Concepts and Practices of Curriculum-based IPE in Graduate English Module: A Case Study of *English Academic (Journal) Paper Writing*

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Abstract: This study examines the current development and research on moral education in ESP courses, highlighting differences between western moral education and Chinese ideological and political education(IPE) in higher education. Taking the graduate course *English Academic (Journal) Paper Writing* of a provincial public university as a case, it explores pathways to achieve the integration of three objectives--knowledge, skill and virtue into specific teaching contents based on five-year teaching practice. The study also discusses the collaboration of faculty and administrative teams to enhance graduate students' research literacy and proposes a triadic model to maximize the holistic impact of IPE in curriculum design and implementation.

Keywords: Moral Education; Curriculum-Based Ideological and Political Education; Graduate English Module; *English Academic (Journal) Paper Writing*

1. Introduction

Moral education, also referred to as moral/ethics education or virtue cultivation, has long been a cornerstone of educational theory and practice, playing a critical role in shaping individuals' character and social behaviors. Its fundamental aim is to cultivate learners' moral qualities, values, ethical awareness, and social responsibility. Through this process, individuals are expected to develop key attributes such as moral judgment, self-discipline, empathy, and accountability, enabling them to act as socially conscious individuals who contribute positively to their communities. This is achieved by instilling ethical principles and guiding learners in practicing behavioral norms that align with societal values.

In China's education system, this focus is systematically incorporated as ideological and political education (IPE), which goes beyond traditional moral education by addressing ideological, political, moral, and psychological development. The overarching goal of IPE is to nurture citizens who possess a sound worldview, a coherent life philosophy, and a robust value system, ensuring they are not only morally upright but also aligned with the nation's broader ideological framework. By integrating moral education within the curriculum, China's education system emphasizes the importance of fostering socially responsible, ethically aware, and ideologically informed individuals who are prepared to contribute to the development of a harmonious and progressive society. This approach demonstrates the dual aim of developing personal moral qualities alongside collective ideological alignment.

IPE consists of two major components: ideological and political courses (IPC) and curriculum-based ideological and political education (also referred to as C-IPE). The latter represents a novel educational concept built upon the foundation of traditional ideological and political theory courses. It emphasizes integrating ideological concepts, political viewpoints, and moral behavioral norms into the teaching objectives, content, and methodologies of various disciplinary courses, based on their specific characteristics. This integration aligns various courses to with IPC to form a comprehensive IPE framework. This approach aims to achieve the overarching educational goal of "cultivating talent and fostering virtue" and to realize a comprehensive, inclusive, and continuous education model that encompasses most courses, different staff, diverse dimensions, and practical processes.

The research focus of moral education has undergone significant changes over the past five decades, reflecting evolving societal, educational, and cultural priorities. A quantitative analysis of 610 articles published in

the authoritative journal -- *Journal of Moral Education* -- between 2014 and December 2023 reveals that international moral education research primarily focuses on areas such as cognitive development theories, moral education teaching and learning strategies, curriculum and teaching contents design, educational philosophy, cross-cultural studies, and social cognition theory. The prominent keywords often include moral reasoning, judgment, fairness and justice, moral values, sex education, and moral development (see Figure 1).
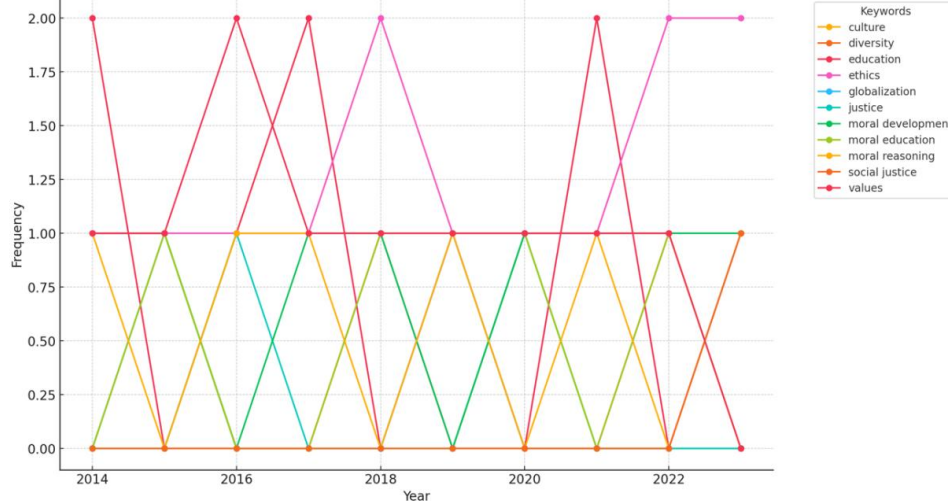

Figure 1. Keyword Trends in Journal of Moral Education (2014-2023).

According to Angela Chi-Ming Lee's (2022) study, four key themes— "moral education," "moral reasoning," "moral judgment," and "moral development" — have consistently appeared as dominant areas of focus from 1971 to 2021[1]. Among these, a substantial portion of studies have centered on moral education in primary and secondary school settings, particularly targeting adolescent learners. This is reflective of a long-standing interest in how moral values and reasoning are shaped during formative years. In contrast, moral education in higher education or graduate programs has received considerably less attention, with only 61 papers specifically addressing this area, accounting for a mere 10% of the total studies analyzed (see Figure 2). This disparity highlights a research gap, particularly in exploring how moral education can address the distinct needs of adult learners and their professional or academic development in higher education contexts.
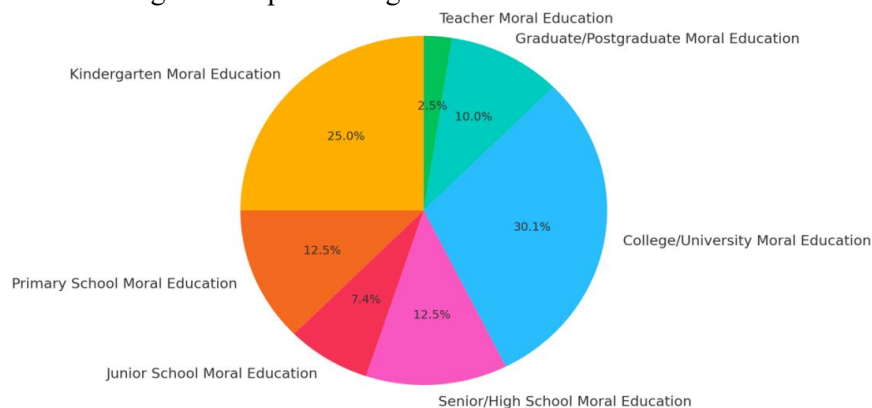

Figure 2. Distribution of Research Subjects in journal of Moral Education (2014-2023).

In fact, the implementation of moral education at the university level in Europe and the U.S. has long been a highly controversial issue. Stanley Fish (2008) criticized the attempts of higher education institutions to shape students' character, arguing that universities should avoid any efforts to instill civic virtues, and instead adhere strictly to the moral norms inherent in academic research and teaching[2]. David Carr (2017) even questioned the legitimacy of moral education in graduate programs[3]. However, Elizabeth Kiss and J. Peter Euben (2010), through empirical research, refuted such criticisms, highlighting that incorporating moral education at the undergraduate, professional, and vocational levels not only enhances students'

academic integrity but also encourages them to develop critical and reflective thinking in forming their own judgments. This approach, they argued, can shape students' character across a broad range of domains without compromising the academic mission of the classroom[4]. Similarly, through the implementation of the "Oxford Global Leadership Initiative (GLI)" for graduate students, Brooks et al. (2019) found that virtue education at the university level significantly improved qualities such as a sense of mission and service to society. Their study emphasized the value and importance of designing and evaluating character education programs for graduate students within a university context[5]. Overall, higher education in Western countries has not yet widely assumed the practical responsibility of fostering moral character development at either the undergraduate or graduate level.

In China, the construction of "curriculum-based ideological and political education" in higher education has been systematically promoted since 2014. The Ministry of Education's *Several Opinions on Comprehensively Improving the Quality of Higher Education* emphasized the need to strengthen curriculum system development and highlighted the moral education function of courses. This was followed by the introduction of the "Curriculum Ideological and Political Education" concept in the *Shanghai Education Reform Plan (2014–2020)*. Subsequently, the *Guidelines for the Construction of Curriculum-Based Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education Institutions* issued by the Ministry of Education in 2020, which fully advanced the integration of ideological and political elements across university curricula. Under the guidance of Xi Jinping's Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, the Ministry of Education has called for a comprehensive implementation of the Party's educational policies, focusing on the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education. It seeks to fulfill the task of cultivating virtue and fostering talent, and to promote synergy between various courses and ideological and political theory courses to form a cohesive effect. The ultimate goal is to cultivate a new generation of talent with firm ideals and beliefs, a strong sense of national identity, and comprehensive qualities[6]. Following the publication of the Guidelines in

2020, research and discussions on C-IPE have surged dramatically within China's academic community. Between January 2014 and December 2023, the number of papers published on C-IPE in CSSCI and Peking University Core Journals in the CNKI database grew exponentially, especially from 2019 to 2022 (see Figure 3). Research on ideological and political in higher education accounts for the largest proportion, nearly 50%, spanning disciplines such as medicine, language and literature, light industry, chemistry, architecture, accounting, and biology (see Figure 4). Among these, studies on C-IPE in college English and English major courses are more prevalent, while research on graduate-level English courses, specifically academic English writing, remains sparse, with only 78 papers published, accounting for a mere 2.17%.

Overall, China's research on C-IPE focuses primarily on integrating ideological and political elements into the teaching of medical and language-related courses, often exploring moral education themes such as professional ethics, national confidence, and Chinese culture. However, attention to curriculum-based ideological and political education in graduate-level "academic English writing" courses remains limited.
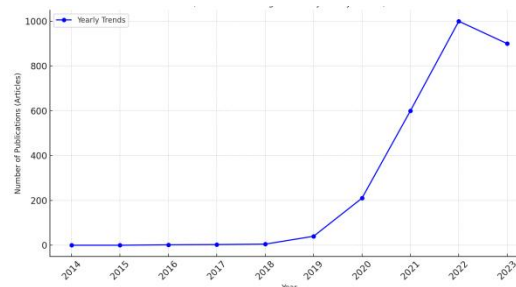

Figure 3. Number of Publications on the Topic of "Curriculum-Based Ideological and Political Education" (CSSCI and Peking University Core Journals).
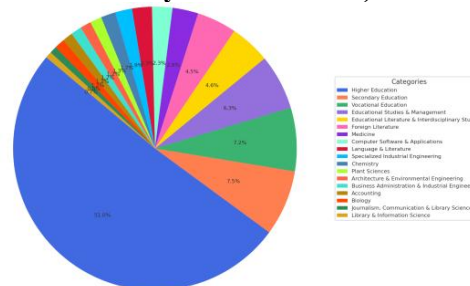

Figure 4. Disciplinary Distribution of Publications on 'Curriculum-Based Ideological and Political Education'.

2. Current Status of C-IPE in "Academic + English+ Writing" Courses

Currently, many universities in China have established courses related to "Academic + English+writing" courses. For example, the University of Shanghai for Science and Technology (USST) offers a "Scientific and Technical Academic English Reading and Writing" course (3 credits) for non-English major undergraduates. Other institutions, such as South China University of Technology, Xiamen University, and Beijing Institute of Technology, have also developed and and launched available MOOCs related to "Academic English Writing." However, most textbooks used in such courses are predominantly designed for undergraduates, either for English majors or non-English majors. For graduate students, nearly two-thirds of the academic English writing textbooks available are general-purpose, generic and non-discipline-specific, making them insufficient to meet the diverse needs of graduate students across various disciplines and their requirements for writing academic papers for professional journals. Cai Jigang (2020) argues that research paper writing and publication are important indicators of graduate students' academic and professional literacy. Academic paper writing training can effectively cultivate learners' academic skills such as information literacy, adherence to academic norms, and critical thinking[7]. In recent years, there has been a growing trend of offering open courses focused on English academic journal paper writing for graduate students, such as Fudan University's *Writing and Publishing International Scientific Journal Papers* and Xiamen University's MOOC *Writing Research Papers for English Journals*. This trend reflects the increasing emphasis that universities place on cultivating learner' research competencies and international communication skills.

However, in the context of C-IPE within English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses, the integration of IPE content with discipline-specific teaching goals and content is not sufficiently strong. In some courses, the IPE elements are even disconnected from the course content or the core curriculum, and many instructors lack a clear understanding of the concept and purpose of C-IPE. Cai Jigang (2022) notes that although C-IPE in foreign language courses in China primarily focuses on college English and foreign language major courses, in actual teaching, it often fails to organically integrate IPE content with professional course content[8]. Due to the constraints of course characteristics and the specialties of teaching content, "academic + English+ writing" courses typically prioritize knowledge transfer and skills development in writing. Consequently, the exploration of IPE elements within these courses remains relatively shallow, the goals of IPE are insufficiently defined, and the potentials of these courses in fostering moral education have yet to be fully realized.

3. Pathways for Integrating C-IPE in *English Academic (Journal) Paper Writing* Course

The course *English Academic (Journal) Paper Writing* is a university-specific course offered at a provincial state-owned university, aiming at first-year non-English major students in master's programme. Over 90% of the learners have not received any academic English training during their undergraduate studies. The course spans 32 teaching hours and is organized around 10 thematic units. Its instructional approach adheres to the principles of "usage-based second language acquisition," "reading-writing-thinking-creating," and "learning for application." A combined methodology of Project-Based Language Learning (PBLL) and blended teaching is employed, leveraging the university-based and other universities' MOOC platforms and utilizing a "general-specific-general" model that integrates macro-level and micro-level objectives. Feng Shimeng (2022) proposed the use of a "subtle approach" to IPE, suggesting that "value guidance be embedded within knowledge transfer and skill development," allowing learners to "subtly internalize mainstream values" and "develop a correct worldview, outlook on life, and value system"[9].

The instructional team of this course faces significant challenges. In addition to designing highly targeted knowledge and skill objectives based on the learners' actual English proficiency, they must also thoroughly explore the course content to embed IPE goals within the process of achieving knowledge and skill objectives in each unit. This integration demands careful planning and innovative pedagogical strategies to balance academic and moral education effectively.

3.1 Definition of Virtue Objectives of C-IPE

According to the *Opinions on Further*

Promoting the Spirit of Scientists and Strengthening the Construction of Academic Conduct and Style issued in June 2019, this course explicitly defines its C-IPE goals as fostering patriotism, innovation, truth-seeking, dedication, collaboration, and critical thinking skills. As future researchers, graduate students should first cultivate a strong sense of commitment to the nation and its people, integrating their scientific pursuits into the grand endeavor of building a modern socialist state. They should possess a strong sense of responsibility to alleviate national challenges and contribute to national development.

Science, with its mission to explore truth and discovery of new knowledge, requires graduate students to aspire to lofty academic ideals and cultivate pioneering spirit of innovation, being pioneers in their fields. They must consciously avoid relying on academic shortcuts or the "free-rider" phenomenon in academia. Graduate students should also recognize the importance of the five core values of academic integrity — honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. They should uphold academic ethics, adhere to research integrity, mastering the rigorous standards required for academic papers, and steering clear of misconduct such as fabrication, plagiarism, falsification,or any other form of academic dishonesty. Cultivating a spirit of academic rigor and truth-seeking is essential. Moreover, as the research process is inherently fraught with challenges, graduate students (research candidates) should not fear the complexities of experimentation, unsatisfactory results, or failures in experiments or publications. Therefore, a spirit of dedication to focused research, embodying a spirit of selfless contribution, is a fundamental scientific quality for graduate students must acquire. Since scientific research often demands collaborative efforts, fostering a spirit of teamwork, coordination and collective problem-solving among graduate students is essential.

Additionally, graduate students should possess the ability to think critically, engaging in independent and in-depth analysis of existing research findings or established conclusions, to identify problems, and to refine or elevate academic inquiries. In summary, this course aims to equip graduate students with the necessary language knowledge for writing academic papers in English while enhancing their teamwork abilities, deepening their awareness of academic integrity, promoting the spirit of scientists, and fostering a sense of patriotism, professionalism, and social responsibilities.

3.2 Specific Pathways of Implementing C-IPE Goals

Considering the generally weak English writing proficiency of the learners, the course establishes knowledge objectives at three levels—macro, meso, and micro. At the macro level, learners are expected to understand the overall linguistic style and characteristics of English academic (journal) papers, as well as the structural features of paragraphs and texts. At the meso level, students are required to master the writing features of key sections of academic papers, including the title, abstract, introduction, methodology, results and discussion, and conclusion. At the micro level, students must acquire knowledge of core academic English vocabulary, field-specific technical terms, and the writing techniques necessary for crafting complex sentences and paragraphs that convey sufficient information and intellectual depth. While achieving these three-tiered knowledge objectives, the course simultaneously aims to enhance students' competencies in four key areas: literature collection, literature reading and synthesis, academic writing, and international academic communication. Based on the three-tiered knowledge objectives and four skill objectives, the instructional team selects representative materials for teaching, including cutting-edge research papers, literature reviews, and news reports in specific disciplines to achieve the C-IPE goals (see Appendix 1).

During the Course Introduction and macro-level Overview, English articles such as news reports on Tu Youyou, are employed to instill in learners a deep sense of patriotism and the appreciation for the enduring dedication of Chinese scientists. Tu Youyou's story of discovering artemisinin, despite significant challenges, serves as an inspiring example of perseverance, scientific ingenuity, and a commitment to societal well-being. In modules covering the overall language features of academic papers, text structure organization, and literature synthesis, research papers by outstanding Chinese scientists, such as Qian Weichang(Chien Wei-zang), are introduced as exemplary works. The reference of his "Second order approximation solution of nonlinear large

deflection problems of Yongjiang Railway Bridge in Ningbo" provides learners with an opportunity to analyze not only the technical depth of his research but also the novelty and originality of his contributions to the field. Moreover, this example illustrates Qian's professional humility. Such materials are strategically chosen to cultivate students' truth-seeking and innovative spirit, encourage critical thinking, and emphasize the values of academic integrity and intellectual honesty in scientific research. In addition, some papers on retraction studies are employed to explore the importance of academic norms and to prevent academic misconduct. These materials not only highlight the importance of advancing knowledge but also demonstrate the ethical and collaborative qualities that underpin meaningful academic and professional contributions.

At the meso level, for teaching the writing of different sections of a paper, research articles published in high-impact international journals by Chinese researchers, particularly those from the learners' fields or institutions are used as teaching cases. This allows learners to develop a strong sense of social responsibility to serve the people, as well as a spirit of innovation, truth-seeking, collaboration, and dedication.

At the micro level, focusing on the writing of vocabulary, sentences, and paragraphs, detailed analyses of language nuances is conducted to inspire students to reflect on and value the importance of a rigorous academic precision and critical thinking in their writing.

3.3 Enhancement of IPE Literacy of the Instructional Team

The instructional team consists of two parts: the faculty team and the administrative team. Enhancing the IPE literacy of the instructional team is essential for the effective implementation of C-IPE.

For the faculty team, it is essential to first strengthen their understanding of IPE thoughts. This involves regularly studying the government's fundamental guidelines and policies, especially key directives issued by the Ministry of Education. This requires a thorough comprehension of their core meanings and practical implications. Additionally, the faculty team is encouraged to actively participate in various C-IPE-related workshops, seminars, lectures, and training programs, such as the teacher training programs offered by the

National Academy of Education Administration during winter and summer vocations. Through these activities, faculty members can learn from exemplary domestic practices in C-IPE, deeply analyze C-IPE cases in English courses, and focus on both theoretical teaching methodology and practical teaching skills. This approach of continuous learning helps update their knowledge structure, improve their academic expertise, and enhance their IPE literacy.

For the administrative team, the complementary function is to continuously provide the faculty team with diverse C-IPE resources, including books, journal articles, and online courses, to support faculty team in expanding their knowledge base. Furthermore, the management team establishes a university-level ESP faculty communication and collaboration platform. For courses like *English Academic (Journal) Paper Writing,* it is particularly crucial to create interdisciplinary and cross-college instructor exchange platforms where faculty members can share journal writing and teaching experiences from different disciplines, allowing instructors from different disciplines to share and learn from each other's experiences in journal writing and teaching, thus fostering the course content and the integration of IPE elements. Additionally, the management team progressively develops an effective instructor evaluation system. This system incorporates the C-IPE outcomes into the overall teaching assessment. Outstanding educators should be recognized and rewarded, thereby motivating other instructors to actively engage in C-IPE practices. Moreover, by showcasing exemplary instructors, the management team can enhance the overall the IPE literacy of the entire instructional team, creating a virtuous cycle in C-IPE.

4. Conclusions

There are notable differences in moral education and pedagogical research between China and other countries, particularly at the higher education level. In China, IPE emphasizes the concept of "whole-course education," integrating moral education into curriculum design based on the characteristics of specific disciplines to achieve the goal of "cultivating virtue and fostering talent." In master's level English teaching, ESP courses constitute a significant portion of the curriculum; however, research on their pedagogy remains relatively limited. Drawing from the teaching practice of

the *English Academic (Journal) Paper Writing* course, we argue that C-IPE in master's ESP courses should closely align ideological goals, such as patriotism, innovation, truth-seeking and collaboration, with the course content. By employing a subtle and implicit approach, such courses can enhance graduate students' awareness of academic integrity and their capacity for teamwork.

Moreover, enhancing the IPE literacy of the instructional team is crucial for the effective implementation of C-IPE. Only when the course's teaching objectives, methods, contents, and instructional team are all closely aligned with the principles of C-IPE can the maximum effectiveness of the curriculum be realized. By adopting a holistic and integrated approach, the ultimate goals of education —combining moral cultivation, knowledge transfer, and skill development—can be achieved in a "triadic approach"

Appendix 1. Integrated Teaching Plan for C-IPE Objectives.

Sec	Knowledge Objectives	Skill Objectives	Virtue Objectives	Representative Materials
I	Orientation of APWP	International Academic Communica-tion	•Patriotism •Dedication	•[70 years on] Tu Youyou: An innovator of traditional Chinese medicine https://english.pku.edu.cn/news_events/news/people/8927.html •Tu first Chinese to win Nobel Prize in Medicine https://www.nobelprize.org/womenwhochangedscience/stories/tu-youyou
	Academic Writing	Features of Academic Paper	•Truth-seeking •Innovation	Day of the week effect in paper submission/ acceptance/ rejection to/ in/by peer review journals(I & II) https://doi.org/10.1016/j.physa.2016.03.032 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.physa.2016.10.078
	Academic Writing	Incorpora-ting Sources	•Truth-seeking •Critical Thinking	•A multi-perspective analysis of retractions in life sciences https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-021-03907-0 •Sources of error in the retracted scientific literature DOI: 10.1096/ fj.14-256735
	Literature Review	Critical Reading& References	•Critical Thinking •Innovation	•Second order approximation solution of nonlinear large deflection problems of Yongjiang Railway Bridge in Ningbo https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02437768
II	Academic Writing	Sentence Writing	•Truth-seeking	•The Most Common Habits from more than 200 English Papers written by Graduate Chinese Engineering Students（Felicia Brittman）
	Academic Writing	Paragraph Writing	•Critical Thinking	•Academic Writing: Coherence and Cohesion in Paragraph （Ambika Prasad Poudel）
	Academic Writing	Title & Abstract Writing	•Innovation •Dedication	•Why wild giant pandas frequently roll in horse manure https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2004640117 •Attention Is All You Need https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.1706.03762
	Academic Writing	Introduction Writing	•Critical Thinking •Truth-seeking	•Two Birds With One Stone: An Efficient Hierarchical Frame-work for Top-k and Threshold-based String Similarity Search https://doi.org/10.1109/icde.2015.7113311
	Academic Writing	Methods Writing	•Collaboration •Truth-seeking	•Incident allergic diseases in post-COVID-19 condition: multinational cohort studies from South Korea, Japan and the UK https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-024-47176-w
	Academic Writing	Results & Discussion Writing	•Patriotism •Collaboration	•The Association between Sugar-Sweetened Beverages and Male Pattern Hair Loss in Young Men DOI: 10.3390/nu15010214
	Academic Writing	Conclusion Writing	•Truth-seeking	•Enhanced out-of-plane crushing strength and energy absorption of in-plane graded honeycomb https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compositesb.2017.03.002
III	Revising the Manuscript & Responding to Reviewers	International Academic Communica-tion	•Patriotism •Truth-seeking	•ChatGPT and Academic Research: A Review and Recommendations Based on Practical Examples DOI: 10.52631/jemds.v3i1.175 •Academic Writing: Challenges and Potential Solutions DOI: 10.24093/awej/call6.8
	Students' Presentation	International Academic Communica-tion	•Collaboration	

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