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Option: Linguistics

Exploring Teachers' and Students' Attitudes towards the Role of Classroom Debate in Enhancing Learners' Critical Thinking:

Teachers and EFL First Year Master Students at the University of Guelma 8 Mai 1945.

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Language and Culture

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my beloved family.

To the "Queen of hearts", dear mother, for her endless love, sacrifice, support.

To the "greatest" father on earth who had always believed in me.

To my lovely sisters, Dorsaf and Razika.

To my cherished brother and his wife.

To my favorite "Youcef".

To all those who have been helpful, caring, and patient, I dedicate this simple work.

Thank you all.

Abir.

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Abstract

This work tries to investigate the effect of classroom debate on developing of students' critical thinking. Though both teachers and students of English language recognize the importance of critical thinking skill, they neglect to develop it. Therefore, teachers are required to help their students to promote their critical thinking and choose the appropriate strategies and tools to achieve this objective. Correspondingly, classroom debate is one of the recommended techniques by many scholars and educationalists to be used for this purpose. It is an activity through which learners can practice many critical thinking skills. Consequently, their critical thinking would be enhanced. Thus, we hypothesize that if teachers use debate in the classroom, students' critical thinking will be enhanced. This research tends mainly to explore both teachers' and students' attitudes towards the use of classroom debate to enhance critical thinking. Also, it sheds light on the importance of both critical thinking as an important skill, and in-class debate as an innovative tool for teaching and learning. In order to affirm the research hypothesis and achieve its aims, two varied questionnaires were administered and distributed to sixty students of first year Master level and fifteen teachers of different modules. After analyzing the findings of both questionnaires, it is indicated that classroom debate helps students to perceive issues from different perspectives, think adequately and thus, reach evident conclusions and establish credible data. These abilities are the major features related to critical thinking. This assumes that many of first year Master students and their teachers believe that classroom debate acts as an effective tool in enhancing critical thinking. On the basis of these results, it is recommended that teachers should raise students' awareness towards the importance of critical thinking skill, and help them develop it through the use of classroom debate.

List of Tables

List of Abbreviations

CT   **Critical Thinking**

CTS   **Critical Thinking Skill**

DR   **Deductive Reasoning**

EFL   **English as a Foreign Language**

ELT   **English Language Teaching**

ESL   **English as a Second Language**

IR   **Inductive Reasoning**

LMD   **License, Master, Doctorate**

List of Figures

Contents

General Introduction

   The educational system of any country aims strongly at creating well educated learners who are able to understand all the important, useful and powerful ideas provided for them. As human beings, learners are required to reflect and analyze the data before accepting it and start working with it. Having the ability to do so requires some cognitive skills like the skill of thinking critically. The critical thinking skill has been a growing area of research since thousands years ago. It aims mainly at making reasonable judgments, and wise decisions based on facts rather than opinions. This happens through the act of rationalizing, analyzing and assessing data gathered about all life subject matters.

   Learners can achieve more success in different domains; particularly social and educational life through mastering the critical thinking skill. It helps them to solve different problems which they may face in classroom assignments or in real life situations, using logic. It enables the learners to move from being passive to being active members in the classroom and the society as a whole. Therefore, teachers seek to manage a successful lecture using different methods and strategies taking into consideration the different skills that each student possesses and needs to improve. Moreover, the use of debate as a teaching-learning strategy may has much influence on the development of students' critical thinking, in which they have an opportunity to express their thoughts, ask questions and assess the other's ideas. Hence, students will feel more comfortable during the lectures, increase their achievements, improve their own lives and contribute to the whole society, culture and civilization.

1. Statement of the Problem

   The majority of students at the Department of English at 8 Mai 1945, Guelma University seem to be passive because they accept all information provided by their teachers without judging or questioning it. This is because they are not aware of developing their CTS. Also, the learner-centered approach necessitates the students to be more active members within the

whole teaching-learning process, where the teacher acts only as a guide and monitor of his/her students' progress. As Students may wonder how to discover their CTS and how to activate it, instructors suggested many strategies that may raise their ability to think critically and implement it in the classroom. Debate can be one of the suitable techniques that students can follow in order to use their skills of analyzing, rationalizing, questioning, criticizing ...etc. Thus, debate is one of the instructional activities that can potentially maximize and develop students' critical thinking skills.

2. Research question

The central focus of this study is how classroom debate can develop their EFL students' critical thinking skill. Hence, our research addresses the following main question:

Does classroom debate have a significant improvement on EFL students' critical thinking improvement?

3. Aims of the Study

Developing critical thinking is a must for all EFL learners not just for educational tasks but also for everyday life ones. Thus, the use of debate in classroom can promote achieving this goal. In conducting this research, several aims were planned to work as the platform for this study. This research aims at:

1. Raising teachers awareness about the importance of developing critical thinking skill like any other skill.

2. Stressing the importance of using debate in EFL classroom.

3. Investigating the perceived impact of using debate in EFL classroom to enhance critical thinking.

4. Research Hypothesis

The use of debate within the classroom is considered as an effective tool used to enhance students' critical thinking. In this research we hypothesize that:

- If teachers use debate in EFL classroom, EFL students' critical thinking will be enhanced.

5. Research Methodology and Design

5.1. The Research Method

The present study employs the quantitative descriptive method. The nature of the present research indicates that it is a descriptive research since it describes EFL students' as well as teachers' perceptions towards using debate in classroom and its effect on EFL students' critical thinking. This method deals with numerical and statistical data. It is chosen in order to gather precise and reliable data and to test the research hypothesis.

5.2. The Study Sample

The sample of this study consists of two types of population; students and teachers of the Department of Letters and English Language at the University of Guelma, 8 Mai 1945. The sample was chosen randomly. Participants of the first sample are 16 teachers who have an experience in teaching different modules, whereas the second sample contains 60 first year Master students. They serve as the best sample for our study; because they are supposed to have sufficient experiment about debate; how it is conducted and what are its characteristics. Furthermore, they started to learn about critical thinking in their lessons in some modules. Hence, they will help in providing more reliable data.

5.3. Data Gathering Tool

The current research is conducted to confirm the research hypothesis. In order to explore both teachers' and students' attitudes towards developing CTS through using debate in the

classroom, two questionnaires are administered to both students and teachers. A total number of 60 Master one students and 16 teachers at the Department of Letters and English Language, Guelma University, participated in answering a survey questionnaire as the only quantitative tool to carry out this study. We selected the questionnaire as a method of data collection. Therefore, it is the appropriate tool to gather data about both students' and teachers' attitudes. Questionnaires are composed of likert- skale items which are a useful and effective means of determining opinions and attitudes; yes/no and other close-ended questions. The open-ended questions are followed by respondents' comments. Students themselves, through their responses, help us to answer the research question, investigate their knowledge and use of classroom debate, and to collect data about their critical thinking skill. Teachers are more concerned with consciousness-raising of critical thinking than their students to urge them dealing with such concept in their classes. It is by questioning teachers to know whether or not are aware of the importance of classroom debate, and to collect data about their procedures for improving students' critical thinking.

6. The Pilot study

Six students and three teachers, accordingly, had taken part in the piloting of the questionnaires. Feedback from these teachers was taken into consideration in rewording questions, adding new ones and modifying ambiguous ideas and wordings.

7. Structure of the Dissertation

The present dissertation is composed of three chapters, each with a specific aim to accomplish. The first two chapters are theoretical parts, whereas the third one is devoted to the practical part. The first chapter explores CTS, providing an overview about it, its definition, characteristics, skills and sub-skills in addition to its importance and how it can be taught. Then, the second chapter is about debate, in which we will present its definition,

history, skills and formats. Also, it shows its importance in education, in ELT context and in enhancing critical thinking. Finally, a third chapter is conducted to analyze data collected from teachers' and students' questionnaires, in addition to a general introduction and general conclusion.

Introduction

As people have goals in their lives and seek to achieve them, they need to be able to distinguish fact from opinion, true from the false and reach conclusions based on evidence. Therefore, higher levels of thinking are required like critical thinking (CT). Hence, critical thinking along time has been a growing area of study by many scholars and philosophers. This chapter tries to provide a brief history of CT, discusses some of its characteristics and shows to what extent it is Important in EFL classes.

1.1 Historical Overview

The notion of critical thinking is not a recent one, it dates back to 2500 years ago with Socrates's method of probing questioning, which is called nowadays "Socratic questioning". It was used as a tool to teach critical thinking where it is required to initiate profound questions before accepting any idea and believe in it. His work was further developed by Plato, Aristotle and Greek skeptics who assumed that things look different from how they appear; only active minds can see the deep reality of life (Paul, Elder & Bartell, 1997, p.34).

Other significant contributions were made by different scholars like Dewey; who emphasized on developing our sense of the instrumental nature of human thought within actual human objectives. Also, Ludwig Wittgenstein work raised awareness to analyzing concepts and evaluating their power and restrictions. In addition to Piaget who focused on the special need to promote critical thinking; which is the ability to rationalize within multiple opinions, arriving to the level of "conscious realization." (Paul, Elder & Bartell, 1997, p.35).

1.2. Definition

In an attempt to clarify the ambiguity and the vagueness concerning critical thinking and to stress its importance, researchers have investigated different aspects of critical thinking. In this regard, many scholars started to define 'thinking' either as a concept or its meaning in the

context of education, before giving a clear definition to 'critical thinking'. McPeck (1990) argued that thinking must be about something; it is impossible to think about naught; it ought to be linked to a subject matter, whatever the subject is about (pp.19-20). Atabaki, Kesthtiaray and Yarmohammaadian (2015) considered thinking as the most substantial aspect of human beings and argued that the task of an education system is to make people learn how to think autonomously (p.93).

The term 'critical' is also demonstrated by several authors who established various explanations of the specific connotation of the term. Paul, Binker, Martin, Vetrano and Kreklau (1989) declared that the 'critical' dimension realizes the "intellectual autonomy of the critical thinker" (p.2). Paul et al. emphasize that a critical thinker is the one who will not take conclusions for grant and will assess evidences – distinguishing true ones from false ones – and then decide what to believe. The ability to do so is a skill that must be acquired. On the basis of these simple definitions, critical thinking has been defined by Halpern (1996) as the implementation of "cognitive skills" and techniques to increase the opportunity for appropriate outcome that recognizes a purposeful, evident, and straightforward thinking. Furthermore, she argued that it is the type of thinking that encompasses a number of cognitive tasks such as; problem solving, inferring, calculating likelihoods, and decision making (p.23).

Sternberg (1986) defined critical thinking as, "The mental processes, strategies and representation people use to solve problems" (p.2). Dewey (1933) preferred to call it "reflective thinking", and define it as "the active, persistent and careful consideration of a belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds which support it and the further conclusion to which it tends." (p. 9). In other words, critical thinking is an active process that requires reflecting on and evaluating reasons to reach reasonable conclusions.

From one hand, Ennis (1985) claimed that it is a logical deep thinking aiming at making sound decision about what to believe or what should be done in different situations (p. 45). In

the other hand, Lipman et.al (1980) pointed out that the aim of critical thinking is to make a correct judgment based on criteria. Teaching critical thinking needs to be programmed carefully for the students. So that, thinking skills are well transferred and students are aware of what they learn (p.8). Same ideas were discussed by Paul and Elder (2009) stating that CT is the way of thinking about subject matter, whereby the thinker enhances his/her thinking through "skillfully taking charge of the structures inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon them". Critical thinking is, therefore, the way in which we think about thinking (p.18).

1.3. Characteristics of a Critical Thinker

Paul et.al (1989) identified the aspects of a critical thinker as someone who can think critically as 'reasonable person'. The term 'critical' is meant to realize the intellectual autonomy of the critical thinker. For that, a critical thinker never accepts conclusions without reflecting on them. He needs to evaluate or judge reasons. However, to agree with or accept these conclusions without understanding them creates unreflective thinker (p. 45).

Additionally, Chafee (2009) claimed that a critical thinker is an individual who can deeply recognize the outside world, make sage judgments, and reason "important ideas" (p.43). Furthermore, Paul and Elder (2009) agreed that the reasonable thinker puts on critical issues into discussions, asks and develops effective questions clearly and accurately, bring all relevant data and evaluate them; thereafter, s/he assesses the conclusions according to some relevant criteria (as cited in Michaelsen & sweet, 2012, p.8).

According to Bowell and Kemp (2002), critical thinkers are able to infer meaning, analyze ideas and arguments, and construct accurate conclusions based on logic. They can deduce the credibility of information from its bias. Critical thinkers are typical self-reflectors and independent thinkers. They rationalize their way of thinking, and they are likely able to think "outside the box." Critical thinkers deeply consider their beliefs, assumptions, ideas, and

arguments in order to detect errors in thinking. They are able to repair their thinking processes, and they master the skill of synthesizing information (as cited in Karakoç, 2016, p.82).

Interestingly, critical thinking is a complex whole of cognitive skills that enable individuals to rationalize data and check its credibility before starting to believe in it. A critical thinker sees things from different angles using logic that enables him to acquire higher levels of knowledge. Decision making, problem solving, inferring, analyzing…etc are all skills that goes under the critical thinking skill.

1.4. Developmental Stages of Thinking

Critical thinking has become one of the most prominent aspects that teachers focus on in their instructions. Nevertheless, they need to take into consideration that CT is not an innate skill. Rather, it needs to be learnt and developed through stages. In this respect, Paul and Elder, as educational psychologists, (2010) have developed six main stages of thinking development classified as follow:

1.4.1. Stage One: The Unreflective Thinker

Thinkers in this stage are highly unaware of the significant role of thinking in their lives and of potential issues with their own reasoning – they are not self-reflective. They may develop some skills in their thinking unconsciously. But, these skills are inconsistently applied because of biases and prejudices. Although these thinkers may be highly educated, they tend to be unable to "fix" problems in thinking or embrace new procedures to solve problems.

1.4.2. Stage Two: The Challenged Thinker

These thinkers are aware of the significance of thinking in their lives. They know that problems in thinking and logic may cause them trouble. They merely understand the basic components of reasoning and the criteria for evaluating thinking. But, it is still hard for them

to enforce it accurately and properly in their reasoning. Thus, enhancing their thinking skills is quite difficult for them.

1.4.3. Stage Three: The Beginning Thinker

Thinkers of this stage are positively trying to control and develop their thinking. Despite that they recognize the problems in their thinking; they still unable to find systematic solutions to improve it. They welcome critics about their own thinking, and egocentrism. They know that their reasoning needs to be self-regulated. However, they are still confused about it.

1.4.4. Stage Four: The Practicing Thinker

At this stage, thinkers are starting to posses the necessary skills to control and develop their thinking. They do analyze their thinking in several areas of their live. Practicing thinkers began to assess their reasoning in a structured way. However, their knowledge about problems in reasoning is still limited. In this regard, Boyle (2014) affirmed that these thinkers have the needed skills that will assist them to fix their defects in thinking (p.326).

1.4.5. Stage Five: The Advanced Thinker

These thinkers have established good habits of thinking. They actively rationalize and criticize their own reason and skillfully deal with their defects in thinking. Although they become better thinkers, they may not function accurately at all times in all fields. Boyle (2014) claimed that "advanced thinkers have mastery over their critical thinking faculties and are able to place under heightened surveillance their thought process and decision making processes" (p.329).

1.4.6. Stage Six: The Accomplished (Master) Thinker

These thinkers have conducted a deep, systematic plan to promote their own thinking processes, and they continually revise, assess and develop this plan to enhance their thinking

level. They largely recognize their bias and egocentric thinking. The good habits of thinking are becoming as a matter of routine.

The students' ways of thinking remains unclear for them, until they are exposed to their teachers' instructions. Through dealing with classroom tasks, they will be able to discover their abilities and the mistakes they commit in thinking, and why not to determine their developmental stage in thinking. Any person who grows up as a critical thinker must pass through certain stages based on his willingness to step up.

1.5. Critical Thinking Skills

According to the Executive Order number 338 of the California State University system (1980), instruction in critical thinking is established with the aim of realizing what links language to logic, which necessitates the capacity to analyze, judge, and defend ideas, to reason inductively and deductively, and to end up with wise decisions based on reasonable inferences constructed from clear amount of information (p.3). In other words, critical thinking is an umbrella skill that encompasses a whole set of sub-skills that a learner should master to be a creative critical thinker.

1.5.1. Reasoning

According to the Online Collins English dictionary, reasoning is "the process by which you reach a conclusion after thinking about all the facts". In other words, reasoning is the act of building arguments, draw conclusions and make decision using logical thinking. The GE Foundation Workplace Skills Program agreed that reasoning is the capacity to construct an argument coherently and logically, and to justify this argument through reason (2006, p. 6).

Hughes (1936) from his part stated that "when we reason we actively link thoughts together in such a way that we believe one thought provides support for another thought" (p.15). Besides, Kutty (2013) assumed that reasoning is a highly structured way of thinking. It is a mental activity that rationalizes data in order to achieve clear conclusions. Individuals

with this high level of thinking are able to infer meaning from different symbols, develop concepts and use linguistic ability. In comparison with thinking, reasoning is taken as more serious and complex cognitive process (p.160).

Reasoning is a highly skillful way of thinking which helps an individual to recognize the cause and effect relationship of an event or solving a problem. It occurs through well-organized steps based on previous knowledge combined with present experience. Hence, mastering the critical thinking skill cannot be achieved without acquiring the reasoning skill. It has two types; inductive reasoning and deductive reasoning.

1.5.1.1. Inductive Reasoning

In inductive reasoning (IR), a general conclusion is drawn from specific premises (S. A. Hatch & L. Z. Hatch, 2006, p.66). According to Patrick Perret (2015), inductive reasoning refers to a mental activity of inducing inferences that has two characteristics. First, IR has a specific direction that begins with observing particular conditions and ends with formulating more general rules. Second, the conclusions from IR are doubtful since it includes formulating hypotheses about principles (p.390). For example:

- Tombor is a dog and has claws.(specific premise)

- Smoky is a dog and has claws. (specific premise)

- Max is a dog and has claws. (specific premise)

- Thus, all dogs have claws. (general conclusion)

Induction starts with observations and methods. Some similarities or structures can be established to form some hypotheses. Then, turn these hypotheses into theory. It is difficult to decide about the truthfulness of the conclusion, despite the accuracy of all the premises from the observation (Feeney & Heit, 2007, pp.2-3). Therefore, the conclusion from induction must not be always true instead it can be or it is likely to be true, which makes it subject to revision and discussion.

1.5.1.2. Deductive Reasoning

According to Ayalon and Even, deductive reasoning (DR) is the act of inferring certain conclusions from a set of familiar data using essential logical rules (2008, pp.235-236). Laird and Byrne (1991) also shared the same idea that it is the cognitive process of making logical inferences (p.8). In contrast to inductive reasoning, in DR the process of inference moves from the very broad premises and come up with specific conclusions (S. A. Hatch and L. Z Hatch, 2006, p.66). Schechter (2013) assumed that the accuracy of the conclusion is formally ensured by the validity of the premises, unless there is no error in reasoning (p.226). Therefore, the premises provide an accurate basis for approving the conclusion. For example:

- All birds live on the tree. (general premise)

- The owl is a bird. (specific premise)

- Therefore, the owl lives on the tree. (very specific premise)

1.5.2. Analysis

Analysis is one of the most prominent skills of critical thinking. It helps in the comprehension of various types of data, as well; it is involved in all the other skills. Quoting from the Consensus Statement of the National Panel of Experts, analysis is "to identify the intended and actual inferential relationships among statements, questions, concepts, descriptions, or other forms of representation intended to express belief, judgment, experiences, reasons, information, or opinions." The experts consider the ability to examine ideas, explore arguments, and analyzing them as sub-skills of analysis (as cited in Facione, 2013, p.5).

Analysis can be viewed as the opposite of synthesis. It is a mental process through which a complex whole is divided into smaller components for understanding it better. According to Facione (1990), analysis is to identify and investigate the essentials and details of particular

issues, then discover the relationship between these constituents and what they tend to express (p.9). Accordingly, he argued that it involves three different sub-skills:

1.5.2.1. Examining Ideas

Before believing in ideas, a careful analysis to the terms and expressions used for persuasion is required. Also, examining ideas involves revealing the relationship between these expressions and terms in relation to the context in which it is expressed.

1.5.2.2. Detecting Arguments

It implies analyzing the data provided with the argument, and find out if it supports the claim or contrasts it. In other words, is to detect the relationship between the opinion, thought or a statement and its internal structure.

1.5.2.3. Analyzing Arguments

According to Govier (2018), the analysis of arguments involves a careful understanding to the arguments, and evaluating the premises used to support it (p.361). In other words, it incorporates the exploring the argument and the background information used to in support for the main conclusion. This step helps in avoiding misleading and to ensure the understanding of the argument.

1.5.3. Evaluation

According to Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Learning (1956), evaluation is one of the higher order thinking skills that cannot be established unless students analyze the information first (as cited in Krathwohl, 2002, p.214). Evaluation is closely associated with critical thinking. Some writers such as Beyer (1985) and Yinger (1980) seem to equate "critical thinking" with "evaluation." Most theorists, however, described critical thinking as including evaluation among several other higher-order thinking processes (Cromwell 1992; Ennis 1989; Paul 1992). Because of these ties between evaluation and critical thinking, much theory and research about critical thinking informs an understanding of evaluation.

The term evaluation is likely understood as a demonstration of a well-structured process. However, Freidman and Wyatt (2006) suggested that evaluation aims at answering questions and making decisions. Thus, it refers to gathering data through multiple activities intended to answer questions. According to The GE Foundation Workplace Skills Program, evaluation is to assess information according to certain criteria or a set of standards (p.6). The consensus statement of the national panel of experts (as cited in Facione, 2013) suggests that evaluation is:

> To assess the credibility of statements or other representations which are accounts or descriptions of a person's perception, experience, situation, judgment, belief, or opinion; and to assess the logical strength of the actual or intended inferential relationships among statements, descriptions, questions or other forms of representation.". (p.6)

Therefore, evaluation is an activity performed by a critical thinker to assess the truthfulness and reliability of data according to some criteria.

1.5.4. Problem solving

Harris (2016) defined problem as the difference between the current state and the desired state. According to Dunbar (1998), a problem has four elements. It has a primary state of the person's knowledge concerning a problem, and a desired state that a person wants to achieve. Also, it requires some procedures through which a problem solver can reach the desired state. Then, it has a task context where the solver is working on. The context helps in providing different ways to solve a problem (p.2). Therefore, problem solving is the individual's ability to figure out the basic reasons behind an issue or situation, think of some solutions, then decide upon which solution is ideal to solve the problem.

1.5.4.1. Stages of Problem Solving

 According to GE Foundation Workplace Skills Program, there are several stages that one should go through in order to solve a problem.

a. Identifying the problem: is a basic step in the process of problem solving. The solver needs to discover the basic reasons for this problem; look at facts, determine the interrelation between factors and map the problem through asking questions.

b. Looking for possible solutions: at this stage, the problem solver starts to create possible solution for the problem. S/he can brainstorm as many ideas as possible, note all the ideas without assessing them. Then, make sure that the ideas are understood before starting to discuss and select the ideal solution.

c. Selecting solution: at this stage, the solver decides upon the best solutions. It involves evaluating all the suggested solutions in terms of their cons and pros. Also, developing some criteria to avoid solutions that cannot be accomplished. Then, the selection of the best solution takes place.

d. Acting on solutions: it is the final stage in problem solving. The solver develops an action plan to implement the solution in reality. It is important to monitor the process of implementation to check the effectiveness of the selected solution (2006, pp.26-29).

Figure1. 2. Stages of Problem Solving.

 (Adapted from: The GE Foundation Workplace skills program. 2006. p.25)

1.5.5. Decision Making

Pearce and Robinson (1989) assumed that decision-making is inescapable, because to think of not making a decision is a decision making in itself (as cited in Al-Tarawneh, 2012, p.2). Therefore, people are obliged to make decisions everyday even if they do not intend to.

Many researchers see that, a decision exists when a solution to a problem is selected to be implemented. (Duncan, 1973) stated that it is a conscious selection to the way of behaving or thinking in a certain situation. However, according to Harrison (1975), a decision making is a dynamic process described by Cole (2004) as "a process of identifying a problem, evaluating alternatives, and selecting one alternative" (as cited in Al-Tarawneh, 2012, p.3). It is the process where people are selecting the best choice among many other options according to the present situation.

1.5.5.1. The Process of Decision Making

Decision making is the process of choosing one option over many. Several models were suggested to identify the process of decision making in order to make more deliberate, thoughtful decisions. Tiernan, Morley and Foley (2013) proposed a six-step model that decision makers usually go through:

A. Identify and diagnose the problem: the decision maker needs to identify the issue that requires resolution. Before taking any action, some information should be gathered about the real cause behind the issue and what it needs to be solved.

B. Identify alternative solutions: the next step involves identifying a range of possible actions that can be used in a way to solve the problem. A decision might be tried before, but it does not mean that it is unique. One should be creative.

C. Evaluate alternatives: based on a certain analysis and feelings, a decision maker will try to imagine each alternative under the same circumstances of the problem. A deep

investigation should be conducted to evaluate each option and to determine whether it meets the desired goal or not.

D. Choose an alternative: after evaluating the suggested options, the decision maker now is ready to select the ideal one. If s/he faces any difficulty, s/he may go back to step 2 and start again.

E. Implement the decision: This step is of high importance in the decision making process. When a decision is made, it is time to take action through implementing it. Thus, the best choice is worthless if it is not implemented perfectly.

F. Evaluate the decision: In this final step, the decision maker evaluates his decision in terms of the results, if they are still appropriate for the situation or not. If any adjustment is required then it should be executed (pp.148-151).

1.6. Importance of Critical Thinking in Language Learning

Enhancing critical thinking among foreign language learners is of high importance and can help them to achieve many successes. When language learners are aware of their own thinking, they can successfully develop the ways they learn through. Also, critical thinking broadens the learning process and makes the language of a higher value for learners. Furthermore, critical thinking is highly interconnected with the learners' achievements (Rafi, 2011, pp.63-67). Various studies have proved the role of critical thinking in improving EFL writing ability (Rafi, 2011); "language proficiency" (Liaw, 2007); and "oral communication ability" (Kusaka & Robertson, 2006).

According to the Language Awareness Approach, which emerged in the 1970's, critical thinking plays a significant role in the language learning process. This approach permits learners to analyze the "real world" language not only focusing on classroom language. The principle of this approach is that teachers equip the students with the needed strategies to be

self-motivated and well-prepared to analyze language whenever they come across it and "solve the problem" of communication using critical thinking (Villa, 2017, p. 75).

Indeed, language learners who have developed to be critical thinkers are able to do some activities of which other students may find difficulty in. According to the study of Mahyuddin, Lope Pihie, Elias and Konting (2004), these critical thinkers are capable of thinking rationally and creatively to achieve the goals of the curriculum; they have the ability to make decisions and solve problems, they use their thinking skills effectively to understand the language or its contents; and finally they are intellectually, physically, emotionally and spiritually well-balanced (pp.23-33).

On the basis of the above mentioned benefits of improving critical thinking in language learners and its little implication in EFL settings, Brown (2004) asserted that, in an ideal academic English language program, the objectives of the curriculum should go beyond linguistic factors, and develop critical thinking skills (p.23). Since English is regarded as a lingua franca, its users and learners need to be critical in their learning and use of the language.

As critical thinking has a great significance in developing the learners' ways of learning; it is then, the role of the instructors to help their students develop the critical thinking skill. Consequently, they will be able to achieve the main objectives of the curriculum. As Lipman (2003) admitted that teachers are required to work on promoting critical thinking in learners instead of focusing on how to move them from one educational level to another. The responsibility of foreign language teachers is to help their learners acquire critical thinking skills while learning the language (p.28).

1.7. Teaching Critical Thinking

Critical thinking skill has become a very important skill in EFL classrooms. This higher level of thinking enables learners to develop reasoned judgments in both the classroom and

everyday life. The educational system insists on including critical thinking into curricula. However, English language teachers wonder how to include developing such important skills in their lessons.

Empirical researches revealed that teachers, when using traditional ways of teaching, they unconsciously provide their students with all the needed data (Kabilan, 2000); like, taught sessions. Therefore, the learners will not have the opportunity to reason or even raise question. Nevertheless, activities such as group work, project-based work, classroom debate and presentation skills (Kusaka & Robertson, 2006) would be appropriate to enable students to be more active thinkers.

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (2001-2002), a non-departmental organization sponsored by the Department of Education and Skills in the U.K, claimed that teaching a foreign language for children requires the application of activities that include: (1) identifying and understanding the relations between the foreign language and mother language in terms of lexis, syntax, and morphology; (2) drawing conclusions from unfamiliar language and unexpected ideas; (3) using their grammatical knowledge to infer the meaning of new words and expressions; (4) using language productively to express ideas, attitudes and opinions; (5) adapting and using the language for their needs; (6) identifying and using language patterns; and (7) managing their own use of language-learning strategies (as cited in Fahim & Shirkhani, 2011, p.1092). This type of activities works in line with the type of activities needed to develop critical thinking among EFL learners. Thus, teachers who aim at promoting their students' critical thinking can apply such activities.

Many authors recommended different ways to increase thinking skills among language learners. For instance, Zainuddin and Moore (2003) in their experiment proposed a structured controversial dialogue technique for developing critical thinking among language learners (classroom debate); Kasper (2000) based on his experiment suggested engaging language

learners in sustained content study within collaborative learning communities as well as using information technology resources to improve learners' linguistic and thinking skills. Of the suggested methods and techniques, learner-centered approach (Kennedy, 2007; Zare & Othman, 2013; Freeley & Steinberg, 2005) is considered as an effective tool to teach language skills while promoting critical thinking.

Carol Numrich, a professor at Columbia University, tried to generate a sequence of tasks that may guide teachers in incorporating and reinforcing critical thinking within their lessons (see appendix A). Therefore, they will help their students to develop and become reasonable thinkers. It involves seven practical task types that work with all different levels of English learners. These tasks can be classified into three classes; some of them are done before displaying the main text (observing and identifying assumptions), others are done while concentrating on the text (understanding and organizing and interpreting) and some others are done after presenting and explaining the main text (Inquiring further, analyzing and evaluating and making decisions). Here, the word text denotes the source of information shaped in a lesson or unit (as cited in Beaumont, 2010, pp.1-6).

Among the tasks that teachers should focus on to achieve this goal are forming relationships; comparing and contrasting; classifying; evaluating; ranking; identifying right from wrong, facts from opinion, cause and effect; summarizing; generalizing; interpreting; identifying main, supporting and detailed ideas as well as making decisions and solving problems (Mahyuddin et al, 2004). Classroom activities need to be a way for the students to share their thoughts, evaluate their learning, and engage in interactive situations with colleagues and teachers (Kusaka & Robertson, 2006). Also, the use of materials which can be analyzed, synthesized, discussed, argued about, classified in different ways…etc is a suitable way to enhance critical thinking among language learners (Shirkhani & Fahim, 2011, p.1092).

Conclusion

In nowadays, critical thinking has gained huge importance in education and EFL context in particular. It has become equal to the four skills of language if not more important. This chapter attempted to provide a clear idea about some key concepts related to critical thinking, which is viewed as a crucial part of EFL learning process. It dealt with various definitions provided by known scholars in addition to a historical overview about it. Then, it stated it skills and sub-sills. Next, it showed to what extent this skill is important in EFL context. Furthermore, it tried to cover the possible ways for teaching this skill for foreign language learners.

Introduction

Classroom debate serves as a systematic pedagogical tool that allows for the active engagement of students. The main purpose of conducting a debate is not only to win the discussion, but it is to develop students' ability to think independently and critically through a set of claims or arguments, in order to enlarge their comprehension and improve their ability think adequately. This chapter presents a brief definition of debate, its history, skills needed for a good debater. Also, it shows its effectiveness as a teaching tool and how it develops critical thinking skill.

2.1. History of Debate

The concept of debate is not considered as a recent one. It dates back over 4,000 years to the Egyptians (2080 B.C.), and debate as a teaching strategy dates back over 2,400 years to Protagorus in Athens (481-411 B.C.) who is the "father of debate" (Combs & Bourne, 1994; Freeley & Steinberg, 2005; Huryn, 1986 ; Snider & Schnurer, 2002). Phajoohande stated that during the 5th century, the ancient Greek philosophers were debating over methods of teaching mainly the dialectic and rhetoric methods that were established by the Sophists. Socrates used debate in his dialectic method to identify the addressees' errors, and repair the mistakes and perplexity of mind. After Socrates, Aristotle become more famous with this method since he conducted Socratic teaching style into methodological ones (as cited in Najafi, Motaghi, Nasrabadi & Heshi, 2016, p.212).

Debate as a teaching strategy flourished along the 19th and early 20th century and then lost its popularity (Garrett, Schoener & Hood, 1996, p.37). A new interest in debate as a systematic teaching-learning strategy was recognized in the 1980s by the assumption of promoting critical thinking, and the high significance of developing critical thinking skills, communication, and logic (Freeley, 1986, p.249).

2.2. Definition of Classroom Debate

As provided by the *Collins Co-build Advanced Learner's English Dictionary,* debate is defined as a discussion or to discuss. The debate can be perceived as a type of dialogue aiming at finding an answer or solution. That is to say, two or more people speak about a specific subject matter, and establish a thought based on different opinions. The debate that aims at investigating and exploring facts through exchanging opinions affects prominently the human's mental side (Soraya, 2005, p.80). More interestingly, debates have a significant influence on human's thinking skills.

Debate was defined by Garett and Hood as an instructional method that promotes empirical reasoning and thinking skills and the increasing awareness of "attitudes," "values" and beliefs" (as cited in Ramlan, Kassim, Pakirisamy & Selvakumar, 2016, p.196). Debate is also perceived as a type of play that gives a chance for students to share their ideas and opinions. It is a game that is based on evidence whereby students provide arguments and defend their claims to establish a better perception to the world and develop their ideas. (Lee & Nair, 2016, p.125)

Debate is a method that marks a chance for students to communicate their points of view. In contrast with classroom discussion which aims at solving problems together and finding out the appropriate solutions, during a debate the class divides into two confronting parties. This requires students to compete, support, and clarify their arguments in opposition to the contrasting arguments in the class (Kurniawan, 2013, p.4). Debates have been successfully practiced in many fields including sociology, history, psychology, biotechnology, math, health, dentistry, nursing, marketing, and social work (Jugdev, Markowski, & Mengel, 2004, pp.4-6).

The process of debate involves investigating different points of view to form judgments. The practice of debate varies between someone using it to establish a decision for his own,

and someone else or many people use it for the sake of convincing others to change their opinion (Freeley & Steinberg, 2005, p.14). The "debate" includes formal, appointed verbal reciprocation of ideas that a group of people can conduct. It is viewed as a systematic learning method that includes specific steps (Rahimi, 2009). It can be claimed that a debate is a teaching-learning method that suggests a certain position on an issue, assertion, or solution to a problem.

2.3. The Process of Classroom Debate

A general description to the process of debate provided by Worthen and Pack (1992) stating that it passes through the following steps. First, a topic or an issue is selected to be debated by all groups. Then, students are required to divide themselves into two separate groups consisting of affirmative and negative side (p.6-7). Darby (2007) claimed that debates differ from lectures and discussions in that there are pre-arranged definitive sides to the issue: "for/affirmative" or "against/negative". The positive team will deliver their thoughts and arguments. Then, the negative team "clashes" with evidence in opposition to the affirmative's analysis (pp.1-10). Silberman (1996) emphasizes that topics are chosen at random. These topics need to be of a controversial nature. Also, they should be linked to the content of the lesson and under the students' ability (p.142).

According to Vo and Morris (2006), debate involves the students' selection of a topic and making a research about it by the students. Then, they state their viewpoints on the issue. Teachers are required to pre-select materials for the debaters to use. At the end of the debate, the announcement of the winner is not obligatory. Yet, there should be a talk after a sharp debate; in order to achieve understanding for both groups (pp.315-320).

In a classroom debate, the participating students are confronting each other providing their claims on a specific subject matter. Yet, all formats of classroom debates promote viewing issues critically from multiple perspectives. This implies students to analyze and

evaluate the logical connections and build arguments for their position towards the subject under discussion.

2.4. Formats of Classroom Debate

Classroom debate can be shaped in different formats whereby all students can be involved and demonstrate multiple views concerning one subject matter. However, the selection of the appropriate formats depends on the objectives of the given course. Some formats are presented below:

2.4.1. Four Corner Debate

According to Hopkins, students in a Four Corner Debate are given a topic, and they establish a position towards it whereby they either strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. Then move to the corner that represents their position. The students of the same position will work with each other arguing for their stand point. At the end of the contest, students are allowed to change the corner if their position has changed. Then all groups are requested to write a new paragraph that summarizes their thoughts and arguments for their claims. For example, developing students' speaking skill through class participation can serve as a good topic for this type of debate. (as cited in Kennedy, 2007, p.185)
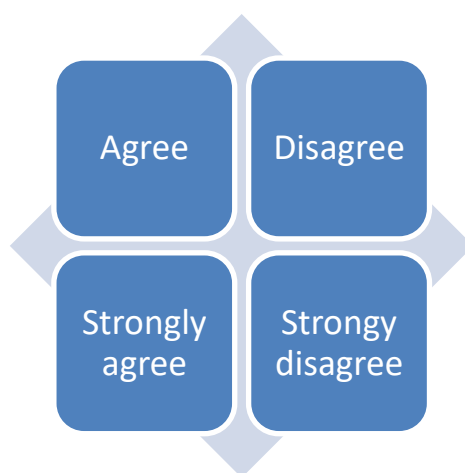
Figure2.1: Layout of Four Corner Debate in Classroom

(Claxton, 2008, p.89 modified by the researcher)

2.4.2. Fishbowl Debate

In a fishbowl debate, students are separated into two or three groups by the teacher, and they are supposed to argue for their position together. They sit in a circle of chairs situated in the middle of the class forming a fishbowl, and surrounded by the rest of the students. All members can participate in the fishbowl. Thus, when someone in the audience has something to add, he can come and sit in one of the chairs. This format is mainly used when students already have background knowledge about the topic (Kennedy, 2007, pp.186-187). Temple stood up for the fishbowl debate, claiming that all students can participate in this debate, while they are divided into two groups in addition to the audience as a third group (as cited in Brown, 2015, p.41).
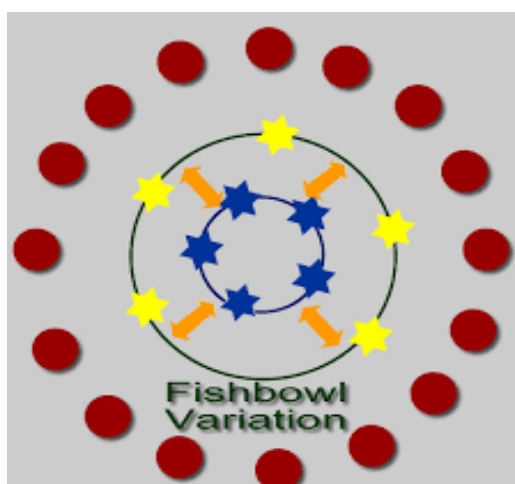
Figure2.2: Layout of Fishbowl Debate in the Classroom

(Huynh, 2016, Retrieved from www.empoweringells.com/a7-teaching-harkness/)

2.4.3. Lincoln-Douglass Debate

In the Lincoln-Douglas format of debate, only two students face each other just as Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas did during the Illinois senate debate about slavery in 1858 (Roy & Macchiette, 2005, p.264). In this type of debate, the participants are restricted with time. Yet, each side consisting of one person or a group gives their opening arguments, the opposing arguments to the other group, and a concluding argument. It is also called

'values debate' since it usually emphasizes more on logical, philosophical, ethical issues (Kennedy, 2007, 187). For instance, the multicultural sensitivity can be a good topic to be debated in the module of culture and civilization.
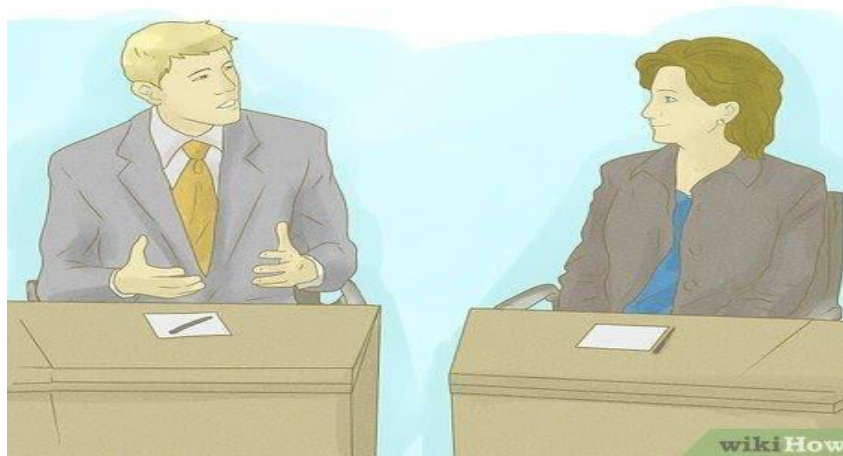
Figure2.3: Lincoln-Douglass Debate in the Classroom

(Retrieved from: http://www.wikihow.com/Debate)

2.4.4. The Role-Play Debate

Hopkins claimed that, in Role-play debates, more than two points of view can be introduced about the issue under debate. In this format, students are asked to represent their opinions in the form of a scenario, and act the roles in order to experience them in educational settings. For example, in a debate concerning "Students should be required to wear uniforms to school" some of the stakeholders might be a teacher, a student, parents…etc. Each member acts according to his role and provides his arguments (as cited in Kennedy, 2007, 185).

In order to conduct a successful debate in the classroom, it should be done through specific procedures following an organized format. Thus, it will establish an enthusiastic environment in the classroom where every student will be encouraged to share his thoughts, do rebuttals, and state the confirmation arguments.
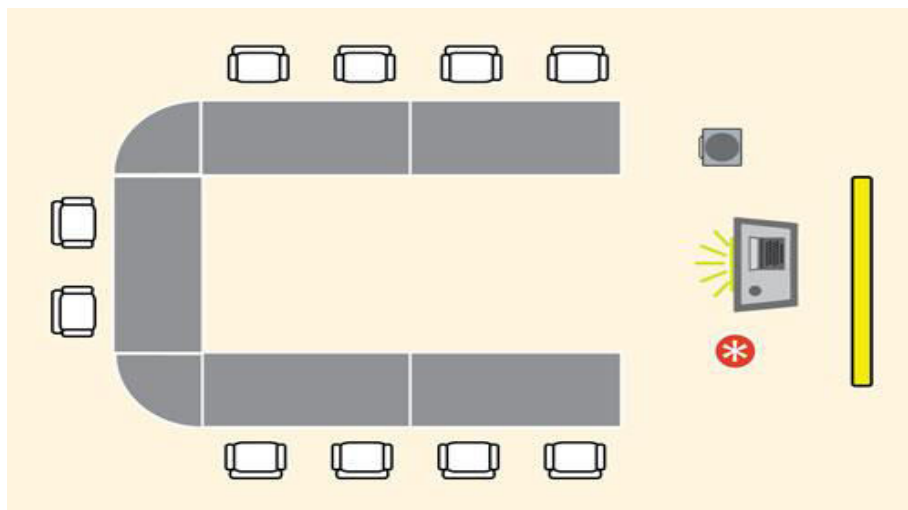
Figure 2.4: Layout for Role-Play Type of Debate

(Retrieved from: https://blog.ampli.com/2014/03/))

2.5. Debating Skills

Classroom debate as a teaching-learning strategy is being widely used by many teachers. Yet, they may face many difficulties in achieving a successful debate. These difficulties can be due to the lack of students to the necessary skills to be good debaters who are able to win a sharp contest. Therefore, a set of skills is required in the participants to be good debaters.

2.5.1. Arguing

The use of argumentation in classroom debates is not always set to make others take an action towards the topic. Rather, it is meant to discuss issues reasonably using evidence (Hanes, 2012, p.3). All types of arguments consist of three parts namely "claim", "warrant", and "data". The claim refers to the position that will be argued for, for example; 'Euthanasia should be banned'. The warrant is the reason behind taking this side, in this example; the reason is that it is considered as a crime. Also, the data includes the evidence used to support the claim. The data that can be used to support this claim is that people are to be killed and no one has the right to take others' lives (National Association for Urban Debate League 'NAUDL', 2007, p.5). In building arguments, the participants are free in choosing the data

they want in which they can appeal to logic "logos", to authority "ethos" or to emotions "pathos" (Varpio, 2018, pp.207-210).

2.5.2. Speaking

During debates, it is very important to be a good speaker and communicator. Having a good delivery increases ones' credibility and enhances the audiences' memory. Therefore, some verbal skills should be acquired like speaking clearly using a simple precise and concise language, use a heard voice sometimes quite loud to add emphasis on some ideas, use a good pronunciation of words and be at ease don't show nervousness. It is also very important to focus on using non-verbal traits like the use of an effective body language including facial expression, eye contact and gestures. Most importantly, one should be prepared and act confidently (Snider, 2008, p.110).

2.5.3. Flowing

Flow sheeting or flowing is a term used in debates to refer to the process of careful listening and note taking during the debate. The notes include the arguments presented by the confronting side to remember them. Therefore, the speech then will be based on answering and rebutting the recorded arguments (NAUDL, 2007, p.7). Since people speaking occurs faster than their writing, using symbols and abbreviations will facilitate the process of writing a shortened meaningful set of ideas. A good flow helps in refuting the opponents clearly and directly. Moreover, it is a significant step towards good reasoning and good speaking (Hanes, 2012, p.11)

2.5.4. Research

One of the most crucial elements needed before engaging in a debate is to make a deep research about the topic. Since students are not experts, they need to gather the necessary information upon which they will claim for their arguments and convince their opponents.

Also, it is helpful to quote experts' ideas to support the arguments. Information can be gathered from multiple sources either the internet, databases or books in libraries…etc. However, it is important to evaluate the truthfulness and relevance of these data before believing in it (Hanes, 2012, p.31).

Doody and Condon (2012) from their part tried to summarize the main skills that a good debate demands. Participants of a debate need to be able to: identify the resolution under debate, assess and interpret the underlying values involved, evaluate the relevance and credibility of information or evidence obtained, collect the different merits of each perspective, deliver ideas and arguments effectively, organize all arguments and rely on logic, and lastly, adjust one's performance as well as the team (p.232-237).

2.6. The Effectiveness of Classroom Debate

Since many studies assumed that students learn through different ways, teachers are supposed to imply various instructional strategies that fulfill this goal and satisfy the learners' needs. Classroom debate acts as a systematic tool to allow students to be involved with the lecture and become active members in the classroom. Additionally, this strategy has a large scale of advantages on the students' developments and achievements.

Snyder (as cited in Brownson, 2013) claimed that students will benefit more from the learning process whenever they are engaged more in debates (pp.78-83). As Zare and Othman (2013) affirmed that: "debate encourages students to learn course content better, since they are engaged in the course content actively, broadly, deeply and personally" (p.2). Also, Students will learn better through the active analysis, discussion, and application of what they learn meaningfully instead of passively getting the information (Bonwell & Eison, 1991, p.25). According to Snider and Schnurer, debate promotes engaging students actively within the lecture, letting them understand it by their own (2002, p.33). Also, Berdine claimed that "students place a higher value on learning by participating than on learning by being lectured

at and receiving information passively" (1987, p. 8). Thus, classroom debate is one of the instructional strategies that allow students to be active members in the classroom where they are involved in the lecture creating a relaxing atmosphere that ensures their understanding to the topic.

In-class debates also promote the development of oral communication skills, which are the essence of success in any field (Combs & Bourne, 1994, p.67). Also, it does not focus only on what is said, but how it is said (Roy & Macchiette, 2005, p. 265). Williams, McGee, and Worth (2001) investigated 286 students' attitudes about classroom debate at 70 different universities. These students opted for enhanced communication skills as the most prominent advantage of participating in debate (p.199-209). Likewise, Combs and Bourne (1994) surveyed marketing students reporting a considerable improvement in theirs and their peers' oral communication skills resulted from participating in classroom debate (p.69). In-class debate is one of the communicative interactive approaches in which students are supposed to exchange their ideas, express their thoughts and opinions in addition to arguing for their claims in order to persuade others.

Silberman (1996, p.141) also clarifies that it is a precious strategy that improves students' thinking. Thinking skills required in a debate involve identifying the problem, evaluating the credibility of sources, opting for the possible assumptions and recognizing contradictions (Kennedy, 2007, p.184). Developing these higher levels of mental abilities helps in improving students' critical thinking skill in which they can analyze, evaluate and make sound decisions in addition to looking for reasonable solutions to issues based on logic and without bias. (Ramlan et.al, 2016, p.196). As Carr concluded, "Thinking cannot be divorced from content; in fact, thinking is a way of learning content" (1988, p. 69). Classroom debate helps students to learn to think logically, analyze and evaluate, solve problems and make sound judgments.

Some skills cannot be mastered when taught in isolation; they entail a context (Worthen & Pack, 1992, p7)

Freeley and Steinberg (2008) listed additional advantages of classroom debate stating that debate provides preparation for effective participation and leadership in free society, offers practice of persuasion, provides for investigation and intensive analysis of significant issues, develops critical thinking skill, helps gaining knowledge, develops the ability to improvise, develops proficiency in purposeful inquiry, emphasizes quality instruction, encourages students' scholarship, develops critical listening, encourages mature judgment, develops courage, encourages effective speech composition and delivery, and develops social maturity (pp.28-38).

Additionally, classroom debate acts as an effective, authentic technique that paves the way for students of different profiles to learn in groups with each other. It encourages the collective work where students from different cultures work cooperatively to solve a problem (Zare, & Othman, 2013, p.1507). According to many studies on learning in an interactive atmosphere, it was deduced that learners who practice classroom debate have better achievements than others who learn individually. It enhances their memorization and critical thinking. It help students to raise their self- confidence and self-esteem which consequently will increase their motivation. It empowers students to communicate effectively (Darby, 2007; Park, Kier & Judgdev, 2011; Oros, 2007).

The classroom debate is not only a means for active learning and course content mastering. Instead, it develops other important skills including speaking, listening, critical thinking and communication skills …etc, as well as, it enables students to stand confidently expressing themselves and defend their claims respecting others' points of view. Through practicing classroom debates, students will make better improvements and achieve higher levels.

2.7. Classroom Debate in ELT Context

It is acknowledged that students learn languages better through communicative interactive techniques like classroom debates. It is an enjoyable authentic activity that needs to be implemented in EFL/ESL classroom. In-class debate can be used in EFL classes to enable students exercise the English language skills in real-life context. Krieger (2005) claimed that debate is the best way to learn languages since it makes the learners involved within different cognitive and linguistic processes. Moreover, it enables them to practices listening, speaking and writing in addition to promoting argumentation skill (p.25).

Furthermore, the advantages of classroom debate in EFL classes were demonstrated by many other researches. As stated by Zare and Othman (2013):"Classroom debate build up academic language skills, second/foreign language fluency and public speaking which assist ESL learners to be prepared for successful academic study"(p.1511). Ramlan et.al (2016) believed that involving students in the activity of debate helps them to enhance their language skills and empowers their capability of using language effectively and convincingly (p.197). Moreover, Sidhu claimed that instructor can promote students' language proficiency by using classroom debate as a critical thinking strategy. He also adds that "Objectives such as critical thinking, problem solving, enhancing self-esteem, and the art of communication are all merged in every aspect of debate-from its preparation to its presentation"(as cited in Rashtchi & Sadraeimanesh, 2011, p.362)

Paulette and Wolf (2000) stated that "debate is a speaking situation in which opposite point of views are presented and argued." (p.176). Therefore, It is apparent that debate has a great influence on the development of speaking skills, since this activity requires a spoken discourse and verbal communication among the participants. Alasmari and Ahmed (2013) argued that practicing debate in EFL classes will help students to overcome their fear of speaking in English. Also, it develops their pronunciation, fluency and enriches their

vocabulary, as well as, helps them to familiarize jargon language and practical terminology of different fields (p.148).

According to Freeley and Steinberg (2008), students participating in a debate will learn to listen carefully with a critical attention to the opponents' and write their arguments accurately so that their answers will be exact (p.33). In a research conducted by Nichols and Stevens found that "on the average we listen at approximately a 25 percent level of efficiency." If we lose our attention when the confronting side is speaking, and we miss to listen to his arguments, as a result, we cannot respond then winning the debate is impossible (1957, p.9). Therefore, listening skill is considered to be a significant aspect for each debater.

Applying classroom debate in EFL classes will also improve both their reading and writing skills, because the students are required to do further researches about the topic to be debated. So, they need to practice reading techniques like skimming, scanning and critical reading to information they find. Consequently, they will be able to distinguish the relevant one from the inadequate to build their arguments (Zare & Othman, 2013, p.1510). In addition, through taking notes (Flowing) and preparing the argumentative speech the writing skill is going to be advanced as well (Krieger, 2005, p.26)

Interestingly, exercising classroom debate in EFL classes allows students to practice the four skills of English language; speaking, listening, reading and writing along with skills of presentation and building arguments, body language, pronunciation, tone of voice, body language, argumentation and illustration…etc. By enhancing these skills and abilities through debates, English language will be ultimately mastered. However, it may be perceived by teachers as a challenging task to make their students actively engaged in classroom debates and to speak the foreign language fluently and confidently.

2.8. Developing Critical Thinking through Classroom Debate

Critical thinking is perceived to be one of the most essential skills that has become of an increasing interest by educationalists, researches and mass media in the twenty-first century. However, In 1989 Resnick had called for involving critical thinking into the curriculum and claimed that it should be taught as the foundation skill instead of merely basic skills. Critical thinking is of a high level that is linked to cognitive development and good thinking practice (Lipman, 1988, pp.38-43). Browne and Freeman (2000) claimed that there is a need to integrate a lot of evaluative learning activities in modules that practice critical thinking skills. It is believed that discussing controversial issues in the classroom creates an exciting atmosphere that entails constantly reflecting on ideas, establishing reasonable judgment, and viewing subject matters from multiple viewpoints (pp.305-306).

Freeley and Steinberg (2005) asserted that debate as a teaching-learning tool has been confessed to be one of the best methods used for developing students' critical thinking skills, for over 2,000 years. According to Doody and Condon (2012), in order for the debaters to win the contest, they are required to gather plenty of information with a deep critical investigation to the topic. Therefore, it is necessary that the information is collected from multiple credible sources. Moreover, the participant or the group of debaters needs to argue well for their claims and rebut the opponents' arguments as it is important to be able to recognize and explore the defects in their reason (p. 235). Interestingly, it can be noticed that these skills practiced during debates work in line with critical thinking skills. As Colbert (1995) agrees, researches asserted that there is a constant relationship between critical thinking and debate (p.72).

The development of students' higher order thinking skills can be highly promoted through teaching methods, like; classroom debate, better than traditional instructional strategies such as: lecture (taught session) (Roy & Macchiette, 2005, p.270). In-class debate

scenario allow for the inclusion of learner-centered activities, wherein students can learn more effectively through practicing critical thinking skills; identifying the problem, evaluating the credibility of sources, clarifying assumptions, realizing contradictions, and arguing with relevant reasonable arguments (Bonwell & Eison, 1991, p.123).

Nowadays, there is more information than ever before that can be easily accessed. Therefore, teachers need to focus more on how to use information rather than only providing students with it. As Kennedy stated that, "although debate certainly requires the mastery of content, it also demands the mastery of critical thinking skills which can be applied to changing situations and new information." (2007, p.184). For Zare and Othman (2013), using classroom debates helps students to evolve their knowledge of social issues, consider and accept multiple points of view as individuals to perceive things differently. More importantly, students need to engage in research to develop their understanding of evidence that aligns with either the affirmative or the negative side in the debates (p.1509).

In the light of classroom impact on the students' critical thinking, Allen, Willmington, and Sprague (1976) declared that debate teaches students to analyze ideas and identify the central meaning of issues. It enables them to conduct accurate research. It makes them learn how to evaluate evidence in terms of relevance, validity and adequacy. More importantly, debate helps students to realize and assess the thoughts on which arguments are based on. Also, it is a way for the students to learn how to end up with conclusions in a critical justifiable way (p.382).

Interestingly, involving students in classroom debate may provide them with plenty of advantages including developing their thinking skills and positive attitudes, like being interested in social issues, considering various viewpoints and accepting the fact that people are free to think differently. This should be emphasized in debates and should be set as goals for achievement through debate exercises.

An action research was conducted by Omelicheva (2007) at the department of political science with undergraduate students to investigate the impact of using classroom debate in developing students' critical thinking skills. In the light of the results of this research, it is revealed that classroom debates helped the learners to get involved in the intellectual practices which require critical thinking skills. Furthermore, the participants in this study declared that classroom debates marked a chance for them to practice and promote their presentation and teamwork skills. Also, they are capable of making reasonable judgments, sound decisions and solve problems when getting in the debate. Hence, it has been reported that the debate activity played a vital role for the students as an excellent tool for enhancing their critical thinking (p.172-175).

Conclusion

Classroom debate is an innovative tool of teaching and learning that has many advantages on students' abilities and skills. It is possible to cover all information about this method. However, this chapter presented the most important aspects related to classroom debate including its definition, history, formats, skills of a good debater, its effectiveness in education in general and in EFL context in specific. In addition, a small part was devoted to examine its impact on developing students' critical thinking skill. In sum, classroom debate is an effective way of teaching that teachers ought to practice and encourage their students to engage in.

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the practical part of this research. It aims at exploring and investigating the teachers' and students' perceptions towards classroom debate and its role in enhancing critical thinking skill. Thus, two questionnaires are distributed for both teachers and students in order to achieve the aims of this research. The first part of this chapter is allocated for the analysis of students' questionnaire, while the second part is devoted to the analysis of teachers' questionnaire.

3.1. Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire serves as a data- gathering tool for this research. It is conducted in order to collect the necessary information. The first questionnaire is submitted to first year Master students to explore their attitudes towards the use of classroom debate to enhance critical thinking skill.

3.1.1. Population and sample

The population chosen for this questionnaire consists of only first year Master students at the department of Letters and English language at 8 Mai 1945 Guelma University during the academic year 2018-2019. The reason behind selecting this population is that they are expected to have a clear idea about the topic under investigation and may provide appropriate useful information.

3.1.2. Administration of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire employed for this study is a self- completion paper questionnaire distributed by the researcher. The questionnaire is conducted at the department of Letters and English Language, Guelma University, with first year Master students. It was distributed to 60 students, and was answered by all of them. The questionnaire was handled on 21/22 May

2019, and handed back in the same days. The main obstacles were mainly the refusal of some teachers to accept distributing the questionnaire in their sessions due to lack of time. However, the students were so helpful.

3.1.3. Description of Students' Questionnaire

Students' questionnaire consists of 23 items divided into three sections. It is inclusive to different types of questions; closed-ended (multiple-choice and yes/no questions) and open-ended questions (see appendix B).

3.1.3.1. Section One: General Information (Q1-Q4)

This section is composed of four questions (Q1-Q4). It aims at collecting general information about the students; their age, the years they spent studying English, whether it was their choice to study it or not, and their level.

3.1.3.2. Section Two: Classroom Debate

This section starts with the fifth question (Q5) where students are asked to tell how often they participate in the classroom. In the sixth question (Q6), the students are asked to choose which teaching strategy they prefer to learn with. The next question (Q7) is a yes/no question where the students are asked to answer whether or not they learn better when they debate. Then, in the eighth question (Q8), they are requested to report the way they understood classroom debate, and provide their own understanding in the space bellow if it is not mentioned in the list provided. Then, two yes/no questions (Q9-Q10) through which participants are expected to answer whether their teachers used in-class debate to develop their lesson or not, and state how often if they do. Also, whether they engage in these classroom debates or not, and justify their denial. In question (Q11), students are requested to choose the type of classroom debate they prefer and justify their choice. After that, they are required to describe their way of debating (Q12), select the characteristics they master during

debates and specify other characteristics if not mentioned in the list (Q13). In the last question of this section (Q14), studentsare asked to tell whether they think that classroom debate is a useful strategy in EFL teaching or not, then explain their point of view.

3.1.3.3. Section Three: Critical Thinking and Classroom Debate

The first two questions in this section (Q15-Q16) explore the students' idea about critical thinking by providing a brief definition for it and selecting the characteristics of a critical thinker. Then, they are required to decide whether they are critical thinkers or not (Q17), and clarify their answer. In question (Q18), students are asked to choose the most important critical thinking skills (according to them) and justify their choice. Also, students are requested to tell whether their teachers encourage them to improve these skills or not (Q19), and select which activities they employ if their answer was yes. In question (Q20), students are asked to choose the skills that classroom debate promotes. In other words, this question intends to investigate the values of classroom debate. If they have an additional answer, a free space is available to tape it. Next, question (Q21) explores the students' perception about the influence of classroom debate on their thinking skills, then explain their answer if they chose the yes option. The final question (Q22) asks the students to describe their extent of agreement or disagreement with the idea that classroom debate help to improve their critical thinking skill and a justification is required for their answer. Lastly, the researcher requests students to provide any additions of suggestions concerning the investigated topic (Q23).

3.1.4. Analysis of the results

The following section contains a detailed analysis for the results of the above described questionnaire.

Section One: General Information

Q1- What is your age?

Table 3.1: *Students' Age*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
21 years	22	36.67%
22 years	27	45%
More than 23	11	18.33%
Total	60	100%

As displayed in table 3.1, 36.67% of the respondents are of 21 years, and 45% of them are of 22 years which explains that nearly most of the students have succeeded in their academic career. However, 18.33% are of 23 years and above which indicates that there are some students who may failed in their studies or misses some years. Therefore, the sample is suitable to our research since students are mature enough to understand the questions displayed in the questionnaire.

Q2- How long have you been studying English language?

Table 3.2: *Students' English Study Background*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
11 year	48	80%
12 years	12	20%
Total	60	100%

In response to the second question, the majority of the respondents (80%) have been studying English for 11 years. The rest of them (20%) claimed that they have been studying English for 12 years. The results confirm that the majority of the students have succeeded in their studies while just few of them may have repeated one year at least. Thus, it is believed

that those years are fairly enough for the students to master the English language and have a clear idea about the topic under investigation.

Q3- Is it your choice to study English?

a. Yes   b. No

Table 3.3: *Students' Choice of Studying English at the University*

Options	Number of students	percentage
A	55	91.67%
B	05	8.33%
Total	60	100%

According to the table above, the overwhelming majority of the sample (91.67%) asserted that it was their choice to study English at the University. While only (8.33%) of them claimed that it was not their choice to study it. This indicates that most of the respondents are mainly expected to be motivated to learn English and chose it for future career. Moreover, they are eager to work hard and enhance their skills.

Q4- How do you describe your level in English?

a. Very good   b. Good   c. Average   d. Bad   e. Very bad

Table 3.4: *Students' Level in English*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
A	6	10%
B	31	51.67%
C	23	38.33%
D	00	00%
E	00	00%

Total	60	100%

As students describe their level in the language, half of them (51.67%) claimed that they have a good level. Also, (38.33%) have an average level, while only (10%) of them reported that it is very good. However, none of the participants responded that they have either bad or very bad level. This implies that most of the students are highly satisfied with their level and achieved enough goals to reach it. Accordingly, it is worth mentioning that the chosen sample consists of good students who will help in valuing the results of the research.

Section two: Classroom Debate

Q5- How often do you participate in the classroom?

a. Always   b. Usually   c. Sometimes   d. Rarely   e. Never

Table 3.5: *Students' Frequency of Classroom Participation*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
A	06	10%
B	10	16.67%
C	32	53.33%
D	12	20%
E	00	00%
Total	60	100%

Concerning students' participation in the classroom, more than half of the sample (53.33%) reported that they participate sometimes. (20%) of them claimed that they rarely participate. However, only (16.67%) of the respondents said that they usually participate while (10%) declared that they participate always. The results indicate that there are many students who depreciate classroom participation and do not give it high importance, though it

is a significant aspect in language learning that may help in enhancing many other skills like communication and thinking skills. Thus, they are required to engage more in classroom participation.

Q6- which of the following teaching strategies do you prefer to learn through it?

a. students' presentation   b. Group work   c. Independent work

d. Classroom debate   e. Taught session

Table 3.6: *Students' Preferrable Teaching Strategies*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
A	06	10%
B	03	5%
C	05	8.33%
D	23	38.33%
E	23	38.33%
Total	60	100%

Table 3.6 investigates students' preference of the different teaching strategies that they better learn through. The same percentage (38.33%) represents respondents who prefer taught session and classroom debate for learning. Only (10%) of the participants opted for students' presentation while few of them (8.33%) preferred the independent work and (5%) selected the group work. The results indicate that the majority of students either prefer lectures or classroom debates over the other teaching strategies. This represents that there are many students who prefer to stay passive and just accept what their teacher says in the classroom, as some others like to be active and initiate a debate with their teacher or classmates. Students at this level are expected to be more active members; especially, in the LMD system whose main purpose is to create active students rather than passive ones.

Q-7 Do you think that you understand the lesson better when you debate?

a. Yes   b. No

Table 3.7: *The Impact of Classroom Debate on students' understanding*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
A	48	80%
B	12	20%
Total	60	100%

According to the above table, the majority (80%) of the respondents claimed that they understand the lesson better especially when they debate. Only (20%) of them reported the opposite. However, it can be assumed that students perceive classroom debates as an effective tool of learning. In-class debate help them to understand the lesson better whereby they can freely exchange ideas to see things from different perspectives, find solution, ask and answer plenty of questions, then, end up with evident conclusions as it will raise their motivation to learn.

Q-8 How do you understand classroom debate?

a. A formal discussion between students about a specific topic

b. A form of discourse between the teacher and the students based on evidence

c. A formal dialogue that aims at finding answers and solutions

d. All of them

Table 3.8: *Students' Understanding to Classroom Debate*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
A	07	11.67%
B	13	21.67%
C	13	21.67%
D	27	45%
Total	60	100%

In response to the 8th question, only (11.67%) of the sample identified classroom debate as a formal discussion between students about a specific topic. (21.67%) of them recognize it as 'a form of discourse between the teacher and students based on evidence'. Also, (21.66%) of the respondents perceive it as 'a formal dialogue that aims at finding answers and solutions', while almost the majority (45%) of them understand classroom debate as all the above mentioned suggestions. These percentages indicate that the chosen sample is quite aware of the meaning of in-class debates and perceives it correctly. Therefore, they are able of conducting such debates successfully.

Q-9 Do your teachers use classroom debate to develop the lesson?

a. Yes   b. No

Table 3.9: *Teachers' Use of Classroom Debate*

Options	Number o students	Percentage
A	56	93.33%
B	04	6.66%
Total	60	100%

In question (Q9), students are asked whether their teachers use in-class debate to develop the lesson or not. The overwhelming majority (93.33%) answer yes, while only 6.67% of the reporters said no. This shows that most of the teachers in different modules tend to use this strategy, while sometimes it may not be possible to apply it with some types of lectures.

For those who affirmed that their teachers use In-class debate were asked to tell how often their teachers imply it. It is requested in the following question:

- If yes, how often do they use In- class debate?

a. Always   b. Usually   c. Sometimes   d. Rarely

Table 3.10: *Teachers' Frequency of Using Classroom Debate*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
A	06	10.71%
B	18	32.14%
C	26	46.42%
D	06	10.71%
Total	56	100%

As table (3.10) demonstrates, the overwhelming majority of the respondents who answer yes ensures the use of In-class debate by their teachers. However, small percentage (10.71%) reported that it is rarely used. According to the former results, the inconsiderable use of classroom debate can be justified as mentioned above by the inappropriateness of implying such strategy in all modules and all types of lectures. However, it does not neglect the effectiveness of classroom debate as a teaching-learning strategy.

Q-10 Do you engage in classroom debates?

a. Yes   b. No

Table 3.11: *Students' Engagement in Classroom Debates*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
A	39	65%
B	21	35%
Total	60	100%

As indicated in table (3.11), the majority of the sample (65%) reported that they engage in classroom debates. Yet, (35%) claimed that they do not. This implies that there are many students who do not appreciate classroom debates which contradict with the results of Q7. Students think that they learn better through debating but they do not really engage in it. Therefore, those who opted for "no" were asked to justify their answers in order to find out the reasons that prevent students from engaging in classroom debates.

Among the students who opted for no (35%), (30%) of them have justified their answer claiming that they are "introvert students", and "dislike engaging in classroom discussions". Others say that they are "too shy and have fears from speaking in public". Also, some of them state that they "have problems with their self-confidence", i.e. they are not confident enough to stand and speak in front of the teacher and their classmates. Moreover, some of them claim that they "have problem with the language"; they lack vocabulary, style, pronunciation…etc.

In the light of students' responses, it can be deduced that students appreciate classroom debate as a teaching-learning strategy, but they face some problems that hinder them from being engaged in debates. So, before deciding to involve such strategy in classroom, it is important to consider the students personalities and abilities in order to achieve a successful debate.

Q-11 Which structure of classroom debate you prefer the most?

a. between group of learners

b. between teacher and learners

c. between one individual and a group

Table 3.12: *Students' Preferred Structure of Classroom Debate*

Options	Number o students	Percentage
A	08	13.33%
B	50	83.33%
C	02	3.33%
Total	60	100%

In response to Q11, the majority of the participants (83.33%) prefer to debate with the teacher. (13.33%) of them prefer to initiate a debate with their classmates, whereas, only (3.33%) prefer a debate between one person and a group of students. The majority of the sample agreed that the best way to conduct a debate must be with a teacher and under his guidance. May be they thought that teachers domination promotes their learning skills and the way they think.

Justifications are required for this question, and were provided by all the respondents. Those who prefer to debate with their colleagues justify their choice saying that "it is more comfortable to discuss issues with each other without fear" as it helps them to "develop ideas and exchange knowledge through viewing things from different perspectives".

Others who prefer to be involved in a debate with the teacher claimed that "the teacher will act as a guide. Thus, the debate will be more organized and formal and everyone will understand what is being discussed and take a part of the contest". Also, they stated that "a teacher will help them by explaining what may not be understood by his students". Therefore,

he will orient the debate in the correct direction. Then, they clarified that "the debate with the teacher will absolutely end with convincing results and solutions". Hence, it would be more beneficial and worthy.

The students who opted for the debate between one student and the whole class clarified that "it would be a chance for everyone to discover his skills and abilities in speaking, thinking, convincing …etc". They added that "it is motivating and makes a challenge for the individual to win the debate".

Q-12 How can you describe your ability in debating?

a. Very good   b. Good   c. Average   d. Bad

Table 3.13: *Students' Ability in Debating*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
A	02	3.33%
B	13	21.66%
C	36	60%
D	09	15%
Total	60	100%

As displayed in table (3.13), the majority of the sample (60%) describe their performance as average. Also, (21.66%) of them perform in a good way, while only (3.33%) of the chosen sample describe their performance during a debate as very good. Moreover, (15%) report that they perform badly. The results indicate that many students are not good debaters as they lack the needed strategies and thinking abilities to perform a good debate. The next question tries to investigate which characteristics they have and which they lack.

Q-13 Which of the following characteristic you master during debates?

a. Speak clearly and fluently   b. Think quickly   c. Clarify arguments

d. Provide examples   e. Professional tone and body language   f. Maintain persuasive speech

Table 3.14: *The Characteristics that Students Master*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
A	02	3.33%
B	05	8.33%
C	05	8.33%
D	08	13.33%
A+B+D	02	3.33%
A+C+D	07	11.66%
A +D+E	12	20%
A+B +E	11	18.33%
B+C+D+E	02	3.33%
ALL	06	10%
Total	60	100%

As table 3.15 demonstrates, (3.33%) of the respondents reported that they can only speak clearly and fluently during debates, while (8.33%) of them can think quickly. Similarly, 8.33% can clarify arguments and (13.33%) of them stated that they can provide examples.

Other students master more than one aspect, where a small number of them (3.33%) were able to speak clearly and fluently, think quickly, provide examples and have a professional tone and body language. Moreover, 11.66% of the sample reported that they have the ability to speak clearly and fluently, clarify arguments and illustrate with examples. Additionally (20%) claimed that they can speak clearly and fluently, illustrate with examples and have a professional tone and body language. Another considerable percentage (18.33%) stated that

they have the ability to speak clearly and fluently, think quickly and have a professional tone and body language. Only 3.33% of the reporters are able to think quickly, clarify arguments, illustrate with examples and possess a professional tone and body language. Furthermore, 10% of the reporters indicated that they master all the features provided in the list.

The above results demonstrate that the majority of the students are able to speak clearly and fluently in addition to some of the other features which indicate that students at this level are highly mastering the language with its aspects. It was noticed that none of the participants have the ability to maintain a persuasive speech and only few can clarify arguments which are essential aspects of each debater where s/he can practice his thinking skills. After the analysis of the results, it became possible to discover the students' weaknesses that lead them to be poor debaters as they reported in the results of Q12.

Q-14 Do you think that classroom debate is a useful strategy in teaching?

a. Yes   b. No

Table 3.15: *Students' Perception of Classroom Debate*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
A	51	85%
B	09	15%
Total	60	100%

As table 3.15 shows, the overwhelming majority of the sample (85%) opted for yes, i.e. they agree that classroom debate is a useful strategy in teaching/ learning, whereas, only (15%) of the reporters opted for no. This may indicate that some students are not convinced yet by this strategy, and prefer to learn through other methods.

This question requires the students who opt for yes (85%) to justify their response. (65%) of these students have provided some justifications, which can be quoted as follow:

- "Classroom debates help us to improve our speaking skills, listening skills and learn to respect each other opinions."

- "It is the best way for students to express themselves in the classroom, and a chance to discover ones' own abilities and skills."

- "It helps in understanding the lesson, memorizing it, and raising ones' self-confidence."

The clarifications provided by the students indicate that they are highly aware of this strategy and its advantages on the students' different learning skills and how it facilitates the process of learning/teaching. Some students commented that classroom debate is an effective method that teachers should employ whenever it is appropriate.

Section Three: Critical Thinking and Classroom Debate

Q-15 How can you define critical thinking?

Table 3.16: *Students' Definitions of Critical Thinking*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
Answered	42	70%
Not answered	18	30%
Total	60	100%

In this question (Q15), students were asked to provide a brief definition of critical thinking. Most of the participants (70%) tried to form a definition including what they know about this skill. Notably, the rest of them (30%) did not answer this question, may be because

they neglect the question or feel bored from the questionnaire. Accordningly, the definitions that were provided are quoted as follow:

- "It is a cognitive ability that aims at analyzing information logically before accepting it."

- "Being skeptical and question what needs more clarification and evidence."

- " It is to analyze and evaluate information then to be able to distinguish the true ones from the false"

- "The process of questioning everything before we accept it."

- "It is a way of judging opinions of others and build a personal point of view"

Based on the definitions provided by the participants, it is noticed that students at this level have a clear idea about critical thinking skill. They could provide brief correct definitions that include some aspects of this type of thinking. However, it could be observed that they still do not know all the skills and sub-skills of critical thinking.

Q-16 What are the abilities of a critical thinker?

a. Evaluate information in a systematic way

b. Ask hard questions to challenge observations and assumptions

c. Analyze ideas and arguments

d. Effectively solve problems and make informed decisions

e. Reach conclusions based on evidence

Table 3.17: *Critical Thinker's Abilities*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
B	03	5%

C	03	5%
A+C	05	8.33%
A+B+C+E	07	11.67%
A+C+D+E	06	10%
D+E	06	10%
All	30	50%
Total	60	100%

Table 3.17 displays the students' responses about the characteristics of a critical thinker. A small number of them (5%) think that a critical thinker can only ask hard questions to challenge observations and assumptions. Similarly, (5%) of them state that a critical thinker can only analyze ideas and arguments. Also, few (8.33%) argue that the critical thinker can both evaluate information in a systematic way and analyze ideas and arguments. (11.67%) of the participants report that a critical thinker can evaluate information in a systematic way, ask hard questions to challenge observations and assumptions, analyze ideas and arguments and reach conclusions based on evidence. Also, (10%) see that a critical thinker is able to evaluate information in a systematic way, analyze ideas and arguments, effectively solve problems, make informed decisions and reach conclusions based on evidence. The same number of the students (10%) agree that he is a person who can solve problems effectively, make informed decisions and reach conclusions based on evidence. Whereas, half of the sample (50%) claim that a critical thinker is someone who is able to do all the mentioned aspects.

Based on these statistics, half of the sample had varied answers between choosing one option to more, because they may not know all the abilities of a critical thinker. However, the other half of the reporters assumed that a critical thinker masters all of the mentioned tasks. Interestingly, it is deduced that many students of the sample perceive critical thinking

correctly as they know the different abilities that a critical thinker can posses. This confirms the results of the previous question (Q15).

Q- 17 Do you see yourself as a critical thinker?

a. Yes   b. No

Table 3.18: *Students' Perception of Themselves as Critical Thinkers*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
A	41	68.33%
B	19	31.66%
Total	60	100%

The table above (3.18) displays the students' perceptions of themselves as critical thinkers. The majority of them (68.33%) declare that they see themselves as critical thinkers. Whereas, the rest of them (31.67%) opt for no, i.e. they don't perceive themselves as critical thinkers. And to understand their point of view, they were asked to provide an explanation to clarify their answer.

Among the students who opt for yes, only 38.33% of them provided a clarification. They said that they consider themselves as critical thinkers because they are able to analyze data, raise hard questions and depend on logic in their analysis. Others added that they prefer to make researches before accepting things for grant. And few of them claimed that they are effective problem solvers and they make decisions based only on evidence. Moreover, only 11.33% of those who opt for yes justified their claim, arguing that that they did not reach this high level of thinking yet. Also, they can't analyze data; instead they prefer to accept information for grant without questioning its credibility.

Q-18 which of the following critical thinking skills are the most important?

a. Reasoning   b. Analysis   c. Evaluation

d. Problem solving   e. Decision making

Table 3.19: *The Most Important Critical Thinking Skill*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
A	09	15%
B	22	36.67%
C	19	31.33%
D	03	5%
E	07	11.67%
Total	60	100%

According to table (3.19), many students (36.67%) believe that analysis is the most important CT skill. Also, (31.33%) of them opt for evaluation. (15%) of the participants select reasoning and (11.67%) assume that decision making is of the biggest importance. However, only (5%) of the sample choses problem solving.

Based on these results, most of the students give higher importance to analysis and evaluation, which may imply that they consider them essential steps in the process of thinking critically. However, the other skills are perceived as less important. This can be related to the students' unawareness of where and when these skills are needed or because they cannot even relate them to critical thinking skill.

To understand the participants' viewpoints, a justification is requested for their answers. Only (36.67%) of the sample provided a clarification. The ones who opted for reasoning justified that the information cannot be criticized or evaluated before being processed by the mind. The ones who chose analysis claimed that it is impossible to judge on the truthfulness

of the information without analyzing it. Also, other justifications were provided by those who selected the evaluation skill as the most important one, they said that the core idea of critical thinking is to evaluate and investigate all aspects of information and view it from different angles. Furthermore, there were no justifications for those who chose problem solving and decision making. Mainly, each student has reached a certain level of awareness of critical thinking skill and understands that all skills are of certain level of importance, each has its role and significance in the process of thinking critically.

Q- 19 Does your teacher encourage you to improve these skills?

a. Yes   b. No

Table 3.20: *Teachers Encouraging Students to Debate*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
A	46	76.66%
B	14	23.33%
Total	60	100%

As it is demonstrated in table (3.20), the majority (76.66%) stated that their teachers encourage them to improve critical thinking skills; while (23.33%) of them neglected that their teachers do so. This implies that even teachers are giving importance to critical thinking skill and emphasize on improving its sub-skills, therefore, their aim is to make their students' thinking develop and reach higher levels. Additionally, it will help students to reach their intended objectives either in the educational field or in the social life.

For those who opted for (yes) they were asked to select the activities that their teachers use in order to enhance the mentioned critical thinking skills. It is requested in the following question: - If yes, what activities s/he chooses?

a. Classroom debates

b. Collaborative learning strategies

c. Classroom assessment techniques

Table 3.21: *Activities Allocated to Enhance Students' Critical Thinking Tkills*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
A	29	63..04%
B	03	6.52%
C	14	30.43%
Total	46	100%

Based on the students' responses to this question, it is shown in table 3.21 that teachers use more classroom debates according to the majority of the participants (63.04%). Some other students (30.43%) see that their teachers depend on classroom assessment techniques to fulfill their aim in improving those skills. Only 6.52% reported that cooperative learning strategies are the most used activities by their teachers. The results of this question demonstrate that teachers prefer classroom debates over the other activities in improving critical thinking skills which even students prefer it as it was asserted in Q6-Q14.

Q- 20 Do you think that classroom debate promote the following?

a. Classroom debate makes the lecture interesting and enjoyable.

b. Classroom debate promotes teamwork skills and group decision making.

c. Classroom debate helps students to realize precise and credible information.

d. Classroom debate helps students to see a subject matter from multiple views.

e. Classroom debate allows students to reach conclusion based on evidence.

f. Classroom debate helps students to think adequately

Table 3.22: *Values of Classroom Debate*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
C	02	3.33%
E	03	5%
F	01	1.66%
A+D+E	15	25%
A+C+E	08	13.33%
B+D+E+F	13	21.67%
All	17	28.33%
Did not answer	01	1.66%
Total	60	100%

A small number of students (3.33%) believe that classroom debate only help students to realize precise and credible information. Also, 5% admit that it only allow students to reach conclusions based on evidence. (1.66%) of them assume that it only enables students to think adequately. Yet, quarter of the sample (25%) report that it makes the lecture interesting, enjoyable and allows students to reach conclusions based on evidence in addition, it may enable the students to see things from different angles. Other students (13.33%) state that it helps students to realize precise, credible information and reach conclusions based on evidence in addition, it creates an enjoyable atmosphere for the lecture and make it interesting. (21.67%) agree also that classroom debate helps students to see a subject matter from multiple views, reach conclusions based on evidence, think adequately and it promotes teamwork and group decision making. Whereas, many of them claim that classroom debate can promote all what was mentioned, while only one person did not answer this question may be because s/he does not have a clear idea about what can classroom debate promote.

The results presented above show that the majority of the students have selected many choices, i.e. they believe that classroom debate has many values not only one or two. All what was mentioned in the suggestion were the possible pros of debates, but, it was noticed that many of them agreed mostly that classroom debate help students to realize precise and credible information, see subject matters from multiple views and reach conclusions based on evidence, which are very important aspects of a critical thinker. Many students have engaged in classroom debates as it was showed in the results of Q10. So, they could reveal the effects of classroom debate on many aspects, and specifically on their way of thinking.

Q- 21 Do you think that classroom debate has an influence on your thinking skills?

a. Yes   b. No   c. Do not know

Table 3.23: *The Influence of Classroom Debate on the Students' Thinking Skills*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
A	41	68.33%
B	4	6.66%
C	15	25%
Total	60	100%

In response to Q21, the majority of the sample (68.33%) indicated that classroom debate influences their thinking skills. 25% of the participants replied that they did not really know whether it affects their thinking or not, while 6.66% opted for no,. In order to understand their answers, a justification was requested from the participants who opted for yes. Among them, only 30% student provided justifications, some are quoted as follows:

- "it help students to be active-minded instead of passive members"

- "it increases memorization"

- "it motivate students to be analytical and evaluative persons"

- "it lead students to change or revise their views about topics under discussion"

Based on the students' clarifications, it can be deduced that the effect of classroom debate is not just a theoretical issue. Rather, students have discovered its advantages and explore it in reality. The aim of the LMD system is to create active members in the classroom. This can be totally achieved through implementing this strategy and make students involved within it.

Q-22 Do you agree that classroom debate help in improving critical thinking skills?

a. Strongly agree   b. Agree   c. Neither agree nor disagree

d. Disagree   e. Strongly disagree

Table 3.24: *Enhancing Critical thinking through Classroom Debate*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
A	12	20%
B	36	60%
C	12	20%
D	00	0%
E	00	0%
Total	60	100%

In table 3.24, the majority of the participants (60%) agreed that critical thinking can be enhanced through classroom debate, as 20% of them reported that they totally agree. However, 20% of the sample preferred to stay neutral. Those who agreed or totally agreed were required to justify their viewpoints. Only 41.66% of them provided explanations claiming that classroom debate enlarges the students' knowledge by viewing things from multiple perspectives. Also, it trains students to base their thinking on logic and evidence,

thus, reach reasonable conclusions. Additionally, it marks a chance for students to practice their analytical, reasoning and evaluative skills that are essential skills in critical thinking. They added that it promotes creating an atmosphere that helps students move away from just receiving knowledge into an environment of active participation. As it is stated in the students' responses, it is noticed that these students does really agree with the idea stated in the question not just ticking boxes. The knowledge of the students about the topic of the research is highly apparent through their answers in which they approximately mentioned all what can be said about the impact of classroom debate on critical thinking.

Q23- Additional comments or suggestions, if any are welcome?

Table 3.25: *Students' Comments and Suggestions*

Options	Number of students	Percentages
Answered	12	20%
Not answered	48	80%
Total	60	100%

The majority of participants (80%) did not provide any additional comments or suggestions concerning the topic under investigation. They may felt that the previous questions are enough to explore all the ideas they have about the topic or they may be in a hurry or bored from answering questionnaires. The rest of the respondents (20%) did not add any information about the topic "the influence of classroom debate on students' critical thinking". Rather, they commented that it is interesting topic, others said that it is difficult. And some said that they enjoyed the questionnaire. Also, some of them preferred to just wish a good luck for the researcher.

Summary of Results and Findings from Students' Questionnaire

The data gathered from the questionnaire have been presented and analyzed in the previous section. Accordingly, this part tries to summarize and interpret the findings according to the main research question raised in the beginning of the study. The first section of the students' questionnaire entitled as "General information" demonstrated that the majority of master one students have chosen to study English at the University by their own. This means that they were positively motivated to study EFL and choose it for future career. Also, they showed their satisfaction about their level in the language. Having a good level refers to their success to achieve their intended goals in learning that will make them more eager to learn and develop more skills.

The findings of "classroom debate" section shows that many students do not appreciate classroom participation where most of them stated that they rarely do engage in it or just from time to time. Instead, they prefer taught session more than the other methods of teaching in addition to classroom debate which they considered it a desired learning strategy that helps them understand the lesson better and it develops their way of thinking **(Q6)**. Although they think so, but only few of them are brave enough to participate in classroom debates. However, they could justify their abstention with reasonable arguments relating it to their personality and interpersonal skills. For instance, through answering **Q13** the majority of the students lack the essential features of a good debater like: the ability to maintain a persuasive speech and clarify arguments. Even though, they still perceive classroom debate as a useful strategy of learning. They reported that it has many advantages on their listening, speaking, memorization, thinking and it raises their self-confidence as well. Since teachers apply this strategy in their classes, they are required to give chance to all students to participate. Therefore, many students will get improved and develop the different learning skills.

The results of the last section "critical thinking and classroom debate" reveals that students at this level clearly understand the core meaning of critical thinking with its steps and

sub-skills in addition to the aspects of a critical thinker. Their awareness towards such skill plus their will to develop it will make these students better members in the educational environment and the society as whole. However, many students claimed that they did not reach that level of thinking yet due to the difficulties they face when analyzing or evaluating information. These skills were admitted to be the most important critical thinking skills in addition to reasoning where it is impossible to solve a problem or make a sound decision before processing the information in the mind, divide the information into its constituents then analyze it so that evaluation can take place. An interesting finding was that the majority of students agreed that their teachers encourage them to improve critical thinking skills. Also, they selected classroom debate as the most common activity used for that purpose. Then, students were asked about the values of this strategy and what it does contribute to. They had varied answers but many of them agreed that it helps students to realize precise and credible information, see subject matters from multiple views and reach conclusions based on evidence, and they are very important aspects of a critical thinker. And this is the conclusion that was reached by **Q22,** whereby the majority of the students agreed with the assumption that classroom debate help in improving critical thinking skill. The students have clarified their position towards this assumption stating that it pushes students to base their thinking on logic and evidence, thus, reach reasonable conclusions. Additionally, it marks a chance for students to practice their analytical, reasoning and evaluation skills which are essential skills in critical thinking. In sum, based on the data collected from analyzing students' questionnaire it can be assumed that the majority of the students confirm the hypothesis that students' critical thinking can be enhanced through classroom debate.

3.2. Teachers' Questionnaire

A questionnaire is being used as a data gathering tool to explore teachers' perspectives towards the impact of using classroom debate to enhance critical thinking skill.

3.2.1. Population and Sample

The second population chosen for this work consists of teachers at the department of Letters and English Language University of 8 Mai 1945- Guelma. The chosen sample seems appropriate to give the needed data concerning the topic under investigation. Teachers were selected randomly without taking into consideration the modules they teach.

3.2.2. Administration o Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in the current work is a self-completion paper distributed by the researcher to the sample. It has been submitted to 16 teachers at the Department of Letters and English Language- Guelma University on 21 May 2019. However, only fifteen of them have answered the questionnaire and give it back. During the distribution of the questionnaire, some obstacles were faced. Some teachers refused to answer the questionnaire, others did not respond immediately because of lack of time. Therefore, it took more than a week to collect all papers.

3.2.3. Description of Teachers' questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire aims at exploring teachers' views about the impact of implying classroom debate to enhance critical thinking skill. It consists of 21 questions divided into three sections. The questions are of different types; yes/no questions, multiple choice questions and open-ended questions (see appendix C).

3.2.3.1. Section one: General Information

This opening section seeks information about the teachers' qualifications (Q1), and years of teaching experience at the university (Q2). Interestingly, Q3 investigates the teacher's

experience in teaching Master one classes which is the First sample of this study. Then, in Q4 teachers were asked about the modules they are teaching this year.

3.2.3.2. Section two: Classroom debate

The first question in this section (Q5) requires teachers to select the classroom activities that students better respond to. Then, they are required to state the classroom activities that they devote more time to (Q6). Question seven (Q7) is a yes/no question that investigates whether teachers encourage their students to debate in the classroom or not. If they chose yes, they are requested to state their reasons to encourage their students to engage in debates. Accordingly, (Q8) asks teachers to show to what extent they agree or disagree with applying classroom debate in teaching all modules, and justify their answer whatever it was. Question nine (Q9) explores whether teachers encounter a difficulty to involve their students in classroom debates or not. The next question (Q10) investigates the teachers' views about the difficulties that their students come across when debating. The next question (Q11) is another yes/no question that asks teachers if they thought that classroom debate help their students to understand the lesson better.

3.2.3.3. Section Three: Critical Thinking and Classroom Debate

The first question in this section (Q12) is intended to ask teachers whether they perceive critical thinking as an important skill or not. Then in (Q13), they are asked to provide a brief definition of it. The next question (Q14) requires teachers to show their extent of agreement or disagreement with the idea of developing students' critical thinking would help in enhancing their academic achievements. Q15 aims at exploring whether these teachers practice some critical thinking skills through classroom activities. Thus, a list of options is provided. In question (Q16), teachers were asked to select the values that In-class debate promotes. In the next question (Q17) teachers were asked whether they can develop students'

critical thinking regardless their level. Teachers who opted for no were requested to tell at which level they can develop it and justify their choice (Q18). Then, in question (Q19), teachers are asked to state how often they rely on classroom debates to enhance their students' critical thinking. Moreover, in the twentieth question (Q20) they were asked to state their agreement or disagreement with the effectiveness of classroom debate as a teaching-learning strategy in improving student's critical thinking, providing us with their own justifications. Finally, in the last question (21) teachers were requested to add any addition or comment about the topic under investigation.

3.2.4. Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire

This part of the chapter includes a detailed analysis of the results gained from the teachers' questionnaire as the only data gathering tool administered for this study.

Section One: General Information

Q1- what is your degree?

a. B.A   b. Master's / Magister's   c. PHD

Table 3.26 : *Teachers' Degree*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
A	00	0%
B	13	86.67%
C	02	13.33%
Total	15	100%

In response to the first question, the majority of the participating teachers (86.67%) have a magister degree. And only two of them hold a PHD degree. Based on their responses, it is

demonstrated that they are qualified enough to provide reliable data to enrich the research with their knowledge and opinions.

Q2- How long have you been teaching English?

Table 3.27: *Teachers' Experience in Teaching English*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
6-9 years	11	73.33%
10-14 years	02	13.33%
17-19 years	02	13.33%
Total	15	100%

According to the above-mentioned table (3.27), the majority of the teachers (73.33%) claimed that they have from six to nine years experience in teaching EFL. Some of them (13.33%) have been teaching English for more than 10 years (10-14 years). Moreover, 13.33% of the respondents claimed that they have a long experience ranges from 17-19 years in teaching English.

These findings represent that the chosen sample of teachers consists of a well experienced instructors in the field. They have an experience of more than six years through which they gained a wide view about the whole teaching-learning process. They will contribute to the research with precious information about the topic under investigation.

Q3- How many years have you been teaching Master one classes?

Table 3.28: *Teachers' Experience in Teaching Master One Classes*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
02 years	10	66.67%
3 years	02	13.33%
04 years	03	26.67%
Total	15	100%

As it is demonstrated in the table above (3.28), the majority of the participating teachers (66.67%) stated that they taught master one classes for only two years. And only 13.33% had the chance to teach three years, while, 26.67% affirmed that they had a four-year experience in teaching master one level. The majority of the sample members had a short experience in teaching master one students. But, it is still a sufficient period to build a considerable background about the students' level and their way of thinking in addition to the appropriate methods of improving this skill.

Q4- what are the modules you teach?

Table 3.29: *The Modules that Teachers Teach*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Linguistic schools + Psychopedagogy	04	26.67%
Online research + Methodology	01	6.66%
Testing & evaluation + Literature	02	13.33%
Methodology + Race, culture, and ethnicity + civilization	02	13.33%
Translation + Oral expression + written Expression	02	13.33%
Discourse analysis +ESP+ Methodology	02	13.33
Language and Culture + Psychopedagogy + Methodology	02	13.33
Total	15	100%

As table 3.29 shows, 26.67% of the questioned teachers reported that they teach linguistic schools and psycho-pedagogy. Only 6.67% of the participants teach online research and

methodology. Also, 13.33% of them teach testing and evaluation plus literature. Similarly, 13.33% of the teachers teach methodology, civilization and culture, race and ethnicity. Keeping with the same percent number, (13.33%) some teaches oral expression, written expression and translation. And some teach discourse analysis and ESP, While, others teach research methodology, cognitive psychology plus reading and writing. Based on these results, the participating teachers have an experience in teaching more than one module which implies that they used different methods of teaching that cope with the content of each lecture. Also, they may have clear opinions concerning the integration of classroom debates in the process of teaching.

Section Two: Classroom Debate

Q5- Which activities your students better respond to?

a. Class work   b. Oral participation   c. Explanation

d. Students debate   e. Asking questions

Table 3.30: *Teachers' Views of Activities that Students Better Respond to*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
B + D	08	53. 33%
A + D	02	13.33%
C + D	01	6.67%
A + E + C	02	13.33%
All	02	13.33%
Total	15	100%

The highest percentage (53.33%) represents those teachers who stated that their students respond better to students' presentations and classroom debates. Only 6.67% of the participants have selected classroom debates and the teacher's explanation. Only two teachers

(13.33%) opted for class work, classroom debate; class work, explanation, questions and all the mentioned options. Accordingly, students respond well to classroom debates as the teachers use it in developing their lesson which is stated in the results of **Q10** in students' questionnaire. This means that teachers were aware of the importance of classroom debates and understood that classroom debates are essential to help students gain control over language use and particularly to enhance their skills.

Q6- Do you devote more time to:

a. Class work   b. Oral participation   c. Explanation

d. Students debate   e. Asking question   f. Make a balance

Table 3.31: *Teachers' Views of the most Used Activities*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
D	03	20%
F	05	33.33%
C + D	03	20%
B + D	04	26.67%
Total	15	100%

The results clearly show teachers' attitudes towards the activities they mostly rely on. 33.33% of the teachers affirmed that they preferred to make balance in implying the different methods of teaching, while 20% of the teachers stated that they either devote more time to classroom debate or in-class debates plus their explanation. Some of them (26.67%) reported that they spend more time in classroom participation and debate. According to these varied answers, it could be noticed that teachers favor classroom debates and they use it considerably. Yet, others preferred to use different methods because they give importance to the individual differences of students and their learning styles (verbally mentioned).

Q7- Do you encourage your students to debate in the classroom?

a. Yes   b. No

Table 3.32: *Teachers' Attitudes of Encouraging Students to Debate in the Class*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
A	15	100%
B	00	0%
Total	15	100%

The results displayed in table 3.32 demonstrate that all the reporters encourage their students to engage in classroom debates. This finding indicates the effectiveness of this method to the extent that all teachers appreciate it in presenting their lessons and support their students to participate in establishing an effective debate with each other.

In this question, the teachers who opted for yes were requested to identify their aim behind encouraging their students to debate. Thus, through the analysis of next question's results we can uncover the goals behind the necessity to urge students to debate in the classroom.

-If yes, why you encourage them?

a. To develop their speaking skills

b. To develop their communicative skills

c. To develop their listening skills

d. To develop their thinking skills

Table 3.33: *The Teachers' Aims behind Encouraging Students to Debate*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage

B	02	13.33%
A+B+C	02	13.33%
A+D	07	46%
D	01	6.67%
All	03	15%
Total	15	100%

46% of the participants encourage their students to develop both their speaking skills, communicative skills and thinking skills. 13.33% represents those teachers who aimed at developing their students' communicative skills in addition to speaking and listening skills. Only one teacher (6.67%) aimed at developing the thinking skill. However, 15% of the sample members encouraged the development of all the mentioned skills. The latest result implies that classroom debates have a significant impact on the learners' different skills including the thinking skill. Consequently, this in turn, will increase students' academic achievements.

Q9- Do you agree that classroom debate should be followed in teaching all modules?

a. Strongly agree   b. Agree   c. Neuter   d. Disagree   e. Strongly disagree

Table 3.34: *Applying Classroom Debate in Teaching All Modules*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
A	05	33.33%
B	08	53.33%
C	02	13.33%
D	00	0%
E	00	0%
Total	15	100%

The table above (3.34) shows that 33.33% of the reporting teachers strongly agreed with the assumption that classroom debate should be followed in teaching all modules. 53.33% of the teachers declared that they agree. However, few of them (13.33%) preferred to stay neutral and showed no position in this regard.

In order to understand each one's view, a justification was required for their answers. Eleven members of the sample (73.33%) provided an explanation for their position. Those who agreed mostly or partly with the assumption claimed that it trains students to speak the foreign language and increases their motivation. Also, it raises their understanding to the topic and decreases anxiety that most of students suffer from. Moreover, it increases their memory and helps them to receive and store the information. Whereas, the teachers who did not show a clear position towards the idea suggested, indicated that there are some modules where classroom debate cannot be implied like theoretical ones and gave the example of theoretical linguistics, grammar and phonetics.

Q9- Do you find it difficult to involve your students in classroom debates?

a. Yes   b. No

Table 3.35: *Teachers' Difficulty of Involving Students in Classroom Debate*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
A	07	46.67%
B	08	53.33%
Total	15	10%

Many students do not like to participate in classroom debates. In this regard, teachers were asked if they find it difficult to involve students in classroom debates. The majority of the respondents (53.33%) reported that they do not have any difficulty, while 46.67% of them

faced difficulty. May be, most teachers took time constraints as pretext, but they did not know how to draw students' attention to classroom debate and its importance or it can be explained by the students' introvert character.

Q10- Does your students show difficulties in debating because of:

a. Difficulty with vocabulary   b. Not motivated at all   c. Shy

d. Afraid   e. Problem in their way of thinking

Table 3.36: *Difficulties Students Face when Debating*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
A	02	13.33%
A+C	04	26.67%
B+D	01	6.67%
A+D+ E	04	26.67%
C+D	04	26.67%
Total	15	100%

In the table above (3.36%), the participants were requested to share their views about the main problems that hinder students from engaging in classroom debates. Many teachers with the percent number of 26.67% related it either to the students' difficulty with vocabulary, shyness, fear or problems in their way of thinking, while 13.33% of them linked it only to vocabulary. Also, few of them thought that the lack of motivation and fear stands as the major obstacles to students. The teachers had considerable views in this regard where they linked the students' problems to many factors based on their experience in teaching different types of students.

Q11- Do you think that your students understand the lecture better when being involved in a debate?

a. Yes   b. No

Table 3.37: *Influence of Classroom Debate on Students Comprehension to the Lecture*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
A	15	100%
B	00	0%
Total	15	100%

According to table 3.37, it is indicated that all the participating teachers (100%) asserted that their students understand the lesson better when they are involved in classroom debates. This explains the effectiveness of classroom debates in promoting the students comprehension to the received lectures. Also, this was confirmed by the students when they answered **Q7**.

Section Three: Critical Thinking and Classroom Debate

Q12- Do you perceive classroom critical thinking as an important skill?

a. Yes   b. No

Table 3.38: *Teachers' Attitudes towards the Importance of Critical Thinking Skill*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
A	15	100%
B	00	0%
Total	15	100%

In response to **Q12**, it is proven by 100% of the reporting teachers that critical thinking skill is of a great importance, whereby   none of them showed the contrary. This means that most teachers were made aware of the importance of classroom debate and its positive effect

on students' critical thinking .This recommends the teachers to raise the students' awareness towards the existence of this skill and to what extent it is important. Furthermore, they need to encourage them to improve it and help them to achieve higher levels of thinking.

Q13- would you please provide a definition for critical thinking?

Table 3.39: *Teachers' Definitions of Critical Thinking Skill*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
answered	12	80%
not answered	03	20%
Total	15	100%

In this question, teachers were asked to provide definitions of critical thinking. The overwhelming majority of the respondents (80%) have answered this question, while 20% of the teachers did not provide their own definitions. These latter may felt the question worthless or unnecessary. However, those who replied, their answers are quoted as follows:

- "To training the brain not to believe in everything and start asking questions"

- "the students' ability to ask questions, analyze and assess situations in a logical reasonable way."

- "the process of analyzing and evaluating subject matters to develop their understanding"

- "it is to think deeply, read between the lines and analyze the main points of any info"

Based on the definitions provided by the teachers it is confirmed that teachers view critical thinking as multi-tasked process that includes the ability to analyze, evaluate, ask questions…etc, which are the main features of this skill. Thus, they are well knowledgeable about critical thinking skill.

Q14- Do you agree that developing students' critical thinking skill would enhance their academic achievements?

a. Strongly agree   b. Agree   c. Neutral   d. Disagree   e. Strongly disagree

Table 3.40: *Critical Thinking Enhances Students' Academic Achievements*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
A	10	66.67%
B	05	33.33%
C	00	0%
D	00	0%
E	00	0%
Total	15	100%

All the respondents believed that the development of the students' critical thinking promote their academic achievements. As it is displayed in table 3.40, 66.67% of the teachers strongly agreed with this assumption and 33.33% agreed as well. This finding proves again that critical thinking is a significant skill which is very important to be developed. Thus, teachers will be able to implement critical thinking strategies that will enable their students to independently develop their competencies.

Q15- Do you employ classroom activities that require your students to:

a. Analyze and evaluate   b. Synthesize   c. Make a decision

d. Solve a problem   e. Other

Table 3.41: *Teachers' Strategies of Making Students Develop their Critical Thinking*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
A	03	20%

A+ D	02	13.33%
A+ C	01	6.67%
A+B	04	26.67%
All	05	33.33%
Total	15	100%

This question aims to investigate teachers' opinions about the best way to make students easily benefit from classroom debate. Of the total respondents, 20% implemented classroom activities that require students only to analyze and evaluate. Others (13.33%) require students to solve problems in addition to analyzing and evaluating things. Also, some others (26.67%) employed tasks that make students analyze, evaluate and synthesize. (6.66%) followed activities that give students a chance to evaluate, analyze and make decisions. However, the rest of the participating teachers chose exercises that enable their students to do all the above mentioned tasks. These results show that though teachers' purpose behind implementing certain activities may not be to foster critical thinking, but students will be able to practice analysis, evaluation, decision making…etc, which are the essential skills that a critical thinker must possess. Thus, it is noticed that the majority of the investigated teachers focus more on tasks that necessitate analysis and evaluation as shown in table 3.19 that the majority of students consider these two skills more important than the other ones (as demonstrated in the analysis of Q18 in students' questionnaire). So, it can be assumed that the majority of teachers help their students to develop their critical thinking skills either intentionally or unintentionally to do so.

Q16- Which of the following does classroom debate promote?

a. Classroom debate makes the lecture interesting and enjoyable.

b. Classroom debate promotes teamwork skills and group decision making.

c. Classroom debate helps students to realize precise and credible information.

d. Classroom debate helps students to see a subject matter from multiple views.

e. Classroom debate allows students to reach conclusion based on evidence.

f. Classroom debate develops students' thinking.

Table 3.42: *Teachers Views about the Importance of Classroom Debate*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
A+ C+ F	02	13.33%
D+ E+ F	04	26.67%
B+ C+ D+ E+ F	02	13.33%
All	07	46.67%
Total	15	100%

It is displayed in table 3.42 that 13.33% agreed that classroom debate can help students realize precise and credible information, develop their thinking and make the lecture interesting and enjoyable. The same percentage (13.33%) represents other teachers who saw that classroom debate promotes teamwork skills and group decision making, helps them to realize precise and credible data and see subject matters from multiple views, in addition, it develops their thinking and reach conclusions based on evidence. Some others (26.67%) claimed that it develops students' thinking, enables them to reach reasonable conclusions and perceive issues from different points of view. However, a higher percentage (46.67%) of the participating teachers admitted that classroom debate has many advantages including all the above-mentioned.

In the light of the findings revealed from table 3.42, it is shown that many teachers appreciate classroom debates and acknowledged the vital significance of this teaching method in fostering many skills. The majority of the respondents believe that classroom debates help students to develop their thinking including exploring subject matters from various points of view, establishing credible information in order to achieve reasonable conclusions. This demonstrates the considerable influence that classroom debates have on critical thinking development. This, in turn, enhances many aspects of this vital skill.

Q17- Can you develop students' critical thinking regardless their level?

a. Yes   b. No

Table 3.43: *Developing Students' Critical Thinking Regardless Their Level*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
A	11	73.33%
B	04	26.67%
Total	15	100%

Table 3.43 displays the results of the teachers' views about the possibility of developing students' critical thinking regardless their level. The overwhelming majority (73.33%) opted for yes, while 26.67% of them thought that it is not important to know the level of the students. This can be explained that each level of students requires selecting the appropriate methods and techniques that help them accordingly to achieve the intended purpose, which is to enhance critical thinking adequately.

Q18- At which level would you develop students' critical thinking?

a. Beginning level

b. Advanced level

Table 3.44: *Teachers' Attitudes towards Students Appropriate Level*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
A	08	53.33%
B	05	33.33%
Both	02	13.33%
Total	15	100%

In response to Q17, over the majority of teachers (53.33%) declared that they prefer to develop students' Critical thinking at the beginning level. 33.33% of the teachers stated the opposite, maybe they think that it is more appropriate to be developed at an advanced level. However few of them (13.33%) think that it can be developed at both levels.

Interestingly, they were asked to provide a clarification to explain their viewpoint. Only seven teachers (46.67%) have stated an explanation. Those who opted for the beginning level reported that it is to make them able to take maximum advantage from their learning, critical thinking is one factor that helps students to develop as advanced ones. Yet, the other teachers explained that students who are at an advanced level tend to be more open-minded and accept different views about certain topic. Additionally, two other teachers explained that critical thinking can be developed at each level. Thus, the beginners need to learn how to become critical thinkers, while, the advanced ones need it to develop and reach higher goals.

Q19- How often do you rely on classroom debates to enhance students' critical thinking?

a. Always   b. Usually   c. Sometimes   d. Rarely   e. Never

Table 3.45: *The Teachers Use of Classroom Debate to Enhance Critical Thinking*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage

A	02	13.33%
B	11	73.33%
C	02	13.33%
D	00	0%
E	00	0%
Total	15	100%

Considering the respondents' answers, it is displayed that the majority (73.33%) usually depend on classroom debate to enhance students' critical thinking. Few of them (13.33%) always rely on classroom debates. Similarly, some others (13.33%) choose it from time to time to fulfill this objective. It is indicated that many teachers follow this method to develop students thinking skills and give higher importance to critical thinking. However, it cannot be neglected that there are other ways and techniques in addition to in-class debates that can be used for this purpose.

Q20- Do you agree that classroom debate is effective in improving students' critical thinking?

a. Strongly agree   b. Agree   c. Neuteral   d. Disagree   e. Strongly disagree

Table 3.46: *Improving Critical Thinking through Classroom Debate*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
A	08	53.33%
B	07	46.67%
C	00	0%
D	00	0%
E	00	0%
Total	15	100%

The majority of the reporting teachers (53.33%) stated that they strongly agree with the effectiveness of classroom debates in enhancing critical thinking skill. Also, 46.67% of them agreed with the proposed idea. However, none of these teachers showed a contrasting or a neutral position.

In this regard, a justification is requested for each answer to this question. Among those who replied, ten teachers (66.67%) clarified their answers. They had nearly similar answers quoted as follows:

- "It provides students with the abilities to acquire the language, profiting from their partners while speaking (new voc and ideas) the best way to learn is to discuss issues with each other"

- "When students have the chance to listen to others, they start thinking about their own point of view and compare ideas and start asking questions. It is a chance for the lazy students to activate their minds and start thinking and share their thoughts."

- "The best way to make the learner understand is through criticizing, asking questions and exchanging ideas with friends and teacher"

Through investigating teachers' answers, it is revealed that the majority of the questioned teachers believe in the effectiveness of this method in improving an important skill like critical thinking. This goes in accordance with the results of Q22 answered by students. Therefore, it is required to direct students' focus towards developing it and help them to achieve this goal.

Q21- If you have any suggestions concerning the topic of the research, please do not hesitate to share it with us.

Table 3.47: *Teachers' comments on the effect of classroom debate on students' critical thinking*

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Answered	06	40%
not answer	09	60%
Total	15	100%

In response to the last question where the participating members of the sample were required to provide some additions or comments about the topic of the research. The less percent number (40%) represents those teachers who answered this part. However, the majority of them (60%) left it blank.

Three participants (20%) of those who answered the question have provided only some comments about the topic, but not about "the impact of using classroom debate to enhance student critical thinking". they stated that it is "interesting" and a "difficult one". The others preferred to add that classroom debate is the best way for improving critical thinking, and the process of learning in general. Also, it is the best method of learning foreign languages, and learners will be encouraged to speak, to think differently and change their points of view which may be opposed to others. Moreover, it raises the students' motivation and understanding of the lecture.

Summary of Findings from Teachers' Questionnaire

The first section in teachers' questionnaire "General Information" reveals that the majority of the investigated teachers have a magister degree. Moreover, they have an enormous experience in EFL teaching that overpasses the six (6) years and two years in teaching the master one classes, In addition to their ability to teach various types of modules.

This demonstrates the adequateness of choosing this sample which will provide credible, reliable data to be used in this research

By analyzing the results of the second section "classroom debates", it is indicated students respond well to classroom debates; however, teachers prefer to make balance between the implementation of the different methods of teaching with special emphasis on this strategy. In addition, many teachers have the tendency to encourage their students to debate in the classroom for many purposes where the majority focuses on developing the speaking and thinking skills. Moreover, they agree that classroom debates should be used in teaching all modules, yet, few of them preferred to show no position in this regard relating it to the difficulty of applying it with some types of modules though its effectiveness like the theoretical ones, which seems a logical point of view. Thus, all of them agreed that their students understand the lesson better especially when they are being involved in a debate, but some teachers find some difficulties in making students engaged. These difficulties could be related to many aspects and more specifically to lack of vocabulary, fear or problem in their way of thinking. So, it marks a challenge for teachers to succeed in involving all students in classroom debates.

In section three "critical thinking and classroom debate", all the participating teachers asserted the highly significant role of critical thinking as a skill in enhancing students' academic achievements. They demonstrated their awareness and understanding of this skill in the definitions they provided in response to Q13. Furthermore, they stated that classroom debates have many advantages on the students and the whole classroom. Most of the reporting teachers shed light on its impact on students' thinking development and that it enable them to see subject matters from multiple viewpoints to reach reasonable conclusions and realize credible information which are essential features for anyone to be a critical thinker. Therefore, they all assumed that classroom debates are always an effective way to foster students' critical

thinking whatever the module they teach. Correspondingly, many of them usually rely on this method to develop critical thinking as there may be other ways to develop it.

Conclusion

Considering attentively the importance of classroom debates to enhance students' critical thinking, we devised and administered our questionnaires to both students and teachers. The results of the present study indicate that both students and teachers perceive classroom debate as an innovative approach to teaching and learning. The results gathered from the students questionnaire show that when participating in a classroom debate it helps them overcome the fear of talking in front of public, raise their confidence to talk and express their thoughts and opinions, improve their speaking and their critical thinking skills. The teachers understood their students' needs. They also showed a deep awareness towards their students' problems in relation to express their ideas and thoughts as well as the way they think. Teachers were made aware of the necessity of directing students' attention to classroom debate to be adopted in classes in order to improve students' critical thinking

The findings of both questionnaires reveal that the participants believe that classroom debate is a helpful way for developing their critical thinking skills. They stated that it helps them to perceive issues from different perspectives, think adequately and thus, reach evident conclusions and establish credible data. As a matter of fact, these abilities are features and elements of critical thinking skill. In sum, we confirm the hypothesis of this research which assumes that classroom debate develops students' critical thinking.

General Conclusion

1. Pedagogical Implications

The aim behind conducting this work is to explore teachers' and students' attitudes towards the use of classroom debate to enhance CTS. The findings revealed that both teachers and students perceive classroom debate as an effective teaching-learning tool, and critical thinking as an important skill in language learning. They showed a positive attitude towards promoting critical thinking skill through classroom debate. However, it was demonstrated that many students do not appreciate engaging in classroom debates; also, their teachers face difficulty in making all of them involved.

Regarding the effectiveness of in-class debate in fostering students' critical thinking, both teachers and students should work hand in hand to achieve their purpose of improving the critical thinking skill. So, students need to overcome their fears and strengthen their abilities of debating. Interestingly, teachers can help them to be involved in debates through introducing controversial issues into the classroom and use types of activities that give the students an opportunity to share their thoughts, evaluate their learning, and engage in interactive situations with colleagues and teachers. Also, they should choose materials that can be analyzed, synthesized, discussed, argued about, and classified in different ways. Therefore, students will be able to exercise the different skills of critical thinking to be developed. As many of the participants agreed on the importance of this skill and its effectiveness in increasing their academic achievements in general and CTS in particular, teachers and curriculum designers should include this skill in different modules as it is possible to design special modules to teach it.

2. Research Perspectives, Limitation and Recommendations

In conducting this research different obstacles and limitations were encountered. The biggest problem that was faced is time limitation. The research was done in a very short period of time that encompassed many incidents that distracted the research progress. Thus, it was very difficult to do a proper work. Also, the sample was limited to only master one students, and their teachers. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized for all learners. Another prominent factor that hindered the fulfillment of the research is the unavailability of printed sources in the library of the University. This necessitates the reliance mostly on e-books and journals, specifically the useful ones, could not be found in pdf formats. Additionally, in the first few months the researcher lacked the other essential materials needed for making the research including a computer and access to the internet.

In the light of the findings that were gathered from this research, a further research is recommended about the topic under investigation. Furthermore, it would be better if it was conducted through an empirical tool of data gathering. Also, the time allotted for making the research should be extended a bit larger, as well as, the sample chosen for investigation in order to reach generalization. Other similar studies are recommended to be done but choosing other new methods that can be used for the purpose of enhancing students critical thinking. An empirical study is suggested entitled as "Enhancing students' critical thinking through problem-solving games among EFL learners".

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Appendix [A]: Numrich's Sequence of Critical Thinking Tasks.

Perspective	Critical thinking	Skills practiced
Focus on the students' world	1. Observation	Looking
		Listening
	2. Identifying assumptions	Sharing background
		Expressing opinions
		Clarifying values
Focus on the text	3. Understanding and organization	Summarizing
		Distinguishing relevant details
		Ordering
		Classifying
		Comparing and contrasting
		Explaining cause and effect
	4. Interpreting	Making inferences
		Interpreting meaning
		Hypothesizing
		theorizing
Focus beyond the text	5. Inquiring further	Surveying the public
		Interviewing a specialist
		Researching
	6. Analyzing and evaluating	Synthesizing information
		Critiquing
		Reflecting on related ideas
		Making logical conclusions
		Reevaluating assumptions
	7. Making decisions	Proposing solutions
		Problem solving
		Taking action
		Participating

Appendix [B]: The Students' Questionnaire

Dear first year Master students,

   This questionnaire serves as a data-gathering tool for a research work conducted at the department of Letters and English Language at Guelma University. It would be really appreciated if you devote some of your time to answer this questionnaire that deals with investigating your perception towards using classroom debate to enhance critical thinking skill. Your collaboration is very important for the validity of this research. You should take into consideration that your answers will be kept anonymous and used only for research purposes. You are required to tick (√) the appropriate box (es), or provide a full answer whenever necessary.

Thank you in advance for your time and cooperation.

Ms. Abir Derouiche

Department of Letters and English languages

University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma

Section One: General Information

1. What is your age?

…………….. ……….….… years

2. How long have you been studying English language so far?

……………………… years

3. Is it your choice to study English?

Yes   ☐   No   ☐

4. How do you describe your level in English?

Very good	Good	Average	Bad	Very bad

Section Two: Classroom Debate

5. How often do you participate in the classroom?

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Always

6. Which of the following teaching strategies do you prefer to learn through it?

a. Students' presentations [ ]   b. Group work [ ]   c. Independent work [ ]

d. Classroom debate [ ]   e. Taught session [ ]

7. Do you think that you understand the lesson better when you debate?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

8. How do you understand classroom debate?

A formal discussion between students on a specific topic	
A form of discourse between the teacher and students based on evidence	
A formal dialogue that aims at finding answers or solutions	
All of them	

9. Do your teachers use classroom debate to develop the lesson?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

If yes, how often?

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Always

10. Do you engage in classroom debates?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

If no, state why

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………….

11. Which structure of classroom debate you prefer the most?

a. Between group of students [ ]

b. Students and teacher [ ]

c. One individual with a group [ ]

Why?

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

12. How can you describe your ability of debating?

Bad	Average	Good	Very good

13. Which of the following characteristics you master during debates?

Speak clearly and fluently	
Think quickly	
Clarify arguments	
Provide examples	
Professional tone and body language	
Maintain persuasive speech	

14. Do you think that classroom debate is a useful strategy in teaching?

Yes [   ]   No [   ]

If yes, would you explain:

……………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………….

Section Three: Critical Thinking and Classroom Debate

15. How can you define critical thinking?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

16. What are the abilities of a critical thinker?

Evaluate information in a systematic way.	
Ask hard questions to challenge observations and assumptions	
Analyze ideas and arguments	
Effectively solve problems and make informed decisions	
Reach conclusions based on evidence	

17. Do you see yourself as a critical thinker?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Please, clarify:

…………………………………………………………………………………………...

18. Which of the following critical thinking skills are the most important? (More than one option)

a. Reasoning ☐   b. Analysis ☐   c. Evaluation ☐

d. Problem solving ☐   e. Decision making ☐

Why?

…………………………………………………………………………………………......

19. Does your teacher encourage you to improve these skills?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes, what activities he chooses?

a. Classroom debate ☐   b. Cooperative learning strategies ☐

c. Classroom assessment techniques ☐   d. Other ☐

20. Do you think that classroom debate promote the following? (more than option)

	Yes	No
Classroom debate makes the lecture interesting and enjoyable.		
Classroom debate promotes teamwork skills and group decision making.		
Classroom debate helps students to realize precise and credible information.		
Classroom debate helps students to see a subject matter from multiple views.		
Classroom debate allows students to reach conclusion based on evidence.		
Classroom debate helps students to think adequately		
Other		

If other, please specify

…………………………………………………………………………………………...

21. Do you think that classroom debate has an influence on your thinking skills?

a. Yes ☐   b. no ☐   c. not really ☐   d. don't know ☐

If yes, how?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

22. Do you agree that classroom debate help in improving critical thinking skill?

Totally disagree	Disagree	Neuter	agree	Totally agree

Would you explain?

…………………………………………………………………………………….........

23. If you have any additions or suggestions concerning the topic of the research, please do not hesitate to share it with us.

……………………………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………..

Thank you for your collaboration.

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire serves as a data-gathering tool for a research work conducted at the department of Letters and English Language at Guelma University. It would be really appreciated if you devote some of your time to answer this questionnaire that deals with investigating your perception towards using classroom debate to enhance critical thinking skill. Your collaboration is very important for the validity of this research. You are required to tick (√) the appropriate box (es), or provide a full answer where it is necessary.

Thank you very much for your time and collaboration.

Ms. Abir Derouiche

Department of Letters and English languages

University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma

Section One: General Information

1. What is your degree?

B.A	
Master's/Magister's	
PHD	

2. How long have you been teaching English?

……………………………… years

3. How many years have you been teaching Master one classes?

……………………………years

4. What are the modules you teach?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

Section two: Classroom Debate

5. Which activities your students better respond to?

a. class work ☐   b. oral participation ☐   c. explanation ☐

d .students debate ☐   e. asking questions ☐

6. Do you devote more time to:

a. class work ☐   b. oral participation ☐   c. explanation ☐

d .students debate ☐   e. asking questions ☐   f. make balance ☐

7. Do you encourage your students to debate in the classroom?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes, you encourage them in order to: (you can choose more than one)

Develop their speaking skills	
Develop their communicative skills	
Develop their listening skills	
Develop their thinking skills	
Other	

 Other, please specify

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

8. Do you agree that classroom debate should be followed in teaching all modules?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neuter	disagree	Strongly disagree

Whatever your answer, please justify

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

9. Do you find it difficult to involve your students in classroom debate?

Yes [ ]   no [ ]

10.Do your students show difficulties in debating because of:

 a. difficulty with vocabulary [ ]   b. not motivated at all [ ]

c. shy [ ]   d. afraid [ ]   e difficulty with their way of thinking [ ]

f. other [ ]

11. Do you think that your students understand the lecture better when being involved in a debate?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

Section Three: Critical Thinking and Classroom Debate

12. Do you perceive critical thinking as an important skill?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

13. Would you please provide a brief definition of it?

……

…….

14. Do you agree that developing students' critical thinking would help them enhance their academic achievements?

Strongly agree	agree	Neuter	disagree	Strongly disagree

15. Do you employ classroom activities that require your students to:

a. Analyze and evaluate [   ]   b. Synthesize [   ]

c. Make a decision [   ]   d. Solve a problem [   ]   e. Other [   ]

If other, please specify

……

…….…………………………………………………………………………………………………...

16. Which of the following does classroom debate promote?

Classroom debate makes the lecture interesting and enjoyable.	
Classroom debate promotes teamwork skills and group decision making.	
Classroom debate helps students to realize precise and credible information.	
Classroom debate helps students to see a subject matter from multiple views.	
Classroom debate allows students to reach conclusion based on evidence.	
Classroom debate develops students' thinking	

Other	

If other, please specify

……………………………………………………………………………………………

17. Can you develop your students' critical thinking regardless their level?

Yes [ ]   no [ ]

18. At which level(s) would you develop students' critical thinking? Why?

a- beginning levels

b-advanced levels

………………………………….……………………………………………………..

19. How often do you rely on classroom debates to enhance students' critical thinking?

Always	usually	sometimes	rarely	never

20. Do you agree that classroom debate is effective in improving students'critical thinking?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neuter	disagree	Strongly disagree

Whatever your answer, please clarify

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21. If you have any additions or suggestions concerning the topic of the research, please do not hesitate to share it with us.

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Thank you for your collaboration.

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ملخص

يسعى هذا العمل لاستكشاف تأثير المناقشة في القسم على تنمية التفكير النقدي لدى الطلاب. على الرغم من أن كل من أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية وطلابها يدركون أهمية مهارة التفكير النقدي إلا أنهم يهملون تطويرها. ولهذا يتعين على الأساتذة مساعدة طلابهم على تعزيز تفكيرهم النقدي واختيار الاستراتيجيات والأدوات المناسبة لتحقيق هذا الهدف. في المقابل ، تعد المناقشة في القسم أحد الأساليب الموصى بها من قِبل العديد من الباحثين والعلماء التربويين لاستخدامها لهذا الغرض. و هي عبارة عن نشاط يمكن من خلاله للطلبة ممارسة العديد من مهارات التفكير النقدي, ونتيجة لذلك يتم تعزيز تفكيرهم النقدي. و على هذا الاساس نفترض أنه إذا استخدم الأساتذة المناقشة في القسم فسوف يتحسن تفكير الطلاب النقدي. يميل هذا البحث بشكل أساسي إلى استكشاف مواقف كل من الأساتذة والطلاب تجاه استخدام المناقشة في القسم لتعزيز التفكير النقدي. كذلك يسلط الضوء على أهمية التفكير النقدي كمهارة مهمة ، والمناقشة داخل القسم كأداة مبتكرة للتعليم والتعلم. من أجل تأكيد فرضية البحث وتحقيق أهدافه ، تم إدارة استبيانين مختلفين وتوزيعهما على ستين طالبًا من طلاب الأولى ماستر وخمسة عشر أستاذا مختصين في مواد تدريسية مختلفة. بعد تحليل نتائج كلا الاستبيانين تبين أن كلا من الأساتذة والطلاب على دراية بأهمية مهارة التفكير النقدي وفعالية مناقشة الفصل في التدريس والتعلم.

كما أنه يساعد الطلاب على إدراك القضايا من وجهات نظر مختلفة ، والتفكير بشكل كاف وبالتالي التوصل إلى استنتاجات واضحة وإنشاء بيانات موثوقة. حيث ان هذه القدرات هي الخصائص الرئيسية المتعلقة بالتفكير النقدي. هذا يبين أن العديد من طلاب الاولى ماستر ومعلميهم يعتقدون أن المناقشة في القسم الدراسي بمثابة أداة فعالة في تعزيز التفكير النقدي. على أساس هذه النتائج، يوصى أساتذتهم بوجوب رفع وعي الطلاب بأهمية مهارة التفكير النقدي و مساعدتهم على تطوير هذه المهارة من خلال استخدام المناقشة في القسم.

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Résumé

L'ouvrage tente d'examiner l'effet du débat en classe sur le développement de la pensée critique des étudiants. Bien que les enseignants et les étudiants de langue anglaise reconnaissent l'importance de la pensée critique, ils négligent de la développer. Par conséquent, les enseignants doivent aider leurs étudiants à promouvoir leur pensée critique et à choisir les stratégies et les outils appropriés pour atteindre cet objectif. De même, le débat en classe est l'une des méthodes recommandées par de nombreux spécialistes et pédagogues pour être utilisés à cette fin. C'est une activité par laquelle les étudiants peuvent mettre en pratique de nombreuses compétences de pensée critique. Par conséquent, leur esprit critique serait renforcé. Ainsi, nous émettons l'hypothèse que si les enseignants utilisent le débat en classe, la pensée critique des étudiants s'améliorera. Cette recherche à pour objectif principal d'explorer les attitudes des enseignants et des étudiants vis-à-vis de l'utilisation du débat en classe pour renforcer la pensée critique. En outre, elle met en lumière l'importance, d'un côté, de la pensée critique en tant que compétence importante et de l'autre, du débat en classe en tant qu'outil novateur d'enseignement et d'apprentissage. Afin d'affirmer l'hypothèse de recherche et d'atteindre ses objectifs, deux questionnaires variés ont été administrés et distribués à soixante étudiants de niveau master I et à quinze enseignants de modules différents. Après avoir analysé les résultats des deux questionnaires, il est apparu que les enseignants et les étudiants étaient conscients de l'importance de pensée critique et de l'efficacité des débats en classe dans le cadre de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage. De plus, il est indiqué que cela aide les étudiants à percevoir les problèmes sous des angles différents, à bien réfléchir et ainsi à tirer des conclusions évidentes et à établir des données crédibles. Ces capacités sont les principales caractéristiques liées à la pensée critique. Cela suppose que beaucoup d'apprenants du master I et leurs enseignants croient que le débat en classe constitue un outil efficace pour renforcer la pensée critique. Sur la base de ces résultats, Les enseignants sont appelés à sensibiliser les étudiants à l'importance de la pensée critique et à les aider à développer cette compétence en utilisant le débat en classe.