



Discourse Analysis Techniques: A Critical Tool for Reading Comprehension

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Abstract:- This study explores the integration of Discourse Analysis (DA) into English reading instruction in higher education to enhance reading comprehension skills among students. Recognizing the limited effectiveness of traditional teaching methods, which primarily focus on grammatical structure and vocabulary memorization, this research advocates for a pedagogical shift towards teaching strategies that incorporate DA for deeper textual engagement and interpretation. DA enables students to move beyond the surface textual features towards critical engagement with the text, fostering higher-order cognitive skills like analysis and synthesis. The research uses a qualitative paradigm that employs Critical Discourse Analysis to investigate the relationship between the text and the reader in an educational context. The study has shown that DA enables students to interpret complex academic texts, thus making their academic work easier and preparing them for professional challenges. This is also said to enhance academic performance, which the study also recorded as a dramatic improvement in the critical and analytical skills required of students to handle the complexities of global communication. The findings of this study direct toward the fact that DA must be integrated by the curriculum designers and educators within the teaching practices to adhere to the contemporary needs of education. This would help the students to develop cognitively and with the required skills to handle the texts in academic and professional life. The integration of CDA with English reading instruction emphasizes a change approach toward transformation in language education, which is dynamic and interactive beyond the traditional paradigm.

Keywords: Discourse Analysis (DA), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Reading Comprehension, Pedagogical Shift, Cognitive Development, L2 Reading



1. Introduction

Effective comprehension of English texts is crucial towards understanding academic and professional success, especially in a global context where English is one of the dominant languages of communication. Nowadays, the number of English language learners is increasing with the demand “to learn English to be updated with the recent developments imposed by the revolution in information in their specific fields of interests or career-related settings” (Alsamani & Daif-Allah, 2016, p.51). The English teaching and learning curriculum in higher education in some countries, such as Saudi Arabia, is characterized by a foreign language nature (Alqunayeer & Zamir, 2016), that has put much emphasis on grammar and vocabulary memorization (Abduh & Algouzi, 2020; Eisa, 2020), with teaching done through traditional methods and extensive use of code-switching (Alkathery, 2014; Almansour, 2016). Most of these approaches have often been found lacking in the sense that they fail to develop interpretive skills critical for text comprehension (LaRusso et al., 2016). In this line, educators and linguists agree that creative teaching approaches are essential if there is any hope for students' increased involvement with complex texts. Teaching approaches improve students' comprehension of complex texts in many ways (Zhou, 2019). Realizing that recent studies have revealed that the average reading proficiency of college-age students has been steadily declining, with about one-third of four-year college students are in critical situations for their low academic achievement (Al Abik, 2014). The present study is designed to develop reading comprehension skills for such students. The focus of this paper is on how discourse analysis can be useful in the improvement of English reading comprehension within higher education.

Discourse analysis is the study of language uses in texts for revealing deeper meanings of cultural, social, and ideological. It has been applied to investigate how meanings are constructed beyond the basic sentence level (Gee, 2014). Accordingly, discussion analysis in educational institutions enhances readings for students to look beyond the surface features of texts into more general contextual influences that shape meaning. It would be the support of modern educational paradigms in which critical thinking and analytical skills are the major contributions of language teaching (Liu, 2005).

While the potential advantages are reckoned, the use of discourse analysis in the teaching of English as a foreign language is uncommon in higher education in developing countries, and only those traditional modes in the teaching and learning of the English language abound more, focusing mainly on the translation of textual materials and the rote memorization of such materials, to the exclusion of critical engagement with the materials themselves (Li, 2004). This paper tries to fill this gap and strengthen how discourse analysis can be integrated properly with teaching strategies, helping in reading comprehension skills. The findings presented by this research would contribute empirical data to the effectiveness of the methods being implemented in discourse analysis during student reading activities and would likely suggest



even more interactive and reflexive character in English reading instruction in higher education.

Vocabulary knowledge is essential for reading comprehension (Alharbi, 2012), but the process is more than an acquisition of basic linguistic gain. These include the ability to analyze, synthesize, and critically evaluate the content information. These are independent skills, most necessary at institutes of higher learning and beyond. The traditional focus on structure and lexis seems to have little use in positioning students for the interpretive claims of academic and professional texts. With this, educators can help the students come up with subtle ways of reading the text, which would enable more conscious engagement of the text material reflecting real-life situations through the integration of discourse analysis in the curriculum (Hyland, 2014).

Moreover, the successful practice of discourse analysis in the educational context of other countries suggests a potentially beneficial impact on teaching EFL in higher education. Exposure of the students to discourse analysis strategies helps the students a higher level of critical thinking, which has been evidenced to widen the scope of understanding and interpreting various texts (Jones, 2024). In other words, such an approach, based on the world's tendencies in education, ensures the acquisition of soft skills in critical thinking, problem-solving, and being flexible.

The paper explores the discourse analysis that is applied to English reading instruction in higher education in a very systematic endeavour, intending to improve the reading comprehension ability of students and nurture them in such a way that they meet the requirements needed at the international level for global communication. This study adds comprehensive empirical studies to the evolving field of English language education and brings forth theoretical frameworks important to a discussion of the field.

2. Literature Review

Reviewing the literature of the issue revealed various teaching methods employed in universities to enhance English reading comprehension through discourse analysis. Studies in the review proffer various innovative strategies or methods of teaching that aim at helping learners overcome the difficulties they face in reading and analyzing text in English. These studies are extremely helpful in gaining a deeper understanding and engagement with the text, which in turn helps develop critical thinking and communicative skills for the students. That would help in achieving educational goals and fulfilling labor market needs. For instance, when Saudi students gain such skills, fulfillment of Saudi Vision 2030 is going to greater. Transformation from “an oil-based economy to a knowledge-based global economy” requires Saudis to become more competitive in their international exchanges and communication. Learning English is “a vital strategic catalyst” for the diversification of the oil-based economy



(Al-Mwzaiji & Muhammad, 2023. p. 435). This literature review offers a summary of some current research findings that indicate how these strategies could be effective within higher education academic context to produce improved English reading outcomes.

Setyono and Widodo (2019) investigate a senior high school English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbook recommended by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture for use by the learners. The textbook presents multicultural content that shows its critical role in preparing students for communication within a transcultural and transnational context. They adopt an approach of critical discourse analysis in scrutinizing the manner through which multicultural values are interwoven within the textbook. The importance of analysis foregrounds four themes in this process: respect for other diverse ethnic and religious groups, appreciation for indigenous cultures, keeping peace and avoiding conflict, and valorizing the opportunity for creative cultural expressions. The outcome is encouraging and proved a sense of enhanced cultural awareness in EFL settings when the materials used in diversified world cultures were included. The purpose of the study is that the English teachers take advantage of innovative multimodal teaching strategies to encourage deeper involvement of the students with multicultural topics. This study highlights that the cultural scope in language education does need to be widened to recognize the status of English as a global lingua franca.

Ong (2019) uses a case study approach to investigate the classroom discourse evident during reading comprehension lessons at the teacher's front, with the main focus being on the opportunities that these sessions present for vocabulary learning. The research critically evaluates the interaction between the teacher and student in the lesson, including some of the strategies applied by the teacher in realizing improved acquisition of vocabulary among the learners. Specific instructional practices are those that Ong explains in detailed discourse analysis, allowing or disallowing specific vocabulary learning. He found that teacher questioning and feedback, followed by effective follow-up questions, enrich the whole vocabulary acquisition process in reading comprehension activities. The author believes educators need to adopt these discourse strategies far more systematically if vocabulary learning is to be maximized in classroom settings. Therefore, the current study forms part of the contributions to a larger interest in second language acquisition research by highlighting the potential for teacher-led discourse to enhance language learning outcome activities.

Bonyadi (2019) explores discourse analysis (DA) and its inclusion in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching to bring out its significance towards educational sustainability. The study further discusses the three critical approaches to DA – Critical, Descriptive, and Pedagogical Discourse Analysis within the literature on language pedagogy. He posits that EFL instruction is bound to be effective if teachers know DA theoretical principles in a bid to enhance communicative competence in divergent linguistic surroundings. The study synthesizes research findings that suggest the potential of DA to enhance language teaching



through focused teaching of authentic language use and critical engagement with texts. Future researchers are encouraged to further operationalize the DA concepts at the methodological level to even better equip EFL teachers with the provision of more effective discourse-based programs. It concludes the review with an impassioned plea to language teacher education institutions to include DA in their curricula, seeking to allow students a better acquaintance with language use and its pedagogical ramifications.

Derin et al. (2020) have reviewed the timeline in chronological order of Discourse Analysis (DA) in the backdrop of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and how it developed in the last 5 years. This study has reviewed 40 selected articles out of 131,000 using the NVivo 12 software for the maintenance of qualitative rigour through the library method of research. In the early years, discourse analysis in EFL was focused only on reading comprehension problems among students. However, it has been expanded to determine ways of authentic teacher performance and classroom discourse progress. This also shows that DA was used to disclose critical issues in the teacher-student and student-student relationships, and the content of mandated EFL textbooks. The findings of the study suggest that the role of DA improvement in EFL educational practices and its curriculum is being realized by an increasing number of people.

Jin, Liu, and Lei (2020) recommended using the three-stage teaching method to help first-year college students in China improve their collaborative reading of academic texts. The objective was to establish if the method would improve the difficulties that students face in their academic reading, making them incapable of developing both collaborative skills and meaningful comprehension of the material. This will go through several phases that include a phase of acclimatization. In phase first students will have to get aligned to the text structures. The second phase is the reading phase with the majority of the phases carried out as a collaborative phase involving discussion and analysis among themselves. The third phase is the consolidation phase in which they synthesize their understanding. It is evident from this study to illustrate that the students reached remarkable improvement in the scores of reading comprehension and critical thinking skills. These authors advocate for a more participatory approach within EFL academic reading curricula that is more fitting to enable participation in the demands of academic discourse by students. It helps in improving reading skills by both individuals and students at large and also prepares them for effective communication and cooperation, vital in both academics and professionalism.

The study of Dong et al., (2020) aims to investigate the level of vocabulary knowledge that could contribute to reading comprehension. This review has synthesized data from various research studies to be able to quantify the effect of vocabulary breadth and depth on students' reading abilities at varied educational levels. The data analyzed shows that there was a strong positive relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension skills among



students, therefore signifying vocabulary as the basis of literacy. The findings of this current study suggest that the results of vocabulary enhancement have to be the focus of any educational intervention designed to improve reading comprehension. The study provides targeted vocabulary instruction as one of the paramount methods that should be adopted by educators in supporting reading outcomes. From this research, sufficient recommendations are open enough for both policymakers and curriculum developers to give special attention to the priority of vocabulary development in educational settings.

Huang and Zhao (2021) bring a new method for discussing and analyzing the issues and problems in society based on Chinese Socio, to be called "Harmonious Discourse Analysis" (HDA). The study describes how discourse practices can be used to understand and possibly find an opportunity to solve conflicts and problems that people in Chinese society face. The findings, identify the main patterns of linguistic expressions that seek harmony and avoid conflict through utilizing a range of textual sources from media, public speeches, and everyday conversations. This research goes on to identify that HDA serves to explore not only the linguistic and cultural depth of language but also offers a practice towards fostering social harmony through communication. The researchers contend that HDA provides valuable insights into the intricate relationship of language, culture, and social interaction within China; hence, it is in high demand to be included in wider practices of discourse analysis that may enhance well-being within society.

Li and Zhang (2022) apply an approach to classroom discourse analysis of the teacher's scaffolding strategies in a Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) framework in an intensive English as a Foreign Language (EFL) reading class. This paper studies the dynamic interactions that take place among a teacher and students within the Chinese educational environment, in accordance she foregrounds how scaffolding helps in language, content knowledge, and understanding development. The author has meticulously identified a variety of scaffolding techniques being used by the teacher through analysis of the transcripts; questioning, recasting, and giving hints. These enhance student engagement and understanding. These findings not only underscore the importance of effective scaffolding in CLIL environments but also illustrate that such strategies are central to optimizing student learning outcomes in EFL settings. The authors argue for extending the use of scaffolded instruction in the CLIL program to afford more support for learners in their achievement of both language and content aims. This paper brings valuable input for pedagogical practice that could be used to be of help in the process of enhancement of effectiveness in language education based on the CLIL model.

The reviewed studies point to a dynamic change in the use of discourse analysis from the stage of addressing simple comprehension problems up to the point of enabling complicated interaction in a classroom. However, some gaps are evident in the systematic integration of



these methods within the curriculum of universities in China. Future research should operationalize these strategies within such specific educational settings so that the greatest benefits of discourse analysis can be realized in fostering profound linguistic and cognitive development among students. This would not only improve reading outcomes but would also prepare students with important analytical skills that would be required in the globalized world.

3. Objectives

The importance of this research is to improve English reading comprehension through discourse analysis within higher education. Within this sense, English represents an important area that leads to academic or professional accomplishment within a globalized world. Traditional teaching methods prove very effective in higher education for the development of interpretive skills, which is a much-needed requirement for good text comprehension. This study aims to fill this gap by including discourse analysis in the teaching methodologies of educators for helping students have a deeper understanding of texts, beyond their surface features, which would enable them to critically engage better with the content. This research is an empirical contribution to the knowledge of how effective discourse analysis approaches can improve reading comprehension skills among university students. The further adapted discourse analysis identifies with the modern educational paradigms that have defined an emphasis on sharpening critical and analytical skills, which are key in guiding students over complex texts in academic and professional settings. If universities accept these ideas, students will have the most excellent ways to learn international standards of communication, while developing their soft skills, including sharpening their abilities in critical thinking and problem-solving. This research is a contribution to the growing body of knowledge in English language education with real-life evidence and theoretical frames for preparing college students to be competent in global communication.

The purpose of this study is to examine English reading competence in light of discourse analysis among students in higher education. Therefore, this study seeks to integrate discourse analysis into teaching strategies to address the weaknesses of traditional teaching methods, particularly the weaknesses in instilling interpretive skills required during comprehension. This study intends to explore the possibility of using discourse analysis as an intervention mechanism in teaching reading comprehension, which should help improve the reading comprehension skills of the students. This study further discusses empirical effectiveness in the development of students' reading comprehension skills using discourse analysis. The research seeks to contribute towards the improvement of English Language education. This is through instilling in students critical thinking and analytic abilities that are required to engage with challenging texts in their own and professional world, being able to communicate effectively within the global context.

4. Methods



Based on the above research questions and objectives, this study uses critical discourse analysis as a qualitative research method, which is the most suitable method for this research. The specific reasons are as follows. Fairclough's discourse practice analysis method regards discourse as a process of social practice (Fairclough, 1992), and through specific text analysis, explores the connection between discourse and social practice, uncovering the inherent relationship between discourse and social structure. Critical discourse research is a different analytical method from general discourse research, with a clear mark of criticism. It believes that discourse is a reflection of social culture and social ideology (Van Dijk, 1993). Starting from the surface form of discourse, combined with the context of discourse generation, multiple approaches are used to analyze the underlying ideology behind discourse (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Diversified research methods provide researchers with a wider range of choices and innovation space on the one hand; on the other hand, the different focuses of various discourse analysis methods are conducive to ensuring the accuracy and science of the research. This critical discourse analysis will clarify the specific semiotic, structuralist, and linguistic analysis methods used (Barthes, 1972; de Saussure, 1916; Halliday, 1978). Speech act theory and discourse analysis both belong to the category of language application. Speech act theory provides a theoretical basis for discourse analysis (Austin, 1962), while discourse provides a practical basis for speech act theory, promoting further development and improvement of speech act theory (Searle, 1969).

4.1 Critical discourse analysis of selected text 1

Critical discourse analysis is conducted based on Michael E. Webber's "What's the World to Do About Water?". Specifically, this text is selected from Unit 5 of New Progressive College English 1 and this unit mainly talks about the water problem. The critical discourse analysis of this discourse focuses on the topic, structure, and writing strategy of the text. These three contents can also be elaborated in detail from the following eight aspects: the content and thematic significance of the discourse, the implicit meaning and function of the discourse, the influence of the discourse on the reader's thoughts and behaviour, the background or context of the discourse, the type and structure of the discourse, the coherence and cohesion of the discourse, the linguistic and non-linguistic means used in the discourse, and the quality of the discourse in terms of content and form.

4.1.1 Content and Thematic Significance of Discourse

The discourse of "What's the World to Do About Water?" is related to irreplaceable water energy and emphasizes the importance of protecting water resources. The critical discourse analysis of this text focuses on social issues related to the use of water resources. This investigation analyzes the expression of social development and contradictions in language and other symbols, rather than analyzing the use of textual language for purely linguistic research.



Critical discourse analysis and traditional socio-cultural analysis are complementary.

4.1.2 The Implied Meaning and Function of The Discourse

This discourse has certain implicit meanings and functions, such as Michael E. Webber's article strongly emphasizes that proper water use can clear the way for achieving a fully liberated, healthy, and peaceful civilization. The content and thematic significance of this discourse are different. For example, it talks about the waste of water resources, but its thematic significance is the principle of water conservation. There are multiple words and writing techniques in the article that suggest solving water resource problems, such as quoting President John F. Kennedy's words, but readers cannot directly see this implicit meaning. In this article, Webber neither tells readers a story nor explicitly describes an event. On the contrary, he shared his views on water conservation with readers and then explained why he believed that repairing water resources would help alleviate and solve energy, defence, and health issues.

4.1.3 Discourse Background and Coherence

The production of this discourse is background, not out of thin air. There should be the producer of the discourse and the environment in which it is produced, all of which belong to the background of discourse production. It mainly comes from alternatives to coal and oil, but water cannot be replaced. The concept of style is too narrow, and now we talk more about discourse types. The discourse consists of 10 paragraphs, and the discourse structure is relatively clear. Cohesion and coherence are important components of discourse quality. This discourse utilizes appropriate language and nonverbal means to enhance cohesion and coherence, effectively conveying information or expressing ideas, thereby solving the current water problem.

4.1.4 Means of Discourse Use and Discourse Quality

This discourse uses both linguistic and nonverbal means. Most discourse is not limited to text but also includes images, charts, and even sound and animation. The textbooks we are currently using also contain a large number of nonverbal means, which also play an important role in teaching. For example, this discourse is not limited to text in class, but also to sound.

In addition, the discourse has high quality in terms of content and form. The discourse is very reasonable, correct, positive, and attractive. It can provide students with new knowledge and experience about water use. With the fluctuation of water supply, water demand is also increasing, and water scarcity will become the next major challenge facing humanity.

Finally, the expected impact of the discourse on the thoughts and behaviours of college students. This discourse hopes that readers will take practical actions after understanding the meaning. For example, it persuades readers to save water and calls on the public to take water-



saving actions, developing abundant clean, reliable, and affordable energy that can provide abundant clean water.

4.2 Critical Discourse Analysis of Selected Text 2

4.2.1 General Model of College English Reading Teaching

This research takes Unit 4 "Five Famous Symbols of American Culture" in the reading and writing tutorial "New Horizon College English III" published by FLTRP as an example. It is believed that college English reading tutorials mainly focus on vocabulary, article structure, sentence structure and writing skills.

Firstly, vocabulary. For example, the article repeatedly appears with similar words in form and meaning, such as the usage of "liberty" and "liberation". Teachers should remind students to distinguish between parts of speech and meaning, and also note that the noun corresponding to "liberate" is "liberation".

Secondly, article structure and writing skills. This article has five subheadings, each of which forms a separate chapter. The article can be divided into five parts. Read each chapter carefully and analyze the four parts: The Status of Liberty, Barbie, The Buffalo Nickel, and Uncle Sam. The paragraphs are expanded in chronological order. Describing stories in chronological order is an important writing structure skill that needs to be mastered in college English writing.

Thirdly, sentence structure. There are many sentences with independent structures and "conjunctions + prepositional phrases" in this article. The focus is to turn these long sentences into simple sentences, explain the composition of independent structures, and then apply the exercises IX after class. For example, in paragraph 17 of the Uncle Sam section, "After the war, a character called Uncle Sam Began appearing in political cartoons, his form evolving from an earlier cartoon character called Brother Jonathan that was during the American Revolution" can be transformed into two simple sentences: "After the war, a character called Uncle Sam Began appearing in political cartoons" and "His form evolved from an earlier cartoon character called Brother Jonathan that was during the American Revolution". This can help students observe the differences between simple sentences and long sentences.

4.2.2 Analysis of Teacher's Teaching Activities

Before discussing the text, students can read the eight questions from Exercise I after class to roughly grasp the 5WH (when, who, what, where, why) behind the five American cultural symbols. After reading, divide the class into five small groups to discuss and retell the specific content of the story. Remind students to pay attention to the specific descriptive sentences of the protagonist and the arrangement of the time sequence. According to the course requirements, the above classroom activities can achieve the teaching objectives. Through the



rich and interesting content of the text, I have learned to understand and experience the social culture of the West.

Consolidate and improve students' English language skills through interactive explanations and practice, and strengthen the cultivation of comprehensive English application abilities. Providing conditions for students' autonomous learning, encouraging the combination of autonomous learning and cooperative learning, and improving their comprehensive cultural literacy requires students to have the ability to think logically and critically independently. To meet this requirement, teachers can apply various teaching methods and theories.

The aforementioned instructional activities can further illustrate language use using CDA. CDA can enable students not only to grasp the literal meaning of words, but also to learn how to use words to display social structure, social ideology, and the self-generated negative impact of ideology on language and writing. The CDA theory considers the situation of text production and consumption and observes and analyzes the process of text construction as well as the reaction of ideology to text.

4.2.2 Analysis and Evaluation of Text 2

The New Horizons series of textbooks places great emphasis on cultural infiltration, and the selected articles showcase a wealth of cultural information to students, such as the Culture Shock in the first book and the Five Famous Symbols of American Culture in the third book. According to statistics, 78% of the selected articles in Section A are from American literature, while 60% are in Section B (See in Figure 1). The article introduces the geography, slang, vocabulary, and syntactic structure of the United States from different perspectives.

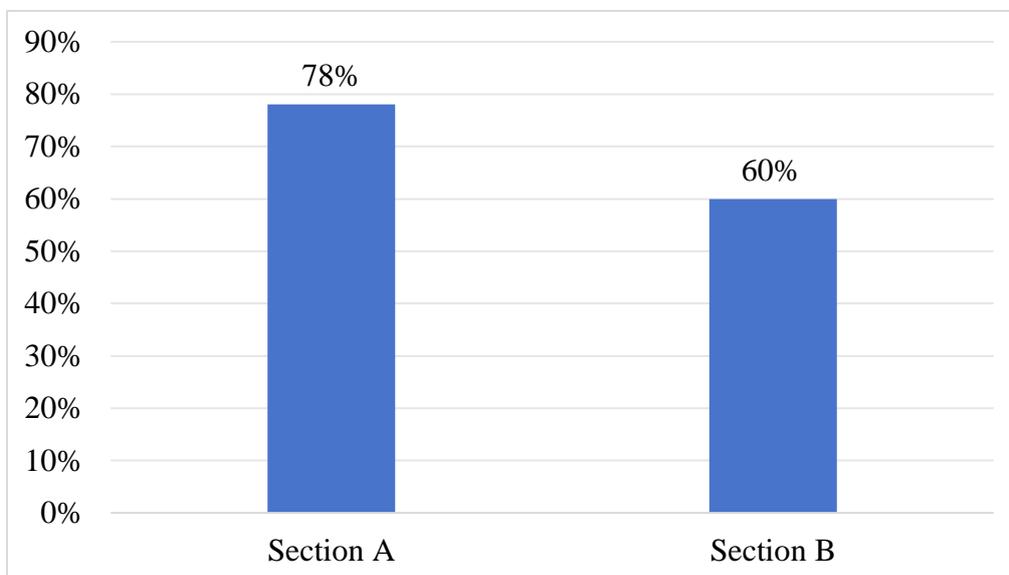


Figure 1. The Percent of contents from American literature



Critical discourse analysis of water resource waste provides a new perspective for imparting, analyzing, and understanding language and interpreting social norms. Vocabulary is arranged in the order in which it appears in text 2, and corresponding English and Chinese definitions are annotated. As stated in Section A of Unit 1 of Volume 2, "rest/'restlis/n. unable to keep still because one is nervous, born, or affected." All new words appear in bold in the text. For example, in Section A of Unit 1 of Volume 2, "You will find drivers will be interrupted and people will push past you." This text emphasizes the repetition rate of new words, which will be repeated continuously in the following article to achieve the purpose of emphasizing and deepening the impression. For example, just as what has been shown in Table 1, the new word "Reward" in Section A of the first unit of the first volume appeared 27 times in the first unit, 38 times in the entire first book, and 20 times in the second book. The distribution of core vocabulary in different discourses and stages reduces the vocabulary learning burden on students and the number of new words accounts for 5% to 7% of the article, and this also ensures effective reading for students.

The amount of "Reward" appeared in the first unit	The Amount appeared in the first book	The Amount appeared in the second book
27 times	38 times	20 times

Table 1. The amount of "Reward" Appeared in Different Positions.

5. Findings

5.1 College English reading teaching should be "critical"

At present, there is still a tendency towards a competency-based model in English education in Saudi Arabia. The ability-based model is a global trend that emerged in the 1960s, equating knowledge with training and emphasizing the cultivation of students' abilities, with knowledge being the most efficient and appropriate ability to do things. In response to the Saudi Vision 2030 conceived in 2016 and its goals to shift from oil to a knowledge-based global economy, EFL learning is set as "an important strategic catalyst because it can prepare Saudi students for the global economy and employment" (Al-Mwzaiji & Muhammad, 2023. p. 439). English is one of the in national interests in Saudi Arabia (Barnawi & Al-Hawsawi, 2017). Teaching EFL in Saudi Arabia cultivate students comprehensive English application ability, so that they can effectively communicate in English in future learning, work, and social interactions while enhancing their autonomous learning ability and improving their comprehensive cultural literacy. The ability-based teaching model clearly cannot adapt well to this goal. From the perspective of Damaskinidis (2017), to enable students to learn independently and improve their overall cultural quality, students should autonomously construct the abilities and skills they need in the future based on their personal goals. Teachers and teaching activities should also create conditions for students to independently decide and construct.



Besides, there is an increasing emphasis on the practicality of English in teaching. However, due to the uneven distribution of students, limited teaching resources, and various objective factors, there are many problems in adult English teaching in Saudi Arabia. In some English-speaking countries, students often lack the motivation to learn other foreign languages well. Faced with the current situation of foreign language education, new educational models have emerged. A common model is immersive teaching, which involves placing learners in the target language environment. Ahmadi et al. (2023) proposed a plan to cultivate learners' 'lifelong learning skills', which include skills to deal with unexpected problems, make wise choices, cultivate keen observation skills, acquire useful knowledge through external world connections, and guide life with an individual's internal values, beliefs, and rationality. The cultivation of these five abilities is complementary. To deal with sudden problems, people need to be able to make wise choices. Only by acquiring useful knowledge under sharp observation can they make wise choices, and to judge whether the decisions made are wise, it is necessary to examine them through "internal values, beliefs, and rationality". This plan coincides with the intention to enhance students' self-learning ability and improve their comprehensive cultural literacy. Exploring the cultivation process involves maintaining a "critical" attitude of "review" and "judgment" (Ikizer, 2023). Therefore, college English teaching should be "critical", and curriculum reform and innovation can also be approached from a "critical" perspective.

5.2 Application of CDA in Selected Texts

This article uses 'Five Famous Symbols of American Culture' for analysis and provides constructive suggestions for classroom teaching activities from the perspective of CDA. However, its purpose is not to replace the teaching activities mentioned earlier, but rather to provide a beneficial supplement to it, making students realize that language use is a phenomenon where speakers make language and nonverbal choices based on their purposes and objective circumstances. According to Fairclough's three-dimensional directional analysis framework, it is recommended to consider three levels of social practice, discourse practice, and textual practice when organizing teaching activities (Ikizer, 2023). This framework theory allows developers to understand and maintain the knowledge they have learned systematically, enabling them to effectively acquire and apply new knowledge. Discourse social theory is an interpretive and constructive discourse analysis method, and both articles are closely related to it.

5.2.1 Social Practice Level

In this level of activity, teachers can consider the following aspects: how can the text reproduce the world in a specific way? How is the formation of text determined by the ideology and stance of the generator? How can text help strengthen or change readers' ideological stance?



The following specific questions can assist students in analyzing the text: What kind of identity and perspective does the author adopt to tell the story behind the five cultural symbols? What is the author's attitude towards the United States and social history? Why did the author choose these five things to tell the story behind them? How does the article showcase the two main characteristics of the American people: creativity and independence? What kind of American national conditions breed these qualities of Americans?

5.2.2 Discourse Practice Level

At this level, teachers should consider the constituent and cognitive elements related to the process of text production and interpretation: what type of discourse genre does the text belong to? Is there any intertextuality similar to text? Are there any different viewpoints in the text, and how can they ultimately be unified? How can the author mobilize readers' experience to interpret the text? Specifically, students can try to answer: Have they read other articles related to American culture and learned about other symbols that can be considered representative of American culture? Is there a difference between articles written by Americans introducing their cultural symbols and articles written by foreigners introducing American cultural symbols? What kind of information does the article want to convey to you through the five symbols? Do you aspire to the spirit and quality behind cultural symbols? If the group were to retell, what methods would they adopt (role-playing stage plays, news interviews)? The performance of the parties involved, short essays, etc.

5.2.3 Text Practice Level

This level of analysis focuses on the external form and semantic features of text construction. Teachers can allow students to analyze the connections, modal systems, theme selection, and transitivity analysis in an article to express ideological significance. For example, how does the article organize events clearly through time markers? How does the article highlight human subjectivity and the personality traits of the protagonist in the story? What are the characteristics of the descriptive language used by the protagonist in the story? What language did the author use to characterize the disappearance of Native Americans and bison herds?

6. Discussion

The discussion part of this research focuses on the adoption of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in English reading instruction in higher education to boost comprehension among students through more fortified interpretive strategies. This innovative approach responds to traditional pedagogies that often fail to foster critical analytical skills that are necessary for students to be able to negotiate complex texts. CDA tries to uncover the relations between text and society, which are found as both latent power relations and the cultural/ideological context. This becomes an essential investigation as it brings to the open the underlying power and



ideological structures framing discourse. This will not affect only the understanding of the text but will extend it to interpreting texts.

Students get to interact with texts from the framework of CDA, which is not only understanding the 'what' but also understanding the 'why', therefore equipping them with tools for critical analysis and inquiry of what they read. Classrooms that apply CDA transform the reading experience from simple comprehension to one that dissects structures, themes, argumentation, and rhetorical devices of texts. For this research, students indulged in iconic symbols of American cultural identity that opened out into broader societal and cultural stories. This has allowed a deeper, both linguistic and cultural, comprehension but has also critically looked at how these narratives build up and are hence communicated, hence their consequence within a wider global view to American identity. Additionally, Fairclough's three-dimensional framework of CDA that consists of social practice, discourse practice, and textual practice would be applied in order to do a wholesome text analysis of all the texts applied in the study. This framework is seen to help the students perceive how language use is related to cultural and social frameworks and help them decode complex messages that were hidden within the texts. Students would through such an analysis learn how to identify and challenge the presuppositions and ideologies that structure discourse, hence bettering the student's ability at critical thinking and interpretive activity.

The integration of CDA into teaching strategies is not an easy task. This kind of discourse analysis is very subjective and it puts great pressure on the instructor to guard against his or her own biases and, subsequently, the influence of his or her interpretations on the students. They must be objective and hold a critical attitude in harnessing the full educational potential of CDA. However, the empirical finding of the research underlines the effectiveness of CDA in developing reading competence among students. In this regard, CDA supports providing a more enriching, interesting learning experience since it does not differentiate between class learning and the wider social and cultural context. All these outcomes point out the fact that using CDA in English reading instruction as an intervention strategy has significant potential. This will help to shed more light on how the discourse analysis approach can be used to not only improve reading comprehension but also to form a deeper, critical awareness among students. Thus, it is important to prepare students to communicate and operate effectively at the international level, with an ability to critically engage with texts that they are to use in their academic and professional lives. Beyond a language education context, the implications of the study include a paradigm shift to more critical, reflective teaching methodologies that will pay more attention to the role of language in the perception and construction of the views of society and, perhaps more fundamentally, of individual ideologies.

7. Conclusion



The research discusses the application of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a fresh perspective and supplementary model in the design of college English reading instruction towards innovations in college curriculum reform for English reading. This shows that there is a need to construe textual connotations within social contexts and ideologies.

This paper has elaborated on several problems of current textbook methodologies, outlined specific advice for textbook revision, and inserted supplementary resources. This has stimulated students' autonomous learning and critical thinking capacities, thus contributing highly to their academic and cultural literacy. The study has shown how classroom activities could be organized according to the three-dimensional model of CDA by Fairclough in terms of social practice, discourse practice, and textual practice to increase the students' educational experiences.

The texts analyzed in this study showed the impact of aligning student motivation with the pedagogical realities facing educators. However, the changes in exercise designs of textbooks point towards the necessity of updating the content to reflect current realities and not bring in frustration on the part of the student due to out-of-date information.

Finally, the research fully demonstrated the practical feasibility of the integration of CDA into English teaching towards better and improved teaching quality of the English language and reading materials used in teaching. The results indicate that there is a need for educators to be more exploratory in their content, other than the conventional textbooks, to use current and relevant content which will interest the students and therefore increase their learning achievements. In adopting CDA, educators shall promote an interactive and reflexive teaching context that is requisite to prepare students adequately to negotiate their way successfully through demanding texts in both academia and professions. The present research has to be expected to contribute very significantly to the further development of English language education by providing empirical evidence of how discourse analysis may contribute very significantly to reading comprehension skills. This further lays the basis upon which more advanced academic research in integrating CDA within educational settings can build, thus underlining the potential of this research for transforming traditional pedagogical practices and equipping the student sufficiently for the demanding contemporary world of global communication.

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