

## **CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES**

The purpose of this study was to determine the instructional approaches reflected in the Omani EFL grade twelve reading curriculum for second language (L2) reading, and also, to investigate how this curriculum prepares students for the appropriate level of academic reading skills required by a university. Chapter four thoroughly presents the main conclusions of the data that was gathered from classroom observation and from reviewing the documents of interest in this study and chapter five exhaustively discusses these major findings. In chapter four, the findings were supported by tables, figures, and some extracts from classroom observations data. The discussions in Chapter Five were supported by excerpts from classroom observations data and the teachers' book. This chapter presents the conclusion of the present study, suggests some recommendations for revising the current EFL 12 grade reading curriculum, and offers some suggestions for further research.

### **6.1 Conclusion**

The current study sought to investigate the instructional approaches reflected in the Omani EFL grade twelve reading curriculum for second language (L2) reading, as well as to find how this curriculum prepares students for the appropriate level of

academic reading skills required by a university. The educational system in Oman has been informal throughout its history. Nevertheless, the history of a modern educational system began in 1970 under the wise guidance of H.M. Sultan Qaboos bin Said (Al-Belushi et al., 1999). Moreover, the English language curriculum reflects maturational degrees at each level of studying and students' conceptual development. Thus, there are three stages of the learning English language curriculum; the first stage consisting of grades 1 to 4, the second stage consists of grades five to seven, and the last stage including 8 to 12 (Omani Ministry of Education, 2010).

The data of the present study was collected through document reviews and classroom observations. The findings showed that the EFL grade twelve reading curriculum as whole does not match the essential features of the CLT approach at a curriculum design level. The stating of the aims, objectives, and the instructional approaches of the EFL reading curriculum at the beginning of the grade twelve EFL Teacher's Book is rather unclear and thus caused misinterpretation of the goals of the curriculum. This misinterpretation was evidenced in the misalignment reflected in the non-communicative structural approaches in the EFL grade twelve reading curriculum documents and classroom instruction.

The findings of the present study show that the majority of the reading-related activities in EFL reading curriculum documents were planned as individual tasks (69.9%) more than as pair/group tasks (30.0%).

Additionally, the findings of classroom observation of the study reading classrooms in the post-basic school level on Oman suggest classrooms are mainly teacher-centred and the learner practises that reading loudly or silently. After students finish reading the text, they answer the teacher's question about the text.

In addition, the findings of the emphasis on English language reading as the means to achieve the listed learning outcomes in the EFL coursebook demonstrate that reading skills were significantly more emphasised (72.4%) than all other English language skills: writing, listening and speaking.

On the other hand, findings indicate that the cognitive demands of EFL reading requirements in the EFL grade twelve coursebook, workbook, reading classroom observation were distributed unequally, particularly in relation to the inequity distribution pattern of cognitive demand of reading tasks, as well as the incorporation of high cognitive demands. This is evidence that the EFL grade twelve reading curriculum prepare students for reading comprehension at the university level, which mainly incorporates reading tasks requiring properly high levels of cognitive demand. Additionally, the findings reflect the reality that in the Omani setting, teachers are not given the flexibility to use texts apart from the passages, which are provided in the coursebook. This effect was manifest in the classroom observation.

The EFL reading teachers used only the materials in the textbook in their reading comprehension classes, which include many expository texts. Finally, the findings of the level of lexical diversity in the reading passages in selected documents of EFL grade twelve reading curriculum indicates that the lexical diversity of the reading passages in the EFL grade twelve-course book was 53.5%. Thus, the Omani EFL grade twelve reading curriculum needs to be revised regarding its label as a communicative-based curriculum as well as in terms of its aim to prepare students for the appropriate level of academic reading skills required by a university.

## **.6.2 Recommendations of the Study**

Based on the findings of analysing the reading curriculum of EFL grade twelve in Oman, several recommendations are proposed to achieve the following objectives:

**Firstly**, to develop the EFL 12 grade reading curriculum to be fully communicative-based curriculum in alignment with the CLT approach.

**Secondly**, to ensure that the curriculum fully prepares the EFL grade twelve students for reading in English in their content-based areas at the university level.

### **6.2.1 Recommendations for Developing EFL Grade Twelve Reading Curriculum and Classroom Instruction to be in Alignment with CLT Approach**

The curriculum designers appointed by the Omani MOE are responsible for developing the EFL grade twelve reading curriculum, should have a clear understanding of the communicative-grounding and the principles of CLT in terms of its underpinning SLA theories, second language reading theories and the related communicative instructional approaches, learner roles as well as the teacher functions. A misconception of these aspects of the CLT may affect the development of the intended curriculum and might create a misalignment in the design of structural approach, which subsequently affects the structural implementation.

The CLT principles revolve around the sociocultural and socio-cognitive theories. The sociocultural theories emphasise the purposeful and meaningful interaction in promoting cognitive development, while the socio-cognitive theories stress the importance of the interaction between the learners' cognition processes and the environment of language learning.

Curriculum designers must integrate the CLT features in the curriculum in a holistic manner. In doing so, the EFL grade twelve reading curriculum has to be designed based on the socio-cognitive and sociocultural theories, which are the grounding principles of the CLT approach. The reading related tasks should reflect a student-centred classroom where learners are active readers. Ozek & Civelek (2006) argue that whether the learners are good or poor when they are given a chance to invest all of the class time in reading, they will understand and comprehend the reading text effectively.

The Omani EFL grade twelve reading curriculum must give the EFL students such chances to develop and enhance their language comprehension skills. Moreover, any lack of training English language teachers leads the teachers to construct their wrong understanding about the reading process, which is the cause of many reading difficulties their students face.

According to the findings from classroom observation, it is recommended that the Omani MOE organise workshops and conferences for Omani educators and schools to keep them updated with any new teaching approaches, and to explain any vagueness about English classroom practices, which might take place in the field of English language teaching. Therefore, the teachers will understand the CLT and its characteristics in an ideal way, as well know that grammar and vocabulary should not be taught explicitly in communicative classrooms. Also, they will find out more about SLA theories and L2 reading theories.

The main goal of the national secondary educational philosophy in preparing the Omani post-basic school graduates was determined depending on the learners'

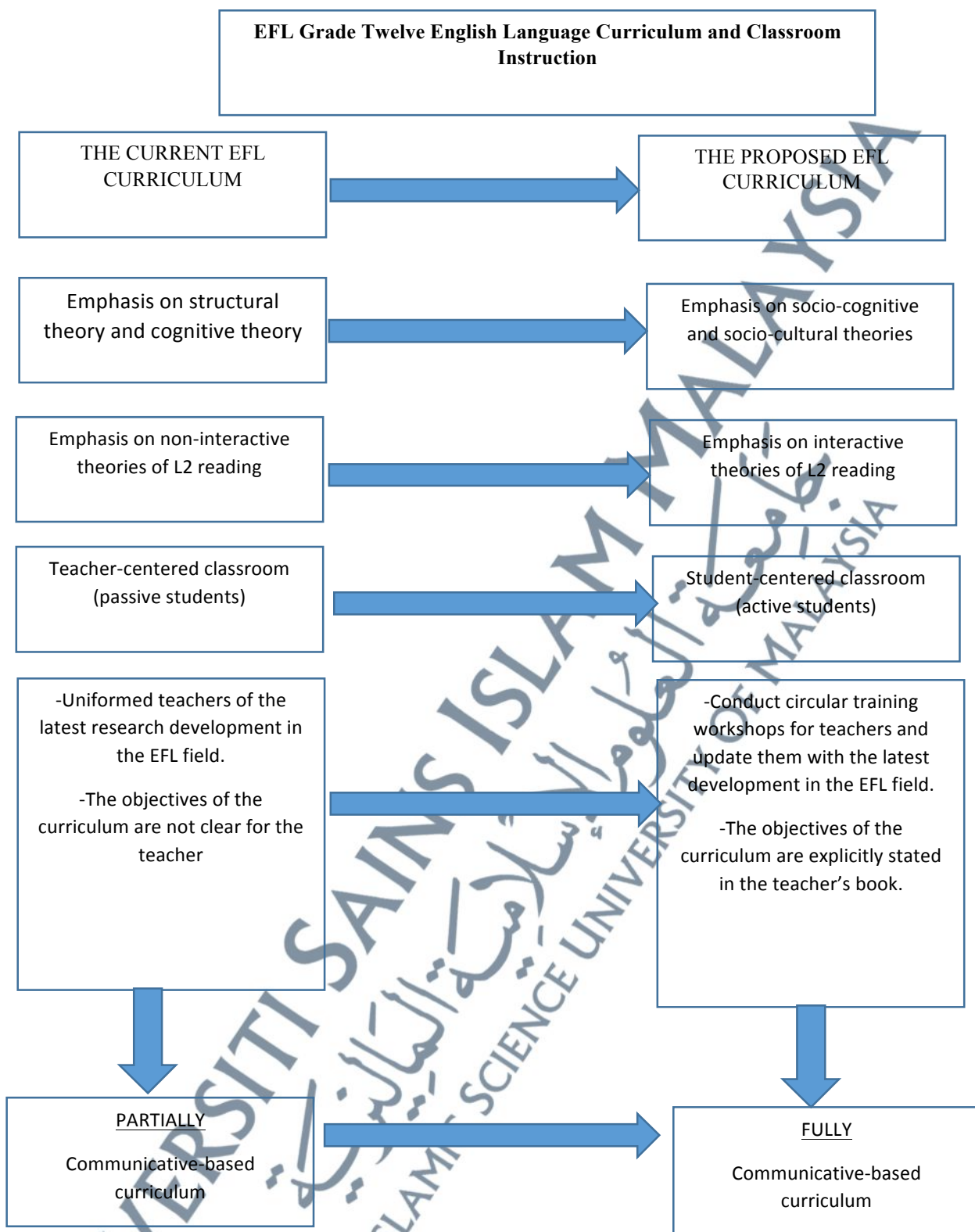
needs to carry on their higher education documents (MOE, 2010). Thus, the current study recommends that the aims and teaching methods of EFL grade twelve curriculum should be stated clearly at the beginning of the teachers book so that any misinterpretations can be eliminated and the English teachers can become aware of the learning outcomes to be achieved through classroom instructions.

The Omani EFL curriculum documents consist of the coursebook, the workbook, and the teacher's guidebook (all teachers do not use the teacher guide book). The absence of an EFL curriculum specification document is dire. Therefore, the current study suggests that the MOE curriculum development establishes and develop a curriculum specification document for the English language for each level of post-basic school education.

With the below revisions, the structural approaches and design for EFL grade twelve reading will fully reflect the proposed communicative structural approaches for the EFL reading curriculum. Furthermore, by revising the Omani EFL curriculum, the EFL coursebook and workbook, as well as the classroom implementations, could be aligned with the appropriate communicative reading comprehension activities. Through such revisions, it is expected that the curriculum designers will ensure the alignment with the CLT approach in the EFL curriculum documents, which are the Coursebook, the workbook, and the Teacher's Book. Also, textbook developers will enrich the Teacher's Book with a full guide on how to conduct classroom instructions based on CLT grounding. When the EFL documents are in agreement with the grounding principles of the CLT reading comprehension structural approaches and when the EFL teachers are conscious of the principles of CLT classroom grounding, it

will yield best practices, which in turn can produce self-regulated EFL readers at all educational levels, particularly in the university level.





*Figure 24: The Recommended Revisions in EFL Grade Twelve Curriculum and Classroom*

*Instruction to Be Aligned to Its CLT Label*

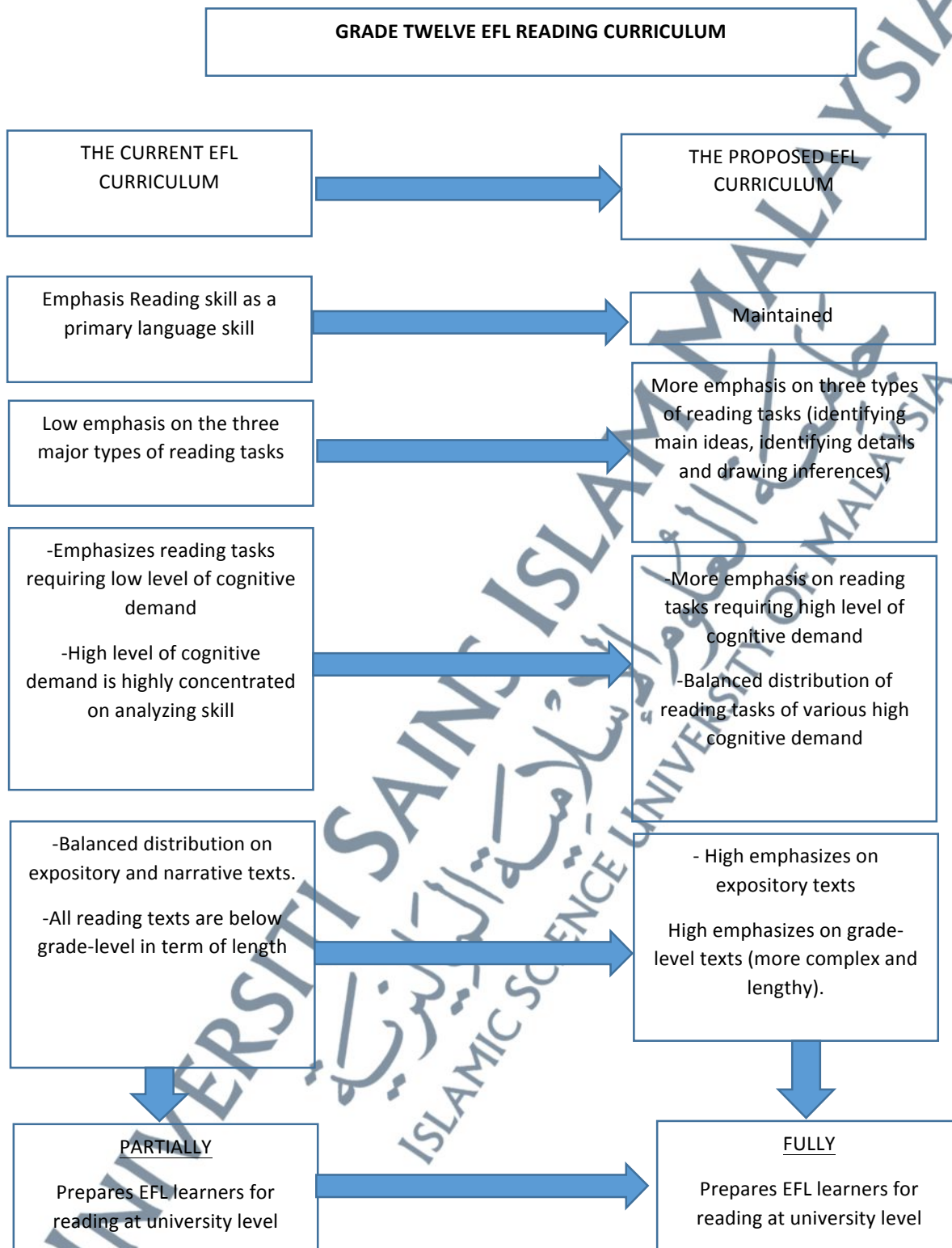
## **6.2.2 To Ensure the Preparation of the EFL Grade Twelve Students for Academic Reading in Content-based Areas at the Higher Education Level**

Ensuring the accomplishment of the curriculum objectives is vital. As Nambiar (2007) stated, there should be agreement among the designed curriculum, the implemented curriculum, and the achieved curriculum. The findings from the review and analyses of the grade twelve EFL reading curriculum documents and classroom instruction show that EFL reading curriculum does not fully prepare learners for reading in English in the content areas at the university level.

Educators argued that reading materials and textbooks should be designed at the student's grade level to train the students to read grade level texts. Thus, the recommendations that are provided below describe the revision, which should take place in the EFL grade twelve curriculum:

- 1- Based on the findings from types of reading tasks in the EFL coursebook, workbook and classroom instruction, a proposed curriculum is recommended where there should be an equal distribution of the types of reading tasks. Teachers at the post-basic school level should provide a balanced training to EFL post-basic school students to process several types of reading tasks to prepare students for academic reading in English at the university level.
- 2- The reading texts in the EFL coursebook should be selected with great care, which means that the reading texts in the proposed curriculum should be appropriate regarding the type and the grade level of students; the selected reading passages should be expository grade level passages.

- 3- A proposed curriculum for the grade twelve reading curriculum must include a balanced distribution of the reading tasks with various cognitive demands, especially the higher level cognitive demand tasks in the EFL grade twelve coursebook, workbook, and classroom instruction. The recommended revisions in the EFL grade twelve reading curriculum are illustrated in Figure 27.



*Figure 25: The Recommended Revisions in EFL Grade Twelve Curriculum and Classroom Instruction to Prepare Learners for Academic Reading*

### 6.3 Suggestions for Further Studies

This study is unique in its kind in the Omani context on EFL reading curriculum analysis and has contributed to developing the revised curriculum, which is needed for preparing EFL Omani learners for reading in academic areas at the higher education level. The findings of the EFL grade twelve reading curriculum analysis can be extended in future research as bellow:

- 1- This study only examined the alignment of EFL grade twelve curriculum with CLT approach. So other studies should be carried out to determine which communicative approach is best utilised in the EL classroom to develop and enhance the reading comprehension among the Omani EFL grade twelve learners.
- 2- Further studies are needed to investigate the reading curriculum in both levels in Oman, secondary level, and university level.
- 3- This study examined the EFL grade twelve curriculum documents, coursebook, workbook, Teacher's Book, and classroom implementation, so other studies need to consider the configuration of all variables examined in this study in the curriculum documents.
- 4- Other studies need to conduct interviews with EFL grade twelve teachers to examine the teacher's professional development and their knowledge of the latest developments in the EFL field.