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Specific objectives:

1. Identify characteristics of authentic materials suitable for higher-order task adaptation.
2. Develop and validate a framework for adapting materials based on revised Bloom's Taxonomy.
3. Evaluate the impact of adapted materials on students' higher-order reading performance through pre-tests and post-tests.
4. Explore students' perceptions regarding difficulty, engagement, relevance, and motivation.
5. Examine teachers' reflections on implementation, challenges, and pedagogical implications.

Design

Participants

Approximately 20 to 30 gifted EFL high school students in Vietnam (final sample N = 27) and their English teacher.

Authentic Materials in EFL Teaching

Authentic materials are texts originally created by native speakers for real communication, not for language instruction, including news articles, advertisements, media programs, literary texts, and academic papers. Studies show learners respond positively to authentic materials: Vinh (2022) found adult EFL students improved communication skills through authentic audiovisual input, while Sari (2016) and Sabir and Hammad (2022) reported that authentic materials motivated students because they were exciting and appealing. Assiddiq (2019) showed authentic materials outperformed pedagogical materials in developing reading comprehension and motivation among Indonesian high schoolers. Aisyah and Azmi (2023) found authentic materials improved comprehension regardless of learning style, a result consistent with Marzban and Davaji (2015).

Reading Comprehension in Advanced EFL Contexts

Reading comprehension involves integrating visual information with prior knowledge, activating schemas, and inferring textual meaning. Ali et al. (2022) emphasize reading's importance for academic success, especially in input-poor EFL settings. Heidari (2025) found gifted intermediate-level students outperformed non-gifted peers across reading item types, with the widest gap on items requiring broad contextual knowledge. At CEFR C1 - C2 levels, learners must understand complex, abstract texts and identify implicit meaning.

Bloom's Taxonomy and Task Design

Bloom's Taxonomy, revised by Anderson and Krathwohl (2001), organizes cognitive skills into six levels: remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create. The first three are lower-order thinking skills; the latter three are higher-order. In reading, lower-order tasks target explicit facts and vocabulary, while higher-order tasks require inference, analysis of perspective, and evaluation of arguments. Effective task design aligns with objectives, offers appropriate challenge, includes scaffolding, and assesses genuine comprehension.

Gifted EFL Students and Research Gap

Gifted EFL students show advanced language capacity, metalinguistic awareness, and intrinsic motivation (Ngoc & Hong, 2023). For them, cognitive demand matters more than linguistic difficulty. Although authentic materials and gifted learners' needs have each been studied separately, their intersection remains under-researched. Mrah (2017) noted that EFL textbooks rarely include higher-order thinking tasks, and classroom-based research on gifted EFL education, particularly in Vietnam, remains limited.

Discussion

The larger gain in higher-order comprehension compared to lower-order comprehension suggests that improvement stemmed from the specific cognitive demands of the task design rather than from general reading exposure. This supports Mrah's (2017) observation that EFL materials often underrepresent higher-order thinking and confirms Heidari's (2025) finding that gifted learners hold their greatest advantage on inference-based tasks once these are deliberately taught. The results indicate that authentic materials, combined with structured higher-order tasks and gradual scaffolding, can meaningfully strengthen gifted students' critical reading skills within a realistic classroom timeframe.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Systematic adaptation of authentic materials is feasible within normal classroom constraints. Teachers should align material selection and task design with objectives drawn from the higher levels of revised Bloom's Taxonomy, provide explicit scaffolding for reasoning processes, and vary task formats to build the full range of higher-order reading skills.

Post-Test Results

Comprehension Level	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Change (pp)
Lower-Order (Identify/Recognize)	752%	816%	64
Moderate-Order (Apply/Understand)	685%	763%	78
Higher-Order (Analyze/Evaluate)	548%	724%	176
Overall Mean Performance	662%	768%	106

Student Feedback

Statement	Mean Rating	% Agreeing (4-5)
The reading tasks were appropriately challenging	38	74%
The materials and topics were relevant and interesting	37	67%
I was engaged and motivated during the reading activities	41	85%
I felt confident in my ability to complete higher-order reading tasks	36	63%
The reading tasks helped me develop comprehension skills	40	81%

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