

Revisiting Academic Reading Teaching: Insights From In-Service EAP Teachers in Bangladesh

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Abstract—The goal of this study was to see how teachers' beliefs about teaching academic reading skills in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses aligned with their actual teaching practices at a Bangladeshi university. Academic reading is a vital skill for students pursuing higher education, yet discrepancies often exist between teachers' theoretical understanding of the subject and classroom execution. Using a qualitative approach, the study employs multiple case studies of three EAP instructors, incorporating semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. The findings revealed a significant misalignment between teachers' beliefs and practices. Although teachers support student-centered approaches such as scaffolding and peer interaction, their classroom practices remain largely teacher-centered, with an overemphasis on teacher talk, controlled textbook tasks, and limited formative assessments. This disconnection between beliefs and practices limits opportunities for active learning and student engagement. This study highlights gaps in aligning lesson objectives, task design, and scaffolding with students' needs. These findings suggest the need for more reflective, student-centered pedagogy to bridge the gap between teachers' intentions and classroom realities, ultimately enhancing academic reading instruction for EAP students.

Index Terms—beliefs, practices, English for academic purposes (EAP), academic reading, misalignment

I. INTRODUCTION

Academic reading is defined as the ability of students to engage with a given topic and gain insights provided by content experts, such as researchers and instructors (Jin et al., 2020). Furthermore, academic reading for English for Academic Purposes (EAP) is recognized as a vital skill for students pursuing higher education in any field (Jin et al., 2020). It is widely accepted that academic reading for EAP purposes equips students with the skills to investigate and analyze discipline-specific materials while using English as the medium of communication (Atai & Taherkhani, 2018). As a result, educational institutions and EAP instructors prioritize academic reading to help students build general knowledge and expertise in specific subject areas (Allen, 2012; Manarin, 2012). Aghaie and Zhang (2012) emphasized that teaching academic reading contributes significantly to learners' academic success, noting that metacognitive strategies are among the most effective approaches for engaging with reading texts. Academic reading also enhances students' ease in their major fields of study (Lockhart & Soliday, 2016). Furthermore, it strengthens learners' writing skills (Lockhart & Soliday, 2016; Valeri-Gold & Demming, 2000) and promotes critical thinking (Paul & Elder, 2008). Students' enthusiasm for academic reading is often indicative of their success in formal education (Mugambi, 2015).

Still, despite the widespread recognition of the importance of academic reading and its assumed link to student achievement, research has revealed a contrasting trend. Studies have shown that students' academic performance is not necessarily determined by their reading abilities (French et al., 2015; Jin et al., 2020). Additionally, some scholars argue that classroom-based reading practice and training may not be as beneficial for learners as traditionally assumed (Mzekand et al., 2021). This discrepancy highlights that the importance of academic reading is perceived differently across studies. Even among instructors who teach academic reading, there is a wide variation in beliefs about how it should be taught. Thus, when all is said and done, the critical importance of academic reading comprehension and the demanding nature of

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mastering the task necessitate a thorough examination of the beliefs and practices surrounding academic reading instruction. Consequently, this study aims to report on teachers' beliefs and classroom practices concerning the teaching of academic reading.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. What Is Academic Reading?

Reading for academic purposes refers to the formal reading activities that students engage in during their academic journey, particularly when they enroll in university and work with texts that are often context-independent as part of their coursework (Jin et al., 2020). This type of intensive reading focuses students' attention on specific discourse elements and methodological aspects of a text (Lockhart & Soliday, 2016). For students to successfully acquire or produce knowledge, strong academic reading skills are essential (Allen, 2012; Manarin, 2012). Academic reading, by nature, is goal-oriented, aimed at achieving specific learning outcomes (Fox & Alexander, 2011). According to Brumfit (1980), reading is "a highly complex activity that involves a combination of perceptual, linguistic, and cognitive skills" (p. 3).

B. EAP Instructors' Beliefs

EAP reading instructors' beliefs are deeply rooted in theories of language acquisition and pedagogy, emphasizing learner autonomy, scaffolding, and contextualized learning. Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development (ZPD) has underscored the importance of guided instruction that transitions learners from dependence to autonomy. Teachers frequently endorse scaffolding strategies, such as activating prior knowledge and gradual withdrawal of support, to facilitate learners' engagement and cognitive development within this framework. However, as Basturkmen (2012) noted, instructors often struggle to align their scaffolding beliefs with classroom practices, highlighting the need for reflective teaching to bridge this gap.

The promotion of learner autonomy is another significant belief shared among EAP instructors. Ferris (2003) emphasized the role of peer feedback and collaborative learning in developing students' independent problem-solving and self-regulation skills. Similarly, Ellis (2018) encouraged task-based language teaching (TBLT), which aligns with instructors' beliefs in progressing from controlled to freer tasks to enhance learners' ability to apply skills autonomously. However, as Grabe (2009) observed, this belief often conflicts with traditional teacher-centered approaches that dominate classroom practices, constraining opportunities for real-world application of reading skills.

Contextualized and meaningful learning is a core belief supported by cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies. Anderson (2008) highlighted the importance of embedding reading tasks within rich, authentic contexts to enhance comprehension and retention. Globe (2007) extended this idea, suggesting that contextually driven tasks motivate learners and improve engagement. Yet, teachers frequently cite constraints, such as curriculum demands or time limitations, that hinder the implementation of such tasks.

Task differentiation and adaptive pedagogy are additional beliefs emphasized by instructors. Tomlinson (2014) stressed the importance of tailoring instruction to diverse learner needs, particularly for weaker readers. However, Baskertun (2015) identified a gap between these beliefs and practice, noting that many instructors default to uniform tasks that fail to address varying proficiency levels, thereby limiting weaker learners' participation and progress.

C. EAP Teachers' Cognition: Conceptual Model

Much like language teaching is influenced by a teacher's cognitive framework, teachers' perspectives on academic reading are fundamentally shaped by their cognitive processes. According to Borg (2015), these beliefs about teaching and learning, referred to as "teacher cognition", have a direct impact on classroom practices. Over time, as teachers engage in practice, their beliefs evolve and become more refined (Borg, 2006). This study seeks to uncover the discrepancy between the stated beliefs of instructors and their actual behaviors in the classroom when teaching academic reading. Farrell (2015) further highlighted that the connection between teachers' beliefs and their teaching practices is often misaligned, suggesting that reflective teaching practices can help bridge this gap by prompting teachers to critically assess and modify their approaches.

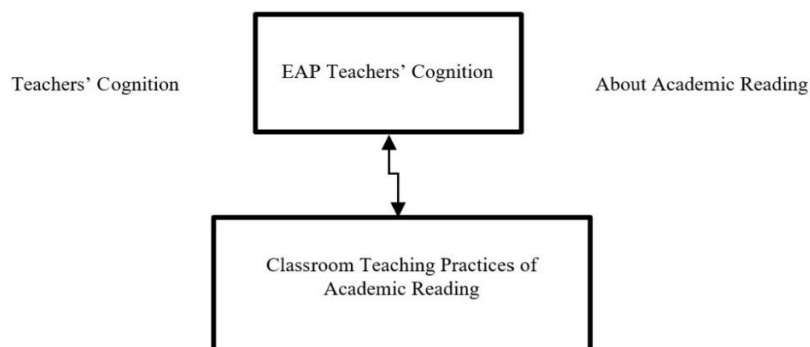


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Teacher Cognition Adapted From Borg (2015)

D. Relationship Between EAP Teachers' Ideologies and Classroom Practices

EAP teachers often struggle to align their practices with their beliefs due to the complexity of their belief systems, which encompass factors such as their perspectives on programs, language, learners, and materials, as well as their broader assumptions and knowledge of teaching and learning (Burns, 1996). Additionally, the perspectives of teachers evolve in response to the practical demands of the classroom. For example, the need for scaffolding arises as students require additional support (Phipps & Borg, 2009). It is not uncommon for teachers to unintentionally diverge from their core beliefs when teaching academic reading (Basturkmen et al., 2004; Alam et al., 2024). Guskey (1986) argued that new beliefs often replace old ones, suggesting a bidirectional relationship between teachers' beliefs and their instructional experiences (Borg, 2009). Moreover, contextual challenges and systemic flaws within educational institutions can contribute to a disconnect between teachers' beliefs and their actual classroom practices (Garcia & Lewis, 2014; Alam et al., 2024).

The aim of the present study is to contribute to the existing literature by exploring the beliefs and classroom practices of three EAP teachers in Bangladesh in relation to teaching academic reading. The following research questions have guided the data collection and analysis in this study:

1. What are the EAP teachers' beliefs about academic reading?
2. What are the observed classroom practices of EAP teachers when it comes to teaching academic reading?
3. What is the relationship between the claimed beliefs of the EAP teachers and the observed classroom practices?

III. METHODOLOGY

To unpack answers to the research questions, the methodology section is devised as follows:

A. Study Approach

This study adopts a qualitative approach, using multiple case studies to gain a deeper understanding of the issue. Although qualitative research has certain limitations, it offers researchers the opportunity to uncover insightful and thought-provoking perspectives on complex topics (Creswell, 2012, p. 16). To gather valuable insights from the EAP teachers regarding the best practices for teaching academic reading, six carefully crafted questions (Appendix A) were posed during the interviews. These questions aimed to explore the teachers' beliefs, strategies, and challenges in teaching academic reading, providing a comprehensive view of their perspectives and classroom practices.

B. Participants

Through purposive sampling, three EAP instructors from a Bangladeshi university, each with nearly a decade of experience teaching academic reading, were selected for this study. After gathering their responses to the interview questions, their classroom practices were recorded using an observation protocol (Appendix B) to compare their stated beliefs with their actual teaching practices. All three teachers hold undergraduate and graduate degrees in English language and literature and have obtained teaching certificates and diplomas from the University of Cambridge.

C. Setting

All the instructors were recruited from the Asian University for Women, a prestigious higher education institution located in Bangladesh. The interviews were conducted in the instructors' professional environment to ensure familiarity and comfort, allowing for more authentic and reflective responses. With prior consent, their answers were recorded using a digital recording device to accurately capture their insights for subsequent analysis. Additionally, classroom observations were conducted to gain insights into the teachers' instructional practices and evaluate how these aligned with their stated beliefs about teaching academic reading.

D. Instruments

To collect data for this study, both a semi-structured interview (Appendix A) and a structured classroom observation protocol (Appendix B) were employed, the latter of which was used to take detailed notes on teachers' classroom practices while teaching academic reading. These tools facilitated a comprehensive analysis of the topic and contributed to a deeper understanding of the subject matter (Creswell, 2012, p. 16).

IV. RESULTS

Inductive and deductive data analysis are two distinct approaches used in qualitative research to make sense of data. These approaches help researchers identify patterns, themes, and categories from the data in different ways (Saldana, 2021). For this study, the researchers applied a combination of deductive and inductive approaches to analyze the data. Specifically, we identified themes based on our research questions using a deductive approach, and categories, subcategories, and codes emerged from the data itself, aligning with an inductive approach to qualitative data analysis. These themes were used to examine the data and compare significant discrepancies between the stated beliefs of teachers and their observed classroom practices. The three major themes were as follows:

1. EAP teachers' beliefs about teaching academic reading.
2. EAP teachers' observed classroom practices about EAP reading.

3. EAP teachers' beliefs versus their practices in the classroom.

TABLE 1
THE FIRST THEME OF EAP TEACHERS' BELIEFS ABOUT TEACHING ACADEMIC READING

Category	Subcategory	Code
Beliefs about teaching	Role of the teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source of information or knowledge • Facilitator of learning • Scaffolder • Unobtrusive monitor • Feedback provider
	Approaches to instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective-oriented • Well graded for task comprehension • Student-centered and interactive • Bottom-up vs. top-down approach to reading • PPP pattern leading to TBLT-based task • Related to reality (meaningful)
Beliefs about students	Role of the students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting rid of word-to-word comprehension tendencies • Target the skill of overall comprehension through reading despite unfamiliar vocabulary • Being a quick reader • Acquire the skill of differentiating among compositional parts and features • Being able to infer as a reader • Adherence to teacher-led instructions
Beliefs about tasks	Types of tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension tasks • Controlled leading to freer tasks • Guided discovery-based task design • Differentiated as required for individual learner needs
Beliefs about assessment	Types of assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combination of formative and summative assessment • Design assessments to measure stage-wise progress • Not in-class assessments • Assessments to allow learners to demonstrate their skills through extended deadlines

As shown in Table 1, the first category is about teachers' beliefs about teaching. The sub-category of the role of the teacher reveals that all three teachers share partially similar perceptions regarding the multifaceted roles a teacher must adopt in a classroom. All three agree that a teacher serves as the primary source of knowledge or information while progressively transitioning to a facilitator, scaffolder, and feedback provider. As Teacher 1 articulated, "The gradually developing pattern of the shifting roles of a teacher in a reading classroom can be as follows: input provider, scaffolder, facilitator, active monitor, feedback regulator, and provider." Similarly, Teacher 3 reinforced this perception by stating, "I believe, as a teacher, I am that primary source of knowledge and information." This perspective aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the importance of scaffolding in the ZPD. Through scaffolding, teachers provide initial support to learners as they engage with new material, gradually reducing assistance as learners develop competence. The process encourages learners to explore and internalize knowledge actively, which mirrors the "discovery learning approach" mentioned in the interviews. Discovery learning, championed by Bruner (2009), promotes the idea of learners constructing their understanding through exploration and problem-solving, with the teacher acting as a guide rather than a direct provider of knowledge.

Teachers 1 and 3 also highlighted the significance of scaffolded peer interaction, where students collaborate toward specific task goals with minimal teacher intervention. For example, Teacher 3 noted, "I also play the role of a facilitator while students interact among themselves mostly." This approach supports research by Johnson and Johnson (2021), who found that cooperative learning fosters deeper engagement and critical thinking when learners work together towards shared goals. Peer feedback further amplifies this process by encouraging active listening and collaborative problem-solving before final teacher intervention.

Teacher 2 underscored the importance of fostering independence, stating, "Teachers must facilitate the students becoming independent readers able to handle anything." This reflects the constructivist philosophy that learners should ultimately become self-reliant, applying strategies and skills to new and varied contexts (Yilmaz, 2008). By minimizing direct instruction and emphasizing facilitation, teachers empower students to take ownership of their learning journey. The teachers' beliefs about tasks show partial alignment, reflecting shared and distinct approaches to task design. Teacher 2 prioritized teaching composition—structure and parts—whereas Teacher 3 emphasized a continuum of tasks that gradually developed skills. Teacher 1 highlighted the importance of "developmental reflections" and "tracing progression"

to ensure focused facilitation. Their collective views stress sequencing tasks to support skill advancement with scaffolding, aligning with the concept of task gradation in language pedagogy (Ellis, 2018).

Teacher 3 also emphasized tailoring tasks to individual learner factors, resonating with differentiated instruction principles (Tomlinson, 2014). Teacher 1 underscored self-reflective practices for effective skill instruction, reinforcing the importance of deliberate task design and evaluation. These beliefs reflect a transition from the structured PPP model to the real-world spontaneity of TBLT, blending the strengths of both approaches (Willis & Willis, 2007). The teachers agreed on an interactive, learner-centered approach to developing independent reading skills. Teacher 2 focused on inference-based proficiency, whereas Teachers 1 and 3 prioritized real-life application and meaningful engagement. Teacher 1 called for “purposeful and analytic” development of subskills, avoiding short-term prescriptive goals. Similarly, Teacher 3 viewed reading as essential for “effective communication”, emphasizing real-world relevance. These perspectives align with Anderson’s (2008) model of cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies and Grabe’s (2009) integration of linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural competencies.

Overall, the teachers’ views encapsulate the dynamic and evolving roles of educators in modern classrooms. While serving as an initial source of information, they transition to facilitators and scaffolders, enabling learners to construct their knowledge collaboratively and independently. The gradual shift to learner autonomy aligns with contemporary educational practices that prioritize student-centered learning environments. All three teachers supported formative and summative assessments for tracking progress. Teacher 3 highlighted class-based interactivity, whereas Teacher 1 stressed progressive formative assessments to guide learning. Teacher 2 preferred assessments outside the classroom. This progressive approach aligns with Black and Wiliam’s (2009) focus on formative feedback and Harlen’s (2013) comprehensive evaluation framework.

The following table represents the real classroom practices, as observed in real-time by the EAP reading teachers in question.

TABLE 2
EAP TEACHERS’ OBSERVED CLASSROOM PRACTICES REGARDING TEACHING ACADEMIC READING SKILLS

	Sub-categories	Never	Limited	Sometimes	Always
Role of Teachers	Major source of knowledge				√
	Provided context and appropriate formats for learning		√		
	Incorporated tasks with interaction pattern		√		
	Played the role of a facilitator		√		
	Encouraged peer interaction				√
	Provided final feedback	√			
Role of Students	Incorporated PPP approach		√		
	Could apply different skills			√	
	Interacted in different patterns	√			
	Understood and adhered to instructions		√		
	Went through consistent practice		√		
Features of Tasks	Consistently connected skills to real-life application/ contexts		√		
	Tasks were well developed		√		
	Task design aligned with lesson objectives			√	
	Tasks were student-centered and interactive		√		
	Tasks utilized different reading approaches		√		
Teaching Approach	Tasks were meaningful		√		
	Learner-Centered		√		
	PPP or TBLT approach - based		√		
	Progressing from controlled to freer practice	√			
	Goal-Oriented			√	
Process-Oriented		√			

The observed practices in EAP reading skills classes reveal a significant misalignment between the teachers’ stated beliefs and their implementations. Teachers consistently began by providing input, often through prolonged lecturing, with limited opportunities for peer interaction or learner-centered activities. Interaction was primarily teacher-initiated, focusing on elicitation and response, which contradicts Teacher 2’s belief that reading development should be “goal-oriented” and Teacher 1’s emphasis on strategic task design for progress. Tasks lacked alignment with developmental stages or objectives, as suggested by Ellis (2018), and failed to incorporate a structured presentation–practice–production (PPP) model, leading to minimal freer production.

Learners were rarely challenged with tasks that encouraged independence or resilience in the face of unknown vocabulary, despite Teacher 2’s assertion that students should “handle anything, even if they don’t understand every word”. Scaffolding, peer interaction, and feedback were sporadic, limiting meaningful engagement and self-regulation (Farrell, 2015). Although reading extracts were used, they were not contextualized to activate schemata, undermining comprehension and retention (Grabe, 2009). Furthermore, task design lacked the flexibility to accommodate individual learner needs, as supported by Basturkmen (2012) and Phipps and Borg (2009).

The absence of interactive scaffolding and consistent feedback practices highlights missed opportunities for collaborative learning and formative assessment (Ferris, 2003). The gap between teacher beliefs and practices suggests the need for enhanced task structuring and a learner-centered approach to align with best practices in language pedagogy.

The observed practices in EAP reading skills classes highlight a lack of alignment with stated teacher beliefs. Assigned reading extracts showed little planned contextualization to activate learners' schemata, contradicting Teacher 2's emphasis on reading for practical information and comprehension-based retention (Grabe, 2009). Comprehension-oriented and diverse tasks were scarce, undermining inclusivity and differentiation as supported by Basturkmen (2012) and Teacher 1's belief in meaningful pedagogical structuring. The selection of topics is rarely connected to learners' real-life contexts, limiting opportunities for communicative capacity development (Farrell, 2015).

Repetitive instructions and extensive teacher talk reduced peer interaction and reflection, contradicting Teacher 3's focus on addressing learner variability through differentiated lesson design (Phipps & Borg, 2009). Lesson objectives were not clearly stated or progressively scaffolded, failing to establish a coherent progression towards freer production. No consistent PPP framework was observed; activities were largely discrete-point, textbook-based, and lacked broader reading contexts (Ellis, 2018).

Final feedback, often teacher-dominated, did not integrate peer feedback, missing opportunities for collaborative learning and self-regulation (Ferris, 2003). Overall, the practices reflected minimal scaffolding, limited interactivity, and insufficient alignment with contemporary language teaching frameworks.

The following table represents how far the stated belief features—categories of the role of teacher, student, teaching approach, and task—converge with or diverge from real classroom practice as observed in real-time in EAP reading teachers' classrooms.

TABLE 3
EAP TEACHERS' BELIEFS VS. THEIR PRACTICES IN CLASSROOM

Theme	Classroom practice	Never	Limited	Sometimes	Always
Role of Teachers	Source of information or knowledge				√
	Facilitator of learning		√		
	Interaction manager promoting peer interaction and feedback		√		
	Scaffolder		√		
	Unobtrusive monitor				√
	Final feedback provider	√			
Role of Students	Getting rid of word-to-word comprehension tendencies		√		
	Target the skill of overall comprehension through reading despite unfamiliar vocabulary		√		
	Being a quick reader				√
	Acquire the skill of differentiating among compositional parts and features	√			
	Being able to infer as a reader			√	
	Adherence to teacher-led instructions			√	
Features of Tasks	Comprehension tasks			√	
	Guided discovery-based task design		√		
	Controlled leading to freer tasks		√		
	Differentiated design required for individual learner needs	√			
Teaching Approach	Objective-oriented			√	
	Well graded for task comprehension		√		
	Student-centered and interactive		√		
	Bottom-up vs. top-down approach to reading	√			
	PPP pattern leading to TBLT-based tasks	√			
Related to reality (meaningful)			√		

The analysis reveals areas of congruence between the stated beliefs of teachers and classroom implementation. Teachers consistently assumed the role of knowledge providers, beginning lessons with extensive input to expose learners to new concepts. Repeated explanations of task instructions occasionally functioned as scaffolding, aiding task performance for some students. However, employing instruction-checking questions (ICQs) after initial instructions could enhance clarity and effectiveness (Farrell, 2015).

Additionally, teachers adhered to their stated practice of providing final feedback, although this was often unaccompanied by peer feedback. Introducing peer feedback before teacher feedback could foster self-reflection and comparative learning, aligning with principles of collaborative learning and formative assessment (Basturkmen, 2012; Ferris, 2003). Such an approach would ensure a more interactive and learner-centered classroom dynamic.

However, the observed practices revealed significant incongruence between teachers' stated beliefs and classroom implementations. Although occasional peer interactions were noted, the classes were largely teacher-centered, dominated by teacher talk, and included minimal learner-centered activities. Interactions primarily occurred between the teacher and individual students, contradicting Teacher 2's claim that reading skill development is "goal-oriented" and Teacher 1's emphasis on strategic task design for progress. Task designs and interaction patterns rarely align with objective-oriented

outcomes, as supported by Basturkmen (2012), who highlighted the importance of aligning beliefs and practices in task design. Despite Teacher 1's assertion that "developmental reflections by the teacher are imperative throughout the course of teaching to maintain gradual and focused facilitation", lesson plans lacked a consistent PPP framework, resulting in minimal progression towards freer production (Ellis, 2018). Questions following assigned readings lacked a progressive structure, and learners were rarely given opportunities to develop as independent readers, a key focus of Teacher 2's stated beliefs. Opportunities for scaffolding, peer interaction, and feedback were scarce, undermining effective interactivity and learner autonomy. These findings align with Farrell's (2015) observation that a lack of reflective teaching practices can lead to misalignment between beliefs and actions, reducing instructional efficacy.

Also, the analysis highlights a notable lack of planned contextualization in the observed classes. Although reading extracts were regularly used, they were rarely employed to activate learners' schemata or serve as lead-ins, which undermined meaningful comprehension and engagement. This contrasts with Teacher 2's assertion that "academic reading should involve reading for helpful information as quickly as feasible while retaining correctness". The absence of comprehension-oriented questions further limited opportunities for learners to ensure meaningful understanding and retention, as supported by Grabe (2009). Consequently, learners' performance often lacked accuracy and relevance.

Task design and interaction patterns were also limited in variation, contradicting Teacher 1's claim that "teaching must be inclusive and meaningful through the application of effective differentiation and pedagogical structuring". This lack of variation reduced learners' ability to connect new knowledge to real-life experiences, failing to align with Teacher 1's belief that "unless a lesson is designed relating to the reality of the learners, it makes little effective sense and doesn't get added to their communicative capacity". Such practices also overlook Farrell's (2015) emphasis on reflective and contextualized teaching practices.

The prolonged input phase, dominated by recurring lecturing, made the classes teacher-centered, with minimal opportunities for spontaneous learner performance or peer interaction. This reduced the potential for facilitation through peer engagement and scaffolding, despite Teacher 3's emphasis on adapting teaching to individual learner preferences, aptitudes, or intelligence types (Phipps & Borg, 2009). During the while-task stage, repeated emphasis on task instructions sometimes caused affective stress among weaker learners and hinted at inadequately graded instructions. This undermined learners' comprehension and engagement, suggesting an underdeveloped task design inconsistent with Teacher 1's insistence that "the grading of these stages must be done prudently and flexibly throughout the course".

Additionally, while skimming and scanning were applied, these activities were often devoid of meaningful contexts, reducing their effectiveness. The lack of a clear and unified broader context in the lesson also contributed to the absence of a productive PPP framework. The robust presentation phase left little room for consistent and meaningful practice, and no autonomous production phase followed. Learners primarily engaged in controlled, textbook-based exercises without any real-world or freer application, contradicting Ellis's (2018) advocacy for structured task design leading to learner autonomy.

V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The data analysis reveals several key insights into the alignment and dissonance between EAP teachers' stated beliefs and their observed practices in teaching academic reading instruction. The teachers' beliefs emphasize a dynamic role transition—from a source of knowledge to a facilitator, scaffolder, and feedback provider. Observed practices demonstrate some alignment, particularly in the knowledge provider role and the provision of final feedback. However, the transition to facilitation and scaffolding remains inconsistent. For example, the limited incorporation of scaffolding techniques, such as activating students' schemata or using context-based lead-ins, constrains the development of learner autonomy. This highlights a gap in aligning practices with Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD framework, which supports active learner engagement and progressive reduction of teacher support. Also, teachers' emphasis on prolonged teacher talk, instead of interactive facilitation, mirrors Farrell's (2015) observation that reflective teaching practices are often underutilized, leading to teacher-centered instruction that hinders active learning.

Although teachers espouse beliefs in fostering independent reading skills and promoting learner autonomy, their observed practices lean heavily towards teacher-led activities, with minimal peer interaction or opportunities for independent problem-solving. For instance, the lack of peer feedback integration indicates a missed opportunity for collaborative learning and self-regulation, which Ferris (2003) identified as critical for fostering student agency. Apart from that, overemphasis on controlled textbook-based tasks fails to provide opportunities for learners to connect reading skills to real-world applications. This contradicts Grabe's (2009) assertion that meaningful comprehension is achieved when students engage with contextually rich, purpose-driven tasks.

Teachers' beliefs emphasize task differentiation, guided discovery, and progression from controlled to freer practice. Observed practices, however, often lack these features, resulting in limited task variation and inadequate alignment with lesson objectives. Tasks rarely progress to freer production stages, undermining the principles of TBLT as supported by Willis and Willis (2007). Students lack opportunities to apply learned skills autonomously in varied contexts without free practice. The absence of meaningful context in task design limits the activation of prior knowledge and engagement, contradicting Anderson's (2008) model of cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies and highlighting the importance of contextualized learning for comprehension and retention.

Although teachers express commitment to aligning tasks and assessments with learner needs, observed practices often fail to reflect these beliefs. For instance, formative assessments are sporadic, and lesson objectives lack coherence, leading to inconsistent skill development. The minimal use of scaffolding techniques and lack of alignment between task design and lesson objectives suggest a misalignment with Ellis's (2018) framework for structured progression in language pedagogy. The reliance on repetitive instructions and extensive teacher talk without employing ICQs or formative check-ins reduces clarity and learner engagement. This is consistent with Basturkmen's (2012) findings on the importance of reflective teaching in maintaining alignment between beliefs and practices.

Observed practices suggest that prolonged lecturing and repetitive instructions may cause affective stress among weaker learners, reducing engagement and comprehension. The lack of well-graded instructions and differentiated task design undermines weaker learners' ability to engage effectively, highlighting the need for adaptive teaching strategies as supported by Tomlinson (2014). The absence of formative scaffolding during the while-task stage may exacerbate cognitive overload, particularly for students with limited reading proficiency, further emphasizing the need for reflective, differentiated pedagogy (Anderson, 2008).

Overall, the analysis reveals a misalignment between EAP teachers' stated beliefs and observed practices in teaching academic reading. Although teachers support fostering learner autonomy, providing scaffolding, and promoting interactive learning, their practices often remain teacher-centered, with limited use of scaffolding techniques, task differentiation, or opportunities for peer interaction and independent problem-solving. Prolonged teacher talk, controlled textbook tasks, and minimal formative assessments hinder active learning and engagement. The lack of coherence between lesson objectives, task design, and formative scaffolding, coupled with insufficient adaptation to learners' needs, highlights gaps in implementing reflective, student-centered pedagogy.

VI. CONCLUSION

The findings in this study highlight significant gaps between EAP teachers' stated beliefs and observed practices in teaching academic reading, particularly in fostering learner autonomy, implementing scaffolding techniques, and designing interactive, student-centered tasks. Addressing these gaps requires increased adoption of reflective teaching practices, integration of peer feedback and collaborative learning opportunities, and alignment of task design with lesson objectives and learner needs. Future research could explore targeted professional development programs that focus on bridging this alignment, as well as the impact of reflective pedagogical interventions on improving learner outcomes and engagement in academic reading contexts.

APPENDIX A. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is your language teaching belief regarding academic reading?
2. What factors influence the congruence or incongruence of your beliefs about classroom practice?
3. In your opinion, what is the role of the teacher in an academic reading classroom?
4. What do you believe is the role of learners in an academic reading classroom?
5. How do you think learning should take place in academic reading?
6. How do you assess learners' improvement in academic reading comprehension?

APPENDIX B. OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

Teacher's number or pseudonym:

Class size:

Date:

Time:

Lesson name or number:

Description of Classroom:

Time & Structure	Teachers' Activities: Teacher Talk, Activity, Interaction (T-S), Instructions	Students' Activities: Student Talk, Activities, Interaction (T-S; S-S), Responses	Comment on the Event
0-10 min			
11-20 min			
21-30 min			
31-40 min			
41-50 min			
51-60 min			
61-70 min			
71-80 min			

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