

İSTANBUL KÜLTÜR UNIVERSITY ★ INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

ON CRITICAL READING: A CLASSROOM APPLICATION

**A MASTER'S THESIS
Feride Zeynep GÜDER**

Department: English Language and Literature

Programme: English Language and Literature

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Nebile DİREKÇİGİL

JUNE 2004



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ABBREVIATIONS

‘CLA’: ‘Critical Language Awareness’

‘EFL’: English as a foreign language

‘L2’: Second language

‘SQ3R’: Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review questions.

This thesis was written according to the criteria based on 2004 Kültür University MA format.

ÖZET

Bu çalışmanın konusu üniversite düzeyinde İngilizce hazırlık sınıflarında verilen “okuma” derslerine özgü sorunlar ve eleştirel okumanın temel alanlarıdır. Hedef, eleştirel okumanın hangi yönlerinin benimsenmesi gerektiğini araştırmaktır. Araştırma, yazılı dilin nasıl analiz edileceğini öğretmek için okuma dersindeki değişikliği vurgulayan, eğitim alanındaki bilişsel ve eleştirel düşünme yaklaşımlarından yola çıkmaktadır. İngilizce yabancı dil öğrencileri yazılı dili analiz etme ve yargılama bilincine sahip oldukları takdirde, İngilizce okur-yazar olarak kabul edilebilirler. Çalışmanın genel amacı öğrencilerin akademik başarıları olurken, başlangıç amacı eleştirel okuma için ayrılmış süreyi arttırmak ve öğrencilerin yazarın stili, kelime seçimi ve konu hakkındaki kendi fikirlerini ifade etmelerine izin veren okuma alıştırmaları düzenlemektir.

Bu yüzden, bu çalışma İngilizce eğitimi veren üniversite hazırlık sınıflarında “okuma” dersindeki özel problemlerle ve eleştirel okumanın temel alanlarıyla ilgilenmektedir. Çalışmanın altında yatan görüş eleştirel okumanın çeşitli yönlerini araştırmaktır. Bir çok beceri ve bilgiyi içeren eleştirel okuma çalışmaları veya mental aktiviteler uygun bir şekilde uygulanırsa, İngilizce okuma dersleri, üniversite hazırlık öğrencilerinin akademik başarıları için ilk adım olacaktır.

Araştırma, eleştirel dil yaklaşımını temel alarak eleştirel okuma becerilerini geliştirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Tek bir sınıfa yönelik sınıf içi araştırmadaki metodolojik konular ve muhtemel çözümler, dördüncü bölümde, araştırma metodolojisinde açıklanmıştır. Metodolojik sorunları irdelemek ve olası çözümleri önermek için Lewin’in iki ana bölümlü bir döngüden oluşan araştırma modeli uygulanarak bir İngilizce hazırlık sınıfıyla vaka çalışması yapılmıştır. Bu süreçte sorun tanımlanmış ve yedi aşamalı çözüme yönelik ders-içi çalışmalar gerçekleştirilmiştir. İlk üç aşama olan tanımlama kısmında, araştırma grubunun eleştirel okuma problemleri analiz edilmiş ve onlara göre bir yaklaşım mevcut programa eklenmiştir.

Birinci aşamada problem gözlemlenmiş ve problemi tanımlamak için bazı sorular seçilmiştir. Bu aşama 13 Ekim 2003 ile 7 Kasım 2003 tarihleri arasındadır. Derse ilgisi ve çalışmaya gönüllü olan 10 öğrenci seçilmiştir. Yapılan analiz, eleştirel okuma kavramının EFL literatüründe desteklenmesine rağmen, EFL okuyucularını yetiştirecek eleştirel okuma çalışmalarının hala sınırlı olduğunu göstermiştir. Hazırlık seviyesindeki okuma derslerinde hem öğretmen hem de öğrenciler sınırlayıcı okuma alışkanlıkları geliştirmektedirler. Öğrenciler sadece metne odaklanıp, metnin derin anlamlarını gözardı etmektedirler.

İkinci aşama 10 Kasım 2003 ile 8 Aralık 2003 arasındadır. Öğretmen iki değişik metin üzerinde veri toplamak için ‘macro’ soruları kullanmaya karar verdi. Test sonuçları bir sonraki aşamayı belirledi.

Üçüncü aşama aslında araştırmanın en başından başlayıp sonuna kadar devam etmektedir. Bu aşamada, eleştirel okumayla ilgili literatür, sınıfta uygun uygulamaları kullanmak için sentez edildi. Eleştirel okuma problemlerinin gözden geçirilmesi, araştırmacı öğretmene sınıfta uygulama fikirleri vermiştir.

Çalışmanın iyileştirmeye yönelik ikinci kısmında okuma dersinde bilinçli bir değişikliği analiz etmekle ilgilenilmiştir. Bu kısım dört aşamayı kapsamaktadır. Dördüncü aşama 12 Aralık 2003 ile 2 Ocak 2004 tarihleri arasındadır. Bu aşamada, araştırmacı öğretmen daha fazla veri toplamak için çalışmıştır.

Beşinci aşama 5 Ocak 2004 ile 16 Ocak 2004 arasındadır. Bu aşama, eleştirel okuma probleminin daha ayrıntılı tanımlanması için yapılan araştırmayı kapsamıştır. Bu aşama bir çok disiplinin eleştirel okumada rol aldığını göstermektedir. Eleştirel okuma izole bir ortamda oluşmaz: reflektif öğrenme, alıştırma hazırlama, öğretmenin sınıftaki dili, metin seçimi, öğrencinin bilişsel yapısı ve zaman, eleştirel okumanın kalitesini etkileyen temel faktörlerdir. Eleştirel düşünme çok çeşitli yeteneklerin kullanılmasını içerir. Buna ek olarak, öğretmenin kullandığı dil, öğrencilerin metindeki fikirleri sorgulamaya teşvik edici olmalıdır. Bu araştırmalar dile doğru yönlendirici çalışmalar olarak görülebilir.

Bu aşamada, sadece gözlemlenebilen davranışlar müsait olduğundan, öğrencilerin iç diyaloglarını takip etmek için günlük soruları tanıtıldı. Bu sorular sadece araştırma sonuçlarını yorumlamada değil veri toplama prosedürünün gelişimi olarak da çok önemlidir. Öğrenciler günlük tutmaya 12 Ocak 2004 ile 28 Mayıs 2004 arasında devam ettiler.

Son aşama olan yedinci aşama 2 Nisan 2004 ile 28 Mayıs 2004 arasındadır ve araştırmanın genel değerlendirmesi ve verilerin yorumlanmasını kapsamaktadır. Bu aşamada, öğretmen günlüğü tamamlandı ve bir rapor yazıldı. Bu raporun amacı araştırmayı kronolojik süreç içinde anlatmak, bu araştırmayı değerlendirmek ve aktivitelerin nasıl uygulandığını göstermektedir. Araştırmayı tamamlamak amacıyla son veri olarak sınıfa sürekli devam eden üç öğrenci yarı formatlı mülakat için seçilmişlerdir. Mülakat sonucu ve çalışmanın geneli göstermiştir ki, EFL eleştirel okuma ve düşünceyi kapsayacak ve pratik düzenleme yolunu önerecek mucizevi ve açık bir formül yoktur. Eleştirel okumada bir çok disiplin rol almaktadır.

Çalışma İngilizce öğretiminde eleştirel okuma ve düşünmeyi kapsayan bir okuma dersini tasarlamak için tek ve kesin bir yöntemin olmadığını göstermiştir. Ayrıca, akademik yılın sonunda, araştırmacı öğretmen öğrencilerin eleştirel bir okuyucu olduğunu iddia edecek bir konumda değildir. Eleştirel okuma alıştırmaları amaç değil araç olduğundan önemli olan öğrencilerin eleştirel okuma alışkanlığını ne ölçüde edinebildikleridir. Tezin son bölümü bu görüşleri ve öğretmenin mesleki gelişimini ayrıntılı olarak açıklamaktadır.

SUMMARY

The rationale of this study stems from cognitive and critical thinking approaches in the educational mainstream, which emphasise change in the orientation of reading lessons to teach students how to analyse the written language and to internalise these approaches. If EFL readers have the awareness to judge and analyse the written text, they can be accepted as literate in English. While the students' academic achievement was the wider aim of the study, the initial aim of the research was to increase the percentage of time allocated for critical reading and to design reading tasks that allowed the students to express their own opinions about the content of the text, the writer's style and his/her choice of words.

This study deals with the basic elements of critical reading in the EFL context and specific problems of tertiary level preparatory EFL reading classes. It sets out to explore what aspects of critical reading should be adopted. If critical reading tasks or conscious mental activities which involve a deliberate choice of process or task, each of which may involve different constellations of skill and knowledge, are implemented properly, EFL reading lessons become a first and leading step for tertiary level EFL students' academic achievement.

The research adopts the critical language awareness approach to develop critical reading skills in EFL learners, based on the critical language awareness approach. A case study based on Lewin's model of action-research which involves a cyclic sequence with two major parts was conducted with a class of EFL students to explore the methodological issues and suggest possible solutions. During the process, the problem was diagnosed and in order to solve it a classroom application was carried out. It was a total process in which a problem situation was diagnosed, remedial action planned and implemented, and its effects monitored. In the diagnostic part, the first three stages, critical reading problems of the group were analysed and a specific tailor-made approach was integrated to the current syllabus.

Stage One involved the identification, evaluation and formulation of the critical reading problems in the research class. It lasted from 13 October 2003 to 7 November 2003. To define the problem, the reading syllabus, the reading books and the students' current approach were analysed. The analysis indicated that design of critical reading tasks to train EFL readers was still limited although the concept of critical reading is widely supported by EFL reading literature. In current reading lessons in tertiary level preparatory classes, both students and teachers develop restrictive reading habits. The students simply focus on what is on the lines by dismissing deeper meanings between and beyond the lines.

Stage Two lasted from 10 November 2003 until 8 December 2003. The teacher decided to use 'macro questions' for data collection, which were introduced to the students on two different texts. Test results determined the next cycle by focusing on necessary elements. Stage Three actually started at the beginning of the research and went on till the end of the research. At this stage, critical reading literature was synthesised to use appropriate procedures in the classroom. The review of the critical reading problems gave the teacher researcher classroom application insights.

The second therapeutic part analysed a consciously directed change in reading lesson. Stage Four lasted from 12 December 2003 until 2 January 2004. At this stage, the teacher researcher proceeded to gather further information.

Stage Five lasted from 5 January 2004 until 16 January 2004. It involved the investigation of critical reading strategies as a further example of the problem defining data. This stage indicated that several disciplines played part in the critical reading activities as teaching for critical reading did not take place in a vacuum. Reflective learning, task design, teacher's instruction, text selection, students' metacognition, and time are the basic elements that affect the quality of the critical reading. Critical thinking involves the use of a wide variety of abilities. In addition, the teacher's instruction must encourage the students to question ideas in the text. The tasks can be seen as the orientation towards language. Since only external behaviour was available for observation, the students were introduced to learner journal questions to follow their inner dialogue. These questions became important not only in the development of data collection procedures but also in the interpretation of research results. The students started writing their learning accounts from 12 January until 28 May 2004.

The final stage, which lasted from 2 April 2004 to 28 May 2004 involved the interpretation of the data and the overall evaluation of the research. Teacher journal chart was completed and a case report was written. The aim of the case report is to report the research as it unfolded over time by adopting a historical format. It evaluates the action research and shows how activities hang together. As a last data collection to complete the research, three students who attended the class regularly were chosen for a semi-structured interview. Interview result and the overall assessment of the study indicated that, there was no explicit and miracle formula to offer a practical way of designing an EFL reading course which covered critical thinking and reading.

The study has revealed that there is no explicit formula offering a practical way of designing an EFL reading course which incorporates critical thinking and reading. Furthermore, at the end of the academic year, the teacher researcher was not in a position to allege that the students were now efficient critical readers. Since critical reading tasks are only means to an end, not an end in itself, what matters in the end is the extent to which the students can acquire the habit of critical reading. Final chapter delineates these implications and the professional development of the teacher researcher.

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ABSTRACT

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Feride Zeynep GÜDER

The rationale of this study stems from the cognitive and critical thinking approaches in the educational mainstream, which emphasise change in the orientation of reading lessons to teach students how to analyse the written language and to internalise these approaches. While the students' academic achievement was the wider aim of the study, the initial aim of the research was to increase the percentage of time allocated for critical reading and to design reading tasks.

Therefore, this study dealt with the basic elements of critical reading in EFL context and specific problems of tertiary level preparatory EFL reading classes. The underlying assumption of the study was to explore what aspects of critical reading should be adopted. If critical reading tasks are implemented properly, EFL reading lessons become a first and leading step for tertiary level EFL students' academic achievement.

The research question centred on how to develop critical reading skills in EFL learners, based on the critical language awareness approach. A case study was conducted for the specific methodological issues and possible solutions. Lewin's model of action-research, which involves a cyclic sequence with two major parts, was adopted. It was a total process in which a problem situation was diagnosed, remedial action planned and implemented, and its effects monitored. In the diagnostic part, the first three stages, critical reading problems of the group were analysed and a specific tailor-made approach was integrated to the current syllabus.

Interview result and the overall assessment of the study indicated that, there was no explicit and miracle formula to offer a practical way of designing an EFL reading course which covered critical thinking and reading. Since critical reading tasks are means to an end, not an end in itself, what matters in the end is the extent to which the students can get into the habit of critical reading.

Key Words : Critical Reading, Critical Thinking, Critical Pedagogy, Critical Language Awareness, Critical Literacy, Cognitive Approaches, Task-Based Approach

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1. RATIONALE

In this age of information, the explosion of knowledge, the complexities of the modern world and the need for Internet skills have posed tremendous new burdens on schools (Zimmerman et al. 1). As society becomes more complex and the world's communication systems expand, university students may feel overwhelmed by the enormity of material available to them to decide how to sort them out. Thinking and communication become more difficult, more complicated, more specialised and require their more conscious effort (Seymour 27). However, the declarative information piling up in EFL readers' minds rarely requires to be processed by focusing on their meanings (Morgan 16).

The term reading in this study covers not only printed material but also all received ideas considering the fact that printed material is the primary place to find the thinking process (Ayseleworth 126). In the broad sense of teaching students the rules of logic or how to assess evidence is hardly new. The role of curiosity and questioning in education are as old as the history of education. If historical antecedents are traced in a straightforward manner, it is obvious that critical thinking is the "corner stone in the journey human kind is taking from beastly savagery to global sensitivity" (Facione 8). A concern with critical thinking in education is woven throughout the Western tradition of education, from the Greeks to the Scholastics to the present day (Burbules 48). Aristotle, Plato and Socrates are famous pioneers who considered the conceptualisation of "thinking"; "Socrates taught his students how to think clearly and critically about contradictions of evidence presented in arguments and how to use various techniques in reasoning." (Pogrow qtd. in Akyüz 1) 2000 years ago, Aristotle imposed on us an important responsibility for being sensitive to the ideas, when he formulated his principles of logic (Hullfish 105). Centuries later, Francis Bacon warned the danger of reading improperly and advised people as they read not to dispute the author's view nor to accept it

uncritically, but to “weigh and consider” it. In the same line, Edmund Burke expressed the same view: “To read without reflection is like eating without digesting.” (Ruggiero 53)

In our context, one of the most important challenges facing tertiary level EFL prep instructors in particular is to decide how to present reading lessons to match the syllabus requirements and students’ language needs. This study assumes that reading lessons must maximise tertiary level students’ language potential, while at the same time provide an environment, which enables to improve their critical reading skills. The assumption is to have reading lessons with a full and balanced integration of language and reading skills, because language level is not the only obstacle for successful comprehension. Some of the reasons for failure in comprehension are connected with defective reading habits - even in their own language and text structure (Swan vii). Moreover, teachers ought to undertake the close scrutiny of gatekeeper texts that determine tertiary level EFL students’ future education and career options. Unfortunately, some are dull, poorly written, too abstract or too simplistic, and misleading. Either way, this study aims to draw attention not only to the problem of reading syllabus and text but also to the students’ reading habits (Kurfiss 106).

The correspondence between language proficiency and reading ability on comprehension is still a prevalent assumption, particularly for EFL reading: EFL learners’ limited control over the language shapes their approach to text as linguistic-oriented. However, this assumption is so overemphasised that EFL students’ reading process loses its meaning-oriented characteristic. Their low language proficiency constrains their role to read ideas properly. It implies that the language proficiency in L2 necessitates a different emphasis on L2 reading problems (Hudson 183-4).

If the primary goal of tertiary level EFL preparatory programs is getting students to be literate in English, as well as helping them to become increasingly independent and efficient readers, the particular mission of reading lessons must be to maximise their comprehension abilities. In addition, language learning should not be limited to one-year. The students must be expected to “adopt strategies which were incorporated into long-lasting language learning routines”. Since the students’

procedural knowledge triggers critical reading, they are imperative for their academic achievement (Parkinson). In critical reading context, being literate in English refers to being a powerful reader to evaluate and judge the assumptions. Therefore, 'Critical Literacy' can be considered as a remedy to overcome passive reading. The students must be aware of the fact that language is a powerful force in society. They must be careful about the language because it can be consciously varied to distort reality, misrepresent the truth or change people's attitudes and perceptions. The difference between objective reality and perceived reality forces us to be very careful when we use language. Language is a powerful force in society. Anybody can put something into words and fix it forever and at the same time distort it. The language one uses can be varied both consciously and unconsciously. To the perceptive reader these variations will reveal much about the speaker's personality, his/her education, age, knowledge of his time, where s/he lives, and most important of all, his/her perception of the world and the way in which s/he wishes others to perceive it (Aik 15-6, 19).

The relationship between language and thought corresponds to underlying assumptions about the nature of critical reading. In its simplest level, "the writer encodes thought as language and the reader decodes language to thought." (Goodman 12 qtd. in Alderson 19) However, critical reading has not been generally encouraged in EFL classrooms in either the wider or the narrower sense, whether we are talking of those with very limited English language proficiency or of quite advanced learners of English. EFL students are rarely "invited to draw on their experiences of literacy, or to articulate their understanding of it." Reading lessons are considered "to be unproblematic as an activity, simply as what goes on when a reader meets text." That explains why EFL texts are generally selected for their potential to challenge. They are usually used as "either vehicles for linguistic structure, as general interest material usually of a fairly safe, bland kind or as functional survival material for some groups of L2 learners who are given material such as forms or official letters, thus suggesting an assimilations model of literacy". Students, then, have no choice but accept rather than challenge the assumptions (Wallace 62).

The underpinning rationale of this research involves practical, but informed ways to help the research students to overcome the obstacle of language difficulty to

their enjoyment of critical reading. This rationale stems from the cognitive and critical thinking approaches in the educational mainstream, which emphasise change in the orientation of the reading lessons. If EFL readers have the awareness to judge and analyse the written text, they can be accepted as literate in English. Critical Pedagogy emphasises teaching students how to analyse and develop reading and writing assignments from the perspective of formal, logical patterns of consistency (Giroux 200-1). In the same line, Critical Literacy suggests EFL teachers giving students “tools for weighing and critiquing, analysing and appraising the textual techniques and ideologies, values and positions.” (Luke et al. 35)

In conclusion, the concept of effective critical reading is widely supported by EFL reading literature, but design of critical reading tasks to train EFL readers is still limited. Equally, in current reading lessons for tertiary level preparatory classes, both students and teachers have developed restrictive reading habits. They simply focus on what is on the lines by dismissing deeper meanings between and beyond the lines. Therefore, this area of research is relevant to the needs of EFL learners both at the immediate local sense, and further afield. To further this idea, a new conception and representational approach that focus on the methodological paradigms to reading lessons must portend new insights. Enriched with the constituents of critical reading, a tailor made programme aims to increase the quality of the study group’s reading lessons.

1.2. RESEARCH AIM

The underlying aim of the study is to encourage the students to keep the balance of their stance by raising the awareness about the language of a text. Scholes points out that in an age of manipulation, the worst thing a reading teacher can do is to foster students an attitude of reverence before texts. This age requires students to be critical readers as they are in dire need of critical strength to resist the continuing assaults of all the media. This study is an attempt to offer some methodological approaches to critical reading (Wallace 60-1). This approach aims to investigate the ways to overcome the students’ over-submissive attitude and to increase their confidence to challenge writer’s assumptions or ideas. Reading for such a purpose not only determines the pace of the reading but also promotes the concept of

independent learning. Once they are involved with the text, they are able to achieve critical reading through the facilitation of the tasks. In a way, the study aims to give the students the opportunity to balance their struggle for decoding the text without losing critical reading skills. In this context, some provocative texts can be used to allow the students to “recognise that language is not simply grammar, but that it is also a system of communication.” Therefore, they are involved in sharing information, using language for special purposes, expressing opinions (Fairclough 7).

The teacher’s instruction must encourage the students to question ideas in the text and to analyse and interpret the assumptions in the written texts through some tasks. The tasks can be seen as the orientation towards language. If critical reading tasks or conscious mental activities, which involve a deliberate choice of process or task, each of which may involve different constellations of skill and knowledge, are implemented properly, EFL reading lessons become a first and leading step for tertiary level EFL students’ academic achievement. Critical reading tasks are means to an end, not an end in itself. The goal of the study is not to have students who could read critically by following the procedure perfectly; rather it is to give tertiary level EFL students the opportunities to use their critical reading comprehension strategies.

In sum, the initial aim of the research is to design reading tasks that allow students to express their own opinions about the content of the text, a writer’s style and his/her choice of words and to increase the percentage of time allocated for critical reading. To this end, the study explores what aspects of critical reading should be adopted. In addition, it investigates EFL critical reading skills by adopting critical language awareness and representational approach, with the belief that these approaches can enhance students’ EFL textual analysis skills, and increase their awareness of critical reading skills. The study expects that the integration of the analytical tools of CLA will broaden students’ scope for critical reading and enrich the students’ literacy awareness. Therefore, the utilisation of CLA tools in reading lessons is highlighted as the procedural skill of critical reading. In other words, this study can be seen as an academic attempt to kindle mental inquiry and adventure.

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research question centres on how to develop critical reading skills in EFL learners based on the critical language awareness approach. This area of research, as stated in the previous part, is necessary because of EFL learners' current over-reliance on decoding activities, in a much more restrictive sense, for textual comprehension at the expense of critical reading skills. EFL reading is more than decoding and encoding English texts. It should involve comprehending not only what is on the lines, but between the lines and beyond the lines (Keith 335). The research aim necessitates highlighting the following subsidiary questions to show the insights into the nature of the research group's reading problems.

1. How can the teacher researcher improve the students' language analysis skills for language and text, enabling them to read not only what is on the lines, but between the lines and beyond the lines?
2. How can the teacher researcher improve her reading instructions to help the students be aware of certain language clues to analyse the text for a better comprehension? How can cognitive and CLA analytical tools be integrated to the reading lesson?

CHAPTER II: DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

This part defines the key words and terms to reach a common understanding in an alphabetical order. It highlights definitions that are compatible and relevant to cognitive approaches.

2.1. Action Research

‘Action research’ in education is a family of activities, professional development with a view to improving the quality of actions. These activities have in common the identification of strategies of planned action, which are implemented, and then systematically submitted to observation, reflection and change. Lewin’s model, which involves a cyclic sequence, is adopted for this study. This cyclic model was divided into seven sub-stages. In this model, there are two main stages. In ‘diagnostic stage’, the problems are analysed and defined. In ‘therapeutic stage’, the problem is attempted to solve by applying a therapy (Cohen 208). ‘Action research’ is situational – diagnosing a problem in a specific context and attempting to solve it in that context. If teachers themselves pose the questions explored, it is more likely to be valuable and stimulating. Since the teachers are actively involved in their own classroom, action research is an important principle of modern teacher development (Carter 2). They take part directly in implementing the research. Therefore, action research is self-evaluative. Modifications are continuously evaluated within the ongoing situation to improve practice (Burns 347-61).

2.2. Action Research Terms

This part gives action research terminologies in an alphabetical order:

‘Learner journals/diaries’ are intended to help students reflect on what they are learning and be conscious of how they are doing, what they are expected to do by raising awareness of, what the cognitive processes in reading are. It is students’ own

account for their meta-cognitive progress as “the practice of recording thinking”. Reflecting one’s own experience is beneficial as it involves analysing and making judgements about what has happened. Since this is integral to every aspect of learning, the research students were expected to verbalise what they have learnt in reading. Recording metacognition, in its simplest meaning, refers to “the internal rehearsal of ideas.” (Wilson vii) The format can be various depending both on the level of the students and the aim of the study.

‘Quantitative research’ aims to establish new generalisations stated as observed uniformities, explanatory principles, or scientific laws and to justify conclusions that are reached, extending beyond the population of the research group and the situation studied. Since it aims to discover the truth, it has a great investment in reliability and validity. Data and the assessment techniques must be reliable and valid. The design features must be able to create satisfactory internal and external validity. Otherwise, the research is worthless in scientific eyes (Burns 12, 353). On the other hand, ‘qualitative approaches’ are concerned with processes rather than consequences, and with meanings rather than behavioural statistics. In this study, this approach has been adopted, as the main purpose is to improve educational practices.

‘Teacher’s journal’ is the activation of metateaching. It “refers to the processes of teachers reflecting on their thinking and teaching, understanding it and seeking to improve it.” (Wilson vii) Recording in detail what changes occurred in lessons will help teachers not only to monitor tasks and feedback but also to classify and analyse data (Cohen 220) (See Appendix C).

‘Tertiary level EFL preparatory program’ gives English education at university level (Sinclair). ‘The teacher’ may either refer to the teacher researcher of this particular study, or, to any teacher who delivers reading lessons. While ‘students’ refers to general students, ‘the students’ or ‘the research group/class’ refers to the subject group who are tertiary level EFL preparatory students of the Faculty of Engineering and Architecture at İstanbul Kültür University. Group B-1 consists of 25 Turkish students, attending classes for six hours a day, five days a week. They started as pre-intermediate students, level two in the preparatory program with four levels, as determined by the placement test. At the end of the academic

year, they are expected to be able to read intermediate level English texts. 10 students were chosen as the research group. The criteria were their eagerness to cooperate during lessons. They promised to attend lessons regularly. Their performance in the Pilot Study tasks was another criterion.

‘A Task’ is a goal oriented communicative activity with a specific outcome, where the emphasis is on exchanging meanings not producing specific language forms (Willis 36). Its definition is crucial as “almost any activity-generating, goal oriented experience, even a classroom lesson or structured elicitation device, can get mislabelled as a task.” Two recurrent features stand out for the definition of ‘task’: “the first is that tasks are oriented toward goals.” Students are expected to arrive at an outcome and to carry out a task with a sense of what they need to accomplish through their talk or action. Secondly, the tasks are student-centred. “What this feature suggests is that students take an active role in carrying out a task, whether working alone or with other participants. In other words, a task is not an action carried out on task students; rather, a task is an activity which students, themselves, must carry out.” The features can take many forms (Pica 12). ‘Task-based syllabus’ springs from the communicative approach to language teaching. A task-based syllabus also refers to ‘a procedural syllabus’ (Carter, 1993: 68).

In this study, ‘traditional teacher-led syllabuses’ are introduced as conventional syllabus. They are based upon teachers’ control on the lesson. A teacher selects and organises the content and in control of the selection and organisation of the tasks. Conventional reading syllabus is top-down, written by conventional criteria giving emphasis on declarative knowledge and referential language. This syllabus is written without needs analysis. It lacks representational approach. Contrary to that approach, “a learner-led syllabus takes the direction determined by the learners, so that it is impossible to predict in advance exactly what route the syllabus will follow, since it is the pace and direction set by the learners that will dictate its shape.” In a traditional curriculum, methodology is mostly ignored on the grounds that “the teacher knows best” (White 95).

2.3. Approaches

For ‘representational language approach’, meaning of the language stretches beyond the limits of a sentence, which requires the analysis and interpretation of language use not just as reference but also as representation. In other words, language is seen as a means of communication in which words are used to refer to a concrete and common sense world. It is also seen as a mode of communication in which a speaker or a writer’s attitude and stance towards that world is represented in terms of how they are positioned within a discourse community. In that process, common sense understanding may be displaced or at least relativised and questioned (Carter 75). Where representational language teaching/learning differs from purely referential language teaching/learning is that the rules are questioned, played around with, and put to different uses as part of that ongoing process of language acquisition (Mcrae qtd. in Timuçin 203).

In ‘Bottom-up approaches’ a reader tries to decode each individual letter encountered by matching it to the minimal units of meaning in the phoneme to arrive at a meaning of the text, whereas with ‘top-down approach’, the interaction process between a reader and a text involves the reader’s knowledge of the world, experiences, expectations and intuitions. For ‘top down approaches’, the schemata, and the reader’s contribution over the incoming text are important factors. Understanding is expectation based. It is only when the expectations are useless or wrong that bottom-up processing begins (Schank 94 qtd. in Alderson 17-8). Good readers can use efficient predicting strategies and after certain practices, produce educated guesses.

‘Critical Literacy’ is “a prescriptive educational, cultural and political agenda about how literacy should be used, and about what literate citizens should be capable of in fast, capitalist, 21st century community and work cultures” (Luke et al 41). ‘Cognitive researchers’, introduced a process called ‘reciprocal teaching’ that “helps students monitor their reading comprehension and practice and internalise.” Proficient readers have four cognitive strategies as key repertoires. They are ‘questioning’, ‘summarising’, ‘predicting’, and ‘clarifying’. In designing tasks, the basic steps of “reciprocal teaching” might be beneficial. A reading-teacher and

students may participate in a structured dialogue about a text, using these four comprehension strategies. Over time and with practice students become increasingly adept at using the strategies to aid comprehension. In the research, students were given tasks that require “mental engagement and awareness of his or her reading process.” In the end, they were expected to monitor and check their comprehension. Practising these strategies in the context of purposeful reading will “help students internalise the most important strategies”. Similarly, ‘reflective learning’ is a way of thinking how one can improve (Wilson v).

2.4. Critical Thinking

Philosophers and educators offer various definitions of ‘critical thinking’. Short and simple definition may oversimplify and undermine its nature. What we need is a clear and careful definition for the satisfactory process of critical thinking and reading activities. An implicit or ambiguous definition may confuse or mislead students. The initial criterion for definitions is their applicability to the study. The Delphi report, which is an expert consensus statement on critical thinking, is compatible to the study as it is relevant and satisfactory. It defines critical thinking as purposeful and self-regulatory judgment which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, or contextual considerations upon which that judgment is based. It is essential as a tool of inquiry. As such, critical thinking is a liberating force in education and a powerful resource in one’s personal and civil life (Facione 15). Apart from some discernible skills such as following an argument, visualising a proposal, imagining alternatives, it is difficult to identify a set of skills that is common to all instances of critical thinking, except at a very general level. Critical thinking is more than just a set of thinking techniques. It is “a voice, a stance, a relationship with texts” and one’s social identity (Fox qtd. in Atkinson 71). It also involves a certain combination of a willingness or disposition, attitude, together with the appropriate knowledge and skills, to engage in an activity or problem with reflective scepticism (Mc Peck 42).

2.5. Reading

To avoid a linguistic confusion, one has to realise that 'reading' does not point out or refer to a single common property, which is common to all cases of 'reading'. Not all generic skill words denote singular skills, and it is simply a mistake to think that they do (Mc Peck 38). Therefore, it is necessary to underline that this study uses cognitive definition of reading.

'Reading process' is the type of reading that is most typical and most readers use regularly (Grabe 12). Apart from memorising, studying, skimming and scanning processes, reading is normal reading in which "the reader is comprehending all or most of the thoughts the author intended to communicate." (Alderson 13)

2.5.1. Terms Related to Reading

'A reading model' can be described as "a set of assumptions about what happens when a reader approaches a text, that is, the ways a reader derives meaning from printed material". Devine proposes, "Readers do indeed have internalised models of reading process that they bring to bear when they read." (Devine 127)

'Reading process' begins with the focusing of the eye on the printed page and ending with the encoding of information into long-term semantic memory or its subsequent retrieval for purposes of demonstrating comprehension to someone in the outer world. The study focuses on global comprehension of particular importance to critical reading comprehension: the issue of how the students analyse the language of texts critically. Two levels of comprehension processes are distinguished: "macro-processes, which have to do with global understanding, and micro-processes, which have to do with local, phrase-by-phrase understanding" (Kintsch and Yarbrough qtd. Alderson 92). 'Comprehension processes' are linguistic skills that involve understanding information, concepts and various implications of the cognitive prerequisites. "Reading cannot be divorced from comprehension because they are not separate but one and the same act. Comprehension is a complex cognitive achievement." (McPeck 127) A text is language written in context, with an intended message, which may go beyond its linguistic representation. To understand it, a

reader must use explicit and implicit information. The reader must have some background knowledge of the situation portrayed in the text. The reader's own goals, attitudes and understanding of the communicative intention of the author must also be taken into account. The reader's awareness for his/her goal to read is, therefore, important as a necessary element for a better comprehension. "Comprehension is consisting of parsing sentences, understanding sentences in discourse, building a discourse structure and then integrating this understanding with what one already knows" (Alderson 12).

'Cohesion' is a system of analysis that describes the coherence of a text as a function of semantic relations realised in surface-level features (Steffensen 140). They are the patterns of language in a text, which help it to hang together across sentence boundaries to form larger units like paragraphs. It can be lexical or grammatical (Goatly 332). It reflects the coherence of the writer's thought and helps the readers to make the right connections between ideas.

While 'connotations' are emotional responses associated with a term in context, 'denotation' is what a term literally means or refers to (Hinderer 249).

'Pragmatics' is non-linguistic knowledge. In this study, presuppositions, or, assumptions were introduced to the students to deal with them effectively. They can be roughly divided into two groups: first, the knowledge and experience that the writer expects the reader to have. Secondly, the writer expects the reader to share, or at least to understand the opinions, attitudes and emotions (Urquhart 114).

'Propositions' are the basic units of meaning in text comprehension which take the reader beyond the level of morphemes and words (Underwood et al. 199).

'Procedural knowledge' is given as an alternative to 'declarative knowledge'. 'Procedural knowledge' refers to knowing how to reason, inquire or how to analyse a text. 'Declarative knowledge' is the knowledge of the facts and concepts. In EFL teaching, grammar, vocabulary and good command of English are declarative knowledge.

'Schemata' are "networks of information stored in the brain which act as filters for incoming information. These interlocking mental structures represent reader's knowledge. Our knowledge is organised rather like a series of spiders' webs, with interlinking threads. New knowledge is added to one of these schemata and interpreted according to its meaning within that particular context. Schema theory provides a theoretical underpinning for the notion of relating new knowledge to old. Therefore, the rationale of a warm-up period and pre activities are valid. While formal schemata are "knowledge of language and linguistic conventions, including knowledge of how texts are organised", content schemata refer to "knowledge of the world, including the subject matter of the text" (Alderson 33).

2.5.2. Cognitive Definitions of Reading

In 1917, Thorndiken gave a plausible reading definition by characterising it as reasoning. He states that "many of the strategies by which readers resolve matters of meaning approximate to a logical process of deduction and inference, and that good reader are those who can think clearly". This triggers academic tendency "towards a top-down interpretation of the nature of reading". Emphasising the importance of schemata and logical inference abilities in the reading process are relevant to the reading definition as "consisting of decoding/word recognition, and general comprehension or problem-solving skills." (Alderson 21-2) Goodman's characterization of the reading process as one of sampling, predicting, confirming and correcting might describe part of a general problem-solving strategy. This definition has an important role for this study because of his affluent notion of "psycholinguistic guess". This psycholinguistic process starts with a linguistic surface representation encoded by a writer and ends with meaning, which the reader constructs. Therefore, there is an essential interaction between language and thought in reading. The writer encodes thought as language and the reader decodes language to thought (Goodman 12 qtd. in Alderson 19).

In the same line, Bacon and Burke highlighted the cognitive side of reading: there is one key idea related to the very essence of effective reading, and on which the improvement of reading depends: reading is reasoning. When you read properly, you are not merely assimilating. You are not automatically transferring into your

head what your eyes pick up on the page. What you see on the page sets your mind at work, collating, criticising, questioning, comprehending and comparing. If this process continues well, one reads well. This is an active and dynamic process, which consists of examining ideas and deciding what they mean and whether they make sense, rather than merely receiving and accepting them (Ruggiero 53-4). While Widdowson describes reading as “the process of getting linguistic information via print”, the doyen of cognitive psychology, Ulrich Neisser, puts forward reading as externally guided thinking. In addition, Perfetti claimed that reading could be considered as thinking guided by print, with reading ability as skill at comprehension of text (Urquhart 17). Cognitive reading strategies are “mental steps or operations that learners use to process both linguistic and socio-linguistic content.” (Wenden 19)

2.5.3. Critical Reading

During the research, critical reading was introduced to the students as a process that shares the analysing and evaluating steps with critical thinking. In critical reading, one actively enters into a silent dialogue with the writer of the material they are reading. This dialogue consists of “the writer’s words and your questions and ideas.” (Glen-Cowan 386)

In this study, ‘critical reading’ refers to understanding the author’s purpose, distinguishing facts from opinions, judging the reliability of the opinions presented, interpreting the statements further, and drawing inferences or implications from what is presented (Wiriyachitra 150). It is the ability to see logical flaws in arguments or to weigh up the evidence for explicit claims (Goatly 1). It means “thinking about what is on the page and what it means to the reader after s/he has read it. It is more than agreeing or disagreeing with a writer, which involves the skill of telling the difference between a fact and an opinion or a judgement. “It is thinking about what the writer does to present his or her perspective”. (Zukowski 11-2) Therefore, a critical reader is someone who assesses the writer’s validity and reliability as well as being aware of the fact that they bring their beliefs, values, experiences, and prior knowledge to the reading process by asking questions about themselves, the writer,

and the writing. The precise definition for this study is: critical reading is not only reading what is on the lines, but between the lines and beyond the lines (Keith 335).

2.6. Critical Thinking and Reading Skills

Critical reading involves different constellations of skills and knowledge. They are ‘Analysing’, ‘Applying what one knows’, ‘Classifying’, ‘Comparing’, ‘Evaluating’, ‘Interpreting’, and ‘Synthesizing’. Apart from ‘Summarizing’ and ‘Paraphrasing’, ‘Following the writer’s train of thought from one sentence to the next’, ‘Identifying the function of a text’, ‘Recognising the presuppositions and assumptions underlying the text’, ‘Distinguishing facts from opinions’, ‘Recognising an intended audience and point of view and evaluating a point of view’, ‘Recognizing implications and making inferences’, ‘Analysing evidence’, ‘Deducing meaning or understanding the intended message’ ‘Distinguishing between important points and supporting details’ are other critical thinking skills.

The following critical reading skills deserve particular attention.

2.6.1. Analysing

‘Analysing’ is the first step of a successful critical reading which combines the skills of understanding ‘what the writer wrote’, ‘what evidence s/he used to form the ideas’, ‘whether or not the writer’s argument is strong’, ‘what the information can be used for’ and ‘finding out the writer’s important tools and techniques’. By noting words and by discovering assumptions, the reader can better understand the writer’s point and make a better-informed decision about whether or not s/he agrees (Hammond 221). ‘Analysis’ is “to identify the intended and actual inferential relationships among statements, questions, concepts, descriptions, or other forms of representation intended to express belief, judgment, experiences, reasons, information, or opinions.” It includes “examining ideas, detecting arguments, and analysing arguments as sub-skills of analysis.” Sub-skills of analysis are “identifying unstated assumptions” and “sketching the relationship of sentences or paragraphs to each other and to the main purpose of the passage.” (Facione 4) Analysis gives objective and critical distance on the reading and helps evaluate what one reads

(Bazerman 11). Logical analysis in reading helps readers to judge the consistency of ideas. On the other hand, ‘critical analysis’ refers to “asking tough questions – questions that arise from a dynamic interplay of ideas and perspectives.” (Colombo vi)

2.6.2. Classifying and Comparing

‘Classifying’ is necessary, as one needs to recognise the grouping of ideas for a better comprehension. ‘Comparing’ is one way to analyse a topic. One looks for similarities and/or differences by questioning (Facione 5).

2.6.3. Deductive and Inductive Reasoning

Deduction is another phenomenon that one has to pay attention for an effective comprehension. “A good reader is able to tell the difference between valid and invalid arguments.” (Boostrom 61) ‘Deductive reasoning’ is arguments that lead to a necessary conclusion. Thinking enables us to derive conclusions on the basis of what we already know. To derive a conclusion is to make an inference, which can informally be defined as something that has not been explicitly stated but that follows from the explicit information. Inferences can be categorised into two broad classes: deductive and inductive. Deductive inferences are logical inferences; they necessarily follow from the premises, the explicit information. Valid inference might be arrived at by the following a general semantic procedure.” (Myers et al. 2) Argument Schemata or forms of skeletons are patterns of deductive reasoning. “All _____ are __ __. All . . . are _____. So, all . . . are __ __. “When the solid, broken, and dotted lines are replaced by general terms, the result is an ordinary argument.” (Michalos 7)

For Aristotle, ‘induction’ is the process of reasoning from the particular to the general. An inductive argument demonstrates that a universal conclusion is implicit in particular premises (Boostrom 58). They are best guesses “based on whatever information is available which has been studied in a number of different ways: in problem solving and creativity, in concept formation, and in hypothesis testing (Stevenson 6).

2.6.4. Distinguishing Fact and Opinion

If students recognise the author's point of view, their awareness can be increased. They need to understand the implicit or explicit messages to assess the author's points of view. Implicit point of view can be revealed by inference meanings and drawing conclusions. A successful reader can identify ideas in the text based on fact and opinion (Wiener 278). Point of view might be an important concept to present. When students are expected to give their point of view, it is quite natural to have diversity of opinions. The critical reading exercises in which students were distinguishing facts from opinions and judgements was the most challenging for the teacher, who remained flexible and asked for clear thinking from the learners. (See Appendix F-4) In this context, 'facts' are statements that tell readers what really happened or really are the case. 'Opinions' are statements of belief, judgement, or feeling. Solid opinions, of course, are based on facts. However, opinions are still somebody's view of something; they are not facts themselves. If an idea is based on direct evidence or known by actual experience or observation, the students should be able to recognise the statement as a fact (Kurfiss 46).

2.6.5. Evaluating Ideas: Inference and Interpretation

Evaluating ideas in the text is very significant for an effective reading. Plain understanding of the text means that the reader does not pay attention to the ideas in the text. The rationale of this study proposes that a university student must be able to read in a critical way, which means that s/he has to evaluate ideas once they understand them. When they evaluate a writer's ideas, they judge the worth of what you read (Wiener 277). Evaluating incorporates not only the critical thinking but also the creative thinking and problem solving. Students must be aware of "the limitations on objectivity in writing". In reading lessons, students must construct and evaluate arguments. Understanding the meaning of the statements is the first step to evaluate an argument critically. However, "the meaning of some term in an argument is not clearly understood which makes it difficult to assess the merits of the argument". Ambiguity often leads to "confusion and to a lack of clarity." (Annis 99) In other words, 'evaluation' is to assess the credibility of statements or other representations and to assess the logical strength of the actual or intended inferential relationships

among statements, descriptions, questions or other forms of representation. Sub skills of evaluation are judging an author's credibility comparing the strengths and weaknesses of alternative interpretations, determining the credibility of a source of information, judging if two statements contradict each other, or judging if the evidence at hand supports the conclusion being drawn?" (Facione 6)

On the other hand, the ability to make inferences is "the ability to answer a question relating to meanings not directly stated in a text." (Alderson 9) 'Inference' means, "identifying elements needed to draw reasonable conclusions." (Facione 7) There are two types of inferences: While 'casual inferences' are formed by the explicit information in the text, 'elaborative inferences' occur when the information is given implicitly and a reader should construct the inferences from that (Underwood et al. 208). When a writer expects the reader to draw certain unstated conclusions from facts, inference is easy. "In this case, the reader has all the evidence required, but is expected to take the final steps. In practice the division between these uses of inference is not always clear." (Urquhart 115)

'Interpretation' is not only "to comprehend and express the meaning or significance of a wide variety of experiences, situations, data, events, judgments, conventions, beliefs, rules, procedures, or criteria" but also to decode significance and clarify meaning. Interpretation of a text contains several activities that must be held for critical reading: "Recognizing a problem and describing it without bias, distinguishing a main idea from subordinate ideas in a text; paraphrasing someone's ideas in your own words; or, [. . .] identifying an author's purpose, theme, or point of view." (Facione 8)

2.6.6. Explanation

While the definition of 'explanation' is "to state the results of one's reasoning", its sub-skills are "stating results, justifying procedures, and presenting arguments." (Facione 6) (See Appendix C-3)

2.6.7. Reading between the Lines and Synthesizing

It is crucial to encourage students to read sensitively, “paying attention not only to what is explicitly stated but also what is implied, assumed, or ignored.” When students analyse the text, they ought to think critically about an argument or a point of view, and consider the values implicit in the argument. To identify implicit assumptions, students should be careful about the argument in the text. They should ask such questions: “What unstated assumptions does the argument depend on?” (Boostrom 55-6) (See Appendix C-5.)

‘Synthesising’ is the process of pulling together pieces of information and ideas. This is particularly important in schoolwork, as students have to pull together ideas from different sources, they might make something new as they add their own ideas and experiences.

2.7. Skills and Abilities

As ‘strategy’, ‘skills’, and ‘abilities’ have been labelled and classified in various ways, there is a need for greater clarity. However, the exact difference between ‘a skill’ and ‘a strategy’ is not clear (Alderson 306). ‘Strategies’ are often defined as a set of abilities under conscious control of the reader, though this common definition is not likely to be true. Many abilities commonly identified, as strategies are relatively automatic in their use by fluent readers, such as “skipping an unknown word.” (Grabe 15) Some strategies may have negative impact on reading comprehension. That is, students may unconsciously reach comprehension by using wrong strategies. L2 readers’ strategies should involve basic reading strategies as well as linguistic, semantic, and textual cues. Other strategies may be semi-conscious. Strategies are not only conscious efforts learners make but also purposeful activities (Wenden xi). They refer to ““techniques, tactics, potentially, conscious plans, consciously employed operations, learning skills, basic skills, functional skills, cognitive abilities, language processing strategies and problem-solving procedures.” (Wenden 7) On the other hand, the terms ability and skill are used interchangeably. They represent linguistic processing abilities that are relatively automatic in their use and their combinations such as “word recognition” and “syntactic processing”

(Grabe 15). Skills are, in essence, essential academic habits. ‘Linguistic abilities’ are syntactic, semantic and phonological operations, while non-linguistic abilities consist of our general cognitive ability (Colley 131).

Metalinguistic knowledge is our knowledge of how language works, knowledge of words and word parts, knowledge of sentences and their parts, and knowledge of texts and genres and how they are organised. In addition, it is our knowledge of what we know, which permits us to reflect on our planning, goal setting, processing of tasks, monitoring of progress, recognition of problems and repair problems. It represents a basic way to understand learning strategies and, especially, our explicit and conscious use of reading strategies. In both cases, our knowledge includes what we know, declarative knowledge, but also how we use this knowledge, procedural. In both cases, it is not straightforward to assert a separation between linguistic and metacognitive knowledge, or between cognitive knowledge and metacognitive knowledge (Grabe 46). Metacognitive reading strategies are “learners’ acquired beliefs about reading.” (Wenden 31) They are ‘to adjust reading rate’; ‘to skim’; ‘preview’; ‘to use context to resolve a misunderstanding’; ‘to formulate questions about information’; ‘to monitor cognition’, ‘to include recognising problems with information presented in text or an inability to understand text’ (Alderson 13).

‘Self- regulation’ is one of the critical thinking skills to monitor one’s cognitive activities self-consciously, “particularly by applying skills in analysis, and evaluation to one’s own inferential judgments with a view toward questioning, confirming, validation, or correcting either one’s reasoning or one’s results.” (Facione 7) In the interview, the students stressed that they employed self-regulation strategies.

2.8. Syllogism and Fallacy statements

While ‘informal logic’ is the study and practice of reasoning in the form of ordinary language arguments, ‘syllogism’ is the classical way of analysing a process of deductive reasoning (Hinderer 252). It affords a quick way of testing the validity of certain kinds of arguments (Altick 138). Studying over fallacy statements will

increase students' ability to distinguish reasonable and unreasonable statements (Boostrom 71). 'Fallacy' is an argument that should not persuade a rationale person (Hinderer 250). They mostly categorised by certain criteria of a good argument that they violate (Damer xi). Most fallacies cover wide spectrum of emotions (Engel xv). 'Reasoning' is seeing connections between evidence and information, so that if you believe the reasons are good ones, you should be willing to go along with what they point to (Hinderer 2).

'Inquiry': Dewey's definition for inquiry shares the similar implications with critical reading which is active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and further conclusions to which it tends (Massialas 1).

2.9. Question Types

In the study, several types of questions are mentioned:

'Display questions' are types of questions that require short and exact information. Students are expected to display their knowledge.

'Macro questions' are used to raise awareness for "the assumption that language use involves making choices: "Why does the writer say that? Why does he use that word rather than another word?" "Why does he use that tense?" (Littlejohn) In this study, macro questions were used to raise the students' awareness (See Appendix D-1). 'Micro questions' are used to test local comprehension. These questions are closely related 'micro' and 'macro' processes which are two notions for the different understanding that makes the common distinction between two components of reading: word recognition and comprehension. "The micro processes have to do with local, phrase-by-phrase understanding, macro processes with global understanding." (Alderson 9, 12) In other words, 'lower-level processes' are word recognition and constructing sentence meaning (Grabe 20). Word-level process refers to encoding and lexical access. Sentence-level refers to semantation and interpretation and text-level refers to topic identification, knowledge activation and

intersentence integration. For a meaningful interpretation of the content of the text, we should focus on the higher-order or text-level processes.

‘Socratic dialogue’ is a questioning type that promotes critical reading. It is “an instructional technique that can be used to enhance critical reading. It entails asking appropriate questions to help learners find answers themselves through their own thought process.” It is derived from the practices of Socrates’ questioning. His primary aim was to encourage critical judgement by practicing the oral art of discussion that he called ‘dialectic’ and which consisted of question and answer exchanges between people who sought to discover ultimate truths (Vygotsky qtd. in Akyüz 22).

2.10. Other Terms

While the ‘surface structure’ carried all the information that is actually spoken, ‘deep structure’ characterised the basic semantic relations of a sentence, the proposition it expresses (Stevenson 3-5).

There are three levels of understanding. Reading ‘the lines’, reading ‘between the lines’ and reading ‘beyond lines’. The first level refers to the literal meaning of the text, the second one to inferred meanings, and the third to readers’ critical evaluations of text. Higher-level processes are comprehension processes that more closely represent comprehension. When a reader constructs a more elaborated interpretation of a text, this represents beyond understanding and interpreting the ideas (Grabe 25). On the other hand, any reading that does not end with meaning is a ‘short circuit’.

‘A text’ is “the wording of anything written or printed; the very words, phrases, and sentences as written.” (Hopkins 75) For the functional language, it is “any chunk of written language which carries a whole meaning.” (Wallace 8)

CHAPTER III: LITERATURE REVIEW ON CRITICAL READING

The qualitative approach shapes the orientation of this chapter. Previous studies are considered as a stimulus mainly to raise awareness for the action-research that was conducted for the study and a sounding board for ideas as well as finding out what is already known in the professional literature. This chapter enlarges each interrelated subjects under two main headings to give the full picture and reviews the professional literature on critical reading. Part I discusses the tertiary level EFL reading phenomenon with the help of the literature on the process of reading and reading models and theories by highlighting the main subjects and findings of relevance to critical reading within their methodological context. Part II presents the potential implications for classroom procedure of adopting a critical reading model. This part also synthesises the main thrusts of research findings in so far as they are relevant to the design of tasks and combines the final stage of the action research.

3.1. PART I

3.1.1. Academic Achievement

If critical reading is the application of the critical thinking skills to a reading text, one needs to discuss the factors that promote the process of critical thinking and its application in reading. A study on critical reading would not be a satisfactory one if it does not include a part about critical thinking (Akyüz 6-7). Despite its importance, there is a widespread academic tendency not to use critical thinking due to its negative association and controversial nature. Academics refrain from using critical thinking because of its complicating nature. This negative association has brought up the question of whether criticism is really negative or not which can be easily refuted. If the critical person evaluates ideas by the application of critical standards or values, we must accept positive features of critical thinking. The word ‘critical’ does not mean ‘negative’ but ‘thoughtfully’. Instead of avoiding it, reading lessons can be a starting point by having critical standards. “To critique”, has more to

do with analysing the good and bad aspects of any person, object and behaviour (Bartu xi).

In addition, critical thinking is widely agreed to an important aim of education, which is closely associated with goals such as rationality, autonomy and perhaps creativity and intelligence. It sometimes refers to a skill, which may be misleading in that it is plainly not a single activity that one engages in (Milburn 77). Therefore, it must be the ultimate educational ideal that should be given its due in educational deliberation and practice (Siegel 136-7).

Since the awareness of the factors will promote successful university studies, this study highlights the positive affects of critical thinking studies on academic achievement. It is crucial for students' concept of independence and learning habits (Akyüz 1, 8).

3.1.2. Process and Product of Reading

For Huey, to completely analyse the complicated process of reading was "almost the acme of a psychologist's dream". It would "describe very many of the most intricate workings of the human mind." (Anderson 34) Researches to characterise the basic processes of reading comprehension have not fully achieved his goal. Since reading has a challenging nature, they have made substantial progress. To make it easier, one should know the distinction between "the process of reading, and the result of that process, the product." While the product of reading refers to "comprehension" at the end of the reading, the process is the interaction between a reader and the text, in which many things occur. When the reader is looking at print, deciphering in some sense the marks on the page, s/he simultaneously, is deciding what they mean and how they relate to each other, presumably thinking about what is reading: what it means to him/her, how it relates to other things s/he has read, to things s/he knows, to what s/he expects to come next in texts like this.

However, to externalise investigating the silent, internal and private nature of reading process may distort and change the nature of the process. There are many ways of externalising the process of reading (Alderson 3-5). Reading process conveys such cognitive aspects as reading strategies, 'inference', 'memory', 'relating text to background knowledge', as well as decoding, and obvious 'language aspects'

as ‘syntax’ and ‘lexical knowledge’ (Urquhart 18). In the study, when three students were interviewed, they externalised their internal reading process by explaining what they were doing at the time of the reading. However, one must accept that their answers did not reflect the precise nature of the process (See Appendix D-4).

3.1.3. Levels of Understanding

‘Reading’ is more than recognising each word and determining which words refer to each other. This cognitive definition introduces us to the model of reading that “entails three levels of representation”. The first one, a surface level representation occurs when a reader “collects visual information and combines it with knowledge in the lexicon, and makes use of syntactic rules”. Then the second level of activity, a propositional text base is formed by semantic analysis of the sentences. The last level of activity, interpretative level, requires reader’s interpretation of the text by making inferences. It follows that, words are first collected together into ideas or propositions; they then draw upon the reader’s knowledge to go beyond the meanings provided by this propositional text base to form a mental model or situational model in which the text is interpreted (Underwood et al. 206, 211).

In the view for cognitive psychology, reading is externally guided thinking. However, from their standpoint, certain problems arise in any use of a foreign language (Beaugrande 15). Reasoning skills directly affect reading comprehension. Reasoning about the text is a multi-level processes that one needs to follow an argument. In order to understand a sentence, apart from identification of words and sentence relations, we need to be aware of “the second and third levels of representation that are necessary for reading and understanding. These are representations of the propositional structure of the sentence, and of the reader’s personal model of the ideas being presented.” The reader recognises propositions that are formed by the agents and events in the text, and then link the “mental model of the text based upon the relationships between the ideas. The meaning of the text may be contained in this propositional model alone, but we often need to reason about the propositions.” A reader’s existing knowledge is required to make inferences about the relationships of the agents and events. Since thinking while reading refers to

readers' thinking about "the ideas represented by the words on the page", it is therefore vital to pay attention to the propositions in the text. Students must be given critical reading tasks to increase their awareness for propositional analysis. Text analysis reinforces the students' ability to make inferences. "Successful comprehension depends not only upon identification of words and propositions, but also upon the reconstruction of the relationships between them." Coherence of the text is created by these relationships of the ideas (Underwood et al. 190, 208, 211).

However, despite the persuasiveness of theoretical notions, literature has slim empirical justification to define the distinctions among 'levels of understanding'. As language is rarely completely explicit, processing it requires the reader to make inferences. A sentence 'The floor was dirty because Sally used the mop' readily infers that 'the mop was dirty'. Although this statement was not made 'literally', this single sentence makes it obvious that writers have "assumptions about their readers' knowledge." If readers do not have the knowledge that writers assume, then difficulties in literal understanding occurs, even if inferences can be made. In this context, being literate gets different dimensions when "a reader's ability to understand at certain levels." It is possible to comprehend the words but not the meaning of sentences or the organisation of the text (Alderson 8-12)

In the task "Sun", the students' attention was drawn to the difference between literal understanding of the paragraph, and an understanding of the main implications of text. This task was not so different from the reading activities they saw to practice "the distinction between understanding details and understanding the main idea of a text" (See Appendix C-4). The evaluations of such differences, as inferred meanings are somehow 'deeper' than literal meanings, and that a critical understanding of a text is more highly valued by society than a 'mere' literal understanding. "It is more 'difficult' to reach a critical understanding of a text than it is to infer meanings, and that both of these are more difficult than 'merely' understanding the literal meaning" because the literal level is somehow 'lower' than critical understanding. Inferring meanings from text literally follows understanding texts. Later, readers learn how to approach text critically, to evaluate text. It implies that the levels are ordered: "one must understand the lines in order to read between them, one had better understands both before adventuring beyond them." (Alderson 8) In the study, similar

implications were realised when the students read the text: 'Public Attitudes toward Science' (See Appendix C-6).

3.1.4. A Challenging Approach

Critical approaches require students' respond to provocative text. They are more comprehensive and systematic than casual reading: take it or leave it reading. "Casual reading is firing on only one or two cylinders: getting the plain sense of the text and forming a general impression of whether it interests you or not." However, critical approaches convey a collection of study strategies, which enables to read not only what is on the lines, but between the lines, inferences and symbolic meanings, and beyond the lines, context and evaluation of the text (Keith 335). Therefore, critical reading is the most demanding of the different types of reading. Reading for information requires more mental effort and readers must be sure in these instances that they understand what they are reading. It is attempting not only to comprehend the message but also to evaluate the significance of the assertions. The step from comprehension to evaluation is a challenging one. First, readers are expected to understand what they read on a literal level. Secondly, they judge the validity of the ideas and information by being able to identify and draw conclusions about main ideas, summarizing those ideas. Lastly, they are expected to express their own ideas clearly (Harris 187-8).

It requires special attitude and different from "the type of reading involves skimming, scanning or 'checking' and has little to do with the entirely different but similarly named 'close reading'." Therefore, it is crucial to forget the process of 'ordinary' reading and focus instead upon this very different variety" (Miller 129). It is not simply close and careful reading. To read critically, one must actively recognise and analyse evidence upon the page (Kurland).

3.1.5. Critical Pedagogy and Critical Literacy

"Reading the world" as well as "reading the word" represents global and local comprehension in the method of critical pedagogy (Freire and Macedo 17 qtd. in Burbules 53). In this crucial regard, "critical pedagogy shares with critical thinking

the idea that there is something real about which they can raise the consciousness of people.” Both traditions believe that there is something given, against which mistaken beliefs and distorted perceptions can be tested. In both, there is a drive to bring people to recognise “the way things are.” (Freire 17 qtd. in Burbules 53) In other words, they “arise from the same sentiment to overcome ignorance, to test the distorted against the true.” The rationale of this study stems from the cognitive and critical thinking approaches in the educational mainstream, which emphasise change in the orientation of the reading lessons. If EFL readers have an awareness to judge and analyse the written text, they can be accepted as literate in English. Critical Pedagogy emphasises teaching students how to analyse and develop reading and writing assignments from the perspective of formal, logical patterns of consistency (Giroux 200-1). These logical and analytical skills also involve thinking outside a framework of conventional understandings; it means to think differently. “An inability or unwillingness to move beyond or question conventional understandings is being illiterate in that sense.” (Burbules 59)

Learning to “decode” means finding the actual, hidden meanings of things. It is a revealing choice of words, as opposed to “interpretation, which also suggests finding a meaning, but which could also mean creating a meaning, or seeking out several alternative meanings.” It is necessary for academic achievement to be open to, and a comfort with, thinking in the midst of deeply challenging alternatives (Burbules 61). Critical Literacy suggests EFL teachers giving students “tools for weighing and critiquing, analysing and appraising the textual techniques and ideologies, values and positions.” (Luke et al. 35) To further this idea, a new conception and approach that focus on the methodological paradigms to reading lessons portended new insights. Enriched with the constituents of critical reading, a tailor made programme in the action research aimed to increase the quality of the study group’s reading lessons.

3.1.6. Language and Thought

This study necessitates discussing the nature of the relationship between language and thought. These insights affect the research proposal. It is pointed out that there have been three main assumptions about the relationship between language

and thought: While Chomsky and his followers see language and thought as distinct and independent abilities, the others see language and thought as components of a single integrated system. The linguistic view of deduction about the distinction between language and thinking, which was rooted in ideas derived from Chomsky's model of language, is noteworthy for critical reading. He implies that language is the "mirror of the mind." (Thompson 69) However, Piaget proposes that language is determined by thought: they are distinct but interrelated systems. In this context, one may easily distinguish language and thought, regardless of the particular stand that is taken on the relation between them. While linguistics is introduced as syntactic, semantic and phonological operations, or linguistic operations, the non-linguistic abilities consist of our general cognitive abilities. For critical reading, knowledge of the syntax is necessary for decoding and meta-linguistic knowledge. Although structural information is conveyed by word order in English, one should pay attention to the deep structure of both active and passive sentences. Chomsky made an important distinction between two levels of language, a deep structure and a surface structure.

However, since 1960s, Chomsky's model of grammar has undergone considerable revision with an assumption that active and passive sentences have different deep structures. This alternative view of linguistic performance recognised the importance of semantics rather than syntax and of non-linguistic world knowledge, pragmatics, rather than linguistic knowledge. They assume that the basic meaning of a sentence, the proposition, can be determined by referring to deep grammatical relations. For them, semantics is more important as it is concerned with meaning: To know the meaning of a sentence requires knowing "what the world would have to be like for the sentence to be true". Reader's background information, schemata allow to "know what situations make it true or false." For a successful reading, pragmatics, play an immense role. It "concerns those aspects of comprehension that depend on inferences based on non-linguistic general knowledge." Even if a sentence is very simple, its syntax and semantics are straightforward and so the linguistic meaning is easy to discern, a reader's schemata is still necessary for meaning making (Stevenson 3-9). These implications helped the students when they follow arguments by taking the form of propositions into consideration.

Errors in the construction of a propositional representation, reasoning errors, may cause errors in comprehension. When the reader constructs a propositional representation of the premises and applies the rules of logic to the premises, s/he derives a conclusion. Inferences are made on the basis of the form of the premises, not their content. Or, for the semantic view, the reader constructs a mental model of the premises, which yields a potential conclusion. Nevertheless, the relationship between language and thought corresponds to underlying assumptions about the nature of critical reading. In its simplest level, “the writer encodes thought as language and the reader decodes language to thought.” (Goodman qtd. in Alderson 19)

3.1.7. Critical Language Awareness

Critical discourse analysis and critical reading focus not only just decoding a text and processing the meaning, but using the text for the reader’s purposes, analysing its presuppositions, and how it works on its readers (Mickuley 26). Patterns of clear thinking are essential to analyse and evaluate language. “Even when language is not coloured by connotative words or by other specially selected devices, people may be misled into believing what not true-by is failing to detect the faulty reasoning that lies behind a statement.” One must realise that “the minds of even the best of us, are filled with half-truths, superstitions, falsehoods, and prejudices.” If no particular attention paid on them to search for the errors in logic, they lead to another (Altick 120).

Language is our principal means of understanding reality and communication. Words come so naturally and become so closely associated with what they represent that we may unconsciously regard them as synonymous with reality. That can be a costly mistake. As people’s language develops according to their insights and observations, and since no people have equal insights into all dimensions of reality, no language is perfectly suited to express all realities (Ruggiero 57). The difference between objective reality and perceived reality forces us to be very careful when we use language. Language is a powerful force in society, anybody can put something into words and have fixed it forever and at the same time may have distorted it. The

language one uses can be varied both consciously and unconsciously. To the perceptive reader, these variations will reveal much about the speaker's personality, his/her education, age, knowledge of his time, where s/he lives, and most important of all, his/her perception of the world and the way in which s/he wishes others to perceive it (Aik 15-6, 19).

Wallace underlines the importance of 'Critical Language Awareness' by suggesting a procedure for reading between the lines, critical reading: During the interaction, a reader must adopt a particular position compatible with his/her purpose in reading. This position can be either assertive or submissive. However, if the reader is too submissive, s/he may accumulate information without accommodating it into the structure of existing knowledge. If s/he is too assertive, s/he may distort the writer's intentions and deny access to new knowledge and experience. The submissive attitude of the reader is not only an individual tendency, which a reader has to submit to the undoubted superior knowledge of the writer but also a context of learning that is forced upon them (Wallace 59-60). Unfortunately, the view that teacher and text-and-test must know best is a widespread assumption for learning, which imposes submission in our reading classes. The underlying aim of the study is to encourage the students to keep the balance of their stance by raising the awareness about the language of the text. Disputing the propositional content of texts and ideological assumptions are other grounds on which writers can be challenged. Wallace argues that "effective reading involves challenging the ideological assumptions as well as propositional knowledge in written texts and that we as teachers may need to guide readers to an awareness of ideological content simply because it is so often presented as 'obvious'." My students were encouraged to be aware of 'assumptions' on which most teaching and learning are based. They were told that assumptions reflect points of view. Lawrence Thomas exposes the reality of making assumptions into perspective when he says, "there is no view without a point of view." The students' evaluation is imperative for academic achievement as Dewey warns, "that when a wrong theory once gets general acceptance, men will expend ingenuity of thought in buttressing it with additional errors rather than surrender it and start in a new direction." (Thompson 2) This underlines the importance of university students' questioning and evaluating even accepted theories.

In therapy stage, reading tasks were intended to guide the students for critical reading by highlighting these implications (See Appendix C-3). Scholes points out that in an age of manipulation, the worst thing a reading teacher can do is to foster students an attitude of reverence before texts. This age requires students to be critical readers as they are in dire need of critical strength to resist the continuing assaults of all the media. This study is an attempt to offer methodological approaches that may help the students to resist certain kinds of assaults presented by written texts: “to challenge particular ways of talking about persons, places, events and phenomena and ways of talking to the reader-of positioning her/him in particular ways.” Here, critical reading “ involves more than a critical awareness in a broader sense, of what reading itself is, which in turn involves a consideration of cross-cultural aspects regarding who reads what and why in what situations” (Wallace 60-1).

The teacher’s instruction encouraged the students to question ideas in the text (See Appendix D-1). The tasks can be seen as the “orientation towards language”. This approach aims to investigate the ways to overcome EFL students’ over-submissive attitude and to increase their confidence to challenge writer’s assumptions or ideas (Fairclough 7). Reading for such a purpose not only determines the pace of the reading but also promotes the concept of independent learning. Once students are involved with the text, they are able to achieve the reading goal by way of critical reading through the facilitation of CLA tasks. In a way, the study gave the students the opportunity to balance their struggle for decoding the text without losing critical reading skills. In this context, some provocative texts were used to allow the students to “recognise that language is not simply grammar, but that it is also a system of communication.” Therefore, the students are involved in sharing information, using language for special purposes, expressing opinions. If they think that language is only used for communication, they may ignore the fact that people do not use language neutrally. “Language is used not only as a means of sharing ideas, but also as a way of controlling people and influencing what they think and do. Language use involves making choices about lexis, grammar, register, discourse structure etc., and these choices are often made for particular reasons.” The writer’s choice of words or languages of the advertisements are good examples to raise their awareness (Littlejohn). Equally, students must pay attention that the passive voice might be used to hide facts or give authority to a statement. Similarly, the language

of the advertisements is so friendly that the familiar tone of voice makes readers feel that a product is important to them personally. CLA raises their awareness of how language is used to make them more conscious EFL readers.

3.1.8. Reading and Cognition

If reading and cognition are interrelated, one should notice that the sub-skills of critical reading are at the same time reasoning skills. Goodman's characterization of the reading process might be described as part of a general problem-solving strategy than that of reading. Indeed, many aspects of reading represent problem solving, and that problem-solving strategies are useful for the resolution of many difficulties in reading. As problem-solving skills are closely related to reasoning skills, to establish the relationship between reading and cognition is necessary. Thorndiken's characterization of the reading process, as good readers are those who can think clearly, triggers academic tendency towards a top-down interpretation of the nature of reading by emphasising the importance of schemata and logical inference abilities in the reading process (Alderson 21). Recent interest in the development of critical reading skills not only draws upon the study of reading and thinking; it draws little if any distinction between the two.

Since it is difficult to assess and make distinction between the ability to read and the ability to think critically, reading teachers must be certain that "to what extent they wish to assess reading ability, and to what extent they wish to distinguish this from other cognitive abilities". In the same vein, it is implied that there is a clear distinction between comprehension and inference. "Whilst acknowledging that 'critical reading' blurs this common-sense distinction, we need to pause before deliberately confusing the two." (Alderson 22)

It is argued that "higher order skills questions" do not assess a reader's cognitive abilities rather than reading ability. This is problematic when designing EFL tests where "the aim is normally to test language-related abilities, not intelligence, and thus any correlation between second-language reading and intelligence worrying". Four different levels of reading are distinguished as: word, sentence, and paragraph or above, and no particular unit. The latter two levels clearly

involve reasoning. “Thus the issue of whether reading involves reasoning is a definitional one, according to Carver.” For him, “using very difficult passages and asking questions that clearly require reasoning” contrasts the definition, as reading is not primarily reasoning. He defends that reading tests should measure not reasoning, but reading. Reasoning should be measured by intelligence tests. More attention should be directed toward the measurement of absolute levels of the ability to read sentences that make up paragraphs, not the ability to answer reasoning-type questions on paragraphs. The relationship between absolute levels of reading and absolute levels of reasoning is confusing and needs to be investigated. Therefore, one should be careful about concluding from reading test data that the ability to answer reasoning-type questions on paragraphs mainly involves the ability to reason (Carver 51-5 qtd. in Alderson 101). Separating ‘reading’ from ‘reasoning’ is full of difficulties. It was not so possible in the study to gain a picture of the students’ reading abilities uncontaminated by other cognitive variables. Moreover, it was not easy to identify ‘good readers’ who may or may not be ‘good thinkers’. This ensures that ‘higher-order’ reading skills can be used as much as ‘lower-order’ skills.” In the recent developments of EFL reading, the distinction between comprehension and ‘critical thinking’ becomes harder to draw and doubtless is more of a continuum than a dichotomy (Alderson 22).

3.1.9. Top-Down and Bottom-Up Processes

‘Bottom-up’ and ‘Top-down’ processes are two important continuums for their apparent dichotomy over the last 20 years. Although, the pendulum swings between two approaches, it is clear that both have vital roles in reading as they “interact in complex and poorly understood ways”. The balance between two approaches is likely to vary with the text, reader and purpose. Current emphasis on the importance of text recognition necessitates some change of emphasis on reader (Alderson 20).

Recent researches have stressed “the importance in reading of the knowledge that a reader brings to text. Models of reading that stress the centrality of this knowledge are known as schema-theoretic models.” Although, the negative statements made against the bottom-up processes, either approach has “an adequate

characterisation of the reading process, and more adequate models are known, as interactive models, in which every component in the reading process can interact with any other component, be it 'higher up' or 'lower down'. Processing is now thought to be parallel rather than serial (Grabe 384 qtd. in Alderson 18). Goodman claimed that his model assumed that the goal of meaning is the construction of meaning that requires interactive use of grapho-phonetic, syntactic and semantic cues. Readers are not passive identifiers of letters and words but active constructors of their own knowledge. Meaning construction does not work linearly: reading is a process in which information is dealt with and meaning constructed continuously with as a series of cycles. The movement of each cycle is arranged by the readers' focus. When each cycle melts into the next, the readers leap toward meaning.

3.1.10. Reading and Communication

Interactive approach has made a significant contribution to the understanding of EFL reading. For interactive approach scholars, reading, like any other communication skills, has various purposes. The purpose of any text can be "to bring about some change or other by the transmission of information." There are various particular interactions associated with particular purposes. Therefore, to deliver his/her messages, a writer tries to "conduct a covert interchange to establish a convergence of frames of reference so that the information he wishes to convey is made accessible to his supposed reader. To do this, he has recourse to the kind of tactical procedures." And naturally, s/he anticipates immediate reactions of the imagined reader. In addition to that anticipation, the writer also makes use of strategic procedures. These procedures can be either retrospective or prospective. The retrospective procedures for formulating have functions to summarise, to conclude or to highlight what was written before, which can be followed with conjunctions (Widdowson 214, 221). In the study, the students were encouraged to summarise texts to enhance their retrospective procedures (See Appendix C-2.).

The interaction is a struggle for the students like other EFL readers because of unknown words. This obviously affects comprehension and takes the pleasure out of reading. By the application of reflective tasks, reading lesson was aimed to be more enjoyable and effective. Learner Initiative is more important than teacher control

with the belief that one needs to recognise and respect the learner's emotional responses to the language, to texts, to the learning situation and to the target culture (Bassnett 5).

However, it is not the teacher's contention to underestimate students' struggle for decoding the text. This will be an oversimplification of decoding activities. Neither is there a suggestion that we must "dissect different types of texts and teach isolated features of language. However, as teachers, we will have enormous advantage if we are sufficiently aware of the way in which authors use language." (Littlefair xii) What the teacher would like to contend is effective comprehension could be better reached if the reader recognises writer's intention for communication. And if the reader is not trained to deal with a writer's intention for his/her targeted readers, s/he resists playing the role that the writer has cast him/her in by realising the underlying discourse from textual clues provided. Therefore, his/her reading will not be an act of submission (Widdowson 222-3).

3.1.11. Good Readers

In interactive model, good readers are both good decoders and good interpreters of texts, their decoding skills becoming more automatic but no less important as their reading skill develops. For EFL reading, the rapid and accurate decoding of language is important to any kind of reading. Equally, in the interview, one student articulated that it is rapid decoding which makes one a successful reader or not. Good readers know the language as they have metalinguistic knowledge by decoding both the lexical units and syntactic structures they encounter in texts (Eskey 95). For Allington, good readers are more reliant on context for fluency and poor readers more reliant on context for accuracy (Stanovich 51). To work at perfecting both their bottom-up recognition skills, and their top-down interpretation strategies, EFL readers achieve properly. Good reading is fluent and accurate reading that can result only from a constant interaction between these processes.

Although successful reading is much more than simple decoding, that does not mean that decoding is not a cognitive process. Decoding skills are important for fluent reading. It involves bottom-up, as well as top-down skills, and successful

comprehension cannot be achieved without it. EFL readers seem to need as much help in “holding in the bottom” as they do in performing higher-level interpretations of texts. Language level is a major problem in EFL reading, and that even educated guessing at meaning is no substitute for accurate decoding. Hence, in the study, critical reading tasks emphasised re-reading the text over and over again for the task performance. Procedural knowledge of text analysis led them to understand the text better. It took us 8 hours to fully understand the text “Public Attitudes” (See Appendix C-6) (Eskey 98). If an EFL student “gets the maximum of information from a text with a minimum of misunderstanding”, s/he is “good at comprehension”. S/he is able to show his/her understanding by re-expressing the content of the text- for instance, by writing sentences or paragraphs in answers to questions, or by summarising the text (Swan vii).

The structure of the language of the text contributes much more to the reader’s construction of meaning than strictly top-down theorists would have us believe. It follows that fluent reading entails both skilful decoding and relating the information so obtained to the reader’s prior knowledge of the subject and the world. Thus, the fluent reader is characterised by both skills at rapid, context-free word and phrase recognition and, at higher cognitive levels, the skilful use of appropriate comprehension strategies. In the context of EFL critical reading, lower-level skills as the rapid and accurate identification of lexical and grammatical forms are crucial and should not be seen as obstacles to be cleared on the way to the higher-level guessing game strategies. They are skills to be mastered as a necessary means of taking much of the guesswork out of reading comprehension. This realisation necessitates an interactive model of reading that provides the most convincing account of this reciprocal perceptual/cognitive process for critical reading and for the proper interpretation of texts.

3.1.12. Reader Variables

‘Reader’ and ‘text’ are two main variables that have been popular investigation subjects. The first factor, reader variables, is “the way readers themselves affect reading process and product”. Apart from other relatively stable characteristics such as sex, age and nationality, a number of different variables have

been identified as the state of the reader's knowledge, the readers' motivation to read, and the way this interacts with the reasons why a reader is reading a text at all. The strategies that a reader uses when processing text efficiently have received academic evaluative attempts to establish what skills are required. What readers know affects what they understand: when they process text, they integrate the new information from the text into their pre-existing schemata. The state of their knowledge influences not only process, product and recall but also how they recognise information as well as how they store it (Alderson 33).

Although there was an early emphasis on the importance of syntactic as well as lexical knowledge, only recently has rhetorical knowledge and metalinguistic knowledge been studied in any depth. Unfortunately, the research findings are lack of pedagogical insights. Such knowledge is imperative to identify the subjectivity of the language of a text. However, research results on them were ambiguous and failed to prove that knowledge of the passive was essential to process texts containing passives. An important element in understanding text appears to be the ability to parse sentences into their correct syntactic structure. In the study, successful readers were able to get at the core of more complicated sentences. The ability to process complex syntax seemed more important for the understanding of detailed information in sentences than for the understanding of the gist of a text. The existence of relevant schemata or even the ability to activate them did not always allow efficient comprehension. Although the relevant schema, some students were not able to follow arguments in the text: 'Mobile phones' (See Appendix A-1 and A-2). It follows that it is the general cognitive ability, which makes a reader a good or bad one (Alderson 38, 48).

3.1.13. Knowledge of Genre/ Reader-Text Interaction

We know that there are many aspects of a text that might facilitate or make difficult the reading process from a variety of different disciplines. Therefore, it is also crucial to highlight some issues about the other side of the coin. The major source of insights into the language of text has often been studied from a linguistic perspective without concern for the reader. This is due to the assumption that "the analyst represents a typical reader". Similarly, one can investigate the "intimate and

complex interrelationship between text content and reader knowledge”. That is, “the quantity of information in a text affects understanding and recall, as does the density of propositions.” If “the information is stated explicitly in the text”, it requires less inference. “Certain topics are associated with certain types of text.” For example, due to the variety of content, expository texts are more difficult to process than narrative texts. Obviously, the context of the text as well as text readability influences text comprehension. A simple, if not simplistic conclusion is that critical reading tasks must cover as many different texts, tasks and topics as possible. (Alderson 60-81)

It is crucial that the students know how texts are organised – what sort of information to expect in what place- as well as how information is signalled, and how changes of content might be marked. The procedural knowledge of, for example, “knowing where to look for main idea in a paragraph, and being able to identify how subsidiary ideas are marked,” was given to the students in the tasks (See Appendix C-2). Students must know the type of the text as it affects their reading. For example, description itself is not an argument. This implication is noteworthy for critical reading as it brings up two important points about arguments. First, context is very important in deciding whether or not a passage should be treated as an argument. Secondly, although arguments generally require a reason that is actually stated, a passage in which the conclusion is strongly implied but not stated may still function as an argument. These complications require readers to exercise careful judgement about what the main purpose of a passage really is with the awareness that they bring too much information (Hinderer 21). Such exercises were held in the text ‘Volunteer Work’ (See Appendix C-2).

3.1.14. Cohesion and Reader Knowledge

Organised background knowledge cannot be enough to extract information from text. The text itself must be organised in such a way that information can be readily encoded. Textual factors can influence a coherent representation of the content of text. Global and local coherence can be achieved by casual, thematic and linguistic cohesion. They are necessary and crucial elements for comprehension. For global coherence, a text has to be coherent; it must have a consistent theme and the events or arguments. The theme must be organised logically within the text. It is

quite possible to maintain coherence in a narrative text. Similarly, on a more local sentence level, thematic and linguistic cohesion is necessary for a text to be comprehensible. Thematic cohesion between sentences is crucial for successful representation of text. The form of this representation may vary according to discourse type. For the formation of a representation of a narrative text, casual cohesion and referential integration are crucial. In a descriptive text, consistency is important which implies that different types of text have different coherence requirements, and strategies for establishing coherence that will presumably vary with text type. “A coherent text allows a representation to be built up in a consistent manner.” (Colley 129) Tasks must “start with global understanding and move towards detailed understanding rather than working the other way round.” (Grellet 6) This implication helped the teacher to design task procedures.

The cohesion of the text is one of the basic steps of critical reading, which provides both the theoretical insights and pedagogical implications. Although there are arguments on the significance of the cohesion in the text, attention to the cohesive devices improved the students’ comprehension. This knowledge increased their understanding of the meaning of a passage. However, it is argued that with an effective prediction, students are ready to give meaning to the text. This implies that cohesion does not cause coherence. Instead, “if readers possess the generalised framework for the text being read, more of the cohesive ties that are present in the original should occur in the recall because they will be anticipated, understood, stored, and recalled under the direction of the relevant schema.” Or, “it is textual coherence that affects cohesion, not the reverse, and cohesion is the result of a coherent rendering of content.” Similarly, “if a logical relationship between ideas, actions, and concepts is perceived, or if the activities of a particular social transaction are familiar, then it might be expected that a reader would focus on the principal sequences, actors, and actions involved.” (Steffensen 141-2)

3.1.15. Propositional Strategies

To construct a representation of a text, the reader should use propositional strategies. Reading is not a passive activity in which you just take in information; whether consciously or not, readers create their version of the text: What is literally,

in a text is, a lot of pages with black marks on them, pages of signifiers that the reader, attach to signified. The signifier “blackberry,” is attached to the signified, those big juicy fruits one finds on bushes. This is particularly noteworthy for EFL reading, as it is up to the readers to make those signifiers significant. This model of reading emphasises three points in relation to signifiers and signifieds: First, no one-to-one correspondence exists between signifiers and signifieds. Words have multiple meanings. Second, “different readers attach different signifieds to the signifiers in a text, and thereby readers help to create texts they read.” Third, “the relationship between signifiers and signifieds is cultural.” (Mc Cormick et al. 6)

Propositions or ‘units of meaning’ are crucial notions for cognitive processing. Sentences can be broken down into underlying propositions to allow the construction of a model of the events or situation portrayed in the text. Discourse processing is a strategic process which takes into account not only the content of the discourse but also its intention or communicative context. It follows that strategies are procedural knowledge about understanding discourse, and as is the case for other problem-solving procedures, these need to be learned and eventually internalised. These implications are noteworthy for the aim of the study. It is expected that critical reading studies will increase the students’ approach to texts in subsequent years (Colley 131-2).

For analysing surface structures for the construction of the text base, the reader should use propositional strategies as a strategic unit, the propositional schema. To get the ‘gist’ of a section of text, its macrostructure should be held which is a hierarchical structure of macro propositions with greater condensing of text. Local coherence strategies allow meaningful connections to be made between different sentences in the construction of a macrostructure. To link propositions, the use of background knowledge is required. “The lowest levels of the macrostructure, the text base, derived by a reader for a particular text may differ from that intended by the author, as it is a function of the interaction of the reader and the text and each reader may have different background knowledge and aims. As the comprehension process is strategic in nature and has much in common with problem-solving processes of the kind, the strategic application of procedural knowledge in the comprehension process should be applied. This may prove to be fruitful, particularly

in the study of reading acquisition. As Garnham proposes interpretation of text, in many instances, may vary with the goal of the reader. A dynamic strategic approach provides a framework for examining the individual differences, which results from the purpose, competence and existing knowledge of different readers (Colley 134-5).

3.2. PART II

This part identifies a number of methodological implications and applications for EFL critical reading. While Part I deals with the general issues relevant to critical reading, this part presents the most salient and significant teaching implications and applications for the classroom reading teachers. This part is also the synthesis of the action-research's conclusion and the professional research literature to incorporate the insights gained so far.

3.2.1. Metacognition and Metalinguistic Knowledge

Having the students become efficient and effective proficient readers, tasks were designed to raise their awareness in constructing a meaning that they could assimilate or accommodate. In the tasks, they practised the activities by using the least amount of effort to achieve effectiveness. Some students minimised their dependence on word-bound comprehension. Background informations about the content of the text increased their efficiency (Maria 225).

Part I discusses that effective reading requires a progressive effort to construct "the meaning of the text" (Arm Buster 1984). An efficient reader has the ability to use top-down strategies sufficiently. Also, what makes a good reader different from a poor reader is the awareness and applications of this ability. They are "absorbed by texts until a triggering event, such as a pile up of poorly understood words, signals a failure to understand what they are reading. They then decide what action to take to correct the situation so that they can continue reading". However, poor readers fail to "recognise their own failure to understand a word or passage they are reading and so are unable to correct the situation (Palinscar and Brown qtd. in Kurfiss 32).

Good readers are mainly distinguished from bad ones by their metacognitive abilities. Since reading performance is closely related to metacognition, the critical reading tasks aimed to raise the students' awareness with a view that good readers possess knowledge of strategies, and are often aware of how or when to apply the knowledge. They aimed that students could infer meaning from surface-level information and develop knowledge about how the reading system works. Students may find a text easy to evaluate text for clarity, consistency and plausibility. For Block, "metalinguistic awareness plays a part in learning to read." While less proficient readers are frequently defeated by word problems by emphasising word problems, more proficient readers do not worry so much if they do not understand a word. For them, exercises to develop contextual guesses are vital. These implications about metacognition and procedural information are noteworthy for our critical reading tasks. With the help of metacognition studies, the students were supposed to be stronger readers and "their strength lies in being able to decide which problems they can ignore and which they have to solve" (Alderson 41-2). Verbalising their awareness and being more sensitive to inconsistencies are other characteristics of good readers.

However, ranging students' profiles from good ones to bad ones did not help the teacher design the classroom procedures. The classroom procedures presented in the study is not a "base for the theory that will generate things to do on Monday and explain why they do or do not help people read more efficiently and effectively". There is no easy formula to help some students to experience "click of comprehension." (Samuels 22) These implications helped the teacher researcher be more sensitive when they design tests by being more conscious to concentrate either on product or process and to diagnose the causes of poor reading can be more bottom-up or more top-down. Therefore, both possibilities should be encouraged, rather than to concentrate on one (Alderson 20).

Good readers are more successful in using metacognitive skills than less fluent readers. Recognising important information in a text, previewing, using context to resolve a misunderstanding, formulating questions about information are metacognitive skills related to critical reading. In addition to them, monitoring cognition, including recognising problems with information presented in a text or an

inability to understand a text are other metacognitive skills. One student articulated his/her metacognitive awareness in the learner journal (See Appendix E). Learner journals highlighted the importance of metacognitive awareness in reading lessons. The students alleged that they were aware of the mental process involved in using reading skills as strategies. The importance of such skills helped the teacher researcher design interview questions (Alderson 48).

3.2.2. Procedural and Declarative Knowledge

Tertiary level preparatory syllabus must encourage procedural knowledge which are ‘using knowledge to accomplish discipline-related tasks like solving problems’, ‘interpreting texts’, ‘designing or evaluating experiments’, or ‘weighing the merits of a proposal’. Procedural knowledge relevant to critical reading includes the knowledge of how a text is written, or how the writer presents his ideas and how to evaluate his/her ideas. In short, it is to acquire the knowledge of how to read between the lines and beyond the lines. Where “declarative knowledge suffices to talk or read about a subject; procedural knowledge makes it possible to do something in the subject domain.” (Greeno et al, qtd. in Kurfiss 40) In this study, task-based approach emphasised the procedural knowledge to incorporate practice and feedback in the context of critical reading skills (Kurfiss 41).

Teaching language rules as declarative knowledge does not ensure that it will be used in subsequent reasoning. Teacher oriented lessons encourage students to acquire the information without thinking or using it. In that sense, teacher-oriented language learning would not be helpful for students’ using language in different situations. Since declarative knowledge is acquired through memorization and by rote, this knowledge makes students mentally lazy because “knowledge must be well understood – reconstructed in schemas in memory- to be useful to the learner. It must also be organised and accessible to the learner (Kurfiss 33-4). Contextual and reflective learning are not new concepts. To solve unfamiliar problems or think about complex issues require procedural knowledge and training. As Coleridge had put forward centuries ago “the aim of education is not storing the mind with the various sorts of knowledge most in request, as if the human soul were a mere repository or banqueting room.” To produce ‘new fruits of thought’, knowledge must place “in

such relations of circumstance as should gradually excite its vegetating and germinating powers.” (Creber 62)

Metacognition and procedural knowledge are two different concepts, which influence academic achievement and problem solving. While metacognitive strategies support problem solving in any domain, procedural knowledge is domain specific. Planning is an important metacognitive strategy, which is visible in many domains. Therefore, an effective critical reader should not only plan “by establishing goals and sub-goals during the problem-solving process”, s/he also uses “a variety of strategies to review their progress”. S/he monitors his/her comprehension using strategies like summarising key points, questioning the meaning and implications of the text and clarifying the text by rereading. Metacognitive strategies are imperative for university students to increase the effectiveness of their reading and problem solving. Poor understanding can be eliminated by these strategies. Training in comprehension monitoring can be “useful in bolstering students’ reading performance”. During lessons, the importance of formulating questions was highlighted. The teacher researcher demonstrated a careful reading of a difficult text passage, showing students the techniques of questioning, summarising, clarifying and predicting, as well as relating the information to previously studied material and encouraging the students to use these techniques on assignments (Kurfiss 41, 44) (See Appendix C-5).

Metacognitive processes would be quite helpful to manage large quantities of complex and often conflicting information. Lecturing from textbooks and using only “objective” examinations discourage the development of metacognitive skills. Teachers’ instructions must direct students’ attention to their own reasoning processes, which stimulate each other’s metacognition and aid learning to improve their cognitive performances. In this study, most critical reading tasks were designed to raise students’ intrinsic motivation, because curiosity is an important factor for a better comprehension. Kurfiss emphasised the key factors of intrinsic motivation as ‘curiosity’, ‘challenge’, and ‘fantasy’. “Socratic” instructional methods and macro questions are other alternatives to trigger inquiry (See Appendix D-1 and D-2). ‘Arousing students’ curiosity’ and ‘demonstrating metacognition and building metacognitive prompts’ are necessary elements to foster students’ critical thinking

abilities. In addition, social and cognitive strategies enhance both the purpose of reading and motivation to learn (Kurfiss 47-8). In the research, nature of the questions played a crucial role in guiding students to think and read critically. Questioning helps the students discover their own ideas by giving them an opportunity to explore (Akyüz 19). In learner journals, the students narrated their reading approach and their development, which is necessary to trigger their metacognitive skills. They have vital roles to recognise more important information in a text. The meaning making process underlying these strategies was not an easy task. In the sample journal, the student summarises his/her reading improvement and which strategies that s/he uses. S/he mentions how s/he decides what is important to include or leave out when summarising an article (See Appendix E).

3.2.3. Cultural Factors

Reading and thinking critically are two inseparable processes. Learning to think and learning to read are inextricably related, so an increase in general thinking skills might be accompanied by a corresponding increase in comprehension ability (Oakhill 170). It is quite natural that it takes time and practice to read and think critically. It is obvious that not only training session and pre-reading activities but also the type of the text play significant factor in thinking and reading critically. A text should convey provocative content. There are “different readings of the same text”. Therefore, purpose, background knowledge, and the relationship between the reader and a writer are very important to have explicit guidelines or criteria in reading lessons (Urquhart 112).

Reading is a socio-cultural practice, which is not an isolated activity that takes place in some vacuum. It is usually undertaken for some purpose, in a social context, which contributes to a reader’s notion of what it means to read or to be literate. In this context, one must be sensitive about the models of literacy because being literate has more than one meaning. If we believe that a reader constructs the meaning of the text, we have to be careful about the position of the reader. However, it has been argued that texts are autonomous and readers are social beings rather than isolated individuals. Reading is not merely a cognitive operation of meaning extraction (Alderson 25). These implications are noteworthy for the students’ interpretations. Apart from the number of literacy practices, EFL reading requires

more oriented approach than reading daily literacy activities. One's view for being literate and how it is valued, used and displayed change from one culture to another. Therefore, the students should be aware of "cultural bias". Obviously, it is very difficult to reach the correct interpretation if readers are "culturally alien and therefore biased." This awareness is crucial for reading between and beyond the lines to lead them being more active reader and approach to texts globally (Alderson 25-6). The text 'A Day in the Life of a Freshman' is a story of a university student who has 'a blind date'. A class discussion was held on 'having a blind date', which is a new concept for Turkish culture (See Appendix C-4).

3.2.4. Task Design and Question Types

Understanding critical reading requires deep analysis and a constant attention. In this study, several insights and practical ideas have emerged which shapes the methodological implications and classroom procedures. The following methodological implications and conclusions were derived from the result of the previous studies in the literature as well as the outcome of the final step of action-research conducted, relevant to critical reading task design, requirements and goals.

3.2.5. Lesson Procedure

For a lesson procedure, pair and group works were "devised for a discussion of student interpretations of text." In the teacher's journal, the teacher researcher kept a record of salient points brought out, and some students' reactions and interpretations. Pre-stages of reading gave the students opportunities for additional information about topic and critical reading. Immersion in the subject is an important ingredient of effective comprehension. The individual variation among readers, especially readers from different cultural backgrounds, can be compensated by long pre-reading activities. This should be one of the roles of EFL reading teachers. The teacher researcher tried to organise tasks in such a way to maximise comprehension minimise the cultural conflicts and interference (Carrell 85). Pre-activities were important as they increase students' appetite to read, provide a need to read to complete an activity or confirm an idea. (Greenwood 15)

Providing background information and previewing for the less proficient language students, who are more word-bound, are crucial regards. Less proficient students feel that they need vocabulary acquisition by doing a lot of specific word-by-word processing exclusively in a bottom-up processing mode. For more proficient EFL readers, receiving content previews can be enough since they are no longer susceptible to vocabulary and structure difficulties in reading. As a result, they were encouraged to do more global, predictive processing in the top-down processing mode. However, less proficient readers need familiar content selections and/or content preview as well. Non-linguistic clues and illustrations are particularly appropriate for students with minimal language skills. They will also be free from focusing on vocabulary and structure if the semantic content components are provided.

Pre-activities also included presenting specialised vocabulary and structures that caused difficulties (See Appendix C-3). These pre-activities facilitated “the incubation of ideas.” (Creber 87) Schema activation is necessary in pre-stages, as one’s background information plays an immense role for logical thinking. It follows that, if we wish to develop powers of critical thought, we have to do it largely in the context of subject matters. One cannot be expected to think critically in every areas; “if people do not know anything about economics, government and tax, or about gardens, then their responses to suggestions about them can hardly count as critical thinking. The development of contextual understanding is educationally worthwhile.” In this research, the texts were not given “in a vacuum”. They were given in the context of the related subject matter (Milburn 78).

3.2.6. Aims of the Tasks

Critical reading tasks were given to promote better reading strategies and raise language awareness. These tasks aimed to help students think more reflectively and critically. They were designed by taking certain assumptions into considerations. First, effective comprehension requires practicing. Second, critical reading is not a linear process that can be divided into a series of steps. “Instead, it is a family of processes that enlighten and support one another.” Third, critical reading is not an approach only for prep classes. To take these assumptions into considerations,

therapy stages of the action research enabled the students to acquire necessary attitudes with a variety of tasks and imposed a responsibility on the students (Stevenson 23-4).

The particular aim of the critical reading tasks was to contribute to the process of becoming an efficient reader. To that end, it is crucial that the students become, comfortable, and independent in using the comprehension strategies. However, no single factor in critical reading tasks accurately accounted for the reader's overall comprehension. Efficient comprehension is characterised by a complex set of interacting processes as the reader tries to make sense of the text (Bernhardt 162).

3.2.7. Reflective Learning and Group Work

In the study, collaborative inquiry into reading was sustained by group works that gave the students sense of responsibility for a successful performance. Group work allowed the students to work collaboratively. This enabled them more active as they did not simply listen to the teacher's explanation for the text. To be more competent or engaged readers, the tasks required them to reflect their own inquiry to be involved for text. In the same line, in learner accounts, the students were required to write about their cognitive strategies. They were more successful in academic studies when students made use of cognitive strategies. Keenly aware of this reality, combination of group and individual activities enabled them to practice using the cognitive strategies (Schoenbach 77).

Introduction of metacognition is difficult and it's even more difficult to 'teach' it. To record our critical reading activities in the area of reflection and metacognition, the students were supposed to record their progress. Reflective learning requires that we should not underestimate our students. They often "have clarity of thinking and simplicity in verbalising". Furthermore, during lessons, group works gave "the benefits of working together with peers which were as important for teachers for sustained motivation, reflective thinking and metacognitive growth as it was for students." Moreover, in their presentations, the students' attempts to analyse the language were an absolute must for critical thinking and reading (Wilson ii).

Through proper use of intelligence and reflective inquiry, students can better come terms with the problems facing them (Boydston 104). This implication requires renewed endeavour for reflective learning. It is recommended because it helps to “develop and clarify thoughts”. “Reflective learning is a way of thinking how you can improve.” In this study, the students were expected to verbalise what they have learnt in learner journal (Wilson vii).

Therefore, student-oriented syllabus and reflective approach put students in the centre of learning. On the other hand, in traditional approaches, “teachers and text developers have been thought of as being the centre of knowledge.” While, reflective learning encourages students to be active and responsible readers, in teacher-oriented syllabus, students relied on teachers (Akyüz 3). However, one of the biggest problems to activate reflective learning and metacognitive skills in reading lessons is fitting them into the already crowded curriculum. Development of reflective and metacognitive thinking must be a crucial syllabus initiative essential to learning. It is integral to a process that encourages independent learners to take more responsibility for their own learning. They must be additions to our total teaching repertoire. Practising them is not detrimental to the development of reading-lessons. In addition, spending some time focusing on developing self-esteem, co-operative learning strategies and reflective skills are all best developed within the context of worthwhile activities and topics. Therefore, they must be slotted into the current reading program.

3.2.8. Students’ Responsibility

Students’ awareness needs training. They must not be the ‘recipients’ of teaching. Increasing responsibility best improves their awareness and consciousness on their own learning process and strategies. “Neither teachers nor learners can take this awareness for granted. It may be cognitively latent, but it needs to be realised into appropriate action: It needs training. Awareness, however, is not on its own enough: learners need awareness with a purpose.” (Candlin xi)

Hence, time spent for training session has an important function to accomplish tasks. With this in mind, the students were encouraged to take

responsibility in their own learning. The students' oral/written presentations or responses to the text gave them the sense of responsibility. They had to accomplish the requirements of the tasks. Therefore, they were provided with opportunities to activate and apply comprehension processes. However, success depended not only on teachers' preparation of the task and introductory instructions but also on the students' performance to carry out and complete the task. Task design was also quite important because choosing tasks on the basis of an activity and a goal alone could not guarantee that instruction was carried out effectively (Pica 12).

3.2.9. Motivation

Motivation is an essential element. The activities were designed to increase the students' motivation. As stated earlier, classroom activities were designed to minimise reading difficulties and to maximise comprehension by providing comfortable classroom atmosphere. With critical reading activities, the students were more aware that reading was a highly interactive process between themselves and their prior background knowledge, on the one hand, and the text itself, on the other. Since they were exposed to micro level questions in achievement and final tests, macro-level questions were given them to engage their attention (See Appendix D-1, D-2, D-3). Satisfactory performance on macro-level tasks required efficient organisation. Reading-teachers should be sensitive and well prepared to increase the students' motivation for an effective outcome as critical reading tasks were challenging and demanding. The tasks were also necessary to retain intrinsic motivation because their minds needed to be challenged. Although some students complained about the burden of the tasks, the outcomes of their studies were surprisingly better than it had been expected. Until they were challenged, it is not possible to guess what one knows, or even what one wishes to know." (Wilder i)

3.2.10. Task-Based Approach

Critical reading tasks were designed to reach the objectives of the study. It was mainly to encourage the students to judge the assumptions and claims and be slow to believe in a writer's point of view just because it's in print (Zukowski 11). The tasks were designed to lead them to become a resisting reader by not taking

everything for granted. However, controlling the class was sometimes a problem as reflective learning led to a chaotic learning environment unless the teacher was well prepared. The tasks must allow a reading that engages readers mentally or cognitively about the text by getting the maximum effort. In that sense, tasks can be seen as exercises in which they analyse a piece of writing closely by focusing on several things. Background information must be activated in pre-reading stages for a better comprehension as its absence inhibits performance in tasks. For example, the text, 'Baseball Fans' required a very long pre-reading activity to activate and form an appropriate schema. (See Appendix C-3)

Task-based approach had many advantages for its reflective learning perspectives. Task procedures allowed the students the opportunity to give their opinions about texts which was more challenging than conventional reading lessons. Task-based approach and reflective learning enabled the students to analyse the language and the texts critically. But many students found critical analysis or "internal dialogue" hard to achieve. In traditional EFL reading lessons, high level processing is often neglected. It is assumed that ideas are commodities transmitted from a teacher to students. Information conveys objective facts. Knowledge is presented in the traditional classroom as static. In a wider scale, this assumption not only limits our understanding of the text completely, but also limits our thinking. Dominant cultural myths impede one's critical thinking as "these collective and often unconsciously held beliefs influence our thinking, reading, and writing." (Colombo vi) Therefore, it is crucial for reading-teachers to "understand the unique contribution" of critical reading tasks. For EFL readers, these tasks are also beneficial for their language improvement as "language is best learned and taught through interaction" (Pica 10).

3.2.11. Integrated Approach

Content-centred lessons provided natural occasions for reading. In the study appropriate pre-reading and post-reading work emerged naturally in the form of introductory activities and ongoing discussions on a subject matter. Topic-related information is a must both for extracting information from text and for making the necessary inferences that make it coherent. The production of oral or written

presentations provided real motivation. The students' interests were stimulated by classroom give and take. The natural blending of listening, speaking, reading, and writing led the students to pursue a common intellectual goal collectively. To express their points of view, they had to learn how to join a discussion. Therefore, they were given discussion rules (See Appendix C-3). These attempts reflected the view that reading is no longer an isolated skill. "It simply becomes an integral part of the normal educational process. It is no longer taught as an end in itself but as a means to a more familiar end-like earning a pass." (Eskey 230) It is often accompanied by other skills. For that reason, when a reading-teacher designs a task for critical reading, s/he should integrate other skills in the task. Students should be able to express themselves either by writing a paragraph or discussing during presentations. However, this may cause a problem for reading assessment. Having students "respond in writing to comprehension questions may contaminate the measurement of reading." To overcome this contradiction, their grammatical or pronunciation mistakes were shared with main-course and other skill teachers (Alderson 25, 27).

3.2.12. Assessing Critical Reading

There are rich variety of test formats and question types for reading "as a routine measure in the school." (Francis 14) However, their validity is open to discussion. Micro questions confine readers to sentence level information (See Appendix D-3). The ubiquitous uses of multiple-choice and gap-filling tests lead to students not to go beyond sentence. Reading-teachers need to consider whether such processes can indeed be tested separately, or which methods might be most appropriate to test which process. Whether reading 'skills' are separately identifiable is not clear. "Answering a test question is likely to involve a variety of interrelated skills, rather than one skill only or even mainly. If we are not able to define what we mean by the 'ability to read', this implication makes it difficult to assess such abilities (Alderson 49, 332).

In our tests, reading questions often focus on the assessment of vocabulary/syntactic skills, or the ability to understand the literal or inferred meaning from texts. The students came up with the correct answer due to their scanning or skimming competence, disregarding the message. To design tests for a sufficient

critical reading assessment, “higher-order” skills, which are neglected in achievement and final exams, were used to explore. Apart from word identification skills, the assessment of reading comprehension poses numerous problems. It is not easy to provide a criterion for saying when the students have understood a text. “People read for different purposes, and there are as many kinds of understanding as there are ways of assessing understanding.” (Oakhill 145)

In the context of critical reading assessment, a reading teacher should be aware of the fact that the test method influenced- contaminated or enhanced his/her measurement of reading. S/he must be certain what s/he is particularly interested in testing. S/he should be interested in knowing how well the students read, and beyond that, how well they read something for some purpose with what degree of effectiveness. This may minimise teachers’ “potential bias” in tests (Alderson 117). Collins questioned the reliability and validity of prevalent reading test scores which had similar insights to the problems that were encountered in the study group’s reading lessons. He revealed that 85% of students correctly completed a multiple choice check on comprehension but only 15% wrote an acceptable sentence summarising the paragraph in the National Assessment of Education Progress Report which was held in 1981. They were not able to reconstruct the structure and meaning of ideas expressed by others. “Not only were students unable to summarise, they were rarely encouraged to support an evaluative interpretation. Reading instruction reflected the lowest level of thinking--it lacked critical analysis.” These common problems imposed a responsibility on teachers to guide students in developing higher level thinking skills. Therefore, reading classroom is the logical place to begin where higher-level cognitive processes are required for comprehension, inference, and decision-making. These skills have been associated with reading instruction for years. They must become core skills rather than enrichment skills (Collins).

3.2.13. The Teacher’s Role and Instructions

The teachers’ awareness and view of reading are intimately linked to their actions. Their instruction, text selection, task designs and classroom procedures are influenced by what they believe. They determine any actions they take for the lesson. Therefore, EFL teachers’ awareness for the actual subtle or hidden classroom

problems is crucial. They must have professional control on the selection of reading texts. Text type and genre, language teaching programme, students' approach to texts and the absence of culture-specific background information are basic components of tertiary level EFL reading problems (Alderson 84).

In reading lessons, teachers are very often much more active than are students. "While this may result in very effective teaching strategies, these teaching behaviours do not necessarily help the students gain independence by developing effective comprehension-monitoring strategies of their own." (Wenden 13) Students must take responsibilities for their own learning and begin to think of the roles of texts and readers in more critical and reflective ways (Wallace 80).

Thinking and reading critically has also some potential challenge for teachers whose role is significant. They must not only encourage pre-reading discussions to help readers activate prior knowledge but also to set the lessons for critical reading. They must help students identify their purposes for reading, formulate hypotheses, and test the accuracy of their hypotheses throughout the reading process. Post-reading activities that extend texts provide an opportunity for teachers to check for learning. The qualities of critical readers are noteworthy as they must be active by questioning, confirming, and judging what they have read.

The teacher's role was crucial, because it was s/he who determined reading texts and tasks. In this context, a good instruction could make a critical difference in reading performance. As reading is not a one-dimensional skill that can be taught with scripts and the students are complex, representing various knowledge backgrounds, experiences, abilities, and aptitudes, reading-teachers' instruction should not be narrow and limited. It must involve a variety of cognitive processes, abilities, skills, and affective conditions which lead to a variety of outcomes. The complexity of students allows a variety of potential instructional alternatives. Therefore, reading-teacher had better view instruction as a continuous selection among alternatives (Duffy 165). "With respect to instruction, it is once again the teacher who must introduce, and provide practice in, useful reading strategies for coping with texts in an unfamiliar language." In pre-reading strategies, SQ3R questions were asked to the students along with macro questions. Another significant

role of teacher for critical reading was his/her feedback as needed. Even the most successful reader needs such help to resolve uncertainties. At this point, “the teacher can keep his or her students’ reading as they work toward the ultimate goal of acquiring a new reading habit which can go on providing knowledge and pleasure long after the teacher has passed from the scene.” (Eskey 229)

The reading-teacher’s instruction should integrate multiple forms of knowledge. Instructions play significant roles to trigger and foster reflective learning and thinking. In the study, ‘open-ended questions’, ‘inferential questions’ and ‘Socratic dialogue’ were used to foster critical reading. In pre-reading or while-reading stages, open-ended questions had major contribution. The uses of higher-order questions had positive impact on the students’ learning. If they are exposed to higher-order questions, they are not only able to make use of critical reading by responding to higher-order application and evaluation questions, but also respond to lower-level factual recall and comprehension questions. However, if students receive only lower-level questions, or display questions, which tap a stock of information, they respond poorly on higher-order questions when they are encountered (Hollis 5). Inference questions are also sine qua non to lead students to read between the lines, and consider what is implied but not explicitly stated. Lastly, Socratic dialogue had positive contribution to the lesson, which develops the students’ critical judgement by stimulating and probing their responses in ways that promote rethinking and restatement. The teacher researcher shifted from the role giver of information to that of a coach. The students were guided to construct and express their own ideas and understandings, rather than being told what to do by the teacher (Akyüz 20-2). Since every question has a purpose, macro questions and teacher’s instructions aimed to trigger critical thinking and reading (Hollis 2) (See Appendix D-1, D-2 and D-3).

To be successful in academic performance, careful and planned instructions are necessary conditions. Providing explicit explanations of how to use reading skills would help less competent readers (Roehler 184). The teacher’s well preparation before the activities that involved the teacher’s readiness for alternative directions to manage the conflicts is also important. Reflective learning makes the reading lesson more complex in the sense that the control of the lesson might be on the students’

part unless the teacher organises the task effectively. In additions, reading instructions should be clear and easily understood (Duffy 164).

Reading-teacher should allow the students to reflect on their thoughts for an efficient reading. In EFL classes, they often interfere with interaction. However, “we do our students no service when we interrupt their reading in order to correct them. Reading could be a process that the students do alone with the text.” In this context, reading instruction should be what the teacher does with the students to help them before or after they have read. Here, reading-teacher may feel himself or herself useless if they’re not talking. “It is harder work to remain silent when a student hesitates or makes an error than it is to jump in and read it for him.” To develop their prediction, confirmation, and correction strategies students should be left alone. “In this respect, reading is like riding a bicycle; no amount of formal instruction can teach one as much as does that first wavering solo down the driveway.” (Rigg 216)

However, flexibility is necessary to follow the lesson plan. It was sometimes impossible to end pre-reading activities for the text. Having “a set of expectations about” the lesson can be counterproductive for an effective critical reading. Therefore, it is not wrong to arrange the tasks accordingly to get rid of stressful moments. Reflective learning may cause some discipline-related problems. Teachers should be ready “to cope with unpredictable student behaviours.” (Duffy 169)

3.2.14. Macro Questions

Macro questions are helpful for an efficient comprehension. They were used to raise awareness that language use involves making choices. The students noticed that certain words are used typically for either gender or children. These associations unconsciously affect the way the reader thinks about people. To introduce these points, the students were given list of words to categorise and discuss (Littlejohn) (See Appendix D-1).

Textually explicit and textually implicit questions highlight the distinction between local and global comprehension. It is argued, global questions are more difficult than local ones (Alderson 87-8). The task for mini interrogations was an

example for the combinations of local and global questions (See Appendix F-3). It was “built around a possible relationship between a piece of writing and a person.” It asked the students to form opinions about the value of a text and tried to get them to offer opinions about the ‘what for and why’ of a particular text. These questions could not be answered without a sound understanding of the text themselves. The focus of the task was “studying a text to fully master its detail, asking and answering questions.” (Holme 98)

The following six questions, which are interrelated with each other, represent macro questions. They were used in the first stage of the action research to define the subject groups’ reading problems. They are relevant and significant for the research proposal and aim to explore certain points for critical reading.

3.2.14.1. Question 1

“Why does the writer write about this topic?” This question gave the students a chance to understand a writer’s aim. To accomplish this, some particular training was necessary. For example, ‘student 1, 5, 9 and 10’ answered this question and gave explanation about the content. They failed to find out the writer’s aim. However, when we discussed their answers on OHP, the teacher researcher found out that they did not understand the rationale of the question. They were taught that they must interpret discourse markers to find out the relationship between different parts of the discourse, between the writer and his message (See Appendix A-1 and A-2). When the second text was given with the similar question, many students were able to answer the question efficiently. Student 4 gave a very interesting answer. S/he wrote that this text was written to earn money. They were aware of the writer’s deliberate word choice. These were discussed to trigger global comprehension. Since the aim of a text is closely related to text type, they were told that they must distinguish text type (See Appendix B-1 and B-2).

3.2.14.2. Questions 2 and 3

“Is the thesis statement convincing? Why? Do you agree/disagree? What is the writer’s opinion about the topic? How do you understand that? Which sentence or

words help you to understand his/her point of view?” These questions were asked the students not only to question the writer’s credibility but also to lead them to analyse the language of a text. On the first text, only two students, 6 and 8, found the thesis statement unconvincing. Student 6 wrote that the writer is not convincing, as they have to use mobile phone. Student 8 wrote, “No” by explaining that everybody knows that it is dangerous. When we discussed these answers, they were encouraged to judge the reasoning of the writer. They were told that ‘recognising topic sentence’, ‘thesis statements’ and ‘supporting ideas’ are basic steps to understand a text and increase their awareness. We decided whether the thesis statement or a writer’s point of view is convincing or not. They judged the reasoning of the writer. They were also told that ‘judging the validity of an argument’ is not only important for effective comprehension but also their ability to form their ideas efficiently. This was a challenging task for many. Once the students found the thesis statement, it was easier for them to distinguish between sound and unsound conclusions. Discovering a writer’s covert persuasion is not easy which necessitates a systematic means of checking and reasoning. The students were encouraged to look for a flaw in the reasoning if the conclusion in a text was wrong. When premises in a text remain implicit, a considerable practice and careful attention are necessary to test the logic of the text (Fairbanks 519).

These implications are more obvious on the second text “The Ghost Pilot” (See Appendix B-1). Three students told that they found the story convincing. They supported their ideas and gave their own opinions about the ghosts. In this context, student 7 made a remarkable point when he wrote that normally they do not believe in ghosts. “But some say they saw. They are important people. So people believe. But I do not believe (sic).” When we had a class discussion that they must be aware of their prejudice, some did not even want to listen to alternative ideas. A considerable practice and careful attention were necessary to distinguish fact from opinion not only in the text but also in their own reasoning.

Distinguishing fact from opinion and discovering fallacies are sine-quo-non for an efficient reading. In addition, the students were encouraged to find out markers that signal the writer’s point of view. In this context, the students tried to understand that cohesion reflects the coherence of the writer’s thought. Cohesion helps the

reader to make the right connections between ideas. Since they directly affect the signification of a sentence, cohesive devices are essential. ‘Student 5, 7, 9 and 10’ were quite successful to find the writer’s opinion. Others questioned the writer’s examples that are related to his opinion. While this explanation seemed valid, they were warned that it was quite possible for a writer to give objective examples.

3.2.14.3. Question 4

“What is not mentioned in the text about X?” This question aimed to find out the presuppositions. Awareness training on presuppositions is a crucial regard, as one cannot tackle a problem if they are not aware of it. It is easy to be aware of an unfamiliar word but difficult to overlook unstated assumptions. Clear thinking and use of inference usually lead to the correct interpretation. Sometimes, when the students follow a writer’s train of thought from one sentence to the next, they cannot see the connection between them. Two possible explanations are of interest. First, a writer may expect the reader to bridge the gap by drawing inferences. Second, s/he may make mistaken assumptions about the readers’ knowledge or point of view. This awareness was very important for the students not to be tricked by the persuasive writing (Urquhart 114). Although ‘student 1’ misunderstood this question, others answered it fully. ‘Student 8’ gave a wrong answer (See Appendix A-1). In the following text, ‘student 10’ told that he doesn’t know because he can’t make comments about ghosts. Except this student, others gave efficient answers. Their answers were discussed.

3.2.14.4. Question 5

‘What are the opposing opinions about “x” in the text? How are these ideas presented in text? Are they developed logically and convincingly?’ These questions were not answered successfully. In the first text, student 3 gave an irrelevant answer. While some (1, 4, 5, 7, 9) gave the opposing ideas in the example, student 2 and 10 gave a full answer. Student 10 gave very long explanations. Student 6 gave the writer’s ideas (Appendix A-1 and A-2).

The students studied on the text structure to follow the logical steps of reasoning in the text. It is important for the students to notice that presentation of ideas in the text is closely related to the structure of the text. To follow the organisation of the text, text diagrams were useful. Since they demand close study of the way the text is put together, and promote text-focused discussion, they are useful not only to display common patterns of paragraph organisation but also to clarify the structure of a complex text. Equally, paragraph structure demands a close attention to the relationship among sentences (Urquhart 106-10). For the second text, these questions were changed to “How many people saw ghosts in the story? How are their words presented in the story?” (See Appendix B-1) However, the result was not better than the previous text. While student 3 did not answer the question, there was no explanation, except student 6 and 8.

3.2.14.5. Question 6

“What is your opinion about the topic?” For an effective comprehension, students’ opinions and schema must be suitable for the text. Therefore, the question ‘Do you agree/disagree with the topic?’ is important not only to activate the appropriate schema but also integrate their opinion. Prediction tasks also helped the students have a clear purpose before reading. The clearer their purpose, the more likely they are to understand. Many exercises were used to enhance the students’ prediction skills such as guessing the content of the text from its title. This followed guessing the content of the paragraphs from subtitles. ‘Exposing the first paragraph’, ‘allowing time for the students to read’ and ‘discussing what the paragraph was doing’ were other activities (Urquhart 119-20). This question was answered fully which implies that they were fully aware of what they knew about the topic. It also proved that our pre-reading activities were fruitful (See Appendix A-1, A-2, B-1. and B-2).

3.2.14.6. Question 7

“What is the nationality of the writer? Who is the intended reader of the text? How do you understand that?” These questions were asked for many purposes. Firstly, it helped the students to identify the writer’s intended reader. Obviously, a

writer's precise choice of words depends to a greater extent upon the audience to which s/he is addressing (Altick 19). Secondly, since raising the students' awareness for the representative language is crucial, guessing the nationality of the writer may help them to find out possible bias. They were trained to pick specific words to recognise a writer's bias or targeted audience because the language a writer uses implies certain types of readers. To achieve this, they should recognise implications and make inferences. If a text is written for the general public in Britain, being aware of the targeted audience and questioning themselves as being text's ideal readers, the students exploited their EFL position as outsiders. (Wallace 68). The students were also warned that it is possible that a writer can write by dismissing his/her national identity. Owing to these concerns, grasping the general meaning of such a text may seem easy. However, it was confusing for many students to understand what is between or beyond the lines. Inference is not an advanced skill and tends to be neglected because it requires readers to use their intelligence (Nuttall 115). In this context, the students were successful to find the nationality of the writer. Except student 6 and 10, they wrote that the nationality of the writer was American. They justified their answers. Student 7 used non-linguistic clues to identify the writer's nationality by having referred the photos in the book. This student gave an irrelevant answer and claimed that the writer wrote for Medical Staff. On the other hand, student 10 gave a rich explanation. S/he guessed that the writer is from England because of his speech. "I guessed it from the words which the writer chosen. I think he didn't discriminate for any reader. But then again, this topic is more important for the young people. When I read the topic, I realise that he does not write by intending someone (sic)" (Appendix A-2). Answers on the second text were better than the previous ones. Student 3 wrote that he did not know the writer's nationality as any writer could write this story. Student 1, 2 and 7 used non-linguistic clues. Student 10 gave an irrelevant justification for his/her answer. S/he wrote that the writer is "British because, his speech is well and uses a lot of conjunction (sic)" (Appendix B-2).

3.2.15. Informal Assessments

Since answering traditional reading test items may minimise students' critical thinking abilities, informal assessments were a valid alternative as their procedures

are more humanistic and conducted in “non-threatening environments”. Therefore, the students often “result in qualitatively better performances than test-based assessments”. They were also more motivating than formal assessments, which increase the quality of the assessment. However, reading-teachers must be careful not to confuse the assessed event with the ‘real thing’ especially in performance assessment. They must “be aware of the fact that any “questions, tasks, outcomes, between the reader and text can be likely “an intervention and disruptive and to create a self-consciousness which destroys the very nature of the event”. Since the students have already lots of opportunities for “pencil-and-paper-based assessment of reading” in achievement tests and the final exam, informal assessments were used during the research. A range of techniques exists that are frequently used in informal assessment. Common examples for informal assessments are ‘class discussions’, ‘the use of self-report techniques’ and ‘learner journals’. Self-assessment was a useful source of information on learner abilities and processes. After presentations and activities, they were also told to do peer assessment. For example, after a group work on the text ‘How Safe Is Nuclear Power’, they were encouraged to assess themselves. The criteria for Performance Analysis are: ‘content’, ‘explanation’, ‘language and text analyses and ‘presentation skills’ (See Appendix C-3) (Alderson 27-32, 82, 257-9).

3.2.16. Role of Exercise

Since critical thinking requires systematic exercise, one can best develop it by exercise and training. However, studying logic does not guarantee success in every context. There is no clear evidence to support or reject the hypothesis that the study of logic is beneficial in respect of promoting the goal of critical thinking. In the study, reading and thinking critically can be seen as a systematic and organised attempt to take readers’ interpretation into account, relying on their mental effort and assisting them in comprehending the text. Raising their awareness controlled their own reading and increased their responsibility (Milburn 80).

The teacher researcher helped students learn and practice critical reading strategies to increase the quality of their reading. The activities can be seen as “assembling the Mental Tool belt”. Embedding cognitive strategies is significant to

the design of explicit instruction in comprehension. By practice, students may become increasingly adept at using the strategies for a better comprehension. In the research, the students were given tasks that require “mental engagement and awareness of his or her reading process.” In the end, they were expected to monitor and check their comprehension. Practicing these strategies in the context of purposeful reading helped many students internalise the most important strategies. At the beginning of the second semester, the definition of critical reading and its basic steps were given to them. Tasks that include different texts and types of individual and group activities were applied so that they could gain confidence deliberately using strategies (Schoenbach 79-80) (See Appendix C-4.).

3.2.17. Role of the Reader

There has been a speculation about the existence of one meaning of a text. Since different readers can develop somewhat different understandings of what a text ‘means’, potential meaning of the text is realised differently by different readers. Successful reading is an act of creation in which the reader creates meaning through the interaction with a text. The meaning of a text does not “reside in a fixed, static form frozen within the words on the page. Rather, it emerges anew in each encounter of a reader with a text.” That implication limits the role of a text (Eskey 230). As it is explained in the “interactive approaches”, meaning is created in the interaction between a reader and a text. Therefore, it is quite normal that the product of understanding may differ from one reader to another because of the readers’ diverse knowledge and experiences. People may have legitimately different interpretations of text (Alderson 6-7). The importance of readers’ interpretation brings crucial implications. The modern age has shifted its focus to the reader as the meaning maker. The readers bring the sensibilities and the ideas to the texts. Whilst acknowledging the prime importance of writers, it recognises the important role of readers as accomplices in the making of meanings (Keith 336). Making sense of a text is an act of interpretation that depends as much on what as readers bring to a text as what the author puts into it (McCarthy 27). Knowledge based factors in comprehension emphasise the importance of the background information.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Since qualitative approach is adopted for this study, Part I delineates the merits and demerits of qualitative approach to clarify the research ground and reveals the positive and negative characteristics of either side. Part II explains the stages of the action research as a case study report.

4.1. PART I: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

4.1.1. Educational Research

Since 1960's, there appeared two polarising ideas on how educational research should be conducted. The proponents of the conventional scientific method believe that social reality is objective and external to the individual. They assume that their approach must "constitute a particular model of research incorporating objectivity, reliability, generality, and reductionism". They try to reach fixed truths through a systematic and a quantitative approach. On the other hand, the proponents of the qualitative approach object to reaching facts through quantification that are expected to be true and the same for all people all the time. Qualitative researchers criticise quantification, as it "can become an end in itself rather than a humane endeavour seeking to explore the human condition." Quantitative approach does not take people's unique ability into account to interpret and work on. However, for qualitative researchers classroom situations are not "a fixed and stable entity but a type of variable that can be discerned through an analysis of multiple forms of understanding." (Burns 3-11)

4. 1. 2. A Suitable Research Approach

Since the research question centred on how to develop the research group's critical reading skills, this research investigated the research group's critical reading skills to enhance their language awareness and textual analysis skills. The study

expected to broaden the students' scope for critical reading. In the study, the utilisation of specific tools in reading lessons was highlighted as the procedural skill of critical reading. In this context, the nature of critical reading itself required the qualitative approach to the specific problem that is encountered in the research group. This approach was relevant and applicable to the research topic, because qualitative methodologies allowed exploring the deeper levels of critical reading in the real life classroom atmosphere. However, in quantitative approach, it is imperative to conduct research within unrealistic constraints for the sake of valid and reliable consequence. Once they reach their research result, the same result must be found if the study is repeated to prove the replicability of their data. However, in this study, it is not possible to replicate the unique result (Burns 6).

The following questions are derived from the observations, at the beginning of the research. To overcome the students' reading problems and discourage their approach texts as vehicles for language learning material by only focusing on linguistic clues, these questions are explored. The questions highlighted the insights into the nature of the research group's reading problems.

1. How can the teacher researcher improve the students' language analysis skills and critical reading skills that enable them to read not only what is 'on the lines', but 'between the lines' and 'beyond the lines'?
2. How can the teacher researcher improve reading-instructions to help the students be aware of certain language clues to analyse the text for a better comprehension? How can cognitive and CLA analytical tools be integrated to the reading lesson?

Qualitative approach allowed setting up ideal reading positions which critical reading should deconstruct. In the long run, research expectations imposed on the students a mission to analyse the text systematically as an academic reading habit.

4.1.3. Reliability and Validity

This research does not seek to establish conventional validity and control variables. Since the teacher intervenes the research, it only possesses an internal validity. As change is an integral part of the process, replicability is doubtful and the results, findings and recommendations can only have relevance for that unique setting (Burns 353). The aim of this research is neither to control all variables rigidly in the study group nor to design a particular syllabus for critical reading. Dependent and independent factors that affected the outcome of the study were not controlled or manipulated.

Methodological eclecticism and hypothesis-free orientation are other strong characteristics of qualitative research. If the aim is to increase the quality of the reading lessons and explore to improve the teaching, there must be no deductive hypothesis to follow (Burns 13, 353). Since it takes much more relaxed view of the scientific method, and is lacking in “scientific rigour”, action research is not without its critics. However, after considerable deliberation, a case study drawn by action-research principles was conducted for its realistic, suitable and practical application on the educational setting (Ellis 25).

4.2. PART II: CASE STUDY REPORT

Designing a case study drawn on the principles of action-research has many advantages. Firstly, procedures of the research can be integrated and applicable to the current syllabus without neglecting its components. Second, since the research class has unique characteristics, it is almost impossible to generalise the research result. The perspectives and criteria of qualitative approach are suitable for a research on critical reading. Thirdly, the initial aim of this research is to find ways to improve the students’ critical reading skills. The therapy stages were based on cognitive approaches with the expectation that they enhance students’ critical reading skills. Fourth, the teacher researcher gained an insider’s view of the field. This proximity to the research subject allows seeing the qualities of educational interaction too often missed by the scientific inquiries. Maintaining close association with the students can reveal subtleties and complexities. This gives the action research to detect real

classroom problems that are often ignored through the use of more standardised measures (Burns 14).

Furthermore, the design of this research has also different characteristics than traditional quantitative methods. Its application is flexible to make changes in cyclic form. The flexibility was challenging as the dynamic nature of redesigning tasks and activities and assessing them allowed the teacher to elicit new ideas. Reflective learning is a necessary class condition as it stimulates critical reading. This research allowed the teacher to be open to new ideas and to discuss the different issues of critical reading with the students (Ekmekçi 74). The step-by step process was constantly monitored over varying periods of time by a variety of mechanisms such as learner journals and class discussions. Therefore, feedback was translated into modifications, directional changes and redefinitions, so as to bring about lasting benefit to the ongoing process. The most important characteristic of action research that makes it different from conventional approach is that multiple factors are taken into consideration and the findings are applied immediately in it (Burns, 1998: 352).

While the aim of the quantitative researchers is to seek to test hypotheses by “sampling theory”, this action-research within stated limits and situation has a different primary purpose. With a view to bringing fresh insights to the current reading problem in the research group, the aim was not immediately concerned with adding more truth to that body of educational knowledge which appeared in articles and books, it was instead situational as the specific subject group was restricted and unrepresentative; there was little or no control over independent variables; and the findings were not generalisable but restricted to the research group (Cohen 216). Being situational is diagnosing and attempting to solve the problem in that specific context. These particular characteristics of action-research are noteworthy as it is in the scientific method; the solution of practical problems should go beyond the specific group. It was also self evaluative, as modifications were continuously evaluated within the ongoing situation to improve practice.

The perspective of this particular action research was primarily methodological to improve the quality of reading lesson. The focus was on the specific reading problems in the research group. Critical reading theories were

validated through practice. Lewin's model of action-research, which involves a cyclic sequence with two major stages, was adopted. It was a total process in which a problem situation was diagnosed, remedial action planned and implemented, and its effects monitored. In diagnostic stage, critical reading problems of the group were analysed and a specific tailor-made approach was integrated to the current syllabus. The second therapeutic parts analysed a consciously directed change experiment in reading lesson (Burns, 1998: 346-7).

4.2.1. Stage 1

This stage involved the identification, evaluation and formulation of the critical reading problems in the research class. It lasted from 13 October 2003 to 7 November 2003. To define the problem, the study group's reading syllabus, reading-book and the students' current approach were analysed. The analysis indicated that design of critical reading tasks to train EFL readers was still limited although the concept of critical reading is widely supported by EFL reading literature. In current reading lessons in tertiary level preparatory classes, both students and teachers develop restrictive reading habits. The students simply focus on what is on the lines by dismissing deeper meanings between and beyond the lines. Since this stage was mainly an observation stage to define the problem, considering all aspects of the problem was necessary. The following factors were crucial in terms of their direct or indirect effects on current critical reading problems of the research group. Chapter three on literature review enlarges these issues.

Definition of the Problem

The teacher researcher observed that the students often approached reading lessons to learn new words and ignored critical thinking skills such as analysis, judging and interpreting writer's ideas. They hardly recognised fallacies. Due to their restricted approach to text, they failed to develop critical reading ability. When they were supposed to summarise or paraphrase the text, few students were able to rephrase the passage. Therefore, they were not competent and careful readers.

1- Reading Syllabus

The research group's reading syllabus is conventional in many levels. Its focus and mission were limited. It ignored the students' expectations, representational approach and mainly critical reading. Firstly, it was written at the beginning of the semester without analysing students' needs. The reading book was chosen assuming that it would be interesting for the students. Secondly, it was prepared by top-down and teacher-oriented criteria, which emphasised declarative knowledge. Thirdly, text selection and "seeing reading in relatively unproblematic terms" affect the students' misled approach to texts. They considered reading lessons to practise grammar and learn new words (Fairclough 18). To foster critical reading, university students should have systematic and disciplined studies that underline procedural knowledge. However, in the current syllabus, procedural knowledge was rarely taught and students' meta-cognitive skills were poorly developed. Instead, they acquired considerable declarative knowledge in lessons (Kurfiss iv).

2- Reading Book

Two books for each semester were chosen for reading lessons: *Pre-Intermediate Select Readings* and *Intermediate Select Readings*. They have 14 units in which there is a reading text. While the layout of each unit is similar, activities are designed as pre- and post-activities. Non-linguistic clues such as pictures are related to topics that allow the students to have an idea about the texts. At the beginning of each unit, the format of the unit is given on a chart as a chapter focus. It includes, "Content", "Reading Skills", "Building Vocabulary" and "Language Focuses". Reading skills in the book are "Using contextual clues", "Understanding words with more than one meaning", "Previewing", "Making inferences", "Scanning", "Understanding the difference between facts and opinions", "Summarizing", "Identifying the topic and main idea", "Making predictions", "Dealing with unfamiliar words", "Writing margin notes", "Asking yourself questions while you read", "Using context clues" and "Reading words in chunks". Pre-activities are organised in detail. They are 'asking questions about the topic', 'scanning the text and completing the chart' and 'previewing activities'. The layouts of pre-activities are quite efficient for activating the appropriate schema though it is devoid of critical

reading components. These activities are designed for teacher-led tasks. The language of some texts is referential. Pre-activities for critical reading tasks gave the students a strong reason to read the text.

Post-reading activities such as “Building Vocabulary” and “Language Focus” have nothing particularly to do with reading skills. They are disguised grammar exercises. To use four hour reading lesson more efficiently, these exercises were minimised. They were useful for language development but instead of focusing on the grammatical rules, the students’ attention should be drawn on critical reading skills.

Therefore, the reading textbook maximises comprehension problems. In addition, relying on one textbook for reading lesson limited the students’ scope. The choice of referential texts plays a big role in this problem. Referential texts pave the way for students’ approach to text as “vehicles for linguistic structure.” It is usual for those students to focus on the form of the language and to get plain comprehension. They assume that the language of the text is neutral. Therapeutic stages of this research aimed to a better approach to promote genuine interaction between the representational text and EFL readers (Wallace 61).

3- Lack of Coherent Approach: Ambivalent Approaches

The current reading syllabus does not have a coherent approach for EFL learners that help them to use their language or meta-linguistic knowledge in the process of reading. This necessitated a dramatic shift from what had generally taken place in the classroom (Collins 6). For that reason, in the therapeutic stages, the lesson procedures and teacher instruction were changed to train the students to be aware of the language of a text critically such as, a writer’s word choice, usage of passive voice, register, etc. As the students’ analytical thinking cannot develop in a spoon-feeding presentation, it is crucial to teach the students the procedural knowledge of reading in order to become more autonomous and assertive readers (Fairclough 13).

For the research group, reading lessons were a way of acquiring new words, and grammatical structures. They were expecting the teacher researcher to become a bridge to the existing linguistic gap between them and the text for comprehension. Their language level determined their aims for reading and interaction with written texts. This common tendency limited their role in the process of reading. In addition, they were hardly given a chance to read critically since they were chiefly perceived as “language learners” (Wallace 62). This current approach naturally affected the students’ interaction with a writer by accepting his/her superiority. The relation of the writer to the reader corresponded to the relation of superior knowledge to inferior knowledge. Inevitably, they developed over-submissive attitude to a writer, accepting ideas without judging them. Therefore, the research group benefited most from the study. Since action-research has “twin goals”, it brought fresh insights both to the students and the teacher researcher. It was intended both to improve the teacher researcher’s classroom practice and also to serve as a means for emancipating her (Ellis 24). In stage 7, the teacher researcher’s professional development is explained.

In conclusion, rationale of this research changed over time because the original problem in the research was revised in cyclic processes. Equally, the goal of the study did not remain constant. For example, in stage 4, it was found out that the students’ reflections and metacognitive awareness for critical reading assessment were necessary. This led the teacher researcher to collect data through learner journals. They gave the students chance to express themselves in the study.

The teacher researcher reflected on the research group’s critical reading problems by offering action research. The analytical tools of critical language awareness were integrated to critical reading activities. These tools were preferred because “critical reading is not just a matter of critical responses to texts; it is also a matter of developing critical awareness of literacy” (Fairclough 18). Furthermore, the activities were fully integrated to the reading lesson increased the students’ EFL capabilities. The students’ meta-linguistic knowledge can be taken as the advantage for reading. The activities aimed to enable the students to utilise that knowledge systematically. Encouraging them to judge the assumptions and claims of the writer is another objective of the research. They must be slow to believe in writer’s point of

view “just because it’s in print” (Zukowski 11). They should become a resisting reader by not taking everything for granted and keeping “a critical distance” (Calvo 128).

4. 2. 2. Stage 2

This stage lasted from 10 November 2003 until 8 December 2003 (See Appendix C-2). It required deciding on the type of data to be yielded at the investigation. Timing the data collection was important. The teacher researcher tried to be realistic and planned to collect data. She worked on a timetable carefully as it was not reasonable to collect more evidence than one could afford to process and reflect about. 10 students’ recordings were transcribed. 4-hour reading lessons were monitored. Certain techniques were selected. They were all matched to a realistic estimate of available time.

To answer the research questions a class-centred action research was conducted to the research group (See Appendix D-1). Data were collected and therapy stages were designed to solve the problems that were encountered in traditional teacher led reading lessons. The teacher researcher planned to finish the research within one academic year to complete at least one cycle before she ought to be sufficiently satisfied with the improvements. This was a commitment of at least a year (Burns, 1998: 352). The cyclic model of problem identification, therapeutic action and evaluation were divided into seven sub-stages. Deadline of this research was the end of the Spring Term of 2003-2004 academic year.

This stage involved reaching facts to give the “full description” of the situation. This means to identify which particular students did not answer some particular questions. The teacher researcher diagnosed particular problems after the test. All these facts helped to clarify the nature of the problem. To clarify the critical reading problems, the teacher researcher tried to find out conditions that a reading lesson change be best effected and the limiting factors in bringing about effective change. She also attempted to realise the strong points of this action research (Cohen, 1987: 220). A tool kit was developed. In the kit, macro questions were used to impose critical reading. The questions were adopted as they are relevant and

sufficient for investigating the source of the problem and help to “become aware of the source of the problem”. They were suitable data collection tools as each question had a function for critical reading. The primary aim of macro questions was to stimulate critical reading. They were given to the students as a reading test or as a post-reading activity. They were organised and designed for the systematic study for critical reading. The students’ answers and macro questions are enlarged in the second part of chapter three on literature review.

4.2.3. Stage 3

This stage actually started at the beginning of the research and went on till the end of the research. At this stage, critical reading literature was synthesised to use appropriate procedures in the classroom. The review of the critical reading problems gave the teacher researcher classroom application insights. They are provided in Chapter II for Literature Review in detail. Part II of the Literature review is closely related to the conclusion of this research by combining the profound implications of professional literature.

4.2.4. Stage 4

This stage lasted from 12 December 2003 until 2 January 2004. At this stage, the teacher researcher proceeded to gather information that was relevant to testing. Analysing data led her to suggest further explanations of the problem situation, which in turn led to more gathering of information. Congruent data were focused on to improve critical reading. Since the process of analysis is an endless one, one must be careful not to lose research orientation (Burns 349).

It was imperative to train students on critical reading. The mission of analysing the language of the text critically had the underlying aim to develop an educated approach to language and get the procedural skills for academic achievement. These awareness-raising tasks fostered certain attitudes to overcome reading comprehension problems. However, interpreting data in action research should not be oversimplified. It requires being very careful. For data analysis, an analytic approach was adopted by focusing on the role of the questions and the

teacher's instruction that reinforce critical reading as the total phenomenon (Seliger 27). As a method for evaluating the students' critical reading performance, an assessment chart was designed. In stage two, macro questions were applied on two different texts. Their answers were typed on a chart by trying to code similar answers (See Appendix A-1 and A-2). It was necessary to design another chart to evaluate each answer separately. The criteria for designing a chart have a dual focus. Firstly, it should be practical and allow the teacher researcher to "reflect on the findings". It should also help her to understand "what information has been obtained so far". In action-research, there is no end to this development, as any new situation would bring some adaptation with it; certain strategies were developed to focus on critical reading problems (Ekmekçi 76).

Several activities were given to the students in this stage. Firstly, the students were introduced markers that signal the writer's point of view. Secondly, on a text about the life of Vanessa Mae, they made predictions for global understanding. Thirdly, on 'How Safe is Nuclear Power', groups answered the question: 'why does the writer write about this topic? How do you understand that?' In the following lesson, within the same group, they gave a presentation. Presentation rules were given. However, during the presentation, it was discovered that they did not know how to join in a discussion. Therefore, following lesson, they were given 'Discussion rules for participating in an Academic Controversy'. By following the procedures, the students were divided into two groups as 'for' and 'against' groups on 'Free Love or Marriage'. Then a jury chose 'against group' as the winner of the discussion. The jury explained their reasons.

Although it was found out that the students should improve their writing skills and grammar for better expressions, their mistakes were only underlined during the feedback session. The mission of this research was not to solve writing or grammar problems. There are methodological implications associated with this problem. Since reading is a receptive skill, we need students' two productive skills: writing and speaking. It would be impossible to assess and evaluate reading without them. But, as it is explained earlier in the literature chapter, one must be cautious not to focus wholly on grammar mistakes. Therefore, the teacher researcher tried to understand whatever valid points contained in the students' sentences. It is more

useful to discuss what they meant in their paper. This was done anonymously in class discussion or on one-to-one basis. These feedback sessions allowed the teacher to revise the general reading problem.

4. 2. 5. Stage 5

This stage lasted from 5 January 2004 until 16 January 2004. It involved the investigation of critical reading strategies as a further example of the problem defining data. Since only external behaviour was available for observation, the students were introduced to learner journal questions. This allowed her to follow their inner dialogues. These questions became important not only in the development of data collection procedures but also in the interpretation of research results. The students started writing their learning account from 12 January until the end of the semester. The result determined the next cycle after each test, by focusing necessary elements (Seliger 38).

Before going into action, there was the need to decide on the selection of research procedures such as choice of materials, resources, teaching method, allocation of task. Since the teacher researcher did not have a fixed purpose and design, this stage was dependent on the previous stage's result. The teacher researcher needed to interpret students' answers and reflection to the problem. Learner Journals and Semi-Structured Interview were decided to be appropriate for the research aim, which necessitated reflective learning. Therefore, Reflective learning with task-based approach was decided to be appropriate for the study.

Through learner journal, the students evaluated their progress. Self-regulatory processes play an integral role in the development. They allowed the students to become more acutely aware of the improvements in their academic achievement and experience a heightened sense of personal efficacy. Therefore, meta-cognitive strategies were activated which was very important. The students wrote about their progress in the study. It was written in the format of a report or a diary. Opportunities for self-regulation were presented through homework assignments when the students write journals regularly based on the readings (Zimmerman et al. 10, 48). The students' self-assessment journal was very significant in the research as the students

were the active partners in the research to involve them in self-reflection about their improvement. To overcome the difficulty to report their thought processes, they were chances to practice during the lessons. They were told that they would be interviewed about their critical reading strategies “to explore their own accounts of their reasons for their progression through the text.” (Alderson 335, 41) However, the teacher found out that the students should be mature and motivated enough to devote their time and mental energy for learner journal. Some students simply refused to write. They were told the aim of learner journal: It was to enable them to use the strategies automatically and effortlessly. Certain amounts of practices help them internalise and use them unconsciously.

At the beginning of this stage, the definition of critical reading and related terminologies were given. They were supposed to summarise what it meant to read critically. Their answers were satisfactory. A paragraph was given to deduce conclusion from it. (See Appendix F-1) When they read the paragraph, they were supposed to evaluate the literal and critical statements. They ticked them if they agreed. In the following lesson, they gave their own interpretations in a group work. This was followed by the peer assessments of their own statements. Class discussion of their assessment was very interesting. The students enjoyed finding faulty reasoning of their friends’ statements.

4. 2. 6. Stage 6

This stage lasted from 16 February 2004 to 29 March 2004. This stage, like stage five, involved the implementation of action plan, which included the conditions, and methods of data collection, the monitoring of tasks and the transmission of feedback and the classification and analysis of data (Cohen 220). At this stage, the teacher researcher arranged the procedures to monitor tasks, to transmit feedback, to classify and analyse data. Certain elements were taken into consideration to monitor the action research successfully. Firstly, a timetable was arranged to follow the program as monitoring technique that provides evidence of how well the course of action was being implemented. Secondly, in the teacher’s journal, a technique was developed. (See Appendix C-1) Teacher journal helped the teacher researcher provide evidence of how well the course of action was

implemented. The timetable part of the chart made her job organised and planned. In the outcome column, one could easily follow the evidence of unintended as well as intended effects. Thirdly, diaries, which were introduced in the previous stage, and class interviews, gave a variety of angles or points of view. The students were given presentation tasks to analyse the language of the text: In their presentations, they studied and reflected on critical reading skills with the anticipation that their procedural skills would be developed and enhanced and be more autonomous and independent readers. Academic achievement requires them being able to think about their reading abilities along with the content knowledge. As the first activity, teacher journal was transmitted to a chart. This chart has five main components. In the first row, dates were written. In the second row, titles of the texts were recorded. In the third row, reading activities or tools for the tasks were recorded. In the fourth row, lesson procedures were recorded. In the final row, the specific outcomes were recorded to evaluate the task and decide for the subsequent step or action according to the feedback. There are plenty of activities in this stage. The students were given some questions related to critical reading and thinking. They were supposed to give their own account for their metacognitive progress in the study. They started to write their progress at the end of the each text. A group work was designed to analyse and evaluate the ideas in the text 'How to Make a Speech'. They judged the reliability of the writer. By referring the text, they discussed assessing the merits of some arguments. In the following text, 'Private Lives', they discussed the subjectivity of the language. They discussed Bill Gate's opinion. In the last activity, the class discussed the writer's claim that "productivity is the world's largest religion?" (Robinson 110) They wrote about Spanish sleeping habits by constructing their own arguments (See Appendix C-5).

4. 2. 7. Stage 7

This final stage lasted from 2 April 2004 to 28 May 2004. This stage involved the interpretation of the data and the overall evaluation of the research (Cohen, 1987: 220). Teacher journal chart was completed. This case report was written by adopting a historical format. The aim of this case study report is to tell the research as it has unfolded over time, showing how activities hang together. This report helped to evaluate this action research. The evaluation criteria and the value of

the action research were to make possible improvements in current critical reading problem. As a last data collection to complete the research, three students who attended the class regularly and were willing to give opinions were chosen for a semi-structured interview. They were interviewed for their accounts. They were given the questions and told that they were free to add or omit the questions. They threw questions to each other. At the beginning of the record, they were taught how to use the tape recorder. They were free to arrange the interview time and content. In the cassette, they narrated their personal development as an EFL reader. One student underlined the importance of some strategies such as contextual guessing. While one of the students realised the importance of the analysing the language of the writer, they all stressed their awareness for the language of the texts. They alleged that their confidence increased to challenge a writer's ideas or assumptions. Two students articulated their opinions on academic achievement and highlighted the importance of critical reading: To be successful in English reading, vocabulary and grammar are not enough. It is crucial to question and analyse ideas. Their feedback is enlarged in the following chapter, which was also written at this final stage.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

This study, which has five main chapters, deals with the basic elements of critical reading in EFL context and specific problems of tertiary level preparatory EFL reading classes. In the first chapter, the rationale of the study and the research aims are presented. University students must be sensitive to the ideas in the texts. Tertiary level EFL prep students' language level causes them to ignore reading EFL texts properly. This study assumes that reading lessons must maximise tertiary level EFL students' language potential and provide an environment to improve their critical reading skills. The initial aim of the research is to increase the percentage of time allocated for critical reading and to design reading tasks that allow the students to express their own opinions about the content of the text, writer's style and his/her choice of words.

In addition, the study investigates EFL critical reading skills by adopting critical language awareness and representational approaches, with the belief that they can enhance the students' EFL textual analysis skills, and increase their awareness for critical reading skills. Following questions were investigated to explore what aspects of critical reading should be adopted.

1. How can the teacher researcher improve the students' language analysis skills and critical reading skills that enable them to read not only what is 'on the lines', but 'between the lines' and 'beyond the lines'?
2. How can the teacher researcher improve reading-instructions to help the students be aware of certain language clues to analyse the text for a better comprehension? How can cognitive and CLA analytical tools be integrated to the reading lesson?

While chapter three on definitions gives key terms in an alphabetical order, chapter three on 'literature review' considers previous studies as a stimulus mainly to

raise awareness for the action-research. In the chapter, each interrelated subjects are enlarged under two main parts to give the full picture. The first part discusses tertiary level EFL reading phenomenon with the help of the literature on the process of reading, reading-models and theories by highlighting the main subjects and findings of relevance to critical reading within their methodological context. On the other hand, Part II presents the potential implications for classroom procedure. It expands the outcome of the study by combining the relevant professional literature that is not so remote from the demands of real classroom. The problems encountered in using certain techniques are also provided. The second part also synthesises the main thrusts of research findings in so far as they are relevant to the design of tasks by combining the final stage of the action research.

The following implications are derived from this synthesis.

1) If the normal reading processes mysterious and imperfectly understood, the nature of critical reading requires a careful approach by emphasising the positive relationship between reflective teacher behaviour and instructional effectiveness. This study viewed critical reading aspects through the lens of classroom realities and constraints from the perspective of the teacher. It focused on the teacher's reading instructions to improve it by exploring solutions to the study group's problems. The solution is not a simple either-or choice. Such approach can be oversimplification of a complex process. In the study, suitable instructions were adopted to maximise the students' understanding of the content critically. The prevailing assumption is that a reading-teacher must harness students' effectiveness in EFL reading. This requires a careful approach by emphasising the positive relationship between reflective teacher behaviour and instructional effectiveness. In addition to this, basic critical thinking issues were attempted to cover.

2) The students could analyse and interpret the assumptions in the written texts through some tasks. A key assumption is that whatever the readers do is not random but is the result of the reading process, whether successfully used or not. The students should not be submissive and passive in the process of reading. To attain academic achievement, critical reading play immense role. In this context, it means not only to comprehend the written English by utilising critical reading skills but also

to have certain abilities to deal with the language. In addition, the teacher's instruction encouraged the students to question ideas in the text. The study assigned the students tasks that engage them to study the text deeply. The adoption of such programmes reinforces a keen awareness of the language of a text. The tasks can be seen as the orientation towards language. However, in EFL reading context, one should be cautious about overemphasising higher-level skills at the expense of such lower-level skills. Despite the valid point that fluent reading is primarily a cognitive process, it would not provide a true picture of the problems such readers must surmount". To strike a better balance among the various sub processes of reading and the elements of critical reading, interactive model posits a constant interaction among these processes in reading. Each source of information contributes to a comprehensive reconstruction of the meaning of the text.

3) The differences among processing levels necessitate different realisation for the teacher and the students. EFL readers spend too much time for word-level and sentence-level processes. However, for a meaningful interpretation of the content of the text, one must focus on the higher-order or text-level processes. The language of any text should be evaluated in context because the intended message may go beyond its linguistic representation.

4) Student-oriented syllabus and reflective approach put students in the centre of learning. However, in traditional approaches, teachers and text developers have been thought of as being the centre of knowledge and dispensers of the right answers. One of the biggest problems to activate reflective learning and meta-cognitive skills in reading lessons is fitting them into the already crowded curriculum. The development of reflective and meta-cognitive thinking is a crucial syllabus initiative which is essential to learning. It is integral to a process that encourages independent learners to take more responsibility for their own learning. It is not an additional subject but procedural knowledge of how we learn. Therefore, these strategies must only be additions to our total teaching repertoire. Time for practice during reading lesson is not detrimental to the development of the program. Spending some time focusing on developing self-esteem, co-operative learning strategies and reflective skills are all best developed within the context of worthwhile activities and topics. Therefore, they must be slotted into the current reading program.

5) In the study, informal assessments are introduced as a valid alternative for their more humanistic procedures. As they were conducted in non-threatening environments, the students might result in qualitatively better performances than test-based assessments. They were also more motivating than formal assessments, which increase the quality of the assessment. If ‘reading’ is ‘problem solving’, learner journal is necessary not only to monitor and control students’ attention while reading but also to be specific about problems. To solve the variety of reading comprehension problems that EFL students encounter in academic texts, they need to be aware of cognitive strategies. Without appropriate problem-solving tools, even the most engaged students could become discouraged and disengaged when they struggle with challenging texts. In the study, ‘questioning’, ‘summarizing’, ‘predicting’, and ‘clarifying’ were introduced as a mental tool belt. To help them become strategic readers, the mental tool belt was utilised to understand difficult texts along with other comprehension strategies. They were encouraged to use appropriate tools on a regular basis and consistently.

The critical reading problems encountered in the research group are explained and defined in chapter four on ‘Research Methodology’. Part I presents us important concerns of EFL reading researchers, and their enormous impacts on methodology. The process of reading is affected by many vigorous interaction elements. If a reading teacher’s instruction reflects higher order mental concepts, students may internalise the interactive approach and become more conscious towards texts by arranging their expectation according to these guidelines. It is noted that the interactive models are more comprehensive, rigorous and coherent. In EFL reading, implications about ‘Bottom-up’ and ‘Top-down’ concerns are both important and should not be ignored. Not only are the rapid and accurate identification of lexical and grammatical forms but also reading for global meaning important. Integrating both concerns should be encouraged by maximising ‘Top-down’ activities with the belief that they already employ bottom-up strategies. Reading any kind of text should be meaning-oriented to foster critical thinking. No student should ever be forced or encouraged to limit him/herself to mere decoding skills.

That chapter assumes that no study is methodologically perfect. This study itself had some methodological weaknesses, which are mentioned in the earlier parts. For example, the nature of this research has very limited generalizability. Qualitative

data analysis gives the researchers a chance not only to interpret their research results according to their criteria by explaining the meaning of the data and its significance but also to cover their methodological weaknesses. Therefore, the teacher researcher is extremely cautious not to make strong claims about the following research outcomes in terms of the students' and the teacher's development.

1) The Students' Development

No matter how reliable the research, the internal validity of any action research is particularly problematic. It would be extremely unwise to claim that improvements in the students' critical reading are the result of critical reading tasks and teacher's interventions or the increased use of critical reading instructions. Their habit tended to be the abandoning of the word-by-word approach to reading; to reading in meaningful "chunks". Such improvements could be simply due to maturation and their progress can be related to their language improvement in the range of time.

At the end of the academic year, the teacher researcher is not in a position to allege that the students are now efficient critical readers. What matters in the end is the extent to which the students can get the habit of critical reading. The positive affects of the action research on professional development are not ambiguous and presented in the following part:

2) Professional Development

In top-down view of teacher development approach, teachers are hardly the consumer of researches to utilise them in their professional life. They are forced to apply someone else's knowledge or the findings of specialist researchers. However, this research improved the teacher researcher's capacity as generators of professional knowledge. As action research's benefits are not top-down, the specific findings enhanced her capacity. One's own specific findings are more realistic than others' research findings. Moreover, the action research bridged the gulf between critical reading theories and the professional knowledge. The teacher researcher synthesised the research results and his/her own application. This was the positive side of it as it

encouraged her to engage in the research and use the results of such research, by giving her own interpretation.

The teacher researcher's understanding of critical reading problem evolved over time. Certain action-steps were undertaken. Reading-teachers must be more sensitive when they design tests. They must be more conscious to concentrate either on product or process and to diagnose the causes of poor reading can be more bottom-up or more top-down. Therefore, both possibilities should be encouraged. Furthermore, the teacher's management and monitoring skills were developed. She gained practicality to cope with the implementation problems. In the teacher journal, the intended and unintended effects of the study with explanations were written. In addition, the techniques, which selected to gather information, its causes and the tasks, were recorded. The professional development was based on generating ideas, which link problems of teaching and learning for tertiary level reading lessons. Since it encouraged group co-operation and cohesiveness with colleagues, the research released creativity and critical thinking, and promoted change. The results of the research were intended to provoke fresh insights to reading problems and contribute to the evolution of the common stock of professional knowledge.

The most obvious development was the change of the instructions in reading lessons. In pre-activities, the teacher researcher used to spend short time to introduce the subject. This study gave the insights that macro-instructions were necessary to improve the quality of the reading lessons (See Appendix D-1). With macro instructions, the students were given a chance to analyse the language of the text. This reflective approach increased their motivation to read texts. Reading tasks gave them reasons to read the text. Since class size is a crucial consideration, arranging groups and encouraging them for a better performance sometimes can be too time-consuming. However, this challenge gave her many practical classroom insights to cope with such difficulties. Classroom management problems indicated that reflective learning and task-based approach required the teachers' full preparation. Conflict management skills were necessary which she had encountered when she introduced the procedures of some tasks. It was very difficult to explain the aim of tasks. The task situation of "Interrogated text" was a good example for such conflict. The students protested to be given such a task situation. However, their answers were

better than she had expected. This implied that the teacher's job is to relieve students' stress, which requires his/her full confidence to the task aim along with well preparation. Such awareness for instruction in critical reading entails sensitivity to the kind of classroom environment in which teaching takes place. Moreover, reading-teachers may contribute to understanding and promoting critical thinking and reading, simply by turning the direction of teaching and learning and recognising the challenges. This is just the beginning of such a journey that has no end.

To sum, there is no explicit and miracle formula to offer a practical way of designing an EFL reading course which covers critical thinking and reading. Critical reading tasks are means to an end, not an end in itself. This study is an attempt to introduce the students' critical reading skills which offer one avenue for initiating the students into the complexities and challenges of reasoning they will encounter in subsequent courses. This is crucial for the students' academic achievement and should be the ultimate goal and vision of prep classes in a wider mission. In conclusion, if these theoretical and practical issues are taken into consideration and tasks are implemented properly, EFL reading lessons become a first and a leading step for tertiary level EFL students' academic achievement.

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APPENDIX A-1

QUESTIONS	STUDENT 1	STUDENT 2	STUDENT 3	STUDENT 4	STUDENT 5
1. Why does the writer write about this topic? (Cell phones)	About the topic, Not about the reason	To give information	Some information	Wants to explain	People may suffer from mobile phones.
2. Is the thesis statement convincing? Why? Do you agree/disagree?	Yes, because of example	Yes, because everybody uses (?)	I agree because of Chernobyl (?) Not given in the text)	Yes, because he uses general example	I agree, because they are dangerous for human body.
3. What is the writer's opinion about cell phones? How do you understand that? (Which sentence or words help you to understand his point of view)	To convince (no explanation for how)	Very useful but bad for our health (no explanation for how)	All of them his idea: √	Useful and convenient: the use questions and answers to understand his p.o.v.	Cell phones are dangerous. He always says: "...."
4. What is not mentioned in the text about cell phones?	(Misunderstood the question) Warning: radiation	1) Special feature of cell ph. 2) Their price	1) Models 2) Using area 3) Useful (mentioned actually)	1) Easy to carry 2) Small 3) Expensive 4) Talk everywhere	1) Heart attack 2) In emergency, it is necessary (?)
5. What are the opposing opinions about mobile phones in the text? How are these ideas presented in the text? Are they developed logically and convincingly?	(Opposing ideas in the example not in the text)	Health probs x some companies	Irrelevant answer	(Opposing ideas in the example not in the text)	(Opposing ideas in the example not in the text)
6. What is your opinion about mobile phones?	Full answer √	Full answer √	Full answer √	Full answer √	Full answer √
7. What is the nationality of the writer? Who is the intended reader of the text? How do you understand that?	USA For cell users ("How" is not explained)	American For all people ("How" is not explained)	USA but no explanation. For Cell-phone users ("How" is not explained)	USA The text intended for everybody Because, he says: "Mobile phones are dangerous for our health", He warns people	USA. All cell phone users. Because, he is talking about who is ill from cell phones. (?)

APPENDIX A-2

QUESTIONS	STUDENT 6	STUDENT 7	STUDENT 8	STUDENT 9	STUDENT 10
1. Why does the writer write about this topic? (Cell phones)	He warns everybody	Want to say they are dangerous	Warns us	Because writer and health professionals worried about the danger of cell phones.	Because, it is an important topic.
2. Is the thesis statement convincing? Why? Do you agree/disagree?	It isn't convincing. We have to use it, for example...	Convincing. Because. he has got proof: In one case...	No. Because, everybody knows it dangerous. I don't agree as radiation is too small	Writer starts the text: "...” and it is real and he says:”“ I agree this idea because, some health professionals say it.	Convincing. Because, if we look at the writer's speech, we can understand the reality.
3. What is the writer's opinion about cell phones? How do you understand that? (Which sentence or words help you to understand his point of view)	Writer doesn't like cell phones. Because, she/he gives some example about the topic	They are dangerous. He says: "In one case..." (Example)	Writer thinks we use our regular phone for long time. Use it when we really need it.	Writer's idea is: ". I understand this idea in line 1 and 7,8. "Millions of people."	They are dangerous. I understand it: "It appears that..."
4. What is not mentioned in the text about cell Phones?	1) They break some comp. Systems	1) Useful	1) Dangerous (wrong)	1) The most expensive 2) Games 3) Small, easy to carry	1) He should have mentioned about advantages of cell phones
5. What are the opposing opinions about mobile phones in the text? How are these ideas presented in the text? Are they developed logically and convincingly?	(Writer's ideas) First, he said they are popular. After that he said they are dangerous for our health.	His family doctor blamed his employers (ideas in the example)	He writes they are cool but dangerous. I don't believe....	Employers doctor and family doctor. . This is not logical because, I think they are dangerous.	Disadvantages are given more than advantages. The opposing opinions appear by becoming harmful sides of mobile phones. But they are not explained with the whole ways. Although, I think they are developed logically and convincingly.
6. What is your opinion about mobile phones?	Full answer ✓	Full answer ✓	Full answer ✓	Full answer ✓	Full answer ✓
7. What is the nationality of the writer? Who is the intended reader of the text? How do you understand that?	British because, in the second para. He gives an example from England. All cell phones users. Because. writer always warns them.	American because, photos is from MIT university. Writes for Medical staff. (Added unnecessary information)	American... We understand it from the first paragraph	From USA. I understand it from the title: ". The text is written for all cell phone users.	I guess he is from England because of his speech. I guessed it from the words which the writer chosen. I think he didn't discriminate for any reader. But then again, this topic is more important for the young people. When I read the topic, I realise that he doesn't write by intending someone.

APPENDIX B-1

QUESTIONS	STUDENT 1	STUDENT 2	STUDENT 3	STUDENT 4	STUDENT 5
1. Why does the writer write about this topic? (The ghost pilot)	Because some people do not believe in ghosts -Main idea	Because some people believe, To give an example	Because, interesting event. Pay attention	Topic interesting To earn money	About ghost pilot. The airplane crashed...
2. Is the story convincing? Why?	No. Because the passenger Saw photos	Not convincing. Because, I haven't seen any ghost	Yes, it is a living story. Lots of eye witnesses	No. Because, I do not believe	I don't believe it because. this story is nonsense. I don't believe how many people saw Bob...
3. What is the writer's opinion about ghosts? How do you understand that? (Which sentence or words help you to understand his/her point of view)	No explanation	He doesn't believe. He says that stories (about ghost) do not finish	Ghosts are dangerous	No answer	He believes in ghosts. Because. they all saw Bob in a chair. He talked to them.... I understand from this part.
4. What is not mentioned in the story about ghosts?	End of the story	1. End of the story 2. Where is the ghost	1. Conversation between people and ghosts 2. Their bodies	Are ghosts dangerous or not?	People might tell lies about seeing ghosts.
5. How many people saw ghosts in the story? How are their words presented in the story?	More than 15 people. No answer for how	More than 10 people. In line 25, more than 10 attendants. (Explained 10 people). No answer for "how"	No answer	2 passengers and more than 10 attendant. No answer for "how"	Lots of people saw them.
6. If you had believed in ghosts how would you have read the story?	Excited No answer for "how"	Excited. No answer for "how"	I would have spent much more time and pay attention so much and care about details.	No answer	Yes, I believed ghost but I don't believe this story. Because American people like making up such stories. If I had believed, I would feel bad. I don't like these things.
7. Who is the intended reader of the text? How do you understand that?	Who do not believe the ghosts No answer for "how"	General	Everybody	No answer	To convince people. He was writing very serious to convince.
8. What is the nationality of the writer? How do you understand that?	American. Because of the newspaper	American from the newspaper.	I do not know any writer can mention about same events.	USA. Because, the story is in America...	USA. Because, he knows everywhere in America: New York, Florida, Miami.

APPENDIX B-2

QUESTIONS	STUDENT 6	STUDENT 7	STUDENT 8	STUDENT 9	STUDENT 10
1. Why does the writer write about this topic? (The ghost pilot)	To warn people not to use wreck's undamaged parts.	The topic is very interesting. So people read the story. But most important we have got one crash and 99 people died. After that ghosts appear.	To tell us an interesting story.	This is an interesting and a popular story.	Because topic is interesting. A strange topic. Commenting possible that to believe in ghosts or not. Different opinions can appear.
2. Is the story convincing? Why?	It isn't convincing, Because I don't believe in ghost. Also, there is no proof about ghosts.	Normally, we don't believe in. But some people say they saw. They are important people. So people believe. But I don't believe that.	It may be convincing. I believe in ghosts.	It isn't convincing. Because I don't believe in ghosts.	Yes. Because I believe them. There are lots of ghosts in the world. But we don't know where they are.
3. What is the writer's opinion about ghosts? How do you understand that? (Which sentence or words help you to understand his point of view)	He believes in ghosts. In the last sentence: "no one has seen their ghosts since", he intended; the ghosts are real and nobody saw them.	He believes in ghosts. Because, he always understand they are believable. (?)	I think he believes in ghosts but he didn't write anything about his opinion.	We don't understand his opinion about ghosts because. he only writes a story. He doesn't have another idea in the text.	They are actual. He believes in them. The sentences of paragraphs have spotted a man....
4. What is not mentioned in the story about ghosts?	1) Ghosts' physical peculiarity 2) Their behaviours	We don't see ghost if they are real. We don't touch. Only we feel.	1) Whether they are bad or friendly	1) Ghosts' physical peculiarities	I don't know. I can't make so comment about ghosts.
5. How many people saw ghosts in the story? How are their words presented in the story?	6 people saw ghosts. Generally they are shocked. But the writer doesn't give many details.	More than 10 people saw ghosts. He writes to convince people.	More than 10 people. They tell us the ghosts and how they feel.	6 people saw ghosts. Usually we shocked. (No explanation for how)	4 persons saw them. (No explanation of how)
6. If you had believed in ghosts how would you have read the story?	Much carefully, and I'd search details about the topic.	Very excited because. they are strong and nobody saw them.	Feel excited because. all passengers saw ghosts.	Same	No answer
7. Who is the intended reader of the text? How do you understand that?	(Interesting) The people who don't believe in ghosts are the intended reader of this text because. he wanted to convince their existence. He thinks that this story is true.	(Interesting) He writes this text that don't believe in ghosts because...?..	Ghostbusters	People who believed in ghosts	It is a story for everybody
8. What is the nationality of the writer? How do you understand that?	I think, he is American, because the story tells the action which happened in USA.	We don't understand about writer's nationality. He may be American as the newspapers' name is the Miami Herald.	American. We understand, he is interested in this story. I think he lives in Miami. (?)	I don't understand.	British. Because his speech is well and he uses a lot of conjunction. (?)

APPENDIX C-1

DATES	TEXT	ACTIVITY /TOOL	LESSON PROCEDURE (WHICH CRITICAL READING SKILL APPLIED)	OUTCOME (FOR THE SUBSEQUENT STEP ACTION)
STAGE 1 13 October 2003	Reading Syllabus	Reading syllabus was introduced to students. They were given the aim of the reading lessons.	In this stage, I started observing their reactions to the activities to define and identify reading problems in the current teaching situation.	I had to calculate how much class time could be dedicated to critical reading. It depended on curriculum requirements, and, indeed, on my expectations and the class.
17.10.2003	Content of the book	Students signed an informed consent form that describes the purpose of the research, its procedures, its benefits and the right to withdraw.	Introduction of the reading lesson, book and the programme. Design issues of the action-research: Introduction to the students.	I took the following decisions concerning the arrangements of activities to develop, foster and practice critical reading skills. "They should take place in the classroom, and be supplemented by carefully chosen texts. However, reading lessons, 4 hours a week, are not enough to carry all the intended activities. Some written activities must be given as homework. Their feedback must be given the hour outside the lesson." I had some sessions with some students about the aim of the study. They volunteered to cooperate with my research. They were told that their names would be anonymous. Therefore, I did not have to deal with ethical problems in negotiating access to, and release of, information. As the prep programme has a heavy workload, I did not have too much time for the activities.
20.10.2003	"Are you getting enough sleep?"	Using context clues. Class discussion on the writer's introduction to the topic?	Micro-processes.	We discussed the writer's opening remarks, and his/her organisation of the paragraph structures.
24.10.2003	"Mika's Home stay in London"	Exercises in the book on Reading Skill, Building Vocabulary and Language Focus.	Teacher-led reading lesson	Vocabulary and language studies. First person narrator. The students needed my explanation to decode.
27.10.2003	PILOT STUDY	Pilot Test	Test was given.	The language level of the questions was too high for students. They required Turkish explanations.
31.10.2003	"The Book of the Future"	Exercises in the book on Reading Skill (Previewing), Building Vocabulary and Language Focus were held.	Writing an opinion essay	I tried to minimise Bottom-up approach and local comprehension. Therefore, I gave them an assignment to write an opinion essay on "Technology in Future"
3.11.2003	"How to be a Successful Businessperson"	Making Inferences	"Mr Kazi has 168 restaurants": Direct Inference: He is very rich.	They were successful for making inferences. I explained the importance of inference skills.
7.11.2003	"Tonic Water Please"	Scanning	Teacher-led lesson to decode.	I encouraged to summarize the story.

APPENDIX C-2

DATES	TEXT	ACTIVITY /TOOL	LESSON PROCEDURE (WHICH CRITICAL READING SKILL APPLIED)	OUTCOME (FOR THE SUBSEQUENT STEP ACTION)
STAGE 2 10.11.2004	“Cell Phones: Hang Up or Keep Talking?”	Exercises in the book on Reading Skill	Specific questions were applied on two different texts.	The students were introduced macro questions. These questions were used as data collection tools.
14.11.2003	“Cell Phones”	Feedback: Class discussion about their answers. Building Vocabulary and Language Focus were held.	Further explanations about the rationale of the questions. They realised that these questions were important. They were lectured that, the function or aim of a descriptive text is to give the description. Similarly, a narrative text conveys a story. Student 6 gave an irrelevant but interesting answer. S/he interpreted that the aim of the writer in the story was to “warn people not to use wreck’s undamaged parts”. This interpretation was discussed. Even talking about their answers gave them an awareness to answer this question more efficiently.	I discovered that it is necessary to teach some vocabulary to analyse the language and the texts such as “imply”, “convince”, “explain”, “mention”, “prove”, “point of view”, “biased”, “aim”, “purpose”, etc.
17.11.2003	“A ghost story”	Summarizing	Explanations on answers. OHP.	Evaluation of their answers helped me to define their problem.
21.11.2003	“A ghost story”	Text type: Narrative	What is the main purpose of the text Talk about the text-type: Explanations on narrative, descriptive and process text. Text type can help us to analyse text better.	They were told that they must distinguish text type to follow the writer’s aim. These explanations helped me introduce analysis skills.
1.12.2003	“Volunteer Work”	Exercises in the book on Reading Skill Building Vocabulary and Language Focus.	Identifying the topic and main idea. How can we analyse a text?	They were explained that finding main idea was crucial to distinguish fact and opinion.
5.12.2003	“Volunteer Work”	Identifying the writer’s opinions	Judging the writer’s p.o.v.	The students were encouraged to question the writer’s credibility. We also discussed the importance of giving equal time and space to anyone who wishes to express a different point of view. (De Fossard 141)
8.12.2003	“Cell phones”	Macro questions	OHP. Class discussion.	I realised that some students did not understand the rationale of the questions. I explained their rationale by using OHP.
STAGE 3	LITERATURE REVIEW	Professional literature	Tasks for critical reading were analysed.	Professional literature guided me for the procedures. It is necessary to synthesise the literature for critical reading procedures. This stage started in stage 1 and went on simultaneously till the end of the stage seven.

APPENDIX C-3

DATES	TEXT	ACTIVITY /TOOL	LESSON PROCEDURE (WHICH CRITICAL READING SKILL APPLIED)	OUTCOME (FOR THE SUBSEQUENT STEP ACTION)
STAGE 4 12.12.2003	“Baseball Fans Around the World”	Assessment Chart to evaluate my students’ answers.	Markers that signal the writer’s point of view are ‘I believe that’, ‘Contrary to common belief and following the writer’s train of thought from one sentence to the next seeing the connection between them and recognizing the presuppositions underlying the text require to emphasise critical language awareness.	Data were analysed to define the problem: Their answers were typed in a chart by trying to code similar answers. My criteria for designing a chart have a dual focus. Firstly, the chart allowed me to evaluate each answer separately to reflect on the findings. Secondly, it was practical and made it clear to understand what information had been obtained so far.
15.12.2003	“Vanessa-Mae: A 21 st Century Musician”	Dealing with unfamiliar words, Building Vocabulary and Language Focus were held.	Making predictions for global understanding. Prediction tasks helped them guess the text. This gave an added purpose for reading. The clearer their purpose, the more likely they are to understand. Many exercises were used to enhance students’ prediction skills such as guessing the content of the text from its title. This was followed guessing the content of the paragraphs from subtitles. Exposing the first paragraph and allowing time for the students to read and discussing what the paragraph was doing can be an example for activities.	The importance of ‘Predicting’ as pre-reading activities was discussed to be an efficient reader. Problems with syntax impeded comprehension, which was more difficult for EFL readers. Most students attempted to parse sentences and reach interpretations, which were rather remote from the author’s original meaning. Some students misinterpreted syntax, which led to misinterpretations.
22.12.2003	“How Safe Is Nuclear Power”	Group Work: Be ready to present your answer. “Why does the writer write about this topic? How do you understand that?”	I firstly formed the 4 groups. They were given the questions to work on. I helped and monitor their preparation. Confirmation of the presentation rules. 2. Then, presentations were organised. 3. Took notes 4. Encouraged them 5. Record the interaction	A group work was designed to present their answer about “How safe is Nuclear Power”. After group presentations, criteria for Performance Analysis of three groups were Content, Explanation, Lang. And Text Analysis and Presentation Skills. I provided detailed information about how they could analyse language and text. We studied some vocabulary to express themselves better. Writing mistakes were coded and given to writing teacher. Some interesting dialogue was recorded.
26.12.2003	“How Safe Is Nuclear Power”	Diagram of the text: Organisation of paragraphs in the text. Organisation of sentences into paragraphs.	Informal assessment	Sell-assessment is a useful source of information on my learners’ abilities and processes.
29.12.2003	Introduction to Learner Account Questions	The questions were given.	Metacognitive development. How to write a journal.	They were encouraged to assess themselves by self-report techniques.
2.1.2004	Discussion Rules for participating in an Academic Controversy on “Free Love”	“The Other Side of the Coin” One must give equal time and space to anyone who wishes to express a different point of view (De Fossard 141)	They were asked to discuss about “free love” and “marriage”	Content-based reading was crucial to think critically.

APPENDIX C-4

DATES	TEXT	ACTIVITY /TOOL	LESSON PROCEDURE (WHICH CRITICAL READING SKILL APPLIED)	OUTCOME (FOR THE SUBSEQUENT STEP ACTION)
STAGE 5 5.1.2004	'Love at First Sight' Opinion vs. fact 'Sun'	Task: Sun Using two critical reading steps – analysing and evaluating.	PW: What can you conclude from the paragraph? Deducing conclusion from the paragraph: Since critical reading tasks should cover basic critical thinking issues, the students were introduced the relationship between critical thinking and reading: The first step of critical thinking is 'analysing'. When they analyse, they must know what questions to ask. These questions are significant because they help the students analyse information. Their questions and answers led them to a thorough understanding of what they are analysing. Apart from analysing, the next step was their 'judgement' based on their 'analysis'.	To analyse and evaluate a checklist was formed to help them achieve this understanding. They were provided the idea of where to use critical reading. This task introduced the Literal Meaning. At this stage, I decided builds upon earlier accounts of the reading problems by trying to suggest solutions and design tasks on future directions in reading lessons. Deciding on the selection of research procedures such as choice of materials, resources, and teaching method, allocation of task. Reflective approach allowed them to express their judgement, by supporting their judgement and by citing evidence they gathered during their analysis. The third step was 'making a decision' based on their analysis and judgement. It was deciding to agree or not with the implicit or explicit assumptions in a text. Their awareness for their own judgements was necessary here to be objective. Their decision could take them in any direction. They should also know that "critical thinking and problem solving go hand in hand." (Glen-Cowan, 1995: 383-5)
9. 1. 2004	"Sun"	Group Work: Discussing their answers by highlighting the difference between literal and critical statements.	Class discussions on their interpretation to the paragraph: "Sun" Using proper tool: the mental tool belt Understanding difficult texts is a form of problem solving –one must apply a variety of cognitive tools. 'Questioning', 'summarizing', 'predicting', and 'clarifying' are the four key comprehension tools that help students as "a mental tool belt for reading".	To help them become strategic readers, the mental tool belt was utilized to understand difficult texts along with other comprehension strategies. They were encouraged to use appropriate tools on a regular basis and consistently. Using proper tools took time to make them strategic readers. When they have a comprehension problem in subsequent years, they will be able to "choose an appropriate
12.1.2004	"A Day in the Life of a Freshman"	Decoding text.	The text 'A Day in the Life of a Freshman' narrates a story of a university student who has 'a blind date'. Blind date is totally a strange concept. We discussed its similarity and differences in our 'arranged marriage' procedures	I decided on the type of data to be yielded at the investigation as 'CLA test questions, Learner Accounts, and Structured Interview. I decided to use reflective learning with task-based approach. Student started writing their learning account in 12 January 2004 till 16 February. Learner account is students' own account for their meta-cognitive progress in the study.)
16.1.2004	"Great Places to Visit"	Learner Journal Questions were discussed.	The students were given chance to discuss learner journal questions to analyse texts. Contrary to the common assumption about the negative effects of the lack of background information, the existence of relevant prior knowledge may sometimes cause misinterpretations if readers let their prior perceptions influence their interpretation.	In the task, students were given the critical reading definition by emphasizing that "much of the reading they have done has been critical reading. After that definition, students were given two parts of analysing: literal and interpretive. To understand the literal meaning of a selection student should make sense of the words the writer had used. That is related to be literate in English. "The interpretive part of Critical reading involves reading the selection from the point of view of the writer and recognizing such elements as the writer's purpose and tone. (Glen-Cowan, 1995: 386)
SEMESTER HOLIDAY	SEMESTER HOLIDAY	SEMESTER HOLIDAY	SEMESTER HOLIDAY	I studied for the next semester. I read literature to guide me in the research.

APPENDIX C-5

DATES	TEXT	ACTIVITY /TOOL	LESSON PROCEDURE (WHICH CRITICAL READING SKILL APPLIED)	OUTCOME (FOR THE SUBSEQUENT STEP ACTION)
STAGE 6 12.1.2004	“A Long Walk Home”	Students’ own account for their metacognitive progress in the study.	This stage involves the implementation of action plan, which include the conditions, and methods of data collection, the monitoring of tasks and the transmission of feedback to the research team; and the classification and analysis of data (Cohen, 1987: 220). This chart was designed to keep a learner journal.	Underlying Values were introduced: When the students analyse the text, they ought to think critically about an argument or a point of view, and consider the values implicit in the argument.
20- 23.2.2004	“Culture Shock”	Questions on Critical Thinking and Reading	I demonstrated a careful reading of a difficult text passage, showing students the techniques of questioning, summarizing, clarifying and predicting, as well as relating the information to previously studied material and encouraging students to use these techniques on assignments	Unstated Assumptions were introduced: To identify implicit assumptions, they must be careful about the argument in the text. They should ask such questions: “What unstated assumptions does the argument depend on?”(Boston 56)
27.2.2004	“A Young Blind Whiz”	Questioning the text	Learner Journal to activate metacognition	Knowing your Own Prejudices: Some tasks should encourage students “to be aware of the ways in which their own prejudices can interfere with their ability to think critically. (Boostrom 56)
1.3.2004	“Pop Group’s Use of Folk Song Stirs Debate”	Talking about the character’s point of view in the story.	Learner Journal to activate metacognition	Inductive Reasoning was not easy to teach: To draw right conclusions, they were told that they must be aware of inductive reasoning.
5.3.2004	“How to Make a Speech”	Group Work to summarize the important parts in the text.	Learner Journal to activate metacognition	Deductive Reasoning
8.3.2004	“How to Make a Speech”	Pair presentation on the text.	Analysis, and evaluation of the ideas.	Class time was spent assessing the merit of the arguments. Fallacy statements.
12.3.2004	“Private Lives”	A mental tool belt for reading	Noticing the subjectivity of the language.	They were told that reasoning skills help them become strategic readers
15- 19.3.2004	“Future Talk: A Conversation with Bill Gates”	Questioning, summarizing, predicting, and clarifying	Discussing Bill Gates’ opinion	We spent a considerable amount of class time “attempting either to strengthen” the arguments “or to devise better arguments for alternative views” (Damer xii).
22.3.2004	“Letters of Application”	Analysis of the Process Text	Referential language	We discussed the importance of analysis.
26- 29.3.2004	“Out to Lunch”	Discussing the writer’s claim that “productivity is the world’s largest religion?”	Write your opinion on Spanish sleeping habit.	The students were asked to construct their own arguments in support of sleeping habits. All class members carefully evaluated the arguments.

APPENDIX C-6

DATES	TEXT	ACTIVITY /TOOL	LESSON PROCEDURE (WHICH CRITICAL READING SKILL APPLIED)	OUTCOME (FOR THE SUBSEQUENT STEP ACTION)
STAGE 7 2.4.2004	“Public Attitudes Toward Science” Fallacy Statements	Reading silently.	Pre-activities for the text’s title. Situation in Turkey. Exercises for fallacies.	Teaching fallacies were given as pair works activity. They were successful to find the logical flaw in the statements. Students 2, 6 and 10 were chosen for the interview.
5-12 April .2004	“Public Attitudes Toward Science”	Reading loud and teacher’s explanation.	Decoding /Pair presentation on the text	This text required a long language study as content and language were too challenging for them.
16-26 April 2004	“John’s Taiwanese Wedding”	19.4.2004: Achievement 5	Studies on fallacy statements	We had a class discussion on six fallacies, which cover wide spectrum of emotions.
30.4. 004/ 3.5.2004	“The Art of Genius”	Subjunctive verbs Decoding the text	Presentation Judging ideas	Argument Schemata was introduced. They were told that it is important because no matter what terms placed in the schema, if the premises are true then the conclusion must be true.
7.5.2004	Choose any of the following text in <u>Select Readings: Intermediate.</u> ‘Culture Shock’, ‘ Pop Group’s Use of Folk Song Stirs Debate’, ‘How to Make a Speech’, ‘Out to Lunch’, ‘Public Attitudes Toward Science’, ‘The Art of Genius’	Interrogated texts An activity that was built around a possible relationship between a piece of writing and a person. It asked students to form opinions about the value of a text and tries to get them to offer opinions about the ‘what for and why’ of a particular piece of reading matter, questions that could not be answered without a sound understanding of the text themselves.	Situation: The text is dead and asking for admission to the Heaven for Texts. It is outside the gate and must justify its existence in order to get in. If it says something like ‘I don’t know, ask my writer’, more than twice it will be sent to hell. The Guardians can interrogate it about every detail and facet of its existence. Finally as the Guardian you may judge the text a ‘worthy’ or ‘unworthy text’ and send it to heaven or hell. Focus: Studying a text to fully master its detail, asking and answering questions: Material: Texts whose language is representational. Preparation: Students had already studied the given texts.	The students protested the design of the questions. They did not want to answer the questions. I encouraged them to try to understand. When they started writing, I controlled and realised that they were answering better than I had expected. It was interesting that despite their prior objections, they were very creative. They analysed the text as if it was a person who had to justify its existence; i.e. its use of vocabulary, its message, its manner of expressions. They designed mini-interrogations to judge the text. They were the ‘Guardians of the Heaven for Texts’. When I evaluate their paper, I chose three successful students for the interview.
10.5.2004	“Conversational Ball Games”	Vocabulary and structure studies	Discussion on how the writer supports the statements. Validity of an argument	Writer’s cross cultural observations are relevant to critical reading as values are important to be evaluated
14.5.2004	“John loves Mary” “Mary is loved by John”	Propositions. Deep and surface meaning. Active and passive voice	Word list to categorise them ‘negative’, ‘positive’ or ‘neutral”	Importance of passive voices for critical language awareness.
17.5.2004	“Women with a Career” Three students were told to be ready for the interview.	They started preparing for the interview.	A small discussion on their answers. “Persuading by Argumentation: Read the paragraph and do the analysis that follows: Analysis the writer’s proposal and supporting arguments.	They analysed the writer’s proposal and supporting arguments. Three students were given a short training for the interview. They were given their previous answers for reading development.
21-24.5.2004	Interview questions Final Exam Reading Questions.	Evaluation of the students’ critical thinking and reading awareness. Final test preparation.	Interview with 3 students.	Interview was recorded. They should be mature and motivated enough to devote their time and mental energy for a successful learner journal. They lost their interest and motivation to join the lesson. They wanted to focus on final exam.
28.5.2004	EVALUATION OF THE STUDY.	At the final stage, the cycle is likely to begin again, with the problem and action modified to meet the evaluation comments. (Burns, 1998: 351)	This final stage involved the interpretation of the data and the overall evaluation of the project. I wrote a case report adopting a historical format. Part II in the literature Review enlarges the methodological implications.	The action-research provoked many insights for critical reading. Background Knowledge, Nature of the teacher instruction and questions, Task awareness, Reflective Learning and Increasing students’ awareness are important factors.

APPENDIX D-1

MACRO QUESTIONS FOR TEXT ANALYSIS AND GLOBAL COMPREHENSION

1. Why does the writer write about this topic?
2. How do you understand the writer's aim?
3. Is thesis statement convincing?
4. Why is it unconvincing?
5. Do you agree/disagree with the writer's statements?
6. What is the writer's opinion about cell phones?
7. How do you understand the writer's opinion?
8. Which sentence or words help you to understand his point of view?
9. What is not mentioned in the text about X?
10. What are the opposing opinions in the text?
11. How do these ideas presented in text?
12. Are the ideas developed logically and convincingly?
13. What is your opinion about X?
14. What is the nationality of the writer?
15. Who is the intended reader of the text?
16. How do you understand the writer's intended reader?

APPENDIX D-2

THE TEACHER'S MACRO INSTRUCTIONS FOR GLOBAL COMPREHENSION

1. Is it your or the writer's opinion?
2. Where do you understand that?
3. How do you understand writer's aim?
4. Why do you think that the writer is biased?
5. Paraphrase the paragraph.
6. Why do you think that.....?
7. How does the writer give his opinion?
8. Let's guess the content from the title of the article.
9. With your partner, discuss X?
10. Be ready to give a group presentation on your interpretation about "X"

APPENDIX D-3

THE TEACHER'S MICRO INSTRUCTIONS

QUESTIONS FOR LOCAL COMPREHENSION

1. What does "X" mean?
 2. What does "X" refer to in line 30?
 3. What did Mr. X say?
 4. How many people are there in the story?
 5. Where does the story take place?
 6. What did Mr. X eat in the restaurant?
 7. Why was he unhappy?
 8. When did the accident happen? (73)
 9. Paragraph 4 (lines 23-27) is about _____. (Multiple Choice question)(57)
 10. A biphasic creature needs _____. (Multiple Choice question) (113)
 11. The ghost appeared on all Eastern Airlines flights. (True/False question) (68)
 12. Number the events in Vanessa-Mae's life from first to last.
_____ She went to Germany to take advanced violin classes.
_____ She studied music in China. (99)
 - 13-15. Which place is or has
0. suitable for cycling?
 1. Which survivor(s);
1. nearly died in a famous tragic accident? 1
- What did the doctor ask the professor? (Questions from Achievement 1&2.)

APPENDIX D-4

LEARNER JOURNAL AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How do you define a good and poor reader? Are you a good reader?
2. How do you monitor yourself at the time of your reading comprehension?
3. What skills or strategies do you find vital for reading comprehension? Give example.
4. How do you control your reading strategies?
5. How do you deal with vocabulary problems?
6. How do you deal with other reading comprehension problems?
7. Which problems do you ignore while you are reading the text?
8. How do you evaluate yourself whether you understood the meaning of the text?
9. Are you sensitive to the language of the writer? Give explanation about your awareness of the language?
10. What are the positive and negative effects of language awareness studies on your reading comprehension? Do they enhance your reading comprehension? Or, do you find them unnecessary?

A SAMPLE LEARNER JOURNAL

READING AND THINKING SKILLS

As I read a text, I only used to read it and try to understand what the author explains. It used to be more difficult for me to understand the text or main idea. But after I read the reading and thinking strategies, I find main ideas easier and it will be helpful for my exams. Now, before, while and after I read something in English, I ask questions to me. Then, I paraphrase the text or write a summary about the passage. Also as I read, I underline the keywords and important sentences. These strategies are really helpful to find ideas. In addition if there is a vocabulary that I don't know, I guess the meaning of the word. I would like to give reading and thinking skills. They will be useful in our readings texts.

Reading Strategies

Reading involves variety of skills. When we have a reading text if we want to understand the topic and read better we should pay attention some reading strategies.

Firstly, before we read we should ask questions (e.g. about the title). It is really good way to ask questions as we read and after we read.

Before we read; we study the title, headings or pictures. We can also ask questions such as these:

- _ What's the text about?
- _ Do I have any background information about the text?
- _ What did I understand from this part?

After we finish; we ask questions in connection with what we read.

- _ What is the subject?
- _ What's the main idea?
- _ How did you find the language of the writer? Or
- _ Do you think if the writer biased is?

Main ideas are the central that a writer wants to communicate. Some ideas are stated directly. While we read we might underline the main ideas. Some ideas aren't stated directly. We must infer them as we read. Here are some strategies to make infer main ideas.

- _ To study details and examples
- _ To ask yourself what these ideas have in common
- _ To add to the specific sentences

Also, we can recognise main ideas due to their relationship to other ideas while we are reading. In addition, to focus on important information in a story we should make a story outline. For instance;

Characters: Who're the people in the story?

Settings: Where and when does the story take place?

The problem: What are the characters trying to do?

What is more, making inferences are reasonable conclusion based on evidence. The reader should try to draw a conclusion from the passage by studying the examples or supporting evidence provided by the author.

When we paraphrase, we put information and ideas into our own words. If we can't paraphrase the text it means that we didn't understand the text very well. So we must read it again. Paraphrasing also helps us remember ideas and information from our reading.

We can also make prediction to understand the main idea or the passage. For example; we can ask like these questions: What is the weather going to be like tomorrow? Or, what is the next paragraph in this reading going to be about?

Scanning means to look quickly for specific information. We can scan to move our eyes down quickly the page without reading every word. If we see words that might be important for us, we should check or underline them. Skimming is also for general information.

Summarizing is one of the good ideas to understand the text. Summary is a shortened form a statement or story. So we should give only the main points and the most important ideas or information. Writing summary helps us to check our understanding of the reading. We can also take notes important information in a chart. It helps us to organise and remember necessary information.

In addition, I can't pass without mentioning about the vocabulary. Because it's really important as we read something. First of all, if we don't know lots of vocabularies we shouldn't be panic! We should try to find or guess the meanings of the vocabularies. We can understand the meanings of the words or sentences. Because there is definitely a connection between other words or sentences.

Critical Thinking Strategies

Firstly, we should analyse. When we analyse about something we examine it. Analysing is like putting it under a microscope. We probably want to know causes, purposes and effects. Also we need ask questions such as: what, why, when, etc.

Then we ought to make classification. Classifying means to organize information into groups, classes and categories.

Comparing puts things side by side to see how far they are alike or which is better. It is one way to analyse a topic. We find the differences and similarities between the subjects. Evaluating finds out the value of the text. Namely, we explain something good or bad, true or false. We make a judgement. Evaluation includes our opinion. So it can be true or wrong. But we should support our opinion.

Interpretation is also includes our opinions or thoughts. We explain our ideas. In addition we must support our interpretation. We must give reasons our opinions.

In synthesizing part we connect all information and ideas. If we synthesise something we might add new ideas and put forward new something.

SUN

“Did you know that the sun is a star much like the stars you see twinkling in the night sky? The sun looks so much bigger and brighter because it is so much closer to the Earth. The sun is 93 million miles from Earth. The next closest star is 21 trillion miles away.” (Valaitis 28-30)

TASK: GROUP WORK

Read the following statements about the paragraph and tick them if you agree. Discuss with your friends. Examine any faulty reasoning.

LITERAL STATEMENTS:

1. The sun is a star.
2. The sun looks brighter than other stars because it is bigger than they are. (?)

CRITICAL STATEMENTS:

1. We depend on the sun more than on any other star. (Interpretation)
2. Things are not always as they appear. (Application)
3. Light travels at 186.000 miles per second. You can conclude that light from the sun reaches Earth in less than a second. (Application)
4. The distances, 93 million miles and 21 trillion miles, are probably approximate rather than exact. (Evaluation)
5. There is no star 5 billion miles away from Earth. (Analysis) (Valaitis 28-30)

GROUPS' STATEMENTS:

1. Sun is important for us. (Interpretation)
2. It has got a lot of energy and light. It is our source of life. (Interpretation)
3. Everybody likes it because of its brightness. (Interpretation)
4. It is accepted that sun has a big importance for our life. Because, with it, we can understand day and night from its movements. _____
5. If there were no sun, sky would be always dark. _____
6. It is a big star. _____
7. It is bigger than Earth. (?) _____
8. It isn't the biggest star. It looks bigger than other stars because it is the closest to Earth.
9. Most people think that the sun is a planet but it isn't. It is just a star as we can see at nights. _____
10. I understand that space is very big. _____
11. We know that the sun is a star but we don't know how many stars there are in the space.
12. I understand that the writer likes space. (?) _____
13. We understand that stars are very twinkling. _____
14. We understand how many miles there are between Earth and the sun. _____
15. We understand that the closest star is 21 trillion miles away. _____
16. We know that there are a lot of stars in the space. _____
17. The other stars are brighter than the sun. _____
18. People may not know that the sun is a star. _____
19. If the sun is closer the Earth like the other stars, we can't live because we can see other stars like point. (???) _____
20. In the space, lots of stars bigger than the other and more than twice bigger. (?????) _____

“Review Exercises for Fallacies”

PAIR WORK: Choose one of the following statements and decide whether the reasoning is fallacious. Be ready to give explanation to the class.

1. If you don't study and get your degree, you will end up like your uncle. Do you really want to be a bum like him for the rest of your life?
2. The speed limit should be kept at 55 miles per hour. Studies have shown that accidents that occur over 55 mph have a higher fatality rate.
3. If the speed limit is raised, then more people will die on the roads.
4. I owned a Ford once and it broke down on me. They are terrible cars and I will never buy one again.
5. Everyone seems to support the changes in the vacation policy, and if everyone likes them, they must be good.
6. Yes, I know that it is illegal to gamble if you are under 21, but that is dumb because you can buy cigarettes at 18.
7. Please don't give George an F--he put so much effort and sweats into that report.
8. Failure to turn the paper in tomorrow will result in an F for the course.
9. Everyone is buying a new bike, so why can't I?
10. Did you enjoy breaking your aunt's heart by being late for dinner?
11. Why shouldn't I make fun of my boss? Look at all the abuse I take from her!
12. According to a survey in *Variety*, the top-grossing film of all time is *Star Wars*.
13. Why would you want to hear him speak? He's a flaming liberal who doesn't care about anything except saving trees in the rain forest.
14. Well, I'm going to continue to believe that there is life on Mars, and that they visit us regularly, unless you can prove otherwise!
15. Legalizing marijuana will mean increased availability, leading to increased drug use by teenagers, more addiction, more drug-related crime, more deaths of young people, the destruction of our public school system, and eventually the collapse of our society. So how can you even consider its legalization?
16. Margaret says that all blondes are airheads, but I wouldn't listen to her--even though her hair looks red, her natural colour is blonde.
17. I've been working at the same video store for the last 2 years and I only make \$5.95 an hour! My boss is such a cheap jerk!
18. The Rolling Stones are the best rock and roll band ever. All my friends agree.
19. Paul McCartney must be a fabulous singer, because he used to be a Beatle, and the Beatles were fabulous.
20. Those James Bond movies are so predictable--if you've seen one, you've seen them all! (“Review Exercises for Fallacies.”)

APPENDIX F-4

Women with a Career

In today's world, women, who have proved themselves as successful in business as men, should not stay at home to look after their children for mainly two reasons. Firstly, women gain more experience and knowledge at work; that's why, they have more self-respect and confidence in themselves. Such women have positive influence on their children's development. Secondly, workingwomen contribute to the family income and provide extra means of raising educated children. For example, they can send their children to day care centres where they gain social skills and more independence quickly. Opponents of this idea claim that women's first responsibility is to their husbands and children. They, also, say that women give birth to babies so it is their responsibility to raise their children. These views are open to doubt. All people, male and female, should enjoy the right to have a career. Today, it is even possible for women to have an online business and work at home, which means the mother, can be both at home-if the child insists –and work at the same time. Moreover, children cared for at day care centres have fewer social and educational problems than those cared for their mothers (survey results, 1990). If women are serious about improving their lives, having more control over their lives, being more influential on their children, they shouldn't stay at home just to take care of their children but have a career. (Danesh et al. 85)

Analysis

Writer's proposal:
.....
Supporting arguments (Writer's ideas):
.....
Evidence:
.....
Opposing arguments (other's ideas):
.....
Refutation of opponent's argument:
.....
Evidence:
.....

(Danesh et al. 85)

Answer these questions:

1. What is the writer's point of view?
2. What evidence does he give to prove his idea?
3. What is the counter argument?
4. How does the writer disprove the opponent's point of view? (Danesh et al. 85)