# EFL CRITICAL READING SYLLABUS AND MATERIALS FOR STUDENTS OF THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

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**Abstract**. The demand of a new model of syllabus and materials were implicitly required through the launching of KKNI-based Curriculum in Indonesia. Due to, finding the students' needs and learning characteristic as the main consideration in developing them became the purpose of this current research. A qualitative research had been conducted to get the data needed by which two kinds of questionnaires were administered then analyzed qualitatively (*Likert scale*). the respondents involved were 132 students and the results dealt with the learning characteristics showed that the audio was 19.69%, the visual was 50.75%, and khinesthetics was 29.54%. In relation to the students' needs (four aspects), 1) *necessities* on topic interest like education (72%), culture (63%), and social life (45%); 2) *background knowledge* w*as* categorized into good (57.25%), very good (28%), and not good (14.75%); 3) *critical reading goals* for both core and sub-skills very agree (42.71%), agree (30.14%), and not agree (27.14%); and 4) *learning model* tended the cooperative (27.25 very agree), (35.5 agree), (37.25 not agree). Thus, it could be concluded that the students' learning style dominantly in visual way with cooperative learning model. In addition, the students were eager to have critical reading skills with sufficient prior knowledge but the topic is mostly in the area of education. It is recommended that in developing the syllabus and materials, the lecturers should consider both students' characteristics and needs.

## 1. Introduction

A word 'critical' does not have negative meaning in any context but it is closest to 'evaluative' or 'reflection'. Furthermore, In the context of reading argumentative text, it refers to evaluate conclusion before making decision. [11] gave the feature of critical as in words choice of oral and written. Next to that, this kind of feature can effect on the relationship according to a proverb "your mouth is your swords".

In accordance to the market demand it is no doubt that Critical Reading skills is paramount. There are two general reasons stated by [2] why ones must be critical, firstly because of various types of information received including its source and essence, secondly the students must be provided with a sufficient ability to think in order that they can improve themselves on their own disciplines. [3] showed its importance through reading instruction by which the students are required to be able to understand how writing persuades, and to determine whether one should accept or reject the idea of text [13]

after analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating it [1]. Due to, the reading class particapants are able to draw their own conclusion along with logical reason.

Having critical reading skills is not as easy as turning hand over but it requires a good and appropriate plan. In university level, the lecturers' plan is usually reflected in the form of syllabus. The format of the syllabus can be taken from the guidelines published by the ministry of Research and Technology. The key point of this document is the ability of the practitioners in developing course learning outcomes by which it should refer to the ability of reading critically. In addition, the syllabus is important because of three major roles as contract, permanent record, and learning tool [12]. The absence of this file might lead not to reach the learning goal that had been settled by institution and choose irrelevant teaching materials. Due to, it is assumed that there are a lot of universities not develop this document yet particularly for critical reading course.

Attention to the reading materials must be paid. [13] comments 'instructional materials generally serve as the basis of much of the language input that learners receive and the language practice that occurs in the classroom' like vocabulary retention [8] and critical reading profile [6]. Next to that, a research found that the use of online audio materials for listening has positive results in terms of learners' enjoyment, interest, and achievement. In addition, the reading materials to be provided should be challenging texts. On this occasion [5] said 'the textbook could reinforce underdeveloped students' epistemology through limitations of content and position as passive recipients of an authoritative version of oversimplified knowledge'. Thus, having appropriate materials, the students' academic and non-academic purposes can be improved.

It is important to be taken into account that there are some types of textbook, two of them are teachers-made and readymade textbooks. In relation to that, [7]) wrote that it is difficult to find out the textbook absolve teachers' responsibility like what and how to teach. To the researchers' opinion, a teacher should create a textbook by him or herself in order to accomodate the students' needs and characteristics. Due to the aim of this research is to produce a textbook based on needs and characteristics. [13] uttered the needs is really necessary when the curriculum planners intend to produce English teaching program for special purposes (ESP). In analyzing the learners' needs, it is very important to consider its classification like subjective and objective [10]. The former refers to the needs that cannot be observed easily. Meanwhile the latter can be observed in the form their individual data such as language proficiency and pattern of language use.

## 2. Method

The research goal is to produce Critical Reading Syllabus and Textbook based on needs and characteristics. Due to, R & D proposed by [9] becomes the umbrella of the research design. Next to that, the R & D process requires needs analysis-usually in the form of qualitative and or quantitative-as the main consideration in developing such products. Thus, the design of this current research refers to qualitative. There were two questionnaires administered to the respondents and then quaalitatively using Likert Scale [4]. The first aimed to obtain the data of the learning characteristics and another one aims to get the data of the respondents' needs on critical reading.

## 3. Result and Discussion

### 3.1. Data on Students' Needs

There were some aspects recorded and displayed namely necessities, weaknesses, objective(s), and classroom activities.

Table 1. students' topic interest

| Items | Percentage | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Topic interest | | | | |
| Culture | 63 | 29 | 8 | - |
| Social life | 45 | 49 | 4 | 2 |
| Education | 72 | 28 | - | - |
| Politics | - | 4 | 39 | 57 |
| Law | - | - | 48 | 52 |

The above table described the students' necessities on critical reading. The first item deals with the topic interest to be discussed during the teaching learning process. It showed that they were highly interested to talk about culture, social life, and education. However, politics and law did not make them enjoy a discussion. Thus, it could be tabulated that the topics about education (72%), culture (63%), and social life (45%).

Table 2. students' background knowledge

| Items | Percentage | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Critical reading prerequisites | | | | |
| Reading Comprehension I | 39 | 54 | 7 | 0 |
| Reading Comprehension II | 31 | 56 | 10 | 3 |
| Reading Comprehension III | 23 | 48 | 21 | 8 |
| Extensive Reading | 19 | 71 | 5 | 5 |
| **Percent** | 28 | 57.25 | 10.75 | 4 |

The above table shown the students' current reading ability were mostly in a good level (57.25) and followed by very good (28), However, in not good level was 14.75 and therefore these category were reflected from the score obtained. Moreover, the highest percentage fell on the Extensive Reading course. Thus, only a few of them who were in not good and not very good score.

Table 3. students' perception on the Critical Reading objectives

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| Items | Percentage | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Non sub-skills goals* | | | | |
| Vocabulary mastery | 25 | 48 | 13 | 14 |
| Writing skills | 39 | 32 | 19 | 10 |
| Grammar mastery | 16 | 22 | 44 | 18 |
| *Sub-skills goals* | | | | |
| Knowing the English texts organization | 21 | 38 | 40 | 1 |
| Producing new ideas in the form of spoken and written | 48 | 31 | 13 | 8 |
| Synthesizing others ideas | 71 | 21 | 8 | 0 |
| Drawing good logical conclusion | 79 | 19 | 2 | 0 |

It shown the students' expectation on vocabulary mastery was quite higher along with the writing skills (73%) than grammar mastery (62%). In another part, the sub-skills was highly expected by the students.

Table 4. students' expectation on classroom model

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| Items | Percentage | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Self-working | 18 | 22 | 33 | 27 |
| Work in pair | 36 | 64 | 0 | 0 |
| Work in small group | 48 | 52 | 0 | 0 |
| Work in large group | 7 | 4 | 67 | 22 |
| Percent | 27.25 | 35.5 | 25 | 12.25 |

The above table shown the teachers' role as the controllers (62%) was not highly expected. However, the rest of the learning model in classroom were highly positive like organizers (62%), collaborators (100%), Information providers (100%), Feedback givers (100%), and facilitators (84%). Moreover, the data about the students' role shown that they really wanted to be the knowledge informants (100%) and providers (100%) rather than the knowledge receivers (30%).

*3.2. Data on learning characteristics*

Table 5. students' learning characteristics.

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| Respondents | Types of Learning | | | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Audio | Visual | Kinesthetic | |
| 132 | 26 | 67 | 39 | - |
| Percent | 19.69 | 50.75 | 29.54 | - |

The table above shown that there were 26 or 19.69% out of 132 respondents who preferred learning something using picture or other visual media. However, the highest learning style fell on visual (50.75%) preferred to learn something through hearing and speaking. Moreover, there were 29.54% who loved to be given something to accomplish.

It had been elaborated that one of the aspects of needs analysis was dealt with the students' necessities. This kind of aspect focused on finding the students' topic interest to be discussed during the teaching learning process. The researchers found three main topics namely education, culture, and social life. In term of education, there were 72% of the students interested on it. That percentage indicated that the dominant materials to be taught and developed was about education followed by culture, and social life. In addition, by having the percentage of the three main topics interest, the students were really aware on their future carreer as the teachers along with their own coomunication, relationship, and adaptation with their society.

On the basis of the data found, the students' strenght was on the prerequisites of critical reading and it indicated that they were ready enough to learn the critical reading skills. However, when they were asked about their current critical reading ability, they had in low category on some sub-skills. Due to the objective(s) of teaching critical reading should cover the whole sub-skills with the required classroom activities.

## 4. Conclusion

Regarding the data analysis, the researchers could conclude that the students with visual learning style was ready enough to learn critical reading and the critical reading syllabus and materials should cover the whole objectives and three topics interest with cooperative learning model.

It is recommended that the future researchers collaborated with the practitioners specifically critical reading lecturers should consider the whole aspects of the students' needs and learning characteristics due to the products (syllabus and materials) are appropriated for them.

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