

## Instructional Strategies for Teaching Reading and Writing in Social Sciences and Humanities in Buddhist Higher Education

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### ABSTRACT

This academic article aims to 1) study the nature and importance of the course Reading and Writing in Social Sciences and Humanities, and 2) propose instructional strategies for teaching reading and writing in social sciences and humanities in Buddhist higher education.

The study found that the course Reading and Writing in Social Sciences and Humanities is vital in higher education for developing critical reading, analytical writing, advanced thinking skills, and reading to writing. Within a Buddhist higher education framework, it further emphasizes reflective practice, ethical awareness, and the responsible integration of digital tools and AI to enhance meaningful learning.

The study proposed instructional strategies for teaching Reading and Writing in Social Sciences and Humanities in Buddhist Higher Education as a new body knowledge through the integration of four major dimensions under the framework of Buddhist Cognitive Development: 1) Academic Literacy Development and Social Learning, which emphasizes critical reading, academic writing, and connecting learning with real-world social issues; 2) Reflective and Mindful Learning, which promotes reflective writing, self-awareness, mindfulness, contemplative reading, and SQ5R learning processes; 3) Collaborative Learning, which supports discussion-based learning, collaborative learning, Task-Based Learning (TBL), Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT), and Project-Based Learning; and 4) Ethical AI and Digital Learning, which encourages AI-assisted learning, digital literacy, responsible AI use, and academic integrity. Furthermore, the study also proposed process-oriented and reflective assessment approaches, including writing development assessment, collaborative participation assessment, reflective assessment, and co-constructed assessment, to promote both academic competence and ethical awareness among learners in Buddhist higher education.

**Keywords:** 1. Reading and Writing in Social Sciences and Humanities; 2. Buddhist Cognitive Development; 3. Buddhist Higher Education; 4. SQ5R; 5. Critical Reading for Reading to Writing

## Introduction

Reading and writing are foundational to undergraduate social sciences and humanities, requiring students to move beyond basic language training toward professional analysis, critical thinking, and structured argumentation. This aligns with Rodsawang et al. (2017) who found that learners face persistent challenges in grammar, vocabulary, organization of ideas, and analytical reading. Additionally, Phanlapa Khathayut (2025) states that Thai EFL students still face clear limitations in critical reading, text analysis, and understanding complex academic content.

The Reading and Writing in Social Sciences and Humanities uses language as a tool to analyze ethical and contemporary issues through interpretation and reflection. Aligning with Insuwan and Thongrin (2024) this pedagogical approach integrates language skill development with critical thinking and social awareness. Furthermore, Insuwan and Thongrin (2025) emphasize that academic writing instruction should prioritize critical analysis and synthesis to strengthen both language proficiency and reasoning. Aligning with Buddhist educational outlined by Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P.A. Payutto), to cultivate wisdom and ethical service to society. Furthermore, while AI tools offer valuable assistance in the digital age, instructors must design activities that promote the responsible use of technology, ensuring that students balance digital support with the development of critical thinking and academic integrity.

Therefore, this academic article focuses on developing critical reading skills, analytical writing, reflective learning, and the application of technology and AI to appropriately support learning in the digital age.

## The Nature and Significance of Reading and Writing in Social Sciences and Humanities

Reading and writing are essential in higher education, particularly in the social sciences and humanities, as they foster critical thinking, information literacy, and reflective analysis. These skills are vital for conducting research, communicating academic knowledge, and viewing social issues from multiple perspectives. Sirawit Apairach (2023) emphasizes that EFL instruction should foster deep reading and critical literacy to enhance learners' higher-order thinking. In the social sciences and humanities, writing requires students to systematically analyze data, synthesize diverse sources, and construct argumentative responses, thereby promoting critical reflection on complex social issues is needed. Thitirat Suwannasom (2025) highlights the need to enhance Thai EFL learners' academic writing and formal language proficiency. Consequently, course materials should feature diverse, context-relevant topics, such as culture, digital media, and AI, to stimulate analytical thinking and academic discussion. In this regard, Kositchaivat (2025) suggested that

reading materials connected to real-life situations, together with task-based activities, can effectively enhance academic reading and writing skills.

In conclusion, reading and writing in the social sciences and humanities are vital for developing critical literacy and analytical communication. By integrating real-world topics, educators can foster deeper reflection and empower students to synthesize ideas systematically and produce high-quality academic work.

### Challenges in Teaching Reading and Writing in Buddhist Higher Education

Thai EFL learners often struggle with academic vocabulary, complex grammar, and the structured organization required for effective analytical and summary writing in higher education. Consistent with Demetriades (2007) Thai learners often face linguistic hurdles in grammar and organization, compounded by difficulties in synthesizing information and constructing the analytical arguments essential for academic writing in the social sciences and humanities. Chuenchaichon (2022) notes that Thai EFL learners struggle with logical content organization and summarization. Furthermore, limited exposure to English, teacher-centered instruction, and few opportunities for authentic language use often impede learners' confidence and their ability to express academic opinions. Suwannatrai et al. (2022) highlight persistent issues in Thai university instruction, digital media, and AI offer support, their unregulated use may hinder critical thinking and foster academic integrity concerns, such as over-reliance and plagiarism. This is consistent with the study of Drarunee Dujsik (2014), which pointed out that easy access to online information is a factor in plagiarism problems among Thai learners.

In conclusion, teaching academic reading and writing in the Thai EFL context is limited by students' language barriers and difficulties with critical synthesis. While digital tools and AI can assist, they also threaten to undermine independent critical thinking and academic integrity.

### Instructional Strategies for Teaching Reading and Writing

Instructional strategies for reading and writing are pivotal to fostering critical thinking, communication, and meaningful language acquisition. Educators should therefore employ diverse, context-specific pedagogical approaches that promote both linguistic proficiency and critical discernment.

#### Critical Reading Activities

Critical reading is an essential tool in the Reading and Writing in Social Sciences and Humanities course. It develops students' analytical thinking skills by helping them distinguish key concepts, evaluate arguments, and question reading texts critically. Pumpachart et al. (2024) proposed a new instructional model that integrates Guided Discovery Learning with Metacognitive

Strategies to enhance learners' critical reading potential. This concept aligns with Paulo Freire (2012) theory of Critical Literacy, which states that individuals can use thought and language to exchange perspectives logically. Through the processes of critique and dialogue, people can engage in a vital mechanism that leads to the collaborative pursuit of knowledge and truth.

### **Reading to Writing Approach**

The reading to writing approach uses source texts as a foundation for analysis and synthesis, helping students master academic language structures, concepts, and writing styles. This concept aligns with Lev Vygotsky's Constructivist theory, as stated by Somabutra (2013), that learning is a process of building knowledge through interactions with information and society. Therefore, students should learn through activities that connect reading, thinking, and writing together. Moreover, Kositchaivat (2025) suggested that connecting reading and writing through task-based activities can effectively develop the academic writing skills of Thai learners.

### **Discussion-Based and Collaborative Learning**

Lev Vygotsky's Social Constructivism, which emphasizes that learning occurs through social interaction and the co-construction of knowledge. Bednar, Cunningham, Duffy, and Perry (1992) established the foundational assumptions of Constructivist instructional design, emphasizing the importance of collaborative learning as follows: Knowledge Construction Mechanism: Collaborative learning allows students to share knowledge and exchange diverse perspectives with group members. Cognitive Process: While discussing and listening to different viewpoints, learners reflect on their thoughts, leading to the reorganization of their existing knowledge representations and the creation of their own new meanings. Ultimate Goal: This collaboration helps students develop concepts and build a more complete knowledge base, enabling them to solve future problems effectively.

### **Social Issues-Based Instruction**

Using social issues as a learning foundation helps students see the connection between language, real life, and society. Wichadee and Thongrin (2024) suggested that using social issues in reading instruction helps develop EFL learners' social awareness and critical thinking. Meanwhile, Insuwan and Thongrin (2024) explained that writing about social issues can enhance students' analytical writing and reasoning skills.

### **Reflective and Mindful Writing Practices**

The context of Buddhist universities that emphasize the cultivation of wisdom and self-awareness, this form of writing tangibly integrates language learning with the elevation of students' minds, morals, and ethics. Aligning with the drawing on John Dewey's Reflective Learning Theory, as noted by Iman et al. (2024) that reflective practice enables learners to deeply examine their experiences and perspectives. Within Buddhist universities, this process



uniquely bridges English language development with wisdom and ethical cultivation, fostering sustainable, self-directed learning and the construction of new knowledge, and also aligns with the study by Sriboonwong and Chosang (2023), which revealed that the experimental group's average score for reflective behavior after learning through reflection practice was significantly higher than before the intervention.

### **Integrating Digital Tools and AI-Assisted Learning**

Digital technology and AI can support reading and writing in various ways, such as information research, grammar checking, brainstorming, and writing feedback. However, instructors must design activities that promote critical thinking and the ethical use of AI. This concept aligns with Technology-Enhanced Learning (TEL). Matere and Oranga (2025) stated that in modern higher education, digital resources, Web 2.0 technologies, and online networking systems can provide significant learning opportunities for students. Lukman (2024) further highlights that Technology-Enhanced Learning (TEL) tools provide rapid, personalized feedback that helps students master academic writing principles, while simultaneously boosting their self-efficacy, autonomy, and overall engagement in the writing process. Moreover, Srichote et al. (2023) demonstrated that integrating technology with Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) significantly enhances English reading comprehension across diverse student populations, regardless of their academic major or language proficiency. However, a study by Ibrohimova (2025) analyzed the accompanying limitations and challenges, particularly regarding digital literacy gaps and academic integrity issues.

### **Suggested Teaching Materials and Classroom Practices**

Effective instruction in the social sciences and humanities requires integrating student-centered materials and activities. This presents evidence-based pedagogical approaches designed to enhance English proficiency while fostering critical thinking and real-world application.

#### **Suggested Teaching Materials**

When selecting instructional materials for a course like "Reading and Writing in Social Sciences and Humanities," instructors should consider language appropriateness, content relevance, and the ability to promote students' critical thinking. Particularly within the context of EFL learners in higher education, materials should provide opportunities for students to read, analyze, interpret, and connect social issues to their own experiences. This aligns with the findings of Hidayat and Setiawan (2020), which indicated that developing supplementary reading software alongside traditional textbooks helps stimulate English learning motivation and effectively enhances students' reading skills. Furthermore, Sari et al. (2024) developed "Reading for Professional Context," an instructional material comprising the

following six steps, which have been proven to effectively enhance learners' reading skills: 1) Read the text multiple times until the content is fully understood; avoid summarizing during the initial reading. 2) Identify the main topic to distinguish and determine essential information. 3) Annotate the text by underlining critical information or taking notes where necessary. 4) Draft the summary using your own words. 5) Focus on core content by including only key information and supporting details essential to the central theme, while omitting minor or unnecessary details. 5) Cite the source of the text to maintain academic integrity. The research by Cotakum (2021) demonstrated that utilizing virtual digital media on the Android operating system is an effective approach to enhancing reading and writing skills. Mudulia et al. (2017) found that the use of authentic materials significantly enhances learners' motivation and engagement in English reading.

### **Suggested Classroom Activities**

Effective learning activities should be designed to cover comprehensive skills, such as reading, writing, discussion, and reflection. This practice needs to be continuous in order to promote both language skills and critical thinking at the same time. The classroom activities are suggested as follows.

**1) Task-Based Learning (TBL) :** Apinya Jamjaroen and Wasana Keeratichamroen (2021) proposed developing students' language skills through hands-on practice, dividing the learning process into three distinct stages: 1. Pre-task Stage: Preparing students by introducing target vocabulary and grammar, and analyzing specific descriptive writing models provided by the instructor. 2. During-task Stage: Emphasizing communicative language use through group activities, where students independently select their own approach to descriptive writing. 3. Post-task Stage: Focusing on review and practice to help students use the language fluently and grammatically.

**2) The Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT):** Jittakan Samarnpun et al. (2025) researched and suggested that The Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT) cooperative learning technique for Grade 6 students consists of five main steps to develop English reading skills: 1. Material Preparation Stage: The instructor prepares appropriate English reading materials and content suited to the students' level. 2. Team Formation Stage: Students are divided into small, mixed-ability teams (high, medium, and low achievers) to encourage peer support and collaboration. 3. Learning Stage: Team members work together to study the reading materials and practice their reading skills. 4. Tournament Stage: Students move to tournament tables to compete in reading games against peers with similar academic abilities. 5. Team Recognition Stage: Individual scores are combined into a team total, and successful teams are recognized, praised, or rewarded.

**3) English Project-Based Learning Activities (9 Stages):** Ladawan Phalamee and Teerachai Nethanomsak (2010) researched and proposed English Project-Based Learning Activities (9 Stages) as follows: 1) Preparation: Assessing student interests and building foundational language skills, 2) Initiation: Introducing the topic, practicing basic reading, and brainstorming via mind maps, 3) Product Selection: Discussing project goals and confirming feasibility as a group, 4) Structuring: Defining the project outline, sources, analysis methods, and timeline, 5) Language Prep: Developing specific communication skills needed for the project, 6) Methodology: Finalizing data collection from various sources and completing the proposal, 7) Implementation: Carrying out the project with teacher guidance and ongoing feedback, 8) Presentation: Practicing and delivering the final project in English, and 9) Evaluation: Using portfolios to assess student progress and reflect on the learning outcomes.

**4) Phonics Instruction Combined with Multimedia Games:** Pichaiporn Saensuk and Saengsuree Duangkamnoi (2023) proposed that this digital learning process builds English proficiency through five simple stages: 1) Letter-Sound Recognition: Practicing listening to and pronouncing individual sounds through games, 2) Grapheme-Phoneme Association: Matching visual letters to their sounds to improve memory, 3) Vocabulary Building: Blending sounds together to form words and learn their meanings, 4) Reading Fluency: Practicing words, phrases, and sentences repeatedly to build speed and accuracy, and 5) Reading Comprehension: Applying these skills to read short stories and understand the main ideas.

**5) Active Learning:** Levine and Munsch (2021) state that Active learning serves as a bridge connecting theoretical textbook knowledge with students' direct experiences. It encourages learners to deeply internalize and construct their own knowledge through the following key activities: 1) Reflecting on personal experiences and sharing ideas with classmates, 2) Receiving immediate assessment of their understanding of concepts and knowledge, 3) Observing, interviewing target groups, or learning through multimedia, 4) Engaging in hands-on learning and reflection to build new knowledge, and 5) Researching and expanding knowledge through information resources and the internet.

**6) The SQ5R Active Learning:** Charoentampanya et al. (2026) state that the SQ5R active learning technique is a systematic reading strategy that encourages learners to continuously engage in the process of self-knowledge construction. It begins with Survey, Question, Read, Record, Recite, Review, and concludes with Reflect. These clear steps not only elevate learners' reading skills to achieve deep comprehension but also serve as a vital mechanism for cultivating lifelong learning.

## Assessment Approaches

Since reading and writing in the social sciences require long-term development, assessment should prioritize process-oriented approaches and continuous reflection over summative evaluation, enabling students to refine their critical thinking throughout the course. Regarding portfolio assessment, Suwarti (2024) explains that it serves as a form of authentic assessment, reflecting learners' writing development through the processes of planning, drafting, revising, and reflecting. Furthermore, this approach effectively enhances learners' motivation and metacognitive awareness. Osanloo and Kolahi (2016) found that integrating ongoing corrective feedback into process-based writing significantly enhances EFL writing quality. Furthermore, course assessment should emphasize active participation, logical reasoning, and collaborative engagement, which are essential for social sciences and humanities instruction. Furthermore, Zhao and Zhao (2020) suggest that co-constructing assessment criteria between instructors and learners enhances transparency and enables students to better understand their learning objectives.

## Implications for Buddhist Higher Education

**Critical Reflection:** Instruction for this course in a Buddhist university should aim to elevate English language proficiency alongside moral and ethical development. This is achieved through the development of "Critical Reflection," which strengthens students' ability to analyze and critically question social issues with logical reasoning, thereby cultivating awareness and discernment in their comprehensive use of language. Furthermore, Sani et al. (2017) concluded that reflective writing (RW) is an approach that should be integrated into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing instruction, as it effectively fosters both writing skills and critical thinking processes among learners.

**Buddhist Educational Principles:** Furthermore, instructional design should integrate Buddhist pedagogical principles, such as Sati (mindfulness), Panya (wisdom), and rational reflection, to foster reflective learning and the holistic development of learners. Kaenmanee et al. (2026) proposed an approach to integrating mindfulness into the learning process through activities such as breath regulation, reflective writing, and mindful listening, thereby establishing a foundation for deep learning. However, Kitikun (2017) states that the cultivation of mindfulness should emphasize consistent practice, enabling learners to apply these skills naturally and sustainably in their daily lives.

**Balanced and Ethical Integration of Artificial Intelligence:** In the digital era, Artificial Intelligence (AI) plays a pivotal role in enhancing learners' reading and writing proficiency. Nevertheless, it is imperative for educators to promote a balanced and ethical application of



these technologies to prevent over-reliance. Central to this pedagogical approach is the preservation of critical thinking development, which remains the cornerstone of meaningful learning. Phrakhrupunyaphisan et al. (2025) suggest that cultivating quality digital citizenship and fostering meaningful social participation require the establishment of a culture rooted in integrity and responsibility regarding the use of technology.

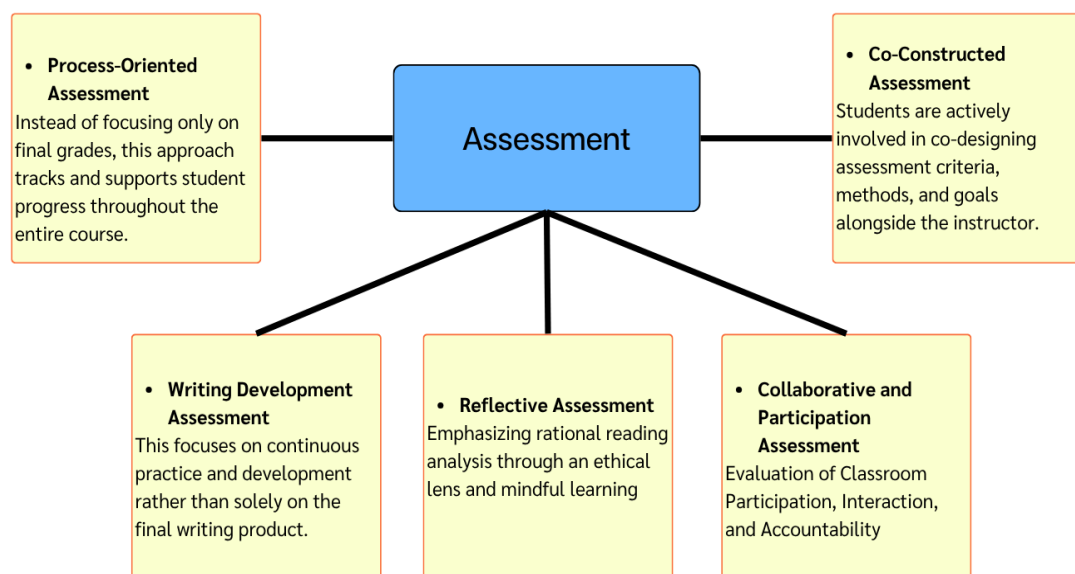
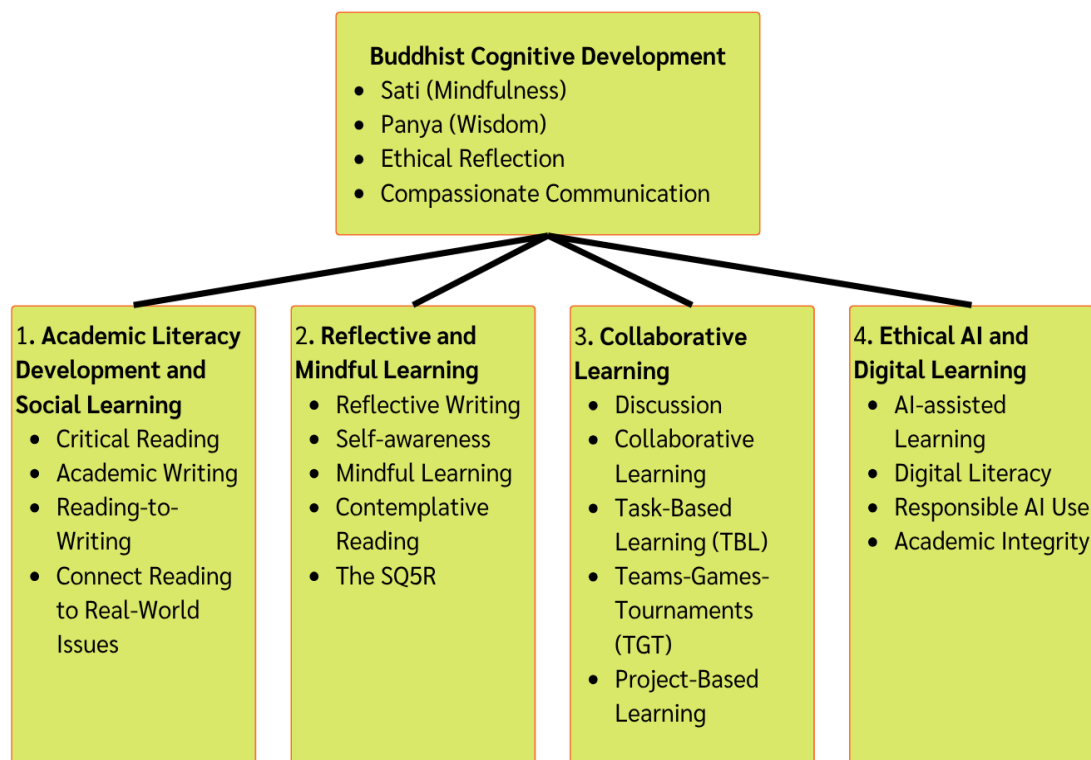
## Conclusion

To optimize learning outcomes in "Reading and Writing in Social Sciences and Humanities," the curriculum should prioritize the development of academic communication skills alongside critical thinking. This is achieved by designing challenging activities that require students to analyze social issues and logically articulate their perspectives. By utilizing context-specific materials that mirror real-world experiences, the curriculum fosters sustainable learning and empowers students to create meaningful of high-quality academic work.

Within the context of a Buddhist university, instructional strategies should integrate Buddhist pedagogical principles to cultivate mindfulness, wisdom, and ethical consciousness, while holistically enhancing English language proficiency. The application of technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) must be guided by ethical frameworks, serving to support the learning and inquiry processes rather than replacing the students' critical thinking. Consequently, this course aims to develop academic competencies that synthesize ethical awareness, ensuring that learners can utilize language and technology in a socially responsible and sustainable manner in the digital age.

## New Body Knowledge

### Instructional Strategies for Teaching Reading and Writing in Social Sciences and Humanities in Buddhist Higher Education



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