individual but a reading culture contains the keywords of group-formation, sustainability and continuous development.

(4) Reading promotion activities should distinguish between target groups so that the promotion is suitable and appropriate. From the study, it was noticed that clear classification of the target group had an effect on inventing and organizing activities in such a way that they would better respond to needs. This is because the activities of different groups may have similar necessary conditions but different sufficient conditions. Target groups might be classified in at least three ways, and the reading promotion activity organizer should analyze what kind of activity his/her target group wanted in order to develop their reading, as followed:

A. Activities for new readers: These activities help those who read very little and are not good at reading to have the skill and ability, gain a good impression, and see the fun and the importance and value of reading more.

B. Activities for existing readers: These activities help those who already have reading skills and can read fluently to further expand their reading habits and conditions and to love and benefit from reading until reading becomes a bigger part of their way of life.

C. Activities for frequent readers: These activities help those who already love reading and usually read a lot to further develop their thinking skills such as analyzing, criticizing, imagining etc. from reading, so that they could further develop their potential into writing, analyzing and extending ideas from reading etc.

(5) Another important tool to develop in the process of promoting a reading culture is creating qualitative indicators that allow follow-up and self-assessment by concerned parties. This is because working to promote a culture is a continuous mission that would take time. Working without indicators to guide or reflect changes will obstruct work progress. However, the indicators created must be able to truly reflect changes, so they must come from a true understanding of the factors and conditions related to reading, the value of reading and the understanding of cultural dimensions.

(6) More research should be conducted to seek information on creating innovations to support the promotion of a reading culture in parallel with new media changes. Since social relations are a necessary condition for creating a reading culture, research on reading promotion in line with the online community or social media would therefore be useful and important to the present and future changes of reading culture development.

(7) The campaign for a new image and value of reading should also be given importance, in order to eradicate the old image. The study found that “reading” in Thai society retained the myths that obstruct the promotion of a reading culture such as the ideas that reading is boring, reading is not fun, reading is a channel to find information and knowledge (not a channel for fun or pleasure), reading is a matter for students not for daily life etc. Therefore research should be conducted to get information that would support a change in attitude, in parallel with activity organizing. This should not be a campaign without activities to back it up nor activities without supporting work to promote a change in attitude in society.

Conclusion : Think big, don't think small

This article was composed and adapted from research and readers of this article will find that the abovementioned enabling factors for the promotion of reading culture are still micro factors found from a synthesis of activities organized by organizations and agencies in Thai society in the past. When considering “**reading**” as a “**national agenda item**”, the thinking and starting point of this important matter should be from the macro level and thoroughly linked to other important structures, organizations and systems in society. It should particularly link with education, the media and the economy, which have important roles in creating the values, beliefs and culture of society these days. We cannot think only at the micro level (individuals and communities). On the contrary, we must give importance to strategy formulation at the macro level because the factors in this level are significant in creating the enabling or obstructing factors for the birth or death of a reading culture.

Wasn't it the education system that made Thai children not like reading? Because the children were forced to read and remember what they read to survive in exams, Thai children threw their books away after graduation. If the government and our society wanted “**readers**” whose reading will help create well-being and build the nation, we seriously need to formulate macro-level strategies for various factors and conditions to create an operational master plan for promoting a reading culture in Thai society.

So in the next ten years, the expression “*Thai people don't like reading*” will be completely eradicated.

References

(Research)

Books

- Committee for the Promotion of Reading to Create a Learning Society. (2009). *Setting strategies to promote reading for the creation of a lifelong learning society*. Office of Non-Formal and Informal Education Promotion, Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education.
- Suphannee Warathon and Chonthicha Sutthinirankun. (2006). *Research on reading promotion activities for pre-teen youths*. Bangkok: Thailand Knowledge Park (TK Park).
- Atchara Pradit. (2007). *Inviting Thai children to be readers (1) The TK reading promotion book set*, Bangkok: Thailand Knowledge Park (TK Park).
- Acorn Marketing and Research Consultants Co. Ltd. (2008). *Executive summary of the research project about Thai people's reading attitudes and behaviour*. Bangkok: Thailand Knowledge Park (TK Park).

Theses

- Chaiphop Seriphon. (2007). *Reading promotion activities at St. Stephen's International School*, Master's Thesis, Ramkhamhaeng University, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Library and Information Sciences.
- Thanchita Rattanatham. (2005). *The promotion of outstanding reading promotion activities at award-winning secondary schools in Educational Area 8*, Master's Thesis, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, Faculty of Education, Department of Educational Administration.
- Bunta Nanthawakun. (2003). *Psychosocial factors influencing the reading behaviour of lower secondary students*, Master's Thesis, Srinakharinwirot University, Faculty of Science, Applied Behavioural Science Research.
- Phuangphet Bongbut. (2007). *Participatory action research to promote the love of reading among students of Ban Na Phra School under Nakhon Phanom Educational Area 2 Office*, Master's Thesis, Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University, Faculty of Education, Curriculum and Instruction Programme.
- Phaijit Saijan. (2007). *Factors influencing the reading behaviour of Prathom 6 students at schools on Meuang Uttaradit Municipality, Uttaradit Province*, Master's Thesis, Uttaradit Rajabhat University, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Department of Research and Development.
- Mallika Khongphan. (2005). *Assessment of reading campaign at schools under Singburi Educational Area Office*, Master's Thesis, Thepsatri Rajabhat University, Faculty of Education, Department of Educational Administration.

Other documents

Mathichon Newspaper, 19 September 2003, 23rd Year, Volume 1205.

Online database

Chanajai Dechawitthayaphon et al. (no date). *Study comparing Thailand's reading promotion policy to that of other countries*, Retrieved 29 August 2010, TK Park database.

Chutima Sacchanand. (no date). *The management of living library*, Retrieved 29 August 2010, TK Park database.

Namthip Wiphawin (no date). *The inspiration creation to instil the love of reading*, Retrieved 29 August 2010, TK Park database.

Siam Cement (SCG) Foundation. (no date). *Project for early childhood development with books under the Project for Children and Youth*, Retrieved 30 August 2010, <http://www.scgfoundation.org/th/childrenAndYouthCat.asp?id=2>.

Siam Cement (SCG) Foundation. (2008). *2008 Annual Report SCG: Opportunities for a good future*, Retrieved 30 August 2010, SCG foundation database.

National Statistical Office of Thailand. (2008), *Initial summary of a survey of the Thai population's reading behaviour*, Retrieved 20 December 2010, National Statistical Office of Thailand database.

Thailand Knowledge Park. (2007). *2007 TK Park Annual Report*, Retrieved 29 August 2010, TK Park database.

Sujit Suwaphap. (no date). *Research on teens' reading promotion guidelines*, Retrieved 29 August 2010, TK Park database.

Suphanee Warathon and Chonthicha Sutthinirankun. (no date). *Research on reading promotion activities for pre-teen youth*, Retrieved 29 August 2010, TK Park database.

Formal interviews

Suphot Ongwandi, Organizer of "Book Box Creative Material" reading campaign by the Rabudbai Group, Ranong province, 10 October 2010 and Royal City Hotel Bangkok, 20 December 2010.

Wattanawadi Phumchai, Advisor of "Book Box Creative Material" reading campaign by the Rabudbai Group, Ranong province, 10 October 2010 and Royal City Hotel Bangkok, 20 December 2010.

Rossukhon Phasukun, Official, Chiang Mai Reading Operation Project by the Institute of Alternative Education, Chiang Mai Public Library, 30-31 October 2010.

Yingpong Mansap, Official, Chiang Mai Reading Operation Project by the Institute of Alternative Education, Chiang Mai Public Library, 30 October 2010.

Phattharika Sirichan, Volunteer, Chiang Mai Reading Operation Project by the Institute of Alternative Education, Chiang Mai Public Library, 30-31 October 2010.

Muhammedharis Gayem Haris, Organizer of "Where's the folk tale?" reading campaign, King Kan Bai Group, Friday Hotel, Uttaradit province, 13 November 2010.

Informal interviews with project participants

Interview with teachers and students at the Chiang Mai Reading Operation Project by the Institute of Alternative Education, Chiang Mai Public Library, 30 October 2010.

Interview with parents and young children in Bang Kluai Nok Community from the “Book Box Creative Material” reading campaign by the Rabudbai Group, Bang Kleuy Nok Community, Ranong Province, 10 October 2010.

Interview with parents and young children in Ban Na Community from the “Book Box Creative Material” reading campaign by the Rabudbai Group, Ban Na Community Ranong Province, 10 October 2010.

Interview with parents from the “Where’s the folk tale?” reading campaign by the King Kan Bai Group, Thairat Wittaya 5 School, Uttaradit Province, 14 November 2010.

