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Using the Interactive Approach in Developing Critical Reading Skills among Yemeni Eighth Grade EFL Students

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Abstract: The purpose of the present study is to investigate the effect of the interactive approach on developing EFL critical reading skills among the Yemeni eighth grade EFL students. To fulfill the purpose of the study, two instruments were constructed; a critical reading skills checklist to identify the appropriate skills for students' level and a pre and post critical reading skills test. The validity and reliability of the study instruments were established before their use in the study. The study adopted the quasi-experimental design. The sample of the study consisted of (20) Yemeni EFL students, purposely selected from eighth grade of Shibam Yemeni school in Cairo in the scholastic year (2024-2025), they represented the experimental group. Results of the study revealed that, there is a statistically significant difference at α= 0.01 level between the mean score of the pre- and post-test administration of the EFL critical reading skills test in favor of the post-test. In other words, the interactive approach teaching led to improvement in students' critical reading skills. These results can be attributed to the effects of the experimental treatment. The interactive approach improved EFL students' critical reading skills; differentiating facts from opinions, distinguishing cause and effect relationships, anticipating, recognizing the main idea, and inferring the antecedent of the sentences. The researcher recommended that, EFL curriculum designers, policy makers, and decision makers at the ministry of education should include interactive approach strategies in the teacher's guide to be applied by teachers during critical reading lessons.

Keywords: Interactive Approach, EFL Critical Reading Teaching, Eighth Grade, Yemen.

استخدام المدخل التفاعلي لتنمية مهارات القراءة الناقدة باللغة الانجليزية لدى طلبة الصف الثامن بالجمهورية اليمنية

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كلية التربية | وزارة التربية والتعليم | اليمن

المستخلص: هدف البحث الحالي التحقق من فاعلية استخدام المدخل التفاعلي لتنمية مهارات القراءة الناقدة في مادة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لدى طلبة الصف الثامن في اليمن. ولتحقيق هدف الدراسة تم بناء أداتي الدراسة والمتمثلة في قائمة مهارات القراءة الناقدة لتحديد المهارات المناسبة لمستوى الطلبة واختبار قبلي وبعدي لقياس التحصيل في تلك المهارات. وتم التأكد من صدق وثبات أداتي الدراسة. اعتمدت الدراسة على التصميم شبه التجريبي، وتألفت عينة الدراسة من (20) طالباً تم اختيارهم من طلبة الصف الثامن الأساسي بمدرسة شبام اليمنية الدولية بالقاهرة للعام الدراسي (2024-2025) حيث مثلوا المجموعة التجريبية. أظهرت أبرز نتائج الدراسة أنه يوجد فرق ذو دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى الدلالة α=0.01 بين متوسط درجات التطبيق القبلي والبعدي لاختبار مهارات القراءة النقدية للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لصالح التطبيق البعدي. أي أن التدريس القائم على المدخل التفاعلي أدى إلى تحسن ملحوظ في مهارات القراءة الناقدة لدى الطلبة، وتُعزى هذه النتائج إلى تأثيرات المعالجة التجريبية على تحصيل الطلبة في مهارات القراءة الناقدة في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. مثل التمييز بين الحقائق والآراء، وتمييز العلاقات السببية والنتيجة، والتوقع، وإدراك الفكرة الرئيسية، واستنتاج الأحداث. واقترح الباحث عدد من التوصيات لمصممي مناهج اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية وصانعي القرار في وزارة التربية والتعليم بتضمين الاستراتيجيات القائمة على الطريقة التفاعلية في دليل المعلم ليتم تطبيقها من قبل المعلمين في تدريس القراءة الناقدة في اللغة الإنجليزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المدخل التفاعلي، مهارات القراءة الناقدة في اللغة الإنجليزية، الصف الثامن، اليمن.

1- Introduction and Background

Teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) in the Arab world started as part of their public scholastic curriculum from different levels, but unfortunately, educators, teachers, and officials are not satisfied with their programs and teaching methods due to the poor results, outcomes and performances of many students. It is believed that many EFL teachers do not show enough English language competence to function as effective EFL teachers. Their quality of instruction also seems to negatively affect their students' language level. In addition, students are not motivated enough to achieve high in English (Al-ghamdi,2024, Al- Soufi, 2017, and Fareh, 2010).

Teaching EFL in Yemen is carried out by the Ministry of Education, and applied within all public schools from the seventh grade and private ones from the first grade. However, the majority of English language teachers in Yemen still use a conventional method in teaching reading i.e. the Grammar Translation Method. Moreover, they present as many grammatical rules as they can from the text (Al-Soufi, 2010).(1)

Based on the researcher's experience and researches' results the majority of English language teachers in Yemen still use a traditional method in teaching reading, i.e. the grammar translation method. Moreover, they present as many grammatical rules as they can from the text. Although the course is mainly a learner-centered approach which promotes learners' autonomy and takes into consideration different learning styles, most English language teachers teach reading in a boring way all the time. The learners there said to be mere receivers and the teacher is the only source of knowledge. The result of using such an approach is usually learners' frustration and boredom (Al-Soufi, 2017; Al-Sohbani, 2018).

Critical reading has been an aim for recent study in the field of English as a Foreign Language. The advancement in online communication applications and social media has brought in a new situation for today's reader. A reader encounters many sources of texts on a variety of topics, he/she has to examine the credibility and validity of the text to understand the message behind the words. Besides, the meaning of the text is unstable, this means that every reader's experience, ideology, sociocultural and individual resources inevitably affect his/her interpretation of the text. So, learners are required to learn how to put ideas in the text against their criteria and keep the balance between subjectivity and objectivity. This process requires a well-trained reader who can quickly evaluate and judge a text in hand in the light objective criteria. Thus, updating curricula to keep up with the requirements of reading is crucial for EFL curricula designers. Current syllabi require continuous evaluation to meet learners' needs to critical reading skills (Kaya, 2025).

The interactive approach is considered one of the essential features of education, training and more generally of learning. Interactive learning approach emphasizes not only the dialogue, communication, interaction and discussion between teachers and students but also the cooperation between them in the teaching and learning process. Interactive classroom has made the students and learning outcomes the primary emphasis of instruction rather than the teacher and instructional resources (Wang & Zhu (2013).

In interactive approach, students are active participants rather than passive recipient of the knowledge. It was discovered that through a variety of learning activities, interactive teaching makes the students the center of the learning process. Students now pay more attention to what they have learned other than what teachers have just taught. It has a more positive impact on learning that the traditional teaching style. The teacher in interactive teaching does not have only educational and vocational role but he/she has to be a designer, programmer, diagnostician, researcher, organizer, manager, innovator, educator and advisor (Nakatani, 2010).

Students are inspired to learn when the materials or classes are tailored to their interests. This suggests that educators play a role in students' development as people and are accountable for it. They experience a wonderful sense of respect and joy having this kind of power and duty. For this reason, all teachers ought to work hard to improve. Also, the more the lessons are matching the interests and inspiration of the students, the more they feel motivated. This suggests that educators play a role in students' development as people and are accountable for it. They experience a wonderful sense of respect and joy having this kind of power and duty. For this reason, all teachers ought to work hard to improve (Xhemajli, 2016).

Based on the above-mentioned literature and related review studies and to the best knowledge of the researcher, it can be noted that, there are no previous studies that have been conducted to investigate the possible effect of the interactive approach on EFL critical reading skills in Yemen. Therefore, the purpose of the present study is to investigate the effect of using the interactive approach on improving EFL students' critical reading in Yemen.

(1) * Reference citation was written according to APA style (6th edition)

The Pilot Study

Table (1) Results of the Critical Reading Skills Test of the Pilot Study

No. of Items	X	SD	Percentage	Total Marks
20	11.8	4.63	39.3%	30

As it is shown in the table above, the average score of the students on the critical reading skills test is 11.8 out of 30 as the total marks of the test. This means that more than (60) percent of the participants were below the average. This indicates that Yemeni EFL students lack many skills for comprehending an English reading text.

1-1-Statement of the Problem:

While working as an English teacher and a language supervisor for 14 years, it has been noticed that the level of most Yemeni students in EFL reading is rather poor which makes the majority of them unable to communicate well. A pilot study was conducted to validate that notion. It showed that more than sixty percent of the students scored below average. This indicates that Yemeni EFL students lack many skills for comprehending an English reading text. The poor level of Yemeni EFL students' critical reading skills seems to be partially attributed to the idea that many Yemeni EFL teachers are not coping with contemporary instructional strategies to develop their students' critical reading skills required to manipulate texts properly. In addition, Yemeni EFL teachers seem not to be aware of the importance that some affective factors play in the process of learning EFL.

A lot of researchers studied the achievement of Yemeni Students' EFL reading skills as Al-Soufi, 2017, and Al-Sohbani, 2018. These studies showed a lack of the mastery level of students EFL reading skills. Through reading and reviewing the related studies, the researcher read about the importance of interactive approach in developing EFL skills. Based on all these ideas, the researcher wants to study how the interactive approach can be used in developing EFL critical reading skills for Yemeni eighth grade EFL students.

1-2-Questions of the Study:

The main question of this Study is "How can the interactive approach be used in developing EFL critical reading skills for Yemeni eighth grade EFL students?"

This main question can be divided into sub-questions as follows:

1- What are the most important EFL critical reading skills needed by Yemeni eighth grade EFL students?

2- What is the impact of the interactive approach on developing critical reading skills of Yemeni eighth grade EFL students?

1-3-Hypotheses:

Using the interactive approach would improve EFL critical reading skills of Yemeni eighth grade EFL students.

For reasons of feasibility of data analysis, the following two sub hypotheses were proposed:

1. There is a statistically significant difference at 0.05 level between the mean score of the pre and post-test administration of EFL critical reading skills test in favor of the post-test.

2. There is a statistically significant difference at 0.05 level between the mean score on the pre- and post- test administration of the EFL critical reading skills test in favor of the post-test.

1-4-Purpose of the Study:

The present study aims at:

1. Determining the most important EFL critical reading skills needed by Yemeni eighth grade EFL students.
2. Examining the effects of the interactive approach on Yemeni eighth grade EFL students' critical reading skills.

1-5-Significance of the Study:

The significance of this study stemmed from investigating the interactive approach in developing critical reading skills among Yemeni eighth grade EFL students. In addition to raising the awareness of EFL teachers' attention to the effect of the interactive approach in developing critical reading skills. Furthermore, to encourage researchers to expand their studies on using new strategies in EFL teaching that might be useful to develop the process of teaching and learning English.

1-6-Delimitations of the Study:

The study is limited by the following:

- The sample of the study consisted of (20) Yemeni eighth grade EFL students (One-Group Experimental Design) at Shibam Yemeni School in Cairo, Therefore, the results cannot be generalized for EFL students of secondary stage.
- The sample represented the Yemeni eighth grade EFL students at Shibam Yemeni school in Cairo; thus, results can be generalized for Yemeni eighth grade EFL students' schools in other governorates with caution.

1-7-Sample of the Study:

The sample of this study consists of 20 Yemeni eighth grade EFL students of Shibam Yemeni school in Cairo.

1-8-Instruments and Material of the Study:

For the purpose of the study, the researcher devised the following:

- A critical reading skills scale to identify the most important skills for Yemeni eighth grade EFL students.
- A pre-post critical reading skills test.
- An Interactive teaching strategy program.
- A teacher's guide sessions plans

1-9-Design of the Study:

The present study used a quasi-experimental design on group pre-post design, in which a pre-post reading test was used. The sample of the study consisted of (20) Yemeni eighth grade EFL students as an experimental group. The group is taught by the interactive approach strategy after the pre-test. The independent variable is the (interactive approach strategy) and the dependent variable is the students' EFL critical reading skills achievement.

1-10-Procedure of the Study:

The following steps would be followed in order to answer the questions of the study:

- Reviewing literature and previous studies related to interactive approach teaching and critical reading.
- Designing the instruments of the study followed these steps:
  - Designing a critical reading skills scale to identify the most important skills for Yemeni eighth grade EFL students.
  - Designing pre-post-test covering the critical reading skills.
  - Designing A teacher's guide.
- Choosing the content of the sessions of critical reading from "Crescent English Course for Yemen Textbooks" for Yemeni eighth grade EFL students' course book.
- Writing lesson plans for the different sessions in the form of a Teachers' Guide based on the interactive approach Teaching Strategy.
- Consulting the specialists and considering their comments and opinions for checking the validity of the instruments.
- Applying the achievement test on a pilot study to find the validity and reliability of the achievement test.
- Choosing the sample of the study from three classes randomly.
- Applying the pre-test on the sample of the study and computing the results.
- Implementing the experiment according to the teacher's guide based on the interactive approach teaching.
- Applying the post critical reading achievement test on the sample after the treatment.
- Scoring and analyzing the data statistically by using appropriate statistical analysis (SPSS).
- Interpreting the results.
- Presenting summary, results, conclusion and then giving suggestions and recommendations.

1-11-Definitions of the terms:

Interactive Approach:

Jarilkapovich, (2025) defined the interactive approach as "a method or strategy given to the students to assist them to have a better understanding on reading instruction by activating students' background knowledge (top down model) and word recognition exercises (bottom up model) used interactively".

Senthamarai, (2018) defined the interactive approach as instructing the students in a way that they are actively involved with their own learning process

The researcher defined interactive approach to reading comprehension is operationally defined as a process through which the teacher helps the learners build their understanding by both using their previous knowledge about the topic and the clause from the text.

Critical Reading:

Critical reading is that a reader applies certain processes, models, questions, and theories that result in enhanced clarity and comprehension. It is also, define critical reading as "the ability to make judgments and inferences, distinguish between fact and opinion, and recognize the author's purpose or point of view" (Göçer and Bardakçı,2024)

In the current study, the researcher defined it as a mental process including the internal responses to a written text and it involves the mental processes that require the reader's skills to explain, infer and argue the meanings from the read text.

2- Review of Literature and Related Studies

2-1-Review of Literature.

2-1-1-Critical Reading:

Generally, reading can be seen as an interactive process between a reader and a text as to elicit the meaning and where different kinds of knowledge can be used: linguistic or systemic knowledge (through bottom-up processing) as well as schematic knowledge (through top-down processing). According to Carson, et al. (1990) the Cognitive Tasks Involved in Reading in this interactive process, in which bottom-up and top-down processing take place simultaneously at all levels, involves the following cognitive tasks: Bottom-up processing makes the data required to instantiate or complete the schemata available; top-down processing makes their assimilation easier if they are anticipated by or consistent with the readers' conceptual assumptions. Top-down processing aids in the readers' ability to resolve ambiguities or choose between various possible interpretations of the incoming data, while bottom-up processing ensures that readers will be sensitive to information that is new or that does not fit their ongoing hypotheses about the text's content or structure.

2-1-2-Critical Reading and TEFL

English has been regarded as an international effective means of communication in social activities. As a result, teaching English is a crucial component of Yemen educational system if the country is to succeed in its efforts to develop economically and integrate into the world community. We can communicate in a variety of contexts due to the two critical language learning abilities of reading and writing. To master a foreign language, reading has traditionally been recognized as a crucial skill, especially for preparatory schools EFL students. The role of reading in learning a foreign language has received more focus in recent years. Numerous strategies for teaching reading and evaluating their efficacy have emerged over the years.

According to many academics, critical reading is a complicated skill that requires the use of a variety of knowledge sources, including both lower level and higher-level knowledge sources in one's second language (Donkol, 2023; Istihari, 2024).

2-1-3-The Importance of Critical Reading to Develop EFL Learning

Shrief (2023) indicated that through reading exercises, teachers can involve EFL students in finding analogies and discovering relationships, as well as in determining the relevance of two pieces of information to each other.

According to studies, it is even more necessary for EFL students to possess cognitive knowledge about the academic topic they are studying, which is facilitated by relevant content schemata. The most reliable and long-lasting Second Language modality is the ability to read. Reading is acknowledged in language teaching as an activity that facilitates deeper processing of materials in the target language and more active engagement with them because it is thought to be a communicative process that transfers meaning from the writer's to

the reader's mind. It is believed that if poor readers receive even a little training on how to select efficient reading comprehension strategies, their total learning could even increase (Tsai & Talley, 2010).

2-1-4-Critical Reading Skills

To learn more about the reading abilities that high school teachers teach and the expectations that instructors of typical first-year college courses have of incoming students, Patterson and Duer (2006), conducted a series of surveys. According to the results of these surveys, the following reading abilities are ranked highly by both high school and college instructors:

- Drawing conclusions based on the information provided.
- Making inferences from the text concerning main idea(s)
- Making inferences from the text about the supporting details of the main ideas.
- Identifying and remembering key ideas through summarization.
- Making inferences about cause-and-effect relationships from the text.
- Identifying the author's purpose.
- Recognizing and recalling comparisons.

2-1-5-The Interactive Approach

The interactive approach is considered one of the essential features of education, training and more generally of learning. Interactive learning approach emphasizes not only the dialogue, communication, interaction and discussion between teachers and students but also the cooperation between them in the teaching and learning process. Chang, Jones, & Kunnemeyer, (2002) stated that the interactive classroom has made the students and learning outcomes the primary emphasis of instruction rather than the teacher and instructional resources. According to Wang and Zhu (2013), students are guided into the learning process through the interactive teaching.

In interactive approach, EFL students are active participants rather than passive recipient of the knowledge. It was discovered that through a variety of learning activities, interactive teaching makes the EFL students the center of the learning process. EFL students now pay more attention to what they have learned other than what teachers have just taught. It has a more positive impact on learning that the traditional teaching style.

Similarly, Interactive teaching provides the learners with the ability to negotiate meaning for the sake of understanding the message uttered by the others and ensure communication and mutual understanding. Additionally, through a variety of activities, it gives EFL students additional opportunities to make the most of their speaking and learn how to speak fluently and accurately. Therefore, interaction is seen as an essential factor for successful communication and better improvement of learners' oral proficiency. It is a way of learning in general and improving language skills in particular. Without this interaction, neither EFL students nor teachers will be able to advance and improve. It gives EFL students the chance to learn how to start, carry on, and terminate a conversation effectively. The teacher should motivate the EFL students to participate actively in class, think independently, and use their own brains, which will aid in long-term memory retention. EFL students' interest, strength, knowledge, teamwork, and freedom of expression will all be improved in addition to their academic performance (Nakatani, 2010).

2-1-6-The Role of the Teacher in Interactive Teaching

The teacher in interactive teaching does not have only educational and vocational role but he/she has to be a designer, programmer, diagnostician, researcher, organizer, manager, innovator, educator and advisor. More specifically, the teacher is the organizer of teaching and partner during the communication with his/her EFL students. For the needs of contemporary schools, Xhemajli, (2016). shows the path for achieving high quality education, which will not be based on compulsion and the authoritative style of the teacher. During this process, the managing role of the teacher should change.

An interactive teacher is the one who is aware of and comprehends some fundamental concepts relating to how children learn while also being aware of the usage of various teaching formats and techniques to aid all children. By using interactive teaching techniques, Bennett (1989) argues that relationships between EFL students improve, common goals are better understood, communication is encouraged, and learning outcomes are improved as well.

According to Lanier cited in Xhemajli, (2016), the primary responsibility of the teacher, is to make an effort to facilitate an engaging learning environment that enables EFL students to solve problems from real life and demonstrate that they have learned

important concepts, developed strong skills, and fulfilled the laws of the mind and the heart, complying with educational standards. Additionally, Maslahat, (2023) illustrated that good teachers emphasize the value of their EFL students' independence and encourage them to use their imaginations.

2-2-Related Studies:

There are many related studies that investigated the effectiveness of using interactive approach and developing critical reading, such as the following:

- Donkol (2023) investigated the effectiveness of using an electronic interactive program for developing EFL analytical writing and critical reading skills of secondary stage students. The study used the quasi-experimental design. The sample of the study consisted of (60) students. The researcher used a list of critical reading and analytical writing skills and tests of analytical writing and critical reading skills. Results of the study indicated that using an interactive program had positive effects on the students' critical reading and analytical writing skills.
- Saleh, (2023) carried out her study to developing the EFL secondary school students' oracy skills using a strategy based on interactive reading approach. The study adopted the quasi- experimental design. The sample of the study consisted of (40) divided into two groups. The researcher designed a pre-post Oracy Test and rubric. Results of the study revealed that there was a statistically significant difference at (0.5) between the mean scores of the experimental group in the pre-post administration favoring the post administration. Moreover, it could be concluded that the interactive reading approach was effective in developing oracy skills.
- Bedaiwy (2022) investigated the effect of interactive approach on developing EFL critical listening skills for college of management sciences students (English section). The Participants of the study were 66 second year college of management students at Sadat Academy for Management Sciences, in Egypt. A checklist was designed to identify the required critical listening skills for second year students. A critical listening skills test was designed by the researcher and used as a pre-posttest for the two groups. Results of the study revealed a positive effect of interactive approach on developing experimental group's critical listening skills.
- Shihab (2021) conducted a study to identify the effect of interactive approach of teaching English on EFL students' communication skills. Participants of the study were 50 students from grade ten. The study used communication skills test as the study instrument. The mean scores of the posttest showed a statistical significant difference at 0.05 level for communication skills scale in speaking between the two groups favoring the experimental group, and there is a statistical significant difference at 0.05 level for communication skills scale in listening between the two groups favoring experimental group.
- Tala'at (2021) carried out her study to enhance descriptive writing skills and self-efficacy of EFL sixth grade primary pupils through an interactive writing approach based strategy. The participants of the study included 72 pupils who were randomly drawn and divided into two groups in Egypt. The instruments of the study were a EFL descriptive writing test to measure the development in the experimental groups' writing skills self-efficacy questionnaire and writing skill test. The results indicated that there was statistical difference between the mean scores of the experimental and those of the control group in their descriptive writing and self-efficacy. It was concluded that the present study provide evidence for the effect of the Interactive Writing Approach Based Strategy to develop descriptive writing skills and self-efficacy.
- Zaza (2019) investigated the effect of using the interactional approach for developing 1st year secondary school students' listening comprehension skills. The participants included (60) students. The researcher used the EFL listening comprehension skills test for collecting data. The main findings revealed that the experimental group students' EFL listening comprehension skills were higher than those of the control group students as a result of using the interactional approach. Therefore, it can be concluded that the interactional approach was effective in developing listening comprehension skills.

2-2-2-General Comment on Previous Studies:

In light of the above mentioned related studies, it is clear that interactive approach has a positive effect on developing EFL learning and teaching. This has been shown through studies of Donkol (2023), Saleh (2023), Bedaiwy, (2022), Shihab (2021), Tala'at, (2021) & Zaza, (2019). Almost all studies have used pre posttest, as instruments to measure students' achievements. Most studies, as shown, used samples of populations different from the present study. While the present study used eighth grade students, other studies

used intermediate, and secondary school students. As seen from the previous studies, very few researches were conducted to investigate developing the critical reading skills through using approaches teaching. None of these studies dealt directly with the effectiveness of using interactive approach in improving critical reading skills, except Donkol, (2023) that investigated the effectiveness of using an electronic interactive program for developing EFL analytical writing and critical reading skills.

The current study has benefited from the review of literature and related studies in identifying some of the most appropriate critical reading skills for Yemeni eighth grade EFL students, and formulating the design of the study as well.

3- Methods of the Study

The methods and procedures that are utilized in conducting this study. Six major areas were described: design, participants, setting, variables, instruments, and statistical techniques for analyzing the findings.

1. Design of the Study:

The present study employed a quasi-experimental design of research, using one treatment group to find out the effect of using the interactive approach in developing critical reading skills among Yemeni eighth grade EFL students. The group was pre- and post-tested on their critical reading skills. The experimental group was taught by using the interactive approach strategy to develop the EFL students' critical reading skills in each session. Figure (1) illustrates the experimental design of the study.

2. Main Procedure:

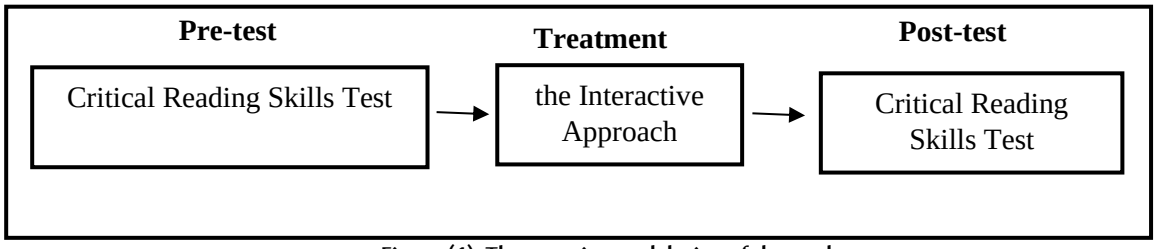

Figure (1): The experimental design of the study

3. Participants

The sample of this research consisted of (20) Yemeni eighth grade EFL students of Shibam Yemeni School in the scholastic year 2024 - 2025, the first term. All participants' ages ranged from fourteen to fifteen years old.

4. Setting:

At the very beginning of the first term and for four weeks of the scholastic year 2024 – 2025, twenty EFL students were pre-tested on 1st of October, 2024. The participants were post-tested on 30th of October, 2024.

5. Variables

Two variables were included in the study as follows:

- The independent variable was the interactive approach.
- The dependent variable was the development of EFL 8th grade students' critical reading skills.

6. Stages of the Study:

The study proceeded in three stages:

- First, designing the instruments.
- Second, determining the teaching materials.
- Third, conduct the study.

Those three stages ran as follows:

7. Instruments and Materials

Four instruments were designed by the researcher and used in this study, namely;

A. A critical reading skills checklist to determine the most important critical reading skills that are necessary for 8th grade EFL students, and consequently, these critical reading skills were integrated into the test, and the classroom sessions.

B. A critical reading skills test to measure the 8th grade of EFL students' critical reading skills by the researcher, with the help of some English language experts, according to curriculum content objectives, the course book " Crescent English Course for Yemen Textbooks, Grade 8".

- An assessment answer key designed by the researcher to measure the 8th grade EFL students' critical reading skills test performance precisely.
- An interactive teaching strategy program.
- A teacher's guide sessions plans

7.1. The Critical Reading Skills Checklist:

Aim:

The checklist aimed at determining the most important critical reading skills to be enhanced for Yemeni eighth grade EFL students' critical reading skills test. This test was constructed in light of the critical reading skills determined by the jury members as the most important ones to be enhanced for 5th grade EFL students.

Source:

The critical reading skills included in the questionnaire were developed from different sources, such as Bedaiwy (2022), Hassanein (2022), Donkol (2023), and Shrief. (2023).

7.2. The Critical Reading Skills Test

The test mainly measures EFL students' critical reading skills. The test is divided into five subskills; differentiating facts from opinions, distinguishing cause and effect relationships; anticipating; recognizing the main ideas, and inferring the antecedent of the sentences.

A. Aims

The critical reading skills test have two main aims:

- First, assessing EFL students' critical reading skills (differentiating fact from opinion, distinguishing cause and effect relationships, anticipating, recognizing the main ideas, and inferring the antecedents of the sentences).
- Second, measuring the development in the treatment group's critical reading skills.

The critical reading skills test was used as a pre-post-test to measure the level of the EFL students' critical reading skills before and after being exposed to the proposed treatment of the interactive approach. In the light of the statistical difference between the EFL students' scores on the pre-post test.

B. Test validity and reliability

Validity

For measuring test content validity, the first version of the test was given to EFL professors at the Department of Curriculum and Instruction in two universities and Yemeni Ministry of Education TEFL supervisors and staff members (N = 12) to help identify the degree of importance of each skill, and evaluate the test questions in the light of specific criteria included in a questionnaire that was submitted to the jury members.

The test proved to be valid, as the jurors approved most of the questions and suggested a few changes that were modified. The targeted skills that got the highest percentage, according to the jury response analysis, are shown in Table (2).

Table (2) The Critical Reading Skills Questionnaire

No	Critical Reading Skills
1	**Differentiating fact from opinion**
2	**Distinguishing cause and effect relationship**
3	**Anticipation**
4	**Recognizing the main ideas**
5	**Inferring the antecedent of the sentences**

C. The internal consistency of the test

The test was administered to a pilot sample consisting of (15) Yemeni eighth grade EFL students. The scores were collected and used to calculate the correlation coefficient between each item of the test and the total score of each sub-skill. Table 2 indicates the values of the correlation coefficients and their significance levels.

Table (3): Pearson's correlation coefficient of test items and the total score of each sub-skill

Differentiating facts from opinions			Distinguishing cause and effect relationship			Anticipation		
Item	correlation	sig.	Item	correlation	sig.	Item	correlation	sig.
1	0.840	0.01	1	0.818	0.01	1	0.835	0.01
2	0.899	0.01	2	0.821	0.01	2	0.732	0.01
3	0.947	0.01	3	0.765	0.01	3	0.738	0.01
Recognizing the main ideas			Inferring the antecedent of the sentences					
Item	correlation	sig.	Item	correlation	sig.			
1	0.874	0.01	1	0.849	0.01			
2	0.808	0.01	2	0.897	0.01			
3	0.773	0.01	3	0.830	0.01			

The table above indicates that all of the values of the correlation coefficients are between (0.732, 0.947), and all of these values are significant at the level of (0.01). This refers to the validity of the test to measure reading sub-skills. The correlation coefficients between the reading sub-skills and the total score of the test were also calculated.

D. Test Reliability

Test reliability was measured by administering the test to a pilot sample that consisted of (15) Yemeni eighth grade EFL students. The researcher used Cronbach's alpha to calculate test reliability. Table (3) indicates the values of the reliability coefficient.

Table (4) Test reliability using Cronbach Alpha

Skills	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Differentiating facts from opinions.	**3**	**0.882**
Distinguishing cause and effect relationship.	**3**	**0.897**
Anticipation.	**3**	**0.899**
Recognizing the main ideas.	**3**	**0.773**
Inferring the antecedent of the sentences.	**3**	**0.845**
Total	**15**	**0.817**

It is clear from the table above that the coefficient reliability of the Cronbach Alpha for the sub-skills and for the critical reading test as a whole are between (0.773, 0.899), and all those values are significant at the 0.01 level. This indicates the test's reliability and that the test can be administered with a high degree of truthfulness.

E. Inter-Rater Reliability

To ensure that the test has an acceptable degree of reliability, the teacher, the supervisor, and the senior teacher marked the EFL students' test. Then the three estimations were calculated and divided by three to get an accurate degree for each student and guarantee the reliability of the scores.

F. Time Allotment

The average time needed to complete the test was 45 minutes. Each item takes 3 minutes.

G. Statistical Techniques

In order to test the research hypotheses, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) used a t-test for the samples to measure the difference between the mean score of the pre and posttest concerning the development of EFL students' critical reading skills.

An eta squared (12) was used to investigate the effect size of the experimental treatment on the development of the EFL students' critical reading skills.

4- The Results

The results of the study are statistically analyzed in terms of its hypotheses, and they are discussed in light of the theoretical background and related studies. The analysis of data is organized in such a way that hypotheses are presented, followed by findings, analysis, and discussion of the results.

1. The Statistical Methods

The SPSS statistical package (version 17) was used for analyzing the data collected as follows:

- T-test for equality of means for two related dependent groups to determine the significance of differences between the mean scores of the experimental group EFL students in pre-post administrations of the study instruments to identify the effectiveness of the proposed interactive approach in developing critical reading skills.
- Effect size test (η^2) to determine the effect size of the training program on developing critical reading skills.

2. Results and Statistical Analysis

For the purpose of testing the first hypothesis "There is a statistically significant difference at α= 0.05 level between the mean score of the pre- and post-test administration of the EFL critical reading skills test in favor of the post-test.

Table (5) t-test results of the experimental group in critical reading skills on the pre/post critical reading test

skills		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig.
Differentiating facts from opinions	pre	25	0.9200	0.7023	-8.430	24	0.01
	post	25	2.0800	0.7023			
Distinguishing cause and effect relationship	pre	25	0.9600	0.6110	-7.076	24	0.01
	post	25	2.0000	0.6455			
Anticipation	pre	25	1.6000	0.7637	-8.660	24	0.01
	post	25	2.6000	0.5773			
Recognizing the main ideas	pre	25	1.2400	0.5972	-8.573	24	0.01
	post	25	2.6400	0.5686			
Inferring the antecedent of the sentences	pre	25	1.2800	0.7371	-9.448	24	0.01
	post	25	2.3600	0.7000			
Total	pre	25	6.0000	2.1794	-19.339	24	0.01
	post	25	11.6800	2.5285			

The table above indicates that there is a statistically significant difference at the 0.01 level between the mean scores of the experimental group on the pre and the post administration of the critical reading test regarding each sub-skill of critical reading and regarding the critical reading skills as a whole. The following diagram refers to a significant difference between the pre and post administration of the critical reading test.

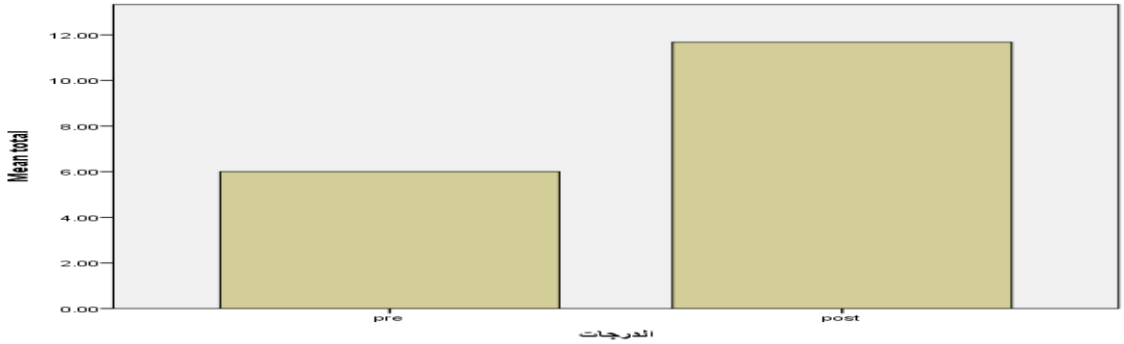

Diagram (1) T-test results of the experimental group in critical reading skills on the pre/post critical reading test

It is clear from the above diagram that there is a significant difference between the pre- and post-administrations of the critical reading test in favor of the post administration. This means that the interactive approach was effective in improving eighth-grade EFL students critical reading skills.

Consequently, the first hypothesis is rejected and the second hypothesis is accepted, namely, "There is a statistically significant difference at the 0.01 level between the mean score on the pre- and post-test administration of the EFL critical reading skills test in favor of the post-test."

3. Estimating the Effect Size

The effect size ((η- value) of the interactive approach was estimated after estimating the T- value. This value was converted into its parallel levels of effect size (small, middle, and high), and it also represents the total variance in the dependent variable, which can be attributed to the independent variable as illustrated in the following table. (Kiess, 1989:486–488) Cited in (Gohar, 2007: 147)

Table (6) Level of effect size

Level of effect size	Small	Middle	High
d	**0.2**	**0.5**	**0.7**

The table above indicates the size of the effect of using an interactive approach on developing the EFL students' critical reading skills after the experimental treatment.

Table (7) Effect size of the interactive approach in developing critical skills

Skills	η	Effect size
Differentiating facts from opinions	**0.747**	**large**
Distinguishing cause and effect relationship	**0.675**	**large**
Anticipation	**0.757**	**large**
Recognizing the main ideas	**0.754**	**large**
Inferring the antecedent of the sentences	**0.788**	**large**
Total	**0.939**	**large**

The table above indicates the following results:

- In differentiating facts from opinions, the value of Eta square was (0.747) which indicates a large effect and also indicates that (74.7)of the variance in EFL students' ability to differentiate facts from opinions can be attributed to the experimental treatment.
- In distinguishing cause and effect relationships, the value of Eta square was (0.675) which indicates a large effect, and it also reflects that (67.5) of the variance in EFL students' ability to distinguish cause and effect relationships can be attributed to the experimental treatment.
- In anticipating, the value of Eta square was (0.757), which indicates a large effect, and also reflects that (75.7) of the variance in EFL students' anticipating can be attributed to the experimental treatment.
- In recognizing the main idea, the value of Eta square was (0.754), which indicates a large effect, and it also reflects that (75.4) of the variance in EFL students' recognizing the main idea can be attributed to the experimental treatment.
- In inferring the antecedent of the sentences, the value of Eta square was (0.788) which indicates a large effect, and it also reflects that (78.8) of the variance in the EFL students' inferring the antecedent of the sentences can be attributed to the experimental treatment.
- In the total of all the five sub-skills of critical reading, the value of Eta square was (0.939), which indicates a large effect, and it also indicates that (93.9) of the variance in EFL students' critical reading skills can be attributed to the experimental treatment.

5- Discussion of Results

In the light of the statistical analysis, it can be said that interactive approach had a large effect on developing the experimental group critical reading skills. The analysis of the obtained data of the experimental group's mean scores on the post test revealed a higher degree of development than their pretest mean scores.

This development was attributed to the activities that the EFL students' practiced without constrains of the regular teaching. Using interactive approach encouraged EFL students to read critically, carefully and accurately. EFL students interacted in a positive way with each other's and they shared the correct levels of sentences and passages. They interacted with each other's in discussing the main

ideas and the sub ideas of the reading content. The results of the study also showed that interactive approach helps EFL students to engage in exploration of knowledge and creation of meaning. EFL students were enthusiastic to explore new ideas and share new terminologies with each other's since it meets their needs.

Furthermore, it exceeds the needs of those EFL students who have different learning styles. Moreover, it also extended the process of search and exploration. It stimulated participants to exercise their minds, search for relevant and irrelevant information that are of importance to the effect on the topic. It constructed a shift in teacher's role from being lecturer to a coach, an organizer, a designer, a facilitator, a planner, and an editor. EFL students were able to discuss many social and cultural issues since they increased their vocabulary knowledge. An intimate relationship between the teacher and the learners and among the learners themselves was created. A balanced assessment was administered. It permitted to use two types of assessment including (formative and summative). This helped achieve a balanced evaluation of students' knowledge and skills have developed. Furthermore, the participants' anxiety/negative attitude was reduced through engaging them in flexible learning conditions. Participants were provided with the opportunity to be independent learners.

This studies' finding are consistent with the results of Saleh (2023), Bedaiwy (2022), Shihab (2021), and Zaza et al (2020), were in line with the current study. The results of these studies concluded that interactive approaches had a positive impact as an instructional tool that enhanced language skills in general and critical reading skills in particular.

6- Recommendations

Based on the results of the present study, the following recommendations were provided:

1. Critical reading skills should receive appropriate attention in order to be developed especially in preparatory stages.
2. Decision makers at the ministry of education should include interactive approach strategies in the teacher's guide to be applied by teachers during reading lessons.
3. The instructional material should be attractive for EFL students.
4. Reading passages should be introduced to EFL students with the aim that EFL students read critically and comment on them.
5. Learning strategies, not only learning material, are necessary to support the critical reading practice.
6. The selection of EFL reading themes should be centered on current events, rather than complex issues.
7. Reading subjects should be varied in order to cover EFL students' areas of interest, and they should not be too long in order to avoid EFL students being distracted.
8. In reading lessons, EFL students' needs and issues should be established and assessed on a regular basis.

7- Suggestions for further research

Based on the findings of the current study, the following areas for future research were suggested:

1. Using the interactive approach in developing other subjects as well like Math, Science, Social Studies.... etc.
2. The impact of using the interactive approach on the development of other language abilities like speaking, reading, and writing.
3. The impact of various instructional strategies on the developing critical reading skills in other stages of education.

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