The Effect of Critical Discourse Analysis Instruction on Iranian EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension and Orientation

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Abstract

This study was planned to investigate the effect of explicit teaching of some Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) techniques on Iranian EFL learners' Reading Comprehension. It was attempted to explore any change in the students' abilities in revealing the implied meaning of the texts. Any change in the students' views toward learning English was also explored in this study after critical reading instruction through CDA techniques. To this end, two news articles were selected from online sources. The participants were 60 undergraduate students of Law at Bandar Anzali Azad University. They were assigned to two groups of 30 students. The experimental group were required to hand in a reflective essay on each reading article. They also responded to a questionnaire to reveal any change in their attitudes toward English language learning or any increase in their motivation to learn it. The results revealed that the experimental group outperformed the control group after being instructed to read between lines through CDA. Their motivation also increased in learning English after becoming familiar with the field of CDA.

Introduction

Over the past few decades various approaches to second/foreign language teaching have been proposed, including Audio-Lingual Method, Communicative Language Teaching, Content-based Language Teaching, Task-based Language Teaching, etc. These approaches mainly focus on effective teaching of language skills and fostering students' communicative competence, but mostly they ignore the social and political complexity of language and language learning (Okazaki, 2005). Language is not neutral; it is culturally and ideologically loaded. Language learning and teaching is essentially political and socially formed (Auerbach, 1995;Pennycook, 1999).

The text whether written or oral is a multidimensional structure consisting of syntax, lexicon, grammar, morphology, phonology and semantics. However, understanding grammar and lexicon does not lead to the understanding of text. Any text is an ideological construction embedded within various discursive systems. They are affected by ideological and sociopolitical forces, and therefore are almost always subjected to social critiques (Cervetti, Pardales, & Damico, 2001). In order to detect the social inequalities and injustices imbedded in the texts, language learners need to understand the social effects of texts and take a critical view to them, so they turn into critical agents and develop a more impartial and democratic society. In fact, comprehension of meaning lies not in the text itself, but in the complex interaction between the author's intent and the reader's ability to decode the author's intent (Dellinger, 1995).

Since the present study employed Fairclough's(1992) three-dimensional model of discourse analysis in analyzing students' reflections on the reading texts, theoretical assumptions of CDA and Fairclough's three-dimensional discourse model should be reviewed.

CDA is mainly developed from the neo-Marxist tradition and made use of social constructionism (Jorgensen & Philips, 2002). On one hand, Neo-Marxism equipped CDA with a powerful analytical tool to reveal the ideological effects of social injustice for it moves away from the economic determinism of classical Marxism and focuses on cultural dimensions of social life, seeing domination and exploitation as culturally and ideologically established and maintained. On the other hand, CDA draws on social constructionism that considers realities as socio-culturally constructed and contingent. Therefore, it creates the freedom of agency to resist the determinism of structure or dominant ideologies. Van Dijk, Wodak and Fairclough are the most effective practitioners in the development of CDA. Their views are briefly explained respectively.

Critical analysis of media discourse has been worked by Van Dijk (1988). He considered a comprehensive analysis of both the textual and structural level of media discourse and analysis at the production and comprehension level. Wodak(2001, as cited in Shyholislami) and her colleagues have worked on discourse sociolinguistics. They believed that in discourse sociolinguistics, text and context have equal importance and the text is studied in context. Fairclough (2001, as cited in Shyholislami) in his approach to language and discourse which is called critical language study, tries to raise consciousness of exploitative social relations by focusing on language. His model will be explained in details later. There are three important concepts that underpin CDA: dialectical relationship, ideology, and hegemony.

Crucial to CDA is the dialectical relationships between discursive practices and social practices (Sunderland, 2004). Critical discourse analysts, holding dialectical relationships, recognize both the delimiting power of social institution and at the same time the shaping power of discourse; thus, it occupies the middle ground in the continuum of discourse's constructing power of the world.

Critical discourse analysts view ideology as "a practice that operates in processes of meaning production in everyday life, whereby meaning is mobilized in order to maintain relations of power"(Jorgensen & Philips, 2002, p. 75). Partially drawing on Althusser's (1971) theory of ideology , critical discourse analysts admit that ideologies as social practices in social institution have the power to position people as social "subject" in particular way. They reject parts of Althusser's theory of ideology because it treats people as passive ideological subjects, over-emphasizing social structure while underestimating human agency. CDA argues for a middle ground between social structure and human agency. In Fairclough's (1992) words, "subjects are ideologically positioned, but they are also capable of acting creatively to make their own connections between the diverse practices and ideologies to which they are exposed and to structure positioning practices and structures" (p.91).

The theory of hegemony comes from Antonio Gramsci, who argues that the hegemony of the dominant social class depends on winning the consent of the majority to existing social arrangements. Therefore, hegemonies are products of negotiation of meaning in which all social groups participate (Gramsci, 1991). Since Gramsci's theory of hegemony ascribes a degree of agency to all social groups in the producing and negotiating of meaning, it provides CDA a theoretical underpinning for arguing people as "agents of discursive and cultural change" (Jorgensen & Philips, 2002, p. 17).

Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model of Discourse

Fairclough (1992) announced five theoretical propositions for CDA (pp. 8-12):

1) Language use (discourse) shapes and is shaped by society. In other words, discourse and society are in a dialectical relationship.
2) Discourse helps to contribute and change knowledge and its objects, social relations, and social identity.
3) Discourse is invested with ideologies and is shaped by power.
4) The shaping of discourse is a stake in power struggles.
5) Critical language study sets out to show how society and discourse shape each other.

These five propositions stem from the assumption that language is both socially constitutive and socially determined. Fairclough's model of critical discourse analysis is influenced by Halliday's functional linguistics. Halliday (1978)views every text as having three functions: ideational function, interpersonal function, and textual function. A text has an "ideational" function through its representation of the world, an "interpersonal" function through social interactions between participants in discourse, and a "textual" function through uniting separate components into a meaning whole and combining this with a situational context. Likewise, Fairclough (1992) views any discursive event, or any instance of language use, as having three dimensions: text, interaction, and context. Text here can be expanded to semiosis, which is meaning-making through language, body language, visual images, or any other way of signifying. Text is also "an interaction between people, involving process of producing and interpreting the text, and it is part of a piece of social action—and in some cases virtually the whole of it" (Fairclough, 1992,p. 10). In other words, an interpretation of a text is the individual's interaction with the text, which is part of social action or context. The context here refers to social conditions of production/interpretation, or order of discourse—"totality of discursive practices of an institution and relationships between them" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 138). Corresponding to the three dimensions of discourse, critical analysis also has three dimensions: description of the text, interpretation of the interaction processes, and explanation of how the interaction process relates to context.

For the present study, students' reflective essays were regarded as students' discursive practice in which they both consumed the text, namely, the in-class reading articles, and then produced the text, namely, their reflective essays. Therefore, students' reflective essays comprised the two dimensions of a discourse in Fairclough's model: text and discursive practice. The corresponding analytical tools are description for the text and interpretation for

the discursive practice. In a critical discourse analysis, students' discursive practice, that is, the discourses in their reflections were to be explained by the social practice which embodies a given ideology or ideologies, namely, the third dimension of a discourse. To simplify Fairclough's concepts, the first two dimensions were called "discourse" and the third dimension "society." The focus of the analysis was therefore on the dialectical relationship between discourse and society.

Critical reading was taught to the students through critical discourse analysis to raise their critical language awareness. In order to reach critical thinking, in this study The purpose of using CDA in education is making the learners' capable of examining and judging the world carefully and to change it, if necessary. This purpose has not yet fulfilled in the realm of foreign language. Van Dijk and Pennycook (2006, as cited in Cots) believed that introducing CDA into language classes does not necessarily require a change in methodology or techniques. Instead, CDA offers a new viewpoint on language which regards that language use is questionable and problematic, reflects social/ideological processes and simultaneously, affects those processes.

Mckinney (1999, as cited in Wallace) provided a critical reading course for colored South Africans as historically disadvantaged students. He wanted to make students critically aware of the social and political situations in which they were caught and to use this awareness to influence on these conditions. Wallace (1999) believed that ending the apartheid status of the reading class was one of the results of such a course. Boston (2002) declared that many teachers already use CDA in their classrooms. When students are required to give their opinions about a text, to compare and contrast the text situation with their own situation in life a CDA analysis is performed.

Zingraf (2003) used a method of CDA for non-native speakers of English to analyze texts. In this study, critical language awareness of a group of university students increased and their attitude toward texts extracted from the British press has greatly changed. The result of this study showed that if we want to prevent our students from being manipulated with ideologically loaded texts, we should equip them with the required critical tools. Zingraf (2003) believed that the texts are presented to foreign language learners based on the view that they are as "vehicles for linguistic structure". He also stated that EFL university students do not question about the authenticity of the foreign language because they are not aware of the ideological load of certain expressions or words in authentic second language texts, and because they are not aware of the manipulative effect of the texts on the readers' beliefs.

Yang (2004) analyzed seven promotional radio shows through CDA based on Fairclough's three-dimensional framework in a case study. The findings revealed that although radio shows about women's health were interesting and educational, they were made to support one product—Juice Plus. Therefore, as Yang (2004) believed, the shows had an ideologically biased load, and showed the social effect of marketing in discourse. The results showed the influence of CDA in raising people's critical language awareness. In another study done by Cots (2006) CDA was used in a foreign language class. The students needed to develop simultaneously three types of competence: teacher, user, and analyst. They were also asked to do three types of activities based on Fairclough's analytical framework. Cots in his study aimed to show that choices of the teachers or materials developers could be critically analyzed in text selection. Such an analysis could be done by teachers and learners together in the classroom. In his study, Cots wanted to introduce CDA as a complementary model to analyze language use and to design language learning activities.

Correia (2006) found some reasons why we should not consider reading comprehension exercises as the only reading activity in the classroom. Firstly reading comprehension exercises, according to Davies (2006, as cited in Correia), include passive reading in which students merely scan the information in the texts to find the answer of the questions. Secondly such tasks, according to Tomitch (2006, as cited in Correia), do not guide students to read between the lines or question the authenticity of the information. Thirdly, these tasks mainly contain only some parts of the text, while ignoring the other parts. Finally, such tasks are neither challenging nor interesting for the learners, especially for young ones. In Correia's (2006) study, the students' feedback showed that although the students were fluent in both L1 and L2, they took the printed material for granted without questioning the truthfulness or bias of the text. Students also affirmed to be critical readers in their first language. However, dealing with EFL texts, they could not come up with reading between the lines. Correia believed that critical reading skills development may be time-consuming and exhausting for EFL students, but it definitely helps EFL readers to decide how to read the text and helps them feel themselves in a more equal status with the writer. Missori (2007) claimed that reading strategies of annotating, previewing, contextualizing, questioning, reflecting, summarizing, evaluating and argument help students read critically and confidently.

Fredricks (2007) implemented critical instruction in a reading schedule in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. While Tajik students were learning the values of Islam at home, they believed that concepts such as God and faith did not exist, based on their school learning. Teachers could freely choose course content based on their students' interests and goals. According to Fredricks (2007), cultural

awareness of both the teachers and the students was the result of analyzing and discussing the texts. Teachers and students could discuss about their biases while getting familiar with each other's world views. Finally, in a study done by IÇMEZ (2009),in order to increase students' motivations Critical Reading (CR) exercises were adjusted to traditional EFL reading lessons. The results indicated that critical language awareness procedures increased students' motivations through asking them to choose the texts for analysis and encouraging them to talk about their stance towards the analyzed texts. Based on these points, CR reveals the students' real nature which is influential in text selection, their classroom involvement and communication.

The aim of this study was to see the effect of critical discourse analysis (CDA) techniques instruction on the students' comprehension after the exploration of their critical analyses of the texts before and after teaching CDA principles. The aim also was to investigate the effect of teaching CDA on the students' attitudes about learning English language. The research questions the present study attempted to investigate are:

1. Does familiarity with CDA techniques affect students' reading comprehension ability?
2. Does familiarity with CDA techniques change students' orientation to language?

Method

Participants

The participants of this study were 60 undergraduate students, both males and females, aged from 19 to 26, from Bandar Anzali Azad University. They were selected from a population of 85 Law students from two different classes, based on their scores on a TOEFL reading comprehension test as a proficiency test. Thirty of the selected students were randomly assigned to the experimental group and were taught through the critical reading approach based on Fairclough's (1992) three dimensional model, and the other 30 students were assigned to the control group and were instructed reading through the traditional approach.

Instrumentation
News Reports

Since news is one of the genres the students deal with in their daily life, two online authentic and biased news articles were selected for the aim of this study. Almost in every country dominant groups take the control of the news sources. A genre like story is not as public as news and it is not also in the hands of groups with more power. The authentic texts reflect real–life situations and are more practical while they reflect the events which happen in people's daily life. Another important aspect of authenticity is that it makes students more motivated because learning a text which is related to what happens around them is more effective in enhancing the students' motivations than an unauthentic text which is far from real life situations. The texts manageable to CDA were selected for this study.

The subjects of the news reports were selected from controversial social topics in which different people with various worldviews are interested. Political and historical subjects have the potential to attract special groups but as all people live in the society, they may have more to say about social problems. Controversial issues are more likely to be biased and ideologically loaded. According to Duzer and Florez (1999), teachers should allow the students to have different interpretations instead of focusing on finding a right answer to any question. They believed that teachers can make critical analysis and critical thinking an indispensable part of their classrooms. The researcher tried to consider the following issues in the study: concise texts were chosen to analyze, a limited number of CDA principles were taught, and the texts were limited to news genre. But the students of the control group were, traditionally, limited to read the same texts and just answer a range of questions. The first article was about women's employment and its implications for the family. The second one was about the suggestion of transferring water from Caspian Sea to Urmia Lake.

Tasks

Tests

Since a specific degree of proficiency in English is needed as a prerequisite, a test containing two passages accompanied by 24 items, chosen from the reading section of TOEFL (2015), was administered as the pre-test to 85 students, and 60 of them who got the highest scores, ranging from 12 to 24, were randomly put into two homogeneous classes. At the end of the training program, another version of TOEFL reading comprehension test (2015) was used as a post-test of reading comprehension. This also included two passages with 24 items.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire related to their ideas was also given to the students in the experimental group about the effect of CDA. The questionnaire included five questions regarding whether the participant students' opinions toward English language or language in general had changed after the CDA instruction.The researcher aimed to collect the students' feedbacks and to compare them with her own findings based on the comparison made on the learners' analysis of the texts.

Procedure

For the aim of this study, 85 students of Law at Bandar Anzali Azad University took part in a reading test, consisting of two passages with 24 questions. Based on their scores on this test, 60 students who got the highest scores, ranging from 12 to 24, were chosen, and 30 of them were randomly put in the experimental group and the other 30 remained as the control group. Afterwards, the experimental and the control groups undertook four weeks of instruction: one session a week lasting 45minutes of reading comprehension. The same passages were taught in both groups.

Two online news reports were chosen for the aim of the present study and each one was taught in two sessions. The teacher worked on the vocabulary and reading strategies through different exercises and only the students in the experimental group were asked to write the summaries and their reflections of the articles they had read. As summary writing is a difficult task, the instructor taught students how to write one and explained the qualities of a good summary. The students in the control group were not taught summary writing at all and were not asked to write any summary or reflection of the passages.

The students of the experimental group were supposed to analyze the articles as their assignment to get marks. They did not know that they were the participants of the study. As a result, they worked seriously, made the findings more reliable. At the beginning, they were asked to write about the writer's stance: whether s/he has written for or against the subject of the article. They also were required to find linguistic evidence as justification of their claims. They were also allowed to analyze the texts at home because time was not among the variables of the study. No explicit explanation was given to the students to avoid their awareness of the critical points of the texts. Moreover, before CDA principles' instruction, the researcher wanted to explore the learners' level of critical reading proficiency. The students were not supposed to come to the same conclusion. They were told that different views are accepted provided that they are followed by justifications. The following session, the experimental group was supposed to hand in their reflective essays and to

discuss what they thought about different views of the same text. They were also taught how to analyze the texts by using a list of questions raised by the teacher. The teacher introduced the field of CDA to the students and explained some of the CDA techniques to them. There are many CDA tools to be used, and analysts are free in the choice of these tools. According to Huckin (1997), there are a number of CDA techniques which are not all equally useful and it is the readers' responsibility to find and use the most effective one to unveil the writer's rational. Van Dijk's (1998) model is too detailed to be used in news studying. Therefore, the techniques the teacher selected were an adaptation of Fairclough's (1992) three dimensional model.

After the CDA techniques instruction, the students were asked to write another reflective essay for the same article. The purpose of the researcher was to compare the two essays to see if the participants' comprehension improved after CDA techniques training or not. Exactly the same procedure was repeated for the second article.

At the end of the study, another version of TOEFL (2015) reading comprehension was given to the students. It consisted of two passages with 24 questions. At last, a questionnaire was given to the experimental group to see if there was any explicit effect of CDA instruction and to see if the students' motivation to learn English has changed.

Results

In order to answer the research questions of this study, the mean and standard deviation of both groups were calculated. The descriptive statistics of the pre-test are presented in Table1.

Table1
Descriptive Statistics of the Reading Pretest

Group	N	Mean	SD
Experimental	30	10.67	3.80
Control	30	8.98	3.19

As shown in Table 1, the experimental and control groups have got nearly equal means. This indicates that the subjects of both groups were initially homogenous. To compare the students' reading comprehension performance in the pre-test, a t-test was run. Since we had a sample size of 30 in two groups, the total degree of freedom is 58. As 58, is not listed in the t-value table,

therefore, 60 was chosen as the df, with the p value of .05. The result of the t-test analysis is shown in Table2.

Table2
Comparison of the Groups' Reading Pre-test Scores

$T_{critical}$	$T_{observed}$	Degree of Freedom
2	.9	58

Significant at p< .05

The results confirm the homogeneity of the proficiency level of the two groups. There was no significant difference between the students' reading performance in the pre-test. ($T_{observed}$<$T_{critical}$)

One session after the treatment was over, the post-test was administered. The descriptive statistics of both experimental and control groups are presented in Table3.

Table3
Descriptive Statistics of the Reading Posttest

Group	N	Mean	SD
Experimental	30	11.53	4.00
Control	30		3.19

By comparing the mean values of the control group in the pre-test and post-test, it can be noticed that the scores of the control group have also increased from 8.98 to 9.38. But this improvement is not as much as that of the experimental group in the post-test. The two groups scored differently in the post-test and the results of the t-test (Table 4) revealed that the difference between them was significant at p<.05.

Table4
Comparison of the Groups Reading Post-test Scores

$T_{critical}$	$T_{observed}$	Degree of Freedom
2	2.31	58

Significant at p <.05

As shown in Table4, the null hypothesis is rejected ($T_{observed} > T_{critical}$). In other words, the treatment was effective enough to make a significant difference between the experimental and the control groups' reading comprehension.

The results of the quantitative analyses of the data suggest a 95 percent probability that the difference was due to the experimental treatment rather than to the sampling error. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of CDA strategy would make a difference in teaching reading comprehension when applied to similar populations of EFL learners.

Following the quantitative analysis, the students' reflections on the texts were qualitatively analyzed. They could mostly recognize in what side the writer was interested. The first article was about the increasing role of the women in the society and its implications on their families, the news writers provided mostly quotes from the party they were in favor of. This way of presenting an event, which is called "bias of selection," helped students to realize the side the writer was interested in. In fact, the articles were selected among those in which the writers' biased ideologies were nearly easily recognizable. The students might have the ability of realizing the biased nature of the texts in general but they were not aware of the lexical, grammatical or rhetorical roles in making writers' biased expressions. The aim of this study was to make students consciously aware of the roles of linguistic features in transforming knowledge or in presenting ideologies. The teacher aimed to unveil the miraculous role of language which could be used by people as a weapon in seizing or maintaining power.

In fact, students did not have a clear framework in their mind to analyze the texts in an organized way. Some students classified the sentences as the evidence to identify the writer's biased stance. However, they could not refer to the connotations the words carried and to the role of syntactic categories or word order in portraying the writers' ideologies. They were not aware of the role of rhetorical elements like simile or metaphor in presenting the writers' beliefs. In fact, before becoming familiar with CDA, students knew these linguistic elements just as innocent vehicles of communication. Sometimes the students just paraphrased the story to justify their claims. After becoming familiar with CDA, they could refer to those specific critical elements representing the writer's ideological stance.

After comparing the first and the second versions of analyses, it was revealed that the critical language awareness of about 90 ٪ of the students was raised. Students' attentions were drawn to linguistic elements and the roles they played in presenting writers' thoughts and beliefs. A considerable point is that, in the second version, although almost all of the students believed that their

abilities to analyze the texts have increased, most of them could not analyze the texts based on the CDA techniques. They could just understand the negative or positive loads of special clues in the texts. However, most of them did not reach the mastery to name the technical terms in their analyses. This can be attributed to the limited time they practiced CDA techniques. CDA techniques were taught to them just for two sessions. About 10% of students did not analyze the texts based on the linguistic elements. They analyzed the texts by paraphrasing the articles in the second version. However, all of them in their questionnaires pointed out that their abilities of analysis increased. In fact, they needed more practice in CDA techniques to do a more detailed analysis. The first and second versions of one of the students' analyses are as follows:

"The first article is against women's employment because it believes that women have a more important role at home: they should bring up children and take care of the family."

"The first article is in favor of the traditional role of women in the society, i.e., they are the pillar of the family and should focus on being the best wife and the best mother. I disagree with this idea and I think in this way we accept the secondary role of women in the society while we can see many women who are working successfully and at the same time they are great wives and perfect mothers. On the other hand there are some women who are just housewives but have many faults in their relationship with their families".

It is clear that the second reflection of the student has somehow improved. He referred to the traditional discourse of the role of women and he also disagreed with the writer. So he learned that any piece of news article is not necessarily true to be accepted without any question.

Based on the examination of both students' analyses and their answers to the questionnaires, it can be concluded that familiarity with CDA techniques showed to be promising in arousing critical language awareness among the majority of the participants. Although they could not analyze the articles based on the linguistic elements in detail and their analyses were weak, clues of change in their beliefs towards discourse and language elements could be easily traced. In order to have better analyses, they need to work on the CDA field for a longer term.

Discussion

The motive behind conducting this study was twofold; effects on discourse-based instruction on both skill acquisition (i.e., reading skill) and leaner's orientation towards language. Quantitative and qualitative analyses of the data

revealed that CDA-based instruction proved to be statistically more significant than the conventional treatment in both developing EFL leaners' reading ability and bringing about clues of changes in their orientation towards the nature and elements of language.

These findings are in line with Mckinney's (1999) study and Wallace's (1999) claim in South Africa where ending the apartheid status of the reading class was one of the results of such a course. Moreover, in line with Correia's (2006) belief in the effectiveness of role of CD-based instruction of reading skill in making the readers feel themselves in a more equal status with the writers, and also positive role of teaching for reading strategies, as suggested by Missori (2007), in helping readers read critically and confidently, the findings of this study offer complementary contributions to the field.

Similarly, this study lends support to Zingraf's (2003) CDA-based instruction of text analysis for non-native speakers of English whose language awareness of a group of university students increased and their attitude toward texts extracted from the British press has greatly changed. Cot's (2006) and Yang's (2004) studies similarly proved the effectiveness of CDA in raising people's critical language awareness. Fredricks' (2007) incorporation of CDA in teaching reading resulted in not only significant development in reading skills but also in arousing learners' awareness of language and its nature as both results are supported in the light of the results of the present study.

According to Brown (2004), it is the teachers' responsibility to provide the students with opportunities to learn about the most important social and moral issues and to analyze all sides of an issue. A language class is the best place for offering information on different topics. The objectives of a curriculum should include critical thinking development and at the same time focusing on linguistic factors. Therefore, the present study tried to make students familiar with the critical domain and encourage them to analyze texts through CDA principles. Two news articles were distributed among 60 undergraduate Law students of Azad University of Bandar Anzali. The students learned that, in critical reading, it is necessary to go beyond textual meaning to search, explain, and evaluate the implied meanings, including the author's purpose, values, and attitudes. The students reanalyzed critically the same texts on their own through CDA techniques to identify ideological manipulations exercised in texts. Comparing the two versions of the students' analyses, the teacher found that after CDA techniques instruction the students' critical language awareness increased and they got more positive attitudes toward learning English language. The first version of their analyses revealed a low level of critical language awareness. After CDA principles instruction, the texts were analyzed in a more organized way. In the first version of their analyses, they just rewrote

the same sentences of the texts or at least paraphrased them to justify their claims or they referred to a limited number of ideologically loaded words. In the second version, after learning the techniques, however, they were capable of providing more tangible clues such as the words with negative or positive loads of meaning or passive or active voice of verbs, relating these linguistic elements to the ideology of the writer. The students believed that their abilities to analyze texts critically increased. All of the students provided positive answers to all the questions of the questionnaire except the fourth question in which they were asked if they were interested in analyzing texts. Some of them gave negative answers, maybe because of the boring nature of news articles. The students also believed that possessing critical thinking was helpful in their lives. They also believed that their ideas changed positively about English language.

According to Wallace (2005), English language carries too much baggage both from its colonial history and through its current global dominance (p.46). Students learn that language can distort the face of truth while the reader may be unaware. Parrot learning, blind memorization and superficial comprehension have no place in CDA teaching. This way of teaching helps the passive students become critical and creative ones. Both linguistic and intellectual capabilities of the learners will develop through CDA. The knowledge of CDA skills also helps students to feel more confident in expressing their views and to be critical of writers and speakers.

To sum up, the following conclusions can be made for the present study: First, since understanding the literal meaning of the texts is no longer the main focus of reading texts, it is important to incorporate critical literacy into the EFL reading curriculum. In fact, understanding the discourse meaning of a text, that is, social and political meanings that make the text meaningful in its context of use is the ultimate goal. Therefore, the final end of teaching reading in the EFL context lies not merely in teaching students the language skills which they can use for future communicative purposes but also in teaching them how they can critically use language in their everyday life. Second, EFL teachers in a critical literacy reading class should help students not only "read the word," but encourage them to "read the world" as well (Freire&Macedo, 1987; Ko& Wang, 2009). Only by "reading the world" will students become aware that learning and using a language is a social practice situated in the real world and that "language-in-use is everywhere and is always political" (Gee, 1999, p.1).Third, critical literacy of foreign language instruction can empower students through raising students' consciousness of the oppressive social structure and help them understand the power of agency deriving from critical

consciousness, thus, bringing about the social changes needed for a more democratic and impartial society.

In the articles, mostly just one side was given voice and there were a very limited number of quotes from the opposite side. The students, however, in the first version of their analyses could not provide the linguistic elements which were critically significant and ideologically loaded. After teaching CDA, the students could provide these elements better. Teaching CDA had a positive influence on the students' attitudes about English language and English language learning issues. They also became more motivated to learn English language. CDA helped them to build a link between the classroom and their own world. The increase of the students' competence in reading skills which can be applicable in all areas of learners' lives increased their motivations. Asking the students to decide on the texts for analysis and encouraging them to express their positions related to the texts, resulted in an increase in students' motivations.

There are some significant points and implications in this study. Unlike most reading texts those involved in this study were not followed by any question of any kind for the experimental group because it is believed that the questions limit the students and give them some clues to think in special direction. Another implication of this study is making the students familiar with CDA and teaching them to be sensitive about the manipulative nature of texts. They learned to read between the lines, criticize the texts and not to take any part of the texts for granted. One more implication of this study is that having learned the critical principles, the students became more independent, confident and active in the class. Teachers cannot force anybody to learn but they can encourage the students and guide them to learn better. The autonomous learners can decide what to learn so they are responsible for learning. Being autonomous learners in the class leads the students to be independent members of society. As the main difference between man and other creatures is his mental ability, the learners can more easily know the surrounding world and take its control through critical thinking. It helps the learners be more rational rather than emotional. The students learn not to necessarily look for a fixed and clear-cut solution for every problem in the class and later in the society. Knowledge of CDA enables the learners to stand against injustice and prepares them for a wider struggle in their social life.

There are some limitations in this study. One of the limitations is related to the scope of the study which is limited to a group of students of Bandar Anzali Azad University. Another limitation is related to the duration of the investigation. It was a short-term study in which the CDA was instructed in two sessions and the students just worked on two articles during the CDA principles

instruction. The study is also limited to the news article genre and problematic social issues. Further studies can be done on other genres such as newspaper advertisement, magazine articles, novels, etc. that may contain more political, historical and cultural themes.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions:

1) Has your opinion changed about English Language after Critical Discourse Analysis instruction?
2) Do you find English language a more interesting phenomenon after learning CDA principles?
3) Are you able to analyze critically not only English texts but also Farsiones after learning CDA principles?
4) Have you become more interested in analyzing texts after being familiar with CDA principles?
5) Do you recommend CDA instruction as an essential issue in language teaching?

Any other suggestion or recommendation by you is appreciated.

Biodata

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