

Bridging the Gap: AI-Assisted Adaptation of Grade 12 English Textbook Reading Tasks for Vietnam's 2025 MOET Exam Reforms

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Introduction

As Vietnam moves toward the 2025 National High School Graduation Examination reforms, English teachers are being asked to rethink how well classroom materials prepare students for the revised reading format. While Tiếng Anh 12 Global Success offers a solid basis for Grade 12 instruction, some of its reading tasks do not yet align closely with the demands of the new MOET exam, which places greater emphasis on inference, paraphrasing, meaning in context, and textual cohesion. These skills are not only central to the exam but also relevant for students who may later encounter English-medium academic texts. To address this gap, the study adopted an action research approach in two Grade 12 classrooms, exploring how artificial intelligence (AI) might support teachers in adapting existing textbook reading tasks. Selected activities were revised or extended using AI tools, with attention to MOET-style item formats and discourse-level reading skills. The outcomes of these adaptations were examined through pre- and post-tests, along with a bilingual Likert-scale questionnaire completed by 50 students. The results indicate modest but meaningful gains in students' reading comprehension and exam preparedness, as well as increased engagement with textbook-based reading lessons. They also suggest that carefully adapted tasks can balance two aims: short-term exam preparation and longer-term development of academic reading skills. Rather than replacing teachers, the study argues, AI is most effective when used as a drafting support that remains guided by teacher judgement.

Methodology

Participants & Design

Action research (10 weeks, second semester 2024–2025) in two intact Grade 12 classes (N = 50, ≈ CEFR B1) — a collaboration between two teacher-researchers, each acting as practitioner and researcher in their own class. Both classes received the adapted materials.

Gap Analysis (RQ1)

Seven reading task types in the textbook were mapped against the official 2025 MOET paper (code 1101): negative detail, paraphrasing, reference, sentence insertion, text organisation, main idea/gist, and discourse logic.

Result: 0 of 7 task types fully aligned — 2 partially aligned (28.6%), 5 mismatched (71.4%). The largest gaps: sentence insertion, discourse logic, reference, paraphrasing, text organisation. ≈ 60% of intervention reading activities were adapted or supplemented.

Data

Pre-/post-tests (First and Second Term English tests, both containing MOET-style reading items) and a 10-item bilingual Likert questionnaire with open comments (N = 50).

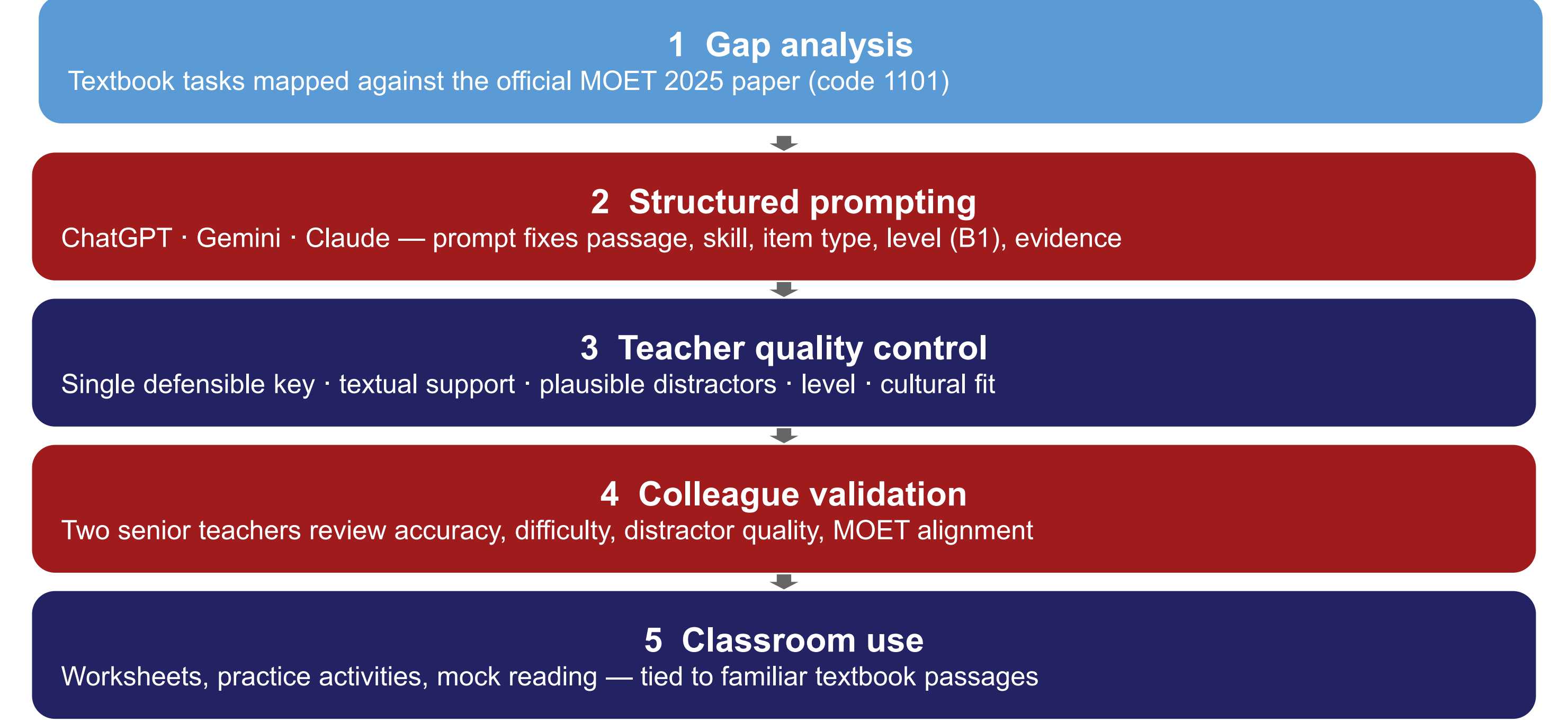
Objectives

- The study asks whether AI can help teachers bring a pre-reform textbook into line with a reformed national exam, without abandoning the book or sacrificing deeper reading development. Three research questions guided the work:
- RQ1.** To what extent do the reading tasks in Tiếng Anh 12 Global Success align with the cognitive and structural demands of the 2025 MOET English exam format?
 - RQ2.** How can AI tools assist teachers in adapting textbook reading tasks to address identified gaps in exam alignment?
 - RQ3.** How do students perceive AI-adapted reading tasks in relation to their exam readiness and classroom engagement?

Literature Review

- Textbook adaptation** is routine professional practice, not a departure from the curriculum: teachers add, omit, and modify published materials to fit local needs (McGrath, 2013; Rathert & Cabaroğlu, 2022; Mustofa & Damayanti, 2024).
 - Washback:** high-stakes exams shape teaching and materials; well-aligned practice should develop the abilities the test measures, not just copy its surface (Cheng et al., 2004; Hughes, 2003; Burgess & Head, 2005).
 - Discourse-level reading:** the 2025 MOET formats (sentence insertion, paraphrase, reference, gap-fill, summary) demand meaning-building across sentences and paragraphs — core academic reading skills, not test tricks (Watkins, 2017; MOET, 2025).
 - Generative AI** can draft questions, stems, and distractors efficiently, but outputs can be inaccurate or ill-fitting; teacher review is essential (Kohnke et al., 2023; Moorhouse & Wong, 2025; Peachey & Crichton, 2024; Wangdi et al., 2025).
 - Scaffolding, not outsourcing:** AI supports reading when it strengthens students' own engagement with the text, and harms it when it replaces that thinking (Mokhtari & Ghimire, 2026).
- Gap:** these strands are rarely combined — few studies examine AI-assisted adaptation of a specific national textbook for a specific exam reform, in real classrooms.

AI-Assisted Adaptation Workflow (RQ2)



Findings and Discussion

Reading performance (RQ2)

Class	Pre M (SD)	Post M (SD)	Gain
Class 1	7.53 (0.81)	8.94 (0.67)	+1.41
Class 2	7.13 (1.02)	8.74 (1.03)	+1.61

Both classes gained over the 10 weeks — **modest but meaningful** improvement, with Class 1's narrowing SD hinting that scaffolded tasks helped weaker readers keep pace. Caution: no control group; term tests were not identical instruments; Class 2's larger gain may partly be regression to the mean. The gains are evidence of association, not causation.

Student perceptions (RQ3) — selected items, 1–5 scale

Item	M	SD
Q5 I learned new ways to read and understand texts.	4.70	0.46
Q9 The tasks helped me prepare for the MOET exam.	4.68	0.47
Q3 The tasks helped me understand reading texts better.	4.62	0.58
Q1 The tasks were interesting.	4.54	0.50
Q6 The task difficulty was appropriate.	4.14	0.52

Ratings were uniformly high and consistent (all SDs < 0.7). Open comments (translated from Vietnamese) echoed three themes — discourse awareness, clarity, confidence:

“Sentence reordering felt like solving a critical puzzle that actually helps my test score.” (S21)

“The instructions were always clear. I never found anything confusing.” (S17)

“These tasks are exactly what we needed. I feel much more confident about the final exam now.” (S8)

Clarity was a product of **teacher review, not raw AI output** — every task had passed quality control and colleague validation before reaching students. High ratings may partly reflect social desirability (teacher-administered survey).

Conclusion & Implications

- The alignment gap is real:** the revised exam foregrounds discourse-level reading the textbook barely practises — adaptation, not replacement, is the answer.
- A teacher-mediated, text-grounded model:** AI drafts quickly; teachers decide what is assessed, whether the key is defensible, and whether the task fits the class. Quality control is not optional — it is what makes AI-assisted adaptation viable.
- Two goals, one job:** because the reformed exam rewards genuine discourse-level comprehension, exam preparation and longer-term academic reading development can be pursued together.
- Next steps:** control-group and longitudinal designs; mainstream-school samples; comparative work on prompting strategies and AI tools.

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