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**The Efficiency of Comparison and Opinion Gaps Exercises on  
Promoting The EFL Learners' Critical Thinking**

The Case Study of second Year LMD English Students in literature course at  
Biskra University

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for The Requirements for Master

Degree in English

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## **DEDICATION**

I would like to dedicate this work to my parents who brought me up with their love and encouraged me to pursue advanced degrees.

To my beloved and affectionate brothers Rami and Abed Al-Rahman for all their love and support. All my appreciation and love to my dear grandfathers Ali and Mohamed .

This work is also dedicated to all my truthful, honest, and lovely friends who supported me every second specially Zohra, Khadija, and Fafa.

To all Ben Ali family

*My God bless you all*

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## **ABSTRACT**

The current study aims to investigate the efficiency of comparison and opinion gaps exercises on promoting the English learners' critical thinking. Our research led us to wonder whether those activities participate in fostering the students' critical thinking skill. The present work aimed at understanding the critical thinking conception, identifying the importance of employing the critical thinking skill in English classrooms, enhancing the students' critical thinking through applying the comparison and opinion gap tasks. This study attempted to show that the application of the comparison and opinion gap exercises would better contribute on promoting the learners' critical thinking. It would also serve students to the better performance in speaking the English language. It followed the qualitative research through using its data collection tools: the classroom observation for the second year English students LMD at university of Biskra in the year of 2016/2017 with population of 466 students divided into two sections. And the structured interview with 5 teachers of English literature in English division at the same university. The most important outcomes the research inferred were the effectiveness of the comparison and opinion gap exercises on improving both the critical thinking and speaking skill level and besides teachers' agreements on the importance of applying critical thinking in English language classes and evaluate it through using those activities.

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

**EFL:** English as Foreign Language

**LMD:** License Master Doctorate

**CT:** Critical Thinking

**EFT:** English Foreign Teachers

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# General Introduction

## **1. General Introduction**

The learners' ability to understand and analyze information, make reasonable and logical judgments, evaluate and present evidence and arguments that support their ideas and point of views, is that the critical thinking ability. The term was widely spread among many scholars and experts in different fields of education. A various of contemporary studies seek to present a better understanding of the critical thinking concept. Besides, demonstrate the importance of developing it in several disciplines specially teaching languages.

Teaching critical thinking in EFL classrooms has an efficient and notable importance in developing the learners' speaking and communication skills. Thinking critically help students to express their thoughts, improve their comprehension abilities, and enhance their linguistic performance. However, it is an essential skill that the teacher should take into consideration and recognize its necessity in language classrooms. ELT has not been ignorant of the significance of critical thinking and English teachers have long tried to employ critical thinking strategies into the English language classroom through problem solving tasks, thought-provocative questions following reading comprehension or in class discussions and many more (Devine, 1962). Consequently, the substantial task of the foreign language teachers is to construct a successful promoting of the students' critical thinking skill utilizing a numerous and different activities and exercises.

Fostering critical thinking through employing a set of activities considered as the fundamental teacher's task in EFL classrooms. Teachers made a great effort to accustom their students with being critically think about any subject. They attempted to enhance their learners' critical thinking ability using various ways and exercises. Among these activities the most widely used were the comparison and opinion gaps exercises.

## **2. Statement of the Problem**

Comparison and opinion gaps exercises are part of a large number of activities taught in language classes in order to ameliorate the learners' critical thinking. Most of language learners make efforts and take a long time to identify the differences and similarities of two objects or topics, they also have weaknesses in discussion and making a long debates. Second year English students at university may face such kind of difficulties in all modules especially in English literature module. These difficulties may affect not only the learners' oral performance and way of thinking, but may affect also their achievement.

However, applying such kind of exercises encourage learners to speak about their own preference, experience or issues. It motivates them to look closely and think deeply about the objects they are comparing. In other words, comparison and opinion gaps exercises develop the students way of thinking, analyzing, organizing, and evaluating ideas, and affect their oral communication ability. This will lead us to ask how does comparison and opinion gaps exercises contribute in increasing the learners' critical thinking in literature courses?

## **3. Research Questions**

Through this study, we will address the following questions :

1. What are the strategies and activities that used to teach the critical thinking skill in the literature session?
2. How does applying critical thinking in EFL classroom affect the learners' oral communication ability and their linguistic performance?
3. What are the learners' reactions toward the comparison and opinion gap activities?

#### **4. Objectives of the Study**

In this research, we shed light on the impact of employing the comparison and opinion gaps exercises in improving the English learners critical thinking and to investigate to how extent could teaching this skill affect the students' achievement.

These are a set of objectives that we seek to attain :

1. To investigate the significance of teaching critical in EFL classroom on the effective learning of language.
2. To identify some strategies and activities that adopted in the oral session to teach the critical thinking skill.
3. To understand the contribution of comparison and opinion gap tasks in increasing of learners' critical thinking in oral courses.

#### **5. Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study is to improve the second year English learners' level of critical thinking in English literature course at the university of Biskra through applying certain activities such as comparison and opinion gap exercises. And motivate them to be more aware, active, and open-minded toward the subject. This study should be taken into consideration because of its importance in developing both the speaking skills and the critical thinking of the English learners.

#### **6. Methodology**

In order to conduct this research and achieve its objectives, we will use the qualitative method of research to determine the importance of teaching the critical thinking activities in speaking the foreign language and enhance the learners' thinking ability through applying certain tasks and activities.

## **6.1. Data Gathering Tools**

To accomplish the objectives above, we will adopt the interview and the classroom observation as data collection tools.

- A structured interview with English literature teachers to know more about their perspectives toward using the critical thinking skills in literature sessions.
- A Checklist classroom observation for the second year English students to see their achievement in comparison and opinion gap exercises and to which extent this kind of activities contribute on promoting their critical thinking ability.

## **6.2. Population and Sampling**

Both teachers and students of English division at Biskra university are concerned by this study.

### **➤ Teachers' Sample**

We have selected 5 teachers of English literature at university of Biskra as a sample to this research. Teachers differ in their way of teaching, each teacher has his own techniques and methods, some of them may use the critical thinking while others do not. However, this variety in teaching literature will help us to accomplish this study.

### **➤ Students' Sample**

In this work, we have selected 466 students at the second year level. Second year English students are taking the English literature as a module standing by itself, and the way of teaching English language at the university differ from teaching it in high school.



## **7. The Structure of the Study**

The present study has been divided into two main parts. The first one was theoretical where it contained two chapters each chapter has addressed one variable. Chapter one deals with the importance of speaking skill in learning the foreign language, it shed light on some essential elements such the definition of speaking, the importance of teaching speaking, the role of teachers of oral expression in teaching speaking, activities to improve it, and finally the use of critical thinking in developing the speaking skill. Whereas, dealing of the chapter two was with promoting the students' critical thinking through comparison and opinion gap exercises and highlight some important points: the definition of the two concepts the critical thinking and the critical pedagogy, teaching the critical thinking in the English language classrooms, activities to enhance the critical thinking, and finally the role of comparison and opinion gap exercises on promoting the critical thinking. However, the second part in this research was practical or the field work. In this part the researcher attempted to gather an authentic information and data through following the qualitative research and adopting its data collection tools; the classroom observation and the interview.

# **Chapter One**

## **The Importance of Speaking in Learning English as a Foreign Language**

## **Introduction**

The need for a good communication skill in English as an international language, has create a huge demands and motivate a millions of people around the world to learn it as a second or a foreign language, in order to be able to speak it. Many foreign language learners consider that communication verbally with others is most important than any other language skills. And mastering English needs mastering the speaking skill.

Realizing the importance of speaking in EFL classrooms, it is essential to teach it using various strategies, media, materials, and instructional approaches and methods that aim to develop the students' speaking ability. Oral expression course provide students with suitable atmosphere to practice their speaking skill, whereas teachers play different fundamental roles to promote not just the learners' speaking proficiency, but also the high-order thinking.

This chapter deals with the importance of teaching speaking skill in foreign language classes and the light will shed on some significant points: definition of speaking, the importance of speaking, teaching speaking, the role of teachers in teaching speaking, activities to teach speaking and finally the use of critical thinking in developing the speaking skill.

## **1. Definition of Speaking**

The ability to speak and communicate was often regarded as the prime part in learning English. Speaking as a process of interacting, communicating, and performing the language was the most dominant and needed skill that a lot of foreign language learners seek to master. Baily and Savage (as cited in Ebrahiminejad 2014) confirmed *"speaking in second or foreign language has often been viewed as the most demanding of the four skills"*. In fact, speaking is the principle goal for many foreign language learners.

According to Harmer (2007,p.343) mastering English and being fluent speaker requires being capable to produce words, phrases, and sounds using the appropriate change in intonation and stress *"if students want to be able to speak fluently in English, they need to be able pronounce phonemes correctly, use appropriate stress and intonation patterns and speak in connected speech"*. In addition, speaking has a central role in building and sharing meaning in various contexts and situations. Therefore, as any other language skills, speaking requires care from both teachers and students to be mastered.

## **2. The Importance of Speaking in EFL Classrooms**

Because of the position of English as a language for international communication, mastering speaking become undoubtedly important for many people who learn English as a second or foreign language. Richards and Renandya's (2002,p.201) assert *"a large percentage of the world's language learners study English in order to develop proficiency in speaking"*. However, many foreign language learners consider the ability to speak and communicate with others is more important than the ability to read and write. Burnkart (1998) argued that speaking is the most important language skill that need to be controlled, and they assess learning achievement based on mastery of speaking skill ( cited in Situjuh 2011).

While Jeonna Baker (2003,p.5) tends to suggest some educational reasons to practice speaking in classroom:

- Speaking activities can reinforce the learning of new vocabulary, grammar or functional language.
- Speaking activities give students the chance to use the new language they are learning.
- Speaking activities give more advanced students the chance to experiment with the language they already know in different situations and on different topics.

### **3. The Role of Oral Expression Teachers in Enhancing Speaking in EFL Classes**

Teaching oral expression module in EFL classrooms become increasingly important for teaching speaking and training learners in fluency of speech in controlled conditions, and by using different techniques and classroom activities. However, teachers of oral expression need to be aware to what is required to motivate the learners to participate, to make presentation, and to take part in discussions on academic topics. In other words, teachers play a various roles on ameliorating the students' speaking ability. According to Wanyu Liu ( 2012) They are :

#### **3.1. Demonstrators**

During the oral expression course, students see teachers as the models they will be imitated. Therefore, teachers should be aware to show the good image in front of students. They should take responsibilities and demonstrating themselves in a positive and active

way. Correcting the students' pronunciations to make sure they do not pronounce the words faultily and improving their listening and speaking skills is the teachers role as demonstrators in oral teaching.

### **3.2. Conductors**

As a conductor in classes, teachers should recognize the students' English level, know their weaknesses and strengths, and provide them with activities executed dialogues, performance, and debates. As well as motivate students to expand the variety of teaching activities. Therefore, teachers as conductors understand the general classroom situation, while students will find their value and be confident about their study.

### **3.3. Directors**

How to design activities and how to carry them out is the key function of teachers as directors. Teachers encourage students to discover and develop advantages and overcome the shortcomings, as well as help students to improve the ability to express themselves orally in English.

### **3.4. Commentators**

The main task of teachers as commentators is to evaluate all the teaching activities. Teachers should take place in different activities to evaluate the advantage and the disadvantage of the students' oral expression, to discover the problem and solve them, and to provide guidance for the students to avoid falling in the same mistakes. In this way, students will pay more attention to the problems and be more confident to solve them.

Not only teachers who have role in enhancing the students' speaking skill, students also can help themselves to learn the language, as John and Marrow( 1981) said "*the teachers can help, advise, and teach, but only the learners can learn*" (cited in Wanyu liu 2012) .

Therefore, both teachers and students can create the supportive atmosphere to teach and learn the language.

#### **4. Teaching Speaking Skill in EFL Classes**

One of the hardest task that face the English teachers in EFL classes is preparing students to be able to speak and use the language. For many years, teachers taught speaking as

a matter of repetition and memorizing dialogues. Nowadays, teaching speaking become concentrating more on improving the students' interaction and communication skill in classroom. Recently, educators and researchers develop a set of an instructional methods, materials, and strategies to make teaching and learning speaking skill more easier. Richard .J (as cited in Segura Alonso 2012) assert teachers and textbooks adopt a number of approaches that focusing on certain features and conditions of the oral interaction through group work, task work, and other strategies. Hayriye Kayi (2006) propose some suggestions for English language teachers while teaching oral language:

- Provide maximum opportunity to students to speak the target language by providing a rich environment the contains collaborative work, authentic materials and tasks, and shared knowledge.
- Try to involve each student in every speaking activity; for this aim, practice different ways of student participation.
- Reduce teacher speaking time in class while increasing student speaking time. Step back and observe students.
- Indicate positive signs when commenting on a student's response.
- Ask eliciting questions such " what do you mean? How did you reach that conclusion? " in order to prompt students to speak more.

- Provide written feedback like " your presentation was great. It was a good job. I really appreciated your efforts in preparing the materials and efficient use of your voice..."
- Do not correct students' pronunciations mistakes very often while they are speaking. Correction should not distract student from his or her speech.
- Involve speaking activities not only in class but also out of class; contact parents and other people who can help.
- Circulate around classroom to ensure that students are on the right track and see whether they need your help while they work in groups or pairs.
- Provide the vocabulary beforehand that students need in speaking activities.
- Diagnose problems faced by students who have difficulty in expressing themselves in the target language and provide more opportunities to practice the spoken language.

## **5. Activities to Teach Speaking in EFL**

Despite the importance of speaking in EFL classrooms, some English students still find speaking a challenging skill and difficult to learn. For that, teachers work hard to provide students with a number of activities which are currently used to foster their communication and oral skill. In order to promote the students' a speaking ability, Harmer (2007,p.348-352) proposed a set of classroom activities and classified them as follow:

### **5.1. Acting From a Script**

#### **5.1.1. Play scripts**

By giving students practice such type of activities, students need to perform it as a real acting, while teachers play a role of directors to guide them to paying attention to the appropriate stress, intonation, and speed. This means the lines they speak



will have a real meaning, and teachers will ensure that acting out the scripts is both a learning and language producing activity.

### **5.1.2. Acting out the Dialogues**

Teachers should create the right assisted and supportive atmosphere, and give students the sufficient time to work on their dialogues before giving their final performance in front of class.

## **5.2. Communication Games**

Communication games aim to get students speaking in quick and fluent way, and it divided into two main categories:

### **5.2.1. Information-gap Games**

This kind of games depend on working in pairs where students have to solve puzzle, describe and draw pictures, put things in the right order, or make comparison between two pictures.

### **5.2.2. Television and Radio Games**

Games from radio and television regarded as a good fluency activities that encourage students to speak. As an example; " Just a minute " is a long-running comedy contest on UK radio. Where each participant has to speak for 60 seconds on a subject they are given by the chairperson without hesitation, repetition or deviation. In the classroom, "deviation" consists of language mistakes as well as wandering off the topic and the students who will speak at the end of 60 seconds will get two points.

## **5.3. Discussion**

This activity made for different reasons. For instance, students may share ideas about a particular event or find solutions for a certain issues.

### **5.3.1. Buzz Groups**

These can be used for a whole range of discussions. Teachers might want students to predict the content of a reading text, talking about their reactions after reading it, or discuss what should be included in a news broadcast.

### **5.3.2. Instant Comment**

This involves showing students photographs or introducing topics at any stage of a lesson and nominating students to say the first thing that comes into their head.

### **5.3.3. Formal Debates**

In formal debates, students prepare arguments in favour or against various propositions. When debate starts, those who are appointed as "panel speakers" produce well-rehearsed "writing-like" arguments, whereas others, the audience, pitch in as the debate progresses with their own thoughts on the subject.

### **5.3.4. Unplanned Discussion**

Unplanned discussions are the unprepared discussions that happen during the lesson. If they encourage and can provide some of the most enjoyable and productive speaking, their success will depend upon the ability to change the attitude to errors and mistakes. Unlike unplanned discussions, pre-planned discussions depend for their success upon the way the teachers ask students to approach the task in hand.

### **5.3.5. Reaching a Consensus**

One of the best ways of encouraging discussion is to provide activities which force students to reach a decision or a consensus, often as a result of choosing between specific alternatives.

#### **5.4. Prepared Talk**

Prepared talk activity depends on making students a presentation on a topic of their own choice. They need time and chance to rehearse their presentation in pairs or small groups. It is important that when student makes a presentation, teacher give other students tasks to carry out as they listen such as feedback tasks and follow-up questions.

#### **5.5. Questionnaire**

Questionnaires are useful because they may encourage the natural use of certain repetitive language patterns. Students can design questionnaires on any topic that is appropriate while teachers can act as resource, helping them in design process.

#### **5.6. Simulations and Role-plays**

One other ways of getting students to speak are simulation and role-plays. Students obtain great benefit from these activities. In simulations, students act as they are in a real life and attempt to create a realistic environment such as business meeting, interview, a hotel foyer , and so on. In other hand, students in role-play pretend and act in different characters of the social roles, and express thoughts and feelings they do not necessarily share. Teacher in role-play may gives student information about his role such as *you are Michael and you want Robin to notice you, but you do not want him to know about your brother.*

Thus , teachers create the helpful classroom environment where students can promot their oral language skill and practice authentic activities and meaningful tasks.

### **6. The Relationship Between Speaking and Other Language Skills**

The central goal of teaching languages is to encourage the speakers to use the language. Language learning aim to improve the speakers' basic skills ( listening,

speaking, reading, and writing ) which each skill connected with other. The relationship between speaking and the other language skills has been studied by many scholars for several years.

### **6.1. Speaking and Reading**

Speaking and reading are two essential skills should be mastered to use the language. Various studies about speaking and reading explore the relationship between the two skills. For many years ago, people claims that there is no connection between speaking and reading because the two skills are totally different. Modern researchers deny this idea, and believe that the speaking and reading skills are mightily connected *"it is believed that reading and speaking skills have a reciprocal relationship. Reading improve speaking skill, and speaking improve reading skill"* Muscato (2015). Nevertheless, this relationship shows the impact of speaking on reading where learning to create meaning by how word and sound interact translate into the understanding of the reading comprehension.

### **6.2. Speaking and Listening**

Speaking and listening are the most language communication people widely use to learn the language. Speaking skill is often associated to the listening, and much debates discuss the relationship between them. Listening plays an essential role on promoting the speaking skill where listening exercises provide the teachers with means for prompt the learners to pay attention to the new vocabularies, grammar rules, and patterns of language. Speaking and listening are viewed as an integrated skills Byrne (1991,p.21) states that *"one should keep in mind that these skills are normally integrated in real life"* (cited in Müge Tavil 2010). They are linked together in a way that practicing the exercises of one skill improve the both skills. For instance, listen and repeat exercises which focus on acquiring a basic vocabularies, it develop the

students' two skills. This integration affect positively the learners' oral communicative competencies.

### **6.3. Speaking and Writing**

Speaking and writing are known as a productive or active skills because to practice them, learners need to produce the language. Therefore, both of speaking and writing are a fundamental skills that person need to create a language. In recent studies, researchers examine the relationship between the two which they believe that speaking and writing help students to get better at the language and understand how it works.

Writing skill regarded as a representation of the oral language which talking translated into the graphic form. However, they argue that the more learners' oral communication experience have the more their producing of the writing materials succeed. Possien (1969,p.9) confirm "*teachers have always agreed in theory that the skills of oral language are basic to those of reading and writing*"(cited in Groff 1979)

Thus, the four language skills are necessary for the effective language communication and they can not be separated where each skill integrates the other skills.

## **7. Using Critical Thinking as a Technique to Enhance the Speaking Skill**

In the recent years, many foreign language educators and researchers have believed that mastering English as a second or foreign language not only requires mastering the language basic skills, but also the critical thinking skill. Its importance in developing the students' skills make much language teachers adopt it as a technique to enhance the students' speaking and communication ability in the classroom.

Various and different definitions of critical thinking have been proposed. Michael Scrivern and Richard Paul (1987) assert "*critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing and/ or*

*evaluating information gathered from or generated by observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication as guide to belief and action"* ( cited in Jun Xu 2011). This intellectual ability to understand, analyze, and evaluate arguments will help learners to make reasoned decisions and guide them to be fair and open-minded. In similar, Fisher and Scriven (1997) seen critical thinking as an evaluating, and interpreting observation, communication, information and argumentation in active and skilled way (cited in Fisher 2011).

In English language classrooms, learners with the ability to think critically, solve problems, and develop arguments and explanations is most likely will be better communicator. Andy Halvorson (2005) presented three main techniques to develop students' speaking and thinking skill :

- **Debate**

Debate forces students to think about the multiple sides of an issue and it also forces them to interact not just with the details of a given topic, but also with one another. Also debates are versatile in the range of topics possible and the format that the debate may follow.

- **Media Analysis**

Analyzing various forms of media, either in an ESL or EFL environment, gives the opportunity for students to think about important issues like media bias and censorship. When students look at the types of issues that may bias reporting, they are also forced to think in terms of their biases and to reflect on these in detail. This is not to say however, that media analysis needs only to focus explicitly on issues of bias and censorship as any analysis of media has the potential to raise students' general awareness and encourage them to think about the issues that affect their lives.

- **Problem Solving**

Problems exist everywhere, both inside the classroom and out, and their resolution is a popular source of conversation in all countries and cultures. Analyzing a somewhat complex problem like a city's poor public transport system can offer students a myriad of opportunities to analyze an issue critically. By asking students to look at pro's and con's and costs and benefits an instructor is forcing them to consider real world problems that impact their daily lives in a critical way.

As a result, developing the learners' speaking skill in language classes needed developing the critical thinking as well.

## **Conclusion**

We have attempted through this chapter to shed light on the importance of teaching speaking in English foreign language classrooms and offer some activities and techniques that contribute on developing the students speaking and communication ability. As productive skill, speaking is very important process to present ideas and express thoughts in foreign language. Teachers have to follow a certain and particular strategies and tasks to teach the speaking skill, since it is the mean that assessing the learning achievement based on. Using critical thinking in teaching speaking help learners to enhance their speaking ability and language proficiency through encourage them to think deeply on the subjects they given to them. However, realizing the importance of teaching speaking in foreign language classes motivate student to participate in different activities and promote their English speaking skill.



## **Chapter Two**

# **Promoting the Critical Thinking Through Comparison and Opinion Gap Exercises**

## **Introduction**

Critical thinking is an exceptional mental process or ability the individuals use in order to solve problems that restricted their achievement, make an intelligent and reasonable decision, as well as encourage the independent thinking. Various domains have been applied the critical thinking whether are a professional domains or educational domains.

As any educational domains, teaching languages has adopted teaching critical thinking skill in the foreign language classrooms. Teaching for thinking effectively impact on the students performance, it is a helpful and active skill for getting best possible outcomes. However, realization of its significant in language classrooms has made many researchers and language educators offer several and different activities, exercises, and techniques that will help students to improve their level of thinking. The activities that require expressing opinions and making comparison also have a dynamic role in developing the critical thinking of the English learners.

This chapter deals with promoting the students' critical thinking through comparison and opinion gap exercises and highlight some important elements: definition of pedagogy and critical thinking, teaching critical thinking in language classes, barriers in teaching the critical thinking, the importance of teaching the critical thinking, presenting some activities to enhance the critical thinking, and finally the role of comparison and opinion gap exercises on promoting critical thinking.

## 1. Definition of Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy in language teaching viewed as a philosophy of education that concerned with the relationship between education and society in the classroom. Crookes (2012) said " *Critical pedagogy in language teaching is a perspective in language curriculum theory and instructional practice that supports and advances teaching and the study of languages in the way that would promote social justice* ". However, Crookes presents some principles for language critical pedagogy derived from Freire's work described as follows:

- to develop critical thinking by presenting [students'] situation to them as a problem so that they can perceive, reflect and act on it
- dialogue forms the content of the educational situation
- the students produce their own learning materials
- the content of curriculum derives from the life situation of the students as expressed in the themes of their reality
- the task of planning is first to organize generative themes and second to organize subject matter as it relates to those themes
- the organization of curriculum recognizes the class as a social entity and resource
- the teacher participates as a learner among learners
- the teacher contributes his/her ideas, experiences, opinions, and perceptions to the dialogical process
- the teacher's function is one of posing problems
- the students possess the power and right to make decisions

## 2. Definition of Critical Thinking

The technical term of the individual's ability to understand and analyze information, generate and organize logical ideas, present and support arguments and opinions, identify and solve problems, as well as make comparisons will be that the critical thinking. Thomson (2002,p.4) asserts " *critical thinking is the ability to analyze facts, generate and organize ideas, define opinions, and make comparisons, draw inferences, evaluate arguments and solve problems*". Moreover, the critical thinking is the ability to engage and encourage the individual to the rational and independent thinking.

Similarly, Richard and Scriven (2003) present the critical thinking as an active mental process of analyzing, applying and developing information, beliefs and values gathered from different relevant sources " *critical thinking is the intellectually discipline process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by observation, experience, reflection, reasoning or communication as guide to belief and action*" (cited in JunXu 2011) . In addition, it regarded as a self-directed, self-disciplined, self-monitored, and self-corrective thinking. Richard and Elder (2008,p.1)

According to Judge, Jones, and McCreedy (2009,p.1) critical thinking is the ability to realize the individuals to their way of thinking and identifying its level, weaknesses, and strengths as well as introduced a meliorated thinking " *critical thinking is the ability to think about your own thinking in such a way as to recognize its strengths and weaknesses and a result, re-present the thinking in an improved form*". Therefore, critical thinking is the capacity of analyzing and evaluating the way of thinking with the view of enhancing it.

However, critical thinking is an ability that valued not just educational settings but also the professional situations.

### **3. Characteristics of the Critical Thinker**

While many researchers tend to illustrate the definition of critical thinking, some of them attempt to demonstrate the main characteristics of the individual with the critical thinking ability. Ennis (1985) offers thirteen features of the critical thinker:

- Open minded,
- Take or change position based on evidence,
- Take the entire situation into account,
- Seek information,
- Seek precise information,
- Deal in an orderly manner with parts of a complex whole,
- Look for options,
- Search for reasons
- Seeks a clear statement of the issue
- Keep the original problem in mind
- Use credible sources
- Stick to the point
- Exhibit sensitivity to others' feelings and knowledge level.

Madhucchanda (2011,p.4) identifies some characteristics of the good critical thinker:

- The one who is guided by reason
- The one who is guided not just emotions
- The one who considers all the evidence at hand and follows the route that the evidence point towards.
- The one who is in search for the best explanation
- The one who is free from motives or biases.
- The one who is aware of his/her own prejudices.
- The one who is faire and open minded.

Whereas Ryall (2010,p.1) describes the major characteristics of thinking critically as *" the key to thinking critically is to ask questions, decide what information is most accurate and relevant, establish what assumptions you are making, make reasonable and logical judgments, and be willing to subject all of your conclusions to yet more questioning "*.

#### **4. Critical Thinking in Language Classrooms**

Contemporary researches and studies indicate the relationship between the critical thinking and teaching languages. Rafi (2011) argues *" the learners may become proficient language users if they have motivation and are taught the way of displaying critical thinking in foreign usage, which signifies that the learners must have reflection on their production of ideas, and they may critically support those ideas with logical details"* ( cited in Mansour & Shirkhani 2011). Much of English language teachers adopt the critical thinking skill in their classes and motive their student to be more aware about their own thinking *" through the years, many English*

*teachers have accepted instruction in critical thinking as a legitimate component of the English program; they have attempted-by a variety of strategies –to induce their students to think more clearly or more effectively or, simply, critically “ Devine (1962)*

Therefore, the main aim of language teachers is to produce a creative and critical learners and generate an effective language learning using critical thinking in language classes.

## **5. Barriers of Teaching the Critical Thinking**

Although the need to teach students to the critical thinking and realize its value in education, several barriers appear and prevent the improvement of critical thinking and learning skills. Tayebeh Fani (2013) determined five common barriers of teaching critical thinking.

### **5.1. Lack of proper assessment**

The first block is that lack of proper assessment which measures the students strengths and weaknesses in critical thinking.

### **5.2.Vague of conceptualization of critical thinking**

The variety of critical thinking definitions and what does critical thinking mean, is it measurable. All of these are still vague for some teachers who are still need a clear, explicit and tangible definition of critical thinking.

### **5.3.Lack of organized sequence in teaching critical thinking**

One of barriers that teachers face in teaching critical thinking is that the absence of an organized approach for teaching the critical thinking and successful formula for developing it.

### **5.4.Threatening nature of critical thinking practice**

It has been claimed that the critical thinking threatens the calm assumed that governs much of our interactions with other. Very rare is the individuals who

are eager to have their reasoning placed under the bright light of critical questions.

### **5.5.Lack of teacher training**

Teachers will be not capable to equip their student with critical thinking unless they will be familiar with the different approaches, techniques, and components of teaching the critical thinking.

Tayebeh Fani (2013) also proposed a set of principles of overcoming barriers. Here are some of them:

- **Specific teacher training course**

Preparing teachers with several instructional techniques, books, and materials of teaching critical thinking by designing some specific courses.

- **Continued practice**

Practice makes perfect. It is advisable that teachers should insist and prompt students to think critically and develop thinking since when they obtain experience in critical thinking they will continue practicing it.

- **Considering different levels of critical thinking**

Researchers propose six levels of critical thinking :

1. Unilateral descriptions
2. Simplistic alternatives/argument
3. Basic analysis
4. Theoretical inference
5. Empirical inference
6. Merging values with analysis

Students need a guide to reach the high level of critical thinking



- **Using critical thinking challenges**

The modern teaching critical thinking approach includes the application of critical thinking challenges. Critical thinking challenges refuse the ordinary views of critical thinking, it focuses more on helping students to acquire the tools needed to resolve problematic situation about what to believe and what to do.

- **Encouraging a positive attitude toward critical thinking**

Practicing critical thinking may have an effective effects on both students and teachers. Each attitude of critical thinking plays a role in a broad community of critical thinkers.

- **Infusion approach**

Focusing on critical thinking require teach it as a separate course. The infusion approach includes the critical thinking into the existing subject matter in different way. However, the infusion approach requires all teachers be skilled in critical thinking.

- **Assessing critical thinking**

Each of multiple-choice and open-ended tests of critical thinking have a limitations. Recently, researchers work to combine the two response formats into one test. However, recognizing a correct response requires assessing the individual's application of thinking by measuring responses in both multiple-choice and open-ended format. This assessment will affect on the critical thinking performance.

## **6. Teaching Critical Thinking in Language Classrooms**

Teaching languages significantly depends on teaching critical thinking. Many educators, scholars, and researchers give much attention for teaching such skill in language classes. They have been recognize it as a fundamental skill that growing and developing the students' language proficiency. Hughes (2014,p.5) explains some reasons why teach critical thinking in language classrooms:

### **6.1. Communication language tasks require critical thinking**

Teachers can teach languages without any elements related to the critical thinking skill such as “listen and repeat” patterns which students in such tasks focus only on acquiring new vocabularies. While there tasks require thinking critically as problem solving, investigating, and personalization. These kind of communicative tasks are familiar because they engage students in authentic communication.

### **6.2. Using authentic meaningful texts**

Either authentic texts or real texts which include the author's original meaning are embraced in language classrooms. However, giving students a text where the speaker or writing express facts and opinions make students think critically toward it, they need to understand the general meaning, analyze information and opinion, present and support arguments as well as express their own point of view.

### **6.3. Critical literacy**

Being critical thinker and use the features of thinking critically are the materials the students need to analyze and evaluate documents and texts with recognizing their sources. Moreover, critical literacy will

undertaken in English which make language teachers have a significant role in developing the students' language skill.

#### **6.4. Critical thinking in exam preparation**

By promoting the students who have a good language level to their critical thinking skill, their performance of language will act better in some exams such as the exams where teachers ask students to discuss a problems or answer a questions focus on expressing and justifying opinions .

### **7. Activities to Promote Critical Thinking**

A large variety of activities have been widely adopted in the language classrooms to enhance the English learners' critical thinking. Hughes (2014,p.8) have summarized some activities and divided them into three sections where the activities in the first section focus on developing the students' critical mindsets and prompt them to treat texts more critically. Second section includes activities which focus on using reading and listening and developing receptive critical thinking skill. Whereas, the third section involves activities to motivate students to present arguments and express opinions from their own view. However, these activities are presenting as follow:

- **Developing a critical mindsets**

Critical thinking aim: to introduce basic awareness of critical thinking.

Language aim: to introduce the language for expressing opinion, agreeing and disagreeing.

Rational: this activity is useful way to introduce students to the idea of becoming a critical thinkers. It also introduce some of the language they might use to express their opinions in class discussions later in the course.

- **Opinion and reason generator**

Critical thinking aim: To develop the skill of supporting a viewpoint with reasons.

Language aim: To practice expressing opinion with opinion expressions and giving reasons with the conjunction ‘because’.

Rationale: introduced students to the importance of supporting an opinion with evidence or reasons. This simple activity continues this idea by introducing students to the need for supporting an opinion with reasons and providing the language they need to achieve this.

- **Critical questioning**

Critical thinking aim: To develop students’ critical questioning skills.

Language aim: To practice the language of asking closed and open questions.

Rationale: Students need to develop the skill of asking searching questions if they are to become effective critical thinkers. This activity shows them how closed questions which only require yes/no answers do not help us to question critically and that open questions are much more effective. At the same time, students review the structures they need to ask questions.

- **Recognizing context**

Critical thinking aim: To develop the skill of seeing things from another point of view.

Language aim: To speculate about a photograph in different contexts.

Rationale: As part of developing a critical mindset, students need to develop the skill of seeing an argument from all sides. This simple activity will raise students’ awareness of how the setting of an image or text can alter our perception or interpretation of something.

- **Making connections between topics**

Critical thinking aim: To make connections between the topic of a new subject and your prior knowledge.

Language aim: To talk about a topic and use topic vocabulary.

Rationale: Sometimes students are required to talk about a topic with which they feel unfamiliar. For example, in an exam situation they may have to talk about a topic and express an opinion about it. For some students, especially younger teens, this is difficult because the topic they are discussing may seem distant from their own (sometimes limited) life experience. Use this activity to demonstrate how to relate a new topic to their life experience and as a mental warmer for students who may have to take a speaking or writing exam which requires them to comment on a topic.

- **Evaluating the reliability**

Critical thinking aim: To evaluate the reliability of sources of information.

Language aim: To discuss the topic of news and media.

Rationale: Before we accept information that is presented as fact in a reading or listening text, it's important to consider whether we trust the source of the information. The following activity is a short warmer into the topic of how much we can trust certain sources.

- **Stance**

Critical thinking aim: To raise awareness of the importance of stance.

Language aim: Expressing opinion with reasons

Rationale: In critical thinking, students need to be aware that a person's stance or position on a topic can greatly change the way they write or speak

about it. For example, the way a person from a very hot climate close to the equator talks about the topic of weather will vary greatly from someone in a Scandinavian country. So this activity provides a simple role-play activity to introduce the idea of stance before students are then asked to read or listen to a text on a topic and identify the writer or speaker's stance.

- **Identifying main arguments and supporting evidence**

Critical thinking aim: To develop the skill of identifying the main argument in a paragraph and the supporting evidence.

Language aim: To identify discourse markers used to structure a paragraph.

Rationale: When students read a text with an opinion or viewpoint, they need to be able to read for the main argument in the text and decide if the writer has provided supporting evidence. This activity introduces this in the context of a single paragraph before asking students to approach much longer texts containing more than one argument.

- **Fact or opinion**

Critical thinking aim: To contrast fact with the writer's opinion.

Language aim: Expressing opinion with reasons.

Rationale: Sometimes we read texts or listen to people claiming to present some kind of factually true content. However, when this is the case, it's important to approach the text critically for information that pretends to be factual when it is in fact the author or speaker's opinion. By analyzing texts in this way, students can learn to identify opinion through the language used and in turn they will learn the language they need to express opinion in their own writing.

- **Vague or accurate**

Critical thinking aim: To identify vague or accurate language.

Language aim: Using vague and accurate language.

Rational: This exercise has some similarities to the previous activity looking at fact and the writer's opinion. It asks the student to assess sentences in terms of whether a statement is too vague or imprecise and to raise awareness that language, especially in academic writing, should be accurate and detailed.

- **Where's it from**

Critical thinking aim: Identifying features of different text types on the same topic, selecting relevant information and synthesizing it.

Language aim: To recognize features of written discourse.

Rational: Students need to develop the skill of researching a topic. They will draw their information from different sources and have to decide whether certain text types are credible sources. In order to do this, they need to be able to recognize the text type from the writing style.

- **Reading between the lines**

Critical thinking aim: To develop the skill of identifying hidden assumptions or implicit meaning.

Language aim: To identify connotation and denotation.

Rational: When students start to read higher level or more authentic texts they will need to develop the ability to read between the lines. In other words, to understand the implicit meaning of the writer's words as well as the explicit meaning. In some cases, a writer will choose a word with connotations or certain associations. So instead of choosing the word for its

denotation, or literal meaning, the writer uses it to evoke a different kind of meaning. Students need to develop the skill of identifying this language use in order to understand the writer's position or stance. Language with connotation can also be more persuasive to the reader because it appeals to our emotions. This exercise introduces students to the idea of connotation and denotation in texts.

- **False conclusions**

Critical thinking aim: To evaluate the supporting evidence for a conclusion.

Language aim: To practice the language of concluding and summarizing.

Rational: When a text ends with the writer's conclusion or final opinion, it should be as a result of a considered assessment of all the arguments and evidence in the rest of the article. Students will also need to arrive at conclusions in a similar way. The following activity draws attention to conclusions which are not based on correct reasoning and acts as a useful lead-in to looking at conclusions in longer texts.

- **Writing headlines**

Critical thinking aim: To analyze a text for its essential meaning.

Language aim: To practice summary writing.

Rational: After students have read or listened to a text, they need to analyze it for its main meaning. One way to do this is to encourage them to summarize the text in a few words. It's also a useful way to develop their note-taking skills. A fun way to do this is to have students read or listen to short texts from a newspaper or radio or TV news and write a headline.

- **Find the expression**

Critical thinking aim: To analyze the structure of a text.



Language aim: To introduce useful expressions for structuring a text.

Rational: Understanding how a written text is structured will help students to understand and evaluate a writer's argument and will also help them to write their own essays.

- **Predicting the content of the text**

Critical thinking aim: To compare your prior knowledge and expectations of the content of a text and to evaluate the relevance of arguments.

Language aim: To prepare students' schema before listening or reading.

Rational: In order to help understand a reading or listening text, we often ask students to predict what information or arguments the text might include. This is also a useful exercise to help students who are researching ideas for a presentation or essay. They can predict the content and then consider why some information was not included in the text.

- **Practicing the language for expressing critical thinking**

Critical thinking aim: To express your view of a topic based on your reading.

Language aim: To practice functional language for discussions.

Rational: Sometimes teachers think their students have no opinions because they are unable to express their opinions. In fact, students often do have strong and thoughtful opinions but they are not confident with the language they need to express themselves. This activity provides input and practice with the language they will need.

- **A for-and-against essay**

Critical thinking aim: To analyze the arguments for and against and to draw a conclusion.

Language aim: To write a four or five paragraph for-and-against essay.

Rational: After students have read or listened to texts on a topic and analyzed the relevant points, they can synthesize their findings into an essay. Writing a for-and-against essay is the obvious choice and it reflects the kind of writing task that is found nowadays in examinations such Cambridge English and IELTS

- **Preparing a group presentation**

Critical thinking aim: To bring together all the stages in critical thinking and apply relevant ideas into a presentation.

Language aim: To input the language of presenting.

Rational: After students have read or listened to texts on a topic and analyzed the relevant points, they can apply their new knowledge and understanding by preparing a presentation. For example, perhaps they have been reading arguments for and against an opinion. Next, you can ask students to present the main arguments either for or against or you can ask one group to present the arguments for a point of view and another group to present the arguments against.

- **Assessing a presentation**

Critical thinking aim: To assess the arguments and opinions presented.

Language aim: To assess the language used in the presentation.

Rational: When students give their presentations, you want other students in the class to participate actively as an audience and to consider the effectiveness of the arguments. One way to do this is to give students who are listening a feedback form to fill in as they do so.

## **8. Comparison and Opinion Gaps Exercises**

A huge number of exercises have been embraced in language classrooms in order to ameliorate the English learners' critical thinking. Two much broader activities taught in English classes are comparison and opinion gap exercises.

### **8.1.Opinion gap**

Opinion gap is an activity in language teaching where students can share, exchange, and discuss their own personal preference, experience, feeling, attitude and justifying opinions about a topics, ideas, and situations. Nunan (1989,p.66) assert "*opinion gap, which involves identifying and articulating a personal preference, feeling, or attitude in response to a given situation*". Anyway, teachers may ask their students to be a part in discussion or debate about certain topics and issues, or may ask them to complete a particular story as Loehrer (2013) confirm "*opinion gap is a basic activity which involves students, in pairs or small groups, reading or listening to the same information. This can be story from the news, a fictional story that will elicit a range of opinions from students*". However, this type of activities do not require for typical answer which means that there is no right or wrong answer "*there is no objective procedure for demonstrating outcomes as right or wrong, and no reason to expect the same outcome from different individuals or on different occasions*"Nunan (1989,p.66).

### **8.2.Comparison**

Comparison or comparison / contrasting is one of the most common activities vastly used in teaching languages where it involves the ability to describe and evaluate the similarities and differences of two or more things,

events, and issues as Moriarty (1997,p.177) emphasize "*comparison refers to likeness, contrast refers to differences. Comparison/contrasting refers to a method of describing the differences and similarities between two things, events, and phenomena*". The term comparison sometimes utilized for both comparison and contrasting. Consequently, comparison is a method of showing, arranging, and developing points of similarities and differences between two things or more. It is the process of looking at the characteristics of two objects.

## **9. The Role of Comparison and Opinion Gaps Exercises on Promoting Critical Thinking**

Making comparisons and expressing opinions are the powerful exercises employed in language classrooms in order to improve the students' critical thinking. Comparison exercises require looking carefully to the topics that they will compare and think deeply about their significant. Students must think critically about the similarities and differences of any topics or objects in order to create an effectual comparison

## **Conclusion**

We have seek through this chapter to shed light on promoting the students' critical thinking through using comparison and opinion gap exercises in language classroom. As an efficient skill, critical thinking is an essential process to analyze, understand, evaluate, and present information, facts, ideas and opinions in a clear and rational way. Students have to pay more attention to the activities that teachers follow in teaching the critical thinking because they promote not just the critical thinking level but also the students language achievements. Applying comparison and opinion gap tasks lead students to think deeper about the similarities and differences and their importance, also they give them the space and time to talk and discuss about their preferences, emotions, and experiences.

# **Chapter Three**

# **The Field Work**

## **Introduction**

The current research aims to determine the importance of teaching the critical thinking skill in the English foreign language classrooms and promote the learners' thinking ability through using comparison and opinion gaps activities. In order to conduct this research, the researcher has followed the qualitative method and employed the structured interview and classroom observation as a data collection tools. Whereas, both second year English teachers and students at university of Biskra are concerned as a population and sampling for this study.

### **1. The Research Methodology**

#### **1.1. Qualitative Research**

To investigate why teaching critical thinking is essential in English language classrooms and how the comparison and opinion gap exercises can participate in enhancing the critical thinking skill, the researcher embraced the qualitative research as a method to conduct this study and obtain as much information as possible by applying qualitative data collection tools, the interview and classroom observation.

The qualitative research is the best method to follow in this study. It is designed to discover the different types of behaviours and conceptions that address a particular issues and topics.

Qualitative research is a broad methodology approach that encompasses many research methods. The aim of qualitative research may vary with the disciplinary background, such as a psychologist seeking to gather an in-depth understanding of human behaviour and the reasons that govern such behaviour.

It examine the why and how of decision making not just, what, where, when, or who, and have a strong basis in the field

of sociology to understand government and social programs.

Qualitative research is popular among political science, social work, and special education and education searchers ( Wikipedia ).

The qualitative research applied for studying a small group of people, where its results tend to be more descriptive than predictive.

## **1.2. Data Collection Tools**

### **1.2.1. The Interview**

In order to know more about the teachers perspectives toward the critical thinking skill and the application of comparison and opinion gaps exercises in English language classrooms, the researcher has selected five teachers of literature in the English division at university of Biskra to be interviewed.

Because of the variety of the teachers' ways of teaching, techniques, and methods they follow, the structured interview which is the best data collection tool in this study. It allows the researcher to ask about authentic answers from teachers, additional information and details, as well as clarify the ambiguous conceptions and notions. Marczyk, DeMatteo, and Festinger (2005,p.117) illustrated the importance of the interview in gathering as much information as possible in a simple and inexpensive way "*A thorough interview is a form of self-report that is a relatively simple approach to data collection. Although simple, it can produce a wealth of information. An interview can cover any number of content areas and is a relatively inexpensive and efficient way to collect a wide variety of data that does not require formal testing.*". However, around a week all participants will be asked the same questions in the same order .



### **1.2.2. Classroom Observation**

Classroom observation is a data collection tool in the qualitative research that provides researchers with manners to collect and check information for who participates and who do not, who interacts with whom, what motivates them and so on. However, this tool is considered as an effective way to gather data when the researcher is interested to study some types of students' behaviors or reactions. Marshall and Rossman (1989,p 79) presented the observation as "*the systematic description of events, behaviors, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study*"( cited in Kawulich 2005). The classroom observation enable the researcher to observe and describe different behaviors in different situations using his five senses.

To accomplish this study, the researcher used a checklist classroom observation in literature lectures for 466 English student at second year level where they divided into two sections each section contained more than 200 student.

The researcher aims through using this tool to observe the students' achievement in comparison and opinion gaps exercises and expose to which extent these two activities can participate in ameliorating the learners' critical thinking. This tool helped us to determine whether the two exercises motivate learners to participate and promote their critical thinking or not. On the other hand, it did not give us a precise outcomes because some students do not show any reaction or response to these activities and this maybe due to several reasons such as shyness, anxiety, or fear of making mistakes.

#### **4. The Interview Description and Analysis**

##### **2.1. The Interview Description**

Five teachers of literature in English division at Mohamed Khider university acted as the interviewees to this study. The researcher's aim from this interview was to collect different point of views and data about the employment of critical thinking, comparison and opinion gap exercises in English classrooms.

The interview have spread for a week, and it contained nine questions divided into three sections each section consist a set of questions concerning the critical thinking skill. Section one comprised teaching critical thinking in language classes. It includes five questions, the first question was asking about the need of critical thinking in teaching the languages. While the second question was about the use of activities to promote the critical thinking. The third question discuss the different barriers of teaching this skill in English classrooms, and the forth question addressed the ability of critical thinking in improving the learners' speaking skill. Whereas, the last question inquired the subject that needs more to the critical thinking.

Section two involved one question which argued the reasons that make students to prefer practicing memorization activities more than speculative questions. The last set of questions was the section three, and this included three questions related to the comparison and opinion gaps exercises, where the first question was concerning the application of this two exercises in the teachers' classroom. The interviewees in the second question in this section have been asked about the students' reactions toward the comparison and opinion gap exercises. The final question in the interview examine the comparison and opinion gap activities contribution on fostering the learners' critical thinking.

To accomplish this interview, the interviewer used both closed and open questions; because the limited time for the researcher and teachers the interview was taken in the written form.

## **2.2.Interview Data**

**A.** Do you think that teaching languages requires using the critical thinking skill?

**T1.** Absolutely, yes.

**T2.** yes.

**T3.** yes, I do.

**T4.** of course.

**T5.** not forcibly.

**B.** As a teacher, do you adopt the activities that focus on promoting the critical thinking skill in your classes?

**T1.** I do.

**T2.** sometimes.

**T3.** yes.

**T4.** I think I do. Personally, I try to guide students to be as logical and organized as possible when they are thinking.

**T5.** somehow sometimes, never be a slave of any focus, method, or option.

**C.** Is there any barriers on teaching the critical thinking in our language classrooms?

**T1.** students' educational background, they are not accustomed to think critically, they have the habit of storing information from teachers

**T2.** teachers are obliged to follow the syllabus they have.

**T3.** yes, the corrected classroom; and the limited time.

**T4.** generally, teachers are neither trained or well informed about this area.

**T5.** crowded classes, Demotivated learners, and bad attitudes on EFL.

**D.** Can teaching critical thinking in EFL classrooms help students to improve their speaking skill?

**T1.** yes, it develops higher order thinking and enables them to have a balanced judgment in issues.

**T2.** yes.

**T3.** yes.

**T4.** it is possible.

**T5.** not teaching it is training them in critical thinking. Making part of this.

**E.** What is the subject that needs more to the critical thinking skill? And why?

**T1.** literature, because it is subjective and its comprehension needs to critical thinking.

**T2.** reading texts, in general makes learner think, compare, analyze, and form decisions.

**T3.** literature as it requires preformed interpretation and reading behind lines.

The analysis of any text should be critical not descriptive.

**T4.** comparative studies.

**T5.** may first year where more focus is skill needed on academic writing and oral activities.

**F.** What are the reasons that make students prefer achieving activities based on memorization more than answering speculative questions?

**T1 . laziness.**

**T2 . it depends on the module.**

**T3 . the habit, the wrong methodology used in tests and exams.**

**T4 . because they are lazy.**

**T5 . they have very poor background knowledge.**

**G. Do you employ the comparison and opinion gaps exercises in your class?**

**T1 . yes.**

**T2 . sometimes.**

**T3 . yes.**

**T4 . yes, I do.**

**T5 . sometimes, if need is there.**

**H. What are the students' reactions toward these two exercises?**

**T1 . they are motivated, they feel free to think.**

**T2 . variety**

**T3 . they like and enjoy them**

**T4 . most of them prefer simple activities.**

**T5 . if they understand the task, they appreciate.**

**I. Can the comparison and opinion gaps' tasks contribute in promoting the learners' critical thinking?**

**T1 . yes.**

**T2 . yes.**

**T3 . yes.**

**T4 . certainly.**

T5. Not specifically because everything is useful in teaching.

### **2.3.The Interview Interpretation and Analysis**

Five teachers who are teaching literature in English division for this year were interviewed.

The teachers have been asked if whether they think that teaching languages requires using the critical thinking skill or not, four teachers replied " yes " while one of them said that it is not forcible. The second question teachers were asked about was if they adopt activities that focus on promoting the critical thinking in their classrooms and their answers were as follow: two teachers answered "yes, I do ", the third teacher point out that he sometimes applied them. While the forth teacher responded by " I think I do . Personally, I try to guide students to be as logical and organized as possible when they are thinking". The other teacher believed that teachers should not be restricted to any focus or techniques. Devine (1962,p 359) stated " *Many English teachers have accepted instruction in critical thinking as a legitimate component of the English programs; they have attempted –by a variety of strategies- to induce their students to think more clearly or more effectively or simply critically* ".

The interviewer asked the instructors if there are a barriers prevent teaching the critical thinking in our language classes. According to the first instructor these barriers are the educational background of the students and their customs of storing information without thinking critically. The second instructor answered " teachers are obliged to follow the syllabus they have" . However, the third instructor assert that in addition to the corrected classroom, the limited time plays a role in creating these barriers. The forth instructor's answer was" generally, teachers are neither trained or well informed about this area", while

the fifth teacher confirmed that the bad attitudes on EFL and are the main barriers of teaching the critical thinking. Teachers were also asked if teaching the critical thinking in English foreign language classrooms can help students to enhance their speaking skill. Four teachers replied " yes, it is possible" and one of them added " it develops higher order thinking and enables them to have a balanced judgment in issues". Whereas, the other teacher argued that training students on critical thinking make it part on improving their speaking skill. As a matter of fact, Rosyati and Rosna (2008) stated " *proficiency in English is positively related to the critical thinking ability implying that if the undergraduates are proficient in English, their critical thinking will also be heightened*"(cited in Sanavi& Tarighat 2014).

The interviewer wanted to know about the subject that needs more to the critical thinking. Two teachers mentioned " literature" , the first teacher justified his answer saying "because it is subjective and its comprehension needs critical thinking" while the other teacher believed that interpreting and analyzing any test requires to be critical. However, the third teacher asserts that reading tests in general makes students think critically since they can think, make comparison, analyze information and make decisions. The fourth teacher his answer was the comparative studies, whereas the fifth one said " may first year where more focus is skill needed on academic writing and oral activities". Teachers then have been asked about the reasons that make students prefer achieving activities based on memorization more than answering speculative questions. Two respondents confirmed that it returned to the students' laziness. One replied " It depends on the module ". Other teacher considered the students' poor background knowledge as the main reason for that while the last teacher assent "the habits and the wrong methodology used in tests and exams"

The researcher was interested to know if those teachers employed the comparison and opinion gap activities in their classes. Three of them agree and answered "yes", the others declare that they sometimes adopt those activities if there is a need for that. Concerning the

students' reactions toward those two exercises, teachers' answers were vary. One teacher argued that they are motivated and without any restricted answers since they are independent to think. The second teacher confirmed that their reactions differ from one students to other while the third teacher replied " they like and enjoy them". The other teacher see that most of students like answering the simple activities. The fifth teacher said " if they understand the task, they appreciate ".

In response to whether or not the comparison and opinion gap tasks can contribute in promoting the learners' critical thinking. The four teachers agree that the two exercises played a great role in improving the critical thinking, Krishna Rao ( 2006 ) illustrate " *compare and contrast can lead to deeper insights if our attention is focused on a variety of similarities and differences and take time to think about what those similarities and differences show* " . However, the other teacher responded " not specifically" he added " because everything is useful in teaching". All scholars agreed with the importance of employing the critical thinking in English language classrooms through applying the comparison and opinion gap exercises in different modules.

#### **2.4. Discussion of Findings**

Generally, it is possible to deduce that most of the English literature teachers recognized the effectiveness of using the critical thinking in teaching English language employing variety of strategies and activities such comparison and opinion gaps tasks which enable them to promote their critical thinking ability in different English language modules. This does not prevent the existence of some barriers in teaching the critical thinking whether they are returned to the students or to the teaching methodology and this may lead students to prefer practicing memorization activities more than the speculative exercises



### 3. Description and Analysis of Classroom Observation

#### 3.1. Classroom Observation Data

Dates And hours of the sessions	Number of sessions	Number of presents	Content of the sessions	Content of presentation	Participation		Teacher feedback		The use of comparison and opinion gaps	
					+	-	+	-	C	O
22/02/2017 11 :20-12 :50	Session one	97	Theoretical knowledge	Comparison						
		46%			30%	15%	√		√	
22/02/2017 13 :10-14 :40	Session two	70	Theoretical knowledge	Comparison						√
		27%			5%	21%	√			
01/03/2017 11 :20-12 :50	Session three	120	Practical session	Comparison + opinion			√		√	√
		57%			37%	20%				
01/03/2017 13 :10-14 :40	Session four	90	Practical session	Comparison + opinion			√			√
		35%			15%	20%				
08/03/2017 11 :20-12 :50	Session five	87	Theoretical knowledge	Opinion			√			√
		41%			10%	31%				

## The Students Achievements in The English Literature Over Five Sessions

### English Literature Course

### Second Year LMD

Session one : 22/02/2017 ,11 :20-12 :50

Session one	Observation	Results
presents	Number of the students	97
	percentage	46%
content of session	Theoretical knowledge	√
	Practical sessions	
Contnt of presentati-on	Comparison	√
	Opinion	
Participati-on	Participant	30%
	Non-participant	15%
Teacher feedback	Positive	√
	Negative	
Use of comparison and opinion	Comparison	√
	Opinion	√

## English Literature Course

### Second Year LMD

Session two : 22/02/017 ,13 :10-14 :40

<b>Session one</b>	<b>Observation</b>	<b>Results</b>
<b>presents</b>	<b>Number of the students</b>	70
	<b>percentage</b>	27%
<b>content of session</b>	<b>Theoretical knowledge</b>	√
	<b>Practical sessions</b>	
<b>Contnt of presentation</b>	<b>Comparison</b>	√
	<b>Opinion</b>	
<b>Participati-on</b>	<b>Participant</b>	5%
	<b>Non-participant</b>	21%
<b>Teacher feedback</b>	<b>Positive</b>	√
	<b>Negative</b>	
<b>Use of comparison and opinion</b>	<b>Comparison</b>	
	<b>Opinion</b>	√

## English Literature Course

### Second Year LMD

Session three : 01/03/2017 ,11 :20-12 :50

<b>Session one</b>	<b>Observation</b>	<b>Results</b>
<b>presents</b>	<b>Number of the students</b>	120
	<b>percentage</b>	57%
<b>content of session</b>	<b>Theoretical knowledge</b>	
	<b>Practical sessions</b>	√
<b>Contnt of presentation</b>	<b>Comparison</b>	√
	<b>Opinion</b>	√
<b>Participati-on</b>	<b>Participant</b>	37%
	<b>Non-participant</b>	20%
<b>Teacher feedback</b>	<b>Positive</b>	√
	<b>Negative</b>	
<b>Use of comparison and opinion</b>	<b>Comparison</b>	√
	<b>Opinion</b>	√

## English Literature Course

### Second Year LMD

Session Four : 01/03/2017 ,13 :10-14 :40

<b>Session one</b>	<b>Observation</b>	<b>Results</b>
<b>presents</b>	<b>Number of the students</b>	90
	<b>percentage</b>	35%
<b>content of session</b>	<b>Theoretical knowledge</b>	
	<b>Practical sessions</b>	√
<b>Contnt of presentation</b>	<b>Comparison</b>	√
	<b>Opinion</b>	√
<b>Participati-on</b>	<b>Participant</b>	15%
	<b>Non-participant</b>	20%
<b>Teacher feedback</b>	<b>Positive</b>	√
	<b>Negative</b>	
<b>Use of comparison and opinion</b>	<b>Comparison</b>	
	<b>Opinion</b>	√

## English Literature Course

### Second Year LMD

Session Five : 08/03/2017 ,11 :20-12 :50

<b>Session one</b>	<b>Observation</b>	<b>Results</b>
<b>presents</b>	<b>Number of the students</b>	87
	<b>percentage</b>	41%
<b>content of session</b>	<b>Theoretical knowledge</b>	√
	<b>Practical sessions</b>	
<b>Contnt of presentati-on</b>	<b>Comparison</b>	
	<b>Opinion</b>	√
<b>Participati-on</b>	<b>Participant</b>	10%
	<b>Non-participant</b>	31%
<b>Teacher feedback</b>	<b>Positive</b>	√
	<b>Negative</b>	
<b>Use of comparison and opinion</b>	<b>Comparison</b>	
	<b>Opinion</b>	√

### **3.2.The Description of The Classroom Observation**

In literature courses, for three weeks, second year English students LMD at Mohamed Khider university have been observed to evaluate their responses toward comparison and opinion gap exercises.

Students at English second year level have divided into two sections. Section one which involved about 211 student took the literature course from 11:20 to 12:50. Whereas section two studied it from 13:10 to 14:40 and it consist about 255 student. Both sections had the literature lectures at the same day with the same teacher following the same way of teaching.

Around five sessions with literature classroom, the researcher was observing the following points : the students' attendances, content of sessions, the content of presentation, students' participation, the teacher feedback; and finally, the use of comparison and opinion gap activities. However, the observer noticed that the number of the students who have attended the literature courses ranged from 27% to 57% . The content of sessions was either theoretical knowledge or practical sessions, whereas in the content of presentation the teacher use either comparison, opinion, or both of them. The students participation also was under the observation where the observer remarked that the number of the students who do participate ranged from 5% to 37% while the ranging from 15% to 31% was the number of students who do not participate. Although, the number of the participants was small comparing to their total number, the teacher had a positive feedbacks toward the students' answers. The last point in the classroom observation was observing the students use of comparison and opinions where the researcher noticed that there is a variety in using two abilities.

The first session was taking place on 22th of February at 11 :20 to 12 :50. It was a theoretical knowledge session where it has been designed to present a lecture about two literature movements "symbolism and realism" and use the comparison between them. The teacher has spent about twenty to thirty minutes explaining the lecture than gave time to the students to participate and ask questions. However, many different questions and answers have been asked and replied either from students or from the teacher, this created an active and effective atmosphere. The observer noted that the number of students who participate was about 30% while 15% was the number of students who do not participate. During their participation, students use the comparison between the two movements as well as express their opinions about them. Whereas, the teacher shows a positive feedback toward the students' responses.

The second session took place in the same day of the first session with differ in time, it was from 13:10 to 14:40. The teacher during this session followed the same way of teaching of the first one; the same lecture and the same questions. The students participation was very weak where they reached 5% and their answers was just expressing opinions. Although, most of the students were attentive to the lecture but just few of them who ask and answer questions which make it a passive and boring session.

In the third session which was on the 01<sup>st</sup> of March from 11:20 to 12:50, and for more understanding to symbolism and realism, the teacher has introduced a practical session involved applying the comparison and opinion gap questions through analyzing the two poems " Mending Wall" by Robert Frost and " What the Thunder Said" by T.S Eliot. Moreover, most of questions have been asked during this session related either to the making comparison between the two movements and presenting the features of each one or to prompt students to express their opinions, as well as asking some speculative questions like: what can it be the theme of this poem?; what does that mean by " he who was living is now dead ; we



who were living are now dying"? and others . Concerning to the students participation, the observer found that the students who participate were about 37% while those who do not participate were 20%. Students used both expressing opinion and making comparison which make the teacher shows a positive feedbacks.

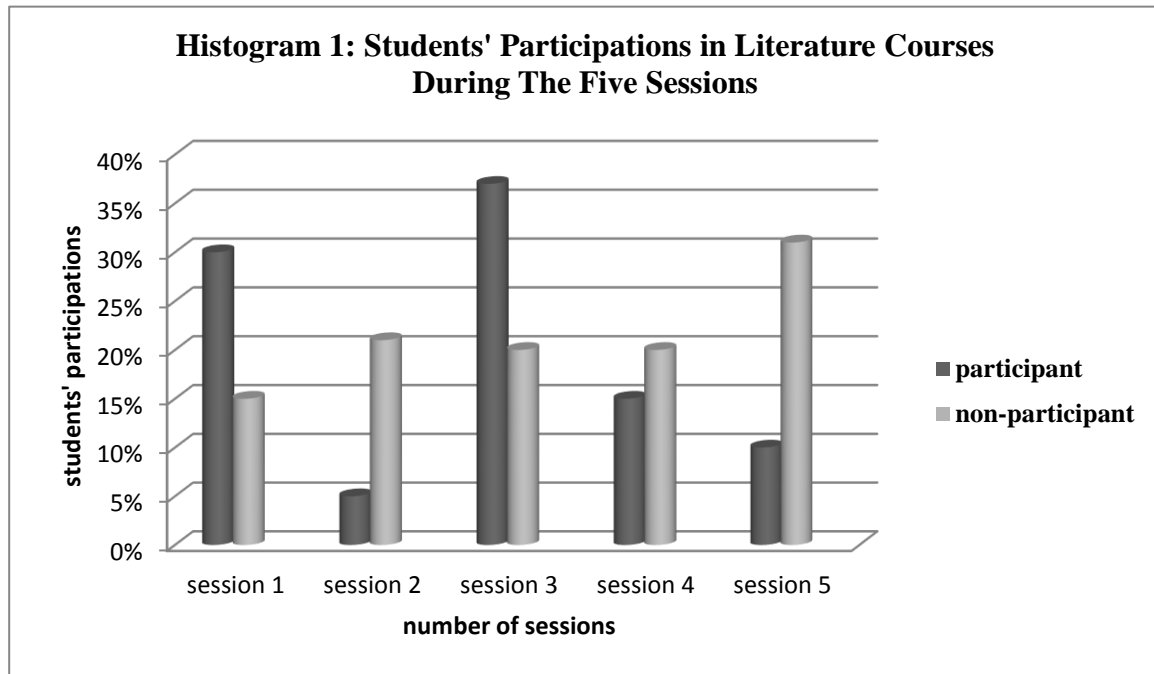
The forth session was in the same day from 13 :10 to 14 :40. As we mentioned before the teacher has practiced the same way of teaching of the last session. The different was in the students participation where we remarked that the number of students participating in this session reached to 15% . whereas, the other students who do not participate were 20%. In addition to that, we also noticed that The students’ answers were limited to expressing their opinions only. While they asked just few questions.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of March at 11:20 was the last session the observer has been attended . The lecture was a theoretical knowledge session presented by the teacher who lecturing on fiction and non-fiction literature. The percentage of participants in this session was very weak which it reached to 10%.while the proportion of non-participants was about 31%. Most questions and answers was about expressing students’ opinions. While most teacher’s feedbacks were positive.

Number of sessions	Students participations	
	participant	Non-participant
Session One	30%	15%
Session Two	5%	21%
Session Three	37%	20%
Session Four	15%	20%
Session Five	10%	31%

( **Table 1:** Students Participation in Literature Course During The Five Sessions )

The table above and the histogram below offer the students' participations over the five sessions of English literature.



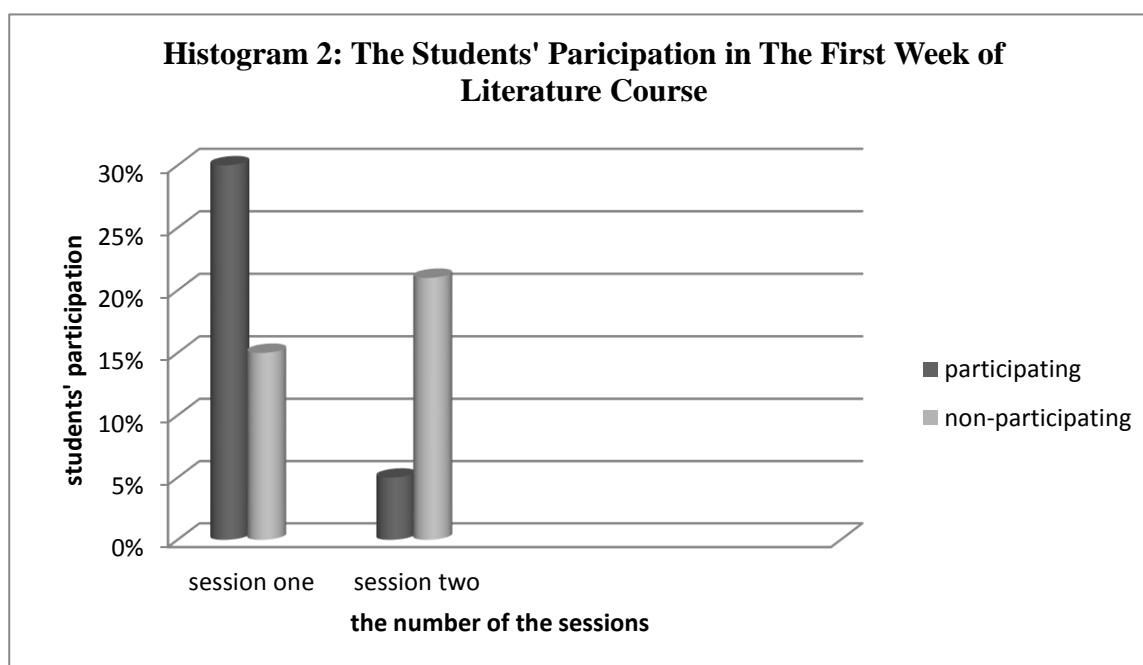
Through our analysis to the table and histogram above, we notice a clear variation in the proportion of the students' participation during the five sessions of English literature.

The percentage of the students' participation was disparate over the sessions, Where we remarked that the proportion of students participating in the first session was high, while it decreased to the lowest proportion in the second session by 5%. It returned to increase during the third ( practical ) session to be in the highest proportion amount to 37% whereas it declined gradually over the forth and fifth session. As we remarked also that the ratio of the non-participating students was increasing over the five session.

The first week in literature course	Participating students	Non-participating students
session One (S1)	30%	15%
Session Two ( S2)	5%	21%

( Table 2 : The Students' Participations in The First Two Sessions in Literature )

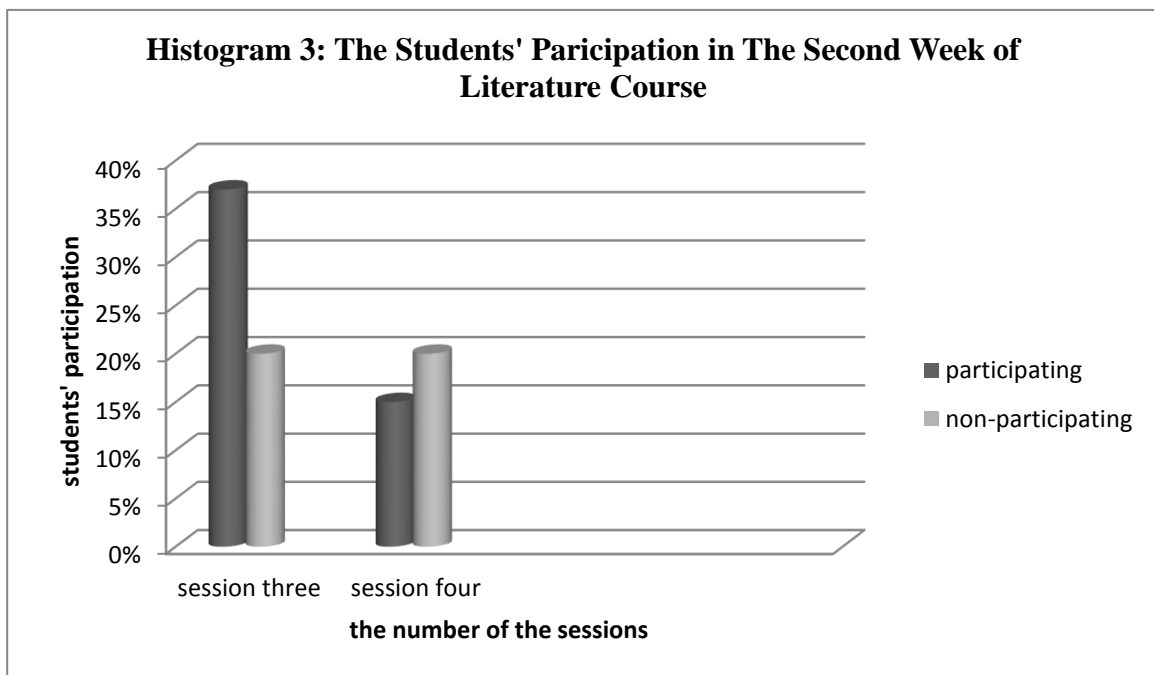
The table above and the histogram below show the proportion of the students' participation in English literature courses over the two first sessions.



By comparing the two sessions of the first week, we notice that the proportion of the students' participating in the first session declined by 25%. While the ratio of non-participating students increased by 6% from the first session.

The second week of literature sessions	Participating students	Non-participating students
session three (S3)	37%	20%
Session four ( S4)	10%	20%

( Table 3 : The Students' Participations in The Second Two Session in Literature )



The table and the histogram above presented the percentage of the students' participation in English literature courses over the second two sessions.

In comparison, the percentage of students participating in the third session decreased by 22% from the four session, while we noted that the proportion of students participating and not participating was equal in both sessions by 20%

### **3.3. Discussion of Findings**

At last, the findings of the classroom observation show that although most of students were attentive, disciplined, and motivated to use the critical thinking, some of them did not show any reaction to the teacher's questions or they answered just for few questions. This may be due with some factors such as: laziness, shyness, anxiety, fear of mistakes, or the bad timing of the session. However, the researcher noticed that the kind of questions the teacher used has motivated her students and consequently they find themselves trying to participate and use the language. In addition, most of the students' answers based on using the critical thinking, they were making comparisons, analyzing information, discussing with the teacher, and expressing their opinions in a rational way. However; as we mentioned before, the absence of any reaction or participation by the students who was attended the literature lectures was maybe due to some factors, the most important was the bad timing of the sessions ( 13:10-14:40 ). By observing those sessions, we noted that the proportion of the non-participating students was high in this time and this maybe because of most students in this period were either tired of studying, hungry or bored. The second reason was the students' laziness, some students attend the lectures just to record their attendance and take the lesson handouts or to talk with their colleagues which make them be inattentive to the lecture or participating in it. Shyness and fear of mistakes were also from the reasons that prevent students to participate. Teachers' feedbacks and their classmates' reactions made some students feel shy or afraid of make mistakes. All of these reasons can not prevent us to think that there are students who do not participate but they are a good students obtain the best marks in the exams.

The reactions of the students participating was positive where they were motivated, attentive, and disciplined. Most of their opinions, questions, and answers were organized, rational and with extensive knowledge of English literature, simply were critically. Moreover,

most of them have good English language which confirmed to us that applying certain activities such comparison and opinion gap exercises can contribute on promoting not just the students' speaking skill but also their critical thinking.

## **8. Description of the Post-test**

After achieving the classroom observation, the researcher has prepared for the post- test in order to assess the students' ability to use the critical thinking. It contained five questions concerning the two poems they studied before( What the Thunder Said and Mending Wall ). However, these questions addressed the following points: the symbolism and realism definition, the main idea of each poem, the function of using symbols, the purpose of repeating the two verses " Something there is that doesn't love a wall" and " Good fences make good neighbors", and finally the reason from referring to the "ignorance " by the word " darkness ". Only twenty English Language students at the second year level have been selected to attain the post-test where they spent around fifteen minutes to answer the questions. The researcher noticed that just one from the twenty students has answered the full questions. While ten students respond from four to three questions. Five of them have answered from two to one questions, whereas the others did not answer any questions in the post-test.

### **8.1.Analyzing the Post-test**

Concerning the first question of the post-test which was about giving the definitions of symbolism and realism, most of the students' answers were correct. Only one student answer the second question that was assigned to identify the main idea of each poem and the student response by the right answer. Correct answers the researcher gather from asking the third question that deals with the function of using symbolism in poems. The same situation with the forth question that was concerning the repeating of the verses " Something there is that

doesn't love a wall" ; " Good fences make good neighbors " and the fifth question that was about the reason of referring to the " ignorance" by the word " darkness", most of the students answers were correct.

#### **4.2 Discussion of Findings**

From the researcher analyses to the students performance in the post-test, we find that although they did not answer the full questions of the post-test ; most of their responses were correct. They seem that they have extensive knowledge of English literature. The questions were speculative questions and they answered them very well which means that they have a good level of critical thinking.

#### **9. General Findings**

The following points summarized the general findings of the present study:

- Most of the students do not participate in the literature sessions and they prefer simple activities.
- Participating students show a positive reactions toward the comparison and opinion gap questions.
- The kind of the questions the teacher use motivate students to speak and use the CT skill.
- Most of English literature Teachers admit the importance of applying the CT in English classrooms.
- Most teachers of literature use the comparison and opinion gap exercises in their classes .

Most of them agree with promoting the CT through applying the comparison and opinion gap activities

## **Conclusion**

This chapter is concerned with gathering an authentic and credible data about the importance of employing the critical thinking in English foreign language classrooms and promoting it through applying the comparison and opinion gap exercises, as well as the students' reactions toward such kind of activities.

The data was collected through using the classroom observation and the interview for both teachers and students. The classroom observation designed to the second year LMD English students at university of Biskra. The interview was presented to 5 teachers of English literature at the same university.

Generally, the analysis of the results shows the importance of teaching the critical thinking skill in English language classrooms and the efficiency of the comparison and opinion gap exercises in developing the learners' critical thinking as well. This means application such skill would lead students to the better achievement in learning and speaking the language.



## **Suggestions and Recommendation**

### **Suggestions**

After analyzing and interpreting the findings, obviously it is necessary to propose some suggestions :

- Allocate a special session in the curriculum for teaching the critical thinking to the first year English students.
- Change in time of some modules ( the modules from 13:10/14:40) especially the modules that require more concentrating from the students.

### **Recommendations**

We state some recommendations that will be useful and helpful for language teachers:

- Teachers have to concentrate more on the learners' interaction rather than lecturing the courses.
- They have to invite students to participate by motivating and helping them.
- They have to change the students habits of storing information from the teachers by focusing more on using the speculative questions.
- They have to give more attention, efforts, and time to train their students in critical thinking.
- They have to design activities that will help them to promote their learners' critical thinking.

# General Conclusion

## **General Conclusion**

Our research was based on motivating the efficiency of the comparison and opinion gap exercises on promoting the learners' critical thinking. Our purposes from this study are to demonstrate the significance of teaching the critical thinking in EFL classrooms and prove the effectiveness of comparison and opinion gap activities on ameliorating the students' critical thinking. To achieve our objectives and answer our questions, we have followed the qualitative research using the classroom observation and the interview as a data collection tool to this study. However, we employed the classroom observation for the second year LMD English students at university of Biskra in the literature courses. The interview was submitted with 5 of teachers of English literature at the same university.

To accomplish our research, we have divided it into two main parts, the theoretical part and the practical part. The first part classified into two chapters, the first chapter handle with the importance of speaking in learning the foreign language. It begins with illustrating the definition of speaking than it discuss some essential points such improving speaking skill using different activities and the role of critical thinking in enhancing it.

In second chapter, we deal with promoting the critical thinking through comparison and opinion gaps exercises. We begin in this chapter by clarifying briefly the definitions of critical thinking and critical pedagogy, we have also mentioned some different barriers that could prevent teaching critical thinking and propose a set of principles for overcoming them. Suggesting some activities to promote the critical thinking in EFL classrooms and determining the role of the comparison and opinion gap tasks on fostering the English learners' critical thinking were also addressed in this chapter.

The second part of this work was the field work. In this part, we analyzed the data gathering from the classroom observation used to the second year English students in English

division at Mohamed khider university and present an interview for 5 teachers of English literature at the same university. We have provided a brief description to each tool before we move to analyze the results.

Based on the obtained results from the application of classroom observation and the interview, we can say that the comparison and opinion gap exercises can participate on promoting the students' critical thinking and help them to the better use of language.

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# Appendices

## **The Interview Questions**

- 1.** Do you think that teaching languages requires using the critical thinking skill?
- 2.** As a teacher, do you adopt the activities that focus on promoting the critical thinking skill in your classes?
- 3.** Is there any barriers on teaching the critical thinking in our language classrooms?
- 4.** Can teaching critical thinking in EFL classrooms help students to improve their speaking skill?
- 5.** What is the subject that needs more to the critical thinking skill? And why?
- 6.** What are the reasons that make students prefer achieving activities based on memorization more than answering speculative questions?
- 7.** Do you employ the comparison and opinion gaps exercises in your class?
- 8.** What are the students' reactions toward these two exercises?
- 9.** Can the comparison and opinion gaps' tasks contribute in promoting the learners' critical thinking?

Dates And hours of the sessions	Number of sessions	Number of presents	Content of the sessions	Content of presentation	Participation		Teacher feedback		The use of comparison and opinion gaps	
					+	-	+	-	C	O
22/02/2017 11 :20-12 :50	Session one									
22/02/2017 13 :10-14 :40	Session two									
01/03/2017 11 :20-12 :50	Session three									
01/03/2017 13 :10-14 :40	Session four									
08/03/2017 11 :20-12 :50	Session five									

### Classroom Observation Checklist

## Post- test Questions :

1. From your prior knowledge about symbolism and realism, define the two concepts in your own words.
2. What is the main idea you can identify from each poem ?
3. What is the function of using symbols ?
4. What is the purpose from repeating the two verses " Something there is that doesn't love a wall "; "Good fences make good neighbors" ?
5. Why does poet refer to the "ignorance" by the word "darkness" ?

Manan

(4)

Questions :

1. From your prior knowledge about symbolism and realism, define the two concepts in your own words.
2. What is the main idea you can identify from each poem?
3. What is the function of using symbols?
4. What is the purpose from repeating the two verses "Something there is that doesn't love a wall"; "Good fences make good neighbors"?
5. Why does poet refer to the "ignorance" by the word "darkness"?

1/ Symbolism: it is a literary movement in which the writers tend to use symbols in their writings so it is difficult to understand.

2/ Realism: also it is a literary movement in which the writer tends to reflect the real life of humans; the (poet) writer speaks about something happened in real life. using (description) accurate and detailed description.

3/ The function from using symbols: challenge the reader to think.

4/ The purpose was to confirm that idea that means it is better to keep distances between people; in order to build a good relation it would be better to keep the wall or the limits between each other.

5/ because he was trying to convince him why should we make walls but the neighbour was ignoring him and told him "good fences make good neighbours".

Meriem (A)

Questions :

1. From your prior knowledge about symbolism and realism, define the two concepts in your own words.
2. What is the main idea you can indicate from each poem?
3. What is the function of using symbols?
4. What is the purpose from repeating the two verses "Something there is that doesn't love a wall"; "Good fences make good neighbors"?
5. Why does poet refer to the "ignorance" by the word "darkness"?

1. Symbolism: is A literary movement, when the writer means the hidden meaning in order to skip from the <sup>identify</sup> ~~o/s~~ ~~o/s~~ ~~o/s~~ ~~o/s~~

Realism: is A literary movement, when the writer use very clear language. is when you feel that the writer is retelling you a story [details]. (1)

2. The idea that I took it from T. S. Eliot poem "What the Thunder Said" is that ~~book~~ is that 0

The idea that I took it from Robert Frost - "Mending wall" is that we don't have to build wall to show that we are neighbors or to protect our privacy, and also it talks about ~~we don't have to build to~~ generally it talks about discrimination. (1)

3. The function of using symbols: is to make people think about the hidden meaning (what the writer really meant). 0, 1, 5

4. The purpose from repeating the two verses " is that even if you think that we shouldn't build the wall, but building small (fences) make us good neighbors (there is kind of respect and limits between us). 1, 5

Fatma

(7)

Questions :

1. From your prior knowledge about symbolism and realism, define the two concepts in your own words.
2. What is the main idea you can indicate from each poem?
3. What is the function of using symbols?
4. What is the purpose from repeating the two verses "Something there is that doesn't love a wall"; "Good fences make good neighbors"?
5. Why does poet refer to the "ignorance" by the word "darkness"?

1 ⇒ - Symbolism = it is a hard style of writing and the whole story is symbolic and that means using symbols to be freedom to say what they want without being afraid - 01  
- Realism = is also a literary movement and the story ~~is~~ is imaginative but it must go ~~before~~ behind the reality - 0,5

2 ⇒

3 ⇒ The function of using symbols is to say their ideas with no afraid from punishment - 1,5

4 ⇒

5 ⇒ because the word darkness refers to the wrong ideas that we have ~~##~~ in our minds and we took them from our father's

1,5 02



OKba

5

Questions :

1. From your prior knowledge about symbolism and realism, define the two concepts in your own words.
2. What is the main idea you can indicate from each poem?
3. What is the function of using symbols?
4. What is the purpose from repeating the two verses "Something there is that doesn't love a wall"; "Good fences make good neighbors"?
5. Why does poet refer to the "ignorance" by the word "darkness"?

1/ Symbolism it's lit movement appeared in France in 20<sup>th</sup> century the Symbolists have freedom to express their personal thought and ideas it's challenging to address minorities not any one could understand it

Realism: it's best-representative in novels and short story & being objective and use simple lang any one could understand it

3/ to have freedom to express your own ideas without being afraid

4/ to attract the reader give it importance to these verses

## المخلص

أجريت الدراسة الحالية للتحقق من مدى كفاءة تمارين المقارنة والرأي في تحسين التفكير النقدي لطلاب اللغة الانجليزية. حيث تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى الفهم الأفضل لمفهوم التفكير النقدي وتوضيح أهميته في تدريس اللغات عامة والانجليزية خاصة وذلك من خلال تطبيق عدة أنشطة وتمارين, كان أهمها نشاطي المقارنة والرأي. ونحاول من خلال بحثنا هذا إلى إظهار مدى مساهمة هذه الأنشطة في تحسين مستوى التفكير النقدي والأداء اللغوي للطلاب. تتبع هذه الدراسة المنهج أو البحث النوعي من خلال استعمال الباحث لأدوات جمع البيانات الخاصة بهذا المنهج وهما: مراقبة الفصول الدراسية والمقابلة. وقد طبقت مراقبة الفصول على 466 طالب بالسنة الثانية لغة انجليزية جامعة محمد خيضر بيسكرة لعام 2017/2016. في حين تم إجراء المقابلة مع خمسة من أساتذة الأدب الانجليزي بنفس الجامعة. وتكمن أهم النتائج المحصل عليها في قدرة ترميني المقارنة والرأي على تحسين مهارة التفكير النقدي والأداء اللغوي لطلاب اللغة الانجليزية بالإضافة إلى اتفاق أغلب أساتذة اللغة على أهمية تطبيق التفكير النقدي وتطويره بالاعتماد على هذه الأنشطة.