

NURTURING CRITICAL READING SKILLS THROUGH THE LENS OF EXPERIENCED TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

Mastering the art of critical reading requires involving yourself in the text, comprehending the author's ideas, scrutinizing the arguments and evidence presented, and ultimately forming your own unbiased views. The study conducted was a phenomenological qualitative one, wherein an In-depth interview was employed. This study was conceived to explore the experiences, techniques, and issues experienced teachers have when it comes to developing the critical reading abilities of their students. The study was conducted to gather insights from the ten educators between six and thirty-two years of teaching experience from the Nabunturan Davao de Oro teachers, specifically from East and West districts. The findings were evaluated using a thematic approach, which revealed fundamental concepts and developing themes. The findings of this study highlight the significance of utilizing a variety of instructional strategies, such as guided reading, activities that include problem-solving, and Socratic questioning, to accommodate the various learning requirements of students. In addition, it emphasizes the significance of technology in developing critical reading abilities, suggests the utilization of digital reading materials, and encourages reading online. The research highlights the need to provide instructors with opportunities for ongoing professional development in the form of seminars and workshops, as well as the importance of cultivating an educational setting that supports learning and integrating parents in the educational process. Lastly, the results of this study are useful not only for reading teachers but also for all teachers, school administrators, and parents in determining how they can equip themselves to support the students.

Keywords: *Critical Reading Skills, Instructional strategies, Reading Comprehension, Teacher professional development, Parental Involvement*

1. INTRODUCTION

Critical reading refers to the active and intelligent involvement with a book, involving questioning and evaluating its content to form an opinion about it (Wallace, 2003). In today's world, reading should go beyond the literal level of the students so that they can improve their ability to comprehend the material in a manner that is not as literal as it may initially appear.

A study carried out at FPT University in Vietnam by Ha Van Le, Thi Ai Duyen Nguyen, Dinh Hieu Ngan Le, Phuong Uyen Nguyen, and Thi Thien An Nguyen reveals that students in Vietnam primarily depend on lower-level cognitive abilities, such as recognizing specific terms and understanding main concepts, rather than actively employing higher-level critical thinking skills such as analysis and evaluation. The research, comprising a quantitative survey of 147 students and qualitative interviews with 12 persons, emphasizes the need for focused instructional strategies to improve students' competence in critical reading (Le et al., 2024).

University of Santo Tomas in the Philippines found that ESL high school students face substantial difficulty in applying critical reading skills. The study found that students frequently accept material without engaging in critical thinking. This reveals a widespread problem in the Philippine education system, wherein students' deficiency in critical reading skills impedes their overall academic performance as well as understanding ability (Suacillo et al., 2016).

In Assumption College of Nabunturan, where the researcher has been teaching English for five years, the issue of grade 7 students struggling to comprehend a text is a significant concern. Observations suggest that struggles are due to students' lack of prior knowledge, limited vocabulary, difficulty connecting ideas within the text, and also the global pandemic, which affected their education most. As a result, the researchers were inspired to investigate the methods experienced teachers use to teach reading to understand better how they approach the issue, even though the instructor has made numerous attempts to resolve the issue by employing various strategies, including various reading drills. These activities include collaboration and unlocking specific terms before reading a lengthy text. This motivates the researcher to investigate the critical reading practices of experienced teachers to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their approach to the issue.

1.1 Review of Related Literature

Teaching Critical Reading Skills. Compelling reading requires a critical approach to texts, evaluating the content and the rationale behind its assertions. The ability to read effectively is fundamental for conducting effective research (via source evaluation) and writing effectively (by comprehending the writing style of what you read, you can strive to integrate those techniques into your work). Compelling reading also requires the capacity to assess one's methods and make an effort to improve one's critical reading abilities (Zemilansky, 2016). To foster lasting and continuous improvement in reading (Ortlieb, 2013) and enhance learners' academic achievements (Fatyela, 2021), it is essential to implement a range of approaches to cultivate meaningful reading experiences.

The importance of reading skills cannot be overstated, particularly in education after the first grade. However, pupils' reading abilities depend on the "teaching reading strategies" their teachers utilize. (Zaman & Asghar, 2019)

Critical reading has become an essential aspect of education due to the accessibility of open information. Students must be critical in reading since texts implicate various writers' aims and intentions (Untari et al., 2023). In the same way, Cimmiyotti (2013) posited that reading holds significant importance across all tiers of the educational framework due to its indispensable role in facilitating comprehension and mastery of subject matter, hence fostering enhanced academic performance.

In the same way, Niculescu and Dragomir (2023) discussed that critical reading is essential for evaluating information across multiple texts, particularly in today's information-rich society, where discerning reliable sources from biased or deceptive ones is critical. Developing these skills allows people to detect nuances in language, uncover logical fallacies and biases, and effectively analyze arguments, encouraging the ability to generate autonomous opinions rather than absorbing information without question. In academia, critical reading is required for students to analyze materials, create well-founded arguments, and make sound conclusions. Similarly, in professional settings, it aids in making informed decisions based on a thorough comprehension and analysis of data. Finally, critical reading fosters critical thinking, providing individuals with the abilities required for academic success, professional activities, and everyday decision-making.

The study of Gao (2019) introduces an approach a teacher can take and uses a text from Extensive Reading 4 as an example to illustrate how to read the text analytically by employing Richard Paul's template "Analyzing the logic of an Article, Essay, or Chapter." Moreover, the teaching strategy is evaluated for quality using Professor Wen Qiufang's "conceptual framework for assessing critical thinking skills." The results indicate that analytical reading significantly influences the learners' critical thinking and conclude that the analytical reading model (Critical reading) aimed at enhancing critical thinking in English reading class is very important.

Developing critical reading skills has a significant role in fostering the acquisition of essential abilities, including scientific reasoning and critical thinking. In this particular context, the significance of persons possessing critical reading abilities is duly acknowledged in the endeavor to construct a culture whereby individuals engage in reading, critical thinking, critique, inquiry, and written expression (Santos, 2017)

The study of Untari et al. (2023), which aimed to find out the students' critical reading competence in Surakarta, revealed that by giving the critical reading test to 96 grade 8 students of 5 junior high schools which consisted of Multiple-Choice test, Complex-Multiple Choice test, and Matching type of test, the students are moderate at understanding the text (68.92%), poor in Integrating text and real-life experience (52.31%), moderate in Reflecting the text (62.27%) and poor in Evaluating the text (47.22%). It concludes that junior high school students in Surakarta have moderate critical reading skills (57.68%), indicating they need to improve. With that, it is advised that other studies focus on finding the reasons for the inadequate skill and develop alternatives to improve the student's critical reading skills. Furthermore, it was asserted that students have sufficient declarative knowledge of critical thinking in reading, but their procedural and conditional knowledge is still insufficient. In this result, the importance of teachers

and researchers finding the proper learning process was highlighted so that students' critical reading skills could improve. In addition, Banditvilai (2020) asserted that despite the provision of teaching and strategies by teachers to enhance students' reading comprehension, there are still individuals who do not attain a proficient reading level.

The information gathered by Anuar and Sidhu (2017) reflects the students' viewpoints regarding their critical reading abilities and preparedness for them. Generally, postgraduate students showed a moderate level of preparedness for critical reading. This result is consistent with other research showing that students frequently enroll in postgraduate programs without sufficient instruction in critical reading. Consequently, postgraduate students must develop critical reading abilities because these are necessary for them to become competent professionals and to meet the country's educational objectives.

When people with critical reading skills or critical thinking abilities encounter new information through reading (for readers) or listening or reading (for readers), they initially establish a preliminary comprehension of the information. Subsequently, they interpret and assimilate the received information to attain a more profound understanding. Finally, they reflect and evaluate the information by drawing upon their external knowledge and personal experiences. The complexity of a given task of comprehension necessitates a heightened cognitive engagement. Consequently, engaging in critical reading can facilitate the development of independent thinking skills among readers. (Lee, 2019).

Higher-order thinking abilities are needed to teach critical reading, as incorporating critical thinking into the reading process will help students comprehend texts on a deeper level. Yunus and Ubaidillah (2021) suggest that teaching critical reading starts with linguistic analysis to comprehend a text and then moves on to higher-order thinking exercises with higher-order thinking problems.

In the study of Koray and Çetinkılıç (2020), their results revealed that the students in the experimental group, who were taught science using Critical Reading (CR) practices, were significantly more successful than the students in the control group, whose teaching was appropriate to the current curriculum in terms of academic achievement, science performance level, and problem-solving skills. It is critical to use such innovative practices, which combine various disciplines, to allow students to excel at reading, an essential skill, at all educational levels to raise contemporary and social individuals.

Taberno-Sala and Castillo (2023) assert that reading prompts readers to contemplate deeply, challenge their beliefs, and establish connections between the text and their prior knowledge and experience.

Critical reading skills essential to achieving academic success include 1) recognizing patterns in textual elements, 2) differentiating between primary and secondary ideas, 3). Evaluating credibility, 4). formulating arguments based on textual analysis, and 5) drawing appropriate inferences. (Manarin et al.,2015)

According to Wison (2016), critical thinking can be applied to critical reading pedagogy. In this regard, it is essential to instruct students in the fundamentals of reading and cultivate critical and reflective thinking skills during the reading process. While critical reading and critical thinking share a strong relationship, it is essential to note that they are distinct concepts. Engaging in critical thinking is essential for individuals to read and comprehend texts critically. While it is possible for individuals to think critically without engaging in reading activities, the absence of critical thinking skills hinders one's ability to read and analyze texts critically. But, the act of critically reading necessitates the presence of critical thinking. Critical reading involves the application of critical thinking skills, including analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Teachers' Experiences in Teaching Critical Reading Skills. Teachers have an essential role in developing critical reading abilities in pupils, serving as guides and mentors throughout the educational journey. Their knowledge and experiences help motivate students to actively engage with materials, challenging them to go beyond surface-level comprehension and develop higher-order thinking skills (Jose & Raja, 2011).

Teachers foster critical thinking in their classrooms by carefully selecting thought-provoking texts, asking open-ended questions, fostering debates, and giving specific reading strategy training. This responsibility goes beyond simply conveying knowledge; teachers encourage students to question, examine, and develop their interpretations. Through their advice and support, teachers assist students in developing the confidence and abilities required to comprehend complex texts, examine diverse views, and apply their knowledge in flexible ways that can be generated from their own experiences. Furthermore, the teacher's capacity to personalize instruction to individual needs and instill a love of reading is crucial in preparing students to be lifelong critical readers (Hinson, 2023).

An effective way for educators to improve their literacy instruction is through active engagement in professional development opportunities. Many resources, encompassing conventional seminars and digital platforms, provide invaluable perspectives on learning to read effectively (Jamieson, 2016). Furthermore, the advantages of collaboration with seasoned colleagues are evident as it facilitates the interchange of methodologies, assessment of pedagogical approaches, and the distribution of invaluable concepts and materials. Participating in professional learning networks

and leveraging the collective knowledge of experienced educators enhances this collaborative learning experience even further. In addition, self-reflection constitutes a fundamental element of efficacious pedagogy (Patzner, 2024). Instructors can assess their practices by observing experienced colleagues, analyzing student data, and soliciting constructive criticism. Engaging in this process of reflection fosters ongoing enhancement by ensuring that pedagogical methods remain in harmony with learners' and the educational environment's ever-changing requirements (Shandomo, 2010).

In the research of Olando and Mwangi (2021) revealed that the teaching experience had a statistically significant influence on reading, speaking, and listening skills, as well as basic skills. Their study calls on the Ministry of Education and the schools to ensure that teachers assigned to grade levels should have extensive experience teaching literacy skills to promote the teaching of literacy skills in the classes.

A separate study conducted by Ampofo (2019) posits the significant influence of teacher experience in promoting the development of students' reading abilities. Educational institutions can employ various supportive measures to foster the acquisition of this specialized knowledge. Providing professional development opportunities that focus on current research and exemplary approaches in reading instruction is of utmost importance. These changes should encompass practical training and knowledge-sharing from seasoned educators, ensuring that teachers comprehensively understand efficacious techniques. Providing instructional materials linked with up-to-date research on reading instruction is equally important, as it facilitates student engagement and ensures accessibility for all learners. Furthermore, the allocation of dedicated time for collaboration among teachers is crucial. By engaging in collaborative endeavors, educators can exchange ideas, examine and analyze each other's instructional methods, and offer valuable constructive criticism. Implementing a comprehensive strategy to assist teachers in improving their proficiency in reading comprehension not only enhances the overall professional development environment but can also foster the development of proficient readers across all student populations.

In the study of Gönen and Kizilay (2022), it was found that although teachers have a general understanding of critical reading (CR) like showcasing higher-order skills of analyzing and interpreting, their attempts to define Critical Reading (CR) in terms of power dynamics, reflected ideologies, and the text's role in positioning the reader were unclear. Upon closer analysis of CR practices, it became clear that teachers are somewhat inexperienced and frequently fail to use a variety of questioning tactics while having theoretical awareness of CR and its potential benefits. Lastly, possible challenges stemming from teachers and students were identified and concluded that CR practices require teachers' and students' awareness of what CR entails, knowledge about how to implement CR practices and to gain experience, opportunities for integrating CR into language practice, and guidance in integrating CR in language classes.

Although there have been numerous studies on teaching critical reading in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes, little study has been conducted to explore teacher educators' perspectives on how to teach critical reading in EFL environments. To overcome this gap, a phenomenological study evaluated EFL teacher educators' experiences teaching critical reading. The study focuses on how teacher educators view critical reading education and how their strategies help students acquire critical reading skills. Based on their live experiences, the findings revealed that teacher educators' perspectives on teaching critical reading include essential concepts of critical reading instruction, teaching critical reading through a philosophical lens, and encouraging students to think critically in reading classes. It also demonstrates that teaching critical reading includes higher-order thinking skills used during the reading process. Overall, it advocates for the establishment of pedagogical training for teacher educators to assist them in grasping the essential concepts of teaching critical reading, the philosophies that underpin this teaching approach, and the empowering learning activities in reading classrooms (Yunus & Ubaidillah, 2021).

Strategies. Educators promote critical reading as a "habit of mind" through targeted teaching strategies. Like demonstrating crucial thinking by examining the text and prompting students to question, analyze, and identify evidence. Critical reading can also be practiced by close reading, annotation, and more. Whatever it may be, these activities will scaffold the students allowing them to improve further (Bauld, 2023).

In addition, reading skills, reading strategies, and metacognitive abilities and strategies should not be taught separately. Integrating these abilities and strategies will help students effectively comprehend any information they encounter. Students should be conscious of their learning abilities and strategies to become analytical and successful learners in the future. Teachers should use appropriate reading teaching methodologies, be innovative and critical in their teaching activities, and assist students in developing into excellent critical readers. As a result, students will excel in any course or subject they choose (Kadir et al., 2014).

In the study of Yen (2011), they investigated to identify prevalent pedagogical approaches employed in developing critical reading skills. The discovered methods encompassed literature-based instruction, the group reading strategy

(GRS), and the utilization of digital mind maps. Utilizing these strategies can serve as beneficial coping mechanisms for educators seeking to augment pupils' critical reading proficiencies. Furthermore, the study conducted by Shalaby (2021) examined the efficacy of an internet-based curriculum utilizing an inquiry cycle-based jigsaw approach in enhancing critical reading abilities. Their research offers valuable perspectives on novel strategies that educators might employ to address this particular development area.

According to the findings of Suacillo et.al., (2016), the students used two critical reading strategies: reflection on challenges to beliefs and values, and contextualization. The study discovered a moderately positive relationship between these strategies, reading comprehension, and analytical writing skills. The correlation emphasizes the efficacy of these strategies and reveals strong relationships between the variables.

The findings of Van Le et.al., (2024) state that the critical reading strategies used by English major students at a Vietnamese university revealed a strong reliance on lower-order cognitive skills, which corresponded to Bloom's Taxonomy's core levels of knowledge and comprehension. The pattern emphasizes the importance of critical reading (CR) instruction covering both lower and higher-order cognitive skills, such as analysis, synthesis, and assessment, to enable a well-rounded development of Critical Reading (CR) abilities. Additionally, it underlined the critical importance of linguistic competence in CR, recommending that theoretical frameworks for CR include language skills as a competency. Furthermore, the research underlined the crucial importance of linguistic proficiency in critical reading (CR), suggesting that theoretical frameworks for CR should incorporate language skills as a key component, reflecting the interdependence between linguistic capabilities and CR competency.

Teachers find it challenging to establish a secure, nurturing space where students may express themselves and ask questions. The significance of this matter stems from the fact that critical reading skills require that students critically examine and comprehend the material they come across. Due to the possibility of language and cultural bias in these materials, teachers must exercise great caution when selecting teaching methods and resources, particularly for students from varied cultural backgrounds (Al Roomy, 2022).

Roorkhooon and Samani (2013) conducted a study revealing that individuals with inadequate reading abilities have a critical reading and thinking skills deficiency. It is also agreed that implementing effective and efficient reading strategies can facilitate the development of critical reading skills and contribute to the academic achievement of the students.

Questioning. Questioning is recognized as a fundamental method for cultivating critical reading abilities. Through the utilization of thought-provoking inquiries about the text being read, educators can foster a deeper engagement and exploration of the subject matter among students. This technique enhances comprehension of the author's intent and promotes a critical evaluation of the viewpoint and supporting facts conveyed in the text. (Lencioni, 2013)

Graphic Organizer. The utilization of graphic organizers as a tool for visualizing relationships. The utilization of graphic organizers has emerged as a highly successful instructional tool. Graphic organizers are utilized as visual tools to depict the connections and associations among various concepts inside a given text. The utilization of visual aids assists students in the process of finding key concepts and corroborating evidence, hence enhancing their overall comprehension of the subject matter. (Lencioni, 2013)

Cooperative Learning. Cooperative learning activities are often recommended to cultivate and enhance critical thinking abilities. Through the facilitation of collaborative undertakings, these events foster an environment conducive to the exchange and deliberation of ideas among students. This form of discourse fosters the development of critical thinking skills and facilitates the acquisition of multiple views, enhancing students' comprehensive comprehension of the subject matter (Lencioni, 2013)

Direct Instruction. Direct instruction has been recognized as a focused method for improving particular essential reading abilities. Educators can equip students with the essential tools for a more nuanced and perceptive comprehension of textual content by offering explicit advice on skills such as drawing conclusions and formulating generalizations (Lencioni, 2013).

The research conducted by Education Hub (2021) reveals a variety of pedagogical approaches utilized by educators, which encompass direct instruction on essential reading methods such as posing inquiries, recognizing primary concepts, and drawing logical conclusions. Furthermore, cultivating a nurturing and cooperative educational setting. Incorporating genuine resources such as news stories and literary texts and providing abundant opportunities for practice through diverse activities have been identified as essential strategies.

Anticipation Guide. An anticipation guide is a metacognitive approach (Antoni, 2017) that is efficacious in activating pre-existing knowledge, identifying and addressing misunderstandings, and fostering reflective thinking during the learning process. This, in turn, establishes a solid groundwork for the absorption of new knowledge, the utilization of

an anticipation guide catalyzes learners to enhance their critical thinking abilities by actively participating, formulating predictions, fostering curiosity, contrasting views, and generating assumptions.

Using an anticipatory guide serves as a preliminary reading exercise that fosters student engagement in classroom discourse about a certain text, hence allowing them to critically analyze and reflect upon their personal views and viewpoints regarding such literature (Roozkhoon & Samani, 2013)

According to Ortlieb (2013), the objective is to establish a clear objective for reading that leads to enhanced understanding prior understanding of the textual content, before engaging with it, it serves as a stimulus for learners to generate ideas and predictions regarding potential outcomes. Following the completion of this procedure, learners have the opportunity to verify the congruence between their cognitive understanding of the text and the actual content of the text.

Digital Storytelling. Digital storytelling is a pedagogical method that can enhance the acquisition of critical reading abilities. The advancement of technology has expanded the possibilities for utilizing digital storytelling as an alternative to conventional storytelling, which has historically been employed primarily for entertainment and didactic purposes. Digital storytelling, abbreviated as DST S, is considered a progressive iteration of conventional storytelling. It involves using digital technology to present human narratives and effectively communicate meanings and emotions to an audience. This is made possible by the immediate and multimodal capabilities offered by contemporary multimedia platforms (Robin, 2008)

According to Harun et al., (2009), Digital Storytelling (DTS) represents a progression from traditional storytelling practices, as it relies on the utilization of stories to transmit wisdom and knowledge through the utilization of modernity and technology.

Best Practices in Nurturing Critical Reading Skills. Employing effective pedagogical methods to enhance students' critical reading skills in language acquisition is crucial for promoting comprehensive understanding and analytical interpretation of texts (McAlpine, 2019). For years, the field of reading education has been discussing optimal practices. The word "best practice" is commonly used to describe instructional approaches and strategies that benefit children's reading development. In short, these techniques have accumulated evidence that, when implemented consistently, children are more likely to become proficient readers (Roskos & Neuman, 2014).

While most of us agree that best practices are not always easy to apply in everyday instruction, this is true in all contexts. To be effective, best practices require teachers to have access to high-quality instructional materials, able to differentiate instruction for children who may need it, have good pacing, and have their classroom organized in a way that maximizes the use of instructional time. If any of these requirements are not met, the best practice may cease to be effective (Roskos & Neuman, 2014).

It is imperative to teach critical reading skills to students to enhance their capacity for complex text analysis, evaluation, and immersion. To help students develop these abilities and become critical, autonomous readers who are ready for both further education and the workforce, effective educators use several best practices (Fitzgerald et al., 2016).

First, to extend students' reading experiences and intellectual perspectives, educators introduce them to various books, including demanding academic topics. Through guided close reading, students acquire the skills necessary to comprehend complex texts—key concept identification, inference-making, and bias recognition (Yunus & Ubaidillah, 2021).

Secondly, explicit instruction on critical thinking strategies plays a pivotal role. Educators teach students to question assumptions, consider multiple perspectives, and draw reasoned conclusions, fostering a more profound and analytical approach to reading (Alshaye, 2021).

Furthermore, chances for group discussions are essential to this procedure. Students can exchange perspectives, test one another's theories, and improve their comprehension through conversation when they participate in debates. Through these exchanges, they can strengthen their argumentation and articulation skills, which are essential for success in both their academic and professional endeavors (Flores-Duenas, 2005).

By integrating these approaches—diverse text exposure, explicit critical thinking instruction, and collaborative discussions—Critical reading abilities can be efficiently developed by educators. This all-encompassing approach not only helps students become more proficient readers but also gives them the analytical skills needed for lifelong learning and responsible citizenship (Le & Nguyen, 2024).

According to Duran and Yalçintaş (2015), the implementation of easily available activities seems to support students' critical reading skill development. However, an analysis of numerical information suggests that learners' critical reading attainment varies depending on the learner's compatibility with the practices, with most of them falling into

an intermediate level. The conclusion is that most learners still have not developed the ability to "question subjectively and to identify exaggerated elements of the texts in their reading.

The study by Ahmadi and Gilakjani (2012) centered on creating a pedagogical framework for enhancing critical reading comprehension skills using Reciprocal Teaching. They provided a targeted methodology to effectively tackle the difficulties encountered in teaching critical reading and asserted many possible best practices, like reciprocal teaching.

Suggestions. So many advice-givers in the education world are far removed from teaching. While the suggestions of others might be entertaining, practical, and inspiring, it's important to take notes from the people who are more experienced and have done more in the field and proven it successful. Asking teachers who have sound instructional practices in teaching critical reading skills is not to be afraid of because accepting suggestions from experienced teachers especially in teaching pedagogy creates a great leap toward improving the teaching and learning process. Still, the spirit of getting good advice on work instruction should come from a place that is instructionally sound and proven to produce good practice outcomes (Ferlazzo, 2021).

The body of existing research provides several crucial suggestions from knowledgeable educators for developing students' critical reading skills. These strategies, which are based on research-proven methods, are designed to help students become critical thinkers and analytical writers. One popular recommendation is to have students annotate sections, ask questions, and make connections as they read in order to promote active engagement with readings. Students engage profoundly with the topic thanks to this hands-on approach, which also improves their comprehension and analytical abilities. Another key element of an effective strategy is giving students plenty of opportunity to discuss and debate the concepts and claims made in texts (Erkek, 2022).

It is emphasized that exposing students to a wide range of texts—including nonfiction—is essential for enlarging their horizons and acquiring background information, both of which are foundational to critical reading abilities. Diverse texts provide a range of perspectives and settings, which enhances students' comprehension and aptitude for critical analysis. One mentioned suggestion is to openly illustrate the cognitive processes involved in reading critically by modeling critical reading strategies and think-aloud exercises (Utamia et al., 2020).

Assigning tasks that challenge students to examine, evaluate, and synthesize material from many sources is viewed as an important way to build critical reading skills. These assignments require students to integrate and critique material, which develops deeper analytical skills. Providing targeted criticism on students' critical reading skills and recommendations on areas for improvement is also believed to be beneficial. The critic or feedback enables students to improve their reading skills and solve specific deficiencies. Fostering a classroom climate that emphasizes critical thinking and encourages students to question and confront ideas is identified as a key contextual aspect in developing critical reading abilities. A supportive setting that promotes questioning and critical conversation can greatly increase students' desire to engage deeply with texts (Sultan et al., 2017).

The literature also suggests that adding digital storytelling and online collaborative learning activities might help students enhance their critical reading, critical thinking, and self-regulated learning abilities. Digital tools and collaborative platforms can make learning more interactive and accessible, allowing students to engage texts in novel ways and work with others to expand their understanding (Koşar, 2021).

In the study of Bråten & Braasch (2017), they suggested that one way to improve students' critical reading and learning skills is to build their source evaluation abilities, which involve judging the reliability or trustworthiness of sources based on readily available information such as the author and the type of source. After reviewing relevant theoretical frameworks, it is possible to analyze numerous connected strands of research on students' source evaluation skills and make recommendations for future research. These directions include researching how individual and textual factors, both individually and in combination, influence students' source evaluation practices, investigating the relationship between source credibility judgments and content relevance, and designing and evaluating effective and efficient instruction for source evaluation skills.

To address the problem of students involving critical reading (CR), it is recommended that educators and curriculum creators create critical reading (CR) courses that focus on the development of higher-order thinking skills. This can be accomplished by using a variety of instructional strategies, including debates, case studies, and rhetorical analysis workshops, all of which involve students in sophisticated cognitive processes. Tailoring lessons to address the unique obstacles identified in this study may result in more effective CR education. Furthermore, professional development programs that focus on innovative teaching practices for improving higher-order thinking abilities and linguistic competence are critical for preparing educators to effectively handle these difficulties (Van Le et al., 2024)

According to Al Roomy (2022), critical reading skills should be clearly taught to students and incorporated into the curriculum for ESL teachers. Teachers must, however, become familiar with efficient teaching strategies before putting

these skills into practice. By including students in tasks like working in pairs or groups, teachers can really help children get more involved in the reading process. By doing so, students can develop their critical reading abilities and improve their overall reading proficiency.

In summary, the literature identifies a variety of evidence-based tactics and approaches that teachers can use to effectively develop students' critical reading skills. These include active reading exercises, text-based discussions, exposure to a variety of texts, modeling critical reading processes, analyzing numerous sources, providing targeted feedback, and cultivating a critical thinking-friendly school culture. Integrating digital technologies and collaborative learning is also cited as a viable strategy for improving critical reading skills (Sultan et al., 2017).

1.2 Research Questions

This study sought to address the following research questions:

- 1). What are the experiences of the teacher participants in nurturing critical reading skills?
- 2). What kinds of instructional strategies do the teachers employ to nurture critical reading skills?
- 3). What are the teachers' best practices in nurturing critical reading skills?
- 4). What are the teachers' suggestions for nurturing critical reading skills?

2. METHODS

For this study, qualitative research, more precisely phenomenological research design, was carried out. It uses the phenomenological research approach, which seeks to investigate and comprehend participants' lived experiences about the phenomena under investigation, which in this case are the teaching strategies and critical reading abilities involved in language learning.

Creswell (1998) states that “a phenomenological study describes the meaning of the lived experience for several individuals about a concept or phenomenon. “The choice of this research approach, according to Creswell (2003), is tied to three main considerations as follows: the nature of the problem to be investigated, the personal experiences of the researcher, and the audience for whom the research is intended. In this study, the participants were asked to share their real personal experiences in developing the critical reading skills of their students as a language or reading teacher.

In addition, the qualitative research described herein used phenomenology as a method for doing qualitative research. Phenomenology is a qualitative research design that focuses on understanding how humans experience the real world. This is because it allows the researcher to interpret the participants' perspectives on their experiences (Austin & Sutton, 2021).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Benefits to Students of Critical Reading Skills Based of Beliefs of Participants. The first major question seeks to understand teachers' experiences nurturing critical reading skills and their perceived benefits to students. The finding revealed several emerging themes in this structured theme, these are -- students easily digest complex topics, students connect texts to personal experiences, students improve their vocabulary, students know factual information, students understand the lesson, holistically develop the students, hone students' creative thinking, and students apply it in the real world.

Cimmiyoti (2013) theorized that reading plays a crucial role in the educational system by promoting comprehension and mastery of the subject, eventually enhancing academic performance.

The many benefits of developing critical reading abilities in students include a variety of academic and personal growth opportunities. Critical reading abilities allow children to digest complex concepts better and comprehend instructions, building the foundation for academic achievement. Breaking down complex information into smaller, manageable parts facilitates better understanding and retention, according to Sweller et al. (2011) and cognitive load theory. Participants commonly discussed how critical reading enhances students' ability to grasp complex topics more effectively. Reducing cognitive overload is supported by the cognitive load theory, which proposes that breaking down complex information into manageable chunks through critical reading can be beneficial.

Another significant benefit noted by teachers is how students connect texts to their personal experiences, making learning more relevant and interesting. An (2013) describe schema theory as the idea that knowledge is organized into

units. This theory supports the finding that students connect new information to their existing knowledge, thereby improving comprehension. Furthermore, providing context to students before reading improved their understanding and recall of information. Furthermore, critical reading skill is equally important in evaluating information from various sources in today's information-rich society to distinguish reliable sources from biased or deceptive ones (Niculescu & Dragomir, 2023)

Students also enhance their vocabulary and ability to distinguish factual material, increasing general language competency and media literacy. Nagy and Townsend (2012) found that extensive reading significantly contributes to vocabulary growth. Therefore, developing critical reading skills to broaden one's vocabulary and overall literacy is beneficial.

Critical reading skills help pupils enhance their creative thinking by helping them to assess and critique different texts and situations critically. Furthermore, these abilities prepare students to apply their knowledge in real-world situations, encouraging lifelong learning and adaptation. Reading critically is a complex task that goes beyond simply reading the lines. It requires readers to employ various skills multiple times to fully understand the text (Huijie, 2010).

The combination of these advantages emphasizes the necessity of developing critical reading abilities in educational contexts, stressing their role in producing well-rounded, informed, competent persons.

Difficulties Encountered When Instructing Students in Critical Reading Skills. The second structured theme tries to discover teachers' common challenges in nurturing critical reading skills among students. The finding revealed several emerging themes such as learners' lack of vocabulary, problems with non-reader students, reading level of learners, slow readers, learners unable to identify letters, and providing a correct response to their certain matter.

A study conducted by Untari et al. (2023) found that students possess a moderate level of critical reading, which is a problem that needs an immediate solution.

When it comes to developing students with critical reading abilities, teachers deal with various problems. One of the most serious problems that emerged is that the students have a limited vocabulary, which hinders their ability to comprehend the material. Stahl and Nagy (2007) explored the correlation between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension in their study. The finding suggests that a lack of vocabulary significantly hinders students' comprehension of texts. Problems with students who cannot read and those who have difficulty recognizing letters further complicate the teaching process, making it more challenging for these students to connect with reading materials.

Teachers must differentiate their lessons to accommodate students with diverse reading levels, which can be time-consuming and challenging with multiple requirements. When it comes to keeping up with the curriculum, students who struggle with reading have significant challenges, which can influence their overall academic achievement. In a study conducted by Guthrie et al. (2013), it was discovered that the use of captivating reading materials and the presence of intrinsic motivation play crucial roles in cultivating students' enthusiasm for reading. Student engagement can be significantly increased by offering reading selections that are both relevant and provide choice.

Another challenge that teachers face is providing appropriate solutions to students' inquiries and requirements. Teachers must ensure that every student receives the required help to develop critical reading abilities.

Anuar & Sidhu (2017) discovered that many graduates enter programs without adequate guidance in critical reading. This points out the importance of enhancing the basic reading foundation of the students. Because of these issues, it is essential to develop individualized teaching strategies and provide additional support for children at varying reading levels to cultivate an educational setting that is both inclusive and efficient.

Ways in which Experiences Influenced the Teaching of Reading Skills that Require Critical Thinking. The emerging themes are modified to suitable teaching strategies, help in planning the lesson, made more motivated to teach, made reading part of the lesson, understood the learning capacities of students, helped develop contextualized materials, and extended time teaching.

The theme reveals that teachers' experiences significantly shape their instructional approaches to teaching critical reading skills. Pashler et al., (2008) explained that educators see children as unique individuals who can achieve their full potential if only instructions are tailored to their learning style. Teachers adapt their methods to suit different learning styles and modify strategies based on previous outcomes, which aids in lesson planning and enhances teaching motivation.

As stated by Jamieson (2016), it is crucial for teachers to pursue professional growth to enhance their teaching of literacy. Understanding students' learning capacities allows for better contextualized materials and integrating reading

into lessons. Gay (2018) discusses the benefits of culturally responsive teaching and contextualization in improving student engagement and learning outcomes.

Additionally, extending teaching time and providing tailored support ensures that critical reading skills are effectively developed. As highlighted by Shandomo (2010), self-reflection in teaching plays a crucial role in implementing effective teaching methods. These themes highlight the dynamic and reflective nature of teaching practices influenced by experience.

Methods Used to Instruct Students in the Skills Necessary for Critical Reading. The emerging themes are the varied methods used to develop students' critical reading skills: problem-solving activities, guided reading, noting details, providing instructional materials, comprehension questions, inquiry-based approach, engaging them in Socratic questioning, contextualization, and WH questions. Helwa (2020) found that common teaching methods which is necessary for developing critical reading skills are using literature, group reading, and digital minds maps.

There are many different approaches that teachers take in order to cultivate critical reading skills in their students—problem-solving tasks that foster analytical thinking and guided reading sessions that provide guidance. Priyatni E.T. & Martutik (2020) stated that creative and critical thinking may be tested through problem solving. This is because the assessment consists of assignments that demand students to uncover difficulties, analyze and evaluate problems, and work out solutions to the problems.

Another method that allows students to focus on important areas in reading is Noting Details. Rahmani and Sadeghi (2011) explained that note-taking facilitates learning, increases students' attention, raises awareness of text organization, stores information in memory, and encourages learners to compare materials with previously learned information. Teachers must provide educational materials to ensure students have the resources they need. Guided reading by the teachers is also helpful, as is peer reading.

Another thing is contextualization, which connects reading to students' lives, making learning more meaningful and will last long. Ladson-Billings (2014) discusses the benefits of culturally relevant pedagogy, which aligns with the finding that contextualization enhances critical reading skills. Suacillo et al., (2016) found a positive connection between one's own beliefs and values and the use of contextualization.

Equally important strategies are inquiry-based methods and Socratic questioning, which encourages deep engagement. Zion and Mendelovici (2012) found that inquiry-based learning fosters critical thinking and deeper comprehension among students.

At the same time, WH questions, "who, what, when, where, why, and how," are especially helpful when comprehending and properly analyzing texts.

Ways Strategies Used to Nurture Critical Reading Skills. The emerging themes in this structured theme are using different strategies for feedback, developing the culture of reading, integrating strategies into different subjects, providing learners with a story to read at home, using translation, using strategy throughout the class, using local materials, and peer instruction.

This emerging theme reveals that various instructional techniques are crucial for enhancing critical reading abilities. Skilled teachers employ various methods to actively involve students in developing critical reading abilities since a strategy that is best for one is not guaranteed to be fit for another. A study by Tomlinson (2014) on differentiated instruction emphasizes the importance of using varied teaching methods to address diversified students. It is helpful to consider when giving activities that are best aligned with their needs, especially when developing the student's critical reading abilities. Combining reading skills, reading strategies, and metacognitive abilities can lead to better development of students' critical reading skills (Kadir et al., 2014).

Using instructional techniques that best suit the student's needs consistently throughout the lesson enhances comprehension, fosters critical thinking, and encourages active participation in the class. Integrating reading strategies into different subjects enhances students' understanding and critical thinking across various disciplines. In their study, Education Hub (2021) discussed different teaching methods, which include direct instruction, understanding basic ideas, and making logical conclusions.

On the one hand, encouraging comprehension and independent reading is fostered by providing students with reading materials at home. (Niklas et al., 2021) HLE (Home Learning Environment) deeply impacts children's development. For that reason, early intervention of the parents is highly encouraged. Guided reading sessions foster a culture that nurtures a passion for reading and cultivates independent and analytical reading skills. To assist students in self-reflection and growth, they employ various strategies specifically geared to meet the requirements of their students

and offer constant feedback. Wisniewski et al. (2020) stated that effective feedback significantly impacts student learning and achievement. It further helps students understand their progress and areas of improvement.

Creating a culture of reading is extremely important, and it should be done at school and home. Students should be encouraged to read regularly and develop a passion for reading. Guthrie and Wigfield (2012) emphasize the importance of creating a school reading culture. Their research suggests promoting love for reading through guided reading sessions can enhance students' critical reading skills.

It is possible to bridge language gaps through translation, which makes content more accessible to students. Ismail et al. (2017) explained that the translation method is translating the source language into the target language. Their study further showed that applying translation methods in teaching and learning can motivate students to learn, particularly in reading. Utilizing local and culturally relevant materials in teaching strategies enhances student engagement and comprehension by establishing a connection with their familiar context. When students are exposed to local resources, reading becomes more relevant and meaningful, fostering a deeper connection with the material used.

Students can learn from one another and strengthen their critical reading abilities through discussion and shared experiences when participating in peer education, which supports collaborative learning. Crouch et al. (2007) found that peer instruction significantly improves student understanding and engagement by encouraging active learning and collaboration. This ensures that important reading skills are reinforced and consistent throughout the discussion.

Ways to Educate Students about Critical Reading Skills through the Use of Technology. The emerging themes are preparing audio-visual materials, allowing learners to use digital reading materials, encouraging learners to read online, giving tasks through messenger, using technology for instruction, exposing learners to current trends and events, finding relevant and reliable sources, allowing learners to present outputs through technology, and utilize social media sites to acquire resources.

Integrating technology into the classroom offers diverse and effective methods for teaching critical reading skills. Sutrisno (2022) found that bringing multimedia technology into education significantly influences student learning engagement and enhances critical reading abilities. Preparing audio-visual materials can make lessons more engaging, while digital reading materials and online resources expand access to various texts. Encouraging students to read online, assigning tasks via messaging platforms, and using technology for instruction cater to modern learning habits. Robin (2008) revealed that digital storytelling has the ability to effectively convey human stories, which in return could make the learner share more and create conversations with the class. A study supports it conducted by Harun et al., (2009) talked about how digital storytelling is a modern version of traditional storytelling.

Exposing learners to current trends and events, finding relevant sources, and allowing presentations through technology foster critical engagement with content. Additionally, utilizing social media sites to acquire resources and share information further enhances the learning experience. Greenhow and Lewin (2019) discuss the potential of social media as a tool for sourcing educational materials and enhancing students learning.

These strategies influence technology to create a dynamic and interactive learning environment conducive to developing critical reading skills. Leu et al. (2014) found that digital reading materials can significantly improve students' reading comprehension and critical thinking skills.

However, we must also remind the students to be keen and mindful when finding reliable sources online. Metzger et al., (2013) emphasize the importance of teaching students to evaluate the credibility of online information sources to enhance their critical reading skills and media literacy.

Instructional Methods Believed to be the Most Effective for Teaching Critical Reading Skills. The themes generated were collaborative activities, constant reading, exposing learners to different stories, peer instruction, translation, inquiry-based learning, contextualization, and motivation.

The most effective instructional methods for teaching critical reading skills encompass a variety of approaches tailored to enhance students' comprehension and analytical abilities. Collaborative activities foster teamwork and idea exchange, while constant reading helps build fluency and comprehension. Johnson and Johnson (2014) found that collaborative learning activities significantly improve students' critical thinking and reading skills.

Exposing learners to different stories broaden their perspectives, and peer instruction influences peer support for deeper understanding. Mol, SE., and Bus AG (2011) found that students who were more adept in comprehension and technical reading had high relationships with print exposure. This was discovered by analyzing the statistical data. There are some moderate connections between print exposure and academic accomplishment, and these associations suggest that students who read frequently perform better. Erkek (2022) stated how crucial it is to discuss and analyze the ideas and statements presented in the texts.

Translation aids in bridging language gaps, and inquiry-based learning promotes critical questioning. Contextualization connects lessons to real-world scenarios, and motivation-driven strategies encourage continuous engagement and improvement in reading skills.

Instructional Strategies Proven to be Effective in the Development of Critical Reading Skills. The themes generated are the following: Graphic organizer, group activities, use of context clues, readers theater, peer instruction, reading at school and home, LOTS and HOTS questions, guided reading, and buddy system.

The importance of creating a classroom climate that promotes critical thinking is crucial in students' development of critical reading abilities. Suppose the environment helps students engage deeply with the content, ask probing questions, and develop their analytical skills. In that case, students feel supported in their queries and are confident in their abilities which is more likely to demonstrate enhanced understanding and independent thinking. (Sultan et al., 2017)

Sathongey and Pransansaph (2020) prove that students' critical reading skills after using the graphic organizer technique were significantly higher than the normal reading of the text. The student's satisfaction with using the graphic organizer was high. Similarly, problem-solving activities like word maps and Venn diagrams promote analytical thinking, which also helps improve the student's critical reading abilities. Effective instructional strategies for developing critical reading skills include diverse and engaging approaches. Graphic organizers help visually structure information, while group activities encourage collaboration and idea sharing.

Using context clues aids in understanding vocabulary. In her research, Wulandari F. (2017) concluded that using context clues as an instructional strategy significantly improved the students' reading ability.

Another strategy is Reader's Theater, which enhances comprehension through performance: peer instruction and a combination of reading at school and home support continuous learning. The buddy system fosters mutual assistance and engagement in reading tasks. In his work, Kozulin (2022) highlighted the significance of teacher-student interactions and scaffolding in learning. Effective communication and timely feedback greatly facilitate understanding and engaging with reading materials.

When improving analytical skills, it is essential to use questions that need both Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) and Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). In contrast to HOTS questions, which encourage more in-depth study and critical thinking, LOTS questions are an effective way to create basic understanding. A systematic study indicates that incorporating parts of HOTS with metacognitive skills significantly improves students' higher-order thinking abilities. This finding suggests that a balance of LOTS and HOTS questions is necessary for comprehensive learning (Hamzah et al., 2022).

According to Bråten and Braasch (2017), developing students' ability to evaluate sources is vital for strengthening critical reading and learning skills. They underline that by teaching students how to evaluate the dependability and credibility of diverse sources, educators can help them develop a more critical approach to knowledge. This skill is especially vital in today's information-rich environment, as students must sort through a tremendous amount of data, some of which may be misleading or biased. Students who develop these evaluative skills are better competent to critically assess texts, articulate well-founded arguments, and make informed decisions based on solid evidence.

Assessment Methods Used to Evaluate and Provide Feedback on the Critical Reading Skills of the Students.

The themes are making synthesis papers, giving comprehension questions, using MCQs, using assessment tools, using PHIL-IRI, doing pen and paper tests, writing assessments, pretests, and posttests.

Various assessment methods are employed to evaluate and provide feedback on students' critical reading skills. Making synthesis papers allows students to articulate their understanding, while comprehension questions assess their grasp of the material.

The results of the study conducted by Zhao, R., and Hirvela, A. (2015) indicate that the student's comprehension of synthesis and the functions of sources played a significant part in learning to synthesize. Additionally, the student's capacity to employ critical reading methods to fulfill this new literacy task was also a significant factor. The effects of these findings are extremely important for understanding the relationships between reading and, writing and teaching. Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) and other assessment tools offer structured evaluation. The PHIL-IRI and pen-and-paper tests provide standardized assessments, and writing assignments give insight into students' analytical abilities.

Additionally, pretests and posttests measure the progress and effectiveness of instruction over time. In a study of undergraduate statistics courses, Delucchi (2014) found that pretests and posttests revealed statistically significant

gains in knowledge, showing that these evaluations are useful for monitoring student development and directing pedagogical approaches.

Suggestions for Teaching Skills Related to Critical Reading. The themes generated are the following: guide learners, always encourage them, include fun activities, develop literacy skills as early as possible, the teacher should be dedicated and committed, parents be involved in the learners reading progress, go back to vocabulary enrichment, equip teachers with current trends, consider contextualization.

To effectively teach critical reading skills, several strategies have been identified. Guiding learners ensures they receive the necessary support while encouraging them to foster positive reading habits. Including fun activities can maintain engagement, and developing literacy skills as early as possible builds a strong foundation. Schwartz, B. D. (2003) found that incorporating fun and engaging activities in reading instruction enhances student motivation and engagement.

Returning to vocabulary enrichment strengthens comprehension, equips teachers with current trends, keeps methodologies updated, and considers contextualization to make learning relevant to students' experiences. One of the most important things to improve understanding is reviewing vocabulary exercises. According to research, an extensive vocabulary has been shown to have a clear correlation with enhanced reading comprehension and general academic success.

Specifically, Beck et al. (2013) highlight that teaching vocabulary in context and through multiple exposures leads to a more profound understanding and retention of words, improving students' capacity to comprehend more complex texts. Based on their findings, vocabulary training in everyday reading activities helps children better comprehend the intricacies and meanings of texts, facilitating greater proficiency in critical reading.

By ensuring that teachers are kept up to date with the latest educational trends, it is possible to ensure that approaches continue to be effective and relevant. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) examine the significance of ongoing professional development for educators, underlining that maintaining awareness of pedagogical tactics and technological advancements improves instructional practices. According to the findings of their research, when educators are provided with up-to-date information and abilities, they can successfully adopt more innovative and effective teaching approaches, which ultimately results in improved student outcomes in critical reading as well as other areas.

Teachers should be dedicated and committed, and involving parents in the learners' reading progress can reinforce skills at home. Day and Gu (2013) discuss the importance of teachers' commitment and its impact on student learning and achievement.

Effective Ways to Propose to Address the Challenges Associated with Teaching Critical Reading Skills. The themes are: all teachers be reading teachers, regular implementation, parents must assist their children at home, support coming from home, have commitment and dedication, DepEd must provide more training, meet the level of needs of the learners, give more attention to teaching critical reading skills, teachers assess levels of teaching the critical reading skills, and budget to focus on reading materials.

Addressing the challenges in teaching critical reading skills involves a comprehensive approach. Ensuring all teachers are reading teachers promotes consistency across subjects. Shanahan (2014) emphasizes the importance of disciplinary literacy and the role of all teachers in developing students' reading skills across subjects.

Regularly implementing reading strategies and involving parents at home creates a supportive environment. Commitment and dedication from both teachers and administrators are crucial, as is providing more training through DepEd. Tailoring approaches to meet learners' needs, giving more attention to critical reading skills, assessing teaching methods, and allocating a budget for reading materials are essential strategies for effective instruction.

Opportunities for Professional Development to Suggest to Teachers to Enhance Capacity to Teach Critical Reading Skills. The only theme generated is to attend seminar workshops.

Teachers are given a crucial opportunity to stay current with the most recent instructional approaches, share best practices, and continuously refine their teaching skills through seminar workshops, which Kennedy (2016) highlights as an essential component of professional development.

Teachers can better equip themselves with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively cultivate critical reading skills among students by participating in these workshops, which enable active involvement and collaborative learning. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), who emphasize the significance of continuing professional development in enhancing teaching methods and improving student results, this strategy agrees with their findings.

Ways School Administrators Assist Teachers in Incorporating Novel Methods of Teaching Critical Reading Skills. These themes generated: providing reading materials, giving constructive observations, giving technical assistance, delegating teachers' observations, using secondary-level novel methods, and providing more training. The school head should be supportive.

The themes generated from the responses indicate several ways school administrators can support teachers in integrating new methods for teaching critical reading skills. According to Ferlazzo (2021), a crucial factor in cultivating a positive and collaborative school environment is having a supportive school head. The administration's unwavering support allows Teachers to explore innovative teaching methods. This encouragement plays a crucial role in ensuring the success of these projects. These also include providing various reading materials, offering constructive observations to guide teaching practices, giving technical assistance to address specific challenges, delegating teacher observations to master teachers, employing secondary-level novel methods suitable for different age groups, providing more training opportunities, and ensuring the school head is supportive. Each of these strategies helps create an environment conducive to adopting innovative teaching methods.

3.1 Implications for Practice

Based on the findings, the following implications for practice are offered.

On Benefits to Students of Critical Readings Skills Based on the Beliefs of the Participants. As noted in the results of this study, Curriculum Developers should make sure that the competencies are not that complex but in smaller manageable parts to enhance understanding and retention among students. Reading materials should also relate to students' personal experiences and environment to make learning more relevant. It can also help a lot if the lessons do not only focus on the cognitive aspect but also give much attention to the psychomotor and affective aspects of the student.

On the Difficulties Encountered When Instructing Students in Critical Reading Skills. It is recommended that teachers must utilize a wide range of teaching techniques to accommodate the unique learning requirements of their students. They should consider the individualities of each student to cater to their individualized needs. Non-reader and slow-reader students pose big challenges to consider in developing critical reading skills. Students' lack of interest in reading is another thing to consider which pushes teachers to think of different strategies to cope with these difficulties. Teachers should provide vocabulary-building exercises or use flashcards, or any interactive activities to make learning engaging to the learners. Having a strong foundation of words is a great help to understand a bigger text in the future.

On Ways in which Experiences Influenced the Teaching of Reading Skills that Require Critical Thinking. The participants had various experiences, which indicates that teaching strategies must be modified suitable for how students learn. Planning the lesson is also put into consideration to further understand the learning capacities of students. There is one participant who shared that reading must be made part of the lesson, hence, it will further develop the student's reading abilities. The Lesson plan should be tailored to include contextualization of materials students will use to align with their learning capacities.

On Methods used to Instruct Students in the skills necessary for Critical Reading. It can be reckoned according to the participants, developing an individualized lesson plan to address the diverse reading levels of students. It can help a lot since students will learn at their own pace. Teachers must consider using problem-solving activities and guided reading sessions to develop analytical thinking among the students. They can also incorporate note-taking techniques and inquiry-based learning.

On Ways Strategies Used to Nurture Critical Reading Skills. The participants conveyed different ways to nurture critical reading skills such as the use of different strategies to make learning fun and engaging. According to the data gathered utilization of various feedback strategies provides constructive and timely feedback to students. Developing a system for regular assessment could also be utilize as well as integrating reading to other subjects, providing students stories to read at home, the use of translation, and using local materials. Peer tutoring is also recommended or by groups.

On Ways to Educate Students about Critical Reading Skills Through the Use of Technology. The results implied that teachers must incorporate digital reading materials and online resources to expand access to various texts. Audio-visual materials when used in the classroom could make the teaching-learning process more engaging and interactive. It is also showed that using social media is another tool to develop the critical reading abilities of the students. Teachers must choose the right educational materials to share with the learners.

On Instructional Methods Believed to be the Most Effective for Teaching Critical Reading Skills. These methods pointed out that all teachers must be reading teachers regardless of their specialization. All subject teachers must work together to create a cohesive learning environment. Collaborative learning is a skill needed for the 21st-century learners. It is very important to include activities wherein students can interact and learn from each other, which is another effective method. Contextualization, translation, and inquiry-based learning are also pointed out.

On Instructional Strategies Proven to be Effective in the Development of the Critical Reading Skills. Teachers are encouraged to use Socratic questioning to cater not only to LOTS questions but also to HOTS questions. The use of a graphic organizer is also found to be effective as well as group activities, the use of context clues, buddy system, and reading not only limited to the four corners of the classroom but also reading at home.

On Assessment Methods Used to Evaluate and Provide Feedback on the Critical Reading Skills of the Students. As noted in the findings of this study, making a synthesis paper can be used as a form of assessment. We can also utilize the traditional MCQs, the PHIL-IRI (Philippine Informal Reading Inventory), Pen and paper tests, pretests and posttests

On Suggestions for Teaching Skills Related to Critical Reading. The participants expressed the following suggestions: Guiding learners to correct any misconceptions or provide assistance whenever it is needed, encouraging the learners to read the text aloud for better comprehension of what they have read, and developing literacy among students as early as possible. Commitment and dedication must not be overlooked in terms of teachers responsibility. Teachers should also be equip with the new trends to cope with the changing learners.

On Effective Ways to Propose to Address the Challenges Associated with Teaching Critical Reading Skills. Other recommendations that were pointed out during the investigation were that all teachers must be reading teachers. It should not be limited to English teachers only, but rather, all teachers outside English must work hand in hand to develop the reading skills of the learner, which would eventually foster critical reading skills, which is essential in reading. It would also be best for students to develop a culture and love for reading at the developmental stage. Parents should also be involved in the student's academic life, especially when the teaching-learning process starts at home. Regular monitoring and support coming from the parents through activities such as reading together, discussing reading material, or by simply being present and involved in the academic life of the child. Training should be normalized to develop the teaching strategies of the teachers especially workshops that focus on strategies for teaching non-readers or slow-readers. The study also suggests that teachers should be provided with more training opportunities to be more equipped to develop the critical reading abilities of the students. Teaming up with the Master Teachers in terms of teacher observation ensures continuous improvement.

On Opportunities for Professional Development to Suggest to Teachers to Enhance Capacity to Teach Critical Reading Skills. The only result generated is to attend seminar workshops. Teachers should actively pursue professional growth opportunities to enhance their instructional approaches. They should not stop learning and trying new methodologies, strategies, and pedagogies to be able to give what is best, especially to Generation Z students, to create a nurturing environment for learning. It implies that regular seminars and workshops for teachers are needed to keep them updated with the latest instructional approaches and best practices.

On Ways School Administrators Assist Teachers in Incorporating Novel Methods of Teaching Critical Reading Skills. Supporting teachers is a crucial responsibility of school administrators. They ensure teachers have the necessary resources and access to professional development opportunities. Additionally, they foster a collaborative and supportive school culture. To effectively teach critical reading skills, allocating a budget for reading materials and establishing continuous assessment and feedback mechanisms is crucial. The teachers mentioned, that offering constructive feedback motivates them more to improve teaching practices. Moreover, offering technical assistance made the teaching-learning process more effective and relevant.

Based on the results of this study, it can be inferred that developing the critical reading abilities of the students is not totally reliant on the teachers. Even though we cannot deny the fact that teachers play a crucial role in this issue. Learning starts, and parental involvement is highly encouraged to effectively address the underlying issues presented.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Critical reading skills is not something we should overlook but something to give much attention to. It is not enough for the students to read; most importantly, they can comprehend, interact, create questions, analyze, evaluate, and interpret the reading materials provided to them.

This study emphasizes the significance of critical reading skills in students' academic and personal growth on how it would help them understand the instructions given, which will eventually lead to understanding the concepts presented by the teacher.

The importance of utilizing a variety of instructional strategies, providing ongoing professional development for teachers, and fostering collaboration among teachers, parents, and school administrators is underscored by the findings. It is important that teachers do not stop aiming for what is best for their students, whether it be by attending seminars and workshops or by being committed to lifelong learning.

Through adopting effective strategies and resolving challenges, educational institutions have the power to cultivate a nurturing learning environment that enhances students' critical reading abilities and equips them for triumph in the future.

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