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Faculty of Letters and Languages  
Department of English

**Literature as a Medium for Developing Critical  
Thinking in EFL Classroom:  
the case of First-Year Licence Students at Ghardaia University and the Continuing  
Education University of El Meniaa**

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Master in Didactics.

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## **Dedication**

*First of all, I dedicate this success to myself.*

*To the one who honored my name with the most beautiful titles, my support in life, the source of my strength and inspiration, my dear father. To my beloved mother, under whose feet lies paradise, who grasped my dreams and hopes, and has always been my greatest support after Allah. Thanks for being in my life.*

*To my brothers and sisters that have been there for me in my weakest moments, that have helped me get the obstacles out of my way, that have always been the shoulder I could lean on.*

*To my beloved husband, Thank you for your continual support and encouragement all throughout this journey. To the one who has been a father, a brother and a true support to me.*

*And thanks to my assistant Esmahane for her support and help to finish this work,*

*Djouda Nour*

## **Dedication**

*I dedicate this humble achievement to my beloved mother, who carried the responsibilities of both parents and surrounded me with endless love, patience, and strength.*

*To the soul of my dear father, may Allah bless him with His mercy and grant him eternal peace.*

*To my little siblings and to my childhood best friend, Safaa, my companion through every step of this journey, for their constant moral support, encouragement, and the warmth they brought into my life during every difficult moment.*

*To my beloved grandmother, my dear aunts and uncles, whose prayers, kindness, and encouragement have always meant so much to me.*

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*Finally, I dedicate this graduation to everyone who stood by me, supported me, and believed in me. May goodness always accompany their hearts and lives.*

*expressing our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all those who have supported and encouraged us in the completion of this work,*

*We would also like to sincerely thank our supervisor, professor Zohra Ghani, for her valuable guidance, insight comments and continuous support which greatly contributed to the completion of this thesis despite her great effort and dedication with us.*

*We are also very thankful to our families and friends for believing in us and their constant encouragement.*

*At last, we would like to thank all those who have contributed, directly or indirectly, to the completion of this dissertation.*

*Thank you so much for your kindness and support.*

*Djafer Fatima zohra*

## **Acknowledgment**

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## **Abstract**

This research aims to explore the role of literature instruction in enhancing and developing critical thinking skills among students in the Department of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The study highlights a fundamental relationship between literature and critical thinking, emphasizing that literature serves as an effective tool for fostering analytical and inferential abilities. It is based on observations that many students struggle with analytical skills due to reliance on memorization rather than deep comprehension of texts. A mixed- method approach was employed, including an online questionnaire distributed to students and semi-structured interviews conducted with instructors. The findings reveal that integrating literature into teaching significantly contributes to the development of critical thinking skills by promoting analysis ,interpretation,evaluation, and inference. The study concludes that literature is a powerful instrument for fostering critical thinking and recommends incorporating literature-based teaching strategies into English language curricula to enhance higher-order thinking skills among students

*Key words:* Literature, Critical Thinking, English as a Foreign Language, Literary Texts, Analytical Skills, Teaching Strategies.

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**GENERAL  
INTRODUCTION**

## Introduction

The development of critical thinking skills has become a major goal of modern education, particularly in EFL education. In an age of exploding information, the need for independent judgment is increasing, and learners are expected not only to acquire linguistic knowledge, but also to develop the ability to critically analyze, evaluate and interpret information. Literature has an important function in the realization of these educational objectives. Literary texts expose learners to various perspectives, complex situations and meaningful use of language, thus encouraging them to engage in deeper reflection and analysis. Students will examine characters, themes and cultural contexts, and will analyze ideas, make inferences, evaluate arguments and express their own opinions. Literature, therefore, provides fertile ground for the development of higher order thinking skills. Many researchers have indicated the positive influence of literature on the development of critical thinking. Literature encourages learners to transcend the literal level and to participate in thinking processes that promote the development of the intellect. Studying literature helps to develop creativity, cultural awareness, reflective thinking as well as language proficiency, all of which contribute to the development of critical thinking skills. The significance of critical thinking is acknowledged; however, many EFL learners rely on memorization and passive learning strategies. This often results in problems in the analysis of information, in the interpretation of meanings and in the formulation of independent judgments. As a result, there is an increasing demand for pedagogical approaches that actively promote critical engagement with texts and encourage learners to become independent thinkers. The present study aims at exploring the role of literature in developing critical thinking skills in first year EFL students at Ghardaia University and the University of Continuing Education in El Meniaa. It intends to explore the role of literary texts in the development of students' analytical, interpretative, evaluative and inferential skills. Furthermore, this study intends to

investigate the efficacy of literature-based instruction to foster critical thinking and to illustrate the educational value of literature in the EFL classroom .

### **Statement of Problem**

Critical thinking is one of the most important skills to be developed by EFL learners to analyze information, evaluate ideas, and make rational decisions. However, many EFL freshmen tend to depend on memorization and passive learning instead of critical analysis and reflection. The literature acknowledges that literature is a rich source of authentic language and meaningful content, and a tool to stimulate higher-order thinking skills; however, it is often underutilized or taught in a manner that does not promote critical thinking. Hence, the need to investigate whether and how literature can be an effective tool for fostering critical thinking skills in EFL classrooms for first year Licence students.

### **The Aim of the Study**

This study aims to explore the role of literature in fostering critical thinking skills among first-year Licence students in EFL classrooms also seeks to explore the role of literary texts in promoting learners' analytical and reflective thinking and to identify the difficulties students face when studying literature. Furthermore, the study attempts to suggest effective strategies for integrating literature into English language teaching. The results of this study will contribute to answering the research questions.

### **Research Questions**

- What is the level of critical thinking skills among first-year students?
- To what extent does teaching literature enhance critical thinking skills among EFL learners?
- What are the difficulties that students face when studying literary texts?
- What are the strategies that can be adopted to integrate literature effectively in teaching English.?

## **Research Hypotheses**

The use of literature contributes to the development of critical thinking skills in teaching a foreign language as an EFL among first-year Licence students.

## **Research Objectives**

- To explore the role of literature in developing critical thinking skills of first year EFL students.
- To investigate the relationship between literature teaching and the development of critical thinking.
- To find out the difficulties students have in studying literary texts.
- To explore effective ways of integrating literature into EFL classrooms.
- To know the contribution of the literary texts for the development of the inferencing skills.

## **Limitations of the Study**

First, it is restricted to first-year EFL students at Ghardaia University and the University of Continuing Education of El Meniaa. Secondly, the sample size is relatively small, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. In addition, the main data collection instrument used in the study is the questionnaires and interviews. Hence, the results represent the participants' responses and perceptions in the context of the study.

## **Research Methodology**

This current study relies on the qualitative and the quantitative Approach to provide a detailed necessity for the subject under investigation. This study examines the role of teaching literature in developing critical thinking skills among EFL learners. An electronic questionnaire was distributed to first-year Licence students, and interviews were conducted with teachers .

**CHAPTER I**  
**LITERATURE REVIEW**

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## CHAPTER I: LITERATURE REVIEW

Many scholars view literature as an important tool to develop critical thinking skills in the classrooms of the English language. Critical thinking helps the learners to make logical judgement, to solve problems and to express their ideas independently. However, some educational settings continue to use traditional teaching approaches that lean more towards memorization than analysis and interpretation despite the importance of critical thinking (Fisher, 2001, p.1). The present study, therefore, aims to explore the contribution of literary texts in developing students' critical thinking skills in learning English. The study aims to investigate the potential of literature to create a more interactive and intellectually stimulating learning environment. The purpose is to investigate how literature can help to create a more interactive and intellectually stimulating environment for learning.

### 1.1 Critical Thinking

Critical thinking has become a major focus in modern education as educators are increasingly seeking to develop students' thinking skills rather than focusing teaching on the transmission of information. This change is in response to an increasing awareness that learners need to be involved in more complex cognitive processes such as analysis, evaluation and interpretation. The historical origin of the idea can be traced back to Socratic questioning, but its modern development is considered as the work of John Dewey, a widely recognised pioneer of the modern critical thinking tradition (Fisher, 2001)

Dewey defines critical thinking as: "Active, persistent and careful consideration of a belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends" (Dewey, 1909, p. 9). It's not a passive process. It warns us not to accept beliefs at face value and to consider the veracity of beliefs before believing them. (Dewey, 1909, p. 9), Richard Paul and Linda Elder define critical thinking as the art of analysing and evaluating thinking to improve it (Paul & Elder, 2006). This definition also corresponds to the idea of critical thinking as a self-correcting cognitive process whereby students improve their understanding through constant reflection and analysis.

Moreover, Peter Facione provides a more detailed definition. He defines critical thinking as purposeful self-regulatory judgment that includes interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference by using evidence and context (Facione, 1998). This view was further strengthened by Facione (1990,P.2) by means of the Delphi method of inquiry involving experts in the field reached a consensus that critical thinking is a disciplined and structured mental process based on evidence and reasoning.

## 1.2Components of Critical Thinking:

The leading researchers concur that there are two primary categories of critical thinking components: cognitive skills and dispositions.

When it comes to cognitive skills, experts say that the most important parts of critical thinking are interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation.

Dispositions are personal traits, or the "character of the critical thinker," which means the willingness and ability to use cognitive skills. (Facione, 2015, p. 5).



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**Figure 1 Critical Thinking Disposition****1.3 Core Elements of Critical Thinking:****1.3.1 The Main Components Underlying Critical Thinking:**

Learning and understanding critical thinking skills enables learners to improve their problem-solving and decision-making abilities. Critical thinking skills are not a single skill, but rather a set of interconnected skills that help them process information more comprehensively.

Cognitive skills, considered the foundation of critical thinking, consist of six key areas: interpretation and analysis, evaluation and inference, explanation, and self-regulation.

Learning these fundamental critical thinking skills is essential for improving decision-making and problem-solving abilities in all aspects of life. (Facione, 2015, p. 5).

Critical thinking is composed of six core skills :

**Interpretation :** was defined as clarifying the meaning and understanding of a variety of events, judgments, and beliefs. This aspect of critical thinking includes sub-skills such as decoding and classification.

**Analysis :** was defined as identifying the intended inferential relationships between questions, statements, concepts, and other forms of representation used for expression.

**Evaluation:** to determine the credibility of account or descriptions of a person's perception, experience, situation, judgment, belief or opinion; and to determine the logical strength of the actual or intended inferential relationships among descriptions, questions or other forms of account or description.

**Inference :** is identify and secure elements needed to draw reasonable conclusions; to form conjectures and hypotheses; to consider relevant information and to educe the consequences flowing from data, statements, principles, evidence, judgments, beliefs, opinions, concepts, descriptions, questions, or other froms representation.

Explanation: as the ability to present the results of one's reasoning in a coherent and cogent way. This means being able to give someone a complete picture of the big picture: both to state and to justify that reasoning in terms of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, and contextual considerations upon which one's results were based; and to present one's reasoning in the form of cogent arguments. The subskills of explanation are: describing methods and results, justifying procedures, proposing and defending with good reasons one's causal and conceptual explanations of events or points of view, and presenting full and well-reasoned arguments in the context of seeking the best possible understandings.

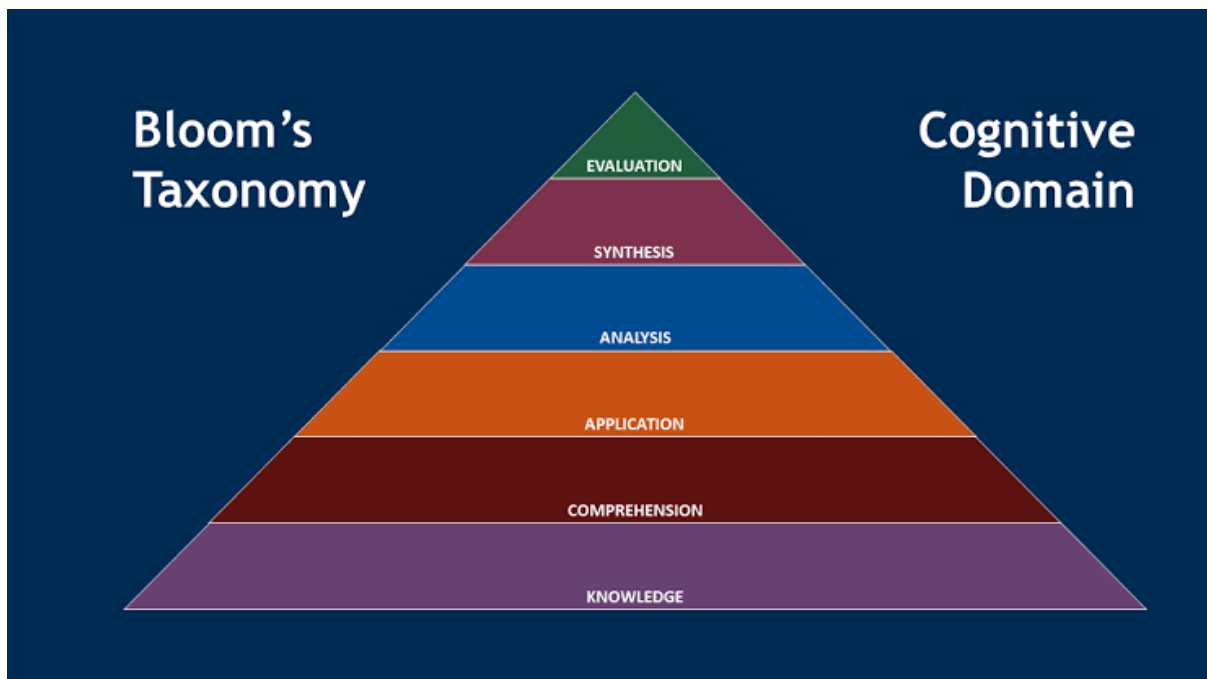
self-regulation: This is when an individual consciously reviews their cognitive activities, the elements used, and the results obtained, through the application of reasoning skills to verify the validity of the idea using self-examination and self-correction skills. (Facione, 2015, pp. 5–7).



**Figure 2 The Critical Thinking Skills (facione ,2013 ,p,5)**

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY, originally developed by educational psychologist Benjamin Bloom in the 1950s, was a groundbreaking framework that revolutionized the field of

education. This taxonomy aimed to categorize educational objectives and cognitive processes into a structured hierarchy, providing educators with a systematic approach to curriculum design, instruction, and assessment. The original taxonomy consisted of six hierarchical levels, each representing a different.



**Figure 3 Using Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning to upgrade training**

## **1.4 The Importance of Critical Thinking for EFL Learners**

The development of students' critical thinking skills in the academic learning process is emphasized by many scholars as such skills allow learners to make deliberate and self-controlled judgments, critically appraise arguments, and reach logical solutions to complex problems (Facione, 1998; Schafersman, 1991; Landsberger, 1996; Halpern, 2003). Critical thinking also helps students to effectively handle conflicts and challenges in their everyday life. However, despite its importance, many educational institutions still focus on teaching

students “what to think” instead of “how to think”, thereby constraining the analytical and independent reasoning capabilities of learners “

According to Daud and Husin (2004), many educational institutions still emphasize teaching students what to think rather than how to think . Literary texts are relevant in this context as they expose learners to different perspectives, promote the interpretation of ideas and characters and foster discussion and reflection. By engaging with literature students become better able to analyze situations, to question assumptions and to build reasoned arguments.

Critical thinking is important at personal and professional levels nowadays because it helps to solve problems effectively and improve performance at academic and workplace settings (Shukri & Mukundan, 2015) . Rational, logical, practical, and solution-oriented are the words used to describe critical thinkers who can turn problems into learning and improvement opportunities. Hence, the use of literature in education helps not only in learning the language but also in the development of the learner’s intellectual and critical capacities.

## **1.5 The Role of Literature in EFL**

### **1.5.1 Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on the use of Literature in Language Teaching**

English literary studies were not a separate academic discipline in the 18th century, but part of classical rhetoric teaching, which aimed to develop learners skills in both effective speaking and writing and an appreciation of literary texts. In this framework, literature was a vehicle for acquiring skills of discovery, reasoning, and communication, not a separate subject of study.

According to Spack (1985) , in the 18th century, English studies emphasized the importance of being able to write and speak well while also enjoying literature. Literature was not regarded as a separate discipline; instead, its study was integrated into classical

rhetoric instruction, which sought to cultivate learners' skills in discovery and communication

From this historical perspective, today's language education can be regarded as a continuation of the pedagogical tradition of the past. Bagherkazemi and Birjandi (2010) believe that the modern idea of literature in developing learners' critical thinking is not a new phenomenon but is historically deeply rooted in educational practices. Literature has always been an intellectual tool: in classical rhetoric, it was used to polish the ability to reason and express oneself, and in modern language teaching it is used to promote analysis, interpretation and critical engagement with texts.

This auspicious historical moment indicates that present-day assumptions about the capacity of literature to promote 'critical thinking' in language learners are profoundly historical (Bagherkazemi & Birjandi, 2010)

### **1.5.2 The Benefits of Literature for Language Development**

According to Collie and Slater (1987), Students are introduced to new vocabulary and to a wide range of features of written language through extensive reading, including sentence construction, cohesive devices and different ways of organising and linking ideas. It helps them to improve their writing skills by providing them examples of good usage. Students learn valuable strategies for reading, such as using context clues to infer meaning and decoding unfamiliar phrases without explicit explanations. These skills are transferable and help one understand different types of text – but not just literary ones . extensive reading can help students to develop their vocabulary, their awareness of sentence structure, the coherence between ideas and their writing skills. It also improves inferencing and context understanding – which are important for reading comprehension.the general idea is that extensive reading is a key pedagogical tool for language learning, both in terms of expanding linguistic knowledge and in developing higher-order reading strategies to interact more effectively .

This is the most benefits :

### **1.5.3 Vocabulary Acquisition**

Prose, poetry and drama all include a variety of meaningful language use . Thus, literature is a good source of lexical variety. Through exposure to the literary texts, learners encounter a large number of vocabulary items, including idiomatic expressions, figurative language and culturally specific terms which are often absent from traditional language learning materials (Laufer & Nation, 1995). These authentic texts encourage active use of the language where learners have to infer meaning from context and how words work in different situations, rather than depending on direct definitions alone. (Webb, 2005). As a result , literature is important in expanding the lexical knowledge and improving the overall linguistic competence of the learners .Literary lexical variety abounds in prose, poetry, and drama. Through interaction with literature, learners are exposed to a variety of vocabulary including idiomatic expressions, figurative language, and culturally specific terms which are less likely to appear in traditional language learning materials. Authentic texts challenge learners to decode meaning from context and to infer how vocabulary is used in different settings, leading to deeper vocabulary acquisition (Hossain, 2024).

### **1.5.4 Grammatical Competence and Syntactic Complexity**

In addition to vocabulary, literature exposes the students to a variety of grammatical structures and complex sentence patterns. Authentic literature often contains complex syntax that challenges learners to process and understand Exposure to authentic grammatical forms in literature helps learners to develop their grammatical competence by giving them examples of how rules of syntax, tense, aspect and mood are applied in real communication. Also the employment of literary Materials used in language teaching can provide a window into grammatical subtleties that are not necessarily taught explicitly in formal grammar classes, such as the use of metaphorical or poetic language. For example, students may study the use of the subjunctive to express wishes, emotions, or hypothetical situations in literature, which are often complex and difficult to learn through standard grammatical exercises.Literary texts also often require learners to interpret non-literal

language, such as metaphors, similes and allegories. Figurative language is a tool that can be used by learners to increase their understanding of how grammatical structures can be used creatively to communicate meaning beyond the literal, thus enhancing their grammatical and linguistic awareness(Hossain, 2024).

### **1.5.5 Discourse Analysis**

Discourse analysis considers language a functional tool that people use to achieve specific communicative goals. Therefore, learning a language involves not only mastering grammatical rules but also understanding how language operates in real contexts. Literary texts expose learners to different forms of discourse and contextual meanings, which play an important role in text comprehension. Since meaning is influenced by both the reader and the text, discourse analysis helps learners explore deeper levels of interpretation beyond sentence structures. By focusing on language in use, it enables readers to identify underlying meanings and better understand the relationship between the author, the discourse, and the intended message. (Ünveren Kapanadze, 2018, p. 95)

### **1.5.6 The Contribution of Literature to Cultural Understanding and Intercultural Awareness**

Literature is one of the best media for intercultural pedagogy and most importantly, world literature consists of texts coming from different cultural, linguistic and historical contexts. Damrosch (2003) says that world literature is not merely a canon of texts translated from languages, but a lively practice of reading and teaching that involves the circulation of literary pieces beyond their culture of origin. When taught with an intercultural intention, world literature can promote critical cultural awareness by opening up for students the discussion of global issues such as colonialism, gender inequality, and migration, through culturally rooted narratives (Saquing, 2018). As Kramersch (2013) points out, literary texts can convey everyday human experiences and culturally specific

worldviews, which can help students to understand others' thoughts and the deep structure of their beliefs.

According to Byram (1997), critical cultural awareness is the ability to critically evaluate and compare one's own and others' cultural practices and perspectives. In literature education, students develop this skill when they are encouraged to reflect on cultural meanings within texts and engage with unfamiliar cultural contexts in a thoughtful and respectful manner. Nussbaum (2010) argues that literature, particularly when read critically, helps students develop "narrative imagination," the capacity to imagine the experiences of others, which contributes to the development of civic and moral thinking.

## **1.6 A Discussion of Different Literary Genres Used in EFL Teaching**

Every literary genre has its own language patterns, its own set of stylistic choices and its own patterns of cultural orientation. Novels and short stories, for example, advance to new levels of realism through setting and plot. Plays, however, are about characters and their relationships, and are meant to be performed on stage. Poetry, however, is known for its many forms. It governs the normal expectations of use. Therefore, the importance of using different literary genres in EFL classrooms is highlighted. Awareness of these genres can help both teachers and students become aware of their benefits in any classroom and to overcome the mismatch between literature as a content-based subject and literature (Benzoukh, 2017).

## **1.7 Integrating Literature and Critical Thinking in EFL Teaching**

### **1.7.1 Theoretical Connections: How Literature Gives rich Contexts for Critical Analysis Literature is just full of messy Situations**

People say different things about the same book. That's where Reader-Response comes in. there's no single meaning in the text itself. It's the readers who create meaning together (Fish ,1980). something similar reading is a transaction between you and the page. Not just passive(Rosenblatt, 1978).Then there's dialogic approaches. The novel is like a conversation. Many voices inside it some agree, some fight. Even the author isn't the only voice. You as a reader also bring your voice. So analysis becomes about listening to all these voices, not just finding one correct answer. (Bakhtin, 1981)And critical literary theory? That's broader. It uses literature to ask harder questions about power, gender, class, hidden assumptions. You don't need to say "I'm doing critical theory." You just ask: who benefits from this story? What is being left out? Literature provides those rich contexts naturally because it's never just one thing.(Tyson, 2006) Literature works for critical analysis because it gives you real human complexity. Not clean examples. Messy ones. And that's actually better for thinking deeply.

### **1.7.2 Pedagogical Strategies**

First, character analysis. This one is good for inference. You know, figuring out what a character really means when they say something or what they don't say. You have to read between the lines. There are studies showing that when students track a character's choices or dialogue, they get better at guessing motives and emotions .(Wolfe & Goldman, 2003). Nothing fancy. Just that stories force you to fill gaps.

Second, plot analysis. This teaches cause and effect. What happened because of what? If this event didn't happen, would that character still end up there? Simple stuff but it builds logical thinking. (Graesser et al., 1996) looked at how students follow story structures.

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They found that breaking down plot into smaller events helps students see chains of reasons. One thing leads to another.

Third, thematic analysis. This is more advanced. Interpretation and evaluation. What does the story mean? Not just what happened — but why does it matter? And how do you judge the ideas inside it? Some approaches use debate or group discussion around themes like justice, loyalty, freedom. Beck and McKeown (2006) had this method called "Questioning the Author." You don't just accept what the text says. You ask: do I agree? Is this fair? That's evaluation. There are other studies. Langer (1995) talked about "envisionment building" — letting students live inside a literary world before analyzing it. And Paul and Elder (2008) have frameworks for critical thinking through texts. But really, the main idea is simple: literature gives you messy human situations. You can't solve them with one formula. That's exactly why it works for teaching thinking.

## **1.8 Challenges and Opportunities: Teaching Literature to First-year Students is not Always Easy**

There are real problems:

### **Challenges First:**

**Text complexity:** Some books are just hard. Old language. Long sentences. References to things students don't know. You give them James Joyce or Faulkner and they shut down. Not because they're not smart. Just because they haven't learned how to read that way yet. The first-year students often struggle with inferencing and holding multiple plot lines in their head (Graesser et al., 1997).

Cultural barriers. Some students feel like it has nothing to do with them. Different values. Different humor. Different ideas about family or religion. If they don't see themselves in it, they might just not. The reader brings their own world to the text. If the gap is too wide, no transaction happens. (Rosenblatt, 1978)

**Opportunities though:** But here's where it gets good. Literature can actually help with exactly those problems. For cultural barriers? That's actually an opportunity to talk about difference. Not as a problem, but as something interesting. First-year students are learning

to see other perspectives anyway. Literature gives them a safe space to ask: why is this character acting this way? Is it weird or just different? That's critical thinking right there.

## **1.9 The Context of First Year Licence Students**

### **1.9.1 Language Proficiency**

.First-year university students demonstrate varying levels of language proficiency. While some learners are able to understand complex academic texts, others experience difficulties with advanced vocabulary and sentence structures. According to Perin (2013), many first-year students tend to overestimate their reading abilities and may fail to identify subtle textual elements such as tone, irony, and implied meaning. These difficulties can affect their comprehension of literary texts.

### **1.9.2 Academic Maturity**

Academic maturity represents another challenge for first-year students. University learning requires students to engage with ambiguity, multiple interpretations, and independent analysis. However, many first-year students prefer clear and direct answers rather than open-ended discussions and alternative interpretations of texts (Paul & Elder, 2008).

## **Conclusion**

This literature review related to the intersection of literature and critical thinking development in EFL classroom. It begins by defining critical thinking and discussion of its components and importance. It also included his role in Teaching English in EFL contexts.

The chapter then explored the benefits of literature. And possiblity of Integration literature and critical thinking in EFL teaching. Mentioning theoretical connection and pedagogical strategies,challenges,and opportunities. Studies confirm a strong connection between literature and critical thinking .

## Research Gap

Despite the established relationship between literature and critical thinking, there are still significant gaps and a lack of empirical research on how to develop critical thinking skills. Therefore, this study will help in the development of these skills through literature for this group of students.

**CHAPTER II**  
**METHODOLOGY AND**  
**PROCEDURES**

## CHAPTER II Methodology and Procedures

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology and procedures adopted in this study, which investigates the role of literature as a medium for developing Critical Thinking in the EFL classroom: *The Case of First Year*. It provides an overview of the research approach, the participants involved, the instruments used for data collection, and the procedures followed in gathering and analyzing the data in order to answer the research questions.

### 2.2 Design of the Study

The present study utilizes a mixed-method research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The design is appropriate to the topic because it allows the researcher to explore the students' perceptions through numerical data and also to explore the teachers' views in depth.

The quantitative part is based on an electronic questionnaire distributed to 20 first year LMD students in the EFL classroom. The qualitative part is developed through semi-structured interviews with three English language teachers of **University of Continuing Training and university of Ghardaïa**

The sequential explanatory design was chosen because it allows for the general exploration of patterns through the questionnaire and then to explain and deepen these findings through teachers' interviews. This approach gives more clarity on the contribution of literature to the development of critical thinking skills in EFL learning

These participants were selected because they are directly involved with the teaching and learning process of English and they can provide relevant information about the use of literature and its impact on developing Critical Thinking.

### 2.3 Tools for Data Collection

This study employed two main instruments. The first is an electronic questionnaire for students. It includes structured questions to explore their perceptions concerning the

use of literature in the EFL classroom and its contribution to the development of critical thinking skills.

The second instrument involved semi-structured interviews with teachers. The interviews allow more detailed and flexible responses and insights into teachers' experience and opinion of the integration of literature in teaching English and its impact on students' thinking skills.

## **2.4 Procedures of Data Collection**

. A questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were the two methods employed in this study to gather data. The purpose of the questionnaire was to learn more about students' opinions and attitudes on the use of literature in English language instruction. It contained a variety of questions to assist get a range of answers from the participants. Semi-structured interviews were also used to gather qualitative information and learn more about the perspectives and experiences of the participants. This tool made it possible to give more thorough explanations and clarification on the subject being studied.

## **2.5 Participants**

In this study, two groups of participants were included. The first group consists of 20 first year LMD students in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses. The second group was composed of three teachers from the University of Continuing Education (Université de la Formation Continue).

These participants were selected because they are directly involved with the teaching and learning process of English and they can provide relevant information about the use of literature and its impact on developing Critical Thinking.

## **2.6 Data Analysis**

The collected data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The questionnaire responses were analyzed statistically in order to identify common trends

among students. The interview data were analyzed thematically by identifying key ideas and recurring patterns in teachers' responses.

This combination of analysis methods provides a comprehensive understanding of how literature contributes to the development of Critical Thinking in the EFL classroom., interviews were conducted with three teachers from the University of Continuing Education (Université de la Formation Continue).

The interviews were conducted using prepared guiding questions, while also allowing flexibility for additional explanations and discussion

**CHAPTER III**  
**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

## **CHAPTER III: Results and Discussion**

### **Introduction**

This chapter is devoted to the practical part of the study. It aims at analyzing and interpreting the data collected through a questionnaire administered to EFL first-year Licence students. and then to explain and deepen these findings through teachers' interviews. The main purpose of this investigation is to examine the role of literature in developing students' critical thinking skills and to explore how literary texts contribute to enhancing interpretation, analysis, inference, and cultural understanding.

The questionnaire was designed in relation to the theoretical framework presented in the previous chapter. It includes different questions about the use of literature in EFL classes, students' attitudes toward literary texts, the importance of literature in developing critical thinking skills, and the main difficulties students face when studying literature. The interview questions were aimed to explore EFL teachers' perceptions and practices on the use of literature in developing critical thinking skills. The questions attempt to investigate some dimensions related to literature teaching such as teachers' beliefs concerning the relationship between literature and critical thinking, classroom strategies, students' participation, learners' difficulties and some possible suggestions to enhance the integration of literature in EFL classrooms.

This chapter is divided into several sections. First, it presents the research methodology and the description of the questionnaire and interview. Then, it provides the interpretation of the collected data question by question.

### **3. Research Methodology**

The present study adopts both quantitative and qualitative approaches in order to obtain reliable and detailed data about the role of literature in developing critical thinking skills among EFL learners. The quantitative approach was used to analyze the students' answers statistically, whereas the qualitative approach investigate teachers' perceptions and

practices regarding the use of literature in developing critical thinking skills among EFL learners

### **3.1 Data Collection**

The data were collected through an electronic questionnaire addressed to first-year Licence students of English. The questionnaire contains different types of questions including multiple-choice questions, Yes/No questions, Likert scale questions, and open-ended questions. These questions were designed to investigate students' attitudes toward literature and its contribution to the development of critical thinking skills. The qualitative part is developed through semi-structured interviews with three English language teachers of University of Continuing and university of Ghardaïa

#### **The Questionnaire Focused on Several Aspects such as:**

- The frequency of using literature in class,
- The literary genres used in teaching,
- The importance of literature in EFL classes
- The role of literature in developing interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inferencing skills,
- Students' participation during literary discussions,
- Classroom activities used in literature classes, and the difficulties students face when studying literary texts.

#### **The Interview Questions Focused on Several Aspects such as:**

- 1/ Literature's role in critical thinking development: Teachers' beliefs and perceptions
- 2/ Teaching practices and interaction in the classroom using literary texts
- 3/ Students' difficulties and the effect of language skills on the development of critical thinking
- 4/ Pedagogical Strategies and Recommendations for a Better Integration of Literature in English Language classrooms

### 3.2 Description of the Questionnaire

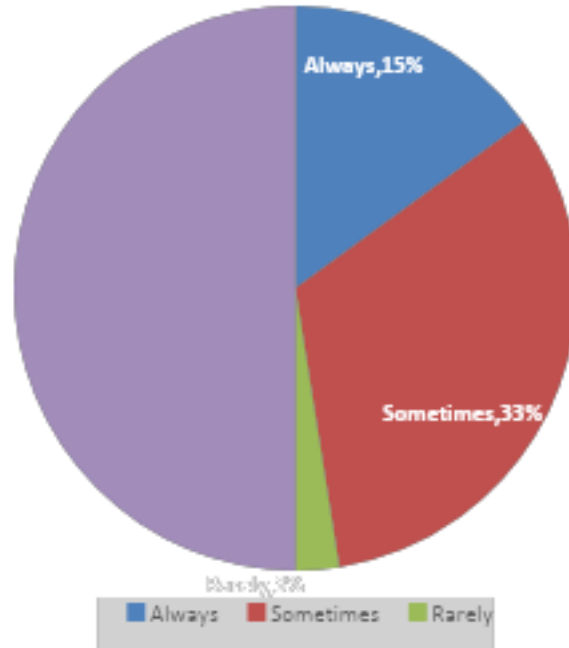
The questionnaire was divided into different sections related to the objectives of the study. The first section aimed at collecting general information about students' use of literature in the classroom. The second section focused on the importance of literature in developing critical thinking skills such as analysis, interpretation, evaluation, and inference. The last section investigated students' classroom participation, learning difficulties, and the activities that help them understand literary texts better.

The questionnaire included close-ended questions because they facilitate statistical analysis and help obtain precise answers from participants. In addition, one open-ended question was included to allow students to express their personal opinions about how literature contributes to the development of critical thinking skills.

#### **Question 01: How often are literary texts used in your classes?**

**Table 1 Students' Frequency of Using Literature in Class**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Always	6	30%
Sometimes	13	65%
Rarely	1	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>



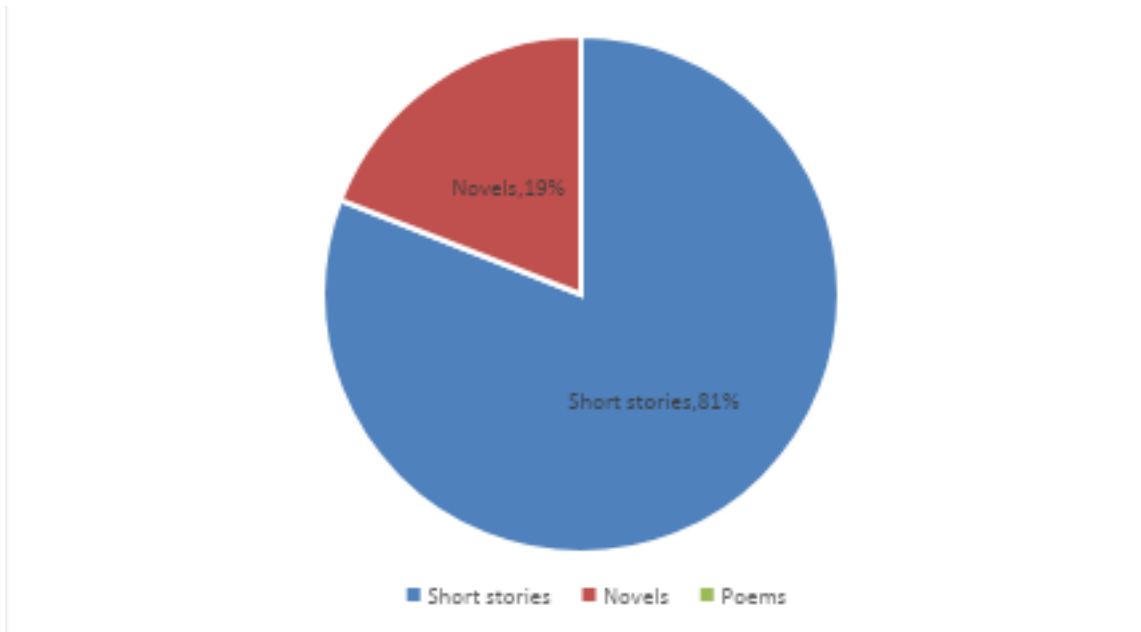
**Figure 4 Students' Frequency of Using literature in Class**

The results presented in table (01) show that the majority of students use literature “sometimes” in class, representing 65% of the total sample, with a frequency of 13 students. In contrast, 30% of the participants stated that they “always” use literature in class, corresponding to 6 students. Only 5% of the students reported that they “rarely” use literature, with a frequency of 1 student.

**Question 02: Which literary genre do you use most?**

**Table 2 The Most used Literary Genre in Class**

Literary Genre	Frequency	Percentage
Short stories	<b>16</b>	<b>81%</b>
Novels	<b>4</b>	<b>19%</b>
Poems	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
Total	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>



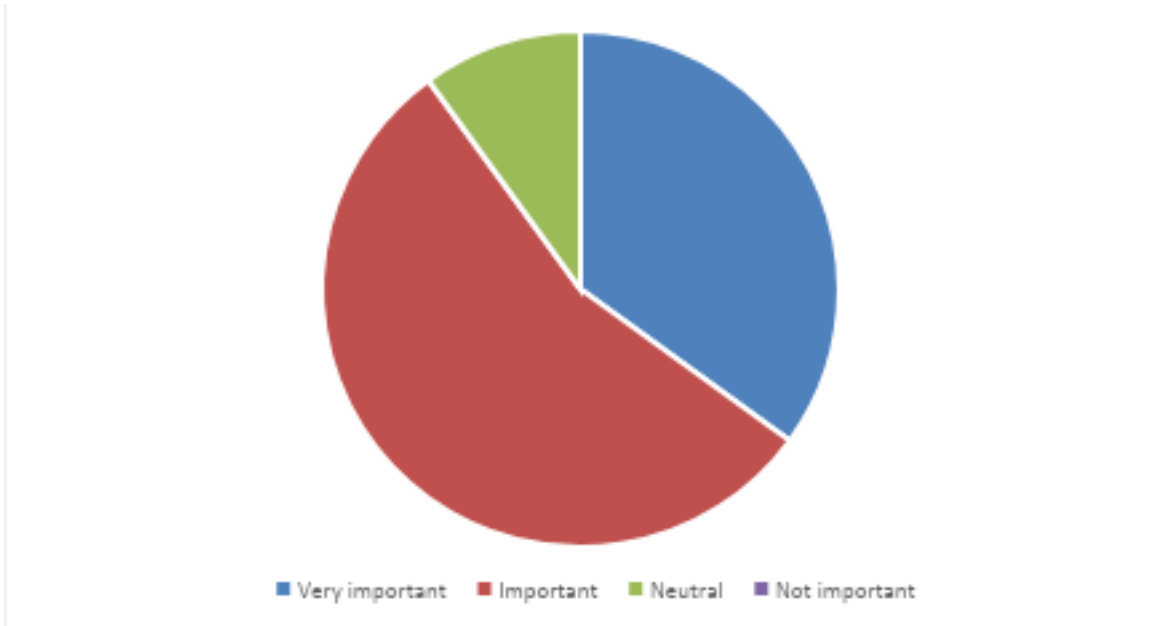
**Figure 5 The most literary genre class**

The results presented in table (02) indicate that short stories are the most frequently used literary genre among first-year students, representing 81% of the total sample with a frequency of 16 67students. In contrast, novels were selected by only19% of the participants, corresponding to 4 students, whereas poems received no responses from the participants.

**Question 03: How important do you consider literature in EFL teaching?**

**Table 3 Students' Opinions about the Importance in EFL Teaching**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Very important	7	35%
Important	11	55%
Neutral	2	10%
Not important	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 6 Students' opinions about the importance of literature in EFL teaching**

The results shown in table (03) demonstrate that the majority of students consider literature important in EFL teaching. A percentage of 55% of the participants selected “important,” representing 11 students, while 35% considered literature “very important,” corresponding to 7 students. In contrast, only 10% of the students had a neutral opinion, whereas no participant considered literature “not important.”

### Question 04: Does literature help students express their personal opinions?

Table 4 Literature and the Expression of Personal Opinions

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	20	100%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	20	100%

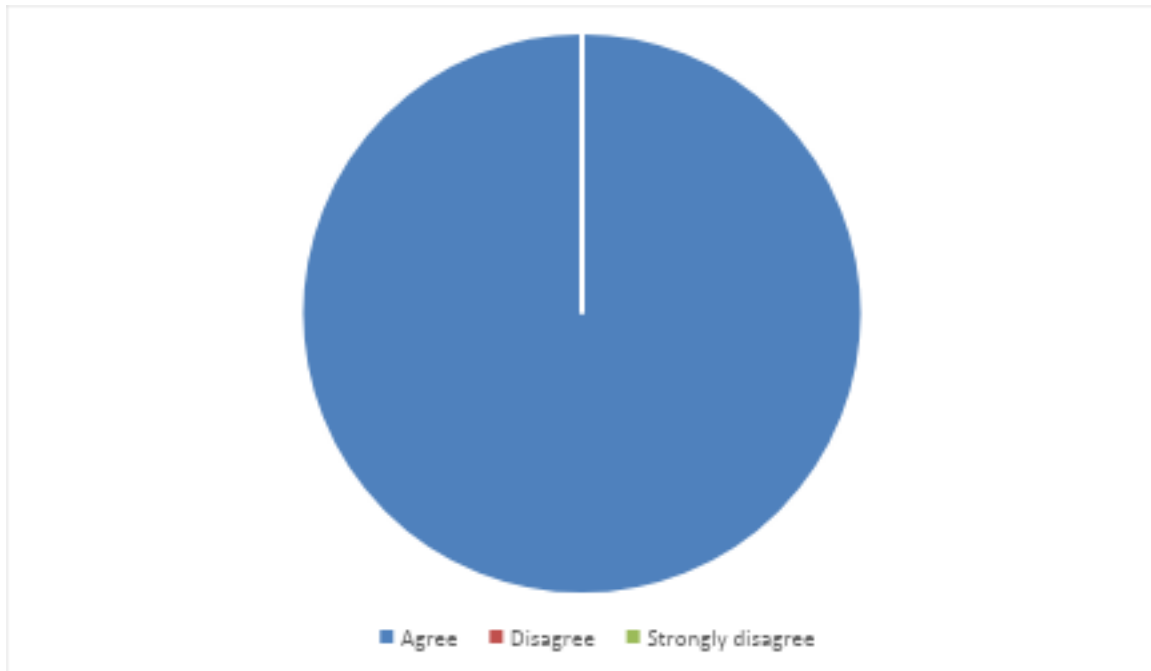


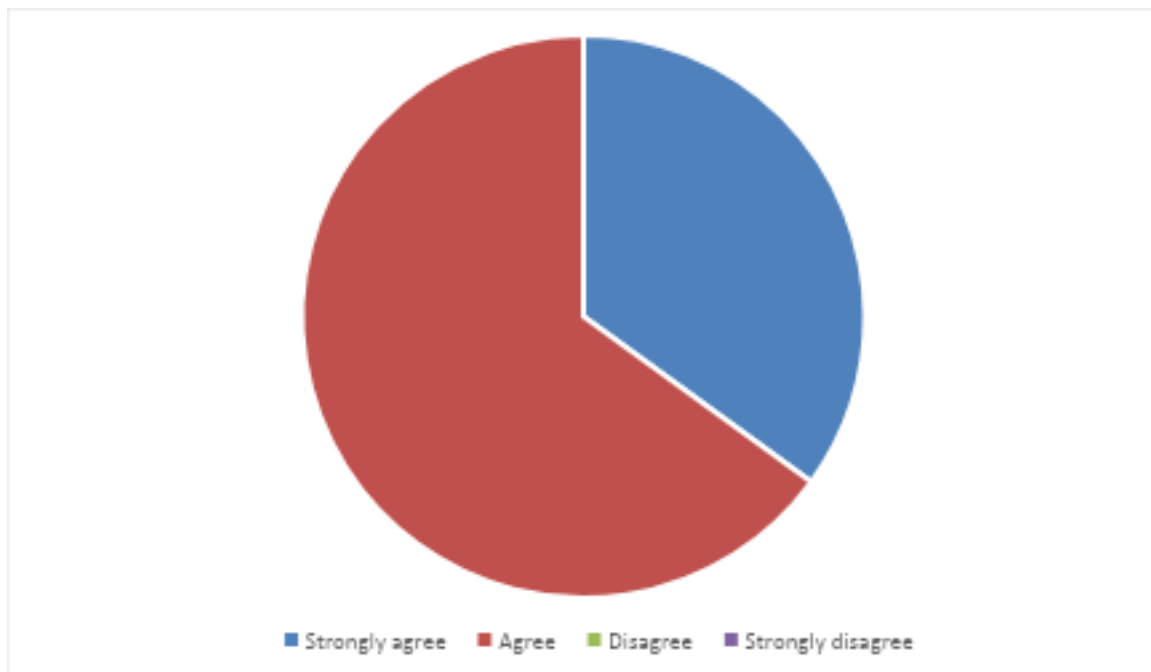
Figure 7 Literature and the Expression of Personal Opinions

The results presented in table (04) show that all participants agreed that literature helps students express their personal opinions. This represents 100% of the total sample, with a frequency of 20 students. No participant selected either “disagree” or “strongly disagree.”

**Question 05: Does literature help students understand different cultures and perspectives?**

**Table 5 Literature and Cultural Understanding**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	7	35%
Agree	13	65%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>



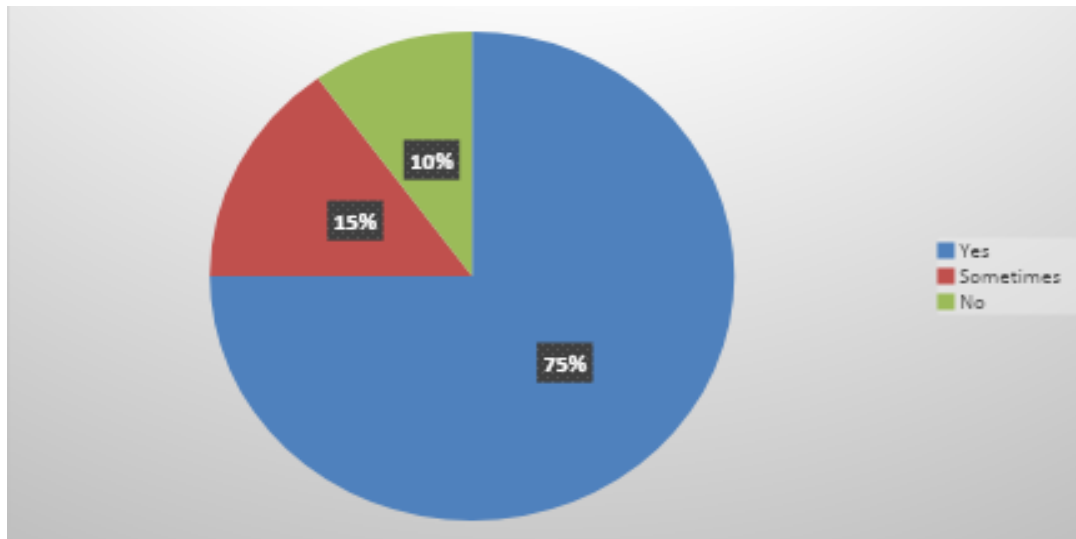
**Figure 8 Literature and Cultural Understanding**

The results presented in table (05) reveal that the majority of students believe that literature helps them understand different cultures and perspectives. A percentage of 65% of the participants agreed with this statement, representing 13 students, while 35% strongly agreed, corresponding to 7 students. No participant selected either “disagree” or “strongly disagree.”

**Question 06: Does literature help develop students’ critical thinking (analysis, interpretation, evaluation)?**

**Table 6 Literature and the Development of Critical Thinking Skills**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	15	75%
Sometimes	3	15%
No	2	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>



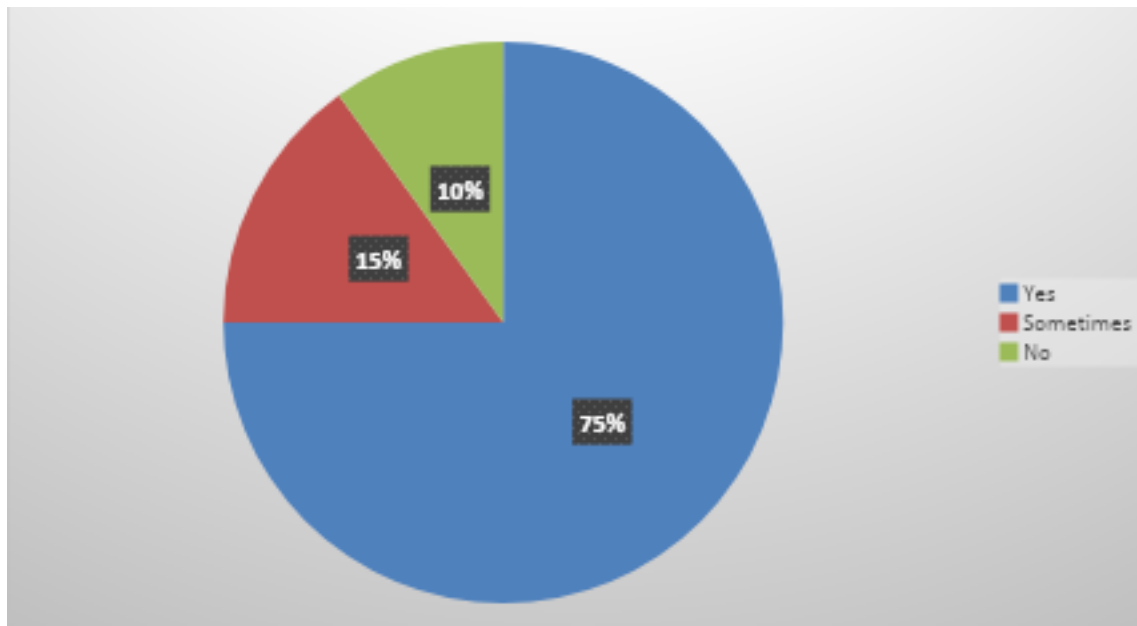
**Figure 9 Literature and the Development of Critical Thinking Skills**

The results presented in table (06) reveal that the majority of students believe that literature helps develop critical thinking skills such as analysis, interpretation, and evaluation. A percentage of 75% of the participants answered “Yes,” representing 15 students. In contrast, 15% selected “Sometimes,” corresponding to 3 students, while only 10% answered “No,” with a frequency of 2 students.

**Question 07: Does literature help students analyse and evaluate ideas critically?**

**Table 7 Literature and Critical Analysis of Ideas**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	15	75%
Sometimes	3	15%
No	2	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>



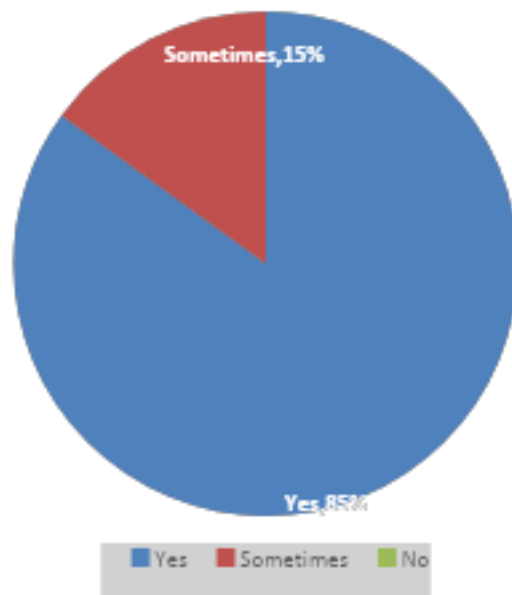
**Figure 10 Literature and Critical Analysis of Ideas**

The results presented in table (07) show that the majority of students believe that literature helps them analyse and evaluate ideas critically. A percentage of 75% of the participants answered “Yes,” representing 15 students. In contrast, 15% selected “Sometimes,” corresponding to 3 students, while only 10% answered “No,” with a frequency of 2 students.

**Question 08: Does literature help students infer meanings beyond the text?**

**Table 8 Literature and Inferencing Skills**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	17	85%
Sometimes	3	15%
No	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>



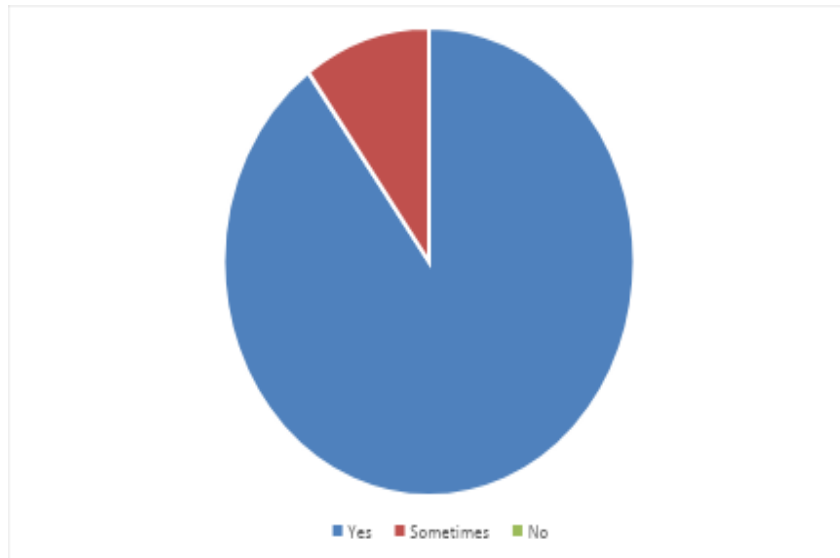
**Figure 11 Literature and Inferencing Skills**

The results presented in table (08) indicate that the majority of students believe that literature helps them infer meanings beyond the text. A percentage of 85% of the participants answered “Yes,” representing 17 students, while 15% selected “Sometimes,” corresponding to 3 students. No participant answered “No.”

**Question 09: Does literature help students move from simple understanding to deeper interpretation?**

**Table 9 Literature and Deeper Interpretation**

Option	Frequenc y	Percentage
Yes	18	90%
Sometimes	2	10%
No	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>



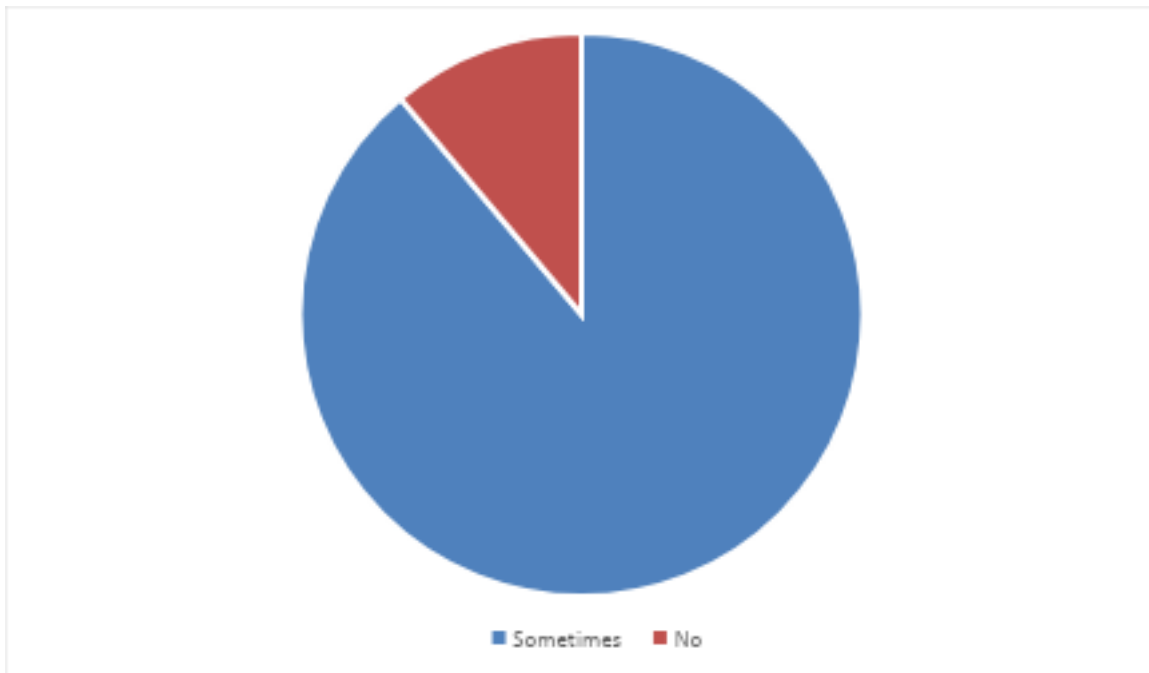
**Figure 12 Literature and Deeper Interpretation**

The results presented in table (09) reveal that the majority of students believe that literature helps them move from simple understanding to deeper interpretation. A percentage of 90% of the participants answered “Yes,” representing 18 students, while only 10% selected “Sometimes,” corresponding to 2 students. No participant answered “No.”

**Question 10: Does literature help students connect texts with real-life situations?**

**Table 10 Literature and Real-Life connections**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	11	55%
Sometimes	8	40%
No	1	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 13 Literature and Real Life Connections**

The results presented in table (10) reveal that the majority of students believe that literature helps them connect texts with real-life situations. A percentage of 55% of the participants answered “Yes,” representing 11 students, while 40% selected “Sometimes,” corresponding to 8 students. Only 5% answered “No,” with a frequency of 1 student.

**Question 11: In your opinion, how does literature help develop critical thinking skills?**

**Table 11 Students' Opinions about the Role of Literature in Developing Critical Thinking Skills**

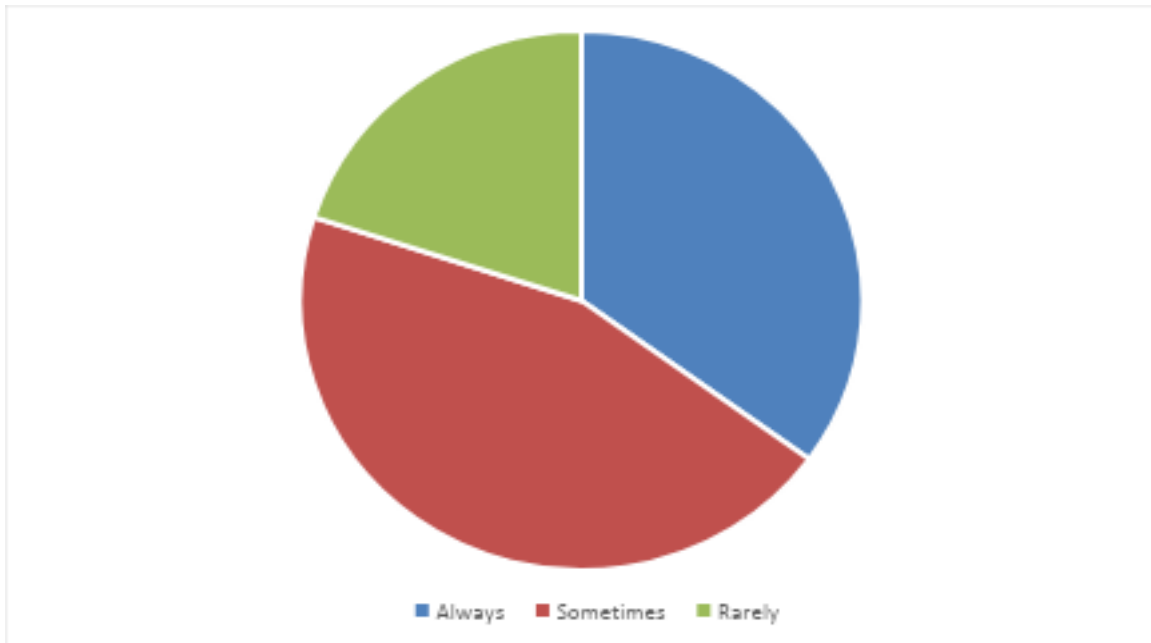
Main Ideas Mentioned by Students	Frequency
Analysis and interpretation of ideas and characters	8
Understanding different perspectives and cultures	5
Developing imagination and deep thinking	3
Encouraging discussion and expression of opinions	2
Connecting literature with real-life situations	2

The students’ answers to this open-ended question revealed different opinions concerning the role of literature in developing critical thinking skills. Most participants explained that literature helps them analyse characters, interpret hidden meanings, and evaluate ideas critically. Others stated that literary texts encourage them to understand different cultures and perspectives.

**Question 12: Do students participate actively in literary discussions?**

**Table 12 Students' Participation in Literary Discussion**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Always	7	35%
Sometimes	9	45%
Rarely	4	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>



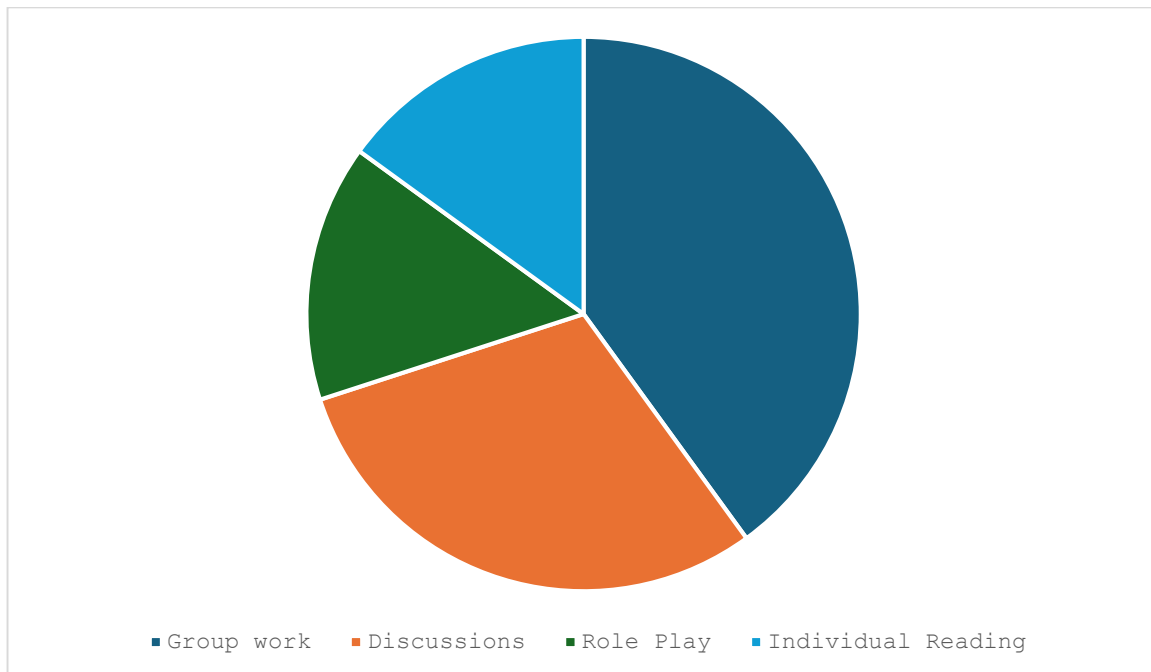
**Figure 14 Students' Participation in Literary Discussions**

The results presented in table (12) show that most students participate actively in literary discussions at different levels. A percentage of 45% of the participants answered “Sometimes,” representing 9 students, while 35% selected “Always,” corresponding to 7 students. In contrast, 20% answered “Rarely,” with a frequency of 4 students.

**Question 13: Which classroom activities help students understand literary texts better**

**Table 13 Classroom Activities that Help Students Understand Literary Texts Better ?**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Group work	8	40%
discussion	6	30%
Role play	3	15%
Individual reading	3	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>



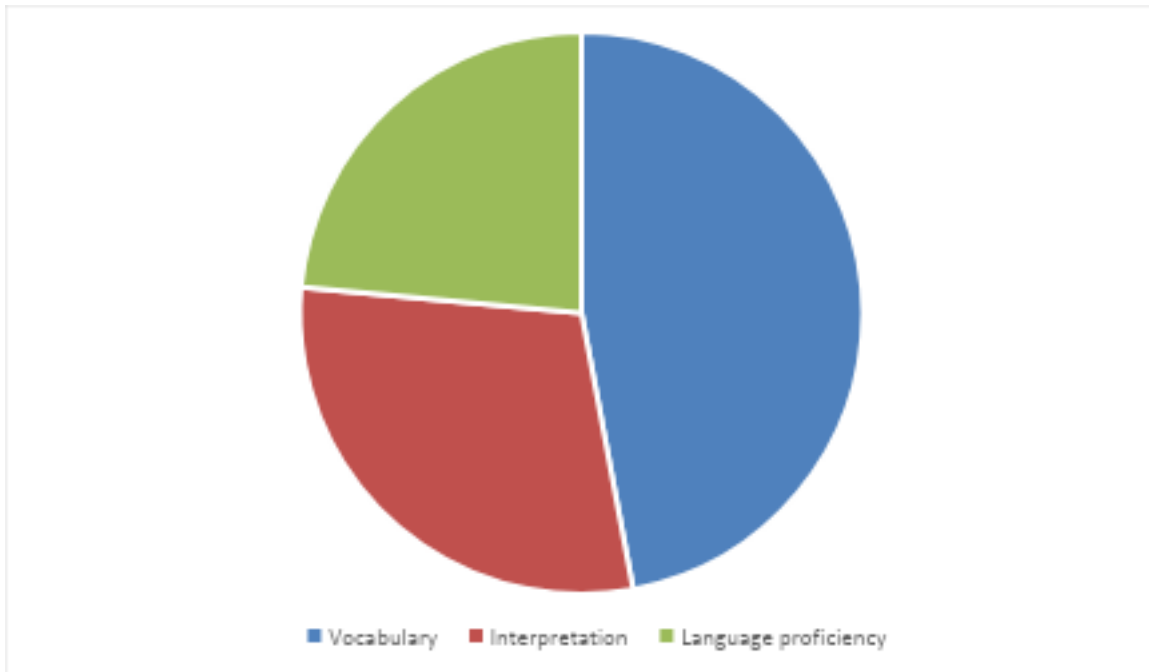
**Figure 15 Classroom Activities that Help Students Understand Literary Texts Better**

The results indicate that Group Work was the most preferred activity, selected by 8 students (40%). Discussions ranked second with 6 students (30%). Both Role Play and Individual Reading were chosen by 3 students (15%) each. These findings show that students prefer group work and discussions as activities that help them understand literary texts better

**Question 14: What difficulties do students face when studying literature?**

**Table 14 Difficulties Faced by Students in Studying Literature**

Difficulties	Frequency	Percentage
Vocabulary	8	40%
Interpretation	5	25%
Language proficiency	4	20%
Cultural context	3	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 16 Difficulties Faced by Students in Studying Literature**

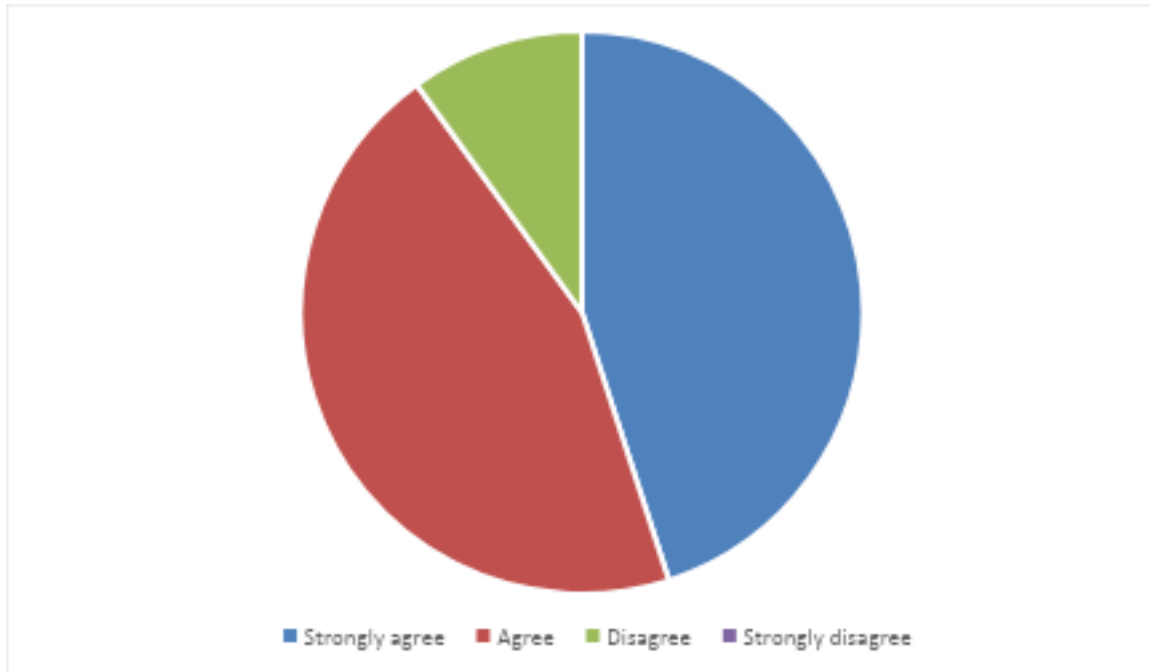
The results presented in table (14) show that vocabulary is the main difficulty faced by students when studying literature. It represents 40% of the total responses, with a frequency of 8 students. Interpretation difficulties come in second place with 25%, corresponding to 5 students. In addition, 20% of the participants reported language proficiency as a challenge, while 15% mentioned cultural context as a difficulty.

**Question 15: Does literature generally help students improve their thinking and reading skills in English?**

**Table 13 Literature and Improvement of Thinking and Reading Skills**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	9	45%
Agree	9	45%
Disagree	2	10%

Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 17 Literature and the Improvement of Thinking and Reading skills**

The results presented in table (14) reveal that the majority of students believe that literature helps improve their thinking and reading skills in English. A percentage of 45% of the participants strongly agreed with this statement, representing 9 students, while another 45% agreed, corresponding to 9 students. In contrast, only 10% of the students disagreed, with a frequency of 2 students. No participant selected “strongly disagree.”

### **3.3 The Interview Questions:**

#### **1/Can literature help develop critical thinking skills in EFL learners? How?**

All the professors agreed that literature is beneficial to develop critical thinking skills among learners of English as a foreign language. The answers concentrated on several aspects that illustrate this role

. The first professor believes that literature facilitates the transition of learners from a superficial reading of texts to analysis, interpretation and evaluation, which are cognitive processes that are directly associated with critical thinking. He also said that literature enhances reflective thinking by relating literary texts to the personal experiences of learners.

The second professor believed literature was a powerful tool because it exposes learners to complex ideas, real-life situations, and diverse concepts that help them to think deeply and analyze the issues presented within texts.

The third professor pointed out the importance of imagination. She stated that literary text is a result of deep imagination and the efforts made by the students to understand the plot and relate it to reality help them develop their critical thinking skills.

The findings suggest that literature promotes critical thinking by encouraging analysis, interpretation, evaluation, reflection, and imaginative.

## **1.2 What aspects of literature contribute most to critical thinking development?**

The professors' responses related to various literary elements that contribute to the development of critical thinking.

As the first professor said, ambiguity and multiple interpretations in literature “make students deeply analyze and defend their opinions.” He also said that identity, culture and ethics are issues that open the door to reflection and discussion.

The second professor pointed out characters, themes, vocabulary and ambiguity as the most important elements to stimulate critical thinking.

The third professor had an indirect focus on imagination and the realistic dimension of the literary texts.

The results indicate that ambiguity, multiple interpretations, characters, themes, cultural and ethical issues, imagination, and realism are the literary elements that contribute most to the development of critical thinking skills

## **2/ How do you integrate literary texts in your teaching?**

The professors explained that they work with literary texts in several different ways in the department.

The first professor states that he chooses texts according to the students' level and needs in terms of length, subject matter and linguistic difficulty and uses textual analysis, discussions and debates.

The second professor mentioned reading activities, group work, role-playing and educational games.

The third professor explained that he uses literary quotations in his writing course and that he views literature as an authentic source for the cultivation of imagination.

The findings reveal that literature is integrated through diverse and student-centered methods that encourage interaction, creativity, and critical engagement with texts

### **2.1 Do students actively participate in discussions of literary texts?**

Most professors confirmed that students actively participate, especially when the topics are related to their interests.

“The participation depends on the level of the students,” said the first professor.

“Students are more engaged when they feel confident and their voice is valued,” said the second professor.

The findings suggest that student participation in literary discussions is influenced by language proficiency, personal interest in the topics discussed, and the presence of a supportive classroom environment

### **3/ What difficulties do students face when analyzing literary texts?**

The responses concur with regard to the existence of linguistic and intellectual difficulties in understanding of literary texts.

The first professor said students have a hard time with:

\* Figurative language.

\* Complicated syntax.

\* Unknown words.

And the second professor added:

\* Concealed meanings.

\* Lack of literary education.

The third professor also noted that some students struggle with understanding what literature itself is.

The results demonstrate that linguistic complexity and limited literary knowledge are the main obstacles that hinder students' ability to analyze literary texts effectively

### **3.1 Do language proficiency levels affect students' critical thinking development?**

The professors agreed that language proficiency has a direct impact on the development of critical thinking.

The initial professor noted that students with a high level of proficiency are capable of articulating their ideas with greater confidence and effectiveness.

As another professor stated, weak language skills restrict the learners' ability to articulate their ideas and analyze texts.

The third professor said that the relationship between language and critical thinking is reciprocal; the development of language promotes critical thinking and literature, in turn, promotes the development of language.

The findings indicate that language proficiency is a crucial factor in fostering critical thinking, and that language development and critical thinking reinforce one another

### **4/ What strategies do you use to encourage critical thinking through literature?**

The professors introduced various tactics,

The most important strategies were:

\* Questions ouvertes.

\* Solving problems.

Debates.

\* Discussions in Groups;

\* Think-Pair-Share activities.

\* Applying the texts to real life situations.

One professor also suggested adding creative writing to build literary appreciation and critical thinking

The findings suggest that interactive, discussion-based, and reflective activities are highly effective in encouraging students to think critically and engage deeply with literary texts

#### **4.1 What improvements would you suggest for better integration of literature in EFL classrooms?**

The professors suggested some ways to improve the integration of literature in the teaching of English language.

The more important suggestions were:

Selecting texts which are appropriate to the level and cultural background of the students.

\* Moving from a teacher-focused to student-focused learning.

\* Use of digital technologies including Perusall and Google Books.

\* Offering a supportive environment for students to understand vocabulary and context.

\* Using real literature in teaching grammar and writing.

The findings indicate that effective integration of literature requires appropriate text selection, student-centered teaching practices, technological support, and the use of authentic literary materials to promote both language learning and critical thinking development

## **Description of the Interview Questions:**

This interview question was designed to explore the role of literature in developing critical thinking skills of English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners. The questions were semi-structured in order to collect qualitative data from English language teachers on their perceptions and teaching practices of using literary texts in the department. The questions revolved around four key themes: teachers' perceptions of the link between literature and critical thinking; how literary texts are used in the classroom and the extent to which students are engaged with them; problems and difficulties students encounter when analysing literary texts; and strategies and recommendations that might help improve the integration of literature into English departments.

## **The Discussion of Findings**

The survey of students and interview with teachers showed that literature is very important for EFL learners to develop thinking skills. Both teachers and students agreed that literature helps improve skills like interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference and expressing oneself. These findings match what Peter Facione said in 1998 that critical thinking involves interpretation, analysis, evaluation and inference. The participants responses showed that literary texts encourage learners to practice these thinking skills through reflection and discussion.

\* Students and teachers think literature is valuable for learning.

\* Literature helps learners develop thinking skills.

In addition the results support what Richard Paul and Linda Elder said in 2006 that critical thinking is a process of analyzing and evaluating ideas. Students said that literary texts make them think beyond what's obvious and interpret symbols, hidden messages and different perspectives. Teachers confirmed that literature gives learners chances to express opinions justify interpretations and develop viewpoints. This shows that literature creates an environment where students actively think and do not just memorize. The study also confirms the assumptions of Louise Rosenblatt's Reader-Response Theory (1978), which considers reading as an interaction between the reader and the text. Students' responses showed that they interpreted literary texts differently according to their experiences and perspectives. This indicates that literature encourages learners to actively construct meaning rather than receive information passively. Such activities promote higher-order thinking skills because literature is usually complex and open to

interpretation. This supports what researchers said in the literature review that literature develops learners analytical and interpretative abilities through interaction with texts. The interview results showed that teachers know how important literature is for developing students critical thinking skills. According to their responses literature helps learners analyze ideas interpret texts and express opinions confidently. However teachers also mentioned challenges faced by students, such as vocabulary complex ideas, implicit meanings and lack of cultural or historical background knowledge. These difficulties often prevent learners from moving from comprehension to deeper interpretation and evaluation. These findings also support Dolores Perin's (2013) argument that many first-year students tend to overestimate their reading abilities while still struggling with deeper comprehension and interpretation. Another important finding was the relationship between language proficiency and critical thinking skills. The results clearly showed that students with higher language proficiency can understand texts discuss ideas and express themselves clearly. On the hand low proficiency learners focus mainly on understanding vocabulary and grammatical structures, which limits their ability to critically analyze and evaluate ideas. Therefore language competence appears to be a factor in successful literary interpretation and critical engagement. Teachers suggested strategies for promoting thinking through literature teaching including: Debates , Problem-solving activities , Group discussions , Think-Pair-Share activities , Connecting literary texts to real-life situations One teacher suggested integrating creative writing activities to improve literary appreciation and analytical thinking. Such interactive activities help students move beyond surface understanding toward interpretation and evaluation of literary texts.

Teachers emphasized using technologies, authentic literary materials and creative classroom activities to make literature more accessible and motivating for students. Activities like debates, role-play, textual analysis and creative writing can help Algerian EFL learners become active participants in the classroom while developing their critical thinking skills. Overall the findings showed that students and teachers agree on the role of literature in EFL education. Literature is not a linguistic resource but also an intellectual, cultural and pedagogical tool that contributes significantly to developing critical thinking skills among EFL learners.

Finally the findings confirmed the research hypothesis that literature contributes to developing critical thinking skills among first-year EFL students. The results also supported the sub-hypotheses related to reasoning, interpretation, inferencing and classroom discussion skills. Although students faced some comprehension difficulties

literature remained an effective pedagogical tool for promoting deeper thinking and classroom interaction, in EFL contexts.

## **GENERAL CONCLUSION**

## General Conclusion

The present study attempted to investigate the role of literature in developing the critical thinking of first-year students in the EFL classroom. The findings obtained from the students' questionnaire and teachers' interviews support that literature serves as a medium for developing learners' critical thinking skills. The results suggested that literary texts help students to go beyond the literal level and think more deeply, interpret, and evaluate ideas. Positive attitudes were expressed by students toward using literature, particularly for the development of skills in analyzing characters, themes, and implied meanings. Teachers also stressed the importance of interactive teaching strategies such as discussions, reflective writing, debates, role-playing activities, teamwork, and reader-response activities to promote critical thinking through literature. However, the study also identified several difficulties faced by students, such as difficult vocabulary, complex literary ideas, implicit meanings, limited cultural background knowledge, and language proficiency issues. These challenges sometimes hinder learners from fully comprehending literary texts and articulating critical opinions effectively. The results also showed that language proficiency is an important factor in students' critical thinking, as lower proficiency levels tend to limit deeper analysis and interpretation. Literature may therefore be considered an effective pedagogical tool for developing critical thinking in the EFL classroom, particularly in the Algerian educational context, where interactive and student-centered methodologies are highly needed to enhance learners' engagement and cognitive development, if supported by appropriate teaching methods and learning environments. Hence, teachers are encouraged to incorporate literary texts and interactive activities in their classrooms to help students develop language competence and higher-order thinking skills, as well as integrate digital technologies in literature teaching such as Perusall and Google Books. In conclusion, the results answered the research questions. The findings indicated that first-year EFL students had attained a certain degree of critical thinking skills in relation to their interaction with literary texts. The study also confirmed that literature plays a vital role in the development of critical thinking skills, specifically analysis, interpretation, evaluation,

and inference. Furthermore, the results revealed that students face several difficulties when studying literary texts, including insufficient vocabulary, interpretation problems, poor language skills, and cultural barriers. To address these challenges, several teaching strategies were identified, such as class discussions, debates, role-playing activities, collaborative learning, and the integration of technology in literature instruction. With regard to the research hypothesis, the findings obtained from both the students' questionnaire and teachers' interviews confirmed that literature contributes positively to the development of critical thinking skills among first-year EFL students. Therefore, the research hypothesis was validated.

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# **ANNEXES**

## Annexes

### Questionnaire

Topic: Literature as a Medium for Developing Critical Thinking in EFL Classroom

#### Section 1: General Information

Q1: How often are literary texts used in your EFL classes?

- \* Always
- \* Sometimes
- \* Rarely
- \* Never

#### Section 2: Literature in EFL Teaching

Q2: What genre do you use the most

- \* Short Stories
- \* Novels
- \* Poems

Q3: What is your opinion on the importance of literature in EFL teaching

- \* Very important
- \* Important
- \* Neutral
- \* Not important

Q4: Does literature help students express their personal opinions?

- \* Strongly agree
- \* Agree
- \* Disagree
- \* Strongly disagree

Q5: Does literature help students understand different cultures and perspectives?

- \* Strongly agree
- \* Agree
- \* Disagree
- \* Strongly disagree

### Section 3: Critical Thinking Development

Q6: Does literature help develop students' Critical Thinking (analysis, interpretation, evaluation)?

- \* Yes
- \* No
- \* Sometimes

Q7: Does literature help students analyze and evaluate ideas critically?

- \* Yes
- \* No
- \* Sometimes

Q8: Does literature help students infer meanings beyond the text?

- \* Yes
- \* No
- \* Sometimes

Q9: Does literature help students move from simple understanding to deeper interpretation?

- \* Yes
- \* No
- \* Sometimes

Q10: Does literature help students connect texts with real-life situations?

- \* Yes
- \* No
- \* Sometimes

Q11: In your opinion, how does literature help develop critical thinking skills?

(Paragraph answer)

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Section 4: Classroom Interaction and Strategies

Q12: Do students participate actively in literary discussions?

- \* Always
- \* Sometimes
- \* Rarely
- \* Never

Q13: Which classroom activities help students understand literary texts better?

- \* Discussions
- \* Group work
- \* Role play
- \* Individual reading

#### Section 5: Difficulties

Q14: What difficulties do students face when studying literature?

- \* Vocabulary
- \* Interpretation
- \* Lack of interest
- \* Language proficiency
- \* Cultural context

#### Final Question

Q15: Does literature generally help students improve their thinking and learning skills in English?

- \* Strongly agree
- \* Agree
- \* Disagree

\* Strongly disagree

### **Teachers' Interview Questions**

\* In your opinion, can literature help develop critical thinking skills in EFL learners?  
How?

\* What aspects of literature contribute most to critical thinking development?

\* How do you integrate literary texts in your teaching?

\* Do students actively participate in discussions of literary texts?

\* What difficulties do students face when analyzing literary texts?

\* Do language proficiency levels affect students' critical thinking development?

\* What strategies do you use to encourage critical thinking through literature?

\* What improvements would you suggest for better integration of literature in EFL classrooms

## ملخص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى استكشاف دور تدريس الأدب في تعزيز وتطوير مهارات التفكير النقدي لدى طلبة قسم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL). يُبرز البحث أن هناك علاقة جوهرية بين الأدب والتفكير النقدي، حيث يُعتبر الأدب وسيلة فعالة لتنمية القدرات التحليلية والاستنتاجية لدى الطلاب. تستند الدراسة إلى ملاحظات تفيد بأن معظم الطلاب يعانون من ضعف في مهارات التحليل الناجم عن الاعتماد المفرط على طرق الحفظ والتذكر، وعدم التركيز على الفهم العميق للنصوص. اعتمدت الدراسة على منهجية مختلطة، شملت جمع البيانات من خلال استبيان عبر الإنترنت أرسل للطلاب، وإجراء مقابلات مع أساتذة المادة. أظهرت النتائج أن دمج الأدب في مناهج التدريس يساهم بشكل كبير في تحسين مهارات التفكير النقدي، من خلال تنمية القدرة على التحليل، النقد، والاستنتاج. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن الأدب يمثل أداة فعالة لتعزيز التفكير النقدي، وتوصي بضرورة إدراج استراتيجيات تدريس تعتمد على النصوص الأدبية ضمن مناهج اللغة الإنجليزية لتعزيز مهارات التفكير العليا لدى الطلاب.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الأدب، التفكير النقدي، الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، النصوص الأدبية، مهارات التحليل، استراتيجيات التدريس.