A Quasi-Experimental Study on Improving Kurdish EFL Learners' Critical Thinking and Written Language Awareness through Critical Discourse Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Critical thinking (CT) and written language awareness (WLA) are essential in academic education, especially for EFL students, as CT supports academic success, deeper engagement with language, and problem-solving. This study, "A Quasi-Experimental Study on Improving Kurdish EFL Learners' Critical Thinking and Written Language Awareness through Critical Discourse Analysis," examines whether Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) significantly affects EFL learners' CT skills and improves their WLA. Its main aim is to assess the impact of CDA-based instruction on developing both skills among Kurdish EFL learners. A quantitative quasi-experimental design was used, with a pre-test and post-test given to a single group and no control group. Forty-one fourth-year undergraduates from the Department of English Language at Koya University took part in a ten-week instructional program delivered by a specialist. The tests comprised five texts, each followed by five analytical questions designed according to CDA dimensions. Data were analyzed in SPSS version 24 using descriptive and inferential statistics, including independent sample t-tests and chi-square, while Cronbach's alpha confirmed reliability. Results showed significant improvement in both WLA and CT after CDA-based instruction. Although the study demonstrates the value of CDA, it is limited by its focus on one university, a single group, a small sample, and written language skills only. Future research should explore long-term effects, include other language skills, and combine quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a fuller understanding of CDA's pedagogical value.

KEY WORDS: Critical Discourse Analysis, Critical Thinking, Written Language Awareness, Kurdish EFL Learners, Language Education.

1. [1]INTRODUCTION

In todays' world, language functions not only as an instrument for communication but also as a means of power and influence. Many students acquire English without understanding how language can influence their beliefs, attitudes, and ideologies. CDA is considered a valuable approach to improve CT and written language awareness among EFL learners.

1.1 Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is considered an essential skill to enhance the ability to find, analyze, and comprehend information to make logical decisions. CT has long been recognized as an important skill for making complex decisions in everyday life. CT has been a fundamental concept and an essential component since the time of Socrates. It is recognized as a crucial part of various fields for the 21st century, such as education and innovation (Azizi et al., 2022, p. 286), (Novikova, 2025, p. 61-62), and (Mzeil, 2024, p. 3265).

CT supports academic success by helping students find information, analyze it, and draw evidence-based conclusions. John Dewey emphasized that education should move beyond memorizing facts; it should also teach students how to think critically and reflectively. In EFL contexts, CT helps learners to engage deeply with the

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language and its cultural and social contexts. It improves learning outcomes, enhances English proficiency, and improves problem-solving abilities achieving success in second language learning (Mzeil, 2024, p. 3265).

As cited in Haji Badre and Saeed Halo (2021), Butterworth argued that CT is distinct from criticism; it does not express an opinion like something is good or bad, while it focuses on evaluating issues based on reasoning and evidence. It does not mean being negative or finding errors but rather being thoughtful and analytical (Haji Badre and Saeed Halo, 2021, p. 110).

Educational philosophers view CT as a primary goal of learning and particularly higher education. The topic has been debated and discussed among scholars and practitioners involved in second language instruction. Robert Ennis, a pioneer in this field, believes that CT, which is considered a higher-order thinking skill, helps students question ideas, understand multiple perspectives, and solve problems, leading to better outcomes and is essential for achieving higher levels of language proficiency (Ennis, 2011, pp. 6-7), (Ennis, 2011a, p. 1) and (Hashemi and Ghanizadeh, 2012, pp. 37-38). The emphasis has shifted from viewing learning as simply memorizing information to recognizing it as an active process of exploration. As a result, CT is now considered essential for meaningful learning.

The United Nations Development Program (2023) identifies CT as a fundamental and top element of 21st century skills. UNDP asserts that CT enables individuals to generate novel ideas. It is one of the basic skills that students must have to perform well in education and supports personal and academic growth (Ratama et al., 2021, pp. 224-225), (Rasheed, 2023), and (Saaed, 2021). Dr. Shaho Saaed is a professor at Sulaimany University, specializing in modern criticism with over two decades of experience in teaching and research. One of his academic interests is CT; he serves as the president of the Board of Directors at the Critical Thinking Foundation in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. He is known for his efforts to promote CT in education and the importance of developing CT skills among Kurdish learners (Saeed, 2025). He has emphasized the importance of cultivating CT among Kurdish learners, pointing out that many Kurdish learners tend to struggle with it (Saeed, 2021). Effective methods are required to address this issue, with growing focus on CDA, which helps learners develop greater analytical and reflective skills.

Researchers argued that EFL classes should incorporate CT activities to enhance learners' comprehension of language's broader cultural, social, and political aspects (Mzeil, 2024, p. 3265). Teachers have an essential role in fostering CT among students by guiding students to engage critically through various classroom activities and increasing their CT abilities. Researchers suggest that presenting texts with hidden meanings or cultural assumptions helps students develop their CT skills, encouraging them to think about broader social and cultural issues. CT is a vital skill that combines cognitive abilities and motivation to evaluate ideas, solve problems and make careful decisions, considering all relevant information, facts, and possible outcomes (Kurosh and Kuhi, 2017, pp. 36-37).

While an EFL classroom can be a wonderful environment for acquiring English, its primary emphasis is often on speaking fluency and grammar, neglecting the development of CT skills among learners. Nevertheless, the analysis of texts is one of the most effective methods for motivating learners to explore various argument styles and perspectives. Incorporating higher-order thinking questions is particularly effective. These questions require deeper analysis and encourage learners to think critically (Sevinch and Bazarbayeva, 2025, pp. 276-277).

1.2 Written Language Awareness

The structure of written language has long been examined by scholars, focusing on how discourse shapes and reflects social issues such as inequalities and power imbalances, showing how grammar and discourse are connected, and examining how cultural and contextual factors affect language use (McCarthy, 1992, pp. 6-7).

In EFL contexts, particularly for Kurdish learners, enhancing written language awareness is essential, especially when learners struggle with complex and difficult language structures and meanings. While traditional English instruction emphasizes basic language skills and rarely focuses on critical awareness of the language and its connection to social and cultural concerns, CDA shifts focus to sociopolitical dimensions of language and provides an effective approach by enabling students to explore and analyze text beyond surface meanings. Fairclough (2014) argued that language learning should include a critical component to help learners think about and question their surroundings. Similarly, Fairclough (2013) emphasizes that critical language awareness, based on critical language studies, should be a key goal of language instruction and suggests ways to develop it. Developing this awareness improves students' abilities to understand, use, and analyze language critically, making them more conscious of how social power shapes meaning. Teachers play a key role by guiding and encouraging them to evaluate and reflect on their language use instead of simply having grammar exercises. He emphasizes that when students integrate their personal experiences, critical awareness, and communication skills with their learning, they learn effectively and acquire more knowledge. Fairclough believes that, through critical views, students learn not only about language but also about how language connects to power in society (Fairclough, 2014, pp. 12-16)

and (Fairclough, 2013a, pp. 529-530).

Incorporating CDA in an EFL setting enables learners to critically analyze texts, question language use, and recognize ideological implications. It empowers their written language awareness and deepens their CT skills.

1.3 Critical Discourse Analysis

CDA examines how power relations, ideologies, and inequalities are presented in written or spoken texts. Fairclough (1992) defines CDA as a field that studies discourse in written and spoken texts to uncover how power and inequality are created and maintained across various social, political, and historical contexts (Van Dijk, 2015, p. 466). CDA interprets texts critically, not just words or sentences; it analyzes their language within a social context. It explores hidden connections between language, events, and texts, as well as broader social and cultural structures, making these hidden connections clear and understandable for everyone (Fairclough, 1992, pp. 26-30) and (Bukhari and Xiaoyang, 2013, p. 9). With CDA, readers and learners are encouraged to think more critically about the message that is conveyed through the texts.

In the 1980s, CDA emerged as a method that united linguistic studies and society. Norman Fairclough, who is one of the influential figures in CDA, defined it as an approach that explores the relationships between language use (discourse) and broader social and cultural structures. He emphasized that language is influenced by power dynamics and can reinforce or challenge these relationships (Hashemi and Ghanizadeh, 2012, p. 38). Fairclough's framework emphasizes the link between language and social contexts, making it an effective approach for examining the impact of written discourse on thought and behavior (Fairclough, 2013, pp. 1-10) and (Fairclough, 2006, pp. 1-11). Being critical involves being skeptical and asking questions about what we hear or see; it also means offering alternatives and trying to find power dynamics and social inequalities (Wodak, 2001, pp. 2-3), (Wodak, 2014, p. 303), and (Amoussou and Allagbe, 2018, p. 12).

1.4 Key Theorists and Models of Critical Discourse Analysis

CDA is a multidisciplinary approach that investigates the connection between language, power, and social inequality. This field has developed various models over the years, research in CDA varies in style and focuses, but the major focus is to explore how language supports social inequality (Sherwani and Qaradakhy, 2019, p. 595). CDA has expanded and evolved from a small group of scholars into a global field that is influenced by both classical and contemporary critical thought (Fairclough, 2001b, p. 1).

Several prominent theorists have contributed to the development of CDA, including Norman Fairclough, Teun van Dijk, and Ruth Wodak. Each has presented unique methodologies and perspectives that improved our comprehension of the way in which discourse functions within social contexts. Norman Fairclough's CDA Model, Teun van Dijk's Socio-Cognitive Model, and Ruth Wodak's Discourse Sociolinguistics Model provide an overview of perspectives on how discourse shapes and reflects power dynamics (Dar, Shams, and Rahimi, 2010, p. 459).

Fairclough's model analyzes discourse critically in three key elements:

1. The text: The words and content themselves, including the meaning conveyed through language, visuals, or body language, or a combination of written or visual content.
2. Interaction: The processes involved in producing, interpreting, and understanding the text illustrate how people communicate with each other.
3. Context: the social and historical context, the social and cultural background in which the text and interaction take place.

(Fairclough, 2014, pp. 11-12), (Janks, 1997, p. 329), (Aziz, 2023, p. 8), and (Hashemi and Ghanizade, 2012, p. 3). To analyze each part, Fairclough suggests three levels of analysis: description, interpretation, and explanation (Fairclough, 2014, p. 11-12) (Fairclough, 2013, pp. 25-26) and (Janks, 1997, p. 1).

1.5 Literature Review

CDA is an interdisciplinary field that examines how language functions within social, cultural, and political contexts. CDA attracts significant attention from researchers and linguists in language studies. The 1990s experienced a substantial period of development for CDA, as it transitioned from a theoretical framework to practical application, especially in education. Since then, it has been widely used to study the connection between language and society in educational settings.

In the EFL context, CDA plays a key role in influencing learners' understanding of language beyond grammatical competence. In the Kurdish EFL context, the emphasis is often on form over meaning, resulting in students having a limited understanding of the critical role of language in society. Despite its global recognition as a valuable educational tool, the application of CDA in Kurdish EFL classrooms remains limited. CDA views language as a form of social practice; it explores how language and social practices are closely interconnected and influence each other (Wodak, 2014, p. 303). The interdisciplinary nature of CDA enables it to cover a range of topics, including linguistics, sociology, psychology, history, anthropology, philosophy, literary studies, sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, and

pragmatics. (Wodak and Meyer, 2009, p. 2), (Wodak, 2014, p. 303). According to Fairclough (2013), CDA examines the relationship between language and power, ideology, institutions, and social identities. For instance, CDA can explain how the broader forces of capitalism influence social inequalities. Fairclough refers to CDA as transdisciplinary, as it combines ideas from different areas of study, like economics and politics, to understanding both the hidden meanings and linguistic aspects of language and social life. CDA helps in analyzing discourse to find hidden meanings and to uncover the relationship between discourse, ideology, and power by systematically analyzing language (spoken, written, and visual). It is an interdisciplinary research approach that focuses on addressing social problems (Fairclough, 2001, p. 1).

CDA emphasizes the social study of language, placing it at the centre of language study, and prefers approaches that focus on how language functions in real life over focusing on abstract rules. CDA is a bridge between critical social theory and linguistics (Fairclough, 2013, pp. 13–14) and (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999, p. 184). Within its broad scope, CDA has proven to be a useful tool for EFL teachers to develop learners' critical thinking skills (Hashemi and Ghanizadeh, 2012, p. 38).

Over the past few decades, CDA has gained popularity as a valuable tool in EFL education, particularly for enhancing critical thinking and deeper reading comprehension, as it has been shown to increase learners' ability to interpret the hidden meaning of a text. This field has been the subject of numerous studies and research.

Rogers et al. (2005) reviewed CDA literature in education from 1980 to 2003, narrowing 803 references down to 284. Forty of these specifically discussed the application of CDA in education. CDA has significantly impacted educational studies by shifting from traditional analysis of written texts to spoken interactions, such as classroom conversation. Moreover, many of these studies rely heavily on Fairclough's model to confirm CDA's importance in understanding educational issues. However, the studies did not give clear descriptions of their linguistic context, which is important in CDA. In addition, they did not fully explain the link between linguistic elements like grammar and pronouns and real-world social practices (Rogers et al., 2005).

Javadi and Mohammadi (2019) investigated the impact of CDA-based instruction on Iranian EFL students' reading comprehension and motivation. The study relied on Fairclough's three-dimensional model, specifically the ten-question framework. The findings showed a significant improvement in reading comprehension and motivation among Iranian EFL students. Hence, they recommended adding a CDA course to the EFL curriculum to help students develop critical awareness. Even though the study shows how important CDA is for improving reading comprehension skills and motivation, their research is limited to the Iranian context and did not explore CDA's effects on written language awareness.

Sihem (2023) studied how CDA can improve critical reading among master's students from Skikda University. Initially, the students had little knowledge of CDA and analyzing ideological texts. They participated in an instructional program for CDA, covering all techniques for analyzing texts with hidden meanings. The findings showed that incorporating CDA into EFL education could enhance students' critical reading skills, encouraging them to move beyond passive learning and engage more critically and analytically with texts. However, it concentrated only on reading and ignored other skills such as written language awareness. Moreover, this study restricted its context to Algerian master's students, which may reduce generalization across other EFL contexts (Sihem, 2023).

Lalaouna and Lechekhab (2024) investigated the effects of using CDA to improve interpretive reading skills among first-year English students. The study employed a quantitative, quasi-experimental design; the experimental group of forty students received CDA-based instruction focusing on Fairclough's description, interpretation, and explanation model. Post-test results showed CDA significantly improved their ability to interpret texts beyond surface meaning and understand the social and cultural implications of language. CDA is a powerful tool for developing CT skills and textual analysis. However, it did not investigate its impact on other important skills and it was limited to first-year university students.

Shihab and Yahya (2023) explored CDA's role in enhancing literary awareness. Sixty-five fourth-year undergraduates from the University of Garmian and Diyala were divided into experimental and control groups. The experimental group received CDA-based instruction using Fairclough's three-dimensional model. The finding concludes that CDA enhanced students' understanding of complex literary texts and that Fairclough's model effectively increases students' awareness of literature. The model also supports cognitive growth and builds students' confidence to discuss broader ideas. CDA offers strong techniques to develop analytical skills. However, they did not address the impact of CDA on CT skills or written language awareness (Ahmed and Yahya, 2023).

Media and Hiwa conducted a theoretical analysis (2023) at Soran University-Erbil and Salahaddin University-Erbil. It introduced CDA as both a theoretical framework and as a powerful qualitative tool in social sciences. The study presents Fairclough's three dimensions: text, discourse practice, and social practice,

highlighting how each contributes to understanding hidden meanings in texts. This analysis has a significant impact on how individuals interpret and react to the text. This study primarily focuses on providing a theoretical analysis of CDA; it does not include practical applications of CDA in actual teaching and learning environments and does not focus on a particular group of EFL learners. Furthermore, it does not include measurable outcomes and fails to provide clear evidence of the effectiveness of CDA in the development of CT skills (Aziz and Fattah, 2023).

In summary, the reviewed studies confirmed that CDA has strong potential to enhance reading comprehension, interpretive skills, and critical reading. However, most focus exclusively on reading and fail to address some essential skills like written language awareness, which is a central concern in EFL education. Furthermore, some studies either fail to explore the practical applications of CDA in the development of CT skills or are limited to specific populations. Therefore, the current study addresses these gaps by exploring how CDA can enhance critical thinking skills and written language.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

Improving Kurdish EFL learners' CT and written language awareness through CDA is the primary focus of this study, which adopts a quantitative quasi-experimental research design with a single group and no control group because only one class was available in the selected college. The study involved administering a pre-test and post-test to a single group of participants. To ensure alignment with the study's goal, all research materials used in this study, including the pre-test and post-test, and the texts, were carefully refined and revised based on feedback from a panel of academic professionals. All ethical considerations were followed throughout the research study. Participants were fully informed about the purpose of the study, and their participation was entirely voluntary. They were assured that their responses would remain confidential. and used exclusively for academic purposes.

To maintain scoring consistency, evaluation of the responses of both tests was carried out using a standardized rubric, and scoring was verified by the supervisor to ensure uniformity. These steps were applied carefully under similar conditions to ensure the validity and accuracy of the data. This structure enables the researcher to measure the changes in students' written language awareness and critical thinking before and after receiving instruction based on CDA techniques.

2.2 Sampling

This study involved one main group of participants. A total of forty-one fourth-year BA EFL students at Koya University, English Department/Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, during the 2024-2025 academic year, participated in the pre-test and post-test. The sample size was determined based on the available participants in the class. It is reasonable to examine the impact of CDA-based instruction on developing CT and WLA. The number is comparable to that of Lalaouna and Lechekhab (2024), who worked with 40 first-year students at the Department of English.

These students were selected because they had no prior experience studying CDA. And due to their language proficiency level, they were able to engage with written texts critically. Over a ten-week instructional period, a discourse analysis specialist delivered core concepts of discourse analysis and CDA, which was a part of their curriculum.

2.3 Setting

This study was conducted at the English Department, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Koya University, during the 2024-2025 academic year. The structured EFL program provided a suitable environment for examining the development of WLA and CT skills among university-level learners.

Both the pre-test and post-test consisted of five political speeches, each paired with five guided analytical questions developed in alignment with Fairclough's framework. The texts were selected for their cultural relevance and linguistic appropriateness to encourage learners in deeper critical reflection. Testing sessions lasted two hours and included a short break to support student concentration.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

The data collection was carried out over a three-month period, from October 2024 to January 2025. The data were analyzed using SPSS version 24. Both descriptive and inferential statistical methods were applied. This design provides a clear and organized method to evaluate the effectiveness of CDA-based instruction in prompting CT and WLA in EFL contexts.

3.1 Statistical Methods

This part presents the statistical analysis of the collected data from the pre-test and post-test. The facts had been coded, tabulated, and introduced in a descriptive form. All the responses were coded, tabulated, and presented in descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Additionally, inferential statistical analyses, including independent samples t-tests and chi-square, are conducted.

The significance of statistical results was determined using the following criteria (P-value):

1. Highly significant (P < 0.001)
2. Significant (P < 0.05)
3. Non-significant (P> 0.05)
4. Very highly significant (P < 0.000)

3.2 Scoring and Interpretation

Original Bloom's cut-off points are adopted to interpret participants' performance on the pre-test and post-test. which are categorized into three levels:

Severe 75%–100%: (18-25 points)
Moderate 50%–74%: (13-17 points)
Mild (<50%): (5-12 points)

Each response was assigned on a five-level scale: Very weak (Code 1), Weak (Code 2), Average (Code 3), Good (Code 4), and Excellent (Code 5). The total score for each test ranged from 5 to 25.

Cronbach's alpha was used to ensure reliability of both tests. Although the same items were used for both tests, the post-test showed higher reliability values (0.61-0.85), because the students responded more consistently after receiving CDA-based instruction during the intervention. The pre-test scores showed moderate reliability, ranging between 0.63 and 0.73.

3.3 Comparison of Total Mean Scores: Pre-test vs. Post-test

Table 1
displays the comparison of mean scores across the five texts.

Text	Test	**Mean Score**	N	Std. Deviation	t-test	p-value
1	Pre	10.2927	41	2.40046	-10.658	0.000
	Post	17.7561	41	3.51269		
2	Pre	8.1951	41	2.47204	-8.975	0.000
	Post	14.2195	41	4.08358		
3	Pre	8.4634	41	2.43000	-9.784	0.000
	Post	13.8537	41	2.32982		
4	Pre	8.3902	41	2.93154	-8.453	0.000
	Post	13.9756	41	4.13816		
5	Pre	7.4390	41	2.82886	-8.079	0.000
	Post	13.6829	41	3.87582		

Table (1) represents the comparison of the mean total score between the pre-test and post-test of the five texts. The results show that there was a statistically significant difference in the total score between the pre-test and post-test of the five texts, indicating a consistent improvement. For example, the mean score in text one rose from 10.29 to 17.75; similar gains were observed in all other texts from 8.19 to 14.21. The differences were statistically significant, as confirmed by independent samples t-tests with p-values less than 0.05 across all texts.

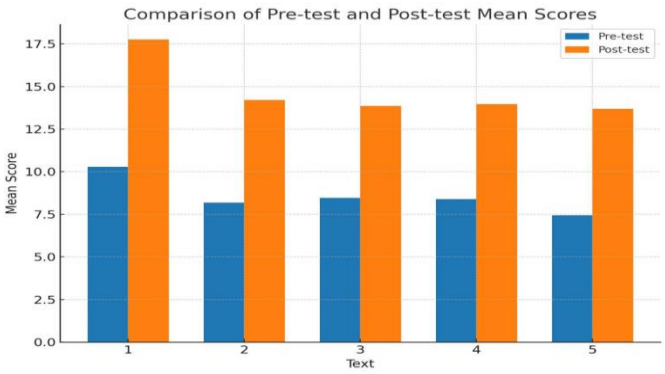


Chart 1

shows the pre-test vs. post-test mean score for each text (1-5). It shows the post-test mean is higher than the pre-test means.

3.4 Item-by-item Analysis: Text One

Table 2
compare the pre-test and post-test in Text one.

Q	Level	Pre Fr.	%	Post Fr.	%	Total	p-value
1	Very weak	4	9.76	1	2.44	5	0.000
	Weak	22	53.66	3	7.32	25	
	Average	14	34.15	4	9.76	18	
	Good	1	2.44	7	17.07	8	
	Excellent	0	0.00	26	63.41	26	
2	Very weak	7	17.07	1	2.44	8	0.000
	Weak	22	53.66	5	12.20	27	
	Average	12	29.27	7	17.07	19	
	Good	0	0.00	19	46.34	19	
	Excellent	0	0.00	9	21.95	9	
	.00	1	2.44	0	0.00	1	
3	Very weak	10	24.39	2	4.88	12	0.000
	Weak	22	53.66	6	14.63	28	
	Average	8	19.51	19	46.34	27	
	Good	0	0.00	13	31.71	13	
	Excellent	0	0.00	1	2.44	1	
	.00	1	2.44	0	0.00	1	
4	Very weak	8	19.51	5	12.20	13	0.000
	Weak	25	60.98	8	19.51	33	
	Average	5	12.20	1	2.44	6	
	Good	2	4.88	12	29.27	14	
	Excellent	0	0.00	15	36.59	15	
	.00	3	7.32	2	4.88	5	
5	Very weak	11	26.83	1	2.44	12	0.000
	Weak	15	36.59	8	19.51	23	
	Average	9	21.95	14	34.15	23	
	Good	3	7.32	16	39.02	19	
Total		41	100.00	41	100.00	82	

Table (2) shows the comparison between the pre-test and post-test in text one. This indicates that there was a statistically significant difference between the pre-test

and post-test in text one. As a result, the p-value was less than the common alpha of 0.05. The number of students in the excellent category rose dramatically (e.g., from 0% to 63.41% for Q1), and the weak and very weak categories decreased significantly in all items.

3.5 Item-by-item Analysis: Text Two

Table 3
Compares the pre-test and post-test in Text two.

Two .Q	Level	Pre Fr.	%	Post Fr.	%	To tal	p-value
1	Very weak	19	46.34	4	9.76	23	0.000
	Weak	19	46.34	7	17.07	26	
	Average	3	7.32	14	34.15	17	
	Good	0	0.00	13	31.71	13	
	Excellent	0	0.00	3	7.32	3	
2	Very weak	16	39.02	6	14.63	22	0.000
	Weak	23	56.10	6	14.63	29	
	Average	1	2.44	17	41.46	18	
	Good	1	2.44	10	24.39	11	
	Excellent	0	0.00	2	4.88	2	
	.00	1	2.44	0	0.00	1	
3	Very weak	12	29.27	1	2.44	13	0.000
	Weak	22	53.66	11	26.83	33	
	Average	6	14.63	14	34.15	20	
	Good	0	0.00	14	34.15	14	
	Excellent	0	0.00	1	2.44	1	
	.00	0	0.00	2	4.88	2	
4	Very weak	21	51.22	3	7.32	24	0.000
	Weak	14	34.15	10	24.39	24	
	Average	6	14.63	17	41.46	23	
	Good	0	0.00	9	21.95	9	
	0	5	12.20	0	0.00	5	
5	Very weak	21	51.22	7	17.07	28	0.000
	Weak	9	21.95	15	36.59	24	
	Average	6	14.63	12	29.27	18	
	Good	0	0.00	7	17.07	7	
Total		41	100.00	41	100.00	82	

Table (3) presents a comparison of the pre-test and post-test in text two. The p-value for all five items was less than the common alpha level of 0.05 . The number of good and excellent responses increased, and very weak and weak responses decreased noticeably.

3.6 Overall Performance Across All Texts

Table 4
compares the total score of text one between the pre-test and post-test.

Text one		Condition Pre	Post	Total
Mild	Fr.	35	2	37
	%	85.4	4.9	45.1
Moderate	Fr.	6	19	25
	%	14.6	46.3	30.5
Severe	Fr.	0	20	20
	%	0.0	48.8	24.4
Total	Fr.	41	41	82
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0
Chi- square test		56.192	p-value	0.000

Table (4) shows the comparison between the total score for text one between the pre-test and post-test. The results show that there was a statistically significant difference, and the result of the p-value was less than the common alpha of 0.05.

Table 5
Summary of pre-test and post-test scores across all texts

Text	condition	Pre-test (Fr.%)	Post-test (Fr.%)	Chi-square	P-value
Text 1	Mild	35 (85.4%)	2 (4.9%	56.192	0.000
	Moderate	6 (14.6)	19 (46.35)		
	Severe	0 (0.0)	20 (48.8%)		
Text 2	Mild	38 (92.7%)	14 (34.1%)	30.713	0.000
	Moderate	3 (7.3%)	19 (46.3%		
	Severe	0 (0.0%)	8 919.5%)		
Text 3	Mild	38 (92.7%)	8 (19.5%)	44.646	0.000
	Moderate	3 (7.3%)	30 (73.2%)		
	Severe	0(0.0%)	3 (7.3%)		
Text 4	Mild	37 (90.2%)	12 (29.3%)	31.962	0.000
	Moderate	4 (9.8%)	25 (61.0%)		
	Severe	0 (0.0%)	4 (9.8%)		
Text 5	Mild	40 (97.6%)	12 (29.3%)	41.231	0.000
	Moderate	1 (2.4%)	25 (61.0%)		
	Severe	0 (0.0%)	4 (9.8%)		

Table (5) shows the comparison between the total scores of five texts. A clear progress and shift in participants' performance across all texts. Most participants were in mild conditions, but after intervention, the number in mild conditions decreased sharply, while those in moderate and severe conditions increased. a statistically significant difference (or association) between the pre-test and post-test in the total score of texts because the result of the p-value was less than the common alpha of 0.05.

Table 6
Summary of pre-test and post-test comparisons across all text

Text	Chi-squar	P-value	Significant
Text 1	56.192	0.000	Significant
Text 2	30.713	0.000	Significant
Text 3	44.646	0.000	Significant
Text 4	31.962	0.000	Significant
Text 5	41.231	0.000	Significant

Table (6) shows the summary of pre-test and post-test comparisons across all texts. The results show that there was a statistically significant difference (or association) between the pre-test and post-test in the total score of all texts because the result of the p-value was less than the common alpha of 0.05.

3.7 Result and Finding

The findings of this study are derived from a quantitative systematic method that uses numerical data to identify patterns by comparing students' performance on the pre-test and post-test. The aim was to assess the impact of CDA-based instructions on CT and WLA among EFL students. The results indicate a clear improvement in students' analytical abilities following the instructional intervention. Students showed greater awareness of how language reflects power, ideology, and social dimensions. The independent sample t-test was used to measure changes in students' performance before and after intervention. Additional statistical method, Chi-square test results across all five texts, confirm a statistically significant shift in performance from pre-test to post-test. There are consistent reductions in the mild category and increases in both moderate and severe, indicating deeper critical engagement with the texts. This confirms that the instruction positively affected student performance.

The increase in scores across all categories suggests that CDA-based instructions motivate learners to go beyond literal comprehension and begin analyzing power relations, bias, and hidden language techniques in texts.

Furthermore, the results, particularly for texts three, four, and five, confirmed this by showing an increase in "Severe" category responses (75-100%). The high level of scores shows students developed stronger CT skills. The analysis showed a significant increase in the number of students performing at moderate and severe levels, while the number of students in the mild category scoring below 50% decreased across all five texts. The outcome indicates that integrating CDA also improves learners' engagement critically with texts.

The quantitative evidence confirmed that the CDA-based instruction effectively improves both CT and WLA, which supports its pedagogical value in the EFL classroom.

4. CONCLUSION

This study confirms that CDA is more than a theoretical framework; it is a practical tool for developing essential academic skills in Kurdish EFL learners. Students are encouraged to view language as socially created and foster deeper awareness of how meaning is constructed rather than as a neutral system. Students interact critically with the written materials, shifting their role from passive learners to active and reflective participants. They get better at analyzing texts and thinking independently.

The progress from lower performance to better analytical skills across all five texts demonstrates significant results for curriculum designers, educators, and teachers on the importance of the application of CDA in EFL classrooms.

The quasi-experimental results encourage a shift towards more reflective pedagogy and open the door for future research on the long-term impact of CDA on the learners' academic success, motivation, and engagement and broader language skills. Overall, CDA-based instructions are considered an important pedagogical approach for enhancing EFL learners' CT and written language awareness through language.

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APPENDICES

Text 1

The following is the full text of the speech delivered by His Excellency President Barham Salih at the Conference of the Mediterranean Dialogues on Thursday afternoon, November 22, 2018:

Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests,

Many may say there is nothing unique about the present day Middle East — we are living through yet another phase of conflict— as we have been plagued by conflict and powers struggles for much of our contemporary history.

A most important and consequential challenge for Iraq today is economic reform and regeneration. Iraq is endowed with immense natural resources, water and fertile land— and an indispensable geopolitical position that can become the hub for regional trade and economic integration. Yet decades of war, sanctions, conflicts, economic mismanagement and corruption have tuned Iraq into an extreme rentier state. This is unsustainable— we are today a 38 million populations, and increasing at a rate of one million each year— youth unemployment is rampant— this is a profound security, social and development challenge.

Iraq is an important country in the Arab world— This Arab anchor for Iraq is vital economically and politically, and we are emphatic about fully developing our relations with our Arab and Gulf neighbors. Our relations with Iran is also important, we share a border of 1400 km, and much social and cultural bonds — and it is in our national interest to promote good relations with Iran and alike with our northern neighbor, Turkey, which is undeniably an important economic geopolitical actor.

There are still remaining issues of contention between the Kurdistan Region and federal government— time to resolve these issues in a fundamental way through adhering to the constitution. There is renewed hope as the our new PM Dr Adil Abdul Mahdi and the Kurdistan leadership have pledged to move on to resolve these outstanding issues. The recent agreement to resume oil exports from Kirkuk to Ceyhan is a welcomed gesture in this context (Republic of Iraq-Office of the President, 2018),
(https://presidency.iq/EN/Details.aspx?id=1073).

Now answer the following questions:

1. What does the speaker mention as a major challenge for Iraq today?
2. How does the speaker describe the Middel East's history in the first paragraph?
3. How does the speaker describe Iraq's importance in the Arab world and broader region in the third paragraph?
4. What problems does the speaker mention that have caused Iraq to depend too much on oil?
5. Does the speaker believe there is hope to resolve the problem between the Kurdistan region and the federal government in paragraph five? How does the speaker show this?"

Text 2

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful,
President of the United Nations General Assembly,
Honorable Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Respected Majesties, Excellencies and Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Peace, mercy and blessings of God be upon you.
Mr. President,
it is not a secret to everyone that Iraq is going through difficult climatic conditions due to the scarcity of water resources, the change of river courses that it shares with neighboring countries, and the establishment of projects without taking into account their effects on water quotas, and the equitable use of riparian countries, all of these conditions together have led Iraq to become 5th most vulnerable country to climate change; This has recently led to the drying up of most of the areas of the Iraqi Marshes, and the livelihoods of hundreds of rural families in the Iraqi Marshes, which are considered natural reserves on the World Heritage List, and have affected the livelihoods of hundreds of rural families, which have led to an increase in the rate of desertification and internal displacement; Because of natural factors, the loss of livelihoods for many families, and also led to a decrease in the proportion of agricultural land. We call on all countries in the region for dialogue to resolve water issues in accordance with international laws and agreements.

Iraq is an oil country that has participated in the recovery and development of the global economy since the beginning of the twentieth century, and if it is suffering from climate changes, it will also suffer from all the measures that will be taken to address this phenomenon, which will reduce dependence on fossil fuels. Nevertheless, this government has worked on important strategic projects in the field of clean energy, associated gas extraction, and other areas related to the green economy. This requires international support in its various fields to support its efforts and enable it to move forward in implementing national policies and strategies on both sides of mitigating and adapting to the negative effects of climate change (Iraqi News Agency (INA), 2022), (https://ina.iq/eng/22017-pms-speech-at-the-united-nations-general-assembly.html).

Now answer the following questions:
Q1: What key words or phrases in the first paragraph indicate how serious the water scarcity issue is in Iraq?
Q2: Does the speaker use simple sentences or complex sentences? How does this type of sentence affect the message?
Q3: How is the information about the Iraqi Marshes presented in the text? Does the description seem positive or negative?
Q4: How does the text explain the impact of climate change on people in Iraq? Can you find any phrases that represent this?
Q5: How does the text describe the relationship between Iraq and neighboring countries regarding water resources?

Text 3

Remarks by SRSG Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert at the Gender Equality & Women Empowerment Strategies conference Erbil, Kurdistan Region | 28 November 2021
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Distinguished guests,

Speaking in the Kurdistan Region today, I would (of course) be remiss not to point out the pioneering role played by female politicians in this region, which has long led the country in terms of the quantity and quality of female political representation.
And as a woman who also blazed a political trail in my home country, I know how important it is for young women and girls to have role models to look up to as they aspire to positions of leadership, including in politics. I truly believe that today's women in public office are the role models for tomorrow's generation of leaders.
Also on the policy and legislative side, a lot has been done in the Kurdistan Region. From doing the obvious, for

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instance by institutionalizing gender issues, to all kinds of legal reforms such as the one addressing polygamy. But let's face it: the growing assertiveness of Iraqi women in Iraqi political life is not yet a given. On the contrary. Past and present experience on the ground tell us that lots of work lies ahead of us. Not only to ensure the elimination of all existing barriers for women to realize their political rights, but also to work towards gender balance in decision-making positions. I mean, of all the names being mentioned for the position of Prime Minister, Speaker or President…perhaps I missed something…but so far, I haven't heard one female name(United Nations Iraq, 2021).

Now answer the following questions:

1. What words or phrases in the text show that the speaker believes women are important in politics?
2. How does the speaker describe the role of women in politics in Kurdistan Region?
3. What does the speaker want to achieve in delivering this speech?
4. Why does the speaker mention legal change like the one about polygamy?
5. What problem do women face in politics according to this speech?

Text 4

Secretary-General's press encounter in Erbil, Iraq
António Guterres,
Ladies and gentlemen of the press –
thank you for your presence.

I am glad to be back in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. In my previous visits to the area, including as High Commissioner for Refugees, I was deeply touched by the generosity and solidarity of the Kurdish people towards those fleeing conflict and catastrophe.

I was extremely encouraged to see, both in Baghdad and in Erbil, with all my interlocutors, a deep commitment to solve the outstanding problems and we all know that they refer to budgetary questions, we all know that they refer to oil, to revenues. But I saw, in both cities, all the officials I met, determined to have a meaningful dialogue and to solve these problems once and for all. And I am truly hopeful that this will happen; and, from our side, we will do everything we can to support this effort.

All these questions were discussed in Baghdad and in Erbil, and as I said, I am deeply confident that the dialogue between the Baghdad Government and the Regional Government here in Erbil will conduct to a satisfactory solution to all those problem for the benefit of the Iraqi people in general and the benefit of the people of the Kurdistan Region (United Nations, 2023)

Now answer the following question:

1. Which words or phrases in the text show the speaker's positive or negative feelings towards the Kurdish people?
2. Look at the sentences that talk about the budget and oil issues. Are they written in an active or passive way? Why do you think the speaker chose this structure?
3. Can you identify any important words or phrases about dialogue or problems between Bagdad and Erbil?
4. How might the audience (Kurdish or Iraqi) feel when hearing this speech?
5. How does this text show the relationship between the Kurdistan Region and the Iraqi government? What message does it convey about cooperation?

Text 5

Statement from President Joe Biden Marking One Year Since the October 7th Attack

Today marks one year of mourning for the more than 1,200 innocent people of all ages, including 46 Americans, I also strongly condemn the vicious surge in antisemitism in America and around the world. It is unacceptable. All of us must stand united against antisemitism and against hate in all its forms. October 7th was also a dark day for the Palestinian people because of the conflict that that followed. Many civilians have suffered far too much during this year of conflict — and tens of thousands have been killed. We will not stop working to achieve a ceasefire in Gaza to bring the hostages home, allows for a surge in humanitarian aid to ease the suffering on the ground, assures Israel's security, and ends this war. Israelis and Palestinians alike deserve to live in security, dignity, and peace(The White House, 2024).

Now answer the following questions:

1. What words or phrases does the speaker use to describe the feeling of mourning in the first paragraph?
2. s the sentence that describes the October 7 attacks written in active or passive voice? Why do you think the speaker used this voice?
3. How does the speaker talk about anti-semitism in the second paragraph?
4. What specific phrases does the speaker use to call for unity agianst hate in the second paragraph?
5. How does the speaker connect the suffering of both Jewish and Palestinian people in the second paragraph?

Rubric for evaluation the participants' responses:

criteria	Excellent (5points)	Good (4points	Average (3points)	Poor (2points)	Very poor (1point)
Q1. Identifying specific words for mourning	Accurately identifies key words	Identifies some key words	Identifies a few relevant words	Identifies only one word with no explanation	Does not identify any words
Q2. Sentence structure analysis	Accurately described	Partially described	Described with lack of clarity	Weakly described	Description is irrelevant
Q3. Addressing anti-Semitism	Clearly explained	Describes but lacks in explanation	Identifies but lacks clarity and explanation	Weakly explained	Incorrect response
Q4. Call for unity against hate	Correctly identifies and explains	Adequately describes but lacks in explanation	Partially identifies	Weakly identified	Fail to identify
Q5. Connecting suffering of both group	Explains in detail	Explains but misses some key points	Describes but lacks clarity	Weakly explained	Irrelevant explanation

باشترکردنی بیرکردنەوەی ڕەخنەیی فێرخوازانی کوردی EFL و هۆشیاری زمانی نووسین لە ڕێگەی شیکاری گوتاری ڕەخنەییەوە

پوختە

بیرکردنەوەی ڕەخنەیی CT وهۆشیاری زمانی نوسراو WLA لە پەروەردەی ئەکادیمیدا زۆر گرنگن، بە تایبەت بۆ خوێندکارانی ئینگلیزی. بیرکردنەوەی ڕەخنەیی پشتگیری لە سەرکەوتنی ئەکادیمی دەکات، یارمەتی فێرخواز دەدات بە قوڵی ئاویتە بێ لەگەڵ زمانەکەدا، ئەمەش فێربوون باشتر دەکات و توانای زمانی ئینگلیزی بەرزدەکاتەوە و چارەسەرکردنی کێشەکان باشتر دەکات. ئەم توێژینەوەیە بە ناونیشانی" باشترکردنی بیرکردنەوەی ڕەخنەیی فێرخوازانی کوردی EFL و هۆشیاری زمانی نووسین لە ڕێگەی شیکاری گوتاری ڕەخنەییەوە،" لێکۆڵینەوە لە چۆنێتی بەرزکردنەوەی توانای بیرکردنەوەی ڕەخنەیی و شیکردنەوەی دەقە نوسراوەکان بە شێوەیەکی کاریگەر لە سەر بنەمای شیکاری گوتاری ڕەخنەیی CDAدەکات. لەم توێژینەوەیە شێوازی نیمچە تاقیکاری چەندایەتی بەکارهاتووە، کە بریتیبە لە تاقیکردنەوەی پێشەکی و پاشەکی بۆ یەک گروپ بە بێ گرویی کۆنترۆڵ. چل و یەک خوێندکاری قوناغی چوارەمی بەکالۆریۆس لە بەشی زمانی ئینگلیزی فاکەڵتیی زانستە مرۆڤایەتی و کۆمەڵایەتیەکان لە زانکۆی کۆیە هەڵبژێردران. لە میانی پرۆگرامێکی فێرکاری دە هەفتەیدا چەمکە سەرەکییەکانی شیکاری گوتار و CDA لە لایەن شارەزاییەک لە بوارەکەدا پێشکەشکرا. تاقیکردنەوەکان لە پێنج دەق پێکهاتبوون، هەریەکەیان پێنج پرسیاری شیکارییان لەگەڵدا بوو کە بە پێی ڕەهەندەکانی CDA دارێژابوون. داتاکان بە بەکارهێنانی SPSS و ڤێرژنی ٢٤ شیکرانەونەتەوە، بە بەکارهێنانی هەردوو ئاماری وەسفی و پەسندکاری ئەنجامدرا. لە تاقیکردنەوەکاندا-t Independent sample test و Chi square بەکارهێنران بۆ پێوانەکردنی گۆڕانکاری لە نێوان هەردوو تاقیکردنەوەکە. هەروەها Alpha Cronbach بەکارهات بۆ پشتڕاستکردنەوەی ڕاستگۆیی. دەرئەنجامەکان ئەوەیان خستەڕوو کە تێکەڵکردنی CDA دەتوانێت بەشێوەیەکی کاریگەر بیرکردنەوەی ڕەخنەیی و هۆشیاری زمانی نووسینی فێرخوازان باشتربکات. ئەم توێژینەوەیە شێوەیەکی پراکتیکی فێربوون پێشکەش دەکات بۆ باشترکردن و پێشخستنی فێرکردن. دانەرانی بەرنامەی خوێندن، ڕاهێنەرانی زمانی ئینگلیزی و پلاندانەرانی پەروەردەیی دەتوانن سوود لەم توێژینەوەیە وەربگرن بۆ بەهێزکردنی ڕێبازەکانی وانەوتنەوە .

وشە سەرەکییەکان: شیکاری گوتاری ڕەخنەیی، بیرکردنەوەی ڕەخنەیی، هۆشیاری زمانی نوسراو، فێرخوزانی کوردی EFL،پەروەردەی زمان.

تحسين التفكير النقدي والوعي اللغوى المكتوب لدى متعلمي الكورد للغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية EFL من خلال تحليل الخطاب النقدي

الملخص

يعد التفكير النقدي CT والوعي اللغوى المكتوب WLA من المهارات الاساسية في التعليم الاكاديمي, و خاصة لطلاب اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية. يساهم CT في تعزيز النجاح الاكاديمي, ويساعد المتعلمين على التفاعل العميق مع اللغة, وتحسين نتائج التعلم, وزيادة الكفاءة اللغوية, و تنمية مهارات حل المشكلات. و بحثنا الموسوم يحمل عنوان " تحسين التفكير النقدي والوعي اللغوى المكتوب لدى متعلمي الكورد للغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية EFL من خلال تحليل الخطاب النقدي", يهدف الى الاجابة عن السوأل: كيف يمكن للتعليم القائم على CDA أن يعزز قدرة الطلاب على التفكير النقدي وتحليل النصوص المكتوبة بفعالية أكبر. ويهدف البحث الى دراسة تأثير التعليم القائم على CDA لدى متعلمي الكورد للغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية. تم استخدام تصميم شبه تجريبي مع مجموعة واحدة، حيث تم اختبار قبلي ثم تقديم دروس تعليمية قائم على CDA و المفاهيم الاساسية في التحليل الخطاب خلال برنامج تعليمي مدته عشرة اسابيع من قبل خبير, يليه اختبار بعدي, وذلك بمشاركة 41 طالباً من المرحلة الرابعة في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة كوية. تضمنت الاختبارات خمسة نصوص, مصحوبة بخمسة اسئلة تحليلية مصممة وفقا لأبعاد .CDA استخدم برنامج SPSS الإصدار24لتحليل البيانات, وتضمنت التحليلات الإحصائية الوصفية والاستنتاجية. استخدم اختبار T-test للعينة الواحدة، ومعامل ارتباط سبيرمان، واختبار (Chi-square) لتحليل وجود فروق في الأداء. بينما تم استخدام معامل كرونباخ للتحقق من صدق النتائج. أظهرت النتائج أن دمج CDAفي التدريس يمكن أن يحسن فعالية فهم المتعلمين للغة المكتوبة و تنمية CT لديهم. تقدم هذه الدراسة أثارا تطبيقية مفيدة لتحسين اساليب التدريس, اذ يمكن لمصممي المناهج, ومدرسي اللغة الانجليزية, و مخططي التعليم الاستفادة من هذه النتائج لتعزيز مناهج تدريس اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

كلمات المفتاحية: تحليل الخطاب النقدي, التفكير النقدي, الوعي اللغوى المكتوب, طلاب الكورد للغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبيةEFL