

Effects of a Learning-oriented Reading Assessment Model on Thai Undergraduate Students' Reading Ability

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Abstract

In recent decades, there has been an attempt to introduce the concept of “assessment for learning” into English language classrooms based on a belief that assessment can be utilized to assist learners in the learning process, not just for teachers to make judgments and decisions. In so doing, the learning-oriented assessment frameworks proposed by a number of scholars have been introduced to integrate the use of both formative and summative assessments into language pedagogy to enhance language skills simultaneously with developing learners' assessment expertise, hence enabling them to better identify their own strengths and weaknesses, which, in turn, helps promote their learning outcomes. The primary aim of the present study was to investigate the effects of the implementation of a learning-oriented reading assessment model on Thai undergraduate students' reading ability. Students' involvement in several types of assessment embedded in reading instructional procedures was the highlight of the

model implementation. The participants were 25 first-year undergraduate students enrolled in a foundation English course at a public university. A mixed-method research design was employed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data using the in-house English proficiency tests, the end-of-unit tests, and the learners' journal. The findings revealed that the learning-oriented reading assessment model could help develop undergraduate students' reading ability, thus leading to a conclusion that learning-oriented assessment can be utilized in language classes to help learners learn the target language with more desirable outcomes.

Introduction

In a language classroom, language assessment can be used for two major purposes. Language tests can be used as a summative means to measure learners' language ability, to make decision regarding learners' final achievement, to place learners into different levels of proficiency, or to diagnose learners' language problems. Also, language tests can be used for formative purposes aiming to assist learners to monitor their performance, to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and to seek appropriate approaches to increase their likelihood for success in learning (Katz, 2014; Leung, 2013). In recent decades, there has been an attempt to integrate language assessment into language instruction under the notion that assessment can contribute to learners' language learning and developmental processes, in addition to being a tool for teachers' judgment of learners' achievement in class. Such an attempt is a step away from a widely held belief in the past that language pedagogy and language assessment were two separate concepts and that language assessment was primarily for teachers to make final decisions on learners' proficiency and report learners' performances in the form of letter grades or scores (Plakans & Gebril, 2015; Stiggins, 2005). Moreover, there used to be misunderstandings regarding the value, credibility, accuracy, and subjectivity of the use of formative assessment in language classrooms (Boraie, 2018). Recently, with a belief that assessment could and should be done "for learning," a focus has been shifted from summative assessment to formative assessment, hoping that assessment results could more clearly and effectively reflect

learners' actual performance, thanks to the integration of both summative assessment and formative assessment into the ongoing learning process in the language classroom so as to bridge the gap between formative and summative assessments and to ensure more favorable learning outcomes. Due to the fact that the use of language assessment in Thailand is mainly for final evaluation (Phongsirikul, 2018; Todd, 2019; Todd et al., 2021)—that is, in the form of summative assessments—learners' opportunities to explore their own strengths and weaknesses based on assessment results and feedback from teachers are rather limited. Additionally, teachers may miss a chance to get in-depth information that can be used to adjust their teaching and to better serve learners' needs. At the same time, learners also miss the chance to receive instant feedback that enables them to more effectively track their own learning progress and learning outcomes.

The concept of learning-oriented assessment was first introduced into the education field (Carless, 2015) and later into language instruction and assessment (Jones & Saville, 2016; Turner & Purpura, 2016) with an aim to make the most of different types of assessment in a language classroom to ensure that learning has actually taken place. Teachers utilize information from the assessments to gain more understanding of learners' learning processes. As for learners, learning-oriented assessment could become a learning tool that helps them maximize their potential to learn a language through their own involvement in assessment (Christison, 2018). So far, the concept of learning-oriented assessment has been implemented in several contexts with satisfactory results. For instance, it was found that with learning-oriented assessment, learners were able to improve their pronunciation (Navaie, 2018), speaking ability (Hamp-Lyons, 2017; May et al., 2020; Wu & Miller, 2020), and writing ability (Kim & Kim, 2017; Mak & Lee, 2014). However, the authors found that implementation of learning-oriented assessment in reading classrooms has not yet been sufficiently explored in Thailand or elsewhere. This is a matter of grave concerns because reading ability is significant for language learners as it not only exposes them to the target language but also offers them more access to the knowledge of the world (Anderson, 2008; Cohen, 1990). Also learners with higher reading ability are more likely to develop other language skills more effectively (Anderson, 2012). Thus, enhanced reading abilities are important to language learners, and learning-oriented assessment can

serve as a crucial means to develop such abilities. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate the effects of the implementation of a learning-oriented reading assessment model on EFL students' reading ability. It was anticipated that the study findings would shed light on whether and how learning-oriented assessment could be utilized in language classrooms to help learners achieve reading mastery.

Literature Review

Learning-oriented Assessment

Learning-oriented assessment can be defined as a combination of language assessment and instruction in a language classroom (Carless, 2015; Carless et al., 2006; Keppell & Carless, 2006; Purpura & Turner, 2014; Turner & Purpura, 2016) so as to make assessment more meaningful for learners by enabling them to use the information from the assessment to make an informed decision on how to learn the target language more effectively. In a classroom where learning-oriented assessment is implemented, the emphasis is placed on learners' learning processes. Nevertheless, such learning processes are driven by learners' involvement in various forms of assessment activities including self-assessment, peer-assessment, and teacher-assessment. The use of both formative and summative assessments by learners in addition to teachers would then develop learners' assessment expertise because they will learn how to monitor their performance, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and spot their room for improvement. In brief, the concept of learning-oriented assessment has been proposed under the assumption that incorporation of summative and formative assessments into language classrooms can enhance learners' performance and promote learner autonomy. To explain, when learners are made aware of their abilities, they are likely to put more effort into figuring out suitable methods to further improve themselves.

To date, several learning-oriented assessment frameworks have been proposed, but those of the following three groups of scholars are most prominent. First, the framework of Carless et al. (2006) and Carless (2015) focuses on how learning tasks and assessing tasks can be developed and how learners could be involved in assessing activities. Second, the framework proposed by Purpura and Turner (2014) and

Turner and Purpura (2016), which is utilized mainly for in-class observation, emphasizes the different, but interrelated, dimensions on which assessments can take place. Finally, the framework of Jones and Saville (2016) concentrates on the design of learning and assessing tasks and the value of information gained from such tasks. Table 1 summarizes these prominent learning-oriented assessment frameworks.

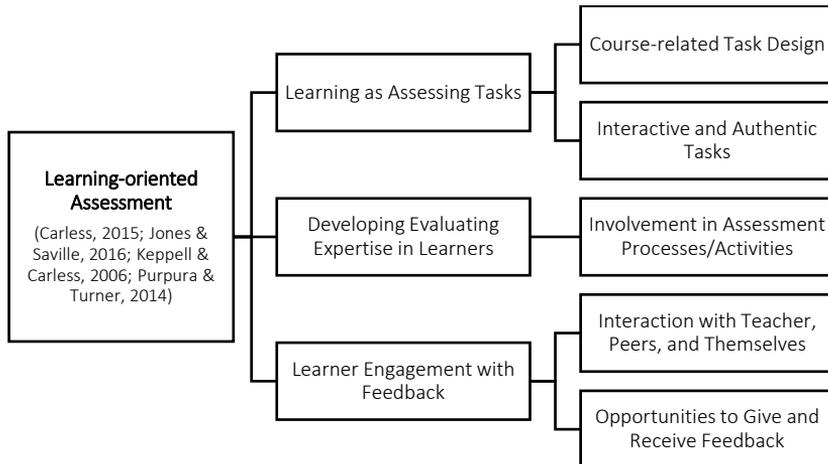
Table 1

Summary of Prominent Learning-oriented Assessment Frameworks

Carless (2015)	Purpura and Turner (2014)	Jones and Saville (2016)
Learning-oriented assessment tasks	Task-related dimensions	Tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relating to real-world tasks - Relating to learning outcomes - Providing choices and tasks cooperation - Taking time and effort to complete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contextual dimension - Elicitation dimension - Proficiency dimension - Learning dimension - Instructional dimension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relating to curriculum and course syllabus - Providing interactive language activities - Promoting interactional authenticity
Developing evaluating expertise	Learning-related dimensions	Interaction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Being involved in assessment processes/activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning dimension - Instructional dimension - Elicitation dimension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observing and recording interaction as evidence
Learner engagement with feedback	Learner-related dimensions	Feedback
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decoding and learning from feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elicitation dimension - Learning dimension - Affective dimension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Given by teachers and peers - Adjusting the activities accordingly

In the present study, the learning-oriented reading assessment model was developed based on the aforementioned learning-oriented assessment frameworks. This model consists of three major components: “learning tasks as assessing tasks,” “developing evaluating expertise in learners,” and “student engagement with feedback.” These three components, shown in Figure 1, were selected as the conceptual framework of this study because they seem to similarly put their focus on the congruence between learning tasks and assessing tasks and the involvement in assessment processes to make assessment more meaningful.

Figure 1

The Conceptual Framework of the Study

The first component—“learning as assessing tasks”—refers to teachers’ use of tasks for both instruction and assessment. Therefore, tasks should be carefully designed in accordance with the course objectives, incorporating a certain degree of interactivity and authenticity,—and with the relationship between tasks and real-world situations intact. The second component is “developing evaluating expertise in learners,” which focuses on the opportunities for learners to be involved in assessing tasks, which could eventually help learners develop assessing skills and monitor their own performance. The final component is “learners’ engagement with feedback,” which helps increase interactions among teachers, peers, and learners themselves when they give and receive feedback. Such interactions not only engage higher-thinking skills of feedback-givers but also improve analytical-thinking and synthesis-thinking skills of feedback-receivers as to how they can use the feedback to further improve themselves.

Reading Ability

Reading ability is defined as learners’ ability to make meaning from a written text they encounter by decoding the text to comprehend

it (Alderson et al., 2015; Anderson, 2008; Grabe, 2014; Grabe & Stoller, 2013; Liu, 2014; Nunan, 1999). To be able to understand reading texts, two main components of reading processes generally play a role: lower-level reading processes and higher-level reading processes. Learners have to effectively—and automatically—manage these two levels of reading processes in order to fully grasp the meaning of what they are reading (Grabe, 2014, 2017; Grabe & Stoller, 2013; Nunan, 1999). Lower-level reading processes focus on recognition of words, grammatical information, and basic clause-level meaning units (Grabe, 2009a; Grabe & Stoller, 2013). Higher-level reading processes, on the other hand, focus on comprehension, interpretation, integration of background knowledge, and attentional monitoring or self-monitoring (Grabe & Stoller, 2013). According to Grabe (2009a), both lower-level and higher-level processes occur automatically in fluent readers. For non-fluent readers, however, either—or both—of these processes are not fully developed, hence resulting reading difficulties. For instance, meaning-making is hindered when readers do not recognize words or related structures or when they do not have sufficient background knowledge on the topic of the text (Grabe & Stoller, 2013).

Typically, when teaching reading comprehension, teachers undergo three major teaching steps of pre-, while-, and post-reading activities (Anderson, 2003, 2008, 2012; Nunan, 1999; Richards, 2015). Pre-reading activities are meant to prepare learners to read. While-reading activities are the actual reading time and the task completion for comprehension. Post-reading activities are the review of the reading text and all activities. In traditional reading classrooms, after learners have been given lessons on reading comprehension, they are generally assessed with summative tests to find out whether their reading comprehension ability has been developed as a result of the reading lessons (Brown, 2012; Grabe, 2009b; Grabe & Jiang, 2013; Koda, 2012; Tileston, 2004). Such traditional reading instruction and assessment could only partially depict learners' reading ability because other relevant factors—such as learners' epistemic belief about their own reading ability, reading motivation, and reading and learning engagement—are not observed and taken into account. Yet, these factors could play an important role when it comes to the development of learners' reading ability. This could consequently mitigate teachers' ability to gauge learners' reading ability (Afflerbach et al., 2018). In order to make

connections between reading instruction and assessment, as well as to incorporate assessment into reading classrooms as a learning tool, many conceptual frameworks, including those of learning-oriented assessment, have been implemented (Alderson et al., 2017). When learning-oriented assessment, which embraces the use of both formative and summative assessments, is used in a reading classroom, both learners' reading processes and learners' reading achievement can be monitored. Teachers could identify learners' reading performance and signs of progress throughout the course of instruction. At the same time, learners are able to gain more understanding of their own reading ability in addition to being offered opportunities to get involved in assessing processes and hence developing their assessing expertise. Simply put, learners will be equipped with a learning tool that helps them grasp better understanding of their own reading ability, which could in turn lead to the development of learner autonomy, another desirable characteristic in language learners.

Methodology

The present study was mixed-method research (Creswell, 2012), and it examined the effects of a learning-oriented reading assessment model on students' reading ability in the L2 reading classrooms.

Participants

The participants of the study were an intact group of 25 first-year Thai undergraduate students enrolled in an integrated-skill foundation English course at a public university in Bangkok, Thailand. The students were both males and females, aged 17 to 19 years old. From the results of an in-house English proficiency test, the students' English proficiency level was in the range of B1 and B2 of the CEFR (Wudthayagorn, 2018). To protect the rights of human subjects, all participants received the necessary explanation about the research objectives and data collection procedures, and those who indicated their willingness to participate in the study all signed the informed consent form before the study commenced.

Instruments

The instrument used in the present study were classified into two types—research instrument and data collection instruments.

Research Instrument: Learning-oriented Reading Assessment Model

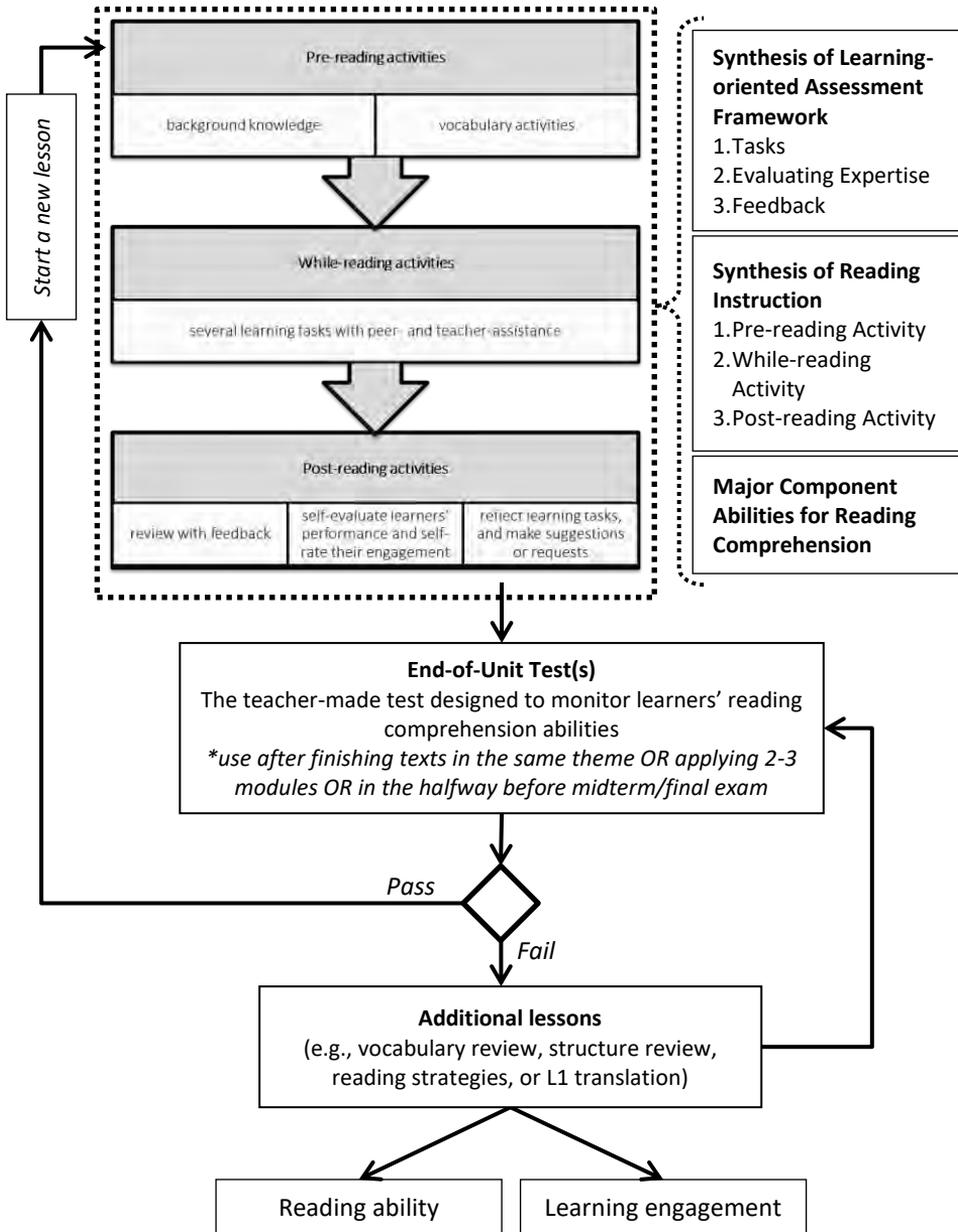
A learning-oriented reading assessment model was developed based on the aforementioned learning-oriented assessment frameworks, as well as on the concepts of reading ability, reading instruction, and reading assessment. The model consisted of four learning modules and two end-of-unit tests. As part of the foundation English course, the implementation of the model took 16 weeks, totaled approximately 48 hours of instruction.

The learning-oriented reading assessment model operated in cycles, as illustrated in Figure 2. The cycle started when students completed the learning and assessing tasks in a learning module. After having completed a few modules, the students then took a teacher-made end-of-unit test. The teacher then made use of the information gathered from the end-of-unit test to adjust the tasks in the following modules to better suit the students' level of proficiency and learning needs or problems. Additional lessons were given outside of class time to students who could not perform well on the test to help them reach the course objectives. Then the cycle began again with a new learning module.

Zooming in on the instructional procedures, which is shown in the middle part of the figure, it can be seen that the concept of learning-oriented assessment was employed in designing and planning reading lessons (Anderson, 2003, 2008, 2012; Nunan, 1999; Richards, 2015). This concept comprised pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities, all were necessary for the development and completion of the reading processes. While group-based activities were used, individual works and performance of each student was not ignored.

Figure 2

Learning-oriented Reading Assessment Model



To elaborate on the steps of the reading lessons, first, the pre-reading activities provided introduction and prepared students to read by giving them the necessary information to understand the reading a text, such as background knowledge, key vocabulary, and lesson on possibly-problematic sentence structures. Next, during the while-reading activities, the students read the text and completed two learning tasks. The first task focused on reading comprehension, in which the students read and answered comprehension questions. The second task was the learning-oriented assessment task, in which the students were asked inferencing questions. Working in groups, the students were encouraged to discuss not only to respond to the questions but also to support their arguments with supporting evidence from the reading text. Each group then presented their answer to the class, and after the presentation the students in the audience used a rubric to evaluate the answer and give feedback to the presenting group. These activities incorporated all three components of learning-oriented assessment—namely, the design of learning and assessing tasks, learner involvement in assessing activities, and interactions. The same rubric was used again to score the end-of-unit tests. Lastly, the post-reading activities allowed the students to review what had been done in class from the beginning of the module. Moreover, as the opportunity to self-monitor is considered a learning-oriented assessment concept, the students also self-evaluated their performance at this stage.

After the instructional procedures were completed, the students took the end-of-unit test to check their reading comprehension. If they did not perform well, they would receive additional lessons based on their needs and available time. In addition, the teacher used the results of the end-of-unit test to consider whether the lessons in the next module suited the students' needs or not and then made adjustments accordingly before commencing the new module.

Data Collection Instruments

There were three data collection instruments in the present study, all of which were constructed, validated, and revised prior to actual data collection. The three data collection instruments are as follows:

1) The In-house English Proficiency Tests. The students took two in-house English proficiency tests, which were mapped with the CEFR (Wudthayagorn, 2018), before and after the implementation of the learning-oriented reading assessment model. This was done to determine if the students' reading ability increased after the completion of model implementation. Each test was composed of three parts—listening, reading, and writing—with the total score of 120 points. In this study, the focus was only on the reading part because its purposes and test types were congruent with those of the study. The reading part of the test took 70 minutes, with the maximum score of 60 points. It contained 60 multiple-choice items, asking close questions and comprehension questions.

2) The End-of-Unit Tests. As part of the cyclical process of the learning-oriented reading assessment model, two end-of-unit tests—all of which validated by three experts in language assessment prior to actual use—were developed to gauge the students' reading ability during the model implementation. The test consisted of two parts: reading comprehension and inferencing. The former were short-answer items with the total score of 8 points, while the latter were two-choice inferencing questions with the total score of 6 points. The total score of the test was thus 14 points. To justify the use of the tests, the development of the tests followed the Assessment Use Argument (AUA) for classroom teachers (Bachman & Damböck, 2017), and the claims and backings were identified and evidence-supported. The contents of both tests were related to the themes of the reading texts used in the modules. After the tests were scored, raters' consistency was conducted using Pearson product-moment correlation (Bachman, 2004; Carr, 2011). There was a strong positive correlation between the two raters at a significant level ($p < .01$) in both tests.

3) The Learners' Journal. The learners' journal was designed for the students to self-evaluate their performance, describe what and how they learned and completed the tasks in class, and review and reflect on their learning. In the first part of the journal, the students were given a five-point self-administered rating scale—excellent, good, neutral, poor, and very poor—to evaluate and reflect on their own performance. In the second part of the journal, the students were asked—via four open-

ended questions—to describe what they had learned, what their favorite and unfavorable activities were, and what and how they felt while in class. The students were encouraged to complete the learners' journal after the completion of each module, hence four times in total.

Data Collection and Analysis

Before the implementation of the first module, all participants took an in-house English proficiency test. While each module was being implemented, the students responded to the learners' journal by self-rating their own performance and reflecting on the class. After every two modules were implemented, the students took an end-of-unit test. The scores were then reported, and feedback given, to the students. There were two cycles of implementation. After the implementation of the last module, the students took another in-house English proficiency test. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to compute the scores of the reading part of the English proficiency test and the end-of-unit tests. Content analysis was used in analyzing qualitative data. The accuracy and credibility of the study findings were ensured by expert validation, in that the interpretation of the analyzed data was submitted for review and approval by an expert in language teaching and assessment.

Findings

Effects of the Learning-oriented Reading Assessment Model on Students' Reading Ability

Two types of tests were used to measure students' reading ability: the in-house English proficiency test and the end-of-unit tests. The former was administered before and after the implementation of the learning-oriented reading assessment model in order to compare the scores—that is, the students' overall performance—obtained. The latter were administered after the completion of every two modules—that is, during week 6 and week 14—in order for the teacher to gauge the students' reading ability and to decide whether provision of additional lessons or adjustment of the following lessons were needed.

As presented in Table 2, Figure 3, and Table 3, the paired samples t-test was conducted to compare the mean scores of the first round (pre-

test) and the second round (post-test) of the in-house English proficiency test. It was found that there was no significant difference between the mean scores of the pre-test (M = 33.76; SD = 7.69) and the post-test (M = 35.24; SD = 8.00) ($t(24) = -1.442$; $p = .162$), and the effect size was small (Cohen's $d = 0.29$).

Table 2

Mean Pre- and Post-Test Scores

	Total Score	N	M	SD
Pre-test	60	25	33.76	7.69
Post-test	60	25	35.24	8.00

Note. M = Mean. SD = Standard Deviation.

Figure 3

Pre- and Post-Test Scores

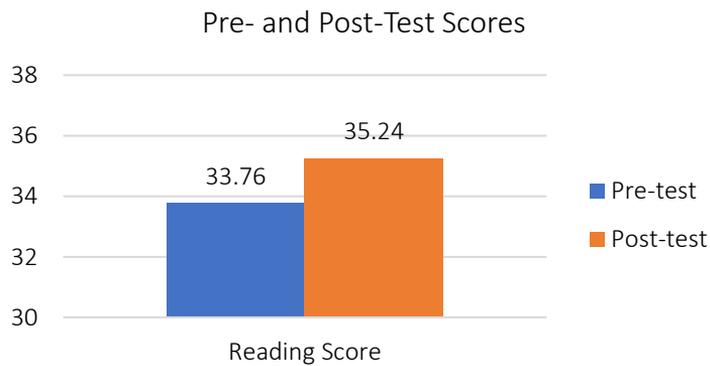


Table 3

Paired Samples t-Test Results of Pre- and Post-Tests

	Pre-test		Post-test		t-test	Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect size
	M	SD	M	SD			
Test Score	33.76	7.69	35.24	8.00	-1.442	.162	0.29

* $p < .05$

The end-of-unit tests were administered in week 6 (Test 1) and week 14 (Test 2) of the model implementation. As displayed in Table 4 and Figure 4, the mean score of Test 2 (M = 11.94; SD = 1.95) was higher than that of Test 1 (M = 11.14; SD = 2.22). As for each part of the test, in Part 1, which tested reading comprehension, the mean score of Test 2 (M = 6.82; SD = 1.23) was higher than that of Test 1 (M = 6.22; SD = 1.49). Similarly, in Part 2, which tested knowledge on inferencing, the mean score of Test 2 (M = 5.12; SD = 1.09) was also higher than that of Test 1 (M = 4.92; SD = 1.19).

Table 4

Scores of End-of-Unit Tests 1 and 2

		Total	N	M	SD
Part 1	Test 1	8	21	6.40	1.33
	Test 2		21	6.83	1.26
Part 2	Test 1	6	21	5.10	1.18
	Test 2		21	5.14	1.11
Total	Test 1	14	21	11.50	2.02
	Test 2		21	11.98	2.05

Note. M = Mean. SD = Standard Deviation.

Figure 4

Average Scores of End-of-Unit Tests 1 and 2

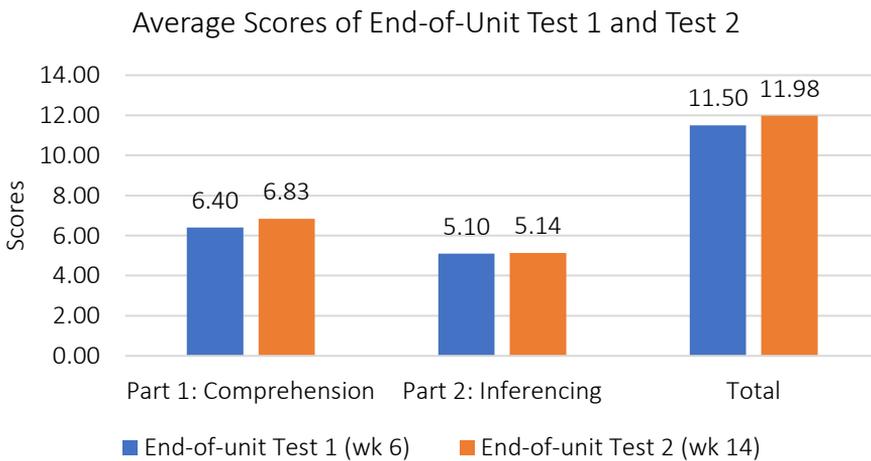


Table 5*Paired Samples t-Test Results of End-of-Unit Tests*

	Test 1		Test 2		t-test	Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect size
	M	SD	M	SD			
Part 1: Comprehension	6.40	1.33	6.83	1.26	-1.123	.275	
Part 2: Inferencing	5.10	1.18	5.14	1.11	-0.252	.803	
Total	11.50	2.02	11.98	2.05	-0.970	.344	0.24

*p < .05

Table 5 shows the results of the paired-samples t-tests used to compare the scores of the two end-of-unit tests. It was found that, statistically, there were no significant differences between the mean scores of Test 1 (M = 11.50; SD = 2.02) and those of Test 2 (M = 11.96; SD = 2.05) ($t(20) = -0.970$; $p = .344$), and the effect size was small (Cohen's $d = 0.24$). When considering each part of the test, it could be seen that, statistically, there were also no significant differences in the mean scores of Part 1 of Test 1 (M = 6.40; SD = 1.33) and of Part 1 of Test 2 (M = 6.83; SD = 1.26) ($t(20) = -1.123$; $p = .275$), and the mean scores of Part 2 of Test 1 (M = 5.10; SD = 1.18) and of Part 2 of Test 2 (M = 5.14; SD = 1.11) ($t(20) = -0.252$; $p = .803$).

However, it is worth noting that although the quantitative findings did not reveal statistically significant differences in the students' test scores after the implementation of the learning-oriented reading assessment model, qualitative data collected from the learners' journal revealed that the learning-oriented reading assessment model helped the students improve their reading ability and other language skills, as discussed below:

Reading Ability

The students mentioned that they had opportunities to practice several reading skills while working on learning tasks in the learning-oriented reading assessment model. In the pre-reading activity stage, for example, the students stated that they had a chance to learn new knowledge as well as to revive knowledge they had previously learned but forgotten, as exemplified by the following excerpts:

I have learned new vocabulary and some grammatical structures. I also concentrated on watching and listening to

the video so that I got a chance to learn the British accent which was quite difficult. [Student RAN, Module 1, week 4]

I learned new vocabulary that I have never known before. [Student KAA, Module 1, week 4]

I have learned some sentence structures that I forgot and also some new words. [Student ANP, Module 2, week 5]

I have learned some new words and some sentence structures. [Student PHP, Module 3, week 12]

I improved my reading skill, and I learned new vocabulary today. [Student NOC, Module 4, week 13]

The students also explained that they practiced identifying main ideas and supporting details through the title and keywords of the reading texts, as described in the excerpts below:

I learned about choices of courses and degrees in the university, such as the types of courses and ways of teaching. [Student BAC, Module 1, week 1]

I now understand the differences between distance learning and face-to-face learning and the history and process of distance learning. [Student NAR, Module 2, week 5]

I learned about the history and how to make silk, as well as new vocabulary about silk. [Student NAS, Module 3, week 12]

I have learned about the process of making paper. [Student PHP, Module 4, week 13]

The activities make me able to find the main ideas and use some reading strategies. [Student SUK, Module 3, week 12]

I understand how I can find the main idea and supporting details of the reading texts. [Student ARN, Module 3, week 12]

Other Learning Skills

Apart from reading skills, the students also mentioned other skills, such as communication skills, collaborative skills, and assessing skills, that they had opportunities to practice while they worked on the learning-oriented reading assessment tasks in class. Such skills were also related to the underlying framework of learning-oriented assessment, which states that the design of the learning and assessing tasks should take into consideration aspects of authenticity and interactiveness, so that learners could relate the tasks done in the classroom with the actual tasks in the real world. Examples of the students' journal entries are illustrated below:

I practiced how to communicate with my new members (in group work) and how to give opinions and rate other groups in my class. [Student ANP, Module 1, week 4]

I can share information with my friends and work in a team. [Student KAA, Module 1, week 4]

I learned how to work as a group and how to give a presentation. Working in a group helped me communicate with other people. [Student SOP, Module 1, week 4]

I have got a chance to present the group's work. [Student RAN, Module 2, week 5]

I read and practiced evaluating my peers as well as had a discussion with them. [Student WAV, Module 2, week 5 and Module 3, week 12]

The quantitative and qualitative data presented above show that the students have developed their reading ability to a certain degree. Apart from the reading skills that they practiced throughout the model implementation, the students also practiced other related learning skills, such as communication skills and collaborative learning skills. It can thus be said that the learning-oriented reading assessment model implemented in the present study not only supported the development of learners' reading ability but also improved other skills necessary for successful learning.

Effects of the Learning-oriented Reading Assessment Model on Students' Reading Performance and Learning Processes

After the implementation of each module, the students were asked to self-rate how well they thought they performed. This provided them with a chance not only to evaluate their own performance but also to reflect on the extent of their concentration and participation in class.

Table 6

Students' Self-Rate Performance (in Percentage)

Percentage	Module 1 (Week 4)	Module 2 (Week 5)	Module 3 (Week 12)	Module 4 (Week 13)
Excellent (5)	8.60	27.30	18.20	16.70
Good (4)	56.50	50.00	63.60	55.60
Neutral (3)	30.40	18.20	18.20	27.80
Poor (2)	4.30	4.50	0.00	0.00
Very Poor (1)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Average (Max: 5 points)	3.67	4.00	4.00	3.89

As seen in Table 6, the students rated their own performance at a rather high level. It can be seen that most of them perceived themselves as either 'good' (4) or 'excellent' (5). It was worth pointing out that only a couple of students believed that their performance was 'poor' (2) and none 'very poor' (1) in Modules 1 and 2. However, no students rated themselves as 'poor' or 'very poor' in Modules 3 and 4. In overall, the average rating for each module was quite high (ranging from 3.67 to 4.00), suggesting that the students believed that their participation and involvement in class were at a good level. Such perception of their own performance suggested that the students gained more confidence to participate in reading classes and believed that what they were doing in the class would help them better develop their reading ability.

The qualitative data gathered from the learners' journal also reflected that the students seemed to see the value of the learning-oriented reading assessment model in the reading classroom. They looked forward to participating in class, and, consequently, they put more effort into their learning. Their responses also showed that they understood the usefulness of the learning tasks, especially the tasks in the post-reading activity stage, as they could review their vocabulary and

recheck their comprehension of the reading text. Not only did the students mention the learning tasks, but they also discussed the learning environment, such as working in groups and sharing ideas with friends. To them, these were perceived as beneficial for their learning, as can be seen in the following excerpts:

The part that the teacher showed the video about silk before reading the text made the lesson more interesting. [Student NAS, Module 3, week 12]

I liked Kahoot because I could review the lesson. It helped me realize whether I understood the lesson of the day or not. [Student RAN, Module 2, week 5]

The lesson was so interesting; however, I got mad a bit because I've lost the Internet connection when we played Kahoot! Thus, I was in the final place for today! [Student RAN, Module 3, week 12]

I liked Kahoot! Of course! Even though I did not get good scores, I still liked it. I also liked the word search activity. [Student ANP, Module 4, week 13]

Crossword puzzle helped me understand the definition of each word and helped me review the vocabulary that I have learned. [Student RAN, Module 4, week 13]

I like it when I write a comment to my classmate's discussion. [Student ANK, Module 2, week 5]

It was new to me because I had to work with new friends, but it was fun. [Student WAV, Module 1, week 4]

I liked group work because it helped me communicate with other people. [Student SOP, Module 1, week 4]

I got to respond to a few questions in class and participated in sharing ideas with my group members. [Student SUK, Module 2, week 5]

I think I get used to it more compared to the first week (Module 1). I was more confident when I answered questions and also when I had to speak English. [Student PHP, Module 2, week 5]

I like to work in my group the most. It is enjoyable when I shared my opinion with my friends. [Student NOC, Module 3, week 12]

Students' Ability to Identify Their Own Weaknesses

The students' responses in learners' journal also showed that they were able to identify their own weaknesses when they were asked what they would like to improve. Although the development of reading ability was the focus of the study, other language skills and knowledge—such as listening skills and knowledge of vocabulary and sentence structures—as well as other learning skills—such as having group discussions and giving a presentation—were also required in order for the students to accomplish the tasks. It seemed that when the students felt that they were unable to finish the assigned tasks due to lack of certain skills, they wanted to develop those skills that they had not yet mastered. The following excerpts show examples of such students' responses:

Today I did not understand what the man in the video said, so I think I want to improve my listening skill. [Student NAS, Module 2, week 5]

I want to improve my speaking skill in class [Module 1, week 4], my knowledge about sentence structures [Module 2, week 5], my listening skill [Module 3, week 12], and vocabulary [Module 4, week 13]. [Student NOC]

I want to improve my skills in group discussion [Student PAD, Module 1, week 4]

I need to develop my discussion skill [Student WAV, Module 2, week 5]

Both quantitative and qualitative data presented above show that, through the implementation of the learning-oriented reading assessment model, the students had developed their confidence in and put more effort into learning the target language and participate in class. Furthermore, the learning-oriented reading assessment model offered opportunities for the students to self-monitor and identify their own weaknesses so that they could further improve their skills in the target language.

Discussion

The findings of the present study showed that the learning-oriented reading assessment model had positive effects on the students' reading ability, reading performance, and learning processes. Although the quantitative findings did not yield solid support for the claim, the students' scores on both the reading proficiency test and the end-of-unit tests were higher after the model implementation. Furthermore, the qualitative findings also suggested that, while participating in the study, the students not only developed their reading ability but also realized the needs to improve other learning skills, such as communication skills and collaborative skills. It is arguable that the development of such skills cannot be measured solely by means of summative assessment. Instead, it requires utilization of formative assessment, which makes the students' development more meaningful. It was found that the learning-oriented reading assessment model had an effect on the students' reading ability. This could be explained that the students' improvement in reading ability occurred due to the utilization of the kind of assessment that the students had never experienced before.

Traditionally, the students in this study were familiar with summative assessments that gave them only scores and final grades. As a result, they had little knowledge of their actual language abilities, which language or learning skills they should improve, and how they could improve such skills to better perform the tasks in the classroom. In this study, the learning-oriented reading assessment model provided more opportunities for the students to reflect on what they had successfully learned and what they still lacked. This is because the model used performance-based tasks that were designed in congruence with real-world, target-language-use tasks. In this way, the students were able to develop not only their reading ability but also other learning skills more effectively. As Migliacci (2018) has pointed out, performance-based assessments should be added into language classrooms so that teachers can use information from learners' performance to offer suitable assistance or challenges to them.

With its alignment of learning tasks and assessment tasks, learning-oriented assessment also plays an essential role in making the classroom environment more conducive to learning because the assessment is not seen by learners as a test but more like a learning tool

(Jones & Saville, 2016). Consequently, the gap between language instruction and language assessment is narrowed down. Additionally, the student participants in this study were also required to self-evaluate their learning performance after each implementation. Through alternative assessments including self-assessment and peer-assessment, the participants might have understood more about their own performance because they were offered chances to give feedback to their peers and review their performances.

It can be seen that to develop reading ability, learners should know both reading ability via scores and feedback and other related factors such as their perceptions of their own reading ability and learning performance in the class. According to Afflerbach et al. (2018) and Koda (2012), efficient readers should recognize their own reading strategies and skills. Resulting from the alignment of several types of assessment in the learning-oriented reading assessment model, the students were able to make connections between what they had learned and what they were assessed. They could detect and understand their weaknesses and were able to look for solutions. As such, there is a shift from assessment *of* learning to assessment *as* learning (Rea-Dickins, 2008) because the information the students gained from the assessment created a scaffold of what they had already known and what they lacked. Jones and Saville (2016) explain that the interactions that occur during the utilization of self- and peer-assessment create a learning environment that helps learners when they face challenging tasks. In brief, the design, the alignment of learning tasks and assessing tasks, and the introduction to self- and peer-assessment could develop the students' reading ability and their assessing expertise. The improvement of the students' reading ability may have also resulted from opportunities to be engaged in assessing tasks, for instance, when they evaluated and gave feedback to their peers' performances. The rubric was also used in the end-of-unit tests so as to assess the students' reading ability. In so doing, the students came to realize what they needed to do to earn higher scores and how they would be assessed. The findings also agreed with Christison (2018) who believes that the assessment should be a reminder for the students so that they could keep monitoring their own performance. Such recognition also leads to the development of the ability to control the students' own learning which is called self-regulation (Salamoura & Unsworth, 2016). The students are likely to set their own learning goals

and make decisions on whether to try harder or give up (Pintrich, 2000, p.454 as cited in Nejadihassan & Arabmofrad, 2016), so they may have better control over their learning with the greater-in-depth information gained from assessment (Janisch et al., 2007). Thus, the involvement in assessment which created a greater understanding of how the reading ability was tested could be a key role to develop the students' reading ability because it helped the students prepare for the test while understanding their rooms of improvement.

The involvement in assessment also developed the students' assessing expertise. Unlike traditional classrooms, the learning-oriented reading assessment model encouraged the students to use a rubric to give constructive feedback to their peers. In so doing, the students could make connections between the rubric and how they were assessed, so they were more likely to understand the expected outcome. When the students have a clearer benchmark for assessment (Christison, 2018), they can better cope with challenges encountered while reading with their expertise in assessing (Jones & Saville, 2016). Indeed, when the students are able to evaluate their reading progress and performance, they could eventually become successful readers.

In addition, the students' reading ability was developed because of their engagement in giving feedback. As previously mentioned, the interactions between the instructor and the students, and among the students themselves, could lead to the development of the students' reading ability. Unlike traditional reading classrooms, the learning-oriented reading assessment model allowed the students to ask questions, require clarifications or explanations, and negotiate their arguments in response to comprehension questions or inferencing questions for clearer understanding. In so doing, reading ability could be developed. The findings yielded support to the claim of Rydland and Gröver (2019) that the discussion and interactions among peers and between a teacher and learners could lead to a better quality of learners' reading comprehension. Furthermore, when the students worked in groups, there were chances that they needed to clarify and explain certain issues to their peers to ensure that eventually every member in the group would achieve comprehension of the reading texts. This was beneficial for the students because they got more practice on text comprehension, understood what they still lacked, and realized what

they could do immediately, which, according to Richards (2015), promotes the development of reading ability.

The information gained from the assessment is advantageous not only for the students but also for the instructor. In this study, the end-of-unit tests and self-and peer-assessment tasks after each class helped the instructor make the decisions whether to provide additional lessons, adjust the lessons, or put an emphasis on specific issues. As pointed out by Jones and Saville (2016), such information is also valuable for teachers. Especially for reading ability, assessment could provide crucial information for the teacher's class preparation (Kim, 2015) and helps the teacher keep track of learners' reading development and how they process their reading (Janisch et al., 2007). In brief, the learning-oriented reading assessment could also assist the instructor to prepare and adjust their instruction based on the ongoing information gained from the assessment employed in the model.

The students' beliefs in their reading performance may have resulted in the development of their reading ability as well. The findings from the self-rate performance revealed a high level of confidence in the participants' reading performance when they participated in the classes that employed the learning-oriented reading assessment model. According to Afflerbach et al. (2013), regardless of their levels of reading ability, learners develop the ability when they are certain that they can achieve the goal of the reading tasks. Such desire to read no matter what also has an effect on the development of learners' reading ability (Komiya, 2018) because they are likely to manage and deal with challenges and difficulties in reading without fear. To provide suitable assistance and supports, learners' beliefs are also helpful information for teachers (Grabe, 2009a; Jang et al., 2014). Therefore, it could be said that the learning-oriented reading assessment model implemented in the present study not only focused on the product of reading ability including the rise of reading scores, but also the reading processes including the students' confidence and beliefs in their own reading ability.

In conclusion, the implementation of the learning-oriented reading assessment model had positive effects on the development of the students' reading ability in several ways. The findings suggested that the students developed reading ability in terms of scores, learning processes, expertise in assessment, and positive perceptions of their reading ability. Therefore, in order to develop reading ability in learners,

it is not enough to focus only on what scores learners have achieved but also on how they process their reading needs. In brief, the learning-oriented assessment model have played a significant role in the development of learners' reading ability and other learning aspects, and this is something that reading scores derived from summative assessment alone might not be able to do.

Implications, Limitations, and Recommendations

Although an effort to integrate assessment into language instruction is not new to the field of language teaching and learning, the integration of learning-oriented reading assessment in the present study has shed light on how language learners' involvement in assessment activities can help increase their language ability as well as their language learning ability. Based on such findings, the following implications are proposed:

Theoretically, the learning-oriented reading assessment model conducted in this present study could be considered as an innovation. This is because, although there were a few studies on learning-oriented assessment with other language skills, e.g., pronunciation (Navaie, 2018), speaking skills (Hamp-Lyons, 2017; May et al., 2020; Wu & Miller, 2020), and writing skills (Kim & Kim, 2017; Mak & Lee, 2014), no studies were conducted with reading and listening skills. Thus, this study reaffirms that learning-oriented assessment could also be beneficial for teaching reading and could become an effective learning tool.

Pedagogically, for teachers and further studies, the design of the learning tasks and assessing tasks should be carefully done with a focus on the congruence between what learners learn and do in the class and what they will be tested on. Although teachers should follow the course objectives, there might be cases that there are classes with learners with multiple levels of English proficiency or classes with learners with mixed abilities. Thus, teachers need to utilize information gained from the ongoing assessment activities to adjust and revise activities and lessons to make sure that by the end of the course, all students will reach the same course objectives, even though the efforts, time, and a number of activities required from individual learners in the same class may vary.

Additionally, the use of multiple types of assessment during instruction provided teachers with beneficial information regarding how

learners perform learning tasks, how they process reading for comprehension, and how they believe in their own knowledge and abilities as learners. With timely information, teachers can adjust and manage their classes in order to serve learners' needs without having to wait for the results of summative assessment at the end of the course, which may already be too late for teachers to provide needed assistance. At the same time, learners who have become familiarized with self-assessment and peer-assessment are more likely to understand themselves and what they lack and need to improve to further master the target language skills. Learners' understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses, as well as how to further develop their language abilities under the supervision and with the assistance of teachers before the end of the course, equip them with the tool that they need to become successful language learners. That said, teachers need to make sure that learners are sufficiently equipped with the skills they need to assess themselves. Unless they are able to effectively perform self-assessment, they may be demotivated, and their learning performance may be negatively affected. For example, they may be eager to conduct self-assessment, but the rubrics and criteria provided by teachers may not clearly be explained to them, so they might feel uncertain about how and to what extent they should and could assess themselves.

Involvement in assessment has been proved to be a helpful learning tool for learning a language as it provides chances for learners to monitor their own learning performance, use the rubric to evaluate their peers, and recognize the learning expectation and learning goals from the assessment tasks. However, there might be cases that learners could not participate in such activities because they do not fully understand how to evaluate their peers, or they think that their English is not good enough to evaluate others. In such cases, training before evaluating their peers should be conducted. The teacher should explain each criterion clearly, with the use of both L1 and L2 if necessary, have a discussion on which elements they should pay attention to when doing the evaluation, and let students practice with some examples and guidance.

It is also noteworthy that the interpretation of the results of the end-of-unit tests might draw misunderstanding or misleading information about learners' reading ability. The crucial problems might occur with the validity and reliability of the tests resulting in the misinterpretation of learners' performance. Thus, it is recommended that

the teachers should understand the concepts of classroom-based assessment and the test development for classroom-based assessment (Bachman & Damböck, 2017).

There were also some limitations in the present study. First, as the study was a part of the foundation English course, it was necessary to cover other assigned course contents. Accordingly, only two cyclical procedures of the model were implemented. Even though the study has led to insightful information, it is recommended that longitudinal research be conducted in order to see whether the development of learners' reading ability could be reflected in reading scores.

Second, as assigned by the administration, the participants in this study seemed to be homogenous, which limited the generalization of the study only to learners with similar characteristics. Hence, it is recommended that the implementation of the model should be replicated with learners with different levels of proficiency and in different settings to better determine the effects of the learning-oriented reading assessment model when implemented with different groups of learners.

Third, the course in which the present study was conducted made it difficult for the researcher to provide additional lessons to the students who might have had difficulties in class. Therefore, further studies should also be undertaken with learners with different levels of proficiency so as to prove that the additional lessons mentioned in the learning-oriented reading assessment could help learners with lower-reading ability learn better.

Finally, the implementation of each module of the learning-oriented reading assessment model took a large amount of time for teachers to complete. Therefore, teachers need to set aside sufficient time for class preparation including both the course content and instructional procedures and the development of the formative tests.

In conclusion, the implementation of the learning-oriented reading assessment model in the present study can be considered another step in an attempt to embed assessment in the learning process. Despite a few cautions in its implementation, the learning-oriented reading assessment model can certainly be utilized by language teachers to assist their learners during the process of learning to increase their chance to develop their English reading ability more successfully.

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Appendix A

Instructional Procedures within a Learning-oriented Reading Assessment Model
(I for instructor, Ss for students)

Procedures		Activities	Embedded components		Remarks
			LOA activities	Component abilities for reading comprehension	
<i>Pre-reading</i>	1	Activating and building background knowledge	Task 1: Background Knowledge I use several media and activities such as video clips, storytelling, and discussion to activate and build Ss' background knowledge relating to the reading text.		
	2	Identifying vocabulary and implementing vocabulary activities	Task 2: Vocabulary Identification – Ss work in groups or on their own and ... 1. scan for recognizable words 2. share vocabulary knowledge with peers 3. scan for unknown words 4. guess the meanings of the words from the context 5. use a dictionary or online dictionary to search for their meanings and choose the appropriate meanings for the reading text. Task 3: Vocabulary Implementation – Ss do the vocabulary exercise (words are derived from key vocabulary).		– The ability to recognize words in terms of sounds, spelling, word building, and meaning Ss are encouraged to bring dictionaries (Thai-English and English-English) to the class.
	3	Identifying language structure	Task 4: Language Structures – Ss work in groups or on their own to 1. identify interesting structures in the text, and 2. discuss how those structures can be interpreted.		– The ability to recognize structures and use the knowledge to support

	Procedures	Activities	Embedded components		Remarks
			LOA activities	Component abilities for reading comprehension	
<i>while-reading</i>	4	Implementing learning tasks	Task 5: Learning-oriented Assessment Task on Reading Comprehension Ss read the passage together and answer the comprehension questions that target the main idea and supporting details.	TYPE 1: learning tasks as assessing tasks – The ability to identify main ideas of the text – The ability to identify supporting details – The ability to summarize the text	
			Task 6: Instructor’s Support for Reading Comprehension Explicit instruction: reading strategies such as - Skimming and scanning - Guessing words and meaning from the text - Locating main idea - Referencing	– The ability to use reading strategies when facing challenge reading texts	
			Task 7: Learning-oriented Assessment Task on Making Inferencing from a Reading Text Ss have a discussion on questions regarding the reading text. They are encouraged to support one another and argue for their positions based on the reading text.	TYPE 1: learning tasks as assessing tasks	
	5	Task 8: Learning-oriented Assessment Task on Evaluating Peers’ Performances – Ss in a group share their discussion. They are evaluated using a rubric and given feedback based on the rubric.	TYPE 2: developing evaluating expertise in learners – The ability to make inferences from the reading text – The ability to synthesize and		

Procedures	Activities				Embedded components		Remarks
					LOA activities	Component abilities for reading comprehension	
		Effective	Moderately effective	Ineffective		evaluate the reading text	
	1. He/She states the issues/questions and elaborates when necessary.						
	2. He/She provides enough supporting evidence based on the reading text to support or argue for their position.						
	3. The overall answer is logical and clear.						
	<u>Comment:</u>						
	Task 9: Learning-oriented assessment task on giving feedback Ss response to the received feedback. They may accept and argue against the feedback.				TYPE 3: learner engagement with feedback (interacting with a teacher and peers)		
	Task 10: Instructor's Support of the Language Used in the Discussion						

Procedures		Activities		Embedded components		Remarks	
				LOA activities	Component abilities for reading comprehension		
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – I monitor each group and gives guidance during the discussion <i>when it is necessary</i>. – I may give explicit instruction on <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the language used to give opinions 2. the language used to refer to the source/reading text 3. the language used to ask for and clarify information 4. the language used to show agreement and disagreement 5. the language used to summarize and report the result of a discussion 			
post-reading	6	Reviewing reading comprehension		<p>Task 11: Lesson Revision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – I and Ss review vocabulary and structures found in the reading text. – Ss do comprehension activities to review the reading text and I may clarify any unclear points. – I and Ss have a discussion on structures in the reading text. 			
	7	Reflecting	Classroom tasks	<p>Task 12: Classroom Reflection</p> <p>Ss reflect on the activities learned in the class.</p>			
	7	Evaluating	reading ability	<p>Task 13: Learning-oriented Assessment Task on Reading Ability Self-evaluation</p> <p>Ss self-evaluate their reading abilities developed in the class.</p>	TYPE 2: developing evaluating expertise in learners TYPE 3: learner engagement with feedback (interacting)		
		learning performance	<p>Task 14: Learning-oriented Assessment Task on Learning Performance Self-rating</p> <p>Ss self-rate their learning performance in the class.</p>				

Procedures	Activities	Embedded components		Remarks
		LOA activities	Component abilities for reading comprehension	
		with themselves)		
	<p>Task 15: Learning-oriented Assessment Task on Sharing Self-evaluation and Self-rating Ss share and have a discussion on their responses to the self-evaluation and self-rating tasks (Task 13 and Task 14) with me and peers.</p>	TYPE 3: learner engagement with feedback (interacting with themselves)		