

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of the present study is to examine the overarching approaches to second language (L2) reading instruction reflected in the Yemeni EST 3rd grade secondary school reading curriculum as well as to find out how well this curriculum prepares the Yemeni students for reading in English at the tertiary level. The objective of the current study is to provide suggestions and recommendations to revise and improve the recent EST reading curriculum for the Yemeni EST 3rd grade secondary school. Therefore, SLA theories and L2 reading theories and underlying instructional approaches, teacher's role and learners' role, the emphasis of EST reading skill compared to other skills, types of reading tasks and texts, readability level and length of reading passages, as well as the level of cognitive demand of the reading tasks are reviewed below.

2.1 SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (SLA) THEORIES AND INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACHES

SLA instructional approaches are represented in three prominent SLA theories (Aslam, 2003); they are:

- **Behaviourism/Structuralism Theory;** which focuses on acquiring a language as acquiring any behaviour in life based on stimulus-response relations or reinforcement-awards relations (Menezes, 2013; Demirezen, 1988). The structuralism theory might be reflected in L2 reading instructional approaches such as the Grammar Translation approach (GT) which involves using reading to explain grammar rules and to learn vocabulary.
- **Cognitive Theory;** explains the cognitive activities that contribute to the learners' intellectual development (Pugazhenthil & Phil, 2012) and translated into metacognitive activities conducted by the learners in response to the text being read. *cognitive theory* is based on practicing different mental activities in the readers mind apart from any grammatical rule inclusion or communicative activities such as processing various types of information; textual, linguistic, prior knowledge and experience (Pugazhenthil & Phil, 2012).
- **Socio Cognitive and Socio Cultural Theory;** which is the major reference in education; it is used as the basis for developing pedagogy and designing curriculum and instruction.
 - Socio-cognitive theory has the view of mixing social and cognition. The social is related to what is going in the outside world while the cognition is related to what is going in the inside world. It represents a belief that language learning is affected by the interaction between the learners' cognition processes and the environment (Khatib & Shakouri, 2013; Atkinson, 2002).

➤ Socio-cultural theory is developed on Vygotsky's notion (1978) of developing the human cognitive and higher mental function (Aimin, 2013; Matsuoka & Evans, 2004). This theory emphasizes the interaction between the environment (society, school, classroom), cognitive knowledge (learners' experiences), and culture (meaning in the environment). Learning a language exists through communication between these elements (Taber, 2011). As such, the individual's language is developed from social activities requiring both cognitive and communicative skills through the mediation of the language (Aimin 2013; Matsuoka & Evans, 2004). Within the sociocultural framework, the learners are seen as active constructors of their own learning environment (Mitchell & Myles, 1998).

Language learning in both socio-cognitive theory and socio-cultural theory functions relies on both communicative tool and psychological tool that develop the learners' cognitive processes (Anton, 1999; Lantoff, 1994). Socio cognitive and socio cultural are reflected in the communicative instructional approaches to L2 such as Content-Based and Task-Based instruction. Thus, SLA theory should be centred not so much on the process of acquiring new sounds and structures and then using them to communicate, but rather on the learner's participation collaboratively in social activities such as talking to classmates and teachers or having out-of-class conversations (Aimin, 2013).

Over the last few decades, the field of second language teaching has undergone many changes and trends. Several methods have been utilised and replaced by others such as the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM), Content Based Approaches (CBA), the

Total Physical Response (TPR), the Natural Approach (NA), and many others (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). It is generally assumed that there is no one method meets the whole goals and needs of all learners and programs; thus, different methodologies of Communicative Language Teaching approach (CLT) have recently emerged. These methodologies include various teaching methods (Brandl, 2008).

The Yemeni EST Secondary Curriculum has been identified as a communicative-based curriculum (Hassen, 2009; Al-Tamimi, 2006; O'Neil et al., 1999), this was clearly stated in the EFL 3rd Grade Curriculum Specifications (O'Neil et al., 1999, p.4). Terry O'Neil, Peter Snow and Richard Peacock are the designers of the Yemeni EFL Curriculum. It is a theoretical curriculum aiming exclusively at preparing students for higher education (UNESCO, 2011). The Republic of Yemen and World Bank (2010) declared that the Yemeni EFL course book, workbook and teacher's guide book of basic and secondary education were developed as a communicative-based curriculum. Hence, the EST reading curriculum should reflect the interactive reading theory and student-centred teaching instruction, which are the principles of the communicative approach of the curriculum (UNESCO, 2011).

Therefore, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approaches and related theories of SLA are first reviewed in this Chapter. Various instructional approaches were found in EFL context. Other L2 instructional approaches and SLA theories such as audio-lingual approaches and the approaches that were classified by Richards and Rodgers (2001) as alternative approaches are also reviewed because these approaches to some extent are reflected in the EST curriculum.

2.1.1 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

To better understanding of the meaning of CLT we need to get knowledge about the different trends and shifts occurred over the last few decades in the L2 instructional approaches and theories of SLA. The Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) was the predominant method of foreign language instruction for many decades (Abdullah, 2013; Chang, 2011; Richards & Rodgers, 2001); however, because of some limitations in this approach to give the learners the chance to produce fluent L2, new instructional approaches (Richards & Rodgers, 2001) were appeared such as the direct method.

The direct method or traditional approach emphasizes on teaching a language in a natural way (Fitriyanti & Soraya, 2011), the same way as how children learn their first language. In this concern, Richards and Rodgers (2001) pointed out, “Believers in the Natural Method argued that a foreign language could be taught without translation or the use of the learner native language if meaning was conveyed directly through demonstration and action” (p.11). The direct method’s strict requirement to be applied such as the need for a native or highly native-like teachers challenged it from becoming widely adopted by academic institutions (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Then, the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) was used in the 1950s and 60s; it was known as the structural, behaviouristic method, or aural-oral method. Spoken language with avoiding any kind of errors is the main focus of this method. In this method, the teachers carry out all the responsibility of teaching while the students are almost totally count on their teachers, who often act like the drillmaster (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). The learners in this method have only a limited opportunity to use

and produce a language creatively due to their lack of any meaningful engagement in language use. Such these criticisms led to breaking-down the audio-lingual method and bringing up the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Approaches and a range of alternative methods such as the Total Physical Response (TPR), the Natural Approach (NA), and the Silent Way (SW).

CLT is a recognized theoretical approach in English language teaching today (Ahmad & Rao, 2013; Vašátová, 2009; Ozsevik, 2010). It did not clearly identify the content, the syllabus, and the teaching routines; it has left its doors open for a huge variety of methods and techniques (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Developing the learners' communicative competence is the primary goal of CLT (Richards, 2006; Canale & Swain, 1980). Briefly, CLT requires the learner to be involved actively in the production of the L2; it depends on language knowledge and use simultaneously (Hymes, 1972). CLT seeks to develop the learners' communicative competence and hence requires the use of the foreign language as a medium for classroom communication as much as possible. Therefore, it is anticipated that CLT classrooms to be characterised by CLT features (Richards, 2006; Williams, 1995). As such EFL/ESL/EST classrooms have emphasis on language use rather than language knowledge and on fluency and appropriateness in the use of the target language than structural correctness; and little emphasis should be put on error correction and explicit instruction for the language forms.

In addition, in CLT classroom, tasks and exercises that encourage a meaningful negotiation among students and students and teachers and using authentic materials take place in a formal as well as an informal environment (Richards, 2006). On the

contrary to traditional approaches, in CLT approaches; teachers are facilitators while the learners are actively involved in classroom interpretation, expression, and negotiation. Thus, CLT approach focuses more on the learner (Savignon, 2002).

CLT has been widely accepted and used as the guiding principle to many national curricula in Asian school systems such as China, Korea, Japan, Thailand, Bangladesh, and Yemen (Nunan, 2004). The English Language Course in Yemen focuses on the real communication between the learners and the teacher. Principally, this course replaced the previous that was focusing on vocabulary and grammar rules and reflects the modern communicative instructional approaches (Al-Tamimi, 2006).

The main end of applying CLT in L2 curriculum and classroom practices is to develop the learners' communicative competence through classroom procedures and activities (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). Communicative competence includes four types of competence; grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence (Canale & Swain, 1980) and strategic competence (Canale, 1983). These competencies come along with the Socio-Cultural Theory (SCT), which views a language as a cultural means mediate the language learning process (Vygotsky, 1978) and as a central means for the development of thinking processes. In CLT classroom, the teacher observes, facilitates, and assesses the communication process among all participants, teacher also acts as a co-communicator who actively communicates with students. Thus, the teacher acts as an analyst, counsellor, and group process manager (Richards & Rodgers, 1986).

Generally, the majority of target language teachers emphasize CLT as the methodology they utilize in their target language classroom instruction. Nevertheless, when they have been asked to explain what they mean by “CLT,” their explanations differ roughly as many teachers assumed the real understanding and use of CLT principles while the classroom observation indicated that teachers tended to use a traditional teaching approach that focusing on grammar (e.g., Chang & Goswami, 2011; Ozsevik, 2010; Marland & Son, 2004; Mitchell; 1988). For example Mitchell (1988) investigated the understandings of ‘communicative competence’ among 59 Scottish foreign language teachers using in-depth interviews, a wide diversity of understandings were found fluctuating between that communicative competence as a survival language and a description of communicative competence as grammatical strategic and sociolinguistic competences.

Latterly, Marland and Son (2004) investigated the integration of CLT in the Australian L2 teaching programs by education authorities and teacher educators. Data were collected using in-depth semi-structured interviews and stimulated recall interviews, and videotapes of two of the teacher’s lessons. The results showed the incorporation of many features of CLT approaches and general teaching in the teacher’s classroom instruction. Marland and Son (2004) declared that understanding the meaning of CLT by teachers and their classroom application is contradict; teachers claim using CLT approach while in practice they use traditional approaches. In addition, Ozsevik (2010) examined the effect of using CLT by 61 Turkish teachers of English at the primary and secondary level. The data were collected using online questionnaire and semi-structured and informal interviews. It was found that EFL teachers face many challenges in employing CLT in their classrooms. Ozsevik (2010)

attributed these challenges to four factors: the teacher, the students, the educational system, and CLT principles and requirements. Thus, these studies showed a clear misalignment between the teachers' understanding for CLT features as a classroom instructional method and the actual classroom practices. Not so far, the current study investigates the alignment between the communicative based reading curriculum and reading classroom implementation.

Recently, foreign language teaching instruction in many Asia-Pacific countries has been shifted towards communicative instruction (Chang & Goswami, 2011), nevertheless, theory – practice mismatches have been found by researchers. Chang and Goswami (2011) investigated the effect of implementing the communicative approach in the Taiwanese English curriculum at colleges of English, along with Ozsevik (2010), they found that factors related to teachers, students, educational system, and CLT practices impact the implementation of CLT in the local context. Therefore, the current study observes classroom instructional implementation to find out classroom procedures in which the teacher and learner roles are reflected. In the Yemeni context, the teacher and learner role should reflect the CLT features as the curriculum is a communicative based curriculum.

In the literature, the main features of CLT approach which are related to the current research study are presented below:

- **Authentic Materials;** using authentic materials allow the teachers to expose their students to the natural language found in a natural context, such as real life telephone conversation. It is important for those authentic materials to reflect the

outer world in relation to the learners' needs (Brandl, 2008). Therefore, reading tasks in EST 3rd grade secondary school must reflect the learners' need.

- **Work Grouping;** based on the principles of CLT approach, the students have to collaborate and work together in pairs or small groups to complete the task and to attain the learning objectives. They are also expected to interact with the teacher.
- **Creative Learning;** CLT stress the importance of providing the students with enough opportunities to engage in high level of thinking activities in classroom in order to support creative and successful learning. Making comparison, classification, sequencing, cause/effect, planning, hypothesizing, criticizing, interpreting, evaluating and synthesizing are some of the critical thinking skills.

2.1.1.1 CLT Approaches and the Underlying Theories

English language is developed quickly and equally in content and methodology (Chang & Goswami, 2011). Consequently, CLT has been introduced in EFL contexts to compensate the drawbacks of the traditional language teaching methods and to advance the students' abilities to use English in real settings (Littlewood, 2007) as CLT approaches support the teaching practices to be involved in authentic contexts in order to develop the learners' communicative competence (Chang, 2011; Diane Larsen-Freeman, 2000). In the field of English Language Teaching (ELT), some valuable methods to teach English in classrooms have been developed as a reaction to other previous methods; each method is based on certain basic principles (Hassen, 2009). Thus, over the last 50 years there have been many changes in the syllabus design and methodology, and CLT as an efficient approach has encouraged the continuous assessment and evaluation of the approaches to syllabus design and methodology. In this regards, Richards (2006) classified trends in language teaching in

the last 50 years into three phases: traditional approaches (up to the late 1960s), classic communicative language teaching (1970s to 1990s), and current communicative language teaching (late 1990s to the present) (p. 6).

Thus, CLT's origin draws back to the 70s until today, CLT is a learner-centred teaching instructional approach that includes new forms of teachers and learners roles in the second language classrooms compared to the traditional second language classrooms (Chang, 2011; Ozsevik, 2010). In CLT classrooms, learners are should participate in different activities using communication as a means to reach the goal; such activities were basically designed based on the collaborative approach, rather than the individualistic approaches, in which the learners act as active participants in the process of language learning (Richards, 2006; Griffiths & Parr, 2001). Thus, the teachers and learners role in CLT classroom is characterized by having a dynamic feature, and thus they tend to be different all the time (Ozsevik, 2010).

Finally, to gain better understanding of CLT features, knowing about specific communicative approaches to L2 instruction such as Task-Based Instruction (TBI), Content-Based Instruction (CBI) and Cooperative Language Learning (CLL) is needed (Sidek, 2010; Griffiths & Parr, 2001). Each of these instructional approaches are explained in the following sections in order to reveal their additional features apart from those mentioned in the general description of CLT (Sidek, 2010, 2012).

2.1.1.1.1 Task-Based Instruction (TBI)

TBI approach was introduced to language instruction in the 1970s when linguists suggested that language instruction should teach both meaning and grammar

(Skehan, 2003). A growing interest on TBI method in language classrooms appeared during the last three decades (Alavi & Nevisi, 2012) as it attracted the attention of SLA researchers, curriculum designers, educationalists, language teachers, and teacher trainers (Van den Branden, 2006).

Some of TBI method sponsors (Alavi & Nevisi, 2012; Nunan, 2004; Skehan, 1998; Willis, 1996) believe that it was developed from CLT and hence shares many features with CLT (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Since 1980s, the role of “*task*” and “*task-based language teaching/instruction*” has been widely used in the field of SLA in order to develop process-oriented syllabi, designing communicative tasks and improving the learners’ use of language (Crooks & Chaudron, 2001). Currently, the term “*TBI*” is expanded to be used mainly in two areas: testing and designing SLA curriculum as well as in the field of SLA research and teaching methodology (Nchez, 2004).

Starting from the 1980s, the term “*task*” has been received various definitions based on different research perspectives. A definition by (Long, 1985) stated in relation to real world activities while others are based on pedagogical perspectives (Nunan, 2004; Ellis, 2003; Richards et al., 1986). The latest emphasises the fact that pedagogical tasks are based on communicative language use in which the learner focuses more on meaning rather than form; for example, Nunan’s definition was:

“A pedagogical task is a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning and in which the attention is to convey

meaning rather than to manipulate form. The task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right with a beginning, middle, and an end” (2004, p.4).

Task based approach is an adaptable approach to language teaching refers to the “contexts where tasks are the central unit of instruction: they “drive” classroom activity, they define curriculum and syllabuses and they determine modes of assessment” (Samuda & Bygate, 2008, p.58). Thus, TBI approach is based on conducting a meaningful communication and interaction among learners while conducting the tasks, which help the learners in acquiring the grammar implicitly while communicating (Winnefeld, 2012; Savignon, 2002). As indicated in Richards and Rodgers (2001), jigsaw, information gap, problem-solving, decision-making, and opinion-exchange are some types of these tasks (Pica et al., 2009). As in any process in life, L2 classroom task happens through phases (Willis, 1996) which is known as ‘task cycle’ that includes three phases. Willis’s task cycle is presented below based on reading instruction:

- **Pre-task phase:** This stage works as students’ schemata preparation in which the teacher pre-teaches the students new vocabulary and phrases for the task’s theme and objectives, and gives them enough time to prepare for the assigned task.
- **The task cycle:** included three steps:
 - *Task:* in which the students carry out the task either in pairs or groups, they read a text using their language while the teacher is monitoring and encouraging them to be confident and explorative speakers spontaneously.

-Planning: in this phase the students plan how to prepare a report to inform the rest of the class about the way they did the task. A discussion session is held among the students in this phase while the teacher is monitoring and encouraging them focusing on the clarity and organization.

-Report: the students tell the class about the task they conducted while the teacher comments and provide feedback.

In all of the three steps of the task cycle, the students are supposed to use a target language confidently and fluently. They need to apply somehow accurate grammatical rules while focusing on the meaning and vocabulary and performing the required task.

- **Post task:** in this phase, the students compare their task outcome with others. In this phase the students perform the tasks and focus on the meaning of the language simultaneously. It can be concluded that all the activities in this phase conduct the following two procedures:

-Analysis: for example the students are asked to find out a particular tense, words, abbreviation and telling its denotation from the reading text while the teacher reviews students' answers and takes notes on the board, and

-Practice: the students practice diverse types of activities based on the notes that was written on the board by the teacher in the analysis phase.

The above task cycle phases show closer picture to TBI classroom practices, which is characterized with the learner-centred educational philosophy (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). As this approach aims at developing the learners' ability to be engaged in meaningful communication (Ellis, 2003). Thus, it provides the learners

with the required opportunities to practice a language and to build their language system and confidence in communicating using the target language simultaneously in contrary to the earlier form-focused approaches such as grammar translation method (Willis & Willis, 2007).

Different models explain the task complexity were generated by different linguists such as Skehan's Model, Prabhu's Model, and Brown's et al. (1984) Model of Task Complexity as cited by Alavi & Nevisi (2012) in their research article. All of these models explain that the pedagogical tasks complexity range from easy to difficult and hence need different levels of cognitive demands starting from coding written information to analysing one's personal experience. For example, Skehan and Foster (2001) indicated that task complexity has to get the needed attention from the participants. Difficult tasks require more attention than easy tasks. This model is principally based on a) Coding complexity of vocabulary load, b) Cognitive complexity in terms of text familiarity and discourse, c) Communicative complexity in terms of time and length of text, and d) Learner factors in terms of the learners' intelligence, imagination and personal experiences (Alavi & Nevisi, 2012).

To this end, Alavi and Nevisi (2012) in their empirical study examined the impact of task complexity and reading proficiency level on the performance of university students' across different types of tasks comprehension. They found that the learners reading performance was significantly affected by their reading proficiency. Moreover, another study by Foster & Skehan (1999) found out an effective role for pre-task planning on the learners' task performance. Those researchers concluded

that implementing TBI method for secondary school students is effective for their learning outcome (Carless, 2007).

Despite of the contribution of this approach in SLA context and its vast supporters (Willis & Willis, 2007; Ellis, 2003; Long & Crookes, 1992), TBI still controversial and hence face many critiques; some of them are discussed below:

- *It is unsuitable for low-level learners:* Skehan (2003) declared that TBLT “tends to be with adults (and some adolescents); generally at intermediate proficiency levels and mostly with English as the target language” (p.3); to this end, Nunan’s (2004) definition of task is more suitable for students at intermediate-level. Moreover, it has been declared that improving L2 elementary students’ proficiency level happens by engaging the students in meaningful and useful conversation with their peers (Swan, 2005). TBI research has paid little attention on children EFL/ESL compared to adult classes (Carless, 2004). However, this criticism does not make sense for present study since the sample is adults.
- *It lacks sufficient focus on form:* Seedhouse (1999) showed that the prominent feature of TBI tends to reduce the use of the linguistic forms during learners’ interactions; thus, the learners communicate simply and shortly using few words and phrases but not complete sentences. However, examination of some task-based teaching frameworks (Skehan, 1996; Willis, 1996) showed that they focus on form. Ellis (2009) and Willis & Willis (2007) argued that language learners in TBI have an opportunity to use the language resources and thus develop their grammar system simultaneously.
- *Has little acquisitional factor:* Seedhouse (1999) argued that TBI leads to language fossilisation rather than acquisition. Seedhouse contended that the poor

level of interaction is mainly produced when tasks activities do not provide the learners with a sufficient challenge to improve and enrich their linguistic abilities. However, Ellis (2009) rejected Seedhouse's criticism on two counts; 1) he argued that this type of interaction can be instructive for beginners by encouraging them to develop their capacity 2) Ellis claimed that the body of interactions during task performance depends on three factors: the students' proficiency level, the task's design, and the methods used in conducting the task. He believes that different types of tasks can result in extremely complex language use. He argued that TBI approach represents both input/output-based approaches; the input approaches help the learners to improve their comprehension ability as well as the grammatical structures they will need in their output. However, previous researches supported the effective role of TBI in teaching foreign and second language (Hyde, 2013; Wesche & Skehan, 2002).

Rahman (2007) in his master study examined the reading syllabus and the reading materials used at the intermediate level. He examined whether the modern approaches to L2 reading such as TBI are used in teaching reading in Bangladesh. The findings showed that students' present level of reading is not up to the mark; the reading pedagogy used in the country is also largely backdated, he recommended the use of more and varied reading activities.

In line with the principles of the communicative TBI approach, the Yemeni EST 3rd grade secondary curriculum that was developed in 1977 (O'Neil et al., 1999) is task-based curriculum in nature because it was designed to prepare the students for the national examination at the end of the senior grade of secondary school; as it is clearly

stated in the introductory section of the EST 3rd grade teacher's guide book. It was stated that Yemeni EST 3rd grade secondary curriculum "has been developed for the examination year in Yemen, it has a different format from that used in the previous five levels" (O'Neil et al., 1999, p. 5); therefore, it was designed based on different types of tasks. Over the few past studies that were conducted in the field of curriculum in Yemen, neither the tasks in the curriculum nor the instructional approaches that are reflected in the Yemeni EFL/EST curriculum were analysed. However, the present study examines the inclusion of TBI as part of CLT instructional approaches in the EFL secondary reading curriculum.

The application of TBI in ESP classroom exposes students to near authentic experiences that allow them to practice both language and social skills. Students are given tasks, which require their interaction with others to be completed (Hyde, 2013). There are many different types of tasks; their fundamental characteristic is that they focus on meaning and establishing authentic communication (Yasuda, 2011). Through TBI, the students become aware of different task genres and content language as they are performing the task, which allow them to choose the correct skills to deal with the tasks. Regarding L2 reading context, the tasks are organized to assist reading comprehension such as problem solving tasks via communication about the text being read (Oxford et al., 1989). Such reading tasks require a high level of cognitive demand.

The important features of TBI are summarized as: a) student-centred focuses on communication over accuracy, b) lessons are based on tasks that challenge students to stretch beyond their language levels while being exposed to realistic situations, c)

allows learners to develop an authentic language, d) provides language teachers with flexible frame work to create a classroom that facilitates second language acquisition (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). Thus, it is clear that through TBI, the learners interact and cooperate with their peers and teacher; as such process allows them to internalize the language. Therefore, a supportive context for the learners in order to reach a higher cognitive level to achieve the tasks is needed. These features are reflected in the socio-cultural and socio cognitive theory (Hyde, 2013).

2.1.1.1.2 Content-Based Instruction (CBI)

The main principle of CBI method is that learning is achieved better when learning takes place about something rather than learning about the language itself (Davies, 2003). In this teaching approach both of the language and the content in the language field have been integrated since the early 1980s, although, it has been received an increased interest over the last 10 years mainly in the United States of America (USA) and Canada due to its effectiveness in ESL immersion programs (Davies, 2003). Nowadays, the valuable of CBI has spread to and proofed in EFL classrooms around the world because the teachers noticed that their students like CBI and are excited to learn English through this instructional approach (Davies, 2003).

Therefore, on the way of reaching ESL/EFL teaching and learning to its desired level, the need for alternative instructional methods has triggered by educators because they completely believe that incorporating a target language with a meaningful content can guarantee the effectiveness in language learning context, which is the main feature of CBI (Little, 2005). However, CBI refers to the immediate teaching of second language skills and academic subject matter; focusing on learning the content while

developing language skills simultaneously and unconsciously (Brinton et al., 1989). Accordingly, it can be stated that CBI ultimately focus is on the integration and utilization of content information and target language meaning and skills in the same text (Davies, 2003).

The term 'content' in content-based approach received many definitions. It was defined as 'an academic subject matter' (Crandall & Tucker, 1990). While, Genesee (1994) defined it more leniently by suggesting that content '...need not be academic; it can include any topic, theme or non-language issue of interest or importance to the learners that contributes to the students' understanding of language in general, and the target language in particular'. Moreover, when learners are exposed to such content, they find it more interesting and valuable and received motivations to learn the language (Brewster, 1999), that is because people achieve best learning from the target language when the information they acquire is perceived as interesting, useful, and leading to achieving their desired goals (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Thus, the term Content-Based Instruction is generally refers to incorporating both language and content under one classroom instructional approach (Davies, 2003). To this end, Crandall and Tucker (1990) defined it as "An approach to language instruction that integrates the presentation of topics or tasks from subject matter classes within the context of teaching a second or foreign language" (p.187); an example for subject matter classes are math and social studies classes. Whereas, Curtain & Pesola (1994) defined the term in a restricted way; they declared that CBI refers to "A curriculum concepts being taught through the foreign language ... appropriate to the grade level of the students..." (p.35). However, TBI approach is

considered the most effective and realistic teaching method as it is an approach to second language teaching in which teaching is organized about the content that the students will acquire, rather than the language.

Thus, it is clear that CBI leads to learning the language and the subject course simultaneously (Stoller, 2004; Davies, 2003; Lightbown & Spada, 1999). Therefore, CBI tasks are authentic because it is not originally formed for language teaching purposes, thus, somehow it needs adaptation to serve the language-teaching purposes (Master, 1997). CBI as a teaching approach needs to be accommodated to meet the language learners' needs through employing redundancy, exemplifications, justifications, simplifications, and frequent comprehension checks as well as assignments and assessment procedures (Master, 1997). The authentic materials used in CBI classrooms are not necessary to be similar to those used in native language instruction but can be extracted from any source of mass media such as newspaper materials that were not originally formed purposely for teaching a language (Brinton et al., 1989). According to Crandall (1999), the use of CBI differs in teaching one skill than another; it combines both of the traditional teaching methods (e.g., grammar-based instruction) and the modern approaches (e.g., CLT).

In 1982, Krashen, in his *comprehensible input hypothesis* declared that the successful acquisition of L2 takes place when L2 context equivalents those in L1 context; that is, when the main focus is on the meaning but not on the form and when the input is extensive, comprehensible and above the competence level of the students. Furthermore, when students get enough opportunity to engage in meaningful and out of any anxiety environment, they learn L2 much better (Stoller & Grabe, 1997).

However, Crandall (1999) summarised the essential features of CBI as follows: “learning a language through academic content, engaging in activities, developing proficiency in academic discourse, fostering the development of effective learning strategies” (p.604). Thus, it emphasises learning about something through a target language in a subject matter curriculum rather than learning a target language directly. Hence, content-based class is a language class in nature but all the instructions and efforts are devoted to help the students comprehend the subject matter taking into account the students’ language competence, needs, interests, and their subject area knowledge; all that to ensure a helpful and language-rich classroom environment and encourage teaching a target language and a subject matter effectively and simultaneously (Dupuy, 2000). The CBI classroom is a learner-centred classroom focuses on meaning not on form, and the students are being evaluated based on the subject matter, not on the language (Musumeci, 1997) and thus they focus on topic-related reading (Krashen, 1991). Moreover, students must be ready; cognitively, linguistically, and emotionally. To apply CBI approach, instructors must be highly proficient in the target language and have a strong understanding and dedication to it (Stoller & Grabe, 1997).

In CBI classrooms, the students’ are highly motivated (Brinton, et al., 1989), and the teacher plays the same role of native speakers when cooperate with foreigner, these roles are summarised in Richards and Rodgers’ book (2001) as follows: 1) *Simplifications*: using short and clear sentences and clauses, 2) *Explicitness*: speaking without any reduction in pronunciations, 3) *Redundancy*: focusing on important materials through using several linguistic mechanisms at the same time, and 4) *Regularization*: using familiar word order. In brief, In CBI classroom, the teachers

need to use comprehensible language to the learners via utilizing redundancy, simplification, and well-formed and formal explicitness in addition to using facial expressions, gestures, and body language to make the instruction context more comprehensible. They should also use tables, maps, flow charts, and other types of graphic organizers (Krashen, 1985). From the other hand, learners in CBI classroom are often involved in activities that integrate more than one skill as it is the real world. Therefore, the learners might read, understand, write a summary, take notes, and discuss orally what has been read simultaneously (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Richards and Rodgers (2001) have summarized two main principles of CBI; the first is that people learn L2 better when they learn it through a subject matter, while the later suggests that the learners' needs for learning a second language are reflected better in the CBI context. Moreover, it has been declared that CBI explains the integration of both meaning and information from meaningful content are used in texts, on the combination of skills of the target language and on their association in all activities (Davies, 2003).

CBI includes different forms of subject courses taught in the second/foreign language; these subject courses are taught in corporation to language classes to improve the learners' language competence. Brinton, et al. (1989) described three basic courses (models) to CBI; they are: Sheltered model, Adjunct model, and Theme-based model.

- **Sheltered model**; they are subject courses taught in the L2 by a content area specialist to ESL learners using sensitive teaching strategies in order to make the content accessible to L2 learners. In such courses, the content learning is the

primary goal and the students are assessed based on the content while language assessment is secondary (Davies, 2003; Brinton, et al., 1989).

- **Adjunct model;** in this model both content and language are the goal; both content and language instructors share the responsibility of the learning process; the students are evaluated in terms of the content. Both L1 and L2/FL content learners are involved in the classrooms (Davies, 2003; Brinton, et al., 1989).

Both Sheltered and adjunct CBI typically occurs at the university level where English is the first language. However, using sheltered and adjunct CBI in ESL/EFL context aims at training students to learn the similar content material of English L1 students (Davies, 2003).

- **Theme based model;** these courses help students at developing proficiency in L2 skills; almost they are taught by language teachers to L2 learners. L2 learners are evaluated based on their language developmental level while content mastery is incidental (Brinton, et al., 1989). This model is found in EFL contexts. It can be taught by an EFL teacher (Davies, 2003). Thus, for the purpose of current research study, the theme based model of CBI is reflected in ESP 3rd grade of secondary school curriculum.

Thus, the focus in CBI lessons is on content not on particular features of language, however, language mastery is the expected result (Eyjólfsdóttir, 2011; Stoller, 2004). In the literature, the critics for CBI are presented in two dimensions; one is related to teachers' proficiency while the other is related to the students. Language teachers are mainly qualified to teach language as a skill but not to teach a content subject through a language. Consequently, they might be insufficiently

grounded to teach subject matter as it is implied in CBI. For that challenge, team-teaching concerning together language and subject matter instructors are needed to reduce the efficiency of both (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Regarding the students, it is realised that the incentive for content-based syllabuses is the belief that the language is a vehicle for communication about something else but not a language in its own (Zhang, 2010). Thus, integrate and teaching a content from other subject areas such as ESP materials to L2 learners, however, expose them with the challenges of extensive information in the content domain and hence frustrate them (Davies, 2003).

It was clearly stated that CBI classroom is a *teacher-driven*; ESL teachers contextualize a language and enhance their students with a comprehensible input resulted in learners who are more dependent on their teachers and unable to approach the material independently using skills needed (Kinsella, 1997). Therefore, CBI must be integrated with the academic skills instruction in order to build the learners' information processing abilities through the comprehensible content information that is presented in the foreign language, (Troncale, 2002; Kinsella, 1997). CBI instructional approach is based on the cognitive theory of SLA, socio-cultural theory and socio cognitive theory (Sidek, 2010). The cognitive theory involves linguistic information processing, textual information processing, and the synthesis of text information and prior knowledge processing (Koda, 2005 as cited in Sidek, 2010).

Classes utilize academic content structure require skills of a higher cognitive level that are reflected in using a combination of information processes to process the information successfully (Met, 1991; Torras, 1991) and to advance SLA. Basically, the cognitive theories of SLA perceive the language as an interaction between the

language forms (surface structure) and meaning (deep structure) (Shirai, 1997 as cited in Sidek, 2010).

In relation to reading comprehension which is seen as interaction between different sources of knowledge, the interactive theory of information processing to reading provides that the reader has several sources of knowledge, which can be used in processing the information from the text (Rumelhart, 1977). Consequently, if a reader has difficulty in processing a text because of lack of background knowledge of content area, it can be compensated by linguistic skills and vice versa (Stanovich, 1980 as cited in Morales, 2010). Therefore, in CBI lessons, teachers should obtain both bottom-up theory and top-down theory to assure reading comprehension. CBI approach has received a wide support in the literature, for example Morales (2010) proved CBI approach effectiveness in developing the level of reading comprehension of science text by allowing the students to apply a compensatory source of knowledge. Another study showed the ability of ESP students to achieve higher scores in all modes of ESP after integrating CBI approach to ESP context (Ngan, 2011). Moreover Eyjólfsdóttir (2011) found that CBI approach is a time-saving approach as there is a focus on more than one direct during the valuable classroom time. However, some researchers contend that CBI approach does not always support EFL learners due to the absence of EFL expertise teachers in both language and content area (e.g., Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Murphy, 1997).

In relation to reading texts, some researchers proposed that reading texts are only expository and allied to academic content (e.g., Fetters et al., 2011; Veveiros, 2010; Ephraim, 2009; Fludernik, 2000; Curtain & Pesola, 1994) while Genesee (1994)

suggested that the texts can also be narrative. From the preliminary review of the Yemeni curriculum document, reading texts in the course book of EST 3rd grade secondary school include descriptive explanatory and narrative texts, newspaper extracts, letters, notices, flowcharts and one experimental procedure and some dialogues were designed for speaking and listening are also helpful in reading practices purposes (O'Neill et al., 1999). Upper secondary level students need to be trained to process expository authentic texts as it is at the university level in order to build up the reading comprehension skills and the level of cognitive processing required for their reading at the tertiary level.

2.1.1.1.3 Cooperative Language Learning (CLL)

Cooperative or Collaborative Language Learning (CLL) is based on using different cooperative activities involving learners work together either in pairs or in groups in language classes towards language learning development (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Zhang; 2010; Richards & Rodgers, 2001); thus, CLL extremely emphasizes the role of social interaction involving cognitive processes dealing with learning tasks among learners in classroom and hence it is based on the socio-cultural and socio cognitive views. Recently, CLL has emerged as a significant concept of instructional practice in the field of Second Language Education (SLE) (Liang et al., 1998) and hence more attention has been paid to the pedagogical benefits it might have in L2/FL language settings (Zhang, 2010; Liang et al., 1998; Slavin, 1996; Johnson & Johnson, 1991; McGroarty, 1989).

On the way of looking for solution for the problems that were caused by the traditional learning approaches, Wang (2007) recommended CLL approach as a

possible solution. Previously, results of three studies have revealed the same conclusion made by Wang's (2007), which argued that in solving several problems of English teaching, CLL instructional approach plays the main important responsibility. In CLL classrooms, more opportunities are available for the students to practice English effectively and naturally with their peers and teachers and therefore, helps the learners to build and exercise their social interaction skills and interpersonal relations (Johnson & Johnson, 1994a; Wei & Chen, 1993). CLL instructional approach is basically based on the socio-cultural view; it mediates the social interactions in classroom language instruction towards language learning development and the development of the learners' critical thinking (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

However, CLL has been received many definitions. For example it was defined as 'the classroom instruction that is based on small groups' interaction through which the students learning is maximized' (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). According to Stenlev (2003), CLL refers to learning process in small groups where interaction is structured according to carefully worked-out principles. In addition, Zhang (2010) argued that Cooperative Learning refers to a systematic instructional method in which the students work together in groups to achieve the learning goals; declaring that people who operate in a cooperative learning activity attain higher achievement level than those who function under competitive and individualistic learning structures. Besides, according to Richards and Rodgers (2001), "what defines CLL is the systematic and carefully planned use of group-based procedures in teaching as an alternative to teacher- centred teaching" (p.196); this definition was constructed from the capability

of CLL to be used in ESP classes to teach grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary in addition to teaching the content.

In order to guarantee a successful interaction among groups, four critical elements have to be used by the teacher as essential guidelines in their instruction in each lesson (Johnson et al., 1990); they are (a) Positive interdependence: all group members must feel that the benefits or hurts of their interaction will be reflected on all, (b) Face-to-face communication: interaction should take place among all students in the same group and different groups as well, (c) Individual responsibility and consciousness: the responsibility of learning must be part of each member in the group, they should communicate together to learn from and teach each other, and (d) Social skills and group processing: these skills are improved when the students communicate and interact together.

A cooperative learning lesson often passes in many stages, starting with a few direct instructions about a new taught material followed by cooperative group work in which a teacher monitor it efficiently. During the group work, the students often take their roles in participation for learning goals (Kagan & High, 2002). In order to get the optimum benefits of CLL, all groups' members should have the same opportunities for interaction, the groups should consist of almost two to four members in which face-to-face interaction becomes possible (Stenlev, 2003). Student-centred characteristic constitutes the key strength of this method, which motivates the learners self-rule and stimulates them to learn from each other knowledge (Troncale, 2002).

It has been recognised that CLL is mainly based on two main notional perspectives; *motivational* and *cognitive* perspectives. The latest highlight the effects of working together (Johnson et al., 1986) and includes two issues; the *developmental* and the *elaboration* (Slavin, 1987). The developmental enables the learners to improve and develop their level of understanding for the material being learned through face-to-face interaction among students (Zhang, 2010; Slavin, 1990) and the elaboration from its side enhance the learners to think, discuss, and exchange information elaborately relying on the belief saying that the best way of learning is teaching, explaining, and elaborating the same material to someone else (Johnson et al., 1986); whereas the motivational perspective focuses on motivating the students to do the tasks (Zhang, 2010; Johnson et al., 1986) as the CLL in general successfully facilitate students face to face cooperation and motivate them to learn (Jacobs & Kimura, 2013). However, Abu & Flowers (1997) claimed that the route of achieving a remarkable progress cognitively and communicatively in learning and retention among students is by applying CLL instructional approach.

In CLL, the teachers' role is restricted in assigning and explaining the task for the students and act as guiders, facilitators, and negotiators aims at building the students' independence in classroom activities (Zhang, 2010; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; 2014). While the students' role is expanded to more than listening to the teacher's instruction and answering the questions; further, it includes working together in groups to share what they have learned and to learn from each other understandings (Wang, 2007). Working together towards achieving the listed goals produces higher achievement and greater productivity than working alone is so well confirmed by so

much research, therefore, it was assumed that task needs cooperative learning to be achieved requires a higher-level of thinking strategies (Johnson & Johnson, 1994b).

CLL approach are flexible enough to be used at all levels of schooling years, from kindergarten to university level, and in many subject areas as well (Slavin, 1996). In 1985, Pica and Doughty examined both of the input accessible to and language produced by L2 learners, they compared learning through students centred and teacher- centred classrooms' discussion among ESL students in low intermediate-level; they found that the students have more opportunities to use and practice a language, receiving direct feedback from all group members, produce and use more of L2 samples and long sentences, and engage in direct interaction in groups than in teacher- centred discussions.

The best strategy to deal with Reading comprehension tasks is the Think-Pair-Share Strategy (Rahvard, 2010). It is essentially based on a cooperative discussion strategy. The teacher first encourages the students to think about the task in few minutes. After that, the students talk to their partner next to them and compare and contrast the answers they came up with. They discuss, compare, and identify the best answer from their point of view. Finally, the pairs of students share their answer with the rest of the class (Rahvard, 2010). Thus, students need to apply higher level of thinking strategies.

A vast body of studies (e.g., Zahedi & Tabatabaei, 2012; Bölükbaş et al., 2011; Rahvard, 2010; Shaabana, 2006; Ghaith, 2003a; Pica & Doughty, 1985; Humphreys et al., 1982) supported the effective impact of CLL on students' progress and

achievement. For example Humphreys et al. (1982) compared the students' cooperativeness, competitiveness, and learning strategies on their level of achievement in science classes. They found that CLL have a significant effect on students' progress and achievement compared to the other two methods that were examined in the study. Bölükbaş et al. (2011) and Ghaith (2003a) found that CLL improved the learners' reading comprehension compared with the traditional teaching methods. CLL provides learners with much more comprehensible input and output in a social interactive and communicative environment, where the students pay attention and listen to each other, through questions, and clarify and discuss issues (Guanjie, 2003). Moreover, the experimental study by Rahvard (2010) found that the group using cooperative learning strategies achieved significantly higher scores in English reading comprehension.

Literature in the area of improving reading comprehension skills shows that CLL significantly enhances reading comprehension and vocabulary learning of learners (Zarei, 2012). However, Zarei (2012) believes that cooperative learning includes integrating learners in a group of highly structured, psychologically and sociologically based techniques but not merely putting them in small groups. The cooperative learning instructional method was found to be very effective in improving the learners' reading comprehension and learning motivation (e.g., Apple, 2006; Almaguera, 2005; Ghaith, 2003b).

Moreover, past studies declared that CLL may lead to improvement in thinking skills (Qin et al., 1995; Johnson & Johnson, 1990) as CLL classroom triggers the students' thinking skills. Indeed, number of thinking skill programmes were organized with the use of CLL method such as Dimensions of learning (Marzano, 1992) (Jacobs et

al., 1997). Richards and Rodgers (2001) listed five main advantages for applying CLL (p.193); they are:

- Providing opportunities for naturalistic L2 acquisition.
- Providing the teachers with methods help them at achieving their goals.
- Through interaction, learners focus the attention to language structures, specific lexical items, and communicative functions.
- Learners get more chances to develop their communicative strategies and gain successful learning.
- Creating an interesting, motivated classroom climate.

Despite the extensive research that showed the ability to gain many benefits and improvement among L2 learners through applying CLL, it also has shortcomings. Richards and Rodgers (2001) pointed out that some groups of students may obtain more benefits from CLL approach than another. That means intermediate and advanced levels students may obtain more benefits from this approach than their counterparts in beginners and elementary levels. In addition, they stated that teachers might face problems in adapting to the new roles required from them. Moreover, Shaabana (2006) did not register any significant effect for CLL on improving students' reading comprehension; however, the results showed some improvement on the learners' motivation to read. Another study examined the effect of CLL approach on students' attainment of content knowledge, retention, in addition to student's attitudes toward CL teaching method compared to competitive learning method. However, no significant difference was found between the teaching methods used in terms of the students' achievement and retention and in students' attitudes toward the teaching methods (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Abu & Flowers, 1997).

Even though, CLL as an effective instructional methodology is an available option for teachers, recently it is rarely used (Johnson & Johnson, 1991); most of the schools instruction count on seatwork, teachers, individual competition among students (Johnson et al., 1984), which means that the teacher talks more than students (teacher-centred). Hassen (2009) critically examined the Yemeni curriculum and found that the materials in the textbook cannot drive the learners to communicate freely outside the classroom or otherwise, which means it is not designed based on social interaction.

2.1.1.2 Genre-Based Instructional Approach (GBIA)

From all the instructional approaches presented above; basically, the main goal of reading is the comprehension of what is being read. The comprehension is a multipart interactive process (Troyka & Thweatt, 2009; Astika, 2004). It means that reading comprehension is a process requires interaction and negotiation between the reader and the writer's mode that is reflected in the written text being read.

The term "*genre*" refers to various characteristics of texts which distribute it to different categories. Genre was defined as the event of the language in which the structure of contextual features come together in the same text to cover a specific purpose (Halliday, 1973). A particular genre is a tool used by the writers to achieve their purposes and communicate with their audience. Genre and purpose are interrelated in a complex manner, and the audience must be considered in the process. Thus, the writer starts a writing job by having a purpose and then selects the genre suits his purpose; which is based on and reflect the desired audiences' demands (Fountas & Pinnell, 2012). Thereafter, the readers choose the texts they are interested

in and suits their purpose and needs. For example if the reader looks for enjoyment through reading, he/she should select a favourite genre that relaxes him/her such as fiction story. While if the reader wants to get real information, they may choose nonfiction stories.

Nugroho and Hafrizon (2009) suggested that approaching language learning from the perspective of texts requires an associated method enables learners to build up and improve knowledge and skill needed to deal with spoken and written texts in social contexts. The most effective methodology for implementing a text-based syllabus is the GBIA (Nugroho & Hafrizon, 2009). The GBIA has received a considerable reputation and interest to the teaching of the language since the mid 1980 (Minaabad & Khoshkholgh, 2012). This approach is widely used now in all sectors of education (Nugroho & Hafrizon, 2009).

The student's awareness of the social contexts can be arose and improved through GBIA, which is very necessary in figuring the learners' reading ability. (Coe, 1994) getting the student's awareness can be gained via some activities such as asking them to identify the main factors of the text (purpose, audience, and circumstances) and then evaluate it in terms of these factors. Exposition, report, narrative, discussion, news item, procedure, explanation, and description are examples of different types of genre (Gerot & Wignell, 1995).

The ability to grasp the meaning of the text differs from one reader to another. Good readers can comprehend the meaning of specific genre of the text much better than others. The readers bring their previous knowledge and experience into their

present reading; compare the facts and arguments presented by the authors (Fitrawati, 2009). However both of the teachers and the learners should know the basic information about the text which can assist them in processing the information. However, Fitrawati (2009) declared that in reading GBIA classroom, there are three main reading strategies to be applied as follows:

- **Pre-Reading Phase;** in which the students' background knowledge are stimulated, they are also provided with new information helping them comprehending the text such as a) Creating a semantic map through which the teacher introduces the major theme and issue of the text before even looking at the reading material, they can be motivated to organize and categorize the semantic map of the text on the blackboard graphically. b) Scanning (read for details) the layout of the text to find out the text's content through previewing the text title, subheadings, photographs, pictures, tables, charts, and graphs. c) Skimming (reading for main idea) some of the paragraphs and examine some of the visuals to determine the main idea of the text. The teacher should explain to the learners any new vocabulary at the beginning of the class.
- **While-Reading Phase;** in which students are engaged in more academically, oriented activities while reading for different genre. Various strategies of reading with specific purposes are applied in this phase such as a) highlighting the main points in the text, b) take notes, c) working collaboratively to predict the content of the text and together to hypothesize the content of the reading passage.
- **Post-Reading Phase;** which requires high level of critical thinking strategies of the students such as reviewing, synthesizing, summarizing, generating, evaluating, and reacting to text being read. Students can work together in pairs or small groups

to apply different information processing activities such as an information gap, problem solving, debate, and role-play activity.

Several studies examined GBIA in teaching/learning writing (e.g., Troyan, 2013; Early & DeCosta-Smith, 2011; Mydkow & Gordon, 2010; Ho, 2009; Cheng, 2008; Firkins et al., 2007; Emilia, 2005). For example, Emilia (2005) found a positive outcome of using GBI in teaching writing at tertiary level. A Parallel result was found by Mydkow and Gordon (2010) but at secondary school level context. Consequently, they suggested that applying GBI teaches the textual features of the text; thus, the teachers need to help their students to understand the relationship between the text and the social context that they live in.

Besides, past studies examined the value of GBI in teaching reading skill (e.g., Minaabad & Khoshkholgh, 2012; Fitrawati, 2009; Johns, 1997; Hyon, 1995; Shih, 1992). These studies reported the positive effect of genre instruction on student's comprehension and understanding the structure of the text. For example, Hyon (1995) revealed that most of the students emphasized that training them to know about text style and structure was advantageous to them.

The above studies and many other studies in literature whether those who examined the impact of GBIA in EFL/ESL secondary school level or tertiary level suggested that GBA has a positive effect on the students' English language reading and writing skill. Therefore, the Yemeni EST 3rd grade secondary school students need to be trained on expository texts to be able to read reading texts at the university level. Such training assists the students to build their competence in reading

comprehension and to succeed in their academic areas at the university level (Jalilehvand, 2012).

Based on the researchers preliminary review of the Yemeni EST 3rd grade reading curriculum it was found that this approach to somehow being reflected in the curriculum. As in most reading texts; the students are first asked to review the text, to find out the main idea of the text through reading the title, to examine the headlines of the text and to look at the photographs to find out the text's meaning. In the Yemeni EST 3rd grade reading curriculum, learners are trained in different types of texts, which differ in their structures. For example the expository texts have more complex structure than narrative texts, which is designed for entertainment (Brown, 2011). An example for expository texts are problem-solution, cause-effect, and compare-contrast ones (Brown, 2011). EST learners should be trained on expository text structure more than any other structure because this is the type of texts that academic passages are based on (Fetters et al., 2011; Veveiros, 2010; Ephraim, 2009; Fludernik, 2000).

2.1.2 CLT Features Under The Structural Situational Approach (SSA)

The structural language teaching approach is originated in the behaviouristic theory of language (Richards & Rodgers, 1995). In SSA, the components of a language are presented as being linearly formed in a rule-governed way and the language elements such as phonetic, phonemic, and morphology can be systematically and carefully described (Richards & Rodgers, 1995). Speech is the main focus of this approach (Richards & Rodgers, 1995) and thus it is believed that the best way of language learning is teaching the grammatical rules of the target language (Mareva & Nyota, 2012).

On the other hand, the situational language teaching approach, which was developed by British applied linguists in the 1920s and 1930s to the 1960s, aims at building up a new approach for English teaching which is more scientific than the direct method. More focus in this approach is paid to vocabulary control as it is the essential component of reading proficiency (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, 2014). All English teaching specialists consider this approach as an oral approach to language teaching, which was the same principle of the direct method approach (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; 2014) as it is explained in sections (2.1.2.4) and (2.1.2.5). Thus, improving the learners' L2 oral proficiency is the main objective of the SSA; this objective takes place by a careful selection and teaching the vocabulary effective in everyday communication, in addition to oral practice the taught material in real situations.

In the principles of this approach, the teachers role was summarised in modelling the situations in which the need for the target structure is created besides modelling the new structure for the students to repeat these structures (Pugazhenthil & Phil, 2012). The teacher is the class-directed, who is required to be skilled in manipulation, providing instructions, throwing questions, encouraging the students to elicit correct output and correcting their faulty output if necessary (Pugazhenthil & Phil, 2012). Regarding the present study, the reading tasks in the Yemeni EST curriculum of 3rd grade secondary school, especially in the science readers' section, require teaching the vocabulary of each lesson explicitly and separately from the text content.

Before the birth of CLT in the late 1960s, the Situational Language Teaching was the most widely used approach in EFL teaching; in that time English was taught through exercising the language structures in meaningful situation-based activities as fluency is more important than accuracy. Thus, language can be acquired through communicative activities such as games, role-play, problem solving, information gap, choice, and feedback (Pugazhenthii & Phil, 2012; Richards, 2006). During the communicative activities, the classroom is somehow noisy; students are actively doing their communicative exercises leaving their seats to complete a task. Teachers motivate and help learners to work with the language emphasizing in communication rather than mastery of the language form.

While the Yemeni English Language Teaching curriculum (ELT) was designed based on CLT (Bataineh et al., 2011; Hassen, 2009; O'Neil et al., 1999), the Yemeni EFL teachers have been facing difficulties in choosing between CLT approach and the structure-based practices, the prior approach used for ages (Bataineh, et al., 2011). It is rather accepted that for the purpose of applying any teaching approach successfully, its main principles should be introduced and its grounds and motivation should be explicitly made.

Previous research on the Yemeni EFL context (e.g., Bataineh, Thabet & Bataineh, 2008; Al-Shamiry, 1991 as cited in Bataineh, et al., 2011) suggested that replacing the traditional structure-based approach with the CLT approach was only restricted to the replacement of the curricula; seemingly, no appropriate introduction of CLT principles was ever made. Consequently, EFL teachers carried on using the traditional instructional approaches. For example, Bataineh et al. (2011) found that

while the Yemeni teachers have knowledge about the principles of CLT; their classroom instruction almost all structure-based method. Moreover, as cited in Bataineh, et al. (2011), Al-Shamiry (2000) reported that as the structure-based method is dominated in Yemeni schools, it is also preferred at tertiary level.

2.1.2.1 Audio-Lingual Method (ALM)

ALM is a traditional structural method derived from Bloomfield's behaviouristic theory (Anggraeni, 2007; Richards & Rodgers, 1995, 2001). The Audio-lingual is an oral approach, like the direct method, it emphasizes the oral skill (Anggraeni, 2007; Kuhlemeier et al., 1996). However, it differs from the direct method as it is emphasizing on vocabulary acquisition through oral practices based on drilling grammatical sentences involve new vocabulary (Anggraeni, 2007).

According to Fries (1945), structure is the first step in learning a language; stating that a language should be taught systematically emphasizing on correct pronunciation and oral drilling of its basic sentence patterns. The basic technique of classroom instruction aims at developing the learners' grammatical competence. The factual statement of this method took place by the mid of 1950s under different names such as the oral approach, the aural-oral method, and the structural approach (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

ALM as a form-focused instructional approach prepares the students to know about the language focusing on accuracy and linguistic competence; hence, the output of this method is assumed to be approximately out of error (Krashen, 1995 as cited in Mareva & Nyota, 2012). Nevertheless, it was recognized that its products cannot

apply their knowledge about the language in a natural speech (Noonan, 2004). The ALM system is mainly based on three different levels of knowledge; phonological, morphological and syntactical knowledge (Anggraeni, 2007), thus it is based on a bottom-up reading theory.

This approach is based on the oral skill (Kuhlemeier et al., 1996). From the structural perspective of audio-lingual method on language teaching, textbooks using this method should include dialogues to teach language (Ishler, 2010) and use a listening comprehension texts as the departure point of learning. The listening task includes new words and structures; however, tools such as language labs and tape recorders or CDs are useful tools (Kuhlemeier, et al., 1996). Thus, teaching a language in this structural method gives the main concern to drilling and pronunciation exercises followed by speaking, reading and finally writing. In the Yemeni 3rd grade course book, many conversations intended for listening and speaking practices can be understood through drilling, silent and loud reading and writing similar conversations for practice thereafter.

The two main assumptions of this method as expected from the learners by linguists and researchers (Kuhlemeier, et al., 1996) are, first; by learning and drilling the dialogues, learners will be able to use the same drilled sentences in their real life communication. Second; learners would be able to produce grammatically well-constructed sentences without learning grammatical patterns explicitly and correct pronunciation and stress. In short, the audio lingual method is characterized by the following: a) repeating different linguistic structures through oral practices, b) teacher-centred classroom, and c) the target language use in the classroom (Anggraeni, 2007)

Generally, Sidek (2010) stated that ALM output shows its failure to engage the learners in different cognitive activities for higher level learners. ALM was criticized by many researchers (e.g., Ishler, 2010; Castagnaro, 2006; Kuhlemeier et al., 1996). ALM students face difficulties in transferring what they drilled in the classroom to their everyday social interactions outside the classroom, neither could produce almost correct grammatical sentences and pronunciations. Moreover, this method mainly focuses on the linguistic features of the language that learners do not need it outside the classroom; hence, it was recognized that the implicit grammar instruction is insufficient for many students. Teachers declared a real need to go back and resume teaching English grammar explicitly (Ishler, 2010).

Previous studies, such as (Lee, 2003) in vocabulary learning and Liang (2002 as cited in Zarei, 2012) in language learning and learners' motivation toward learning, compared the effectiveness of traditional method (Grammar Translation Method and Audio-Lingual Method) to the cooperative learning method. They found that the students achieve better learning outcome by using cooperative method than traditional methods.

In spite of the above shortcoming of this approach, studies examined ALM effectiveness in teaching a language showed controversial results. For example, studies examined the effectiveness of ALM in improving the students' language competence (Saleh, 2011; Anggraeni, 2007) found that ALM has a strong role in motivating students' interest and achievement in learning English. On the contrary, other studies (Samimy, 1989) compared the ALM to the Counselling-Learning Approach (CLA) in relation to the significant changes appear on students'

communicative and linguistic competence; found that ALM has less significant effect on students' competence than CLA.

From the researcher experience as a student studied the preparatory, secondary and tertiary level in Yemen from one hand and as a preparatory school teacher of EFL from the other hand, can declare publicly that difficult words and English grammatical rules are broadly taught using Arabic. Although CLT and ALM insist on the integration of new vocabulary in texts, vocabulary is taught in isolation in Yemen (O'Neil et al., 1999).

While the ALM believes that a taught material should be heard first then seen (Ishler, 2010), real listening materials are not used by the most of school teachers in Yemen might because of the limited number of cassette recorders, CDs, or PCs, the large number of students in the class and the large number of teachers at the same school. Even the dialogues that designed to be taught by listening to two or more characters, the teacher intends to read them to their students; such teaching techniques make the students feel board and abandon them from their need to expose and listen to native speaker model. To this end, Rababah (2005) declared that while the current ELT curriculum in most Arabic countries, Yemen is one of whom, is based on CLT approach, the teachers use method much similar to the grammar translation method because themselves are products of the same method.

2.1.2.2 Total Physical Response (TPR)

Total Physical Response (TPR) is one of the alternative structural approaches to L2 instruction. It was developed by a psychological professor, James Asher in the

1960s and 1970s in order to help L2 learners learn a language (Holleny, 2012; Castro, 2010; Dinçay, 2010; Brune, 2004; Silver et al., 2003). The chief principle underlines TPR is the integrating of both language instruction and motor activities, in which the students are enhanced with an effective and stimulating atmosphere to learn a language (Castro, 2010).

Recently, Holleny (2012) has assumed that TPR will lead the combination movement and activity to language learning, resulted in more interactive and meaningful learning situations, she defined TPR as ‘a technique for teaching FL with emphasis on teaching gestures with words’. Different physical movement are made by the students in response to the teacher’s commands. Moreover, this approach was defined as an instructional method concerns on the combination of knowledge and skills leading to a better learning at a rapid rate (Asher, 1996).

TPR suggests that the spoken language is the gate to develop speaking skill (Dinçay, 2010). Practically, classroom procedures using this technique as suggested by Dinçay (2010) and Silver et al. (2003) are, the teacher throws the commands with performance to the students, and then the command is performed by the teacher accompanied with the students. Next, the students perform the commands alone without the help of the teacher. Then, the commands are extended by using new sentences and commands. L1 is learnt naturally by listening and responding to commands many times away from any formal instruction for grammar rules; however, TPR believes on following the same way in L2 instructional context (Holleny, 2012).

On the way of creating this method, Asher conducted many studies in second language learning for different languages such as Spanish, Japanese, and Russian; he found a greater effect for TPR learners than the non-TPR students. In addition, his research concluded that the kinesthetic approach of responding to commands through physical action is vital to recall and learn a language (Castro, 2010). Thus, by involving language and actions together we could help our students to use the language in a meaningful context and thus help them to retain it longer.

As total physical response counts on teaching L2 via commands; thus, classroom activities are predictable. For example as Brune (2004) predicted, the first day of class might include learning some commands and their correct responses as it is required from the students to act out the given commands such as “stand up” and “sit down”. Given such commands by the students are required in the next classes. This is due to the main aim of this method is language comprehension first followed by production. Students have a readiness period to listen, focus, learn, and respond to commands in order to be ready and feel comfortable and confident in producing the utterances (Dinçay, 2010). Ashers and Brice (1982) suggested that the time per session of applying TPR should vary depending on the age of the learners; that, the older are the more time they need to learn effectively. They suggested that a thirty minute sessions of training are efficient for children while 50-minute sessions are effective for high school students and up to 3-hour sessions for university students (Setiyadi, 2010).

Other than Asher’s studies, many studies in language acquisition have supported the use of TPR in language learning (e.g., Gardner, 2011; Furuhashi, 1999; Kelly et al., 1999). Kelly et al. (1999) examined the role of iconic gestures and various

combinations of gestures and speech in helping and enhancing adult students in retaining and learning a foreign language vocabulary longer. However, they found that using gestures aid adults to better comprehension and understanding more detailed; thus, through TPR method, the students could create a stronger and a more multimodal memory representation. However, these results contradict the belief on the effectiveness of TPR in early stages than advanced ones; TPR faces challenges in higher levels when the learners need to learn L2 for advance level (Brown, 1994).

Moreover, research has been deepened and examined the students' perception of traditional methods versus the NA and TPR for foreign language learning. For example, Furuata (1999) examined Japanese students' beliefs and preferred styles of learning English under three methods, GTM, NA, and TPR. The results showed that Japanese students still find some kindness to the teacher's error correction found in some traditional approaches; while at the same time, they preferred the absence of any grammar instruction as it is in the NA and TPR, particularly, they were interested in using the commands and physical movement by instructors. Generally, Furuata's (1999) and Gardner (2011) found a constructive and effective role in applying the new foreign language learning methods which the TPR is one of them.

Despite of all the supported studies for the effectiveness of TPR previously mentioned; Castro (2010) reached to another conclusion. He investigated the usefulness of TPR Storytelling compared to the Grammar-Translation approach in learning and retaining new ESL vocabulary. Results did not show any significant differences between the two approaches on the students' ability to retention

vocabulary. Statistically, the improvements in vocabulary acquisition and retention were 49% and 45% for using GTM and TPR Storytelling respectively.

Seriously, TPR does not have many serious limitations. The only limitations the researcher could manage to find in the literature that TPR can become repetitive and boring if used exclusively, so that, Asher insisted to be used in integration with other teaching methods and techniques (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; 2001). This method can only be employed to teach a limited set of vocabulary and grammar concepts (Brune, 2004). Besides, Sidek (2010) declared that building the students' communicative competence is not one of TPR principles since it does not promote any real language use communicative and the teaching-learning process takes one way direction of teachers-centred. She added, saying that regarding L2 reading domain, TPR mismatch the students' need to develop information processing and comprehension strategies. Regardless, TPR is usefulness in acquiring vocabulary and some grammatical patterns of L2. From the researchers' experience, this method is used at the very beginning levels of learners in Yemen in teaching some of the new vocabulary but not all, however, the teachers use extra materials such as teaching aides, symbols objects, and flash cards.

2.1.2.3 Silent Way Method (SWM)

The Silent Way (SWM) is a structural language teaching method. It was found by Caleb Gattegno, who believes that the learners can achieve their learning goals only when they really have a strong willing to learn that language (Silver, et al., 2003; Mei-ying, 2001). Totally, he believes on the complete difference between the required principles and approaches of first language acquisition and adult of second language

learning. To this end, he declared that the language environment required for learning and acquiring the first language is very different from those needed for adult learners of a second language (Gattegno, 1972). Actually, the SWM and the TPR are two of the alternative approaches to L2 instruction (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). SWM is essential in teaching speaking skill; students get more opportunities to exercise communication in different social roles (Rahmawati, 2012).

This method shares certain beliefs with the Cognitive Approach, in which the learners are the only responsible principle for their learning and errors are expected to be committed by the learners because they are seen as signs that learners were actively testing their learning (Dinçay, 2010). The teacher's role in correcting and modelling repetition forms for the students is absent. Consequently, the teacher's role is expected from the learners to develop their independency and responsibility features towards language learning in addition to developing inner criteria to correct themselves (Sheikhzadeh, 2011). In SWM, the teacher a) offers the learning materials to the learners and guides them to acquire the language, b) organizes and arranges different activities needed for promoting the target language learning, c) a resource of information and problem solving providers about the subject, and d) evaluates the learners' level of language and judges the amount of input they need to achieve their required level (Rahmawati, 2012).

Moreover, in this structural approach the teacher focuses on propositional meaning, rather than communicative value. And the grammar rules are learned through inductive processes since Gattegno sees vocabulary as the central element of language learning and the choice of vocabulary is essential (Sheikhzadeh, 2011).

However, a big portion of this method's attention was given to teaching pronunciation. The most vital principles of SWM is that teaching should be subordinated to learning (Cael, 2010), teacher keep silent, learner-centred classroom, and peer learning; it aims at developing the learner cognition (Mei-ying, 2001). In the Yemeni reading classroom implementations, the teachers focus on correct pronunciation while the learners' are reading aloud (Azzan, 2001 as cited in Al-Tamimi, 2006). While, based on the researcher's preliminary review of the curriculum of interest in this study, no statement was found guiding the teachers to take care of the students' pronunciations.

In SW classroom implementation, the teacher facilitates the learning process through creating up a real environment that encourages the students to learn, presenting the language based on what the students already knew and then observe and the students' responses. And finally, based on the students' performance and teachers' observation, the teachers' feedback and assessment are directly provided to move on to the next language learning challenge level (Cael, 2010). However, as it is implied in the name of this method, the teacher should keep silent as long as possible allowing the students to do their tasks and produce L2/FL as much as possible.

Besides, the teacher's role is to help the students to be aware about the way the language is used by natives and also to carry on their tasks without interfering with their learning aiming to be as close as possible to the native speaker's use of the language instead of creating an individual way of using a language. Consequently, from the very first moment, the SWM instruction focuses on attracting the learners' attention and hence motivating them to perfectly produce English patterns in a native speaker's way (Cael, 2010). Most of this approach attention is paid to teach

pronunciation and help the learners to develop their own inner criteria for correct production of various L2 features.

The SWT classroom instruction is basically based on particular materials which mainly involve coloured rods through which words are linked to language structures to avoid L1, coloured pronunciation charts are used to discriminate L2 sounds by comparing them to the sounds of L1, in addition to sheets, books and workbooks to practice the reading and writing skills, and other visual aids such as pictures, tapes, videotapes and films (Sari, 2005).

Getting high benefits from SW instructional teaching method depends on the teachers' behaviour, training and knowledge, for example strict and tough teachers make this method meaningless (Sari, 2005). The teachers has to provide the students with an immediate feedback, which might obligate the teachers to abandon this method (Celce-Murcia 1979 as cited in Sari, 2005). This method is an artificial because it teaches a language based on rods and away from any real practices in a real social context (Sari, 2005). The learning hypotheses underlying Gattegno's work could be stated as follows: a) learning is facilitated when the learners discover and create rather than remember and repeat the taught materials, b) learning is facilitated by accompanying physical objects and c) learning is facilitated by involving problem solving tasks in the materials being taught (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

The only empirical study that the researcher could find in the literature was conducted by (Rahmawati, 2012), who supported the effective role of SWM in developing and improving the learners' speaking ability. He examined the impact of

using silent way method in learning English pronunciation on the students' speaking ability level by running pre-test/post-test design for one group of participants. The results showed that using silent way method in learning English pronunciation improves the learners' speaking ability.

2.1.2.4 Oral Approach (OA)

Oral approach, which is also called as the situational language teaching approach or structural-situational instructional approach, is a language teaching approach based on the behaviouristic theory (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; 2001). It was developed in the 1920s and 1930s until the 1960s by British applied linguists. It is used in designing many EFL/ESL textbooks and courses, many of them still being used today. The focus of this approach was on vocabulary, which is seen as an essential component of reading proficiency. It also focuses on grammatical content of a language course. The emphasizing on the principle of introducing and practicing new language structures situationally started in the 1960s and "it was then that the term situational was used increasingly in referring to the Oral Approach" (Richards & Rogers, 2001, p.39).

The Australian George Pittman, one of the most vital proponents of the OA in 1960s, in accompany with his colleagues could develop an influential set of teaching materials based on the oral approach used in Australia, Guinea, and the Pacific territories (Richards & Rogers, 2001). One of Pittman's (1963) beliefs is that providing the learners with enough oral practices of patterns in different situations to allow the learners to get a great opportunity to practice a language.

Teaching grammar inductively, in which all the explanation and meaning are induced by the learners from the language situation without reference to neither the learners L1 or L2. Therefore, prior any lesson instruction, the teachers should teach their students the new structures and vocabulary orally by using different techniques such as pictures, mimic, concrete objects along with gestures to simplify and explain them (Pittman, 1963). Other teaching techniques under this approach are repetition, dictation and drills (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). While the learners' role implies only in listening, repeating and responding to the teacher's commands and questions.

Oral approach classrooms is teacher-centred and thus, teacher's classroom instruction is summarized in three stages: a) setting up the proper learning situation, b) modelling different learning structures for the students to mimic and learn the target language and c) providing sufficient feedback for the learners (Richards & Rogers, 2001). However, it is clear that in this approach both of textbooks and assorted types of teaching visual aids are essential (Pittman, 1963). The OA to L2 instruction is based on the bottom-up processing in order to develop the learners' lower level information processing skills such as phonological processing, word recognition and word identification processing (Nassaji, 2002). Following the truth that the main focus of this approach is vocabulary and grammar mastery (Al-Humaidi, n.d), one can assume that OA is a traditional situational form focused method for teaching language vocabulary and grammar.

This approach was criticized for its 1) chief focusing on speaking skill while ignoring other skills; 2) it is expected from the learners to use the learned language in the classroom at other situations outside the classroom. However, this point is not

definite particularly in countries where English is used only in the classroom, 3) the complete absence of focusing on communicative ability; however, it stresses the accuracy in both pronunciation and grammar (Al-Humaidi, n.d).

Since the Yemeni reading curriculum of senior secondary school shows a great interest in teaching vocabulary, thus it is expected that vocabulary teaching procedures will include a combination of teaching both pronunciation and words' meaning; this expectation is in line with previous studies (Azzan, 2001, as cited in in Al-Tamimi, 2006). Actually, teaching a language under Situational Language approaches requires long hours of teaching (Al-Humaidi, n.d) which is not available in the Yemeni EFL classes in addition to the huge number of students in a class which decrease opportunity of all students to practice the language in the classroom.

The Form-Focused Instruction (FFI) was examined in previous studies (e.g., Abe, 2011; Chen, 2011). Abe (2011) examined the effect of FFI on learning L2 pronunciation pedagogy. The learners were encouraged to learn L2 pronunciations and correct the output of their learning by themselves. The results showed that FFI had significant effects on improving the participants' learning of L2 forms. And Chen (2011) investigated the impact of phonetic and phonological instruction on the proficiency level of L2 learners' speaking skill in a cooperative learning setting. The results showed some improvement in the learners' oral proficiency; however, there was no statistically significant difference in the improvement degree between the experimental and control group. The researcher attributed any improvement in the oral proficiency level among participants to the cooperative learning as in the structural method applied during the experiment.

Past studies supported the effect of oral reading in improving pronunciation, reading fluency and comprehensions (e.g., Alshumaimeri, 2011; Gibson, 2008; Amer, 1997). For example Gibson (2008) claimed that oral reading used by both teachers and learners is instructive in reading comprehension. Gibson found that teachers and learners use oral reading primarily for pronunciation and intonation practices, for speaking practices, for making graphemic-phonemic connections, diagnosing and solving pronunciation problems, improving fluency and practicing reading comprehension skills. Gibson found that 82% of independent learners were practicing oral reading to themselves to improve and practice pronunciation.

Recently, Alshumaimeri (2011) examined the effect of three different reading methods; oral, silent, and subvocalizing on the comprehension performance of EFL Saudi 10th grade students. The majority of the students preferred oral reading because it supports them comprehending the passages, memorizing words and texts, concentrating, and practicing and pronouncing words for real world encounters. However, as cited in Alshumaimeri (2011), Teng (2009) found that both oral and silent reading methods are beneficial for L2 students.

2.1.2.5 Direct Method (DM)

The Direct Method (DM), which is known as the Natural Approach (Richard & Rodgers, 2001), was developed in the 19th century as a critical response to the teachers' need to develop their learners' communicative competence (Puebla, 2012; Pugazhenthhi & Phil, 2012) that GTM failed to attain (Pugazhenthhi & Phil, 2012; Freeman, 2000; Celce-Murcia, 1991).

This method believes that teaching L2 is attained much better by using the language itself to express the meaning directly along with demonstration and visual aids in everyday situations. Therefore, it is assumed that offering an enough amount of helpful practical knowledge and comprehensible input of language to the learners leads them to learn target language similarly as it is in L1 context (Freeman, 2000). Thus, it shares with the oral approach the fact that they are both oral approaches form in nature.

The main principles of DM are as follows: a) focuses on oral communication and correct pronunciation of the learners, b) Reading and writing tasks are based on the basic oral communication previously practiced by students, c) no use for L1 either in teaching grammar rules or vocabulary, the new and difficult vocabulary are taught deductively through different ideas such as explanation and pictures (Mehjabin, 2007).

Classroom under this approach mainly depends on the teachers' instruction, demonstration and clarification but not on the written materials in textbooks; therefore, it is essential for the teachers to make great effort in teaching the target language since they are not allowed to use their L1. Besides, the teachers should be able to find out useful teaching materials to be taught along with the texts in the book (Richard & Rodgers, 2001). In this regards Freeman (2000) explained the main four techniques of the direct method as follows: a) reading aloud, b) question/answer activity, c) students' self-correction, and d) dictation. For more explanation, learners read a text loudly under the teacher's explanation by using different oral means to simplify the content, then; the teacher examines the students' comprehension by throwing some questions willing to be answered in full and correct sentences. After

that, the teacher repeats their answers aiming to help the students find out their own mistakes and correct them. Finally, the teacher dictates the text to the students, who are supposed to conduct error correction procedures of their mistakes thereafter (Freeman, 2000).

The direct method instruction approach, based on researcher's preliminary review for the reading curriculum of interest in present study, is clearly reflected. In the general procedures of teaching reading texts in the curriculum documents of interest it was stated that the following steps to be followed by teachers' instruction for the reading materials; they are:

- 1) Discuss the topic,
- 2) Dictate vocabulary,
- 3) Preliminary reading (for the gist),
- 4) Work out meaning (students find out the meaning from text and then check with the teachers),
- 5) Read and do exercises,
- 6) Rounding off a comprehension activities, and
- 7) Do homework and check the meaning of words.

Relying on the researcher's learning and teaching experience, counting on the teachers' skills and language in demonstrating and explaining L2 texts with a complete avoidance of the learners' L1 is instructive if the teacher is native or native like but if the teacher is not in that level, as most English teachers in Yemen, without doubt will lead to miscomprehension and production problems in L2 by L2 learners.

Although Direct Method teaching instruction avoids using the mother tongue, the Yemeni EFL 3rd grade advise the teachers to use Arabic in some occasions such as explaining instructions of new activity, explaining word or phrase, or explaining grammatical and cultural points while the entire classroom instruction should be in English.

Following the assertion on avoiding using L1 in L2 classroom and teaching grammar and vocabulary inductively (implicitly) under the direct method, previous researchers found benefits and positive effects of using the students' L1 (Kang, 2008; Liao, 2006; Liu et al., 2004; Levine, 2003; Hosoda, 2000). They see that using the mother tongue in L2 classroom facilitates the learning process and communication in addition to enhancing and motivating the affective learning environment. On the one hand, researchers against using L1 in L2 classroom see for most L2 learners, the classroom is the only context where they get the chance to expose and practice the target language (Littlewood & Yu, 2011), they claim that using the target language as the exclusive instructional language makes the classroom more like real-life situation (Macaro, 2001). Moreover, past research on teaching and learning grammar in relation to inductive versus deductive instructional approaches reached to contradicting results. Some studies supported the significant role of deductive approach (Erlam, 2003; Herron & Tomasello, 1992) while others supported the inductive approach (Haight, 2007).

2.2 THEORIES AND INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACHES TO L2 READING

In the previous section, the communicative language teaching approaches that the Yemeni EFL is based on were reviewed. Moreover, based on the researcher's

preliminary review of the reading curriculum of EST 3rd grade secondary school and the general EFL instructional approaches that are reflected to some extent in the Yemeni EFL curriculum such as ALM, TPR, SW, OA and DM were reviewed as well.

However, due to the fact that the current research analyses reading comprehension skill of EST 3rd grade secondary school, so knowing about the main theories of reading processing and approaches that underlying these theories is needed. For that purpose, the prominent three reading instruction theories have been discussed from their relevant benefits and drawbacks: Bottom-Up, Top-Down, and Interactive theories. The bottom-up is based on managing printed symbols while the top-down is based on using the reader's schemata (prior knowledge) and expectations in comprehension purposes (Goodman, 1994).

However, different levels of emphasis were set on these approaches; methods that emphasize the bottom-up theory, such as GTM, pay all the attention to the processes used by the readers while reading the printed text to extract information; since the readers manage the letters and words in an absolute and systematic way (Alsamadani, 2011). On the other hand, theories emphasizing top-down processing believe that the vocabulary and utilizing the visual information from the text are the main focus of the readers to understand the text's elements (Goodman, 1967 as cited in Alsamadani, 2011). While the third reading theory; the interactive refers to the combination of two models of interaction: bottom-up and top-down interaction (Alsamadani, 2011), and text-reader interaction (Lee, 2009; Grabe, 1991).

Over the years, the perception of these three reading theories has passed through transformational phases; between the 1950s and 1960s, reading was mostly regarded as a *bottom-up* process, which beliefs on the unique importance for the text in the reading process. In the 1970s, challenging view for the *bottom-up* process appeared shifting to supporting the *top-down* reading process, which proposed that the readers' prior knowledge is approximately the main element in reading comprehension. Lately, in the 1980s and 1990s the *interactive* theory challenged the *top-down and bottom-up* ideas (Oyetunji, 2011).

2.2.1 Bottom-Up Theories

In bottom up theories of reading, the reader utilizes his/her linguistic knowledge in comprehending the text from words, phrases, clauses and paragraphs (Gough, 1972; Liu, 2010). Thus, interpreting the text is seen as a linear process, word after word and sentence after sentence and so on. Due to the mainly count on decoding the symbols, the words, the phrases, and the sentences to comprehend the text's meaning, it is referred to this theory as text-driven (Zainal, 2003) without a single need to any background knowledge (Rahman, 2007). In these theories, reading begins from lower level to higher level processing by applying reading a loud process rather than the silent one.

Specifically speaking, the reader is passive receiver of the written information in this lower-level reading process (Grabe, 1991). During the decoding/comprehension process, the focus is on understanding the linguistic structures of the language, but never understanding the whole text's meaning and its context (Gough, 1972); teachers who support bottom-up processing focus on how the learners comprehend information

in the written texts from one hand, and on whether or not the learners deal with letters and words systematically (Lee, 2009). Hence, automatic word recognition and rapid reading rate are considered the vital aims of the bottom-up theories which needs direct classroom instruction on the phonics and spellings (Grabe, 1991).

However, the linear feature of these theories through which the information is processed in one direction of lower level was classified as the drawback of bottom-up theories (Rumelhart, 1977), while, sometimes, the readers capable to identify a word meaning accurately better through utilizing higher level semantic and syntactic processing (Liu, 2010). Thus, the deficient in the reader's flexibility to shift from lower level to higher level processing and vice versa is the main limitation of these theories (Zainal, 2003). Hence, the bottom up theories represents the reading process of poor / beginning readers who to rely on lower level processing (Gough, 1972) as learner processes information beginning from visual system, then a phonological system and ending with a semantic system (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974). Azzan (2001 as cited in Al-Tamimi, 2006) conducted an experimental study among two groups of Yemeni learners of English (poor and good readers) in two English departments; he found that good readers tend to be less dependent on orthography and extracting the meaning from the linguistic units while the poor readers were more dependent on each individual word and each unit of a printed pages.

The bottom-up teaching approach has been symbolized in the Grammar-Translation Method (GMT), in which L1 is utilised to translate L2 in order to understand the whole verbal construction (Chang, 2011; Khan, 2007).

2.2.1.1 L2 Grammar Translation Reading Instruction (GTM)

The main feature of GTM is the emphasis on learning the grammatical rules and their application in translation from one language to another. For the most part of the lesson in GTM instructional approach, the students' mother tongue is used more than the target language and most of the lesson's time is allocated for grammar rules instruction, particularly, on the memorization of grammatical features, vocabulary, and the direct translations of text in the mother tongue (Nakatsugawa, 2009). Texts are treated as exercises in grammatical analysis translated and discussed directly in the native language with a very little attention to its content (Vašátová, 2009). Gough's explained the reading system from the bottom-up structuralism view in three levels of representations: First, the graphemic-phonemic representation; the reader's visual system extract the graphemic information from the printed pages and convert it to the phonemic representation (sounds). Second, the phonemic representation is transformed into words. Third, the words (meaning units) are integrated into the knowledge system (Liu, 2010).

Due to the truth of focusing reading instruction under GTM on teaching the rules of grammar with less attention to texts' content on one hand and on lower level text processing skills on the other hand, it was assumed that GTM incapable to lend a helping hand to students to develop their EFL reading processing (Sidek, 2010). While, some studies (e.g., Schiff, 2004; Cunningham, 2000) found that GTM is effective for language structure, clause, and sentence acquisition which share a contribution in building the needed linguistic competence for text processing at the word level. Due to refusing this method from previously researchers, teacher noticed that the learners' ability to understand and use the grammatical instruction decrease

(Lando, 1999). Moreover it was found by Chang (2011) that the combination of GTM and CLT is the best method for better learning of L2 grammatical structures.

2.2.2 Top-Down Theories

In top-down theories of reading, the learner prior knowledge is triggered in order to improve his/her language learning and facilitate reading comprehension (Lee, 2009). In other words, in top-down theories, elements such as content schemata, inferences, interpretations, predictions, illustration conclusions, checking comprehension, and providing clarifications while reading are mainly activated (Oyetunji, 2011). L2 reader's content schemata plays a major role in the learner comprehension (Lee, 2009) and hence, its absence challenges L2 reader with more texts processing (Carrell, 1988b). In the same vein, Anderson and Pearson (1984) argued that a high degree of content schemata can help the learners to rise above any linguistic shortage, whereas a low level of bottom up is highly expected to lead the reader to be challenged in meaning making (Oyetunji, 2011).

Contradictory to bottom-up, reading in top-down theories focuses on meaning and moves dramatically from whole to part, it is a concept-driven theories and processed the information through higher level as the reader's background knowledge of the language interact and direct the flow of information (Liu, 2010; Goodman, 1988). Goodman (1967) believes that skilled reader doesn't come out from the accurate perception and identification of all the elements in a word as it is in top down theories, but besides to the word's letters, they need another types of information such as semantic cues (meaning) and syntactic cues (grammatical or sentence sense) (Liu, 2010). At first, readers are building hypothesis to predict the meaning of texts, check

their predictions by either confirming them or not, and if the prediction is not confirmed, then the readers revise them and continue the reading process (Goodman, 1988). Top down theories is more appropriate to the advanced level reader because it emphasizes the higher level processing and thus the comprehension of the text is based on the background knowledge and the textual cues (Zainal, 2003; Goodman, 1988). However, as cited in Al-Tamimi (2006), Al-Mekhlfi (2005) found that background knowledge and text familiarity have an effective role in reading comprehension equally among two groups of students, successful and unsuccessful readers.

Furthermore, while the bottom up reading theories are a *data-driven* or *text-driven*, the top down reading theories are a *concept-driven* or *reader-driven*; the reader makes hypotheses about the conceptual meaning of the text paying the attention to the meaning of the text but not the visual details (Goodman, 1988). On the other hand, as GTM instructional method represents the bottom up theories, the top down theories are actually represented by the whole language teaching approach, in which the readers focus on the context, and manage to construct meanings in the text as reviewed below (Treiman, 2001).

2.2.2.1 Whole Language Approaches (WLA) To L2 Reading Instructions

Whole language instructional approach refers to the comprehension hypothesis (Krashen, 2001), it believes on the importance of the whole, meaningful, and relevant relationship between the learners and the learning process (Goodman, 2005). Under the umbrella of these theories, the learners learn a language throughout the language itself during the learning process because the effective way to learn L2 occurs when

the learner focuses on the meaning being communicated but not on the language (Goodman, 2005). This approach was developed based on the theory that symbolizes the language as communication or social activity (Sidek, 2010).

In reading instruction, learners learn to read throughout reading signs, advertisements, newspapers, magazines, and posters. In addition, in a whole-language instructional approach, the readers pay most of their attention on the context in order to understand the text (Treiman, 2001). In this sense, it can be assumed that top-down reading theories include predicting, inferring and focusing on the meaning (Grabe, 1991) because reading is actually *a psychological guessing game* (Goodman, 1970 as cited in Lee, 2009). However, Lee (2009) mentioned that the chief difference between the top down and bottom up theories lies in the readers' role; which is active recipient of information in the top down while passive in the bottom up.

The teacher in the whole language classes engages the learners in quite amount of activities planned in relevant to the learners' interests, needs, and abilities. The whole language classroom is characterized by the student centred, in which the teacher is classified as a facilitator of the learning process supporting the learners to follow up their interests, build decisions, and assess their learning growth. Thus, classroom situations can be described in the mode of cooperativeness backgrounds, where both of the learners and the teachers act as assistance and supporters for the learners (Farris, 1989).

Krashen (1999) argued that when the whole language approach receives a correct definition which includes a real reading process, students achieve better

performance in reading comprehension test and all other skills (Krashen, 2002). In relation to beginners reading achievement, Stahl & Miller (1989) quantitatively examined the effect of whole language approaches on beginners reading achievement. The data was collected from two fields; first grade studies of United States Office of Education (USOE) and 46 studies comparing basal reading approaches, earlier program that has been specially planned to teach the supportive skills in learning to read such as phonemic awareness and vocabulary, to whole language approaches. The results showed that for teaching functional aspects of reading, such as print concepts and expectations about reading, the whole language approaches might be the most helpful and effective approaches, as well as the most direct approaches that helps the learners to control word identification skills necessary to reading comprehension (Stahl & Miller, 1989).

Another meta-analysis study on the effect of whole language was conducted in 1989 by Stahl and Miller and later published by (Stahl et al., 1994). Stahl and Miller used studies since 1988, and found that the whole language approaches show great effects on the readers' achievement parallel to readers under basal approaches. Moreover, these studies found that the whole language approaches affect L2 learners' thoughts toward reading.

2.2.3 Interactive Theories

Three types of dynamic relationship; between the bottom-up and the top-down theories (Eskey, 1988), between lower level processes (decoding/orthographic knowledge/semantic knowledge) and higher level processes (interpretation) (Stanovich, 1980), and between text and reader are referred to the interactive theories

(Eskey, 1988; Lee, 2009). The word “*interactive*” has been defined as different elements join together in mental processes in the reader's brain to understand the text using the different reading models (Redondo, 1997).

These theories have been developed as a result to the limitations of both bottom-up and top-down theories. Different models underlined the interactive theories, for example Rumelhart (1977) model stated that the interactive model is primarily based on the simultaneously combination of both text-driven (bottom-up) theories and reader-driven (top-down) theories information processing (Oyetunji, 2011). In this model, four knowledge sources; orthographic, lexical, syntactic, and semantic knowledge are combined together to help the students in identifying the word meaning. Learners need to make hypothesis about the meaning of the text in order to understand the text. Thus, reading is neither only a bottom-up nor a top-down process, but a combination of both (Liu, 2010; Zamal, 2003).

Another interactive model by Stanovich (1980) called the interactive-compensatory model suggests that any over use in one processing stage can compensate the weakness of another. Hence, this model is effective in reducing problems resulted from the bottom-up and top-down processing models; that is, bottom-up models do not permit for higher-level processing strategies to take place in lower-level processing, and the top-down models do not allow the reader with little background knowledge to make hypothesis about the text. This model suggests that any weakness at any knowledge source can be compensated by reference to other sources. For example poor readers might be seen more reliance on using syntactic or semantic knowledge to compensate their weakness in orthography or lexicon

knowledge (Liu, 2010; Zainal, 2003). The ability to build L2 vocabulary is not an easy task for L2 learners, although the importance of vocabulary development for reading comprehension. Thus, interactive reading classroom instruction needs a teacher to act as a facilitator of the reading process.

However, engaging the students in the process of reading in an interactive approach is effective in providing the students with the skills that they will need to comprehend the texts and overcome the reading problems during their reading for content based courses at the university level (Astika, 2004).

2.2.3.1 Communicative L2 Reading Instruction (CRI)

The integration of both bottom-up and top-down theories formed the traditional view of the Interactive theory (Sidek, 2012). L2 reading scholars shifted their interest to find a more active model of information processing theory in which L2 readers can interact socially and cognitively while reading (Vygotsky, 1987). Consequently, the Interactive theory of L2 reading has been expanded and moved a bit further from the integration of the text's features and students' schemata to include new communicative theories of SLA such as socio-cultural theory, socio-cognitive theory, and CLT instructional approaches. Utilizing these theories and approaches of language teaching and learning help the learners to improve their cognitive skills and social interaction while reading because in these L2 theories and approaches a language is a tool mediates the mental and social interactions and hence learners' discourse competence of text information processing is promoted (Vygotsky, 1987).

Thus, interactive theories are presented by the communicative approaches to language teaching (Dumessa, 2002). CLT is a helpful and valuable approach that was highly supported and appreciated by language teachers and applied linguists (Chowdhury, 2012). This approach assigned different roles to learners and teachers. Learners in CLT act as negotiator between the self, the learning process, and the purpose of learning from one hand, while from the other hand, the learner interacts with other students in the same group or other groups within the classroom activities with the presence of the teacher as a facilitator and cooperative member (Breen & Candlin, 1980). Many studies attested the effective role of CLT in learning/teaching FL/L2 (Chang & Goswami, 2011; Ozsevik, 2010; Marland & Son, 2004). Based on section 2.2, summary for the main features of L2 reading theories is presented below in Table 2.1.

TABLE 2.1: Main Features of L2 Reading Theories (bottom-up, top-down and interactive theories)

Bottom-Up Theories	Top-Down Theories	Interactive Theories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading begins with processing visual information in texts (Gough, 1972) - Reading is based on decoding process of letters and phonemic representation (Gough, 1972). -Reading is linear starts from the visual system (letters & words), then the phonological system (sounds of letters & words) and finally the semantic system (meaning of words & sentences) (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974). -The emphasis is on lower level-processes where the readers are passive. They cannot move from lower level processing to higher level processing and vice versa (Gough, 1972). -It is suitable for beginner readers (Gough, 1972). -Representing reading aloud rather than silent reading (Gough, 1972). -It is a data-driven / text-driven theory (Goodman, 1988). -Represented in the grammar translation instructional approach to teaching reading (Chang, 2011; Khan, 2007). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading is a psycholinguistic guessing process in which the readers make predictions while reading) based on their background knowledge (Goodman, 1988) - Reading is based on receiving input from the texts, making predictions (based on, background knowledge), examine the predictions by confirming them or revising them (Goodman, 1988) -Emphasis on higher level processes (Goodman, 1988) -It is suitable for proficient readers (Goodman, 1988) - Represented by the "whole language" approach to teaching reading (Treiman, 2001). -It is a concept-driven / reader-driven theories; readers focusses on meaning rather than visual information (Goodman,1988) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading is interaction between bottom-up and top-down theories (Eskey, 1988) -Reading is interaction between lower-level processes and higher level processes. Every level can compensate the deficiency in the other level (Stanovich, 1980). -Reading in based on the interaction between the text information and the readers' background knowledge (Eskey, 1988) -Represented by the communicative approach to teaching reading is used (Dumessa, 2002).

2.3 YEMENI EFL EDUCATIONAL POLICY

The educational policy in Yemen has passed with many eras as Yemen historically was divided into two parts (south and north regions of Yemen). So reviewing the educational policies of Yemen will include the policies applied before unification, which was held in the 22nd of May 1990, until today.

The Northern region was ruled by Imam Regime from 1918-1962, in which the north of Yemen was totally isolated from all the other parts in the world. This isolation affected the educational system of the region; it was informal, traditional, and mainly restricted to Islamic schools known as “Al-Ma’lamah” or “Quttab” mainly in the mosque, where the children learn reading and writing in the mother tongue, religion rules, Holy Quran memorization, and basics of mathematics. Thereafter, Learners were allowed to join some religious educational centres if they wanted to continue their studies. So, the majority of the population were illiterate (Hassen, 2009).

As a consequences, movements to change the political, social, and educational systems were appeared, and the revolution on 26th of September 1962, which overthrew the Imamate rule and replaced by the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) made essential changes in all aspects of life including the educational system in north of Yemen (Hassen, 2009). This revolution movement announced education as an important means of cultural, social, and economic development and progress that should be achieved as one of the revolution goals (Hassen, 2009).

The educational system in the northern of Yemen was consisted of three stages in a total of 12 schooling years (Primary (6), Preparatory (3) and Secondary (3); the

first year of secondary stage is general while the second and the third are either scientific or literary. Teaching English as one of school subjects starts from the first year of preparatory stage. In addition, in 1982 a new system consisted of first year of secondary stage is general while the second and the third years of secondary school are scientific, literary, or Islamic studies focuses on Arabic language was introduced (Hassen, 2009).

From the other hand, the British colony occupied the Southern region for about 128 years (1839-1967), the independence was gained on the 14th of October (1963) and all the Britain forces were withdrawn on the 30th of November (1967). After that, the Southern Yemen was declared as a communist state in the Arab region called People Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY). In this era, English language was used as a medium of instruction for professions and social communication, this resulted in many English words integrated to the vocabulary of Yemeni people, and English language became a second language to many of them (Hassen, 2009).

The British applied the educational system that had been used in neighbored countries in the main cities only while the rest of people followed the informal education focusing on teaching the Holy Quran, Islamic instructions, and Arabic Language. However, after the independence, the educational system had new policy; in general, the school ladder was consisted of three stages in durations of 12 years (Primary (6), Preparatory (3), and Secondary (3)). Afterwards, in 1975 and 1979, a new school ladder was applied in place of the previous; it was divided into two stages in duration of 12 school years as well basic stage (8) and secondary (4), in this system

Arabic was the medium of instruction in school and English was taught as a foreign language subject starting from class five.

Recently, on the 22nd of May 1990, the unification between Northern and Southern parts took place and Yemen became one country called Republic of Yemen (RoY). All the ideologies' differences were changed, one of whom was the educational system. Article (54) in the constitution stipulates that "education is a right for all citizens, and the state secures this right through the establishment of schools and educational and cultural institutions". Consequently, a new educational system incorporating both systems of south and north was implemented (Kefaya, 2007). The basic of Republic of Yemen educational system is based on the new act of education number (45) in (1992), article 16 consists of two levels 1) The school level and 2) The higher level (Hassen, 2009).

2.3.1 The School Level

It is under the control of Ministry of Education; it includes three stages such as (pre-basic stage – basic stage – Secondary stage (*general secondary education, technical Education, and Vocational education*)) (See Figure 2.1).

- i. **Pre-Basic Education (PBE)**, it is called Kindergarten. The age group of children is in between 4-6 years old.
- ii. **Basic Education (BE)**; the age of pupils in this stage is (6-15). The duration is nine years starting from 1st class to the 9th class, this level is divided into two levels; the first is primary stage (6 levels) and the second is preparatory (3 levels). Study in this stage is compulsory and free of charge for all Yemeni students. English is taught in this stage starting from level 7 to level 9 (MoE,

2004). English is a compulsory subject in the National Examination that is administered at the end of level “9”, students who pass this exam successfully are eligible to move on to secondary level (Abdullah & Patil, 2012; Al-Tamimi, 2006).

- iii. **Secondary Education (SE);** this is the third stage; the pupils’ age in this stage range between 16-18 years old with duration of three years. Students who passed the BE stage successfully have a chance to study at SE level. In grade 10 of this stage of education, Students are required to study general curriculum. After grade 10, students have to choose to study at one of two streams: scientific and literary; each stream is of two years duration in 11th and 12th grade. At grade 12 (3rd grade of SE), a national examination, in which English is a compulsory subject, is administered; students who pass this exam successfully are qualified to join the university level (Al-Tamimi, 2006). However, this stage attracts most of the BE graduates with total of 98% of graduates because they look at it as the main gate to the university level. While the Vocational training (VT) and Technical education (TE) like Veterinary Training School, Health Manpower Training Institute, and Agricultural secondary school (MoE, 2004) attract the minority of BE graduates.

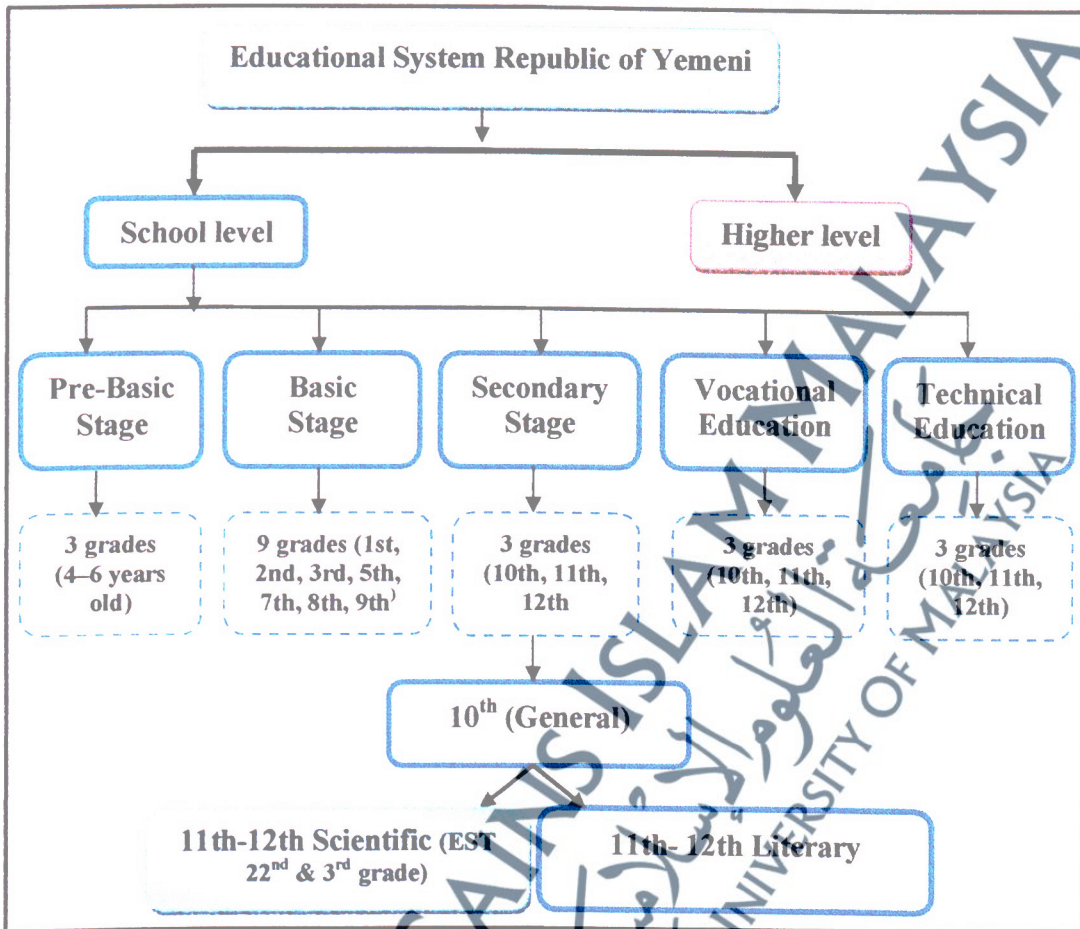
2.3.2 The Higher Level

The birth of this educational branch returns back to the time of establishing Aden University and Sana’a University with opening some colleges in the beginning of 1970s. This educational branch was flourished between 1994 – 2003 as the number of students attracted to this stage was enlarged from 90826 in 1994/1995 academic

year to 182445 in 2003/2004 academic year in a variation of 91619 students (MoE, 2004).

Recently, many students have been rejected because universities have become more selective in their admission requirements than before. Before 2001, there was no particular level of English language required from secondary school graduations who want to pursue their tertiary studies. Since 2001, on the way of reducing the students' number in some faculties as social sciences and humanities, the universities supreme council has stated that a pass rate of 70% in the secondary school national examination is required for university admission (MoE, 2008). While in some other faculties like medicine, sciences, computing, languages and engineering set up their conditions for registration by preparing particular tests in order to be extremely selective in accepting the students (National strategy for the development of higher education in yemen, 2005). In addition, at the university level, English is the language of instruction only in some faculties such as faculty of Medicine and Technology while it is a compulsory course in the first year in all faculties (Al-Tamimi, 2006). Figure 2.1 summarizes the educational system of the Republic of Yemen reviewed in section 2.3 in terms of the school level and the higher level.

FIGURE 2.1: Educational System of Republic of Yemeni



Thus, in Yemen, English is taught starting from grade 7 in all public schools when the students' age is 13-14 years old (Abdullah & Patil, 2012). English is taught in 4 - 5 classes a week in a duration of 45 minutes a class; thus on the average of 3 to 3 hours and 45 minutes a week. (Al-Yamimi, 2006). As in most countries, where English is taught as a foreign language, Yemeni learners of English have little opportunity to be exposed to English outside the classroom, where Arabic is the means of communication (Rababah, 2005). Therefore, they lack the ability to interact in English inside and outside the classroom even after completing the tertiary stage of education (e.g., Abbad, 1988; Wahba, 1998 as cited in Rababah, 2005). Moreover,

most of the English language teachers, if not all, either in the preparatory or the secondary level, are native speakers of Arabic and most of them use Arabic more than English in classroom instruction.

According to the educational act (45), the principles of the new developed educational system assures the complete, comprehensive and balanced education for every person, ensuring the spirit of belief, the country and the nation (The Republic of Yemen, the Parliament house, General Act for Education (45), 1992). Moreover, in article number (3) of the same act, it was declared that the Yemeni educational philosophy was set based on the needs of Yemeni society in different aspects of life because English is very important for nations' communication and trade between diverse nations of the world. English language serves the need of the Yemeni society and therefore, teaching English in Yemen became necessary; ELT at secondary school was defined and assured by the current educational system.

2.4 APPROACHES TO THE YEMENI EFL/ESP SECONDARY CURRICULUM

As the educational system in Yemen has passed with different stages starting from the period before the two revolutions in the South and North of Yemen, after revolution, before unification and after unification (in 1990) until recent days, the Yemeni EFL curriculum also does. To this end, in the previous section it was mentioned that before revolutions each part of Yemen had its own educational system, hence, the curriculum was different; in the North of Yemen, no specific formal curriculum was established by the government but the teachers themselves determined and employed the learning/teaching content. While in the South of Yemen, the British

colony implemented its own curriculum that was applied in all countries under its colony (Hassen, 2009). The post-revolutionary era (1960s) created greater educational and intellectual awareness; libraries were established and expanded along with the growth of public education (Hassen, 2009).

Generally talking, the current educational system in Yemen has become essential after the establishment of the Ministry of Education in 1963 in the north of Yemen and in 1967 in the south of Yemen. Before that time, no basis for designing national curriculum was found because of the deficiencies in experienced Yemeni workforce; in addition to the absence of clear educational policy (Al-Agbari, 2002). In line with the field of curriculum however, the whole scenario of the English curriculum in Yemen is summarized as follows: after revolutions, the MoE used an Egyptian English curriculum called "*The Nile Course of English*" in the Yemeni schools in 1963/1964, which was based on the Grammar-Translation Method. Then, at the end of 1960s, "*The Progressive Living English for the Arab World*" English course was introduced; it was designed and implemented for Gulf Countries and it was based on the Audio-lingual method, and the Communicative Method (El-Sayed, 1993). However, the aims and the needs of English Language in Yemen were not achieved through these two programs.

Later on at the end of 1967, the MoE structured the Yemeni - Egyptian educationists committee to Yemeniz the schools textbooks in order to achieve the desired level of English (Al-Agbari, 2002). A year later, the majority of English textbooks were based on the Yemeni context, perspective and the needs of the Yemeni learners. Thus, in 1979 a new Yemeni series entitled "*English for Yemen*" were

introduced based on the structure and communicative methods together with more emphasis on the communicative methods. This course was organised by a collaboration of MoE and British colony under a Key English Language Teaching (KELT) program aiming at developing English language materials, teacher training and qualification, and teaching aids making (Hassen, 2009). However, this syllabus was used in schools until the beginning of 1990s, but yet these textbooks still have weakness and shortage in improving the English proficiency level among the Yemeni students.

After the unification in 1990, when a new country the “Republic of Yemen” was born in place of the two parts of Yemen, all the political, cultural and educational differences in the two systems have been disappeared. Thus, it was very important and necessary to have a new curriculum, which is suitable to the new situation. Accordingly, in 1990, the MoE in Yemen started the Curriculum Development Project of establishing a new curriculum, which is based on the Yemeni educational philosophy that reflects the needs of the society. Alas, English as a school subject did not take part in the targets of this project. Therefore, English textbooks were not changed until the academic year 1994/1995, when a modern series called “Crescent English Course” (CEC) were introduced; this series were established to be used in all Arabic countries based on the communicative approach to language learning.

The Yemeni CEC integrates the four language skills “listening, speaking, reading, and writing” in addition to a clear emphasizing on vocabulary (O’Neil et al., 1999). Although a well organization of Crescent English Course for Yemen (CECY), to some extent it appears to be higher than both of the students and teachers’

competence level of language. This is because the students have a low proficiency level and the teachers lack the ability to adapt the materials at the real level (Al-Ahdal, 2010).

Moreover, CECY has been criticized to be theoretical course more than practical course; as there is a vast mismatch between the real situation in Yemen and the topics of Crescent. Moreover, the current curriculum is neither accounts on a scientific approach nor the Yemeni student's communicative needs (Na'ama, 2011; Al-Ahdal, 2010; Hassen, 2009). Besides, although the main approach behind establishing CECY is the CLT, in the secondary school English classes, an explicit attention is paid to grammar items and language exercises for these items found in the workbook under the title '*Language Study*' (Na'ama, 2011; Al-Ahdal, 2010).

However, based on the preliminary review of the researcher of current study for the work book of the senior level of secondary school, there is no title named '*Language Study*' was found, and thus this title and the conclusion made by Na'ama (2011) and Al-Ahdal (2010) might be related to previous 5 series of CECY. On the other hand, the researcher of the current study found a title named '*Language Review*' in the pupil's course book has the same purpose of the 'language study' section mentioned by those researchers. However, the students' weakness in English competence is not only a result of textbooks and the curriculum, which is used at schools, but it is also affected by of many other components as pupils, teachers, parents, classrooms and educational situations (Sahu, 1999 as cited in Al-Ahdal, 2010).

Generally, the conceptual meaning of curriculum has been received misunderstanding from the learners and the teachers, the essential point that needs some clarification here is that curriculum does not only refer to the textbooks and the textbooks alone do not constitute a curriculum. At the initial stage of studying the curriculum, considering three levels of curriculum is very useful namely: the 'planned curriculum', the 'enacted curriculum' and the 'experienced curriculum' (Marsh & Willis, 2007). The planned curriculum represents the main objective; it is referred to as 'curricular authority'—the authority of standardized curricular guidelines (Campbell, 2006). The enacted curriculum refers to the professional judgements about the nature and type of curriculum to be implemented and evaluated. Teachers have to judge the proper pedagogical knowledge to be used (Campbell, 2006). While the actual practices in the classroom represent the experienced curriculum (Smith & Lovat, 2003), it is individual and unpredictable curriculum (Marsh & Willis, 2007). Thus, the textbooks, the teachers, the methods, the materials, the goals and the aims, classroom activities and assessment and many others are components of any curriculum.

Previous studies analysed different facets of the Yemeni EFL secondary school curriculum found that the English language course at the school level in Yemen unable to fulfil the Yemeni learners' English language needs to be used as a communicative tool in real-life situations (Murshed, 2002; Alshamiry, 2005 as cited in Hassen, 2009). In addition, the aims and objectives of Crescent English Course for Yemen (CECY) are not stated clearly (Alshamiry, 2005 as cited in Hassen, 2009) and hence, challenge the required classroom instructional approaches. Therefore, it has been noticed accurately that the teachers of English should be aware of the recent significance of English and the students' needs; they have to prepare their English

classes based on the new perspectives of English and use a sufficient means to teach it most effectively within a standard time. Teachers should teach English using a new communicative approaches in order to develop their students' language skills and linguistic competence along with their needs but not operate as examination coaches only (Sharma, 2005). Nevertheless, recent studies (e.g., Na'ama, 2011) determined and identified the effective role of teaching English through grammar translation method (structural syllabus).

Due to the deficiency in the published Yemeni works, most of the Yemeni studies related to the current study are cited in other studies. To the researcher's knowledge, the only Yemeni study that examined the CECY curriculum was conducted by Hassen (2009). Hassen (2009) examined the whole series of CECY for secondary school level. He examined 1st grade, 2nd grade and 3rd grade. The main objectives of Hassen's study (2009) were: 1) To investigate the facts of secondary school English teachers and students about CECY, 2) To assess the social setting in terms of its culture and beliefs towards a foreign language with a foreign culture accompanying the target language, 3) To criticize the Crescent English textbooks in secondary stage with reference to the objectives 1 and 2, 4) To analyse the content of the CECY of secondary stage in terms of the stated curriculum (P.xv). He used two sets of questionnaire (for teachers and students) to collect the data as well as content analysis of the textbooks. He did not use any coding for analysing the textbooks; however he analysed them in general in terms of elements such as repetition of the content, topics and structure of the textbooks and the attractiveness of the curriculum. Thus, no study analysed specifically the reading curriculum of senior level of secondary school particularly in terms of its alignment to its communicative label or in

terms of the preparation of the students for reading at their tertiary level, as it is the aim of the current study.

2.4.1 Crescent English Course for Yemen (CECY)

CECY was first published in 1977 and since then it has been amended and shaped many times in order to meet different situations in different countries using it to ensure the continued success of the course throughout the Arab world (O'Neil, et al., 1999). It was specially developed for teaching of English in Arab schools. These series are based on the Communicative Approach to language learning and teaching and aimed at integrating the four language skills of language “listening, speaking, reading and writing” (O'Neil, et al., 1999). CECY consists of series of 6 books starting from book 1 to book 6; book 1 to book 3 are designed to be taught in the basic education (grade 7, 8 and 9) while book 4 to book 6 are taught in the secondary level (grade 10, 11 and 12). Therefore, Crescent English course (6) is the course taught in the 3rd grade secondary level of education, the main interest grade in the current study.

Crescent English teacher's book enhances the teachers with enough instructions, which is necessary to carry on their teaching task, as well as the learning objectives of each skill, teaching procedures and the needed activities. An example of the reading objectives presented in Crescent English teacher's book (6) are developing the students' skills of predicting the context of a text, reading for the gist (skimming), reading for specific information (scanning), reading for enjoyment (extensive reading), and reading for detailed understanding (intensive reading); in addition to improving the capability of students to use the required reading comprehension skill

for the suitable reading text types and tasks (O'Neil, et al., 1999). The Yemeni teachers are obliged to follow this English Course (CECY) in primary schools and secondary schools (grades 7th-12th). For each level, CECY includes four materials; course book, workbook, teacher's guide book, and class cassettes (O'Neil, et al., 1999). Teacher's guide book includes the detailed lesson plans, useful background information, statements of learning objectives, lists of materials required, evaluation activities, and additional activities (UNESCO, 2011).

Regarding the present study, the Yemeni English for Science and Technology (EST) of 3rd grade secondary school reading curriculum will be referred to here after as *EST 3rd grade secondary school reading curriculum*. There are four terms related to the Yemeni EST 3rd grade secondary school reading curriculum used frequently in present study; *EST 3rd grade course book*, *EST 3rd grade work book*, *EST 3rd grade teacher's book* and *EST 3rd grade reading classroom observation*.

After completing the secondary school level, the Yemeni students have one year obligatory gap prior enrolling in the tertiary level. Most of those students enrol in private English language centres in order to improve their language prior starting their higher education; which denotes that English is important in that level (Al-Ahdal, 2010). However, While 280,000 students complete their secondary education yearly; higher education is only restricted to about 60,000 student, which is the current capacity of both public and private universities. Thus, about 220,000 secondary graduates annually lack the opportunity to pursue their higher studies (MoPIC & UNDP, 2010).

Both of the high school Grade Point Average (GPA) and college entrance test scores (CETS) are considered the two admission criteria into post-secondary institutions. However such reliance on these two criteria by most colleges in Yemen to select their students has been criticized by educators, parents and faculties at most Yemeni universities for various reasons (Al-Tamimi, 2006). In general, teachers simply rely on their experience and familiarity in testing and evaluation in developing and preparing the tests; that because there are no training programs on testing and evaluation have been provided for the teachers. Thus, the developed tests by teachers are often reflects the teachers' methods in testing. The question-papers they prepare usually test the students' ability to reproduce the memorized data that have been learned.

It was declared in a report submitted by Cambridge University Local Examination Syndicate (CULES) in 1985 that the English examination papers in Yemen are mostly based on the repetition of the written materials in the textbook (Al-Hamzi, 1999 as cited in Al-Ahdal, 2010). As time passes, the exams' questions are expected, and hence, the students are seen to collect previous question papers, polish them and practise their answers by heart without any interesting or stimulation for their mind. Such practices do not train the students to apply higher-level of cognitive skills; however, they rely on lower-level of cognitive skills, which resulted in students with low level of English proficiency. In spite of the low level of English proficiency level among the Yemeni applicants, they are enrolled and being accepted to study at many faculties and at English department as well (Abbad, 1988); and hence faced many challenges which reading comprehension is one of them.

2.5 READING ISSUES AT THE YEMENI 3RD GRADE SECONDARY LEVEL

According to the World Bank (2011), a high priority of the strategies in the government of Yemen has been given to the educational system. Furthermore, education is considered essential to the development of Yemen. In the 1990s and 2000, tertiary education in Yemen viewed a remarkable growth as many public and eight private universities were found after 1990. In addition to a number of two year colleges and post-secondary specialized education institutes (Ramaswami et al., 2012).

Over the last two decades, literacy rates in Yemen have increased and were estimated by 62.4% in 2009. The majority of the Yemeni population, approximately 99%, speaks Arabic because it is the mother tongue and the official language while the rest speaks a number of South Semitic languages. Moreover, 9% of the population speaks English as second language and can communicate in English at an intermediate level (Ramaswami, et al., 2012). Thus, due to the dominant of Arabic in the country, the belief of the importance of English is growing among younger Yemeni people. Hence, English is taught as a foreign language in the Yemeni education system starting from the 7th grade of preparatory school (Al-Maktary, 2001 as cited in Al-Tamimi, 2006; Ramaswami, et al., 2012). Although English is not the language of instruction at school, accessing key information at higher education often dependent on having rather high level of reading ability in English (Al-Tamimi, 2006; Noor, 2006); this was clearly presented in Noor words below:

“Without doubt, in any academic or higher learning context, reading is perceived as the most prominent academic skill for university students. It is through reading that these learners will learn new information and are able to

synthesize, evaluate and interpret to learn more about their subject matter. But yet, most often, many students who enter institutions of higher learning are found to be unprepared for the reading demands placed upon them and they encounter difficulties” (2006, p. 66).

It is generally believed that reading is the most fundamental skill although learning a foreign language involves learning and acquiring the four language skills, reading importance was attained from its importance for academic studies, professional achievement and success, and personal development purposes (Alderson, 1984 ; Jahangard et al., 2011), in addition to the majority professional, technical and scientific literature that was published in English. For example, Norway exposes their secondary school students to English extensively because it has realised well that instruction in EFL classes at upper secondary level develops the students’ competence level required for higher education. Consequently, 16 years old Norwegians did well in a comparative study of English proficiency among eight European countries (Bonnet, 2002).

As previously discussed in section 1.5, the secondary level is the corner stone in preparing students for higher education and has a direct impact; positively or negatively (Abdullah & Patil, 2012; Hellekjær, 2005), yet that role of secondary level in preparing students for higher education still controversial matter (Ramaswami, et al., 2012). Most of Yemeni graduates’ English level deteriorates after graduation because they do not get the opportunity to practice their English after school years, which in turn increased the demand for English tuition at language centres have been opened lately (Ramaswami, et al., 2012). Two PhD studies (Lehmann, 1999) and

(Hellekjær, 2005) found a serious weakness among Norwegian university students' writing and reading ability. Both studies criticized the effect of EFL instruction at upper secondary level on students' preparation for tertiary level. If this is the case in Narwig, where English is taught in the all ten years of elementary school and from one to three years of upper secondary, so it is logical to be the same in Yemen, where English is only taught as a compulsory subject starting from level 7 in the basic education and 3 years of secondary school education; this comparison comes in line with the results of study conducted by Mourtaga (2012) among the Palestinians students, who study English starting from the first grade of elementary stage. Mourtaga found that reading in English for Palestinians students is considered a very complicated skill; and therefore, they have many problems with it.

Moreover, Park (2010), in her doctor of Philosophy study investigated the reading strategies used by Korean college students learning EFL and found an apparent difference between the university level requirements and classroom instruction at secondary level in relation to the reading comprehension skill. The Korean situation is not so far from that in Yemen; university students in Korea lack the opportunity to advance their reading skills prior university because they are extensively exposed to authentic expository reading material in their academic level while they are exposed to non-authentic at secondary level (Park, 2010).

The reading problems students encounter may be related to misunderstanding for the reading process which might lead us to conclude that the teachers also have inaccurate knowledge of the reading process (Miller & Yochum, 1991). Therefore, Mourtaga (2012) in his study hypothesized that teachers' misunderstanding of the

reading process is the cause of many reading difficulties that their students face. To this end, Weaver claimed:

“Children’s success at reading reflects their reading strategies; their reading strategies typically reflect their implicit definitions of reading; children’s definitions of reading often reflect the instructional approach, and the instructional approach reflect a definition of reading whether implicit or explicit” (1988, p. 2).

The admission process in different institutions started to have different requirement from one college to another with minimum high school GPA of 60% after unification in 1990. At that time the students’ number applying in tertiary level has considerably increased (MoHE and Scientific Research, 2005). Later in 2001, when the number of students went beyond the limited number of available places at the universities, the Yemeni government upgraded the minimum high school GPA score for admission into all postsecondary institutions to be GPA of 70%.

Moreover, MoHE (2010) stated that the registration procedures and requirements in colleges as science, medicine, dentistry, and pharmacology should be based on college entrance test scores together with high school GPA as a way to select the most qualified students and decrease the number of applicants at the same time. It was proposed that these colleges should formulate their own standardized entrance exam (Al-Hattami, 2012).

Specifically, the MoHE and Scientific Research demanded that graduates who want to pursue their studies at any college of Yemeni universities must be restricted by

the following: a) Must hold the Secondary General Certificate (SGC) granted from MoE for a period time not more than 5 years since its obtainment and for other certificates: not more than 2 years. b) Must choose the college based on their percentage score required for entrance to the wanted college. c) Must meet the entire application requirements in original form. d) Applicants have two choices of field of study that they wish to join as a first choice and a second choice. e) Must take the entrance examination administered by the desired colleges. Admission is implemented based on 50% of the high school GPA and 50% of the college entrance test scores and then make a comparison procedure among applicants. Thus, the enrolled students for higher education at tertiary level are the best students among their peers, however, they still confront reading comprehension problems.

As far as teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) occupies an important place in the republic of Yemen educational system, which appears in the efforts to introduce suitable English language curriculum based on new teaching/learning approaches as presented in the previous section at tertiary level. Reading is, therefore, the most important skill for foreign language learners (Abdullah & Patil, 2012) given that in 1986-1987 MoE stated that “teaching English at secondary aims to help the students gain the basic language skills, especially reading and comprehension as well as the ability to express them in English orally and in writing” (Hassen, 2009, p. 20).

Reading in CECY textbook of the secondary school are more varied, more task-based, and dedicate to provide students with a collection of different strategies for dealing with texts in a different ways according to the goal of reading. The main goal of this stage is to enable students to be independent and proficient readers. The use of

pair and group work communication is also promoted. Such a teaching methodology is expected to results in-classroom communicative environment to build up the learners' confidence and reading comprehension ability (O'Neill et al. 1995 as cited in Al-Tamimi, 2006).

Ironically, current reading instructional practices in Yemeni schools simply means reading with good pronunciation, developing vocabulary, and asking and answering questions based on sentences are extracted from the passages (Azzan, 2001). Therefore, most of the reading teachers insist to ask students to read loudly and answer questions orally or find out the meaning of new English words in that lesson into Arabic (Ba-Matraf, 1997). Such reading instruction produces weak students incapable to comprehend what they read but focuses on their pronunciation (Perfetti et al., 2005); teachers must realize that reading comprehension can be achieved through different levels of language: word level (lexical processes), sentence level (syntactic processes) and text level (Perfetti, et al., 2005).

Some Yemeni studies (Ba-Matraf, 1997) on EFL teachers' perception for reading comprehension as a cognitive skill found that many of them are unaware of reading comprehension and the students were weak in using the reading strategies necessary for reading comprehension. However, Al-Tamimi, (2006) summarized Azzan's (2001) description for reading instruction at Yemeni schools as follows:

“Students are simply requested to stand up in class and read aloud while the teacher constantly interrupts, correcting pronunciation or explaining a word.

After the comprehension passage is read aloud, the teacher once again poses questions from the textbook usually to students he/she feels are not paying

attention. The teacher finally gives the correct answers, careful to show he/she already knew them without consulting the teachers' guide and then moves on to the next section of the textbook. The answers are usually whole sentences extracted in their entirety from the reading passage" (Al-Tamimi, 2006, p.19).

Such this reading tasks presents a disconnection between the cognitive demand in EFL reading comprehension skills at the secondary school level and those required for reading at the tertiary level. In addition, in this teaching mechanism, teacher encourage students to build memorization strategies (BaMatraf, 1997) while ignoring the most essential skills in reading texts at tertiary level such as reading for main ideas (skimming), reading for details (scanning) and drawing inferences.

Although the Yemeni secondary school graduates are not trained and prepared to read successfully in English, English has an essential role in the Yemeni educational context (Azzan, 2001). Nevertheless that reading passages in CECY allow the students to read for pleasure, most of the teachers skip them and move to teach grammar and focuses on literal comprehension skills at the sentence level such as word recognition that is typically tested in final examinations (Azzan, 2001).

Consequently, the students build up their own wrong understanding for reading comprehension, which means reading carefully with a correct word pronunciation from the beginning to the end of the passage (Ba-Matraf, 1997; Bil-Fagih, 1999). Similarly, Ali (2007) found that second year students at university of science and technology average of reading comprehension level was very low (Abdullah & Patil, 2012). Moreover, as stated in Al-Tamimi (2006) many studies in the Yemeni

university level context found that Yemeni learners experience diverse problems in reading in English, for example Azzan (2001) found that second year students, studying English as a major subject at Sana'a and Mahweet faculties of education at Sana'a University face difficulties in reading comprehension. Moreover, Albadri (2001) found that first year medical students at Aden University have many reading comprehension challenges (as cited in Al-Tamimi, 2006).

From the literature that have been reviewed in this chapter, it was realized that the Yemeni EFL reading curriculum of secondary school level is mainly designed based on the communicative instructional approaches that help learners to build up their cognitive demands, which is required to deal with different types of texts. Moreover, Yemeni EST 3rd grade secondary school students are exposed to different types of reading texts; nevertheless, they challenged in reading comprehension problems when reading in English at their tertiary level. Moreover, as the Yemeni EST reading curriculum of senior secondary school level is labelled as a communicative based curriculum, so the socio-cognitive and socio-cultural SLA theories should be reflected in the curriculum, the learners should process the information from texts through using both the bottom up and top down theories interactively, as well as reading classrooms instruction should be learner-centred classrooms. Moreover, based on the Yemeni educational philosophy, the Yemeni curricula were designed based on the learners' needs aiming at preparing them for higher level of education.

In line with this matter, previous studies in EFL reading in Yemen, especially at the tertiary level, found that the mainstream of tertiary students at Yemeni science and technology faculties face many challenges in EST reading comprehension; however, previous studies in the Yemeni context did not analyse the existing reading problems at the university level by examining reading curriculum and instruction at the school level. In contrast to previous studies, the present study attempts to examine the alignment of the EST 3rd grade reading curriculum to the CLT instructional approaches as well as to find out how well this curriculum prepares the Yemeni students for reading in English at the tertiary level. A summary of the motivation to conduct the current study is shown in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2: Motivation of Current Study

