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Instructors' Perceptions of Microsoft Teams Reading Progress in an Omani EFL Foundation Programme: Adoption, Challenges, and Institutional Feasibility

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Abstract. Oman's digitisation priorities under Oman Vision 2040 encourage the integration of technology into teaching and learning. Little research examines instructors' perceptions of Microsoft Teams (MS Teams) Reading Progress in Omani General Foundation Programme (GFP) contexts, particularly regarding its pedagogical value, ease of use, and implementation challenges. This mixed-methods pilot study explored instructors' perceptions of Reading Progress in General English 2 (GE2), within the pre-degree GFP at the Preparatory Studies Centre (PSC), University of Technology and Applied Sciences (UTAS), Oman. MS Teams Reading Progress is an artificial intelligence (AI)-supported tool designed to help students practice reading aloud, improve accuracy and fluency, and give instructors performance data. Drawing on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), this study explored instructors' perceptions of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, social influence, facilitating conditions, and behavioural intention. Using purposive sampling, data were collected from three sources: a structured questionnaire (N = 10), two semi-structured interviews, and MS Teams usage logs. Quantitative data were analysed descriptively, and qualitative data were analysed thematically. The findings reveal a disconnect between teachers' positive perceptions and willingness to continue using the tool and students' limited engagement. Although instructors believed the tool could support reading fluency and accuracy, its use remained low, possibly due to the timing of the pilot, the absence of continuous assessment (CA), and limited time within the course plan. The findings indicate that wider implementation would benefit from early rollout, integration into course design, and CA weighting.

Keywords: Reading Progress; AI-enabled formative assessment; general foundation programme; oral reading fluency

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1. Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) feedback tools are fast becoming part of routine teaching and learning practices in areas of writing, feedback, assessment, and language skill development (Dönmez, 2024). Although research evaluating generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in language teaching has increased (Li et al., 2025), comparatively little is known about teachers' perceptions of and classroom use of specific AI-supported feedback and assessment tools. This gap is particularly visible in formative assessment, where AI tools can automate written and oral feedback, individualise learner practice, and support large-scale assessment practices (Hopfenbeck et al., 2023). Researchers have shown growing interest in AI tools for measuring language skills such as reading accuracy, oral reading fluency and pronunciation, with recent studies reporting positive effects of feedback generated by AI on overall learner proficiency (Al-husban & Alabri, 2025; Wilang et al., 2026). Previous studies, including work conducted within this institutional context and in other teaching settings, have focused mainly on students' perceptions of the tool, the accuracy of its feedback, and its effects on reading fluency and ease of use (Jose, 2025; Molenda & Grabarczyk, 2022; Qurashi et al., 2025; Taylor et al., 2023). Much of this research has centred either on students or on measurable results, which means teachers' views and perceptions have not been studied enough.

Microsoft Teams (MS Teams) comes with a suite of Learning Accelerators that are enhanced by AI features. It has become a broadly adopted institutional platform in higher education around the world, as well as in Oman, including at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (UTAS). One of the MS Teams Learning Accelerators is Reading Progress, which supports reading-aloud practice by allowing students to read aloud any assigned reading passage and record and submit their recording. Students then receive automated feedback on reading accuracy, including detected pronunciation errors, as well as other indicators associated with oral reading fluency (Al-husban & Alabri, 2025; Taylor et al., 2023).

The successful adoption of any new technology or tool, however, does not depend solely on the tool's technical functionality and pedagogical value. In higher education, technology integration may also be influenced by instructors' perceptions and the institutional support available to facilitate its use (Feng et al., 2025). In the Omani English as a Foreign Language (EFL) General Foundation Programme (GFP) context, adoption largely depends on two considerations: instructors' perceptions of the pedagogical and practical value of these tools and whether the existing institutional structure facilitates their implementation. The role of instructors becomes even more significant as they are the ones who make important decisions and determine whether the new tool aligns with existing teaching practices, whether students are able to engage with it meaningfully, and whether sustained use is justified. These decisions become particularly significant when the use of these tools is optional and carries no formal continuous assessment (CA) weighting.

The study was conducted at the Preparatory Studies Centre (PSC), UTAS Al Musannah (UTAS-A). UTAS has several campuses throughout Oman. At the PSC, students complete the GFP before entering undergraduate programmes in engineering, information technology (IT), or business. Although the GFP comprises English, IT, and mathematics, the present research is confined to its English component. Reading Progress was piloted formatively in General English 2 (GE2) from Week 5 of classes during Fall 2025, without inclusion in formal assessment or the allocation of marks. The tool was proposed for use in homework, classwork and/or independent practice. Nevertheless, because its use was optional and ungraded, it remained inconsistent across 10 GE2 class sections.

Reading Progress is not part of the formal course or assessment design. The learning outcomes for reading skills in GE2 mainly focus on reading comprehension subskills such as scanning, skimming, and reading for details, while reading aloud is not listed as a separate learning outcome (University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Preparatory Studies Centre [UTAS-PSC], 2025a). According to the testing specifications, reading aloud is also not formally assessed (UTAS-PSC, 2025b). Students are therefore not awarded marks for completing Reading Progress activities, whether they are done in class or as homework. This lack of assessment weighting raises questions about students' motivation to engage with an optional tool.

From the instructors' perspective, using an optional, ungraded AI tool also requires additional time. Instructors must first get familiar with the tool, work out which tasks suit their class, and guide students through it, subsequently requiring continuous monitoring of ungraded tasks, which increases their administrative role (Kellen & Kumar, 2021). Time has been widely recognised as a barrier to technology adoption among teaching faculty (Uzorka et al., 2023), and instructors may also need to train students to use digital tools effectively (Tan et al., 2022).

At one level, the study examines instructor perceptions of Reading Progress as a tool for AI-supported formative assessment of oral reading in an Omani EFL foundation programme. At a broader level, the study examines the possibility of its continued use beyond the initial pilot stage. As a formative assessment tool, the primary purpose of Reading Progress is to generate automated feedback on reading accuracy, oral reading fluency and pronunciation. Whether that formative function is perceived as useful, manageable, and worth integrating into regular instruction is what this study ultimately asks. Although Jahan and Akbar (2026) examined ChatGPT integration in an Omani preparatory higher education setting, research on instructors' perceptions of AI-supported reading tools in Omani GFPs remains limited. In particular, little is known about instructors' judgements of the usefulness and usability of AI-supported oral reading tools at an early stage of implementation. The influence of colleagues, institutional provision, and available resources on instructors' willingness to continue using Reading Progress also remains uncertain. Related factors have been examined in other EFL contexts; Abdelhalim et al. (2025), for example, found that instructors' engagement with GenAI was shaped by individual, pedagogical, and contextual factors across four countries. The absence of comparable evidence from Omani

classrooms creates a practical problem. Without evidence from real classroom use, decisions about wider adoption may focus on what the tool can do rather than on whether instructors can realistically sustain its use. This mixed-methods study therefore examines instructor acceptance, perceived implementation challenges, facilitating conditions, and behavioural intention during the Reading Progress pilot.

1.1 Research Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to investigate GE2 instructors' experience of using MS Teams Reading Progress during its pilot phase at the Preparatory Studies Centre, UTAS-A. Particularly, the research aims to:

1. Examine instructors' perception of the usefulness of Reading Progress in supporting students' reading fluency and pronunciation, as well as its capacity for tracking progress and providing personalised feedback.
2. Explore instructors' perception of the ease of use of Reading Progress, the social and institutional factors affecting its implementation, and their intentions regarding its continued use.
3. Identify the challenges and limitations instructors encountered while using Reading Progress during the pilot.
4. Investigate instructors' views on the feasibility of continued or wider use of Reading Progress and the support required for its implementation.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the research objectives, the following research questions were formulated:

Main Research Question:

- What are GE2 instructors' perceptions of Reading Progress in terms of its usefulness, acceptance-related factors, implementation challenges, and institutional feasibility during the pilot phase at the PSC, UTAS-A?

- RQ1. How do GE2 instructors perceive the usefulness of Reading Progress in supporting students' reading fluency, pronunciation, progress monitoring, and personalised feedback?
- RQ2a. How do GE2 instructors perceive the ease of use of Reading Progress?
- RQ2b. How do GE2 instructors perceive the social influence and facilitating conditions associated with the use of Reading Progress?
- RQ2c. What are GE2 instructors' intentions regarding the continued use of Reading Progress?
- RQ3. What challenges and limitations did GE2 instructors encounter while using Reading Progress during the pilot?
- RQ4. How do GE2 instructors perceive the feasibility of institutional integration of Reading Progress within the PSC at UTAS-A?

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it provides insights into instructors' perceptions of Reading Progress as an AI-supported tool for reading instruction. By examining

instructors' views, this study may help identify its perceived usefulness and ease of use, as well as the social and institutional factors that may affect its implementation and continued use. The findings may also provide useful feedback on the benefits, challenges and facilitating conditions associated with its use from the instructors' perspective. They may also inform decisions about the continued use of the Reading Progress tool and institutional support required for its implementation. By addressing these research objectives, the study aims to clarify how Reading Progress as an AI-supported educational tool is perceived, used, and supported within this institutional context.

2. Literature Review

Digital technology has taken a more central role in many higher education systems. UNESCO (2023) reported that an increasing number of countries have incorporated digital learning into national education systems, while the OECD (2023) identified a sector-wide movement towards deliberate technology integration instead of adding tools at the margins. Within this development, AI applications have taken on an increasingly instructional role, particularly in areas such as personalised feedback, adaptive practice, and learner progress tracking (Bahari et al., 2025; Chichekian & Benteux, 2022). Understanding why some teachers adopt these tools while others do not has become a persistent research concern. Two frameworks dominate that conversation. TAM (Davis, 1989) centres on perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use as the key drivers of intention to adopt, while UTAUT (Venkatesh et al., 2003) broadens this perspective by incorporating social influence and the structural conditions that either enable or impede sustained use. Across a wide range of educational settings, both models have shown consistent predictive value for teacher adoption behaviour (Granić, 2022; Scherer et al., 2019; Xue et al., 2024).

MS Teams is used in many higher education institutions. Its functionality has expanded to include a range of AI-enhanced Learning Accelerators, one of which is Reading Progress (Microsoft, n.d.). This tool assesses oral reading fluency, measures accuracy, and detects pronunciation errors through automated speech recognition. Early classroom-based studies suggest that Reading Progress can support instructors in monitoring students' reading performance and help learners improve reading fluency and pronunciation (Alsalami & Mohammed, 2025). Al-Bogami and Alahmadi (2025) similarly found positive effects on oral reading fluency among EFL learners in Saudi Arabia. Similar findings have been reported in other EFL contexts. Pham (2025), for example, found improvements in pronunciation-related performance among Vietnamese EFL learners, while Pham and Nguyen (2025) found that students generally viewed Reading Progress favourably for pronunciation practice.

Jose (2025) conducted a quasi-experimental study on the impact of Reading Progress on Omani EFL learners' oral reading and pronunciation skills at PSC, UTAS-A and found a statistically significant reduction in mispronunciations in the experimental group following the intervention. At the same institution, Qurashi et al. (2025) surveyed Foundation-level students on their perceptions of teachers' use of Reading Progress. Sixty-five percent reported improvements in

reading ability and comprehension, with similarly positive trends for pronunciation and general language proficiency. Across these studies, findings are generally positive for learners, particularly in relation to reading and pronunciation. Although Jose (2025) and Qurashi et al. (2025) differed in design and outcome focus, both concentrated primarily on learners rather than instructors' implementation experiences. This gap matters because previous research suggests that automated feedback may be more useful when teachers help learners interpret and apply it (Han & Li, 2024; Thi & Nikolov, 2022). Consequently, the existing studies do not show how instructors manage the implementation of Reading Progress, what difficulties they face, or what institutional support may help sustain its use.

A similar limitation appears in the wider Gulf literature. Alsalami and Mohammed (2025) studied Reading Progress with Saudi EFL undergraduates and likewise reported positive learner-related outcomes. Although they interviewed four instructors, their main focus remained on student fluency, and they did not fully analyse instructors' implementation experiences or the institutional conditions needed for broader adoption. For this study, institutional feasibility refers to whether Reading Progress can be used within existing programme structures and teaching conditions, including workload, curriculum requirements, assessment, institutional support, and coordination across sections and among instructors. Therefore, while existing Gulf studies have mainly focused on learners' outcomes and reported positive results, limited research has examined instructors' perceptions, implementation challenges, and institutional feasibility of Reading Progress in General Foundation Programmes.

To address this gap, the present study applies TAM and UTAUT to GE2 instructors at UTAS-A. It focuses on usefulness, ease of use, challenges, and the feasibility of sustained, wider use of Reading Progress. In doing so, the study extends existing research by shifting focus from students' outcomes and perceptions to examining instructors' perceptions of the factors that may support or hinder adoption. This also provides evidence from an Omani GFP, where research on the sustained adoption of AI-supported oral reading tools remains limited. The findings may help the PSC understand whether Reading Progress is useful and manageable in the GE2 context. They may also support decisions about its continued use after the pilot stage and the conditions needed for wider use.

3. Theoretical Framework

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) (Venkatesh et al., 2003) are commonly used to examine technology acceptance in education. This study draws on selected constructs from both models. TAM focuses mainly on individual perceptions, especially perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. UTAUT also examines broader social and institutional influences that may affect technology use. These constructs allow the study to examine instructors' views of the usefulness and usability of Reading Progress, as well as the conditions that support or constrain its use. Not every element of TAM and UTAUT is included; the analysis instead focuses on perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, social

influence, facilitating conditions (Venkatesh et al., 2003) and behavioural intention because these constructs are closely linked to the research questions and the data collected. Other constructs were not included because they were not addressed by the questionnaire items and were not central to the research questions.

The two models contain some similar ideas. TAM's perceived usefulness is close to UTAUT's performance expectancy, while perceived ease of use is like effort expectancy. Performance expectancy and effort expectancy were therefore not treated as separate constructs because they substantially overlap with perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, respectively. Because the questionnaire used TAM terminology, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use are used when reporting the findings. To avoid reporting similar concepts twice, TAM terms are used to discuss instructors' personal views, while UTAUT terms are used to discuss social and institutional factors. This distinction was also used analytically to resolve overlap between the two models. At UTAS-A, instructors and students already have access to Microsoft 365.

In this study, perceived usefulness concerns instructors' views of Reading Progress for supporting fluency, pronunciation, progress monitoring, and feedback, while perceived ease of use relates to how easy the tool is to learn and manage in teaching. Social influence relates to encouragement from colleagues, coordinators, and the institution. Facilitating conditions include internet access, technical support, training, available time, and implementation coordination. Behavioural intention refers to instructors' willingness to continue using and recommending the tool. These constructs also help explain institutional feasibility, which is examined through conditions such as curriculum and assessment integration, technical and training support, workload, and coordination across the programme. In this context, the feasibility of using Reading Progress may depend not only on technical support but also on how well the tool fits the course, when it is introduced, the workload it creates, and whether it is linked to the assessment. These factors may affect how easily instructors use Reading Progress in their routine teaching and whether they are willing to continue using it in the future.

4. Study Variables and Constructs

This study investigates perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, social influence, facilitating conditions, and behavioural intention. All of these constructs have been adopted from TAM and UTAUT theories and are associated with the research questions posed as well as the gathered data. The first construct is the perceived usefulness of the Reading Progress tool to support the development of reading fluency and pronunciation skills among students. Perceived ease of use relates to the ease or difficulty of preparing and applying the software. Social influence refers to the impact of colleagues and the institution on instructors' use of Reading Progress. Facilitating conditions refer to practical and institutional factors that may support or constrain the use of the tool, while behavioural intention refers to instructors' willingness to continue using it. Therefore, the investigation goes beyond the issue of the technical possibility of

use and addresses the pedagogical and practical issues which were identified during the pilot. The prospective use of the tool is examined from two perspectives. One of them concerns instructors' intentions regarding the continued use of the tool during teaching across the PSC, whereas the other concerns the practicality of continued or broader implementation across the PSC. Together, these constructs help assess the feasibility of wider implementation.

5. Methodology

5.1 Research Design

A convergent mixed-methods design was employed (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), combining questionnaire data, interviews, and MS Teams usage records. Each source addressed a different dimension of the research problem. The questionnaire documented instructors' views of Reading Progress, and the interviews yielded more detailed accounts of classroom use. Platform records supplied evidence of activity levels, although those records could not establish instructional quality or the educational value of the recorded activity. Each dataset was first analysed separately. The datasets were then compared to identify where the evidence agreed, where one source added detail to another, and where the findings differed.

5.2 Study Sample and Sampling

Participants were GE2 instructors at the Preparatory Studies Centre (PSC), UTAS-A. Purposive sampling was used because the study required instructors with direct experience of the Fall 2025 pilot who had used MS Teams Reading Progress. Ten instructors completed the questionnaire, with five continuing to the follow-up interviews. Four participated in a group interview, while one participated in an individual interview because of a scheduling conflict.

This was a small sample from one centre. For that reason, the questionnaire findings describe this group only and are not used to make claims about a wider teaching population. The interview findings are also discussed within the setting of this pilot. The group included instructors with different levels of teaching experience. Seven had taught English for more than 16 years, one had between 11 and 15 years of experience, and two had between one and five years. Qurashi et al. (2025) studied students' views of Reading Progress at the same institution during the 2023 to 2024 academic year. The current study focuses on instructors and uses data from a later pilot.

5.3 Data Collection Instruments

5.3.1 *Questionnaire*

The questionnaire used a five-point Likert-type scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. At the time of the study, the research team could not identify a validated questionnaire specifically designed for MS Teams Reading Progress. The team therefore developed a questionnaire for this study. Questionnaire development was informed by TAM (Davis, 1989) and UTAUT (Venkatesh et al., 2003).

Issues of usefulness, usability, social influence, facilitating conditions, implementation challenges, and intention to continue with Reading Progress were covered. The draft was reviewed by the Research Team Coordinator and two researchers with relevant experience in English language teaching and educational technology. This expert review was used to assess the questionnaire's content and face validity. The reviewers examined the relevance, clarity, wording and alignment of the items with the study objectives and the intended constructs. Their feedback informed revisions to the questionnaire. However, the expert panel was limited in size, and this is acknowledged as a limitation of the questionnaire validation process.

Construct validity was supported by examining the questionnaire's alignment with TAM and UTAUT and determining whether the items adequately represented the intended constructs. Based on the feedback, several questions were reworded for clarity and items that did not adequately represent the intended constructs were revised. Criterion validity was not assessed, as no comparable validated instrument specifically measuring instructors' perceptions of MS Teams Reading Progress could be identified. The final questionnaire was distributed using MS Teams. A copy is provided in Appendix 1. Cronbach's alpha was used to examine the reliability of the subscales. Following guidelines suggested by George and Mallery (2003), the results showed good internal consistency: .854 for perceived usefulness (6 items), .827 for perceived ease of use (4 items), and .835 for behavioural intention (5 items). When analysed together, the five items relating to social influence and facilitating conditions produced a Cronbach's alpha of .822.

However, social influence and facilitating conditions are theoretically distinct UTAUT constructs, and the combined coefficient should not be interpreted as evidence that they form a single scale. They were combined only to provide preliminary descriptive information because each construct contained too few items for a meaningful separate reliability estimate. Implementation challenges were not assessed through a Likert-type scale. They were assessed through multiple-response questions and were, therefore, excluded from the Cronbach's alpha calculation. Only ten instructors answered the questionnaire, so these figures should be interpreted with caution. With a larger sample, the coefficients may change. In addition, although the items on social influence and facilitating conditions were analysed together, they should not be interpreted as evidence that they form a single coherent scale. The values are reported as preliminary information about the responses collected in this study, not as evidence of established instrument reliability.

5.3.2 *Semi-structured interviews*

Qualitative data were collected through two semi-structured interview sessions conducted in English. One was a group interview with four instructors, a format suitable for exploring shared experiences and views among participants (Morgan, 1997). The other was an individual interview with an instructor who could not attend the group session because of a scheduling conflict. Both sessions used the same interview guide and lasted approximately 20 to 30 minutes. The questions

addressed instructors' experiences of using Reading Progress, perceived barriers and enabling conditions, student engagement, and views on wider institutional implementation. Both sessions were recorded with participants' informed consent and transcribed verbatim. The qualitative dataset was limited to five participants. It should therefore be interpreted as an in-depth account of experiences within this pilot rather than as a representative account of instructors more generally. The semi-structured interview guide is provided in Appendix 2.

5.3.3 *MS Teams usage records*

Usage records were obtained from the Reading Progress dashboard in MS Teams. The lead researcher, who served as team coordinator during the pilot, extracted the records during the implementation period and organised them by class section. Instructor and student identifiers were replaced with codes before analysis. The dashboard captured only activity completed through MS Teams. It did not include reading practice conducted in class, through other platforms, or outside the recorded assignments.

5.4 Data Analysis Procedures

5.4.1 *Quantitative analysis*

Questionnaire responses were analysed using descriptive statistics. Frequencies and percentages were calculated for each item to summarise instructors' responses. Cronbach's alpha was calculated to examine the internal consistency of the questionnaire scales. Because the number of participants was small, the findings were interpreted descriptively rather than through inferential statistical analysis.

5.4.2 *Qualitative analysis*

The interview transcripts were analysed using Braun and Clarke's six-phase approach to reflexive thematic analysis: familiarisation with the data, coding, initial theme development, theme review, theme definition, and reporting (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Both researchers read and coded the transcripts and then met to discuss their interpretations, assumptions, and developing themes. These discussions were used to deepen the analysis rather than to calculate agreement between coders or establish a single objectively correct coding scheme. Candidate themes were reviewed against the coded extracts and the complete set of transcripts. Four themes were retained for reporting.

5.4.3 *Usage records*

MS Teams usage records were analysed by counting the number of Reading Progress assignments created in each section and the number of student submissions recorded by the platform. The number of assignments in each section was compared with the pilot target of five assignments. Instructors could assign more than five assignments. The records were used to describe the level and distribution of participation across sections.

5.5 Integration of Data Sources

After the three datasets had been analysed, the findings were brought together in a convergence coding matrix (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Denzin, 1978). Questionnaire findings were compared with qualitative themes and usage

indicators. Each comparison was classified as showing convergence, complementarity, or divergence. This process was used to identify where instructors' reported perceptions corresponded with, expanded upon, or differed from the activity recorded in MS Teams.

5.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant authority at UTAS before data collection (Ref. 30/46/3, March 2025). All participants provided written informed consent and were informed of the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, their right to withdraw without consequence, and the procedures used to protect confidentiality. Interview participants were identified in the transcripts and reporting as Teacher A to Teacher E. Questionnaire responses were not linked to named individuals. The use of MS Teams usage records formed part of the research proposal submitted for ethical approval. The analysis was limited to aggregate submission-status data and did not include student names or other identifying information. The institution's OneDrive system was used to store the data, and access was restricted to the research team.

6. Results and Findings

Results are reported in four sections: the questionnaire, the interview findings, MS Teams usage records, and a comparison of evidence from all three sources.

6.1 Quantitative Results

Questionnaire responses were obtained from ten GE2 instructors. The instrument addressed teaching experience, patterns and purposes of Reading Progress use, perceived usefulness and usability, available support, implementation problems, and plans for future use.

6.1.1 *Participant profile and use of Reading Progress*

Most participants had extensive teaching experience (Table 1). However, most instructors had less than one semester of experience with Reading Progress (Table 2). Frequency of use also varied, although weekly use was most common (Table 3).

Table 1: Teaching experience

Teaching experience	n	%
1 to 5 years	2	20%
11 to 15 years	1	10%
More than 16 years	7	70%

Table 2: Duration of experience with Reading Progress (N = 10)

Duration of experience	n	%
Less than one semester	8	80%
More than two semesters	2	20%

Table 3: Frequency of Reading Progress use among GE2 instructors (N = 10)

Frequency of use	n	%
Weekly	7	70%
Biweekly	1	10%
Monthly	1	10%
Occasionally	1	10%

6.1.2 *Teaching goals and perceived effectiveness*

Reading fluency was the most selected goal (100%), followed by pronunciation accuracy (90%) and personalised feedback (80%) (Table 4).

Table 4: Primary pedagogical goals for using Reading Progress (N = 10)

Pedagogical goal	n	%
Improve reading fluency	10	100%
Support pronunciation accuracy	9	90%
Provide personalised feedback	8	80%
Identify reading or pronunciation difficulties	7	70%
Monitor individual progress	6	60%
Support students who need more help	5	50%

Note. Frequency of selected pedagogical goals. Multiple responses were permitted.

Table 5 shows perceived effectiveness ratings for all six items.

Table 5: Perceived effectiveness of Reading Progress (N = 10)

Survey item	Agree	Strongly agree	Neutral
Helps students improve reading fluency	9 (90%)	1 (10%)	0
AI feedback accurately identifies errors	8 (80%)	2 (20%)	0
Easier progress tracking than traditional methods	8 (80%)	2 (20%)	0
Enables personalised feedback at scale	8 (80%)	2 (20%)	0
Aligned with GE2 learning outcomes	7 (70%)	2 (20%)	1 (10%)
Supports overall GE2 teaching objectives	8 (80%)	2 (20%)	0

Note. Likert scale responses about perceived effectiveness. No participant selected Disagree or Strongly Disagree for any item.

6.1.3 *Ease of use*

The instructors responded positively to the perceived ease of use of Reading Progress. Responses were particularly favourable for assigning tasks, reviewing reports, and using the tool itself. Neutral responses were limited to learning to use the tool and explaining its use to students.

6.1.4 *Social influence and facilitating conditions*

The responses showed a generally positive view of the support available to instructors. Collegial, institutional, and technical support received particularly favourable ratings. Views on internet access and training were somewhat more mixed, with some instructors selecting Neutral.

6.1.5 *Implementation challenges*

Time constraints within the GE2 syllabus were the most frequently reported challenge. Table 6 summarises all reported implementation challenges.

Table 6: Reported implementation challenges (N = 10)

Challenge	n	%
Time constraints within GE2 syllabus	7	70%
Student difficulty using the tool independently	4	40%
Other context-specific issues	4	40%
Unreliable internet connectivity	3	30%
Background noise affecting recordings	3	30%
Need for more training or guidance	2	20%
AI feedback accuracy with Omani or Arabic accents	2	20%

Note. The table records how often each implementation challenge was reported. Multiple responses were permitted (N = 10).

6.1.6 *Intention to continue and conditions for wider use*

Behavioural intention was generally positive. All participants intended to continue using Reading Progress and would recommend it to colleagues. All also regarded wider use as feasible with sufficient technical support. Responses were slightly more varied regarding integration into formal PSC assessment (Table 7).

Across the Likert items in the questionnaire, no participant selected Disagree or Strongly Disagree. This uniformly positive pattern is discussed further in the limitations section.

Table 7: Behavioural intention and institutional feasibility (N = 10)

Survey item	Agree	Strongly agree	Neutral
Continue using it in future classes	80%	20%	0
Recommend to colleagues	70%	30%	0
Integrate into PSC assessment	60%	30%	10%
Feasible with technical support	70%	30%	0
Feasible with sufficient training	60%	40%	0

Note. Likert scale responses about respondents' behavioural intentions and views of institutional feasibility. No participant selected Disagree or Strongly Disagree for any item.

6.2 Qualitative Interview Findings

Two semi-structured interview sessions were conducted with five instructors: four instructors took part in the group interview, while one instructor was interviewed separately. Four themes emerged from the reflexive thematic analysis of the transcripts: teaching benefits, student engagement, teacher support during implementation, and institutional conditions.

6.2.1 *Perceived teaching benefits*

Participants found Reading Progress useful for improving reading fluency and pronunciation, particularly in large GE2 classes where time for individual correction was limited. They described how students could read aloud, review automated pronunciation feedback, and attempt passages again without waiting for one-to-one teacher correction. Teachers B and C placed greater emphasis on independent practice. They noted that learners could repeat passages at their own pace without having to read aloud to the whole class. Teacher B stated, "*Students can practice without feeling embarrassed. They repeat the reading until they are confident, which helps them learn pronunciation independently.*" Participants reported that some students appeared to improve over the semester when they used the feedback regularly. Teacher D identified an additional practical advantage for instructors: the supplied passages and automated comprehension questions reduced preparation time for certain lessons.

6.2.2 *Student engagement*

While participants appreciated Reading Progress, Teachers D and E expected more submissions from students and linked the low level of participation to the absence of assessment marks. As Teacher D expressed, "*When it is not graded, they don't do anything. They only pay attention to the things that can be counted towards their continuous assessment marks.*" The timing of implementation created an additional challenge, as students were already managing other coursework when the pilot began, and participation declined further after the midterm examinations. As Teacher C put it, "*The number of submissions went down right after the midterms when they got busy with other assignments.*" Overall, participants linked lower engagement to both the absence of assessment marks and the timing of the pilot.

6.2.3 *Teacher support during implementation*
In both interview sessions, task completion was associated with regular instructor follow-up. Students were more likely to submit Reading Progress work when teachers reviewed it and discussed their progress. Participants considered the automated feedback valuable but insufficient by itself to sustain involvement.
Teacher E explained, "*The software alone is not enough. Students only complete the assignments when I check their progress during class and tell them I am reading their records.*"

Such monitoring increased workload because instructors, despite limited class time, had to issue reminders, identify incomplete work, and contact students who had not submitted tasks. Teachers C and D proposed allocating brief periods of lesson time to Reading Progress rather than assigning every activity for completion outside class. In their view, in-class completion would increase participation.

6.2.4 *Institutional conditions*
The professional development workshops provided participants with the basic knowledge needed to use Reading Progress. Their main concern, however, was its optional status. Although teachers were advised to assign five tasks, implementation varied across sections and often depended on individual teacher initiative. Participants suggested two changes. First, they recommended introducing Reading Progress at the start of the semester, before students became occupied with heavier coursework and assessments. They believed that an earlier start could reduce pressure later in the term. Second, they suggested awarding a small number of CA marks for task completion to encourage participation.

6.3 MS Teams Usage Analytics
Use of Reading Progress varied across the ten sections. Section 2 recorded full participation, with all enrolled students completing all five assigned tasks. Across the other nine sections, MS Teams recorded 49 individual task submissions in total, with each section recording between one and eight submissions. Two sections met or exceeded the pilot target of five assignments. The other eight created fewer than five. The pilot began around Week 5 of the 15-week Fall 2025 semester, shortly before the midterm examinations in Week 7. Because questionnaire responses were anonymous and were not linked to individual sections, direct section-level comparison between perceived usefulness scores and submission rates was not possible.

6.4 Integration of the Findings
Comparison of the questionnaire, interview, and usage data revealed three main patterns. First, questionnaire ratings of usefulness and ease of use were positive, while interview accounts described perceived benefits for reading and pronunciation practice. These positive perceptions contrasted with the usage records, which showed substantial variation in submission levels across sections. Because questionnaire responses were anonymous, this contrast could only be examined at the overall group level. Responses could not be matched with individual sections. Second, engagement was constrained by limited time, low motivation in the absence of assessment marks, workload, and the timing of the

pilot. Usage records also showed variation in participation across sections. Third, although questionnaire responses indicated positive institutional and technical support, interviews showed that the pilot's optional status placed much of the responsibility for implementation on individual teachers. Usage records likewise showed variation across sections.

7. Discussion

Discussion of the findings follows the four research questions and the two theoretical frameworks (TAM and UTAUT). It starts from theory, implications, and possible expansion of the framework, continues with weighting and motivation in Omani EFL foundation programmes, and ends with Oman Vision 2040 and regional institution implications.

7.1 Assessment Weighting and Motivation in Omani EFL Foundation Programmes

The gap between the low participation recorded in the usage logs and instructors' explanations, including a lack of CA grades, time constraints and difficulty using the tool, suggests that sustained use was shaped more by motivational and practical factors than by the tool's design or functionality. Previous research in the area of motivation in Gulf EFL teaching helps to understand this phenomenon. Al-Harthy and Was (2013) reported that goal orientation and assessment-related self-regulation were strong predictors of sustained engagement among Omani university students. Effort was lower for activities regarded as marginal to academic results, especially as the semester advanced.

The present findings are consistent with that observation in an AI- supported formative activity, for which voluntary, ungraded participation appeared difficult to sustain. Self-determination theory provides another way to understand this result (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Foundation students were introduced to a new digital tool in the middle of the semester, but the activities were not assessed, and intrinsic motivation had not yet been firmly established. Under these conditions, marks or formal credit may have helped support participation. The inclusion of behavioural data also separates this study from earlier technology acceptance research in the same setting.

Previous work on Reading Progress at UTAS-A, including Qurashi et al. (2025), relied mainly on self-reported student perceptions. Such evidence could not show whether the reported barriers were reflected in actual participation. When the low and uneven participation shown in the usage logs is considered alongside the interview and open-ended questionnaire responses, this pattern supports further examination of the relationship between assessment arrangements and student engagement. While Qurashi et al. (2025) supplied evidence from students, this research presents evidence from instructors. Together, the studies offer a more complete account of Reading Progress adoption at the PSC than either source alone.

These findings also help explain how TAM and UTAUT constructs relate to implementation in this study. Instructors generally viewed Reading Progress as a

useful and manageable tool, but these positive perceptions did not always lead to consistent classroom usage. This indicates that usefulness and ease of use may not, on their own, support sustained implementation. Other conditions, including available time, assessment arrangements and institutional coordination, were also associated with how the tool was used. This suggests that, in similar contexts, TAM and UTAUT may need to give greater attention to the facilitating conditions from the beginning. In this study, instructors viewed the tool positively early on, but this did not lead to consistent use without adequate institutional support. These findings suggest that technology acceptance in this pilot context should be examined alongside the practical conditions that affect whether intended use can be sustained in a foundation programme.

7.2 Alignment with Oman Vision 2040

These implications also relate to the facilitating conditions discussed above. The findings may be considered alongside Oman Vision 2040's broader focus on education, future skills, digital transformation and innovation. Institutions seeking to align with national priorities for digital transformation may find the engagement barriers identified in this study relevant for further consideration. Although instructors had generally favourable perceptions of the Reading Progress tool and expressed willingness to continue using it, the variation in the actual usage suggests that any wider implementation at UTAS-A would require further evaluation of the conditions identified in this study. From a policy perspective, institutions considering the use of AI-supported tools, such as Reading Progress, may benefit from reviewing these implementation conditions before introducing them in classes. This may include clear procedures, training, consideration of instructors' workload, and guidance on how the tools relate to assessment. This need for earlier planning and institutional support aligns with Oman Vision 2040's wider emphasis on education, future skills, the development of national capabilities, and the digital shift (Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-Up Unit, 2023).

7.3 Practical Implications for Regional Institutions

The pilot conducted at UTAS-A may offer preliminary context-specific insights for other Gulf higher education institutions adopting AI-based language learning. Research indicates that teacher acceptance is crucial but not sufficient for actual adoption of the tool (Shuvra et al., 2026). In the present case, teachers' willingness to continue using Reading Progress was accompanied by low student participation, suggesting that instructors' acceptance alone did not guarantee adoption. Teachers' positive perceptions of Reading Progress align with recent research showing that related acceptance factors, including performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions, influence educators' intentions to adopt such educational technologies (Feng et al., 2025).

In this study, sustained use appeared to depend not only on teacher involvement but also on whether students had a clear incentive to complete the activities. Participants suggested that a small CA weighting could encourage more regular engagement with Reading Progress activities. According to the interview participants, students tended to pay less attention to tasks that do not carry marks

as pressure from assessed coursework, such as midterm exams, increased. For other regional foundation programmes, these findings may be relevant when considering institutional policy related to teacher involvement and student incentives. The findings also highlight the importance of considering how such AI-supported activities fit within existing assessment structure and students' workload.

Participants reported higher participation when teachers reviewed recordings, provided feedback on performance, and used Reading Progress during advising sessions. Similar findings by Han and Li (2024) and Haddadian (2024) suggest that AI feedback is most useful when it initiates teacher–student dialogue rather than replacing teacher responses. For the adoption of AI-supported tools at regional institutions, instructor involvement may remain essential, as instructors play a meaningful role in deciding how AI tools are adapted, integrated, and interpreted (Kalawati et al., 2026). Finkelstein and Soffer-Vital (2026) reported a similar value-action gap, in which faculty members' favourable views of AI-supported formative assessment were not always matched by the practical conditions needed for its sustained use.

The research shows that sustained classroom use of AI-supported tools depends on other factors, such as institutional support, policy clarity, and resource availability (Taheri et al., 2025). The timing of implementation also appeared to affect its use. Introducing the tool later in the semester may have reduced the time available for students to become familiar with its use before the academic workload increased. The findings also point to the relevance of technical training on how to use automated feedback in teaching and guidance on its use. However, for UTAS-A and other similar institutions across Oman and the Gulf, more research is needed to assess the accuracy of feedback from these tools, especially when students speak English with local or regional accents. Two instructors shared their concerns about AI-generated feedback for Omani Arabic-accented English. For foundation-year English programmes, if speech recognition does not accurately assess local accents, its usefulness for pronunciation development may be limited.

8. Limitations of the Study

Interpretation must take account of four limitations. First, the participant group was small. This may limit the generalisability of the findings beyond this specific group and setting. To mitigate this, the study included all ten GE2 instructors rather a sample selected from a larger group.

Second, the timing and conditions of implementation may have influenced participation. The pilot began around Week 5 of the 15-week semester, shortly before the midterm examinations in Week 7. Other competing academic demands during this period may have affected participation independently of the perceived value of Reading Progress. Classroom conditions were not the same across sections. Participants reported different levels of internet stability, recording quality, and background noise. This kind of variation is common in real teaching settings, but it makes student engagement patterns harder to interpret.

Therefore, participation and engagement should be interpreted in light of these implementation conditions.

Third, the questionnaire was developed for this study, so its results should be interpreted with caution (Messick, 1995). The questionnaire was reviewed by only three experts, so the evidence for face and content validity remains limited. Social influence and facilitating conditions were combined for a preliminary reliability estimate, although they are UTAUT constructs. The resulting constructs should therefore be interpreted cautiously. The use of questionnaire data alongside the interviews and usage records helped to mitigate this limitation.

Fourth, social desirability bias is a limitation. No participant selected a negative or disagree response for any Likert item (Nederhof, 1985). This may reflect the pilot's positive reception, but the data collection circumstances may also have influenced the responses. Participants were recruited through the Level Coordinator; the study received institutional funding, and Reading Progress was introduced as a university-based initiative for GE2. Instructors may therefore have expressed more favourable views than they held privately. To reduce this risk, the questionnaire was administered anonymously via MS Forms with voluntary participation; however, this could not eliminate the risk completely. The consistently positive quantitative results should therefore be read with caution.

Overall, these limitations may restrict the generalisability of the findings beyond this specific group and setting. Transferability is a more suitable criterion, especially when considering whether the results may apply to similar Gulf higher education contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Future studies with larger and more diverse groups, as well as longer implementation periods, would provide a clearer account. They could also use independent recruitment procedures and validated measures of social desirability to further reduce the potential risk of response bias.

9. Conclusion

This mixed-methods study explored GE2 instructors' perceptions of Reading Progress during a pilot implementation at the PSC, UTAS-A. It mainly focused on its educational value, usefulness, ease of use, implementation challenges, and institutional feasibility. Practical challenges during the pilot, particularly limited time and the absence of assessment weighting, led to instructors' inability to integrate the tool consistently and to low student engagement and motivation. The pilot therefore suggests that sustained and effective use of the tool may depend on embedding the Reading Progress tool more clearly within the course structure rather than leaving it as an optional or supplementary tool.

Overall, the findings suggest that these identified barriers may be addressed through institutional arrangements. In particular, within this pilot context, the tool needs a defined programme role and arrangements that promote regular participation. This study extends previous work conducted at the same institution (Jose, 2025; Qurashi et al., 2025) by showing that positive instructor perception

alone may not be sufficient for sustained use of Reading Progress. The findings suggest that continued use also depends on how well the tool is embedded within the course and supported institutionally. Thus, the study suggests that the feasibility of Reading Progress at the PSC, UTAS-A, depends on both instructors' positive perspectives of the tool and institutional support for its implementation. Given the small, single-site sample, these implications should be treated as preliminary and would benefit from confirmation through larger, multi-site studies before informing wider institutional policy.

10. Recommendations for Practice and Policy

The findings suggest four recommendations for the continued use of AI-supported fluency tools at UTAS-A and similar institutions in the region. Based on the findings, MS Teams Reading Progress could be formally included in the English Language Teaching curriculum. Assigning five per cent of the CA marks to the tool could help improve student and teacher motivation, make its use regular, and reduce repeated teacher reminders.

The findings also point to the timing of such tools' integration and introduction. Introducing the tool in the first week of teaching could allow students to learn how to use it and establish a routine before coursework and assessment pressure increase. A further recommendation is to coordinate the tool's implementation at the centre level and have it overseen by a focal person or level coordinators, rather than leaving follow-up to individual teachers. As a result, Reading Progress tasks could be planned and assigned with the course themes and assessment dates in mind. This would help avoid giving students too many tasks at once and would also help instructors manage the work more easily. At the policy level, clear guidance on how the tool fits into the curriculum, assessment, scheduling, and coordination could improve consistency across sections.

Finally, effective implementation may also depend on adequate equipment and facilities. Some recording problems were reported by teachers and students. For future implementation, providing quiet spaces in language laboratories and noise-cancelling headphones could help make student submissions more consistent and of better quality. Teachers could also use the tool more effectively in class. These implementation suggestions would need to be evaluated in future use. This would support the digital transformation objectives of Oman Vision 2040.

11. Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Appendix 1: Survey Instrument: GE2 Instructor Perceptions of Microsoft Teams Reading Progress

Response scale for Likert items: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

By continuing with this survey, you indicate your informed consent to participate in this study.
Yes / No

Section A: Teacher Profile

Q2. Years of teaching English:
1–5 years / 6–10 years / 11–15 years / More than 16 years

Q3. Duration of experience with Reading Progress:
Less than one semester / 1–2 semesters / More than 2 semesters

Q4. Frequency of use of Reading Progress:
Weekly / Bi-weekly / Monthly / Occasionally

Section 1: Educational Impact and Usefulness

Q5. What are your main goals for using Reading Progress with your students? (Select all that apply)

Improving student reading fluency (pace and flow)
Supporting pronunciation accuracy and oral clarity
Identifying specific reading or pronunciation weaknesses
Providing personalised feedback on students' reading performance
Monitoring individual student progress over time
Supporting weaker or at-risk readers

Q6. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the usefulness of Reading Progress in GE2:

a. Using Reading Progress helps my students improve their reading fluency.
b. The AI-generated feedback accurately identifies students' pronunciation errors.
c. Reading Progress makes it easier for me to track student progress over time compared to traditional methods.
d. The tool allows me to provide more personalised feedback to a larger number of students.
e. It aligns well with GE2 learning outcomes for pronunciation.
f. Overall, Reading Progress supports my GE2 teaching objectives.

Section 2: Ease of Use and Accessibility

Q7. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the perceived ease of use of Microsoft Teams Reading Progress in GE2:

a. Learning how to use Reading Progress was easy for me.
b. Assigning tasks and reviewing student reports is easy.
c. I find the Reading Progress interface easy to use.
d. It is easy for me to explain to students how to use the tool.

Section 3: Social Influence and Facilitating Conditions

Q8. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the support and environment for using Microsoft Teams Reading Progress:

a. My colleagues or coordinator encourage the use of Reading Progress in GE2.
b. I feel that UTAS-A encourages the use of AI tools such as Reading Progress to enhance digital learning.
c. I have adequate internet connectivity to use this tool effectively in class.
d. Support is available if I encounter issues with the tool.
e. The training and guidance I received prepared me to use the main features of Reading Progress.

Section 4: Implementation Challenges and Limitations

Q9. Which of the following challenges have you encountered? (Select all that apply)

Unreliable internet connectivity
Lack of sufficient training or guidance
Time constraints within the GE2 syllabus
Students' difficulty using the tool independently
AI accuracy issues with Omani/Arabic accents
Background noise interference during student recordings
None of the above
Other (please specify)

Section 5: Behavioural Intention and Institutional Feasibility

Q10. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding Microsoft Teams Reading Progress:

a. I intend to continue using Reading Progress in my future GE2 classes.
b. I would recommend the use of Reading Progress to other instructors in the Preparatory Studies Centre.
c. I believe Reading Progress could be formally integrated into the PSC assessment framework in the future.

d. Full institutional adoption of Reading Progress is feasible if teachers receive enough technical support (e.g., reliable WiFi and IT help).
e. Full adoption of the tool is feasible if teachers receive adequate training.

Section 6: Final Reflections and Recommendations

Q11. Do you have any additional comments, concerns, or suggestions regarding the use of Microsoft Teams Reading Progress at UTAS-A? (Open response)

Note. The survey was administered electronically via Microsoft Forms during the Fall semester of the 2025–2026 academic year. Items in Sections 1–3 and 5 used a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Items in Sections 4 and 6 used multiple-response and open-response formats respectively.

Appendix 2: Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Opening reassurance
Before we begin, I'd like to clarify that this discussion is not about evaluating individual teaching practices or judging success or failure. You may respond based on full use, limited use, or even attempted use of Reading Progress. The purpose is to explore feasibility, challenges, and perceptions during this early pilot phase.

Core Questions (6 only)

1. Overall perception (RQ1 – Usefulness)
Q1. Based on your experience or understanding of the tool, how useful do you think Reading Progress is for supporting students' reading fluency and pronunciation in GE2?

2. Ease of use & readiness (RQ2 – TAM)
Q2. How easy or difficult did you find Reading Progress to use or prepare for use, and what influenced your confidence in using it?

3. Implementation barriers (RQ3)
Q3. What were the main challenges that affected your ability to use Reading Progress effectively or consistently during the pilot? / What made it easy or difficult for you to use Reading Progress during this pilot?

4. Social & institutional support (RQ2 – UTAUT)
Q4. To what extent did institutional factors (such as training, time, internet access, or coordination) influence your use of Reading Progress?/ How well do you think the current teaching and institutional environment supports the use of Reading Progress?

5. Behavioural intention (RQ2)
Q5. Under what conditions would you be more willing to use Reading Progress regularly in future GE2 classes?

6. Institutional feasibility (RQ4)
Q6. In your view, how feasible is the wider adoption of Reading Progress at the PSC, and what changes would be needed to support effective implementation?

Optional closing prompt (only if time allows)

Is there anything else you would like to add or suggest regarding the use of Reading Progress at UTAS-A?