

الجمهورية الجزائرية الديمقراطية الشعبية

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

وزارة التعليم العالي و البحث العلمي

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

University of Mustapha Stambouli,
Mascara



جامعة مصطفى سطمبولي ، معسكر

Faculty of Letters and Languages
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Cultivating Critical Thinking at the University Level

The case of Second Year EFL English Department Students, Laghouat, Algeria

Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Candidacy for
the Degree of Doctorate in Didactics

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Academic Year: 2024-2025

DEDICATION

To my dearest parents,

*All I am I owe to them. I attribute my achievement
in all fields of life to the intellectual, moral and physical
education I received from them.*

To the memory of my paternal grandmother,

*Her wisdom, kindness, and unwavering love remains
deeply etched in my heart. May Allah grant her Jannat*

El-Firduas.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deep gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Mohamed DIB, for his invaluable feedback, unwavering support, guidance and mentorship throughout the conduction of this study.

*S*pecial thanks go to all the members of the jury who have accepted to devote some of their precious time to judge my work.

I would also like to thank the staff at the faculty of letters and languages, University of Mascara, for providing academic support and a family atmosphere throughout the four years of our doctoral studies.

I would also like to thank all those who took part in this study for their cooperation and endless help, especially the students who accepted to participate in the experiment, the statistics engineer who helped with data analysis using SPSS, and the staff at the department of English, University of Laghouat. Without their cooperation, this research would not have been possible.

*L*astly, I would like also to express my heartfelt appreciation to Professor Farouk BENABDI, the head of our doctoral project, who provided us with a stimulating academic environment.

List of Abbreviations

- **BA** Bachelor of Arts
- **CBA** Competency Based Approach
- **CLT** Communicative Language Teaching
- **CT** Critical Thinking
- **EFL** English as a Foreign Language
- **ELT** English Language Teaching
- **ESL** English as a Second Language
- **ESP** English for Specific Purposes
- **FLT** Foreign Language Teaching
- **HOTS** Higher Order Thinking Skills
- **ICC** International Chamber of Commerce
- **ICT** Information, Communication and Technology
- **L1** Native Language
- **L2** Second Language
- **LMD** License Master Doctorat
- **LOTS** Lower Order Thinking Skills
- **MA** Master of Arts
- **PBL** Problem Based Learning
- **RRA** Reader Response Approach
- **RRT** Reader Response Theory
- **SPSS** Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
- **TOEFL** Teaching of English as a Foreign Language

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Creating a scenario that attempts to foster critical thinking at the university level is the primary goal of this study. This is why the researcher chose a scenario that examines how well the Reader Response approach (RRA) to literary texts fosters critical thinking skills in EFL university students. Critical thinking has been widely acknowledged as a crucial 21st century skill and as one of the most significant indicators of students' learning quality. It is believed that teaching this ability is crucial for all grade levels. One of the main objectives of higher education is to help students develop their critical thinking skills. Furthermore, literature plays a significant role in the curriculum at every level of language instruction, Literary texts are intended to help pupils develop their critical thinking abilities in addition to their reading comprehension and appreciation of poetical language. Therefore, the current study attempts to determine whether using a different approach to literary texts aids in developing students' critical thinking abilities. For this purpose, a series of research questions and hypotheses have been laid to steer the investigation. The study's subjects are Algerian university students who were randomly assigned to one of two groups—the experimental RRA training group or the control group—and the work is experimental in nature. A correlation analysis has been conducted to examine the critical thinking proficiency of the students. The Cornell Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) and the Nelson Test Dadkhah were given both before and after the experiment. Additionally, both student groups completed an exit test at the conclusion of the study after being asked to interpret a literary text as an admission test. Additionally, participants filled out a pre-experiment questionnaire at the start of the study, and students in the experimental group participated in an interview at the conclusion. The RRA is used to teach literary texts for ten weeks in total during the project. Both test results and questionnaire replies have been compared, with the interview responses taken into consideration. According to the research findings, there is a causal relationship between the proposed scenario (RRA) and the probability that it will significantly improve the critical thinking abilities of the research sample. Teachers and course planners may find the research findings useful in developing a successful EFL literature course. It may be seen as an initial stage in the design of a course for EFL students that helps promote critical skills and self-development.

Key words: Critical thinking, Reader response approach, literary texts, literature, EFL Learners' thinking skills

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General Introduction



General Introduction

Critical thinking has been widely recognized as an important 21st century skill and as one of the most important indicators of students learning quality. Its importance in the field of FLT has been identified for its scope to meaningful learning experience. Teaching this skill is seen as an important part of all grade levels. From the early stages of their learning, students need to develop this skill for the reason that it is not just a “nice to have” skill in the 21st century, it is essential. Developing students’ critical thinking has been set as one of higher education primary goals. This has been a long case, but recently it has become more prominent and urgent in implementing this goal to enhance students’ employability in the fast changing workplace.

Consequently, many higher educational institutions profess their capacity to cultivate critical thinking skills in their students through incorporating critical thinking skills into the curriculum content and teaching approaches and sequencing it as a major element of the teaching / learning experience and implementing it through innovative techniques. However, there is still currently a gap in how to foster and cultivate this skill and develop successful critical thinkers at the university level. Actually, over the history of FLT different techniques and strategies have been suggested to approach this skill. The field of literature, according to many recent researches, can be promoted as an effective option to foster critical thinking through the implementation of a critical literary approach to literary texts among EFL university students.

Undoubtedly, Literature is an important part of all stages of language teaching curriculum. From the very beginning of their schooling, students have to learn by heart different poetic extracts which are included in the set reading textbooks. The teaching of such texts is meant to improve the students’ reading ability, to enhance their enjoyment of poetical language and, at the same time, to instill in them some social, cultural, and more values.

Scope of Work

Various definitions of critical thinking have been proposed. For instance, Ennis (1996) defines critical thinking as ‘reasonable reflective thinking’. More specifically, he relates critical thinking to particular skills such as reflection, inferring, reasoning, evaluating and the like.

According to Ennis, these skills can be learned independently and transferred to various domains, without associating them with any particular discipline.

Larsson (2017) maintains that enhancing students' critical thinking skills and abilities is of paramount importance as it is a highly prized educational objective. Forawi (2016) contends that the educators of the present-day world highly recognize the importance of the development of the modern citizen's abilities and skills so that they may consume and comprehend the explosion of information. Billing (2007) also highlights the significance of critical thinking when he styles it "the essential foundation of education" because he claims that the social, personal and professional demands of the 21st century cannot be met without this essential foundation. Meiramova (2017) has discussed the issues relating to the relationship between language instruction and critical thinking teaching, the time of introducing critical thinking to students and how it can fit in an intercultural context.

The objects of critical thinking are texts, be they visual, oral or written (both non-literary and literary). For Lau (2011) critical thinking is a rational and clear thinking which involves thinking precisely and systematically, and following the rules of logic and scientific reasoning, among other things. Mason (2008) asserts that critical thinking may refer to the skills of critical reasoning; to a disposition (in the form of a critical attitude or a moral orientation) or knowledge of a particular discipline in which one can "express a critical thought." Obviously, the concept may either refer to a skill or to the result of applying this skill.

Paul and Elder (2007) infer that a critical thinker is the one who formulates relevant questions, the one who is capable of accumulating relevant information, and evaluating it in order to come to relevant conclusions whereas Belinda Hakes distinguishes two distinct approaches of introducing literature students to critical thinking: From critical reading to critical thinking or from critical thinking to critical reading. Critical reading and critical thinking should not be confused with each other. While critical reading should be understood as an active reading which enables the recipient to find specific information in a text; critical thinking, on the other hand, enables readers to reflect on what they have read.

All in all, literature is a reflection of the outside world; it is an ideal means of how to bring outside the classroom thinking inside the classroom walls. Consequently, thinking about a literary text is a reflection of thinking about real-life situations. Employing higher levels of thought and thinking to a literature class brings in the element of critical thought. Literature may thus serve not only as a means of practicing critical reasoning and building up ones

knowledge of the subject but also as a means of forming critical dispositions and moral attitudes that are willing to accept alternative systems of thought without which the contemporary world would not be able to survive.

Statement of the Problem

Recent national reports highlight that Algerian graduates lack analytical and critical thinking skills in relation to academic achievement and job performance (Bouhadiba, 2004).

For students of language, it is argued that language teachers are often more concerned with language accuracy than critical appraisal of texts. English language classes often involve students reading a text and answering comprehension questions. Rarely are they asked to evaluate the text, or judge the credibility of the information. In many cases, the materials used in the language classroom do not encourage students to think in a critical way (Kheladi, 2021; Betka Rezig, 2013).

The teaching of English literary texts remains information-oriented in that students usually receive a certain interpretation of a text transmitted by the teacher to reproduce for learning and examination purposes. This teaching culture does not create the space needed for students' exploration of literary texts or the development of their critical thinking (Allami, 2016).

The lack of critical thinking that prevails among university students indicates a need for a strategic methodology that will impact critical thinking. Research in the field has proved that when teachers train their students on critical thinking by implementing a critical literary approach to literary texts, students' critical skills improve (Ghodbane, 2019).

Central to this present research work is the question: To what extent can the implementation of a Critical literary approach to literary texts help fostering students' critical skills? In other words, can educators secure the teaching ground for students' critical skills by implementing a critical literary approach to literary texts?

Research Aims

This research thesis examines the working of an alternative approach to teaching English literary texts to university EFL students in Algeria. The conventional approach to literary texts in EFL pedagogy in the Algerian university classroom is characterized by teacher transmission of objectified literary interpretation, coupled with learner passivity and conformity in reading

and learning (Ellis, 2003). The alternative approach to EFL literature that this paper explores is an approach that seeks innovation to traditional practices in literature-based pedagogy. This approach aims to help students form their own responses to literary texts by ‘transacting’ critically with the texts (Rosenblatt, 1994) and interacting openly with the literature class in a meaningful discourse (Halpern, 1999).

The present work aims at determining whether critical thinking can indeed be fostered in the literature classroom by implementing a critical literary approach to literary texts. The present research therefore fills this gap and focuses on the teaching of critical thinking skills in the literature classroom at the university level where thinking in the target language is required.

Research Sub-questions and Hypotheses

The purpose of this study is to identify the impact of implementing a Critical literary approach to literary texts on fostering EFL university students’ critical skills. In order to conduct an in-depth analysis and make inferences, varied sub-questions were raised:

- How could students’ knowledge about critical thinking and reading improve their perceptions of and attitudes towards these skills?
- What makes a reader-response pedagogy applicable with second year EFL students of literature?
- Can the reader-response pedagogy raise the quality of reading literary works and foster critical thinking among students?

In the attempts to provide answers to the questions above, a set of hypotheses is laid:

- Students who are trained on this specific critical literary approach would enjoy literature classes more, and the approach will be preferred over traditional ones.
- The critical literary approach to literary texts that can be applied with a variety of tasks that range from questioning to evaluating to analyzing, helps contribute to developing students’ critical skills.
- If students were instructed through a critical literary approach to literary texts, those learners’ analytical and arguing skills would improve.

Methodology

The impetus to the present research work comes from a personal experience as an EFL student at the University of Laghouat. Throughout the years of study in the field, it has been observed that EFL students lack critical skills. These skills range from questioning to evaluating. While reading some recent reports, we noticed mainly in literature classes students' lack of a host of specific problems. Among them, lack of deep comprehension, analysis, evaluation, interpretation, and drawing inferences can be enumerated.

Faced with this situation, the researcher has considered a project to stimulate university students to improve their critical skills. The project starts with the basic idea that any support that would be developed towards this end should be related to implementing a critical literary approach to literary texts. Teachers are supposed to design well-specified critical thinking-based scenarios. It is necessary therefore, to design the learning task and the learning environment. In this respect, and in an attempt to foster EFL university learners' critical skills, this research is intended to make use of the critical literary approach to literary texts as an alternative to the reader-response approach prevailing in the traditional literature classroom.

The objective of this experimental study is to investigate the relationship between instruction based on the critical literary approach to literary texts and that of students' critical skills and their implication on their academic performance. In this respect, the research at hand aims first at examining whether university EFL students are trained and can effectively use their critical thinking during their academic tasks. It aims also at measuring the effects of the implementation of the critical literary approach on students' critical thinking when applied to literary texts. The research findings could serve teachers and course designers in conceiving an effective EFL literature course. It could be considered as a first step in the design of a course for EFL students that helps promote critical skills and self-development.

This research has an experimental nature that comprises one independent variable (critical literary approach to literary texts) and one dependent variable (critical thinking skills). It involves comparing two groups on one outcome measure to test the above mentioned hypotheses regarding causation. Being interested in the effects of critical thinking-based instruction on fostering university EFL students' critical skills, the researcher will randomly divide the population of the study into two groups. One of the groups, the control group, will receive literature instruction within the traditional method (teacher as central element of the learning teaching operation, and reader-response approach being applied). The second group,

the experimental group will receive critical literary approach instruction. After receiving the instructions, both groups will be compared to see whether students' critical skills in the experimental group improved better than among students in the control group.

According to Schmit (2002), critical thinking in a literature class can be exercised through questions that the teacher asks as our understanding of the outside world is shaped by the questions we ask. Drawing on Bloom's taxonomy, the author suggests that to practice critical thinking, the questions asked by the teacher should be thoroughly ordered from the ones focusing on content issues to the ones aiming at interpretive issues. Students should first discuss the "facts of the text" (the time when it was written, particular parts of the plot, the narrator, etc.); then the discussion should move to the analytical phase when specific elements of the text are closely studied so as to "identify meaningful components of the text"; in the final stage students bring about their own interpretation of the text drawing inferences between the text and the outside world. Thus, the lesson moves from knowledge, comprehension and application to analysis, synthesis and evaluation. This follows Crawford's categorization of low levels and high levels of thought; first, students practice critical reading and then they proceed to critical thinking about the text that they have read.

Participants will be second year students at the English department, Laghouat University. All are native speakers of Arabic. The training will take place during literature sessions and will consist of two phases:

In-class modeling: during this phase, each participant of the experimental group will have the opportunity to receive about 3 hours of in-class training on how to deal with a literary text applying the critical literary approach using a variety of tasks that range from questioning, responding, evaluating, problem solving, synthesizing, interpreting and drawing inferences.

In-class training: during this phase, each member of the experimental group is to be offered training on the application of the critical literary approach to literary texts, how to view texts and how to review and evaluate them.

Data collection starts at the beginning of the 2021-2022 academic year. A correlation will be carried to investigate the students' level of critical thinking. Nelson Test Dadkhah and Cornell Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) will be administered as pre- and post-experiment tests.

The experiment will be followed by a detailed literary text analysis post-test whose tasks

focus on deep comprehension, analysis, evaluation, interpretation, and drawing inferences. This will also be followed by a questionnaire to collect students' feedback on the new experiment. Collected data will be analyzed using SPSS software.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

The main research question and the sub-research questions are informed by the theoretical perspective of this research which centers a variety of previous research works which have reported that the educational objective of fostering critical thinking in students may be so widely valued because it is an enduring skill that adds value to higher education; it prepares students to handle the multitude of challenges that they are likely to face in their careers and their personal and social lives where the content of education gives way to application of knowledge and skills. Universities worldwide signal the institutions' definition of the educated person as one who is critical and reflective (Browne & Freeman, 2000). Critical thinking is undoubtedly a valued attribute in graduates, useful not only in the higher education context but also transferable beyond the confines of the academic world.

It is not surprising, therefore, that in Algeria the teaching syllabi for all subjects, from primary school to university, emphasize the concept of 'profile dimensions' rather than 'content knowledge' as the basis and prime focus of instruction and assessment. Profile dimensions describe the required learning behavior, and teachers are asked to move teaching and learning from the didactic acquisition of "knowledge" to a new position where students will be able to apply their knowledge, develop analytical thinking skills, synthesize information, and use their knowledge in a variety of ways to deal with learning problems, and with problems and issues in their lives (Benbouzid, 2005)

According to Liaw (2007), the current world demands fostering the habit of being well informed, of expressing one's opinions correctly and appropriately, and having, defending and arguing one's ideas and opinions as well as being able to understand, analyse and evaluate others' views.

Literature and critical thinking are not "two islands" but "simply different coastlines of the same one" (Hakes, 2008). In an inspiring work when Critical Thinking met English Literature, Belinda Hakes gives numerous practical examples of how to employ critical

thinking in teaching English literature, be it prose poetry or drama. Overall, she distinguishes two distinct approaches of introducing literature students to critical thinking. One is to wait until a point arises where it is natural to introduce the idea. The other way is to begin with the critical thinking (the teacher first introduces some aspects of critical thinking and then students apply these points to literary texts). In other words, the teacher proceeds either from literature to critical thinking or from critical thinking to a literary text (from critical reading to critical thinking or from critical thinking to critical reading). Despite all these facts, Algerian policy makers and syllabus-designers have not yet recognized the importance of literature in teaching in general and languages (English as a Foreign Language, EFL) in particular (Boureguig & Nebbou, 2019).

Thesis Structure

Besides the general introduction and the general conclusion, this project consists of six chapters:

Chapter 1 contains a review of the relevant body of literature. It starts with definitions of critical thinking and how it fits into an EFL classroom, taking into account studies conducted in this area and existing limitations. It then moves to relate critical thinking to literature teaching, taking into account the theories that underpin this project.

Chapter 2

provides a brief overview of the state of literature and critical thinking skills. More specifically, it aims to highlight and discuss how literature is used and taught at the university. This chapter also emphasizes the objectives of teaching literature. It argued the importance of teaching literature deemed as source of critical thinking and one of the most crucial skills with regard to EFL learners. The utilization of literary texts in the language classroom to accomplish critical thinking is also presented afterwards.

Chapter 3 provides readers with an overview of the study context, Algeria, in relation to the concept of critical thinking; it reveals the status of critical thinking in higher education aims. Finally, a description of the university where the study will be carried out is provided.

Chapter 4 clarifies the research methodology and methods adopted for this study. The

chapter provides descriptions of methods used, sampling procedures and a discussion of ethical issues.

Chapter 5 deals with the results obtained to answer the research questions. The results obtained from regular tests are validated by integrating them with the data obtained from the questionnaires and from the experiment. It also contains a discussion of the findings in which all the results are connected and interpreted, taking into consideration the related literature and the culture of the context. Finally, a proposed framework for implementing critical thinking in higher education literature classroom will be given. As it is the concluding chapter, it provides a summary of the research focus and findings, along with a discussion of their contribution to the wider context. The limitations of the present study are also stated. Finally, recommendations for future research are made at the end of the chapter.



Chapter One

*Conceptualization and Theoretical
Framework of Critical Thinking*



Introduction

As one of the leading research groups in education, the Metiri Group has pointed out that 21st century success comes in all shapes and forms. In other words, it is believed that success within the 21st Century makes it basic that students achieve proficiency in science, innovation and culture and pick up a careful understanding of data in all its forms. That is to say, to successfully flourish in the new technically literate world, the skills that are needed reach far beyond the basics of reading and writing.

Therefore, at a time when it is necessary to improve the thinking skills of students of all educational levels so that they can adapt to changing realities, create knowledge, recognize their own values and make decisions, it makes sense to talk about critical thinking that contributes to one's own benefit and that of others. Undoubtedly, critical thinking has been widely recognized as an important 21st century skill and as one of the most important indicators of students learning quality. Its importance in the field of FLT has been identified for its scope to meaningful learning experience

To address this goal, already important worldwide efforts have been made, through the implementation of programs and projects for the development of critical thinking, because teaching this skill is seen as an essential part of all grade levels. From the early stages of their learning, students need to develop this skill for the reason that it is not just 'a nice to have' skill, rather as an essential requirement.

Developing students' critical thinking has been set as one of the higher education's primary goals. This has been a long case, but recently it has become more prominent and urgent to implement this goal to enhance students' employability in the fast changing workplace. Halpern (2003) discussed this issue by maintaining the importance of this skill in today's

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information age. He highlighted the crucial role of thinking skills especially critical thinking skills for the educated people to cope with the new rapidly changing world. He believes that specific knowledge will not be as important to tomorrow's workers and citizens as the ability to learn and make sense of new information.

Consequently, many higher educational institutions profess their capacity to cultivate critical thinking in their students through incorporating critical thinking skills into the curriculum content and teaching approaches and sequencing it as a major element of the teaching / learning experience and implementing it through innovative techniques.

This chapter contains a review of the relevant body of literature. It starts by providing a conceptual framework of thinking process in general. It reviews its definition, development, modes, major different elements, and sheds light on its pedagogical implications. Then a whole section is devoted to critical thinking skills. It reviews some of its common definitions and most important features. In addition, it sheds light on its importance in the educational field and how it fits into the EFL classroom, taking into account studies conducted in this area and existing limitations. Finally, the chapter moves to relate critical thinking with Bloom's taxonomy and to literature teaching.

1.1 Conceptual Framework of Thinking Process

Thinking may seem self-evident and simple to define. However, a deeper look beyond the general popular impression reveals the complexity and elusive matters of its nature. In fact, the question about thinking identification itself is the theme of a number of works. Various definitions of thinking have been suggested by different researchers and philosophers throughout history (Ennis, 1987).

The history of thinking depends upon the time that human beings recognized that they think. Thinking as a process is one of the essential features that distinguish humans from other

living beings. According to Murat Karakoç (2016) thinking is the transformation or manipulation of some internal representation. To think, individuals utilize their knowledge to achieve a certain objective. In this sense, thinking ability is a fundamental case of our life because all of us need to achieve an objective.

1.1.1 Thinking Definition

In its commonsensical meaning, Guy Holmes (2002) highlighted that thinking is an activity that uses images in the form of inner speech; a process that involves bringing concepts or ideas into the mind; a process which is a succession of ideas or images in the mind. Also, he asserted that to think is: to ponder over, to reflect, to reason, to deliberate, to rationalize, to calculate, to picture in the mind, to conceive, to create, to imagine, to conjure up. According to him, each of these different phrases has in its essence a different insight of what thinking is.

In this vein, B. F. Skinner stated (1969) “The real question is not whether machines think but whether men do” (p.87). These definitions may seem different in terms of whether we think in words or express our thoughts in words, but all of them emphasize the fact that thinking is a process and at the center of its conceptualization has the concept of mind.

Psychologically speaking, as stated by Paul (2004) thinking is understood as a mental process of reflection on reality. It is regarded as the highest level of human knowledge and the creative activity of a human being. Undoubtedly, this discussed process has close connections and depends directly on how mental functions such as perception, memory, imagination, and language are. It cannot be considered separately from the differing qualities of a person. Factors such as culture, internal experiences, behavior stereotypes, beliefs, religion and social rules of conduct in a particular community affect thinking. Hence, if one looks at the development of the person in anthropogenesis, it can be argued that ‘thought’ has emerged with the formation of mankind and has constantly changed and improved.

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Therefore, one could state that this mental process called thinking is; ideally, the birth of a human mind. However, this is not always the case; the result of mental activity is often a conscious or unconscious re-examination of the thoughts of others or a formalistic study of a phenomenon. In each case, the principle of giving birth to thought will be distinctive (Fisher, 2001).

Swartz and Perkins (1991) add their voice when speaking about this issue to describe good thinking as following:

To us, good thinking is, at its roots, something with which we are all familiar. We accomplish it at times when we make careful choices and solve problems effectively. It involves the use of keen critical skills and opens creative exploration in which we call up and gather relevant information that we bring to bear on the issues with which we are grappling. (P. 17)

This view suggests that thinking is the mental manipulation of sensory influence and recalled perceptions (information and thoughts stored in memory) in order to create or find meaning, to think about it or to formulate and judge thoughts with. It confirms the fact that the focus of this process lies on the mental activity, reason and logic and mainly the critical use of information.

In 1951 Martin Heidegger, the 20th century's great philosopher, gave a series of lectures entitled "What is called Thinking?" In the lectures, Heidegger challenged many of the things that we usually call thinking by providing his own philosophical point of view. He asserted in those lectures that thinking is neither an act nor an activity, rather, it is a way of living; it is a remembering of our nature as human beings, of who we are and where we belong. In Heidegger's opinion, thinking is not to have an opinion or a notion about something, instead, he considers it as a process of developing a chain of premises that leads to valid conclusion

(Holmes, 2001).

A great number of views have been provided to describe the process of thinking. In Ahmed Assaf's opinion (2009), thinking comes in a variety of distinct forms i.e. each individual can have his own meaning of thinking. For him, a six-grade student thinks that thinking is solving problems.

Though it is a broad term, but basically for many researchers and philosophers, it can be summed up as an internal mental activity and as the base of all cognitive activities which is unique for humans. It is the process that helps us, as humans, to solve problems, to deal with situations, to understand circumstances and to reach certain conclusion through a series of statements.

1.1.2 Thinking Development

Research on human thinking has two main areas of particular importance to the development of thinking. (a) Developmental psychology perspective that identifies the types and forms of thought and explains how the state of these forms changes qualitatively throughout an individual's life. (b) Educational, cognitive, and psychological perspectives. It addresses the question of the best way to stimulate the development of thinking by organizing the learning environment that is most influential to the developing individual. Both perspectives led to the emergence of theories aimed at explaining the development of thinking (Pithers, & Soden, 2000).

Thinking skills encompass multiple cognitive abilities, including: analysis, inference, evaluation, inductive and deductive reasoning, explanation, and self-regulation (Vroom, 2003). In education, these skills are developed through the application of practices supported by a set of cognitive and constructivist learning theories as shown in Figure (1.1).

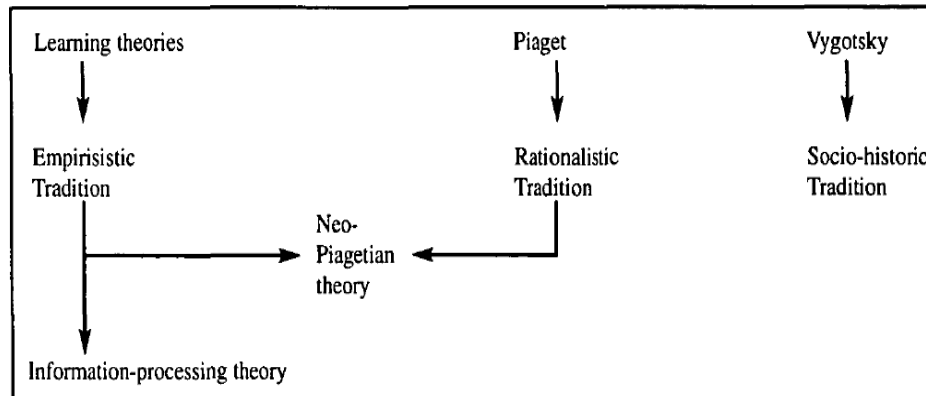


Figure (1.1): Main Theories on Thinking

Jean Piaget's developmental cognitive theory is probably the theory of thinking and learning that has had the greatest impact on educational practice and teacher training over the last half century. This theory of how children and adolescents go through a series of developmental stages has had a major impact on many teachers' belief systems, with their understanding of objects, relationships, and concepts restricted by their minds. Piaget had little interest in pedagogy, but others, such as Adey and Shayer and Gouge and Yates, developed and evaluated approaches to cognitive acceleration based on Piaget's stage theory. In the field of adult education, King and Kitchener sought to extend Piaget's stage beyond the level of formal operational thinking to draw out pedagogical implications for the development of reflective judgment in schools (Moseley et al., 2005).

In the 1960s and 1970s, there was a keen interest in cognitive information processing accounts, with a focus on different types of central processing, including those believed to be rooted in perceptual channels or cognitive styles. Educationally speaking, teachers have sought to improve or build individual strengths in the areas of perceptual and psycholinguistic processing such as vision, auditory discrimination, visual motor processing, and auditory continuous memory. The theory behind such analysis-based intervention programs is that dealing with processing flaws and tailoring teaching to individual strengths can lead to higher academic performance in areas such as reading and mathematics. However, empirical studies

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have generally failed to support these claims (Moseley et al., 2005).

In the 1970s and 1980s, behaviorist theory had a relatively strong influence on education and training. The goal was to change behavior with well-defined goals and appropriate rewards. The curriculum is broken down into a set of learning goals related to observable behavior. Various behavioral instruction techniques such as task analysis, shaping, cross fading, forward and backward chaining were applied in the form of broader programmed learning and skill training in special education settings. These approaches have had a major impact on mainstream practice. Even today, the behaviorist approach is an influential tool for dealing with unwanted behavior in the classroom. At the same time that behaviorists' approaches gained momentum in the 1980s, some educators were beginning to respond to the transition to cognitive academic psychology. However, the return to the final cognitive approach was influenced by theoretical perspectives and concepts that differed significantly from those prevalent in the 1960s and 1970s (Ibid).

The development of cognitive psychology, especially in the field of working memory, suggests an important central executive function in which the brain actively regulates learning and problem-solving in strategic ways. Flavell derived the process of meta-cognition from this concept. Metacognition, which is essentially thought of as thinking about thinking, is a process that has proven to be particularly attractive to educators and underpins many of today's cognitive programmes. A new cognitive focus in education shows that people with learning disabilities have specific problems with metacognitive and self-regulatory functions, including those involving checks, planning, monitoring, predictions, and assessments. Promoted by many studies, the intervention in the United States introduced a series of tactics based on cognitive models. These include advanced organizers (statements of learning material that remind learners of the steps that learners need to use to be more strategic in their approach) and elaboration (students already have learning materials in mind). Includes the use of) if it is

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actively encouraged to combine it with the information or ideas you have. Attributions (considering the reason for the success or failure of the strategy) and reflection and control of one's thinking process (metacognition) (Moseley et al., 2005).

The theories of learning and thinking described above emphasize the development of thinking (Piaget), the development of thinking and education (Bruner, Vygotsky), learning (information processing, constructivism), and the measurement of individual differences in mental abilities (psychological measurement). Essentially, it is the perspectives of Piaget, Vygotsky and Bruner which are often compared to each other. They agreed on the sequencing of thinking development: from concrete actions via increasing reflection to abstraction. Moreover, it is assumed that education has an essential function with respect to a child's development of thinking. In 'teaching thinking' the various theories mentioned are viewed as compatible and complementary, and all of them contribute in their own specific way to understand and optimize learning conditions for the teaching of thinking (Sungur & Tekkaya, 2006).

1.1.3 Modes of Thinking

One of the major aspects that should be highlighted when speaking about thinking is its styles. In fact, many attempts have been made to classify and enumerate the relevant styles of thinking. As stated by Ran (2015), a thinking style is a study of how individuals think and it can be categorized as interactive and reciprocal mental self-management psychology. Its main goal is to show how different thinking styles influence learning preferences and how individual learning abilities should be recognized and respected. They are of great interest to educators as they help in improving instruction and assessment.

The term 'thinking styles' can also be referred to as 'thinking modes'. Terminologically speaking, the origin of the concept of modes of thinking is founded on the Torrance's concept of "hemispheric style" or "hemispheric thinking style". Recently, these concepts were

examined by Zhang in terms of the information processing and proposed using “modes of thinking” instead of these terms (Pithers & Soden, 2000).

Zhang (2002) categorized three thinking modes: Analytic thinking mode, holistic thinking mode, and integrated thinking mode. Individuals with an analytical mindset tend to process information in pieces, analytically, and in sequence. These individuals can usually perform tasks that require analysis, planning, and organization. People with a holistic mindset tend to process information intuitively, and comprehensively. Students accustomed to applying holistic ideas are accustomed to complex and ambiguous tasks and problems. The tendency to process information in an interactive and dynamic way is called an integrated mode i.e. the use of both modes can be termed as an integrative mode of thinking.

According to Emine Önen (2015), Vengopal and Mridula indicated that learning differences of students are not just related to their understanding and thinking abilities. Instead, an important source of these differences according to them is students’ styles of learning and thinking, referred to here as “modes of thinking”. When designing educational activities could students’ thinking modes help students develop their full potential to improve academic achievement. Therefore, it was proposed to design teaching activities in a way that adapts to the students’ modes of thinking.

1.1.4 Thinking Skills

One of the most controversial issues in educational cycle is the concept of skills, mainly because of how the notion of ‘thinking skills’ has been applied. In this respect, it might be appropriate to refer to Gerald F. Smith (2002) in his article “Thinking skills: the question of generality in which he offered his own definition of the notion skill”. According to him, a skill is a capacity which aims at performing competently certain tasks, and it is acquired through training and experience. He claimed that “ The term ‘*ability*’ though it connotes a high level of training, experience and proficiency, it may stand as the closest term to the notion skill”

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(Smith, 2002, P. 87).

For thinking skills, it is argued that they share to some extent the same characteristics that they apply to skills in general. He asserted that thinking skills can be referred to as special capacities that extend beyond the mere ability to think. i.e. most of individuals are capable of thinking with some base level of competence. These skills generally lie between two main extremes. On the one hand, they must be partially proceduralized. On the other hand, they must be adequately instructed i.e. teachable and mentally exercised at their possessors' volition. Another point that he highlighted is that possessing a thinking skill entails more than just possessing or having declarative knowledge. (Ennis, 1987).

Swartz and Perkins (1991) go on the same lines by describing thinking skills as the competencies that contribute to some sort of thinking. Kagan (2003) classified thinking skills into three categories: understanding information, manipulation and generating information. According to him, each of these categories has specific skills. For instance, summarizing is relevant to understanding the information; solving the problem is relevant to manipulation of the information; and asking is related to the last category.

For Ashman and Conway (1997), thinking skills typically include the following wide range of skills: metacognition, critical thinking, creative thinking, cognitive processes (such as problem-solving and decision-making), core thinking skills (such as representation and summarising), and understanding the role of content knowledge.

Accordingly, it could be argued that thinking has many skills, and that the word 'skill' means something that can be learnt, taught and practiced in the course of teaching and learning. This implies that thinking has to be viewed as a 'process', consequently; thinking skills also have to be also viewed as processes that they empower the brain to more efficiently work when they are practised. This nature of thinking raises the question: why do we need to learn and

practice these skills.

1.2 Pedagogical Implications of Thinking Skills

Skillful thinking has been deemed to be as an important goal for educators. There have always been educators who view the cultivation of students' thinking ability as an important objective. In fact, educators have long told themselves and others that the purpose of education is to teach students to think. Dewey was among the first in the past to focus attention on the development of thinking ability. Unfortunately, this goal continues to be a pious hope, not a concrete reality. Various factors have weighed heavily on developing serious and well-thought-out strategies to help students become autonomous, creative and productive thinkers (Ennis, 1985).

According to Hilda Taba (1965), perhaps the most serious impediment was the vague conceptualization of both, the meaning of teaching and the components of thinking. Thinking is treated as a global process and seems to cover everything that is happening in the mind, from fantasy to the construction of the concept of the theory of relativity. Therefore, the problem of defining thoughts is still in front of us. The differences between different types of thinking were also inadequate. Even more serious educational thinkers cannot separate thinking strategies such as problem-solving from basic cognitive processes and skills such as generalization, differentiation and conceptualization. These processes are the components needed to solve the problem if this strategy is more than just formal.

The implementation of thinking as an educational goal, according to Taba, has also been hampered by some suspicious assumptions. A fairly widely accepted assumption is that reflexive thinking cannot occur until a sufficient amount of factual information is contained. Education is still considered primarily knowledge-giving, and knowledge is often equated with descriptive information, and questions such as "what", "who", and "when" are regarded as the

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main standards of classroom instruction. As a result, current teaching methods tend to be shaped by this emphasis. Teaching studies have bypassed the actual teaching process and instead focused on questions such as the personal characteristics of good teachers and a priori criteria for assessing effective teaching. (Ausubel, 1968).

This issue has become of more interest in today's world. According to Resnick, in today's information age, educators consider powerful thinking skills as essential feature for successful navigation in a rapidly changing world i.e. that the need for teaching thinking stems from the rapid changes in society. He argued that knowledge and information are becoming even more complex. Therefore, students need to be able to use logical thinking to evaluate decisions and identify and solve problems. Therefore, it would not be enough to only have a considerable amount of knowledge (declarative knowledge), but there is a need to reconsider this issue to help students to acquire and apply this knowledge (Harmes & Csapo, 1999).

Several views have been done on this issue that gives various aims of teaching thinking. Here, the most noteworthy ones are highlighted. Lippmann argued that the goal of education should be the development of reasonable individuals, at least in democratic societies. Also, he asserted that education should be seen as a context for individuals to acquire to be reasonable in order to grow up to be reasonable peers, reasonable parents. Consequently, to grow up to be reasonable citizens. Concerning the importance of teaching the subject matter content and teaching thinking, he argued that if someone is good at thinking, he can get the content he needs, but having content does not guarantee that he can use it thoughtfully. He pointed out that the teaching of the subject matter is not useless and that he does not claim that it should not be done. Instead, his plea is to focus on thinking (Lipman, 1993).

According to Fisher, all humans have the right to be educated this means that individuals have the right to learn. However, he asserted that the important feature of schooling is to

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educate individuals to think critically, creatively and effectively. He suggested adding the 4th R which stands for 'reasoning' to the 'three Rs' which are: Reading, writing and Arithmetic to the curriculum as the most basic skills as they may help to raise the standards of proper education (Assaf, 2009).

In today's world, it is not that easy to identify what knowledge students will need in the future. Thus, it is logical to give them the skills they need to handle the flow of information. Kagan (2003) clarifies this view " In the face of the accelerating information explosion, having the student memorize one more fact is of little value compared to having the students learn how to categorize, analyze, synthesize, summarize, and apply information" (p.13).

1.3 Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is a generally recognized educational goal. Its definition is debatable, but conflicting views can be viewed as different interpretations of the same underlying concept: attentive thought directed towards a purpose. The breadth of such thinking, the type of aim, the criteria and norms for thinking properly, and the thinking components on which they focus are all different concepts. Its adoption as an educational aim has been proposed since it respects students' autonomy while also educating them for life achievement and democratic citizenship. When it comes to thinking critically, "critical thinkers" have the dispositions and talents to do so. The abilities can be determined directly; the dispositions can be identified in directly by looking at what situations help or hinder the ability's exercise. To determine the degree to which a person possesses such dispositions and abilities, standardized tests have been established. Experiments have demonstrated that educational intervention can improve them, especially when it combines dialogue, anchoring instruction, and mentoring. There have been debates about critical thinking's generalizability across domains, alleged bias in critical thinking theories and education, and critical thinking's relationship to other types of thinking (Hartman, 2000).

1.3.1 Common Definitions of Critical Thinking

Alison Doyle (2004) from Indiana University describes critical thinking as “the ability to analyse information objectively and make a reasoned judgment. It involves the evaluation of sources, such as data, facts, observable phenomena, and research findings” (P.41). Rawls (1971) defines it as “a characteristic set of principles for assigning basic rights and duties and for determining the proper distribution of the benefits and burdens of social cooperation” (P. 5). It is defined by the Oxford dictionary as “the objective analysis and evaluation of an issue in order to form a judgment”. The Merriam-Webster dictionary describes it as the mental process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information to reach an answer or conclusion.

From the previous definitions, critical thinking is apparently a process that involves analysis in order to reach an objective result or judgment. Critical thinking, therefore, involves the mind. For better defining what critical thinking is, “thinking” is defined as the foundation of all cognitive acts or processes. It entails manipulating and analysing data gathered from the environment. Abstracting, reasoning, imagining, problem solving, judging, and decision-making are all used to manipulate and analyse data. While thinking functions of the brain are involved in information processing, such as when one generates concepts, engages in problem solving, reasons, and makes judgments, the mind is the idea. The beginning of thinking study may be traced back to when humans first realized they could think. One of the characteristics that distinguish humans from other living organisms is their ability to think. Manipulation or change of some internal image is referred to as thinking (Morelli, 2001).

According to the above statement, thinking capacity is the foundation of our lives since we all need to reach a goal; on the other hand, people have social relationships and no one is alone. According to Descartes, thinking is reasoning, and reason is a sequence of simple

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concepts linked by using strict logic principles. Guven and Kurum (2008) argue that learning and thinking are two notions that complement and complete one other. When seen from this perspective, despite the fact that learning styles and critical thinking concepts have different qualifications, they can be employed together. Similarly, a review of the literature reveals that there are studies that combine learning styles and critical thinking principles.

In his paper “Regarding a Definition of Critical Thinking”, Richard Paul (1989) states that “Critical thinking is thinking about your thinking while you’re thinking in order to make your thinking better” (p.55). It is acknowledged that there are various interpretations of it that have been proposed in the context of philosophy and psychology, but in a broader sense, this phrase does not have a clear meaning. The term "critical" comes from the Greek word "kritikos," which means "to judge," and refers to the way analysis and Socratic argument dominated thinking at the time. The term was afterwards adopted by Latin as “Critic” and implies as “critique” which means to be able to judge or discern (Fisher, 2001).

According to Critical Thinking Cooperation, Critical thinking is a skill that goes beyond memorizing facts. Students who think critically are taught to think for themselves, to challenge assumptions, to evaluate and synthesize events, and to go even farther by formulating new hypotheses and testing them against the facts. Questioning is the foundation of critical thinking. It is the basis of knowledge formation, it should be taught as a framework for all learning. Students' attitudes towards learning are common shaped by their experiences in teacher-led, textbook-driven classes. This is a troubling position for contemporary teachers, and as a result, they would prefer to use the most up-to-date models and methods that are more effective in getting students to think. When students analyse, evaluate, interpret, or synthesize information and apply creative thought to build an argument, solve a problem, or reach a conclusion, they are engaging in critical thinking. Therefore, critical thinking aims to encourage independent thinking, personal autonomy, and reasoned decision-making in thought and action (Simpson,

1996).

1.3.2 Prominent Features of Critical Thinking

Researchers have found a number of features in common included in critical thinking. Ennis (1987) in his book, "A Taxonomy of Critical Thinking Dispositions and Abilities", summarizes the main features of critical thinking into four areas 'clarity, basis, inference, and interaction'. He divides clarity into two categories: elementary and advanced and includes focusing on a question, analysing arguments, and asking and answering questions of clarification and/or challenge in the elementary category, while defining terms and judging definitions and identifying assumptions are included in the advanced category. The ability to support one's judgments and appraise evidence is Ennis' second essential element of critical thinking. He involves assessing the source's reliability and observation and evaluating of observation reports. The third area, inference, includes deducing and judging deductions, inducing and judging inductions, and making value judgments. The final area, interaction, focuses on interacting with others and deciding on an action. It also includes : a) define the problem, b) select criteria to judge possible solutions, c) formulate alternative solutions, d) tentatively decide what to do, e) review, taking into account the total situation, and decide, f) monitor the implementation".

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Skill	Experts' consensus description	Subskills
Interpretation	Comprehend and express the meaning or significance of a wide variety of experiences, situations, data, events, judgements, conventions, beliefs, rules, procedures or criteria.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Categorisation ● Decode significance ● Clarify meaning
Analysis	Identify the intended and actual inferential relationships among statements, questions, concepts, descriptions or other forms of representation intended to express beliefs, judgements, experiences, reasons, information, or opinions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Examine ideas ● Identify arguments ● Identify reasons and claims
Evaluation	Assess the credibility of statements or other representations that are accounts or descriptions of a person's perception, experience, situation, judgement, 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Query evidence ● Conjecture alternatives ● Draw logically valid or justified conclusions
Inference	Identify and secure elements needed to draw reasonable conclusions; to form conjectures and hypotheses; to consider relevant information and to reduce the consequences flowing from data, statements, principles, evidence, judgements, beliefs, opinions, concepts, descriptions, questions, or other forms of representation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assess credibility of claims ● Assess quality of arguments using inductive and deductive reasoning
Explanation	To state the results of one's reasoning; to justify that reasoning in terms of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological and contextual considerations upon which one's results were based; and to present one's reasoning in the form of cogent arguments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● State results ● Justify procedures ● Present arguments
Self-regulation	Self-consciously to monitor one's cognitive activities, the elements used in those activities, and the results educed, particularly by applying skills in analysis and evaluation to one's own inferential judgements with a view toward questioning, confirming, validating, or correcting either one's reasoning or one's results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Self-monitor ● Self-correct

(Table 1.1): Core Critical Thinking Features

In his book “Developing Critical Thinkers”, Brookfield (1987) mentions four basic components of critical thinking. Identifying and challenging assumptions, challenging/recognizing the importance of context, imagining and exploring alternatives, and engaging in reflective skepticism. He argues that critical thinkers are skeptical about universal truth claims. They are reflectively dubious of ultimate answers due to their grasp of assumptions, context, and alternatives. Furthermore, Brookfield identifies five phases of

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critical thinking: the trigger event, appraisal, exploration, developing alternative perspectives, and integration.

In the first phase, the trigger event, unexpected occurrences take place, causing inner anguish and complexity. The second stage, which is appraisal, the thinker appraises the situation. Self-evaluation, minimizing and denial, a focus on the nature of the problem, identification and clarity of the problem, and a search for others with a similar problem are all examples of this appraisal. In the third stage, exploration, the thinker starts looking for and experimenting with various ways to explain or deal with the problem. The fourth stage is developing alternative perspectives, in which the thinker chooses the problem solution that appears to be the most appropriate and compatible with his or her style of thinking and living. Finally, integration in which the thinker's life is merged with the answer that was chosen as the most suited in the previous stage. A change or a renewed commitment to an existing position may be required (Wallace, 2003).

King and Kitchener (1994) developed a seven-stage reflective judgment model that describes a developmental progression that occurs between childhood and adulthood in the ways that people understand the process of knowing and in the corresponding ways that they justify their beliefs about ill-structured problems. Therefore, critical thinking or reflective judgments are not necessary unless the problem is poorly constructed and has no evident solution. The seven stages are grouped into three primary categories: pre-reflective thinking (1-2-3), quasi-reflective thinking (4-5), and reflective thinking (6-7). They further explain beliefs are justified probabilistically on the basis of a variety of interpretative considerations, such as the weight of the evidence, the explanatory value of the interpretations, the risk of erroneous conclusions, consequences of alternative judgments, and the interrelationships of these factors .

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According to King and Kitchener (1994), first-year college students usually score in stages three and four. Stage three people consider knowledge to be either certain or merely momentarily unknown. Where knowledge is known, the authorities' views are seen as paramount in their idea of justification. Students at stage four start to employ evidence to back up their claims, and they are starting to realize that knowledge is uncertain. They believe that there are numerous alternative solutions to an ill-structured problem, and that the best option is solely a matter of personal preference.

At stage five, students realize that an individual's viewpoint can alter how evidence is interpreted, resulting in contextual and subjective knowledge. Beliefs are justifiable in a specific situation. In stage six, knowledge is viewed as something that is built on an individual basis from a range of sources. Beliefs are justified by analyzing evidence, and opinion from many view points on a problem or across different contexts, as well as by developing solutions that are reviewed using criteria such as “the weight of the evidence, the utility of the solution, or the pragmatic need for action” (15). Stage seven is the highest level of reflective thinking and is uncommon among college students. Knowledge is viewed as the result of a process of reasonable inquiry at this point. The effectiveness of remedies to ill-structured situations is assessed using current evidence

1.3.3 Importance of Critical Thinking in Education

Education is the process of human development, and it is possibly the most basic need for people. The goal of education, according to Meyer (1976), is to nurture the individual, to assist in realizing the full potential that already exists within him or her. There has always been a school of thought that believes that enhancing a child's thinking should be the primary goal of schools rather than an afterthought, if it happens at all. Qualified education should show students the route in terms of what to study and how to learn it. Students' critical thinking talents are demonstrated as they analyze what they have should be the primary goal of schools

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rather than an afterthought, if it happens at all. Qualified education should show students the route in terms of what to study and how to learn it. One of the goals of education should be to develop students' thinking and motor skills, which is a basic goal of contemporary educational techniques. When kids practise critical thinking, they are not passive but active. (Muniz-Swicegood, 1994).

Approaches to life and living in general	Approaches to specific issues, questions or problems
Inquisitiveness with regard to a wide range of issues	Clarity in stating the question or concern
Concern to become and remain generally well-informed	Orderliness in working with complexity
Alertness to opportunities to use CT	Diligence in seeking relevant information
Trust in the processes of reasoned inquiry	Reasonableness in selecting and applying criteria
Self-confidence in one's own ability to reason	Care in focusing attention on the concern at hand
Open-mindedness regarding divergent world views	Persistence though difficulties are encountered
Flexibility in considering alternatives and opinions	Precision to the degree permitted by subject and circumstances
Understanding of the opinions of other people	
Fair-mindedness in appraising reasoning	
Honesty in facing one's own biases, prejudices, stereotypes, egocentric or sociocentric tendencies	
Prudence in suspending, making or altering judgements	
Willingness to reconsider and revise views where honest reflection suggests that change is warranted	

(Table 1.2): Affective Dispositions of Critical Thinking

As indicated in Table (1.2), one of the major goals of education is to generate well-informed learners, which means that students should be able to comprehend important, helpful, beautiful, and powerful ideas. Another goal is to develop students who are eager to think critically and analytically, to apply what they have learned to improve their own lives and contribute to their society, culture, and civilization. These two aims according to Iyer are based on a number of assumptions; (1) Brains are biological in nature. Minds are built. As a result, curriculum is a mind-altering technology. This emphasizes the moral imperative of treating students as autonomous centers of consciousness with the fundamental power to shape their

own minds and lives. (2) Instead of preconceived roles, education should aim to educate students for self-direction. As a result, learners must be prepared to think their way through the maze of problems that life will throw at them on their own. (3) Education systems often introduce the novice to the forms of representation and regions of meaning that humans have thus far produced. (4) Democracies and democratic life require careful study, clear thinking, and fundamental deliberation (Muller, 2018).

1.3.4 Critical Thinking and EFL Classroom

Language acquisition is a complex process whose research spans a variety of academic fields, including cognitive psychology, linguistics, psycholinguistics, and sociolinguistics. Since the 1970s, theories have focused on how learners develop "communicative competence" in a foreign language - i.e. the ability to use the grammar system and communicate in a language appropriately to a particular context - to several different components. These components include grammatical competence or the ability to use the rules of language and vocabulary; sociolinguistic competence, i.e. the ability to communicate appropriately in a given social context; strategic competence, the speaker's ability to cope with communication disruptions or failures; and discursive competence, which refer to the ability to construct coherent written or oral communication (Hymes, 1972).

Due to the growing consensus that effective communication is based on speakers' understanding of their interlocutor's culture, the concept of sociolinguistic competence has finally been broadened and named sociocultural competence. This component of communicative competence includes not only the ability of speakers to communicate appropriately within a specific social context, but also the ability to effectively understand the cultural context in which they communicate (Thurrell et al., 1995). In other words, effective communication in a foreign language requires an understanding of the culture and its 'meanings, values and connotations' as reflected in the language (Byram, 1997).

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Overall communicative competence includes knowledge of how social groups function in a foreign culture, what values drive that culture, and how that culture intersects or differs from the culture of the learner. Helping learners develop communicative skills in a foreign language and culture requires developing their skills in each of the different language components.

According to Daren Snider (2017) , practically and pedagogically, this generally means that the teaching of foreign languages has several objectives for the learner: (1) The acquisition of language skills; (2) Enhances understanding of culture through the study of civilization, literature, and media; and (3) Specialized language studies, such as for professional preparation, e.g. Business language or translation studies. Although a critical thinking approach may be pursued at different stages of the language and culture curriculum, perhaps the most obvious areas of interest lie in the study of culture, which is a component of socio-cultural competence , and in the development of more advanced knowledge, oral and literacy skills, which are part of discursive competence.

In language teaching, as well as in other subjects, students are often better able to learn critical thinking when the teacher provides an example to learners of how they do it. Mulnix (2010) found that when a teacher makes a critical thinking approach explicit to students, they model it for them and then invite them to try out their own critical thinking, both developing these skills and creating an environment of positive class. In a foreign language class, for example, this may be the case when a teacher initiates a discussion on a literary text (Manyai, 2006).

In line of that, often the discussion of a literary text proceeds in a linear fashion, dealing at least first with the literal and then figurative meaning of the text, finally analyzing the themes and assessing the text's contextual role in the culture. Following this general model, a class discussion of a text can begin with the teacher asking simple comprehension questions

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to assess students' comprehension of what they are reading (literal meaning); further discussion of metaphors, idioms and symbolism in the text would help learners discover meaning beyond concrete meaning (figurative meaning); Finally, a partner or other activity could help students understand the underlying cultural implications of the text (analytical meaning). A critical approach to thinking seems natural at these stages of researching a text, since a rigorous analysis of the cultural issues contained in a text would necessarily involve identifying one's assumptions about the subject(s) of the text, testing the validity of these assumptions, to examine the text from several different angles - in other words, following the steps of critical thinking (Snider, 2017).

1.4 Bloom's Taxonomy

According to Ennis, when it comes to teaching and measuring higher-order thinking skills, the taxonomy of Benjamin Bloom and his associates for information processing skills is one of the most often recognized tools for educational practitioners. Bloom's taxonomy is a hierarchical classification system, with "comprehension" at the bottom and "assessment" at the top. Critical thinking sometimes is described as the three greatest levels (analysis, synthesis, and assessment (Ennis, 1987).

1.4.1 Definition of Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's taxonomy is a collection of three hierarchical models for categorizing educational learning objectives according to their complexity and specificity. That List address cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor learning objectives. Most traditional education has focused on the cognitive domain list, which is widely used to build curriculum learning objectives, evaluations, and activities. The models were named after Benjamin Bloom, the chair of the taxonomy's development committee of educators (Paul, 1982).

The basic cognitive skill sequences were knowledge, understanding, application,

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analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. In their book, *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: a Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, Lorin Anderson and David Krathwohl (2001) updated the framework, resulting in the revised Bloom's Taxonomy. The most significant change to the Cognitive Domain was the removal of 'Synthesis' and the addition of 'Creation' as the highest level of Bloom's Taxonomy. Because it is at the top, it is assumed to be the most intricate or difficult cognitive skill—or, at the very least, the pinnacle of it. Bloom's taxonomy is hierarchal, which means that learning at higher levels is contingent on having acquired prerequisite knowledge and abilities at lower ones. Bloom's Taxonomy is frequently represented as a pyramid graphic to illustrate this order. To stress that each level is built on the basis of the preceding levels, we have modified the pyramid to a "cake-style" structure. In order to assist teachers explain and classify observable information, skills, attitudes, actions, capacities, Benjamin Bloom developed taxonomy of measurable verbs. The hypothesis is founded on the assumption that there are different degrees of visible behaviors. The latter represent what is going on in the brain (cognitive activity) by utilizing measurable verbs to create learning objectives. Teachers can clearly state what the student must perform in order to demonstrate learning (Bloom, 1976).

1.4.2 The Difference between Original and Revised Bloom's Taxonomy

In 1999, Dr. Lorin Anderson, a former Bloom student, and his colleagues published an updated version of Bloom's Taxonomy that considers a broader variety of elements that influence outcomes on education and learning. This new taxonomy aims to address some of the issues with the original one with a unique classification. Unlike the 1956 version, the updated taxonomy distinguishes between "knowing what" and "knowing how", in which "Knowing what" refers to the content of one's thoughts, whereas "knowing how", refers to the methods employed to solve difficulties (Marzano, 2010).

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The revised taxonomy's cognitive process like the original consists of six skills that are represented as verbs, and go from less to more complex. They are (1) Remember which entails recognizing and retrieving important information from long-term memory; (2) Understand, which is the ability to interpret educational materials such as reading and instructions in the student's own words. Interpreting, exemplifying, classifying, summarizing, inferring, comparing, and explaining are some of the sub skills required for this procedure; (3) Apply, which entails putting a taught procedure into practice in a familiar or unfamiliar scenario; (4) Analyze, which includes breaking down knowledge into its constituent elements and considering how those parts relate to the overall structure. Differentiating, organizing, and attributing are some of the ways students fulfill this task; (5) Evaluate, which is the fifth of the six processes in the new form and at the top of the original taxonomy. It entails reviewing and critiquing; (6) Create, which is the top component of the new version. It was not included in the previous taxonomy. This ability entails fitting things together in order to create something new. Learners develop, plan, and produce in order to complete creative tasks (Anderson et al., 2001).

The skill sequences could be further explained as (1) Remembering: retrieving, recognizing, and recalling relevant knowledge from long-term memory. (2) Understanding: constructing meaning from oral, written, and graphic messages through interpreting, exemplifying, classifying, summarizing, inferring, comparing, and explaining. (3) Applying: carrying out or using a procedure for executing, or implementing. (4) Analyzing: breaking material into constituent parts, determining how the parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose through differentiating, organizing, and attributing. (5) Evaluating: making judgments based on criteria and standards through checking and critiquing. (6) Creating: putting elements together to form a coherent or functional whole; reorganizing

elements into a new pattern or structure through generating, planning, or producing (Wallace, 2003).

1.4.3 Lower Order and Higher Order Thinking Skills

Bloom's taxonomy was created in order to reach higher order thinking and it consists of two main parts of thinking skills: the lower-order thinking skills (LOTS) involve memorization, while higher-order thinking (HOTS) requires understanding and applying that knowledge. As the Curriculum and Leadership Journal notes that while Bloom's Taxonomy is not the only framework for teaching thinking, it is the most widely used. Subsequent frameworks tend to be closely linked to Bloom's works to promote higher forms of thinking in education, such as analyzing and evaluating, rather than just teaching students to remember facts (rote learning) (Giroux, 1994).

Furthermore, the higher order thinking skills according to Bloom's taxonomy are evaluation, analysis, and synthesis. While the lower order thinking skills consist of the knowledge (memorization), comprehension, and application. Each of the six tiers of Bloom's taxonomy has its own set of features. For example, knowledge is the level of thinking that can lead to the acquisition and retention of information. However, comprehension level entails understating knowledge and interpreting facts. Students are asked to apply and use the information they have learned at the Application level. In addition, during the Analysis phase, students are expected to examine, research, and infer. Learners must also incorporate theories, predictions, and evaluation at the Synthesis level. As a result, learners at this level are better able to draw conclusions and are more analytical and creative. These various levels were classified into two categories: LOTS and HOTS (Guilherme, 2002).

1.5 The Importance of Teaching Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)

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According to Rahman and Manaf (2017), educational reformers advocate for improving higher order thinking skills based on several degrees of cognitive skills. This addition is intended to encourage students to be more critical and creative, allowing them to apply topic of knowledge in a way that allows them to investigate information, analyze, evaluate, and be critical and creative in their responses to questions and problem solving. Incorporating higher order thinking skills (HOTS) into education has become one of the reforms implemented to help students develop critical and creative thinking skills (Haroutunian-Gordon, 1998).

Anderson et al. (2001) proposed that educators and teachers educate analysis by integrating methodologies such as distinguishing, organizing, attributing (breaking down into constituent elements) and determining how the parts relate to one another as well as to a larger structure and purpose. The scope and relevance of higher order thinking skills in the teaching and learning process have been demonstrated by research findings. Analyzing information to determine the problem, analyzing and developing the problem.

New practical solutions are all examples of higher order thinking skills. Continuing practice and involvement in tasks that excite the thinking faculties is a direct driver of continuous growth of higher order thinking skills (Ikuenobe, 2001).

Furthermore, Anderson et al., (2001) suggested that activities such as co-coordinating, detecting, monitoring, testing, criticizing, or judging should be included in teaching students how to build assessment strategies. They experimented and came to the unmistakable conclusion that exposing students to these types of activities would stimulate the mind to recognize patterns, distinguish patterns, expose the problem in its entirety, and assist students in critically weighing all information in order to create workable solutions.

Because the main goal of teaching is to ensure that students can think critically and solve

problems, higher order thinking skills should be an important part of the teaching and learning process. This can be accomplished when students are not just taught a series of routine activities, but rather lessons that teach them how to think and create for themselves. This supports Kerka's (1995) belief that teaching kids how to think rather than what to think is the best method to prepare future employees and problem solvers. Thinking skills, according to James (1999), are essential to the educational process. The speed and efficacy with which a person learns is influenced by his or her thoughts. As a result, higher-order thinking skills are inextricably linked to the learning process.

1.5.1 Teaching Critical Thinking Using Bloom's Taxonomy

In a study on using Bloom's taxonomy as a frame work for engaging business students in higher order thinking skills, Nancy Nentl and Roth Zietlow (2008) claim that for most teachers, creating course activities and deliverables that represent Bloom's lower learning stages is rather simple. There are courses in many curricula whose primary learning objectives are to acquire the knowledge and comprehension of business essentials that are required for subsequent courses. A typical accounting course, for example, is called "Financial Accounting", and it focuses mostly on learning and recognizing key accounting terminology. This is also seen in many other principles courses that familiarize students with business words and the application of such terms. For example, the University of Minnesota's Carlson School of Management describes a typical Principles of Marketing course as follows: "Introduction to terms, concepts, and Skills for analyzing marketing problems and factors outside the organization affecting product, pricing, promotion, and distribution decisions" (Kolb, 1984).

These courses are necessary and important because they lay the groundwork for students to progress to more substantive business courses. Even more sophisticated courses, on the other hand, may mistakenly include lower-order learning requirements, requiring students to

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analyze, add to, and evaluate existing knowledge structures. An obstacle to learning is failing to engage analytical thinking beyond knowing, understanding, and applying a topic (Leese, 2010). Many standard course activities and evaluations, such as publisher test banks and end-of-chapter exercises, have limited potential to drive business students to break over the learning barrier and engage in higher analytical thinking. The integration of simulations into the course curriculum could be an exception. Because quality simulations have the capacity to advance pupils through increasing complexity, prompting students to internalize, build on, and assess "chunks" of past, stored information, their use can be beneficial. Teaching students how to conduct quality secondary research, which is becoming increasingly necessary in professional life, is another effective strategy to break past this learning barrier and develop analytical thinking. Integrating real secondary research methods into the course curriculum may educate students how to examine rather than merely replicate information, how to combine it with other information to form a new knowledge, and how to assess that new understanding for veracity and authenticity.

In a study entitled, *Design of Assignments Using the 21st Century Bloom's Revised Taxonomy Model for Development of Critical Thinking*, Zapalska (2018) explains the taxonomy's six stages use by teachers as follows: in remembering, students must remember ideas, words, procedures, terminology, and concepts in order to recall them in the identical form in which they were encountered .In Understanding, students must understand statements and information supplied in the second stage .Understanding can be developed through seeing, listening, reading, revising lecture notes, and supplementing with notes from supplemental readings in order to fully grasp the meaning of words and concepts. Students must mentally translate and recognize things in different terms in the following four stages, identify assumptions, ambiguities, and problems, analyze and apply concepts learned to unfamiliar problems and situations, and then make inferences and extensions of thinking based on

principles given.

Students must arrange and assess assertions and facts that are communicated in the fifth step, Evaluating, by contrasting, comparing, and finally evaluating. Students must make judgments regarding the material and explain why they made them. Students must defend their opinions using higher-level reasoning (logical argument, scientific investigation, empirical data) rather than lower-level thinking (peer pressure, self-confirmation). They must also determine whether the author gives evidence, refines generalizations with suitable qualifications, and the trustworthiness of observation assertions. The final stage, creating, involves making a creative statement and developing a logical empirical assertion that must be sustained. Students rewrite and synthesize material into a coherent presentation that can be communicated via written or oral work to create a creative resolution during this process. Our findings suggest that the model can effectively support critical and analytical thinking in the business and economics learning process (Zapalska, 2018).

1.5.2 Teaching Critical Thinking through the Use of Literary Texts

In her article “Teaching Critical Thinking through Literature”, Shaheera Jaffar (2020) shows the importance of integrating literature as a tool to teach students how to think critically. She claims that in order for them to be critical thinkers, learner should first become critical readers. She further explains the importance of teaching critical thinking particularly through the use of literary texts, since Critical thinking in literature fosters a deep awareness of the use of language, not just from an aesthetic stand point but also from the inevitable political one, given today’s society and its developments. Students understand that language is not a neutral phenomenon that explains some pre-existing world, but rather that words weave layers of meanings that create and generate their own reality. The premise of this argument is that

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language is a purposeful and deliberate selection of specific word patterns with the goal of influencing readers in a specific way. Language would not reveal itself as a living and vital force unless this pattern is discovered.

The article explains teaching critical thinking through literature with covering nine essential aspects: (1) Responding to the text, which is helpful to conceive of a text as an actor who employs various strategies to entice you into their point of view. In the beginning, pupils might be informed what to look for. It can not be presumed that students will know what to look for on their own; they must be directed. They can be trained to connect ‘what’ questions to ‘how’ questions later, (2) Genre, in which different genres are linked with distinct styles of writing, it is better to elicit preconceptions from students by starting with the text's genre, (3) Tone, “The tone of the text is closely related to the purpose of the text. Is it harsh and angry, sarcastic, melodramatic, subtle and ironical or matter of fact?” (P.17), (4) Style, “is the style argumentative, descriptive, analytical, director metaphorical?”(P.17), (5) Purpose, where it is critical for students to understand the writer’s intent. Is he just showing them a slice of life or is he trying to sway their opinion? Is he writing for a moral, social, or religious reason, or is his goal to provide an aesthetic experience to his readers? This is a very simplistic distinction because a writer can achieve multiple goals at once, but it is useful to categorize at the outset so that students are aware of the various levels to which a writer can relate, (6) Content and language, in which of the preceding points are never directly discussed on the page. These must be deduced from the language selection and content selection, (7) Interference and analysis, in which students learn what to search for in analysis, and how to think about what they find and connect information in a logical and cohesive manner in inference. The importance of analysis is that it teaches students which components of the text govern the meaning. Students learn how to evaluate data that they recognize from their analysis through inference, (8) Argumentation, It is critical to teach pupils how to debate responsibly. Students adopt a stance when they fight, whether on paper or in class,

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and offering reasons is a responsibility that comes with having a viewpoint. Critical thinking is defined as this type of reasoned evaluation. In this phase, Shaheera suggests for students to ask the following questions:

1. What is at issue? What makes this question an issue?
2. Why is an answer worth knowing?
3. What am I being asked to believe?

This would encourage students to consider the question's background and inherent politics. It would assist pupils understand the importance of an issue and determine how much they agree with the writer. The third question will encourage pupils to recognize that they have an identity apart from the author, and that the author is employing specific writing techniques to persuade and influence him. It has something to do with the text's ideology.

1.6 Studies on the Use of Bloom's Taxonomy in Teaching Critical Thinking through English Literature

Shukran Abdul Rahman and Nor Faridah Abdul Manaf (2017) discuss in their article "A Critical Analysis of Bloom's Taxonomy in Teaching Creative and Critical Thinking Skills in Malaysia through English Literature" the use of Bloom's Taxonomy to teach creative and critical skills through English literature. They first emphasize the relevance of English Literature as a subject to teach critical thinking, since it triggers the students' thoughts and encourages them to come up with new ideas and contributions to the classroom. It also points out the importance of the use of Bloom's Taxonomy to test and improve students' critical thinking in Malaysia as well as trying to find its limit and issues.

Shukran and Manaf state (2017) also that the research is significant for several reasons. To begin with, the findings on the importance of using Bloom's Taxonomy in the teaching and learning of English Literature in Malaysia would throw light on the causes for

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the low efficacy in the teaching of creative and critical thinking. Second, the findings may aid curriculum developers and teachers in exploring the missing components of Bloom's Taxonomy in relation to the indigenous setting, which are vital in encouraging pupils to think creatively and critically. The findings are likely to inform curriculum developers on how to promote increased interest and engagement in the subject among students in the future. The findings could provide a solid foundation for developing an alternative to Bloom's Taxonomy of educational goals.

The study continues to conclude that students should be trained to attempt reading comprehension questions to verify their understanding of the text; learn to detect their logical reasoning weaknesses; conduct group presentations to improve their abilities in synthesis, organization, communication, and cooperation; be guided in-class discussion with questioning skills to provoke critical thinking; and be required to attempt individual essay-question reports to promote deductive or inductive thinking. Teachers' classroom teaching skills are critical in fostering the development of students' thinking skills because students can enhance their thinking skills if their teachers teach them how to think (Shukran & Manaf, 2017).

Charla Faulkner (2010) conducted a doctoral thesis on "The Effects of Using Bloom's Taxonomy to Align Reading Instruction". She conducted a study on a class of fourth grade students in order to examine the level of their reading skills, in which the results showed that the level of analytical reading is very low for students who read literature just as a school subject rather than taking the literary experience and engage personally in the stories. As examinations shift toward more analytical thinking, it is critical that kids in all demographics have as many opportunities to succeed as possible. Teachers will be able to discover techniques to promote student use of higher order thinking skills if they understand how to use Bloom's Taxonomy effectively while preparing instructional activities. The results showed that the rate of the group experimented with the integration of Bloom's Taxonomy increased

with 58 percent comparing to the control group that dealt with more traditional methods of teaching.

Conclusion

Critical thinking empowers students to think more about problems and issues; a critical thinker is someone who makes appropriate judgments under certain circumstances. Many studies have highlighted the merits of teaching thinking skills. Students, therefore, have the right to learn and practise thinking skills in order to prepare them to become creative and critical citizens who will build the future of society as a whole.

In order to achieve this goal, educational systems must focus primarily on teaching youth how to think rather than what to think. Teaching critical thinking skills must be an important ingredient in the vision and mission of the educational sector. Only when having dedicated and well-educated teachers, and respected students, one will successfully fulfill this mission; and failure to help students develop higher-level thinking skills severely will limit their ability to effectively manage in an increasingly complex technological world. To conclude, believing that the concept of critical thinking appears in a number of areas especially in education, educators need to bear in mind that critical thinking needs to be encouraged, developed and they have to consider what they need to practice through employing certain educational strategies.

This chapter gained insights into the significance, necessity of teaching and learning of critical thinking. It provided a detailed conceptual framework of thinking in general and critical thinking in particular. The following chapter will relate critical thinking to literature teaching, taking into account the theories that underpin this project. It will discuss the role of

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literature pedagogy in fostering critical thinking among university learners.



Chapter Two

*Literary Texts and Criticality in
EFL Classes*



Introduction

This section sheds light upon the significance of literature education in the field of teaching English as a foreign and second language in education contexts. Besides, literature-teaching approaches that are likely to help fostering critical thinking among students will be surveyed. According to Lazere (1987), reading literature offers the potential for developing higher order thinking skills. He claims that literature may be regarded one of many academic disciplines that can come closest to embracing the full range of qualities engaged with critical thinking.

2. Literature Education and Critical thinking

Lazar further (1987) states that literature study involves the capacities to:

....unify and make connections in one's experience; to follow an extended line of thought through propositional, thematic, or symbolic development; to engage in mature moral reasoning and to form judgments of quality and taste; to be attuned to skepticism and irony; and to be perceptive of ambiguity, relativity of viewpoint, and multiple dimensions of form and meaning (literal and figurative language) syntactic and structural complexity and so on. (p.3)

This claim found support among many scholars such as Oster (1989) who argues that literature enlarges students vision and fosters critical thinking by dramatizing the various ways a situation can be. Through reading literary texts, learners can get deeper knowledge about a range of cultures and other useful insights that can broaden their worldview and foster critical ideas (Sidhu, 2003). This view is echoed by Jaffar (2004) who states that students of literature are expected to think critically and apply their critical and analytical skills to the texts they study. She claims that critical thinking cannot be separated from critical reading [of literature]. In her view, critical thinking and critical reading always come together. Good

readers bring their own understanding to the text and add to its dimension and this leads to the process of critical thinking development later on.

This same view is shared by many other experts who claim that literature is an excellent stage to practise critical thought as it has ‘meaning potential’ which is often highly self-referential and dense in meaning. Thus, literature education can offer an effective way to develop critical thinking in the learners (Alderson & Short, 1995).

The study of literature supports autonomous and critical thinking in the analytical and creative responses of the students to the texts. All these skills will be beneficial to students for their future lives both inside and outside academic study because in the literature classroom it is necessary for learners to ‘make judgments, be decisive, come to conclusions, synthesize information, organize, evaluate, predict and apply knowledge’ and all these practices could help develop their critical thinking skills (Hannauer, 2001).

As far as reading literature is concerned, Oster (1989) argues that focusing on point of view in literature enlarges student’s vision and fosters critical thinking by dramatizing the various ways a situation can be seen. Thus, students become more creative and critical as they have a chance to see various points of view; the characters in the story and those of their peers from the class discussion, and this will also lead to the development of critical thinking.

2.1 Literature education and EFL/ESL learners

Literature classes are aimed at training students to think, read, analyse, and write like literary scholars, approaching literary problems, learning a literary methodology, in short, “doing” literature as scientists “do” science’ (Elaine Showalter, 2003). Thus, integrating literature into language instruction has been considered as bringing multiple benefits to language learners.

Compared to L1 learners, L2 learners' language skill, personal background knowledge and literary background knowledge are limited. According to Paran (2008), L2 learners have usually experienced a narrow view of literature in their previous schooling. They see literature as teaching fixed ways of reading or as having fixed meaning and they believe that the teachers should take responsibility in helping them to access this. The L2 learners are familiar with viewing the reading of literature as an efferent exercise and make no connection between what happens in the literature classroom (be it L1 or L2) and their own reading of fiction. Paran argues for the teachers to find approaches that can help learners to leave their previous attitudes, engage them in texts, facilitate them to develop a sense of enjoyment in literature, and 'help them see the relevance of what they are reading to their own lives.

There are attempts from literature educators and researchers to suggest effective teaching approaches for L2 literature teaching. According to Short (1983), engaging L2 students can be accomplished by applying three widely accepted L2 literature teaching approaches which are reader-response theory, the stylistics approach and the language-based approach. Short claimed that reader-response theory shows the greatest potential to promote both cognitive and affective competence in the L2 students.

2.2 Reasons for Teaching Literature

Many scholars emphasize the importance of using literature in the EFL classroom. According to Issan (2014), literature in the EFL classroom gives context that is similar to real-life circumstances. It engages students by evoking their imaginations and encouraging critical thinking. Students also have the opportunity to expand their vocabulary by reading conversations and comprehending the content. Literature, according to Healy (2010), improves learners' creative abilities and increases their awareness of the target language's culture.

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Ranzoli (1986) goes further in her article “Literature in the EFL Classroom” to suggest four significant reasons for teaching literature in the EFL classroom. Literature is motivational because most people appreciate good stories, and it is often more entertaining than the content of proprietary EFL training books. Second, literature helps students to communicate their thoughts and feelings with one another and interact meaningfully with one another as they share the plot and characters with their peers and suspend disbelief with them. Third, it helps pupils to consider concepts and ideas and to form opinions about them. Fourth, Literature can help pupils improve their linguistic knowledge and skills in a controlled environment. Finally, literature contains cultural expectations and conventions that students can generally access and understand, boosting their confidence in their language skills. In conclusion, literature can play a significant role in encouraging students to study English literature and enhancing their academic, cultural, linguistic, and intellectual skills.

Another reason why literature should be taught in an EFL classroom is explained by Boçnak (2020) in their article “Literature in the Language Classroom” in which they explain how literature addresses real life situations and analyze fundamental human issues. Giving the plays of William Shakespeare as an example, they claim that those plays were regarded as representation of the romantic hero figure back in the seventeenth-century and they used to describe the issues of that time, while now they could be used by scholars from a psychoanalytical or dialectical perspective. Therefore, though its meaning does not remain static, a literary work can transcend both time and culture to speak directly to a reader in another country or a different period of history. Furthermore, literature is absolutely the best device a language can learn to enrich the cultural side of the language, besides enriching and widening his or her range of vocabulary plus the fact that he or she will be personally involved in the material they are facing.

2.3 Approaches to Literature Teaching

According to Carter (1996), approaches to literature teaching fall within three general categories. First, there are information based approaches, in which facts about literature-literary history, distinguishing features and properties of different literary genres, etc. -and commonly accepted interpretations of texts are supplied to students in a traditional lecture type format. Second, there are personal-response based approaches, where the focus is on individual responses to texts. Here the discussion/tutorial format is emphasized. Third, there are language-based approaches. These approaches, with a focus on the language of literary texts, usually employ either stylistic techniques featuring linguistic analysis of texts or language teaching procedures aimed at increasing students' ability to use language through a greater awareness of language in use.

2.4 Literature teaching in ELT

In general, during the first half of the 20th century, the overall approach to literature in the ELT context was one in which, says Strevens (1977) “ Literature was taught as a part of a broad general education, oriented towards the humanities. It used to be linked with, and often incorporated, an introduction to the study and appreciation of English literature, and this constituted the principal justification for teaching the language” (p.60). Here literature was included in the higher levels of the language learning process, and the methods used were the teacher-oriented approaches of the first language classrooms.

During the second half of this century, the use of literature underwent dramatic changes in view of larger changes in the thinking about the teaching and learning of languages. For one thing, as already noted, literature itself fell out of favour in the general domain of ELT. For another, when literary texts were used, the context was usually one in which students were aiming at knowledge of literature in English rather than improved proficiency in the language.

Here literature teaching was characterized by the 'flight from the text' approach in which, as explained by Carter (2007), teachers have frequently retreated into teaching about literature (for instance, giving students biographical facts about authors, descriptions of literary movements and critical schools synopses of novels and plays) instead of teaching the literature itself.

2.4.1 Communicative Approaches to Literature

A major category under which scholarship pertaining to literature and ELT can be classified is communicative approaches to literature. Such scholarship should not be seen as being in opposition to, or a reaction against, the work falling under the heading of the linguistic approaches. Indeed, to some degree the two categories overlap. In both, for example, there is an interest in the language of literary texts, and both wish to sensitize learners to that language, where the two categories separate is in the domain of response.

That is, the linguistic approaches attempt to draw learners' attention to the linguistic features of literature so as to increase learners' knowledge of the ways in which the target language operates. Learners can then build upon that knowledge, or enhance language awareness, as a way of improving their communicative (or literary) competence. In contrast, communicative approaches draw learners' attention to the language, or to the content, of texts in order to initiate responses on the part of the learners. These responses then become avenues for practice, and subsequent increased proficiency, in the target language. The root idea here is that learners encounter language in use, in real-life kinds of contexts, in literature, and in responding to what they have read, must likewise use the target language in order to express their responses.

In this way, they are generating discourse which gives voice to their own, personal responses as readers. As such, they encounter opportunities for personal expression-and

possible personal growth and development-as well as meaningful use of the target language. Thus, the emphasis is fundamentally on communication through the starting point of responses to texts.

As will be seen in the pages to follow, the communicative approaches concentrate on the activities-based methodology. Here students are given tasks to perform and problems to solve, and it is through such activities that their responses are initiated. For the most part these responses are intended to enhance learners' language ability, but the development of literature-related abilities is also, increasingly, seen as a part of the communicative approaches. Whichever purposes obtain, the basic idea, says Collie (1987), is “ to turn our students into good detectives” (p.20) . In this detective role, they may hunt for the meanings of a literary text or for an understanding of the linguistic/communicative functions at work in the text-functions which helped produce the text's meaning.

Most of the scholarship concerning communicative approaches to literature has appeared quite recently and, given its communicative orientation, has been of crucial importance in the linking of literature and CLT. It is also important to note that this scholarship may be viewed within two separate, though related, streams. One is the interactive stream, while the other is the reader-based stream. Both focus on the response element as the key factor in the learners' contact with literature, and have communicative aims underlying them, but they differ to some degree in their view of the learner. Interactive approaches look more strictly at the learner as someone responding to literature, while reader-based approaches are concerned in part with the learner as a reader of literature. To provide a more systematic view of communicative approaches to literature, these two streams will be discussed independently of each other.

2.4.2 Interactive approaches

The roots of the communicative approaches to literature, as well as the interactive stream

within such approaches, trace back to the early 1960s. Billows (1961), for example, discussed the use of literature within the situational approach to ELT. Learners would not respond to the texts as they do at present, but the texts would provide examples of the kinds of real-life situations students might later encounter, and in a limited context within the structural orientation of that time period they would interact with the situations at hand in the texts.

Cook (1994) wrote in reaction against traditional approaches to literature teaching, asserting that “ We must try, as far as possible, to turn the traffic the other way round, from the class to the teacher rather than from the teacher to the class” (P. 27), Thus, advocating a modified form of the learner-centered principle at the heart of communicative approaches to language teaching. This call for a reversal in the centering of the class, from teacher to students, was important in the cause of interactive, and communicative, uses of literature, because a response based methodology could not be developed without a view of the learners at the center of the language teaching situation.

A very useful early contribution to the development of an interactive, response-based use of literature came in a paper by Rivers in 1987. In both the 1950s and earlier in the 1960s, Pattison had written vigorously in support of the notion that literature could not be used to teach language. His 1968 paper did not retreat from that stance, but he did remark of literature that 'A text provides something to talk about and so practices language. It can also suggest other exercises in using language, and the exploitation of its possibilities is one of the skills to be learned in preparing to teach. Here Pattison articulated the essence of the communicative, and interactive, use of literature: 'a text provides something to talk about andso practices language'. It is from this simple assertion that communicative approaches spring, particularly within the interactive stream, where language practice arises from learners'interaction with texts.

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Hirvela (1994) and Ali (1994) also supplied fairly early papers envisioning interactive, response-based uses of literature, in both cases involving light humorous verse, as the source of the responses. Like Billows, cited earlier, they attempted to fit literature into the framework of language drills and pattern practice, but they felt that literature holds a unique appeal to learners which will encourage them to respond more enthusiastically than in the case of the standard materials used in pattern work. It was for this reason that both supported the use of the aforementioned light humorous verse.

In the early 1980s, as the move towards communicative approaches to language teaching gained momentum, interest in communicative uses of literature likewise increased, as reflected in papers by Kirkgoz (2014) and Rozenblat (1982). Schmidt's influential work (1983) also played a role in stimulating interest in literature vis-a-vis CLT. In an interview with Widdowson in the *ELT Journal*, he focused on differences in reading ordinary and literary discourse. Widdowson (1983) begins by noting that, unlike in the reading of ordinary discourse, in literature there are no clearly established frames of reference for the reader to work with. This, in his opinion, is one of the great advantages of literature. He says “Literature creates a new reality for the reader to explore, thus stimulating the student 'to find the evidence, as it was which is representative of some new reality’” (P. 31). This, in turn, requires him to develop new 'procedural abilities', that is, strategies for the interpretation of this new reality. Literature, he says, “sets up conditions for a crucial part of language learning the ability to infer meaning by procedural activity” (P. 33). He goes on to explain that “Literature of its nature can provide a resource for developing in learners an important ability to use knowledge of language for the interpretation of discourse” (P. 34).

The value of such perspectives with respect to the development of communicative approaches to literature is reflected in the following citation:

The writer of literature is really in the problem setting business, and the reader of literature is in the problem-solving business par excellence. And because there is no right solution, such activities can provide plenty of scope for discussion, certainly as much as problem-solving activities that don't involve literature. (Widdowson, 1983, pp. 32-33)

This citation portrays the essence of interactive, communicative uses of literature, in which learners respond to literary texts via problems set for them within the activities-based approach. Such problems are normally dealt with in pair or group work—hence the reference to "plenty of scope for discussion"-. In this sense, learners interact both with the text and with each other. While doing so, they are using the target language, as well as talking about its use in their discussions of the text. Here, too, the idea that there is "plenty of scope for discussion" is important because by their nature, literary texts are open to interpretation, thereby providing learners with more to discuss.

In these remarks, then, Widdowson lays out the foundation of the interactive approach to literature, a foundation which was quickly built upon in other scholarship on the subject. This was seen, for example, in McRae and Boardman's "Reading between the Lines" (1996), a book focusing on 'integrating language and literature activities. Its purpose is stated in these terms by the authors:

This book does exactly what its title and sub-title suggest: it helps you to see below the surface (between the lines) of what you read in English, and to improve your ability in the language ... by offering many wide-ranging opportunities to practice. (P.7)

They also explain that you will find that the literary texts deepen and enrich your thinking and feeling and result in more effective personal expression (Ibid). Their

Approach, thus, entails learner interaction with the texts so as to develop personal responses. Interaction also takes place through the pair and group-work tasks contained in the activities-based approach used in the development of each of the book's ten, theme-based units (concentrating on topics such as family, women, war, and so on).

2.4.3 Reader-based approaches

Interactive approaches look at the learner in terms of his / her responses to literature as a means towards the achievement of language teaching goals. Reader-based approaches also serve language teaching goals, but at the same time are interested in the learner as a reader of literature. That is, the development of literary competence is a focus of instruction which accompanies the aim of enhancing learners' communicative competence.

From this description one may notice that there is a certain amount of overlap between interactive and reader-based approaches. Indeed, the texts cited in the review of interactive approaches could be said to be reader-based to some extent, in that the interaction at the heart of such approaches revolves around the learner as a reader of literature. That is, the learner's reading experience is central to all-the work in the classroom which follows that experience. Furthermore, both interactive and reader-based approaches hinge upon the activities-oriented classroom mode. Thus, there is not a clear separation between interactive and reader-based approaches.

Special interest in the language student as a reader of literature may be seen in three papers: Maley (1989), Lasaten (2008), and Rosenblatt (1978). Each of these papers has a primary focus on the use of literature in language teaching, but an interest in reading processes is also expressed. That is, how learners read literature in the process of language improvement work is also viewed as a dimension to be considered in the application of literature in the language classroom. A slightly later paper by Khatib (2011) continues that interest.

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The approach advocated is one which uses provocative questions to take students into 'the human experience embedded in literature', thereby creating a deeper relationship between the reader and the text. This theme is also dealt with McKay (1982), who discusses methods of promoting an aesthetic interaction between the reader and the text. This kind of interaction will enrich the reader's experience of literature as well as contributing to improved language proficiency.

Changing this focus slightly, Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) discuss the need to take into account the dimension of emotion in learners as readers. Through such a focus, literature can serve a 'therapeutic function' in the language classroom, as well as building both an emotional and creative attitude towards language.

This may display that the learner's experience of literature is a dimension beyond a response to literature. That is, a real experience of literature has a deeper effect on the learner, and brings into play elements of reading not required in responses, which can be superficial and still serve language teaching purposes provided that the responses involve language use on the part of the learner. This theme of the 'emotional involvement' of learners as readers of literature is also discussed in Cook (1994), who contends that to move students beyond the level of surface reading of literature, activities used in the classroom should attempt to take learners more deeply into the texts. Such a process will, if the texts are selected carefully, eventually create such emotional involvement in the learner, and will thus intensify the reading of the text. This, in turn, impacts on the learner as a reader, since such involvement entails more active engagement on the part of the learner.

McMahon has written several papers in the reader-based context. All concern the use of poetry. In one (1994), she focuses on an idea discussed previously in Widdowson's work:

that of using literature in a problem-solving mode which, among other objectives, activates student responses and enables them to engage in their own interpretive experience of the poem in question. She discusses strategies for moving students from the comprehension of facts to the interpretations of poems, in the process focusing on deeper levels of the reading of literature. A paper with Sage (1985) explores the emotive nature of poetry and how to make learners more sensitive readers of poems.

Reader sensitivity is a theme dealt with in Mitchell (1993), where it is asserted that the use of literature in the classroom should tap into the 'underlying emotions and needs' of learners as a way of sharpening their reading of literature through the increased interest such texts would provoke. The deeper reading of the texts that ensues will also impact on their language learning experience. Kramsch (1985) offers an incisive paper focusing on a discourse perspective on the teaching of literary texts, in which students are put into the role of 'a community of autonomous and responsible readers. In such circumstances, the discourse between a literary text and its readers and among readers of the same text can serve as the link between communicative language teaching and the teaching of literature (Ibid). This link is a crucial one in the reader-based approach, because it ensures that communicative language goals are central to whatever methodologies are implemented with the literary texts, while at the same time taking into account the development of the learner's literary competence. That is, Kramsch's approach aims to create more proficient language learners as well as more effective readers of literature. The key is in creating learning situations in which students have to interpret, and not simply respond to, texts. In this way, their reading skills develop and their communicative competence increase.

In short, the active role of the learners should be encouraged. Literature, when published, is the 'property' of the reader. We, as readers, should become involved as co-writers of the texts in our imagination, in speech, and on paper. The many ways of interpreting multi-levelled

literature will create a meeting place in class for views and opinions to be exchanged. By way of a general review of these reader-based approaches, one can notice how they consistently strive to assist in the language learning process, but seek to develop some degree of literary competence as well by focusing on the learner's ability to read literature as well as respond to it. In this way, learners experience literary texts as literature, as well as sources for responses.

2.5 Teaching Literary Texts

The question of how to teach literary texts in an EFL classroom and how to choose the literary text depending on which type of learner's competency the teacher is willing to improve is still debatable. Occasionally, the instructor reverts to a more traditional classroom role, in which he /she sees himself or herself as disseminating information about the author, the context of the work, the literary traditions that underlie the text, and so on. Learners are expected to be able to absorb all of this information and make it their own. The sheer difficulty of detailed comprehension posed by the language's complexity or linguistic subtlety frequently turns literature teaching into a massive process of teacher explanation or even translation, with the majority of available classroom time devoted to a step by step exegetical exercise led by the teacher. The teacher may utilize metalanguage of criticism at higher levels of literature work, which may both separate learners from their own response and induce them to undervalue it, whatever the analytical gain might be. These teacher-centered approaches might not be as beneficial for English learners, for that reason, more student-centered approaches are required.

2.5.1 Goals for Teaching Literary Texts

The goals for the teaching of literary texts to EFL higher education learners are stated in the syllabus (Canevas). Literary texts are meant to:

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1. Connect the pupil with the heritage of foreign cultures during different periods by studying examples of poetry and prose texts selected from these periods. The aim is to help learners assimilate that heritage; acquire the intrinsic ethical, social, human and artistic values that are useful for them and the development of their society. Literary texts are also meant to assist them appreciate the outstanding literary characteristics of the historical periods of English literature.
2. Familiarizing the pupil with the biographies of a group of literary figures whose texts are studied at this stage.
3. Imparting to the pupil knowledge of important historical, political and social events related to leaders, scholars, thinkers and literary figures.
4. Enriching the pupil's language by promoting the acquisition of vocabulary, grammar and style.
5. Improving the learner's library research skills.
6. Acquainting the learner with the different genres.
7. Developing the learner's reading skills.
8. Training the learner in a range of cognitive tasks, including comprehension, thinking, analysis, deduction, linking, judgment, conclusion, appreciation and criticism.
9. Improving the learner's ability to memorize texts.
10. Widening the learners' intellectual horizons, and motivating them to expand their knowledge independently.
11. Enhancing the learners' aesthetic awareness and their ability to express

themselves in a polished and distinctive style.

12. Promoting the learner's ability to respect other people's opinions while, at the same time, proceeding to assess these attitudes with the aim of adopting or rejecting them.

13. Arousing the learner's sentiments and feelings through the study of intentions, passions and feelings.

14. Expanding their imagination through images and ideas contained in the texts.

15. Improving the learner's ability in oral expression.

The above stated goals may be categorized into three main groups. The first is a language-oriented group to which we may assign goals which are meant to enrich the language of the learner in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and figures of speech. The second category is related to the study of literary history and criticism. Its aim is to enable the pupil to extend his knowledge of the lives and creative works of literary figures as well as the distinct literary characteristics of the different periods of literature. The remaining group of goals focuses on developing various skills of thinking and acquiring positive, but critical attitudes towards other people's points of view and feelings.

The texts are extracted from the work of different literary figures and cover different periods of literature. Moreover, they represent a variety of different literary genres with their characteristics, styles, and modes of construction. Some goals are served by some aspects of the content of the selected texts. Of course, this does not necessarily entail that the content may or does lead to achievement of the goals, because there are other factors which influence the teaching process, such as the teacher, the teaching method, the instructional media, the class

conditions and so forth. In other words, whether the goals of teaching literature are accomplished depends on how the curriculum as a whole is implemented. One of the main difficulties encountered results from the fact that the above goals seem to treat literary texts as a means of enrichment of knowledge and language acquisition and moral.

2.5.2 Selection of Literary Texts in an EFL Classroom

Selecting the suitable texts to meet students' needs, desires and life experiences is challenging for teacher especially in an EFL classroom, where the language challenge must be taken into consideration. It is advantageous for learners who are learning to read unfamiliar text to have a familiar background. This is due to the fact that it is unfair to expect students to acquire a new language or a new skill like reading while also learning about new things. The texts should remain relevant to how they live and what their lives are like as they continue to read (Maleki, 2008).

In her book "Teaching Language, Composition and Literature", Fowler M. Elizabeth (1972) argues that the expanding number of options available to young readers has been one of the most significant reasons of change in the teaching of English in recent years. Many teachers have been able to meet the vast range of diversity in their classrooms with a variety of alternatives, thanks to the low cost of paperback books and the availability of inexpensive hard-cover volumes.

Indeed, if teachers, instructors or lecturers overlook the level of maturity and experience of students, a permanent attitude towards the reader may result. Teachers resist surrendering to the transitory and the meaningless while choosing literature. Not all adolescent literature makes an attempt to convey authentic experience. Not all of them are suitable in terms of style. Many are clichéd, manufactured commercial enterprises that prey on preconceived preconceptions that exist in the minds of adolescents. Teachers will not encourage the reading

of the best novels to which immature readers can respond while picking literature. Teachers know that the level of quality will not always be as good as expected, and that the only way to enhance the students' level of response here, as well as everywhere in the curriculum, is to provide sound and organized direction (Carlisle, 2000).

2.5.2.1 Criteria for Selection of Texts

The major changes in how literature is used are reflected not only in what takes place in the contemporary language classroom but also in the kinds of texts selected for use as well. As such, in gaining a clearer picture of the present situation regarding literature, it is necessary to look briefly at how texts are currently selected.

Prior to this half of the 20th century, there was little need to discuss selection criteria, since it was assumed that texts would be drawn from the English literary canon. Here both the culture and the language to be studied would be best represented in the masterpieces of English literary history. That assumption no longer holds true, and there are two primary factors underlying the dismantling of that assumption. These are: a) changing attitudes toward the role of culture in language teaching, and b) the communicative revolution in ELT.

Turning first to cultural factors and their impact on selection criteria, it should first be pointed out that the relationship between culture and literature is one which has received considerable attention since literature's place within ELT began to weaken in the 1950s. No-one questions the fact that, as Spacl (1985) states:

Literary texts are artifacts of our culture, and that in reading literature, learners are exposed to the culture that literature comes from. What has come under scrutiny are the questions of a) whether literature should be used to teach the culture of the target language, and b) whether the cultural dimension in literature renders literature too difficult for non-native speakers to understand fully, and if so, does this make it

unsuitable for the language classroom? (p.490)

These questions are of considerable importance in the matter of selection criteria for texts. In the early 1980s, Raiter (1985) raised concerns about their students' ability to work through cultural impediments in the English literary canon, with the former discussing students in South America and the latter commenting on students in Africa. Scher (1976) noted that "It has been my experience that the whole area of cultural comprehension is more likely than language problems to cause difficulty in the use of literature" (p.44). Gatbonton and Tucker (1971) developed the phrase 'cultural filtering' to summarize the problem referred to in the other papers; a problem in which students from one culture read literature from the target culture through the filter of their own cultural perspectives.

Widdowson's *English in the World* (1985) has played a major role in recent discussion on the cultural dimensions of literature, looking at the role of English literature in a global context. But here there has been a significant shift in focus, from the 'cultural comprehension' problem cited earlier by Povey to the issue of 'cultural imperialism'. That is, to what degree does a reliance on British and/or American literature in places where English is not the native language have in the sense of simultaneously imposing the values of the society from which that literature has come upon the students where it is taught? Furthermore, will a dependence on such literature communicate the impression that only literature written in those places where English is the first language can be considered 'real' or 'true' English literature?

The teaching of only European literature, and mostly British imperialist literature, in our schools means that our students are daily being confronted with the European reflection of itself, the European image, in history. Our children are made to look, analyse, and evaluate the world as made and seen by Europeans. Worse still, these children are confronted with a distorted image of themselves and of their history as reflected and interpreted in European

imperialist literature.

The problem is not only one of the values of the English-speaking countries being forced upon learners in other countries through exposure to literature from the English-speaking countries. There is also the matter of a certain view of the English language being imposed upon non-native students. That is, a steady diet of texts from, say, Britain, may subtly communicate the notion that only the English from Britain is legitimate English. In places like Africa and India, where English is a deeply rooted language and where strong local varieties have developed, the question of which English is valid English takes on great importance.

The consequence of debates on these issues with respect to selection criteria has been an increasingly strong call for the use of 'localized literatures' written in English by non-native speakers of the language.

With respect to cultural factors, then, the emerging emphasis within the context of selection criteria is to look to some degree in the direction of localized literatures. As for the impact of the communicative revolution in ELT, there is likewise a movement in favour of 'discharging the canon', or, again, using other texts in conjunction with it. Much of the scholarship which deals with literature in ELT and CLT comments on selection criteria, and the remarks which follow represent a synthesis of the points expressed in that scholarship. It should also be pointed out that the selection criteria to be presented refer to language teaching situations where literature serves language teaching goals, rather than being the end, or object, of study, as in the case of students studying for a qualification in English literature.

Given the nature of CLT and its emphasis on communicative competence, wherein learners are assisted in developing the ability to use language creatively and flexibly so as to communicate effectively in real-life circumstances, linguistic concerns are central to decisions

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on ~~selection criteria~~. Here, says Scher (1976), “It is essential to ‘avoid ‘frustrational’ reading in a foreign language” (p.44). That is, the language of the texts must be accessible to the learners. This generally means ignoring texts containing archaic language, or language too complex to be fairly readily understood by the students. Given such restraints, the general situation which has emerged is one described as follows by Marckwardt (1978):

Certainly, at the initial stages of reading literature and for some time thereafter, the literature that is read should be contemporary, written in the modern idiom. There is little or nothing to be gained from subjecting the student to archaic forms of the language, obsolescent meanings of words, and subject matter that requires historical interpretation. Given the heavy current output of literature, the busy literary activity in all English-speaking countries, and the situation of having so much to choose from and so little that can be taught, it would seem to be self-defeating to include anything but contemporary literature—contemporary being understood as that literature which poses no linguistic difficulties for the pupil because of the time lag. (p. 65)

Sage (1987) lists several selection criteria, and these reflect the kinds of boundaries identified by Marckwardt. According to Sage, the selection criteria mentioned in Table 2.1 are regarded as essential. Tomlinson (1986) offers another useful list of selection criteria which reflect general attitudes on the subject. Some of them, i.e. 'universal appeal' and 'brevity', have already been defined in Sage's overview (Table 2.1).

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Criterion	Explanation
Contemporaneity	texts should be of recent vintage
Inclusiveness	texts should be drawn from the whole of literature written in English, i.e. both native English speaking and localized literatures
Brevity	texts should be short (poems or short stories)
Accessibility of Style	texts should be within the, learners' range both in terms of language and content, organization, etc.
Completeness	texts should be presented in their entirety, rather than in fragments or selections from larger works.
Cultural Significance	texts should, as in much as possible, express themes or ideas of universal significance

Table (2.1): Sage's Selection Criteria

Criterion	Explanation
Surface simplicity	texts should be linguistically accessible
Potential depth	texts contain deeper levels of meaning which can be explored, depending on the nature of the class and the proficiency of the students.
Affective potential	texts should be able to evoke an emotional reaction among learners so as to stimulate response-based work in the activities format.
Contemporary language	texts should contain the same kinds of language the learners are expected to learn and use.
Potential for illustration	texts lend themselves to other media which can be used to supplement the written text.

Table (2.2): Tomlinson's Selection Criteria

A few other points to be considered include Collie and Slatere's (1987) belief that a 'personal involvement' factor is essential, especially in communicative teaching. Texts, they say, should be capable of arousing the learners' interest and provoking strong, positive reactions from them. They add that texts should be 'relevant to the life experiences of emotions, or dreams of the learner. They go on to assert that if the language of the literary work is quite straightforward and simple, this may be helpful but it is not in itself the most crucial yardstick.

Interest, appeal and relevance are all more important. In other words, says Tripasai (2005), "Texts chosen should be a 'good read'" (p.15). By way of summary, this means, as

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has been seen, that texts should attract readers' interest through the content and/or theme(s) so as to build the kind of learner/reader involvement which will stimulate the appropriate amount of response for activities-based work which creates maximum opportunities for language practice.

2.5.4 Approaches to Teaching Literary Texts in an EFL Classroom

The goal of literature teaching is to help students understand and analyze language structures, literary styles, figures of speech, and rhetoric, as well as to improve their cultural awareness and expressive ability. A suitable strategy should be used to achieve these goals. In fact, teaching literature methods can be divided into three models: (1) The Cultural Model, which views literature as a teacher-centered and fact-based source of knowledge and information, (2) The Language Model, which allows teachers to use language teaching strategies to deconstruct literary texts in order to achieve specific linguistic goals, and (3) The Personal Growth Model, which focuses on a specific use of language in a text and in a specific cultural context. According to Lazar (1993) and Carter and Long (1991) these models have been included into a variety of approaches to literature teaching.

2.5.4.1 The Critical Literary Approach

Maley (1989) explains that with the implementation of this approach, the focus is on the literary qualities of the texts, such as plot, characterization, motive, value, psychology, background, and so on. Learners should be able to communicate at an intermediate level. Furthermore, they should have a basic understanding of literary conventions. Its primary goal is to improve the learners' critical awareness. It is based on critical philosophy and critical education. Students therefore should be aware of the political and social contexts in which literary writings are done. The critical literary approach emphasizes on the literariness of the texts in this method, which includes plot, characterization, motive, value, psychology,

background, and so on. When using this strategy, teachers must ensure that their students have mastered the intermediate levels and are currently at a higher level. Furthermore, pupils should be familiar with literary traditions.

2.5.4.2 The New Criticism Approach

This approach, in contrast to the critical literary approach, ignores contextual variables such as the text's political, social, and historical context, according to Daiches (2009). Literary analysis, for example, is commonly utilized in this technique, and texts are typically selected from old literature; nonetheless, they have been critiqued for being unrelated to the learners' needs.

According to Abrams (1957) “Glossary of Literary Terms, The New Critics” differ in variety of ways, but many of them share the four following points of view and methodologies. First, a poem is treated and should be dealt with as a poem, as T.S Eliot (1999) put it “Primarily as poetry and not another thing” (P .181)—and as a result, it should be treated as a self-contained word object. Abrams continues to claim what is said about the first law of criticism quoting John Crowe Ransom, “Is that it shall be objective, shall cite the nature of the object and shall recognize the autonomy of the work itself as existing for its own sake” (p.182).

New Critics warn readers of critical approaches that take the focus away from the poem. They avoid mentioning the author’s biography, and temperament, the social conditions at the time of its creation, or the psychological, and moral repercussions on the reader when analyzing and evaluating a work; they also avoid mentioning the work's place in the history of literary forms and subject matter. The New Criticism is frequently categorized as a type of critical formalism because of its critical attention on the literary work in isolation from its surrounding conditions and effects (Ibid).

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The second point of view holds the idea that The New Criticism's principles are primarily linguistic. That is, literature is viewed as a distinct type of language whose characteristics are defined by systematic opposition to the language of science and practical and logical discourse, with the explicative procedure consisting of examining the meanings and interactions of words, figures of speech, and symbols. The emphasis is on the "organic unity" of general structure and word meanings in a great literary work, and we are warned against what Brooks has termed "the heresy of paraphrase". In the third methodology, Abrams explains how the careful investigation of the complex interrelations and ambiguities (several meanings) of the verbal and figurative components inside a work is the distinguishing technique of a new critic. He also explains that, despite that "explication de text" (stressing all kinds of information relevant to a full understanding of a word or passage) has long been a formal procedure for teaching literature in French schools, the kind of explicative analyses of verbal interactions characteristic of the new criticism can be found in books like A. Richards' *Practical Criticism* (1929) and William Empson's (1930) *Seven Types of Ambiguity*.

The fourth point of view tackles the concept that although acknowledged, the divide between literary genres does not play an important role in New Criticism. Words, images, and symbols, rather than character, thought, and story, are considered important components of every work of literature, whether lyric, narrative, or dramatic. These linguistic elements are often said to be organized around a central and humanly significant theme, and to have high literary value to the extent that they manifest "tension," "irony," and "paradox" in achieving a "reconciliation of diverse impulses" or a "equilibrium of opposed forces," regardless of genre. Whether or not a work has characters or a storyline, it is regarded to be essentially a "structure of meanings" that evolves into an integral and self-contained whole largely through the play and counter play of "thematic imagery" and "symbolic action" (Abrams, 1999).

2.5.4.3 Structuralist Approach

The linguistic and structural aspects of a text are often the focus of this approach, which takes a scientific approach to literature, i.e. the focus is on the text's form (Savvidou, 2004). This emphasis on literature as a scientific system rather than as a source of personal and subjective meaning minimizes the individual's involvement in meaning construction. However, literature should aid in students' personal development, cultural understanding, and language skills development.

Since Aristotle, almost every literary theorist has highlighted the importance of structure, in various forms, in assessing a work of literature. However, "structuralist critique" now refers to critics who study literature using the explicit structuralist linguistics approach. The class contains a number of Russian formalists, like Roman Jakobson, but it is best known for a group of writers based in Paris who brought to literature Ferdinand de Saussure's notions and analytic distinctions created in his *Course in General Linguistics* (1915). Structuralist critique, as used in literary studies, sees literature as a second-order signifying system that utilizes the first-order structural system of language as its medium and is largely to be evaluated on the basis of linguistic theory (Abrams, 1999).

Abrams (1999) explains how some structuralist critics analyze the structure of a literary text using linguistic concepts such as the distinction between phonemic and morphemic levels of organization, or between paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationships; and others analyze the structure of a literary text using the syntax in a well-formed sentence as a model. A thorough going literary structuralism, on the other hand, aims to explain how a competent reader may make sense of a given literary text by identifying the underlying system of literary norms and rules of combination that such a reader has unconsciously absorbed. He further claims that Mimetic criticism (the view that literature is primarily an imitation of reality),

expressive criticism (the view that literature primarily expresses the author's feelings, temperament, or creative imagination), and any form of the view that literature is a mode of communication between author and readers are all explicitly opposed to structuralism.

2.5.4.4 Stylistic Approach

This approach is primarily concerned with literature as a “Text”. It closely resembles what EFL/ESL teachers want in their language classes. In contrast to the previous approach, making interpretations takes precedence above linguistic description and analysis. The teacher encourages students to utilize their language expertise to make aesthetic judgments and interpretations of the texts in the Stylistic Approach. As a result, the reader's participation in the process is raised once more (Maley, 1995).

Traditionally, style has been described as the mode of linguistic expression in prose or verse—as how speakers or authors express themselves. The rhetorical setting and objective; peculiar diction, or choice of words; kind of sentence structure and syntax; and density and varieties of figurative language have all been used to study the style special to a single work or writer, or else distinctive of a class of writings. Since the 1950s, the term stylistics has been utilized to describe critical techniques that aim to replace what is believed to be the subjectivity and impressionism of traditional analyses with an "objective" or "scientific" analysis of literary style. The writings of Roman Jakobson and other Russian formalists, as well as European structuralists, supplied much of the impetus for these analytic methodologies, as well as examples for their practical implementation (Abrams, 1999).

2.5.4.5 Reader Response Approach

According to Hirvela (1996), reader-response theory emphasizes ‘the reader’s role as an active participant in the creation of meaning while reading a text, and describing the intricacies of the reader’s involvement with the text. It is generally implemented in teaching as a means

of getting students to interact with literature with minimum interference from the teacher. Reader-response theory has had a considerable influence on both the teaching of literature and the teaching of composition within the first language (L1) context. Louise Rosenblatt (1978) who has contributed to the transactional theory of literature is one of the most well-known and influential figure in both disciplines. Reader-response theory is described by Rosenblatt (1978) as:

What, then, happens in the reading of a literary work? Through the medium of words, the text brings into the reader's consciousness certain concepts, certain sensuous experience, certain images of things, people, actions, scenes. The special meanings and, more particularly, the submerged associations that these words and images have for the individual reader will largely determine what the work communicates to him. The reader brings to the work personality traits, memories of past events, present needs and preoccupations, a particular mood of the moment, and a particular physical condition. These and many other elements in a never-to-be duplicated combination determine his response to the particular contribution of the text. (P.42)

We can see that meaning and interpretation generated from a literary work is a by-product of the reader's experience of the original text together with the meaning embedded within the text. This meaning emerges through the transaction which occurs when the readers engage their life experience, personality, background with the original text which leads to interpretative authority.

Reader-response theory is based on constructivism which is a philosophy of learning founded on the basis that, by reflecting on our experiences, we construct our own understanding of the world we live in (Grellet, 2003). Individuals create their own form of learning which they use to make sense of their experiences. Reader-response approach is having a growing influence on EFL literature classes (Carlisle, 2000).

According to Savvidou (2004), this approach views the reading process as a transaction between readers and the text in which they interact with the text by interacting with past experience, beliefs, expectations and assumptions, and create meaning as the result of this transaction. The emergent meanings are not inherent in the text itself but are introduced by the author and generated from the text by the reader (Grellet, 2003). Readers can construct their own meaning from the text according to their own preferences of interpretation and personal background. With the application of reader-response, readers are allowed to question the author's values against their own; to differentiate between fiction and reality; to discuss and evaluate forms of narration and implied cultural values of the author.

According to Grellet, the reader-response approach aims to encourage learners to respond to the text and freely express their own ideas, opinions and feeling. The main concern of the learners should be 'how they feel', rather than 'what they understand'. Therefore, from the perspective of the teachers, they should not expect just one 'correct interpretation' but also accept 'multiple interpretations' (Rosenblatt, 1995). Grellet (2003) points out that "Multiple interpretations encourage creative and critical thinking to take place in an atmosphere where there are no threats or any pressure to learn for the correct answer or to compete for the best interpretation" (P. 68).

Mitchell (1993) mentions the influential impact of reader-response in the literature classroom on the way the students view texts and how they see their role as readers. It enables students to learn to make their own critical interpretation by relating what they read from the text to their personal background and life experience rather than relying on a teacher or critic to give them a single, standard interpretation of a text. The result will be a variety of possible responses and interpretations of students for any literary work as there is no single 'right' answer or 'correct' interpretation. The interaction of the students' personal background and experience to create their own interpretation of the stories might be applicable to the model of critical thinking of Barnett (1997). In his model of critical thinking development, Barnett talks of the need for those seeking critical thinking to develop their social and personal knowledge. In other words, as society places different kinds of value on different kinds of knowledge, individuals need to be able to be aware of the wider social context and see how their own concepts of what counts as knowledge are influenced. Such self-critical awareness includes the idea of defying what is 'given' – rather than merely seeking acceptance within a given knowledge. Barnett calls this the 'transformatory' purpose of higher education – that we are not only changed as individuals through our learning, but as a result may also make change in the world. Applying reader response theory in reading literature will bring the same outcome. The reader's role in interpreting texts is emphasized in reader-response theory.

This theory rejects the idea of a single, fixed meaning in every literary work. Instead, the theory embraces the idea that the individual creates his / her own meaning through a 'transaction with the text based on personal experience. Each interpretation is personal and distinctive because each reader brings their own emotions, concerns, life experiences, and knowledge to their reading.

This can lead to the development of three domains of critical thinking proposed by Barnett's: knowledge (critical reason), the self (critical self-reflection) and the world (critical action).

The development of knowledge can be seen in students' process of transaction and interpretation, first they have to apply their knowledge to the story they are reading in order to reflect what they think according to their personal associations. Next, through the transaction involving their personal experiences and knowledge, students can intuitively develop the domain of self in form of critical self-reflection by critically reflecting on what they read. Finally, the students' domain of the world can be developed when they apply that knowledge and reflection to their lives outside the classroom later on in form of critical action. Meaning in literature is not to be perceived in a ready-made state, but must be actively and critically interpreted by the reader. Thus, according to Mora and Welch (1997), teaching reader-response encourages students to be aware of what they bring to texts as readers. It also helps them to be aware of the specificity of their own cultural backgrounds and to understand the cultural background of others.

The transaction involving students' personal life experience and cultural background knowledge in reading literature also relates to Bailin et al.'s (1999) intellectual resources as proposed in their framework. It is clear that this approach enables students to apply their background knowledge to text interpretation in order to create their own understanding and meaning. Through the application of this approach, students tend to be more open-minded about multiple interpretations, one of the important habits of mind that will lead to accomplished critical thinking. Moreover, reader-response also helps students to become better critical readers who know the strategies useful in thinking critically.

Because their personal responses are valued, students in reader-response classrooms

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become active learners who perceive themselves as having both the authority and the

responsibility to make judgments about what they read. Through interaction with their peers, students learn about diverse ideas and interpretation which helps to broaden their perspective.

English language enjoys the same status, foreign rather than second language. In EFL settings, students have some experience in the three literature teaching models including their related teaching approaches from the native literature classes which they have experienced since the early school levels. Studying the native literature in a native context makes a significant contribution to the resources which English education students bring to their study of L2 English literature. At school levels, all students have to study their native literature as a compulsory course. They start studying less complicated literary texts such as the abridged literary texts in the early years of school, and move to the most complicated ones by reading the authentic great literary texts in secondary school level. In general, the teaching practice of the foreign literature is conducted in the same manner as the native literature teaching is done. That is, the teacher takes the leading role in class by giving lectures and also group discussions and student presentations when possible.

In the early school levels, the focus of native literature classes is generally on the cultural model which provides understanding in content and cultural comprehension of the literary text rather than the explicit analysis of literary language or poetic devices. Then, in the higher school levels, teaching practices become more complicated by also focusing on the language-based model through the application of stylistic approaches. Emphasis is put on the analysis of literary text in terms of narrative structure, grammatical structures, plot-pattern, and literary terms such as simile, metaphor, personification and so on. At this level, the students have to learn how to read and interpret literary text analytically through the application of reader-

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response theory which requires them to bring out their own personal experience and feeling to interact with the text.

It is noticeable that the students join English literature classes at university levels with some resources from literature classes that should facilitate their reading, comprehension and analysis of English literature. However, they do not have prior experience in reading and studying English literature at secondary school level. The English that they learn at that stage is focused primarily on vocabulary, sentence structure, and grammatical structure. Their limited language ability and background knowledge is probably the reason they still encounter problems in comprehending and analyzing the meaning of the literary texts at the university level.

To sum up, from the approaches to teaching literature discussed above, it is observable that each approach has its own distinctive way of helping students deal with literary texts. Each helps them develop critical thinking in a different way by focusing on a different aspect. It is clear that all literature teaching approaches have their own advantages and drawbacks. According to Savvidou (2004), the three approaches to teaching literature are different in terms of their emphasis on the text. For the cultural model, the text is viewed as a cultural artifact. For the language model, the text is used as a focus for grammatical and structural analysis. For the personal growth model, the text is the motivation for personal growth activities. What Savvidou argues for is an integrated model which includes elements of all the three approaches which would make literature accessible to learners linguistically, methodologically and motivationally. Here the idea of an integrated model in literature teaching is echoed by Carter (2007) who argued that:

...there is no single 'correct' way of analysis and interpreting the text, nor any single correct approach. In this sense the appropriate method is very much a

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hands-on approach taking each text on its own merits, using what the reader knows, what the reader is aiming for in his or her learning context, and

employing all of the available tools, both in terms of language knowledge and methodological approaches. (P .10)

From an analytical standpoint , what Savvidou (2004), and Carter (2007) argue for, i.e. the integrated approach to literature teaching, is practical particularly when applying it in conjunction with the two theoretical models of critical thinking proposed by Barnett (1997) and Bailin et al. (1999). Through the integrated application of the three literature teaching models, the students will have chances to gain the necessary intellectual resources to accomplish critical thinking proposed by Bailin et al. What they will achieve is not only resources like background knowledge, but also other necessary resources such as language resources, certain habits of mind in thinking critically, and possession of critical concepts. Then, with the sufficient intellectual resources, the students are prepared to practice their critical thinking in different domains and levels as proposed in Barnett's framework.

2.5.4.6 Language-Based Approach

Like the Stylistic approach, it emphasizes awareness of the language of literature and is a foundational stage for EFL learners. This approach, on the other hand, encourages students' responses to and experiences with literature, and it is seen to be more accessible to language learners than the Stylistic approach. Furthermore, the Language-Based approach calls for a variety of language instruction activities, such as brainstorming to activate background knowledge and make predictions, rewriting the endings of stories or summarizing plots, cloze procedures to build vocabulary and comprehension, and jigsaw readings to allow students to collaborate with others, form opinions, and engage in spirited debates.

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The language-based approach supports literature as a "great vehicle for CLT methodologies that result in four-skill English language development through engagement,

cooperation, peer teaching, and student freedom" (Van, 1975, p. 7). As a result, it stresses literary language awareness and encourages the implementation of a variety of language activities. Cloze processes, ending rewriting, brainstorming, summarizing, jigsaw reading, and other activities are used to contact literature.

2.6 Advantages of Teaching Literature

It would be worthwhile to briefly review some of the advantages to the use of literature in ELT and, especially, CLT. In essence, this is a response to a key question posed by Carter and Walker (1989), who ask, "Is there anything which literary texts can offer in the second or foreign language classroom which other texts cannot offer?" (p.6).

The advantages of literature in language teaching, and particularly in CLT, with its response and activities-based foundation, are rooted in the narrative character of literary texts, whichever genre of literature they come from. Here it is worth noting an observation by Abbs and Richardson (1990):

We are all narrative makers. We spend much of our lives telling our own stories and listening to the stories of others. Events happen to us, we put words around them and- depending on what we can remember, how we feel and who is listening-narrate them in different ways. These stories are our own personal stories, our own narratives. They come outof the incidents, accidents and encounters of our own lives. Often, at night, before falling asleep, we go through the story of our day's experiences and when we see our friends we exchange these stories, constantly adding to them as we grow older. (p.6)

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Chambers (1984) highlights “Story is the fundamental grammar of all thought and communication” (p. 59). As a result, literature, given its narrative nature, has as

its starting point links to a kind of experience not only common to, but special within, the lives of students, whatever their cultural background. This is not the case with many other kinds of language learning materials; hence, literature begins on a strong note in terms of establishing a unique appeal within the ELT framework. Literary materials construct experiences or 'content' in a non-trivial way which gives voice to complexities and subtleties not always present in other types of text. A further feature of the literariness of texts is that ambiguities and indeterminacies inexperience are preserved thus providing many natural opportunities for discussion and for resolution of differing interpretations. Literary texts generate many questions about what means what and how things come to mean what they mean. A key point which emerges from these comments by Carter and Walker is that, generally, learners cannot respond to literary texts in quite the same ways they do to nonliterary texts. This necessitates different sorts of

responses which match perfectly with the aims and methodologies central to CLT by requiring learners to interact with the texts in such a way that they must use, in creative ways, the target language they are seeking to master. Thus, literature, especially when linked with CLT, places learners in a unique role that maximizes chances for communicative use of the target language.

In summary, literature offers several benefits to ESL classes. It can be useful in developing linguistic knowledge both on a usage and use level. Secondly, to the extent that students enjoy reading literature, it may increase their motivation to interact with a text and thus, ultimately increase their reading proficiency. Finally, an examination of a foreign culture through literature may increase their understanding of that culture and perhaps spur their own

creation of imaginative works.

Conclusion

This chapter portrayed a conceptualization of literature teaching related to critical thinking. It also argued the importance of teaching literature deemed a source of critical thinking and one of the most crucial skills with regard to EFL learners. The utilization of literary texts in the language classroom to accomplish critical thinking was presented afterwards. Besides, this chapter introduced a series of criteria that help select suitable literary texts. These criteria are derived from different scholars' views.

According to the literature in this chapter, it is clear that literature studies is a discipline that fits well with all three domains described by Barnett , particularly when it is supported by the application of Bailin et al.'s (1999) intellectual resources to accomplish critical thinking. With the application of intellectual resources such as certain habits of mind and knowledge of strategies in thinking critically, students can practise critical self-reflection from what they have learned in the literary texts they read. The knowledge and self-reflection they achieve from literature considered a 'life in miniature' will enable them to perform critical action in various forms such as problem-solving, practical decision making and so on.



Chapter Three

*Literature and Criticality at
the Algerian University*



Introduction

This chapter provides a brief overview of the state of literature and critical thinking skills in the Algerian university system. More specifically, it aims to highlight and discuss how literature is used and taught at the university. The chapter begins with a brief description of the context and provides an overview of the status of the English language in the Algerian educational system. The teaching of literature in both, high school and university, is then discussed in detail. Last but not least, this chapter emphasizes the objectives of teaching literature.

3.1 Situational Analysis of the Research

Algeria, officially the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, is a country in North Africa. It is considered part of the Maghreb region of North Africa. It has a semi-arid geography, with most of the population living in the fertile north and the Sahara dominating the geography of the south.¹

The official languages of Algeria are Arabic and Tamazight. The majority of Algeria's population is Arab, practicing Islam. The native Algerian Arabic is the main spoken language. French also serves as an administrative and educational language in some contexts.²

Although French has no official status in Algeria, it has one of the largest Francophone populations in the world, and French is widely used in government, media (newspapers, radio, local television), and both the education system (from primary school onwards) and academia due to Algeria's colonial history. It can be regarded as a lingua franca of Algeria. Following a period during which the Algerian government tried to phase out French, in recent decades the government has changed course and reinforced the study of French, and some television programmes are broadcast in the language.³

3.1.1 Education

Since the 1970s, in a centralised system that was designed to significantly reduce the rate of illiteracy, the Algerian government introduced a decree by which school

¹ [Algeria — Wikipédia \(wikipedia.org\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Algeria)

² [Algeria — Wikipédia \(wikipedia.org\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Algeria)

³ [Algeria — Wikipédia \(wikipedia.org\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Algeria)

attendance became compulsory for all children aged between 6 and 15 years who have the ability to track their learning through the 20 facilities built since independence, now the literacy rate is around 92.6%. Since 1972, Arabic is utilized as the language of instruction during the first nine years of schooling. From the third year, French is taught and it is also the language of instruction for science classes. The students can also learn English, Italian, Spanish and German.⁴

In 2008, new programmes at the elementary appeared, therefore the compulsory schooling does not start at the age of six anymore, but at the age of five. Apart from the 122 private schools, the Universities of the State are free of charge. After nine years of primary school, students can go to the high school or to an educational institution. The school offers two programmes: general or technical. At the end of the third year of secondary school, students pass the exam of the baccalaureate, which allows once it is successful to pursue graduate studies in universities and institutes. Education is officially compulsory for children between the ages of six and 15. In 2008, the illiteracy rate for people over 10 was 22.3%, 15.6% for men and 29.0% for women.⁵

Algeria has 26 universities and 67 institutions of higher education, which must accommodate a million Algerians and 80,000 foreign students in 2008. The University of Algiers, founded in 1879, is the oldest, it offers education in various disciplines (law, medicine, science and letters). Twenty-five of these universities and almost all of the institutions of higher education were founded after the independence of the country.⁶

Even if some of them offer instruction in Arabic like areas of law and the economy, most of the other sectors as science and medicine continue to be provided in French and English. Among the most important universities, there are the University of Sciences and Technology Houari Boumediene, the University of Mentouri Constantine, and University of Oran Es-Senia.⁷

3.2 The Status and Role of English in Algeria

Many theorists such as Baker (2003) agree that English has been established as the worldwide language of all domains; nowadays English language imposes itself in every single field of human beings' daily life. People used to define an illiterate as a

⁴ [Algeria — Wikipédia \(wikipedia.org\)](http://wikipedia.org)

⁵ [Algeria — Wikipédia \(wikipedia.org\)](http://wikipedia.org)

⁶ [Algeria — Wikipédia \(wikipedia.org\)](http://wikipedia.org)

⁷ [Algeria — Wikipédia \(wikipedia.org\)](http://wikipedia.org)

person who neither reads nor writes, but today illiteracy refers with no exaggeration to the person who does not master English and the computing sciences. Thanks to the economic tendency of the country that the English language found its way to the Algerian people in the early 60's and 70's. This is stated clearly in the British Council Profile on ELT in Algeria 1975 "Algeria's interests in the field of petroleum, natural gas, iron, steel, orientate her increasingly to the English speaking west... Nevertheless, and despite its importance, the English luage remained and is still in a perpetual competition with French" (cited in Khelloufi,1983, P. 56).

The fact that the use of the English language is restricted in use only in classrooms is systematically reflected on the kind of the Algerian learners' language proficiency that may vary between average and poor. Classroom exposure to English remains insufficient to master a foreign language and meet learners' communicative needs as explained by Mountford and Mackay (1978):

When English as a foreign language is taught to children at the primary school and early secondary levels of education, it is generally taught with a general aim in mind – that is, it is regarded as a 'good thing' for them to learn a foreign language as a part of a broad education. There is usually, however, no immediate and specific requirement for such children to make use of the language in any communicative situation. (p.2)

Because of this, syllabus designers and policy makers have led some educational reforms stressing the fact that all that is taught to primary, middle and secondary level children is not communicative knowledge of the English language use, but knowledge of how the syntax and lexical rules of English operate (Mackay, 1978). Hence, students go to University lacking many aspects of the language. This lack affects negatively their performances like the communicative competence which is required in the utilitarian purposes. They encounter difficulties in communicating mainly when they travel abroad, look for a job or simply when they write correctly (Savvidou, 2004).

According to Brumfit (1979), the problem lies in the fact that students still struggle, show weaknesses and remain deficient in using the language for communicative purposes despite the fact that they have been exposed to this language for years. That is why, immediate reconsideration and urgent change must occur on both English language status, and the way it is viewed and taught by the Algerians.

3.3 Education and Reform in Algeria

Many countries have been implementing a series of reforms at all levels of education. Algeria is no exception, and in this era of globalization this is not something new. Educational reforms around the world aim to meet the needs of a rapidly changing social and economic world. In this regard, the United States and Canada are good examples of countries that have made innovative reforms since the 1980s. According to Waks (2007), the publication of « A Nation at Risk » in 1983 led to a series of educational reforms in the United States, followed by similar reforms in Canada and many other industrialized countries.

3.3.1 Reform and High School EFL Teaching

In 2002, Algerian politicians planned a reform of national education. The most important change in these reforms that is relevant to this study is that English is taught in the 6th grade (high school) two grades earlier than before. This large-scale reform movement, which began in July 2002, became the basis for the teacher-led model of a student-centered approach to learning. This reflects Roeger's (2006) educational mission, which emphasizes values such as "autonomy" and "responsibility for learning" that actively involve students in the learning process. Intentions vary widely between education systems. However, according to Perrenaud (2000), it is clear that the driving force behind educational reform is the desire to adapt the goals of education to modern realities and to provide students with an adequate education.

Holding this view, the ex-Minister of National Education Benbouzid, in his introduction to Xavier Roegiers' (2006) *L'Approche par Compétence dans l'Ecole Algérienne* says "Une réforme globale visant l'édification d'un système éducatif cohérent et performant s'impose donc aujourd'hui pour permettre à la société algérienne de faire face aux multiples défis du 21ème siècle (A comprehensive reform to build a

coherent and effective educational system is therefore necessary today to allow the Algerian society to face the multiple challenges of the 21st century)” (p.7).

Benbouzid also argues that schools should develop Algerian society in terms of knowledge and know-how. According to him, the reform also aims to improve knowledge and skills in society. Roegiers (2006) defines school reform in Algeria as having two main challenges: internal challenges (*défis d'ordre interne*) and external challenges (*défis d'ordre externe*). In the first category, namely internal challenges, it can be seen that Algerian schools can promote the values of tolerance and dialogue and prepare students to exercise their citizenship in a democratic society. That is, improving the efficiency of the education system in accordance with the needs of Algeria today. Internal factors also include the continued recovery of the labor market. The second category is characterized by the modernization of the economy, the development of scientific and technical knowledge, the use of new information and communication technologies and learning how to use them in various areas of life.

The education reform in Algeria hinges upon three main pillars: teacher training, pedagogical reform and the general restructuring of the education system. For the effective implementation of educational policies and the introduction of innovative working methods for teachers, it is necessary to improve the appropriate qualifications of teachers. From the perspective of the current reform, special attention is paid to raising the status of teachers, increasing their capacities and mastering didactic content. Pedagogical reforms include many measures, such as the introduction of new curricula and textbooks for all school subjects. Reform of the education system is underway, such as the generalization of kindergarten, the shortening of primary school to 5 years and the extension of secondary school to 4 years (Benbouzid, 2003).

3.3.1.1 New Approaches

Schools nowadays face many difficulties. Because of a technologically advanced economy and a highly complex society, they must now meet the new requirements and hold students to higher academic standards than in the past. Because of this, in order to provide their students with access to information and knowledge sources that enable them to investigate concepts, gather and integrate knowledge, and formulate and resolve problems, teachers must possess not only subject matter expertise but also knowledge of

curriculum resources and technologies.

To create supportive environments at home and at school, teachers must also understand how to organize student interactions, collaborate with other educators, and work with parents. Put differently, educators and students have taken on new roles that call for, on the one hand, fresh perspectives, sensible teaching methods, and sufficient curricula. In order to meet academic standards, schools in nations like Algeria must implement new theories and innovations.

3.3.1.1.1 Competency-Based Approach (CBA)

The Algerian Educational System has implemented the CBA to teach all subjects, including foreign languages, in accordance with the recommendations made by the National Commission for the Reform of Education. CBA is learner-centered in that it views students as responsible, active agents in their own learning, in contrast to the traditional teacher-oriented teaching paradigms that were designed to impart knowledge to passive students. The emphasis in this approach is on the learner, whose needs and interests are prioritized, rather than the teacher, who is in charge of imparting knowledge to passive students. Furthermore, the programme seeks to develop self-sufficient individuals who can adapt to the ever-changing world and apply the knowledge and abilities they receive in the classroom to solve real-world issues (Chun, 1994).

Due to its introduction during the first year of middle school, English is given greater prominence. The recent reform, as previously mentioned, led to the creation of new curricula and textbooks in every subject, including foreign languages like English. There are EFL textbooks and syllabuses designed specifically for secondary education (Benrabah, 2001)

3.3.1.2 Objectives of EFL Teaching English

The importance of the English language in the secondary education system is emphasized by the authors of the programmes. For them, English is the language of science and technology, and learning this language contributes to their harmonious integration in modern times by fully participating in the language community that uses English in all kinds of interactions. This participation, based on the exchange of ideas and experiences, allows Algerian students to get to know themselves and others better (Brumfit, 1979).

In addition to the acquisition of language and communication skills, transversal skills such as critical thinking, tolerance, openness to the world and respect for oneself and others are also considered important elements of a CBA education. Simply put, after learning English, students acquire a worldview that allows them to share knowledge and become "future citizens" with access to universal science, technology and culture (Benrabah, 2001).

The Algerian Secondary School syllabuses are based on principal objectives which will consolidate the competencies acquired through the four main skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. These objectives are worded in the syllabuses as follows:

1. Provide the learners with the necessary linguistic tools (grammar, vocabulary, syntax, and pronunciation) which allows them follow with success studies in English at university or in a professional milieu.
2. Allow the learners to understand the English language and use it in different communicative situations.
3. Develop learners' intellectual and mental abilities like analysis, synthesis and evaluation through a series of exercises.
4. Promote learners' strategies of learning and of self-evaluation to enable them expand and deepen their knowledge.
5. Learn the rational use of oral and written texts in English in order to prepare the learners for their future professional lives (SE 2 and SE 3 syllabuses).
6. Enable the learners to learn and use technological tools like the Internet which are of great relevance to their inquiry (Al-Hazmi, 2006).

In their approach, the authors of the three high school programmes believe that today's education must meet the needs of students by creating environments that increase students' autonomy and responsibility for their learning. To achieve these objectives and the general objectives mentioned above, CBA must be adopted. (Benrabah, 2001)

According to its designers, CBA is indeed suitable for achieving the proposed objectives. These learner-centered approaches focus on social constructivist and cognitivist approaches to learning, which see learning as the creative construction of

knowledge through social interactions with other learners and provide methods for achieving cognitive goals. In addition, the curriculum should implement this approach to consolidate the skills acquired in English in recent years. These broad skills are defined as speaking English, interpreting spoken and written texts, and producing spoken and written texts (Khelloufi, 1983).

3.3.2 21st Century University Education

In his study, Coleman (1966) identified a number of factors that facilitate learning. Among these were the tangible components of the educational infrastructure, which includes textbooks, language labs, classrooms, and libraries.

These days, information and communications technologies would support these physical components. Austin (1999) brought up the topic of motivation in students, stating that the level of physical and psychological energy a student invested in their academic experience determined their level of involvement. In this context, a highly involved student is someone who studies a lot, spends time on campus, participates actively in group activities, and interacts with teachers and other students frequently. Thus, compared to the average undergraduate, underachievers and less successful students engage in these activities less.

According to Astin, the best use of higher education resources can be achieved by prioritizing student motivation and engagement over subject matter and technique. For this reason, all university policies and practices—administrative as well as academic—should be assessed with an eye towards promoting student involvement. Moreover, undergraduates' experience in higher education is enhanced by university faculty members who are successful in engaging students. Al-Hazmi (2006), who discussed the difficulties students face in obtaining enough infrastructure and professional resources to educate the growing number of people, shared these opinions.

3.3.2.1 LMD System Implementation

Algerian universities first adopted a system based on the French model, which meant that university faculties were also autonomous in writing the curriculum. This system resulted in duplication of academic offerings and complete loss of credits when students changed programmes. Some reforms aimed at modernizing the university

system were introduced in 1971, and a major reform took place in 1988. However, universities still follow the French model and French is still widely used for educational purposes (Benrabah, 1999).

Like other developing countries, Algeria faces the challenges of the new century to meet the needs of a society shaped by globalization and technology. In this process, many governments around the world are taking steps to implement the Bologna Process, and Algeria is no exception. The result of this process was the launch of the LMD (Bachelor, Master, Doctorate) system in 2004, which attempted to reposition higher education in terms of globalization and competitiveness. To achieve this goal, extensive architectural, organizational and Pedagogical changes have been made. These changes are important because they are intended to impact the learning process as well as the teaching and learning profession (ICC, 2002).

3.3.2.2 LMD System and EFL Teaching

Within this system, EFL academics are required to innovate some of their practices. They need to:

- develop the contents of their pedagogical programmes instead of complying with the national programme set by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research,
- adopt the learner-centered approach instead of the teacher-centered instruction.
- and provide their students with on-going assessment instead of a one-shot exam at the end of each semester.

According to the above requirements and official documents, the positive position of the system has been fulfilled. The latter is explained by the emphasis on education, reform and student autonomy that this system, LMD, emphasizes. If we look at the term education in its linguistic sense, it mainly refers to intellectual, moral and social education in a university environment. However, "educa" (Latin: e-ducere), which originally meant "to instruct," properly means "to bring out or bring forth the latent

powers of an individual" (Cassel's Encyclopedic Dictionary, 1904). This definition takes us to the heart of the field.

Recent approaches to education treat education as an individual. This personality is the most important factor in this subject that everyone pays attention to. This wonderful person is a student. Based on the initial definition mentioned at the beginning, education aims to identify the hidden potential of the learner. That is, learners should be viewed as individuals with hidden, latent, indirect, implicit, understood, unexpressed, innate, internal, natural, reasoning abilities, which are referred to as powers in the above definition (Lo & Hylland, 2007). Our idea is that our education must be based on this student as an individual, as a person responding to specific conditions. It is autonomous because it can create, realize, think and change.

3.3.3 Learner Centeredness and Autonomy

Autonomy in the context of learning refers to a concept introduced by Henry Holec (1981). It is a fundamental contribution to the field of language education and remains a central theme in the field of language. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, many publications addressed this topic. Learner autonomy in language learning has had a significant impact on English language learning over the past two decades. Today's education systems place a strong emphasis on differentiating and targeting individual learners with diverse abilities and interests. The curriculum iterates to give students freedom of choice and creativity in input and output. Student-centredness and autonomy respond to this as they shift the focus from teaching to learning. This allows students to do different tasks and not everyone can do the same thing at the same time. They focus on reading and journal writing and emphasize self-assessment. There are many things teachers need to consider when implementing student autonomy in the classroom (Waks, 2007).

3.3.4 Collaboration and Group Work

The sociocultural theory emphasizes the role of peer interaction and cooperation in second language development. From a sociocultural point of view, learning is an activity in a social situation. Higher cognitive functions occur first at social and interpsychic levels and later at psychological and intrapsychic levels (Vygotsky, 1978). Students and newcomers build their knowledge with more competent people and

experts. Researchers who apply sociocultural theory to the study of L2 learning suggest that because learners can act as both novices and experts, they can positively influence each other's development (Storch, 2004).

Because no two students have the same strengths and weaknesses, when working together they are able to provide informed support to each other and combine various resources to achieve levels of performance that exceed their individual levels of ability (Ohta, 2001).

An example of language use is the collaborative conversation that occurs in LRE, where students work together to solve grammar and vocabulary problems (Watanabe & Swain, 2007). For example, in writing courses, much research in recent years has focused on the benefits of collaborative writing tasks that require students to work in pairs throughout the writing process (Storch, 2004).

From a sociocultural perspective, research has shown that collaborative writing activities encourage students to reflect on their language use and collaborate to solve language problems (Watanabe & Swain, 2007). By integrating language resources for problem solving, students engage in language-based cognitive activities that promote the co-construction of language knowledge and higher levels of performance (Beauvais & Passerault, 2011).

3.3.5 Adoption of Innovations

Theoretically, “the purpose of educational change presumably is to help schools accomplish their goals more effectively by replacing some structures, programs and/or practices with better ones” (Fullan, 1991, P.15). In other words, we are not satisfied with the current situation and continue the educational reform. Education reform happens when we sense something is wrong, when others step forward, and when we sit still so we take action to improve the situation. We often do not know what we want and questions of what and how should be at the heart of change (Ibid).

According to Fullan (1991), if there is no need for change, there is no need for change. It takes time to be considered an integral part of the system. Moreover, change is seen as a long process of implementation and adaptation to ensure the most favorable conditions for new innovations to work well. Therefore, changes in education should be

accepted as a process rather than an event.

3.3.5.1 Teacher's Role

According to writers like Clark (2003), the influence of the Internet on education in recent years has led to significant changes in the roles and competencies of teachers by fostering the idea of an open, global, and flexible learning environment. Within the context of this educational landscape, the teacher's job is to manage students' learning by simultaneously developing new instructional models that are placed in freshly constructed virtual environments, serving as a guide and instrument to ensure a thorough learning process via the Internet.

As for Lo (2007), a knowledge manager is someone who can effectively manage a student's knowledge, skills, and abilities while inspiring them and making the most of their opportunities for both individual and group learning. As a result, the teacher's role becomes more complex and evolves from being a single information provider to one that includes orchestrating, learning, assessing, researching, designing appropriate learning scenarios, integrating new ICT media, facilitating and guiding the learning process, and collaborating with other educators and students.

The ICC report from 2002, which focused primarily on the function of foreign language teachers, outlines the knowledge and abilities that educators must possess in order to successfully incorporate ICT. The report thus discusses the development of technical, scientific, digital, critical, linguistic, cultural, and mediation literacy in addition to the acquisition of technical, organizational, and conceptual skills.

3.3.5.2 Learner's Role

In order for the learners, who are 21st-century citizens, to become proficient users of new tools and resources, they must be provided with access to didactic and technical strategies. They are in charge of their own education and are independent. Furthermore, they must develop the capacity to use technology effectively at technical, critical, and rational levels in addition to the skill and ability to meet technological demands. Therefore, the biggest obstacles a teacher would encounter when it comes to teaching students would be to emphasize the various educational needs and attributes of each student while emphasizing teaching them to search, understand, use critical thinking,

and communicate. To be clear, Cabero (1998) says :

.... the final goal is to enable learners to manage themselves in the society of the future, which -as it seems- will be the society of learning, and it will be a life-long learning. Just like the teacher, the learner definitely has to adjust to a new role in the learning process. (p.5)

They have to take on new responsibilities and often work without supervision. According to Cabero (1998), to succeed in a technology-rich environment, students develop certain fundamental skills and abilities, such as adapting to a constantly changing environment, working in a team, and using creativity to solve problems...etc. The ICC report (2002) documents many of the benefits of the new institution. Students have the opportunity to publish and distribute their work to a wider audience. Activities encourage students to learn rather than passively receive knowledge, promoting the idea that students are actively involved in the learning process.

In the new technological environment, students are given the opportunity to work independently and become more aware of their own learning process and the knowledge they have acquired, making them more aware of the content and the goals to be achieved. The introduction of ICT in English courses mainly promotes communication. "Learning on-line is different from learning off-line in another important way: there is much more learning and much less teaching (...) at least there is much less teaching as it is typically done in off-line settings" as stated by Peterson and Facemyer (1996, P.55).

3.4Curriculum

The term curriculum has as many definitions as there are authors in the given field. The terminology used by North American researchers differs significantly from that used by British researchers. For Americans, curriculum and course are interchangeable, but the British distinguish between the two terms; curriculum and course are not the same (Badger, 2000).

A course is usually defined as a plan that defines precisely the elements that students must learn about a particular subject in a school or university. A well- structured course fulfills several functions. It is an agreement between teacher and students

on what and why to learn, as a general course plan and also as a cognitive plan to share with students (Baker, 2009).

Course planning determines the success or failure of a course. A carefully prepared curriculum is one of the valuable documents that can be provided to students. This can prevent misunderstandings about what should be studied and why, including reading choices and activities, standards for assessment and evaluations, and assessment practices (Cumming, 2001).

3.4.1 The Teaching of Literature in Algeria

In respect to the significance of literature in EFL classroom, many reasons have been set up by scholars and educationalists to support literature teaching. Lazar (2000) states that literature is a source of pleasure and emotion sanctification. It can develop advanced thinking chops similar as heightening one's experience and provoke intellectual productivity.

Through any literary work, be it prose, lyric, or play, it can take down the learners to fully different places, time ages, beliefs and societies (Kramch,1993). Besides, literature is regarded a source of provocation due to its authenticity. It exposes learners to colourful stylistic kinds of the target language (Hirvela, 2005).

As far as secondary school textbooks are concerned, the texts include a lot of authentic reading portions from colourful erudite workshop, journals, and publications from the United States and the United Kingdom that can help scholars broaden their knowledge, where they explore the history, where they learn about American and British educational systems, and where they can express and describe their passions (ICC, 2008).

3.4.2 Teaching of Literature in Algerian Universities

The practice of teaching literature in the Algerian universities is done through transmissive approach. According to Savignon (2002), it is an approach wherein the school-teacher is the source of knowledge to the learners, whereas, learners admit input, and their roles are lowered to learning and rote literacy. This approach considered literacy as a process of acquiring data and knowledge about literature including content of colourful movements, literal backgrounds, and characteristics of different stripes.

Beach's explanation of this approach provides acceptable description to the practice of teaching literature in Algerian universities. In simpler words, literature classrooms are more teacher centered settings, wherein the teacher is viewed as the sole source of knowledge. In this sense, the teacher addresses and explains all the way. On the other hand, learners' participation is reduced to the minimum (Khaldi, 2020).

Empirical studies about the teaching styles of literature at university revealed numerous shortcomings. According to khaldi (2020), teachers of literature dominate the classroom, as they impose their own interpretation of the literary work, giving learners little space to develop their judgments.

Guerroudj (2015) in his study about the practice of teaching literature in Algerian educational settings, came up with the conclusion that literature is not duly taken advantage of in language classroom, to ensure learners' engagement with the learning material. According to him, the operation of this approach lowered the possibilities of active literacy. English as a foreign language is mandatory in Algeria's mainstream education system, both in middle and secondary schools. The learning material used is locally created to align with the country's educational approach, and the EFL textbooks must be approved by the Ministry of National Education. Whenever there is a change in teaching methods or approaches, new textbooks are developed to reflect these changes.

3.4.3 Reasons for Using Literature as a Teaching Tool

Many attempts have been made to justify the use of literature as a teaching tool for foreign languages. Researchers have cited a number of advantages. Carter and Long (1991) presented three models to explain why teachers use literature:

- ✓ the cultural model,
- ✓ the language model,
- ✓ the personal development model.

The cultural model is a valuable means for learners to deepen their knowledge about the culture and society of the target language. This type of knowledge is difficult to obtain

from other sources (Keshavarzi, 2012). Literature can be seen as a product of social and cultural conditions, which are expressed in an artistic way. Therefore, literary texts can be used to deeply engage with and encourage connections to the target culture (Lazar, 1993).

3.4.4 Challenges in Integrating Literary Texts in English Language Teaching

EFL teachers encounter several challenges in incorporating literary texts in EFL instruction despite the fact that integrating literature in EFL classrooms offers various useful benefits. The language of literature is one of the most common problems encountered by EFL teachers. Many EFL teachers as well as students consider literature to be a hindrance because literary language is seen as sophisticated and incomprehensible. In addition, the size and length of a literary text is considered to be one of the major challenges.

For some EFL teachers and students, long texts may seem more difficult, while others assert that short literary texts incorporate more difficulties because they do not offer extended contextual support and repetition that do offer longer texts (Duff & Maley, 1990). Finally, literature and literary texts can bring problems if they are seen as carrying an undesirable freight of cultural connotations (Floris, 2004).

All in all, EFL teachers should consider these challenging factors in incorporating literature in ELT to enhance EFL teaching and learning. Understanding these challenges will enable English instructors to identify areas that need improvement so that they can best use the literature in English language teaching.

3.4.5 Ways of Integrating Literary Texts in EFL Instruction

Most scholars admit the various advantages of literature in the field of language teaching, but there is no consensus on the incorporation of literary texts in teaching English language. It is difficult to think of a universal way to introduce literary texts in the EFL classroom that would suit the needs and interests of all EFL learners. For example, some prioritize grammar and vocabulary while others focus on the stylistic features of the text (Bobkina & Dominguez, 2014).

McKay (1982) argued that the literature used in EFL teaching should be highly selected. It must be linguistically appropriate to the level of learners. Out of this, there would be an unauthentic relationship with literature. Hence, the deliberate selection of literary texts can greatly help to overcome the obstacles of linguistic difficulties and lack of cultural knowledge. The implementation of sound pedagogical practices would be of paramount importance after selecting the appropriate literary text based on the learners' needs.

Incorporating literature into English language teaching is crucial for EFL instructors to determine the best approach to use the resources provided by literary texts to improve the language mastery of EFL students (Bobkina & Dominguez, 2014). Van (2009) presented six approaches to integrating literature in language instruction.

Alasmari and Khan (2018) includes the following approaches:

- (1) Stylistic,
- (2) Reader-Response,
- (3) Language-Based,
- (4) Critical Literary,
- (5) New Criticism, and
- (6) Structuralism.

Most scholars recommend the use of the first three methods of integrating literature in ELT. A stylistic approach considers literature as a discourse and studies it from a linguistic perspective. In other words, how literary texts exemplify the system of language. The aim of the stylistic analysis is to identify how the language code resources are used in the production of actual messages. The reader-response approach considers literature as an interaction between the text and the reader, or what changes occur in the reader's mind while reading a text, not as lingual objects printed on a page. Essentially and most importantly, the Language-Based Approach considers literature as an excellent vehicle for communicative language teaching methods that result in the development of four-language skills through interaction, collaboration, peer teaching and student independence. In the framework of this approach, EFL teachers can use role-play,

poetry, short stories, debate, cloze, prediction, and ranking tasks in language learning to integrate literature in ELT. This method is more practical and effective compared with other methods (Carter, 2011).

3.5 Students' Engagement Language Education

Students' engagement in learning is the gateway to higher academic achievement. In fact, it is not possible to think of success without ensuring a higher level of engagement. On the other hand, a lack of engagement is thought to be a source of enormous difficulties that would hinder the effective conduct of learning events. In a brief yet cogent definition of engagement, Kuh (2008) posits that this influencing variable refers to "The time and effort students devote to activities that are empirically linked to desired outcomes of college and what institutions do to induce students to participate in these activities" (P.7).

The responsibility of assuring engagement falls not only on the students' side but equally on the instructors' side in terms of both the input being imparted and the teaching methodology applied. Carini, Kuh, and Klein (2006) stress the indisputable significance of engagement in achieving successful language learning, stating that students' engagement is a pivotal predictor and a key premise of learning and personal development at large. Therefore, engagement is conducive to critical and reflective thinking as it exhorts students to practice, analyse, and synthesize matters from multiple perspectives. However, as asserted by Cora (2006), class passivity among students at higher education institutions is regrettably still a striking phenomenon that has to be seriously addressed in spite of the huge amounts of literature and research on promoting students' engagement.

3.6 Predominance of Transmissive Approaches to Teaching Literature

According to Hirvela (2005), within the transmissive approach to teaching literature, the teacher acts as being the all-know master who imparts knowledge to students. This approach focuses on learning in terms of acquiring facts and knowledge about literature. It focuses on what the teacher does in dispensing knowledge to the students, whose roles are often reduced to memorizing and rote learning. In addition, it emphasises the coverage of different literary movements, historical contexts, factual information on canonical texts and the specificities of different literary genres.

CHAPTER THREE: Literature and Criticality at the Algerian University

In the words of Hirvela (2005) “The transmission model is reflected in literature curricula in which the primary focus is on coverage of different literary periods, historical backgrounds, and biographical information about authors, literary concepts, or genre characteristics” (p.7). The statement above is, to a larger extent, a convenient description of the practice of literature teaching in the Algerian EFL context, wherein the teacher is the epicenter of the learning process and the master of classroom activities, in the sense that s/he teaches, talks, and explains all the way. In simpler words, a teacher is seen as a custodian of knowledge. Therefore, students’ participation is at a minimum, yet it might not be encouraged unless the teacher considers it appropriate for the flow and purpose of the course.

The predominance of such a traditional mode of teaching literature in the Algerian context has been reported in many investigative studies, particularly at the graduate level (Bouhend 2000; Kheladi, 2013; Guerroudj, 2015).

Bouhend (2000) and Kheladi (2013) investigated EFL students’ attitudes towards literature teaching methods at the graduate level. In their empirical studies, both researchers have clearly displayed the inadequacies and weaknesses of the applied teaching methods that were typically characterized by teacher-centeredness and, therefore, failed to engage students with literature because of the heavy reliance on a unique modality of teaching, i.e. lecturing about literature.

According to Kheladi (2013), teachers of literature tend to conceitedly impose their own interpretations of texts on students, leaving little space for them to form and back up their own literary judgment. Worse, however, both studies have reported a lack of motivation and enthusiasm among a large number of students to accept advanced literary studies.

Guerroudj (2015) investigated the practice of teaching literature in the Algerian context. Her study mainly focused on the relevance and significance of teaching literature both as a subject and as a resource. In this respect, the researcher concludes that literature is not adequately exploited to ensure students’ engagement with the literary component of the English language. According to him, little is done with

literature in the classroom as teachers continue to show a striking reluctance to transcend an informative teaching approach that reduces the students' active learning.

Given these inadequacies, the researcher recommended a shift towards a dialogic mode of teaching that champions the students' voice in classroom discourse. She has also emphasized the necessity of implementing an integrated approach to teaching literature that enhances students' linguistic competence, connects them with other cultures, and allows them to conceive the literary experience as a medium for self-expression. Therefore, it has been clarified that in the traditional approach to teaching literature, students become passive recipients of knowledge instead of active participants in building knowledge. This in turn hinders their creativity and impedes their critical thinking skills (Kheladi, 2013).

Schön (1983) argues that in a total contrast with the objectives of modern education, transmissive approaches generate a culture of learning that holds back self-directed learning and, therefore, contributes little to empowering life-long learning skills. Parkinson and Thomas (2004) opine that teacher centeredness in literary studies is an important issue that must be seriously addressed. They also contend that it mainly stems from 'the likely imbalance of knowledge and power between teacher and learner'. In other words, teachers' monopolization of the course is due to teachers' familiarity with the text and the environment in which it was produced as opposed to students who usually lack literary knowledge and expertise to competently handle literature, especially in EFL settings.

In the Algerian context, however, one should not put the blame entirely on teachers, since they sometimes find themselves compelled to resort to such typically informative and unidirectional approaches in order to cover "overloaded syllabi." In fact, teachers are bound by a syllabus that obliges them to introduce students to a survey of the literature of the whole century in due time to prepare them for formal examinations. In spite of the latest reforms in education, which, theoretically at least, have highlighted the need to develop a student-centred pedagogy whose fundamental objective is to help students acquire specific skills and competences that facilitate their learning and thinking, the teaching literature for examinations is indeed a sample example of the overall orientation of ELT in Algeria (Bouhend, 2000).

3.7 Some Strategies for Change

In line with the objective of developing a student-centred approach to teaching literature and therefore achieving genuine engagement with it, and based on the surveyed literature, we came up with the following suggestions.

3.7.1 Process-Oriented Literature Teaching

The traditional transmissive approach tends to diminish students' participation and involvement, as stated previously. It does not reflect the relevance and the true value of literature in the foreign language classroom. Instead, literature must capture and stimulate the interest of the students. This can only be achieved if the students strongly feel that what is presented to them, satisfies their needs and meets their concerns. The current literature teaching in most Algerian EFL classes is product-oriented, a teaching practice that is best expressed and succinctly summarised in the words of Littlewood (1986) when he posits that "Teaching literature as a product can be nothing but a setting wherein the teacher 'translates passages and dictates notes'" (P. 177). This is, however, not to entirely dismiss the role of the teacher as a source of knowledge, but one has to point to the fact that the teacher's role must not overshadow the students' involvement in learning.

The process-oriented approach to teaching literature has recently gained popularity in educational settings. According to Bolhuis (2003), the very assumption underlying such a teaching philosophy is that learning is perceived as a multifaceted process wherein students' interest is activated and their responses are endorsed and acknowledged. Bolhuis provides an insightful explanation of the core principles of process-oriented teaching. She asserts that within such a teaching philosophy, the teacher's task is to assist the students to gradually acquire the necessary competencies for regulating multiple learning components. This scaffolding paradigm stimulates them to be actively involved in autonomous knowledge building, reflecting on this knowledge and even testing it.

According to Boulhouis, the next principle is giving the affective aspect of learning a fair share of importance by paying special attention to students' emotional reactions. This principle is mainly based on fostering students' motivation and coping with the sources of anxiety and apprehension.

Last but not least, learning ought to be conceived as a social phenomenon within which the teacher's role is to inculcate and promote interpersonal and social skills, particularly collaborative skills, in the students. Furthermore, a process approach teaching emphasizes an explicit evaluation of how things have been done, spotting both strengths and weaknesses (Lin & Guey, 2004).

This is indeed a strong claim indicating the importance of feedback and assessment, in particular formative assessment, which has long been neglected in the Algerian EFL literature classroom due to the predominant teaching-to-test assessment policy. Moreover, within a process approach to literature teaching, more attention is centred on the language of the text, making students well aware of how meaning is conveyed and prompting them to exploit the literary text in advancing their language skills (Lazar, 2000). Therefore, many classroom activities can be used in this area with various degrees of complexity. These include, for instance, linguistic analysis of the text, summarizing texts, comparing and contrasting texts, transferring texts to other genres, rewriting beginnings and ends of texts with alternative imagined scenarios, and performance activities (Parkinson & Thomas, 2004).

Involvement of students in these activities is likely to increase their motivation as they enjoy more autonomous learning roles. The traditional modes of learning in product-oriented teaching, which reduce their role to passive listening and note-taking, are challenged. In short, the dynamic nature of process-oriented literature teaching aims to involve students in the text and enable them to develop their own perception of the text. The aim is to create a student-centred learning environment and, at the same time, promote collaborative learning.

3.7.2 Task-based Literature Classroom

If a process approach to teaching literature is adopted, the need for learning by doing becomes a condition for attaining student engagement. Learning by doing implies the involvement of students in tasks. However, before examining the significance of a task-based approach to the teaching of literature and the potential benefits arising from its implementation on pedagogical grounds, it seems wiser to define what a task is. Nunan (1988), Carter and Long (1991), and Willis (1996) have suggested a myriad of definitions. We shall opt for the one suggested by Breen (1987), and which considers a task as: Any structured language learning endeavour which has a particular objective, appropriate content, a specific working procedure, and a range of outcomes for those who undertake the task. 'Task' is therefore assumed to refer to a range of work plan which has the overall purpose of facilitating language learning—from the simple or brief exercise type to more complex and lengthy activities such as group problem solving or simulations and decision making.

The quotation above clearly implies that tasks must be carefully planned with well defined objectives and which have the very potential to actively engage students in the process of learning. In fact, the significance of devising tasks lies in their efficacy in removing the teacher's monopolization of the course (Nunan, 1988). Instead, the teacher must assume the role of an enabler and a facilitator, thus delegating responsibility to the students to take care of the learning.

Lazar (2000) postulates that devising tasks assists foreign language students to advance their literary competence, a competence without which they cannot convert words on pages into literary meanings. In her opinion, the mastery of the peculiarities of literary discourse can be significantly improved by involving students in illustrative tasks.

Similarly, Khatib et al. (2011) endorse the pedagogical value of task-based literature teaching, considering it as one of the most efficient tools to achieve what they referred to as “whole literary engagement” given its potential to involve the students linguistically, emotionally, intellectually, critically, creatively, and motivationally.

In a nutshell, engaging students in well-developed tasks can serve as a means to advance their linguistic and literary skills, in addition to bringing differentiation into the classroom. This latter term is used by educationalists to refer to employing different types of teaching methods to appeal to students with different aptitudes and learning styles (Tomlinson, 1999). Hence, working with literature instead of merely lecturing about it is likely to maximize its benefits.

3.7.3 Task-Based Literature Course Plan

Course pre-requisites: The students are prompted to read beforehand about the author's biography and the historical, social, and cultural aspects of the literary tradition/era studied.

Pre-reading stage: The pre-reading phase involves the students in the theme of the literary text. Thus, the teacher can use pictures, videos, or any other pedagogical support to brainstorm the topic of the text with the students and elicit primary responses from them.

Lower order thinking skills: This stage is a combination of two main rubrics:

(a) vocabulary and allusion: Students are required to look up difficult words using their own dictionaries on the linguistic level. Allusions that are too often cultural references must be provided by the teacher.

(b) Basic comprehension questions: Within this rubric, a set of questions are set to check the students' overall understanding of the text. Therefore, the students skimmed through the gist text.

Higher-order thinking skills: It is a stage in which the students penetrate the text. It focuses mainly on the analysis questions and literary aspects of the text. It is, therefore, divided into two rubrics:

a) Moral philosophical aspects: highlighting the predominant moral and philosophical dimensions of the text.

b) Stylistic features: identifying the prominent stylistic devices in the text and determining their effects on meaning.

Post-reading : The post-reading phase includes three major points:

a) **Personal response**: students freely express their critical judgments of the text either orally and in writing. This activity also encourages the students to gauge the literary merits of a text within a given literary movement/tradition.

b) **Reflection**: the students focus on the literary devices used in the text. If any element seems ambiguous, the teacher should further exemplify it through tasks.

c) **Performance**: This step is devoted to performance and dramatization activities. For example, students may be involved in reciting and reading poems aloud, in addition to acting out dramatic works.

3.7.4 Encouraging Reader Response

The search for genuine engagement with literature appears to be based on the development and application of an appropriate pedagogy that prepares students to become independent readers. From this perspective, encouraging and promoting a reader response stance to reading literature becomes essential. Basically, the reader response and reception theories at large have noticeably marked the shift from the exclusive focus on the text as being ink on page, to using Rosenblatt's (1994) terms, without neglecting its importance of course, to an emphasis on the reader. Rosenblatt was one of the pioneering advocates of the "transactional" reading model. As a result, it claims that the interaction between the reader and the text is equated with a transaction in which both the reader and the text affect each other.

In a rather deeper sense, during this transactional form of reading, the reader selects possible meanings from a set of assumptions and beliefs stored in what Rosenblatt (1994) called "Our personal-experiential-linguistic reservoirs" (P. 381). Stated differently, the selection process is all too often determined by some influential variables that envelop the attention, the physical and the emotional state of the reader. This latter assumes an active role in the process as s/he brings into the text his own experiences, characteristics, qualities, and ideas that interact with the message embedded in the text to ultimately produce the meaning of the implied message.

Commenting on the significance of respecting and encouraging students' individual responses to literature, Probst (1994) writes, "If literature is to matter, however, if it is to become significant in the reader's life, then those personal connections become hard to deny" (p.38). The meaning lies in that shared ground where the reader and text meet; it is not resident within the text, to be extracted like a nut from its shell. Rather, the meaning is created by readers as they bring the text to bear upon their own experience, and their own histories to bear upon the text. Clearly enough, the rationale for encouraging this model of reading in the Algerian EFL literature classroom stems from the belief that teachers must overcome the traditional practices that restrict students' active interaction with the text. It is also one of the most effective strategies for inculcating critical reading and thinking in children. In short, students have to create meaning beyond the judgments usually given by teachers and critics themselves.

Conclusion

This chapter aimed at portraying a brief outline of the state of literature teaching and critical thinking skills within the Algerian school and university frameworks. More particularly, it pointed to highlight how literature is utilized and instructed at Algerian educational institutions. The chapter started with a brief portrayal of the setting and gave an outline of the status of the English language within the Algerian instructive framework. The teaching of literature in both, high school and university, is at that point examined in detail. Finally, the chapter emphasized critical thinking enhancement as one of the main objectives of teaching literary texts.



Chapter Four

Methodology



Introduction

The previous chapters discussed various definitions of critical thinking, literature, literary texts, the connection between reading and literary texts, and the teaching of critical thinking and reading literature. This chapter explains the mixed methodology of field experiment adopted for the present study, the main intervention, and the evaluation of data collection tools utilized, concluding with discussion of the ethical issues arising.

4. Research Purpose

As a research scenario, the purpose behind the present study is to examine the working of an alternative approach to teaching English literary texts to higher education EFL students in Algeria. The conventional approach to literary texts in EFL pedagogy in the Algerian secondary school classroom is characterized by teacher transmission of objectified literary interpretation, coupled with learner passivity and conformity in reading and learning (Beach, 2011). The alternative approach to EFL literature that will be explored is reader-response approach, which seeks innovation to traditional practices in literature-based pedagogy. This approach aims to help students form their own responses to literary texts by ‘transacting’ with the texts (Rosenblatt, 1994) and interacting openly with the literature class in a meaningful discourse (Probst, 1994), and mainly to enhance critical thinking skills among students while analyzing their literary texts.

As for the aim, the research at hand seeks to determine whether critical thinking can be fostered in the literature classroom by implementing a reader-response approach to literary texts. It therefore fills this gap and focuses on the teaching of critical thinking skills in the literature classroom at the university level where thinking in the target language is required.

Central to this present research work is trying to find out the extent to which the implementation of a reader-response approach to literary texts can help fostering students’ critical skills. In other words, whether educators can secure the teaching ground for students’ critical skills by implementing a reader-response strategy to deal with literary texts as an alternative to the prevailing schooling characterized by the focus on passive, book-based rote learning.

With regard to the research gap already established in the literature review and

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summarized in the previous section, the purpose of this study is to identify the effects of implementing a reader-response approach to literary texts on fostering EFL university students' critical skills. In order to conduct an in-depth analysis and make inferences, varied research questions were raised.

1. How could students' knowledge about critical thinking and reading improve their perceptions of and attitudes towards these skills?
2. What makes a reader-response pedagogy applicable with second year EFL students of literature?
3. Can the reader-response pedagogy raise the quality of reading literary works and foster critical thinking among students?

In the attempts to provide answers to the questions above, a set of hypotheses is laid:

- Firstly, improvements in students' knowledge about critical thinking and reading skills lead to better perceptions of and attitudes towards these skills, as well as positive assessments of the intervention.
- Secondly, teaching literary texts combined within a reader-response approach enables students to enjoy literature classes more, and the approach will be not only preferred over traditional ones but also more beneficial.
- Finally, if students were instructed within a Critical literary approach to literary texts, those learners' analytical and arguing skills would improve because of interactive and cooperative literature class tasks.

In investigating the above research questions and hypotheses, and in educational contexts such as in this study, a supportive classroom environment, student interaction and collaboration, the adoption of guided critical reading and reflective reading, could each play a significant role in the interventions' success. The intention, therefore, is not to examine the impact of each variable independently but to see how the combination of all these factors contributes to improvements in students' thinking skills.

4.1 Research Design

Appropriate research methods are an essential component of a successful research study. While qualitative research methods are flexible and suitable for answering the research question at hand, quantitative methods are also needed for drawing a complete

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picture of the results (Cohen & Manion, 1994).

The study adopted a mixed methodology to collect suitable research data using a questionnaire, field-experiments and focus group interviews for both quantitative and qualitative data gathering. Mixed methodologies combine quantitative and qualitative research techniques to collect, analyze data and integrate findings in a single study. The main guiding principle is that researchers should use all the means at their disposal to create pragmatic designs that effectively answer their research questions. The research questions determine the choice of method and the values of the researcher play a large part in the interpretation of results, where statistical and thematic techniques are combined in a single operation (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007).

Therefore, since in this study the investigation of students' attitudes and perceptions about critical thinking skills is exploratory in nature, while how far their argumentative thinking skills could be improved through the integrative teaching of reader-response theory. The investigation of these aspects cannot yield reliable and in-depth understanding if only one method was used. Therefore, to achieve the study's aims, it was deemed important to use both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

To answer the research questions under investigation, a range of data types was collected, including pre- and post- tests, students' reflections, and focus group interviews. Some of this data required qualitative analysis, others quantitative. Through the convergence and corroboration of findings from mixed methods, strong evidence for a conclusion can be provided (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005).

The use of mixed methods has various weaknesses. It can be difficult for a single researcher to carry out both quantitative and qualitative research, especially if two or more approaches are expected to be used concurrently. Secondly, mixed methods can be time consuming.

The integration of findings from mixed methods may be problematic and findings are often reported separately. The essence of using mixed methods should be the integration of insights provided by strictly following the research questions; a strategy followed in this study (Bryman, 2007).

4.1.1 Mixed Methods

In keeping with the scientific realist approach, this research project has both tested hypotheses, and undertaken exploration, of the impacts of reading on CT. In this way, researcher Gerald Cupchik (2001) wrote “Qualitative methods offer an in-depth account of underlying processes and can help frame hypotheses that test specific functional relationships, while empirical findings related to processes can suggest areas which might benefit from detailed descriptive examination” (p. 1). Thus, the aim has been to make use of what both qualitative and quantitative methods have to offer in a complementary manner. Concretely, the research followed a sequential and explanatory paradigm (Ivankova et al., 2006; Subedi, 2016). Quantitative data was collected and analysed first, followed by qualitative data in order to enrich and explain the quantitative findings, and to elucidate a causal explanation for quantitative casual descriptions (Shadish et al., 2002). As such, priority was given to the quantitative components of the research design, but with flexibility to re-weigh the balance of priority later dependent upon findings (Ivankova et al., 2006); this rebalancing will become evident in the overall discussion. This research was therefore designed with a results point of interface, with the quantitative results forming the framework for integrating the qualitative results, which in turn embellish the quantitative findings and add important detail (Maxwell & Mittapalli, 2010).

Using both methods allows for different emphases without demanding excessive time commitments on participants by asking for both types of information. However, this approach to triangulation does not attempt “quasi-correlation” (Flick, 2018). The quantitative and qualitative studies are not meant to be capturing necessarily the same phenomenon, such that it can be more accurately portrayed. Rather, triangulation was pursued as an opportunity for enrichment through deepening (gaining detail) and widening (increasing avenues for exploration) the scope of the present research.

In short, to serve the overall purpose of the present research, several methods of data collection including pre and posttests, intervention, and interview were utilised.

Figure 4.1 provides an overview of the research framework.

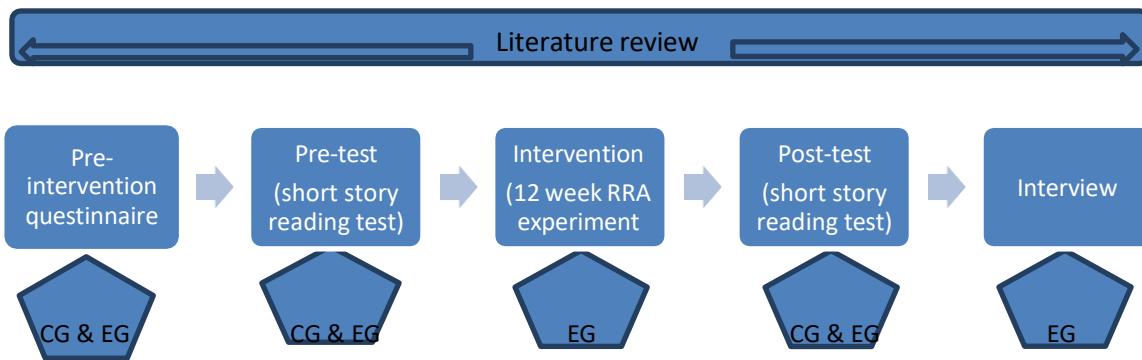


Figure (4.1): Overview of the research design

4.1.1.1 Interpretivism

Undertaking this two-fold, quantitative and qualitative, project, which aimed to address the aforementioned research questions, interpretivism, was found to be the most appropriate stance to support the gathered quantitative data. In fact, commitment to this theoretical framework not only informs the conduct of the study, but also justifies its research methodology principles. Interpretivism contrasts with positivism as it attempts to understand and explain human and social reality. According to Schwandt (1994), interpretivism was conceived in reaction to the effort to develop a natural science of the social. Its foil was largely logical empiricist methodology and the bid to apply that framework to human inquiry. Based on this theoretical perspective, methods applied in natural sciences are not appropriate to illuminate social science phenomena (Crotty, 1998) and in order to understand this world of meaning one must interpret it (Shwandt, 1994). As Hughes (1976) puts it, “Human beings are not things to be studied in the way one studies rats, plants or rocks, but as valuing meaning-attributing beings to be understood as subjects and known as subjects” (cited in Radnor, 2002, p. 20). In other words, for interpretivist researchers, reality is not discovered but is envisaged as the product of human experience created out of interaction between human beings and their world (Richards, 2003).

Referring to interpretivist tradition as the underpinning theoretical framework of the present research implies the researcher’s priority in acknowledging each of participant’s uniquely constructed version of reality and his attempt to understand and interpret their meanings through negotiation and interaction on one side, and to provide a thick description of the phenomenon under study for the potential audience on the other. This can help them find the opportunity to make their own inferences and interpretations of the

findings based on what is presented.

Having said these, it is safe to argue that interpretivism can provide an appropriate framework for studying developmental processes in learning and teaching environments as it facilitates employing research methods, which not only capture the dynamics of the interactions and collaborations between members of the community, but also provides a rich description of the features of the context within which developmental processes occur. More precisely, interpretivism leans towards the collection of qualitative data and uses methods such as surveys, interviews, and audiorecording to provide insight into the meanings of social behaviour. Hence, conducting a research through the lens of interpretivism and employing combination of qualitative methods enable those who work within this framework to gain access to the developmental processes and experiences of the learners in their natural settings, as well as to examine and understand their learning processes. Indeed, SCF (Social & Contextual Framework) and interpretivism properly match with each other and share several common principles/characteristics as both of them ground the theory in the data rather than imposing theories and laws on them, study the phenomenon within a broader social and contextual framework, and assign a pivotal role to co-construction of knowledge. There are a number of research methodologies, which are closely associated with interpretive approach. Broadly speaking, all these embrace the idea of multiple realities and share the goal of collecting and providing an in-depth account of the social world of research participants by learning about their social and material circumstances, their experiences, perspectives and histories. These strategies usually require close contact between the researcher and the research participants and emphasise understanding social processes in the context. Further, they begin by examining the empirical world; that is, the social world and in that process develop a theory consistent with what is being observed. Finally, the data gathered by utilising such strategies are value-laden in nature and include the values and biases of the researchers.

4.1.2 Case Study

Case study is not actually a data-gathering technique, but a methodological approach that incorporates multiple sources of data collection instruments such as surveys, interviews, documents, audio-visual material and artefacts (Creswell, 2007). Stake (2005) distinguishes three types of case studies in terms of the intent of the case analysis: intrinsic, instrumental, and multiple or collective. While by performing an intrinsic case study, a

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researcher wants to better understand a particular case because the case presents an unusual or unique situation. In instrumental case study, the case actually becomes of secondary importance as the investigator aims to understand an issue or a problem. Collective case study, on the other hand, involves an in-depth, detailed study of several instrumental cases. Case studies can also be exploratory, explanatory, or descriptive (Yin, 2003). That is, not only are they used to generate hypotheses that can be tested in other forms of research, but also can establish cause and effect relationships, or illustrate a rich and vivid description of events (Cohen, et al., 2007). As Yin (2009) puts it, “case studies are the preferred method when (a) ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions are being posed, (b) the investigator has little control over events, and (c) the focus is on contemporary phenomenon with a real-life context” (p. 2). In other words, it is used when an investigator strives to effectively understand a real-world and dynamic phenomenon in depth without isolating it from its context. It is also a preferred research method when the investigator has limited control over the behavioural events (Ibid).

Case studies have several claimed strengths and weaknesses. Cohen et al. (2007) and Dornyei (2007) suggest that case study research (a) is strong on reality and recognizes the complexity of social issue embedded within a cultural context, (b) offers rich and in-depth insights about a target phenomenon, (c) can manage unpredicted events and uncontrolled variables, and (d) its results are comprehensible for the readers. All these positive characteristics make case study an attractive strategy of inquiry for some researchers. On the other hand, some researchers may view case study as a less desirable form of inquiry claiming that it may lack rigor due to researcher’s being selective and biased and its results are not normally generalizable. However, as Yin (2009) argues, bias may occur in other forms of research. He further states that considering the fact that no single experiment can lead to the formulation of theoretical principles and several experiments are needed to establish a scientific fact, the same approach can be used in case study. Indeed, he addresses this concern by stressing that “case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes” (p. 15). In addition, as Punch (2009) puts it, sometimes the intention of a study is to get an in-depth understanding of a unique and complex case or issue within its context and it is not concerned with generalizability.

Given the complexity of researching the nature, revision behaviour, reading performance, and perceptions of EFL reading learners involved in literature tasks during a naturally occurring literature course, multiple case study was decided to be compatible

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with the purpose of the study and the phenomena examined. Further, a case study approach was adopted because it is flexible and can involve qualitative or quantitative data or both. However, focusing on multiple cases in a study may cause the researcher to face a dilemma; that is, lack of thick and in-depth description of the cases ‘behaviours, and feeling for the situation’ (Creswell, 2007).

To address this concern, the project was undertaken through a long period of time (one semester) literature reading, drawing on multiple sources of information such as audiorecorded materials, observations, interviews, and students’ questionnaire and produced texts. It is believed that employing these strategies could make data triangulation possible which would consequently contribute to the credibility of the findings.

4.1.2.1 Context of the Case

The Faculty of Lettres and Foreign Languages, University of Laghouat offers a three year English curriculum of BA (English) which is a typical English program under the LMD system all over the world. The English department students are required to study general education units which provide fundamental knowledge in the fields of Writing, Reading, Linguistics, Literature, Civilisation, Phonetics, Methodology and Computer Information Sciences. In their second year, students are required to study literature courses which include an introduction to English Literature, introduction to English Prose and English Poetry.

Data in the main study was collected from two English literature classes. Both were taught by the same teacher who offered useful data. From the point of view of student participants, it was decided to choose only a sample from the experimental group to be interviewed because the data collected from both groups were sufficiently rich and relevant to the data analysis. Apart from that, it was more valuable to analyze each of them in depth rather than focusing on the superficial analysis of a larger number of student participants.

English Literature was provided as a course for the second year English major students. This course was provided by the Department of English in the Faculty of Lettres and Foreign Languages at a public university in Algeria, namely University of Laghouat. As shown in table (4.1), the literary material adopted by the conventional syllabus, Literature 2, and taught at university includes both poetry and prose works.

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1. Hamlet by William Shakespeare
2. London, 1802 by William Wordsworth.
3. Annabel Lee by Edgar Allan Poe.
4. Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen.
5. The Fall of the House of Usher by E.A Poe.
6. Frankenstein's Monster by Mary Shelly.
7. Moby-dick by Herman Melville.
8. The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Table 4.1: Literary works taught to second year students

By introducing a reader-response approach to teaching literature to Algerian EFL learners, students must be granted the chance to experience an enjoyable reading process in which reflection and expression of inner feelings and thoughts is made possible before, during and after the reading. Being exposed to reading literary works through a reader-response approach, learners could view reading English literature as a thought-provoking. In this study, the researcher was interested in investigating probable differences in thinking skills development between students experiencing the reader-response approach in reading literary texts and those going through the traditional method.

The selected literary texts (short stories) to be read by the participants were supposed to be covered as a side-programme along with the other reading materials officially assigned. These works were all gone through with the researcher, being their instructor for 2 extra hours a week for both experimental and control groups. After reviewing several collections of literary texts, six short stories were selected by the researcher in order to be covered in both the experimental and control groups throughout the course. These short stories (Table 4.3) were all selected as they were supposed to evoke a suitable amount of emotional response and were promising to provoke students to express their opinions and interpretations of the short stories. The selected works were dealt with in the order shown in Table 4.2.

Title	Author	Overview
« 2 B R O 2 B »	Kurt Vonnegut (1922-2007)	This short story (pronounced "To be or not to be") gives readers a glimpse into a world where people do not age. Whether this world is utopian or dystopian may lead to a worthwhile discussion about what makes life worth living.

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« A Mystery of Heroism »	Stephen Crane (1871-1900)	This is a thoughtful yet simply written piece set during a battle in the American Civil War. Crane, while capturing the terror and foolishness of war, dispels a heroic myth. This text contains graphic descriptions of a violent battle.
« A Respectable Woman »	Kate Chopin (1850-1904)	'A Respectable Woman' is a short story about a woman whose husband invites his old college friend to stay with them on their plantation. Despite being certain she will dislike the man, she discovers that she is strangely attracted to him and grows confused about her feelings.
« The Cat That Walked by Himself »	Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)	The <i>Cat That Walked By Himself</i> is Kipling's take on animal domestication. Kipling started the story by relating how Woman made a warm home for Man in a cave, and then how using magic, she enticed wild creatures (specifically the Dog, the horse, and the cow) to serve her and Man in exchange for warmth and food. Each time, the Cat observed the compact negotiated between the Woman and the Wild Dog, the Wild Horse, and the Wild Cow but declined to participate, saying, "I am the cat who walks by himself, and all places are alike to me."
« The Story of Keesh »	Jack London (1876-1916)	This is the story of a young man who overcomes fierce and unforgiving opposition. He uses his wits to become the most successful hunter in his tribe's history. It is an uplifting tale with inspirational themes.
« Thrown Away »	Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)	"Thrown Away" was published in the first Indian edition of <i>Plain Tales from the Hills</i> (1888), and in subsequent editions of that collection. "Thrown Away" tells of an unnamed 'Boy', a product of the English "sheltered life system" that Kipling abhors.

Table (4.2): The six short stories selected for the intervention

Teaching materials	Reader-responses	Activities
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. « 2 B R 0 2 B » by Kurt Vonnegut 2. « A Mystery of Heroism » by Stephen Crane 3. « A Respectable Woman » by Kate Chopin 4. « The Cat That Walked by Himself » by Rudyard Kipling 5. « The Story of Keesh » by Jack London 6. « Thrown Away » by Rudyard Kipling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Conceiving •Connecting •Explaining •Interpreting •Judging •Evaluating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Think-alouds •Free writing •Question asking •Listing •Discussions •Oral interpretation

Table (4.3): Order of the selected works

These literary works were selected because of their plots, characterization, suspense and ironies which were aimed to attract the attention of the students and drive them into

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expressing their personal interpretations and opinions. Moreover, these short stories were short enough to be read in only one week by the students and discussed in the limited class time. The themes were also framed in a manner with which participants could relate and interact according to their ages and status. It is worth mentioning that because of time constraint, the researcher selected short stories rather than plays or novels.

4.1.2.2 Sampling

The sample comprised seventy three (73) second year English department students from the University of Laghouat. Groups were classified as Experimental or Control groups. Thirty eight (38) students were in the Experimental Group, and thirty five (35) in the Control group. The groups were taught by the same teacher. The whole number of students at the department at the time of the experiment in October 2023 was 856 students. The sample of 73 students was drawn from a second year university population of 145. These students were selected at random. Worth to be noted, the grouping was made by the administration of the department at the beginning of the year. The researcher was obliged to work with the already set groups, which is considered part of the random sampling.

The sample represents 48.34% of all second year students, Department of English, Laghouat University. There was a total of 53 girls and 11 boys participating in the experiment. Most students were aged 19-22 years, with a low of 19 and a high of 26.

The Experimental Group used special instructional materials designed by the researcher to be covered as a side-programme along with the other materials included in the official curriculum. Students learned to apply the components of a reader-response approach to read thoroughly a literary text for the sake of developing students' thinking skills.

The Control group is composed of one-second year class. Like the experimental group, students in the control group studied the same components officially assigned, but the teacher followed the curriculum and procedures outlined in the English programme. Both of the Experimental and Control groups had two literature sessions a week. Each session is a 90-minute period. Worth to be noted, the students in neither of the two classes had been asked to read any English literary texts as a requirement for their previous courses and therefore, this was their first serious academic encounter with the target language literature.

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Participants were randomly selected. This randomisation is important because it provides a solid ground against which it can be claimed that every participant had an equal chance of being assigned to any of the levels of the independent variable. Randomly formed groups can be assumed to be equivalent within the laws of probability. Besides, the randomization of participants into treatment and non-treatment groups before the application of any treatment reduces the chances of inequality between experimental groups, so that differences observed in the post-test can be attributed to the treatment alone. This eliminates the possible effects of rival explanations of causal findings and strengthens the internal validity of the design (Bryman, 2008).

As for teachers, the teacher who taught both groups graduated from the University of Laghouat, Algeria in 2001 with a B.A. in English, from the University of Laghouat in 2011 with an M.A. in Literature, and from the University of Ouargla in 2018 with a PhD. in Literature. She had over 10 years' teaching experience at university.

4.2 The Design and Development of Tools

As stated in earlier sections, in mixed method studies, there is a need for multiple types of evidence gathered from different sources, often using different data collection methods (Hatch, 2002). To gain rich and robust data from the case studies, various data collection methods and procedures were employed. This allowed for a richer account using data gathered from different perspectives to illuminate issues raised in the research questions.

According to Marshall and Rossman (1999), case study relies on a multiple use of techniques for data gathering such as interviews, observation, document analysis and even surveys that are conducted over a period of time. Based on this, a multi-strategy research was conducted in this study, whereby different data collection methods were used to gather the necessary data during three different stages; tools included pre-test and post-test reading tasks, pre-experiment questionnaires, and post-experiment interviews with members of the treatment group. The first questionnaires helped obtain a general idea of students' perceptions and attitudes of various thinking skills, and following stages of data collection enables us to see if students' reading competency of literary texts is likely to change and their thinking skills are likely to develop by the end of the experiment. This idea of what students thought of thinking skills as well as the introduction of reader-response strategies is captured from the subsequent questionnaire and interviews. However,

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the reading tasks help track students' progress and improvement in their thinking skills.

This project follows a tradition of studies that employed the pre-, post-tests technique including Lundstorm and Baker (2009), Ellis et al. (2008), Al-Hazmi, Scholfield (2007), Min (2006) and many others, to compare students' progress either within a period of time usually in which an experiment is carried out with or without different treatment groups. Semi-structured questionnaires were used in the first stage of data collection for both groups. However, more qualitative means of collecting data were used including interviews with only a sample of the students who underwent the experiment.

4.2.1.1 Instrumentation

The following instruments were used to serve the purpose of the research study:

4.2.1.2 Pre-experiment Questionnaire

A pre-reading questionnaire, containing 20 questions mainly in order to help have a general idea of what the participants' attitude towards reading literature in general, and English literary texts in particular was. This would also enable the researcher to compare any possible changes in the participants' attitudes about reading literary texts of English literature and their beliefs about thinking skills after the completion of the study.

The questionnaire was adopted from Gardner's AMTB (1985) and took the form of a 6 point, Likert-type attitude scale. The items ranged from 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree'. If any statement appeared incomprehensible or ambiguous, the participants were allowed to ask questions about it. To make sure that the questionnaire was reliable it was piloted on 20 second year students of the Department of English and the index of reliability of 0.82 showed that the questionnaire was reliable. For the validity of the questionnaire, it was given to three of the teaching staff and they were asked to check the content of the questions. They confirmed that the questionnaire really checked the construct it intended to assess.

The questionnaire is divided into three main parts (see appendix 1). As shown in the samples provided in Table 4.4, the first section asks students general questions about their age, educational background, and what type of questions their teacher asks in literature class. The second section asks more specific questions in the form of a tendency scale to

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measure students' attitudes and beliefs about critical thinking skills. The third section asks similar questions to the previous sections, but with regard to different types of questions they can answer in literature class.

Section 1: Related to what type of questions your teacher asks in literature class.

There are five scales to choose from:

.1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The questions asked by the teacher to trigger memorizing certain facts are good				
The questions asked by the teacher to predict what come next are helpful				

Section 2: Related to your attitudes and beliefs about critical thinking skills.

There are five scales to choose from:

It is important to memorize what has been learned in English class.	
It is important to recite English passages.	
It is important to understand the every single part of a passage.	

Section Three: Related to the different types of questions you can answer in literature class. (There are six scales to choose from):

I don't find it difficult to answer questions and use supporting examples.	
It is easy to answer questions and give reasons to support my answers.	
Questions that require comparison and contrast are easy to be answered.	

Table 4.4: Samples of questions from the three sections included in the Pre-questionnaire

As the main purpose of the questionnaire is to investigate students' competence in reading literary texts, most questions are in Likert scale format which, according to Cohen et al. (2000), is helpful in terms of helping combine the opportunity for a flexible response with the ability to determine frequencies, correlations, and other forms of quantitative analysis. In other words, these rating scale items offer measurement with opinion, quantity, and quality, and therefore are very suitable to collect data for this research project.

The questionnaire was fairly easy to use and simple. It was also written in a way that never intimidates the respondents, neither in linguistic nor in technically complicated terms. It appeared attractive, easy to read and to follow, and easy to answer. Cohen et al. (2000) recommend survey designers to make them attractive by using coloured ink, coloured papers, and different type styles. In this project, it was decided that items and pages should also be numbered, a brief instruction should be included (see appendix 1), examples should be given before any item that might be confusing, the questions should

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be organized in a logical sequence so related items should be grouped together, beginning with interesting and nonthreatening, factual questions, and the most important questions should not be left until the end.

All of these features generate user-friendliness, a very important characteristic of credible questionnaires. The early draft of the questionnaire underwent numerous editing processes and was regularly reviewed in the light of relevant educational research handbooks, references, such as Cohen et al. (2000), Brown and Rodgers (2002). Moreover, the advice of other researchers currently working in the field of education was sought prior to the intervention stage.

4.2.1.3 The Reading Entry and Exit Tests

Literature reading helps students to develop their imagination and creativity, improves not only their language but also thinking skills and also enables them to appreciate the arts. It also helps in developing emotional sensitivity and gives them a taste of beauty. As for the administered tests, as already discussed, they are aimed to help yield essential data required for analysis into the effectiveness of the integration of a reader-response approach. However, many experts in educational research including Cohen et al. (2000) and Ginsburg (2010) stress the fact that the use of tests in research raises a number of ethical concerns. For instance, many researchers have reported that individuals may suffer from anxiety in testing situations. It is therefore the researcher's responsibility to elicit participants' best performance, while minimizing their anxiety if they plan to use a test as part of the data collection process. The evaluated answers were thinking-based tasks instead of text understanding and vocabulary eliciting tasks, especially important with the exit test. In other words, higher order thinking skills were addressed, as shown in the results obtained.

After the four weeks of intervention, students were post-tested to see whether there were any changes in their thinking skills compared to their pre-test. In addition, since the mere assessment of students' writing may not yield information concerning how they felt about the intervention and the difficulties they encountered, interviews were conducted by the end of the study. These indicated students' perceptions about thinking and their feelings about and reaction to the intervention to be measured, enriching the interpretation of the quantitative data.

4.2.1.4 Interviews

Interviews were the last stage of data collection and were supposed to supplement and give an in-depth account of data already generated by both the questionnaire and the intervention. Most research manuals mention that interviews and questionnaires are two very accepted methods for collecting data in educational research, and such extensive reviews of interviews give a clear idea of how they best function in this situation (Radnor, 1994).

The interviews (see Appendix 10) subsequently took a semi-structured, one-to-one format to best meet the requirements of the study. Interviews also observed a more inductive logic, as opposed to deductive logic, whereby theories and cognitive principles would emerge from the data, or, in other words, moving from the specific to the general. Research methods literature suggests that inductive logic is more suitable for arguments based on experiences or observation as the case here (Cohen et al., 2002).

According to Dilley (2014), interviewing students is of great significance to include them and their views into the learning process. Before the researcher started interviewing students; manuals in educational research including Gillham (2000) and Cohen et al., (2000) should be consulted to review various types of interviews and to figure out the best possible option of interviewing participants of this study. Careful preparation plays an important role when it comes to the successfulness of the event but one should be aware that interviewing skills such as the ability to prompt questions and to control the discussion in a smooth and timely manner are equally important traits of any interviewer.

In all, the researcher has to learn how to respect the ethics of educational research including students' privacy and trying to present their ideas in their words. He/she has to learn also how to balance what the researcher wants to investigate with what issues students want to raise within the available time limit.

Very little previous research has been reported on the teaching of thinking skills in literature classes in the EFL context, particularly in Algeria. Interviews were then seen as a suitable tool to explore students' attitudes, use and understanding of critical thinking in literature reading at higher education institutions. Interviews were restricted to the experimental group as they were in a position to compare and contrast the intervention

teaching strategies with traditional methods, the researcher could trace how students' ideas and perceptions changed as a result of the intervention. In fact, interviews were administered to assess their reactions, allowing free and comprehensive discussions that covered different aspects of the intervention.

Data obtained from interviewing aim to encourage frank and open responses that can provide large amounts of rich data in the respondents' own words. The researcher can, therefore, obtain deeper levels of meaning, make important connections and identify subtle refinements in the expression of meaning (Steward et al., 2007). More importantly, the researcher interacts directly with respondents, providing opportunities for clarification, follow-up questions, and the probing of responses. It is also possible to observe non-verbal responses which may carry information that contradicts or supplements verbalization (Steward et al., 2007).

4.3 Field Experimental Method

The field experimental method is often referred to as the randomized experiment commonly used in social sciences where variables are manipulated and their effects on other variables observed and measured. Normally in field experiment design, two groups are established and assigned randomly into experimental (treatment) and control groups, enabling the researcher to observe the cause and effect relationship between the independent and dependent variables (Bryman, 2008). Here the effect of the designed reader-response approach-based tasks (independent variable) on the development of students' reasoning and thinking skills in reading literary texts (dependent variable) could be measured.

In this study, the two randomly established groups were termed experimental and control groups. The experimental group received the teaching intervention, while the control group was denied that treatment. The dependent variable of students' use of thinking skills while reading literary texts was then measured before and after the experimental manipulation.

The actual data collection took place over a 12-week period (September to November, 2023) in the first semester of the 2023/2024 academic year at UATL. It involved a two-step process of preliminary surveying as well as pre-tests followed by an

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intervention and ended with post-tests and interviews with focus groups of student participants.

Research Method	Participants	Dates
Questionnaire	CG & EG	28 09 2023
Pre-test	CG & EG	1 10 2023
Intervention	EG	2 oct – 30 nov
Post-test	CG & EG	4 12 2023
Interviews	EG	6 12 2023

Table 4.5: Research procedure intervals

Group interviews are meant to encourage frank and open responses that can provide large amounts of rich data in the respondents' own words. The researcher can therefore obtain deeper levels of meaning, make important connections and identify subtle refinements in the expression of meaning (Steward et al., 2007). More importantly, the researcher interacts directly with respondents, providing opportunities for clarification, follow-up questions, and the probing of responses. It is also possible to observe nonverbal responses which may carry information that contradicts or supplements verbalization (Ibid).

4.3.1 The Intervention

In designing the intervention upon which the present work is based, the researcher had to draw on both the experience as a teacher of and on existing theories of teaching reading. In other words, the researcher was aware that one need not reinvent the wheel but that one could select and develop existing ideas to suit one's students' needs and context. This approach is supported by Graves (1996) when she says "Both the efforts of others to provide models and the teacher's own experience and understanding of that experience are part of how teachers make sense of what they do" (p. 2). Hence, on this premise, the designed intervention on which the present study is based is set out.

The ultimate aim of the present intervention about reading literary texts in an EFL context has been to take the reader out of the passive recipient role attributed to her or him and place him or her as an active participant in the process of reading, who brings to the text her or his world and who is helped by the world of the text. The investigation, therefore, will focus on how the reader carries on her or his own activities in the process

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of reading the literary text so as to reach interpretation and show critical thinking while reading. Interpretation will not be restricted to the meaning of the text, for as has been made clear in reader response theory, the text is not considered to carry one, concrete meaning (the author's meaning), as it is not considered to be an entity or an object of study in itself; it is considered, however, to carry several meanings, one of which will be realized in the process of interpretation. Critical thinking, on the other hand will mean uncovering meanings in the text, questioning, analyzing, evaluating and making judgments about what he or she reads.

Thus, the intervention will deal with the responses of the participants to the literary texts presented to them. The reader, however, has been guided by the teacher/assistant or facilitator, who has urged and encouraged her or him to find ways to approach the texts and form responses to them with the final aim of developing her or his thinking skills.

4.3.2 Intervention Objectives

The intervention was meant to develop second year students' thinking skills through the integration of reader-response approach to literary texts in ways which would benefit them in their academic studies in the English Language Department. It is believed that if students were trained on the use of this approach and learned how to go through the different steps of reading, they would be well prepared to read literary texts critically. Moreover, in this two-month intervention, students were exposed to both theory and practice with a view to process reading, showing a good level of critical thinking. The programme aimed at encouraging students to focus not only on the surface knowledge of texts, but to dig deeper, interpreting the content, evaluating it, making predictions and assessing knowledge. The pedagogical approach was also an attempt to make use of the best elements of the reader-response approach with a view to become critical thinkers. Students were taken step by step through the various stages of the reading process and their awareness was raised through activities of pre-reading, reading, and post-reading to provide reflect on each other's responses.

More important, the nature of the course can also be explained in terms of two important characteristics: "awareness" and "intervention". The former means that students are trained on the application of the newly adopted approach (Susser, 1994). The latter, "intervention", is based on the fact that reading is a: Complex problem-solution process.

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This viewpoint provides a useful orientation to reading instruction. It could enable teachers to intervene at points in the reading (Flower and Hayes 1981).

As part of the research design, an intervention teaching stage was to be conducted. This was preceded by a pre-intervention phase lasting one week. It aimed at introducing the participants to the study's aims and objectives, performed initial selection and randomization processes, administering the initial questionnaire and the pre-test followed by the main study which lasted for three weeks allotted to the teaching intervention with the final week for post-test and group interviews.

4.3.3 Stages of the Intervention

The first week of the intervention was allotted for selection processes, surveying and pre-testing sessions. Two among four groups were randomly selected. They were surveyed, pre-tested and then randomly assigned into experimental and control groups. During the final three weeks, the intervention teaching strategies were applied and tested. The topics covered during the intervention were the six literary works selected by the researcher as stated earlier.

The next three weeks were devoted for the intervention, applying the reader-response approach to reading literary texts, both in prose and poetry. Six literary works were selected by the researcher in order to be covered in both the experimental and control groups throughout the intervention. These works were all targeted to evoke a suitable amount of response and were promising to provoke students to express their opinions and interpretations of the reading material.

4.3.4 Materials, Activities and Procedures

The teaching stage was initiated by training on the application of the reader-response approach to literary texts. As a side-programme, students in the experimental group had two sessions a week; each lasted for an hour and a half. Each lesson started with a pre-reading stage, representing both brainstorming and the main body of the teaching in which the theme of the lesson was introduced providing questions that would guide students gradually through the material which needed to be learned. This stage aims to elicit students' current understanding, encourage them to express their own views and consolidate and extend their current understanding by building on pre-existing knowledge.

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The teacher's role was to facilitate the tasks by giving prompts, analogies and asking questions that would take them through various steps until the important issues in the lesson were covered. Through this guided discussion they were able to share and expand their understanding of the topic, and were encouraged to take the responsibility for their own learning processes since they were the main actors in the class and not just listeners or receivers of the teacher's instructions. This represented the mediation and scaffolding stage in sociocultural theory where learners are assisted before being left to work on their own.

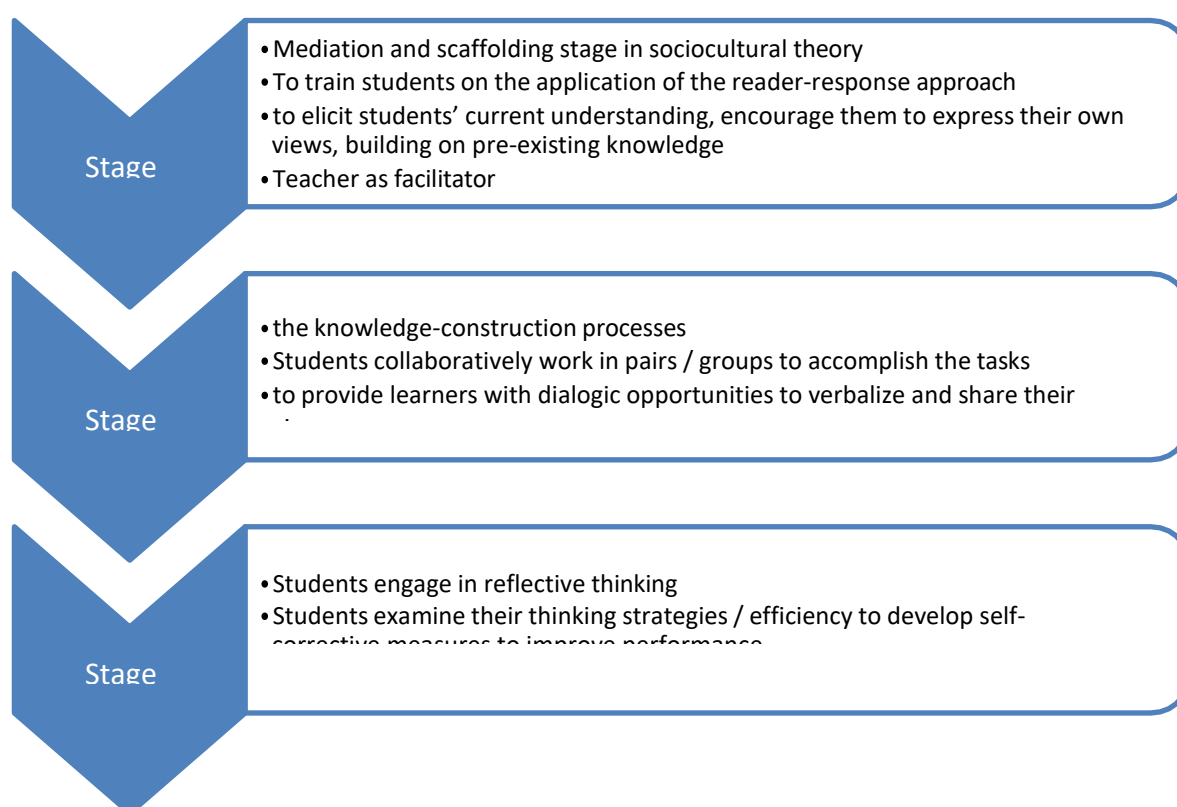


Figure 4.2: Stages of the research experiment

During the second stage, learners were asked to collaboratively work in pairs and sometimes in groups to accomplish the task accompanying the in-class tasks which were reading passages. This was intended to provide learners with dialogic opportunities to verbalize and share their views with others in the group. This represented the knowledge-construction processes (Wells, 1999) occurring when learners express their views and ideas which become the target knowledge of other individuals in the group as well as for themselves. Here learners continue to acquire new ideas as well as correcting existing faulty ideas, raising their awareness of their own thinking and that of others in the group

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and becoming conscious of their own strengths, weaknesses and thinking processes. The group discussions also allowed learners to work at a higher level than when working alone, providing a non-threatening environment encouraging students to think critically (Ebersole, 1993). Then, participants shared and cross-checked their answers, which provided opportunities for them to discuss issues and differences and therefore further scaffold each other. In each lesson, students were encouraged to engage in reflective thinking where they were to distance themselves from the activities in the session and contemplate on their thinking, assessing the ways they had approached the tasks and commenting how easy or hard they were, how they might improve them, whether this was a productive way to think about such issues, and planning how they would perform the same kind of thinking in the future. Students were supported with questions to help their reflections, which aimed to help them examine their thinking strategies and their efficiency and to develop self-corrective measures to improve performance. Assisting students to identify and address their strengths and weaknesses could promote their ability to become both self-learning and lifelong-learning individuals (Johns, 1990). After every lesson, the researcher wrote down observations made about the lesson and the students' performance, in order to monitor changes in their attitudes and progress in class.

The planned lessons focused on critical thinking skills, the cultivation of open-mindedness and sharpening students' argumentative abilities, aiming to enable students to look at issues from different perspectives and to go beyond the facts in exploring issues. They were directed towards developing students' creative thinking by introducing "The Whys" technique as a viable approach which empowers them by showing them that what they have to say is valued, and by then they become more ready to look at the possibilities the teacher may wish to contribute to the discussion. Simply put, if we impose our ideas on students who are still grappling with things such as the motivations of characters, they cannot absorb the ready-made interpretations we would like them to think about (Mitchell, 1993).

The aim was to stir their imaginations and creativity in producing sound and reasonable solutions. Such creative thinking can push students to go beyond their usual ways of thinking and solving problems, to understand how complex issues may be and how flexible and open-minded thinking can assist in exploring issues and opportunities which might otherwise not be noticed (De Bono, 2000). After an introduction and demonstration, students were asked to apply the "Whys" approach to explore the topics of

the suggested reading material.

4.3.5 Treatment for the Control Group

The method adopted to teach the control group was the conventional approach adopted to teach literary texts to university students. The conventional method of teaching literature courses consists of instructors giving lectures and students receiving the information and the interpretation of the story. Teachers' conventional practice of teaching literary works included pre-reading activities which are usually done as home assignments in which students are required to prepare the next to be read stories. For this reason, students usually rely on websites and go through summaries and criticism. Students are often assigned these works to be presented in class. While presenting, the teacher usually interferes explaining unknown vocabulary items, asking the students for their opinions regarding literary elements of the story such as theme, characters, plot and so on. The participants are also introduced to the 'who, what and when' of the story. As classes are characterized by teacher-centeredness, it was the teacher who presented the final interpretation of the story and decided which interpretation is right and which one is wrong.

4.3.6 Treatment for the Experimental Group

The experimental group received the treatment based on the reader response approach. The key in this approach was to let the participants deal with the stories from their own unique perspective. This implied that there was no imposition of the teacher's interpretation.

Following Mitchell (1993), the following steps were taken to implement the reader response approach in the classroom. The students were asked to read the story at home. For the implementation of the reader-response approach, the researcher adopted both Mitchell (1993) and Carlisle (2000) approaches. The teacher, as a first step, explains to the students what reader response approach is, the difference between reading literature and reading for information, and the steps we need to follow when reading a story. The key in this approach is to let the readers deal with the reading material from their own unique perspective. This implied that there is no imposition of the teacher's interpretation. As Carlisle (2000) recommends, students need to understand that meaning does not reside in the text and each reader creates the meaning out of the text. Therefore, they should be taught to value their own responses. To show the importance of the readers' contribution,

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the students are asked to read a page of the short story and make notes of their responses to the text. They would later read their notes to the class and the instructor and classmates give their comments. Free exploration of ideas is encouraged at this stage. According to Mitchell (1993), for post-reading activities, the students are required to think about the following questions:

1. What struck you about the story/ poem?
2. What kinds of things did you notice?
3. What would you like to talk about after reading this?
4. What issues did it raise for you?
5. Were there parts that confused you?
6. What questions would you like to ask?
7. Did anything upset you or make you angry?
8. Is there anything you want to ask any of the
9. What made you feel this way?

Table (4.6): Mitchell's model questions for applying RRA

The students begin discussing the questions with the classmates and the instructor is there just for conducting and controlling the process of the discussion. The students are constantly reminded that there is not one best response. Students are also continuously urged to go back to the story and find support for their views.

In order to involve the students in the story, in the next stage following Khatib (2011) the participants are required to present their ideas about the main characters of the story and say if they liked characters, whether they can find anybody in real life similar to the character and what they would do if they were the character. They were also asked if they were the author would they have chosen a different ending to the story. During the discussion if any issues regarding the elements of the story occurred instead of imposing their own rigid views on the students the teachers provided the opportunity for the participants to express their opinions regarding the elements. Students should be taught to value their own responses.

As part of the implemented approach, while reading, students are encouraged to make a record of images, associations, feelings, thoughts, judgments, and so on. This may contain questions that they ask about characters and events, memories from their own experience, provoked by the reading, guesses about how they think the story will develop,

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and why, reflections on striking moments and ideas in the story, comparisons between how they behave and how the characters in the story are behaving, thoughts and feelings about characters and events, comments on how the story is being told, and connections to other texts, ideas, and courses.

4.4 Incorporation of Bloom's Taxonomy

To encourage meaningful understanding, a learner needs to understand and remember texts by inferring, elaborating ideas, and discarding unimportant details (Garner, 1988). Such tasks engage cognitive processes that require learners to follow and respond to a message from a writer who is distant in space and time (Davis, 1995). Logically, active and thoughtful reading procedures should lead learners to critically analyze and think of the text, resulting in the reconstruction of knowledge. Many researchers advocate this concept of reading as a source for critical thinking engagement with texts because of its potential to facilitate, re-enact and reconstruct knowledge that produces meaning and understanding i.e. comprehension (Fielding & Pearson, 1994).

Comprehension includes all the skills and abilities necessary for literal, inferential and critical reading. Thus, Bloom's taxonomy was incorporated into the tasks questions through a multi-step process: First sample questions representing each learning domain within Bloom's taxonomy (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) were introduced to students during lecture presentations and discussions. Second tasks and activities containing questions categorized according to Bloom's taxonomy were administered to students.

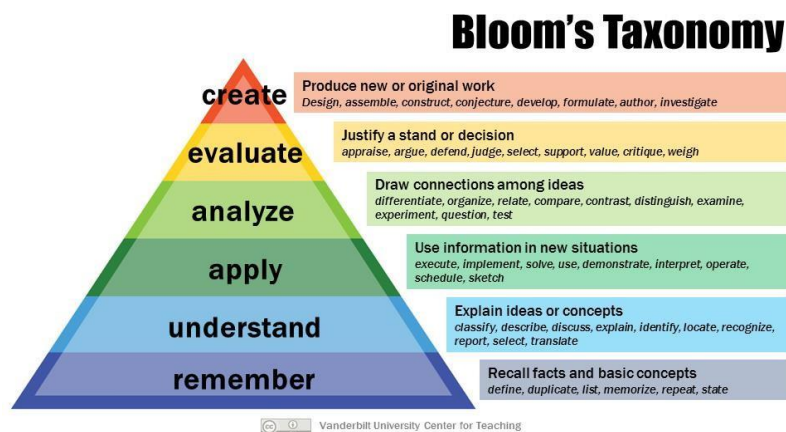


Figure 4.3: Bloom's Taxonomy

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There was a focus on higher order rather than lower order thinking skills. The tasks included in the treatment were designed according to Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives in the cognitive domain. The participants were expected to apply knowledge, analyze elements and relationships, produce plans, derive sets of abstract relations, and judge in terms of internal evidence as well as external criteria (Bloom, 1956). For the detailed materials used during the treatment, G. Mustapha's (1995) model was adopted for designing the different tasks; Table 4.6 shows sample questions, key words used for the wording of questions, abilities and types of thinking expected to be demonstrated while doing the tasks.

Taxonomy Level	Summary/Sample questions	Key words	Abilities demonstrated	Types of thinking
Affective	Questions at this level ask students to respond with a statement of feeling, emotion, or opinion without a standard of appraisal. Describe your feeling.....	Feeling Emotion Opinion	Expressing feelings and opinions	Expressive Thoughtful
Evaluation	Questions at this level ask students to use criteria to make and justify judgments about something.	Judge	Forming judgments	Evaluative Judgmental
Synthesis	Synthesis questions ask students to be creative by putting a number of ideas or objects together in a way that is unique and new to them. There are many different solutions and no right answers. What plan would you draw up to .?	Create	Using information	Divergent
Analysis	Questions at this level direct students to determine the parts of a problem, solution, or idea and	Why		

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	show how they are related. <i>Why did the main character work so hard?</i>			
Application	Questions at this level require students to demonstrate the use of ideas. They must apply their knowledge and understanding to new situations and use it to solve problems. <i>Using the procedures discussed in the text, how would you solve the this problem?</i>	How		

Table 4.6: Sample questions and key words used for the wording of questions

4.5 Sample Lessons

The sample lessons provided below have been designed by the researcher based on thoughts listed by Peter Master and Donna M. Brinton (1998) in their book entitled “New Ways in English for Specific Purposes”. The activities have been founded on the reader-response approach where activities and tasks are aimed to enhance critical thinking skills among participants of the experimental group.

N°	Title	Literary work	Aims
1	“Convince the Opposition”	« The Story of Keesh »	-To analyze arguments from a story and developing effective arguments. -To construct a convincing argument
2	“Making a Case”	“A Respectable Woman”	-To enable students recognize cause and effect in a case To enable them to discuss the case through role play
3	“Interpreting”	"Thrown Away"	-To enable students to differentiate between observations and interpretations. -To enable them to learn how personal perspectives influence them

Table 4.7: Sample lessons and aims of activities

4.5.1 Lesson One

The lesson is entitled “Convince the Opposition” where “The Story of Keesh” is used as a reading material that aims at analyzing arguments from a story and developing effective arguments. The story provides an interesting way to teach students how to construct a convincing argument. By summarizing and evaluating the opposing arguments presented in the story, students develop critical thinking skills and become aware of the elements of a good argument. Students also learn that in developing a convincing argument, they must not only present their point of view but must also address the opposing point of view. They then choose an issue about which they have a strong opinion and apply their knowledge of effective argumentation to write sentences and paragraphs that argue for their position and convincingly rebut the opposing point of view. The argument encourages students to explore their own beliefs about important issues. The details of the lesson procedures are provided in the appendices section.

4.5.2 Lesson Two

The lesson is entitled “Making a Case” where “A Respectable Woman” by Kate Chopin is used as a reading material that is summarized as a story that tells about a woman whose husband invites his old college friend to stay with them on their plantation. Despite being certain she will dislike the man, she discovers that she is strangely attracted to him and grows confused about her feelings. The lesson is aimed to enable students recognize cause and effect in a case. It also enables them to discuss the case through role-play. In a word, people are fascinated by love stories, and in this lesson, students take an in-depth look at what went wrong and why.

Assessing the theme of a story, making inferences, characterization, context clues and vocabulary, symbolism are the skills incorporated in the story. Lesson is outfitted to appeal to auditory, visual, and textual learners.

4.5.3 Lesson Three

It is important to not dwell on your failures too much. This story illustrates that point in a dark and controversial way. The lesson makes of “Thrown Away” as a reading material that is summarized as a story that tells the story of young subaltern in India, The Boy led a sheltered life with his family in Great Britain and never had to deal with

unpleasantness. After his years at Sandhurst preparing for military life in the colonies, The Boy is sent first to a third-rate depot battalion and then to India.

The lesson is aimed to enable students to differentiate between observations and interpretations. It also enables them to learn how personal perspectives influence them. The activities are intended to allow students to explore key terms. The tasks provide opportunities for the students to work individually and cooperatively as well as to make cross-cultural comparisons.

4.6 Criteria of Assessing Critical Thinking in Reading Literary Texts

Based on the official syllabus (Appendix X), assessment indicator of reading literary texts was developed. Critical thinking ability is the ability to think evaluatively, showing the gap between reality and truth by referring to ideal things. Critical thinking skills can be used to solve problems and make decisions. The following are indicators of reading literacy assessment that can improve critical thinking skills: revealing the content of the message/text, understanding the contents of the dialogue, finding the implied answer, finding an overview of the content of the text, predicting the ending of the story, predicting future actions, finding the communicative purpose of the text, determining the conclusion, determining the reason for an activity, determining the benefits of text, and determining the moral message of the text. The indicators of reading skills above require critical thinking skills to answer the given questions.

As part of higher order thinking skills, argumentative thinking skills need to be developed by higher education students. Argumentative thinking is a thinking process based on critical and logical thinking. In solving problems, arguments must be accompanied by adequate supporting data and evidence. The following are indicators of literary texts reading assessment that are used to rate students' use of argumentative thinking skills. They are predicting future actions, finding the communicative purpose of the text, determining the reason for an activity, the benefits of text, and determining the moral message of the text.

4.6.1 Critical Thinking Assessment Rubrics

For the sake of evaluating participants during both phases, pre- and post-test as well as during the intervention, an assessment rubric that is aligned to the literature review on critical thinking was adopted. These rubrics were created by National Center for Improvement of Educational Assessment (Center for Assessment) in collaboration with PBL works (Hammond, 2013). This research-based rubric is designed to provide useful, formative information that teachers can use to guide instruction and provide feedback to students and students can use to reflect on the quality of their critical thinking. Student performance is described along a continuum and balances content-specific and the more general nature of critical thinking. The research-based definition of critical thinking is:

...purposeful, self-regulatory judgment which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, or contextual considerations upon which that judgment is based....The ideal critical thinker is habitually inquisitive, well-informed, trustful of reason, open-minded, flexible, fair-minded in evaluation, honest in facing personal biases, prudent in making judgments, willing to reconsider...and persistent in seeking results which are as precise as the subject and the circumstances of inquiry permit. (Facione, 1990, p. 3)

Based on Facione's definition of critical thinking, this rubric is designed to evaluate the extent to which participants evaluate claims, arguments, evidence, and hypotheses. The rubric includes four components. The researcher is supposed to see whether a) students accurately interpret evidence and thoughtfully evaluate alternative points of view, b) draw judicious conclusions, justify results, and explain reasoning, c) engage in skepticism, judgment, and free thinking, and whether they engage in abstract reasoning, questioning and understanding (Table 4.7).

4.7 Methodological Issues

Like every scientific research, this research project rigorously follows ethical considerations throughout its different parts in their entirety. It is especially important to

stick to such considerations when it comes to dealing with human participants. It is crucial to mention all of these ethical issues, which can all be grouped under this heading, but in order to make ethical concerns easier to spot; they are presented in the designated sections of the data collection methods, along with recommended solutions to minimize possible negative effects.

Generally speaking, the data collection methods (tests, questionnaires and interviews) are always considered as an intrusion into the lives of the respondents in terms of the time taken to complete the task, the level of sensitivity of the questions, and/or the possible invasion of privacy (Cohen et al., 2000). It is very important therefore to assure the privacy and anonymity of participants involved in the study when possible. Participants should provide their informed consent before participating in the study, which is what the researcher tried to adhere to throughout the research.

4.8 Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability aspects of any data collection method used are of great significance to the findings of any scientific research. Moreover, validity and reliability issues serve as guarantees of the results of the participants' performances. Weir (2005) mentions that the educational bodies that provide language-testing services, such as Cambridge ESOL and Educational Testing Service (ETS) TOEFL have seriously and constantly addressed the reliability and validity aspects of their tests. They have also started addressing the legitimacy of the socio-cognitive elements of validity as much as they devoted attention to other reliability aspects. Weir declares that "...the provision of any satisfactory evidence of validity is indisputably necessary for any serious test" (p.11).

As for content, it is worth mentioning the words used by Meterns (1998) as he mentions that "content validity is especially important in studies that purport to compare two (or more) different curricula, teaching strategies, or school placements. If all students are taking the same test but all the students were not exposed to the same information, the test is not equally content valid for all the groups" (p. 294).

This study actually investigates two different treatments of EFL students where the control group receives typical teaching while the experiment group is introduced to a special treatment, namely the application of reader-response strategy to literary texts, to

prompt them to show critical thinking while performing the tasks.

Gall et al. (1994) mention that one of the criteria for judging experiments is population validity. By definition, population validity is "...the extent to which the results of an experiment can be generalized from the sample that participated in it to a larger group of individuals, that is, a population" (p. 217).

The concept of population validity is closely related to the process of sampling in different types of quantitative research. In this research project, the researcher selected the sample randomly to correspond with the defined population for which the generalization of results is required. The sample should be sufficient in size, which in turn reduces the probability of having different characteristics from the population from which it was drawn. The sample error in the case of the first questionnaire should be very low, and in the case of subsequent tools almost nil, because all of the participants were included.

4.9 Analysis Instrumentation

The process of data analysis involves making sense out of text (Creswell, 2009). All the data collected gained meaning when it was being processed into knowledge. Cassell and Symon (1994) comment that "Data analysis is an organic whole that begins with the data gathering case study and does not end until the writing is complete" (p.34) . Creswell (2009) also pointed out that "It is an ongoing process involving continual reflection about data" (p.43). For qualitative data, there is a diversity of methods available and there is no standardised approach to the analysis of qualitative data. There are many qualitative research approaches with the result that there are also different strategies to deal with the data collected (Saunders et al, 1997). Cassell and Symon (1994) also agree that there is no separation between data collection and data analysis.

Scoring procedures followed recommendations by of an analytic assessment-based rating procedure. To serve the purpose of the research study, the pre-reading test was used to ensure that all of participants would approach the selected literary works with homogeneous levels of reading comprehension skill. The test consisted of a reading passage (selected from a short story) and the overall of 20 comprehension questions

A pre-intervention questionnaire, containing 20 questions mainly in order to help

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have a general idea of what the participants' attitude towards reading literature and critical thinking skills. This would also enable the researcher to compare any possible changes in the participants' attitude about critical thinking skills and motivation for further reading of English literature after the completion of the study. It must be mentioned that this questionnaire had been previously piloted on a group of students of English. The reliability of it was calculated as being, a high reliability index for a questionnaire and the validity verified by some of the teaching staff.

A Post-experiment test, consisting of a reading passage and 20 question items similar to the pre-experiment test, designed to check the participants' use of critical thinking skills after having been exposed to the experiment of reading the short stories. The questions were divided into different forms, varying from multiple-choice questions and fill in the gaps to providing the meaning of words, and the "whys" questions. This test was designed to evaluate the participants' overall comprehension of the short stories. Students were not informed of this upcoming test, in order to prevent any pre-exam reviewing or revising. Scores obtained through both tests are to be compared to make decisions about the effectiveness of the applied approach in promoting thinking skills among participants mainly those in the experimental group.

Both experimental and control group students were aware that they were taking part in the testing of a new programme. The importance and the relevance of the study were explained to both groups. This was an attempt to control for a possible undesired effect.

4.10 Data Analysis

Following Miles and Huberman (1994), data analysis went through the three main steps, namely data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/ verification. The material collected is selected and condensed to ease the interpretation process. As suggested by Holliday (2002), under each thematic heading, extracts of data are taken from the corpus, put together with discussion and used as evidence for the ongoing arguments. A few strategies for data reduction as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) namely the use of summaries of various kinds, coding and memoing were used.

4.10.1 Analysis of quantitative data

In a quantitative data analysis, the researcher attempts to explain a phenomenon by gathering numerical data that are mathematically examined. It is primarily meant to turn information into codes, which are numerical numbers (Kumar, 2011). In plain terms, numerical analysis, which can be done manually or automatically, is a prerequisite for quantitative data analysis. The researcher used Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS - version 26) to compute frequencies, percentages, means, and other statistical tests for the current investigation. In the study at hand, the questionnaires and tests were all statistically analyzed. To start with, the preliminary questionnaire was administered using the quantitative data analysis. Serial numbers were assigned to its completion. Coding, organization, description, interpretation, and conclusion-making were all part of the analysis. The focus of the investigation was on descriptive statistics, which involves computing means, frequencies, and percentages. The data were turned into pie charts, bar graphs, and tabular form. Moreover, the researcher used a T-Test for data analysis of pre-/posttest. Indeed, the T-Test with a 93% confidence interval is used to compare the means of the EG and CG in order to determine whether or not they are statistically different in terms of display of critical thinking skills.

4.10.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

The gathered qualitative data were analyzed thematically by viewing and reviewing themes and patterns. Kumar (2011) suggests that one of the ways in which qualitative data is processed is by identifying the main themes that emerge from the qualitative tool. In other words, the analysis of qualitative data leads to abstracting emerging themes and categories. Exploration and description of a phenomenon are the main objectives of qualitative research. According to Kumar (2011), content analysis is a method used to examine interview content for qualitative data. He claims that this procedure includes four steps, including identifying the main themes; assigning codes to the main themes; classifying responses under the main themes; and finally integrating themes and responses into the text of report.

As the research data comprised transcripts of interviews, the data was analyzed simultaneously during the collection and interpretation. Simultaneous analysis will assist understanding a pattern in the findings as they emerge from voluminous data (Marshall &

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Rossmann, 1995). Thematic analysis was performed on all the transcripts to analyze participants' perceptions and attitudes towards the adopted approach, reader-response approach, as well as thinking skills. The analysis was guided by the aim of the research.

The content of the transcripts were divided into units of meanings (Marshall & Rossmann, 1995). The transcript content was read and the units of meanings were coded by marking the main quotes.

After having reduced and arranged the data into a set of coded transcripts, it was easier to identify and select the potential interpretations of data. The researcher then engaged in a selective process to reduce and rearrange the data into a manageable and comprehensive form (Lester, 2020). Comments on the detailed discussions of several themes and interconnecting themes from the multiple perspectives of the informants were produced, and finally interpretation of the data was made. During the interpretation, the findings were compared with the information gathered from the questionnaire as well as the literature.

4.11 Ethical Considerations

The conduct of this research complied with the Algerian University Code of Practice on research ethics in all the case studies of this research. It was also conformed to the University's policies on Health and Safety and Equal Opportunities. Ethical guidelines serve as a standard for the researcher to evaluate the whole process of the research. Creswell (2009) pointed out that the researcher has an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values and desires of the participants. The participants have a right to know that the data collected from them is kept confidential (Oates, 2006). The matter of confidentiality and data protection was handled by not revealing the participants' names. All the participants in this research were anonymous. All the identities have been randomly 'coded' to avoid personal identification. All the transcripts are confined to myself. It is necessary for the researcher to be fully open and honest with the participants. Participants should be made "aware of exactly why the evidence is required and exactly what will be done with it once the research has been completed" (Remenyi et al., 1998, p.228). For every semi-structured interview, the researcher informed them of the nature and purpose of the research before commencing.

4.11.1 Researcher's Role

Understanding the role of the researcher within the research process can form an important part of a research study (Cassell & Symon, 1994). Researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis (Lichtman, 2006). Qualitative researchers are characteristically concerned in their research to accurately describe, decode and interpret the precise meanings of the research in the social contexts (Cassell & Symons, 1994). The role of a qualitative researcher is to "bring understanding, interpretation and meaning to mere description" (Lichtman, 2006, p12). It is through his or her eyes that data are collected, information is gathered, settings are viewed and realities are constructed. Cassell and Symons (1994) mentioned that the researcher needs to engage in interacting with the participants and to make the research process 'transparent' to the participants. The researcher has built up a social relationship with the students in order to ease the understanding of their perceptions and attitudes about a reader-response-based reading of literary texts to develop critical thinking skills. This enabled the researcher to gain access to the informants easily. In addition, the researcher possessed a deep understanding of the relevant literature. The researcher acted as a question-asker, listener and observer in order to demonstrate sensitivity towards the data and bring out meanings that resonated with the informants and revealed new knowledge to the wider researcher community. Qualitative research is a "Situated activity that locates the observer in the world" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.3), and a qualitative approach to inquiry does not require objectivity and distance from the data. Hence, The researcher is conscious of how the dual role as a tutor in the class and researcher might affect the participants' responses to the research questions.

Conclusion

Chapter four attempted to provide a rationale for the methodologies adopted by the present study. Therefore, it discussed the characteristics of mixed methods, the method of case study, the design of this research, the data collection tools, participant selection process, ethical concerns in conducting this research, as well as thematic analysis as the approach to data analysis. These reviews of paradigmatic stances, methods, and their outcomes have enabled awareness of 'how to go about' collecting data in relation to the research questions. As the central theme of the research and research questions is, 'enhancing critical thinking among EFL learners through the perspectives of reader-response approach to literary texts, the success of the research depends on finding out the

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

relevant participants' views about it, and the methods that are used to gain the views.



Chapter Five

Data Analysis



Introduction

This chapter explores the student participants' views on developing critical thinking in Algerian EFL university learners in light of the main and sub-research questions, literature review, and theoretical framework. The theoretical perspectives of social constructivism inform the main research question and the three sub-research questions (Vygotsky, 1978).

Selected through random purposive sampling, participants were selected for their unique contributions in terms of knowledge of the context-specific traditions, academic practices, and their knowledge of the accumulating academic needs (in relation to the research theme) in general.

The main goal of the present study as indicated in the general introduction was how to enhance EFL university students' critical thinking abilities as manifested in the quality of their analysis of literary texts through the integration of reader-response approach. This chapter is divided into two sections, with the first mainly exploring students' responses gathered through the exploratory questionnaire administered to both student participants using a T-test. Their abilities in terms of thinking skills were investigated through a three-section questionnaire that targeted students' reading abilities, teacher's types of questions when dealing with literary texts and students' abilities when analyzing literary texts.

In the second section, the issues that were first investigated through a questionnaire were then piloted through pre-and post tests whose data were compared in pairs. These comparisons were conducted to determine whether or not there were significant improvements in their critical thinking skills as groups as well as individuals before and after the intervention. The third section is devoted to comparing the consistency of students' quantitative results with the qualitative data collected through post- intervention interviews,

As a research scenario, the present study aimed to examine the working of an alternative approach to teaching English literary texts to higher education EFL students in Algeria. The conventional approach to literary texts in EFL pedagogy in the Algerian secondary school classroom is characterized by teacher transmission of objectified literary interpretation, coupled

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with learner passivity and conformity in reading and learning (Baurain 2010). The alternative approach to EFL literature that was explored is reader-response approach, which seeks innovation to traditional practices in literature-based pedagogy. This approach aims to help students form their own responses

5.1 Test of Normality

As a first logical step of the data analysis, the researcher used the test of the normality which is an important step for deciding the measures of central tendency and statistical methods for data analysis. When the data follow normal distribution, parametric tests otherwise nonparametric methods are used to compare the groups. There are different methods used to test the normality of data, including numerical and visual methods, and each method has its own advantages and disadvantages.

According to the Shapiro-Wilk test, a p-value greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$) represents the assumption that the data have been approximately normally distributed (Pearson, 2010). The p-values for the perceptions of benefits and effectiveness are all less than 0.05. Our sample constituted of 73 participants ($n=73$) and by applying the test of normality, as indicated in both table 5.1 and figure 5.1, we obtained a ,004 as a sig value. Then we can conclude that the gathered data have been approximately normally distributed.

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Total	,126	73	,004	,948	73	,004

Table (5.1): Tests of Normality

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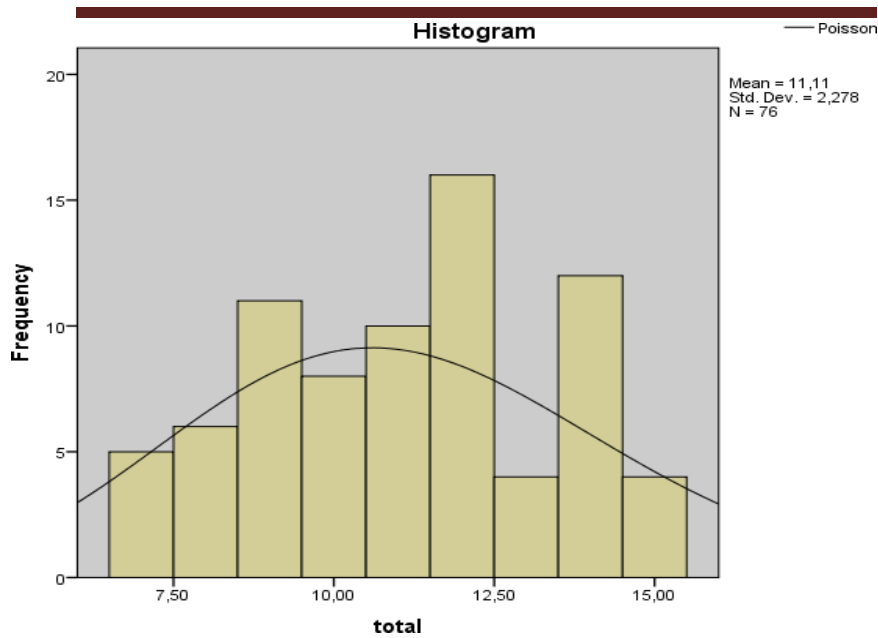


Figure (5.1): Frequency of Tests of Normality

The normality of the data distributions was analyzed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test to determine whether the significance levels of the sample data for critical thinking test fit a normal distribution. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistics show the maximum difference (absolute value) of an observed and theory-based distribution function; under normal distribution, the absolute value of the statistics is close to zero. The confidence level was set at 95%. According to our test results, the p-value of Analysis, Inference, and Evaluation skills was less than 0.05, which indicates that the distribution was not normal for the three skills. The p-value for the 'Inductive Skill' and the 'Total' was greater than 0.05, which indicates that the distribution for the two factors was normal. Table (5.2) below shows the result of testing for normality of students' critical thinking skills.

	Total	Eval	Anal	Infer	Cop/Cntr	Reas
N	73	73	73	73	73	73
Kolmogorov-Simnov Z	1.238	1.798	1.345	1.234	1.241	1.546
Asymp inSig.	0.88	0.03	0.31	0.31	0.86	0.06

Table (5.2): Normality Test for the Critical Thinking Skills

5.2 The Pre-intervention Phase

In the pre-experimental phase, a preliminary questionnaire was administered to both groups, EG (n=38) and CG (n=35). The researcher attempted to investigate the EFL students' views regarding their knowledge about critical thinking skills, their abilities when dealing with literary works as well as literature teachers' types of questions. Moreover, the participants sat for a literature pretest to identify their current level and ensure similarity between EG and CG. As an experimental scenario, an experiment was carried out to find out the effectiveness of adopting a reader-response approach to literary texts in enhancing EFL students' critical skills. In the post-experimental phase, the participants were post-tested to check the extent to which our adopted approach and learning strategy bring about positive results in bolstering their critical thinking skills. Finally, to support the already gathered data, the researcher opted for collecting qualitative data by interviewing participants of the experimental group (EG) to divulge their attitudes towards the intervention.

In short, prior to the experimental intervention, two quantitative instruments, a preliminary questionnaire and short story reading pretest were employed to both groups (EG & CG) to examine critical thinking issues encountered by EFL university students that hinder effective critical analysis of literary texts and to determine their current level and ensure that they were similar in terms of comprehension and analysis.

5.2.1 Students' Preliminary Questionnaire

The present study aims at testing the predetermined hypothesis, which is concerned with the effectiveness of reader-response approach in enhancing EFL students' critical thinking skills. To this end, this preliminary questionnaire was meant to a mass quantitative data that is pertinent to find out the participants' attitudes towards critical thinking skills, their reading abilities as well as

their literature teacher's types of questions.

5.2.1.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Questionnaire

The data gathered through the preliminary questionnaire are analyzed and interpreted as follows:

5.2.1.1.1 Background Information

As indicated in Figure (5.2), in terms of participants' age, the category that ranged between 20 and 21 years old(32.12%) shapes the majority of our selected sample, whereas the second category (17-19) represents (12.41%).Worth to be mentioned, few(8.76%) respondents' ages are higher than usual (25 years old). That is because some students got their Baccalaureate exam when older than usual, and some are employees who wanted to pursue their studies.

	<u>EG</u>	<u>CG</u>
<u>17-19</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>20-21</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>22-27</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>
Total	38	35

Figure (5.2) Students' Age

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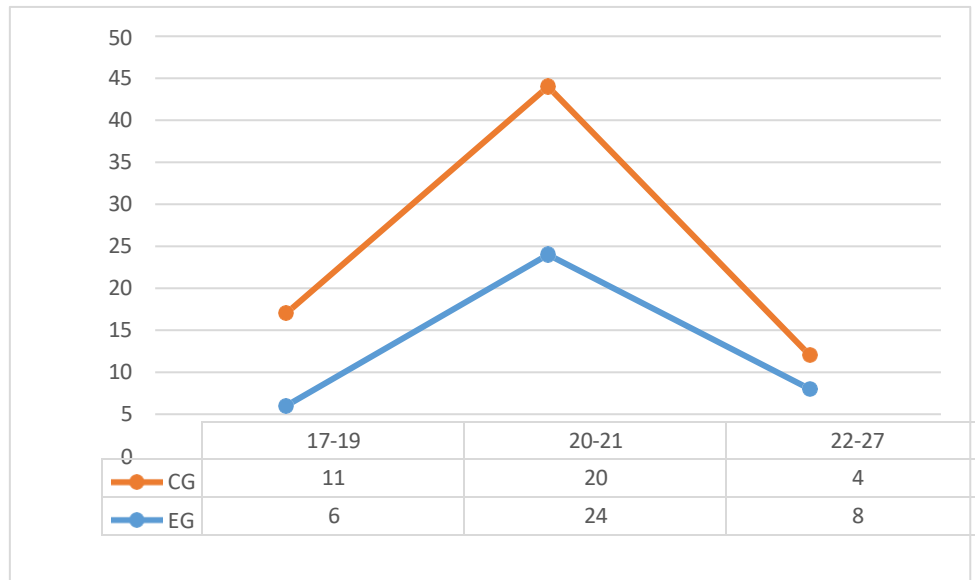


Figure (5.3) Students' Gender

As displayed in Figure (5.3), female students outnumbered males. There were just 24 male participants out of seventy-three making up 17.52 %; whereas, the rest 49 students were of a female gender which representing 35.77 % of the whole sample.

The results demonstrated above are in complete harmony with the male and female ratio at the Department of English in most educational institutions. This reflects the fact that females are more interested in learning foreign languages than males who prefer disciplines other than languages.

5.2.1.1.2 Pre-Experiment Questionnaire

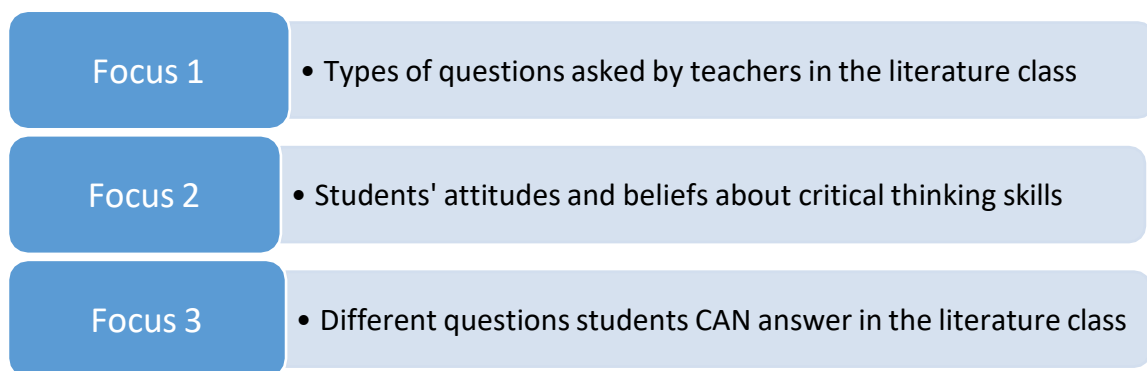


Figure (5.4) The three focuses of the first section of the questionnaire

This section highlights the findings related to the pre-experiment questionnaire, dealing with the participants' educational background. It focuses on teaching literary texts, prose and poetry, for Algerian second year English department students. The questionnaire is divided into three focuses (Figure 5.4). As illustrated in this Figure, the main focuses are the types of questions the teacher asks in literature class, students' knowledge about critical thinking skills, and the different types of questions these students can answer in literature classes.

5.2.1.1.2.1 Focus One: Types of questions asked in literature class

This section addresses the types of questions their teacher of literature asks when analyzing the different literary texts in class. The Likert scale questions, specific choices based on 'agreeing' or 'disagreeing', are addressed for respondents to measure their attitudes and beliefs about the types of questions asked by their teacher of literature. The choice options include strongly agree, slightly agree, agree, disagree, slightly disagree, and strongly disagree as to the Likert item.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Remembering	47,95	42,47	9,59	0,00	0,00
Predicting	46,58	35,62	15,07	2,74	0,00
Understanding	26,03	24,66	31,51	5,48	9,59

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Challenging questions	0,00	6,85	6,85	46,58	12,33
Giving opinion	5,48	19,18	2,74	36,99	6,85
Justifying opinion	15,07	19,18	46,58	8,22	0,00
Reflecting on learning	0,00	0,00	2,74	42,47	2,74
Relating knowledge	0,00	0,00	12,33	26,03	0,00
Relating to real world	1,37	10,96	30,14	10,96	17,81
Using knowledge in other subjects	2,74	19,18	6,85	17,81	9,59
Providing time	8,22	19,18	23,29	19,18	0,00
Different ways for answering	6,85	5,48	12,33	28,77	0,00
Sharing views	15,07	12,33	0,00	38,36	0,00
Discussion	15,07	10,96	2,74	49,32	2,74
Debating	2,74	8,22	10,96	30,14	0,00
Range of question types	15,07	28,77	8,22	5,48	0,00
Opportunities for all students	5,48	32,88	49,32	2,74	8,22

Table (5.3) Types of questions asked by teachers of literature

As shown in Table 5.3, based on participants' responses, the rates related to lower order thinking skills (remembering, understanding and predicting) are higher compared to higher order thinking skills (giving opinion, sharing views, reflecting). Few participants (5.48%) strongly agree that their teachers of literature ask them to provide their opinions about the content they receive in the literature class. As for relating the learnt material to real life situations, most participants disagree about being given the chance to do so (28.77% strongly disagree and 17.81 disagree). More important is the fact that all participants strongly disagree about being hindered a chance to reflect on their learning. It means that lower order thinking skills were mostly targeted in classroom activities at University.

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Based on the obtained findings, through section one of the questionnaire, it can be concluded that lower and higher order thinking skills are not balanced. It seems that teachers prioritize lower order thinking skills at the expense of the higher ones.

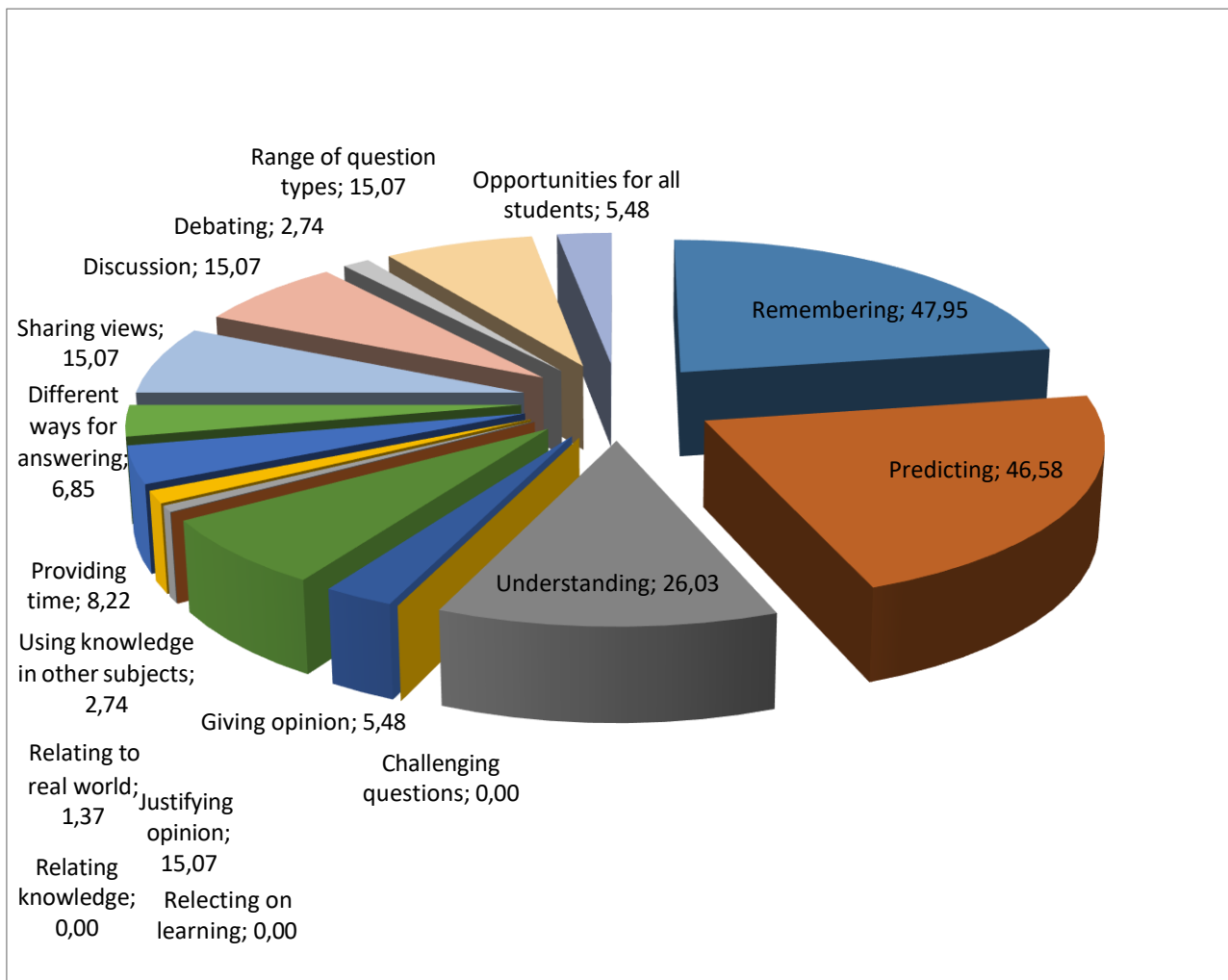


Figure (5.5) Types of questions asked by teachers of literature

In an attempt to respond to the statements whether the teacher provides enough time for students in the literature class to think and endeavour answering questions, only 8.22% of participants provided a positive answer. More than that, only 6.85% of participants confirmed that

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their teacher encourages them to provide different ways for answering questions (Figure 5.5). The target students confirmed that exam questions usually entail lower-order thinking skills (definition listing, memorization, and explanation), and higher while higher order thinking skills (comparison and contrast, evaluation, and synthesis) are seldom asked.

As a researcher, we have been struck by this particularly disturbing phenomenon: very few students are asked to think. We have always witnessed the university teacher who provides maximum direction to his or her students. In other words, they provide a formula with an accompanying set of rules they require the students to follow. University studies do need to be introduced to the protocols associated with the discipline they are studying, be well-prepared, and then given time and opportunities for higher order thinking skills to be developed.

5.2.1.1.2.2 Focus Two: Students' knowledge about Critical Thinking Skills

In order to have an idea about the students' competency on critical thinking, we devoted section two of the questionnaire to participants' knowledge and abilities in terms of critical thinking. Again, specific choices based on 'agreeing' or 'disagreeing' are addressed for respondents to examine their exercise of critical thinking skills. The section included 16 statements ranging from "memorization" to "making judgements/reason".

As illustrated below, the participants' knowledge about the importance and exercise of analysis, evaluation, creative thinking, and reasoning for the literature class students were confirmed. We also noted that students gave through their additional comments different reasons for the importance of each critical thinking skill. Thing, which was observed later through their responses to the questions posed during the pre-intervention test.

Based on the obtained results, analysis is considered as a useful tool for participants in the literature class because, for them, being able to analyze equips them with the ability to solve

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problems. For evaluation, we found that all participants confirmed the importance of this critical thinking skill as it enables them to judge the value of information and to argue. This perception of the concept corresponds to the framework of critical thinking, the literature that described evaluation as a cognitive skill (Krathwohl, 2002).

Regarding reasoning, most participants prove it as an important skill because they were able to come up with ideas themselves at university. It enables students to distinguish themselves from others, which might enhance their future career opportunities and contributions to society.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Memorizing	30,14	34,25	15,07	0,00	1,37
Reciting	1,37	2,74	5,48	53,42	4,11
Understanding details	5,48	6,85	46,58	12,33	4,11
Summarizing	15,07	5,48	28,77	17,81	0,00
Retelling	28,77	15,07	23,29	0,00	6,85
Applying	38,36	42,47	6,85	2,74	0,00
what I would do as a character	19,18	52,05	23,29	5,48	0,00
Think 'alternative ways' to explain	28,77	26,03	23,29	6,85	0,00
Comparing / Contrasting	42,47	39,73	13,70	0,00	0,00
Analysis of texts	49,32	36,99	13,70	0,00	0,00
Problem solving	49,32	36,99	12,33	0,00	0,00
Creativity	43,84	41,10	10,96	0,00	0,00
Designing	13,70	52,05	32,88	0,00	0,00
Assessing	45,21	36,99	13,70	0,00	0,00
Argumenting	39,73	49,32	9,59	0,00	0,00
Making judgements /reason	38,36	47,95	8,22	0,00	0,00

Table (5.4): Attitudes and beliefs about critical thinking skills

As illustrated in table 5.4, the mean value of the “strongly agree” choice is 48.9%. The higher order thinking skills ranged between 28.77% and 49.32%. Students have different views on critical thinking which is based on their different experiences. Critical thinking was considered to be a means of problem-solving by some of the students. Participants were given the chance to provide

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further comments after having responded to the 16 statements under section two. Some students commented and described critical thinking as a means of solving problems they face in their lives. This is reflected by the participants' responses: 49.32% think that higher order critical thinking skills (HOTS) enable them to solve problems; 43.84% think that HOTS help them be creative; and 45.21% strongly agree that HOTS help students assess the learning material and provide thoughtful judgements.

Several interesting details emerged in the analysis of results of the administered questionnaire. First, there was a great deal of consistency between the present research work and previous surveys on participants' general views of critical thinking. The knowledge about the importance of critical thinking remains high (79.50% ranging from strongly agree to agree), as does the belief that these skills are generally lacking in classrooms. Encouraging points of analysis emerged in responses to questions about higher order thinking skills.

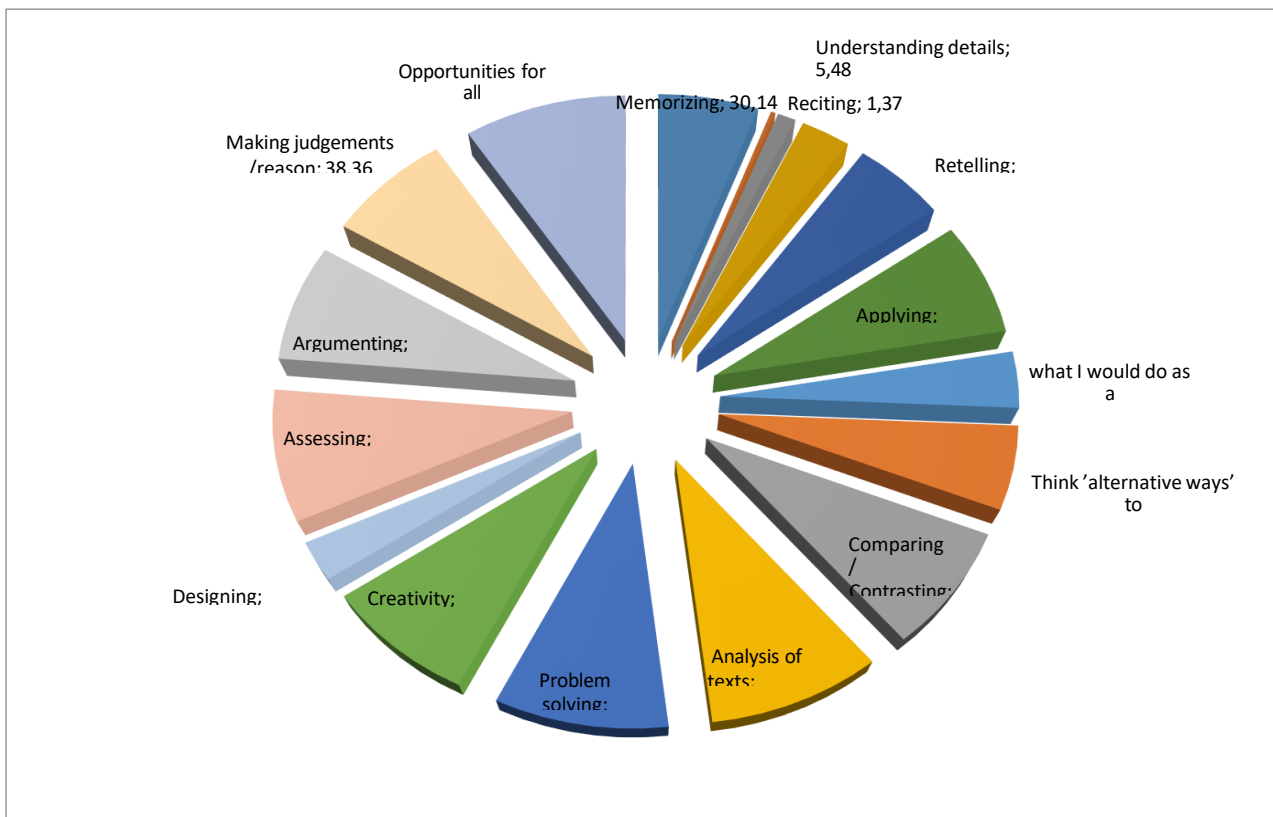


Figure (5.6): Students' attitudes about HOTS

Figure (5.6) above shows a detailed comparison between the means of the obtained data based on students' responses regarding their abilities in terms of every specific skill of the different critical thinking skills. The figure shows the rates obtained by participants. Thing that indicates the interest to study literature in EFL settings. These obtained data increased the researcher's will to integrate the reader response as an approach to literary analysis. The latter is aimed to aid EFL learners exercise their critical thinking skills.

As far as evaluation and assessment are concerned, 45.21% of informants strongly agree and 36.29% agree with the importance of evaluation of the literary learning material, subject of analysis. Unfortunately this skill is seldom targeted by in-class activities as illustrated by the findings previously discussed in the previous section of the questionnaire. Participants' instructors do not encourage them to exercise evaluation, otherwise this could be reflected in the types of questions

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they ask in class.

With respect to relating the learnt material to real life « What would you do if you were the character... ? », 19.18% of respondents strongly agree, and 52.05% agree with the fact that this type of questions are rarely asked. According to participants' comments, the majority felt the importance of this type of questions which help them dive in stories and negotiate meaning thoroughly.

From Figure (5.6) above, it can be clearly noticed that the scores for the first choice « strongly agree » about HOTS ranged from 43.24% to 45.21% on a five-point Likert-scale indicate that the respondents agree with the fact that the critical thinking skills are crucial for learners and do affect not only their reading proficiency but their learning and level as well.

As the findings revealed, if students approach the reading text with a reader response strategy in the act of reading, not only the comprehension but also the quality of analysis will be affected. This highlights the rationale behind reader response theory which, based on Çubukcu (2007) holds that “everything the reader brings to the text is important and this response is always structured by the language of the text and the literary experience is a transaction, in which neither the text nor the reader can be seen as the sole repository of meaning” (p. 63).

5.2.1.1.2.3 Focus Three: Students' Abilities in Terms of Critical Thinking Skills

As discussed previously, section three addressed the students' abilities in terms of critical thinking skills. The section comprised sixteen (16) different abilities (refer to Table 5.5, showing the different abilities and their labels).

Label	Ability to answer / respond to
Ab1	questions which ask for information I have memorized

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Ab2	questions where the answer can be found in the text.
Ab3	questions which ask for understanding of the materials learned in English class
Ab4	questions which require a summary of an article or a story
Ab5	questions where I need to retell what I learned in English class
Ab6	questions where I need to apply things I have learned to a new context
Ab7	questions where I need to place myself in another person's situation.
Ab8	questions where I need examples.
Ab9	questions where I need to give reasons
Ab10	questions which require comparison and contrast.
Ab11	questions where I need to think of a possible solution to a problem
Ab12	questions which require creative skills, e.g. 'Can you make a new ending for this story?'
Ab13	questions where I need to design something new .
Ab14	questions which require assessment and reasoning skill, e. . 'Which do you think is better and why ?'
Ab15	questions where arguing ability is required and I need to elaborate my views and provide reasons or evidence.
Ab16	questions where I need to give my personal views, e.g. agree or disagree, and give reasons to support my views. e.g. 'Do you agree with this decision?'

Table (5.5): Students' abilities and their labels as used in the questionnaire

As shown in the above table (use of highlighter), students' abilities were divided into three categories ranging from simple (including six abilities) to medium (including four abilities) to higher order thinking skills (including six abilities).

As illustrated in the figure below (Figure 5.7) which comprised the lowest critical thinking skills such as memorisation, retelling, understanding and summarizing, the respondents reported

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their highest positive attitudes expressing their ability to answer and respond to questions related to the lower order thinking skills. Among the respondents, 23.29% strongly agreed and 52.25% agreed and stated their ability to answer questions about information they have memorized. For item 2 (Ab2), answering questions whose answers are found in the text, 65.75% strongly agreed and 32.88% agreed upon the fact of being able to do so. Answering questions which ask for understanding of the materials learned in English class seems not a hard task for most respondents since 36.99% and 21.99% answered positively with both choices, strongly agree and agree. It is noticeable that the higher we are within Bloom's taxonomy, the less critical participants are. This is supported by the fact that only 12.33% strongly agreed and 5.48% agreed upon their ability in terms of answering questions where they need to apply things they have learned to a new context.

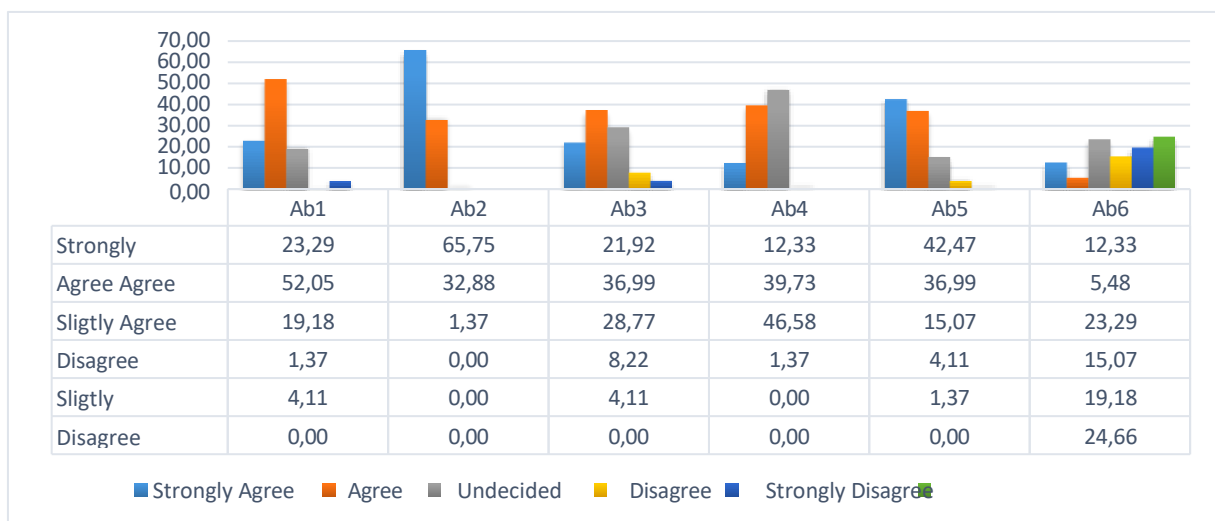


Figure (5.7): Students' abilities in terms of Lowest Critical Thinking Skills

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Giving examples, reasoning, comparing and contrasting, and placing oneself in another person's place are what is agreed upon as medium critical thinking skills. They were assigned the labels Ab7, Ab8, Ab9 and Ab10 respectively. The table displays the participants' responses regarding these four skills. In the statistics result, the overall percentage of agreement for all skills is 24.66%, ranging from 4.11% to 8.22%. For this set of skills, generally, participants agreed that they were poorly skillful.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Ab7	4,11	6,85	21,92	32,88	5,48
Ab8	8,22	16,44	5,48	23,29	0,00
Ab9	5,48	8,22	12,33	32,88	12,33
Ab10	6,85	9,59	13,70	32,88	5,48

Table (5.6): Students' abilities in terms of Medium Critical Thinking Skills

For item Ab7, with only 4.11% (strongly agree) and 6.85% (agree), which were the lowest, this indicates that most of the students believed that they did not have the ability to place themselves in another person's place. Only 8.22% and 5.48% (item Ab8) believed they were able to give examples when asked. As for item Ab9, giving reasons, very few (5.48% and 8.22%) participants thought they were able to do so. Comparing and contrasting seemed a hard skill for most participants since only 6.85% strongly agree and only 9.59% of participants agreed upon their ability to lead a comparison and contrast task in the literature class (Table 5.6).

The third set included the skills that are considered the highest as they appeared in Bloom's taxonomy. The set included responding to questions where one needs to think of a possible solution to a problem, answering questions which require creative skills, responding to questions where one needs to design something new, answering questions which require assessment and reasoning skill,

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answering questions where arguing ability is required and one needs to elaborate his/her views and provide reasons, and responding to questions where one needs to give his/her personal views.

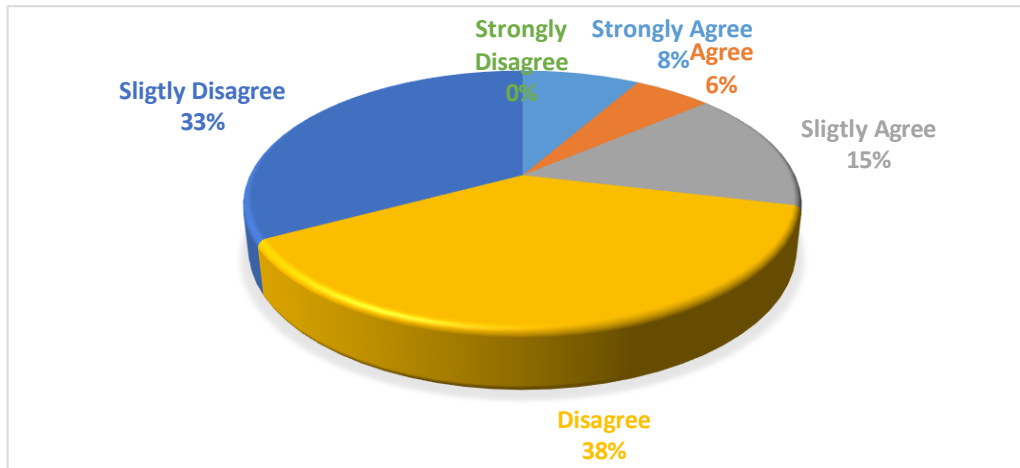


Figure (5.8): Students' abilities in terms of Higher Order Critical Thinking Skills

As anticipated and based on the data presented in Figures 5.8 and 5.9, for the skills of judging the value of new information or evidence presented to them and evaluating others' arguments, participants displayed a reasonably strong collective agreement that these skills are essential for their education and expressed their lack of ability to exercise them. To add more, higher order thinking skills, through items A11 to Ab16, revealed that all participants confirmed that there was a general disagreement on being able to display critical thinking in terms of providing responses to questions where one needs to think of possible solutions to a problem, to questions which require creative skills, to questions where one needs to design something new, to questions which require assessment and reasoning skill, to questions where arguing ability is required and one needs to elaborate his/her views and provide reasons, and to questions where one needs to give his/her personal views. This general disagreement is clearly and easily noticed by reference to the below table (5.7).

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	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Ab11	8,22	5,48	15,07	32,88	0,00
Ab12	2,74	5,48	8,22	46,58	2,74
Ab13	4,11	6,85	9,59	27,40	5,48
Ab14	8,22	5,48	6,85	36,99	28,77
Ab15	8,22	5,48	16,44	12,33	24,66
Ab16	5,48	24,66	15,07	2,74	9,59

Table (5.7): Students' abilities in terms of Higher Order Critical Thinking Skills

5.3Pre- and Post-Test Analysis

There were two separate sets of results from the writing tasks, the first of which included the participants' responses from both sections B1 and B2, control and experimental groups respectively, and will be considered as the entry tests for both groups. The second set, however, included the responses to the tasks, and it was carried out shortly after subjects were involved in the experiment. It will be considered as the exit test for the experimental group.

In the field of empirical research, testing is a procedure for assessing an individual's competence in a particular domain (Brown, 1994, p. 252). In EFL research, testing procedures are generally used to collect data about learners' language proficiency. In the present study, therefore, tests are designed to gauge EFL students' critical thinking as a result of the adoption of reader response strategy so as to ascertain whether this strategy will achieve better results in terms of students' critical thinking skills than the traditional instruction in literature sessions.

Before leading the experiment, and after having administered the preliminary questionnaire, the researcher conducted the reading pre-test to pinpoint the students' current level in terms of critical thinking skills. The purpose of the pre-test was to ensure the equivalence of both EG and CG before the study started while the purpose of the post-test was to assess the students' critical thinking abilities in response-based literature reading towards the end of the study and to compare

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the results of the EG with their counterparts in the CG. The data collected from these pre-/ post-test would approve the pre-set hypotheses about the students' critical thinking subsequent to the effectuation of the treatment and would also be used to compare the subjects' performance in both groups for the sake of proving the efficiency of reader response strategy. For identification purposes, the researcher then assigned a code number to each participant. The results of these tests were then calculated and analyzed descriptively using the software SPSS 26.

5.3.1 Entry and Exit Tests

The entry and exit test results were as follows: The total number of participants was 73 distributed between the two groups, 38 for the treatment group and 35 for the control group. All participants' papers were validated without any missing case (Table 5.8).

	Valid		Cases Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
TEST * X1	73	100,0%	0	0,0%	73	100,0%
TEST * X2	73	100,0%	0	0,0%	73	100,0%
TEST * X3	73	100,0%	0	0,0%	73	100,0%
TEST * X4	73	100,0%	0	0,0%	73	100,0%
TEST * X5	73	100,0%	0	0,0%	73	100,0%

Table (5.8): Case Processing Summary

As far as the procedures of administering the pre- and post-tests are concerned, participants were instructed to take the tests seriously, as they are a critical part of an experimental endeavour. Besides the low-anxiety testing environment that was established, the examiner conducted the tests by assuming the role of a facilitator and guide, being helpful to participants to feel more relaxed

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and self-confident while responding to the questions. As usually held exams, each test lasted 1 hour and a half.

The pre-test, a-400 word short story, entitled « Escape » was followed by a set of questions, seeking responses that enhance and encourage thinking. As shown in table 5.11, the reader response questions were classified under literal, interpretation, analysis, application, synthesis, evaluation, and affective.

Skill	Reader response questions
Literal	1. Where did the trio land after their plane was shot down? 2. What was the name of the family that helped the three British airmen?
Interpretation	1. Who were the British alliance in the second world war? 2. What happened to Bill Alliston during the war? 3. What do you understand by the phrase 'parachuted to safety'? 4. They 'nursed Bill to health'. Can you think of another word to replace 'nursed'?
Application	Relate Maurice Dupuis experiences to the present situation. Name two countries where such experiences might happen.
Analysis	1. Why were the Dupuis willing to look after Steel, Bill and Collar? 2. What nationality do you think gave the German the tips?
Synthesis	1. What would have happened if Bill and his friends have not met the Dupuis? 2. What should you do if the Germans found you out? (Imagine you were Dupuis)
Evaluation	1. Do you think Dupuis would have lived had he told the truth? Why? 2. In your opinion was the Dupuis sacrifice worthwhile?
Affective	1. If you were Dupuis, what would you have done? Why? 2. Imagine that you are Mrs. Alliston, how would you show your gratitude to the Dupuis Family?

Table (5.9): Pre-test activities and questions

The test was used to measure critical thinking skills, whether participants' responses meet the inference, explanation, evaluation and analysis indicators. The T- test was used to determine differences in the critical thinking skills of reading literary texts in the experimental and the control groups. Candidates are scored based on an analytical rating scale from 1 to 20 (Harris, 1969). Likewise, the post-test was administered under the same conditions. The scores obtained by the EG and CG in the pre-/ posttest were compared to assess the effectiveness of the incorporation of the

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independent variable, reader response approach to literary texts. Pre-/post-test enabled the researcher to obtain reliable results, and prove that any observable difference in the EG may be related to the independent variables and not to chance or confounding factors.

The post-test, a-288 word short story, entitled « The Titanic » was also followed by a set of questions, seeking responses that indicate the participants' level in terms of critical thinking skills.

As participants (experimental group) have been trained during ten weeks on analysis of short stories using a reader response approach, the main objective behind the post-test was to see whether any differences had occurred either positively or negatively on students' critical thinking. As shown below, the activities that followed the text varied from interpreting, literal, analysis, evaluation using the reader response to questions.

Task one : Read the text, then answer the following questions.

1. Where did the Titanic sail from its first voyage?
2. What is the meaning of the word *precognition as described in the text?
3. How is clairvoyance different from psychokinesis?
4. How best could you use ESP for the good of your own country?
5. Why did no one believe the woman when she said "That ship will sink"?
6. If you could have ESP, which one would you choose and why?
7. Is the evidence given in the text adequate for an investigation to take place?

Task two (Literal) : Fill in the appropriate boxes with suitable information obtained from the text.

.....	Left Southampton
Number of people killed
Telepaphy
Psychokinesis

Task three (Interpretation) : Using the information given in the text, state the different types of ESP and explain how one differs from another in terms of definitions and functions?

ESP	Definition	Function

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Task four (application): Give an example of a situation of how each type of ESP can function.

ESP	Situation
Precognition	
Telepaphy	
Psychokinesis	

Task six (Analysis): What do you think, would have happened if the woman raised the alarm about the tragedy one or two days prior to the maiden voyage?

Task seven (Synthesis): As someone gilled with ESP (precognition), prior to the incident. Draw up a plan to save the *Titanic*?

Task eight (Evaluation):

- Outline how this tragedy could have been avoided?
- Working as an insurance agent. How would you work out your assessment of financial compensation to the families of the victims?

5.4 The Reader Response-based Intervention

As shown in Figure 5.9, The Reader-Response Approach was used in the form of activities. There were several reader-response theory based activities conducted by the teacher researcher. The approach was applied in the form of written activities, which were conducted mostly in the post -reading phase. The pre- and while reading phases were mostly devoted for oral discussions while in post reading stage, the teacher usually asked the students some questions about the story in the form of written tasks.

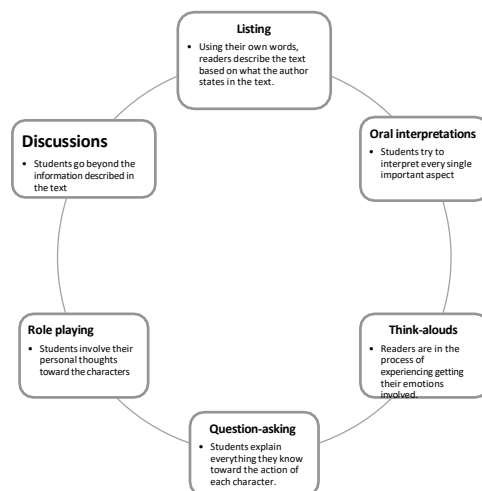


Figure (5.9) Activities performed within reader-response approach

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As a warm-up phase, using clues, real life situations and learning aids, the teacher asked the students of what they were thinking when they were told that they would read a story. They were asked to predict what kind of story they would get and why they predicted it to be so. The teacher instructed the students to write down their thoughts to be compared and checked during the pre-reading phase. The aim behind such an activity was to check students' ability to anticipate content upon given clues.

During the while-reading phase, the teacher usually asked, for example, what the students think when they heard the title of the story they were going to read or something significant that was related to the story. He often orally questioned the students to transform their thoughts into drawings ; this activity had successfully made the class more alive and got the students' interested to read the story. To delve deeper in the story, the teacher would ask the students' opinion about some parts of the story after they read it. This interesting task, usually performed orally, dealt with the students' opinion or interpretation.

To arouse students' curiosity and encourage them to think, the teacher usually asked questions about the story to be answered orally. These questions were related to the students' feelings about the story, their imagination, agreement towards the characters' actions, their experience, and their understanding regarding the information in the text. The teacher applied this activity in each meeting during the implementation of the reader-response approach.

Based on the experience, a variety of responses were made by the students towards the selected short stories. They were interpretive responses, reflective responses, affective responses, queries, and associative responses. The most remarkable responses made by participants during the intervention were the interpretive ones which came in the form of written and sometimes oral responses. To answer the teacher's questions, students responded with their interpretations and

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quotes from the passages to support their answers. It is eminent that the responses of the students involve the readers' feelings, experiences, and background knowledge which could be seen in the students' responses.

« I choose precognition because it enables us to know about the future of our country. For example, in the case of presidential elections, it helps us to decide which candidate will serve the country better. »

« They didn't believe her because they believed it was built to the very latest design. »»

« ESP could serve better our country to prevent tragedies and it helps to understand more scientific obscure facts. »»

« No one believed her because for the met was unsinkable and they believed in precognition. »

« The evidence was not enough because it could have been a coincidence only, so no investigation would take place based on one evidence. »

«ESP could be used for good reasons such as in wars or any beneficial reasons for humanity. »»

« No one believed her because she was shouting without any reason, which is illogical. »

« If I could have ESP, I'd choose telepathy because I always wondered how the human mind works, and who am I in the eyes of others. »

« ESP could be used to develop the country's economy and the whole system. »»

« I would choose psychokinesis because I think it would be great to have the ability to move things without any effort. »

Figure (5.10): Samples of students' interpretive responses

Participants, orally and in writing, mentioned their personal memories that were brought back when they discussed some parts of the stories. There were quite a few who made this kind of response. In oral, the students briefly mentioned their personal beliefs that were brought back when they discussed some parts of the stories. Many of the participants showed their skillfulness in

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leading a deep analysis of the events of stories when asked to do so. They succeeded at making connections and associations either with their experiences or other literary works they read (Figure 5.10).

It can be concluded that the planned activities in the treatment got fully involved the participants in a dialogue with the text. This is in line with Carlisle's (2000) argument. As he explains that it gives the learners the opportunity to go beyond literal meaning of the text towards aesthetic appreciation. This may result in the learners' interaction with the text and consequently better comprehension of the texts which is reflected by their analytical responses.

« They were willing to look after them because if they were caught, many members of the resistance would have been caught and killed. »

«they wanted to provide them with food and shelter. »

« ...to look after them so that the resistance would survive. »

« ... it is their duty and they had to do so. »

« If the woman raised the alarm earlier, an investigation and a whole checkup of the whole ship would have taken place to ensure the ship's security. »

« I think nothing will change because no one will believe her. »

« If the woman raised the alarm earlier, no one will die and the majority of people will not accept to go on this ship. »

« If the woman raised the alarm earlier, the crew would believe her and cancel or postpone the trip. »

« If the woman raised the alarm earlier, nothing would change because it is hard to convince people. »

Figure (5.11): Samples of students' analytical responses

5.4.1 Pre- and Post-Tests Results Analysis

As to the pre-test and the post-test, the mean scores of the groups were compared and tested using Wilcoxon test and through one-way ANOVA at the .05 level of significance. The results of both tests were cross tabulated (crosstab). Cross tabulation is a useful analysis tool commonly used to compare the results for one or more variables with the results of another variable. It is used with data on a nominal scale, where variables are named or labeled with no specific order. Data gathered through both tests, pre-test and post-test, were compared to confirm whether there were any differences between the obtained results before the intervention and those obtained after the experiment. In other words, the tabulation of the gathered data aimed to confirm the effectiveness of the implementation of reader-response strategy when dealing with literary texts in enhancing participants critical thinking skills in terms of analysis, evaluation, synthesis, application and interpreting the learning material.

T-test was run to compare the means scores of the control and experimental groups on the entry and exit tests. Based on the results obtained through the data tabulation, it was concluded that there was not any significant difference between the experimental and control groups' reading comprehension ability prior to the administration of the treatment. Thus, these results indicate that the control and experimental groups are selected from the same population of students with no marked difference between their variances; this indicated that the two groups' levels of critical thinking were almost the same and that any probable discrepancy in the results of the post-experimental questionnaire can be directly attributed to the difference in teaching approaches.

Based on the results of both tests, as show in table 5.12, it was concluded that as far as skill one, understanding, is concerned, there was not any significant difference between the experimental and control groups' scores. As the results in the table below reveal, while in the

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experimental group, out of 38 participants, 10 got a « Good » mark and 16 got a « Very good » mark in the pre-test, and then the number increased to 11 who got a « Good » mark and 19 who got a « Very good » mark in the post-test , in the control the number of the same category either remained the same or increased slightly. Thus, the obtained data revealed that the students who read literature using the reader-response approach showed better understanding than those who followed the traditional methods.

		Criterion1 : Understanding				Total
		Very bad	Bad	Good	Very good	
EG	Before	3	9	10	16	38
	After	0	8	11	19	38
	Total	3	17	21	35	76
CG	Before	8	15	9	3	35
	After	11	12	8	4	35
	Total	19	27	17	7	70

Table (5.10): Pre and Post-test Results. _The skill of « Understanding »

		Criterion 2 : Interpreting & Evaluating				Total
		VERY BAD	BAD	GOOD	VERY GOOD	
EG	Before	10	24	4	0	38
	After	1	23	7	7	38
	Total	11	47	11	7	76
CG	Before	13	16	4	2	35
	After	8	17	7	3	35
	Total	21	33	11	5	70

Table (5.11): Pre-& Post-test Results. _The skill of « Interpreting & Evaluating »

As demonstrated in Table (5.10), the results obtained by participants in task two, interpreting and evaluating in both tests, revealed that there is a very interesting statistically significant difference between the scores of EG pre-test (Very bad =13, Bad=16, Good=4, very good=2) and EG post-test (Very bad =1, Bad=23, Good=7, very good=7). Therefore, this remarkable difference

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between pre-test and post-test scores of EG unveils that the EG participants' critical thinking skill, mainly evaluation and interpreting have improved.

In terms of students' ability to draw conclusions, and based on the results (Table 5.12), a significant difference was found between the experimental group participants' scores, when both pre- and post-test scores were compared. While they obtained the following scores (Very bad =13, Bad=16, Good=4, very good=2) in the pre-test, they got improved and obtained in the post-test (Very bad =1, Bad=23, Good=7, very good=7). Thus, it was concluded that the participating EFL students using reader-response approach could indeed give responses to English short stories. Based on their experiences, they could infer information that is implied (or not directly stated without sacrificing the comprehension of the story. To put it in other words, the Reader-Response Approach did impair the reading comprehension ability of the participants.

		Criterion 3 : Drawing Conclusions			
		VERY BAD	BAD	GOOD	VERY GOOD
EG	Before	9	17	3	0
	After	17	26	4	0
Total		26	43	7	0
CG	Before	12	16	7	0
	After	5	16	7	7
		17	32	14	7

Table (5.12): Pre- and Post-test Results. _The skill of « Interpreting & Evaluating »

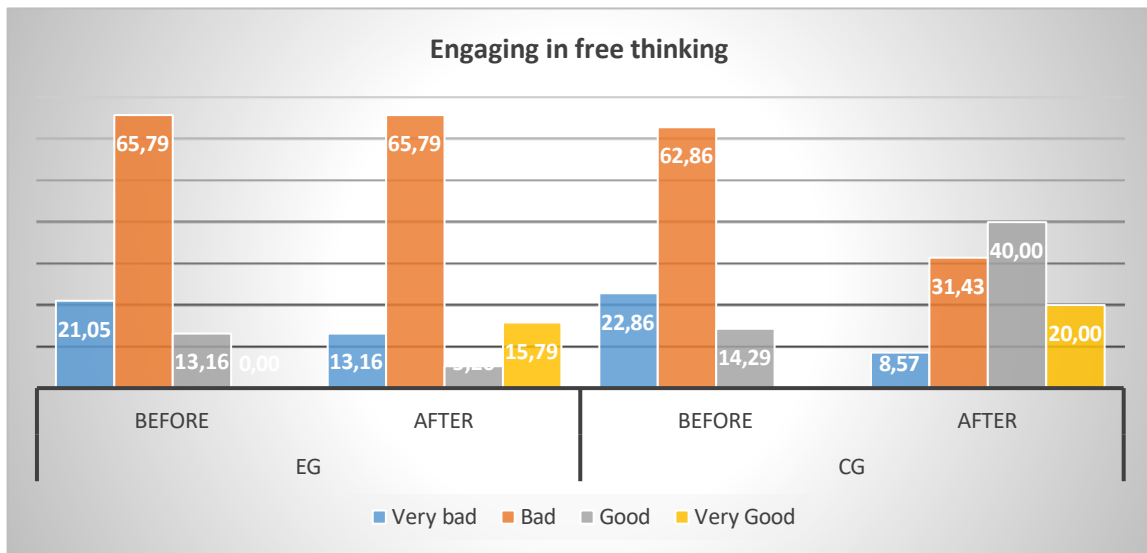


Figure (5.12): Pre- and Post-test Results. *The skill of « Engaging in free thinking »*

In light of the findings illustrated in Figure (5.12), it is obviously seen that students of both groups had nearly the same level since nearly no difference was found in the results before and after the intervention in terms of engagement in free thinking. This indicated that the two groups’ engagement was almost at the same level. Based on that, we concluded that the analysis carried out showed that the data of the two sample groups were homogeneous and normally distributed, and critical thinking skills need to be considered as a whole. Participants in such a study should not be judged on one criterion at the expense of the other criteria. Thus, further tests could be carried out in light of the findings illustrated in Figure (5.10).

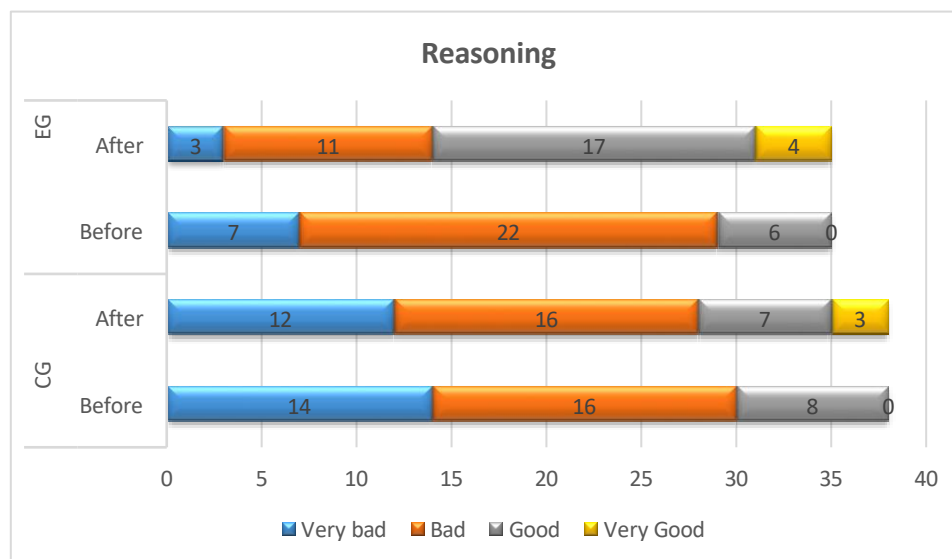


Figure (5.13): Pre- and Post-test Results. _The skill of « Reasoning »

Figure (5.13) demonstrates the difference between the CG in the pre-/posttest in terms of criterion five; reasoning. Therefore, the data divulge that there are slight changes between the scores of the EG in the pre-test and post-test. Firstly, the 22 bad score, and 4 students got a very good mark in reasoning. The results of the CG nearly remained the same.

Based on these results, it was found that the EG subjects were able to convey things that were known and asked from the questions, to write and explain the steps for solving the problem correctly and adequately. Therefore, it was found that students had an acceptable level of reasoning abilities since they were able to compile evidence and provide explanations. They were able to make the correct conclusions.

5.5 Effect of RRA on Participants' Performance

The objective of the present experimental study was to examine the possibility of enhancing university students' critical thinking skills through a reader-response approach environment. In other words, the researcher's aim was to identify the impact of an RRA on critical thinking skills

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of students and explore the participants' attitudes towards the implementation of this strategy. After having conducted the tests before and after the intervention, and after having trained EG students on the use of RRA when studying literary texts, the impact of the independent variable (reader response approach) on the dependent variable (critical thinking skills) was examined despite the limitation of the small sample size.

As illustrated previously (Figures 5.10 and 5.11) while presenting the data gathered through both tests, the EG students outperformed the traditional students, not only on the average, but also in five out of five critical thinking skills. The mean score for each thinking skill and the same results have visually been shown.

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
X1 - TEST	Negative Ranks	12 ^a	17,50	192,50
	Positive Ranks	40 ^b	27,76	1082,50
	Ties	21 ^c		
	Total	73		

Table (5.13): Effect of RRA on Students' understanding skills

Table (5.13) illustrates the effect of RRA on EG students' understanding. « X1 » stands for the first skill, understanding, in the adopted checklist, with 40 participants who have been positively affected, 12 students negatively affected, and 21 ties. It is noteworthy that students who outperformed and improved in terms of show deep understanding of literary texts exceeded the total number of EG students (N=38). It is concluded that EG students performed marginally better than the CG students. The mean rank of those who have been affected positively is 27,76 while 17,50 is the mean rank of those affected negatively. Thus, the difference between the average score of EG and the counter-part is in favor of the EG. These results show that participants' exposure to the RRA resulted in better performance in terms of using critical thinking skills and understanding

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literary reading material than the participants exposed to traditional instruction.

Table (5.14) below shows a comparison between the means of the participants based on critical thinking skills. It illustrates the scores obtained by participants involving critical thinking skills. Having reached a statistically significant difference between EG and CG in terms of the second variable, interpreting; now within EG, the results indicated students made greater gains. Thirty-two (32) have made a positive change with 21.63 as mean rank, and only eight students regressed. Thirty students' results remained the same (30 ties). Again, this result is statistically significant, so causation relationship should be highlighted in interpreting these results. The more students are exposed to RRA, the better their interpreting skills will be (Table 5.14).

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
X2 - TEST	NegativeRanks	8 ^d	16,00	128,00
	Positive Ranks	32 ^e	21,63	692,00
	Ties	30 ^f		
	Total	70		

Table (5.14): Effect of RRA on Students' interpreting skills

With mean rank of 22.45 (positive ranks), and 14.50 (negative ranks) for the total score of 'Drawing Conclusions Skills', ' the teaching method, RRA, was found to be a significant factor in improving these skills along with overall performance of the participants. Among the five thinking skills, 'Drawing Conclusions Skills' were critical factors. The results indicate that the learning method improved the participants' critical thinking skills. To provide more thorough information, further analysis was performed by providing mean ranks for each sub-group of participants as shown in Table (5.14).

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		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
X3 - TEST	NegativeRanks	6 ^g	14,50	72,50
	Positive Ranks	39 ^h	22,45	830,50
	Ties	28 ⁱ		
	Total	73		

Table (5.15): Effect of RRA on Students' Drawing Conclusions Skills

The table (5.15) shows that EG students outperformed students exposed to traditional forms of instruction in drawing conclusions skills. While 39 students have been positively affected showing good level when responding to questions that sought conclusions to be drawn, only six students were negatively affected, and 28 students' results remain unchangeable (28 ties).

The results of the performed statistics revealed that the reader-response approach can significantly improve the students' ability to engage in free thinking when reading English literature. It is, however, noteworthy that the effect of the reader-response approach to reading literary texts might have on the enhancement of students' critical thinking in terms of engagement in free thinking, while reading literature in the target language may be greater if tested over a longer period of time since the EG students reflected this skill within a short period of experience.

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
X4 - TEST	NegativeRanks	4 ^j	20,00	60,00
	Positive Ranks	50 ^k	26,38	1266,00
	Ties	19 ^l		
	Total	73		

Table (5.16): Effect of RRA on Students' Engaging in Free Thinking

Based on the results shown in Table 5.16 above, despite the fact that neither of the two groups had any experiences with English literary texts within a reader response strategy-based setting prior

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to the experiment, the superiority of the reader-response theory to the traditional method in improving students' free thinking is proved with 26.38 as a positive rank. Fifty (50) out of 73 students have been positively affected, and only four were negatively affected while 19 students ended as ties.

The fifth variable this study sought to find an answer to was whether there is any difference between students trained on RRA and those who read the short stories with a traditional approach in terms of reasoning.

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
X5 - TEST	Negative Ranks	6 ^m	21,50	64,50
	Positive Ranks	49 ⁿ	26,81	1313,50
	Ties	18 ^o		
	Total	73		

Table (5.17): Effect of RRA on Students' Reasoning

As illustrated in the above table (5.17), 49 out of 73 students showed a very positive, while only six showed a negative effect. The remaining 18 participants' results remained stable (ties). Thus, the conclusion of the carried out statistical procedures revealed that the application of the reader-response approach in reading literature, in our case short stories, did led to a noteworthy improvement in the students' quality and level of reasoning in the target language literature class. Thus, there is enough evidence that can lead educators to the selection of the reader-response approach to reading literature over the traditional method if they aim at improving students' critical thinking skills.

5.6 Challenges with RRA

While interviewing EG participants, they articulated some of the challenges related to critical thinking skills. These challenges have been faced during RRA experiment. Students expressed their

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reflections on expressing their opinions about the teacher's strategies and techniques, the amount of knowledge they acquired, and the skills they learnt.

Based on the interviewees' responses, the students struggled with the imposed strategy and found it hard to respond to the questions asked by the teacher mainly at the very beginning of the intervention. This is due to the fact that they were not used to. They were not familiar with thorough discussions and debates, all of which encouraged critical thinking. « *I had big problems with literature, but now I feel we benefitted a lot from this experience. I feel that now I have to engage in thinking while reading literature assignments. It is a pleasure.* »

Another student commented on the teacher's and students' roles by saying « *We used to rely on the teacher who provides us with his analysis and interpretation. We sometimes used the internet to read the summaries and analysis. But, now we will always rely on ourselves.* » These comments support the principles of RRA where responsibility rests largely in the voices of the students; the teacher must initiate the discussion, allow the classroom to alter from teacher to student-centered, and constantly monitor the level and depth of learning which is taking place. Teachers are responsible for guiding class discussion. They must also create "thinkers" in the classroom. Rosenblatt (1994) defines this responsibility as "enabling the students to make intelligent judgments" (p.176).

There is a general agreement among interviewees that the teacher with whom they led the experience is highly student-centered, because he encouraged discussions, not like their usual Literature teacher. In fact, each of the teachers articulates a pedagogy. However, with this teacher, « *we are given freedom, more time, and our voice is heard in class discussion* », said one of the interviewees.

In summary, the interviews show that the students faced problems at the beginning of the

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intervention but with time, they got familiar with it. The findings reflect the relationship between reader response approach and the increase in student's critical thinking. The interview findings also show that the students ended the journey with a strong interest in the applied strategy which helps « improve their university skills which are considered as key features of high education and lifelong learning », as stated by an interviewee.

5.7 Discussion of the Findings

Reader response as an approach to literary analysis can aid EFL learners change their attitude towards the study of literature in the target language and help enhance their critical thinking skills. As the findings revealed, if students approach the reading text as an aesthetic experience and their feelings as well as their personal responses are taken into account in the act of reading, the comprehension of the students is affected. This highlights the rationale behind reader response theory which, based on Çubukcu (2007) holds that “everything the reader brings to the text is important and this response is always structured by the language of the text and the literary experience is a transaction, in which neither the text nor the reader can be seen as the sole repository of meaning” (p. 63).

As to the better performance of the experimental groups, it can be concluded that this group outperformed the other group since the well-planned activities in the treatment got fully involved the participants in a dialogue with the text. This is in line with Carlisle's (2000) argument for the application of logs. As he explains, keeping logs gives the learners the opportunity to go beyond literal meaning of the text towards aesthetic appreciation. This may result in the learners' interaction with the text and consequently better comprehension of the texts. Therefore, by designing activities which invest on the students' personal experiences teachers can make use of the reader response techniques in literature classes. However, based on the findings, it can be

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argued that the particular techniques used in a reader response approach might yield different results. Overall, the study indicates that the technique used to introduce a model would affect the result. However, teachers, especially those involved in teaching literature should carefully choose the activities since no specific technique serves teachers' intended purpose.

As mentioned earlier, the present thesis aims at determining whether critical thinking can be fostered in the literature classroom by implementing a reader-response approach to literary texts. It therefore fills this gap and focuses on the teaching of critical thinking skills in the literature classroom at the university level where thinking in the target language is required. The main research problem that this work aims to answer is to know the extent the implementation of a reader-response approach to literary texts can help fostering students' critical skills. In other words, can educators secure the teaching ground for students' critical skills by implementing a reader-response strategy to deal with literary texts as an alternative to the prevailing schooling characterized by the focus on passive, book-based rote learning?

The findings from questionnaires, tests, intervention and interviews are summarised in chapter five. Finally, this chapter summarizes and discusses the findings of the research, and includes a set of recommendations and implications.

5.8 Interpretation of the Findings

In order to investigate the connection between the reader-response technique and critical thinking, this part presents the interpretation of the data acquired using the research instruments that were utilized. Its goal was to investigate how a different method of teaching English literary texts to Algerian EFL students pursuing higher education functions. In the beginning, the study asked participants about their critical thinking ability and the questions their teacher asked them in literary classes. Following a pre-test and a post-test, the study exposed EG students to an educational

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scenario in which RRA was included as a method. The study concluded with interviews with students to collect qualitative data regarding their opinions of the experiment in which they participated.

Many questions were posed in order to perform a thorough study and draw conclusions. As previously indicated, the researcher aimed to determine how university students felt about critical thinking, how much they thought a reader-response pedagogy would work with second-year EFL literature students, and how they felt about its application. Furthermore, the primary goal was to determine how much this technique could improve student critical thinking and classroom discourse.

The results of the survey conducted in a pre-experimental design were used to pave the way for testing the initial research hypotheses. To answer the first question, the researcher hypothesized that « improvements in students' knowledge about critical thinking and writing skills lead to positive assessments of the intervention.» However, the responses to the first part of the questionnaire indicate that the learners had a positive attitude towards the idea of being critical. All of the learners seemed to despise the activities and questions typically asked by literature teachers.

As a second step, the researchers hypothesized that teaching literary texts combined within a reader-response approach enables students to enjoy literature classes more, and the approach will be preferred over traditional ones. The test results clearly showed that the performance of students in the experimental group was significantly different from that of students in the control group. Not only did EG students outperform the CG students, but they also demonstrated enjoyment in reading short stories. This strategic reading filled a gap within themselves.

On this basis, both hypotheses which stated that (1) improvements in students' knowledge about critical thinking and note taking skills lead to better perceptions of being critical, as well as

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positive assessments of the intervention, and (2) teaching literary texts combined within a reader-response approach enable students to enjoy literature classes more, and the approach will be preferred over traditional ones were supported.

Taking into consideration students' responses and deep involvement in the study of literary texts, the researcher hypothesized that « if students were instructed within a reader response approach to literary texts, those learners' analytical and arguing skills would improve because of interactive and cooperative literature class tasks. ». The findings revealed that the EFL literature classrooms were teacher-centered rather than learner-centered. This problem can be addressed via the inclusion of reader response strategies that engage learners in active and autonomous learning. A considerable number of the informants commonly shared the idea that the existing teaching methods and techniques are inefficient to enhance their thinking skills. They also complained of not having been trained on how to delve in literary texts without relying on teachers. This implies that both teachers' and students' roles need to be geared towards a strategy-based instruction. Thus, by the gathered data comparing pre- and post- tests results as well as the interviewees' responses, it was concluded that the implementation of the reader-response approach in a literature classroom was beneficial. It promoted students' participation and their responsiveness towards literary texts, involved them in active encounter with literary texts, and it enabled respondents to use their skills in relating parts and wholes, analyzing, synthesizing, and using inductive and deductive reasoning. The Strategy involved using their skills in identifying cause and effect, making distinctions, inferencing and evaluating. The RRA helped respondents use their skills in distinguishing similarities and differences, grouping and categorizing, comparing and contrasting. Thus, the hypothesis saying that « if students were instructed within a reader response approach to literary texts, those learners' analytical and arguing skills would improve because of interactive and cooperative literature class tasks. » is well supported and confirmed.

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In short, the qualitative results of the interviews corroborate the quantitative data collected. They confirm a pre-established hypothesis about the effect of an experiment on participants' critical thinking skills. Participants also found the reader response setting to be more comfortable and less anxiety-prone. This atmosphere served as a suitable environment to foster students' critical thinking.

RRA provides students with the opportunity to delve deeper into literary works ; this involves the process of interpreting and evaluating the linguistic and social context of a literary work. According to Alwine (2014), critical thinking helps students understand the meaning of a literary work by recognizing both the literal and inferred meanings of tone and demonstrating the ability to make rational judgments can be developed through learning activities that help them understand.

It is worth mentioning that credibility is a key factor for the success of the implemented strategies and their positive impact on students. This seems to give students the opportunity to work on problems that arise in the real world.

In terms of analyzing literary works, students can also think about themselves and compare what they find with their own experiences. This finding is consistent with Tabačková's finding that thinking about literary works can reflect thoughts about real-life situations.

In addition to these two factors mentioned above, there is another important indicator that needs to be mentioned. It is direct participation in student thinking. By giving students opportunities to actively engage in thinking activities, they will be able to engage more actively with literary works.

Additionally, the role of the teacher in guiding students within the RRA environment is also

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important. In this case, teachers must actively involve students in discussions of literary works, allowing them to think critically and explore new ideas. Regarding student perceptions, we found that students responded positively to incorporating RRA into the study of literary works to improve their critical thinking skills.

Empirical research findings provide an understanding of the reader-response approach and document pedagogical practices related to promoting critical thinking skills in college students. Additionally, it provides insight into students' understandings, attitudes, and beliefs about critical thinking about literary texts.

The results of this study are a detailed summary of the theoretical arguments about the contingent relationship between RRA and critical thinking in literature education presented in the literature review. In addition, the results of the classroom intervention provide a more detailed description of the activities that are suitable for the proposed scenario and highlight the different types of reactions that may be evoked in students when performing the proposed activities.

It has been confirmed that teachers are no longer expected to use teacher-directed teaching styles to increase student critical thinking in literature lessons. Furthermore, the pre-test and post-test results show that answer-based questions are helpful in stimulating students' critical thinking at various levels, such as analysis, interpretation, and evaluation. In short, EG student responses on the post-test provided overall positive evidence of the quality of student engagement and critical skill development.

5.9 Contribution and limitations

The issue of implementing RRA strategies to improve critical thinking skills in literature education has not been widely studied in Algeria. This study provides valuable insights. The first

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finding is that RRA strategies can be an effective teaching method to increase student participation and improve attitudes and beliefs regarding critical thinking skills. Something that creates opportunities for learning and thinking.

Another result is that when literary texts are well-chosen and connected to their lives, this strategy is positively accepted by learners, resulting in increased critical thinking in literature classes. Another positive point is the approach to designing the study. The flexible design of this study allowed for the collection of evidence from multiple sources, which identified both the challenges and benefits of applying RRA strategies.

The sample was limited to second year students in the Department of English at the University of Laghouat. Due to time limitations, it was not possible to study a larger sample. Many of the statistically insignificant results may be due to the small sample size. Therefore, with a large sample size, the results of this study could be highly applicable to the target population. Finally, this study was conducted in a relatively short period of 10 weeks, so it would have been advantageous if the study period had been extended to allow for further investigation.

5.10 Pedagogical Implications

The results of this study showed that incorporating the reader-response approach into literature teaching can significantly improve the thinking skills of second-year EFL students. Therefore, based on the above findings and considering the strengths and limitations of this study, it is possible to suggest future research areas. Action research could be conducted to further explore the integration of reader response approaches into literary education and critical thinking development processes proposed in this study. Moreover, there is a growing number of experimental studies that are very useful in studying the effectiveness of improving critical thinking skills in university students. Comparison studies are also possible.

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Another possible direction for future research would be to compare the effects of RRA pedagogy on the development of critical thinking, using gender as another research variable, to determine whether pedagogy affects one group more than the other. It may be to determine whether it will bring benefits or not.

As part of RRA, students are encouraged to express themselves freely about their chosen literary texts in class discussions and in their own writing. However, teachers must also support and guide students by introducing and relating readers to the technical analysis of texts and the aesthetic and emotional aspects of literary works. In addition, teachers should help students draw on their own experiences to deepen their understanding and appreciation of the literary works they are reading.

5.11 Recommendations

The study suggests using the Reader Response Strategy for a longer amount of time to guarantee that students' critical thinking abilities improve. Instructors may apply RRA in other subject areas, such as history, ethics, and cultural studies, as long as they modify the material for the activities and assess the strategy's applicability in other subject areas.

If the findings of this research support the importance of critical reading skills, then universities should take appropriate action. It is reasonable to assume that teachers are giving their pupils the support and chances to advance their critical reading skills if, as this research also indicates, students are exhibiting signs of developing this ability.

Regretfully, the research's ethnographic phase indicates that little of this appears to be occurring. Teachers typically believed that a text's meaning was rigid and unchangeable. They limited the students' approaches to texts in the classroom and their thinking about texts outside of

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it by primarily using magisterial discourse as a teaching tool. Because of this authoritative way of thinking and teaching, kids accepted what they read without questioning it. They did not reflect on the texts, on themselves, or on the act of reading, to use Freire's phrase from 1972. It takes participation and emancipation from magisterial ways of thinking to read critically.

In order to assist students in developing critical reading skills at the university level, the following adjustments in classroom practice are suggested to be considered:

Texts must be read aloud to students. Books are an important source of heteroglossia. Readers who lack the experience to 'hear the tunes on the page' (Barrs, 1992) must be read too often in order for such tunes to seep into their thoughts. Learners who possess resonant interpretative frameworks are more adept at deciphering texts and evaluating the interpretations of others.

More communication and interaction between students, texts, and teachers are required. Students should discuss texts with their teachers and with one another, and they should use well-known texts to illuminate unfamiliar ones. Less focus should be placed on getting the correct responses about texts and more on identifying possible answers. Exposure to the resulting babel of voices and possibilities is the only means by which students will hear them and become practiced.

It is important to pay attention to and consider carefully what the students comprehend and think about the text. Chambers (1993) emphasizes how crucial it is for students to understand that their statements are morally accountable. Students will not speak openly in class unless they are certain of this, and only then will supportive and imaginative interpretive communities be able to grow. Students get the self-assurance to believe in their own reasoning through these communities. Given the above-mentioned conditions, it appears highly probable that students who are encouraged to read and discuss reading will be able to acquire critical reading skills.

Conclusion

A key component of the restructuring of higher education is critical thinking. By fostering a paradigm shift away from teacher-centered and magisterial modes and towards student-centered education and an atmosphere defined by a reader response method that encourages students to engage in free thought, it can strengthen higher education reform. As a result, critical thinking abilities ought to be among the fundamental components of the teaching process (Bates, 2005). The purpose of this study was to find out how well RRA integration with literary texts can improve students' critical thinking abilities. The empirical results of this study show that RRA is a useful tool for fostering critical thinking when used in literature classes.

This chapter aimed at providing a detailed analysis and interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative data obtained from the research instruments, including questionnaires, pre- and post intervention tests, and the interviews so as to answer the research questions as well as approving or disapproving the predetermined hypotheses. First of all, the researcher analyzes and interprets students' responses to the preliminary questionnaire that was administered prior to the experimental phase. Secondly, the researcher provides a detailed analysis of both tests, before and after the experiment. The scores obtained were cross-tabulated using T-Test and Wincoxon Test. Finally, EG participants' interview responses were analyzed. The analysis and interpretation of the data were presented in tables and figures followed by an interpretation of findings.

In short, the results indicated that respondents showed an increase in their level of critical thinking after exposure to reader response strategy. They showed improvement in their critical thinking competencies (understanding, synthesizing, evaluating, interpreting, comparing and drawing conclusions) after exposure to RRA. Besides, there was an improvement in the

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respondents' attitudes and beliefs in critical thinking and expressed their joy having taken part in the intervention.

General Conclusion

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Like all educational systems, the Algerian educational system aims at developing learners' competencies including critical thinking skills. To help realize such an aim, the use of active learning and problem-solving strategies that help students develop 21st century skills, communicate effectively, and think critically is recommended. Unfortunately, these strategies are not present in classrooms, so critical thinking is not promoted. In this regard, the present research work adopted a scenario seeking enhancement of critical thinking skills among university students by integrating the reader response approach to literary texts.

The aim of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of an alternative approach to teaching English literary texts to Algerian students. The traditional approach to these texts in EFL pedagogy in the Algerian university classroom is characterized by the teacher providing an objective literary interpretation, to which is added the passivity and adaptation of the student in reading and learning (Baurain, 2010). An alternative approach to EFL literature that has been explored is the reader-response approach, which seeks innovation in traditional literary pedagogical practices. The purpose of this approach is to help students construct their own responses.

Central to the current research is the question: To what extent can the application of a reader response approach to literary texts help promote students' critical skills? In other words, can teachers provide a foundation for teaching students' critical skills by applying a reader-response strategy to literary texts as an alternative to traditional instruction that is characterized by a focus on passive study? Considering the gap already noted in the literature review and summarized in the previous chapters, the purpose of this study is to find out the effects of the reading response approach in literary texts on the development of critical skills of EFL university students. For this end, various research questions were asked for in-depth analysis and conclusions.

- How could students' knowledge about critical thinking and reading improve their perceptions of and attitudes towards these skills?

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- What makes a reader-response pedagogy applicable with second year EFL students of literature?
- Can the reader-response pedagogy raise the quality of reading literary works and foster critical thinking among students?

To explore these questions and achieve the purpose of this study, the study used a mixed methodology to collect appropriate research data, using a questionnaire, field experiments and focus group interviews for both quantitative and qualitative data collection. Mixed methods combine quantitative and qualitative research methods to collect, analyze, and synthesize results into a single study. The main principle is that researchers use all the tools at their disposal to create pragmatic designs that effectively answer their research questions. Research questions determine the choice of method, and the values of the researcher play an important role in the interpretation of results, where statistical and thematic techniques are combined in one operation (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007).

Since the current study investigates students' attitudes and perceptions about critical thinking, it is possible that integratin of reader-response approach will greatly improve students' thinking skills. When studying this aspect of the subject, no one method alone will provide a reliable and in-depth understanding. Therefore, it was deemed important to use both qualitative and quantitative approaches in order to achieve the objectives of the study. To answer the research questions, different types of data collection tools were used, including pre- and post-tests, student reflections, and focus group interviews. Some of these tools required qualitative analysis and some required quantitative analysis. Approximation and validation of mixed methods results can provide strong evidence for drawing conclusions (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005).

Critical thinking skills can be used in all aspects of life. They include both short-term opportunities in an individual's daily life and the use of critical thinking in education, which requires students to be able to make informed judgments about something within the context of learning. According to Khatib (2012), it is important for educators to inculcate critical thinking skills so that students can think critically and accurately. Various definitions of critical thinking are used in the literature of schools of thought. Specifically, these include reflective thinking, critical analysis, rational thinking, and higher-order thinking. For some researchers, critical

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thinking is one of the most discussed higher-order skills and is thought to play a central role in logical reasoning, decision-making, and problem-solving (Frankel & Roohr, 2014).

As mentioned above, this study examines the effectiveness of implementing a reader-response approach as an alternative to traditional teaching and determines its impact on the development of students' critical thinking skills in literature classes. Reading literature requires students to look beyond the text and develop hypotheses that encourage students' analytical and interpretive thinking. Literature education is very effective in developing students' critical thinking because it is assumed that analysis of a particular literary text is necessary to identify critical thinking skills such as reflection, argumentation, evaluation, etc. (Bamont, 2010 ; Madondo, 2012).

In addition, literary works are closely related to life, so they are very effective in cultivating students' critical thinking. It is said that the essence of literature is directly connected to reality. Analyzing and reading literary texts that contain content that directly reflects problems in everyday life provides practical advice as students retain a picture of a particular problem through the written text that requires analysis . Additionally, reading literary texts allows students to explore cause-and-effect relationships between events and actions, creating new schemas that are stored in their brains that help them make further judgments and decisions about specific actions. Therefore, some literary works focus on assessing behavior and the environment.

Finally, improving students' critical thinking skills becomes more interesting and effective first by teaching literature as a medium, second by practicing critical thinking through reading and analysis of literary works, and third by enabling students to respond critically to situations. This can be achieved by implementing a reader-response approach that places great emphasis on the reader's role in interpreting the text. Therefore, the idea that a literary work has only one or fixed meaning is unacceptable. Readers construct their own meaning based on how they approach the text through a series of responses, making each response unique (Larson, 2009). According to Iskhak (2015), reader-response strategies provide students with an opportunity to express themselves, so they can provide diverse experiences in the learning process, thereby increasing students' motivation and critical thinking.

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The reader-response approach is based on reader-response theory and focuses on the integration between the reader and a text used in the context of EFL literature education. This not only helps students develop their literary appreciation skills, but also gives them an opportunity to express their emotions in the target language. Reader-response approaches challenge traditional literary education. They also provide new ways of thinking for literature teachers. Applying the reader-response approach to teaching literature in the EFL context and encouraging students' authentic responses in literature lessons can help students improve their critical thinking skills.

Reader Response as an approach to literary analysis helps EFL learners change their attitude and improve their critical thinking skills when studying literature in the target language. As the research results revealed, students' understanding is impaired when they view text reading as an aesthetic experience and their emotions and personal reactions are taken into account in the act of reading.

The work aimed at providing a detailed analysis and interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative data obtained from the research instruments, including questionnaires, pre- and post intervention tests, and the interviews so as to answer the research questions as well as approving or disapproving the predetermined hypotheses. First of all, the researcher analyzed and interpreted students' responses to the preliminary questionnaire that was administered prior to the experimental phase. Secondly, the researcher provided a detailed analysis of both tests, before and after the experiment. The scores obtained were cross-tabulated using T-Test and Wincoxon Test. Finally, EG participants' interview responses were analyzed. The analysis and interpretation of the data were presented in tables and figures followed by an interpretation of findings.

In short, the results indicated that respondents showed an increase in their level of critical thinking after exposure to reader response strategy. They showed improvement in their critical thinking competencies (understanding, synthesising, evaluating, interpreting, comparing and drawing conclusions) after exposure to RRA. Besides, there was an improvement in the respondents' attitudes and beliefs in critical thinking and expressed their joy having taken part in the intervention.

This study suggests using reader response strategies over an extended period of time to ensure the development of students' critical thinking skills. Researchers can apply the RRA

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to other subject areas, such as history, ethics, and cultural studies, as long as they adapt the activity materials and evaluate the applicability of the strategies in their subject areas. If the results of this study support the importance of critical reading skills, universities should take appropriate action. As shown in this study, when students show signs of improving their critical reading skills, teachers are expected to provide them with support and opportunities to improve their critical reading skills.



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Appendices





This questionnaire is part of a PhD project, doing some research into critical thinking in the field of EFL Didactics. It aims to clarify how higher order questioning is used in the literature classroom. This questionnaire is to investigate your attitudes and beliefs towards thinking skills and questioning-answering behavior. It is anonymous. There is no right or wrong answer. We would really appreciate it if you could take the time to fill out this questionnaire. We value your opinion and thank you in advance for your time and honesty.

Gender:

Age:

This questionnaire contains three sections:

Section 1: Related to what type of questions your teacher asks in literature class.

There are six scales to choose from:

.1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

1. My teacher asks questions that require me to remember certain facts.	
2. My teacher asks questions that help me to predict what comes next.	
3. My teacher asks questions that check that I understand how to do something.	
4. My teacher asks questions that challenge us to think in new ways.	
5. My teacher asks questions that require us to give our opinion.	
6. My teacher asks questions that require us to justify our opinion.	
7. My teacher asks questions that help us to reflect on our learning.	
8. My teacher asks questions that help us relate what we already know to what we're learning now.	
9. My teacher asks questions that help us relate our understanding to the real world.	
10. My teacher asks questions that help us to use our learning in other topics and subjects.	
11. My teacher provides enough time for us to think to answer questions.	
12. My teacher provides different ways for us to respond to a question.	
14. My teacher asks questions so we can discuss and share views to complete a task.	
15. My teacher asks questions so we can discuss different ideas.	
16. My teacher asks questions so we can debate and justify our ideas.	
17. My teacher asks a range of question types so we can all participate.	
18. My teacher provides opportunities for all students to answer questions.	

Any further comments?

.....

Section 2: Related to your attitudes & beliefs about critical thinking skills.

There are six scales to choose from:

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

It is important to memorize what has been learned in English class.	
It is important to recite English passages.	
It is important to understand the every single part of a passage.	
Being able to summarize what we have read is important in literature class.	
Being able to retell what we have read is important in literature class.	
It is important to apply what we have learned in a literary passage, e.g. to use the reading strategies learned	

after class.	
Being able to think what I would do as a character in a novel is important.	
It is important to be able to think 'alternative ways' to explain when people do not understand me in English class.	
It is important to use comparison and contrast skills in literature class, e.g. to tell similarities and differences of the two characters in a novel.	
It is important to be able to analyze texts, e.g. to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of a plan used by a character in a story.	
Being able to solve problems is important in literature class, e. . to think about a solution to save someone's life .	
Creativity is important is literature class, e.g. to make a new ending for a story.	
It is important to be able to design things in literature class, e. . to design a plan for a summer holiday .	
Being able to assess (evaluate) is important in literature class, e.g. to assess which travelling package is better for students and provide reasons and evidence.	
It is important to be able to make a good argument supported with reasons or evidence, e.g. to argue for not having dress code on campus and provide with reasons or evidence.	
It is important to be able to make judgments based on evidence or reasons, e.g. to show my position, agree or disagree, and give reasons or evidence.	

Any further comments?

.....

Section Three: Related to the different types of questions you can answer in literature class.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

I can answer questions which ask for information I have memorized	
I can answer questions where the answer can be found in the text.	
I can answer questions which ask for understanding of the materials learned in English class	
I can answer questions which require a summary of an article or a story	
I can answer questions where I need to retell what I learned in English class	
I can answer questions where I need to apply things I have learned to a new context	
I can answer questions where I need to place myself in another person's situation.	
I can answer questions where I need examples.	
I can answer questions where I need to give reasons	
I can answer questions which require comparison and contrast.	
I can respond to questions where I need to think of a possible solution to a problem	
I can answer questions which require creative skills, e.g. 'Can you make a new ending for this story?'	
I can respond to questions where I need to design something new .	
I can answer questions which require assessment and reasoning skill, e. . 'Which do you think is better and why ?'	
I can answer questions where arguing ability is required and I need to elaborate my views and provide reasons or evidence.	
I can respond to questions where I need to give my personal views, e.g. agree or disagree, and give reasons to support my views. e.g. 'Do you agree with this decision?'	

Any further comments?

.....
.....
.....

Thank you for your cooperation, help, time and efforts.

Appendix 2

It was April 9th 1912. A crowd of people stood on the dockside at Southhampton. They were watching the splendid new liner. *Titanic*, steaming out of port. It was its maiden voyage. Suddenly a woman in the crowd pushed forward.

'That ship will sink!' she shouted. Her friends tried to calm her down. The *Titanic* was unsinkable, they said. It was built to the very latest design. Nothing could go wrong, but the woman would not be reassured.

'No!' she cried. 'They will all be drowned.' Five days later, she was proved right. The *Titanic* hit an iceberg and sank about 1500 people were killed.

This is an example of precognition, knowing what is going to happen in the future. Precognition is one form of extrasensory perception. Extrasensory perception or ESP is the ability to know things without the use of your five senses.

There are other forms of ESP. Some people have the ability to know what you are thinking, without being told. We call this telepathy. Others can "see" things that are actually hidden from them. They may know what is in the darkened room, or be aware of things that are out of sight. This gift is known as clairvoyance. Perhaps the most exciting form of ESP is called psychokinesis. It is the ability to change or move objects just by thought. You may have seen or read about people who can, for example bend spoons simply by the power of thought. That is psychokinesis.

Some of the things said about ESP may seem fantastic. Scientists in America and Russia, however, take ESP very seriously. They believe that it may be useful in any future war between their countries. They are studying it very carefully.

Seely, J. O. *ford* Secondary English (1982). OUP

1. Where did the Titanic sail from its first voyage?
2. What is the meaning of the word *precognition as described in the text?
3. How is clairvoyance different from psychokinesis?
4. How best could you use ESP for the good of your own country?
5. Why did no one believe the woman when she said 'That ship will sink'?
6. If you could have ESP, which one would you choose and why?
7. Is the evidence given in the text adequate for an investigation to take place?

Literal Instruction: Fill in the appropriate boxes with suitable information obtained from the text.

.....	Left Southampton
Number of people killed	
Telepathy	
Psychokinesis	

Activity three – Interpretation : Using the information given in the text, state the different types of ESP and explain how one differs from another in terms of definitions and functions?

ESP	Definition	Function

Activity four – application : Give an example of a situation of how each type of ESP can function.

ESP	Situation
Precognition	
Telepathy	
Psychokinesis	

Activity five – Analysis : What do you think, would have happened if the woman raised the alarm about the tragedy one or two days prior to the maiden voyage?

Activity six – Synthesis: As someone gifted with ESP (precognition), prior to the incident. draw up a plan to save the *Titanic*?

Activity seven – Evaluation : a. Outline how this tragedy could have been avoided?

b. Working as an insurance agent. how would you work out your assessment of financial compensation to the families of the victims?

2 B R 0 2 B

By Kurt Vonnegut

Directions: Read the short story and answer the questions that follow. Refer to the text to check your answers.

Everything was perfectly swell.

There were no prisons, no slums, no insane asylums, no cripples, no poverty, no wars.

All diseases were conquered. So was old age.

Death, barring accidents, was an adventure for volunteers.

The population of the United States was stabilized at forty-million souls.

One bright morning in the Chicago **Lying-in**¹ Hospital, a man named Edward K. Wehling, Jr., waited for his wife to give birth. He was the only man waiting. Not many people were born a day any more.

Wehling was fifty-six, a mere **stripling**² in a population whose average age was one hundred and twenty-nine.

X-rays had revealed that his wife was going to have triplets. The children would be his first.

Young Wehling was hunched in his chair, his head in his hand. He was so rumped, so still and colorless as to be virtually invisible. His camouflage was perfect, since the waiting room had a disorderly and demoralized air, too. Chairs and ashtrays had been moved away from the walls. The floor was paved with spattered dropcloths.

The room was being redecorated. It was being redecorated as a memorial to a man who had volunteered to die.

A **sardonic**³ old man, about two hundred years old, sat on a stepladder, painting a mural he did not like. Back in the days when people aged visibly, his age would have been guessed at thirty-five or so. Aging had touched him that much before the cure for aging was found.

The mural he was working on depicted a very neat garden. Men and women in white, doctors and nurses, turned the soil, planted seedlings, sprayed bugs, spread fertilizer.

Men and women in purple uniforms pulled up weeds, cut down plants that were old and sickly, raked leaves, carried refuse to trash-burners.

Never, never, never—not even in medieval Holland nor old Japan—had a garden been more formal, been better tended. Every plant had all the **loam**⁴, light, water, air and nourishment it could use.

A hospital orderly came down the corridor, singing under his breath a popular song:

If you don't like my kisses, honey,
Here's what I will do:
I'll go see a girl in purple,
Kiss this sad world toodle-oo.
If you don't want my lovin',
Why should I take up all this space?
I'll get off this old planet,
Let some sweet baby have my place.

Vocabulary

1. **lying-in**: the stage of childbirth where the mother gets bed rest
2. **stripling**: an adolescent, passing from boyhood to manhood

The orderly looked in at the mural and the muralist. "Looks so real," he said, "I can practically imagine I'm standing in the middle of it."

"What makes you think you're not in it?" said the painter. He gave a satiric smile. "It's called 'The Happy Garden of Life,' you know."

"That's good of Dr. Hitz," said the orderly.

He was referring to one of the male figures in white, whose head was a portrait of Dr. Benjamin Hitz, the hospital's Chief **Obstetrician**⁵. Hitz was a blindingly handsome man.

"Lot of faces still to fill in," said the orderly. He meant that the faces of many of the figures in the mural were still blank. All blanks were to be filled with portraits of important people on either the hospital staff or from the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Termination.

"Must be nice to be able to make pictures that look like something," said the orderly.

The painter's face curdled with scorn. "You think I'm proud of this daub?" he said. "You think this is my idea of what life really looks like?"

"What's your idea of what life looks like?" said the orderly.

The painter gestured at a foul dropcloth. "There's a good picture of it," he said. "Frame that, and you'll have a picture a damn sight more honest than this one."

"You're a gloomy old duck, aren't you?" said the orderly.

"Is that a crime?" said the painter.

The orderly shrugged. "If you don't like it here, Grandpa—" he said, and he finished the thought with the trick telephone number that people who didn't want to live any more were supposed to call. The zero in the telephone number he pronounced "naught."

The number was: "2 B R 0 2 B."

It was the telephone number of an institution whose fanciful **sobriquets**⁶ included: "Automat," "Birdland," "Cannery," "Catbox," "De-louser," "Easy-go," "Good-by, Mother," "Happy Hooligan," "Kiss-me-quick," "Lucky Pierre," "Sheepdip," "Waring Blendor," "Weep-no-more" and "Why Worry?"

"To be or not to be" was the telephone number of the municipal gas chambers of the Federal Bureau of Termination.

The painter thumbed his nose at the orderly. "When I decide it's time to go," he said, "it won't be at the Sheepdip."

"A do-it-yourselfer, eh?" said the orderly. "Messy business, Grandpa. Why don't you have a little consideration for the people who have to clean up after you?"

3. **sardonic**: scornfully mocking or cynical

4. **loam**: a type of soil with organic matter, which makes it fertile

5. **obstetrician**: physician who specializes in childbirth

6. **sobriquet**: nickname

The orderly laughed and moved on.

Wehling, the waiting father, mumbled something without raising his head. And then he fell silent again.

A coarse, formidable woman strode into the waiting room on spike heels. Her shoes, stockings, trench coat, bag and overseas cap were all purple, the purple the painter called "the color of grapes on Judgment Day."

The medallion on her purple musette bag was the seal of the Service Division of the Federal Bureau of Termination, an eagle perched on a turnstile.

The woman had a lot of facial hair—an unmistakable mustache, in fact. A curious thing about gas-chamber hostesses was that, no matter how lovely and feminine they were when recruited, they all sprouted mustaches within five years or so.

"Is this where I'm supposed to come?" she said to the painter.

"A lot would depend on what your business was," he said. "You aren't about to have a baby, are you?"

"They told me I was supposed to pose for some picture," she said. "My name's Leora Duncan." She waited.

"And you dunk people," he said.

"What?" she said.

"Skip it," he said.

"That sure is a beautiful picture," she said. "Looks just like heaven or something."

"Or something," said the painter. He took a list of names from his smock pocket. "Duncan, Duncan, Duncan," he said, scanning the list. "Yes—here you are. You're entitled to be immortalized. See any faceless body here you'd like me to stick your head on? We've got a few choice ones left."

She studied the mural bleakly. "Gee," she said, "they're all the same to me. I don't know anything about art."

"A body's a body, eh?" he said, "All righty. As a master of fine art, I recommend this body here." He indicated a faceless figure of a woman who was carrying dried stalks to a trash-burner.

"Well," said Leora Duncan, "that's more the disposal people, isn't it? I mean, I'm in service. I don't do any disposing."

The painter clapped his hands in mock delight. "You say you don't know anything about art, and then you prove in the next breath that you know more about it than I do! Of course the sheave-carrier is wrong for a hostess! A snipper, a pruner—that's more your line." He pointed to a figure in purple who was sawing a dead branch from an apple tree. "How about her?" he said. "You like her at all?"

"Gosh—" she said, and she blushed and became humble—"that—that puts me right next to Dr. Hitz."

"That upsets you?" he said.

"Good gravy, no!" she said. "It's—it's just such an honor."

"Ah, You admire him, eh?" he said.

"Who doesn't admire him?" she said, worshiping the portrait of Hitz. It was the portrait of a tanned, white-haired, **omnipotent**⁷ Zeus, two hundred and forty years old. "Who

doesn't admire him?" she said again. "He was responsible for setting up the very first gas chamber in Chicago."

"Nothing would please me more," said the painter, "than to put you next to him for all time. Sawing off a limb—that strikes you as appropriate?"

"That is kind of like what I do," she said. She was **demure**⁸ about what she did. What she did was make people comfortable while she killed them.

And, while Leora Duncan was posing for her portrait, into the waitingroom bounded Dr. Hitz himself. He was seven feet tall, and he boomed with importance, accomplishments, and the joy of living.

"Well, Miss Duncan! Miss Duncan!" he said, and he made a joke. "What are you doing here?" he said. "This isn't where the people leave. This is where they come in!"

"We're going to be in the same picture together," she said shyly.

"Good!" said Dr. Hitz heartily. "And, say, isn't that some picture?"

"I sure am honored to be in it with you," she said.

"Let me tell you," he said, "I'm honored to be in it with you. Without women like you, this wonderful world we've got wouldn't be possible."

He saluted her and moved toward the door that led to the delivery rooms. "Guess what was just born," he said.

"I can't," she said.

"Triplets!" he said.

"Triplets!" she said. She was exclaiming over the legal implications of triplets.

The law said that no newborn child could survive unless the parents of the child could find someone who would volunteer to die. Triplets, if they were all to live, called for three volunteers.

"Do the parents have three volunteers?" said Leora Duncan.

"Last I heard," said Dr. Hitz, "they had one, and were trying to scrape another two up."

"I don't think they made it," she said. "Nobody made three appointments with us. Nothing but singles going through today, unless somebody called in after I left. What's the name?"

"Wehling," said the waiting father, sitting up, red-eyed and **frowzy**⁹. "Edward K. Wehling, Jr., is the name of the happy father-to-be."

He raised his right hand, looked at a spot on the wall, gave a hoarsely wretched chuckle. "Present," he said.

Vocabulary

7. **omnipotent**: having unlimited power, force or authority

8. **demure**: modest, reserved, or serious

9. **frowzy**: having a dingy, neglected, and scruffy appearance

"Oh, Mr. Wehling," said Dr. Hitz, "I didn't see you."

"The invisible man," said Wehling.

"They just phoned me that your triplets have been born," said Dr. Hitz. "They're all fine, and so is the mother. I'm on my way in to see them now."

"Hooray," said Wehling emptily.

"You don't sound very happy," said Dr. Hitz.

"What man in my shoes wouldn't be happy?" said Wehling. He gestured with his hands to symbolize care-free simplicity. "All I have to do is pick out which one of the triplets is going to live, then deliver my maternal grandfather to the Happy Hooligan, and come back here with a receipt."

Dr. Hitz became rather severe with Wehling, towered over him. "You don't believe in population control, Mr. Wehling?" he said.

"I think it's perfectly keen," said Wehling **tautly**.

"Would you like to go back to the good old days, when the population of the Earth was twenty billion—about to become forty billion, then eighty billion, then one hundred and sixty billion? Do you know what a drupelet is, Mr. Wehling?" said Hitz.

"Nope," said Wehling sulkily.

"A drupelet, Mr. Wehling, is one of the little knobs, one of the little pulpy grains of a blackberry," said Dr. Hitz. "Without population control, human beings would now be packed on this surface of this old planet like drupelets on a blackberry! Think of it!"

Wehling continued to stare at the same spot on the wall.

"In the year 2000," said Dr. Hitz, "before scientists stepped in and laid down the law, there wasn't even enough drinking water to go around, and nothing to eat but sea-weed—and still people insisted on their right to reproduce like jackrabbits. And their right, if possible, to live forever."

"I want those kids," said Wehling quietly. "I want all three of them."

"Of course you do," said Dr. Hitz. "That's only human."

"I don't want my grandfather to die, either," said Wehling.

"Nobody's really happy about taking a close relative to the Catbox," said Dr. Hitz gently, sympathetically.

"I wish people wouldn't call it that," said Leora Duncan.

"What?" said Dr. Hitz.

"I wish people wouldn't call it 'the Catbox,' and things like that," she said. "It gives people the wrong impression."

"You're absolutely right," said Dr. Hitz. "Forgive me." He corrected himself, gave the municipal gas chambers their official title, a title no one ever used in conversation. "I should have said, 'Ethical Suicide Studios,'" he said.

"That sounds so much better," said Leora Duncan.

"This child of yours—whichever one you decide to keep, Mr. Wehling," said Dr. Hitz. "He or she is going to live on a happy, roomy, clean, rich planet, thanks to population control. In a garden like that mural there." He shook his head. "Two centuries ago, when I was a young man, it was a hell that nobody thought could last another twenty years. Now centuries of peace and plenty stretch before us as far as the imagination cares to travel."

He smiled **luminously**.

The smile faded as he saw that Wehling had just drawn a revolver.

Wehling shot Dr. Hitz dead. "There's room for one—a great big one," he said.

And then he shot Leora Duncan. "It's only death," he said to her as she fell. "There! Room for two."

And then he shot himself, making room for all three of his children.

Nobody came running. Nobody, seemingly, heard the shots.

The painter sat on the top of his stepladder, looking down reflectively on the sorry scene.

The painter pondered the mournful puzzle of life demanding to be born and, once born, demanding to be fruitful ... to multiply and to live as long as possible—to do all that on a very small planet that would have to last forever.

All the answers that the painter could think of were grim. Even grimmer, surely, than a Catbox, a Happy Hooligan, an Easy Go. He thought of war. He thought of plague. He thought of starvation.

He knew that he would never paint again. He let his paintbrush fall to the drop-cloths below. And then he decided he had had about enough of life in the Happy Garden of Life, too, and he came slowly down from the ladder.

He took Wehling's pistol, really intending to shoot himself.

But he didn't have the nerve.

And then he saw the telephone booth in the corner of the room. He went to it, dialed the well-remembered number: "2 B R 0 2 B."

"Federal Bureau of Termination," said the very warm voice of a hostess.

"How soon could I get an appointment?" he asked, speaking very carefully.

"We could probably fit you in late this afternoon, sir," she said. "It might even be earlier, if we get a cancellation."

"All right," said the painter, "fit me in, if you please." And he gave her his name, spelling it out.

"Thank you, sir," said the hostess. "Your city thanks you; your country thanks you; your planet thanks you. But the deepest thanks of all is from future generations."

Vocabulary

13. **tautly**: tightly, tensely

14. **luminously**: rightly, glowingly

2 B R 0 2 B | Reading Quiz

- Which character trait applies to Edward Wehling?
 - He is young.
 - He is playful.
 - He is cheerful.
 - He is bright and colorful.
- Which is **NOT** one of the ways that the world in the story has changed?
 - People have stopped aging.
 - There is no war or disease.
 - Everybody is happy all of the time.
 - The American population is capped at 40 million.
- What does '2 B R 0 2 B' mean in the story?
 - It is the title of a hit song.
 - It is the phone number to the gas chambers.
 - It is the secret password to leave the hospital.
 - It is the combination to a character's bicycle lock.
- Which characterization does **NOT** apply to the painter?
 - He is optimistic.
 - He is witty.
 - He is sarcastic.
 - He is jaded.
- Which of the following statements about Leora Duncan is **FALSE**?
 - She has a crush on Dr. Hitz.
 - She works at the gas chambers.
 - She has a mustache.
 - She is afraid to speak up.
- Which best explains what the author includes the following sentence from the fourth paragraph?
"What man in my shoes wouldn't be happy?"
 - Confused
 - Enthused
 - Sarcastic
 - Jealous
 - Naive
- Which best explains what the author includes the following sentence from the fourth paragraph?
"The painter pondered the mournful puzzle of life"
 - Simile
 - Metaphor
 - Hyperbole
 - Understatement
- Why does Dr. Hitz believe in population control?
 - So everyone can have as many kids as they want
 - So there are fewer annoying babies in public
 - So he has job security
 - So there are enough resources for everyone
- Which event happens **LAST**?
 - Mr. Wehling and Dr. Hitz get into an argument.
 - Leora Duncan reveals her admiration for Dr. Hitz.
 - The painter makes a phone call.
 - The orderly sings a popular song under his breath.
- Which statement is best supported by themes from this text?
 - War turns allies into friends.
 - War encourages the creation of new technology.
 - War makes some people very wealthy.
 - War is good for controlling the population.

Extended Response

Directions: On a separate sheet of paper, respond to the following question. Support your response with **two quotations** from the text. Be sure to explain what your evidence shows.

Why does Mr. Wehling target Leora Duncan and Dr. Hitz rather than the painter and the orderly? Use evidence from the text to support your response and explain your argument completely.

A Respectable Woman

By Kate Chopin

Directions: Read the short story and answer the questions that follow. Refer to the text to check your answers when appropriate.

Mrs. Baroda was a little **provoked**¹ to learn that her husband expected his friend, Gouvernail, up to spend a week or two on the plantation.

They had entertained a good deal during the winter; much of the time had also been passed in New Orleans in various forms of mild **dissipation**². She was looking forward to a period of unbroken rest, now, and undisturbed **tete-a-tete**³ with her husband, when he informed her that Gouvernail was coming up to stay a week or two.

This was a man she had heard much of but never seen. He had been her husband's college friend; was now a journalist, and in no sense a society man or "a man about town," which were, perhaps, some of the reasons she had never met him. But she had unconsciously formed an image of him in her mind. She pictured him tall, slim, cynical; with eye-glasses, and his hands in his pockets; and she did not like him. Gouvernail was slim enough, but he wasn't very tall nor very cynical; neither did he wear eyeglasses nor carry his hands in his pockets. And she rather liked him when he first presented himself.

But why she liked him she could not explain satisfactorily to herself when she partly attempted to do so. She could discover in him none of those brilliant and promising traits which Gaston, her husband, had often assured her that he possessed. On the contrary, he sat rather mute and receptive before her chatty eagerness to make him feel at home and in face of Gaston's frank and wordy hospitality. His manner was as courteous toward her as the most exacting woman could require; but he made no direct appeal to her approval or even esteem.

Once settled at the plantation he seemed to like to sit upon the wide portico in the shade of one of the big **Corinthian**⁴ pillars, smoking his cigar lazily and listening attentively to Gaston's experience as a sugar planter.

"This is what I call living," he would utter with deep satisfaction, as the air that swept across the sugar field caressed him with its warm and scented velvety touch. It pleased him also to get on familiar terms with the big dogs that came about him, rubbing themselves sociably against his legs. He did not care to fish, and displayed no eagerness to go out and kill **grosbecs**⁵ when Gaston proposed doing so.

"You used to say he was a man of ideas," she retorted,

Gouvernail's personality puzzled Mrs. Baroda, but she liked him. Indeed, he was a lovable, inoffensive fellow. After a few days, when she could understand him no better than at first, she gave over being puzzled and remained piqued. In this mood she left her husband and her guest, for the most part, alone together. Then finding that Gouvernail took no manner of exception to her action, she imposed her society upon him, accompanying him in his idle strolls to the mill and walks along the **batture**⁶. She persistently sought to penetrate the reserve in which he had unconsciously enveloped himself.

"When is he going--your friend?" she one day asked her husband. "For my part, he tires me frightfully."

"Not for a week yet, dear. I can't understand; he gives you no trouble."

"No. I should like him better if he did; if he were more like others, and I had to plan somewhat for his comfort and enjoyment."

Gaston took his wife's pretty face between his hands and looked tenderly and laughingly into her troubled eyes.

They were making a bit of toilet sociably together in Mrs. Baroda's dressing-room.

"You are full of surprises, ma belle," he said to her.

"Even I can never count upon how you are going to act under given conditions." He kissed her and turned to fasten his **cravat**⁷ before the mirror.

"Here you are," he went on, "taking poor Gouvernail seriously and making a commotion over him, the last thing he would desire or expect."

"Commotion!" she hotly resented. "Nonsense! How can you say such a thing? Commotion, indeed! But, you know, you said he was clever."

"So he is. But the poor fellow is run down by overwork now. That's why I asked him here to take a rest."

Vocabulary

1. **provoke**: to cause someone to become annoyed or irate
2. **dissipation**: wasting money or health in pursuit of pleasure
3. **tete-a-tete**: face-to-face; spending time privately with another
4. **Corinthian**: architecture reminiscent of Ancient Greece
5. **grosbecs**: sparrows; a type of bird
6. **batture**: a sea or riverbed that is raised or elevated
7. **cravat**: a wide fabric band worn as a necktie

Her mind only vaguely grasped what he was saying.

unconciliated⁸. "I expected him to be interesting, at least. I'm going to the city in the morning to have my spring gowns fitted. Let me know when Mr. Gouvernail is gone; I shall be at my Aunt Octavie's."

That night she went and sat alone upon a bench that stood beneath a live oak tree at the edge of the gravel walk.

She had never known her thoughts or her intentions to be so confused. She could gather nothing from them but the feeling of a distinct necessity to quit her home in the morning.

Mrs. Baroda heard footsteps crunching the gravel; but could discern in the darkness only the approaching red point of a lighted cigar. She knew it was Gouvernail, for her husband did not smoke. She hoped to remain unnoticed, but her white gown revealed her to him. He threw away his cigar and seated himself upon the bench beside her; without a suspicion that she might object to his presence.

"Your husband told me to bring this to you, Mrs. Baroda," he said, handing her a filmy, white scarf with which she sometimes enveloped her head and shoulders. She accepted the scarf from him with a murmur of thanks, and let it lie in her lap.

He made some commonplace observation upon the baneful effect of the night air at the season. Then as his gaze reached out into the darkness, he murmured, half to himself:

"Night of south winds--night of the large few stars! Still nodding night--"

She made no reply to this **apostrophe**⁹ to the night, which, indeed, was not addressed to her.

Gouvernail was in no sense a diffident man, for he was not a self-conscious one. His periods of reserve were not constitutional, but the result of moods. Sitting there beside Mrs. Baroda, his silence melted for the time.

He talked freely and intimately in a low, hesitating drawl that was not unpleasant to hear. He talked of the old college days when he and Gaston had been a good deal to each other; of the days of keen and blind ambitions and large intentions. Now there was left with him, at least, a philosophic acquiescence¹⁰ to the existing order--only a desire to be permitted to exist, with now and then a little whiff of genuine life, such as he was breathing now.

Her physical being was for the moment **predominant**¹¹. She was not thinking of his words, only drinking in the tones of his voice. She wanted to reach out her hand in the darkness and touch him with the sensitive tips of her fingers upon the face or the lips. She wanted to draw close to him and whisper against his cheek--she did not care what--as she might have done if she had not been a respectable woman.

The stronger the impulse grew to bring herself near him, the further, in fact, did she draw away from him. As soon as she could do so without an appearance of too great rudeness, she rose and left him there alone.

Before she reached the house, Gouvernail had lighted a fresh cigar and ended his apostrophe to the night.

Mrs. Baroda was greatly tempted that night to tell her husband--who was also her friend--of this folly that had seized her. But she did not yield to the temptation. Beside being a respectable woman she was a very sensible one; and she knew there are some battles in life which a human being must fight alone.

When Gaston arose in the morning, his wife had already departed. She had taken an early morning train to the city. She did not return till Gouvernail was gone from under her roof.

There was some talk of having him back during the summer that followed. That is, Gaston greatly desired it; but this desire yielded to his wife's **strenuous**¹² opposition.

However, before the year ended, she proposed, wholly from herself, to have Gouvernail visit them again. Her husband was surprised and delighted with the suggestion coming from her.

"I am glad, **chere amie**¹³, to know that you have finally overcome your dislike for him; truly he did not deserve it."

"Oh," she told him, laughingly, after pressing a long, tender kiss upon his lips, "I have overcome everything! You will see. This time I shall be very nice to him."

Vocabulary

8. **unconcilliated**: not made calm; not placated

9. **apostrophe**: sudden dialog addressed to someone or something

10. **acquiescence**: giving in or submitting to a force

11. **predominant**: most important or significant

12. **strenuous**: requiring great strain or effort

13. **chere amie**: *dear friend* in French.

A Respectable Woman | Reading Quiz

1. What is Mrs. Baroda's impression of Gouvernail after meeting him for the first time?
 - a. She likes him for some reason she can't explain.
 - b. She does not like him because he's tall and cynical.
 - c. She likes him because he's talkative and charming.
 - d. She does not like him because he's unsociable.
2. Which best describes Gouvernail's approach with Mrs. Baroda?
 - a. Gouvernail is polite but makes no effort to connect with her.
 - b. Gouvernail teases her, but only because he likes her.
 - c. Gouvernail teases her, but only because he likes her.
 - d. Gouvernail goes out of his way to impress her.
3. Which best describes Gouvernail's personality?
 - a. He is a youthful and ambitious artist.
 - b. He enjoys nature and the simple things in life.
 - c. He thinks money is the solution to any problem.
 - d. He suffered a loss and is trying to pick up the pieces.
4. Which technique is used in the following sentence?
"The air that swept across the sugar field caressed him with its warm and scented velvety touch."
 - a. Personification
 - b. Simile
 - c. Hyperbole
 - d. Understatement
5. Which best describes Gaston's reaction to Mrs. Baroda's concerns about Gouvernail?
 - a. He becomes angry and viciously lashes out at her.
 - b. He challenges Gouvernail to a duel.
 - c. He listens empathetically and helps her feel better.
 - d. He laughs at her and discounts her feelings.
6. What does the reader learn about Mrs. Baroda when Gouvernail opens up to her?
 - a. She is afraid of Gouvernail.
 - b. She and Gouvernail have a secret past.
 - c. She is related to Gouvernail.
 - d. She is attracted to Gouvernail.
7. Which is the correct order of events?
 - a. Mrs. Baroda suggests that Gouvernail visit; Gouvernail visits the plantation; Mrs. Baroda goes to her aunt's
 - b. Mrs. Baroda argues with Gaston; Mrs. Baroda goes to her aunt's; Mrs. Baroda suggests that Gouvernail visit
 - c. Gouvernail visits the plantation; Mrs. Baroda goes to her aunt's; Mrs. Baroda invites her aunt to the plantation
 - d. Mrs. Baroda goes to her aunt's; Mrs. Baroda tells Gaston how she feels; Gouvernail visits the plantation
8. Why Mrs. Baroda goes to her Aunt's?
 - a. She finds Gouvernail irritating.
 - b. She doesn't like how Gaston acts around Gouvernail.
 - c. She is afraid of her feelings.
 - d. Her aunt is sick.
9. Which statement is **false**?
 - a. Gaston suspects that his wife has feelings for Gouvernail.
 - b. Gaston and Gouvernail have been friends for a long time.
 - c. Mrs. Baroda becomes frustrated by her feelings for Gouvernail.
 - d. Gouvernail seems to be unaware of Mrs. Baroda's feelings.
10. Based on how the story concludes, which would be most likely to occur next if the story were to continue?
 - a. Gouvernail would visit the plantation and Mrs. Baroda would ignore him.
 - b. Gouvernail would accept the invitation and Mrs. Baroda would go to her aunt's house.
 - c. Gouvernail would visit the plantation and Mrs. Baroda would make a move on him.
 - d. Gouvernail would decline the invitation and Gaston would challenge him to a duel.

The Cat That Walked by Himself

By Rudyard Kipling

Directions: Read the short story. Answer the questions. Refer to the text to check your answers when appropriate.

Hear and attend and listen; for this befell and **behappened**¹ and became and was, O my Best Beloved, when the Tame animals were wild. The Dog was wild, and the Horse was wild, and the Cow was wild, and the Sheep was wild, and the Pig was wild--as wild as wild could be--and they walked in the Wet Wild Woods by their wild lones. But the wildest of all the wild animals was the Cat. He walked by himself, and all places were alike to him.

Of course the Man was wild too. He was dreadfully wild. He didn't even begin to be tame till he met the Woman, and she told him that she did not like living in his wild ways. She picked out a nice dry Cave, instead of a heap of wet leaves, to lie down in; and she strewed clean sand on the floor; and she lit a nice fire of wood at the back of the Cave; and she hung a dried wild-horse skin, tail-down, across the opening of the Cave; and she said, "Wipe your feet, dear, when you come in, and now we'll keep house."

That night, Best Beloved, they ate wild sheep roasted on the hot stones, and flavoured with wild garlic and wild pepper; and wild duck stuffed with wild rice and wild **coriander**²; and marrow-bones of wild oxen; and wild cherries. Then the Man went to sleep in front of the fire ever so happy; but the Woman sat up, combing her hair. She took the bone of the shoulder of mutton--the big fat blade-bone--and she looked at the wonderful marks on it, and she threw more wood on the fire, and she made a Magic. She made the First Singing Magic in the world.

Out in the Wet Wild Woods all the wild animals gathered together where they could see the light of the fire a long way off, and they wondered what it meant.

Then Wild Horse stamped with his wild foot and said, "O my Friends and O my Enemies, why have the Man and the Woman made that great light in that great Cave, and what harm will it do us?"

Wild Dog lifted up his wild nose and smelled the smell of roast mutton, and said, "I will go up and see and look, and say; for I think it is good. Cat, come with me."

"Nenni!" said the Cat. "I am the Cat who walks by himself, and all places are alike to me. I will not come."

"Then we can never be friends again," said Wild Dog, and he trotted off to the Cave. But when he had gone a little way the Cat said to himself, "All places are alike to me. Why should I not go too and see and look and come away at my own liking." So he slipped after Wild Dog softly, very softly, and hid himself where he could hear everything.

When Wild Dog reached the mouth of the Cave he lifted up the dried horse-skin with his nose and sniffed the beautiful smell of the roast **mutton**³, and the Woman, looking at the blade-bone, heard him, and laughed, and said, "Here comes the first. Wild Thing out of the Wild Woods, what do you want?"

Wild Dog said, "O my Enemy and Wife of my Enemy, what is this that smells so good in the Wild Woods?"

Then the Woman picked up a roasted mutton-bone and threw it to Wild Dog, and said, "Wild Thing out of the Wild Woods,

taste and try." Wild Dog gnawed the bone, and it was more delicious than anything he had ever tasted, and he said, "O my Enemy and Wife of my Enemy, give me another."

The Woman said, "Wild Thing out of the Wild Woods, help my Man to hunt through the day and guard this Cave at night, and I will give you as many roast bones as you need."

"Ah!" said the Cat, listening. "This is a very wise Woman, but she is not so wise as I am."

Wild Dog crawled into the Cave and laid his head on the Woman's lap, and said, "O my Friend and Wife of my Friend, I will help Your Man to hunt through the day, and at night I will guard your Cave."

"Ah!" said the Cat, listening. "That is a very foolish Dog." And he went back through the Wet Wild Woods waving his wild tail, and walking by his wild lone. But he never told anybody.

When the Man waked up he said, "What is Wild Dog doing here?" And the Woman said, "His name is not Wild Dog any more, but the First Friend, because he will be our friend for always and always and always. Take him with you when you go hunting."

Next night the Woman cut great green armfuls of fresh grass from the water-meadows, and dried it before the fire, so that it smelt like new-mown hay, and she sat at the mouth of the Cave and plaited a halter out of horse-hide, and she looked at the shoulder of mutton-bone--at the big broad blade-bone--and she made a Magic. She made the Second Singing Magic in the world.

Out in the Wild Woods all the wild animals wondered what had happened to Wild Dog, and at last Wild Horse stamped with his foot and said, "I will go and see and say why Wild Dog has not returned. Cat, come with me."

"Nenni!" said the Cat. "I am the Cat who walks by himself, and all places are alike to me. I will not come." But all the same he followed Wild Horse softly, very softly, and hid himself where he could hear everything.

When the Woman heard Wild Horse tripping and stumbling on his long mane, she laughed and said, "Here comes the second. Wild Thing out of the Wild Woods what do you want?"

Wild Horse said, "O my Enemy and Wife of my Enemy, where is Wild Dog?"

The Woman laughed, and picked up the blade-bone and looked at it, and said, "Wild Thing out of the Wild Woods, you did not come here for Wild Dog, but for the sake of this good grass."

And Wild Horse, tripping and stumbling on his long mane, said, "That is true; give me it to eat."

The Woman said, "Wild Thing out of the Wild Woods, bend your wild head and wear what I give you, and you shall eat the wonderful grass three times a day."

Vocabulary

1. **behappened:** happened
2. **coriander:** an herb also known as cilantro
3. **mutton:** sheep

"Ah," said the Cat, listening, "this is a clever Woman, but she is not so clever as I am." Wild Horse bent his wild head, and the Woman slipped the plaited hide halter over it, and Wild Horse breathed on the Woman's feet and said, "O my Mistress, and Wife of my Master, I will be your servant for the sake of the wonderful grass."

"Ah," said the Cat, listening, "that is a very foolish Horse." And he went back through the Wet Wild Woods, waving his wild tail and walking by his wild lone. But he never told anybody.

When the Man and the Dog came back from hunting, the Man said, "What is Wild Horse doing here?" And the Woman said, "His name is not Wild Horse any more, but the First Servant, because he will carry us from place to place for always and always and always. Ride on his back when you go hunting."

Next day, holding her wild head high that her wild horns should not catch in the wild trees, Wild Cow came up to the Cave, and the Cat followed, and hid himself just the same as before; and everything happened just the same as before; and the Cat said the same things as before, and when Wild Cow had promised to give her milk to the Woman every day in exchange for the wonderful grass, the Cat went back through the Wet Wild Woods waving his wild tail and walking by his wild lone, just the same as before. But he never told anybody. And when the Man and the Horse and the Dog came home from hunting and asked the same questions same as before, the Woman said, "Her name is not Wild Cow any more, but the Giver of Good Food. She will give us the warm white milk for always and always and always, and I will take care of her while you and the First Friend and the First Servant go hunting."

Next day the Cat waited to see if any other Wild thing would go up to the Cave, but no one moved in the Wet Wild Woods, so the Cat walked there by himself; and he saw the Woman milking the Cow, and he saw the light of the fire in the Cave, and he smelt the smell of the warm white milk.

Cat said, "O my Enemy and Wife of my Enemy, where did Wild Cow go?"

The Woman laughed and said, "Wild Thing out of the Wild Woods, go back to the Woods again, for I have braided up my hair, and I have put away the magic blade-bone, and we have no more need of either friends or servants in our Cave."

Cat said, "I am not a friend, and I am not a servant. I am the Cat who walks by himself, and I wish to come into your cave."

Woman said, "Then why did you not come with First Friend on the first night?"

Cat grew very angry and said, "Has Wild Dog told tales of me?"

Then the Woman laughed and said, "You are the Cat who walks by himself, and all places are alike to you. You are neither a friend nor a servant. You have said it yourself. Go away and walk by yourself in all places alike."

Then Cat pretended to be sorry and said, "Must I never come into the Cave? Must I never sit by the warm fire? Must I never drink the warm white milk? You are very wise and very beautiful. You should not be cruel even to a Cat."

Woman said, "I knew I was wise, but I did not know I was beautiful. So I will make a bargain with you. If ever I say one word in your praise you may come into the Cave."

"And if you say two words in my praise?" said the Cat.

"I never shall," said the Woman, "but if I say two words in your praise, you may sit by the fire in the Cave."

And if you say three words?" said the Cat.

"I never shall," said the Woman, "but if I say three words in your praise, you may drink the warm white milk three times a day for always and always and always."

Then the Cat arched his back and said, "Now let the Curtain at the mouth of the Cave, and the Fire at the back of the Cave, and the Milk-pots that stand beside the Fire, remember what my Enemy and the Wife of my Enemy has said." And he went away through the Wet Wild Woods waving his wild tail and walking by his wild lone.

That night when the Man and the Horse and the Dog came home from hunting, the Woman did not tell them of the bargain that she had made with the Cat, because she was afraid that they might not like it.

Cat went far and far away and hid himself in the Wet Wild Woods by his wild lone for a long time till the Woman forgot all about him. Only the Bat--the little upside-down Bat--that hung inside the Cave, knew where Cat hid; and every evening Bat would fly to Cat with news of what was happening.

One evening Bat said, "There is a Baby in the Cave. He is new and pink and fat and small, and the Woman is very fond of him."

"Ah," said the Cat, listening, "but what is the Baby fond of?"

"He is fond of things that are soft and tickle," said the Bat. "He is fond of warm things to hold in his arms when he goes to sleep. He is fond of being played with. He is fond of all those things."

"Ah," said the Cat, listening, "then my time has come."

Next night Cat walked through the Wet Wild Woods and hid very near the Cave till morning-time, and Man and Dog and Horse went hunting. The Woman was busy cooking that morning, and the Baby cried and interrupted. So she carried him outside the Cave and gave him a handful of pebbles to play with. But still the Baby cried.

Then the Cat put out his paddy paw and patted the Baby on the cheek, and it cooed; and the Cat rubbed against its fat knees and tickled it under its fat chin with his tail. And the Baby laughed; and the Woman heard him and smiled.

Then the Bat--the little upside-down bat--that hung in the mouth of the Cave said, "O my Hostess and Wife of my Host and Mother of my Host's Son, a Wild Thing from the Wild Woods is most beautifully playing with your Baby."

"A blessing on that Wild Thing whoever he may be," said the Woman, straightening her back, "for I was a busy woman this morning and he has done me a service."

That very minute and second, Best Beloved, the dried horse-skin Curtain that was stretched tail-down at the mouth of the Cave fell down--whoosh!--because it remembered the bargain she had made with the Cat, and when the Woman went to pick it up--lo and behold!--the Cat was sitting quite comfy inside the Cave.

"O my Enemy and Wife of my Enemy and Mother of my Enemy," said the Cat, "it is I: for you have spoken a word in my praise, and now I can sit within the Cave for always and always and always. But still I am the Cat who walks by himself, and all places are alike to me."

"I will do so," said the Woman, "because I am at my wits' end; but I will not thank you for it."

She tied the thread to the little clay spindle whorl and drew it across the floor, and the Cat ran after it and patted it with his paws and rolled head over heels, and tossed it backward over his shoulder and chased it between his hind-legs and pretended to lose it, and pounced down upon it again, till the Baby laughed as loudly as it had been crying, and scrambled after the Cat and frolicked all over the Cave till it grew tired and settled down to sleep with the Cat in its arms.

"Now," said the Cat, "I will sing the Baby a song that shall keep him asleep for an hour. And he began to purr, loud and low, low and loud, till the Baby fell fast asleep. The Woman smiled as she looked down upon the two of them and said, "That was wonderfully done. No question but you are very clever, O Cat."

That very minute and second, Best Beloved, the smoke of the fire at the back of the Cave came down in clouds from the roof--puff!--because it remembered the bargain she had made with the Cat, and when it had cleared away--lo and behold!--the Cat was sitting quite comfy close to the fire.

"O my Enemy and Wife of my Enemy and Mother of My Enemy," said the Cat, "it is I, for you have spoken a second word in my praise, and now I can sit by the warm fire at the back of the Cave for always and always and always. But still I am the Cat who walks by himself, and all places are alike to me."

Then the Woman was very very angry, and let down her hair and put more wood on the fire and brought out the broad blade-bone of the shoulder of mutton and began to make a Magic that should prevent her from saying a third word in praise of the Cat. It was not a Singing Magic, Best Beloved, it was a Still Magic; and by and by the Cave grew so still that a little wee-wee mouse crept out of a corner and ran across the floor.

"O my Enemy and Wife of my Enemy and Mother of my Enemy," said the Cat, "is that little mouse part of your magic?"

"Ouh! Chee! No indeed!" said the Woman, and she dropped the blade-bone and jumped upon the footstool in front of the fire and braided up her hair very quick for fear that the mouse should run up it.

"Ah," said the Cat, watching, "then the mouse will do me no harm if I eat it?"

"No," said the Woman, braiding up her hair, "eat it quickly and I will ever be grateful to you."

Cat made one jump and caught the little mouse, and the Woman said, "A hundred thanks. Even the First Friend is not quick enough to catch little mice as you have done. You must be very wise."

That very moment and second, O Best Beloved, the Milk-pot that stood by the fire cracked in two pieces--fffft!--because it remembered the bargain she had made with the Cat, and when the Woman jumped down from the footstool--lo and behold!--the Cat was lapping up the warm white milk that lay in one of the broken pieces.

"O my Enemy and Wife of my Enemy and Mother of my Enemy," said the Cat, "it is I; for you have spoken three words in my praise, and now I can drink the warm white milk three times a day for always and always and always. But still I am the Cat who walks by himself, and all places are alike to me."

Then the Woman laughed and set the Cat a bowl of the warm white milk and said, "O Cat, you are as clever as a man, but remember that your bargain was not made with the Man or the Dog, and I do not know what they will do when they come home."

"What is that to me?" said the Cat. "If I have my place in the Cave by the fire and my warm white milk three times a day I do not care what the Man or the Dog can do."

That evening when the Man and the Dog came into the Cave, the Woman told them all the story of the bargain while the Cat sat by the fire and smiled. Then the Man said, "Yes, but he has not made a bargain with me or with all proper Men after me.' Then he took off his two leather boots and he took up his little stone axe (that makes three) and he fetched a piece of wood and a hatchet (that is five altogether), and he set them out in a row and he said, "Now we will make our bargain. If you do not catch mice when you are in the Cave for always and always and always, I will throw these five things at you whenever I see you, and so shall all proper Men do after me."

"Ah," said the Woman, listening, "this is a very clever Cat, but he is not so clever as my Man."

The Cat counted the five things and he said, "I will catch mice when I am in the Cave for always and always; but still I am the Cat who walks by himself, and all places are alike to me."

"Not when I am near," said the Man. "If you had not said that last I would have put all these things away for always and always and always; but I am now going to throw my two boots and my little stone axe (that makes three) at you whenever I meet you. And so shall all proper Men do after me!"

Then the Dog said, "Wait a minute. He has not made a bargain with me or with all proper Dogs after me." And he showed his teeth and said, "If you are not kind to the Baby while I am in the Cave for always and always and always, I will hunt you till I catch you, and when I catch you I will bite you. And so shall all proper Dogs do after me."

"Ah," said the Woman, listening, "this is a very clever Cat, but he is not so clever as the Dog."

Cat counted the Dog's teeth (and they looked very pointed) and he said, "I will be kind to the Baby while I am in the Cave, as long as he does not pull my tail too hard, for always and always and always. But still I am the Cat that walks by himself, and all places are alike to me."

"Not when I am near," said the Dog. "If you had not said that last I would have shut my mouth for always and always and always; but now I am going to hunt you up a tree whenever I meet you. And so shall all proper Dogs do after me."

Then the Man threw his two boots and his little stone axe (that makes three) at the Cat, and the Cat ran out of the Cave and the Dog chased him up a tree; and from that day to this, Best Beloved, three proper Men out of five will always throw things at a Cat whenever they meet him, and all proper Dogs will chase him up a tree. But the Cat keeps his side of the bargain too. He will kill mice and he will be kind to Babies when he is in the house, just as long as they do not pull his tail too hard. But when he has done that, and between times, and when the moon gets up and night comes, he is the Cat that walks by himself, and all places are alike to him. Then he goes out to the Wet Wild Woods or up the Wet Wild Trees or on the Wet Wild Roofs, waving his wild tail and walking by his wild lone.

1. Which is **NOT** one of the ways that the Woman improves the Man's life?
 - a. She moves the Man out of his pile of wet leaves.
 - b. She teaches the Man to clean up after himself.
 - c. She starts the fire and keeps it fed.
 - d. She attracts helpful animal companions.
2. What is the **main** reason why the Wild Dog approaches the cave?
 - a. He is hungry.
 - b. He is attracted to the warmth of the fire.
 - c. He is trying to protect the other animals.
 - d. He wants to be petted by the Man and the Woman.
3. Which statement about the Cat is **false**?
 - a. The Cat is sneaky.
 - b. The Cat finds a way to get what he wants.
 - c. The Cat's attitude gets him into trouble.
 - d. The Cat is eager to please others.
4. Which is the correct order of events?
 - a. The Cat and the Woman make a deal, the Baby is born, and then the Horse becomes the Man's servant
 - b. The Dog becomes Man's friend, the Baby is born, and then the Cat meets the Woman for the first time
 - c. The Horse becomes the Man's servant, the Baby is born, and then the Dog becomes Man's friend
 - d. The Cat meets the Woman for the first time, the Baby is born, and then the Cat angers the Man
5. Which character is also known as *The Giver of Good Food*?
 - a. The Man
 - b. The Woman
 - c. The Cow
 - d. The Cat
6. The Cat makes a deal with the Woman by doing **ALL** of the following **EXCEPT**?
 - a. The Cat plays with the Baby.
 - b. The Cat helps the Baby sleep.
 - c. The Cat flatters the Woman.
 - d. The Cat makes the Man laugh.
7. Which animal is the Cat's closest friend?
 - a. The Bat
 - b. The Dog
 - c. The Horse
 - d. The Cow
8. What is the author's purpose in referring to the reader as "Best Beloved"?
 - a. He truly appreciates each and every one of his readers and is expressing his love.
 - b. He is acting as though the story is being told to a child.
 - c. He is writing this story in the olden days when everyone was called "Best Beloved."
 - d. He wants the reader to feel comfortable so he is being sweet and endearing.
9. Which poetic device or technique is used in the following sentence?
"The smoke of the fire at the back of the Cave came down in clouds from the roof--puff!"
 - a. Rhyme
 - b. Simile
 - c. Onomatopoeia
 - d. Repetition
10. This text attempts to explain each of the following EXCEPT?
 - a. This text explains why cats catch mice.
 - b. This text explains why cats always land on their feet.
 - c. This text explains why cats and dogs fight.
 - d. This text explains why cats get along with babies.

Extended Response: Answer the following question in complete sentences on a separate sheet of paper. Use evidence from the text to support your response and explain your answer completely.

*The Cat makes a lot of enemies in this story. What is it about the Cat that offends so many others? Which **character trait** do the others find offensive? Support your answer with at least two examples from the text.*

The Son

By Hermann Hesse

Directions: Read the short story. Answer the questions. Refer to the text to check your answers when appropriate.

Timid and weeping, the boy had attended his mother's funeral; gloomy and shy, he had listened to Siddhartha, who greeted him as his son and welcomed him at his place in Vasudeva's hut. Pale, he sat for many days by the hill of the dead, did not want to eat, gave no open look, did not open his heart, met his fate with resistance and denial.

Siddhartha spared him and let him do as he pleased, he honoured his mourning. Siddhartha understood that his son did not know him, that he could not love him like a father. Slowly, he also saw and understood that the eleven-year-old was a pampered boy, a mother's boy, and that he had grown up in the habits of rich people, accustomed to finer food, to a soft bed, accustomed to giving orders to servants. Siddhartha understood that the mourning, pampered child could not suddenly and willingly be content with a life among strangers and in poverty. He did not force him, he did many a chore for him, always picked the best piece of the meal for him. Slowly, he hoped to win him over, by friendly patience.

Rich and happy, he had called himself, when the boy had come to him. Since time had passed on in the meantime, and the boy remained a stranger and in a gloomy **disposition**¹, since he displayed a proud and stubbornly disobedient heart, did not want to do any work, did not pay his respect to the old men, stole from Vasudeva's fruit-trees, then Siddhartha began to understand that his son had not brought him happiness and peace, but suffering and worry. But he loved him, and he preferred the suffering and worries of love over happiness and joy without the boy. Since young Siddhartha was in the hut, the old men had split the work. Vasudeva had again taken on the job of the **ferryman**² all by himself, and Siddhartha, in order to be with his son, did the work in the hut and the field.

For a long time, for long months, Siddhartha waited for his son to understand him, to accept his love, to perhaps **reciprocate**³ it. For long months, Vasudeva waited, watching, waited and said nothing. One day, when Siddhartha the younger had once again tormented his father very much with spite and an unsteadiness in his wishes and had broken both of his rice-bowls, Vasudeva took his friend aside in the evening and talked to him.

"Pardon me," he said, "from a friendly heart, I'm talking to you. I'm seeing that you are tormenting yourself, I'm seeing that you're in grief. Your son, my friend, is worrying you, and he is also worrying me. That young bird is accustomed to a different life, to a different nest. He has not, like you, ran away from riches and the city, being disgusted and fed up with it; against his will, he had to leave all this behind. I asked the river, oh friend, many times I have asked it. But the river laughs, it laughs at me, it laughs at you and me, and is shaking with laughter at our foolishness. Water wants to join water, youth wants to join youth, your son is not in the place where he can prosper. You too should ask the river; you too should listen to it!"

Troubled, Siddhartha looked into his friendly face, in the many wrinkles of which there was **incessant**⁴ cheerfulness.

"How could I part with him?" he said quietly, ashamed. "Give me some more time, my friend! See, I'm fighting for him, I'm seeking to win his heart, with love and with friendly patience I intend to capture it. One day, the river shall also talk to him, he also is called upon."

Vasudeva's smile flourished more warmly. "Oh yes, he too is called upon, he too is of the eternal life. But do we, you and me, know what he is called upon to do, what path to take, what actions to perform, what pain to endure? Not a small one, his pain will be; after all, his heart is proud and hard, people like this have to suffer a lot, err a lot, do much injustice, burden themselves with much sin. Tell me, my friend: you're not taking control of your son's upbringing? You don't force him? You don't beat him? You don't punish him?"

"No, Vasudeva, I don't do anything of this."

"I knew it. You don't force him, don't beat him, don't give him orders, because you know that 'soft' is stronger than 'hard', Water stronger than rocks, love stronger than force. Very good, I praise you. But aren't you mistaken in thinking that you wouldn't force him, wouldn't punish him? Don't you shackle him with your love? Don't you make him feel inferior every day, and don't you make it even harder on him with your kindness and patience? Don't you force him, the arrogant and pampered boy, to live in a hut with two old banana-eaters, to whom even rice is a delicacy, whose thoughts can't be his, whose hearts are old and quiet and beat in a different pace than his? Isn't forced, isn't he punished by all this?"

Troubled, Siddhartha looked to the ground. Quietly, he asked: "What do you think should I do?"

Quoth Vasudeva: "Bring him into the city, bring him into his mother's house, there'll still be servants around, give him to them. And when they aren't any around any more, bring him to a teacher, not for the teachings' sake, but so that he shall be among other boys, and among girls, and in the world which is his own. Have you never thought of this?"

"You're seeing into my heart," Siddhartha spoke sadly. "Often, I have thought of this. But look, how shall I put him, who had no tender heart anyhow, into this world? Won't he become **exuberant**⁵, won't he lose himself to pleasure and power, won't he repeat all of his father's mistakes, won't he perhaps get entirely lost in Sansara?"

Vocabulary

1. **disposition**: mood
2. **ferryman**: carries people across a river or body of water in a boat
3. **reciprocate**: to give something in return or response
4. **incessant**: without pause; unending, to the point of annoyance
5. **exuberant**: high-spirited; extremely energetic and enthusiastic

Brightly, the ferryman's smile lit up; softly, he touched Siddhartha's arm and said: "Ask the river about it, my friend! Hear it laugh about it! Would you actually believe that you had committed your foolish acts in order to spare your son from committing them too? And could you in any way protect your son from **Sansara**⁶? How could you? By means of teachings, prayer, admonition? My friend, have you entirely forgotten that story, that story containing so many lessons, that story about Siddhartha, a Brahman's son? Who has kept the Samana Siddhartha safe from Sansara, from sin, from greed, from foolishness? Were his father's religious devotion, his teachers warnings, his own knowledge, his own search able to keep him safe? Which father, which teacher had been able to protect him from living his life for himself, from soiling himself with life, from burdening himself with guilt, from drinking the bitter drink for himself, from finding his path for himself? Would you think, my dear friend, anybody might perhaps be spared from taking this path? That perhaps your little son would be spared, because you love him, because you would like to keep him from suffering and pain and disappointment? But even if you would die ten times for him, you would not be able to take the slightest part of his destiny upon yourself."

Never before, Vasudeva had spoken so many words. Kindly, Siddhartha thanked him, went troubled into the hut, could not sleep for a long time. Vasudeva had told him nothing that he had not already thought and known for himself. But this was a knowledge he could not act upon, stronger than the knowledge was his love for the boy, stronger was his tenderness, his fear to lose him. Had he ever lost his heart so much to something, had he ever loved any person thus, thus blindly, thus sufferingly, thus unsuccessfully, and yet thus happily?

Siddhartha could not heed his friend's advice, he could not give up the boy. He let the boy give him orders, he let him disregard him. He said nothing and waited; daily, he began the mute struggle of friendliness, the silent war of patience. Vasudeva also said nothing and waited, friendly, knowing, patient. They were both masters of patience.

At one time, when the boy's face reminded him very much of Kamala, Siddhartha suddenly had to think of a line which Kamala a long time ago, in the days of their youth, had once said to him. "You cannot love," she had said to him, and he had agreed with her and had compared himself with a star, while comparing the childlike people with falling leaves, and nevertheless he had also sensed an accusation in that line. Indeed, he had never been able to lose or devote himself completely to another person, to forget himself, to commit foolish acts for the love of another person; never he had been able to do this, and this was, as it had seemed to him at that time, the great distinction which set him apart from the childlike people. But now, since his son was here, now he, Siddhartha, had also become completely a childlike person, suffering for the sake of another person, loving another person, lost to a love, having become a fool on account of love. Now he too felt, late, once in his lifetime, this strongest and strangest of all passions, suffered from it, suffered miserably, and was nevertheless in bliss, was nevertheless renewed in one respect, enriched by one thing.

He did sense very well that this love, this blind love for his son, was a passion, something very human, that it was Sansara, a murky source, dark waters. Nevertheless, he felt at the same time, it was not worthless, it was necessary, came from the essence of his own being. This pleasure also had to be **atoned**⁷ for, this pain also had to be endured, these foolish acts also had to be committed.

Through all this, the son let him commit his foolish acts, let him court for his affection, let him humiliate himself every day by giving in to his moods. This father had nothing which would have delighted him and nothing which he would have feared. He was a good man, this father, a good, kind, soft man, perhaps a very **devout**⁸ man, perhaps a saint, none of these were attributes which could win the boy over. He was bored by this father, who kept him prisoner here in this miserable hut of his, he was bored by him, and for him to answer every naughtiness with a smile, every insult with friendliness, every viciousness with kindness, this very thing was the hated trick of this old sneak. Much more the boy would have liked it if he had been threatened by him, if he had been abused by him.

A day came, when what young Siddhartha had on his mind came bursting forth, and he openly turned against his father. The latter had given him a task, he had told him to gather brushwood. But the boy did not leave the hut, in stubborn disobedience and rage he stayed where he was, thumped on the ground with his feet, clenched his fists, and screamed in a powerful outburst his hatred and **contempt**⁹ into his father's face.

"Get the brushwood for yourself!" he shouted foaming at the mouth, "I'm not your servant. I do know, that you won't hit me, you don't dare; I do know, that you constantly want to punish me and put me down with your religious devotion and your **indulgence**¹⁰. You want me to become like you, just as devout, just as soft, just as wise! But I, listen up, just to make you suffer, I rather want to become a highway-robber and murderer, and go to hell, than to become like you! I hate you, you're not my father!"

Rage and grief boiled over in him, foamed at the father in a hundred savage and evil words. Then the boy ran away and only returned late at night.

But the next morning, he had disappeared. What had also disappeared was a small basket, woven out of **bast** of two colours, in which the ferrymen kept those copper and silver coins which they received as a fare. The boat had also disappeared, Siddhartha saw it lying by the opposite bank. The boy had ran away.

"I must follow him," said Siddhartha, who had been shivering with grief since those ranting speeches, the boy had made yesterday. "A child can't go through the forest all alone. He'll perish. We must build a raft, Vasudeva, to get over the water."

Vocabulary

6. **Sansara**: chasing power and pleasure

7. **atone**: to make amends

8. **devout**: warmly devoted; hearty; sincere; earnest

9. **indulgence**: tolerance; catering to someone's every desire

10. **bast**: a fibrous rope or cord

"We will build a raft," said Vasudeva, "to get our boat back, which the boy has taken away. But him, you shall let run along, my friend, he is no child any more, he knows how to get around. He's looking for the path to the city, and he is right, don't forget that. He's doing what you've failed to do yourself. He's taking care of himself, he's taking his course. Alas, Siddhartha, I see you suffering, but you're suffering a pain at which one would like to laugh, at which you'll soon laugh for yourself."

Siddhartha did not answer. He already held the axe in his hands and began to make a raft of bamboo, and Vasudeva helped him tie the canes together with ropes of grass. Then they crossed over, drifted far off their course, pulled the raft upriver on the opposite bank.

"Why did you take the axe along?" asked Siddhartha.

Vasudeva said: "It might have been possible that the oar of our boat got lost."

But Siddhartha knew what his friend was thinking. He thought, the boy would have thrown away or broken the oar in order to get even and in order to keep them from following him. And in fact, there was no oar left in the boat. Vasudeva pointed to the bottom of the boat and looked at his friend with a smile, as if he wanted to say: "Don't you see what your son is trying to tell you? Don't you see that he doesn't want to be followed?" But he did not say this in words. He started making a new oar. But Siddhartha bid his farewell, to look for the run-away. Vasudeva did not stop him.

When Siddhartha had already been walking through the forest for a long time, the thought occurred to him that his search was useless. Either, so he thought, the boy was far ahead and had already reached the city, or, if he should still be on his way, he would conceal himself from him, the pursuer. As he continued thinking, he also found that he, on his part, was not worried for his son, he knew deep inside that he had neither perished nor was in any danger in the forest. Nevertheless, he ran without stopping, no longer to save him, just to satisfy his desire, just to perhaps see him one more time. And he ran up to just outside of the city.

When, near the city, he reached a wide road, he stopped, by the entrance of the beautiful pleasure-garden, which used to belong to Kamala, where he had seen her for the first time in her sedan-chair. The past rose up in his soul, again he saw himself standing there, young, bearded, hair full of dust. For a long time, Siddhartha stood there and looked through the open gate into the garden, seeing monks in yellow robes walking among the beautiful trees.

For a long time, he stood there, pondering, seeing images, listening to the story of his life. For a long time, he stood there, looked at the monks, saw young Siddhartha in their place, saw young Kamala walking among the high trees. Clearly, he saw himself being served food and drink by Kamala, receiving his first kiss from her, looking proudly and disdainfully back on his **Brahmanism**¹¹, beginning proudly and full of desire his worldly life. He saw the servants, the gamblers with the dice, the musicians, saw

Kamala's song-bird in the cage, lived through all this once again, breathed Sansara, was once again old and tired, felt once again disgust, felt once again the wish to annihilate himself, was once again healed by the holy **Om**¹².

After having been standing by the gate of the garden for a long time, Siddhartha realised that his desire was foolish, which had made him go up to this place, that he could not help his son, that he was not allowed to cling him. Deeply, following the runaway son, there was now emptiness. Sadly, he sat down, felt something dying in his heart, experienced emptiness, saw no joy any more, no goal. He sat lost in thought and waited. This he had learned by the river, this one thing: waiting, having patience, listening attentively. And he sat and listened, in the dust of the road, listened to his heart, beating tiredly and sadly,

That this wound did not blossom yet, did not shine yet, at this hour, made him sad. Instead of the desired goal, which had drawn him here following the runaway son, there was now emptiness. Sadly, he sat down, felt something dying in his heart, experienced emptiness, saw no joy any more, no goal. He sat lost in thought and waited. This he had learned by the river, this one thing: waiting, having patience, listening attentively. And he sat and listened, in the dust of the road, listened to his heart, beating tiredly and sadly, waited for a voice. Many an hour he crouched, listening, saw no images any more, fell into emptiness, let himself fall, without seeing a path. And when he felt the wound burning, he silently spoke the Om, filled himself with Om. The monks in the garden saw him, and since he crouched for many hours, and dust was gathering on his gray hair, one of them came to him and placed two bananas in front of him. The old man did not see him.

From this **petrified**¹³ state, he was awoken by a hand touching his shoulder. Instantly, he recognised this touch, this tender, bashful touch, and regained his senses. He rose and greeted Vasudeva, who had followed him. And when he looked into Vasudeva's friendly face, into the small wrinkles, which were as if they were filled with nothing but his smile, into the happy eyes, then he smiled too. Now he saw the bananas lying in front of him, picked them up, gave one to the ferryman, ate the other one himself. After this, he silently went back into the forest with Vasudeva, returned home to the ferry. Neither one talked about what had happened today, neither one mentioned the boy's name, neither one spoke about him running away, neither one spoke about the wound. In the hut, Siddhartha lay down on his bed, and when after a while Vasudeva came to him, to offer him a bowl of coconut-milk, he already found him asleep.

Vocabulary

11. **Brahmanism**: aspects of Hinduism as practiced by the Brahmin caste of India

12. **Om**: a sacred, mystical syllable used in prayer and meditation

13. **petrify**: to become very rigid; to become like stone

The Son | Reading Quiz

- Which statement is **false**?
 - Siddhartha is poor and lives in a hut the woods.
 - The boy's mother has passed away.
 - The boy grew up in a wealthy home with servants.
 - Siddhartha has raised his son since infancy.
- Which best describes how Siddhartha treats his son?
 - He is firm but loving.
 - He is understanding and kind.
 - He is impatient and demanding.
 - He is too busy working to give his son attention.
- Which best describes Vesduva's position on the boy?
 - The boy needs discipline, so Siddhartha should treat him more firmly.
 - The boy doesn't work and he steals, so he should be sent to live elsewhere.
 - The boy has to experience life for himself, so Siddhartha should let him go.
 - The boy needs an education to succeed, so he should be sent to a teacher.
- Which statement about the boy is **false**?
 - He is afraid of Vasudeva.
 - He makes Siddhartha happy.
 - He is disrespectful and ungrateful.
 - He is spoiled and troublesome.
- What effect does Siddhartha's approach have on the boy?
 - It makes the boy laugh at his father's weakness.
 - It makes the boy angry with his father.
 - It makes the boy sad about the way that he acted.
 - It makes the boy concerned for his father's health.
- Which character trait does **not** apply to Vesduva?
 - possessive
 - patient
 - tactful
 - clever
- Which is the correct sequence of events?
 - The boy runs away; Siddhartha stands by the garden and thinks; Vesduva tells his friend to listen to the river
 - Vesduva makes an oar for the boat; the boy runs away; the boy yells at his father
 - The boy yells at his father; the boy steals the boat; Siddhartha stands by the garden and thinks
 - The boy steals the boat; Vesduva tells his friend to listen to the river; the boy runs away
- Which figurative language technique is used in the following?
"Your son is worrying you, and he is also worrying me. That young bird is accustomed to a different life, to a different nest."
 - Simile
 - Metaphor
 - Personification
 - Hyperbole
- Which statement about Siddhartha is **false**?
 - He learns that he cannot protect his son.
 - Siddhartha learns that love can be selfish.
 - He learns that children bring suffering and worry.
 - He learns that children need structure and rules.
- Based on how the story concludes, which would be most likely to occur next if the story were to continue?
 - Siddhartha would take his anger and grief out on Vesduva.
 - Siddhartha and Vesduva would continue living as they once did.
 - Siddhartha would search for his son with greater intensity.
 - Siddhartha and Vesduva would establish a list of rules for their hut in the woods.

Extended Response: Answer the following question in complete sentences on a separate sheet of paper.

What is a theme, message, or lesson that the author of this text is trying to communicate to the reader?

Put it into your own words and explain how this story attempts to teach this theme, message, or lesson to readers. Support your argument with two examples from the text. Explain your argument completely.

The Story of Keesh

By Jack London

Directions: Read the short story and answer the questions that follow. Refer to the text to check your answers.

Keesh lived long ago on the rim of the polar sea, was head man of his village through many and prosperous years, and died full of honors with his name on the lips of men. So long ago did he live that only the old men remember his name, his name and the tale, which they got from the old men before them, and which the old men to come will tell to their children and their children's children down to the end of time. And the winter darkness, when the north gales make their long sweep across the ice-pack, and the air is filled with flying white, and no man may venture forth, is the chosen time for the telling of how Keesh, from the poorest igloo in the village, rose to power and place over them all.

He was a bright boy, so the tale runs, healthy and strong, and he had seen thirteen suns, in their way of reckoning time. For each winter the sun leaves the land in darkness, and the next year a new sun returns so that they may be warm again and look upon one another's faces. The father of Keesh had been a very brave man, but he had met his death in a time of famine, when he sought to save the lives of his people by taking the life of a great polar bear. In his eagerness he came to close grapples with the bear, and his bones were crushed; but the bear had much meat on him and the people were saved. Keesh was his only son, and after that Keesh lived alone with his mother. But the people are prone to forget, and they forgot the deed of his father; and he being but a boy, and his mother only a woman, they, too, were swiftly forgotten, and ere long came to live in the meanest of all the igloos.

It was at a council, one night, in the big igloo of Klash-Kwan, the chief, that Keesh showed the blood that ran in his veins and the manhood that stiffened his back. With the dignity of an elder, he rose to his feet, and waited for silence amid the babble of voices.

"It is true that meat be apportioned me and mine," he said. "But it is oftentimes old and tough, this meat, and, moreover, it has an unusual quantity of bones."

The hunters, grizzled and gray, and lusty and young, were aghast. The like had never been known before. A child, that talked like a grown man, and said harsh things to their very faces!

But steadily and with seriousness, Keesh went on. "For that I know my father, Bok, was a great hunter, I speak these words. It is said that Bok brought home more meat than any of the two best hunters, that with his own hands he attended to the division of it, that with his own eyes he saw to it that the least old woman and the last old man received fair share."

"Na! Na!" the men cried. "Put the child out!" "Send him off to bed!" "He is no man that he should talk to men and graybeards!"

He waited calmly till the uproar died down.

"Thou hast a wife, Ugh-Gluk," he said, "and for her dost thou speak. And thou, too, Massuk, a mother also, and for them dost thou speak. My mother has no one, save me; wherefore I speak. As I say, though Bok be dead because he hunted over-keenly, it is just that I, who am his son, and that Ikeega, who

is my mother and was his wife, should have meat in plenty so long as there be meat in plenty in the tribe. I, Keesh, the son of Bok, have spoken."

He sat down, his ears keenly alert to the flood of protest and indignation his words had created.

"That a boy should speak in council!" old Ugh-Gluk was mumbling.

"Shall the babes in arms tell us men the things we shall do?" Massuk demanded in a loud voice. "Am I a man that I should be made a mock by every child that cries for meat?"

The anger boiled a white heat. They ordered him to bed, threatened that he should have no meat at all, and promised him sore beatings for his presumption. Keesh's eyes began to flash, and the blood to pound darkly under his skin. In the midst of the abuse he sprang to his feet.

"Hear me, ye men!" he cried. "Never shall I speak in the council again, never again till the men come to me and say, 'It is well, Keesh, that thou shouldst speak, it is well and it is our wish.' Take this now, ye men, for my last word. Bok, my father, was a great hunter. I, too, his son, shall go and hunt the meat that I eat. And be it known, now, that the division of that which I kill shall be fair. And no widow nor weak one shall cry in the night because there is no meat, when the strong men are groaning in great pain for that they have eaten overmuch. And in the days to come there shall be shame upon the strong men who have eaten overmuch. I, Keesh, have said it!"

Jeers and scornful laughter followed him out of the igloo, but his jaw was set and he went his way, looking neither to right nor left.

The next day he went forth along the shore-line where the ice and the land met together. Those who saw him go noted that he carried his bow, with a goodly supply of bone-barbed arrows, and that across his shoulder was his father's big hunting-spear. And there was laughter, and much talk, at the event. It was an unprecedented occurrence. Never did boys of his tender age go forth to hunt, much less to hunt alone. Also were there shaking of heads and prophetic mutterings, and the women looked pityingly at Ikeega, and her face was grave and sad.

"He will be back ere long," they said cheerfully.

"Let him go; it will teach him a lesson," the hunters said. "And he will come back shortly, and he will be meek and soft of speech in the days to follow."

Vocabulary

1. **industrious:** hard-working and persistent
2. **solicitude:** excessive concern; uneasiness occasioned by fear of evil
3. **temperance:** moderation, specifically in respect to using liquors
4. **acquiesce:** to accept or consent by silence or by omitting to object

But a day passed, and a second, and on the third a wild gale blew, and there was no Keesh. Ikeega tore her hair and put soot of the seal-oil on her face in token of her grief; and the women assailed the men with bitter words in that they had mistreated the boy and sent him to his death; and the men made no answer, preparing to go in search of the body when the storm abated.

Early next morning, however, Keesh strode into the village. But he came not shamefacedly. Across his shoulders he bore a burden of fresh-killed meat. And there was importance in his step and arrogance in his speech.

"Go, ye men, with the dogs and sledges, and take my trail for the better part of a day's travel," he said. "There is much meat on the ice--a she-bear and two half-grown cubs."

Ikeega was overcome with joy, but he received her demonstrations in manlike fashion, saying: "Come, Ikeega, let us eat. And after that I shall sleep, for I am weary."

And he passed into their igloo and ate profoundly, and after that slept for twenty running hours.

There was much doubt at first, much doubt and discussion. The killing of a polar bear is very dangerous, but thrice dangerous is it, and three times thrice, to kill a mother bear with her cubs. The men could not bring themselves to believe that the boy Keesh, single-handed, had accomplished so great a marvel. But the women spoke of the fresh-killed meat he had brought on his back, and this was an overwhelming argument against their unbelief. So they finally departed, grumbling greatly that in all probability, if the thing were so, he had neglected to cut up the carcasses. Now in the north it is very necessary that this should be done as soon as a kill is made. If not, the meat freezes so solidly as to turn the edge of the sharpest knife, and a three-hundred-pound bear, frozen stiff, is no easy thing to put upon a sled and haul over the rough ice. But arrived at the spot, they found not only the kill, which they had doubted, but that Keesh had quartered the beasts in true hunter fashion, and removed the entrails.

Thus began the mystery of Keesh, a mystery that deepened and deepened with the passing of the days. His very next trip he killed a young bear, nearly full-grown, and on the trip following, a large male bear and his mate. He was ordinarily gone from three to four days, though it was nothing unusual for him to stay away a week at a time on the ice-field. Always he declined company on these expeditions, and the people marvelled. "How does he do it?" they demanded of one another. "Never does he take a dog with him, and dogs are of such great help, too."

"Why dost thou hunt only bear?" Klash-Kwan once ventured to ask him.

And Keesh made fitting answer. "It is well known that there is more meat on the bear," he said.

But there was also talk of witchcraft in the village. "He hunts with evil spirits," some of the people contended, "wherefore his hunting is rewarded. How else can it be, save that he hunts with evil spirits?"

"Mayhap they be not evil, but good, these spirits," others said. "It is known that his father was a mighty hunter. May not his father hunt with him so that he may attain excellence and

patience and understanding? Who knows?"

None the less, his success continued, and the less skilful hunters were often kept busy hauling in his meat. And in the division of it he was just. As his father had done before him, he saw to it that the least old woman and the last old man received a fair portion, keeping no more for himself than his needs required. And because of this, and of his merit as a hunter, he was looked upon with respect, and even awe; and there was talk of making him chief after old Klash-Kwan. Because of the things he had done, they looked for him to appear again in the council, but he never came, and they were ashamed to ask.

"I am minded to build me an igloo," he said one day to Klash-Kwan and a number of the hunters. "It shall be a large igloo, wherein Ikeega and I can dwell in comfort."

"Ay," they nodded gravely.

"But I have no time. My business is hunting, and it takes all my time. So it is but just that the men and women of the village who eat my meat should build me my igloo."

And the igloo was built accordingly, on a generous scale which exceeded even the dwelling of Klash-Kwan. Keesh and his mother moved into it, and it was the first prosperity she had enjoyed since the death of Bok. Nor was material prosperity alone hers, for, because of her wonderful son and the position he had given her, she came to be looked upon as the first woman in all the village; and the women were given to visiting her, to asking her advice, and to quoting her wisdom when arguments arose among themselves or with the men.

But it was the mystery of Keesh's marvellous hunting that took chief place in all their minds. And one day Ugh-Gluk taxed him with witchcraft to his face.

"It is charged," Ugh-Gluk said ominously, "that thou dealest with evil spirits, wherefore thy hunting is rewarded."

"Is not the meat good?" Keesh made answer. "Has one in the village yet to fall sick from the eating of it? How dost thou know that witchcraft be concerned? Or dost thou guess, in the dark, merely because of the envy that consumes thee?"

And Ugh-Gluk withdrew discomfited, the women laughing at him as he walked away. But in the council one night, after long deliberation, it was determined to put spies on his track when he went forth to hunt, so that his methods might be learned. So, on his next trip, Bim and Bawn, two young men, and of hunters the craftiest, followed after him, taking care not to be seen. After five days they returned, their eyes bulging and their tongues a-tremble to tell what they had seen. The council was hastily called in Klash-Kwan's dwelling, and Bim took up the tale.

"Brothers! As commanded, we journeyed on the trail of Keesh, and cunningly we journeyed, so that he might not know. And midway of the first day he picked up with a great he-bear. It was a very great bear."

Vocabulary

1. **industrious**: hard-working and persistent
2. **solicitude**: excessive concern; uneasiness occasioned by fear of evil
3. **temperance**: moderation, specifically in respect to using liquors
4. **acquiesce**: to accept or consent by silence or by omitting to object

"None greater," Bawn corroborated, and went on himself. "Yet was the bear not inclined to fight, for he turned away and made off slowly over the ice. This we saw from the rocks of the shore, and the bear came toward us, and after him came Keesh, very much unafraid. And he shouted harsh words after the bear, and waved his arms about, and made much noise. Then did the bear grow angry, and rise up on his hind legs, and growl. But Keesh walked right up to the bear."

"Ay," Bim continued the story. "Right up to the bear Keesh walked. And the bear took after him, and Keesh ran away. But as he ran he dropped a little round ball on the ice. And the bear stopped and smelled of it, then swallowed it up. And Keesh continued to run away and drop little round balls, and the bear continued to swallow them up."

Exclamations and cries of doubt were being made, and Ugh-Gluk expressed open unbelief.

"With our own eyes we saw it," Bim affirmed.

And Bawn--"Ay, with our own eyes. And this continued until the bear stood suddenly upright and cried aloud in pain, and thrashed his fore paws madly about. And Keesh continued to make off over the ice to a safe distance. But the bear gave him no notice, being occupied with the misfortune the little round balls had wrought within him."

"Ay, within him," Bim interrupted. "For he did claw at himself, and leap about over the ice like a playful puppy, save from the way he growled and squealed it was plain it was not play but pain. Never did I see such a sight!"

"Nay, never was such a sight seen," Bawn took up the strain. "And furthermore, it was such a large bear."

"Witchcraft," Ugh-Gluk suggested.

"I know not," Bawn replied. "I tell only of what my eyes beheld. And after a while the bear grew weak and tired, for he was very heavy and he had jumped about with exceeding violence, and he went off along the shore- ice, shaking his head slowly from side to side and sitting down ever and again to squeal and cry. And Keesh followed after the bear, and we followed after Keesh, and for that day and three days more we followed. The bear grew weak, and never ceased crying from his pain."

"It was a charm!" Ugh-Gluk exclaimed. "Surely it was a charm!"

"It may well be."

And Bim relieved Bawn. "The bear wandered, now this way and now that, doubling back and forth and crossing his trail in circles, so that at the end he was near where Keesh had first come upon him. By this time he was quite sick, the bear, and could crawl no farther, so Keesh came up close and speared him to death."

"And then?" Klash-Kwan demanded.

"Then we left Keesh skinning the bear, and came running that the news of the killing might be told."

And in the afternoon of that day the women hauled in the meat of the bear while the men sat in council assembled.

When Keesh arrived a messenger was sent to him, bidding him come to the council. But he sent reply, saying that he was hungry and tired; also that his igloo was large and comfortable and could hold many men.

And curiosity was so strong on the men that the whole council, Klash-Kwan to the fore, rose up and went to the igloo of Keesh. He was eating, but he received them with respect and seated them according to their rank. Ikeega was proud and embarrassed by turns, but Keesh was quite composed.

He waited calmly till the uproar died down.

Klash-Kwan recited the information brought by Bim and Bawn, and at its close said in a stern voice: "So explanation is wanted, O Keesh, of thy manner of hunting. Is there witchcraft in it?"

Keesh looked up and smiled. "Nay, O Klash-Kwan. It is not for a boy to know aught of witches, and of witches I know nothing. I have but devised a means whereby I may kill the ice-bear with ease, that is all. It be headcraft, not witchcraft."

"And may any man?"

"Any man."

There was a long silence. The men looked in one another's faces, and Keesh went on eating.

"And... and... and wilt thou tell us, O Keesh?" Klash-Kwan finally asked in a tremulous voice.

"Yea, I will tell thee." Keesh finished sucking a marrow-bone and rose to his feet. "It is quite simple. Behold!"

He picked up a thin strip of whalebone and showed it to them. The ends were sharp as needle-points. The strip he coiled carefully, till it disappeared in his hand. Then, suddenly releasing it, it sprang straight again. He picked up a piece of blubber.

"So," he said, "one takes a small chunk of blubber, thus, and thus makes it hollow. Then into the hollow goes the whalebone, so, tightly coiled, and another piece of blubber is fitted over the whale-bone. After that it is put outside where it freezes into a little round ball. The bear swallows the little round ball, the blubber melts, the whalebone with its sharp ends stands out straight, the bear gets sick, and when the bear is very sick, why, you kill him with a spear. It is quite simple."

And Ugh-Gluk said "Oh!" and Klash-Kwan said "Ah!" And each said something after his own manner, and all understood.

And this is the story of Keesh, who lived long ago on the rim of the polar sea. Because he exercised headcraft and not witchcraft, he rose from the meanest igloo to be head man of his village, and through all the years that he lived, it is related, his tribe was prosperous, and neither widow nor weak one cried aloud in the night because there was no meat.

Vocabulary

1. **industrious**: hard-working and persistent
2. **solicitude**: excessive concern; uneasiness occasioned by fear of
3. **temperance**: moderation, specifically in respect to using liquors
4. **acquiesce**: to accept or consent by silence or by omitting to object

The Story of Keesh | Reading Quiz

1. Keesh is facing all of the following problems at the beginning of the story **EXCEPT** which?

- a. He is not given his fair share of food. b. His father was crushed by a polar bear.
c. He is not respected by the old hunters. d. His mother is sick.

2. Which character trait does **NOT** apply to Keesh?

- a. Timid b. Loyal c. Wise d. Respectful

3. Which best explains why the women look pityingly at Ikeega in the following?

"Also were there shaking of heads and prophetic mutterings, and the women looked pityingly at Ikeega."

- a. They think that Keesh disrespected the elders. b. They think Ikeega is at fault for Keesh's bad manners.
c. They think that Keesh is going to die. d. They think that the Ikeega's sickness will kill her soon.

4. Which best expresses how the men reacted to the success of Keesh's first hunt?

- a. They were happy that he shared his meat. b. They were angry that he left without permission.
c. They were suspicious of his success. d. They were regretful for how they acted.

5. Which of the statements about how Keesh gains status in the village is **FALSE**?

- a. Keesh distributes his meat fairly. b. Keesh asks to rejoin the council.
c. Keesh goes on many successful hunts. d. Keesh hunts alone.

6. Which conclusion is most logical when comparing Keesh's new igloo with that of Chief Klosh-Kwan's?

- a. Keesh is more important to the tribe than Klosh-Kwan.
b. Keesh is of equal importance as Klosh-Kwan to the tribe.
c. Keesh is less important to the tribe than Klosh-Kwan.
d. Keesh is of no importance to the tribe.

7. Which figurative language technique is used in the following?

"How dost thou know that witchcraft be concerned? Or dost thou guess, in the dark?"

- a. Personification b. Metaphor c. Hyperbole d. Onomatopoeia e. Simile

8. Which of the following is **NOT** an effect of Keesh's success?

- a. Jealous tribesmen accuse Keesh of witchcraft. b. Ikeega becomes well-respected amongst the women.
c. Men from the village spy on Keesh. d. Ugh-Gluk attempts to poison Keesh.

9. Which best explains how Keesh is able to hunt so many bears by himself?

- a. Keesh is protected by his father's spirit. b. Keesh is stronger than the bears.
c. Keesh outsmarts the bears. d. Keesh uses witchcraft.

10. Which adage expresses a theme in this story?

- a. A watched pot never boils b. Two wrongs don't make a right.
c. Beggars can't be choosers. d. Work smarter not harder.

Long Response

Answer the following question in complete sentences on a separate sheet of paper. **Use at least two examples from the text to support your response** and explain what your support shows.

What can readers learn from this text? Put the lesson of this story in your own words and explain how the text teaches readers this lesson. Be sure to use the text to support your response.

Thrown Away

By Rudyard Kipling

Directions: Read the short story and answer the questions that follow. Refer to the text to check your answers.

To rear a boy under what parents call the "sheltered life system" is, if the boy must go into the world and fend for himself, not wise. Unless he be one in a thousand he has certainly to pass through many unnecessary troubles; and may, possibly, come to extreme grief simply from ignorance of the proper proportions of things.

Let a puppy eat the soap in the bathroom or chew a newly-blacked boot. He chews and chuckles until, by and by, he finds out that blacking and **Old Brown Windsor**¹ make him very sick; so he argues that soap and boots are not wholesome. Any old dog about the house will soon show him the unwisdom of biting big dogs' ears. Being young, he remembers and goes abroad, at six months, a well-mannered little beast with a chastened appetite. If he had been kept away from boots, and soap, and big dogs till he came to the trinity full-grown and with developed teeth, just consider how fearfully sick and thrashed he would be! Apply that motion to the "sheltered life," and see how it works. It does not sound pretty, but it is the better of two evils.

There was a Boy once who had been brought up under the "sheltered life" theory; and the theory killed him dead. He stayed with his people all his days, from the hour he was born till the hour he went into **Sandhurst**² nearly at the top of the list. He was beautifully taught in all that wins marks by a private tutor, and carried the extra weight of "never having given his parents an hour's anxiety in his life." What he learnt at Sandhurst beyond the regular routine is of no great consequence. He looked about him, and he found soap and blacking, so to speak, very good. He ate a little, and came out of Sandhurst not so high as he went in. Then there was an interval and a scene with his people, who expected much from him. Next a year of living "unspotted from the world" in a third-rate depot battalion where all the juniors were children, and all the seniors old women; and lastly he came out to India, where he was cut off from the support of his parents, and had no one to fall back on in time of trouble except himself.

Now India is a place beyond all others where one must not take things too seriously--the midday sun always excepted. Too much work and too much energy kill a man just as effectively as too much assorted vice or too much drink. Flirtation does not matter because every one is being transferred and either you or she leave the Station, and never return. Good work does not matter, because a man is judged by his worst output and another man takes all the credit of his best as a rule. Bad work does not matter, because other men do worse, and incompetents hang on longer in India than anywhere else. Amusements do not matter, because you must repeat them as soon as you have accomplished them once, and most amusements only mean trying to win another person's money. Sickness does not matter, because it's all in the day's work, and if you die another man takes over your place and your office in the eight hours between death and burial. Nothing matters except Home furlough and acting allowances, and these only because they are scarce. This is a

slack, **kutch**³ country where all men work with imperfect instruments; and the wisest thing is to take no one and nothing in earnest, but to escape as soon as ever you can to some place where amusement is amusement and a reputation worth the having.

But this Boy--the tale is as old as the Hills--came out, and took all things seriously. He was pretty and was petted. He took the pettings seriously, and fretted over women not worth saddling a pony to call upon. He found his new free life in India very good. It DOES look attractive in the beginning, from a Subaltern's point of view--all ponies, partners, dancing, and so on. He tasted it as the puppy tastes the soap. Only he came late to the eating, with a growing set of teeth. He had no sense of balance--just like the puppy--and could not understand why he was not treated with the consideration he received under his father's roof. This hurt his feelings.

He quarrelled with other boys, and, being sensitive to the marrow, remembered these quarrels, and they excited him. He found **whist, and gymkhanas**⁴, and things of that kind (meant to amuse one after office) good; but he took them seriously too, just as he took the "head" that followed after drink. He lost his money over whist and gymkhanas because they were new to him.

He took his losses seriously, and wasted as much energy and interest over a two-**goldmohur**⁵ race for maiden **ekka**⁶-ponies with their manes hogged, as if it had been the Derby. One-half of this came from inexperience--much as the puppy squabbles with the corner of the hearth-rug--and the other half from the dizziness bred by stumbling out of his quiet life into the glare and excitement of a livelier one. No one told him about the soap and the blacking because an average man takes it for granted that an average man is ordinarily careful in regard to them. It was pitiful to watch The Boy knocking himself to pieces, as an over-handled colt falls down and cuts himself when he gets away from the groom.

This unbridled license in amusements not worth the trouble of breaking line for, much less rioting over, endured for six months--all through one cold weather--and then we thought that the heat and the knowledge of having lost his money and health and lamed his horses would sober The Boy down, and he would stand steady. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred this would have happened. You can see the principle working in any Indian Station. But this particular case fell through because The Boy was sensitive and took things seriously--as I may have said some seven times before. Of course, we couldn't tell how his excesses struck him personally. They were nothing very heart-breaking or above

Vocabulary

1. **Old Brown Windsor**: a brand of soap
2. **Sandhurst**: the British Army's initial officer training center
3. **kutch**: imperfect, makeshift; ramshackle, second-rate
4. **whist / gymkhana**: a card game / a horse-riding competition
5. **goldmohur**: a low-value coin of British India
6. **ekka**: a small vehicle used in India, pulled by a single horse

the average. He might be crippled for life financially, and want a little nursing. Still the memory of his performances would wither away in one hot weather, and the **shroff**⁷ would help him to tide over the money troubles. But he must have taken another view altogether and have believed himself ruined beyond redemption. His Colonel talked to him severely when the cold weather ended. That made him more wretched than ever; and it was only an ordinary "Colonel's **wigging**"⁸!

What follows is a curious instance of the fashion in which we are all linked together and made responsible for one another. THE thing that kicked the beam in The Boy's mind was a remark that a woman made when he was talking to her. There is no use in repeating it, for it was only a cruel little sentence, rapped out before thinking, that made him flush to the roots of his hair. He kept himself to himself for three days, and then put in for two days' leave to go shooting near a Canal Engineer's Rest House about thirty miles out. He got his leave, and that night at Mess was noisier and more offensive than ever. He said that he was "going to shoot big game", and left at half-past ten o'clock in an ekka. Partridge--which was the only thing a man could get near the Rest House--is not big game; so every one laughed.

Next morning one of the Majors came in from short leave, and heard that The Boy had gone out to shoot "big game." The Major had taken an interest in The Boy, and had, more than once, tried to check him in the cold weather. The Major put up his eyebrows when he heard of the expedition and went to The Boy's room, where he rummaged.

Presently he came out and found me leaving cards on the Mess. There was no one else in the **ante-room**⁹.

He said: "The Boy has gone out shooting. DOES a man shoot tetur with a revolver and a writing-case?"

I said: "Nonsense, Major!" for I saw what was in his mind.

He said: "Nonsense or nonsense, I'm going to the Canal now--at once. I don't feel easy."

Then he thought for a minute, and said: "Can you lie?"

"You know best," I answered. "It's my profession."

"Very well," said the Major; "you must come out with me now-at once-in an ekka to the Canal to shoot black-buck. Go and put on **shikar**¹⁰-kit, quick, and drive here with a gun."

The Major was a masterful man; and I knew that he would not give orders for nothing. So I obeyed, and on return found the Major packed up in an ekka--gun-cases and food slung below--all ready for a shooting-trip.

He dismissed the driver and drove himself. We jogged along quietly while in the station; but as soon as we got to the dusty road across the plains, he made that pony fly. A country-bred can do nearly anything at a pinch. We covered the thirty miles in under three hours, but the poor brute was nearly dead.

Once I said: "What's the blazing hurry, Major?"

He said, quietly: "The Boy has been alone, by himself, for--one, two, five--fourteen hours now! I tell you, I don't feel easy."

This uneasiness spread itself to me, and I helped to beat the pony.

When we came to the Canal Engineer's Rest House the Major called for The Boy's servant; but there was no answer. Then we went up to the house, calling for The Boy by name; but there was no answer.

"Oh, he's out shooting," said I.

Just then I saw through one of the windows a little hurricane-lamp burning. This was at four in the afternoon. We both stopped dead in the **verandah**¹¹, holding our breath to catch every sound; and we heard, inside the room, the "brr--brr--brr" of a multitude of flies. The Major said nothing, but he took off his helmet and we entered very softly.

The Boy was dead on the **charpoy**¹² in the centre of the bare, lime-washed room. He had shot his head nearly to pieces with his revolver. The gun-cases were still strapped, so was the bedding, and on the table lay The Boy's writing-case with photographs. He had gone away to die like a poisoned rat!

The Major said to himself softly: "Poor Boy! Poor, POOR devil!" Then he turned away from the bed and said: "I want your help in this business."

Knowing The Boy was dead by his own hand, I saw exactly what that help would be, so I passed over to the table, took a chair, lit a **cheroot**¹³, and began to go through the writing-case; the Major looking over my shoulder and repeating to himself: "We came too late!--Like a rat in a hole!--Poor, POOR devil!"

The Boy must have spent half the night in writing to his people, and to his Colonel, and to a girl at Home; and as soon as he had finished, must have shot himself, for he had been dead a long time when we came in.

I read all that he had written, and passed over each sheet to the Major as I finished it.

We saw from his accounts how very seriously he had taken everything. He wrote about "disgrace which he was unable to bear"--"**indelible** shame"--"criminal folly"--"wasted life," and so on; besides a lot of private things to his Father and Mother much too sacred to put into print. The letter to the girl at Home was the most pitiful of all; and I choked as I read it. The Major made no attempt to keep dry-eyed. I respected him for that. He read and rocked himself to and fro, and simply cried like a woman without caring to hide it. The letters were so dreary and hopeless and touching. We forgot all about The Boy's follies, and only thought of the poor Thing on the charpoy and the scrawled sheets in our hands. It was utterly impossible to let the letters go Home. They would have broken his Father's heart and killed his Mother after killing her belief in her son.

Vocabulary

7. **shroff**: a money-changer or banker

8. **wigging**: a telling-off or reprimanding

9. **anteroom**: a room before another; a waiting room

10. **shikar**: a hunting expedition; a hunting guide

11. **veranda**: platform or balcony along the outside of a building

12. **cheroot**: a cigar with square-cut ends

13. **indelible**: incapable of being canceled, lost, or forgotten

At last the Major dried his eyes openly, and said: "Nice sort of thing to spring on an English family! What shall we do?"

I said, knowing what the Major had brought me but for: "The Boy died of **cholera**¹⁴. We were with him at the time. We can't commit ourselves to half-measures. Come along."

Then began one of the most grimy comic scenes I have ever taken part in--the concoction of a big, written lie, bolstered with evidence, to soothe The Boy's people at Home. I began the rough draft of a letter, the Major throwing in hints here and there while he gathered up all the stuff that The Boy had written and burnt it in the fireplace. It was a hot, still evening when we began, and the lamp burned very badly. In due course I got the draft to my satisfaction, setting forth how The Boy was the pattern of all virtues, beloved by his regiment, with every promise of a great career before him, and so on; how we had helped him through the sickness--it was no time for little lies, you will understand--and how he had died without pain. I choked while I was putting down these things and thinking of the poor people who would read them. Then I laughed at the **grotesqueness**¹⁵ of the affair, and the laughter mixed itself up with the choke--and the Major said that we both wanted drinks.

I am afraid to say how much whiskey we drank before the letter was finished. It had not the least effect on us. Then we took off The Boy's watch, locket, and rings.

Lastly, the Major said: "We must send a lock of hair too. A woman values that."

But there were reasons why we could not find a lock fit to send. The Boy was black-haired, and so was the Major, luckily. I cut off a piece of the Major's hair above the temple with a knife, and put it into the packet we were making. The laughing-fit and the chokes got hold of me again, and I had to stop. The Major was nearly as bad; and we both knew that the worst part of the work was to come.

We sealed up the packet, photographs, locket, seals, ring, letter, and lock of hair with The Boy's sealing-wax and The Boy's seal.

Then the Major said: "For God's sake let's get outside--away from the room--and think!"

We went outside, and walked on the banks of the Canal for an hour, eating and drinking what we had with us, until the moon rose. I know now exactly how a murderer feels. Finally, we forced ourselves back to the room with the lamp and the Other Thing in it, and began to take up the next piece of work. I am not going to write about this. It was too horrible. We burned the bedstead and dropped the ashes into the Canal; we took up the matting of the room and treated that in the same way. I went off to a village and borrowed two big hoes--I did not want the villagers to help--while the Major arranged--the other matters. It took us four hours' hard work to make the grave. As we worked, we argued out whether it was right to say as much as we remembered of the Burial of the Dead. We compromised things by saying the Lord's Prayer with a private unofficial prayer for the peace of the soul of The Boy. Then we filled in the grave and went into the verandah--not the house--to lie down to sleep. We were dead-tired.

When we woke the Major said, wearily: "We can't go back till tomorrow. We must give him a decent time to die in. He died early **THIS** morning, remember. That seems more natural." So the Major must have been lying awake all the time, thinking.

I said: "Then why didn't we bring the body back to the **cantonments**¹⁶?"

The Major thought for a minute:--"Because the people bolted when they heard of the cholera. And the ekka has gone!"

That was strictly true. We had forgotten all about the ekka-pony, and he had gone home.

So, we were left there alone, all that stifling day, in the Canal Rest House, testing and re-testing our story of The Boy's death to see if it was weak at any point. A native turned up in the afternoon, but we said that a **Sahib**¹⁷ was dead of cholera, and he ran away. As the dusk gathered, the Major told me all his fears about The Boy, and awful stories of suicide or nearly-carried-out suicide--tales that made one's hair crisp. He said that he himself had once gone into the same Valley of the Shadow as the Boy, when he was young and new to the country; so he understood how things fought together in The Boy's poor jumbled head. He also said that youngsters, in their repentant moments, consider their sins much more serious and **ineffaceable**¹⁸ than they really are. We talked together all through the evening, and rehearsed the story of the death of The Boy. As soon as the moon was up, and The Boy, theoretically, just buried, we struck across country for the Station. We walked from eight till six o'clock in the morning; but though we were dead-tired, we did not forget to go to The Boy's room and put away his revolver with the proper amount of cartridges in the pouch. Also to set his writing-case on the table. We found the Colonel and reported the death, feeling more like murderers than ever. Then we went to bed and slept the clock round; for there was no more in us.

The tale had **credence**¹⁹ as long as was necessary, for every one forgot about The Boy before a **fortnight**²⁰ was over. Many people, however, found time to say that the Major had behaved scandalously in not bringing in the body for a regimental funeral. The saddest thing of all was a letter from The Boy's mother to the Major and me--with big inky blisters all over the sheet. She wrote the sweetest possible things about our great kindness, and the obligation she would be under to us as long as she lived.

All things considered, she **WAS** under an obligation; but not exactly as she meant.

Vocabulary

14. **cholera**: a disease that causes severe dehydration
15. **grotesqueness**: the quality of being abnormal and hideous
16. **cantonments**: town used by a body of troops for quarter
17. **Sahib**: a term of respect for a European in colonial India
18. **ineffaceable**: unable to be erased or forgotten
19. **credence**: acceptance of a belief or claim as true
20. **fortnight**: two weeks; fourteen days

Thrown Away | Reading Quiz

1. Which of the following is **NOT** one of the narrator's opinions regarding India?
 - a. The sun in India is hot and dangerous.
 - b. India is a great place to raise a family.
 - c. Many things are dysfunctional in India.
 - d. People are generally disposable in India.

2. Which character trait applies to The Boy?
 - a. Serious
 - b. Callous
 - c. Resilient
 - d. Disciplined

3. With which statement would the narrator of this text most likely **AGREE**?
 - a. Good parents protect their children from all types of harm.
 - b. Good parents put their young children into great danger often.
 - c. Good parents let their children take their lumps early.
 - d. Good parents should keep their children locked up and safe at home.

4. Which event pushes The Boy over the edge?
 - a. The other men laugh at him.
 - b. A girl makes a mean comment to him.
 - c. He gambles away all of his money.
 - d. His Colonel reprimands him.

5. Which best describes how the Fir Tree responds to being decorated?
 - a. Impeccably honest
 - b. Generally respected
 - c. Incredibly intuitive
 - d. Well meaning

6. Which best explains why the Major asks the narrator if he can lie?
 - a. The Major wants him to lie to The Boy to help make him feel better.
 - b. The Major wants to sneak off the base and have a fun time.
 - c. The Major is preparing for the worst-case scenario with The Boy.
 - d. The Major only wants honest men to accompany him on his mission.

7. Which figurative language technique is used in the following sentence?
"It was utterly impossible to let the letters go Home."
 - a. Simile
 - b. Metaphor
 - c. Personification
 - d. Hyperbole

8. Why does the narrator laugh when he cuts a lock of the Major's hair?
 - a. He is laughing because he is ticklish.
 - b. He is laughing at how they survived the attack.
 - c. He is laughing because he heard a funny joke.
 - d. He is laughing at the absurdity of their actions.

9. Which best explains why the narrator and the Major conceal the circumstances of The Boy's death?
 - a. They are trying to make themselves look good.
 - b. They want to collect the reward money.
 - c. They are trying to protect The Boy's family.
 - d. They do not want to be punished for The Boy's death.

10. What is the effect of the narrator making the following sentence?
"Finally, we forced ourselves back to the room with the lamp and the Other Thing."
 - a. The narrator is worried that someone will find the gun.
 - b. The narrator reduces The Boy to an object.
 - c. The narrator wants to avoid repetitious descriptions.
 - d. The narrator is afraid to tell readers the whole truth.

Extended Response: On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following question using at least two quotes.

Did the narrator and the Major do the right thing or not? Use evidence from the text to support your response.

During the Second World War Bill Alliston was a gunner in a Halifax Bomber. In Spring 1944 his plane was shot down and Bill was injured in the leg. Bill and two other members of the crew, Maurice Steel and John Collar, parachuted to safety. They landed in Northern France, which was occupied by the Germans. Bill and his friends set out to find their way back to England. They could only travel very slowly because of Bill's injured leg, and they travelled by night to avoid the Germans. During the day they hid in woods and farm buildings, getting as much rest as they could. In this way they reached Paris.

At Soissons, east of Paris, they met Maurice and Genevieve Dupuis. They looked after the airmen, giving them food and hiding them from the Germans. For five weeks they nursed Bill back to health. The three men lived in a shed behind the house. Every time the German soldiers came near they had to run away, for they knew that the Dupuis would be punished and even killed if they were found out.

Meanwhile the French Resistance movement was planning an escape route for the RAF men. They would be taken to Spain and from there it would be much easier for them to get back to England. So the men set off. They were taken across the Pyrenees, the mountains which separate France and Spain. In June they reached Spain.

Just after the airmen had left Soissons, the Germans raided the Dupuis' house. It was obvious that someone had tipped them off. They took Maurice Dupuis away with them. They questioned and tortured him, but he would not tell them where the airmen had gone or who had helped them. His silence cost him his life, for he died as a result of the torture. If he had talked many members of the Resistance would have been caught and killed. Even the RAF escapers might have been stopped. To this day Bill Alliston and his wife are grateful to the Dupuis. They regularly visit Genevieve to show their gratitude to her and to her dead husband. Bill also helped to start the RAF Escapers' Society. This is a group of men who escaped from France and Germany during the war. They collect money to help families whose husbands and fathers helped RAF men to escape during the war.

Literal

1. Where did the trio land after their plane was shot down?
2. What was the name of the family that helped the three British airmen?

Interpretation

1. Who were the British allies in the second world war?
2. What happened to Bill Alliston during the war?
3. What do you understand by the phrase 'parachuted to safety'?
4. They 'nursed Bill to health'. Can you think of another word to replace 'nursed'?

Application

Relate Maurice Dupuis' experiences to the present situation. Name two countries where such experiences might happen.

Analysis

1. Why were the Dupuis willing to look after Steel, Bill and Collar?
2. What nationality do you think gave the Germans the tips?

Synthesis

1. What would have happened if Bill and his friends had not met the Dupuis?
2. What should you do if the Germans found you out? (Imagine you were Dupuis)

Evaluation

1. Do you think Dupuis would have lived had he told the truth? Why?
2. In your opinion was the Dupuis sacrifice worthwhile?

Affective

1. If you were Dupuis, what would you have done? Why?
2. Imagine that you are Mrs. Alliston, how would you show your gratitude to the Dupuis Family?

ABSTRACT

Creating a scenario that attempts to foster critical thinking at the university level is the primary goal of this study. This is why the researcher chose a scenario that examines how well the Reader Response approach (RRA) to literary texts fosters critical thinking skills in EFL university students. Critical thinking has been widely acknowledged as a crucial 21st century skill and as one of the most significant indicators of students' learning quality. It is believed that teaching this ability is crucial for all grade levels. One of the main objectives of higher education is to help students develop their critical thinking skills. Furthermore, literature plays a significant role in the curriculum at every level of language instruction, Literary texts are intended to help pupils develop their critical thinking abilities in addition to their reading comprehension and appreciation of poetical language. Therefore, the current study attempts to determine whether using a different approach to literary texts aids in developing students' critical thinking abilities. For this purpose, a series of research questions and hypotheses have been laid to steer the investigation. The study's subjects are Algerian university students who were randomly assigned to one of two groups—the experimental RRA training group or the control group—and the work is experimental in nature. A correlation analysis has been conducted to examine the critical thinking proficiency of the students. The Cornell Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) and the Nelson Test Dadkhah were given both before and after the experiment. Additionally, both student groups completed an exit test at the conclusion of the study after being asked to interpret a literary text as an admission test. Additionally, participants filled out a pre-experiment questionnaire at the start of the study, and students in the experimental group participated in an interview at the conclusion. The RRA is used to teach literary texts for ten weeks in total during the project. Both test results and questionnaire replies have been compared, with the interview responses taken into consideration. According to the research findings, there is a causal relationship between the proposed scenario (RRA) and the probability that it will significantly improve the critical thinking abilities of the research sample. Teachers and course planners may find the research findings useful in developing a successful EFL literature course. It may be seen as an initial stage in the design of a course for EFL students that helps promote critical skills and self-development.

Key words: Critical thinking, Reader response approach, literary texts, literature, EFL Learners' thinking skills

المخلص

الهدف الرئيسي من هذه الدراسة هو تصميم سيناريو يهدف إلى تنمية التفكير النقدي لدى طلبة المستوى الجامعي. لهذا الغرض، اختار الباحث سيناريو يبحث في فعالية استجابة القارئ (RRA) للنصوص الأدبية في تعزيز مهارات التفكير النقدي بين طلاب الجامعات الذين يدرسون اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لأن التفكير النقدي معترف به على نطاق واسع باعتباره مهارة مهمة في القرن الحادي والعشرين وأحد أهم مؤشرات جودة تعلم الطلاب. يُنظر إلى تدريس هذه المهارة على أنها جزء مهم في جميع المستويات الدراسية. وقد تم وضع تطوير التفكير النقدي للطلاب كأحد الأهداف الأساسية للتعليم العالي. أيضاً، يعد الأدب جزءاً مهماً في جميع مراحل تدريس اللغة، والنصوص الأدبية لا تهدف فقط إلى تحسين قدرة الطلاب على القراءة، وتعزيز استمتاعهم باللغة الشعرية، ولكن أيضاً إلى تعزيز مهاراتهم النقدية. وبالتالي، يهدف هذا البحث إلى معرفة ما إذا كان تنفيذ نهج بديل للنصوص الأدبية يساعد في تعزيز المهارات النقدية للطلاب. لهذا السبب، تم وضع مجموعة من أسئلة البحث والفرضيات لتوجيه البحث. هذا البحث له طبيعة تجريبية، وعينة الدراسة هي طلاب جامعيون جزائريون موزعون عشوائياً في مجموعتين: مجموعة التدريب التجريبية RRA والمجموعة الأخرى هي المجموعة الضابطة. تم إجراء ارتباطات للتحقيق في مستوى التفكير النقدي للطلاب. كما تم تطبيق اختبار نيلسون واختبار مهارات التفكير النقدي كورنيل (CCTST) كاختبارات قبل وبعد التجربة. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، طلب من كلتا المجموعتين من الطلاب تحليل نص أدبي كاختبار دخول كما قاموا باختبار نهاية الدراسة. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، اكمل المشاركون استبياناً في بداية التجربة، كما أجرى طلاب المجموعة التجريبية مقابلة في نهاية الدراسة. دامت التجربة إجمالاً عشرة أسابيع تخللها تدريس النصوص الأدبية باستخدام RRA. و تمت مقارنة نتائج كل من الاختبارين واستجابات الاستبيان، مع مراعاة استجابات المقابلة. افضت نتائج البحث إلى وجود علاقة سببية بين السيناريو المقترح الذي بين من خلال النتائج المحصل عليها إمكانية أحداث تطوير ملحوظ في مهارات التفكير النقدي لدى عينة البحث مما يمكن من استخلاص أن نتائج البحث يمكنها أن تخدم المعلمين ومصممي المناهج في تطوير دورات أدبية فعالة في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. يمكن اعتبارها خطوة أولى في تصميم دورة لطلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية تساعد في تعزيز المهارات النقدية والتطوير الذاتي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التفكير النقدي، المنهج الأدبي النقدي، النصوص الأدبية، الأدب