

教育部教學實踐研究計畫成果報告
Project Report for MOE Teaching Practice Research Program

計畫編號/Project Number：PGE1110373

學門專案分類/Division：通識(含體育)-通識課程

計畫年度：☒111 年度一年期 ☐110 年度多年期

執行期間/Funding Period：2022-08-01 - 2023-07-31

Reading to Connect: Adding “Meaningfulness” Ingredient into Reading Recipe

讀中生智：大班級英文閱讀「意義化」

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成果報告公開日期：☐立即公開 ☒延後公開（統一於 2025 年 7 月 31 日公開）

繳交報告日期(Report Submission Date)：2023 年 9 月 20 日

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1. Research Motive and Purpose

Trends in higher education continue to highlight the importance of reading skills for student learning (Fernald, 2004; Bharuthram, 2012). Not only is reading one of the most important academic tasks that students must utilize, reading is the foundation of all formal education as “literacy in academic settings exist within the context of a massive amount of print information” (Grabe, 1991, p. 389), with students accessing information primarily through reading. For EFL students, reading is rather more of a challenge, as the vast majority of scholarly publications, as well as information in both print and online, are in English (van Weijen, 2012; McCarthy & Richter, 2019). English accounts for 44.29% of printed information production in the world (Lobachev, 2008). This linguistic dominance is also clearly present on the Internet. While it is difficult to determine exactly what percentage of the Internet is in English, the estimates for the most part are around 55% (McCarthy & Richter, 2019). Thus, for students to not only gain access to but to learn from these sources, they will need the language ability and critical skills to decode the language and comprehend the reading materials in English. English reading helps students to immerse themselves in the culture of the discipline and facilitates learning the conventions, discourse, skills and knowledge of that discipline (Erickson et al., 2006). Realising the importance of English reading and critical reading skills, there has been a strong push in pedagogical design to move away from solely focusing on form and instead to a more communicative use of content.

Along with the pedagogical challenge in English reading classes, new problems are also introduced due to the emerging phenomenon of increasing class size resulting from budgetary concerns (Hornsby & Ossman, 2014). In many countries like France, Italy, and the USA, sizable classes larger than 100 can be found (Mulryan-Kyne, 2010; Cash et al., 2017). One drawback to this is that learning outcomes generally decrease as class sizes increase (Kokkelenberg et al., 2008), for student proficiency differences and low motivation in general courses are commonly observed in sizable classes. The class size limits teachers from tailoring class pace to address individual needs and providing sufficient opportunities for meaningful practice and interactions between teachers and students and that among students, thus leading to student low motivation. Therefore, this study aimed to develop instructional means to tackle these issues and reinforce student cultivation of reading skills, critical skills, and student engagement in large-sized English reading classes.

To achieve these, a “meaningfulness” ingredient was added to the English reading recipe through the conjunction of two teaching approaches—Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Blended Learning (BL)—into an integrated pedagogical method, termed Task-Based Blended Learning (TBBL). In terms of adding meaningfulness, two measures were taken: (1) design learning tasks with real-life goals and contextual learning settings and learner-relevant themes to foster meaningful communication and (2) adopt both online and face-to-face classroom teaching to offer a more flexible and feasible means of learning for self-paced learning and hands-on application to increase the likelihood of transforming learning into mastery of skills.

A combination of large class sizes online with face-to-face classroom teaching is becoming more commonplace. Online learning by itself has been shown to be uncondusive for learning and interaction (Chen & Looi, 2007; Koutropoulos et al., 2012; Friedman, 2020), but a combination of online and in-class learning has been shown to be even more effective than sole in-class instruction. While there have been some initiatives to merge TBLT and online instruction in pedagogical frameworks (Dodi et al., 2021; Khojah & Thomas, 2021; Tavakoli & Loth, 2021), these are comparatively sparse, and specialized discourse on their application to ELF reading is notably lacking. Thus, with ever-growing class sizes, developing strategies to make courses like these more engaging and educational will have a significant impact on the institution as a whole. With a foundation in

pedagogy, this study has the potential to produce results that can be replicated or adapted to a variety of other classes.

2. Research Questions

This study incorporated blended learning into a large English reading course, focusing specifically on designing task-based learning into the face-to-face teaching component of this course. Here, a large English reading class refers to a class with more than 50 students. The class, *Reading to Connect*, was designed mainly to help undergraduate students develop fundamental strategies for reading English academic texts more critically. In addition to reading skills, one of the main focuses was to encourage students to develop their own views through reading, with the goal of team collaboration and communication in learning tasks. This sizable course was reflective of trends in higher education, with a large course relying on a blended learning approach rather than an online-only approach to increase student engagement and learning. Here, the impacts of TBBL on students' English reading, critical skills, and learning motivation are investigated. With this in mind, the research questions for this study are as follows:

- (1) Can TBBL enhance students' learning in sizable English reading classes?
- (2) Can TBBL enhance students' critical skills in sizable reading?
- (3) Can TBBL enhance students' learning motivation in sizable English reading classes?

3. Literature Review

(1) Learn to Read, Read to Learn

A wealth of research in applied linguistics and reading research has shown a strong correlation between reading proficiency and academic success at all ages, with an overall consensus that poor reading skills lead to poor academic performance (Vacca et al., 2011). Readers need to employ a variety of strategies, or techniques, to facilitate their comprehension, and these strategies are "deliberate actions that students take in order to facilitate the learning, recall of both linguistic and content area information" (Chamot, 1987, p. 71).

In reading, students deploy strategies to facilitate information acquisition, storage, and subsequent retrieval (Hasnain & Halder, 2023). These reading strategies are pivotal for student comprehension to facilitate the construction of meaning, arming them with the requisite tools for effective reading. To become meta-cognitive readers, Ali and Razali (2019) discuss strategies from the perspectives of cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies. The former comprises planning and goal setting, tapping prior knowledge, asking questions and making predictions, constructing gist, and monitoring revising meaning, whereas the latter includes problem-solving reading strategy, global reading strategy, and support reading strategy. New and Aye (2019) view reading strategies as types of reading, determined predominantly by the purpose of the reading. By their notion, categories of strategies comprise skimming and scanning, word-attack skills (i.e., techniques to recognize the meaning and function of language elements in a text), text-attack skills (i.e., interpreting a text as a whole, using all the clues available), identifying main ideas and supporting details, summarizing, interpreting discourse markers, and interpreting non-verbal features of discourse. Regardless of what and how they are phrased, this active process of using strategies to extract meaning from text is perceived as the crucial elements for developing student reading comprehension, as firmly explained by Banditvilai (2020).

In discussing the vital skills necessary for evolving into a critical reader, Bloom's taxonomy, first introduced in 1956, looks at knowledge and skills from an alternative angle, that is, those needed for different learning objectives. This version of skill presentation has maintained its significance in the educational field ever since. In this framework, Bloom put forth six different learning objectives (Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation) categorized into

three domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. Consensus among educational researchers, such as Stapleton (2002), supports the notion that tasks promoting critical thinking skills are instrumental in language acquisition. Bloom's Taxonomy has been widely popular among generations of teachers and applied across a broad range of age groups, from kindergarten to the college level. The Hierarchy of Bloom's Taxonomy can be beneficial to learners to address their higher-order thinking skills (Liao, 2009, Pakpahan et al., 2021). Stefanou et al. (2004) add a nuanced perspective by suggesting that cognitive autonomy support is essential for student engagement and that mastering lower levels of cognition serves as a foundation for achieving higher-level skills.

The utility of Bloom's Taxonomy gains further relevance with the advent of technological applications in education like BL and Flipped Classroom Model. Specifically, the taxonomy was revised in 2001 to comprise six tiers, which are now described using verbs rather than nouns: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). This revised taxonomy, when applied to BL settings, allows for a more robust exploration of knowledge and skills at the higher levels of cognitive functioning. Notably, these higher-level skills are reinforced in the classroom through collaborative learning experiences involving both peers and instructors. The revised taxonomy also separates types of knowledge used in cognition, thereby enriching its applicability in contemporary educational settings.

Understanding the critical roles of reading strategies to academic success, concerns arise as empirical evidence has shown relatively low overall reading comprehension among university students (Bharuthram, 2012; Nel et al., 2004; Pretorius, 2000). Given this, tertiary institutions have been striving for effective means to cultivate students to be critical readers; in these endeavours, one unanimity is evident: mastering a target language is markedly more effective when undertaken within a learning context that is both meaningful and purposeful (Anderson & Eggington, 2015; Hasnain & Halder, 2023). Previous theories of teaching and learning in the domain of EFL like Grammar Translation predominantly focused on form, thus employing a lexical, grammatical or notional-functional reading syllabus, and adhering to the Presentation-Practice-Production synthetic paradigm (Maftoon & Saeid, 2012). In such an instructional milieu, students were exposed to "simplified" dialogues or textual passages, given intensive practice, and gradually provided with the opportunity to use the target language often constituting pseudo-communicative language (Long, 2015). Recent pedagogical approaches like the Communicative Approach and Content-Based Instruction have demonstrated a pronounced shift from an exclusive emphasis on structure towards a more communicative engagement with content, underscoring the notion that gaining a better understanding of the world as one primary goal of reading (Bharuthram, 2012).

Following this shift, instructional countermeasures are proposed. Typical examples are the utilization of authentic materials and contextual interactions to furnish students with contextual information about current events and global affairs in an attempt to not only offer insights into their reading but also act as a stimulant for discussions and learning tasks (Tsai, 2011). From this reasoning, authentic reading materials provide a basis for students to comprehend what they read, but to also use the content communicatively to express opinions and contribute to the formation of world view. To meet the expectations of using authentic materials, providing sufficient practice, and learning to communicate and communicate to learn, TBLT comes into play.

(2) Task-Based Language Teaching

The introduction of communicative language teaching (CLT) in the 1970s aims to unpuzzle the nature of language and its acquisition and has widely affected how language is learned and taught. CLT is generally conceived as a philosophical approach, rather than a method (Richards & Rogers, 2001), as the theory of learning is not explicitly discussed. Rooted in the philosophical rationale of CLT, TBLT is considered an extension in that it provides more insights into the theory of learning (Willis, 1996; Long, 2015).

In TBLT, tasks are the centrepiece of learning. A widely referenced definition by Nunan (1989) delineates a communicative task as classroom work where learners engage with the target language, emphasizing meaning over structure. As also explained by Richards and Rogers (2001), “tasks are believed to foster the processes of negotiation, modification, negotiation, modification, rephrasing, and experimentation, that are at the heart of second language learning” (p. 229). Hence, the proponents of TBLT argue that tasks create an optimal environment for learners to effectively utilise their language skills, enhancing second language acquisition (SLA). In light of this rationale, tasks are essentially real communicative encounters that serve as catalysts for second language (L2) learners to impart information, as articulated by Bialystok (1983). This notion is further supported by SLA research, stressing that L2 is often learned, but less acquired. L2 can only be acquired through meaningful interactions and purposeful communications; tasks provide the “process” needed for learning to transform into acquisition (Richards & Rogers, 2001; East, 2017).

Regarding the categorisation of tasks, a diverse classification system has been presented. Nunan (1989) outlines two broad classifications, with further distinctions made within these based on language functions and cognitive processes or knowledge hierarchies. Long (1989), on the other hand, classified tasks based on topics, requisite language skills, or the nature of the task’s outcome, whether predetermined or open-ended. Moreover, Pica’s team (1993) differentiates tasks based on the direction of information flow, yielding types such as jigsaw tasks, information gaps, problem-solving, decision-making, and opinion exchange. Although the precise definition of a task remains debated and the categorisation of tasks varies, there exists a collective recognition of their fundamental characteristics. They are anchored in non-linguistic-specific objectives, prioritize processes, harness one or more of the four core language skills, and resonate with genuine language use.

Efforts have been made to incorporate TBLT in EFL reading classes (e.g., Chen, 2018; Duong & Truong, 2022; Keyvanfar & Modarresi, 2002; Nguyen, 2022). In Chen’s research in 2018, TBLT was applied in an intermediate reading course at a private university in Taiwan. The 18-week course, meeting biweekly, aimed to bolster reading comprehension, fluency, confidence, and motivation. In another study, Keyvanfar and Modarresi designed twenty hands-on tasks in a beginning English reading class in Iran. Both studies have suggested that the implementation of TBLT and learning tasks positively impact learner engagement, authentic language use, and confidence

Notwithstanding the widespread adoption of TBLT in EFL classrooms, two concerns are often the topics of public discussions in TBLT-relevant literature. First, while it might seem that TBLT prioritises communicative fluency over accuracy and complexity, a focus on form and grammar has been growing in support of contemporary SLA research. Nunan (1989) posits that these elements are essential resources in using language communicatively. Such focus, encompassing strategies like consciousness-raising and form-focused instruction, integrates modified interactions that underscore the interplay of L2 form, meaning, and function (East, 2017; Pica, 2001). Willis (1996), among those theorists in support of form-focused interventions, extends the description of tasks by characterising tasks as purpose-driven activities where learners employ language to attain tangible results. She proposes a more explicit framework, which is most commonly cited and employed by classroom teachers, primarily because of its practicality and straightforwardness (see [Appendix 1](#)). In her framework, pre-task, task, and report phases are designed. The pre-task phase familiarises learners with the topic and the task to be performed. In the task phase, learners carry out meaning-focused tasks. Finally, during the report phase, learners allocate time to prepare their presentation. Concurrently, attention is directed towards heightening awareness of linguistic elements and ensuring accuracy. Therefore, this public reporting can motivate students to produce accurate and fluent language (Willis and Willis, 2017), moving from private to a more public interaction (Loumpourdi, 2005). While many educators appreciate Willis’ model for its simplicity, concerns persist regarding the adequacy of the language input provided (Sato, 2009). The issue under discussion is the perceived “disconnect between language input and output tasks” (Leeming & Harris, 2020, p. 216). To respond to the concern, the inclusion of input-based tasks is revisited and highlighted (Ellis, 2017). Leeming

and Harris (2020) further propose the *Integrated Input Output Framework for TBLT* to deliberately introduce language for utilisation in a subsequent output task. All in all, the recent scholarly discussions on TBLT have primarily centred around the characteristics and structure of tasks, aiming to capitalize on the strengths of this approach while rectifying its potential drawbacks.

Also, the selection of task topics presents an additional challenge. Freire (1997) conceptualises themes as concrete manifestations of concepts, challenges, or obstacles that are “knowable object” for both teachers and students (p. 8). In his 2005 work, a refined categorisation of themes is provided, where themes are divided into broad and narrow themes. Broad themes encompass universally relevant subjects within a variety of units, whereas narrow themes are designed to cater to the specialized requirements or interests of a particular demographic. In alignment with Freire, Shor also includes generative themes as the first theme type, subsequently followed by topical and academic themes. The former pertains to crucial social inquiries, whereas the latter is rooted in the discipline-specific needs of students or the structured knowledge within a teacher’s domain. These different proposals suggest two main observations: firstly, that the needs of students serve as a central criterion for theme selection, whether for the purpose of establishing reader relevance or boosting student motivation; and secondly, that the types of themes play a role in determining the types of material chosen. Hence, the emphasis on fostering meaningfulness—through finding or creating themes and materials closely aligned with students’ genuine needs and authentic experiences—has garnered considerable interest among contemporary educators and researchers.

(3) Blended learning

BL, or hybrid learning, has enhanced language education by effectively leveraging technological advances to improve student outcomes (Chapelle & Sauro, 2017; Farr & Murray, 2016). BL usually involves combining face-to-face instruction with self-access content such as prints and videos (King, 2016), and has been viewed as a promising approach in tertiary education. Though not without its own challenges, this approach has received much attention in the language teaching and learning field (McCarthy, 2016; Trinder, 2016; Hung, 2017; Hockly, 2018). According to a review of 26 blended learning studies by Grgurović (2017), recent trends in technology have spurred a proliferation of studies on four major themes: comparing different types of non-blended and blended classes; investigating teacher and student perceptions; examining specific technology tools; and evaluating blended course implementation. Also, Arabasz and Baker (2003) found that 80 percent of all higher education institutions offer BL courses. In fact, in a survey of higher education (Bonk et al., 2006), respondents clearly expected a dramatic rise in their use of blended learning approaches. The reason for this growth and prevalence is the increasing awareness of the positive impacts of such approaches on student learning experiences (Albrecht, 2006; Marquis, 2004) and reported faculty satisfaction (Vaughan & Garrison, 2006).

The core of this interest in blended learning stems from the desire for more engaging learning experience. Traditional lecture-based approaches have been criticized for creating a passive learning environment and, despite their long-standing use, have not been conclusively proven to enhance critical thinking and comprehension skills (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008). Complex topics and ideas require more in-depth engagement than what is typical in a lecture for students to be able to negotiate meaning and build comprehension. Thus, there is a clear argument to be made that interactive and collaborative learning experiences are the key to achieving higher-order learning outcomes (Palloff & Pratt, 2005). In this context, BL synergizes online and face-to-face learning elements, enhancing each and aligning education with contemporary demands while retaining traditional educational values (Bonk, 2007; Garrison & Vaughan, 2008). While the idea of combining both online and in-person instruction may seem simple on the surface, practical application is much more complex. One mistake that often happens is that a traditional classroom course will choose to add an online component in addition to the classroom course. One frequent misconception of BL is that this approach merely builds another educational layer. Thornes (2004) elucidates that BL constitutes a

comprehensive overhaul of the course structure, with the goal of facilitating learner engagement and broadening access to internet-based resources.

Several recent literatures have indicated the efficacy of BL in EFL reading courses. One study conducted by Kheirzadeh and Birgani (2018) elaborated on the an EFL reading comprehension course, underpinned by a BL framework. Alongside regular classes, the course featured virtual sessions on a website, where students were assigned reading materials, followed by various language practice opportunities such as discussion, problem-solving and skill-practice activities. In a parallel vein, Behjat, Yamini, and Bagheri (2012) executed a similar study. Although their course design maintained conventional classroom instruction, it augmented the learning experience with assignments facilitated in virtual environments. Both studies concluded that BL yields better outcomes than traditional classroom-only instruction.

Diverse implementation of BL has been explored to develop students' different language skills in instructional settings. Vasbieva and his colleagues (2016) deployed BL in a vocabulary learning class to allow students to practice new target vocabulary items via visual learning tools and reserve in-class time for collaborative communicative activities. Essentially, the virtual component in their experiment acted as a pedagogical scaffold for subsequent classroom interactions. Conversely, Banditvilai (2016) implemented a seemingly inverse approach in a speaking- and reading-focused class by dedicating classroom time for more direct instruction and designating online sessions for practice and application of what had been learned in class. These two studies have empirically substantiated the efficacy of BL in bolstering student learning outcomes and enhance motivational engagement. Vasbieva and his colleagues attribute this success to the advantages conferred by virtual learning environments, which facilitate self-paced and independent study and Banditvilai to its capability to encourage autonomous learning.

Although the strengths of BL are demonstrated in those studies, they share one common limitation: they lack explicit explanations of the hands-on activities implemented. Specifically, the discussion on the design, underlying rationale for the activities and topic selections, and in-class execution of these activities were not detailed. Thus, the translation of philosophical concepts into tangible educational practices remains nebulous, posing challenges for educators who seek to replicate these teaching and learning experiences.

4. Teaching Planning

(1) Course Objectives and Description

Two English reading classes were chosen: one being the control group in Term 111-1 and the other experimental group in Term 111-2. Both classes were designed to help undergraduate students not only develop effective reading skills, but more importantly, grow as proficient and critical readers, while also gaining a better awareness of global issues. Despite the mutual objectives, they differed in instructional means and course structures. While the control group remained a conventional reading class with two-hour instruction, the experimental group adopted a BL framework with two-hour in-class learning and one-hour online sessions. All tasks and group projects were intended to foster students' metacognitive awareness of reading and analytical skills.

The course consisted of four modules: Introductory module, Module 1 reading for meaning, and Module 2 reading critically in a diverse world, and Module 3 reading to write (see [Appendix II Course Syllabus](#)). Each module covered a set of topics and lessons related to active English reading and comprehension strategies, critical reading and thinking skills, and practical strategies for connecting reading and writing. Reading assignments, practice and activities explored a variety of English language materials, such as news articles, academic articles, opinions, and commentaries across disciplines. The texts covered topics related to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, which addressed a wide range of social and global issues ranging from poverty to climate change Content

components included comprehension, vocabulary enrichment, close-reading analysis, and critical reflection. The content of each learning module is organised as follows:

(2) Teaching Pedagogies

Table 1 presents the course plans for the control and experimental groups. In addition to the formal instruction, different types of individual tasks (e.g., skill-focused tasks and reflection-writing tasks) and collaborative tasks (e.g., different forms of discussion, Q&A role play, puzzle reading, and communicative application tasks) were designed. One weekly review task was designed for the control group, whereas in the experimental, diversified tasks were designed with their respective learning goals at different task phases.

Table 1. Course Designs

Group	Classroom Instruction	Online Session	Theme/ Content	Weekly Task
Control	Yes	No	- Strategy-focused texts - SDGs reading passages	One weekly task (e.g., discussion, text-analysis)
Experimental	Yes	Yes	- Strategy-focused - Authentic SDGs-related texts	Pre-task warmup, skill-focused practice, and post-task application

(3) Assessment Methods

Table 2 outlines the respective assessment means, their weighting, and descriptions of both groups.

Types of Assessment	Descriptions of Assessment Tasks	
	Control Group	Experimental Group
Reading Tasks & Quizzes 30%	3 review quizzes (15%) - The weekly in-class quiz after the (10%) - weekly in-class review task (5%)	3 review quizzes (15%) - The weekly quiz after each online reading task (10%) - Task fulfilments (pre-task, practice task, and review task) and portfolio (5%)
Attendance & Participation 20%	- Attendance (10%) - Peer-evaluation (5%) - Instructor's Discretion (5%)	- Attendance (10%) - Peer-evaluation (5%) - Instructor's Discretion (5%)
Mid-Term Evaluation Task 20%	Midterm Exam (Oral report)	Midterm Exam (theme-based Oral report)
Final Learning Evaluation Task 30%	- Final exam - Portfolio	- Post-test (IELTS online practice test) - Online group Anki e-Dictionary project

(4) Weekly Schedule & Materials

Sixteen weeks of lessons were designed, and the information regarding weekly themes and task schedule were given in *Appendix II Course Syllabus-Weekly Schedule*.

The course contents included five foundational units on English reading strategies, eight modules in alignment with SDGs themes, and a two-week intensive period devoted to integrated reading and writing education. All reading texts pertained to global issues addressed by the SDGs. The primary distinction between the two groups resided in the source of these reading materials. For the control

group, the sources were mixed, including both authentic texts and materials specifically created for educational use. For the BL experimental group, however, all materials were authentic and spanned a diverse array of sources, including news articles, academic journal papers, critiques, and reports.

In addition to the reading materials, fifteen online videos, one for each week, were also made for the BL experimental group. The videos, ranging from 20 minutes to 35 minutes, were made into two versions: English and Chinese versions. They were all uploaded to *OpenCourseWare*, with both English-speaking and Chinese versions. The students were given the choice to make their own decision on watching the English or Chinese versions (English version: <http://ocw.aca.ntu.edu.tw/ntu-ocw/ocw/cou/110S104>; Chinese version: <http://140.112.161.116/ntu-ocw/ocw/cou/108S201/1/V/1>). All the videos were uploaded to *OpenCourseWare* (*Appendix III*). The other class materials (i.e., reading articles, task handouts, and class PPTs) were uploaded to the university's e-learning platform.

(5) A Sample TBBL Task Design

For the BL experimental group, at least three mini-tasks (at pre-task, task, and post-task phases, respectively) were designed each week. Below is a sample of a complete TBBL lesson and task design for Week12 “To Mitigate or to Adapt? Act on Climate Change”.

- **Online Learning** (34-min video & 15-min reading task):

- Guided Reading Task**

- (1) Watched the first part of the video to read the article, “The Problem with Greta Thunberg’s Climate Activism” (article link: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/02/opinion/climate-change-greta-thunberg.html>);
 - (2) Analyzing Task: Students applied the reading strategies and identified the six arguments in the article, took notes, and then self-checked answers by watching the second part of the video.

- **On-Site Learning** (100 mins)

- Pre-Task** (30 mins): Teacher acted as the chairperson leading the class discussion

- (1) Teacher introduced the theme by watching a YouTube video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAmuUIEsN9A>);
 - (2) Teacher distributed the task worksheet and explained the task instructions;
 - (3) Students noted down key points and useful words and phrases;
 - (4) Teacher led the class discussion (basic *wh*-questions)
 - (5) Teacher wrote down new words, phrases or expressions on the blackboard whenever new language was used during sharing/discussion.
 - (6) Teacher asked students to co-edit the group Anki e-Dictionary by adding new useful language (useful words & phrases)

(NOTE: Students collaboratively curated an e-Dictionary on Anki, a learning-enhancement software, throughout the semester. This platform automatically converted new words into flashcards and allowed students to enrich content with media and contextual sentence examples. The media-rich, synchronized environment promoted a dynamic, learner-centered experience.)

Task Cycle (70 mins): Teacher acted as a monitor and encouraged students

Task (15 mins):

- (1) Teacher distributed the two response letters commenting on the article “The Problem with Greta Thunberg’s Climate Activism” (see *Appendix IV*);
 - (2) Teacher encouraged students to apply the learning reading skills in practice;
 - (3) Teacher asked students to reach a mutual group stance on the discussed issue (e.g., Thunberg’s idea of school strike for climate, enforcing international regulations banning the excessive use of Greenhouse gases);

Planning (15 mins): Teacher acted as language adviser and walked around to provide assistance

- (1) Students prepared to give a three-minute report about their stance and justified their decision;
- (2) Students rehearsed what they would say in their sharing; a cheat sheet was allowed for notes;

Report (20 mins):

- (1) Students used Zuvio software to reassign group members and form new groups (that is, six new group members from six different original groups to form a new team);
- (2) Each member shared his/her opinions from the original group with the members of the new team)

Analysis (20 mins)

- (1) Teacher asked students to return to their original group and share what they had learned from the new team;
- (2) Group members worked together to reflect on the new language they had learned during the reading and discussing task, and then co-edited the group Anki e-Dictionary to update the glossary list, while also writing example sentences demonstrating how the new language could be used in context.

Practice (Take-home assignment)

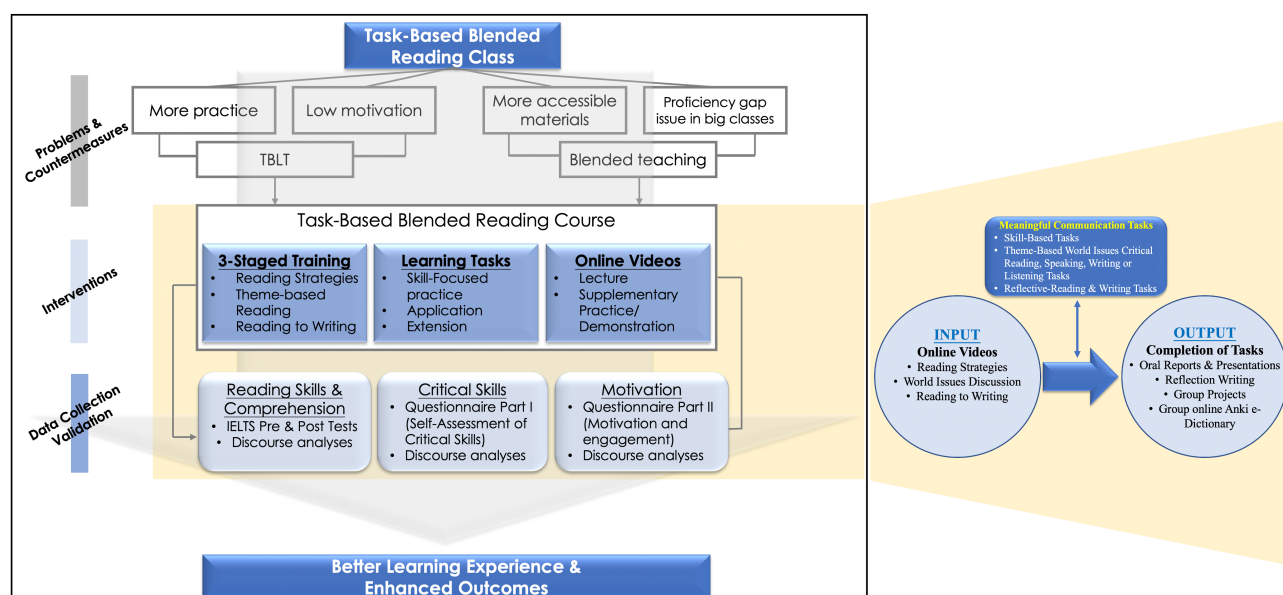
- (1) Students responded to one of the letters and wrote a 100-word response letter (the learned new words and phrases were encouraged to be applied in the written text);
- (2) Students were encouraged to research the issue and integrate appropriate supportive data to strengthen their ideas in their own response letter.

5. Research Methodology

(1) Research Framework

This study aimed to seek a feasible instructional method to tackle the issues of proficiency gaps among students, insufficient practice opportunity, and low learning motivation in a large-sized English reading class, and develop a more accessible learning means to alleviate the proficiency gaps among students (see Figure 2 below).

Figure 2. Research Framework



As shown in Figure 2, the integration of TBLT and blended teaching/learning is proposed, as the former assists learning motivation and allows more meaningful hands-on practice, and the latter provides convenience and flexibilities in time and space in learning. The reading contents were divided into three parts: the learning and application of reading strategies, theme-based reading practice, and the introduction to and bridging between reading and writing (as one of the reading outcomes). Three aspects of progress were investigated: reading skills and comprehension, critical skills, and learning motivation. Qualitative (i.e., discourse analyses) and quantitative tools (IELTS pre- & post-tests and Likert-Scale student questionnaire) were implemented for data collection. The integration of meaningful communication tasks like skill-based tasks and theme-based critical reading provided the process needed to facilitate the possibility of transferring learning into acquisition.

(2) Research Participants, Instruments, and Data Analysis

Table 3 presents the information of the participants, data collection instruments, data analysis tools, and the corresponding research questions for each instrument. Mixed methods design has been touted as a valuable research methodology, which provides diverse standpoints and enriches a comprehensive understanding of the studied phenomenon (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Research on mixed-methods design has also suggested global rationales for choosing this integrative research paradigm. These rationales or purposes could be divided into six categories: initiation, development, triangulation, complementarity, expansion and diversity (Ågerfalk, 2013, p. 252). Here, complementarity, which refers to the use of results from one method to clarify or illustrate the results from another, is targeted. That is, the results of discourse analyses would provide further evidence and/or insights into the findings gathered in the quantitative data.

Fifty-nine students were registered for the reading class in Term 111-2. Of these, nine students joined only after the course selection period (on Week 3), and one student was on personal leave on Week 16, thus leading to these ten participants missing either the pre-test or the post-test. Therefore, data from only forty-nine participants were considered valid. As for the control group, thirty-eight students consented to participate in the research in Term 111-1. The student participants were undergraduates with mixed disciplines and English proficiencies. The two reading teachers involved in this study had had more than seven years of experience in teaching English reading.

Table 3 Research Instruments and Data Collection of the Experimental Group

Design	Data Collection Instrument	Participants	Data Analysis	Corresponding Research Question
Mixed-Methods Design	Pre- & Post-Tests (IELTS simulation tests)	49 students	<i>t</i> -test	RQ1
	Pre & Post-Course Student Likert-Scale Questionnaire (Part I: Self-Assessment of Critical Skills)	49 students	<i>t</i> -test	RQ2
	Pre & Post-Course Student Likert-Scale Questionnaire (Part II)	49 students	<i>t</i> -test	RQ3
	10 Task recordings	10 groups (group of 6) & 2 teachers	Thematic analysis	RQ1, 2, 3

Pre- & Post-IELTS Simulation Tests

Both the IELTS simulation tests and student Likert-scale questionnaire were piloted. IELTS simulation tests were selected for examining students' reading knowledge and skills (pre- and post-tests) because it was one of the most popular as well as government-recognized means for assessing students' English proficiency in Taiwan. The test items included short passage reading, medium-length passage reading, and long passage reading. Different language aspects—grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension, article structure, reading strategies, and critical thinking—were examined. *T*-test was used to analyse the results gathered from the IELTS tests to examine students' progress in English reading learning.

Pre- & Post-Course Student Likert-Scale Questionnaire

A Likert Scale assumes that the strength or intensity of an attitude is linear, i.e., on a continuum from strongly agree to strongly disagree, and makes the assumption that attitudes can be measured (Creswell, 2011). Here, the questionnaires investigated students' perceptions of their critical skills, learning tasks and task engagement. Inspired by the work of Liao (2009), in which her students' critical skills were examined after the implementation of the literature cycle, Bloom's Taxonomy theory was adopted to create and assess the student self-assessment of critical thinking skills in her study. Since Liao's work focuses on literature circles (especially stories) in an EFL context, not academic English reading, a critical skill description list was generated in this study to specifically fulfil the nature and achieve the research purposes of this study (see [Appendix V](#)). Hence, the Pre- and Post-Course Student Likert-scale Questionnaires comprised the examinations of three aspects: critical skill development (Part I) (18 items), student perception of peer interaction and affective attitudes toward the learning tasks (5 items), and cognitive attitudes toward the learning tasks and online learning (Part II) (15 items).

To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire items, the questionnaire was taken by thirty-six undergraduate students with mixed disciplines. Cronbach's alpha was used to examine the internal consistency of the questionnaire. The Internal-Consistency Reliability Coefficient of the 38 items is 0.89, showing good internal consistency. Moreover, the questionnaire results were analyzed using *t*-tests to probe into student perceptions of their critical skills and attitudes toward peer interaction, learning tasks, and online learning.

Content Analysis

The qualitative method, content analysis, was applied to cross-examine the quantitative data as well as to provide further insights into the studied phenomena. Indications about the variables of interest or inter-variable relationships can assist in establishing the initial coding framework or connections between codes. Mayring (2021) contends that directed content analysis employs a more structured methodology compared to traditional qualitative content analysis approaches. The directed

approach is informed by existing theories or pre-existing research questions, thereby providing a more organised framework for analysis.

Ten in-class group tasks were recorded and transcribed for content analysis. Following the suggestions made by Mayring (2021) The initial set of codes was derived from the concept of Bloom's Taxonomy (i.e., six tiers: remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating and creating). The codes were then applied to the transcripts for manual analysis. Through thematic analysis, group codes formed broader themes for pattern-, frequency-, and relationship-identifications. A research colleague was invited for peer checks of the qualitative analysis to ensure credibility. The generated themes were finally integrated to provide insights into the research questions.

Credibility of the study

To ensure the credibility of the study, several measures were taken. To begin with, all instruments were piloted before implementing. Next, the design of the questionnaire was theory-driven (i.e., Bloom's Taxonomy), and Reliability Coefficients for consistency were calculated to confirm the internal consistency of the statement items. Also, IELTS were used to assess students' reading ability, as the learning tasks provided observations of students' language and skill learning and the IELTS tests could provide objective insights into the students' proficiency (given that IELTS is a commonly recognised English language proficiency criterion internationally). In the final place, the application of complementarity mixed-methods design could provide an opportunity to cross-examine the qualitative and quantitative data.

6. Teaching and Research Outcomes

(1) Teaching Process and Outcomes

Several favourable outcomes have been noted as a consequence of initiating this present action research, as briefly explained below:

a. Increase social engagement

The students have shown significant progress in reading performance, motivation, and critical skills. More importantly, clear evidence of increased social engagement among students was observed. During a sharing task conducted in week 14, two students mentioned that they had become frequent volunteers (at a dog shelter and a senior community college) after realising their capability to effect small changes. Several students had also demonstrated their growing awareness of and interest in global issues

b. Enhanced learning motivation

When reviewing the watch rate of the online videos, ranging from 65 to 254, thus suggesting that many students may have watched the videos more than what was expected of them. Additionally, the students' self-initiated sharing and comments in the online class communication corner (i.e., a feature of the university's e-platform that allows students to communicate, make comments, and provide written feedback to posted texts) demonstrated enhanced student motivation (see [Appendix VI](#)).

c. Strengthened teacher connection

At the preparatory stage of this study, some colleagues heard about my plan to create online reading videos. Recognising the importance of English reading as a basic core competence and the potential applicability of these videos in various EAP and ESP classes, nine teachers requested access to the videos and other relevant materials. In return, they agreed to join the research team and offered

assistance with filming. After this pleasant collaboration experience, we created another series of online videos for public use.

d. *Emerging academic-community*

Since the videos were uploaded to *OpenCourseWare*, they have gained 47,457 watch rates. To better use these reading materials, one on-campus workshop and two cross-campus talks were held to explain how the materials can be used and how reading tasks could be designed. Also, the research findings were shared in an international educational conference in Thailand in 2023. At the conference, two inter-institutional and international collaborative academic research projects and dialogues have been initiated.

e. Further professional development

This research experience has advanced my professional knowledge and skills through the attempt to develop a new instructional method (i.e., TBBL). Also, the findings of this study helped me tackle some existing problems in the large-sized English reading class. For instance, this action research betters my teaching quality through the enrichment of my instructional means, which could strengthen my students' learning motivation as well as their critical skills and reading ability by providing more meaningful learning opportunities. Mixed learning and TBLT are closely related and show great potential for student learning and engagement. Incorporating these elements together in an English reading class may motivate students, while also preparing them to develop into independent critical thinkers.

(2) Teacher Reflection

Mixed learning and TBLT are closely related and show great potential for student learning and engagement. Incorporating these elements together in a reading class may motivate students while also preparing them for the rest of their academic careers in terms of reading and information gathering, as well as world view.

Large class size is becoming more commonplace. Online learning by itself has been shown to be uncondusive for learning and interaction, but a combination of online and in class time has been shown to be even more effective than purely in-classroom instruction by itself. With ever-growing class sizes, developing strategies for making courses like these more engaging and educational can have a large impact on the institution as a whole. With a foundation in pedagogy, this study has the potential of producing results that can be replicated or adapted to a variety of other classes.

Most importantly, often teaching at the higher education level is a solitary endeavor for instructors. However, I have come to realise that not only do students need support, but also teachers do as well. This project has demonstrated that with a willingness to collaborate and share, greater educational impacts can be achieved—benefiting students, the public, and even the teachers ourselves.

(3) Student Learning Evaluation: Research Findings

This section discusses the qualitative and quantitative outcomes of this research. It comprises three sub-sections, arranged and discussed based on the research questions.

a. ***Research Question 1: Can TBBL enhance students' learning in sizable English reading classes?***

As shown in Table 4, the pre- and post-test scores of the 49 student participants in the BL English reading class showed significant differences ($p < 0.0001$) at a significance level of 0.05. This suggests that, on average, the students demonstrated significant progress in their reading performance after the completion of the course training.

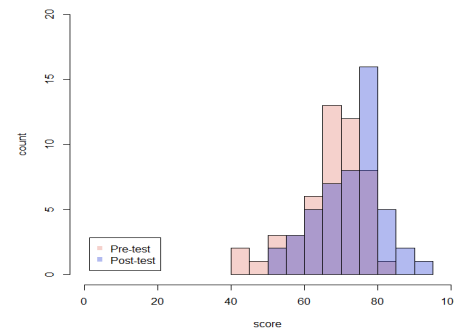
Table 4. Reading Pre- and Post-Tests

(n=49)		mean	SD	Min.	Max.	q1	q3	Paired Sample t test	
Reading	pre-t	67.57	8.93	43	81	63	74	p-value	<.0001
	post-t	73.24	9.04	53	93	68	79		

In addition, Figure 3 displays the distribution of the pre- and post-test scores. As shown, the histogram moves rightward, indicating positive improvements in student English reading learning.

These have demonstrated that the incorporation of meaningful tasks and blending learning have impacted student learning positively, thus suggesting the efficacy of TBBL in enhancing student English reading learning in a sizable reading class.

Figure 3. The distribution of pre- and post-test scores in reading



b. Can TBBL enhance students' critical skills in sizable reading?

The overall average scores of the 38 items on the pre- and post-course questionnaires ($m=3.41$, 4.11) revealed improvements (Table 5), showing a statistically significant difference in the paired sample t -test ($p < 0.0001$) at a significance level of 0.05. Hence, the facts that TBBL enhances student English critical skills, affective attitudes towards peer interaction and task engagement, and cognitive attitudes towards learning tasks and blended learning are confirmed.

Table 5. The Paired Sample t -test of the Pre- and Post-Course Questionnaires

38 items	Paired sample t-test		
	mean	SD	p-value
Pre-subjects	3.41	0.55	<.0001
Post-subjects	4.11	0.52	

Respectively, the mean scores of Domain 1 of the pre- and post-course questionnaires also showed statistical significance ($m=3.25$, 4.00), suggesting the efficacy of TBBL in enhancing student critical skills in a sizable reading class.

Table 6. The Paired Sample t -test of the Domains of Pre- and Post-Course Questionnaires

	Pre-subjects		Post-subjects		Paired sample t-test
	mean	SD	mean	SD	p-value
domain 1 (18)	3.25	0.72	4.00	0.61	<.0001
domain 2 (5)	3.57	0.43	4.21	0.53	<.0001
domain 3 (15)	3.54	0.60	4.20	0.55	<.0001

This is further validated by the content analysis results of the task recordings in Week 3 (Task Recording 1) and Week 14 (Task Recording 2). Table 7 shows that the use of higher levels of cognitive skills increases as time progresses, implying that students may be growing in confidence and willingness to explore ideas, tackle potential idea conflicts, and seek possible explanations when discussing social issues. Also, another possible cause is that they are learning to see a social issue critically, that is, to tackle the problem from different perspectives by processing, reorganising, re-interpreting, and comparing the information in hand. This learning process, in a sense, could be understood as the “learning to acquisition process”, “meaning-making”, and “negotiating for interpretation” discussed in the relevant literature (e.g., Nunan, 1989; Palloff & Pratt, 2005; Richard & Rogers; 2001)

Table 7. The Frequency of Cognitive Skill Use During Tasks

Task Topic: Poverty Issue at Post-Pandemic			Task Topic: Stop Saying No to ChatGPT		
Content Analysis	Remembering 17	Analyzing 4	Content	Remembering 12	Analyzing 11
	Understanding 9	Evaluating 3	Analysis	Understanding 11	Evaluating 7
	Applying 3	Creating 0		Applying 3	Creating 3

c. Can TBBL enhance students’ learning motivation in sizable English reading classes?

As presented in Table 6, the mean scores of Domains 2 and 3 of the pre- and post-course questionnaires demonstrated statistical significance ($m=3.57, 4.21$) ($m=3.54, 4.20$), suggesting the efficacy of TBBL in enhancing student affective perceptions of peer interaction and task engagement and cognitive perceptions of learning tasks and online learning in a sizable reading class.

7. Recommendation and Reflections

Several suggestions are made based on my experience of conducting this research as well as my observation during the time of the conduction of this action research. They are briefly discussed below.

- (1) The Value Goes Beyond Teaching: TBBL effectively addresses challenges such as large class sizes, varying proficiency levels, and low motivation commonly encountered in general course classrooms. However, the true value of this project may lie in its psychological impact. Although contemporary scholarly publications have often emphasised the importance of attending to individual student needs, fulfilling this imperative remains a formidable challenge for educators, particularly in the context of increasingly large class sizes and demanding teaching schedules. During the implementation of this action research, I observed closer collaborative relationships among student group members. This improvement could likely be attributed to frequent, meaningful interactions within groups. In other words, the “tasks” and “themes for discussion” may have acted as catalysts, enabling students to communicate more effectively. This mutual understanding of the discussed viewpoints has further motivated them to engage in social events to which they would like to contribute.
- (2) Share to Care, Care to Share: In this study, authentic reading materials were used, but a more structured instructional framework was needed to maximise the benefits of both TBLT and BL. As a result, online videos were created and three mini-tasks per unit/theme were developed. The preparation was both time-consuming and labour-intensive, but the project’s potential merits

garnered the support of seven colleagues, enabling successful collaboration. Hence, for the general courses, establishing teacher collaboration to promote educational quality. This approach not only offers the potential for innovative breakthroughs in teaching but also helps to distribute the workload required for adopting new educational initiatives.

- (3) Replicable and Adaptable Across Classrooms: Since offering sizable classes is becoming a common measure due to budgetary concerns at tertiary institutions, the application of TBBL could avoid alleviating university's budgetary pressure at the expense of students' needs. Grounded in educational theory, TBBL holds the potentials to yield findings that are both replicable and adaptable across a diverse range of classrooms.

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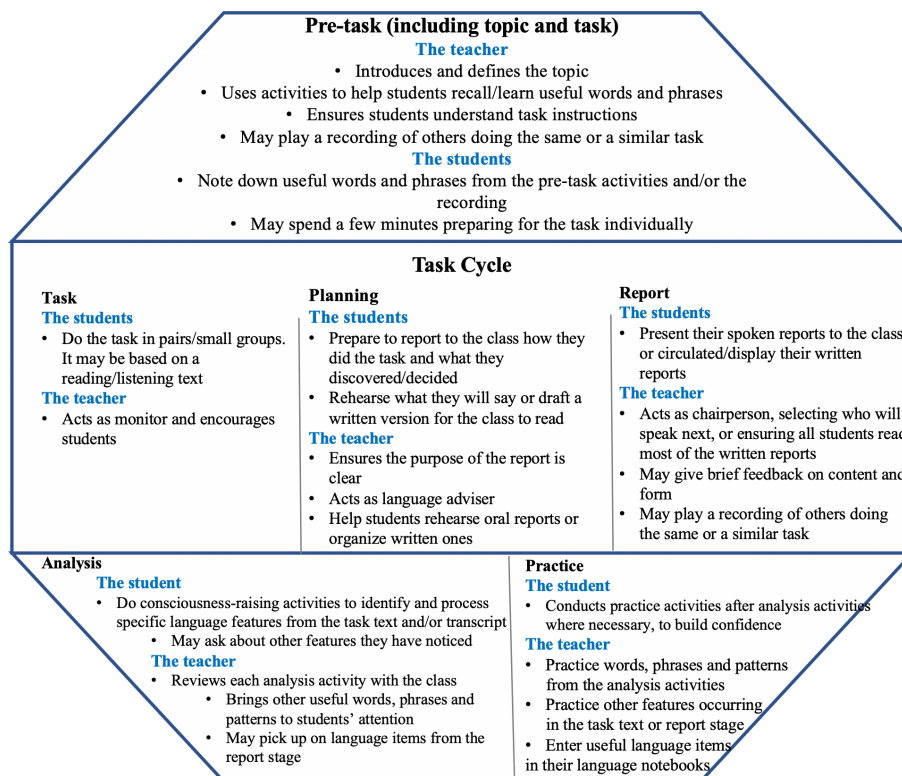
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Appendices

Appendix I. Task-Based Language Teaching Framework



Adopted and Summarised from Willis (1996)

Appendix II. Course Syllabus

Course Description: The course being studied and further developed is titled “*Reading to Connect.*” This course is a blended learning course that will meet in person for two hours a week, supplemented with 1 hour of online learning. The course will consist of three modules. Each module will cover a set of topics and lessons related to active English reading and comprehension strategies, critical reading and thinking skills, and practical strategies for connecting reading and writing. Reading assignments, practice and activities will explore a variety of English language materials, such as news articles, academic articles, opinions, and commentaries across disciplines. The texts will cover topics related to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, which aim to address a wide range of social and global issues ranging from poverty to climate change. Topics covered will include comprehension, vocabulary enrichment, close-reading analysis, and critical reflection. The content of each learning module is organized as follows:

- (1) **Introductory Module** provides an overview of the course, including course requirements, policies and student responsibilities.
- (2) **Module 1:** Reading for Meaning introduces fundamental reading strategies: activating, comprehension, review and reflection, critical thinking
- (3) **Module 2:** Reading Critically in a Diverse World explores diverse perspectives and global issues through the reading of various genres (narratives, news articles, commentary and opinions, and academic/scientific texts).
- (4) **Module 3:** Reading to Write presents key elements and techniques that guide students to use

their critical reading skills to write effectively.

Course objectives (Core Competences, hereafter CC): The purpose of this course is to adhere to the university's educational objectives by contributing to students' three CC: independent judgment and ability to innovate, professional knowledge and skills, and communicative and team skills.

The course is designed to help undergraduate students develop fundamental strategies for reading English academic texts more effectively and critically. Furthermore, *Reading to Connect* aims to address a wide range of social and global issues ranging from poverty to climate change. All activities and group projects are intended to foster students' metacognitive awareness of reading and analytical skills. Upon completion of this course, students will not only develop effective reading skills, but more importantly, grow as proficient and critical readers, while also gaining a better awareness of global issues.

Course Intended Learning Outcome (CILO): By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- CILO 1: identify common patterns of organization in texts and develop strategies for reading a variety of genre texts, increasing vocabulary, and responding critically to texts. (CC 1, 2 & 3)
- CILO 2: effectively use context clues and other electronic reference materials to determine the meanings of unfamiliar vocabulary and phrases. (CC 1 & 2)
- CILO 3: analyze and summarize information from texts including main ideas, supporting details & evidence, points of view, biases and arguments. (CC 1, 2 & 3)
- CILO 4: demonstrate the ability to synthesize information from different sources into writing and provide valid and logical reasonings for arguments. (CC 1 & 2)
- CILO 5: demonstrate awareness of local and global issues from a variety of genre texts and develop capacity to become a more critical, independent reader and critic. (CC 1, 2 & 3).

Teaching pedagogies: online lecturing and discussion, on-site task-based practice (e.g., whole class/group/paired discussion, skill-focused learning tasks, peer reviewing), and collaborative tasks (e.g., Q&A role play, puzzle reading, communicative application tasks)

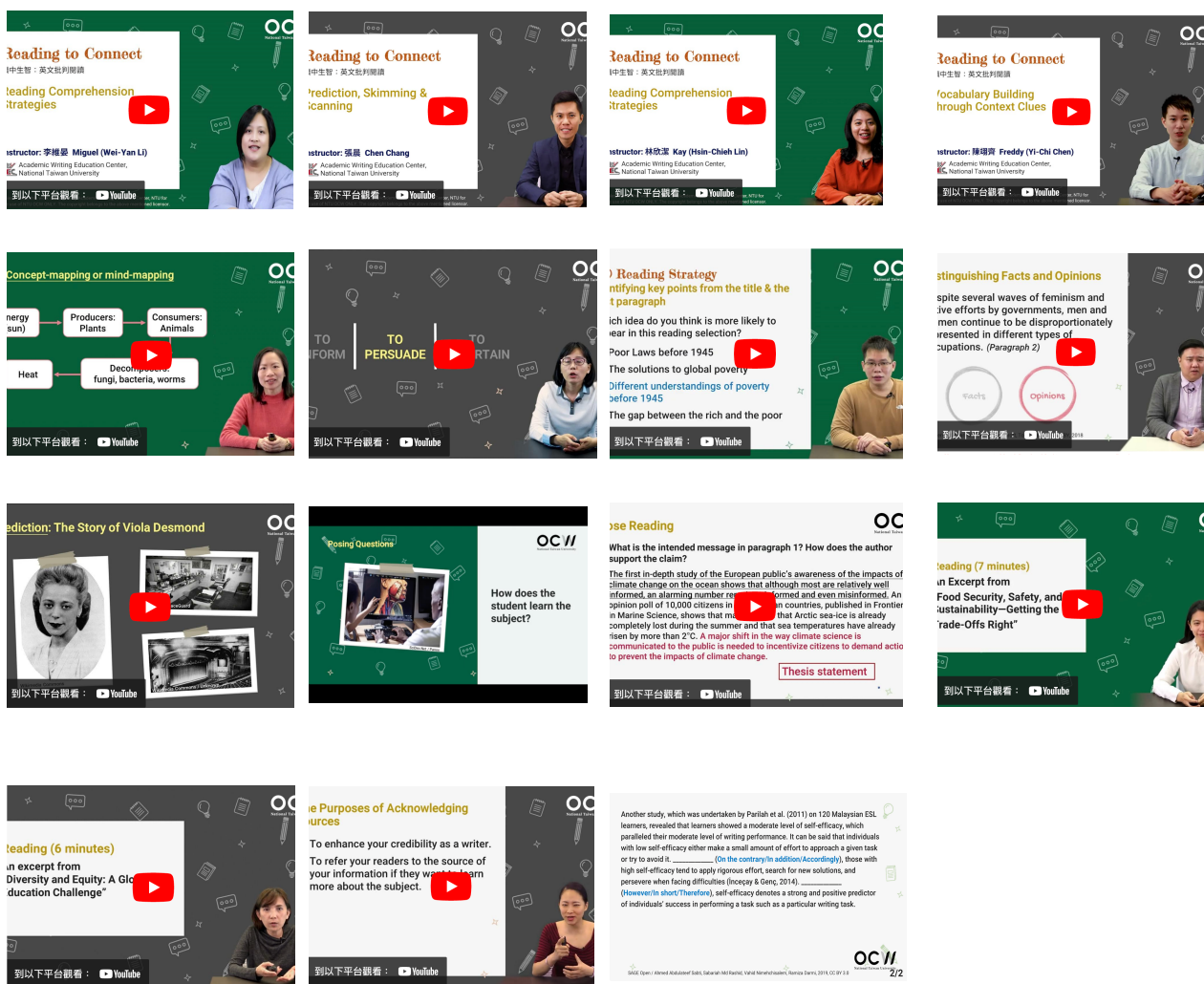
Assessment methods:

Types of Assessment	Descriptions of Assessment Tasks	
	Control Group	Experimental Group
Reading Tasks & Quizzes 30%	• 3 review quizzes (15%) • The weekly in-class quiz after the (10%) • weekly in-class review task (5%)	• 3 review quizzes (15%) • The weekly quiz after each online reading task (10%) • Task fulfilments (pre-task, practice task, and review task) and portfolio (5%)
Attendance & Participation 25%	• Attendance (10%) • Peer-evaluation (10%) • Instructor's Discretion (5%)	• Attendance (10%) • Peer-evaluation (10%) • Instructor's Discretion (5%)
Mid-Term Evaluation Task 20%	• Midterm Exam (Oral report)	• Midterm Exam (theme-based Oral report)
Final Learning Evaluation Task 25%	• Final exam • Portfolio	• Post-test (IELTS online practice test) • Online group Anki e-Dictionary project

Weekly Schedule:

WK	Course Content	Units & Lessons	Tasks
1	Introductory Module: Course Introduction	Course introduction Brief introduction to Module 1 & Assignment for WK2 Reading diagnostic test (pre-test)	Pre-tests (IELTS & Questionnaire)
2	Module 1: Reading for Meaning	Lesson 1: Activating Reading Strategies Making prediction / Anticipating ideas / Activating prior knowledge/ Skimming & Scanning News: Battle Against Poverty	Weekly Tasks
3	Module 1: Reading for Meaning	Lesson 2: Reading Comprehension Strategies Posing Questions / Identifying the topic of a paragraph, main ideas & supporting details News: Battle Against Poverty Task Recording 1	Weekly Tasks
4	Module 1: Reading for Meaning	Lesson 3: Vocabulary Building Identifying definitions or unfamiliar words in texts / Inferring meanings from context clues / Using dictionary and other technological devices News: Breaking Gender Stereotypes	Weekly Tasks
5	Module 1: Reading for Meaning	Lesson 4: Review & Reflection Summarizing / Paraphrasing/ Outlining / Note-taking News: Breaking Gender Stereotypes	Weekly Tasks
6	Module 1: Reading for Meaning	Lesson 5: Critical Thinking Analyzing purpose and tone in the text / Identifying facts vs. opinions Making personal & global connections News: Defending Human Rights	Weekly Tasks
7	Module 2: Reading Critically in a Diverse World	Theme: Battle Against Poverty Task Recordings 2 & 3 News: Defending Human Rights	Weekly Tasks
8	Module 2: Reading Critically in a Diverse World	Theme: Breaking Gender Stereotypes Task Recordings 4 & 5	Weekly Tasks
9	Midterm Learning Evaluation	Midterm Exam	
10	Module 2: Reading Critically in a Diverse World	Theme: Defending Human Rights Task Recordings 6 & 7 Theme: Fighting for Social Justice	Weekly Tasks
11	Module 2: Reading Critically in a Diverse World	Theme: Fighting for Social Justice	Weekly Tasks
12	Module 2: Reading Critically in a Diverse World	Theme: To Mitigate or to Adapt? – Act on Climate Change Task Recordings 8 & 9	Weekly Tasks
13	Module 2: Reading Critically in a Diverse World	Theme: Affordable & Sustainable Energy	Weekly Tasks
14	Module 2: Reading Critically in a Diverse World	Theme: Quality Education Intensive reading: online reviews Task Recordings 10	Weekly Tasks
15	Module 3: Bridging the Gap: Reading to Write	Reflection & Review Summary & Paraphrase Understanding scholarly references / identifying sources of information / plagiarism	Weekly Tasks
16	Final Assessment	Final Exam Post-tests (IELTS & Questionnaire)	Submit e-portfolio

Appendix III. *OpenCourseWare* Videos (English Version)



Appendix IV. Response Letters

Letter 1

To the Editor:

Christopher Caldwell, in his condescending assault on Greta Thunberg, the 16-year-old Swedish high school climate activist (Op-Ed, Aug. 3), asserts that “democracy often calls for waiting and seeing.” For what exactly does he propose that we wait and see? Evidence of “global heating” — an appropriate successor to the more tepid “global warming” — is unequivocal, and Ms. Thunberg is masterful in marshaling the relevant data. She is a deeply principled, well-informed critic of complacency.

Contrary to Mr. Caldwell’s assertion, it is not hard to imagine what “a real, non-utopian low-carbon politics” would look like. In the United States and abroad, we abound in policies that are beginning to reshape the energy profiles of our buildings, transportation systems, electricity sector and consumer habits. Significantly ramping up those policies is a civic imperative, not a threat to democracy.

We should all thank Ms. Thunberg for her courage and forthrightness, not deride her for her youthful determination.

Philip Warburg

Newton, Mass.

The writer, an environmental lawyer, writes about energy policy.

Letter 2

Christopher Caldwell faults Greta Thunberg's climate activism on two main counts: She is anti-democratic and she is too young to understand the complexities of the climate problem and the proposed solutions.

A dozen carefree passengers take a joy ride in a speedboat. The steersman joins in with their cheery banter. One passenger, a 16-year-old girl, realizes that he's become inattentive, allowing the boat to accelerate toward rocks some way ahead. Instinctively, she leaps for the wheel and manages to pull the boat over onto a safer course.

The other passengers hastily put on their life jackets. Disaster is narrowly averted. Should that girl rather have called on her fellow passengers (her elders and betters) to discuss the problem in an orderly, democratic manner?

According to the best available information on the climate crisis, we are all in that boat. By the end of the century will enough of our "civilization" remain for our grandchildren and great-grandchildren to debate its future, as Mr. Caldwell would like?

Raymond Clayton

Stanford, Calif.

Appendix V. Pre- & Post-Course Student Likert-Scale Questionnaire

Student Survey: Student Perception of their Reading Learning and Skills

Please read the following statements, and rate your level of agreement on a 1 to 5 scale, where 1 is "Strongly Disagree" and 5 is "Strongly Agree".

1=Strongly Disagree 很不贊成 2=Disagree 不贊成 3=Neutral 沒意見/普通 4=Agree 贊成 5=Strongly Agree 很贊成

Part I. Student Self-Assessment of Critical Skills

No.	Statement	Level of Agreement Pre-Training Stage 修課前						Level of Agreement Post-Training Stage 修課後				
		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
1-1	I can remember and recognize what I have read. 我能記得和認出文章中的內容。											
1-2	I can list specific information like the names, places, time, and event in the article. 我能列舉文章中的人物、地點、時間、事件。											
1-3	I can summarize the major points that I read into my own words. 我能用自己的話概括我讀到的文章重點。											
1-4	I can explain why (e.g., why did something happen?) 我能解釋「為什麼」，如「為什麼會發生這種事情」?											
1-5	I can make connections from the article to my own life. 我能把自己的生活與文章的人物或情節做連結。											
1-6	I can relate my past learning or knowledge to the event. 我能把過去的經驗和知識與文章作聯繫。											
1-7	I can discover the important points in the article. 我能找出文章中的重要觀點。											

1-8	I can analyze the important event(s) and focused issue(s) in the article. 我能分析文章中的重要事件和焦點議題。	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
1-9	I can explain how important points fit together. 我能解釋文章中的重點相互間的關聯。	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
1-10	I can find similarities and differences between stances in the article. 我能找出不同立場間的相同與不同的地方。	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
1-11	I can compare the article with other articles I read before. 我能用我曾讀過的文章與這文章作出比較。	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
1-12	I can organize main points of the article in a logical way. 我能合理地組織文章中的重點。	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
1-13	I can imagine myself in the event or time that I am reading. 我能在閱讀時，想像自己身處於文章事件情節中。	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
1-14	I can brainstorm some possible solutions for the problem in the article. 我能集思廣益，提出針對文章中問題的可能解決辦法。	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
1-15	I can distinguish different stances/sides in the article and develop my own perspective based on my analysis of the causality. 我能分辨判斷文章中不同的立場，並根據事件關聯分析發展出自己的觀點。	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
1-16	I can evaluate the value of the article. 我能評估文章的價值與重要性。	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
1-17	I can judge the article in terms of arguments, events, etc. 我能評論文章中的論點、事件等。	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
1-18	I can predict possible developments of the discussed issue/topic in the article. 我能預測文章中討論之議題的未來發展。	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5

Part II. Student Self-Assessment of Attitudes Toward Four Aspects (Peer interaction and affective as well as cognitive attitudes toward the learning tasks in class /videos after class)

No.	Statement	Level of Agreement Pre-Training Stage 修課前					Level of Agreement Post-Training Stage 修課後				
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
2-1	I actively offered my own constructive ideas to my team during tasks.										
2-2	I frequently responded to my teammates using verbal or non-verbal communication during tasks.										
2-3	I often worked collaboratively with my teammates to complete the assigned tasks.										
2-4	I liked working collaboratively with my teammates.										
2-5	Working together with my teammates enhanced my learning.										
3-1	I watched all the class learning videos.										
3-2	I actively participated in the learning tasks.										
3-3	The learning tasks made me more active in completing group tasks and discussions.										
3-4	The learning tasks motivated me to learn English reading.										
3-5	I am interested in doing different types of tasks.										
3-6	The learning tasks allowed me to discuss and negotiate freely in pairs or groups.										
3-7	The tasks created a comfortable environment that encouraged me to use the English language.										

3-8	Working with my teammates has made me more confident in expressing myself.	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
3-9	The designed learning tasks were meaningful and purposeful.	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
3-10	The learning tasks improved my communicative skills.	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
3-11	The learning tasks provided me with more opportunities to communicate in English.	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
3-12	I can improve other skills through integrated tasks.	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
3-13	The learning tasks enhanced my knowledge through authentic texts.	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
3-14	The learning tasks formed my habit of learning English reading.	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
3-15	The learning tasks improved my reading comprehension.	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5

Appendix VI. Student Sharing in the Online Class Communication Corner

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2023年03月21日

Karachi, the biggest city of Pakistan, is the largest slum housing in Asia. Due to the natural disaster, unsettled political situation, the spread of infectious diseases, and no birth control, the poverty rate rises continuously. A large number of Pakistanis live below the poverty line. Most of the kids need to work very hard at the young age, or they have no food to eat. Just like the picture shows. However, the poor would not have the ability to solve difficulties that they face everyday, they could only do lots of work to earn few



money, day after day.

2023年03月21日 15:00 編輯

👤 回覆

2023年03月21日

Eastern Cape is the poorest province in South Africa. Though South Africa is the most industrialized country in Africa, lots of people still live in poverty. The major cause is historical root, apartheid. The government prevented the black South Africans earning to please the white. The government also restricted the black to their hometown; however, there were few infrastructure and employment, which made the poor poorer. Up to 86% residents in Eastern Cape are colored and it is also one of apartheid homeland.



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2022年04月18日

group match

Teacher-student relationship: AI can provide valuable support and enhance learning experiences, but it cannot replace the role of a teacher. Balancing the use of AI with maintaining meaningful teacher-student interactions is a challenge. It is important to find the right balance between technology and human interaction in education.

Equity and accessibility: While AI has the potential to improve learning experiences, it can also create disparities. Ensuring equitable access to AI tools and addressing the digital divide is crucial to prevent marginalized students from being left behind. Steps must be taken to provide equal opportunities for all students to benefit from AI integration in education.

🔍 回覆
👍



2022年04月18日

1. Unadjustable: some people might not adjust so quickly from traditional education to AI assisted education, and will slow down their learning process.
2. Unavailable to electric devices: in remote area, kids might not have enough access to electric devices, therefore they will not have access to AI resources, and this will make it harder to get everyone involved in the integration.

🔍 回覆
👍



2022年04月18日

Latte:

1. The educators should learn how to use and utilize ChatGPT firstly. Several workshops for teachers should be held.

🔍 回覆
👍