

**The Effect of Critical Thinking Skills on Reading Proficiency of  
English Learners: a Pragmatic Approach**

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The term *applied linguistics* is generally considered equivalent to language learning and related issues, and is an interdisciplinary field of study dealing with the analysis of language issues. It is worth noting that reading is one of the four main skills of language learning with three levels: working memory processing, lower-level and higher-level processes, the last being the main goal of fluent reading. This study aimed to investigate the role of critical thinking skills in reading proficiency of English learners. In order to assess the hypothesis, two groups of 29 students in the first grade of a high school were selected in a girls' school in District 12 of Tehran. For the first group, teaching English lesson plans with critical thinking and pragmatic approach, based on dialog and an inquiry community, were implemented in 20 sessions, and the second group received only the conventional English language teaching. In this research, micro navigation with a quantitative approach in addition to a questionnaire and an open questionnaire were used. In order to analyze the data, the mean difference test and analysis of content were employed. The average scores on post-test, critical thinking skills and higher level reading test scores of the experimental group were significantly higher in comparison with the control group. The experimental group could also use more pragmatic items considered in this study in their writings.

**Key words:** Reading Skills, Critical Thinking, Pragmatics, Community of Inquiry, Dialog.

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