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OPTION: LINGUISTICS

**Investigating the Role of Teaching Literature in Developing EFL
Learners' Critical Thinking Skills:**

The Case of Master I Students at the University 08 Mai 1945-Guelma

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial
Fulfilment of the Requirements of the Degree of Master in Language and Culture.

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DEDICATIONS

To the candles of my life,

*I dedicate this heartfelt tribute to the ones who have illuminated my journey.
My beautiful mother, **Samia MAGHLOUT**, who has always been my guiding light
and the source of my strength.
My father, **Nacer**, who has been a constant source of inspiration and support in all
my endeavors. I am truly blessed to have **YOU** as my parents.*

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Abstract

This research aims at investigating the extent to which teaching the literature course enhances EFL learners' critical thinking skills at the University 8 Mai 1945-Guelma, Algeria. To achieve this aim, the current study adopts a qualitative-descriptive method. Two major tools of data collection were used; a structured observation of two groups of Master I students during their literature classes, and a questionnaire administered to nine (09) teachers of Literature. The analysis of the results demonstrated that teaching the literature course effectively enhances EFL learners' critical thinking skills. When EFL learners interacted with their teachers during the lessons, they displayed three major critical thinking skills, which are questioning, interpretation, and inference. Hence, it was found that teachers participating in this study perceived literature as a significant tool for developing thinking skills. As a result, studying literature is, then, a good opportunity for EFL learners to practice thinking, and to guide their thinking towards criticality. Finally, the study suggested some pedagogical implications for teachers, EFL students, and faculty.

Keywords: Teaching Literature, Critical Thinking Skills, Master I, EFL learners, University of 8 Mai 1945-Guelma.

List of Abbreviations

AR: Active Reading

CT: Critical Thinking

CTS: Critical Thinking Skills

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

PBL: Problem-Based Learning

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ARABIC SUMMARY الملخص

General Introduction

Developing EFL students' thinking skills has been always set as a crucial aim in higher education. Notably, in literature classes, students are required to think critically and utilize their thinking abilities to analyze the texts they read. In the light of this, numerous studies have demonstrated that teaching literature has the potential to promote higher-order thinking skills, including analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Serafini, 2014). This is primarily because literature provides learners with a unique opportunity to engage with complex ideas, delve deeply into the meaning of language, and critically assess arguments and perspectives. On one hand, critical thinking is an indispensable quality in today's world and can be effectively cultivated through the use of literature as an educational tool. On the other hand, literature serves as an invaluable resource for EFL learners, as it not only offers a wealth of background information related to the subject matter of their literature courses, but also fosters the development of their critical thinking abilities.

1. Statement of the problem

Research has shown a positive correlation between teaching literature and developing critical thinking skills in EFL learners. Through the analysis of literary texts, learners are exposed to complex ideas and perspectives that require critical thinking. This process not only improves their language proficiency but also enhances their analytical and reasoning abilities, which can be applied to other areas of their learning. By incorporating literature into EFL instruction, teachers can facilitate the development of critical thinking skills and prepare learners for academic and professional success. However, implementing literature in EFL learning is quite challenging for students due to their lack of knowledge of how to interpret literary texts using their CTS. The situation of the Algerian EFL learners at the Department of English at the University 8 Mai 1945-Guelma, is not an exception. One of the several reasons behind this is the teachers' disregard for providing learners with good encouragement in

classroom activities that contribute deeply to motivating the students' reasoning. Therefore, the current study aims to examine the role of teaching literature in enhancing critical thinking skills among EFL learners.

2. The Aim of the Study and Research Questions

This study aims at investigating the role of teaching the literature course on enhancing EFL learners' critical thinking skills at the University 8 Mai 1945-Guelma. Further, it attempts to explore teachers' awareness of the significance of literary texts in boosting their students' CTS. Besides, this will be achieved by observing how students actively engage with the assigned literary works and how teachers effectively motivate them to improve their thinking abilities. Therefore, the findings of this study would mostly contribute to answering the following questions:

- To what extent does teaching the literature course enhance the critical thinking skills of EFL learners at the University of Guelma?
- What are the perceptions of EFL teachers regarding the use of literature as a tool to develop critical thinking skills?

3. Research Methodology and Design

3.1. Research Method

The current study adopts the qualitative-descriptive method in order to provide a detailed picture of the issue under investigation. This method fits to describe a naturally-occurring phenomenon, which is, in this study, the role of teaching literature in enhancing EFL learners' critical thinking skills. Teaching the literature course is actually taking place among Master I students at the department of English, University of Guelma. It is not a manipulation done by the researcher. Thus, both variables of the study: teaching literature, and critical thinking skills are examined in their natural settings. Additionally, it opted for the qualitative approach to deal with the qualitative nature of data that comes in a form of words and statements

that reflect participants' views.

3.2. Population of the Study

The population of this study consists of Master I students, and teachers of literature at the Department of Letters and English Language-University 8 Mai 1945-Guelma, during the academic year 2022/2023. The sample is composed of two groups of Master students' consisting of fifty-three (53) learners, a combination of both male and female students studying EFL, in addition to nine (09) teachers of literature who were selected randomly. The selection of this sample is based on the assumption that at this stage, students are supposed to be familiar with thinking skills such as analysis, interpretation, and explanation, among other skills, and that they have been dealing with literature classes for at least 7 semesters. Additionally, the main reason behind selecting Master I teachers of literature is related to the fact that they have a wealth of experience and knowledge in this field. Hence, they will help in collecting more reliable data.

3.3. Tools of Data Collection

Two main research instruments are used to collect relevant data. A structured observation among Master I students during their Literature classes, and a questionnaire that is distributed to teachers of literature to examine their perspectives on the subject being studied. The questionnaire consists of a mixture of both closed-ended and open-ended questions, and it is composed of fourteen (14) questions, with a focus on providing predetermined options for the teachers to choose from, when necessary. Further, two sessions per week are attended with Master I students during their literature classes with two teachers to observe their critical thinking skills when interacting with their literature teachers.

4. Structure of the dissertation

This dissertation is divided into two major sections, in addition to the general

introduction and conclusion. The first part is subdivided into two theoretical chapters, while the second part entirely focuses on the practical chapter of the study. The first chapter is entitled “Teaching Literature”. It presents a summary of the subject matter, encompassing its general overview, definition, characteristics, and types. It also sheds light to discuss the various models and approaches for teaching literature that Carter & Long (1991) discuss in their book “*Teaching Literature*”, and finally, it presents some key factors for the importance of literature in EFL classrooms. In the end, it tackles the importance of a good selection of literary texts.

The second chapter is entitled “Critical Thinking”. Again, it deals with its general overview, along with the major skills and dispositions that characterize critical thinkers. It additionally addresses several strategies to enhance critical thinking, namely; active reading, problem-based learning, and questioning. Moreover, it also provides insight into critical thinking and teaching EFL in Algeria. Finally, it tends to highlight the importance of literature to enhance CTS.

The second part of the research contains the third chapter, which is entitled “Field Investigation”. It presents the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered from the teachers’ questionnaire and the classroom observation. Additionally, this chapter includes a section dedicated to the recommendations and limitations of the study.

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Introduction

The status of English as a lingua franca and an international language, shape a strong motive for people to learn it. Over time, EFL teaching has evolved from emphasizing language knowledge to prioritizing language usage and practical application. As a consequence, there was a need to consider communicating using the target language and knowing the target culture. Hence, EFL scholars and EFL teachers insisted upon the teaching of literature as a means to develop learners' English level. As a matter of fact, teaching literature in EFL classes was a subject of debate among researchers and teachers as they argued between its importance and difficulty. Couched differently, the proponents of teaching literature in EFL classes hold the view that it is crucial in enhancing the students' language skills, thinking skills, and creativity. In contrast, the opponents believed that it is extremely hard to involve the target language literature in the EFL program because of the different beliefs, traditions, and language levels between the target and the native language.

In this respect, the ensuing chapter consists of a brief overview of what is meant by literature and literary texts, the various models and approaches to teaching literature in the EFL context, the importance of literature in EFL classroom, and the importance of the appropriate selection of literary texts in order to have fruitful results.

1.1. Overview of Literature

Over time and in many contexts, the definition of literature has varied. In other words, literature is not an easy term to be defined because of its complex divergence. When it comes to English language teaching, Lazar (1993) limited the concept of 'literature' to mean fictional novels, plays, short stories, and poems. With the aim of providing another up-to-date perspective of literature in foreign language classrooms, in other words Lazar, defined literature in a narrow sense, encompassing fictional novels, plays, short stories, and poems. This limited definition suggested that Lazar's focus was primarily on traditional forms of literary works. On

the other hand, Watkins (2017) stated that literature can also comprise “modern novels, graphic novels, short stories, plays, poems, song lyrics, play scripts, screenplays, and even comics” (as cited in Kellil, 2021, p.113). This definition presents a broader understanding of literature in the foreign language classrooms. According to Watkins, literature can include not only traditional forms but also modern novels, graphic novels, song lyrics and screenplays. This expanded definition acknowledged the evolving nature and recognized a wide range of literary genres and formats. Other authors, such as Klarer (2005) noted that “Etymologically the word literature is derived from the Latin word “litteratura” which is, in turn, derived from the word “littera”, which means letters”. However, in recent years, teaching literature at the universities in foreign classes attracted so much attention from a significant body of applied linguists, educationists, and people in the field, as Zafeiriadou (2001) asserted “during the 1980's there was a strong reawakening of interest in literature and language teaching” (p.8). Collie and Slater (2001, p.4) also pointed out that “in reading literary texts, students have also to cope with language intended for native speakers and thus they gain additional familiarity with many different linguistic uses”. Both quotes highlighted the importance of literature and language teaching. The first quote suggested a historical trend of increased interest in this field, while the second quote underscored the benefits of reading literary texts for language learners. Together, they demonstrated the significance of incorporating literature into language education and the value it can bring to students' linguistic development.

Similarly, other scholars go deeply and provide a scientific definition of literature. Terry (1996) offered both a broad and a narrow definition of the term. The broad definition encompasses "everything that has been or will be written," implying that literature encompasses all written works, regardless of genre or form. On the other hand, the narrow definition focuses on specific criteria such as functionality and ambiguity, omitting considerations about the inherent nature of literature itself. This implies that the narrow definition seeks to categorize

literature based on its practical purpose and ability to evoke uncertainty or multiple interpretations. Besides, some academics provide definitions based on predetermined standards. For instance, Cuddon (1976) contended that “literature” encompasses pieces that fall under popular categories, including, epic, drama, lyric, novel, and short stories. Other researchers, however, based their definitions of literature on the semantic theory of meaning and its prototype. It was defined by Wellek (1978) as any work of excellence that makes a permanent claim, while McRae (1991) considered it as any work whose innovative content elicits a reader's reaction or response. In the same line of thought, other scholars defined literature according to what it can serve, such as Bennett and Royle (1995) who asserted that:

Literature serves to provide an exquisite excitement of emotions and a very deep insight into the nature of reality. It translates various experiences of life into various patterns and thus helps readers discover meaning in their lives. It provides them with insight to deal with the people and world around them. The literary world is regarded as a mingling of fact and fiction (p.191)

Literature, as stated in the quote above, is a source of intense; emotional engagement and deep insights into the nature of reality. It transforms various life experiences into meaningful patterns, allowing readers to discover purpose and significance in their lives. It also provides readers with valuable understanding and perspectives to navigate the complexities of the world and the people around them. This means that by blending fact and fiction, the literary world captures the essence of human experiences while allowing for creative expression and exploration. In this way, literature holds the power to both entertain and enlighten, making it a vital medium for personal growth and a deeper understanding of the human condition.

1.1.1. Literary Texts

A literary text is any written work, such as a book or poem, which is intended to entertain or tell a tale, as in a fictional novel including characters like Sherlock Holmes, and Robinson

Crusoe (Hadj Mimoune, 2017). To put it differently, it is a section of literature that includes poetry, prose, and theatre in a variety of styles. It is distinguished from other types of writing in that it involves specific artistic features and devices.

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Encyclopedic Dictionary, literary texts are "writings that are valued as works of art, especially fiction, drama, and poetry" (1994, p.527). These creative writings seek to foster various attitudes, including those of love, compassion, feelings, happiness, and motivation, and to increase learners' respect and comprehension of life. Similarly, Diyanni (2002) believed that literature has great value "though transports us to the world, created by imagination, yet evokes our emotions of love, sorrow, joy, and pity." Consequently, literature offers knowledge, understanding, and appreciation, and it has a valuable role in education and a proper place in language learning.

1.1.2. Types of Literary Texts

As aptly explained by Lucas (1990), there are two main types of texts; artistic and functional. Novels, short stories, essays, poems, and plays are examples of artistic texts, which are typically the literary genres. Whereas, Functional texts consist of whatever texts other than the artistic as shown in the figure below (as cited in Bousbai, 2009, p.26)

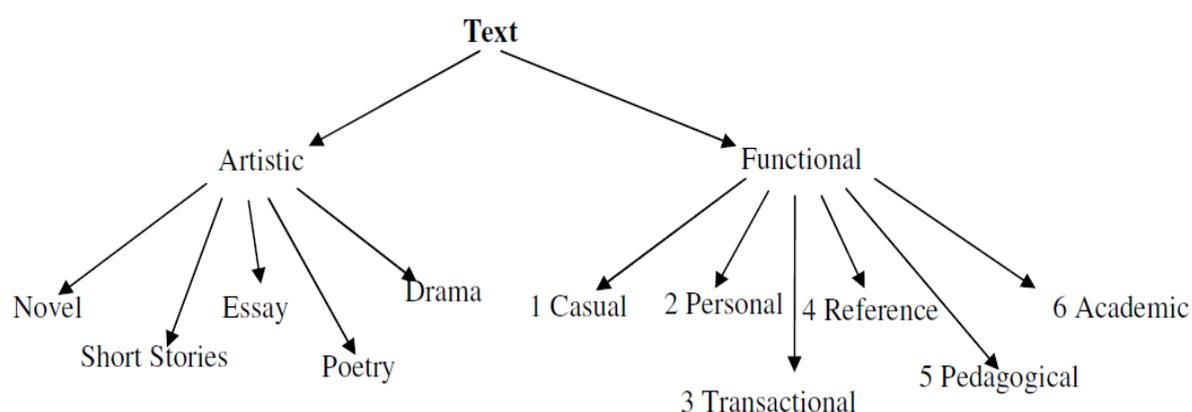


Figure 1.1: Artistic Texts vs. Functional Texts (Adapted from: Bousbai, 2009, p.26)

According to Lucas, functional texts can be classified into six distinct categories. These classifications are used to categorize different types of texts based on their purpose and

function. The first category identified was casual texts. This category included newspapers, magazines, and non-fiction materials. Casual texts are typically written for general readership and provide information on current events, entertainment, or other topics of interest. Moving on to the second category, personal texts include letters and diaries. These texts are primarily used for personal communication and self-expression and often to convey thoughts, emotions, and experiences more intimately and informally. The third category comprises transactional texts commonly employed for business and professional purposes. Examples of transactional texts include business letters, legal documents, reports, and instructions. Such texts are characterized by formal language and specific formatting requirements.

Next, reference texts make up the fourth category. These texts serve as sources of information and include dictionaries, catalogs, directories, and inventories. Mainly, they are designed to provide quick and accurate information on various subjects, often organized in a systematic and easily accessible manner. Moving along to the fifth category, pedagogical texts are specifically created for educational purposes. Textbooks and encyclopedias fall into this category, as they offer structured information and instructional content to support learning and knowledge acquisition. Lastly, academic texts constitute the sixth category within the functional text. This category encompasses research papers, theses, specialist books, and journals. Academic texts are scholarly in nature and are produced within the academic community to advance knowledge and contribute to specific fields of study. Overall, by organizing functional texts into these six categories, it becomes easier to comprehend and analyze the different types of texts based on their intended purpose and target audience (1990, as cited in Bousbai, 2009, p.26).

1.1.3. Characteristics of Literary Texts

Based on the research conducted by Arab (1993, p.27), literary texts are characterized

by four main features. Firstly, literary texts are designed to be read and comprehended, serving as an example of language usage, i.e.; it requires the reader's engagement and understanding to fulfill its purpose. Secondly, it encompasses the illustration and expression of artistic sensibility within specific literary genres, such as fiction, poetry, and drama, each with its own unique history and formal laws. That is to say, the mentioned genres should be expressed and illustrated in a controlled way to evoke the readers' emotions. Thirdly, a literary text is considered an artifact that can be analyzed within its socio-historical context, including the writer's biography, which contributes to its interpretation and understanding. Finally, a literary text is a semiotic construct with a distinct set of devices and codes that differentiate it as literary, making it amenable to interpretation and evaluation. This means that any literary text includes specific devices and elements such as figurative language, narrative structure, and character development that set it apart from other texts, making it open to interpretation, analysis, and evaluation by readers. To sum up, the features above enable readers to delve into the richness and depth of any literary texts.

1.2. Traditional Models for Teaching Literature

In the EFL context, teaching literature course was and still a difficult and challenging task since it encompasses various themes, ideas, and cultures that may be interesting or boring to students. Nowadays, integrating literature in language teaching and learning is considered an effective technique for teaching basic language skills; reading, writing, listening, and speaking, and language areas such as; vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation (Hişmanoğlu, 2005).

Therefore, three models were presented to elucidate how literature can be taught successfully. The cultural model, language-based model, and personal development model are the three basic models for teaching literature that Carter and Long (1991) discuss in their book "*Teaching Literature*". The emphasis on texts in each of these three literature teaching models

varies. For instance, the texts are employed as a focal point for grammatical and structural study in the language model, as cultural objects in the cultural model, and as a stimulant for personal development activities in the personal growth model.

1.2.1. Language Model

It is a student-centered model that ultimately based on the study of the language of the literary text. The teacher here is supposed to exemplify several kinds of linguistic designs, such as literal and figurative language. Also, it is considered the most popular way of teaching literature in EFL classes. This model directs students' attention to well-known language areas including grammar, vocabulary, and discourse while also assisting them in deciphering and interpreting the text. Additionally, students can understand and appreciate the literature more intelligently and aesthetically by learning particular language elements. This method effectively teaches basic EFL activities like role-playing, prediction problems, jumbled sentences, summary writing, and creative writing. It enables instructors to utilize these exercises to examine literary works and accomplish particular language goals (Yimwilai, 2015).

According to Healy (2010), with this model, students examine texts to find particular linguistic components, such as vocabulary items and grammatical structures. If EFL instructors wish to concentrate on a certain language aspect, they can use this method and implement tasks, including summary exercises, gap-filling exercises, and grammar practices. The fact notwithstanding, the language model has encountered several criticisms because of “The ‘disconnection’ or distance between the student, the text, and the literary purpose of the text” (Healy, 2010, p.179). In other words, this model emphasized the language and completely disregards the appreciation of the literary work.

1.2.2. Cultural Model

It is recognized as the oldest model to literature teaching, this approach appears to be a

teacher-centered approach at which the teacher affords his learners with the social, political and historical background of the texts during the lecture. Yimwilai (2015) suggested that the cultural model can help EFL students to comprehend literary works in the context of the target culture, including its literary history and genres. As a result, with the implementation of the present model students can better appreciate literary works and develop an appreciation for other cultures and beliefs compared to their own by learning about the cultural context.

Furthermore, in order to investigate the fundamental ideas and concepts of a text, students in this teaching mode are first provided with a background on the text. Additionally, they learn about many cultures and thought processes through this approach, and contrast them with their own. Healy (2010) claimed that this model encourages “students to learn about different cultures and patterns of thought, and either directly or indirectly, will compare them to their own”. This implies that the cultural model promotes students’ understanding of diverse cultures and cognitive frameworks, facilitating a direct or indirect comparison with their own cultural perspectives. Besides, exposure to cultural and content-based material is crucial for foreign English language learners since it raises their language proficiency, self-assurance, and aspirations. Simply put, integrating culture while teaching literature benefits EFL students by allowing them to learn about other cultures.

1.2.3. Personal Growth Model

The major concern of the personal growth model is to relate both the language and cultural models alongside involving the learners linguistically and culturally through reading a given text. Yimwilai (2015) stated that by emphasizing language use in a particular cultural context, the enrichment model, also known as the personal growth model, seeks to connect the language and cultural models. In similar thought, including students' personal, intellectual, and emotional experiences allows them to articulate their thoughts and feelings while connecting

their cultural and personal experiences to the ideas communicated in the text. Similarly, with various themes and topics, the model also aids learners in developing their knowledge of concepts and language. Cadorath and Harris (1998) approved that literary books have an intrinsic value and merely guide readers to infer meaning from their personal experiences. This means that both of them argued that literary books possess inherent worth and serves as guiding tools for readers to derive meaning from their individual experiences.

Furthermore, this approach combines cultural and linguistic perspectives and encourages students to actively engage with literary texts. This paradigm highlighted also the development of a sincere appreciation for literature in addition to language development. Accordingly, students here are not just passive and receivers of knowledge as in the cultural model; but are encouraged to become autonomous and think critically, independently, and share their views and opinions. To put it concisely, this approach emphasized the student, while the teacher serves as a learning facilitator. However, this method has a drawback in that it might not give EFL students a clear language focus (Healy, 2010, p.180).

In conclusion, teaching literature in the EFL context is a challenging task due to the diverse themes, ideas, and cultures involved. However, integrating literature in language teaching has proven to be an effective technique for developing basic language skills and areas such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Three models have been presented to facilitate successful literature teaching, namely; the language model, cultural model, and personal growth model.

From the three main models described above, it can be said that these three models of teaching literature differ in terms of their focus on texts. In the language model, texts are used as a focus for grammatical and structural analysis; in the cultural model, texts are used as cultural artifacts, and in the personal growth model, texts are considered a stimulus for personal growth activities. Each approach has different strengths and weaknesses. Savvidou (2004)

commented that the cultural model tends to be teacher-centered, and there is little opportunity for extended language work. Therefore, what is needed is an integrated approach model comprising key elements of all three models so that literature becomes accessible to EFL students and most beneficial for their development. As a result, the integrated approach is “a potentially powerful pedagogic tool” (Savvidou, 2004)

1.3. Approaches to Teaching Literature

Carter and Long (1991) introduced six approaches of teaching literature to assist students to comprehend literary texts effectively and to encourage learning, namely, the paraphrastic approach, the Language-based approach, the moral philosophical approach, the information-based approach, the stylistic approach, and the personal response approach. However, the current study chose to explore the last three approaches.

First, the information-based approach; as the name implies, this approach represents a way of teaching knowledge about literature where literature is seen as a means for offering a source of information to learners (Carter & Long, 1991). It seeks to provide students with background information and historical context related to the literary work and deepen students' comprehension of the text and assist them in connecting to a wider historical and cultural context. Second, the investigation of the literary text as a work of art is the main focus of the stylistic approach. The Stylistic Approach enables students to analyze the writing style and investigate how word choices, sentence structure, and sound devices affect the text's overall meaning and impact. Finally, the personal response method placed a strong emphasis on the value of individual interpretation and contemplation in comprehending and enjoying language and literature. Using their own experiences, feelings, and ideals as a prism for interpretation. This approach invites students to investigate their own responses and reactions to a literary work or linguistic element (Engku Suhaimi et al., 2021, p.400).

1.3.1. The Information-Based Approach

According to Rashid et al. (2010, p.88), this method of teaching literature involves viewing literature as a means of providing students with a source of knowledge. It is mostly a teacher-centered learning method where students actively receive feedback regarding the texts that have been presented by the instructors. Teachers using this approach emphasized the analysis of literary elements such as plot, characters, themes, and setting. The goal here is to enhance students' understanding of the text by providing them with the necessary information and enabling them to make connections between the text and its broader context.

1.3.2. The Stylistic Approach

Lazar (1993), assumed that this approach guides students toward a closer comprehension of literary texts via linguistic analysis and literary appreciation. This approach has two main goals: to empower students to interpret the texts in meaningful ways, and to deepen their language understanding and knowledge. Furthermore, it focused on dissecting the unusual language patterns found in literary texts, especially poetry. Teachers using this approach guided students in examining the use of literary devices, exploring the author's choice of words and phrases, and understanding the impact of stylistic choices on the meaning and interpretation of the text. The main objective of this approach is to help students understand the variety and power of all the forms of language to convey the whole range of human emotions.

1.3.3. The Personal Response Approach

This approach is centered on the learner's reaction toward the literary works. The personal response approach encouraged students to engage with literature on a personal and emotional level. Teachers using this approach prioritized students' subjective responses, opinions, and interpretations of the text. This approach aimed to develop students' empathy, critical thinking, and ability to relate the text to their own experiences and emotions. It

recognized that literature could evoke different responses and meanings for each individual (Rashid et al., 2010, p.88).

Therefore, even if it can be said that this method is learner-centered, the teacher could be involved as a mediator and facilitator in guiding students to develop their own ability to read, comprehend, and enjoy literary texts. Nevertheless, this process should be facilitated by the teacher so that students can engage with the material and add to the outcome based on their prior knowledge and expectations (McRae, 1991).

1.4. The Significance of Literature in EFL Classroom

The use of literature in EFL classrooms is extremely important because it has many advantages that are particularly beneficial to improve EFL students' skills. Collie and Slater (1990, p.5) list a few key factors that influence a language teacher's decision to incorporate literature into the classroom. These primary goals are listed in the following subsections.

1.4.1. Language Enrichment

EFL Students can enhance their writing abilities and gain more confidence using appropriate grammar principles and a variety of sentence forms through the use of literature. Learning about sentence creation, structure, and concept connections can be difficult at different levels (Collie & Slater, 1995, p.5). However, students can overcome these challenges by reading literary works and practice speaking in plays and prose. In addition, reading literature can introduce EFL learners to a variety of linguistic idioms and customs by allowing them to examine the language employed in literary writings. Students are prompted to consider language usage norms when they are encouraged to study literary language (Lazar, 1993, p.18).

Furthermore, literature in language teaching serves as a language model, as the close relationship between language and thinking means that one's capacity for independent thought relies on mastery of the language (Kelly, 1996, p.11). Nonetheless, because authors usually utilize complex sentences and sophisticated and lavish words, literature frequently provides a

fuller model of language than speech, which is evident when teachers, students, parents, and librarians frequently observe children using vocabulary they have learned from their favorite books, novels, or short stories. Whereas, individuals in conversation tend to use a limited number of words (Rahayu, 2011).

1.4.2. Cultural Enrichment

Many language learners assumed that visiting the country where a specific language is spoken, interacting with native speakers, and using the language in everyday conversation are the greatest ways to comprehend the culture of that nation (Collie & Slater, 1995, p.5). But, reading literary works like short tales, novels, plays, and poetry is a more practical and economical approach to learning about a language's culture. For instance, because the characters in a story originate from various socio-cultural backgrounds, readers might learn about diverse cultures. This can shed light on the emotions, ideas, convictions, conventions, traditions, and daily lives of the characters (Arafah, 2018).

The use of literature helps EFL students to gain a distinctive perspective on the cultures related to the target language through enrichment activities in EFL. As a result, learners can experience new traditions, customs, human values, and alternative ways of thinking through these activities. In general, EFL students can learn more about civilizations and cultures that are different from their own in terms of social structure, politics, history, and culture. In other words, by being engaged in these activities, students can better understand the culture.

1.4.3. Personal Involvement

EFL students may find themes and situations in literary texts that are similar to their own experiences, which may spur greater interest and drive in the subject. Literature acts as a mirror that enriches students' perceptions of social reality. In similar thought, learners can make links between the concepts, occurrences, and things portrayed in literary works and their own

life. This can boost their enjoyment of reading, "stimulate their creativity, build critical thinking skills, and increase emotional awareness" (Lazar, 1993, p.19).

Developing a pleasure to read leads students to be motivated and able to comprehend literary writings. Brumfit and Carter (1986) argued that the reader is placed in an active interactional role in working with and making sense of this (literary) language (p.15). This implies that creating an enjoyable reading experience fosters student motivation and enhances their understanding of literature. Carter and Long (1991), added that literature had a broader impact on developing students' knowledge as it not only enhanced their personal growth through reading but also improved their relationships with individuals and institutions around them (p.3). This quote suggested that literature played a significant role in students' overall development. Through reading, learners could explore different characters, situations, and themes, allowing them to gain insights and develop their own identities. Additionally, literature often explored social, cultural, and institutional contexts, enabling students to understand and navigate the complexities of the world around them. Overall, by engaging with literature, students not only expanded their knowledge but also developed their interpersonal skills and adaptability in various social settings.

Furthermore, personal involvement means taking an active and enthusiastic interest in what the students are studying. This kind of participation is essential for assisting students in maintaining their attention and sharpening it when it comes to speaking, writing, listening, and reading. For instance, when reading a novel, students must learn how to concentrate and focus on the text in order to be drawn into the narrative. Finding out how the story develops and ends now takes precedence over comprehending the specific terminology and phrases. When readers become more invested in the narrative, they could grow emotionally attached to some of the characters, which may have a favorable effect on how well they learn the language as a whole (Arafah, 2018).

1.5. The Importance of a Good Selection of Literary Texts

Many scholars suggested specific criteria for selecting the appropriate literary texts to be used in teaching EFL. This requires the teacher to investigate the student himself, his linguistic proficiency, his cultural and literary background (Lazar, 1993, p.13). However, assigning literary texts that may suit the whole class and foster the students' interaction is a very vital task on the part of the teacher. Maley and Duff (1997) suggested selecting literary materials that fit learners' linguistic abilities. They argued that if the written structure of the literary text was simple enough for students to understand, they would desire more access to literary works and find these writings more relevant to their experiences. Lazar (1993, p.14) contended that literature offers "meaningful and memorable contexts" for understanding and interpreting foreign languages. Similarly, Carter and Long (1991), among others, have emphasized the linguistic, inspirational, and cultural advantages of literature.

If literature is not chosen in relation to the student's interests and level, it may be challenging to be understood. In this respect, Lazar (1993), McRae (1997), and Maley and Duff (1997) insisted upon the significance of choosing texts that are appropriate, fascinating, and relevant depending on factors including age, comprehension level, cultural background, linguistic skill, literacy background, and suitability. Accordingly, Brumfit and Carter (1986) pointed out that proficient readers of literary texts acquire literary competence in the sense that they have an implicit grasp of, and familiarity with specific norms that allow them to convert the words on the page of a play or other literary work into literary meanings. However, according to Lazar (1993), students who lack literary knowledge but are linguistically skilled may understand each word on the page without being able to comprehend the literary meanings underlying the texts. The literary background of the students and their linguistic proficiency do not necessarily go together. Equally important, in selecting literary texts, the instructor must consider the extent to which the student's cultural background may aid or hinder their

understanding of the work, as well as how much background the instructor has to impart for learners to have at least a basic knowledge of the text (Carter & Long, 1991, p.18).

Ali (1994) also claimed that the texts encourage students to regard literature as an enriching experience in their lives. He continued to say that in culturally known texts, the reader brings past experiences, prior knowledge, cultural and psychological assumptions to the text, all of which might play a part in determining the meaning of the text to be read. As a result, it is evident that for EFL courses, culturally recognizable texts should be chosen to transmit the necessary language abilities. In the same line of thought, Alemi (2011) asserted that literary works that speak to the needs and interests of the learners are more suited for aesthetic reading, which further enhances reading competence, interpretative and inference capacities, grasping various levels of meaning and developing critical thinking skills.

Conclusion

To sum up, the status of English as a lingua franca and an international language has led to a shift in focus in EFL teaching towards developing learners' ability to use the language effectively in communication and understanding of the target culture. Literature has emerged as a valuable tool in achieving these goals, with proponents arguing that it can enhance language skills, thinking skills, and creativity. However, there is debate among researchers and teachers regarding the difficulty and importance of teaching literature in the EFL context, with opponents citing challenges related to cultural differences and language levels. This chapter has provided an overview of various models and approaches to teaching literature in the EFL context, highlighting the importance of selecting appropriate literary texts to achieve successful outcomes. Overall, the teaching of literature can play an essential role in developing learners' language proficiency and cultural awareness, making it a valuable component of EFL teaching.

Chapter Two: Critical Thinking

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Introduction

The goal of education is to help students to become critical thinkers. This leads to a debate on the importance of critical thinking among many researchers. Teaching necessary thinking skills has received much attention in modern education, especially since the shift in approach from teacher-centeredness to learner-centeredness. Therefore, success in various areas of life, including academics, work, and personal relationships, depends on developing critical thinking (CT) as a fundamental skill. Such skill can be acquired through practice and questioning, gathering information, considering different perspectives, being open-minded, and considering the evidence before making a conclusion.

In light of this, the current chapter aims to provide a comprehensive overview of CT, along with the key elements of thought, characteristics of critical thinkers, in addition to the skills and dispositions that characterize essential thinkers, and several effective strategies to assist EFL learners in enhancing their reasoning, including active reading, problem-based learning; and questioning. Additionally, it provides insight into critical thinking and teaching EFL in Algeria and, finally, how the teaching of literature can be used to improve CTS.

2.1. Overview of Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is a vital skill that helps individuals to analyze and evaluate different types of information effectively. It has a long history and has been recognized as an important concept since Greek philosophers. Socrates, a Greek philosopher, is considered the father of critical thinking. He emphasized the importance of asking questions to improve one's understanding of the world. Socrates stated that "The unexamined life is not worth living" (as cited in Kraut, 2006, p.228). Other ancient philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle, also believed in the importance of reasoning. They adhered that critical thinking was essential to better understand the natural world and human society. In this concept, Plato, a student of Socrates, built upon his mentor's ideas by developing the "dialectic method"; a method of

inquiry that involves a back-and-forth exchange of ideas to arrive at a deeper understanding of a subject. This method involves questioning assumptions, examining evidence, and considering alternative viewpoints to arrive at a more accurate and nuanced understanding of a subject (Dybics & Pyles, 2011, p.302).

Throughout history, other scholars have also highlighted the importance of critical thinking. Francis Bacon, a 17th-century philosopher, emphasized the need to question established beliefs and traditions in order to arrive at new insights and discoveries. As he famously stated, "If a man will begin with certainties, he shall end in doubts; but if he will be content to begin with doubts, he shall end in certainties" (as cited in Thomke, 2020, p.46). Rene Descartes, stressed the importance of skepticism and doubt in pursuing knowledge. He believed that only by doubting everything could one arrive at a solid foundation of knowledge, as he famously expressed, "I think, therefore I am" (Dicker, 2013, p.1).

The Greek word *Kritikos*, which means the capacity to judge, decide, and discern, is the origin of the English word "critical." Yet, because different scholars approach the term from different perspectives, there is no clear definition of CT. As stated by Butterworth and Thwaites (2013, p.7), "being critical" and "thinking critically" are two different things. They believed that critical thinking objectively assesses something rather than just criticizing it or expressing disapproval.

Every individual is born with the natural capacity for thought, which aids in learning and comprehending their surroundings. Reasoning, analysis, problem-solving, and decision-making are used to do this (Nickerson, et al. 1985). Yet, a number of factors, including religion and society, can impact how people think. Thus, people must improve their critical thinking abilities in order to overcome this by developing their reasoning.

Many Researchers and academics show disagreement upon the definition of critical thinking. Dewey (1933, p.13) declared that "reflective thinking" is a term used to describe a

specific type of thinking that involves giving a subject careful thought. In other words, it refers to the process of critically examining a topic or problem, considering different perspectives and potential solutions, and engaging in deep contemplation before arriving at a conclusion or making a decision. Equally important, according to Paul (1993), exercising critical thinking is an active and intentional process which requires individuals to take responsibility for their thinking by accessing, analyzing, and assessing their own logic. By doing so, they can develop more rational and informed perspectives, make better decisions, and communicate their ideas more effectively. In addition, Chance (1986) pointed out that critical thinking is the capacity to evaluate and analyze data, formulate and organize concepts, defend viewpoints, compare and contrast, draw conclusions, and solve problems.

Moreover, according to Griggs (1998), scientific reasoning, analytical techniques, gathering facts, examination of arguments, and conclusions are other components of critical thinking. Yet, reasoning is the process of assessing the evidence supporting assertions and determining whether conclusions logically flow from the evidence. Last but not least, Maiorana (1992) asserted that the goals of critical thinking are to understand, assess viewpoints, and resolve issues.

Similarly, Paul and Elder (2013) contended that humans are unique among conscious beings in that they have the capacity to reason. Nevertheless, they point out that much of our reasoning might be incorrect, prejudiced, and ignorant. The ability of critical thinking, which Paul and Elder (2013) defined as the process of reflecting on our thinking with the intention of changing it, is not possessed by all people. All people have the ability to think, but not everyone can think critically. In the same line of thought, Lau (2011) declared that CT entails thinking clearly, logically, precisely, and methodically while conforming to logic and scientific reasoning rules. Thus, objectivity, order, and the avoidance of prejudice or fragmentation are necessary for critical thinking.

According to Schaferman (1991), critical thinking is the process of seeking accurate and timely knowledge about the world through thoughtful, responsible, and skillful decision-making. Similar to this, Wood (2002) claimed that critical thinking entails the habit of logically differentiating between right and wrong based on the data we come across every day. Additionally, Rainbolt and Dwyer (2012) asserted that critical thinking is the capacity to make decisions based on solid arguments. In a nutshell, CT essentially means evaluating and filtering information to determine what to accept or reject. Hence, making decisions with critical thinking requires being deliberate and thoughtful.

All in all, critical thinking is a skill that has been valued by thinkers and scholars throughout history. Nonetheless, some people might not be aware of its presence, causing them to accept information without questioning its accuracy or dependability. Others, on the other hand, have a tendency to assess, query, and scrutinize whatever information is given to them before determining whether or not to accept it.

2.2. The Elements of Thought

Over the years, critical thinking has been a subject of interest for many scholars from various disciplines. Each scholar brings their unique perspective and approach to the field, resulting in a diverse range of models and frameworks for understanding and applying critical thinking skills. These different models often emphasize different aspects of CT, such as cognitive processes, dispositions, standards of reasoning, or problem-solving strategies. Some models may focus more on the analytical aspects of critical thinking, while others may emphasize the importance of creativity or empathy in the process. The variations in these models reflect the multidimensionality of critical thinking and the recognition that it encompasses various cognitive and affective aspects. One such model, presented by Paul and Elder, has been chosen for this particular study due to its comprehensive and encompassing nature in presenting CTS.

Paul and Elder's critical thinking framework is a comprehensive approach to understanding and improving the reasoning and problem-solving abilities of individuals. The framework is based on the idea that critical thinking involves a set of interconnected elements or components that must be used in a systematic and structured way in order to arrive at accurate and well-supported conclusions.

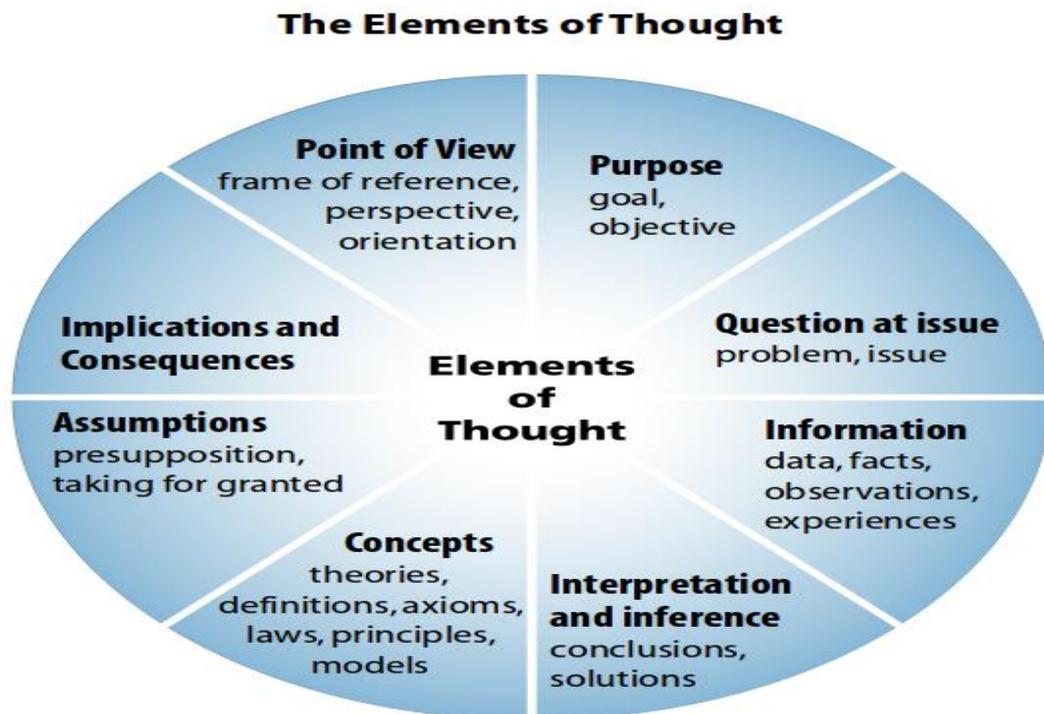


Figure 2. 1: Elements of Thought

In their *Miniature Guide of Critical Thinking*, Paul and Elder (2006) identified eight key elements of thought that are essential for effective reasoning and problem-solving. If individuals master these elements of thought, they can achieve good-quality thinking. As Figure 2.1 displays, the elements of thought are purpose, the question at issue, information, inference, concepts, assumptions, implications and consequences, and point of view.

The purpose of reasoning is the ultimate goal or objective of the reasoning process. This element provides a clear focus for the reasoning and helps to ensure that the conclusions that are reached are relevant and meaningful. Additionally, the question is an attempt to figure something out, to settle some question, or solve some problem. This element is important

because it helps to ensure that the reasoning is conducted in a structured and systematic way, which in turn increases the likelihood of arriving at accurate and well-supported conclusions.

Moreover, inference is the skill of drawing logical conclusions based on the available evidence. It requires the ability to use evidence to make predictions or extrapolate beyond the available information; while avoiding unwarranted assumptions or hasty generalizations. Furthermore, concepts and ideas are the key concepts or ideas that underpin the reasoning process. It is important because it helps individuals to identify and understand the fundamental concepts and principles that are relevant to the issue or problem being addressed. Equally important, assumptions are another key element of the framework. This element refers to the beliefs or presuppositions that underlie the reasoning process. Assumptions can be conscious or unconscious and can have a significant impact on the conclusions that are reached.

Last but not least, implications and consequences are all reasoning that leads to conclusions and has repercussions. This element is critical because it helps individuals to understand the broader implications of their conclusions and to communicate their findings effectively to others. Finally, Point of view is the perspective or position from which the reasoning is conducted, it helps individuals to recognize the biases and assumptions that may be influencing their thinking and to consider alternative perspectives.

To conclude, by breaking down the reasoning process into these distinct elements, Paul and Elder's critical thinking framework provides a structured and systematic approach to reasoning and problem-solving that can be applied in a wide range of contexts and disciplines. The framework emphasizes the importance of developing strong reasoning skills and systematically evaluating information and evidence in order to arrive at well-supported conclusions and judgments.

2.3. Characteristics of Critical Thinkers

Not everyone has the ability to think critically. This involves specific traits that

distinguish persons from each other. Ennis (1991) presents a comprehensive explanation of the skills and dispositions that are crucial for critical thinking, in his article "Critical Thinking: A streamlined conception", Ennis defines critical thinking as "reasonable, reflective thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do" (p.6). He emphasized that critical thinking is not just a set of skills, but also involves certain attitudes, values, and dispositions that are essential for effective reasoning and decision-making. Thus, Ennis considers that critical thinkers' key characteristics can be outlined as a set of twelve dispositions and sixteen abilities that are interdependent and somewhat overlapping, some of them will be mentioned in the upcoming paragraphs. The first twelve abilities and all of the twelve dispositions are considered constructive for the ideal critical thinker. Additionally, critical thinkers generally required the last four skills, referred to as "auxiliary abilities" (p.4) and are considered helpful.

Skills and dispositions are two distinct aspects of critical thinking. On one hand, skills refer to the specific abilities or competencies that enable individuals to engage in critical thinking. On the other hand, dispositions are related to the underlying attitudes, traits, or qualities that shape a person's approach to thinking critically.

2.3.1. Dispositions of Critical Thinkers

Ennis (1991) identified several dispositions that are essential for critical thinking. These include being open-minded and seriously considering other points of view than one's own, trying to be reflectively aware of one's basic beliefs, and considering alternative perspectives. Ennis emphasized that critical thinkers should be intellectually curious, willing to explore new ideas and evidence, and open to revising their own beliefs and assumptions based on new information. They should also be persistent, willing to work through complex problems and challenges, confident in their ability to reason effectively; and to be clear about the intended meaning of what is said, written, or otherwise communicated.

2.3.2. Skills of Critical Thinkers

In addition to dispositions, Ennis also identified several skills that are necessary for CT. According to him, critical thinkers are equipped with sixteen important abilities. These skills are classified into five categories, each encompassing a set of skills. The first category focused on clarification and it includes the ability to identify the issue, question, or conclusion at hand, analyze arguments, ask and answer clarifying or challenging questions, define terms, and identify unstated assumptions. Moving to the basis for decision-making, this category involves judging the credibility of sources and observing and evaluating observation reports. The third category revolves around the skills required for making logical inferences. It consists of the abilities to deduce and judge deductions, as well as induce and judge inductions, including generalizations and explanatory conclusions. The fourth category encompasses metacognitive abilities, which comprises considering and reasoning from premises, reasons, and assumptions, with which one disagrees or has doubts, without letting the disagreement or doubt interfere with one's thinking. The last four are considered to be auxiliary critical thinking abilities. These include proceeding in an orderly manner appropriate to the situation (e.g., following problem-solving steps), monitoring one's own thinking, employing a reasonable critical thinking checklist, being sensitive to the feelings, level of knowledge, and degree of sophistication of others, dealing with appropriate rhetorical strategies in discussion and presentation (both orally and in writing), and employing and reacting to "fallacy" labels in an appropriate manner.

To conclude, Ennis exemplified the previously mentioned dispositions and abilities, showing the vital role that they can play in dealing with real issues. Further, his conception of critical thinking highlights the importance of both skills and dispositions in effective reasoning and decision-making. Overall, Ennis's article provides a useful framework for understanding the skills and dispositions that are necessary for the ideal critical thinker; and highlights the importance of cultivating these abilities in ourselves and our students.

2.4. Strategies to Enhance Critical Thinking

In today's world, where information is abundant and easily accessible, critical thinking is more crucial than ever before. Reasoning enables individuals to innovate and create, especially in the ever-competitive world of academics and real life. The effective strategies that may enhance critical thinking are more likely the ones that relate school subjects and topics to students' daily life situations and issues; they can associate what they learn with what they experience in their real life (Ten Dam & Volman, 2004). Therefore, active reading, problem-based learning, and questioning are among the strategies that can enhance critical thinking.

2.4.1. Active Reading (AR)

The era of information overload has made reading an essential skill. However, not all reading is created equal. In passive reading, we consume information without engagement, which may lead to a superficial understanding of the text. On the other hand, active reading is a powerful tool that can enhance one's critical thinking capabilities.

Active reading involves actively engaging with a text; instead of just passively reading it. It involves applying critical thinking skills to analyze and understand the information presented, thus enabling us to think more critically about the text and its content. Keyser (2000) defined active reading as any instructional activity involving students doing and thinking about what they are doing. It is considered to be a student-centered approach, as Gunn et al. stated that with active learning, students will be more self-directed in acquiring knowledge and skills and learn independently if they know how to utilize the approach correctly (2007, p.25). Simply put, active learning encourages students to take charge of their education by giving tasks that call for critical thinking and appropriate action. Therefore, active reading involves several key strategies, Paris et al. (1986) explains as follows:

- **Previewing the text before reading:** This involves looking at the title, subheadings, and other features to help the learners better understand the text. By doing so, this allows focusing on what is important, and anticipating what is learnt from the text.
- **Asking questions:** As learners read, continually supposed to ask themselves questions, such as: "What is the main idea?" or "What evidence supports this argument?" This can help them to engage more deeply with the text and evaluate the information.
- **Taking notes:** Taking notes is another key element that may help learners to remember important information and organize their thoughts. This can be especially helpful when writing a summary or an essay about the text.
- **Highlighting or underlining key points:** By highlighting or underlining key points or arguments, learners can recall those important details more easily; and refer back to them when needed.
- **Summarizing the main points:** By summarizing the main points in their own words after reading, learners can better understand the information more deeply; and remember it more effectively. Additionally, by actively engaging with a text in these ways and applying critical thinking skills, you can enhance your understanding of the reading material and develop stronger critical thinking skills.

Notwithstanding, active learning is not only about reading it also involves understanding, interacting, and critically analyzing the text. Overall, by applying these key strategies, teachers encourage exercises that allow students to be in charge of their actions, behaviour, and thinking during the learning process (Paris et al., 1986).

2.4.2. Problem-based Learning (PBL)

Problem-based learning (PBL) is an educational approach that encourages students to solve authentic, real-world problems through collaboration and critical thinking. PBL has been recognized as an effective tool to enhance critical thinking among students. According to

Hmelo-Silver, PBL "is well situated to help students become active learners because it situates learning in real-world problems and makes students responsible for their learning"(2004, p.236). This means that PBL seeks to promote critical thinking by engaging students in solving, real-world problems. In the same line of thought, Savery (2006) contended that problem-based learning is a learner-centred approach, as it focuses on questioning, critical thinking and problem-solving (p.16). As a result, Savery (2006) made some adaptations of basic PBL key strategies that are presented as follows:

- **Identifying the problem:** PBL begins with identifying a problem that needs to be solved. This encourages students to think critically about the problem and consider various aspects of the problem.
- **Problem analysis:** Students are required to analyze the problem thoroughly in PBL. As a result, this involves gathering information, identifying the underlying causes of the problem, and evaluating different solutions. Such an approach helps students develop critical thinking skills.
- **Collaboration:** In PBL, students work in groups to solve the problem. In this way, they can have the opportunity to discuss and explain their ideas to their peers, which leads to an exchange of information and viewpoint. Accordingly, this promotes critical thinking and helps students develop a broader perspective.
- **Evaluation of solutions:** PBL encourages students to evaluate different solutions that may exist for the given problem. Thereby, evaluation of solutions permits students to think about different possibilities and to think critically about the pros and cons of each solution.
- **Reflection:** PBL emphasizes that students reflect on their learning experiences. Likewise, this involves thinking critically about the problem-solving process, its challenges, and the knowledge gained from it.

However, for PBL to be successful, students must possess prior knowledge of how to utilize suitable metacognition and thinking techniques in their learning. Otherwise, the effectiveness of PBL may be diminished.

2.4.3. Questioning

Questioning can be a powerful tool to enhance critical thinking. When we ask questions, we engage in an active process of inquiry, which helps us to gather information, clarify our thinking, and challenge our assumptions. By asking questions, we can better understand the world around us and the ideas, concepts, and arguments that we encounter. In this matter, Myrick and Young asserted that in order “to make questioning part of the culture of the teaching and learning process, teachers should start with asking students questions” (2002). Thus, when it comes to enhancing critical thinking, questioning is a tool that can be used; since it is considered a way of probing, seeking evidence, and considering different perspectives. Accordingly, Etemadzadeh et al. (2013) declared that questioning plays a very important role in developing students’ critical thinking skills. Thus, according to Browne and Keeley (2007), we can determine that there are a set of ways in which questioning can enhance critical thinking:

- **Engaging with information:** When we question what we read or hear, we actively engage with the information rather than simply accepting it at face value. By doing so, we are asking whether the information is accurate, complete, or relevant by evaluating its credibility and reliability.
- **Clarifying our thinking:** Asking questions helps individuals to clarify their thinking and create a clearer mental picture of what they are trying to understand. Simply put, we can use questions to identify an argument's main points, tease out the assumptions behind a claim, or uncover the underlying logic of a position.
- **Challenging assumptions:** Questioning can help us to challenge our own assumptions and biases. This means that we can examine our beliefs and biases and consider

alternative perspectives by asking ourselves why we think a particular argument is strong.

- **Uncovering inconsistencies:** Questions are also important in uncovering inconsistencies or contradictions in arguments or information. By asking probing questions, we can identify gaps or weaknesses in an argument and determine whether it is internally consistent and logically sound.
- **Generating new insights:** Questions can also help us to generate new insights and ideas. By asking open-ended or exploratory questions, we can stimulate our thinking and develop creative solutions to problems or alternative perspectives on certain issues.

Questioning is a powerful tool that can be used to enhance critical thinking. It encourages individuals to analyze information, consider different perspectives, and refine their beliefs in education, the workplace, or personal life. Thus, to develop critical thinking skills, people must practice these five skills in real-life situations. In the classroom, teachers can design activities and assignments that promote critical thinking, such as debates, case studies, and problem-solving exercises. Outside the classroom, people can practice critical thinking in their daily lives by asking questions, seeking evidence, and considering different perspectives. Overall, the aforementioned key strategies that was discussed in each strategy are considered standard elements.

2.5. Critical Thinking and Teaching EFL in Algeria

In the field of education, critical thinking is often seen as a desirable outcome of the learning process. Despite all the controversy and debate about critical thinking and its nature, scholars and educators are aware of its importance in the educational system. For that reason, critical thinking is thought to be the most proposed skill in higher education (Ennis, 2008). In addition, critical thinking becomes essential in the educational system since it enables students to work independently and think critically (Tsui, 1999). Thus, many schools and universities

incorporate critical thinking skills into their curriculum in order to help students develop the ability to analyze information and make informed decisions.

Teaching EFL (English as a Foreign Language) in Algeria is crucial to enable individuals to exchange knowledge, solve real-life problems, participate in international communication, and contribute to national and international politics, economy, and other areas of human endeavour. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in Algeria regarding the integration of critical thinking skills into EFL. This interest stems from the recognition that learners need to develop these skills in order to effectively navigate the complexities of the modern world, analyze information critically, and make well-informed decisions. In this regard, several studies investigated the implementation of critical thinking in the Algerian context.

Ameziane and Guendouzi (2015) conducted a study to investigate how middle and high school textbooks address digital competence and its impact on the development of learners' CTS. Their findings indicated that while the digital competence acquired from English coursebooks enhances technical, linguistic, and cultural skills, it does not demonstrate a clear positive effect on CTS. Similarly, El Ouchdi-Mirali (2015) examined the influence of ICTs on learners' CT under the LMD system. The study revealed that second-year EFL learners at the University of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis in Mostaganem experienced difficulties and achieved low scores in their ICT exams and regular assessments, despite their familiarity with smartphones and social networks (p.102). The study attributed this failure to the syllabus's theoretical focus at the expense of practical application. Additionally, it recommended aligning the content of the ICT module with the needs of EFL classrooms, emphasizing learning through ICTs and their use in research rather than solely focusing on computing (El Ouchdi-Mirali, 2015, p.108). Consequently, insufficient instruction in ICTs hinders the improvement of learners' CTS.

In the same context, Abdaoui and Grine's (2020) study offered important insights into the role of higher education in fostering critical thinking abilities among EFL students at the

University of Guelma, Algeria. Based on the results of this research, the study shows that the courses provided at the university under the LMD system do not have a positive impact on enhancing learners' CTS (p.389). The researchers demonstrated that senior learners displayed greater levels of skills in critical thinking than freshmen, indicating that these abilities may be acquired through academic study and practical experience. This is a sign that Algeria's present EFL teaching strategies do not adequately support students' development in critical thinking abilities. Additionally, the study shows the need to emphasize critical thinking skills development in Algerian EFL instruction, where study, experience, English competence, and academic success may all play significant roles in how well EFL learners in Algeria develop their critical thinking abilities. Finally, the study called for researchers to carry out similar studies with larger sample sizes and other tools in order to assess CTS among freshman and senior students in higher education.

Finally, Ouhiba (2022) investigates the role of literature in enhancing EFL university students' CTS. In order to accomplish this study a mixed-method approach was used to explore students' responses to high-order thinking used by the teacher-researcher to teach literature and examine EFL teachers' perspectives towards the use of different critical thinking approaches in teaching English as a foreign language (Ouhiba, 2022, p.481). Further, two research instruments were applied to collect the needed data; semi-structured interviews with 20 EFL teachers and classroom observations among 180 first-year EFL students at the University of Dr. Moulay Taha. Saida, Algeria. Consequently, the study reveals that teachers are aware of the importance of CT when instructing literature in order to enhance learners' language proficiency and improve their thinking abilities. It also reveals positive feedback from the students towards CT approaches that have been applied by the teacher-researcher during their literature classes. Besides, this study recommended the implementation of a high order of thinking as a key strategy when instructing literature (Ouhiba, 2022, p.477).

In conclusion, critical thinking is highly valued in education as it empowers students to independently analyze information and make well-informed decisions. Many educational institutions recognize the importance of integrating critical thinking skills into their curriculum. In Algeria, there is a growing interest in incorporating critical thinking skills into the teaching of English as a Foreign Language, as they are essential for navigating the complexities of the modern world. Overall, all results of the aforementioned investigations may help educators and policymakers in their attempts to enhance EFL instruction in Algeria and better equip students for success in both academic and professional settings.

2.6. Teaching Literature as a Tool to Enhance Critical Thinking Skills

Literature is more than just a source of entertainment or a means of escape. It can be an incredibly powerful tool for enhancing critical thinking skills. Through reading and analyzing literature, individuals can sharpen their analytical abilities, develop their cognitive flexibility, expand their cultural horizons, and gain a deeper understanding of human experiences.

Several researchers investigate the role of teaching literature in developing EFL learners' critical thinking skills. In this respect, Tung and Chang (2009) undertook an experimental study at Feng Chia University; Taiwan, on twelve (12) non-English majors, composed of ten (10) females and two (2) males. Their research aims to explore the impact of reading literary works as a means to develop critical thinking, some techniques are used in order to collect the needed data like quizzes, learning logs, group presentations, guided in-class discussions with Socratic questioning, and individual essay-question reports. Students completed a pre-test and post-test (California Critical Thinking Skills Test), as well as a self-assessed questionnaire, and an individual interview with a teacher was scheduled. The results indicated that class discussion positively impacts learners' critical thinking more than learner-oriented activities. In addition, students' critical thinking is developed compared to the pre-test score. Furthermore, learners show an improvement in analyzing than other critical thinking

skills.

In addition to developing analytical skills, literature can also help individuals to cultivate their cultural horizons. By exposing readers to diverse narratives and perspectives, literature can broaden their understanding of the world around them. This exposure to different cultural viewpoints can also foster empathy and understanding, which are essential components of critical thinking. According to Khuankaew, integrating literature into classes can develop critical thinking. In addition, literary reading nurtures students' appreciation of English culture, and if students had an opportunity to relate their lives to the literature, it might stimulate them to participate more actively in class discussions (2010). By gaining a deeper understanding of different cultures, readers can make more informed decisions and engage more effectively with people from diverse backgrounds. As El-Helou (2010) noted that literature leads students to discern and enjoy cultures and principles dissimilar from their own.

Similarly, Nur Abida (2016) conducted a study at Negeri Surabaya University, Indonesia; to investigate the influence of utilizing literary works in the teaching of language to enhance students' critical thinking in order to easily master a particular language. The study demonstrated that the implementation of literary texts will significantly help teachers to improve students' critical thinking abilities. Moreover, the results reveal that the study has a significant implication for teachers to teach language through literature. It is also found that by having literary works in the teaching and learning process, students find the perfect tools to seek the structure of a language and linguistic devices that help them to learn the particular language comprehensively (Nur Abida, 2016, p.17). By doing so, students not only acquired the grammatical rules and basic theory of a language, but also learned how to employ critical thinking skills in the process of studying the language.

In another study, Stefanova et al. (2017) examined the role of teaching critical thinking skills through literature in EFL classes. To achieve such a goal, the researchers designed

numerous tasks concerning Caryl Phillips's novel *The Lost Child* (2015) for twenty-one (21) Administration and Finance degree students from a Centre for Technical and Vocational Education in Spain. Findings show that learners are highly motivated to analyze literary works through various activities with their teacher, particularly with regard to self-evaluation and assessment. Moreover, providing the students with intrinsically motivating activities and frequent opportunities to discuss literary texts and relate them to current issues proved to be highly beneficial. It provided students with a broader perspective that helped them to interpret real-world problems properly.

In the same vein, Djamaa (2018) undertook a research study to explore the influence of a film-literature course on enhancing CTS among third-year English as a Foreign Language learners. The study focused on evaluating the participants' performance in five cognitive abilities, namely; analysis, inference, evaluation, induction, and deduction, comparing the experimental group and the control group. The findings revealed that the experimental group outperformed the control group in the inference skill, while both groups demonstrated similar performance in the remaining CTS assessed.

Furthermore, Hamza Ahmed (2020) conducted mixed-method research that aimed to explore teachers' and students' perspectives towards utilizing critical thinking techniques as a means to teach literary works in Sudanese secondary schools. Three main research tools were used to gather the necessary data: a teacher's questionnaire, a student test, and a pre-and post-questionnaire. Results revealed that students perceived critical thinking tools in teaching literary works positively. However, the teacher's knowledge of the appropriate strategies for teaching literature was quite limited. The findings showed that students were very cooperative if the right method is used in the classroom. Furthermore, a lack of knowledge and training about updated methods of teaching led to being stuck on one method of teaching literature. Thus, the researcher recommended that teachers should be updated with new methodologies

for teaching this subject.

Boumediene (2022) examined the effectiveness of reading literature in enhancing EFL learners' critical thinking abilities in Algeria. A qualitative descriptive method was used to conduct this study, which aims to investigate the relationship between critical thinking skills and literary reading practices. The results show that readers and students will be able to strengthen their critical thinking abilities through various reading techniques such as interpretation, inference, and assessment. Thus, reading literature is suggested in EFL teaching to improve critical thinking. Further, teachers of literature should integrate some skills of critical thinking into their classroom context to ensure better reading comprehension of literary works.

From the previously mentioned studies, it can be concluded that literature can be an incredibly powerful tool to enhance critical thinking skills. Through close reading and analysis, learners can develop their analytical abilities, expand their cultural horizons, and gain a deeper understanding of the human experience. Studies related to this issue have been conducted in different contexts, but not at the University of Guelma, among Master I students of English. For that, this study comes to tackle the issue in the aforementioned setting, to unveil the status of students' CT as perceived by teachers of literature.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, critical thinking is the ability to think clearly and rationally about what to do or what to believe. It includes the ability to interpret, analyze, evaluate, and explain information, as well as the ability to make reasoned judgments and draw logical conclusions. Therefore, the current chapter introduced a general overview of critical thinking from different perspectives. Then, it spotted the light on Paul and Elder's critical thinking framework with an emphasis on its key elements of thought. Further, it introduced a detailed explanation of the major skills and dispositions that characterize ideal critical thinkers with a focus on Robert

Ennis's taxonomy. Additionally, it tackled several strategies to improve CTS, namely; active reading, PBL, and questioning. Last but not least, it also provided insights into critical thinking and teaching EFL in Algeria. Ultimately, this chapter highlighted the importance of literature in developing EFL learners' critical thinking. Overall, educators should value developing critical thinking skills in EFL students and incorporate them into their teaching strategies.

Chapter Three: Field Investigation

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Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the practical part of the study. It aims at investigating teachers' views and perceptions about the role of teaching literature in enhancing EFL students' CTS. In doing so, two data-gathering tools have been used; a teachers' questionnaire and classroom observation. Therefore, the chapter presents the analyses and interpretations of the collected data to answer the questions raised in this research. The first part of the current chapter deals with the analysis of teachers' questionnaire; whereas, the second part is oriented toward the analysis of classroom observation. It ends with some pedagogical implications and limitations of the study.

3.1.Method

To accomplish the aim of the current research and answer the questions that have been previously raised, a qualitative-descriptive method is followed. According to Burns & Grove (2003), "The descriptive research is designed to provide a picture of a situation as it naturally happens" (p.47). It is also referred to as the description of characteristics of situations, groups or phenomena. The qualitative approach is typically followed because it fits the small sample size in the present study compared to the quantitative approach. Therefore, the main goal behind choosing this method is to provide a comprehensive, detailed description of the topic under investigation.

3.2. The Questionnaire

3.2.1. Sample of the study

The target population involves all teachers that have been teaching literature for Master I students for the academic year 2022-2023 and the previous years. The sample consists of twelve (12) English teachers from the Department of English at the University 8 Mai 1945-Guelma, during the current academic year. The reason behind selecting this sample is related to the fact that teachers of literature to Master I students would provide accurate and relevant

data; since they have been teaching the literature module independently for years. Unfortunately, only nine (09) teachers have given back the questionnaire. Thus, the exact number of participants is nine (09). The questionnaire has been handed out and collected by the researcher.

3.2.2. Description of the Teachers' Questionnaire

This questionnaire is essentially based on the elements discussed in the theoretical part. It is made up of 14 questions organized under three main sections, each section focuses on a particular element (Appendix A). It is a semi-structured questionnaire, mainly composed of multiple-choice questions in which participants are asked to choose the appropriate answer according to their perspectives and to specify their answer when needed.

The first section is entitled "General Information". It includes three factual questions (from **Q1** to **Q3**) about the respondents, like their gender and the number of years of their teaching experience at higher education; the first two questions are closed-ended, the third question is an open-ended question in which they were asked to indicate which kind of educational system they prefer, and they are required to justify their answers. The second section, entitled "Teaching Literature" includes four (04) open-ended questions (from **Q4** to **Q7**). It seeks to extract the teachers' perceptions towards the course of literature, the preferred models that they often use in teaching literature, in addition to the approaches that they usually employ in their classes. In the next question (**Q7**) teachers were required to indicate the extent of their agreement or disagreement concerning whether or not a good selection of literary texts is important for EFL student, and to justify their answers. The third section entitled "Teaching Literature and Critical Thinking", consists of seven (07) questions (from **Q8** to **Q14**). In the opening question of this section (**Q8**), teachers were asked to state how often they consider developing their students' CTS when teaching literature. Then, in question (**Q9**), they were required to state their perceptions towards their students' CTS. In the following question (**Q10**),

they were requested to indicate which strategy they have been using to develop CT in their classrooms and to specify the other strategies they usually employ. Questions (Q11) and (Q12) were designed to explore the teachers' views about the integration of literature with critical thinking. Moreover, (Q13) seeks teachers' points of view towards the challenges of implementing CT in their EFL classes in Algeria. The last section (Q14) allows teachers to add any recommendations or suggestions related to the topic under examination.

3.2.3. Administration of Teachers' Questionnaire

This questionnaire was administered to teachers of literature following two manners; hand-to hand, and online according to their preference. Questionnaires were distributed at the Department of Letters and English Language, 8 Mai 1945 University-Guelma, for two weeks, from April 23rd till May 9th, 2023. During the distribution of the questionnaire, many obstacles have been raised. Some teachers refused to answer the questionnaire, while; others did not hand it back. In addition, some of them did not reply immediately; due to work pressure.

3.2.4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The following section provides an analysis of the results obtained from the teachers' Questionnaire

Section One: General Information

Question One: Would you specify your gender, please?

Table 3. 1

Teachers' Gender

Options	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Male	00	0 %
Female	09	100 %
Total	09	100 %

As shown in the above table 3.1, it is revealed that 100% of the respondents of

the questionnaire are female teachers. No male teachers participated in this study.

Question Two: How long have you been teaching English at the higher education level?

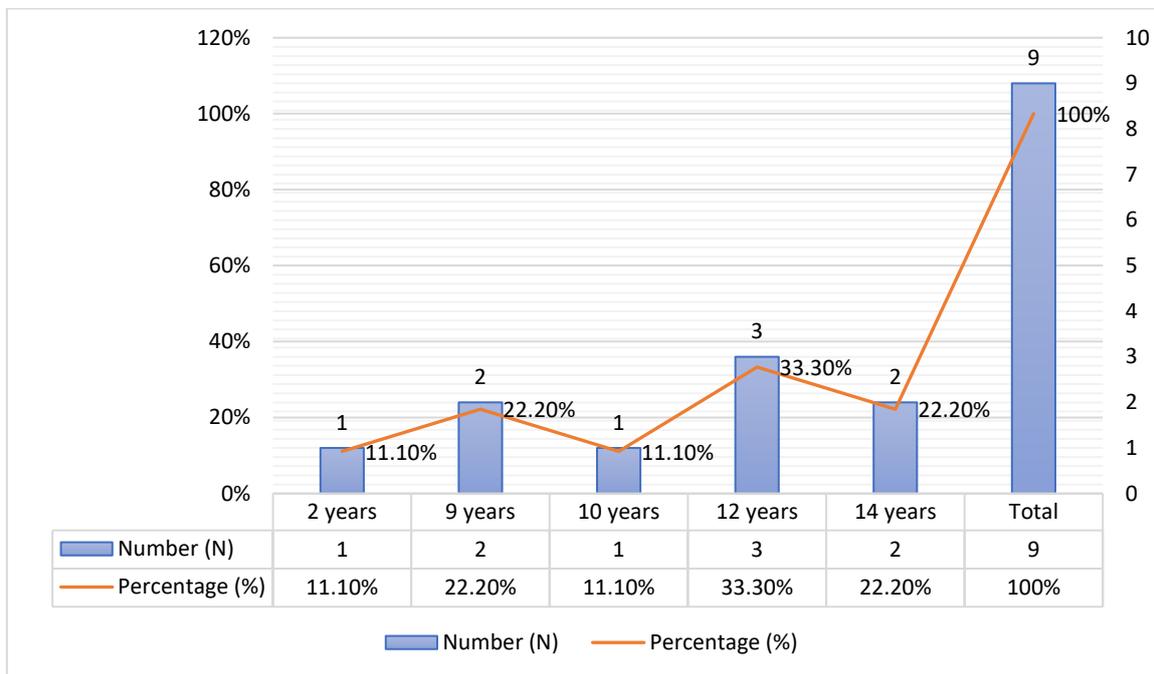


Figure 3. 1: Teachers’ Teaching Experience

As indicated in figure 3.1, the highest percentage (33.30%) of teachers in this study have been teaching English for 12 years. Besides, (22.20%) of them have been teaching for 14 years. Further, another (22.20%) of them experienced teaching for 9 years. Additionally, (11.10%) of the respondents answered that they have 10 years of experience, and the other (11.10%) answered that they have been in this domain for 2 years. For that, the obtained results show that the majority of teachers have considerable experience in teaching English.

Question Three: Which educational system do you prefer?

This question seeks to identify teachers’ viewpoints toward the suitable educational systems in terms of course content and syllabus, in the process of teaching and learning, not the educational system itself. The results reported in figure 3.2, below have revealed that (77.80%) of the participants claimed that they prefer the classic system, whereas, (11.10%) declared that they do prefer the LMD system. Besides, (11.10%) of them remained neutral. Consequently, the obtained results imply that the majority of the respondents favor the classic system. All in

all, participants that took part in this questionnaire have different degrees of interest when it comes to educational system preferences.

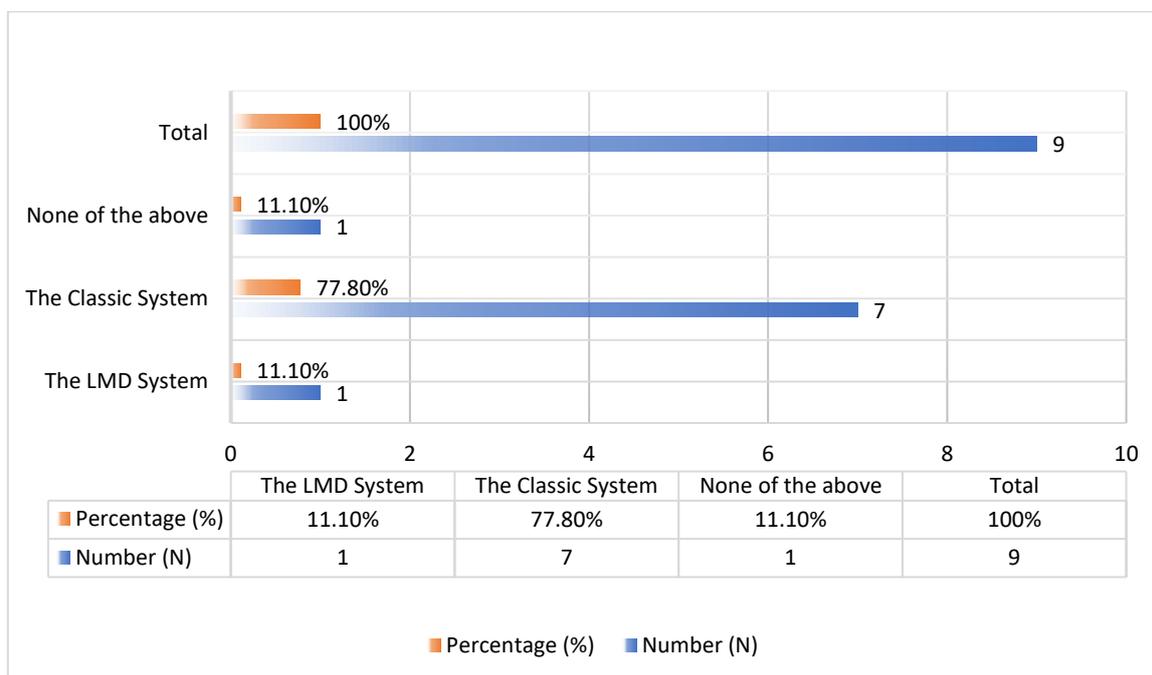


Figure 3. 2: Teachers' Preferences for Educational Systems

This question requires some justifications, among those who claimed that they prefer the classic system, some of them justified their answers by saying that:

- “The classic system, is more effective, rich, and helpful”
- “I prefer the classic system because of the density of modules. It included fewer modules with less content with more time available to fully discuss the planned subjects.”
- “The classic system is more efficient”
- “The classic system, has been praised by people in the field of EFL teaching as it provides students with more extensive exposure to the language, before grading them.”
- “The classic system gives students the opportunity to focus on specific subjects and novels to be discussed very well throughout the semester.”
- “In the classic system there are no compensation or credit points, the student relies on scoring points in the same year.”

Accordingly, the participants believe that the classic system offers a more effective and rich learning experience. They emphasize that the system's density of modules allows for a thorough exploration of subjects and encourages in-depth discussions. This suggests that the classic system prioritizes quality over quantity. Moreover, the statements highlight that the classic system is considered efficient, presumably due to its focused approach and the ample time available to delve into topics. Furthermore, the classic system allows students to concentrate on specific subjects and novels throughout the semester, facilitating a deeper understanding and engagement. Finally, the absence of compensation or credit points in the classic system implies that students are evaluated solely based on their performance within a given year. This could promote a sense of responsibility and focus on achieving academic goals. Overall, these interpretations highlight the perceived advantages of the classic system in terms of content depth, efficiency, language exposure, focused learning, and academic assessment.

One participant favored the LMD system. She justified “because it is a License-Master-Doctorate system that follows the most developed countries’ higher educational programs”. This suggests that the LMD (License-Master-Doctorate) system is preferable due to its alignment with the higher education programs of the most developed countries. This implies that the LMD system is seen as a reflection of advanced and progressive educational practices.

Finally, the participant that does not show any preference justified her answer by stating that “both systems have their weaknesses, and a mixture of both would be so beneficial”. The statement acknowledged that the combination of both systems would be highly advantageous rather than favoring one system over the other. This implies that each system has its strengths and limitations, and by merging their positive aspects, it may be possible to create a more effective educational system.

Section Two: Teaching Literature

Question Four: Is Literature -as a course- important in developing EFL learners’ language skills?

All participants believed that literature classes are crucial for improving EFL learners' language skills. This implies that teachers value the literature course as a fundamental course. Justifications vary among participants. Some of them said that literature is an essential component of any language curriculum, particularly in developing the language skills of EFL learners, as it allows them to engage with the authentic language in context. Others claimed that literature allows students to discover and be exposed to a new vocabulary. Following are some of their words:

- “It is a tool that aims at expanding the grammar of the student, enriching his/her imagination, and developing his/her critical thinking.”
- “Reading pieces, analyzing characters, discussing themes need much use of language”
- “Literature is important because it enables students to acquire vocabulary from authentic materials.”
- “Literature helps students to communicate in the English language and to practice the language. Through reading and interpreting literary texts, students can develop more than one skill”

Question Five: Which of the following models have you used to teach literature?

As pointed out in figure 3.3, the largest majority of the participants (77.80%) maintained that they employ all the models in their literature classes, while only (22%) of them declared that they utilize the personal growth model, which focuses on the learner's growth as they examine literary themes and characters. Based on their responses, it is demonstrated that most educators appreciate incorporating several models in their teaching method for this course. Consequently, this can increase learners' engagement in the learning process. Teachers' justifications concerning this question are as follows:

- “Literature is about diversity and I believe that by integrating them, my students will benefit a lot. I try to use all models depending on the nature and aim of the lecture”.

- “I have always believed that mixing methods, strategies, techniques, or models help to achieve better results in the teaching-learning process”.
- “All of them as a whole present the perfect unit to teach the literature”.
- “It is better to combine the three models in teaching literature because they complement each other”.

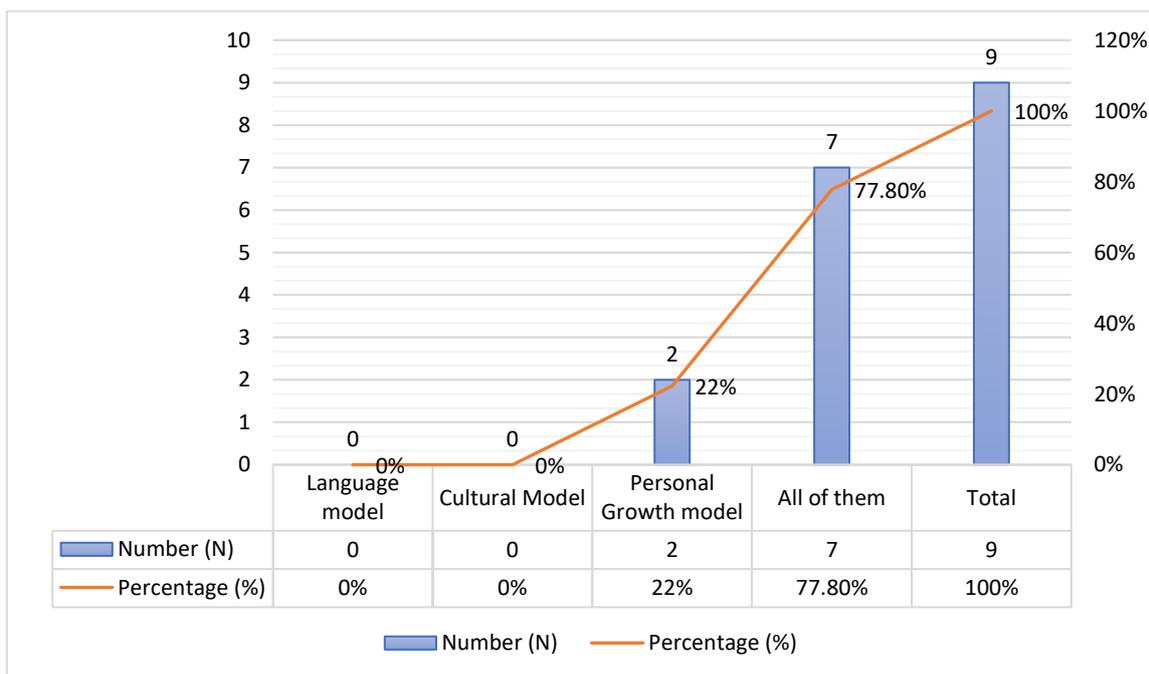


Figure 3. 3: Models of Teaching Literature

It can be concluded from the revealed justifications that by integrating the three models we can create a stimulating and effective teaching model that meets the requirements of the course, and fulfill the needs of students.

Question Six: which approach do you usually employ when you teach literature?

As it is demonstrated in Figure 3.4, nearly all the informants (77.80%) declared that they prefer to use all the mentioned approaches as one unit. While (11%) of them focused only on the use of the information-based approach, another (11%) pointed out that they mostly used the stylistic approach to foster the students' interpretation toward analyzing different stylistic dimensions of a given text. This denotes that the vast majority of teachers, opt for the use of

various approaches in teaching literature. Their justifications revolve around the following points:

- “The context, the aesthetic and stylistic side, as well as the readers’ response, are the major factors in understanding and even establishing the meaning of literary texts. For this reason, these approaches should be equally taken into consideration when teaching the course of literature”.
- “The combination of the three approaches effectively helps students understand and learn the target language. In addition, this combination helps learners to develop their communicative skills and enhance their cognitive abilities”.
- “To reach an in-depth analysis of any literary works, teachers should consider all these approaches”.

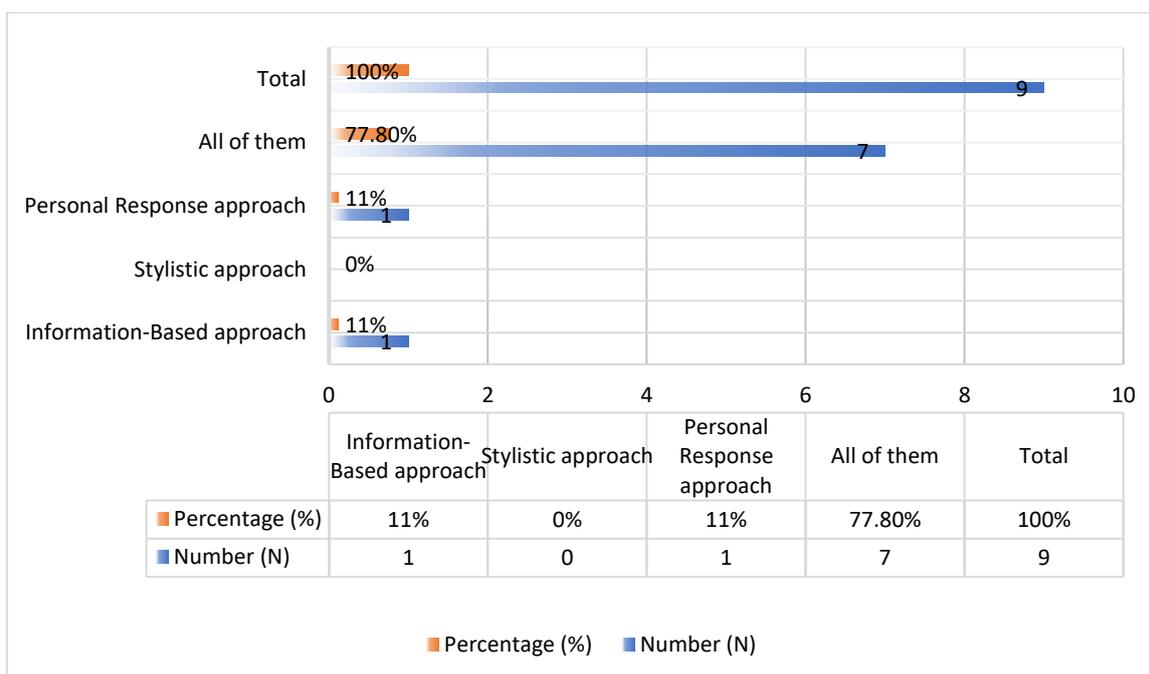


Figure 3. 4: Approaches of Teaching Literature

In this respect, to achieve better results, a combination of all three approaches is required. This combination can advance students' language and communication abilities, strengthen their capacity for critical thought, and broaden their comprehension and appreciation

of literary works.

Question Seven: To what extent do you agree that a good selection of literary texts is important for EFL learners?

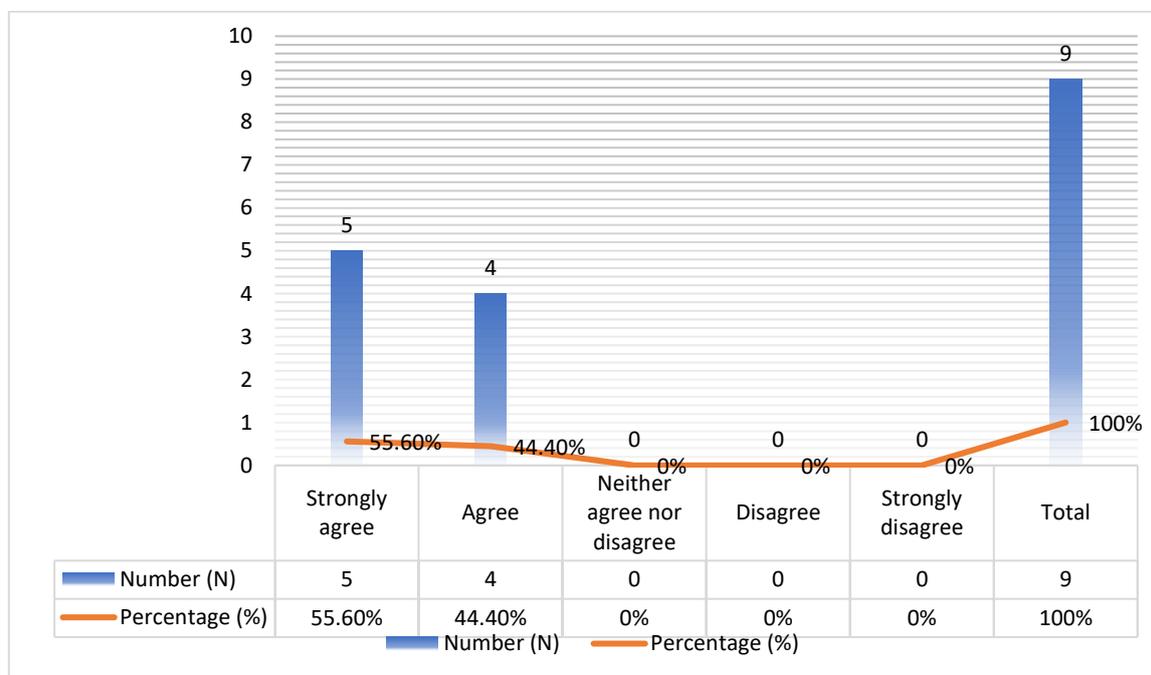


Figure 3. 5: The Importance of a Good Selection of Literary Texts

The results observed in figure 3.5, indicated that (55.60%) of teachers strongly agreed that the good selection of literary texts is an important key element for EFL learners. The remaining (44.40%) of teachers assumed that they also agreed with that, and none of them disagreed about such an idea. This means that all them are aware of the fact that the appropriate selection of literary work is an essential aspect. One of the reasons highlighted by one of the teachers is that a good selection of literary texts can greatly impact the language learning experience of EFL students. By exposing them to a variety of challenging vocabulary, syntax, and grammar structures, such texts can facilitate more rapid improvement in their language skills. Literary works often contain complex language usage, figurative expressions, and nuanced meanings, which can enhance students' linguistic abilities and expand their language proficiency. Therefore, by carefully choosing appropriate literary texts, teachers can provide

engaging and enriching learning materials that contribute to the overall language development of their students.

Another factor mentioned by another teacher is the need for caution when selecting literary texts, particularly considering cultural and societal sensitivities. In some cases, certain texts may be banned or prohibited in the students' native country or culture due to religious, political, or social reasons. Therefore, teachers must be mindful of these considerations and ensure that the selected texts align with the cultural norms and sensitivities of their students. This approach promotes a respectful and inclusive learning environment while also preventing any potential discomfort or conflicts that could arise from the use of inappropriate or offensive materials. Furthermore, another informant emphasized that the correct choice of literary texts can help students deepen their understanding of various subjects and expose them to new types of jargon and vocabulary. Literary works often explore diverse themes, perspectives, and genres, allowing students to engage with different ideas and cultures. By immersing themselves in these texts, students can broaden their knowledge, develop critical thinking skills, and gain insights into different linguistic and literary devices. In this respect, through exposure to various forms of literature, students can expand their vocabulary repertoire, become more adept at deciphering complex language structures, and enhance their overall language proficiency.

Section Three: Teaching Literature and Critical Thinking

Question Eight: To what extent do you consider developing learners' CTS when teaching literature?

As it is obtained from the teachers' answers to this question, table 3.2 showed that the highest percentage of informants (55.60%) proclaimed that they took into account the development of CTS in their students to a very good extent, when instructing literature. In other words, they always focused on rising students' thinking skills. Besides, (33.30%) of them declared that they often considered it, and only (11.10%) indicated that they did so to a

somehow limited degree. This shows that teachers of literature at the Department of English-University of Guelma, are aware of the significance of CTS in studying literature in particular, and in the learning process, in general.

Table 3. 2

Teachers' Frequency Towards Developing their EFL Learners CTS

Options	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Rarely	00	00%
Sometimes	00	00%
Often	03	33.30%
Very often	01	11.10%
Always	05	55.60%
Total	09	100 %

Question Nine: What do you think of the CTS of your students?

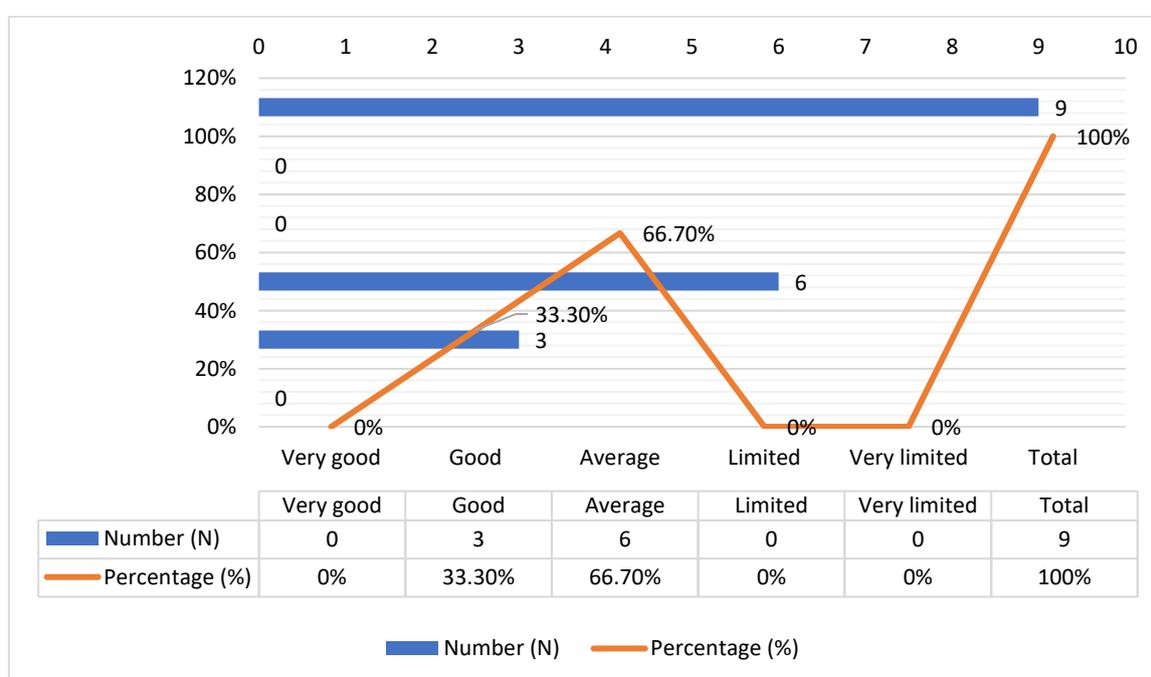


Figure 3. 6: Teachers' Perspectives Towards their Students CTS Level

This question examines teachers' perspectives concerning their students' thinking

abilities. The answers turned around good and average. As indicated in figure 3.6, nearly the whole population (66.70%) affirmed that their learners' level of CTS is average, while, (33.30%) regarded it as a good level of thinking. These results indicated can be attributed to several factors, some teachers noted that students' lack of motivation to critically analyze literary works could contribute to an average level of thinking. As one participant stated, "I think students are not that motivated when it comes to criticizing the literary works, because they prefer to passively consume the content of the texts, maybe they believe that since the author is human and famous, he/she must be only appreciated." This passive approach limits their engagement with the material and inhibits the development of critical thinking skills.

On the other hand, the positive perspectives from teachers who regarded their students' thinking abilities as good provide insights into the reasons behind these outcomes. In this respect, one participant expressed pleasant surprise at the level of analysis displayed by some students regarding events in the literary texts they studied together. This suggests that certain students possess the capacity to think critically and demonstrate their analytical skills. Furthermore, another teacher emphasized that students today have a broad knowledge of literary events, themes, and subjects due to their interaction with various media forms. This exposure to diverse sources of information enables students to develop critical thinking abilities. In light of this, by engaging with different media, students can access a range of perspectives, which encourages them to think critically and evaluate information.

To sum up, the varying results of average and good thinking abilities among students can be attributed to factors such as their motivation, level of engagement, and exposure to diverse media sources. While some students may exhibit a passive approach to literary analysis, others demonstrate the potential for critical thinking, often influenced by their media interactions and broader knowledge.

Question Ten: Which of these strategies have you used to enhance CT in your EFL classroom?

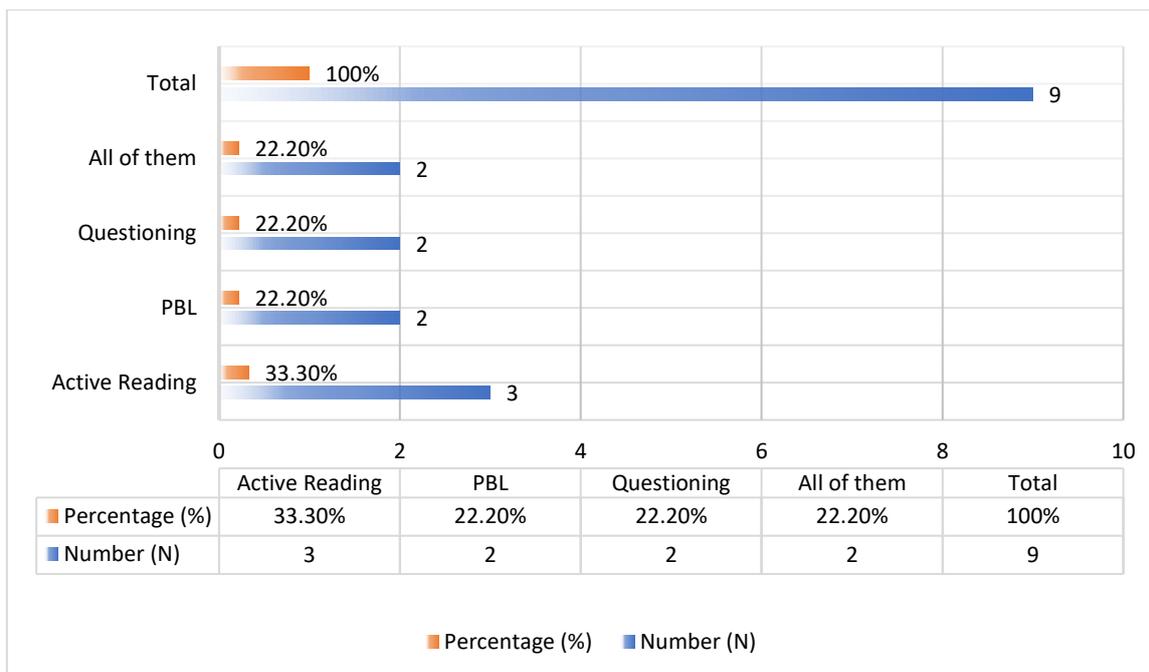


Figure 3. 7: Strategies Used by the Teachers to Enhance CT

This question detects teachers' viewpoints concerning the strategies used by them to enhance CT when instructing literature in the EFL classroom. As summarized in the figure above, (33.30%) of the teachers claimed that they employ active reading as a strategy to develop critical thinking in their EFL classrooms. While (22.20%) of them viewed problem-based learning as the appropriate strategy. The other (22.20%) of the informants pointed out that they employ questioning as a strategy to enhance CT in their classes. However, the remaining (22.20%) revealed that they use all of the stated strategies. As a result, most of the participants declared that they opt to use active reading as a strategy among all the aforementioned strategies.

In the second part of the question, the respondents were asked to specify the other strategies that they used apart from the three offered options. Their responses showed that some of them admitted the use of group discussions or open discussions. One teacher stated, "I give my students in each lesson a warm-up activity and then read a text beforehand and ask them about it." Furthermore, another teacher highlighted, "In addition to the previously mentioned strategies, I sometimes use open discussion, where students are required to persuade their

colleagues, with evidence and arguments based on their understanding.” These responses denote that teachers are implementing various strategies to cultivate critical thinking in their EFL classes.

Question Eleven: Do you think that critical thinking skills can be enhanced through literature?

Table 3. 3

Developing CTS Through Literature

Options	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	9	100 %
No	0	0 %
Total	9	100 %

As exhibited in the preceding table above, all respondents (100%) agreed upon the assumption that literature courses can enhance EFL learners’ CTS. This signifies that all of them are conscious of the powerful role of literature in developing such skills. In this regard, students are prompted to develop their thinking skills by engaging with different characters, settings, and narratives. This means that by immersing themselves in the diverse worlds and perspectives presented in the literature, students are encouraged to think critically. This question requires respondents to provide some justifications for their choice. As one respondent eloquently stated, “Literature is the perfect setting where students can practice their criticality.” Another respondent emphasized, “Critical thinking skills can be enhanced through literature in a number of ways. When EFL learners engage with literary texts, they are required to analyze, evaluate, and interpret the language and themes presented. This process encourages them to think critically.” Additionally, a participant highlighted, “The study of literature can develop EFL learners’ critical thinking skills, benefiting them in their language learning and beyond.” Another respondent emphasized the capacity of literature to unveil hidden ideas and ideologies, stating, “Literature is able to represent some hidden ideas and even ideologies, for this reason,

analyzing the literary text can be the perfect tool to enhance students' CT." These comments collectively affirm that literature serves as a valuable tool for fostering critical thinking skills among EFL learners.

Question Twelve: How do you encourage EFL learners to engage critically with the texts they are studying?

This question requires teachers to provide some strategies that they habitually use to engage their students with the texts they are studying critically. Among the answers, one teacher stated that she implemented several strategies like; asking open-ended questions; and encouraging active reading. Another teacher indicated that she asks them about their personal viewpoints on the issues raised in the texts regardless of what some characters do or what other critics think about the provided text. One other respondent admitted that she often asks the students to read a given text, then summarize, analyze, and interpret it. These answers may imply that teachers are aware of how they can use literature as a means to critically engage their students with the text they read. In this way, teachers target many CTS among students such as; inference, interpretation, and problem-solving; literary texts often present characters facing challenges or conflicts, providing opportunities for students to think critically and devise solutions.

Question Thirteen: In your opinion, what are the challenges of teaching CT in EFL classrooms in Algeria?

This question seeks to gather teachers' perspectives on the challenges of teaching CT in Algerian EFL classrooms. In the light of this, teachers were given full freedom to state the challenges they faced instead of limiting them to a list of options. Their answers turn around various major points. Firstly, limited resources and traditional teaching methods that emphasize rote memorization and repetition hinder the effective cultivation of critical thinking and analysis. Secondly, there is a need for diverse materials, in order to enable students, to

comprehend literary texts, allowing them to respond to them both ideologically and linguistically such materials could be; literary criticism, scholarly articles, visual and audio resources, like films, or recorded performances related to literary texts. However, time constraints pose a significant challenge, as there is no insufficient amount, for a comprehensive study of literary texts. Lastly, a prevailing concern is that students exhibit a lack of creativity and self-driven effort. They tend to heavily rely on the internet, leading to a decline in their enthusiasm for critical thinking. This dependence on the internet has, unfortunately, diminished their willingness to engage in critical analysis. In this regard, one of the teachers mentioned “Nowadays, students are too lazy to be creative or to work by their own capacities, they tend to rely more on the internet and this is what killed their passion towards criticality”.

Question Fourteen: If you have any suggestions or recommendations on the subject under inquiry, please feel free to share.

The answers to this question are not truly relevant to the topic under investigation. Some teachers showed interest in the topic, while others wished luck to the researcher. One of the constructive comments linked critical thinking to reading at an early age. This means that if children are encouraged to read different materials at an early age, they will develop good critical thinking skills. In the teacher’s words: “Nurture the love of reading in our children so they will grow to be readers with critical thinking”. Another teacher emphasized the significance of integrating CT as an independent course into the literary studies major. This claim supports that studying literature requires good critical thinking skills. At the same time, thinking can be developed through practice, and the literature course is a good opportunity to practice thinking skills.

3.2.5. Summary of Results and Findings

This part of the study attempted to summarize the findings of the teachers’ questionnaire after analyzing them in the previous section. The opening section “General Information”

determined that the sample which is composed of nine (09) teachers, has a considerable experience in teaching English in higher education. Their experience ranges from two (02) to fourteen (14) years. This entails that these teachers have sufficient experience to provide substantial responses and suggestions that will enrich the topic under investigation.

The findings of the second section “Teaching Literature,” indicated that all the informants agreed on the importance of the course of literature in enhancing EFL students’ language skills. This signifies that teachers consider this module as valuable as the other modules. In addition, their justifications for this question confirm that through literature students can develop more than one skill. Moreover, informants revealed that by integrating approaches and models of teaching literature as one unit, one can develop an effective teaching model that meets the student’s needs. Furthermore, all the participants insisted on the significance of a good selection of literary works for EFL learners. This implies that the appropriate selection of literary texts plays a crucial role in developing learners’ language learning as well as CTS.

The third section “Teaching Literature and Critical Thinking,” demonstrated teachers’ awareness of the existence of CTS; while instructing literature in particular, and in the learning process, in general. This may imply that CT is a crucial skill in the teaching-learning process. In this respect, another interesting result was revealed when teachers claimed that their students’ level of CTS is considered to be between good and average. Their answers to this question confirmed their awareness of the importance of such skills.

Moreover, when asked about the strategies employed in their EFL classrooms to develop CT, most of the participants declared that they employ active reading. This question requires teachers to specify the other strategies that they usually use apart from the mentioned options. Their responses showed that some of them admitted the use of group or open discussions. This suggests that the majority of teachers are encouraging their students to think

critically in one way or another. Teachers also reported that literature can be the perfect setting to enhance learners' thinking abilities. This denotes that teachers in the current study are conscious of the powerful role of literature. Informants also admitted that they use some key strategies to help their learners to engage with the texts they are studying critically. Among their answers, one teacher stated that she asks them about their viewpoints on the issue raised in the texts regardless of what other critics think about it. Another teacher added that she asked students to read the text, then summarize, analyze and interpret it. These answers entail that in this way teachers target many CTS among students such as interpretation, and analysis. As a concluding point, participants were asked to state some of the challenges they may face when instructing CT in Algerian classrooms. Their answers revealed that there are several challenges such as limited resources, lack of creativity and self-driven effort.

In brief, the findings indicate that teaching the literature course effectively enhances CTS among EFL learners at the University of Guelma. Moreover, it can be concluded that the teachers in the present research perceive literature as a valuable tool for developing thinking abilities. Therefore, these results have positively answered the questions of the present research.

3.3. Classroom Observation

3.3.1. Description of the Classroom Observation

Classroom observation is used as a second data collection tool to gather qualitative data about the topic under investigation. On this basis, Master I students at the Department of English- University of Guelma, were observed to thoroughly document and examine how literature is taught in the EFL classroom; and the extent to which learners' critical thinking skills are developed when interacting in this course.

In this sense, the present study used a structured observation in which all the observed elements were planned. These elements are organized in an observation checklist (Appendix

B) composed of seventeen (17) statements that are categorized into three sections. The first section concentrates on the classroom environment such as the class observed, the lesson being taught, and the student's number. The second section focused on the strategies applied by the teacher during the sessions to enhance students' critical thinking, while the third section sheds light on the student's engagement during their literature class. In addition, another section is dedicated to the general remarks about the observation. The checklist is organized in a form of a table so that it will be easy to handle. It is the same for all the observed classes to prevent any potential inconsistencies.

After asking for permission from two teachers of the literature module at the Department of English at the University 8 Mai 1945-Guelma, each group was observed for two successive sessions for 90 minutes per session. This means that the total time of observation is 360 minutes, 180 minutes for each group. The observation lasted for two weeks, it started on April 25th, 2023, and ended on 4th May. The table 3.4, below summarizes the timing, teachers, sessions, and dates of the observation. This observation was conducted during the last two weeks of the second semester that's why the researcher could not attend extra sessions.

Table 3. 4

Observation Key Elements

Skill	Level	Sessions	Teachers	Dates	Time
Critical Thinking	Master I	01	A	25/04/2023	09:30-11:00h
	Students at the University 8	02	B	26/04/2023	11:00-12.30h
		Mai-1945-	03	A	02/05/2023
	Guelma.	04	B	04/05/2023	08:00-9:30h

3.3.2. Aim of the Classroom Observation

According to Bell (2010, p.195), classroom observation is a technique that “can often

reveal characteristics of groups or individuals which would have been impossible to discover by other means". This means that classroom observation is one of the most effective data collection tools because it helps to collect valid data through direct observation. Therefore, observation in the study at hand aims at gathering specific data and insights regarding instructional strategies, student engagement, students' thinking skills, and teacher-student interactions during the literature class.

3.3.3. Analysis of Data from the Classroom Observation

This section is devoted to the interpretation of the main results from the classroom observation. This observation was conducted with two teachers of literature at the Department of English, University 8 Mai 1945-Guelma. Hence, they were labeled successively as Teacher A, and Teacher B throughout the analysis of the findings discussed in the following sections. Additionally, every two sessions were analyzed separately to ensure the results' reliability.

3.3.3.1. Analysis of Data Observed in Class A (Teacher A)

Session one

Teacher A has an experience of 10 years in teaching English as a foreign language. The class with this teacher usually starts at 9:30 A.M, and most of her students attend the session on time. Regarding the learning environment, it should be mentioned that there were 26 students in the class (17 girls and 09 boys). The classroom atmosphere was pleasant and impressive, and learners sit in a well-organized manner. During the first session, the instructor asked students to open the provided file (PDF) in order to make sure that the whole group is following with her while she explained the lesson. The article entitled "*Postcolonial Novels and Theories*" by *Feroza Jussawalla* was the target lesson for this session.

As a skillful teacher, her management of the classroom was highly effective. It was noticed that she has a good method of controlling her classes. As the observation checklist displayed, the teacher confirmed that every student has an equal chance to engage in the lesson

and participate in the discussion. In addition, she corrected their answers and guided them in case they were not able to find the exact keywords. The constructive feedback was both positive and negative. The positive feedback was regularly delivered, frequently utilizing the words “good” and “very good”, while the negative one was rarely used, her negative feedback tends to be as a joke to prevent students from losing their confidence by saying “good but this answer is not appropriate for this question”

In order to address all facets of literary analysis, the teacher tends to be flexible in her way of teaching and apply the three mentioned models of teaching literature; the language model, the cultural model, and the personal growth model. By doing so, students can have a comprehensive understanding of the lesson. Moreover, the teacher used both open-ended and close-ended question types. An example of an open-ended question is “Can you provide some examples of the post-colonial novels discussed in the article?” This range of questioning methods helps students to communicate their ideas and views while also fostering their thinking abilities such as linking prior knowledge to new knowledge.

Additionally, it was observed that by allowing students to analyze and interpret the article, the teacher guided students’ thinking critically. This signifies that the development of higher-order thinking skills as well as deeper comprehension of the subject need to be guided by an instructor. Furthermore, since the teacher is responsible for the delivery of the lesson, she talked more than the students, but each time she tried to encourage them to engage with her by asking questions about the article being studied by stating “According to *Feroza Jussawalla’s* article, how do postcolonial novels challenge traditional literary narratives and offer alternative perspectives? Can anyone share an example from the article that supports this idea?”

Accordingly, it is noted that nearly all of the students actively engaged in the lesson, through taking notes. However, just 13 students (4 boys and 9 girls) interacted with the teacher,

by answering the teacher's questions; and criticizing the article, indicating that not all of them were actively participating. This implies that such ways of teaching literature foster students' thinking skills. In this respect, some students might require more assistance or motivation to actively participate in class discussions.

It is demonstrated that half of the learners appeared to be very motivated to study literature. This denotes that they are interested in the topics covered, and it was remarked during their interactions with each other, and this was confirmed by the type of questions they asked to seek clarification about the lesson from the teacher. To conclude, the prevailing CTS that students show are three: interpretation, questioning, and inference. This entails that after they interpret the provided information, they ask questions in order to get further details. This process of asking questions encourages them to think deeply and analyze the information before reaching conclusions; and finally, they tend to draw logical conclusions based on their analysis.

Session two

During the second session, it was remarked that the classroom environment was very relaxing which promoted students' learning. This welcoming atmosphere is essential to encourage participation and provide a comfortable setting for them to actively engage in the session. Concerning the classroom in general, it was very organized, with a number of 26 students (17 girls and 9 boys). The presented lesson during this session was about *Selmans' Rushdie* novel, *Midnight's Children*. Regarding the methodology used by the teacher, it should be mentioned that she used the same method as the previous session starting by introducing the novel by providing an overview of the post-colonial era and stating why it is important to analyze and interpret this literary work.

As observed from the two sessions, she proved to manage her classrooms in a good way. The teacher ensured that all students have an equal opportunity to participate in the classroom discussion. She created a participatory environment that fostered student interaction by calling

out each student's name and asking them about the novel's summary. Another important issue that is observed was the fact that the teacher kept providing constructive feedback to assist students' performance. Additionally, the teacher used open-ended and thought-provoking questions to encourage them to interpret the work from different angles, in which the students were encouraged to engage critically and reflect to answer questions such as "How does the magical realism in *Midnight's Children* contribute to the overall themes and messages of the novel?" and "What does the character of Adam Aziz represent in terms of the tension between western and eastern cultural influences?" This implies that the instructor targeted students' thinking abilities and promoted a deeper engagement with the novel by enabling them to share their viewpoints and interpretations. Another point to consider is that she always tends to work on the three models of teaching literature as one unit to broaden their comprehension. In the light of this, the teacher guided her learners to think critically through analyzing and interpreting the novel.

The group discussion that was followed in the observed class allowed both parts- teacher and students- to have a similar amount of talk. Nearly, all the members of the group were interested in this class, motivated to learn, and participating in the discussion. This fact might imply that they possess positive learning attitudes; and good thinking skills. Equally, such good participation could be because of their evaluation that is based on this group discussion, as the teacher reported. In a nutshell, the prevailing thinking skills that they showed are two: inference and questioning. This denotes that after they analyze the provided novel and draw logical conclusions, they tend to ask questions to deepen their understanding. In this regard, the majority of them show CTS in their interactions with the teacher and with each other.

3.3.3.2. Analysis of Data Observed in Class B (Teacher B)

Session one

The first session attended with Teacher B was on April 26th, 2023 at 11:00 A.M. Teacher

B has 14 years of experience in the domain of teaching. In this group, there were 27 students (25 girls and 2 boys). The classroom atmosphere seemed to be positive and supportive for students to learn. During this session, the teacher already asked her students to prepare a presentation about "*The Golden Book*" by *Doris Lessing*. The presentation was prepared and delivered by five female students. The teacher here did not provide an overview of the novel because it is a task to be done by the presenters in order to be evaluated. Moreover, from time to time, the teacher tends to ask her students to check if they understand what is being presented and whether they are following up with the presenters or not, and she ensures to offer an equal opportunity for all the students to participate.

Furthermore, positive comments from the teacher served as constructive feedback for all of them by saying "*good*", and "*correct*". Additionally, since it was a presentation, all of the three models were applied, namely, language, cultural, and personal growth models. In order to foster students' skills of analysis, interpretation, and explanation, the teacher posed thought-provoking questions, such as "What is the significance of the title of the novel?". This shows that the teacher is supporting learners' CTS, thus, she is aware of the importance of CT at different levels, such as university and workplaces. Concerning the amount of talk, students who were presenting took the word more than the teacher and other students. This is due to the mode of evaluation followed in which the teacher asks for a presentation as part of the evaluation.

The observation revealed that just nine students were actively engaged during the session, indicating that the majority of the class was not paying attention. However, those who took part in the presentation were focused and demonstrated critical thinking skills, such as inference and interpretation. Finally, it is indicated that the majority of the students seemed that they feel bored and lost, mainly because the explanation of their colleagues is not clear as that of their teacher, and this is the reason probably why they lose concentration.

Session two

The second session took place on May 4th, 2023 at 8:00 A.M, with the same observed class. The lesson delivered was “*An Introduction to Post-colonialism*”. One can confidently say that the classroom atmosphere; was mostly well controlled by the teacher’s acquired experience in classroom management, in which she created an environment that was conducive and encouraging for students’ learning. Consequently, she provided her students with a detailed overview of the post-colonial era, in addition to its theories, and characteristics.

Another exciting remark that should be mentioned is that during the explanation of the lesson, the teacher tends to call at random the names of the passive students to engage them with the lecture. In addition, positive comments like “*very good*” and “*good*” were used to provide students with constructive feedback. As the course entailed investigating a new era and style of writing, the teacher used both the language model and the cultural model to teach literature. For the purpose of fostering critical thinking and participation among the students, she offered a range of questions, some of which were open-ended and thought-provoking. Students were prompted to think critically and reflect to answer questions like “How did the post-colonial era affect colonized people's sense of cultural identity and belonging?” and “Have you ever considered the impact of post-colonialism on literature?”.

Similarly, throughout the session, students demonstrated active participation by paying attention to the teacher's explanations. Particularly, in comparison to the previous session, they showed signs of being engaged and attentive during the class. This denotes that students under observation are motivated to study literature. They revealed thinking abilities in their interactions with the teacher, especially when they answered about the definition of post-colonialism, each student defined the term based on his/ her understanding. This signifies that the students prefer to study with the teacher-centered approach in which the instructor is responsible to deliver the lesson, and the students just follow and answer questions. To sum up,

the prevailing thinking skills that the students show during this session are two: questioning and interpretation. This implies that after they ask thoughtful inquiries to seek further details about the lesson, they interpret and analyze the provided information by the instructor. Together, these skills enhance their ability to think critically and arrive at well-supported conclusions.

3.3.4. Summary of Results and Findings from Classroom Observation

This section attempted to summarize the results and findings achieved through the analysis of data collected from the observation. During the observed sessions, it was noticed that both Teachers A and B demonstrated good experience in teaching EFL. Additionally, both of them created a comfortable and adequate atmosphere for the learning process. Another point to consider is that each of Teacher A and Teacher B used a combination of open-ended and close-ended question types, but sometimes they tend to employ thought-provoking questions in order to foster their students' thinking abilities. Concerning the students' engagement during the observation, it was remarked that with Teacher A the majority of them appeared interested and attentive, demonstrating motivation to study literature in both sessions. Whereas with Teacher B regarding the first session, only a few students were actively engaged, but the majority seemed bored and detached, possibly because they found that the explanation of their colleagues is not clear as that of their teacher, that's why they lose concentration. While in the second session, students demonstrated active participation and appeared motivated to study this course. This denotes that some students require more assistance or motivation in order to be engaged.

Similarly, both teachers tended to use a variety of teaching models, namely, language, cultural, and personal growth models. By combining these three as one unit, teachers create a comprehensive approach to teaching literature that fosters students' thinking. As a result, the prevailing thinking skills that learners showed in their interactions were inference,

interpretation, and questioning. Generally, this signifies that both instructors are aware of the significance of CT and work very hard to guide their students to think critically. Therefore, the findings from this observation may be of particular significance for teacher training programs as it could help to inform the development of effective teaching strategies that foster critical thinking skills among EFL learners at an advanced level.

Pedagogical Implications

This study investigated the role of teaching the literature course in developing EFL learners' CTS. The findings from the teachers' questionnaires and classroom observation contributed to achieving a set of pedagogical implications that are detailed in the following lines. There are some implications for teachers, the faculty, and some instructions for EFL learners.

It is recommended for teachers to make their students aware of the concept of CT and its skills because awareness is the first step of mastering. They might provide their students with activities that allow them to practice and develop their CTS by encouraging them to interpret and analyze literary texts. Moreover, instructors have to implement some strategies, such as; cooperative learning, role-play, and active reading, that aims at developing their learners' CT ability; since the participants agreed upon the importance of enhancing this skill in the development of their student's academic achievements. It is worth focusing on enlightening students to think beyond the exam, and believe that literature is a unique material for learning and an excellent opportunity to practice thinking. Finally, teachers must be trained to teach critical thinking skills in EFL classes.

For students, it is recommended to recognize the significance of the literature course; actively engage in class discussions, and exchange thoughts and ideas with their colleagues and teachers in order to develop their thinking abilities, as it will also contribute to their overall English proficiency. On the other hand, faculty members have the responsibility to integrate

CT as a central educational aim across the curriculum. As a result, at this level, curricular designers have to implement some modules that are directed toward teaching critical thinking skills.

Limitations of the Study

Undoubtedly, research conduction encounters obstacles and difficulties that act as barriers to its successful completion. The current study is no exception, as various limitations constrained its progress. First, the limited time, health issues, and psychological condition of the researcher created additional challenges during the conduction of this study. Second, to get access to the teachers with the intention of having their responses, some of them refused to answer the questionnaire, while; others did not hand it back. Besides, a few of them did not reply immediately; due to work pressure. Furthermore, it was planned to collect data through interviews. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, it was shifted to a questionnaire.

Recommendations for Further Research

Apart from that, as a result of accomplishing the specific objectives drawn in this study, the present researcher views other new perspectives of research. It is proposed that future researchers may investigate the influence of teachers' gender in acquiring critical thinking skills in higher education in EFL classrooms. This type of research may give an explanation of the noticeable phenomenon in nowadays classes in which female teachers are dominant.

Conclusion

This practical chapter is based on the analysis of data from teachers' questionnaire and classroom observation. Above all, these two data-gathering tools have helped the researcher to answer the previously raised research questions in the general introduction. Based on the obtained results, it can be concluded that teaching the literature course at the University of Guelma has a significant role on enhancing critical thinking skills in EFL learners. Additionally, through the observed sessions, it was evident that both students and teachers possess a strong awareness of the literature course's importance in cultivating one's own language skills and

critical thinking abilities.

General Conclusion

The present study has discussed the potential of developing the students' CTS through the literature course. In this respect, the current research shows that the teachers are completely aware of the significance of reading literature in developing the students to become critical thinkers and readers. Besides, this study emphasized the need for active research, which enables researchers to be aware of the everyday practices in the teaching of literature for the sake of developing critical thinking abilities.

More to the point, to answer the research questions, the researcher opts for the qualitative-descriptive method of research, which includes two instruments: a teachers' questionnaire and a classroom observation conducted at the English Department at the University of Guelma 8 Mai-1945, to gather the needed data. Additionally, this dissertation is divided into two main parts, the first part is theoretical, while the second is practical. Most significantly, the theoretical part consists of two chapters. The first chapter sheds light on the theoretical knowledge which requires teachers with the major approaches of teaching literature in an EFL classrooms. It is devoted to provide a general overview of what is meant by literature and literary texts, the various models to teaching literature and the importance of the appropriate selection of literary texts in shaping students thinking skills. However, the second chapter is dedicated to theoretical knowledge which requires EFL teachers with several effective strategies to assist their learners in enhancing their thinking abilities, in addition to a comprehensive overview of CT, along with the major skills and dispositions that characterize critical thinkers. The third chapter focuses on the practical part of the study which tackles the analysis and interpretation of results. Besides, it contains two parts, the first portion is devoted to displaying results and analyzing data gathered from the teachers' questionnaire, and the second portion is for the analysis and interpretation of the classroom observation.

To conclude, the deduced results from the analyses of teachers' questionnaires and

classroom observation enabled the researcher to provide a number of conclusive interpretations in relation to the aforementioned research questions. Firstly, the obtained findings show that teaching the literature course at the University of Guelma significantly enhances critical thinking skills in EFL learners. Secondly, EFL teachers perceived literature as a valuable tool in developing CT, indicating that they employ various strategies in order to promote it in their classrooms. Finally, during the observation sessions, it was remarked that both students and teachers show a great deal of awareness towards the importance of the course of literature in developing EFL learners' language skills as well as critical thinking abilities.

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APPENDICES

(Appendix A)

Teachers' Questionnaire

Investigating the Role of Teaching Literature in Developing EFL Learners' Critical Thinking Skills

Dear Teachers,

You are kindly invited to answer this questionnaire which is part of a Master dissertation research. This questionnaire serves as a data-gathering tool for research work conducted at the department of Letters and English Language at Guelma University. It aims at exploring your views about the role of teaching literature in enhancing EFL students' critical thinking skills. We assure you that your answers will be treated with great confidentiality and care, and your participation in this study is completely voluntary.

Would you cross the appropriate box (X), which indicates your choice, and specify your answer when needed?

Thank you for your cooperation.

Ms. Bechkoura Sawsen
Master II student
Department of English
Faculty of Letters and Languages
University 8 Mai 1945-Guelma, Algeria
2023

Section One: General Information

Q1. Would you specify your gender, please?

- a) Male
- b) Female

Q2. How long have you been teaching English at the higher education level?

..... Years

Q3. Which educational system do you prefer?

- a) The LMD System
- b) The Classic System
- c) None of the above

Whatever your answer, please justify

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Section Two: Teaching Literature

Q4. Is Literature -as a course- important in developing EFL learners' language skills?

- a) Yes
- b) No

If yes, why?

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Q5. Which of the following models have you used to teach literature?

Definition of terms

Carter and Long (1991) proposed three different models for teaching literature:

- 1- ***The Cultural Model:*** This model emphasizes the study of literature as a reflection of the culture that produced it.
- 2- ***The Language-Based Model:*** This model emphasizes the formal features of literature, such as structure, genre, and language use.
- 3- ***The Personal Growth Model:*** This model emphasizes the potential for literature to promote personal growth and self-understanding in readers.

- a) Language Model
- b) Cultural Model
- c) Personal Growth Model
- d) All of them

Whatever your answer, please justify

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Q6. Which approach do you usually employ when you teach literature?

Definition of terms

Carter and Long (1991) proposed three different approaches for teaching literature:

- 1- ***The Information-Based Approach:*** It provides students with background knowledge about literary works' historical, cultural, and biographical contexts.
- 2- ***The Stylistic Approach:*** It enables students to analyse the writing style and investigate how word choices, sentence structure, and sound devices affect the text's overall meaning and impact.
- 3- ***The Personal Response Approach:*** It encourages students to explore their emotional and personal responses to literary works.

a) Information-Based approach

b) Stylistic approach

c) Personal Response approach

d) All of them

Whatever your answer, please justify

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Q7. Do you agree that a good selection of literary texts is important for EFL learners?

a) Strongly agree

b) Agree

c) Neither agree nor disagree

d) Disagree

e) Strongly disagree

Whatever your answer, please justify

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Section Three: Teaching Literature and Critical Thinking

Q8. How often do you consider developing learners' CTS when teaching literature?

a) Rarely

b) Sometimes

c) Often

d) Very often

e) Always

Q9. What do you think of the critical thinking skills of your students?

a) Very good

b) Good

c) Average

d) Limited

e) Very limited

Whatever your answer, please justify

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Q10. Which of the following strategies have you used to enhance CT in your EFL classroom?

a) Active Reading

b) Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

c) Questioning

d) All of them

Other (s), would you please specify

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Q11. Do you think that critical thinking skills can be enhanced through literature?

a) Yes

b) No

Justify your answer, please.

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Q12. How do you encourage EFL learners to engage critically with the texts they are studying?

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Q13. In your opinion, what are the challenges of teaching CT in EFL classrooms in Algeria?

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Q14. If you have any suggestions or recommendations on the subject under inquiry, please feel free to share.

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Thank you for your cooperation.

(Appendix B)

Classroom Observation Checklist

Teacher:

Date:

Observer:

Time:

Department:

Session N°:

Section 1: Classroom environment		
	Class A	Class B
1. The class observed		
2. Students' number	Class A	Class B
3. The classroom has a positive and welcoming atmosphere that supports students in learning	Yes	No
4. The lesson(s) taught while observing		
Section 2: Teacher's Methodology, Practices, and Assessment.		
	Yes	No
5. Does the teacher provide an overview of the text being studied and explain its relevance to the students?		

6. Does the teacher ensure that all students have equal opportunities to participate and engage in the lesson?	Yes	No
7. Does the teacher provide constructive feedback to students to help them improve their understanding of the literary texts being studied?	a) Positive feedback b) Negative feedback	
8. Which of these models for teaching literature is used by the teacher?	a) Language Model b) Cultural Model c) Personal Growth model	
9. What types of questions does the teacher ask?	a) Open-ended questions b) Close-ended questions c) Thought-provoking questions	
10. Does the teacher guide students' thinking towards criticality?	a) To analyze b) To explain c) To interpret	
11. The amount of teacher-talk in the classroom in comparison to students-talk.		
Section 3: Students' engagement		
12. Are students actively engaged in the lesson?	Yes	No

13. Do students appear interested and attentive during class?	Yes	No
14. Do students ask relevant questions and seek clarification when needed?	Yes	No
15. Do students appear motivated to study literature?	Yes	No
16. Do students show critical thinking skills in their answers and interactions with the teacher or each other?	Yes	No
17. What are the prevailing critical thinking skills that students show?	a) Inference b) Questioning c) Interpretation	
General Remarks and Observation		

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى تحري مدى مساهمة تدريس مقياس الأدب في تحسين مستوى مهارات التفكير النقدي لدى طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بجامعة 8 ماي 1945 قالمة، الجزائر. و لتحقيق هذا الهدف، اعتمدت الدراسة الحالية على المنهج الوصفي الكيفي. كما تم استخدام أداتين اثنتين لجمع البيانات: الملاحظة المنظمة لفوجين من طلبة الماستر 1 أثناء دراستهم لمقياس الأدب، و استبيان تم توزيعه على تسعة أساتذة لمادة الأدب. أظهر تحليل النتائج أن تدريس مقياس الأدب يلعب دورا فعالا في تحسين مهارات التفكير النقدي لدى طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. أثناء تفاعل الطلبة مع أساتذتهم خلال الدروس، أظهروا ثلاث مهارات أساسية للتفكير النقدي وهي: التساؤل، التفسير، والاستنتاج. بالتالي، تم التوصل إلى أن الأساتذة المشاركين في هذه الدراسة ينظرون إلى الأدب كوسيلة مهمة لتنمية مهارات التفكير لدى متعلميهم. وبذلك تعتبر دراسة الأدب فرصة جيدة لطلبة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لممارسة التفكير وتوجيه تفكيرهم نحو النقد. في النهاية اقترحت الدراسة بعض التوصيات البيداغوجية لكل من الأساتذة، الطلبة، والكلية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تدريس الأدب، مهارات التفكير النقدي، ماستر 1، طلبة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، جامعة 8 ماي 1945- قالمة.