The Assessment of Critical Thinking Skills in TEFL Exams

The Case of Third year LMD Students of English at Larbi Benmhidi University- Oum El Bouaghi

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master’s Degree in Didactics of Foreign Languages

Presented by: Widad HADJERIS

Supervisor: Dr. Leila DJOUIMA

Examiner

Miss Souad ZERROUKI
2018-2019
Dedication

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

I Thank Allah for giving me the ability, the patience, the strength to accomplish this work, and realize my dreams.

I dedicate this simple and very modest work to those who gave me life, love, happiness, encouragement, and all their tenderness, my beloved Parents,

To my unique sister: Meryem,

To my friends who kept encouraging me to complete this work,

To my best friends

To my teachers.
Acknowledgement

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

First and foremost, I thank Allah the Almighty for guiding our steps to the right way and providing us with patience and strength to praise him for everything he granted us.

I would also like to express my infinite gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Leila Djouima, for her precious guidance, support and patience.

All my gratitude goes for all those who contributed in the realization of this work.
Abstract

Critical thinking has become the most important outcome in EFL classes over the globe. The current study aims at investigating the assessment of critical thinking at the level of TEFL exams. We hypothesize that TEFL exams fail to address students’ thinking skills. To test the hypothesis, a descriptive method has been conducted, and from which a number of data were gathered through one questionnaire that have been submitted to seventy (70) EFL license students at Larbi Benmhidi University- Oum El Bouaghi. A qualitative method has also been used throughout an analysis of samples of TEFL exams over the period of 2 years. The findings of the students’ questionnaire have revealed that students are aware of the importance and benefits of developing critical thinking skills, on the other hand, students rarely uses this skills when answering TEFL exams questions this due to many reasons such: lack of time, or exams questions do not include this skills. The results of the analysis of TEFL exam question from 2017-2018 have shown that questions are arranged from simple too complex to meet the different levels of students’ abilities. However, the questions only targeted the knowledge, comprehension, and application levels of students, and rarely target the first level of critical thinking skills “analysis level”. Thus TEFL teachers are recommended to include students thinking skills when exams questions

Keywords: assessment, TEFL exams, and critical thinking.
List of Abbreviation and Symbols

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language.

**TEFL:** Teaching English as a foreign language.

**CT:** Critical thinking.

**CTS:** Critical Thinking Skills.

**Q:** Question.

**%:** Percentage.
List of Tables

Table 1: Learners’ Gender

Table 2: The Importance of Assessment in EFL Classes

Table 3: The type of assessment that used by EFL teachers.

Table 4: The Importance of Critical Thinking Skills.

Table 5: Benefits of Developing Critical Thinking Skills.

Table 6: Sense of Responsibility for Developing Students’ CT Skills.

Table 7: Students’ Attitudes toward Exams

Table 8: Purpose of Exams.

Table 9: Arrangement of Exam Questions.

Table 10: The Assessment of Students’ Cognitive Abilities in TEFL Exams.

Table 11: The Frequent Verbs Used by Teachers in TEFL Exams Questions.

Table 12: Frequency of TEFL Exams Assessment of Students’ Point of View

Table 13: Answering Questions in Critical Way.

Table 14: Answering Questions in Critical Way.

Table 15: Advantages of Assessing Critical Thinking in TEFL Exams
List of Figures

Figure 1: The Assessment Process Tools.

Figure 2: Illustrates the Cognitive Domain of Bloom’s Taxonomy.

Figure 3: Illustrate a Sample of Check List Used To Analyse TEFL Exams

Figure 4: Show TEFL First-Semester Re-Sit Examination 2017

Figure 5: Checklist for TEFL First-Semester Re-sit examination 2017 Analysis

Figure 6: Second Semester TEFL Exam May25, 2017.

Figure 7: Checklist for TEFL Exams 2017 Analysis

Figure 8: Part One of TEFL Exam January 2018.

Figure 9: Part two of TEFL Exam January 2018.

Figure 11: Checklist of TEFL Exam January 2018.

Figure 12: TEFL Second Semester Re-Sit Exam 2018
Table of Contents

Dedication .................................................................................................................. I
Acknowledgment ...................................................................................................... II
Abstract .................................................................................................................... III
List of Abbreviations ............................................................................................... IV
List of Tables ............................................................................................................ V
List of Figures ......................................................................................................... VI
Table of Contents .................................................................................................... VII
Introduction ............................................................................................................. 1
Statement of the Problem ......................................................................................... 1
Aim of the Study ....................................................................................................... 1
Significance of the Study ......................................................................................... 2
Research questions .................................................................................................. 2
Research hypothesis ................................................................................................ 2
Research Methodology ............................................................................................. 2
Structure of dissertation .......................................................................................... 3

Chapter One: Assessment of Critical Thinking Skills

Section One: Assessment

Introduction ............................................................................................................. 4
1. Definition of Assessment .................................................................................... 5
2. The Difference between Assessment, Testing and Evaluation ......................... 5
3. Types of Assessment ......................................................................................... 5
3.1 Initial assessment ............................................................................................. 6
3.1.1 Sources of initial assessment according to Scannel and Tracy (1975) ........... 6
3.2 Formative Assessment .................................................................................... 7
3.2.1 Sources of Formative Assessment ....................................................... 7
3.3 Summative assessment ................................................................. 7
3.3.1 Types of Summative Assessment .................................................... 8
4. Purpose of Assessment ................................................................. 8
4.1. Instructional ............................................................................. 9
4.2. Diagnosis ............................................................................... 9
4.3. Administrative ........................................................................ 9
5. Role of teacher in assessment ....................................................... 9
7. Issues Related To Assessment ......................................................... 10
Conclusion ..................................................................................... 10

Section two: critical thinking

Introduction ..................................................................................... 11
1. What is thinking? ....................................................................... 11
2. Critical thinking definitions ....................................................... 13
2. Critical thinking in higher education ......................................... 13
3. Blooms taxonomy .................................................................... 14
3.1 Cognitive Domain .................................................................. 15
3.1.1 Knowledge ........................................................................ 15
3.1.2 Comprehension .................................................................. 15
3.1.3 Application .................................................................... 16
3.1.4 Analysis .......................................................................... 16
3.1.5 Synthesis ........................................................................ 16
3.1.6 Evaluation ........................................................................ 16
3.2 The Affective Domain ............................................................. 16
3.3 The Psychomotor Domain ......................................................... 18
Chapter Two: Analysis of the Students’ Questionnaire and TEFL exams questions

Introduction .............................................................................................................. 27
1.1. Students’ Questionnaire .................................................................................... 27
1.1.1. Aim of the Questionnaire ............................................................................... 27
1.1.2. Sample ........................................................................................................... 28
1.1.3. Description of the Questionnaire .................................................................... 28
1.1.4. Analysis of the Results .................................................................................. 28
1.1.5. Discussion of the Students’ Questionnaire...................................................... 45
2.1. Analysis of TEFL exams questions .................................................................... 46
2.1.1. Aim of analysis ............................................................................................. 46
2.1.2. Sample ......................................................................................................... 46
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1.3 Description of TEFL Exams Sheet</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.4. Description of the analysis of exams from 2017 – 2018</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.5. Description of the Checklist for Exams Analysis</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.6. Analysis of the TEFL Exams</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.7. Discussion</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General conclusion</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of References</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
General Introduction

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, education has highlighted the importance of evolving critical thinking skills in both educational and social life. In higher education, students are expected to analyze ideas from lectures content, give their own judgment about scholars’ claims rather than accept them uncritically. Unfortunately, several EFL educators at Larbi Benmhidi University frequently experience that learners face great difficulties when they ask them to do so in formal TEFL exams. As they tend to reproduce the information without a further elaboration, and occasionally use unrelated proofs to backing their statements. The problem possibly comes as the result of the type of assessment used at university level that is highly based on memorization rather than on all students’ cognitive abilities.

The university experience can foster the development of critical thinking in students. However, current university graduates often lack critical thinking skills. Therefore, in order to solve this problem we propose that EFL learners should not be assessed only on the level of memorization, and the recapitulation of the lectures content. TEFL Exams have to target the students’ critical thinking skills. TEFL teachers also should not only assess but train students on how to use their critical thinking skills when answering exams questions, by providing them meaningful knowledge that elicits, higher-order thinking skills such analysis, problem solving, creativity, and decision –making and evaluation, rather than recalling facts.

Aim of the study

Assessment that is based on rote learning and memorisation is no longer effective. Therefore, this study aims at investigating the assessment of critical thinking at the level of TEFL examination questions.
Significance of the Study

The current study is significant for several reasons. First, assessment plays a vital role in language teaching so it needs to be continuously examined to ensure students’ progress. Second, we attempt to show that students will have the opportunity to become more motivated while implementing their critical thinking skills in their formal exams and tests. Third, it will be a great help for EFL teachers as it provides support on how to assess critical thinking in exams and tests to make the learning process effective and comprehensible.

Research questions

The research addresses the following questions:

1- Are exams questions arranged from simple to complex to meet all the different levels of learners ‘cognitive abilities? 

2- What is the impact of developing EFL students’ critical thinking skills on their learning outcome? 

3- Which levels of critical thinking are more prevalent in TEFL exams at graduate level at Larbi Benmhidi University? 

4- What are the students’ attitudes towards the assessment of critical thinking skills in TEFL formal exams? 

Research hypothesis

Based on the previously asked questions, it is hypothesized that:

TEFL formal tests and exams fail to address critical thinking skills.

Research Methodology

A descriptive study is conducted to gather data concerning learners’ attitudes toward the assessment of critical thinking in TEFL formal exams by submitting a questionnaire to third
year students from the department of English at Larbi Benmhidi University. Moreover, an analysis of TEFL exam samples over a given period of 2 years is also carried out.

**Participants**

There are two main reasons behind choosing third year students to answer this questionnaire. First, this is the level at which they are introduced to the TEFL module. Second, this is the exit profile to start a highly demanding teaching career in terms of critical thinking skills.

**Structure of Dissertation**

The work is composed of two chapters. The first chapter is theoretical; it is divided into two sections. The first section is mainly concerned with definitions and theories, as well as a types and issues related to assessment. The second section is related to critical thinking: its definition, types, and advantages. The second chapter involves the analysis of the students’ questionnaire and exams.
Chapter One: Assessment and Critical Thinking Skills

Introduction

Assessment plays a vital role in language learning and teaching. It is generally believed that students’ skills development, their motivation to learn, and their life career is highly influenced by assessment. Boud (1995) claims that “...assessment methods have a greater influence on how and what students learn than any other factor” (p.39). On this basis, assessment has been the target for so many EFL researchers, and is considered to be the most important, complex, and challenging task.

Speaking about assessment leads us to the reference to its crucial purpose, which is developing students’ critical thinking skills. Nowadays it is essential for students to know not only the basics of the target language, but also to be able to think critically, to analyze, and to make their own interpretations. Acquiring this skill will help students to face the world that is constantly changing.

The present chapter is composed of two sections the first section is an overview that covers some aspects and connotations of the term assessment, its types and aims; the second section however, involves the critical thinking skill and how to assess it in EFL classrooms.
Section One: Assessment

1. Definition of Assessment

Assessment is a methodical process for collecting data about the different variables in EFL teaching programs to make critical decisions about students’ skills and abilities. Bachman, L and Palmer (2004) defined assessment as “a process of collecting information about something that we are interested in, according to procedures that are systematic and substantially grounded” (p. 6-7). In other words, Bachman describes assessment briefly as a process of gathering data, which is not collected randomly but based on a specific consideration and techniques, and produced from various sources. Some of these sources are formal and include written examinations, test and classroom presentations, and results in student's grades. Others are informal and include observations, interviews and checklists, homework and classroom activities.

2. The Difference between Assessment, Testing and Evaluation

In the field of language teaching and learning, the terms assessment, testing and evaluation are frequently used to refer to the same action, which is gathering data, however, most EFL researchers agreed that these terms are truly bounded but differ from each other. These claims can be confirmed throughout a brief definition that is given to each term on itself.

Assessment is used to determine students’ areas of strength and weakness to assist them to make decisions to improve their learning and to choose the right programs for each learner and classify them according to their abilities. While test is used to inspect someone's knowledge of something to conclude, what he or she knows or has learned. Testing measures the level of skill or knowledge that has been reached. Evaluation on the other hand is the procedure of making decisions built on standards and proofs.

3. Types of Assessments
Types of assessment are series of actions that are used to identify student needs. Scannel and Tracy (1975) proposed that the assessment process must take place in two phases: the pre-teaching stage, where the students’ abilities are assessed in order to propose the accurate teaching program for them; and the teaching stage, where the assessment is done for determining the efficiency of the teaching process.

Assessments’ types differ according to the purpose for which they are used. Formal assessment for example measures students’ knowledge and abilities at the end of a unit. It is also used to get information about students’ achievement in predetermined times. Informal assessment however, allows tutors to measure the constant improvement of students’ skills and abilities.

- Tests
- Written/Oral exams
- National Tests
- Teacher-made Test
- Classroom Attendance
- Classroom Participation
- Classroom Activities
- Homework

**Figure 1: The assessment process tools.**

**3.1 Initial Assessment**

It comprises the measures undertaken by the teachers to see what students know about the topic of the lecture, and to correct some false impression that students have before teaching takes place. Initial assessment main goal is to help teachers to categorize students according to their levels and set the appropriate course design to fulfill their needs.
3.1.1 Sources of Initial Assessment

- **Pre-tests** are often used to assess how much students know about a content, or to get an idea about their abilities.
- **Self-assessment**: it is an act to identify one’s skills and self-competencies.
- **Discussion board responses**: it is a sort of prompting questions about lecture content for students to do further reading.
- **Interviews** are used to diagnose students’ knowledge and need. This can be done by interviewing students in brief, private, around 10-minute interview of each student.

3.2 Formative Assessment

Formative assessment offers feedback and data during the instructional procedure, while learning is taking place. It consists of a continuous checks that the teacher creates to determine whether students are gaining the knowledge and skills that are required to be learnt in a specific unit. This type of assessment helps the teacher to modify the method being used, or the way used to provide the knowledge… for upcoming tutoring. “Formative assessment takes place during learning and is aimed to help learning and teaching by giving appropriate feedback. “(Lewy, 1990).

3.2.1 Sources of Formative Assessment

According to Scannel and Tracy (1975) sources of formative assessment are stated as follow

- **Observation**: it is a formal or informal observation of students during lecture activities in class to have a feedback about their progress.
- **Homework exercises** which are mainly used as a review for formal exams.
- **Question and answer**: sessions which can be planned or spontaneous.
• **Student feedback**: collected by periodically answering specific questions about the instruction and their self-evaluation of performance and progress.

3.3 Summative assessment

Summative assessment summarizes what the students learned during a course and it is regularly done at the end of the semester (Brown, 2004). It can also be defined as a process of gathering data, and the evaluation conducted at the end of each unit to determine how well the students have learned the content and skills they have been taught. It also measures the effectiveness of the teaching process and this can be determined throughout the students’ grades, attendance …

Summative assessment, therefore, is usually used to check the understanding of what has been studied; it is used to make formal decisions about the students’ outcomes that can affect their future. However, formative assessment is not concerned with students’ final grade, but is rather used as a positive feedback to improve the learning process. As a result, summative assessment requires individual evaluation, final product evaluation can be assigned in formative assessment, and the latter can be used as an initiation or preparation for summative assessment.

3.3.1 Types of Summative Assessment

This type of assessment according to Scannel and Tracy (1975) can have many sources such:

• **Examinations**: they are formal tests to distinguish skills progress in a particular content that students take.

• **Final examinations**: they are tests given to students at the end of a course to assess each their knowledge of a specific subject.

• **Term papers**: These are research papers written by students over an academic term.

• **Projects**: they are an individual or collaborative initiative that is cautiously planned and done by students.
4. Purposes of Assessment

According to Brown (2004), Assessment has different types and each type serves a specific purpose. Some believe that the only aim of assessment is to score or rank students according to their grades to represent the whole of a student's learning. In fact, assessment has numerous purposes that vary according to the following aims teachers and students want to achieve:

4.1 Instructional

The most crucial purpose of assessment is instructional. However, most of the time it is being underestimated or neglected. Assessment can be used as a tool for gathering information about students’ understanding and abilities to decide the next step for teaching and learning such as creating suitable learning activity or categorizing students and selecting the further education or training for them.

4.2. Diagnosis

Assessment is used to detect individual students’ strengths and weaknesses, when this later is being identified; teachers select the right program for them to provide support for learning. Teachers use diagnostic assessment in class to adjust course instruction and to better meet their students’ learning needs (Black and William, 1998).

4.3. Administrative

In order to facilitate and comprehend students’ progress and achievement by administrative members, teachers, students, parents, programmers develop a method of grades and marks that later helps to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of students, show their achievement and hard work. It can be used as a tool for students to communicate what they learned to their teacher and parents. Marks can also be a means to aid the students to have a sense of accomplishment,
which will give them a positive motivation to learn that can be positively correlated with their achievement.

6. Issues Related to Assessment “Final Exams”

The issue of final exams has considerable implications on our educational system especially in the field of foreign language teaching where the structure of language is seen as a vital outcome and the students’ proficiency is frequently measured through final exams. Exams can cause stress and anxiety to students due to time pressure, the exhaustion of having to sit multiple examinations in a single day, which may affect their performance that lead to lower marks. As a result, students’ educational and social lives will be affected negatively in short and long term. That is to say, higher marks are seen as requirements for university entrance or a condition to get a job. EFL researchers such as Alderson and Wall (1993) claimed that the effect of final exams does not just affect students but also affects the content, and the method used in teaching and learning. "Language tests as influencing not only the “degree and depth of teaching,” but also “attitudes toward the content, method, etc. of teaching and learning” (p. 120–121). The wash-back effect of exams also can influence the teacher and the way of teaching. In other words, if the marks are low the teacher will be unconsciously less motivated, less productive and less helpful.

Conclusion

Assessment in EFL classes plays a vital part in the education process, as it describes whether the goals of teaching are being met; assessment can provide reliable data on student learning, effectiveness of the curriculum, the teaching methods, and education needs of learners. Assessment is also a significant way to increase learners’ academic achievement as it helps students to recognize and appreciate their own strengths and build confidence and motivation to learn and the will to overcome their weaknesses. In addition, assessment can be a great help
for teachers by letting them know about how students learn. Consequently, this will help them to be more effective instructors.
Section Two: Critical Thinking

Introduction

The world that we live in changes constantly due to many factors like science and technology. New things are being introduced as necessities and some other things are being eliminated. These changes affect individuals’ lives in every aspect such as their work, education… In the field of education researchers and tutors used to believe that the main goal of learning a second language is to be able to translate texts from their origin language to the target one. Nowadays, they believe that developing critical thinking skills is an essential goal of education to prepare students for their next step in learning and for future career. According to these claims, students who cannot find new ways to develop their skills and abilities they become an overload on society in the future. Likewise, John Dewey (1933) pointed out that learning to think is the central purpose of education. Therefore, teachers should promote critical thinking skills in their classrooms to encourage learners to think and reason in a proper way.

This section is devoted to the concept of critical thinking, its definition, the concept of Bloom’s Taxonomy (1956) and its relationship to critical thinking. In addition to discussing critical thinking in higher education, as well as strategies to enhance critical thinking skills, and finally assessing critical thinking.

1. What is Thinking?

Thinking is a mental activity that has a great value for humans, through thinking people develop ideas that allow them to make sense of the word around them, interpret action and gestures, communicate with others, adjust in new environment, decide the next step in their education, career…etc. Thinking allows a person to learn and get knowledge through a process of reasoning, analyzing, problem solving, and decision-making (Nickerson, et al. 1985). Not all
humans think in the same way. This is due to many factors such as environment, religion, and social beliefs…etc. Some of these factors such as bad criticism, wrong interpretation could unconsciously hinder human progress. The individual should develop thinking abilities that allow him to be the stakeholder in his life decisions through critical thinking (Nickerson, et al. 1985).

1. Critical Thinking Definition

The term critical thinking was first used by the philosophical school then the educational school and the psychological school. Each of these gave its own definition and despite of their controversy about critical thinking and its nature they all were aware of its importance in the educational context and considered it the most priority outcome in education.

Many definitions of critical thinking emerged because of the multiplicity of theoretical backgrounds that dealt with it. John Dewey's (1933,p. 91-94 ) is one of the first authors who attempted to define critical thinking as reflexive thinking that is linked to activity and perseverance, a thought provoking reflection or belief that there is real ground supported by the conclusion. John Dewey believes that critical thinking generally involves evaluating standards, trusting issues or hypotheses, and leading to judgment or a work-oriented direction Udall and Daniels (1991) defined it as.” The ability to verify and evaluate a phenomenon based on specific criteria” (p, 49). The American Psychological Association (1990) defined it as:” a process that leads to subjective judgments based on induction, reasoning, and the tendency to seek knowledge and evidence”.

Critical thinking according to (Elder and Paul, 1994, p.34-35) “….is best understood as the ability of thinkers to take charge of their own thinking. This requires that students develop sound standards and values for examining and judging their own thinking and regularly use those standards and values to enhance its quality”.
Paul (1993) clarifies that critical thinking is the ability to take in control of one’s own thinking, which includes accessing, analyzing, evaluating the efficiency of thinking based on reason. Thus, the purpose of critical thinking is to give the learner the ability to develop his/her own knowledge and take the responsibility about one’s own learning.

2. Critical Thinking in Higher Education

For the last century, educators have emphasized the importance of critical thinking in education. For that reason, critical thinking is supposed to be the highest recommended skill in higher education. Tsui (1999) claimed that critical thinking turns out to be so significant in the educational system, since it helps students to improve the way they express their ideas, analyze the logical structure of texts, and improves comprehension abilities. As a result, most university today tries to imply the critical thinking skills in their curricular, and developing new methods to assess it in their classes in order to enhance the educational outcome.

Today one of the most important criteria for success in College is the ability to think independently while being logical at the same time. Knowledge of Critical Thinking Skills enables students to not only answer to questions coherently with a logical structure, it also helps them reason and present their thoughts in an organized and persuasive manner.

However, most tutors see students as “empty containers that needs refilling.” They mostly focus on drilling students to memorize lectures. Most times, they tend to ignore student’s personality. Because of this, student’s critical thinking skill will not be developed and this later will hinder their learning progress.
3. Bloom’s taxonomy

Bloom’s Taxonomy was suggested in 1956 under the direction of the educational psychologist Dr Benjamin Bloom in order to stimulate higher forms of thinking in education, such as analyzing and creativity rather than just remembering facts. The commission under Bloom’s supervision identified three main domains of educational activities (Bloom, et al. 1956): Cognitive: mental skills (knowledge), affective (growth in feelings or emotional areas; attitude or self), and psychomotor (manual or physical skills).

At that time (1956), the commission realized that they have little knowledge in training physical abilities within the college level. Therefore, they decided to omit the psychomotor domain and created an elaborate gathering for the cognitive and affective domains. Their assembling divides the three domains into subsections, beginning from the simplest cognitive process to the most complex.

3.1. The Cognitive Domain

The cognitive domain includes knowledge and the development of rational skills (Bloom, 1956). This contains the memorization of precise evidences, practical patterns, and concepts that assist in the growth of intellectual abilities and skills. Bloom (1956) identified six major categories of cognitive processes: knowledge, understanding, analysis, application, synthesis, and evaluation. This taxonomy begins with the first crucial procedures, and then progressively develop to a more complex one. Every level depends on its previous level. Thus, all previous processes are a precondition for accomplishment in any following process and for succeeding thinking objectives. This Taxonomy claimed that it offers a significant plan for teachers to use to develop higher order thinking and help them in planning presentation tasks, and questions.
3.11. Knowledge

In terms of critical thinking, the first vital level for students is to be able to obtain information from what they see, hear, or read; so the student would be able to identify: the topic, the issue, main point…etc. To acquire information of what is being communicated, student should first recognize the topic discussed.

To assess the level of knowledge, the teacher can ask the students questions to test whether they gained particular information from the lecture. Definitions, naming dates… etc. are all examples of knowledge type questions. It can also contain knowledge of the main ideas being taught.

3.1.2 Comprehension

Comprehension is perhaps the most stressed intellectual skill in the learning process. At comprehension levels students’ upgrade from simply recalling facts to the level of understanding of the information. Within this level, they will be able to understand the information and put them into their own words.
3.1.3 Application

This refers to the application of knowledge to a different situation. In this level, students will have to apply and relate the knowledge they have learned to a new situation. In other words, they might be asked to solve a problem with the information they have gained in class, to create a sustainable solution.

3.1.4 Analysis

At the level of analysis, students will have to break down the knowledge and show the relations between the parts. In addition to that, students will be obliged to go beyond knowledge and application and actually see patterns that they can use to analyse a problem. This involves dividing ideas into their component parts; therefore investigating and discriminating between the relationships of the parts.

3.1.5 Synthesis

At this level, students would be able to combine parts of knowledge from multiple subjects to reproduce innovative ideas that can be used to solve problems. In this stage, Students are required to use the particular facts to produce new theories.

Evaluation

This level is about making judgments about the worth of supplied information for given purposes. Evaluation is believed to be the highest level of cognitive thinking by many tutors because of its complexity. At this level; Students are expected to assess information and draw conclusions.

3.2 The Affective Domain

This domain was first described in 1964, and attributed to David Krathwohl as the primary author. The Affective domain focuses on boosting the growth of aspects such as student feelings, motivation, attitudes, perceptions and values towards the material they are learning. This domain exceeds activities of ranging from listening to others, contributing in discussions
to showing self-reliance when working independently (Bloom et al., 1964). According to
Krathwohl, like the cognitive objectives, affective objectives can also be divided into a hierarchy that
is arranged from simpler feelings to those that are more complex.

- **Receiving**
  
  This refers to the learner’s feeling to the existence of stimuli – awareness, readiness to
  receive, or selected attention.

- **Responding**
  
  This refers to the learners’ active attention to stimuli and his/her motivation to learn –
  agreement, willing replies, or feelings of fulfilment.

- **Valuing**
  
  This refers to the learner’s beliefs of self-value, approval, or commitment. An acceptance,
  preference, or commitment to a value.

- **Organisation**
  
  This refers to the learner’s awareness of the importance of involving their beliefs in their
  learning, once their beliefs become internalized; the learner organizes them according to priority.

- **Characterization**
  
  This refers to the learner’s highest level of internalization and relates to behavior that
  reflects a generalized set of values, and a characterization or a philosophy about life. At this
  level, the learner is capable of practicing and acting on their values or beliefs.
3.3 The Psychomotor Domain

This domain deals with physical movement and skills that may be required in order to complete a course or subject matter. Traditionally, the objectives of this domain are concerned with the physically encoding of information, with movement and with activities where muscles are used for articulating concepts. This area also refers to natural, autonomic responses or reflexes.

4. Critical Thinking Skills:

Swartz, R., Fisher, S., & Parks, S. (1999) classify thinking skills into three categories: First, the brainstorming skills related to creative thinking. These are skills to bring new ideas, and to develop imagination. Second, skills for clarifying ideas. These are related to the skills of analysis to improve the ability to understand and the ability to use information. Third, skills and rationality of ideas related to the process of evaluating the rationality of ideas put forward. On the other hand, Facione (1998) identified five skills for critical thinking as follows:

4.1 Analysis

This involves identifying the relationships with the intended and actual signs between the words, questions, concepts, attributes and other forms of expression of belief, judgment, experience, information or opinions.

4.2 Induction Skill

It is the ability of reasoning in which the premises are viewed as providing some evidence for the truth of the conclusion; this is in contrast to deductive reasoning. While the conclusion of a deductive argument is certain, the truth of the conclusion of an inductive argument may be probable, based upon the evidence given. Examples of this skill are scientific evidence and experiments. Inductive statistics extrapolate even if this extrapolation is based on prediction or
probability. The extrapolation also includes indications and judgments issued by the person after reference to a situation or events.

4.3 Inference Skill

This skill refers to the practice of a set of processes that depend on the generation of arguments and hypotheses, the search for evidence, the finding of results, and the identification of causal connections and relationships.

4.4 Deductive Skill

This skill refers to identifying and providing the necessary elements to derive the logical results of the intended relationships between words, qualities, questions, or any other form of expression.

4.5 Evaluation Skill

Measuring the credibility of information or expressions i.e. describe a person's understanding and perception, describing his or her experience, status, judgment, belief, and opinion, and thus measuring the logical power of the intended relationships.

5. Approaches for Teaching Critical Thinking

The first approach for teaching critical thinking in higher education is active learning instructional strategies, which include a wide range of activities that share the common element of involving students in doing things (Bonwell & Eison 1991). Active learning instructional strategies can be created and used to engage students in thinking critically or creatively, speaking with a partner, in a small group, or with the entire class, expressing ideas through writing, exploring personal attitudes and values, (e) giving and receiving feedback, and reflecting upon the learning process.

The second strategy is to teach critical thinking skills through formative assessment, which can offer feedback, provide practice in critical thinking. Using the collected feedback helps the teachers to find new ways to engages students’ metacognitive skills in class. Bloom’s
taxonomy has been a tool to help us understand what level of cognitive skill is required throughout test questions. When we define critical thinking skills as higher-order cognitive skills, those higher-order skills are level three: application, and above.

6. Advantages of Developing Critical Thinking Skills

Most EFL researchers stressed the significance of developing critical thinking for both teacher and student, and how this later is beneficial in learning and learning processes. Thomas and Smoot (1994) emphasized that teaching students’ critical thinking in the first year of university, will raise their awareness of the importance and need of this type of thinking. They will also be able to use and integrate critical thinking skills in the coming years of their studies, and various works. Therefore, the development of critical thinking should be a continuous process throughout the university. The importance of developing critical thinking skills are also seen through the work of (Ramer, 1999) as stated below:

- The development of critical thinking improves teachers' ability to teach and produce valuable and responsible process achievements,
- it facilitates the ability of teachers to produce activities that allow students to practice these skills in the classroom,
- it improves student achievement in different subjects,
- it encourages learners to practice a wide range of thinking skills such as: problem solving, cross-thinking, creative thinking, precise comparison, discussion, originality in the production of ideas, vision of things i.e. overview, analysis, evaluation, conclusion, research, safe decision making, organization, flexibility and communication, intelligent negotiation with oneself and others,
- it encourages the creation of a comfortable classroom environment characterized by free dialogue and meaningful discussion,
- it develops the ability of the learner to self-study and search for clear knowledge; this reflects on his awareness of the value of himself and his achievements, and makes learners more receptive to the diversity of knowledge and employment in their successful classroom behavior,
- it gives students the ability to understand the cultural differences between civilizations,
- it transforms the process of acquiring knowledge from a passive to a mental activity leading to a better mastery of knowledge content, and a deeper understanding of it as learning is essentially a process of thinking.
- Students earn correct and acceptable explanations for the topics raised in a wide range of daily life problems, and work to reduce false claims,
- it leads students to monitor their thinking, which helps them, make decisions in their lives.

7. Assessing Critical Thinking

Assessment is still a major problem in developing curricula to improve learners ‘critical thinking skills. Until a comprehensive definition of the concept of critical thinking and how it can be assessed, suitable curricula for teaching are hard to develop. Despite of the absence of an understandable theory of critical thinking, there has been a great effort to develop some assessment tools for it. Three main methods are used to assess critical thinking that are Standardized Critical Thinking Tests, teachers developed tests, teaching students to assess their own thinking.

7.1. Standardized Critical Thinking Tests

This type of method is based on multiple choice responses and essay tests. The multiple-choice tests are used by teachers to measure students’ thinking skills (Facione, 1989). These tests tackle some aspects of critical thinking. Such as clarification, analysis, suggestion, recognition of assumptions, assessing reliability, and identifying misconceptions in reasoning.
To assess students and give them grades, these tests use an instrument called “machine scoring” which automatically counts the suitable answer for the question, and gives a final mark.

This type is considered by many researchers as less effective in assessing critical thinking skills, because it does not allow students to write their own arguments based on their knowledge and evaluation (Keeley, 1995). It also does not assess whether students are able to generate clear, well-supported written or oral arguments, whether they can solve open-ended problems.

The limitation of this type of test “multiple choice answer” has been taken into consideration in the essay tests. Therefore, instead of ticking the right answers, teachers assign students essays to detect some perceptive mistakes and to construct their own response. This type of tests give students a chance to develop their own arguments and to capture the open-ended problem solving nature of critical thinking. However, this type of tests is time-consuming i.e. giving grades. It also requires qualified teachers and scales to grade students properly (Keeley, 1995).

7.2. Teachers’ Developed Tests

The second method to assess critical thinking is teachers’ developed tests. Researchers such as Norris and Ennis (1989) have provided samples and criteria for teachers who are interested in developing assessment techniques for the purposes of testing critical thinking, evaluating a critical thinking progress, determining grades. These tests may include “Multiple-choice items based on passages to be read, judging direction of support, strength of reasons, and representativeness of data; making predictions; noticing other alternatives; and hypothesizing the writer’s intentions.

7.3. Teaching Students to Assess their Own Thinking

Perhaps the most suitable method to measure students’ critical thinking skills is to teach them to assess their own thinking skills through self-assessment. Allowing students to be in charge of their actions, behavior, and thinking during the learning process. Klenowski (1995) has recognized the importance of self-assessment on developing students thinking skills. He
argued that the students who are less dependable on teacher feedback, are the ones who develop critical thinking skills and likely have a better outcome from others “the evaluation or judgment of ‘the worth’ of one’s performance and the identification of one’s strengths and weaknesses with a view to improving one’s learning outcomes” (Klenowski 1995, p. 151). However, students must be under the supervision of their teachers. Thus, teachers must know how to choose the appropriate strategies in order to encourage their students to attain their goal of learning. (Gunn, Richburg, & Smilkstein, 2007).

8. Role of Teacher in Assessing Critical Thinking

It is important for teachers to comprehend that their role in developing students’ critical thinking skills in language learning is quite different from their role in developing other skills such as reading, writing, speaking, listening. Instead of being the only source of information, teachers should work as facilitators. Thus, the amount of teacher talk is reduced (Jacobs & McCafferty, 2006) According to Harel (1992), the role of the teacher is explained as follows:

“During this time, the teacher interacts, teaches, refocuses, questions, clarifies supports, expands, celebrates, and empathizes. Depending on what problems evolve, the following supportive behaviors are utilized. Facilitators are giving feedback, redirecting the group with questions, encouraging the group to solve its problems, extending activity, encouraging thinking conflict, observing student and supplying resources” (p.169).

From Harel’s quote, we can summarize the teacher’s role in the assessment of critical thinking as follows:

- **Facilitator**: The instructor in the critical thinking discussion attempts to create positive environment to facilitate the learning process, and to motivate learners to interact effectively.
• **Encourager:** Encourage students’ thinking by asking questions that pursue details and proof, through the use of authentic tasks that includes illogical information to boost critical thinking during learning activities.

• **Monitor:** S/he continuously supervises, and looks after the discussion process.

• **Guide:** The teacher gives some clarifications to lead students' thought a procedure during explorations. Shows his/her learners the way to be critical, and helps them if they face any difficulties in the task.

• **Assessor:** Instructors provide a feedback and evaluation about the product and the process of working together. Offer sufficient time for students to reflect their way of thinking when responding to questions.

9. **Standards to Assess Critical thinking**

Many questions will appear to teachers who opt to assess critical thinking in formal exams. Questions such as “how can I evaluate them?”, or “what consideration should I take to give them marks?” may frequently raise. That is why, it is quite important to clarify some standards used to assess critical thinking. These standards are based on judging the quality of individual thinking when dealing with a subject. The studies of (Elder & Paul, 2001) listed a number of criteria to be observed in critical thinking verification which are:

• **Clarity:** A high degree of clarity and a thorough understanding of others, such as clarification and presentation of examples must characterize critical thinking skills.

• **Accuracy:** The use of reliable and valid evidence to support certain claims. The phrases used by the students should be characterized by a high degree of validity and reliability.

• **Precision:** This means to give the subject of thinking the right of treatment and effort and express with a high degree of accuracy, identification and detail.

• **Relevance:** The elements of the problem or situation should take into consideration clarity of the correlation between the elements or between the data and the problem.
• **Depth**: The treatment of the problem or phenomenon should involve a high degree of depth in the thinking, interpretation and prediction to get out the phenomenon from the surface level of treatment.

• **Breadth**: All aspects of the problem or situation should take into consideration the views of others and their ways of dealing with the problem.

• **Logic**: Critical thinking must be logical by organizing and associating ideas in a way that leads to clear and specific meanings.

• **Significance**: By recognizing, the importance of the problem or situation compared to other problems and attitudes that the individual faces.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, Critical thinking has great positive effects on students and learning in general. Therefore, the goals of education should not stop on enriching students ‘knowledge and comprehension. But develop these goals to include variety of methods to assess and stimulate students’ critical thinking. Assessing and developing this skills can have a positive change on student in the way they conceive things and expand the width of their understanding.
Chapter Two: Field work

Introduction

1.1. The Students’ Questionnaire

1.1.1. Aim of the Questionnaire

1.1.2. Sample

1.1.3. Description of the Questionnaire

1.1.4. Analysis of the Results

1.1.5. Discussion

2.1. Analysis of TEFL exams samples

2.1.1. Aim of analysis

2.1.2. Sample

2.1.3. Description of the analysis of exams from 2017 – 2018

2.1.4. Analysis of the TEFL Exam samples

2.1.5. Discussion

Conclusion
Introduction

In the previous chapter, we have tackled the literature review related to the assessment of critical thinking skills in EFL classes, taking into account its positive effect on the learners and the learning process as a whole. In the practical part, a mixed method approach to research is adopted. Data is gathered both quantitatively using a students’ questionnaire, and qualitatively through an analysis of exam questions samples. The aim of this chapter is to analyze, interpret, and discuss the learners’ answers, views, and perspectives concerning the assessment of critical thinking and its value according to their previous experiences. Also to analyze and interpret a sample of TEFL exams over a period of 2 years to verify whether they target students ‘critical thinking skills or not. We chose the module of TEFL because it is the base of teaching English as foreign language; also the knowledge grasped from this module will prepare future educators “licence students” by giving them the knowledge on how to teach their students throughout a number of teaching and learning strategies to meet their needs.

1.1. Students’ Questionnaire

1.1.1. Aim of the Questionnaire

The students’ questionnaire aims to investigate the learners’ attitudes towards the assessment of critical thinking skill in EFL exams. Moreover, it aims to discover its positive effect on students’ outcome and future career.

1.1.2. Sample

As a sample of the study, seventy-five questionnaires were submitted to seventy-five license students at the department of English, University of Larbi Ben M’hidi., Oum El Bouaghi the sample of this study was selected randomly and only seventy students respond to the questionnaire.
1.1.3. Description of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of sixteen questions organized in five sections. The first section deals with the students’ personal information concerning their gender (Q1). The second section is about the students’ attitudes towards assessment in general (Q2-Q3). The third section is about the students’ attitudes towards critical thinking (Q4-Q6). Moreover, the fourth section deals with assessment of critical thinking in EFL formal exams (Q7-Q15). Finally, the fifth section deals with any additional suggestions or comments on how to assess critical thinking skills in EFL classes (Q16).

1.1.4. Analysis of the Results

Section One: Background Information

Q1. Are you male or female?

a- Male

b- Female

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>84.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table one shows the sample of the study in terms of gender. Clearly, the percentage of females (84.28%) is significant compared to the percentage of males (15.71%). This result will
not affect the study because we are focusing on the students’ answers to the questionnaire and not on their gender.

Section two students’ attitudes towards assessment

Q2. Do you think that assessment is important in EFL classes?

a- Yes
b- No

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Importance of Assessment in EFL Classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question aims at investigating whether the students are aware of the importance of assessment in their educational process. The table demonstrates that eighty-eight point fifty-seven percent 88.57% of the participants are aware of its importance.11.42 % eleven point forty-two percent stated the opposite claiming that assessment is not important in their educational process. This indicate that students are aware of the importance of assessment in their education career as it helps them to identify their needs and interpret their progress.
Q3: Based on your experience, what is the type of assessment most used by teachers?

a - Initial assessment

b- Formative assessment

c- Summative assessment

Table 3

Type of assessment that used by EFL teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>34.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a+b+c</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a+c</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b+c</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question investigates the frequency of the most used type of assessment by EFL teachers. The table shows that the three highest chosen options are as follows: 34.28% of the participants declared that the dominant type of assessment used by their teachers is summative assessment. Twenty percent 20% declared that their teachers apply initial assessment. Seventeen point fourteen percent 17.14% declared that their teachers apply formative assessment, then eleven point forty-two 11.42% of the participants showed a combination of options ‘a’, ‘b’ and ‘c’ that are “Initial assessment” “Formative assessment” and “Summative assessment». Eight point seventy-five 8.75% of the participants showed a combination of
options ‘a’, ‘c’ that are “Initial assessment” and “Summative assessment”. Only five point seventy-one 5.71\% showed a combination of options ‘b’, ‘c’ that are “Formative assessment” and “Summative assessment”. This indicates that teachers concentrate more on summative assessment this might due to the higher status giving to it by educational systems.

Section three students’ attitudes towards critical thinking

Q4. Do you believe that critical thinking skills are necessary in EFL class?

   a- Yes  
   b- No

Table 4

The Importance of Critical Thinking Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>81.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question aims at investigating whether students are aware of the necessity of CT skills in their academic life. The table shows that the majority of eighty-one point forty-two 81.42\% of the participants claimed that CT is important in EFL class. while the minority of participant eighteen teen point fifty-seven percent 18.57\% declared the opposite. These results indicate that students are aware of helpfulness of CT skills on their learning development.

Q5: If yes, this is because

   a- Critical Thinking enhances language and presentation skills.

   b- Critical Thinking promotes creativity.
c - Critical Thinking skills might enhance students’ academic performance

Table 5

Benefits of Developing Critical Thinking Skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>38.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a+b+c</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a+b</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>15.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>10.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>8.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question intends to explore the reasons why learners think that developing critical thinking skills is essential in EFL classes. The table shows that the three highest chosen reasons are as follow: Thirty-eight point fifty-nine percent 38.59% of the participants think that developing CT skills are important because it might enhance their academic performance. Twenty-six point thirty-one percent 26.31% claimed that CT enhances language and presentation skills and promotes creativity and might enhance their academic performance. 15.78% of the participants mentioned a combination of options ‘a’, ‘b’ that “CT enhances language and presentation skills” and “CT can promote creativity”. Ten point fifty-two percent 10.52% of the participants claimed that CT enhances language and presentation skills. Eight point seventy-seven percent 8.77% of the participants declared that CT promotes creativity. These results indicate that students are aware that CT has more than one benefit on their education and social life. Developing CT skills can improve the way students express their ideas, learning how to analyse the logical structure of texts...
Q6: Who is responsible for developing critical thinking skills of students?

a- Students ‘own responsibility

b- Parents’ responsibility

c- Teachers ‘responsibility

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a+c</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>27.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question intends to explore those who are responsible for developing students’ CT skills. Sixty percent 60 % of the participants declared that it is the responsibility of both the teacher and the learners.27.14% twenty-seven point fourteen percent of the participants declared that it is the students own responsibility to develop their CTS.25.71% twenty-five point seventy-one percent of the participants declared that it is teachers’ own responsibility to develop students’ CTS. Only 7.14% seven point fourteen percent of the participants declared that it is the parents ‘own responsibility. These results indicate that students do not deny their responsibility for developing their CTS and their need for teachers’ guidance to do so. As it has been stated in the theoretical part, the best strategie to develop students’s critical thinking skills is by letting them think for themselves with the help of teacher guidance.
Section Four assessment of critical thinking in TEFL formal exams

Q7. What do you think about exams?

a- Exams are the most effective way of assessment.

b - Exams are good, but not enough to measure all our cognitive abilities.

c- Exams are not an effective way to measure students’ competence.

d- Exams are not an effective tool to assess students.

Table 7

Students’ Attitudes toward Exams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>38.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>31.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question intends to explore the students’ views toward the effectiveness of the use of exams as a way of assessing students ’abilities. Thirty-eight point fifty-seven percent 38.57% stated that exams are good as an assessment tool, but not sufficient way to measure all their cognitive abilities. 31.42% thirty-one point forty-two percent claimed that exams are not an effective way to measure students ‘competence. 18.57% eighteen point fifty-seven percent of the participants declared that exams are an effective way to assess student progress. While 11.42% eleven point forty-two percent of the participants stated that exams are not an effective
tool to assess students. These answers imply that the dominant problem in EFL exams is that they do not take into consideration all students’ cognitive abilities.

Q8: What is the purpose of “Exams” in your own view?

a- Checking your understanding.

b- Recognizing your accurate abilities, to choose the next level of education for you.

c- Checking your ability of memorization i.e. give back what has been said in the lecture.

Table 8

Purpose of Exams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>37.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a+b</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a+c</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question investigates the purpose of exams according to students’ view. The table demonstrates that thirty-seven point fourteen percent 37.14% of the participants believe that the purpose of exams is to check students’ ability of memorization. While thirty percent 30% of the participants believe that, the purpose of exams is to check their understanding. On the other hand, twenty-one point forty-two percent 21.42% of the participants assume the purpose of exams is to recognize students’ abilities, to choose the next level of education for them. Seven point fourteen 7.14% of the participants recognize that the purpose of exams is to check
students’ understanding and to recognize their accurate abilities, to choose the next level of education for them. The rest of participants four point twenty-eight percent 4.28% believe that the purpose of exams is to check students ‘understanding and their ability of memorization. These results indicate that exams do not fulfill their correct purpose that is helping students to recognize their abilities to guide them to right path in academic and social life.

Q9: what is your first impression about TEFL questions when you read the exam sheet?

a- Questions are too easy

b- Questions are too complex.

c- Questions are arranged from simple to complex.

Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arrangement of TEFL Exam Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b- All the questions are too complex.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c- Questions are arranged from simple to complex.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a- All the questions are too easy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question seeks to investigate the arrangement of TEFL exams questions in EFL classes. The table shows that fifty-seven point fourteen percent 57.14% of the participants stated that all exams question are complex. Twenty-two point eighty-five percent 22.85 % of the participants noticed that exams questions are arranged from simple to complex. the rest of participants twenty percent 20% detected that the exams question are too easy. These answers indicate that exams questions do not target the different levels of students’ capabilities.
Q.10. From your own experience, what level of the cognitive domain are TEFL exams based on?

a- Knowledge  
b- Comprehension  
c- Application  
d- Analysis  
e- Synthesis  
f- Evaluation

Table 10

The Assessment of Students’ Cognitive Abilities in TEFL Exams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a+b</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>28.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a+b+c</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>24.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question seeks to examine if the TEFL exams involves all students’ cognitive abilities. The table shows that 28.57% twenty-eight point fifty-seven percent of the participants indicated that exams questions are constructed on students’ knowledge and comprehension. Twenty-four point twenty-eight percent 24.28% of the participants claimed that exams questions are based on students’ knowledge, comprehension, and application. Twenty-two point eighty-five percent 22.85% of the participants indicated that exams questions are based on knowledge. Eleven point
forty-two percent 11.42% of the participants stated that exams questions are based on students’ comprehension. Seven point fourteen percent 7.14% of the participants declared that exams questions are based on the analysis. Only 1.42% one point forty-two of the participants stated that exams questions are based on evaluation. These results indicate that exams questions give more attention to the first crucial skills of students that are “knowledge, comprehension, and application” and less attention to the higher levels( evaluation, analysis, synthesis) which means that TEFL exams do not target students critical thinking skills.

Q.11. What are the Frequent Verbs Used by Teachers in Exams Questions?

a-Define, name, order, describe, recite, recognize, list, state, arrange, and underline.

b-Explain, interpret, classify, express, describe, identify, report, and discuss.

c-Apply, practice, solve, choose, illustrate and demonstrate.

d-Analyze, categorize, distinguish, differentiate, examine, compare, and criticize.

e-Arrange, assemble, propose, compose, synthesize, construct, and conduct

f-Select, argue, evaluate, support, judge, value, attack, compare, defend.

Table 11

The Frequent Verbs Used by Teachers in TEFL Exams Questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a+b</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b-Explain, interpret, classify, express, describe, identify, report,</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and discuss.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a-Define, name, order, describe, recite, recognize, list, state,</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrange, and underline.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This question tends to explore the frequent verbs used in TEFL exams question to see the degree of students’ cognitive assessment according to Blooms’ classification. Twenty-one point forty-two percent 21.42 % of the participants chose the option “a+b” that is “Define, name, order, describe, recite, recognize, list, state, arrange, and underline.” and “Explain, interpret, classify, express, describe, identify, report, and discuss.”. Fifteen point seventy-one percent 15.71% of the participant selected “b” that is “Explain, interpret, classify, express, describe, identify, report, and discuss.”. fourteen point twenty-eight percent 14.28% of the participants stated that the most frequent verbs used in exams question are the ones in option “a” that is “Define, name, order, describe, recite, recognize, list, state, arrange, and underline”. Twelve point eighty-five percent 12.85 % of the participants selected the option “e” that is “Arrange, assemble, propose, compose, synthesize, construct, and conduct”. Eleven point fourty-two of the participants chose the option “d” that is “Analyze, categorize, distinguish, differentiate, examine, compare, and criticize”. Ten percent 10 % of the participants chose the option “c” that is “Apply, practice, solve, choose, illustrate and demonstrate”. Eight point fifty-nine 8.59% of the participants selected the combination of options “a+c” that is “Define, name, order,
describe, recite, recognize, list, state, arrange, and underline." and "Explain, interpret, classify, express, describe, identify, report, and discuss." The rest of the participants five point seventy-one 5.71% chose the option “f” that is “Select, argue, evaluate, support, judge, value, attack, compare, defend.” The results indicate that the most tutors prefer to use simple question that are based on knowledge we deduce that from the type of verbs used to ask questions. Teacher prefer this type because they are easy to evaluate. Another reason could be that they use this type of questions because there are new teachers and with less sufficient experience in assessment.

**Q.12.** How often does the TEFL teacher ask about your own view in exam questions?

- a. Always
- b. Very often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

**Table 12**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of TEFL Exams Assessment of Students’ Point of View</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Options</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Rarely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Very often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The aim behind this question is to investigate whether TEFL teachers take into consideration students own views when developing TEFL exams. Thirty-eight point fifty-seven
percent 38.57% claimed that it occurs sometimes. However, twenty-five point seventy-one percent 25.71% of the participants declared that this involvement is a rare phenomenon. Moreover, eighteen point fifty-seven percent 18.57% think it never happens. Ten percent 10% claimed that it occurs very often. Only eight point fifty-seven 8.57 think it always happens. These answers imply that TEFL teachers usually take into account students’ points of view when developing their exams questions. This is an indicator of teachers’ are aware of the importance of developing students’ critical thinking.

Q.13. Do you answer exams question in a critical way?

a-Yes   b-No

Table 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>84.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question aims to indicate whether students’ answer TEFL exams question in a critical way or not. The majority of the participants eighty-four point twenty-eight percent 84.28% declared that they do not answer questions in a critical way. while the minority of the participants fifty-one point seventy-one 15.71 declared that they do answer the question in a critical way. The results indicate that there is reasons behind student not answering in critical way, this reasons can be related to student, teacher, or the exam itself.
Q.14. If no, this is because:

a- You cannot put ideas into words.

b - You do not have the knowledge required by the questions.

c - The teacher does not give sufficient time to formulate a critical answer.

d- The teacher requests only the information given to you in class only.

e- The teacher does not evaluate your extra effort “your own view about the problem”

Table 14

Answering Questions in Critical Way

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>44.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>35.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question tend to find reasons behind student not answering question in critical way. The majority of the participant forty-four point zero-six 44.06 % selected the final option “e” that is “The teacher does not evaluate your extra effort “your own view about the problem”. While thirty-five point fifty-nine percent 35.59% of the participant declared that, the teacher request only the information given to them in class only. Only ten point sixteen percent 10.16 % of the patricians declared that the teacher does not give sufficient time to formulate a critical answer. On the other hand, six point seventy-seven 6.77% of the participants stated that they
could not put ideas into words. The rest of the participants three point eighty-eight 3.88% stated that they could not put ideas into words. The result indicate that the student are able to answer in critical way but they prefer not, because there is no enough time to develop a critical answer or the teachers do not ask about students views or evaluated them correctly.

**Q15.** What do you feel if TEFL exams challenge you skills and abilities rather than recalling the information given to you?

- a- You will be more motivated to learn because your view is important.
- b- It will make you do more efforts to support what you stand for.
- c- You feel that you are qualified, and your view is important.
- d- This will developed your self-esteem.
- e- You would not care because exams are about gaining point to pass to the next level.

### Advantages of Assessing Critical Thinking in TEFL Exams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>41.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>8.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a +c</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>5.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>4.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This question tends to explore the advantages of involving students’ critical thinking skills in their TEFL exams. The table shows that forty-one point forty-two percent 41.42% of the participants chose the option “b” that is “It will make you do more efforts to support what you stand for”. While thirty percent 30% of the participants chose the option “c” that is “you feel that you are qualified, and your view is important”. Ten percent 10% selected the option “a” that is “You will be more motivated to learn because your view is important”. Five point seventy-one selected the combination of the option “a” and “c” that is “You will be more motivated to learn because your view is important” and “You feel that you are qualified, and your view is important”. Eight point fifty-seven percent 8.57% chose the option “d” that is “This will developed your self-esteem”. Five point seventy-one percent 5.71% shoes the combination “a” and “c” that is “You will be more motivated to learn because your view is important” and “You feel that you are qualified, and your view is important”. Only four point twenty-eight percent 4.28% selected the option “e” that is “You would not care because exams are about gaining point to pass to the next level”. The results indicate student aware that developing their critical thinking skills have variety of advantages on their learning and their self-esteem as well.

Section fifth additional suggestions or comments on how to assess critical thinking skills in EFL classes

Q16: What do you Suggest to Assess Critical Thinking Skills in the EFL Classes?

This question was a space for the participants to provide suggestions they think are useful to assess critical thinking skills in EFL classrooms. Only twenty-five point seventy-one percent 25.71% out of seventy students answered the question. Most of the participant suggested that teachers should develop method and strategies to develop the critical thinking skills. They also
suggested that exams should contain problem solving situation and a chance to express their opinions. Some suggested that teacher should develop activities that promote critical thinking.

1.1.5 Discussion of the Students’ Questionnaire

The analysis of the students’ questionnaire has revealed much information about students’ perceptions about the assessment of critical thinking skills in TEFL exams. It has been noticed that the majority of students are aware of the importance of involving critical thinking skills in their TEFL exams. On the other hand, most of the students did not included this skills when answering exams questions and this due to the fact that TEFL exams do not include any critical skill. In addition to that, it has been detected that TEFL exams are highly based on knowledge, comprehension, and application, which are the lower cognitive abilities of students.
2.1. Analysis of TEFL Exams Questions

2.1.1. Aim of Analysis

The analysis of TEFL exams aims to investigate whether or not the TEFL exams have been targeting students’ critical thinking skills.

2.1.2. Sample

The TEFL exams given from 2017 to 2018 are selected to be the sample of this study. Due to the availability of the material to be analyze unlike the other modules.

2.1.3 Description of TEFL Exams Sheet

The TEFL exams sheet consist of two main parts Part A and a Part B or sets of two to three questions. The number of questions in exam paper do not go over three. the points giving to each question in TEFL exams are not divide equally, in most cases the first question have a lower points that the second and the thirds. There is also an ability to write the answers in exams sheet

2.1.4. Description of the Analysis of TEFL Exams From 2017 – 2018

In the present section, we will analyze TEFL exam sets given from 2017 to 2018. In order not to make this broad we picked out selections of issues we want to address, and which are of relevance to this work. First, we shall focus on the form and the content of exams questions. Secondly, we shall look into the question given in each part and see whether it takes into consideration all students’ cognitive abilities and their developed skills. Finally, we will focus on the choice of tasks. Logical order of questions i.e. from simple questions and upgrade to complex one. To get results that are more accurate we developed a checklist that consist of questions that help us to detect the degree of implementation of critical thinking skills in TEFL exams.
2.1.5. Description of the Checklist for Exams Analysis

In order to analyze exams we developed a checklist that contain two sections, the first section deals with the form of exams questions (Q1-Q3), the second section deals with the content of TEFL exams questions (Q4-Q5). The aim of this checklist is to aid us in the decision making of whether TEFL exams do target students critical thinking skills or not.

Checklist Sample To Analyse Exams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section one : Form</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. what is the Type of assessment?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a- Initial assessment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b- Formative assessment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c- Summative assessment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q2. Do Questions Follows a Progression Order?**

Questions have a balanced progression

**3. What Type of Questions Used in TEFL Exams?**

- Multiple choice
- True/false
- Matching
- Short answer
- Essays
- Paragraphs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section two : Content</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Cognitive levels in questions from lower to higher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a- <strong>knowledge:</strong> define, name, recite, describe, list, state, and underline.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b- <strong>Comprehension:</strong> explain, interpret, identify, discuss, express, and classify.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
e-Application: apply, illustrate, demonstrate, solve, choose, and practice.

d-Analysis: analyse, criticize, compare, categorize, examine, and compare.

e-Synthesis: arrange, compose, conduct, construct, propose, and assemble.

f-Evaluation: select, argue, defend, attack, evaluate, judge, and value.

5. Integrated skills

- Writing Skills: questions encourage the use of a developed style in writing
- The questions involves learners in a mode of thinking.

Figure 3: Illustrate a Sample of Check List Used To Analyse TEFL Exams

2.1.6. Analysis of the TEFL Exams

TEFL First-Semester Re-sit Examination 2017
First-Semester Re-sit

Question One (8 pts): Underline errors in each of the following statements; then, correct them.

1. Grammar is taught deductively in the Audio-lingual Method.

2. Objectives are broader than goals.

3. “Approach” refers to a set of activities that actually take place in the classroom.

4. Situational syllabuses are concerned with selecting topics for study.

5. In the Audio-Lingual Method, oral skills are highlighted, but aural skills are overlooked.

6. Stating the behavior in an objective is optional.

7. A deductive approach is concerned with figuring out the rules from the examples.

8. Transmission of Knowledge characterizes student-centered classrooms.

Question Two (12 pts)

In a paragraph of no more than 10 lines explain the characteristics of a well-written performance objective. Support your answer with two examples.
### Section one: Form

1. **What is the Type of Assessment?**
   - a- Initial assessment
   - b- Formative assessment
   - c- Summative assessment

**Q2**. **Do Questions Follows a Progression Order?**

Questions have a balanced progression

**Q3.** **What Type of Questions Used in TEFL Exams?**

- Multiple choice
- True/false
- Matching
- Short answer
- Essays
- paragraphs

### Section two: Content

**Q4.** **Cognitive levels in questions from lower to higher**

- **a- knowledge**: define, name, recite, describe, list, state, state, and underline.
- **b-comprehension**: explain, interpret, identify, discuss, express, and classify.
- **c-application**: apply, illustrate, demonstrate, solve, choose, and practice.
- **d-analysis**: analyse, criticize, compare, categorize, examine, and compare.
- **e-synthesis**: arrange, compose, conduct, construct, propose, and assemble.
- **f-evaluation**: select, argue, defend, attack, evaluate, judge, and value.

**Q5.** **Integrated skills**

- Writing Skills: questions encourage the use of a developed style in writing
- The questions involves learners in a mode of thinking.
TEFL First-Semester Re-Sit Examination 2017 Analysis

As shown in figure 4, the first question is of “short answer type”. It contains a set of statements ordered from one to eight. Each statement contains an error that students are supposed to find and correct. The errors seem to be linked to content of the module not the structure of language and easy to detect and correct. The question targets the first cognitive level “knowledge” we deduced that from the verb used to ask the question “underline” which linked to first cognitive level according to blooms taxonomies (1956). The statement, in this question seem to be searching for specific information that can be recalled by anyone who is only familiar with the language and has capacity of memorizing information. The question does not allow the students to think for themselves. It does not encourage any beneficial skills such as problem solving, creativity, and decision making that will be needed in their future teaching career as graduate students.

The second question is “paragraph type”. It targets the comprehension and application level of students cognitive abilities, we deduced that from the verb used to ask the question that are “explain” and “support”. Furthermore, in the content of the question the students are asked to give description about the characteristic of a well-written performance objective in a paragraph length no more than ten lines. Moreover, to put it clearer the teacher bolded and lined a statement that restrict students to wright no more than 10 lines and give only two examples to support their claims. The exams as a hole did not involve any higher level of thinking. It highly restricted students from showing their writing, thinking skills. However, the exam did respect the progression of question from simple to complex but it was limited only to the first and second cognitive level, which is not very effective especially in higher education.
Second-Semester Examination

Question One (8pts): Make the following sentences meaningful by adding the suitable word or phrase.

1. The Baccalaureate is an example of a ..............................................
2. .............................................................................................. aims to promote effective future learning by giving students helpful feedback.
3. If a student gets the same score after another rater evaluates his or her work, the test is said to be ..............................................................
4. In......................................................................................, the reader or listener focuses on individual words and phrases, and achieves understanding by stringing these detailed elements together to build up a whole.
5. ..............................................................................................identifies the standard of attainment achieved at a particular moment in time, usually at the end of a period of instruction.
6. ..............................................................................................is the method of rapidly moving the eyes over text with the purpose of getting a general overview of the content.
7. True/False questions are ...................................................... than essay questions.
8. In receptive skills, students are concerned with ..............................................................from the discourse they see or hear.

Question Two (12 pts)

Write a paragraph (no more than 12 lines) on ONE of the following topics.

Topic One: Factors that can negatively affect the reliability of a test

Topic Two: Benefits of lesson planning

Figure 6: Second Semester TEFL Exam May 25, 2017.
Checklist for TEFL Exams 2017 Analysis

Section One: Form

Q1. What Is the Type of Assessment?
   a- Initial assessment
   b- Formative assessment
   c- Summative assessment

Q2. Do Questions Follow a Progression Order.
   Questions have a balanced progression

Q3. What Type of Questions Used in TEFL Exams?
   - Multiple choice
   - True/false
   - Matching
   - Short answer
   - Essays
   - Paragraphs

Section Two: Content

Q4. Cognitive Levels in Questions From Lower to Higher
   a- knowledge: define, name, recite, describe, list, state, and underline.
   b- comprehension: explain, interpret, identify, discuss, express, and classify.
   c- application: apply, illustrate, demonstrate, solve, choose, and practice.
   d- analysis: analyse, criticize, compare, categorize, examine, and compare.
   e- synthesis: arrange, compose, conduct, construct, propose, and assemble.
   f- evaluation: select, argue, defend, attack, evaluate, judge, and value.

Q5. Integrated Skills
   - Writing Skills: questions encourage the use of a developed style in writing
The questions involves learners in a mode of thinking.

**Figure. 7. Checklist for TEFL Exams 2017 Analysis**

As we can see in the figure 6, the first question is “short answer type”, contains a set of statements ordered from one to eight. The question is based on the knowledge level and appears to be a lot similar to first semester exam question. However, the first semester question was more complicated than the second semester question. In the first semester exam question, the student were expected retrieve and find ways to correct statements, while the second one is only about retrieving information to complete the statements. We can deduce that this question is based on memorization and does not target any critical thinking skills.

One the other hand, the second question is “paragraph type”, it contain two topics and the students have the opportunity to choose one of them. This question is based on knowledge and comprehension level, it does not include students views or their judgment about the topic. it also does not encourage the use of a developed style of writing neither elaborate critical thinking skills. Yet, we might deduce that for students’ to make right choice of the topic is itself, a stimulus for thinking and decision-making. The students’ choice would eventually require a thorough analysis of the suggested alternatives to finally come up with suitable decisions.
Larbi Ben M’Hidi University—Oum El Bouaghi
Department of English Course: TEFL / Third-Year
Student’s Name/ Group: ..........................................

First-Semester Examination

Part One (13 pts): Answer each of the following questions in a short paragraph.

Question One (7 pts)
Explain the characteristics of a well-written objective. Support your answer with your own example.

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

Question Two (6 pts)
Which of Krashen’s hypotheses is related to the criterion of “Learnability” of content? Explain the relationship.

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

Figure 8: Part One of TEFL Exam January 2018.
Part Two (7 pts): Fill in the gaps with the appropriate word or phrase.

1. ............................................. refers to the “specification of the work to be covered over a period of time, with a starting point and a final goal.”

2. ............................................. is defined as “acquiring or getting knowledge of a subject or a skill by study.”

3. Grammar is studied ............................................. in the Grammar-Translation Method.

4. Objectives are ............................................. than goals.

5. ............................................. is a key principle for organising content because it is rarely sufficient to present and practise a language item once only and then consider it dealt with.


7. ............................................. are generally sequenced according to their complexity.

8. The language that is used mostly in the Grammar-Translation classroom is the student’s .............................................

9. Unlike ............................................. which deal with developing students’ intellectual abilities and skills, ............................................. are concerned with the growth of students’ attitudes, values, and feelings.

10. ............................................. is the ability of putting parts together to form a whole, with emphasis on creating a new meaning or structure.

11. ............................................. refers to “the order in which new items are taught, how the components fit with one another and how the range of language taught develops as learners progress through the course.”

12. In the Grammar-Translation method, ............................................. are given little attention since the ability to communicate in the target language is not a goal of language instruction.

Good Luck!
# Section One: Form

## Q1. What is the Type of assessment?

a- Initial assessment  
b- Formative assessment  
c- Summative assessment

## Q2. Do Questions Follows a Progression Order?

Questions have a balanced progression

## Q3. What Type of Questions Used in TEFL Exams?

- Multiple choice  
- True/false  
- Matching  
- Short answer  
- Essays  
- Paragraphs

# Section Two: Content

## Q4. Cognitive Levels in Questions From Lower to Higher

**a- knowledge:** define, name, recite, describe, list, state, and underline.  
**b-comprehension:** explain, interpret, identify, discuss, express, and classify.  
**c-application:** apply, illustrate, demonstrate, solve, choose, and practice.  
**d-analysis:** analyze, criticize, compare, categorize, examine, and compare.  
**e-synthesis:** arrange, compose, conduct, construct, propose, and assemble.
**Q5. Integrated Skills**

- Writing Skills: questions encourage the use of a developed style in writing.
- The questions involve learners in a mode of thinking.

**Figure 11: Checklist of TEFL Exam January 2018.**

As we can see in figure 8, in the first part; the first question is “paragraph type”. It targets the comprehension cognitive level of students; we deduce that from the verb used to ask the question “explain”. The students are asked to give description about the characteristic of a well-written objective in a short paragraph. In this question, the teacher asked students to recall information, and give their own example to support their description. First, the question has been giving in the first semester exam 2017 and repeated in 2018, second what has been asked in this question cannot be accomplished in a short paragraph. Third, the teacher required the learners to write only one example of their own and to write answers on the exam questions’ sheet. Therefore, they are limited with number of examples and lines as we can see in the figure 8, also the developer of this question might not have taken into consideration that 3rd year students are able to write a descriptive essay. We can conclude that this question did not give the students the opportunity to show what they are capable of. Moreover, it did not include students’ grasped knowledge over the years i.e. their competence in written descriptive essays.

On the other hand, the second questions in figure 8 seems to be more suitable to the level of graduate students as it involved a higher level of cognitive abilities “application” i.e. finding the relationship between a theory and a certain criterion. However, the problem evaluating the students’ developed skills is still absent.

Figure 9 shows part two of the exams. The question is “short answer type”. The teacher asked the students to recall the exact word or phrases. Some of these sentences seem to be
definitions of some aspects in TEFL example: the history of methods in teaching second language. If the students cannot recall the exact words, he/she will not be able to answer the question. The type of this question “Filling the gaps” does not seem equivalent to the level of graduate students because it is highly based on memorization, which is the lower cognitive ability of humans. On the other hand, this question seems to be advantageous for the teacher because it is easy to evaluate.

Second Semester Re-Sit Exam 2018

![Image](image_url)

*Figure 12: TEFL Second Semester Re-Sit Exam 2018*
### Section One: Form

**Q1. What is the Type of assessment?**

a- Initial assessment

b- Formative assessment

c- Summative assessment

**Q2. Do Questions Follows a Progression Order?**

Questions have a balanced progression

**Q3. What Type of Questions Used in TEFL Exams?**

- Multiple choice
- True/false
- Matching
- Short answer
- Essays
- Paragraphs

### Section Two: Content

**Q4. Cognitive Levels in Questions From Lower to Higher**

a- **knowledge**: define, name, recite, describe, list, state, and underline.

b- **comprehension**: explain, interpret, identify, discuss, express, and classify.

c- **application**: apply, illustrate, demonstrate, solve, choose, and practice.

d- **analysis**: analyse, criticize, compare, categorize, examine, and compare.
**Q5. Integrated Skills**

- Writing Skills: questions encourage the use of a developed style in writing
- The questions involves learners in a mode of thinking.

**Figure 13: checklist of TEFL Second Semester Re-Sit Exam 2018**

As we can see in figure 12, the first question is “paragraph type”, it targets the knowledge and comprehension cognitive levels of students. We can see that from the use of verb used to ask the question “explain”. The students are asked to distinguish the difference between two types of assessment. To answer this question the student have to remember the information then recognize the difference between those two types. The question did not limit the number of examples that student can give to support their claims. However, the number of lines is limited like the previous exams. Moving on, the second question is “paragraph type”. According to the checklist, the question is based on comprehension and application. The student were supposed to give explanation to retrieve information. This question is a good implication of the grasped knowledge as it illustrate a real use of information in real situations.

**Discussion of the Analysis of TEFL Exams**

The analysis of TEFL exam questions has provided us with significant information about the assessment of students’ critical thinking skills in TEFL exams. It has shown that the questions are simplistic in form and content. The type of questions is either “paragraph type” or “short answer only”. The content is sometimes repeated and targets the lower cognitive levels of students “knowledge, comprehension, and application”. It does not measure the diverse knowledge and skills acquired by students. On the other hand, the exams seem to be more advantageous to teachers rather than students because they are easy to evaluate. To state it
otherwise, the questions have specific answers in “short answers question” and the number of lines in paragraphs is limited, which makes them easy to evaluate. According to this analysis, we can deduce that TEFL exams fail, to a great extent, to address students’ critical thinking skills.

**Conclusion**

This chapter was devoted to the collected data description and analysis. Two research instruments were used, a questionnaire addressed to third year students, and an analysis of TEFL exams at the department of English, Larbi Ben M’hidi University over the period of 2017-2018. The analysis of the students’ questionnaire has revealed that the students are aware of the benefits of developing critical thinking skills. Moreover, students favor the exams that involve their opinions, and questions that involve problems solving. However, most of the students do not include their critical thinking skills when answering exams question due to some problems they confront. According to them, teachers do not assess critical thinking in TEFL exams. Data from the analysis of TEFL exams questions have revealed that teachers do not involve or encourage students to answer exams in a critical way or even target their cognitive levels. This indicates that TEFL exams fail to address students’ critical thinking skills. Therefore, the aforementioned results confirm the hypothesis put forward before.

**Limitations of the study**

The present study includes some inevitable limitations that are listed below:

- Due to time constraints, this research has been conducted only on a small sample of students and did not include teacher views. Thus, to get more reliable results, the study should have involved both students and teachers views more participants.
Due to the unavailability of data, the study has been conducted only on TEFL exams over the period of two years not three. Thus to get more reliable results, the study should analyze the exams of more than one module over a period of at least three years.

**Pedagogical Implications**

- Teachers should suggest types of questions that evoke students’ critical thinking skills.
- TEFL exams should target high order thinking skills.
- TEFL teachers should consider students’ attitudes, interests, and abilities when developing exams questions.
- TEFL teachers should encourage students to use their thinking and express themselves critically and creatively when answering exams questions.

**General conclusion**

The current study has investigated the assessment of critical thinking in TEFL exams. It has focused on analyzing the way TEFL exams deal with students’ critical thinking skills. The sample we selected for this study is that of third year students at the English Department Larbi Ben M’hidi University, Oum El Bouaghi. The research was divided into two chapters, one for the literature review and another one for the data analysis. The first chapter was made up of two sections; section one was devoted to assessment and its types, sources, and its purposes, and section two focused on critical thinking and how to assess it in EFL classes and exams. The practical chapter of this study included the analysis of students’ questionnaire and TEFL exams.
List of References


Appendices

Appendix 1

Students’ Questionnaire

Dear students,
This questionnaire is designed to gather data as part of a research work carried out in the framework of a Master degree. It aims at investigating **The Assessment of Critical Thinking in TEFL Exams**. Your ideas and cooperation are highly valued. Please, try to answer the following questions by ticking (√) the appropriate choice.

Thank you so much in advance for your cooperation

Ms: widad HADJERIS

Department of English

Larbi Ben M’ hidi university, Oum El Bouaghi
Section One: Background Information

Q1: Are you male or female?  
   a. Male ☐  
   b. Female ☐

Section Two: Students’ Attitudes Towards Assessment.

Q2: Do you think that assessment is important in EFL classes?  
   Yes ☐  
   NO ☐

Q 3: based on your experience, what is the type of assessment most used by teachers?  
   a- Initial Assessment (before starting the lecture, teachers see what student know about the topic such pre-test , discussions… ) ☐  
   b- Formative Assessment (continuous checks that the teachers creates to determine whether students are gaining the knowledge or not.) ☐  
   c- Summative assessment (the evaluation conducted at the end of each unit to determine students’ progress such exams.) ☐

Section three: Students’ Attitudes Towards Critical Thinking.

Q4: Do you believe that critical thinking skills are necessary in EFL class?  
   a- Yes ☐  
   b- No ☐

Q5: If yes, this is because: (You may choose more than one)  
   a- Critical Thinking can enhances language and presentation skills. ☐  
   b- Critical Thinking promotes creativity. ☐  
   c- Critical Thinking skills might enhance student’ academic performance. ☐
Q6: Who is responsible for developing critical thinking skills of students?

a- Students’ own responsibility
b- Parents’ responsibility
c- Teachers ‘responsibility
d- Other (Please specify.)

Section four: The Assessment of Critical Thinking in Formal Exams.

Q7: What do you think about exams?

a- Exams are the most effective way of assessment.
b- Exams are good, but not enough to measure all our cognitive abilities.
c- Exams are not an effective way to measure students ‘competence.
d- Exams are not effective tool to assess students.

Other (Please specify.)

Q8: What is the purpose “Exams “in your own view?

A - Checking your understanding.
b- Recognizing your accurate abilities, to choose the next level of education for you.
c- Checking your ability of memorization i.e. give back what has been said in the lecture.
Q9: what is your first impression about questions when you read the TEFL exam sheet? (You may tick more than one option)

a- Questions are too easy

b- Questions are too complex.

c- Questions are arranged from simple to complex.

e- Other (Please specify.)

Q10: From your own experience, what TEFL exams are based on?

a- Knowledge

b- Comprehension

c- Application

d- Analysis

e- Synthesis

f- Evaluation

g- Other (Please specify.)

Q.11. what are the frequent verbs used by teachers in TEFL exams questions?

a- Define, name, order, describe, recite, recognize, list, state, arrange, and underline.

b- Explain, interpret, classify, express, describe, identify, report, and discuss.

c- Apply, practice, solve, choose, illustrate and demonstrate.

d- Analyze, categorize, distinguish, differentiate, examine, compare, and criticize.

e- Arrange, assemble, propose, compose, synthesize, construct, and conduct

f- Select, argue, evaluate, support, judge, value, attack, compare, defend
Q12: How often does the teacher ask about your own view in TEFL exam questions?

a. Always □  b. Very often □  c. Sometimes □
   d. Rarely □  e. Never □

Q13: Do you answer TEFL exams question in a critical way?

a- Yes □  b- No □

Q14: If no, this is because: (You may choose more than one)

a- You cannot put ideas into words. □

b - You do not have the knowledge required by the questions □

c - The teacher does not give sufficient time to formulate a critical answer. □

d- The teacher request only the information given to you in class only. □

e- The teacher does not evaluate your extra effort “your own view about the problem” □

f- Other (Please specify.)---------------------------------------------------------------
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Q15: what do you feel if TEFL exams challenge you skills and abilities rather than recalling
the information given to you? (You may choose more than one)

a- You will be more motivated to learn because your view is important □

b- It will make you do more efforts to support what you stand for □

c- feel that you are qualified, and your view is important □

d- this will developed your self-esteem □
e- You would not care because exams are about gaining point to pass to the next level

f- Other (Please specify.)

Section Five: Further Comments/Suggestions

Q16: What do you suggest to assess critical thinking skills in the EFL classes?

---

Thank You
Appendix 2
First-Semester Re-sit

Question One (8 pts): Underline errors in each of the following statements; then, correct them.

1. Grammar is taught deductively in the Audio-lingual Method

2. Objectives are broader than goals

3. “Approach” refers to a set of activities that actually take place in the classroom

4. Situational syllabuses are concerned with selecting topics for study

5. In the Audio-Lingual Method, oral skills are highlighted, but aural skills are overlooked

6. Stating the behavior in an objective is optional

7. A deductive approach is concerned with figuring out the rules from the examples

8. Transmission of Knowledge characterizes student-centered classrooms

Question Two (12 pts)
In a paragraph of no more than 10 lines explain the characteristics of a well-written performance objective. Support your answer with two examples.
Second-Semester Examination

Question One (8 pts): Make the following sentences meaningful by adding the suitable word or phrase.

1. The Baccalaureate is an example of a .................................................................

2. ........................................................................ aims to promote effective future learning by giving students helpful feedback.

3. If a student gets the same score after another rater evaluates his or her work, the test is said to be .................................................................

4. In ................................................................., the reader or listener focuses on individual words and phrases, and achieves understanding by stringing these detailed elements together to build up a whole.

5. ........................................................................ identifies the standard of attainment achieved at a particular moment in time, usually at the end of a period of instruction.

6. ................................................................. is the method of rapidly moving the eyes over text with the purpose of getting a general overview of the content.

7. True/False questions are ................................................................. than essay questions.

8. In receptive skills, students are concerned with ................................................................. from the discourse they see or hear.

Question Two (12 pts)
Write a paragraph (no more than 12 lines) on ONE of the following topics.

Topic One: Factors that can negatively affect the reliability of a test

Topic Two: Benefits of lesson planning
First-Semester Examination

Part One (13 pts): Answer each of the following questions in a short paragraph.

Question One (7 pts)
Explain the characteristics of a well-written objective. Support your answer with your own example.

Question Two (6 pts)
Which of Krashen’s hypotheses is related to the criterion of “Learnability” of content? Explain the relationship.
Part Two (7 pts): Fill in the gaps with the appropriate word or phrase.

1. ........................................ refers to the “specification of the work to be covered over a period of time, with a starting point and a final goal.”

2. ........................................ is defined as “acquiring or getting knowledge of a subject or a skill by study.”

3. Grammar is studied ........................................ in the Grammar-Translation Method.

4. Objectives are ........................................ than goals.

5. ........................................ is a key principle for organising content because it is rarely sufficient to present and practise a language item once only and then consider it dealt with.

6. Transmission of Knowledge characterises ........................................ classrooms.

7. ........................................ are generally sequenced according to their complexity.

8. The language that is used mostly in the Grammar-Translation classroom is the student’s ........................................

9. Unlike ........................................ which deal with developing students intellectual abilities and skills, ........................................ are concerned with the growth of students’ attitudes, values, and feelings.

10. ........................................ is the ability of putting parts together to form a whole, with emphasis on creating a new meaning or structure.

11. ........................................ refers to “the order in which new items are taught, how the components fit with one another and how the range of language taught develops as learners progress through the course.”

12. In the Grammar-Translation method, ........................................ are receive little attention since the ability to communicate in the target language is not a goal of language instruction.

Good Luck!
Department of English
Course: TEFL
Third Year/ Groups: 1, 2, 3 & 4
Name: .................................................

Second-Semester Resit

Question One (8 pts)
In a paragraph (no more than 8 lines), explain the differences between summative and formative assessment. Support your answer with examples.

Question Two (12 pts)
In a paragraph (no more than 12 lines), explain why EFL teachers should deviate from their original lesson plan and make adjustments to the lesson at the implementation phase.

Good Luck!
Résumé

La pensée critique est devenue un sujet important dans les classes d’anglais langue seconde. La présente étude vise à examiner l’évaluation de la pensée critique au niveau des examens de TEFL. Nous émettons l’hypothèse que les examens de TEFL ne répondent pas aux capacités de réflexion des étudiants. Pour vérifier cette hypothèse, une méthode descriptive a été utilisée et à partir de laquelle un certain nombre de données ont été recueillies au moyen d’un questionnaire qui a été soumis à soixante-dix (70) étudiants en licence d’anglais langue étrangère à l’université Larbi Benmhidi - Oum El Bouaghi. Une méthode qualitative a été utilisée tout au long de l’analyse d’échantillons d’examens de TEFL sur une période de 3 ans. Sur la base des résultats de l’étude, il a été démontré que la pensée critique est une compétence adéquate qui doit être testée et évaluée au même titre que les autres compétences de base. L’évaluation des compétences. Peut aider les apprenants à apporter des changements positifs dans leur façon de penser et à élargir les horizons de leurs connaissances. Dans l’ensemble, la pensée critique est une stratégie efficace qui devrait être appliquée dans toutes les classes afin d’aider les apprenants à devenir actifs, stimulés et motivés. L’évaluation de cette compétence aide les élèves à développer leur auto-efficacité et une attitude positive à l’égard de l’apprentissage dans son ensemble. Par conséquent, l’hypothèse initialement adoptée est devenue une considération valable des données de l’étude. Les enseignants sont donc invités à inclure les compétences de pensée critique des étudiants lors de l’élaboration des questions d’examen.
ملخص

أصبح التفكير الناقد أهم نتائج ثمار دراسة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في جميع أنحاء العالم. تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى دراسة تقييم التفكير الناقد على مستوى مهارات اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. نحن نفترض أن اختبارات تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية فشلت في معالجة مهارات التفكير لدى الطلاب. لاختبار الفرضية، تم إجراء طريقة وصفية، تم من خلالها جمع عدد من البيانات من خلال استبيان تم تقديمه لسبعين (70) طالبًا في معهد اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في جامعة العربية بن مهدي - أم البوادي. وتم استخدام أيضًا طريقة نوعية من خلال تحليل عينات من اختبارات تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية على مدى فترة 2 سنوات. بناءً على نتائج الدراسة، فإن التفكير النقدي مهارة مناسبة يجب احترامها وتقييمها باعتبارها المهارات الأساسية الأخرى. يمكن أن يساعد تقييم مهارات التفكير النقدي لدى المتعلمين في إحداث تغييرات إيجابية في طرق تفكيرهم وتسريع أفاقهم. بشكل عام، يمثل التفكير الناقد استراتيجية فعالة يجب تطبيقها في كل فصل دراسي من أجل الحصول على متعلمين تشجيعي ومحمسين. يساعد تقييم هذه المهارة الطلاب أيضًا على تطوير القدرات الذاتية والموظف الإيجابي في التعلم ككل. وتستنجد لذلك، أصبحت الفرضية التي تم اعتمادها مبدئيًا صحيحاً لعناصر الدراسة. لذلك ينصح المعلمين بتحضير مهارات التفكير الناقد لدى الطلاب عند تطوير أسئلة اختبارات