Integrating Out-of-Class Materials into Critical Reading Instruction: Insights from Thai Upper-Secondary Classrooms

Chudakarn Pakarasang[1] and Ruedeerath Chusanachoti[2]

Abstracts

The objective of this study is to propose evidence-based guidelines for incorporating out-of-class English material in critical reading lessons for Thai EFL upper-secondary students. The study employed a qualitative case-study design, conducting classroom observations and in-depth interviews with four purposively selected expert EFL teachers from Bangkok, Thailand, to examine their approaches to teaching critical reading using out-of-class materials. The study's findings established six evidence-based design guidelines across text selection, teaching practices, and application. The guidelines include diversifying genres of authentic materials (G1), activating schemas and students' experiences (G2), utilizing inquiry-based questions (G3), presenting analyses from multiple perspectives (G4), and evaluating reliability (G5). The discussion elaborates on reflection and transfer (G6) as a component of the proposed design guidelines and further considers the potential pedagogical implications of using out-of-class materials in critical reading instruction.

Keywords: Critical Reading, Out-of-Class Materials, EFL learners, Thai secondary education

Introduction

"Meaning is paramount" (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983, as cited in Brown, 2000). As second language educators and learners, its increasing attention has been aware to use language not just for passing tests, but for facilitating the naturalistic use of it. Aligned with the principles of automaticity and meaningful learning underpinning the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, a one-way process of reading, where students passively receive information, can hinder their understanding of real-world reading. Brown, H.D. (2000) argued, "Rote learning taking in isolated bits and pieces of information that are not connected with one's existing cognitive structures has little chance of creating long-term retention." Therefore,

[1] M.Ed. Student, Teaching English as a Foreign Language, Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University

[2] Assist. Prof. Dr. of Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, Advisor

Corresponding Author E –mail: Chudakarn.pk@gmail.com

if reading is done without consideration of textual direction or relevance to personal life experience, it may result in short-term comprehension or limited interpretation.

Passive readers tend to accept information as facts without reconsideration, whereas critical readers analyze arguments, question assumptions, and assess the reliability and intent of the text (Wallace, 2003; Pardede, 2007). They actively interrogate the text, respond to its claims, and evaluate how it is presented, drawing on their own experiences and synthesizing both in-text and outside knowledge (Wallace & Wray, 2011). Critical reading involves skills such as analyzing the author's intention, arguments, tone, and persuasive ideas, as well as developing logical conclusions and judging credibility and accuracy. While lower-level comprehension skills, such as recognizing vocabulary, grammar rules, or key facts, are essential, it is these higher-order skills that enable deeper engagement with texts and foster critical reading practices. In many EFL contexts, however, such skills are not systematically integrated into reading instruction.

In today's world, the challenge becomes even greater: Real-world texts often indirect, implicit and complex. In contrast, as we encounter real-world texts, multiple texts are rapidly appearing in printed and digital formats, displayed online and on street corners, making everyday reading easily accessible but potentially unsafe to consume. "21st-century literacy means stopping to look left and right before proceeding online" (OECD, 2021). Due to advanced technology, learners increasingly face social information challenges (Pellegrino & Hilton, 2013). Critical reading, closely linked with critical thinking, is among the 21st-century skills that should be taught in global education (Bassham, 2004; Bråten & Braasch, 2017; Duron et al., 2006; Lau, 2011; Siemens, 2004), and language classes should adapt accordingly (OECD, 2021; Shihab, 2011; Wilson, 2016). Its benefits have been reported in the work of Le Ha, Chong, and Wan (2022), a systematic review of 75 critical reading-related papers in higher education from 2001 to 2021, highlighting its role in increasing academic success and providing an advantage in future professional challenges by enabling students to scrutinize complex ideas around them. This suggests that second language learners are required to engage with texts beyond literal understanding to interpret and respond critically to daily text encounters.

Parallel to Richards' (2015) statement, "Two dimensions to successful learning: what happens inside classrooms and what happens outside them," the rapid expansion of the world prompts more research on language learning and teaching beyond the classroom (LBC) (e.g., Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Hamid, Forsia, & Isnaniah, 2024; Liu, Soyoof, Lee, & Zhang, 2025; Yang, 2020). Going beyond language skills improvement, it is also beneficial for fostering proficiency in different areas (Richards, 2015), reducing anxiety, increasing confidence and

motivation in learning (Reinders & Benson, 2017), and taking control of self-learning (Nunan & Richards, 2015). As yielded by these advantages, the perspective of LBC highlights that classroom-based methods can incorporate a variety of out-of-class learning opportunities, a notion that resonates across EFL classrooms worldwide.

Despite growing calls to apply classroom knowledge to real-world reading challenges, this practice remains scarce across Asian EFL contexts (Le, Chong, & Wan, 2022), including Thailand (Stone, 2017; Thunnithet, 2011; Wichanee & Thongrin, 2024). Rooted in grammar-led and test-driven curricula, one observed issue is the lack of texts mirroring the complexity of the real-world texts that require analysis, interpretation, and evaluation (Khamkhong, 2018; Surattha, 2019). As a result, students may experience difficulties in using 'real-world language' when stepping outside the reading class.

Previous studies suggest that authentic texts can help bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world application (Wang Wen-cheng et al., 2011). For example, Yujong (2011) reported the use of real-world articles from the New Yorker to teach critical literacy in EFL college reading classes, with positive results. Similarly, critical texts have been discussed as potential resources for generating diverse ideas in classroom learning (Vasquez, 2014). Therefore, critical texts, such as news media, misinformation, or persuasive advertisements, have been associated with improving critical engagement while supporting language development. Since EFL students have fewer opportunities to experience real English communication (Brown, 2000), it could be the responsibility of teachers and their teaching materials to transform the classroom into a practice environment, simulating real-world situations to enhance real-life contact. However, such discussions have focused on teaching potential rather than on the integration of these materials.

Existing research on critical reading has focused on proposing innovative teaching methods (e.g., Chinpakdee & Gu, 2021; Kaowiwattanakul, 2021; Upatham, Chuawatcharin, & Phibanchan, 2023; Varaporn & Sitthikul, 2019; Yang et al. 2022; Yimwilai, 2015), exploring students' and teachers' perceptions (e.g., Khathayut & Walker-Gleaves, 2025; Sutherland & Incera, 2021), or enhancing literacies and language skills (Sriwantaneeyakul, 2018). In classroom practice, instructional materials and tasks have been reported to emphasize basic comprehension rather than higher-order critical thinking skills (Khamkhong, 2018; Panyang & Phusawisot, 2023; Sumonsriworakun, 2023). Additionally, the integration of informal or out-of-class language learning into formal EFL instruction remains underexplored (Reinders, Lai, & Sundqvist, 2022). Consequently, little guidance exists for teachers regarding how to implement critical reading using out-of-class materials in actual teaching classrooms.

Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by observing the classroom practices of role-model teachers and proposing their strategic use of out-of-class materials in critical reading lessons.

Objectives

To propose evidence-based guidelines for integrating out-of-class English materials in critical reading lessons for Thai EFL students.

Research Methodology

1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative case study design to develop practical guidelines for incorporating out-of-class English materials into critical reading lessons. Grounded in real classroom practice, the study observed how four experienced EFL teachers selected, integrated, and scaffolded out-of-class reading texts to teach critical reading skills. They were purposively selected based on their expertise in teaching critical reading and the use of out-of-class texts as supplementary materials. To emphasize the qualitative nature of the findings, classroom observation and in-depth interviews were used to inform the empirical foundation for the proposed guidelines. Recurring patterns of classroom practices were recorded across cases, and the guidelines were written based on their recurrence and the objectives' relevance.

2. Participants and Context

Four EFL teachers (one native English speaker and three Thai non-native speakers) teaching upper-secondary students at Thai-curriculum schools in Bangkok participated in this study. Participants were purposively selected through a two-stage process: 1) a screening questionnaire of self-reported frequency of critical reading instruction, and 2) a review of written examples of effective critical reading lessons and use of out-of-class materials. Selection criteria were: 1. Holding a degree in English education or a related field. 2. Having more than two years of experience teaching English and critical reading at the upper-secondary level in Thai schools. 3. Having experience in or currently integrating out-of-class materials into critical reading instruction. 4. Demonstrating willingness to participate in the process of classroom observations and interviews, with anonymity ensured through pseudonyms.

Teachers who met all criteria were further screened using both quantitative and qualitative data to support purposive sampling. The selected participants scored high frequency ratings (3-4 on a 4-point scale, meaning "often" or "always") across all items related

to critical reading instruction. They also provided detailed written descriptions of effective critical reading practices, along with examples of how out-of-class reading materials were integrated in actual classes. Overall scores from 87 to 98 points out of 100, surpassing the study's predetermined threshold of 80 points for classification, were used to screen and identify exemplary practitioners and did not constitute analytic data or evidence in this study.

2.1 The background of the four participants

2.1.1 Mr. Akinson, a 48-year-old native English speaker with a master's degree, has been teaching English in Thai schools for 15 years. He is currently teaching different levels in the SMART program, a specialized English program. His observed class was with 12th-grade upper-secondary students focusing on critical thinking about bias, identity, both personal and global perspectives, using "Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *The Danger of a Single Story*" as the main content.

2.1.2 Mrs. Fatima, a 38-year-old Thai English teacher with 8 years of experience at her school, holds a master's degree in TESOL. She is currently teaching 11th-grade upper-secondary students. In the observed class, she engaged students in discussions about contemporary local and international news, encouraging analytical thinking through collaborative tasks.

2.1.3 Mrs. Tessa, a 32-year-old Thai English teacher with a master's degree from England, has been teaching for 4 years. Despite her relatively limited experience, she demonstrated how her students were taught to develop critical thinking skills in her 10th-grade English for Reading - Writing course. Her observed lesson, "*Sex in the Wild*," engaged students in comparing human and primate behaviors related to gender and social interactions.

2.1.4 Mrs. Madeline, a 35-year-old Thai English teacher with a master's degree in education, has been teaching for 10 years. She is currently teaching 10th-grade upper-secondary students. Her observed class focused on real-life materials and authentic texts, using news excerpts about the Thai environmental issue "Maya Bay" to extend the unit on "place" through pair work, individual work, and group discussions, with assigned roles.

3. Research Instrument

This study employed field notes and semi-structured interview questions as primary research instruments. Field notes recorded teacher and student behaviors, critical reading skills and strategies implemented during instruction, types of out-of-class materials utilized, and their incorporation into lessons. A set of interview questions then elicited teachers' perspectives and the underlying rationale for their instructional beliefs and practices.

Based on existing literature, both instruments were designed to investigate three primary themes: 1) selection and use of out-of-class texts, 2) activities and task designs, and 3) assessment. The observation field note form was created to document all relevant details, and its structure was designed to be divided into descriptive and reflective sections. In accordance with Schwandt (1997), the descriptive section included 1. basic contextual information (e.g., teacher name, date of observation, class level, subject, topic, objectives), 2. a behavior checklist for tracking specific skills or strategies, and 3. an open-ended area for comprehensive notes. The reflective section enabled the researcher to summarize key findings and frame the follow-up questions. Each teacher was informed of their participation in two to three observed classroom sessions, with observations lasting 50-60 minutes each.

Although the research focused on three main areas, the semi-structured interview questions permitted adaptive follow-up based on patterns identified during classroom observations. This approach facilitated an in-depth exploration of emergent themes. Each interview included five main questions and two to three sub-questions, which could be modified or enhanced according to observations made by the researcher. Interviews lasted 30 to 40 minutes and were audio-recorded with participants' consent.

Both instruments were validated for content validity using the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC), with three experts assessing their conceptual relevance and content clarity. Nearly all items achieved perfect congruence with IOC scores of 1.0, except for one item that scored 0.67. One expert suggested clarifying the interview question about types of out-of-class texts by providing specific examples. Another expert recommended adding checkbox options to the observation form to quickly document critical reading skills, strategies, and questions applied in class. Both suggestions were incorporated into the final revised instruments.

4. Data Collection Procedure

Data collection lasted three months (March 2025 to May 2025), starting with a screening questionnaire, followed by classroom observations and in-depth interviews. All participants provided consent for ethical approval prior to the collection. Six teachers initially participated, with the first two involved in a pilot study to test and refine the research tools. Each pilot teacher was observed for two lessons and then participated in a 30-minute interview. The remaining four teachers formed the main sample. Within one week after each observed class, each teacher participated in a 30-to 40-minute audio-recorded interview (two to three interview sessions per person). Presentation slides with visual diagrams illustrating key

concepts, skills, and levels of critical reading were used to ensure a shared understanding, clarify questions, secure accurate responses, and manage interview time.

5. Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study employed a two-phase deductive–inductive thematic process to identify key patterns and themes emerging from classroom observations and interviews. The analysis began with a deductive, theory-driven approach, using a pre-existing theoretical framework related to critical reading, out-of-class materials, and instructional design. Example codes are categorized under themes of selecting out-of-class materials, such as "multiple genres" and "authenticity," and designing activities, including "critical questions" and "different viewpoints." This initial phase helped categorize observed practices into outlined themes. This was followed by an inductive approach, or data-driven coding, which allowed new themes and sub-themes to emerge directly from the data. For example, "context activation" emerged when teachers encouraged students to engage in deeper analysis through different roles.

To support the reliability of the coding process, three large language models (LLMs), Gemini, Claude, and ChatGPT, were employed as analytic assistant tools. The researcher initially generated all codes, and then the tools helped identify potential thematic patterns and reduce single AI bias. Rather than functioning as autonomous coders or decision-makers, the researcher observed possible discrepancies, critically reviewed, compared, and contrasted, and carefully accepted or rejected the suggestions, and the tools were supplementary aids. This process of non-human assistance was finalized by a human interpreting the context, theoretical alignment, and data consistency in all details, recording in a reflexive memo. Consequently, final coding remained entirely under human (researcher) judgment. Although the inter-coder reliability process was not applied, the trustworthiness of the study was ensured through iterative comparison across cases, obviousness in conducting each procedure, and maintenance of consistent checks and revisions throughout the process.

Research Results

This study proposes guidelines for integrating out-of-class English materials into critical reading lessons. These guidelines are derived from classroom observations and interviews with four English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers.

Through multiple rounds of coding, six major patterns emerged from the three initial themes: text selection, activity design, and assessment. These patterns informed the development of six evidence-based guidelines: one guideline addresses material selection

(G1), four guidelines detail specific instructional practices (G2-G5), and one guideline focuses on the real-world application and transfer (G6). The six guidelines are presented below.

Guideline 1: Select diverse types of out-of-class materials as reading texts.

Participants emphasized the importance of incorporating a variety of genres when selecting instructional materials. One teacher explained that "news can be analyzed and interpreted quite extensively," while another noted that "poetry is interesting when there are elements of 'tone,' 'structure,' including 'rhyme' and 'figurative language'." Another teacher mentioned that "memes or ads can be fun yet convincing in conveying the idea." From their view, different genres serve distinct purposes: news excerpts inform and analyze, social media posts or ads often persuade or entertain, while signs and announcements typically direct or instruct.

Across cases, the findings revealed the teachers let students expose to a range of authentic materials expected to serve different instructional purposes, such as the ability to analyze context-specific language use, rhetorical strategies, and real-world purposes. They were selected accordingly during critical reading classes.

Guideline 2: Activate students' schema and build connections with their experiences.

Mrs. Fatima prompted questions like, "What do you know about this situation?" on the *Cops Combat in Bangkok*. Meanwhile, as students read the first paragraph, Mrs. Madeline asked, "Do you know anything about Venice?" and "What problems might Venice face?"

This guideline emphasizes that authentic texts should not be presented in isolation. Classroom observations showed that teachers regularly began their class with schema-activation questions. In one observed lesson, the teacher asked the students questions such as "Have you ever experienced...?", "Have you had ideas about...?", "Do you know anything about...?", or "Imagine when you... What would you decide to do?" aims to stimulate thinking by connecting students' prior experiences. Highlighting questions or statements that connect students' experiences with the authentic reading material is preferred. To illustrate this guideline, consider the following example:

Example 1: Public Safety Sign

<div style="border:2px solid black; padding:1em; text-align:center;">

<u>WARNING!</u>

CONSTRUCTION ZONE AHEAD

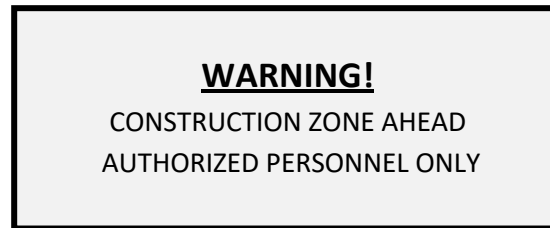AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY

</div>

Figure 1: Public Safety Sign

In one observed lesson, the teacher asked students questions such as, "Have you ever ignored a warning sign? What happened?" "In what place have you ever seen this sign?" instead of normally asking "What does this sign say?" or "Where is this sign placed?"

Example 2: Social Media Post (Political Opinion)

Avoid asking "What is the main idea of this post?" Use a pre-reading question like: "Before we read, predict: What kind of language might someone use when they're trying to convince others?", "Can you tell who the intended audience is from the current political situation of our country?"

Guideline 3: Use guiding questions with out-of-class materials to elicit critical reading.

The data indicated that the teachers' use of guiding questions emerged for developing critical reading skills. Rather than functioning as a means of assessing low-level comprehension, instructional questions were employed as a tool for inquiry, activating students' curiosity, and promoting continuous engagement before, during, and after reading. This approach challenges students to consider the intent, purpose, emotional language, and actions the writer intends to provoke from the reader. One participating teacher articulated this, explaining, "I added 'Why not?', 'How?', and 'What if?' instead of only asking them to find the main argument; I want them to interrogate it more." The following examples illustrate how teachers can apply this guideline:

Example 1: Energy Drink Advertisement - *<u>'Unleash your potential. Let's embrace your inner champion!'</u>*

Consider asking your students more insightful questions, such as: "Which phrase might trigger and appeal to you as a buyer?" "Why not simply say 'Stay awake' as a selling line?" "Who else benefits from this convincing ad?" and "What is the company selling beyond the product itself, given the statement *'embrace your inner champion*'?"

Example 2: Uniform Policy Article - The ministry claims that uniforms *'eliminate class differences.'*

Teachers can conduct a deeper analysis with mind-triggering questions for students to reflect on, such as: "Have you noticed bias existed in the text?" and "If a student wrote this, how would it differ?" Not just words, they notice a reflection of the author's position or interest.

Guideline 4: Encourage students to examine texts from multiple perspectives.

Teachers consistently designed activities that required students to read texts through different lenses, asking questions such as "What social/political/environmental issues does this story reflect?" or "What would you do if you were A yourself?" "If the text is there, plain, without such questions, it is considered not profitable for mind development," said one teacher. Across observed lessons, teachers adopted perspective-shifting prompts to encourage students to consider how different stakeholders might interpret the same material.

Example 1: Song Lyrics

"Shallow" by Lady Gaga & Bradley Cooper
I'm off the deep end, watch as I dive in.
I'll never meet the ground.
Crash through the surface, where they can't hurt us.
We're far from the shallow now.

Figure 2: Song Lyrics

An analysis of multi-perspective or role-based interpretation activities can be used in class, with students assigned roles and corresponding questions as follows:

Role 1: A teenager's perspective: Since adolescents can easily relate to the lyric's context. A potential question from their standpoint could be: "What does 'I'm off the deep end' mean to you in your life right now?"

Role 2: The Parents' Perspective: Now, from the caregiver's view, consider how a parent might interpret the lyrics differently. Ask: "What elements in the lyrics express 'concern for well-being and safety' that would make them worried?"

Role 3: Someone in a long-term relationship's Perspective: Beyond self-context, students learn how age or relationships affect interpretation. Use a question like: "Would they resonate differently for a 40-year-old married woman and someone who is just dating?"

Role 4: A mental health therapist's perspective**:** From a professional standpoint, ask: "If you were a therapist, what concerns might you have listening to the song?"

Guideline 5: Design tasks that require students to make judgments and evaluations about out-of-class texts.

Teachers raised the importance of teaching students to distinguish facts and opinions and evaluated the reliability of the out-of-class texts. As one teacher explained during the interview, "I let students clarify facts and non-facts, biased or not, so they know if it's believable." To guide this process, teachers used prompts such as "Is this a fact or opinion?" "What is the writer trying to convince you of?" and "Do you trust what is said here? Why or why not?" These questions help students differentiate and evaluate their statements wisely.

Example 1: Fake Crime News Article

Instead of simply asking "When did this take place?", pose a thought-provoking question like: "Identify two contrasting arguments; which one is more reasonable, and why?" or "What bias have you found in this fake news?" or "Is the online news source believable?" Additionally, teachers noted that critical thinkers and readers do not rely solely on one source, or they risk being easily misled by the writer's emphasis. "I asked the class to decide which product they prefer buying by analyzing each pro and con," a teacher stated. Hence, tasks required students to compare and contrast arguments from similar and opposing viewpoints.

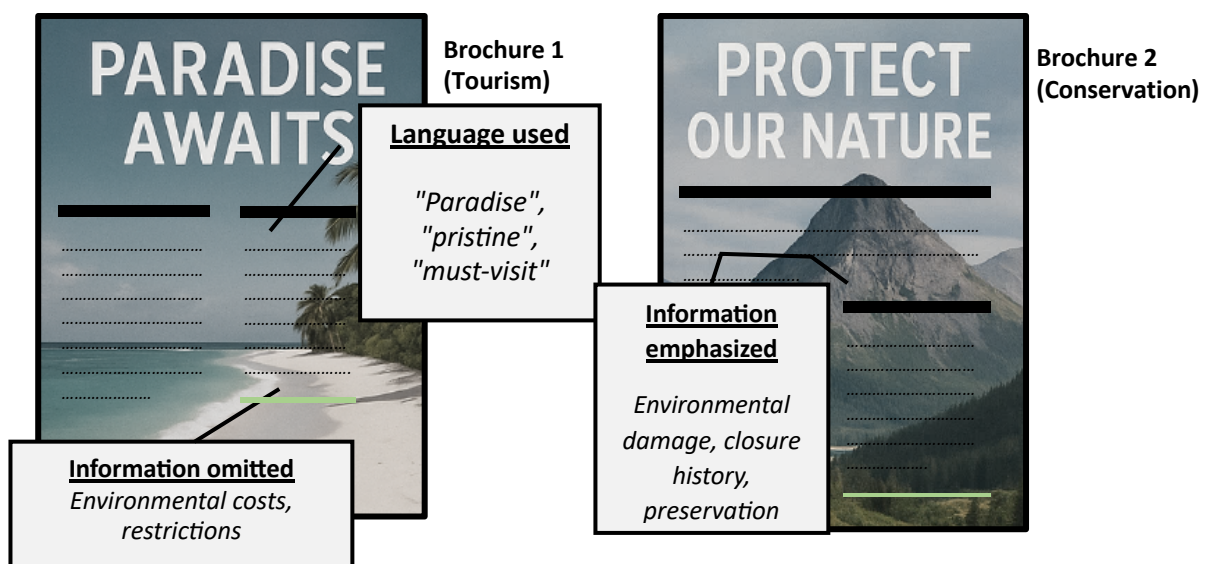**Example 2: Comparing Two Travel Brochures**

Figure 3: Annotated Comparison of Two Travel Brochures

Appealing terms like "paradise" and "pristine" may contrast with "endangered" or "fragile" in the other brochure. The conservation side highlights "damage," while tourism may emphasize "activities or attractions." These differences reflect distinct communicative goals.

Critical questions to ask could include: "What is each organization trying to convince you of?" and "Which brochure tells the 'truth'? Or do both contain partial truths?"

Guideline 6: Connect and transfer what students have read to their personal lives and real-world context.

Classroom observations and interviews revealed that teachers frequently encouraged students to reflect on how the text connected to students' personal experiences and broader real-world contexts, as observed in several lessons. This guideline recommends including stories that mirror current issues by adapting or directly adding to the original text, as well as using idea-activating prompts. For example, a teacher could guide students through a news article.

Example 1: Global News

Using idea-activating prompts, such as "What does this text make you think about?" helps students gain a broader perspective and consider questions like "What might you change after reading this?" Teachers reported that such questions help students see themselves in different role to articulate their responses and consider possibilities of several circumstances.

Discussion

This study reveals that despite the lack of formal critical reading curricula in Thai EFL upper-secondary classrooms, exemplary teachers are actively incorporating critical reading skills into their teaching practices. Although certain skills, such as the deep analysis of language use and source evaluation, were not intensively taught, teachers focused on interpretation, students' connection, and real-world contextual relevance. This sign indicates the possibility of English learning evoking awareness of going beyond grammar rules and test-driven curricula in Thailand.

1. Out-of-Class Materials as Essential Instructional Tools

All four teachers used authentic out-of-class texts, such as news articles, advertisements, poetry, and transcripts of TED Talks. These materials provided linguistic and rhetorical complexity that traditional English textbooks often lack. They integrated facts with opinions, possessed persuasive intent, frequently presented diverse viewpoints, and, most importantly, addressed topics of significance to the students. Nevertheless, these materials

may challenge the low-performance students. For example, asking students in Bangkok to analyze a text about Maya Bay may require imaginative reasoning and scaffolding for students unfamiliar with the context. However, the guidelines also suggested selecting materials focusing on contextual familiarity, and scaffolding could be provided specifically for them.

This approach elevates the use of out-of-class materials beyond just a supplementary tool used in class. According to one teacher, "Textbook readings are clean, filled with grammar and language designed for educational purposes; they do not truly reflect real texts." The complexities of real-world language necessitate incorporating elements like bias, persuasive word cues, and diverse arguments into the reading text for deeper analysis. However, material selection alone proved insufficient. Teachers carefully scaffolded the practices outlined in Guidelines 2-6, suggesting that out-of-class materials can facilitate critical reading when paired with appropriate pedagogical support (Wallace, 2003).

2. The Six Guidelines as an Integrated Pedagogical System

The six guidelines function collaboratively like interconnected building blocks, each intentionally progressing to the subsequent one. Rather than presenting isolated random techniques, teachers methodically developed their students' critical thinking skills in a sequential manner. The classroom application begins by introducing a specific genre of out-of-class reading materials and stimulating students' prior knowledge (G1-G2), activating understanding through inquiry during reading (G3) with multi-perspective-taking (G4), followed by promoting deeper analysis to evaluate texts critically and gain personal insights (G5-G6). However, these guidelines may vary in different contexts, such as in rural or under-resourced schools.

This methodology can transform critical reading into a practical, real-world competency, enabling students to develop skills to assess what they read, critically evaluate media and non-media texts, make thoughtful daily choices, and engage in civic matters. This approach marks a pedagogical shift from traditional teaching methods, in Thai EFL teaching sequence of reading: pre-vocabulary learning and memorizing, reading paragraph by paragraph of the passages, and finding facts through straightforward question structures. It aligns more with Freire's (1970) "problem-posing education." Instead of passively receiving information, students actively construct meaning and use it in reality. They tend to learn not to memorize but to be involved in thinking, questioning, and making meaning independently.

3. Promoting Real-World Language and Awareness through Reading

Every teacher involved in this study transformed the summary from the reading activity into a personal reflection and practical implication. For example, Mr. Akinson ended

his in-class worksheet with questions like, "In your opinion, what is the most powerful example Adichie gives, and why?" and "What is the ultimate consequence of believing in a single story?" Similarly, Mrs. Madeline concluded her class by encouraging students to share their thoughts when she asked, "What did we learn from the study of Maya Bay?"

The main finding of the study is that skilled teachers help students develop reading as a lifelong skill. They encourage students to consider how a text's themes connect to their own lives, communities, and the world. . By linking classroom lessons to real-world issues like economic, environmental, and social challenges, these teachers demonstrate that English is more than just a subject; it is a vital tool for understanding and engaging with the world. This method addresses the problem of classroom texts not reflecting the complexity of real-world analysis, a problem also observed by Surattha (2019). In this way, critical reading becomes more than an academic task; it helps students grow personally and develop greater societal awareness. While this method supports the goal of 21st-century literacy, students with limited prior knowledge, limited language proficiency, or exposure to English-language materials may find it comparatively challenging.

Limitations

This study's primary limitation lies in its focus on a small sample of highly experienced teachers in one specific metropolitan area (Bangkok). While this purposive selection ensured the quality and depth of the pedagogical insights, it limits the generalizability of the findings to less experienced teachers or those in rural or less resource-rich settings. Furthermore, this study explored teachers' practices and perspectives without directly observing student engagement or learning outcomes, which may limit insights from the learners' viewpoint. Although this was mitigated through reflexive practice when triangulating all related data, interpretative bias may still exist. Lastly, these guidelines may not suit all instructions and students in limited contexts.

Recommendations

Recommendations are proposed for future research. It is recommended that future studies extend the data collection period to capture a broader spectrum of teaching methods and content, as some lessons focused on more advanced critical reading concepts may not have been observed. Additionally, increasing the sample size of participants or including student perspectives would enhance the generalizability and validity of the results.

Furthermore, longitudinal studies could examine the guidelines' impact on the reading skills among students as well as real-world language awareness.

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