



Tugas Bahasa Inggris berbasis Personal dan Disiplin: Keterlibatan dan Kinerja Praja dan Taruna

Personal and Discipline-based English Tasks: Cadets' engagement and performance

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini membandingkan keterlibatan perilaku yang dapat diamati dan kemampuan berbahasa Inggris taruna dalam tugas video yang bersifat relevan secara pribadi dan berbasis disiplin ilmu. Studi ini menggunakan desain perbandingan berpasangan dalam kerangka metode campuran konvergen. Sumber data mencakup dua produk tugas dari 62 taruna yang sama—21 dari program studi Politik Indonesia Terapan, 21 dari Studi Kebijakan Publik, dan 20 dari Pembangunan Ekonomi dan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat—yang menghasilkan 124 video beserta transkrip dan metadata pengumpulannya. Bukti kuantitatif meliputi skor rubrik analitik, ketepatan waktu pengumpulan, durasi video, jumlah kata, dan indikator perilaku lainnya, sementara analisis konten kualitatif menelaah aspek elaborasi, pengalaman konkret, kreativitas multimodal, ekspresivitas, dan ketergantungan pada naskah. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa tugas yang bersifat pribadi menghasilkan tingkat keterlibatan yang lebih tinggi ($M = 4,03$; $SD = 0,44$) dibandingkan tugas berbasis disiplin ilmu ($M = 3,47$; $SD = 0,57$), $t(61) = 6,88$; $p < 0,001$; $d = 0,87$. Kemampuan berbahasa Inggris secara keseluruhan juga lebih tinggi pada tugas yang bersifat pribadi, meskipun besaran efeknya tergolong kecil ($d = 0,30$). Sebaliknya, tugas berbasis disiplin ilmu menghasilkan penggunaan kosakata teknis yang lebih kuat, register akademik yang lebih baik, dan akurasi konseptual yang lebih tinggi, namun disertai dengan tingkat ketergantungan pada naskah yang jauh lebih besar. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa relevansi pribadi dan relevansi disiplin ilmu mendukung dimensi kinerja tugas yang berbeda, alih-alih menjadi pilihan instruksional yang saling meniadakan. Penelitian ini mengusulkan model "Jembatan Pribadi-Disiplin" (*Personal-Disciplinary Bridge*) yang memanfaatkan pengalaman lokal taruna sebagai titik awal untuk menganalisis politik, kebijakan publik, tata kelola pemerintahan, pembangunan ekonomi, dan pemberdayaan masyarakat.

Kata kunci: keterlibatan dalam tugas, relevansi pribadi, Bahasa Inggris untuk Tujuan Khusus

Abstract

This study compares cadets' observable behavioral engagement and English performance in personally relevant and discipline-based video tasks. It adopts a paired comparative design within a convergent mixed-methods framework. The data sources comprise two task products from the same 62 cadets—21 from Applied Indonesian Politics, 21 from Public Policy Studies, and 20 from Economic Development and Community Empowerment—yielding 124 videos, their transcripts, and submission metadata. Quantitative evidence includes analytic-rubric scores, punctuality of submission, video duration, word count, and other behavioral indicators, while qualitative content analysis examines elaboration, concrete experience, multimodal creativity, expressiveness, and script dependence. In the simulated dataset, personal tasks produced higher



engagement ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.44$) than discipline-based tasks ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 0.57$), $t(61) = 6.88$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.87$. Overall English performance was also higher in personal tasks, although the effect was small ($d = 0.30$). By contrast, discipline-based tasks generated stronger technical vocabulary, academic register, and conceptual accuracy but were accompanied by substantially greater script dependence. The findings suggest that personal and disciplinary relevance support different dimensions of task performance rather than representing mutually exclusive instructional choices. The study proposes a Personal–Disciplinary Bridge model that uses cadets’ local experiences as an entry point for analyzing politics, public policy, governance, economic development, and community empowerment.

Keywords: task engagement, personal relevance, English for Specific Purposes

INTRODUCTION

Learning tasks occupy a strategic position in an English language instruction in higher education because they provide a space for learners to transform linguistic knowledge into meaningful language use. Mastery of vocabulary, grammar, and discourse structure does not in itself guarantee communicative competence if students do not have the opportunity to use them in authentic contexts. Through tasks, students organize ideas, connect knowledge with experience, and convey their perspectives to specific audiences. Therefore, the quality of learning is determined not only by the language content taught but also by the task’s objectives, cognitive demands, and topic orientation. In task-based learning, these characteristics can influence the amount of attention and effort students invest, as well as the quality of the language output they produce (Jackson, 2025; Philp & Duchesne, 2016).

In second language acquisition studies, *task engagement* refers to learners’ involvement as they focus their attention, sustain effort, utilize cognitive and linguistic resources, and strive to complete a task. Engagement is multidimensional and encompasses behavioral, agentic dimensions, emotional, and cognitive (Fredricks et al., 2004; Hiver et al., 2024). However, research that relies solely on task artifacts cannot account for all of these dimensions. Therefore, this study limits engagement to *observable task engagement*—that is, engagement evident through timeliness, adherence to instructions, completeness, elaboration, multimodal creativity, extra effort, and expressiveness. This limitation is also important because behavioral compliance is not always synonymous with intrinsic motivation; students may appear engaged but still experience a lack of motivation (Cao & Abdullah, 2025).

One characteristic of tasks that has the potential to enhance engagement is personal relevance. Topics related to learners’ experiences, identities, cultures, or social environments allow them to draw on existing knowledge schemas. This familiarity reduces the need to comprehend new content and frees up more cognitive capacity for idea generation and language production. Research on culturally familiar texts shows that contextual proximity can support language learners’ understanding and engagement (Novita et al., 2023), while research on topic familiarity demonstrates its influence on the three components of complexity, fluency, and accuracy of language production (Sun & Santos, 2023). In oral tasks, personal familiarity can also enhance a sense of ownership over the content, making it easier for students to provide details, evaluations, and concrete examples.

On the other hand, higher education needs to develop language skills that align with disciplinary and professional needs. The *English for Specific Purposes* perspective emphasizes the



alignment of materials and tasks with students' academic practices and professional communication (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). At IPDN, discipline-based tasks may include Indonesian politics, public policy, governance, economic development, and community empowerment. These topics are relevant to the graduate profile, but curricular relevance is not always immediately perceived as personal relevance. Abstract concepts and technical terminology can increase cognitive demands, forcing students to divide their attention among understanding the substance, ensuring linguistic accuracy, and maintaining fluency in communication. The perspective of limited attentional capacity explains that increased task demands can result in trade-offs between fluency, accuracy, complexity, and content development (Skehan, 1998).

Preliminary observations in English language learning at IPDN reveal a consistent pattern. When cadets are asked to create videos about their hometowns, local culture, or personal experiences, they tend to submit assignments on time, present more detailed information, and use more creative documentation. Conversely, when topics focus on program-specific issues, assignment outcomes are often more formal and concise, and rely more heavily on text. This phenomenon highlights a pedagogical paradox: discipline-based tasks are academically and professionally relevant, but they are not necessarily directly meaningful to the cadets. Nevertheless, instructors' observations alone are insufficient to conclude that topic orientation causes differences in engagement and performance; a systematic comparison of the two assignments produced by the same individuals is required.

The existing literature leaves three gaps. Conceptually, research on engagement, personal relevance, and ESP often remains developed as separate fields, so the difference between relevance as perceived by students and relevance as defined by the curriculum has not been extensively tested directly. Empirically and methodologically, many studies use questionnaires, interviews, or observations to measure engagement, whereas authentic artifacts, submission records, and language output have not yet been widely used in an integrated manner. Contextually, Indonesia's civil service higher education remains underrepresented, even though cadets experience a residential environment, strict institutional schedules, and unique academic-professional demands. A paired comparative approach can mitigate the influence of individual differences because each cadet serves as a control for themselves.

Based on these gaps, this study aims to compare cadets' observable behavioral engagement and English language performance in personal and discipline-based video tasks. Its contribution lies in integrating personal relevance, task engagement, and disciplinary language within a single analytical framework grounded in authentic learning artifacts. More specifically, the study examines whether the two types of tasks differ in terms of observable behavioral engagement and overall English language performance, including fluency, pronunciation, grammatical accuracy, lexical variety, sentence complexity, organization of ideas, clarity, and content relevance. It also investigates how the characteristics of the video content and presentation help explain the quantitative differences identified between personal and discipline-based tasks.



METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a paired-comparative design with a convergent mixed-methods approach. The quantitative component compares engagement scores, English language performance, duration, word count, and behavioral indicators across the two tasks performed by the same individuals. The qualitative component analyzes videos and transcripts to explain patterns of elaboration, the use of concrete experiences, multimodal creativity, expressiveness, and difficulties in conveying disciplinary concepts. Both types of evidence are analyzed separately and integrated through *joint interpretation* during the discussion phase. A *within-participant* design was chosen to ensure that variations in language ability and individual characteristics are relatively controlled.

Respondents and Data Sources

The data sources consisted of two English video assignment products from 62 IPDN cadets, resulting in a total of 124 videos analyzed. Participants came from three study programs in the Faculty of Politics and Governance. Selection was conducted purposively based on the availability of two complete assignments, video files that could be played and transcribed, and documented submission metadata. The cadets' identities were replaced with codes P01 through P62. The distribution of participants is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of participants by academic program

Study program	n	%
Applied Indonesian Politics	21	33.9
Public Policy Studies	21	33.9
Economic Development and Community Empowerment	20	32.2
Total	62	100.0

Task Characteristics and Equivalence

The first assignment was a video on a personal topic, such as the student's hometown, local culture, educational experiences, or social life. The second assignment was a discipline-based video, such as local politics, policy implementation, governance, economic development, or community empowerment. Both assignments require oral production in English and are assessed using equivalent rubrics. To ensure valid comparisons, the format, duration, time allotted for completion, level of support, and weighting of the two assignments must be made comparable.

Instruments

The research instruments consisted of a documentation sheet, a rubric for analyzing visible engagement, a rubric for English language performance, and guidelines for content analysis. The documentation sheet records the submission time, duration, word count, completeness of elements, use of media, and indications of reading the text. Engagement is not interpreted based on a single indicator, but rather on a configuration of several behavioral evidences and product characteristics. The operationalization of the variables is summarized in Table 2.



Table 2. Operationalization of research constructs and indicators

Construct	Indicators	Source of Evidence
Observable task engagement	Timeliness; compliance; completeness; elaboration; creativity; multimodal elements; extra effort; expressiveness	Data submission metadata, videos, and rubrics 1–5
English language performance	Fluency; pronunciation; grammar; lexical variety; sentence complexity; organization; clarity; content relevance	Videos, transcripts, and rubrics 1–5
Disciplinary language features	Technical vocabulary; academic register; conceptual accuracy; reliance on the script	Video and transcript
Evidence of binary behavior	Timeliness; personal documentation; going beyond the minimum; concrete examples; reading the text	Code 0 = no, 1 = yes

Each rubric indicator is rated on a 1–5 scale, with higher scores indicating stronger performance. Specifically for the indicator of reliance on the script, a high score indicates greater reliance and is therefore treated as an undesirable characteristic in spontaneous communication.

Procedures

The researcher collected the files for both tasks, matched them based on the participants' identities, and then replaced the identities with anonymous codes. Each video was transcribed verbatim. Submission metadata, duration, word count, completeness of elements, use of visuals, and forms of additional effort were recorded on a documentation sheet. The videos and transcripts were then assessed using rubrics for engagement and language performance. In the qualitative phase, the data were coded to identify narrative depth, concrete details, forms of personal evaluation, multimodal creativity, pauses and self-corrections, expressiveness, and patterns of reliance on a script. Coding was conducted iteratively through data reading, initial coding, category grouping, cross-task comparisons, and the derivation of interpretive patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Data Analysis

Quantitative analysis was performed on paired data. Composite scores for engagement and performance were summarized using means and standard deviations, while ordinal data and data that did not meet the assumption of normality were reported using medians and interquartile ranges. Normality was tested for difference scores using the Shapiro–Wilk test. Paired-samples t-tests were used for composite scores and continuous variables with normally distributed differences; the Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used for ordinal indicators or non-normally distributed differences; while binary indicators were compared using the exact McNemar test. Effect sizes were reported as Cohen's d_z for paired t-tests and r for the Wilcoxon test. The interpretation of effect sizes took into



account the characteristics of L2 research and did not rely solely on p-values (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014). Since the analysis per dimension involved multiple tests, p-values were adjusted using the Holm procedure.

Qualitative analysis served to explain the mechanisms that may underlie the quantitative differences. Results from both components were integrated into a *joint display* that brought together statistical scores with observable characteristics in the videos and transcripts. A pattern was considered strong if it was supported by more than one form of evidence, such as longer duration, higher elaboration, and greater use of concrete examples and visual sources.

Ethical Considerations

The data were derived from learning artifacts and treated as educational research data. Student identities were anonymized, file access was restricted, and the report did not include any information that could identify individuals. The use of artifacts for research must be separated from academic assessment decisions to avoid placing pressure on students.

FINDINGS

Engagement in Personal and Discipline-Based Tasks

An analysis of 62 task pairs showed that engagement scores for personal tasks ($M = 4.03$; $SD = 0.44$) were higher than those for discipline-based tasks ($M = 3.47$; $SD = 0.57$). The difference in composite scores met the assumption of normality, Shapiro–Wilk $p = 0.255$. The results of the paired-samples t-test showed a significant difference, $t(61) = 6.88$, $p < 0.001$, with a large effect size, $d_z = 0.87$. The pattern of higher scores for personal tasks was also evident descriptively across all three study programs, although this study was not designed to test the interaction between task type and study program.

Table 3. Summary of the comparison of key indicators

Indicator	Personal tasks	Discipline-based tasks	Test	Effect size
Total engagement	$M = 4.03$; $SD = 0.44$	$M = 3.47$; $SD = 0.57$	$t(61) = 6.88$; $p < 0.001$	$d_z = 0.87$ (large)
Total language performance	$M = 3.76$; $SD = 0.39$	$M = 3.65$; $SD = 0.41$	$t(61) = 2.34$; $p = 0.022$	$d_z = 0.30$ (small)
Video duration	$Md = 285$ sec; $IQR = 93.5$	$Md = 227.5$ sec; $IQR = 65.0$	$Z = -5.13$; $p < 0.001$	$r = 0.65$ (large)
Number of words	$M = 440.39$; $SD = 96.06$	$M = 304.52$; $SD = 79.60$	$t(61) = 8.47$; $p < 0.001$	$d_z = 1.08$ (large)
Technical vocabulary	$M = 3.12$; $SD = 0.58$	$M = 3.87$; $SD = 0.59$	$Z = -5.38$; $p_{Holm} < 0.001$	$r = 0.68$ (high)
Academic register	$M = 3.22$; $SD = 0.53$	$M = 4.02$; $SD = 0.59$	$Z = -5.68$; $p_{Holm} < 0.001$	$r = 0.72$ (strong)
Concept Accuracy	$M = 3.52$; $SD = 0.54$	$M = 4.01$; $SD = 0.55$	$Z = -4.55$; $p_{Holm} < 0.001$	$r = 0.58$ (strong)
Script dependence	$M = 2.33$; $SD = 0.40$	$M = 3.66$; $SD = 0.48$	$Z = -6.78$; $p_{Holm} < 0.001$	$r = 0.86$ (high)



Note: Higher scores on the script-dependence scale indicate greater dependence. p_{Holm} is the p -value adjusted using the Holm procedure.

Duration and word count provide additional evidence of effort investment. The median duration of personal tasks was 285 seconds (IQR = 93.5), while that of discipline-based tasks was 227.5 seconds (IQR = 65.0), $Z = -5.13$, $p < 0.001$, $r = 0.65$. Transcripts of personal tasks were also longer ($M = 440.39$ words; $SD = 96.06$) than transcripts of discipline-based tasks ($M = 304.52$; $SD = 79.60$), $t(61) = 8.47$, $p < 0.001$, $d_z = 1.08$. Duration is not automatically interpreted as a measure of quality, but it becomes meaningful when it is accompanied by higher levels of elaboration, creativity, and additional effort.

Table 4. Behavioral indicators and product characteristics

Indicator	Personal, n (%)	Discipline-based, n (%)	Exact McNemar
Submitted on time	52 (83.9)	28 (45.2)	$p < 0.001$
Using personal documentation	41 (66.1)	3 (4.8)	$p < 0.001$
Exceeding minimum requirements	41 (66.1)	13 (21.0)	$p < 0.001$
Using concrete examples	45 (72.6)	16 (25.8)	$p < 0.001$
Seen reading a script	9 (14.5)	35 (56.5)	$p < 0.001$

Analysis of the rubric indicators shows that the strongest difference is found in elaboration. Personal tasks received an average elaboration score of 4.09 ($SD = 0.60$), while discipline-based tasks scored 3.18 ($SD = 0.76$), $Z = -5.78$, $p_{Holm} < 0.001$, $r = 0.73$. Significant differences were also found in creativity, the use of multimodal elements, and additional effort. Qualitatively, personal videos more frequently included family photos or images of the student's hometown, maps, music, and cultural documentation. Students also tended to add local history, traditions, regional cuisine, childhood experiences, or personal reflections not required by the instructions. Disciplinary videos made greater use of text, definitions, and general illustrations and tended to stop once the main requirements were met.

English Language Performance

Overall English performance on the personal task ($M = 3.76$; $SD = 0.39$) was slightly higher than on the discipline-based task ($M = 3.65$; $SD = 0.41$). The difference in scores is normally distributed, Shapiro–Wilk $p = 0.458$. The difference is significant, $t(61) = 2.34$, $p = 0.022$, but the effect size is small, $d_z = 0.30$. Thus, the impact of topic orientation on overall language performance is weaker than its impact on engagement.



Table 5. Comparison of English Language Performance Dimensions

Dimension	Personal M (SD)	Disciplinary M (SD)	Z	pHolm	r
Fluency	3.97 (0.50)	3.49 (0.59)	-4.61	< 0.001	0.59
Pronunciation	3.69 (0.66)	3.57 (0.53)	-1.43	0.461	0.18
Grammar	3.56 (0.58)	3.73 (0.58)	-2.09	0.146	0.27
Lexical diversity	3.69 (0.60)	3.53 (0.57)	-2.20	0.139	0.28
Sentence complexity	3.49 (0.55)	3.59 (0.60)	-1.03	0.607	0.13
Organization of ideas	3.88 (0.58)	3.61 (0.56)	-2.64	0.050	0.33
Clarity	3.86 (0.54)	3.61 (0.62)	-2.72	0.045	0.35
Content relevance	3.95 (0.53)	4.02 (0.62)	-0.91	0.607	0.12

Note: P-values in the dimensional analysis were adjusted using the Holm procedure. The direction of the difference was determined based on mean scores, not Z-scores.

Fluency is the dimension with the strongest difference. Personal tasks resulted in higher fluency ($M = 3.97$; $SD = 0.50$) than discipline-based tasks ($M = 3.49$; $SD = 0.59$), $Z = -4.61$, $p_{Holm} < 0.001$, $r = 0.59$. Clarity of expression also remained significant after Holm's correction, $p_{Holm} = 0.045$, $r = 0.35$, while organization of ideas was at the threshold of significance, $p_{Holm} = 0.050$. Pronunciation, grammar, lexical diversity, sentence complexity, and content relevance did not show strong differences after adjustment for multiple testing. Descriptive patterns indicate that discipline-based tasks scored slightly higher in grammar and sentence complexity, while personal tasks scored higher in lexical diversity; however, these trends should be interpreted with caution.

Analysis of transcripts and videos revealed that in personal tasks, students more frequently spoke in long speech sequences, provided examples, and maintained a narrative flow. Facial expressions and intonation appeared more natural, although minor errors still occurred. In discipline-based tasks, pauses, self-corrections, reading rhythm, and eye contact with the text were more frequently observed. Some presentations stopped at the definition or classification of concepts without developing specific cases, so more academic terminology did not always result in more elaborate communication.

Academic and Disciplinary Language

Discipline-based tasks demonstrated consistent superiority in academic language features. Technical vocabulary was higher in discipline-based tasks ($M = 3.87$; $SD = 0.59$) than in personal tasks ($M = 3.12$; $SD = 0.58$), $Z = -5.38$, $p_{Holm} < 0.001$, $r = 0.68$. Academic register showed a similar pattern, $Z = -5.68$, $p_{Holm} < 0.001$, $r = 0.72$, as did conceptual accuracy, $Z = -4.55$, $p_{Holm} < 0.001$, $r = 0.58$. Terms such as "public participation," "policy implementation," "local government," "political representation," "community empowerment," and "public services" were more prevalent in discipline-based tasks.



This dominance is accompanied by a greater reliance on source materials. The script-dependence score for discipline-based tasks ($M = 3.66$; $SD = 0.48$) is higher than that for personal tasks ($M = 2.33$; $SD = 0.40$), $Z = -6.78$, $p\text{Holm} < 0.001$, $r = 0.86$. A total of 56.5% of IPDN cadets were observed reading from a script during discipline-based tasks, compared to 14.5% during personal tasks. Qualitative data indicate that technical terms were sometimes accompanied by changes in intonation, pauses before or after the terms, and limited deviation from the prepared text.

Integration of Findings

The integration of quantitative and qualitative evidence reveals complementary patterns. Personal tasks are stronger in terms of engagement, output volume, fluency, clarity, elaboration, and the use of concrete experiences. Discipline-based tasks are stronger in technical vocabulary, academic register, and conceptual accuracy, but rely more heavily on the text. Thus, the results do not support the conclusion that one type of task is always better. Both types of tasks facilitate different performance profiles: personal relevance supports more spontaneous and rich communication, while disciplinary relevance expands academic-professional language.

DISCUSSION

Personal Relevance and Behavioral Engagement

Key findings indicate that personal orientation has a strong relationship with students' behavioral engagement. The large effect size on engagement scores suggests that the difference extends beyond mere preference for the topic; it is reflected in punctuality, duration, elaboration, creativity, and extra effort. These findings align with the view that engagement is responsive to task design and context (Egbert & Panday-Shukla, 2024; Philp & Duchesne, 2016). Studies in the Indonesian context also show that culturally familiar material can enhance EFL learners' understanding and engagement (Novita et al., 2023), while the integration of contextual and project-based learning can foster engagement among vocational students (Gani et al., 2025).

Longer videos are not automatically better. However, in this study, longer duration was associated with higher word count, elaboration, personal documentation, and concrete examples. The convergence of these indicators reinforces the interpretation that students invested greater effort in personal tasks. Knowledge of their hometowns and local experiences provides readily accessible material, so cognitive energy is not expended on understanding new concepts. Students can use their available attention to select details, organize the sequence of the story, and tailor their presentation to the audience.

Topic Familiarity, Fluency, and Elaboration

The greatest advantage in language performance was found in fluency. Topic familiarity allowed students to draw on information from direct experience and produce speech with less conceptual planning. These findings support research showing that topic familiarity influences the quality of language production (Sun & Santos, 2023) and the limited-attention-capacity perspective, which predicts a trade-off between content demands and linguistic realization (Skehan, 1998). When the demands of understanding the content are low, participants can maintain the flow of speech, develop examples, and use more natural intonation.



However, the effect of personal relevance is not uniform across all aspects. Overall performance differed only by a small margin, and several linguistic dimensions showed no significant differences after adjusting for multiple testing. This suggests that high engagement does not automatically lead to substantial changes in pronunciation ability, syntactic complexity, or accuracy. These aspects are likely more influenced by proficiency level, long-term practice, and opportunities to receive feedback. Therefore, personal relevance should be understood as a condition that facilitates the use of language skills, not a substitute for systematic language instruction.

The Contribution of Disciplinary Tasks to Academic Language

Discipline-based tasks continue to serve a function that cannot be replaced by personal tasks. Scores on technical vocabulary, academic register, and conceptual accuracy indicate that these tasks expand the language repertoire appropriate for the academic and professional needs of cadets. This is consistent with the ESP principle that prioritizes disciplinary needs and target communication practices as the basis for material selection (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). In the context of IPDN, the ability to explain policies, governance, political participation, economic development, and community empowerment in English is a critical professional competency.

The issue does not lie in the presence of disciplinary topics, but rather in how these topics are translated into assignments. A high reliance on source texts indicates that cadets use the texts as a strategy to maintain conceptual accuracy and linguistic form as substantive demands increase. This strategy may enhance descriptive grammatical control but reduces spontaneity, engagement with the audience, and the ability to elaborate. Thus, discipline-based tasks create a tension between control and communication: the greater the focus on terminology and conceptual accuracy, the more limited the capacity for fluency and the development of ideas.

The Personal–Disciplinary Bridge Model

The main implication of this research is not to replace discipline-based tasks with personal tasks, but rather to connect the two through the Personal–Disciplinary Bridge model. This model begins learning from students' local knowledge and experiences, then channels those experiences toward disciplinary concepts and professional outcomes. This approach maintains a personal connection while fostering academic language, critical thinking, and the ability to apply concepts to real-world problems. Integrating tasks with local contexts can also help instructors avoid an artificial separation between general and professional communication (Ilyas & Istaryatiningtias, 2025).

Table 6. Stages of the Personal–Disciplinary Bridge Model

Stage	Focus	Example Tasks	Language Targets
1. Personal anchor	Drawing on local experiences and knowledge	Describing issues or potential in one's hometown	Fluency, description, evaluation, narrative



Stage	Focus	Example Tasks	Language Targets
2. Disciplinary reframing	Connecting experiences to academic program concepts	Analyzing problems as issues of policy, politics, governance, economics, or empowerment	Technical vocabulary, cause and effect, definitions, classifications
3. Professional output	Developing evidence-based recommendations or solutions	Creating video policy briefs, solution presentations, or recommendations for local governments	Academic register, argumentation, recommendations, professional communication

The application of this model can take the form of analyzing public policy implementation in one's hometown, explaining local political dynamics, evaluating community empowerment programs in one's home village, mapping local economic potential, or developing solutions to public service issues. Such assignments remain relevant to the program of study but provide concrete experiences to fuel critical thinking and public speaking. Instructors can then gradually reduce their support, for example, by moving from a framework of questions and a glossary of terms to a fully unscripted presentation.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations. First, engagement was measured using indicators evident in the product and metadata, so it does not directly represent emotional or cognitive engagement. Second, differences in topics may be intertwined with conceptual difficulty, the order in which tasks were assigned, completion time, or available support; these factors need to be controlled for and reported. Third, the data come from a single institution and three closely related academic programs, so generalizations to other higher education contexts should be made with caution. Fourth, rubric-based assessments require strong content validity and inter-rater reliability. Fifth, the figures in this working draft are still based on simulations and cannot be treated as empirical evidence. Future research could combine assignment artifacts with brief interviews, written reflections, or measures of cognitive load to explain the mechanisms underlying these differences more comprehensively.

CONCLUSION

This comparative study shows that personal tasks and discipline-based tasks have the potential to produce different engagement and performance profiles. In the simulation data, personal tasks resulted in higher engagement, longer videos, richer transcripts, greater fluency, and more frequent use of concrete examples and documentation. Discipline-based tasks, conversely, fostered technical vocabulary, academic register, and conceptual accuracy, but were accompanied by a higher reliance on scripts. Overall differences in language performance were relatively small compared to differences in engagement, suggesting that topic relevance primarily influenced effort investment, output quantity, and communicative fluency.

The pedagogical implication is the need for task design that moves from personal experience toward disciplinary analysis and professional output. The *Personal-Disciplinary Bridge* model offers a way to maintain topic relevance while developing language competencies relevant to politics, public policy, governance, development economics, and community empowerment. Prior



to publication, simulation findings must be replaced with authentic data, rubrics must be validated, the reliability of the assessment must be reported, and the equivalence of the conditions for both tasks must be ensured.

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