

Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of an English Textbook for Developing Doctoral Students' Reading and Writing Skills in a Buddhist Context

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Abstract

This research explores the perceptions of teachers and students at a Buddhist university regarding an English textbook designed to develop reading and writing skills for doctoral students. The study involved 7 teachers who teach the *English for Doctoral Students: Reading and Writing Skills* course and 140 doctoral students from various fields of study enrolled in the English course at a Buddhist university in Thailand. Data were collected through a questionnaire focused on participants' opinions towards the English textbook used for teaching and learning. The findings indicated that teachers rated the textbook at a very high level in various aspects, including content quality and academic standards, organization and methodology, language and skill development, cultural and contextual relevance, design, layout and engagement (average mean score = 4.75). Students also rated the textbook at a very high level (mean score = 4.55). Both teachers and students found the textbook to be comprehensive and aligned with academic standards. The content was regarded as interesting, meaningful and presented with clear, easy-to-understand explanations. The topics were considered appropriate and relevant to the Buddhist context. While most participants expressed positive attitudes towards the textbook, some suggestions for improvement were provided.

Keywords: Perceptions, English textbook, reading and writing skills, Buddhist context

Introduction

Textbooks play a significant role in language teaching and learning, as they provide structured content, varied activities, and clear guidance for both teachers and learners. They are a key component in most language programs (Richards, 2001). According to Cunningsworth (1995), the textbooks serve as a guide for achieving specific educational goals based on learners' needs, while Shahid et al. (2021) emphasize their function as one of the main sources of classroom input. In this sense, textbooks act as a compass, guiding both teachers and students through the learning process (Pasaribu, 2022).

According to Richards (2001), textbooks standardize classroom content, support lesson planning, and offer varied activities that engage learners. They also promote independent practice and save teachers' time. When well designed, textbooks can be adapted to meet diverse learners' needs and enhance learning. Therefore, textbook quality is essential. Effective textbooks should be accurate, linguistically appropriate, engaging, and contextually relevant, with language features that support learners' development (Pasaribu, 2022).

This study was conducted with doctoral students enrolled at one of the Buddhist universities in Thailand. As part of their curriculum, they are required to complete two English courses designed to enhance the four core skills of English. One course focuses on listening and speaking skills. The other course emphasizes reading and writing skills. The present study focuses on the *English for Doctoral Students: Reading and Writing Skills* course, which employs a textbook as the primary instructional material for developing the students' academic reading and writing competencies. For several years, commercial textbooks had been used in this course at the Buddhist university. However, based on the researchers' experience teaching this course for several years, it became clear that the commercial textbook had some limitations. Specifically, the content did not align with the students' context, as it lacked relevance to Buddhism. This mismatch often reduced the relevance and meaningfulness of the learning experience. The market survey also showed that there are no commercial textbooks that teach English through a Buddhist context. Most available books focus on Buddhist content itself, not on developing English reading or writing skills using Buddhist themes. This shows a clear gap in suitable learning materials for Buddhist learners.

To address this issue, a new English textbook was developed specifically for the course, integrating Buddhist context into the reading passages and writing exercises to provide students with opportunities to practice. Since textbooks are central to teaching and learning, an evaluation of the textbook is an important area of research. McDonough and Shaw (1993), Rubdy (2003), and Tomlinson (2003) have argued that systematic evaluation enables teachers and researchers to identify a textbook's strengths and weaknesses, ultimately improving both instructional practices and future textbook design. Evaluations often

consider multiple dimensions, including content quality, linguistic appropriateness, cultural relevance, and learners' needs.

In this regard, the perceptions of both teachers and students are particularly valuable. Teachers, as the primary users of teaching materials, are more likely to be effective when they find the content engaging and relevant (Tomlinson, 2003). This idea is supported by several authors. For instance, Hammad and Abdellatif (2012) stated that exploring EFL teachers' perceptions of learning materials can provide valuable insights. Additionally, Tok (2010) emphasized that EFL teachers, as the primary users of school textbooks, have the right to be involved in the evaluation process. However, in this study, in addition to teachers' perceptions, students enrolled in the course were also asked for their feedback. Learners' perceptions are equally important. As direct recipients of instructional materials, students' views reflect the textbook's practicality, interest level, and impact on learning. Including students' voices ensures a more comprehensive evaluation and can highlight mismatches between what teachers assume to be effective and what learners actually experience (Litz, 2005). Thus, studies combining both teachers' and students' perspectives offer a more balanced and valid evaluation of instructional materials.

In Thailand's Buddhist universities, doctoral students represent a unique learner group. Their academic and cultural environment is deeply rooted in Buddhist philosophy and practice, yet commercial textbooks often fail to reflect this context. Previous studies in ESP and EAP have emphasized the importance of tailoring materials to learners' disciplines and contexts (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Basturkmen, 2010). However, little research has been conducted on English textbooks that integrate Buddhist context for doctoral students.

This lack of research represents a gap in the literature. While many studies have investigated textbook evaluation in general EFL or ESP settings (Ali & Murtaza, 2020; Azizah et al., 2025; Miroud, 2021; Shahid et al., 2021; Sulistiyo et al., 2021), few have examined how textbooks tailored to a Buddhist context are perceived by both teachers and learners. Addressing this gap is critical not only for improving the effectiveness of English instruction in Buddhist universities but also for contributing to the broader discussion in EFL textbook design and evaluation.

Therefore, this research aims to explore the perceptions of both teachers and doctoral students toward the English textbook designed for the *English for Doctoral Students: Reading and Writing Skills* course in a Buddhist university in Thailand. The study specifically addresses the following questions:

1. How do teachers perceive the English textbook used to develop reading and writing skills in a Buddhist context?
2. How do doctoral students perceive the English textbook used to develop reading and writing skills in a Buddhist context?

This study is significant because it provides insights that can inform future textbook development, particularly in specialized contexts such as Buddhist higher education. The findings may also contribute to the broader field of EFL/ESL materials evaluation by highlighting how contextually relevant content can enhance learners' engagement and skill development.

Literature Review

Perceptions of Teachers and Students toward the Textbook in the EFL Context

In the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), perception refers to the way teachers and students interpret and make sense of their language teaching and learning experiences. These perceptions are naturally subjective, shaped by personal experiences, prior knowledge, cultural background, educational expectations, and individual learning needs (Richards, 2015). Perceptions are understood as mental and personal constructions, assumptions, and beliefs that form each individual's unique viewpoint (McDonald, 2012; Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Closely related to constructs such as views, conceptions, and perspectives (Pajares, 1992), perceptions play a vital role in shaping attitudes toward classroom practices, particularly the use of instructional materials such as textbooks.

Textbooks remain central to most EFL programs because they provide structured language input, practice activities, and a framework for teaching and learning (Cunningsworth, 1995; Ur, 2005). However, both authors emphasize that no textbook is perfect and that teachers must adapt materials to meet specific learner needs and teaching contexts. When teachers and students perceive a textbook as relevant, well-structured, and adaptable, it can support more effective instruction and foster a positive classroom environment.

From the teachers' perspective, perceptions include their professional knowledge, beliefs, and understandings about language instruction. Teacher perceptions are significantly influenced by how well a textbook aligns with curriculum objectives, supports the development of language skills, and adapts to various teaching methodologies (Cheng et al., 2021). From the students' perspective, perceptions involve their ideas, beliefs, and attitudes about English learning, the methods used to teach it, and their personal learning experiences (Pajares, 1992). Students often evaluate textbooks based on clarity, engagement, cultural appropriateness, and how effectively they support language proficiency development (Tomlinson, 2012).

Studies show that when teachers perceive a textbook as relevant and adaptable, classroom instruction is more effective. Conversely, negative perceptions often arise when textbooks fail to meet curricular goals, students' proficiency levels, or cultural expectations (Alhamami & Ahmad, 2018). Students' perceptions are equally important because they reflect the textbook's practical usability and

impact on learning outcomes (Benson & Lor, 1999; Litz, 2005). Hence, incorporating both teachers' and students' perspectives provides a more balanced and valid evaluation of instructional materials.

Frameworks for Textbook Evaluation

Evaluating textbooks requires a systematic approach to ensure that the analysis is rigorous, comprehensive, and pedagogically meaningful. Several scholars have proposed frameworks for materials evaluation, which provide criteria for assessing textbooks in terms of content, language, methodology, and contextual appropriateness. This study draws on established models while adapting them to the specific context of doctoral students in a Buddhist university.

Cunningsworth (1995), McDonough and Shaw (1993), and Tomlinson (2003) offer complementary perspectives that guide the analytical approach of this study. Cunningsworth highlights the importance of aligning textbook content with course objectives, balancing language and communication skills, and allowing flexibility to meet learners' academic and cultural needs, particularly Buddhist doctoral students developing advanced reading and writing skills. McDonough and Shaw provide a two-stage evaluation model, starting with external features like aims and organization, then examining how well tasks and activities achieve those aims. Tomlinson emphasizes authentic language, meaningful communication, and engaging learners cognitively and emotionally, showing that textbooks should motivate students and be culturally relevant. Together, these frameworks create a clear basis for evaluating and developing English materials that are pedagogically effective, culturally appropriate, and tailored to the needs of Buddhist learners.

The three frameworks were selected because together they offer a comprehensive basis for evaluating an English textbook designed for doctoral students in a Buddhist context. From Cunningsworth (1995), the study takes the idea that textbook content must match the needs of doctoral students in a Buddhist context. From McDonough and Shaw (1993), it uses the two-stage model to examine both the textbook's stated aims and its actual content and activities. From Tomlinson (2003), it includes the importance of cultural relevance and affective engagement. By integrating these perspectives, the study forms an evaluation approach that considers linguistic quality, pedagogical suitability, and cultural appropriateness.

Previous Research on English Textbooks

Several studies have highlighted the importance of evaluating English textbooks in EFL contexts, particularly to ensure alignment with learners' needs, cultural relevance, and curriculum objectives. These studies have examined both teacher and student perceptions, as well as the effectiveness of textbooks across a variety of educational settings.

In Gaza, Hammad (2014) reported positive perceptions of cultural appropriateness, despite concerns about vocabulary load and time constraints. Ayu and Indrawati (2018) found Indonesian textbooks to be well-sequenced and aligned with curricular goals, while Alhamami and Ahmad (2018) noted negative views toward commercial textbooks lacking methodological and contextual fit. Orfan et al. (2021) observed more balanced perceptions in Afghanistan, where textbooks supported integrated skills. Similarly, Azizah et al. (2025) found that students in an Islamic secondary school viewed their English textbook positively, especially valuing interactive tasks and real-life case studies.

Recent studies also highlight the need to evaluate English textbooks to ensure they are suitable for teaching and learning. Ali and Murtaza (2020) found that the *Oxford Progressive English* textbook had both strengths and weaknesses, especially in its limited focus on key language skills and learner needs. Likewise, Miroud (2021) noted that several reading texts in a secondary-level textbook did not fully meet criteria such as readability and authenticity. In contrast, Shahid et al. (2021) reported mostly positive views of a 10th-grade textbook that was well-designed and visually appealing, although it still had some minor flaws. Focusing on cultural content, Sulistiyo et al. (2021) found a mix of local and target-culture elements in an Indonesian textbook but pointed out that some information was too general and that the visuals lacked detail.

Collectively, these studies highlight that the perceptions on the textbooks vary depending on how well they align with learners' contexts and curricular demands. While some studies affirm their effectiveness, others expose mismatches that reduce pedagogical value.

In Buddhist educational contexts, several studies have investigated perceptions of culturally relevant English learning materials. Suphipat and Chinokul (2019) reported positive feedback from teachers and students on Buddhist-based reading materials for monks, particularly regarding content, organization, and layout. Similarly, Inkrungkao et al. (2022) found that Buddhist-themed texts at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University enhanced comprehension, especially among higher-proficiency learners. In terms of skill development, Srikote (2012) showed that collaborative learning improved monks' reading and writing abilities, while Chatkaew and Tachom (2020) demonstrated that integrating Buddhist content with the PSQ6R technique strengthened both comprehension and learner satisfaction. These findings underscore the importance of aligning English materials with Buddhist students' cultural and disciplinary contexts. However, most existing research has concentrated on specific skills (e.g., reading comprehension) or on pilot materials, rather than systematically evaluating a complete textbook designed for advanced academic purposes.

In summary, while studies have examined textbook use and perceptions in both general and Buddhist educational contexts, a significant gap remains in research that investigates the integration of Buddhist content into English language materials at a comprehensive level. Moreover, few studies have

considered both teachers' and students' perspectives, even though their insights are complementary. To address these gaps, the present study applies established textbook evaluation frameworks (Cunningsworth, 1995; McDonough & Shaw, 1993; Tomlinson, 2003) to examine perceptions of an English textbook specifically developed to enhance doctoral students' reading and writing skills in a Buddhist context.

Research Methodology

Procedure

The English textbook used for the *English for Doctoral Students: Reading and Writing Skills* course was developed by the university's academic team into five stages. First, a brainstorming session was conducted involving key stakeholders of the university. Second, a team of six writers—each responsible for one unit—developed the textbook based on the ideas and content generated during the brainstorming stage. Third, the first draft of the textbook was edited and revised. Fourth, the textbook was revised again following a pilot implementation and evaluation by three academic experts from the university. Finally, after the textbook was officially adopted, data were collected from both instructors and students to assess its effectiveness in real classroom settings (See Figure 1).

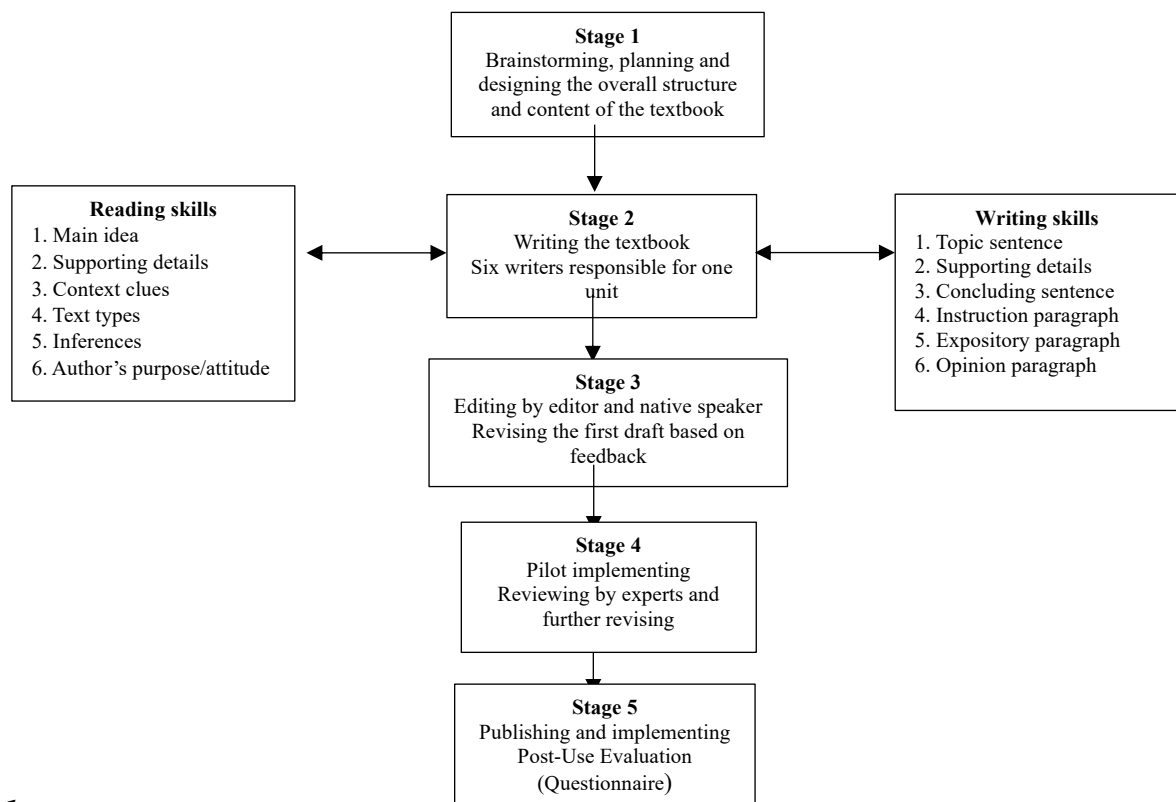


Figure 1

Stages of Textbook Development and Evaluation

According to Figure 1, the initial stage in the textbook development and evaluation process began with meetings and brainstorming sessions involving key stakeholders from the university, including instructors, administrators, textbook writers, and researchers. During this stage, the collaborative effort focused on designing the overall structure and content of the textbook. As a result, six thematic units were developed: *Unit 1 – Tradition and Festivals*, *Unit 2 – Education*, *Unit 3 – Environment*, *Unit 4 – Science and Technology*, *Unit 5 – Health and Lifestyles*, and *Unit 6 – Social Issues*. Each unit was developed to reflect the Buddhist context, ensuring that the material is culturally relevant and meaningful for doctoral students. In terms of reading skills, the team agreed that the textbook should emphasize the development of several key areas: *identifying main ideas, locating supporting details, using context clues, recognizing text types, making inferences, and understanding the author's purpose and attitude*. For writing skills, the textbook was designed to cover essential components of academic writing, including *identifying topics and topic sentences, supporting details, concluding sentences, and outlining*. In addition, specific writing tasks were incorporated, such as *giving instructions, composing expository paragraphs, and expressing opinions through opinion paragraphs*. (See Unit 1 as a sample in the Appendix)

Following the completion of the initial draft of the textbook in the second stage, the next stage involved a thorough editing process conducted by a professional editor and a native English speaker. In the fourth stage, the revised draft was pilot implemented and then reviewed by three university experts specializing in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to ensure the academic quality and pedagogical appropriateness of the content. Based on the feedback received, further revisions were made before finalizing the textbook.

In the final stage, the textbook was published and implemented in online classrooms as part of the university's English curriculum for doctoral students. During this stage, a post-implementation evaluation was conducted using questionnaires distributed to both instructors and students. The evaluation aimed to gather feedback on the textbook's effectiveness, usability, and overall structure in actual teaching and learning contexts.

Participants

The participants in this research consisted of 7 teachers who taught the *English for Doctoral Students: Reading and Writing Skills* course at a Buddhist university in Thailand and 140 doctoral students from various majors across several faculties and campuses enrolled in the course.

For the demographic data of the teacher participants, Table 1 shows that 28.57% were male laypersons, while 71.42% were female laypersons. In terms of age, 14.28% were between 41 and 50 years old, 57.14% were between 51 and 60 years old, and 28.57% were over 60 years old. Regarding their experience specifically teaching the *English for Doctoral Students: Reading and Writing Skills* course at

the Buddhist university, 14.28% had taught it for 1 to 5 years, 57.14% for 6 to 10 years, and 28.57% for more than 10 years. It is noted that none of the teacher participants were textbook writers.

Table 1

Demographic Data of the Participants (Teachers)

Items	Number of Participants (N=7)	Percentage (%)
<i>Status</i>		
Male layperson	2	28.57
Female layperson	5	71.42
<i>Age (years)</i>		
41-50	1	14.28
51-60	4	57.14
more than 60	2	28.57
<i>Experience in teaching the English for Doctoral Students course (years)</i>		
1-5	1	14.28
6-10	4	57.14
More than 10	2	28.57

Table 2 presents the demographic data of the student participants or doctoral students. Among the participants, 37.14% were Buddhist monks, 33.57% were male laypersons, and 29.28% were female laypersons. Regarding age distribution, 4.28% were under 30 years old, 17.14% were between 31 and 40 years old, 27.14% were between 41 and 50 years old, 36.42% were between 51 and 60 years old, and 15.00% were over 60 years old. Their fields of study included Buddhism (30.71%), Public Administration (16.42%), Political Science (13.57%), Buddhist Educational Administration (25.00%), and other fields of study (14.28%). In terms of English language proficiency, particularly in reading and writing, most students rated themselves at the beginner level (52.58%), while 40.00% considered themselves at the intermediate level, and 7.14% rated themselves as advanced.

Table 2*Demographic Data of the Participants (Students)*

Items	Number of Participants (N=140)	Percentage (%)
<i>Status</i>		
Buddhist monk	52	37.14
Male layperson	47	33.57
Female layperson	41	29.28
<i>Age (years)</i>		
less than 30	6	4.28
31-40	24	17.14
41-50	38	27.14
51-60	51	36.42
more than 60	21	15.00
<i>Major of Study</i>		
Buddhism	43	30.71
Public Administration	23	16.42
Political Science	19	13.57
Buddhist Education Administration	35	25.00
Others	20	14.28
<i>Level of English Proficiency in</i>		
<i>Reading and Writing skills</i>		
Beginner	74	52.58
Intermediate	56	40.00
Advanced	10	7.14

The Research Instrument

The research instrument used in this study was a questionnaire which was developed by the researchers based on the frameworks of Cunningsworth (1995), McDonough and Shaw (1993), and Tomlinson (2003), ensuring that it comprehensively addresses multiple dimensions of textbook effectiveness. It consists of 20 statements divided into five aspects. The first aspect of the questionnaire, focusing on content quality and academic standards (Items1-7). The second aspect addressing organization and methodology (Items 8-11), evaluates the logical sequencing of topics, clarity of instructions, and inclusion of exercises. The third aspect, language use and skills development (Items12-13), examines the appropriateness of language difficulty and the relevance of writing tasks. The fourth aspect, cultural and contextual relevance (Items14-17), evaluates whether the textbook integrates Buddhist content and aligns

with the students' academic and cultural context. Finally, the fifth aspect, design, layout, and engagement (Items 18-20), examines the visual clarity, attractiveness, and motivational aspects of the textbook (See Table 3)

Table 3

The Summary of Framework Category Used in the Questionnaire

Aspects	Items	Framework Alignment	Notes
1. Content Quality & Academic Standards	1-7	Cunningsworth, McDonough & Shaw, Tomlinson	Academic accuracy, clarity, level, references
2. Organization & Methodology	8-11	Cunningsworth, McDonough & Shaw, Tomlinson	Sequencing, exercises, instructions
3. Language & Skills Development	12-13	Cunningsworth, McDonough & Shaw, Tomlinson	Language level, writing tasks
4. Cultural & Contextual Relevance	14-17	Cunningsworth, McDonough & Shaw, Tomlinson	Buddhist context, relevance, illustrations
5. Design, Layout & Engagement	18-20	Cunningsworth, McDonough & Shaw, Tomlinson	Visual clarity, motivation, user-friendliness

The questionnaire was validated by three experts in the field of English language teaching. The content validity indices were 0.92 for the teachers' questionnaire and 0.89 for the students' version. Revisions were made based on the experts' feedback before distribution to participants.

Both teacher and student questionnaires included closed-ended and open-ended items designed to explore participants' perceptions of the textbook. The closed-ended items used a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from *strongly disagree (1)* to *strongly agree (5)*.

Examples of questionnaire items include:

- The content in the textbook aligns with the context of Buddhism.
- The explanations and examples in the book help students understand the lessons more easily.
- The book includes questions and exercises for students to practice.

- The content in the book is current and up-to-date.
- The illustrations in the book are clear.

The questionnaire was administered in Thai language and created exclusively in an electronic format using Google Forms, which was divided into three parts. (1) demographic information, (2) 20 Likert-scale items asking perceptions across the five aspects, and (3) open-ended questions asking the participants to elaborate on their opinions in terms of content quality and academic standards, organization and methodology, language use and skill development, cultural and contextual relevance, and design, layout and engagement.

Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected in this study. The quantitative data from closed-ended items were analyzed using percentages, means, and standard deviations to reflect teachers' and students' perceptions of the textbook, with the level of agreement for each item determined using an equal-interval scale on a 5-point Likert rating: 1.00–1.50 = Very Low, 1.51–2.50 = Low, 2.51–3.50 = Moderate, 3.51–4.50 = High, and 4.51–5.00 = Very High.

For the qualitative data, responses from open-ended questions were analyzed using thematic analysis. The responses were read carefully, coded for key ideas, and grouped into themes based on the five aspects: content quality, organization and methodology, language skills, cultural relevance, and design and engagement.

For example, a student comment, *“Reading strategies in the reading part of the book can help me improve my writing skills,”* was coded under “language use and skill development”, while a teacher comment, *“The integration of Buddhist content makes the textbook more relevant to our students,”* was coded under “cultural and contextual relevance.” To ensure reliability, two researchers independently coded a subset of responses and discussed any differences until agreement was reached. The final version of the discussion notes was then used to interpret the results in the qualitative findings.

Results

Results from the Teacher Participants

As shown in Table 4, the teacher participants expressed a very high level of agreement that the topics in the textbook are appropriate and relevant to a Buddhist context (mean score = 5.00). They also agreed that the textbook is comprehensive, meets academic standards, presents current and up-to-date content, follows a logical sequence from easy to difficult, and effectively motivates students to actively

engage in learning. All of these aspects were rated at the same mean score of 4.85, which was a very high level.

In terms of the illustrations, the participants felt that they are clear, appropriately sized and consistent with the content in the Buddhist context. In addition, the teacher participants indicated that the explanations and instructions in the book are clear, the book is well-organized and attractive, has good printing quality, and is easy to read. All of these aspects were rated at the same mean score of 4.85, which was a very high level of agreement. The overall mean score for teacher participants' agreement was 4.75, which was a very high level.

Table 4

Teachers' Perceptions of the Textbook for the English for Doctoral Students Course on Reading and Writing Skills (N=7)

Items	Statements	M	S. D	Level of Agreement
	I: Content Quality and Academic Standards			
1	The content in the book is accurate to academic principles.	4.57	0.53	Very High
2	The book is comprehensive and meets academic standards.	4.85	0.37	Very High
3	The explanations and examples in the book help students understand the lessons more easily.	4.57	0.53	Very High
4	The content in the book is current and up-to-date.	4.85	0.37	Very High
5	The content includes a mix of easy and difficult material appropriate for the students' level of ability.	4.42	0.53	High
6	The amount of content in each unit is suitable for the allocated class time.	4.42	0.53	High
7	The book includes references and cites the sources of information.	4.71	0.48	Very High
	II: Organization and Methodology			
8	The organization of topics and content in the book follows a logical sequence from easy to difficult.	4.85	0.37	Very High
9	The book includes questions and exercises for students to practice.	4.57	0.53	Very High
10	The explanations and instructions in the book are clear.	4.85	0.37	Very High

Items	Statements	M	S. D	Level of Agreement
11	The book is well-organized, attractive, has good printing quality, and is easy to read.	4.85	0.37	Very High
	III: Language Use and Skills Development			
12	The language used in the book is appropriately varied in difficulty, matching the students' level.	4.57	0.53	Very High
13	The topics for paragraph writing are consistent and appropriate with learners' context.	4.71	0.48	Very High
	IV: Cultural and Contextual Relevance			
14	The content in the book aligns with the context of Buddhism.	4.85	0.37	Very High
15	The content in the book is useful, and students can apply it to their daily life in relation to Buddhism.	4.71	0.48	Very High
16	The illustrations in the book are consistent with the content in the context of Buddhism.	4.85	0.37	Very High
17	The topics in the textbook are appropriate and relevant to the context of Buddhism.	5.00	0.00	Very High
	V: Design, Layout and Engagement			
18	The content in the textbook is engaging and can motivate students to actively participate in learning.	4.85	0.37	Very High
19	The illustrations in the book are appropriately sized.	4.85	0.37	Very High
20	The illustrations in the book are clear.	4.85	0.37	Very High
	Average mean score	4.75	0.29	Very High

Results from the Student Participants

According to Table 5, the student participants expressed a very high level of agreement that the illustrations in the book are clear (mean score = 4.85). They also agreed that the content of the book aligns with the context of Buddhism, is useful and can be applied to their daily lives in relation to Buddhism, is current and up-to-date with mean score of 4.63, 4.62 and 4.61, respectively.

In addition, the student participants indicated that the content of the book is accurate according to academic principles and that the book includes questions and exercises for students to practice. Both of these aspects received a mean score of 4.59, which was a very high level of agreement. The overall mean score of student participants' agreement was 4.55, which was also a very high level.

Table 5

Students' Perceptions of the Textbook for the English for Doctoral Students Course on Reading and Writing Skills (N=140)

Items	Statements	M	S. D	Level of Agreement
	I: Content Quality and Academic Standards			
1	The content in the book is accurate to academic principles.	4.59	0.52	Very High
2	The book is comprehensive and meets academic standards.	4.56	0.51	Very High
3	The explanations and examples in the book help students understand the lessons more easily.	4.57	0.50	Very High
4	The content in the book is current and up-to-date.	4.61	0.50	Very High
5	The content includes a mix of easy and difficult material appropriate for the students' level of ability.	4.55	0.49	Very High
6	The amount of content in each unit is suitable for the allocated class time.	4.52	0.50	Very High
7	The book includes references and cites the sources of information.	4.57	0.49	Very High
	II: Organization and Methodology			
8	The organization of topics and content in the book follows a logical sequence from easy to difficult.	4.52	0.50	Very High
9	The book includes questions and exercises for students to practice.	4.59	0.49	Very High
10	The explanations and instructions in the book are clear.	4.55	0.49	Very High
11	The book is well-organized, attractive, has good printing quality, and is easy to read.	4.49	0.50	High
	III: Language Use and Skills Development			
12	The language used in the book is appropriately varied in difficulty, matching the students' level.	4.50	0.51	High
13	The topics for paragraph writing are consistent and appropriate with learners' context.	4.53	0.50	Very High
	IV: Cultural and Contextual Relevance			

Items	Statements	M	S. D	Level of Agreement
14	The content in the book aligns with the context of Buddhism.	4.63	0.48	Very High
15	The content in the book is useful, and students can apply it to their daily life in relation to Buddhism.	4.62	0.48	Very High
16	The illustrations in the book are consistent with the content in the context of Buddhism.	4.52	0.50	Very High
17	The topics in the textbook are appropriate and relevant to the context of Buddhism.	4.54	0.49	Very High
	V: Design, Layout and Engagement			
18	The content in the textbook is engaging and can motivate students to actively participate in learning.	4.51	0.51	Very High
19	The illustrations in the book are appropriately sized.	4.48	0.50	High
20	The illustrations in the book are clear.	4.85	0.37	Very High
	Average mean score	4.55	0.41	Very High

According to open-ended questions in the last part of the questionnaire, both teacher and student participants revealed their opinions into five aspects. The followings are the opinions from the teacher participants and student participants.

Results from Teacher Participants' Open-ended Responses

Among the 7 teacher participants, not all answered the open-ended questions. Only some shared their opinions. The followings are the analysis of teacher responses revealed across five aspects of the textbook.

Content Quality and Academic Standards. Overall, some teachers considered the textbook content to be good and academically appropriate for doctoral students. However, they suggested that certain additions were needed to enhance learning outcomes. For example, one teacher noted: *"It would be helpful to include more vocabulary exercises in each unit to strengthen students' lexical knowledge."*

Organization and Methodology. One teacher commented that some units required additional exercises, particularly in the grammar sections, as example below: *"Some grammar exercises are not fully aligned with the content being taught, such as prepositions. More coherence between instructional content and practice activities is needed."*

Language Use and Skills Development. Regarding skills development, one teacher suggested: *“Writing exercises on concluding sentences and summarization should be reformatted as full paragraphs rather than isolated sentences, so students can better extract main ideas.”* This adjustment would allow students to engage with complete texts and better extract main ideas for summarization.

Cultural and Contextual Relevance. No specific comments were provided by teachers in this dataset related directly to cultural or contextual relevance.

Design, Layout and Engagement. Teachers generally found the layout appealing but recommended improvements: *“The visual appeal could be enhanced by including colored illustrations, which may engage learners and support comprehension.”*

In summary, teachers’ feedback highlighted strengths in content quality and layout, while also identifying areas for improvement in vocabulary and grammar exercises, alignment of tasks with instructional content, and the formatting of writing exercises to support deeper reading and writing skills.

Results from Student Participants’ Open-ended Responses

Among the 140 student participants, some students shared their opinions in the last part of the questionnaire. The analysis of student feedback highlighted perceptions across the five aspects of the textbook evaluation framework as follows:

Content Quality and Academic Standards. Some students felt that the textbook content was clear and helpful for learning. For example, one student stated: *“Each unit clearly presents learning objectives and guides students on what to learn and how to apply it.”*

Students highlighted that the reading sections focused on developing strategies such as identifying main ideas, differentiating key points, and understanding details efficiently. They also appreciated the integration of Buddhist teachings through examples like monks’ actions, traditions, and interviews. One student noted: *“I like how Buddhist teachings are included naturally, and the examples help me relate the content to modern life, such as meditation and environmental conservation.”*

Regarding suggestions for improvement, a student recommended: *“It would be helpful to include information about Buddhism in other countries, add external resources like QR codes, offer more current topics, and include vocabulary with translations and pronunciation at the end of each unit.”*

Organization and Methodology. Most students appreciated the variety and structure of the exercises. For example, one student commented: *“The tasks, such as answering questions, matching items, completing short answers, and identifying pronoun references, are arranged from easy to more challenging, which really helps develop reading and writing skills.”*

Students also noted that the exercises supported grammar, vocabulary learning, and critical thinking. One student suggested: *"It would be helpful to include sample answers or answer keys at the end of each unit or the textbook to facilitate independent learning and better understand the Buddhist content."*

Language Use and Skills Development. Most students stated that the textbook was helpful for developing reading and writing skills. One student explained: *"I can use reading strategies to improve my writing, especially through exercises involving stories, vocabulary, and grammar."*

Some students suggested areas for improvement. For example: *"It would be helpful to add more grammar explanations and vocabulary to strengthen our skills further."* Another student recommended: *"Including content about important Buddhist holidays could help us apply what we learn in real-life situations."*

Cultural and Contextual Relevance. Most students highlighted the effective integration of Buddhist teachings into the textbook. One student remarked: *"The textbook connects traditional Buddhist knowledge with modern life, which makes it engaging and meaningful."*

Students also noted that the content was enjoyable and accessible while remaining closely tied to their cultural and religious context. For example: *"I feel that the material helps me understand Buddhist teachings more deeply and supports my practical use of English in culturally relevant situations."*

Design, Layout and Engagement. Most students found the textbook's printing, layout, and illustrations well-organized and visually clear. One student commented: *"The design is attractive, the text is clear, and the organization makes it easy to follow and learn."* However, some students suggested improvements. For example: *"Including colored illustrations would make the textbook easier to read and more engaging, especially for learners with visual difficulties."* Another student noted: *"We sometimes use color images provided by teachers during lessons to compensate for the black-and-white illustrations."*

In summary, students found the textbook helpful, culturally relevant, and well-structured. They highlighted its strengths in guiding learning, integrating Buddhist content, and supporting skill development. Suggested improvements included additional grammar explanations, more vocabulary support, color illustrations, and additional resources for a more complete learning experience.

Conclusion and Discussion

This study examined teachers' and doctoral students' perceptions of an English textbook designed to develop reading and writing skills within a Buddhist context. Overall, the findings indicated very high levels of agreement regarding the textbook's effectiveness, academic standards, cultural relevance, and organization. At the same time, the study also identified several areas for improvement, offering valuable insights for the future development of instructional materials in similar contexts.

The results showed that teachers (mean score = 4.75) and students (mean score = 4.55) shared strong perceptions of the textbook's effectiveness. Teachers emphasized its academic standards, logical organization, and cultural alignment, while students valued its clarity, relevance, and integration of Buddhist themes into modern academic life. These findings support the argument that textbooks are most effective when they are closely aligned with learners' cultural and disciplinary identities (Azizah et al., 2025; Inkrungkao et al., 2022; Suphipat & Chinokul, 2019). In particular, the integration of Buddhist content reflects Tomlinson's (2003) principle that materials should engage learners not only linguistically but also affectively and culturally, making them meaningful in everyday life.

One possible interpretation for these positive evaluations is that the textbook was specifically designed for Buddhist doctoral students, filling a gap in available materials. Unlike many commercial EFL textbooks, which are often criticized for being culturally irrelevant (Alhamami & Ahmad, 2018), this textbook incorporated Buddhist values directly into its content, which likely increased engagement and relevance. However, the very positive feedback may also reflect some bias, as both teachers and students belonged to the university that developed the book. This raises the question of whether the textbook would receive the same response in other Buddhist or non-Buddhist contexts.

While overall perceptions were very positive, a closer look at specific items reveals differences in teachers' and students' views. Item 5, regarding the balance of easy and difficult material, received the lowest score from teachers ($M = 4.42$, High) but a higher score from students ($M = 4.55$, Very High). This contrast suggests that teachers are slightly more concerned about the balance of content difficulty, whereas students generally find the material appropriate. These findings indicate that, although the textbook is broadly effective, some sections may challenge certain learners. Including exercises with varying levels of difficulty could help all students engage more effectively and further enhance the textbook's usefulness in developing reading and writing skills in a Buddhist context.

Despite the overall satisfaction, both teachers and students suggested areas for improvement. Teachers recommended adding more vocabulary exercises, better alignment of grammar tasks with reading and writing content, and restructuring writing activities into full paragraphs to strengthen summarization skills. These suggestions support McDonough and Shaw's (1993) point that effective evaluation should consider not only a textbook's objectives but also its internal consistency and ability to develop skills in practice. The student suggested including vocabulary lists with pronunciation guides, QR codes for digital resources, and content covering Buddhist perspectives beyond Thailand. This recommendation reflects Tomlinson's (2003) emphasis on promoting learner autonomy and engagement by offering multiple opportunities for independent study.

The study's findings align with Ayu and Indrawati (2018), who emphasized that logical sequencing and task progression support learning outcomes, and with Orfan et al. (2021), who showed that culturally

relevant textbooks can enhance learners' language skills. They also correspond with more recent evaluations such as the study of Shahid et al. (2021) in Punjab, which reported positive perceptions of well-designed and visually clear textbooks that meet learners' needs. However, the results contrast with those of Hammad (2014) and Alhamami and Ahmad (2018), who found negative teacher perceptions of textbooks that were overloaded with vocabulary or lacked contextual relevance. Similar weaknesses were noted by Ali and Murtaza (2020) and Miroud (2021), who observed that textbooks with limited attention to key language skills or poorly constructed reading texts may hinder learning. In terms of cultural content, the present findings differ from Sulistiyo et al. (2021), whose analysis revealed imbalances and overly general information in some Indonesian textbooks. One possible explanation for these differences is that the textbook in this study was specifically designed for a doctoral audience within a Buddhist context, rather than for a general EFL market, which may have allowed for clearer alignment with learners' needs and disciplinary expectations.

While previous research in Buddhist educational settings (Chatkaew & Tachom, 2020; Srikote, 2012) has focused more on teaching methods than on materials, this present study shows that carefully designed textbooks can provide similar motivational and contextual benefits. This indicates that both effective teaching approaches and well-crafted learning materials work together to support Buddhist students' engagement and academic success.

Applying established textbook evaluation frameworks helps to interpret the findings more systematically. From Cunningsworth's (1995) perspective, the high scores show that the textbook aligns with course objectives and academic standards, although teachers' suggestions for more balanced vocabulary and grammar activities indicate that some linguistic elements could be strengthened. According to McDonough and Shaw's (1993) two-stage model, external evaluation of objectives and organization was rated highly, but internal evaluation of task-content alignment revealed weaknesses in the coherence of grammar exercises. From Tomlinson's (2003) perspective, students' requests for additional resources, sample answers, and broader cultural content highlight the need for deeper engagement and greater learner autonomy, beyond surface-level satisfaction.

In summary, the findings suggest that the textbook successfully met both academic standards and cultural relevance. Both teachers and students rated the textbook highly, highlighting its clear organization, alignment with curriculum goals, and integration of Buddhist content. The results indicate that well-designed, culturally responsive textbooks can effectively support academic skill development and enhance student engagement in specialized educational contexts.

Limitations of the Study

Although both teachers and students gave the textbook positive feedback, some limitations need to be noted. First, the study was conducted in only one Buddhist university. This makes it difficult to know if the results would be the same in other universities or in non-Buddhist settings, where students may not feel the same connection to the cultural content. Second, the very high scores may have been influenced by social desirability bias. Since the textbook was developed locally, participants might have wanted to show support rather than give completely objective opinions. Third, the study focused only on perceptions and did not measure actual improvements in reading and writing skills. Therefore, positive attitudes toward the textbook do not automatically mean students' abilities improved. Fourth, data were collected only through questionnaires. Without interviews, the study may have missed more detailed or personal insights from participants. Finally, although the Buddhist themes were valued, too much emphasis on them might limit students' opportunities to engage with global perspectives in academic English.

Even with these limitations, the study provides useful guidance for creating textbooks in specialized contexts. As Tomlinson (2003) explains, including cultural values in materials can increase motivation and engagement. At the same time, it is important to maintain balance and flexibility. Following the ideas of Cunningsworth (1995) and McDonough and Shaw (1993), textbooks should not only reflect the students' context but also cover the language comprehensively and allow for adaptation. This study shows that textbooks designed for specific learner groups can be more relevant and effective, while still keeping academic standards and openness to wider cultural perspectives.

Implications and Recommendations

Previous research has shown that evaluating English textbooks is an important way to improve language teaching and learning. By focusing on how Buddhist content can be integrated into an EFL textbook, this study fills an important gap and provides practical implications for teachers, material developers, and policymakers. The findings suggest that when textbooks are connected to learners' cultural and academic backgrounds, they help students improve their skills while also increasing motivation and engagement.

In this study, the results showed that including topics related to students' values and real-life experiences made them more interested and active in class. These topics also matched the goals of the curriculum and supported effective teaching practices. Students valued the clear structure, step-by-step progression, and range of tasks, while teachers appreciated the ready-to-use materials that required less adaptation and supported organized instruction.

Based on the findings, several recommendations can be made. First, cultural and religious themes should be included where they are appropriate so that students can relate to the content. Second, both teachers and students should take part in the design and evaluation of textbooks, to ensure the materials are

useful and effective. Third, textbooks should be clearly organized, include different types of activities, and support gradual skill development. Teacher support materials, such as guides, should also be developed to help with lesson planning and classroom use. Finally, textbooks should be regularly reviewed and updated using feedback from teachers and students to ensure they stay relevant and effective.

For future research, it would be useful to study the long-term impact of textbooks with cultural content on students' English skills and motivation. Studies in other cultural and religious contexts would also help to create more inclusive and sensitive materials. In addition, future studies could use interviews alongside questionnaires to collect deeper and more detailed insights. By expanding the methods and contexts, future research can provide a clearer understanding of how culturally based textbooks affect both language learning and the development of learners' identities.

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Appendix

UNIT 1 TRADITIONS AND FESTIVALS

Learning Objectives

After studying this unit, students will be able to:

1. identify topics and main ideas
2. understand how to organize ideas and write topic sentences

Warm-Up Activities

Work in pairs. Look at the following pictures and answer the questions.

Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 1: Source: <https://maytermthailand.org/2018/05/13/vesak-visakha-bucha-day/> (Retrieved December 25, 2019)

Picture 2: Source: <https://cutt.ly/8kqTIGs> (Retrieved December 25, 2019)

1. What are people in Picture 1 doing? Where are they? What special day is it?
-

2. What are people in Picture 2 going to do? What is the occasion? Why are they doing this?
-

Reading Skill

Finding the Topic and Main Idea

Finding the topic and main idea is one of the most basic reading skills. Readers need to have some knowledge of the topic and related vocabulary in order to understand the text. A good academic paragraph will always contain a topic sentence. The topic sentence is the most important sentence in the paragraph as it tells the reader both the topic and main idea that the author wishes to convey.

The topic is a word or phrase repeated throughout the paragraph. Usually, the writer starts each paragraph with a topic sentence, but sometimes they are found in the middle or at the end of the paragraph. The author usually expresses the main idea in the topic sentence. Other sentences provide supporting details to clarify, explain, or support the main idea. A main idea that is directly expressed is called a **directly-stated main idea**.

Read the example paragraph below and answer the questions that follow.

Who or What is the paragraph about? – The answer is the topic of the paragraph.

What does the author want you to know about the topic? – The answer is the main idea of the paragraph.

Example Paragraph

The Royal Ploughing Ceremony is an important national holiday in Thailand. It usually falls in May. This ceremony marks the beginning of the rice-growing season. This is important in Thailand since half of the population depends on farming for a living, and rice is the main staple for Thais. The King presides over the traditional ceremony that is meant to bring an auspicious beginning to the new planting season. The ceremony takes place at Sanam Luang, an open field and public square across from Wat Pra Kaew and the Royal Palace.

You will see that the first sentence of the paragraph contains both the topic and the main idea. The topic is “The Royal Ploughing Ceremony” and the main idea is “The Royal Ploughing Ceremony is an important national holiday in Thailand.” The writer gives more details in the following sentences to explain why it is important, when it occurs, and where it takes place.

EXERCISE 1

Now work with a partner. Find the topic and main idea of each of the following paragraphs. Answer the following questions:

- *Who or what is the paragraph about?*
- *What does the author want to express about the topic?*

Paragraph 1

Ceremonies associated with Buddhism are classified into three groups. The first group is ceremonies linked with events in the life of the Buddha and the Dispensation. The second one is ceremonies connected with the discipline and monastic life, primarily the concern only of monks. The third one is ceremonies connected with folk cultures and non-Buddhist elements. They are those which have been appropriated by Buddhism or accepted into the Buddhist fold by assimilation or by the incorporation of Buddhist elements. These three groups are ceremonies related to Buddhism.

Topic: _____

Main idea: _____

Paragraph 2

Songkran (Water-Throwing Festival), the traditional Thai New Year, falls on April 13 in the hottest time of the year in Thailand. It is believed to be Hindu in origin. It is a big festival celebrated for three to seven days, each of which begins with merit-making ceremonies of offering food to monks. The festival is characterized by the ceremony of respects to monks and the elderly and the throwing of water on one another among younger people. During this month of high temperatures, water symbolizes a happy beginning by its twofold function of renewal through cleaning and happiness through refreshment. People pay respects and express their good wishes to monks and elderly people by bathing the monks and by bathing and giving new clothes to the elderly, thereby receiving blessings from them in return. The festival ends with water-throwing, an act of refreshment and merry-making. These are some facts about the Songkran festival.

Topic: _____

Main idea: _____

Paragraph 3

Sārd takes place on the new moon of the 10th lunar month (usually at the end of September or in early October), the time when the departed are believed to be released temporarily from the world of the

dead to see their relatives in the human world. Sārd is the giving of merit to the departed. Originally, people made food offerings to their departed ancestors and relatives by leaving them at the foot of a tree. After Sārd was incorporated into Buddhism, the ceremony consisted only in the merit-making ceremony of offering food to monks and dedicating or transferring the merit to the dead. In many parts of the country, however, both practices are still followed.

Topic: _____

Main idea: _____

PREPARING TO READ

EXERCISE 2

Match the words from the box with the definitions in the chart.

alms	celebrate	commemoration	honor	intently	luxurious
	procession	ritual	sincerely	worship	

Vocabulary Chart	
Word	Definition
1.	very expensive, beautiful, and comfortable
2.	truly, really feeling or believing something, not just pretending
3.	carefully, in a way that gives your all attention to something
4.	to show great respect for someone or something
5.	to show <u>respect</u> and <u>love</u> for a higher being, especially by <u>praying</u> or prostrating
6.	to do something enjoyable to show that an occasion or event is special
7.	a <u>ceremony</u> that is always <u>performed</u> in the same way to <u>mark</u> an important <u>religious</u> or social <u>occasion</u> = rite
8.	something <u>intended</u> to <u>honor</u> and <u>remember</u> an <u>important person</u> or event
9.	a <u>line</u> of <u>people</u> or <u>vehicles moving</u> in a <u>slow</u> and <u>formal</u> way as part of an <u>event</u>
10.	money, food etc. given to poor people in the past

READING PASSAGE

(1) Visākha-Pūjā Day is a national holiday in Thailand. It is the day of **worship** that falls during the full moon of the 6th lunar month in **commemoration** of the birth, enlightenment and passing away of the Buddha into total Nibbāna. It is believed to have been **celebrated** since the Sukhothai Period about 700 years ago.

(2) On the morning of Visākha-Pūjā Day, thousands of Buddhists across the country go to the monastery to pay homage to Lord Buddha. They make merit by giving **alms** to monks. Some people observe the five precepts which encompass abstaining from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and taking intoxicants, while others practice three additional precepts which encompass abstaining from eating after lunch, singing, dancing, playing music, attending entertainment performances, wearing perfume, using cosmetics and garlands, sitting or sleeping in **luxurious** places, and overindulging in sleep. Monks across the country give sermons to people who listen **intently** to help them better understand the Dhamma.

(3) In addition, many birds and animals are also released into the wild as a symbol of giving freedom to those who are held in captivity. In the evening, there is a candlelit **procession** where people walk around the main ubosot, or shrine of a monastery three times to **honor** the Triple Gem of Buddhism—Buddha, his teachings and the Sangha. While all of these **rituals** serve a purpose, the most important thing to do is to follow the Buddha's teachings (Dhamma) **sincerely**.

EXERCISE 3

Give the short answers for the following questions.

1. What is the main idea of the first paragraph?

2. What does the second paragraph mainly discuss?

3. What is the topic of the third paragraph?

4. What do people practice on Visākha-Pūjā Day?

5. What do the monks practice on this day?

6. Why do people walk around the shrine three times?

EXERCISE 4

Complete the following sentences by using the words from the box.

alms	celebrated	commemoration	honor	intently	luxurious
procession	rituals	sincerely	worship		

1. The lady of the house performs the sacred _____ of lighting two candles.
2. In the past, people thought it was their religious duty to give _____ to the poor.
3. Leather seats sports cars are _____, but completely unnecessary.
4. I would like to thank you all most _____.
5. The child stared _____ at the mysterious light in the woods.
6. Thousands of veterans will take part in a _____ of the battle.
7. We are here today to _____ the men and women who gave their lives for their country.
8. About 10,000 women carrying pots of milk on their heads walked in a _____ from one temple to another.
9. They all _____ the same god.
10. Let's have a party to _____ your birthday.

DISCUSSION

1. What do you usually practice on Visākha-Pūjā Day?
2. Why do you think people observe the five or eight precepts? Have you ever practiced them?
3. What do you do to *follow the Buddha's teachings*? How does it make you feel?

Writing Part**Language Focus****Simple Sentences, Subject-Verb Agreement, Adjectives/Adverbs, Prepositional Phrases****1. Simple Sentences**

According to the Oxford Dictionary, a sentence is a set of words that is complete in itself, typically containing a subject and predicate, conveying a statement, question, exclamation, or command, and consisting of a main clause and sometimes one or more subordinate clauses. When you write a sentence, you should capitalize the first letter and end with a period if it is a statement, a question mark if it is a question, or an exclamation mark if it is an exclamation.

There are five basic sentence patterns.

1.1 Subject + intransitive verb

Examples of verbs in this pattern include **run, jump, walk, go, laugh, pray, sleep, exercise, sit, stand**, etc.

For example:

- All monks stay in the monastery during the rains-retreat.
- Thet Mahachat occurs in April or during the rains-retreat.

1.2 Subject + transitive verb + direct object

Examples of verbs in this pattern include **eat, drink, do, make, like, hate, love, kick, read, write, teach, draw**, etc.

For example:

- People make small vessels or baskets of banana leaves.
- They put lit candles and incense sticks inside the banana baskets.

1.3 Subject + verb + subject complement

Examples of verbs in this pattern include stative verbs (**be**) and linking verbs: **smell, look, seem, feel, sound, appear, become, turn, stay, keep**, etc.

For example:

- Kathin is a very special occasion.
- The children seem amused by the zoo animals.

1.4 Subject + transitive verb + indirect object + direct object

Examples of verbs in this pattern include verbs that require two objects.

For example:

- Lay devotees offer the monks their help.
- A student bought the teacher a krathong.

Note: If the direct object comes before the indirect object, we need to add “to” or “for” before the indirect object.

Verbs that take “to”: **bring, feed, give, hand, lend, offer, owe, pass, pay, post, promise, read, sell, send, show, take, teach, tell, throw, write**.

Verbs that take “for”: **book, bring, build, buy, choose, cook, fetch, find, get, leave, make, order, pick, reserve, save.**

Subject + transitive verb + direct object + to /for + indirect object

- Lay devotees offer their help **to** monks.
- A student bought a krathong **for** the teacher.

1.5 Subject + transitive verb + direct object + object complement

Examples of verbs in this pattern include **find, call, consider, name, elect, appoint, think, drive, make**, etc.

For example:

- Foreigners find Buddhism interesting.
- Thai people call a banana basket a krathong.
- People consider Elvis Presley the king of rock and roll.

EXERCISE 5

Put the words in the correct order to make sentences.

1. takes place / the Yi Peng festival / in November / in Chiang Mai

2. was once / Chiang Mai / of the Lanna kingdom / the capital

3. people / live /can enjoy /music performances

4. the lantern festival / northern Thai people / call / the Yi Peng

5. the night sky / firecrackers / light up

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

In the present simple, present perfect, or present and past continuous, we need to write the verb so that it agrees with the subject. Singular subjects require singular verbs, and plural subjects require plural verbs.

- She usually **eats** noodles for lunch.
- Most children **like** ice cream.
- At the moment they **are living** in a very small flat.
- While it **was raining**, I **was watching** TV.
- The plane **has landed**.

EXERCISE 6

Choose the correct verb form in each sentence.

1. Phi Ta Khon (**take place / takes place**) in the small town of Dan Sai.
2. It (**is / am / are**) a three-day celebration marked by colorful masks.
3. As the legend (**go / goes**), Phi Ta Khon (**is meant / are meant**) to be a party that is so much fun, both the living and the dead (**want / wants**) to attend.
4. Locals (**believe / believes**) that the loud noises will awaken the spirit of the Mun River who (**protect / protects**) their town.
5. There (**is / are**) massive parades, beauty pageants and music performances on the first two days of the festival followed by a more somber day of Buddhist ceremonies.

3. Adjective/Adverb

3.1. An adjective is a word that describes a noun or pronoun. It tells us characteristics of the noun or pronoun. There are two places where we can use an adjective.

- Before a noun

- This is a **fun** festival.
- Tom bought a **new** car.
- The man made a **slow** start.

- After a linking verb

- Tom's car is **new**.
- This festival looks **fun**.

3.2. An adverb is usually formed by adding –ly after an adjective such as **politely, quickly, safely, happily, nicely, fortunately**, etc.

Adverbs are used to modify a verb, an adjective or an adverb. Adverbs can be either before or after a verb or at the beginning or at the end of the sentence.

- The man started the race **slowly**.
- The woman dresses **expensively**.

EXERCISE 7

Choose the correct word to complete each sentence.

1. Boon Bang Fai Festival (The Rocket Festival) in Yasothorn Province is very (**popular / popularly**) amongst the farming communities as the rockets are meant to encourage the gods to bless them with plentiful rains.
2. Locals construct (**elaborate / elaborately**) rockets that are almost 20 feet in length.
3. The person whose rocket soars highest (**usual / usually**) wins a prize of 10,000 baht.
4. People whose rockets fail to launch are (**playful / playfully**) thrown into a mud-bath as punishment.
5. There is plenty of live folk music and merriment marked by drinking (**local / locally**) rice wine.

4. Prepositional Phrases

Prepositional phrases tell us about time and place. The tables below summarize their use.

4.1 Place

preposition	use	examples
in +	town, country, street (GB)	in class, in Ayutthaya, in Pahonyothin Road, in prison/hospital
on +	floor, street (US)	on the fifth floor, on Pahonyothin Road, on the right/left, on the screen
at +	place on a journey, house, address, event	at the bus stop, at Jatujak, at Peter's house, at the temple, at work/home/school

4.2 Time

preposition	use	examples
in +	year, month, season	in 2018, in December, in winter,

in +	part of day	in the morning/afternoon/evening
on +	day, date	on Wednesday, on 15 April, on New Year's Day
on +	day + part of day	on Monday morning, on Friday night
at +	clock time/ mealtime/ night/ midnight/midday	at lunch, at three o'clock, at the moment, at night/midday/midnight

EXERCISE 8

Choose the correct prepositional phrase to complete the paragraph.

- a) on the third weekend of November
- b) of elephants
- c) of Thailand's friendly giants
- d) for travel
- e) with flowers and paste
- f) with fruits and vegetables
- g) of this country's history

The Surin Elephant Festival is a celebration (1) _____. Elephants have been an essential part (2) _____; they were used in battle, they aided in agriculture, and they were even used (3) _____. This festival in the Northeast of Thailand sees enormous parades (4) _____ that are lovingly fed (5) _____. The parades are followed by marching bands and elephant shows. Tourists love interacting with these friendly beasts and taking pictures, especially once they have been decorated (6) _____. The Surin Elephant Festival usually takes place (7) _____.

Writing Skill

Writing Topics and Topic Sentences

Writing Topics

A topic is a noun phrase that tells us what each paragraph is about, e.g. a person, a thing, an object, or a place. Therefore, the topic is more general than other phrases, and it shows that other phrases are examples of this topic.

EXERCISE 9

Check (✓) the topic of all the items in a group.

<p>1. <input type="checkbox"/> taking a bath <input type="checkbox"/> getting dressed <input type="checkbox"/> eating <input type="checkbox"/> daily routine <input type="checkbox"/> working</p>	<p>6. <input type="checkbox"/> giving <input type="checkbox"/> meditation <input type="checkbox"/> listen to the dharma <input type="checkbox"/> making merit <input type="checkbox"/> moral conduct</p>
<p>2. <input type="checkbox"/> listening to music <input type="checkbox"/> gardening <input type="checkbox"/> hobbies <input type="checkbox"/> going shopping <input type="checkbox"/> traveling</p>	<p>7. <input type="checkbox"/> insert a card <input type="checkbox"/> withdraw money from ATM <input type="checkbox"/> enter your pin <input type="checkbox"/> select the amount <input type="checkbox"/> take your money</p>
<p>3. <input type="checkbox"/> do well in school <input type="checkbox"/> study hard <input type="checkbox"/> do all assignments <input type="checkbox"/> don't skip classes <input type="checkbox"/> don't cheat on exams</p>	<p>8. <input type="checkbox"/> do well in an interview <input type="checkbox"/> come prepared <input type="checkbox"/> be yourself <input type="checkbox"/> smile <input type="checkbox"/> be an attentive listener</p>
<p>4. <input type="checkbox"/> eat fruits and vegetables <input type="checkbox"/> stay healthy <input type="checkbox"/> drink lots of water <input type="checkbox"/> exercise</p>	<p>9. <input type="checkbox"/> respect each other <input type="checkbox"/> happy couples <input type="checkbox"/> be honest <input type="checkbox"/> accept the differences <input type="checkbox"/> communicate</p>
<p>5. <input type="checkbox"/> calm the mind <input type="checkbox"/> give time to heal <input type="checkbox"/> talk to someone <input type="checkbox"/> try relaxation techniques <input type="checkbox"/> avoid stress</p>	<p>10. <input type="checkbox"/> law-abiding <input type="checkbox"/> responsive <input type="checkbox"/> transparent <input type="checkbox"/> accountable <input type="checkbox"/> good governance</p>

Writing Topic Sentences

A topic sentence is a sentence that is the focus of a paragraph. Other sentences of the paragraph relate, explain or support this topic. A good topic sentence is composed of a topic (what it is about) and a controlling idea (the writer's opinion about the topic). The controlling idea tells what the writer thinks about the topic and their purpose for writing.

See the examples below. Each contains the same topic but has different controlling ideas. The topic is in bold and the controlling idea is underlined.

- **Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University** is a great Buddhist university.
- It is easy to get to **Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University**.
- There are many reasons I chose to study at **Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University**.

EXERCISE 10

Choose the topic sentence of each paragraph.

1. _____. They can go mountain climbing in the north or visit islands in the south. Some enjoy eating different local foods. Others like to buy local souvenirs. In conclusion, tourists should visit Thailand, for they can do and see many things.
 - a. Tourism is the main source of income in Thailand.
 - b. Some tourists prefer natural places to historical parks.
 - c. Thailand is the medical hub of Southeast Asia.
 - d. There are many things for tourists to do and see in Thailand.

2. _____. Some people go home to visit their parents. Others enjoy splashing water on others on public streets of different provinces. Tourists in Bangkok go to Khao San Road to join the festivities. Some go to the monastery to make merit. Others prefer pouring scented water with flowers onto the hands of monks and elders to ask for blessings for the New Year. In short, during the Songkran Festival people enjoy doing various things.
 - a. Different people do different things during the Songkran Festival.
 - b. People start doing new things at the New Year.
 - c. Tourists enjoy the water festival on Khao San Road.
 - d. Streets for the water festival are called Khao + something, e.g. Khao Poon, Khao Niew, or Khao Yum.

WRITING TASK

Write a topic sentence for each paragraph.

1. _____. First, some people drink and drive, losing focus behind the wheel and causing injury or death. Second, some drivers do not follow the speed limit and lose control of their vehicles. In addition, people text or use the mobile phone while driving. As a result, they do not pay attention to their driving. Accidents may also occur because road conditions are poor. These are the reasons why there are many road accidents.
2. _____. In South Korea, followers light lotus lanterns throughout the monasteries. In Sri Lanka, colorful lanterns are used to illuminate different stories from the Buddha's life. In Indonesia, Buddhists light and release lanterns into the air while visiting the Borobudur temple. In Taiwan, followers pour fragrant water over Buddha statues, symbolizing a fresh start to life. These are examples of how people in different countries celebrate the Lord Buddha's birthday.
3. _____. The first event was when 1,250 Sangha followers came to see the Buddha without any schedule. The second event was that all of them were Arahants (Enlightened Ones) ordained by the Buddha himself. The third event was that the Buddha gave those Arahants the principles of Buddhism: to cease from all evil, to do what is good, and to cleanse one's mind. The fourth event was that it was a day of the full moon. These four events occurred on Māgha-Pūjā Day.

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