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MINISTRY of HIGHER EDUCATION and SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

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# Teaching Civilization to Enhance the Critical Thinking of EFL Students

A case of Third Year LMD Students at Amar Telidji university-  
Laghouat-

*A Dissertation submitted as a partial fulfillment for the requirements of Master  
Degree in literature and civilization*

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## ***Dedication 01***

*First and foremost, I would like to dedicate this modest work to my beloved parents who have been the source of my motivation and inspiration.*

*To my dearest brothers; Hamza, Oussama, and Housine. To my best sisters; Fatima, Chaima, and Asma.*

*Great thanks go also to my sweetheart Souad, I will never forget her endless love and support.*

*Lastly, I dedicate this work to my cousin Djadaoui Salam who gave me help, encouragement, and strength. Thank you for everything.*

**Ben ouarith Saida**

## DEDICATION 02

*This work is dedicated to:*

*My dearest parents who have been my source  
of inspiration and give strength when  
I thought of giving up, who continually  
Provide their moral, spiritual and emotional  
Support, you are the reason of what I became  
today, thank you for your support and continuous care.*

*To my brothers Abdellah, Ataellah, Ahmed, Mounir,  
and sisters Naceria, fatiha, khadija who share their words of  
Advice and encouragements to finish this work.*

*To my friends Hadjira, Aicha, Halima  
, Fouzia, safa. Thank you for your love and support.*

*Medjadi Aicha*

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## **Abstract**

It is generally emphasized that critical thinking pedagogy plays a fundamental role in education and as a result, it needs to be integrated within the framework of civilization courses. For the process of critical thinking to occur, civilization teachers are required to adopt learner-centered methods of teaching that help EFL students to analyze, interpret, synthesis and evaluate what they are learning. Therefore, the current study aims at investigating the effect of teaching civilization on the critical thinking skills of EFL students, and to discover whether civilization is taught on the basis of this pedagogy in an effort to provide understanding about the main methods, techniques, and tools that have the potential to promote students' critical thinking abilities. Most importantly, in order to gather the data necessary for this research, one main research instrument is at the heart of this investigation which is concerned mainly with two questionnaires handed to six civilization teachers, and to thirty four EFL students who belong to third year LMD classes at the university of Amar Thelidji (Laghouat). Accordingly, the suitable method for this research work is descriptive interpretive that combine quantitative and qualitative data. In here, mixed method is used in order to add validity to the research' main findings. The analyses of both questionnaires results indicate that the majority of civilization teachers are aware of the importance of critical thinking in which they apply several methods, and techniques that can enhance the students' ability to think critically, yet some students show negative attitudes towards this module. This leads us to offer some pedagogical implications that would enhance the quality of learning, and therefore, promote students' critical thinking abilities.

**Key Words:** Critical Thinking, Teaching Civilization, Learner-Centered Methods, EFL Students.

## **List of Abbreviations**

**TEFL:** Teaching English as a Foreign Language

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

**LMD:** License/ Master/ Doctorate

## **List of Figures**

<b>Figure 1:</b> The six categories of Bloom's Taxonomy.....	14
<b>Figure2:</b> Students' Level in English Language.....	14
<b>Figure3:</b> Types of Visual Materials Used by Civilization Teachers.....	37
<b>Figure4:</b> Students' Opinions about Teachers' Dictation.....	39
<b>Figure5:</b> Students' views Towards the Teachers' Use of Questions.....	41
<b>Figure6:</b> Students' Practice of Homework Assignments.....	<b>42</b>
<b>Figure7:</b> Students' Motivation in Civilization Courses.....	45
<b>Figure8:</b> Preferable Techniques in Teaching Civilization.....	46
<b>Figure9:</b> Students' Preparation Ways in Civilization Exam.....	46
<b>Figure10:</b> Teachers' Opinions about the Difficulties Faced by Students in Civilization.....	50
<b>Figure11:</b> Teachers' Use of Homework Assignments.....	52
<b>Figure12:</b> Teachers' Opinions towards Group Work Activities.....	53
<b>Figure13:</b> Teachers' Use of Open-ended Questions.....	55

## **List of Tables**

<b>Table1:</b> Students' Attitudes towards Civilization Topics at the Level of Difficulty...	38
<b>Table2:</b> Students' Attitudes towards Civilization Topics at the Level of Interest.....	38
<b>Table3:</b> Teaching Methods Used by Civilization Teachers.....	39
<b>Table4:</b> Students' Satisfaction towards the Methods of Teaching Civilization.....	40
<b>Table5:</b> Students' Views about the Language Used by Civilization Teachers .....	40
<b>Table6:</b> Students' Interaction during Civilization Courses.....	41
<b>Table7:</b> Students' Practice of Group Work Activities.....	43.
<b>Table8:</b> Students' Views about Critical Thinking in Civilization Courses.....	47

## Table of Contents

<b>Dedication 1</b> .....	
<b>Dedication 2</b> .....	
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	
<b>Abstract</b> .....	
<b>List of Abbreviations</b> .....	
<b>List of Figures</b> .....	
<b>List of Tables</b> .....	
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	
<b>General Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Background of the study.....	1
Statement of the Problem .....	1
Aim of the Study.....	2
Significance of the Study .....	2
Research Questions.....	2
Hypotheses.....	2
Previous Works.....	3
Research tools.....	3
Structure of the dissertation.....	4
<b>Chapter one: Critical Thinking</b>	

1.1. Introduction.....	7
1.2. Conceptual Discussions of Critical Thinking.....	7
1.3. Critical Thinking Strategies and Tools.....	8
1.3.1. Questioning.....	9
1.3.2. Group Discussion.....	9
1.3.3. Collaborative Learning.....	9
1.3.4. Solving Authentic Problems.....	10
1.3.5. Media Literacy.....	10
1.4. Bloom’s Taxonomy of Critical Thinking.....	11
1.4.1. Conceptual Discussion of Bloom’s Taxonomy.....	11
1.4.2. Categories of Bloom’s Taxonomy.....	11
1.4.2.1. Knowledge.....	11
1.4.2.2. Comprehension .....	12
1.4.2.3. Application.....	12
1.4.2.4. Analysis.....	13
1.4.2.5. Synthesis.....	13
1.4.2.6. Evaluation .....	13
1.5. Metacognition as an Aspect of Critical Thinking.....	15
1.6. Motivation as an Aspect of Critical Thinking.....	15
1.7. Conclusion.....	15

## **Chapter Two: Teaching Civilization to EFL Students**

2.1. Introduction.....	17
2.2. Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Algerian Context(TEFL).17	
2.3. Definition of Civilization.....	18
2.4. Definition of History .....	18
2.5. The Importance of Teaching and Learning History.....	18
2.6. Approaches to Teaching Civilization.....	19
2.6.1. Thematic-based Approach.....	19
2.6.2. Task-based Approach.....	19
2.6.2. Postholing versus Coverage.....	19
2.6.3. Memorization versus Analysis.....	20
2.6.4. Dialogic Approach.....	20
2.6.4.1. Conceptual Discussion of Dialogic Education.....	20.

2.6.4.2. Characteristics of the Liberating Teacher.....	23
2.7. Promoting Learning Skills through Civilization Courses.....	23
2.8. Practical Tools to Teaching Civilization.....	24
2.9. The Relationship between Teaching Civilization and Critical Thinking.....	25
2.10. Conclusion .....	26

### **Chapter Three: Research Design and Procedures of the Study**

3.1. Introduction.....	28
3.2. Choice of the Research Method.....	28
3.2.1. Quantitative Research .....	29
3.2.2. Qualitative Research .....	29
3.3. Case Study Method.....	29
3.3.1. Purpose of Case Study.....	30
3.4. Research Setting.....	30
3.5. Population and Sampling.....	30
Rational for Sampling.....	31
3.2.Data Gathering Procedures .....	31
3.3.Techniques of Data Collection.....	32
3.8.1. Description of Students' Questionnaire.....	33
3.8.2. Description of Teachers' Questionnaire.....	34
3.9. Data analysis tools.....	34
3.10. Limitations of the Study.....	35
3.11. Conclusion.....	35

### **Chapter Four: Data Analyses, Interpretations, and Suggestions**

4.1. Introduction.....	37
4.2. Analysis of Students' Questionnaire.....	37
4.3. Interpretation of Students' Questionnaire.....	38
4.4. Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire.....	50
4.5. Interpretation of Teachers' Questionnaire.....	56
4.6. Pedagogical Implications.....	58

4.7. Suggestions for Future Research.....59  
4.8. Conclusion.....59  
**General Conclusion.....60**  
**Bibliography.....63**  
...

**Appendices**

Appendix : Students' Questionnaire

Appendix : Teachers' Questionnaire

## **General Introduction**

### **Background of the Study**

Education has become an important part in human's life due to its wide variety of use. The instructions of the learning process are increasingly developed in order to fulfill the needs, and the interests of the students. More specifically, Algerian English as Foreign Language (EFL) students at university level tend to have civilization as a module whereby they acquire the historical backgrounds, events, facts, and lifestyle of British and American communities. Moreover, civilization teachers are required to provide knowledge to their students by applying certain methods, techniques and activities that maximize historical understanding among them. Besides, the critical thinking is considered by many scholars as a necessary aspect in the process of teaching disciplines in general and civilization courses in specific as it helps them deal with historical information more creatively and actively in order to find solutions to problems, analyze, interpret and evaluate viewpoints in the subject given.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Teaching civilization to EFL students is deemed necessary for the purpose of English language learning. Besides, civilization may be considered heavy knowledge module that is perplexing to teach when it comes to critical thinking, and many methods of civilization teaching can render students passive, and not motivated to learn. Thus, the focus of this study is on exploring and investigating the ways in which critical thinking skills are enhanced during civilization courses among third year LMD students at the university of Amar Thelidji (Laghouat).

### **Aim of the Study**

Bringing to light the importance of thinking critically about historical knowledge is the ultimate aim of the current research which attempts to provide clarification of critical thinking pedagogy, and its application in the framework of civilization courses. Specifically, the present study aims at investigating and discovering the impact of teaching civilization on the critical thinking skills of EFL students in an effort to

identify the main approaches, methods and techniques used to teach civilization courses in order to enhance the critical thinking abilities among EFL students. Also, this research tries to demonstrate the critical thinking skills that are tapped by EFL students during civilization sessions along with their effectiveness in this module.

## **Significance of the Study**

This study attempts to bridge the research gap by bringing an understanding to how the innovative methods and techniques of teaching civilization can help EFL students to be part in the learning process, and to be encouraged to think critically and analytically about historical knowledge in order to solve problems, and to deal with diverse issues intelligibly. In the context of Amar Thelidji University, this study tries to offer an analysis of civilization teaching and learning in an attempt to know the main techniques and activities used by civilization teachers to enhance the critical thinking of EFL students. Besides, the active engagement of the students can make civilization lessons more enjoyable, the thing that leads them to enhance their performance and their understanding. In addition, the present research tries to raise awareness about the importance of critical thinking in the process of learning civilization courses among students and teachers alike.

## **Research Questions**

For the purpose of investigating the process of critical thinking, and its significant relation with teaching civilization to EFL students at the University of Amar Thelidji (Laghouat), the current study asks one main question:

-To what extent do civilization courses help enhancing the critical thinking of third year LMD students?

-What are the basic methods and techniques that develop students' ability to think critically and analytically while learning historical knowledge?

-what are the main critical thinking skills that are tapped during civilization lessons at third year LMD classes?

## **Hypotheses**

According to the above questions, it is hypothesized that EFL students can develop their critical thinking skills through civilization courses by applying certain methods, and techniques that increase their motivation and willingness to learn. Concerning the methods and techniques that are used to develop the critical thinking of third year LMD students at Amar Thelidji university, it is hypothesized that these methods and techniques may include classroom discussions and debates, open-ended questions, group work activities, five minutes quizzes, and homework assignments, all these techniques may have great impact on students' critical thinking abilities. Finally, the analysis, interpretation, synthesis, and evaluation can be the main critical thinking skills that are tapped by EFL students during civilization courses.

## **Previous works**

Teaching history requires the learners to interpret, discuss, and analyze the events being presented. Colby (2008) investigated the effects of historical empathy on the learners' ability to think critically, and the role of historical narrative on making connections between present and past events (p. 61-65). Unlike the other strategies that are used to teach history, Colby believed that the dialogue and the classroom discussion are the most effective ways that deepen historical understanding (p. 76).

Crenshan, Hole, and Harper (2011) gave much importance to critical thinking skills among the learners and emphasized the role of integrating critical thinking activities into the framework of teachers' courses. In order to develop the students' ability to think critically, they suggested several approaches, methods and techniques to be used inside the classroom. More specifically, these approaches are the general approach, the infusion approach, the immersion approach and the mixed approach (Ibid). Besides, they discussed some methods that encourage students to be engaged in the learning process. Mention is made to techniques such as modeling, conceptual analysis, problem based learning, cognitive dissonance and Socratic questioning. In addition to the above method, those writers identified frontloading, Socratic discussion, debriefing, and evaluation as the four main techniques that may be helpful for the student to think critically and analytically (Ibid. p. 18-20).

Facione (1990) reported the importance of critical thinking in the process of learning and teaching. He also presented four main aspects of critical thinking which are critical thinking movement, critical thinking assessment, critical thinking instruction and critical thinking pedagogy. Furthermore, in an attempt to verify the learner's ability to think critically, Facione suggested a qualitative research called Delphi method used by experts to participate and share ideas and thoughts. He also introduced critical thinking skills and sub-skills such as interpretation, categorization, clarification, evaluation and analysis.

Halpern (2014) highlighted critical thinking as being one of the most important skills that needs to be mastered effectively for the purpose of education. Halpern defines critical thinking as the use of cognitive procedure to analyze, evaluate and solve problems (p. 8), he also tackled its types, its relation to intelligence and its role in the process of learning. Halpern demonstrates what differentiate between students in terms of critical thinking. By doing so, the author discussed the attitudes or the dispositions that characterize good critical thinkers such as flexibility, persistence, self-correction and consensus seeking. These attitudes according to Halpern seem to have great impact on the learners' performance.

What matters the most in the process of learning is the learners' attitudes towards critical thinking pedagogy. After reading the work of Nan and Llyod (2010), the writers examine the learners' views towards this pedagogy along with its use inside the classroom. By doing so, the writers organized a small scale study on some learners in Australian university in which they asked them questions about critical thinking, and its significance in education, the questions asked provide the chance for them to know the main patterns of critical thinking and whether they experience its main strategies and tools. After doing so, Nan and Llyod concluded that most of the learners are familiar with critical thinking pedagogy and its effectiveness in education.

By taking into consideration the fact that individual's critical thinking abilities are affected by biological conditions, Yilmaz (2011) provided a clarification of the thinking process as a biological cognitive development studied by the psychologist Jean Piaget who claimed that learning requires the engagement of the students in the course (p. 206). On the other hand, she introduced Vygotsky's social cognitive theory claiming that the process of learning occurs through interaction between the teacher and his learners, and between the learners themselves (p.207-208). Moreover, Yilmaz

presented the main learning theories along with their main characteristics. A number of procedures must be applied in the classroom in order to make the students aware of the knowledge presented (p. 210).

## **Research Tools**

In an attempt to explore the application of critical thinking skills in civilization courses at the university level, the most appropriate method is the descriptive, interpretive one that combines both quantitative and qualitative used to get rich and valid data necessary to accomplish this research. In addition, the current study is concerned mainly with two research instruments used to enhance confidence and credibility of the research outcomes. Specifically, the first research tool of this study is questionnaire for students in which thirty four EFL students who belong to third year LMD classes at the University of Amar Thelidji have participated in this questionnaire. Whereas, the second research instrument is questionnaire for teachers who are asked several open-ended questions and close-ended questions in relation to civilization module.

## **Structure of the Dissertation**

The present dissertation consists of four main chapters. The first theoretical chapter is devoted to tackle the conceptual discussion of critical thinking pedagogy and its importance in education followed by Bloom's Taxonomy along with critical thinking tools. The first chapter provides also a detailed explanation of motivation and metacognition as the two main aspects of critical thinking. Whereas, the second chapter seeks to discuss initially the status of English in Algerian context, and then teaching civilization to EFL students highlighting some innovative approaches to teach civilization along with some practical tools that reinforce historical understanding, and concludes with the relationship between teaching civilization and critical thinking.

In addition, the third chapter represents the methodology of this research highlighting a description of the method used, the research setting, population and sampling, the research instruments, the data analyses tools, and finally the limitations of the study. Whereas the fourth chapter is devoted to the analysis of data gathered

from teachers' and students' questionnaire along with the interpretation and discussions of the research main findings followed by some pedagogical implications, and suggestions for future research.

# Chapter One

## Critical Thinking in Education

1.1. Introduction

1.2. Conceptual Discussions of Critical Thinking

1.3. Critical Thinking Tools

1.3.1. Questioning

1.3.2. Group Discussion

1.3.3. Collaborative Learning

1.3.4. Solving Authentic Problems

1.3.5. Media Literacy

1.4. Bloom's Taxonomy of Critical Thinking

1.4.1. Conceptual Discussion of Bloom's Taxonomy

1.4.2. Bloom's Taxonomy

1.4.2.1. Knowledge

1.4.2.2. Comprehension

1.4.2.3. Application

1.4.2.4. Analysis

1.4.2.5. Synthesis

1.4.2.6. Evaluation

1.5. Metacognition as an Aspect of Critical Thinking

1.6. Motivation as an Aspect of Critical Thinking

1.7. Conclusion

## **1.1. Introduction**

This chapter offers detailed explanation about critical thinking pedagogy highlighting its conceptual discussions according to many scholars along with some tools that reinforce students' critical thinking skills. In addition, the current chapter gives emphasis on Bloom's Taxonomy of critical thinking followed by its main categories including knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Eventually it tackles the notion of motivation and metacognition as the two main aspects of critical thinking pedagogy.

## **1.2. Conceptual Discussions of Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking as a pedagogy is a fundamental part in higher education. Judge, Jones, and McCreery (2009) indicated that this pedagogy involves thinking about thinking i.e. the reconstruction of the thinking process in order to be familiar with its power and its powerlessness. It involves also the ability to question different opinions, and to think open-mindedly about others' ideas (p.4). They defined also critical thinking as the individual's ability to interpret, analyze, synthesize, evaluate and make deductions (p.29). Similarly to Vizzossi, critical thinking is the ability to deal with any kind of information creatively and actively (p. 3)

According to McCreery, Jones and Judge, "Critical thinking skills involve careful observation and data gathering from the context, interpretation of complex environments and events and a level of self-analysis which reveals your own values and beliefs."(p.33). Besides, critical thinking helps students to challenge the arguments and viewpoints of others in order to make their own judgment and to successfully seek any kind of evidence (p.11). According to them critical thinking is the investigation that aims at posing questions and examining different situations and problems that help individuals prove hypotheses and make conclusions (p.20).

Critical thinking and creative thinking according to Athreya and Mouza (2017) are interrelated when it comes to perplexing situations that need to be solved. Specifically, creative thinking depends mostly on the use of imagination as an effective strategy to find solutions to problems and bring something new to the world. Besides, Critical

thinking refers to the ability to analyze, synthesis, and evaluate any kind of information in order to deal with different situations, and to come up with appropriate deductions (p.30, 31). Similarly, Halpern (2014) argued that:

Critical thinking is the use of those cognitive skills or strategies that increase the probability of a desirable outcome. It is used to describe thinking that is purposeful, reasoned, and goal directed the kind of thinking involved in solving problems, formulating inferences, calculating likelihoods, and making decisions, when the thinker is using skills that are thoughtful and effective for the particular context and type of thinking task (p.8).

In other words, this quotation defines critical thinking as the application of individual's cognitive abilities that require deep thinking necessary for analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating the information at hand. In here, while dealing with the situations and problems around them, critical thinkers need to think open-mindedly and to possess active thinking strategies.

According to Halpern (2014), a critical thinker is able to:

- Use metacognitive skills that control his performance.
- Recall appropriate knowledge when needed.
- Relate previously learned information with existing ones.
- Generate persuasive arguments on controversial topics.
- Use diagrams for communication.
- Synthesis information found in the analysis of different sources.
- Seek incredibility and make use of this information in order to formulate conclusions (p.26).

### **1.3. Critical Thinking Tools**

It is widely acknowledged that critical thinking is a fundamental aspect in education as it provides active and effective learning atmosphere inside the classroom. Thus, for the process of critical thinking to occur, several strategies and tools need to be applied in the framework of teachers' courses. In this vein, many scholars have investigated this issue and offered multiple strategies and tools that the teacher may use to engage

students in the process of critical thinking. Specifically, these strategies and tools include:

### **1.3.1. Questioning**

Asking questions to assess students' understanding need to be emphasized inside the classroom, so that they can promote their motivation and curiosity to acquire new information. Athreya & Mouza (2017) stated that the questions asked should serve the process of critical thinking. For example, questions like what, when and where are about memorization in which students tend to just remember previous knowledge. Whereas asking questions like discuss, evaluate, and apply require the students to think and use their critical thinking abilities in order to solve the problems proposed to them (p.125).

Furthermore, Athreya and Mouza declared that there exists a questioning technique called Socratic questioning. This technique is used to increasingly promote students' critical thinking abilities, and it is applied in small groups where the members of the group start doing the task proposed to them by asking a question that would pave the way for them to produce other questions that enable them to exchange ideas and express points of view. Therefore, students in this sense will be able to engage in the process of critical thinking (p.126).

### **1.3.2. Group Discussion**

Unlike lecture method of teaching, group discussion requires the students to take an active role in the learning process where they are expected to discuss the main patterns of the topic being presented. Zhao, Pandian, and Singh (2016) argued that group discussion helps enhancing the quality of learning because engaging students in classroom discussions can increase the potential for them to learn effectively, and to promote their ability to think critically. Through group discussion, different ideas and thoughts are likely to take place i.e. students seem to think open-mindedly and accept other's ideas, and therefore they will widen their background knowledge thanks to their motivation and willingness to acquire what is being taught inside the classroom (p.17).

### **1.3.3. Collaborative Learning**

A collaborative atmosphere of learning may help students learn better. In this sense Smith and MacGregor (1992) argued that learning collaboratively helps students develop their enthusiasm to learn as it is advocated to be learner-centered technique, yet when done properly, teachers should effectively manage these activities in order to be intellectually developed. Through group work activities, students are asked to investigate an issue by expressing and sharing ideas and thought within the group rather than in isolation. Besides, for collaborative learning to occur, increasing abilities of critical thinking are likely to take place through which students are engaged in the process of learning (p.11).

Similarly to Halpern (2014), effective learning environment is at the heart of group work activities that require the students to take an active role. He writes: “Groups tend to be more creative than individuals working alone, but only when the group process fosters creativity by structuring group interactions so that members are supportive of each other but also able to dissent” (p.551). In other words, active learning environment is determined by the use of group work activities. However, the members of the group may act negatively towards the group work and oppose being parts of the group

### **1.3.4. Solving authentic problems**

Practicing problem solving tasks help reinforcing the critical thinking skills of students. Polya (1995) suggested several reasoning steps and strategies that are largely useful when it comes to complicated issues. Polya suggested four main steps for problem solving that the students need to follow. Among these steps is dividing the problem into its component parts including understanding its context, designing a plan, working on this plan, and finally generate solutions for this problem. What helps students apply these steps in problem-solving tasks is reflective thinking through which students can use different thinking skills (cited in Athreya & Mouza, 2017, p.128).

### **1.3.5. Media literacy**

Because of the advanced multimedia technologies, individuals depend mostly on the information found in the internet. According to Athreya & Mouza (2017), students may use two types of sources while searching about information. For example, they may use primary sources that hold historical writings, original speeches and documents. They can also use secondary sources that include articles in newspapers, journals, magazines and so on. Nowadays, people use largely the multimedia tools such as social media, TV shows, and video games that may influence their thinking in different ways. For example, students may engage in discussions about an issue through Facebook, twitter or any other ways of communication .Thus it is important to raise awareness among students about the right use of media tools especially what develop their critical thinking skills. Generally, media literacy is concerned with the ability to make use of the internet and its multiple sources for the purpose of writing, analyzing, and evaluating messages in different forms. Multimedia in this sense helps individuals become critical thinkers, but only if they could control and seek what is beneficial for them so that they can promote the quality of learning and engage students in the critical thinking process (p. 134-136).

## **1.4. Bloom's taxonomy of critical thinking**

### **1.4.1. Conceptual Discussion of Bloom's Taxonomy**

Bloom's Taxonomy is a necessary aspect in the process of teaching and learning. The integration of this taxonomy determines students' effective learning. Besides, for educational objectives, Forhand (2011) stated that Bloom's Taxonomy is the hierarchical classification of the thinking process that requires the use of cognitive reasoning. More specifically, Bloom's Taxonomy involves six categories; knowledge, comprehension are the lowest levels, whereas application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation are the highest levels (p.3).

According to Stanny (2016), the students' critical thinking abilities are the result of the application of Bloom's Taxonomy categories. In this sense, teachers guide the development of students' learning through these categories as it helps them clearly design the process of teaching, describe the quality of learning, and assess students' performance (p.1). Stanny (2016) declared that the framework of teachers' courses should be based on the use of Bloom's Taxonomy that helps teachers assess the

development of students' mental skills and, consequently they would determine the objectives of the teaching process starting from recalling knowledge to evaluating the acquired information (p.10).

## **1.4.2. Bloom's Taxonomy**

### **1.4.2.1. Knowledge**

Knowledge according to McKay (1956) can be defined as something learned or given to the student in different forms, it is the basic category of educational objectives in which students recognize or recall the already known information and ideas. Besides, knowledge is a necessary objective for the development of learning as it is the first step in the process of thinking. The category of knowledge is considered as an important outcome of learning that demands the intellectual abilities of students including the remembering skills. Particularly, in order to deal with any situation, students need to have some knowledge about what they are going to do. This step is the responsibility of teachers who are required to help them learn and acquire this knowledge (p. 20- 28).

### **1.4.2.2. Comprehension**

On the light of McKay' (1956) view, comprehension is the largest skill of the category of Bloom Taxonomy, it involves the student's ability to clearly understand what is being taught inside the classroom either orally or in written form. There are three types of comprehension behavior; the first one is translation in which students can put the pattern of communication into different languages, and different forms. Whereas, the second type is interpretation in which students tend to reorder ideas, and materials into a new configuration found in students' mind. In other words, interpretation considered communication as a configuration of ideas. The third type as indicated by McKay is called extrapolation; students in this sense can make predictions or inferences based on their understanding of implications, consequences, and conditions expressed in the communication. Specifically, the author defines extrapolation as "The ability to deal with the conclusions of a work in terms of the immediate inferences made from the explicit statements." Furthermore, comprehension refers to the students 'ability to understand and use the ideas,

materials, and structures being communicated in order to fully understand them (p.205).

### **1.4.2.3. Application**

Anderson and Krathwohl (2016) declared that application involves the ability to use the acquired information, and to put them into practice in order to produce new materials different from the existing ones (p.3). Similarly to McKay (1956), through application, students will be able to generate new materials based on their previous knowledge, techniques, roles, and facts that they have acquired and understood in the classroom. In other words, application involves the ability to solve different kinds of problems by generating and producing solutions in different forms. For example, in order to serve the purpose of application, teachers can ask students questions like change, modify, construct, manipulate, relate and many others (p.125).

### **1.4.2.4. Analysis**

McKay viewed that analysis involves dividing the patterns of the data received into its main components, and discovering the ways parts are arranged, and related to each other. Accordingly, he stated:

Although analysis may be conducted merely as an exercise in detecting the organization and structure of a communication and may therefore become its own end, it is probably more defensible educationally to consider analysis as an aid to fuller comprehension or as a prelude to an evaluation of the material. (p.145)

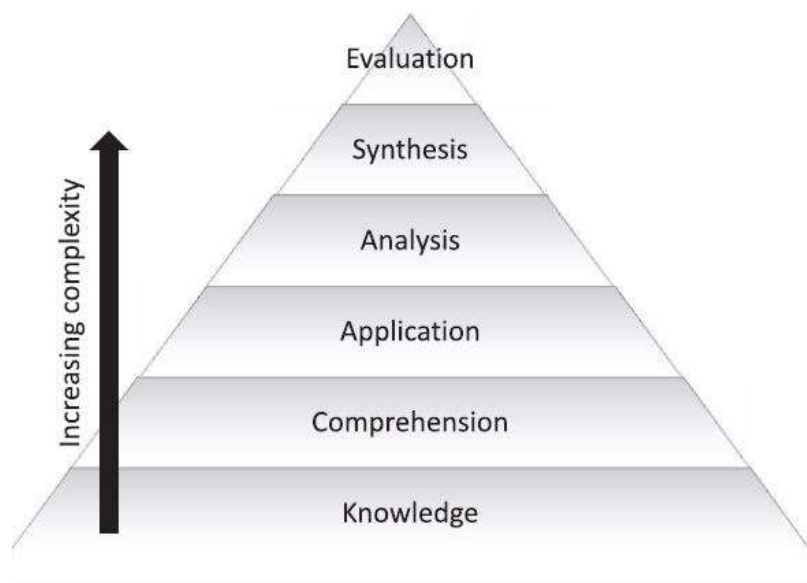
From the above quotation, it is highly noticed that analysis is important for full understanding of the information given, and at the same time, it can be the preliminary step of evaluating the materials.

### **1.4.2.5. Synthesis**

McKay (1956) stated that synthesis is one category of Bloom's Taxonomy, it involves putting together multiple parts or elements in order to formulate a whole, different from previous structures. Synthesis category of the cognitive domain demands the creative thinking abilities of the students. In addition, students in the process of synthesis are required to draw upon elements from different sources, and to combine these elements to reconstruct new structures. Besides, through synthesis, students will be able to produce a unique communication involving the ability to organize ideas and thought, and to creatively write essays, stories, personal experiences, poems, or any other kinds of writings (p.163).

#### **1.4.2.6. Evaluation**

Evaluation is the highest level of Bloom's Taxonomy according to Cullinane (2009), in which it merges all previous thinking skills (p.3). Whereas McKay (1956) addressed that evaluation is the ability to make judgments using a set of standards and criteria to determine the value or worth of works, materials, and ideas. The criteria are either decided by the students or given to them by the teacher. Besides, the judgment can be quantitative or qualitative. Evaluation represents the last category of Bloom Taxonomy, but not necessarily the final step of the thinking process. Although it is the last category of Bloom's Taxonomy, it can be the preliminary step of acquiring new information (p.110-111).



**Figure1:** the six categories of Bloom's Taxonomy

### **1.5. Metacognition as an aspect of critical thinking**

Metacognition involves the application of reasoning strategies used to control memory and thinking. Through metacognition, students are able to make deductions after doing any task. Specifically, Hammond, Austin and Martin (2003) investigated metacognition as the process of thinking about thinking in which good thinkers are characterized by the ability to do so. Besides, there are two aspects of metacognition; the first one is reflection which involves thinking about the acquired information, whereas the second one is self-regulation which means managing and organizing the process of learning in order to maximize understanding. Furthermore, the application of metacognitive skills help students solve different kinds of problems, make decisions, and select what is suitable for them, they can also think open-mindedly i.e. they are able accept others' thoughts and ideas (as cited in Athreya and Mouza, 2017, p.137).

On the basis of Halpern (2014)'s view, metacognition is the ability to use prior knowledge that enable students to solve and deal with new learning activities. In order to be engaged in the process of critical thinking, the students are required to control the quality of their thinking using multiple learning strategies that help them deal with different situation (p.28).

### **1.6. Motivation as an aspect of critical thinking**

EFL students learn effectively when they are encouraged to do so. Thus giving a value to creativity among students can increase their motivation, and willingness to think creatively and actively about what they are learning. Accordingly, individuals" will be more creative when they are told to be creative" said Halpern (2014, p. 511).

Amabile (2001) suggested two types of motivation that can increase the potential for students to experience the process of critical thinking. The first type is called intrinsic motivation which is concerned mainly with students' desire coming from their inner self in addition to their curiosity to think. Whereas, extrinsic motivation is a

sort of motivation that comes from outside environment such as family, teachers, friends, and so on. Intrinsic motivation is the most effective way as it builds the love of learning and develops students' critical thinking abilities. However, the effectiveness of extrinsic motivation cannot deny the fact that intrinsic motivation is an important aspect of effectively promoting the critical thinking skills (As cited in Halpern, 2014, p.535- 538).

## **1.7. Conclusion**

After introducing the main studies on the critical thinking pedagogy in relation to the teaching and learning processes, it becomes clear that this pedagogy provides a great contribution to students' learning thanks to the implementation of the categories of Bloom's Taxonomy. At last, the next chapter will be concerned mainly with teaching civilization to EFL students tackling the basic approaches, techniques and tools that reinforce historical understanding, and enhance the critical thinking skills.

# **Chapter Two**

## **Teaching Civilization to EFL Students**

2.1. Introduction

2.2. Teaching EFL in Algerian Context

2.3. Definition of Civilization

2.4. Definition of History

2.5. The Importance of Teaching and Learning History

- 2.6. Approaches to Teaching Civilization
  - 2.6.1. Thematic-based Approach
  - 2.6.2. Postholing versus Coverage
  - 2.6.3. Memorization versus Analysis
  - 2.6.4. Dialogic Approach
    - 2.6.4.1. Conceptual Discussion of Dialogic Education
    - 2.6.4.2. Characteristics of the Liberating Teacher
- 2.7. Promoting Learning Skills through Civilization Courses
- 2.8. Practical Tools to Teaching Civilization
- 2.9. The Relationship between Teaching Civilization and Critical Thinking
- 2.10. Conclusion

## **2.1. Introduction**

The current chapter presents to the reader brief description of teaching EFL in Algerian context, and then it shifts to the teaching of civilization highlighting some innovative approaches, methods, and techniques to effectively teach civilization courses. It tackles also various practical tools that can increase students' motivation, and willingness to learn, and concludes with the relationship between civilization teaching and critical thinking pedagogy.

## **2.2. Teaching English as Foreign Language (TEFL) in Algerian Context**

According to Dakowska (2005), English as a foreign language refers to the acquisition and the use of English language which is considered additional in the countries of non-English speakers like Algeria. In order to teach English as Foreign Language, the teachers and students should know the main principles of that language. Besides, it is widely acknowledged that the mastery of English language rules, and patterns help students to be able to interact and use the language appropriately. In the educational system of Algeria, Mami (2013) argued that English Language takes a vital place, and it is believed to be the second foreign language. From 2000 onward Algeria has experienced a series of changes in order to ameliorate the educational system (p.911).

Furthermore, Chemami (2011) indicated that there has been an increased demand for improving the English teaching methods used. This desire comes from Algeria's cooperation with Canada and the United States of America who supported the educational reform policy in Algeria by emphasizing the use of textbooks, teachers' training and the multimedia technologies. Despite the fact that English language is taught in all universities, he declared that the use of this language in Algeria is deemed low comparing to French language, yet there have been an increasing demand for improving English language status in Algeria (p.231).

### **2.3. Definition of Civilization**

The definition of civilization has been discussed by many scholars. Literally, the notion of civilization according to Kroeber (1952) is derived from the word "civitas" which means "state" and "civilis" which means citizen. He indicated that the term was largely used in French to reflect people's social and cultural developments (p.145).

In addition, Bennabi (2012) argued that civilization is a broad term that includes people's history, culture, customs, beliefs, and lifestyles. Besides, it is concerned also

with people's own thoughts, ideas, and values, and how their way of thinking was changing over time (p.81-145).

## **2.4. Definitions of History**

Tan (2004) defines History as the reconstruction of past events by means of inquiry and interpretation of historical documents, history therefore goes beyond memorization of its events (p.198). Tan (2004) argued that History is a multidimensional process which includes a series of past events and facts. As such, students need to deepen their historical understanding in which they think about the theories, findings and historical concepts that lead to the appearance of this information. Also, students need to build personal actions from the acquired knowledge in which learning history to understand the historical circumstances of past events, and facts is not an easy task for the students, therefore; history teachers need to provide their students with the educational tools that help them effectively understand historical information (As cited in Tan, p.199).

## **2.5. The Importance of Teaching and Learning History**

Historical knowledge is taught almost in all universities for the purpose of understanding the past. In this sense, Okai stated that "history is to the community what memory is to the individual" (p.12). He demonstrated the crucial role of history in understanding the past of mankind. Without history, people lose their identity which is the key to human's life. Therefore, knowing the past leads us to understand the present as it offers to the students an overview of people's actions and activities of the past. Learning history makes the students aware of what happened to the world in early ages. On the other hand, it pushes them to analyze, interpret and evaluate this historical information from different points of view. In addition, investigating the historical happenings is the responsibility of the historians who wrote about it in order to pave the way for students to understand, analyze, and interact with their writings (p.12). Similarly to Weiner (1995), "the knowledge of history has the potential to give people new perspective on where we have been and where we may be in the future" (p. 4).

## **2.6. Approaches to Teaching Civilization**

### **2.6.1. Thematic-based Approach**

Louahala (2017) argued that while interest and motivation of students can be lost through chronological method of teaching, thematic-based approach helps them engage in the process of learning by taking an active role (p.193). Similarly to Mehdaoui (2015), thematic-based approach facilitates students' acquisition of knowledge as it helps them develop their cultural competencies rather than historical facts, events and dates. Besides, students may feel enjoyable when civilization is taught in a thematic way in which teachers are required to reduce the amount of historical information, and emphasizing cultural topics that pave the way for them to enhance the quality of learning, and interact with the teacher in order to express their ideas and thoughts (p.38).

### **2.6.2.Task-based Approach**

Task-based approach as discussed by Almahdi (2016) makes students the central part in the process of learning. It is characterized by the teachers' use of tasks done collaboratively inside the class where students are required to use their background knowledge in order to complete the task given to them. Moreover, the use of tasks as a way to teach civilization courses can increase students' interest and willingness to learn. It also help them share and express thoughts and ideas. This method is considered to be more learner-centered because it can develop students' interactive abilities, and therefore, enhance their intellectual performance (p.304).

### **2.6.3. Postholing versus Coverage**

There are several approaches and methods to teaching civilization at the university level, and postholing versus coverage is one of them. Louahala (2017) indicated that unlike the coverage method, the traditional way of teaching civilization that teachers use in order to provide a general idea about a particular historical event without having deep understanding of its roots, postholing method of teaching is most effective as it enables students to understand, and know the detailed information about the topic at hand (p.189).

## **2.6.4. Memorization versus analysis**

Weiner (1995) stated that the difficulties that face students while memorizing knowledge leads many researchers to consider the analysis of events as a useful way to teach civilization courses because it increases their ability to understand, and their motivation to learn. Most importantly, by analyzing the information given, active and creative learning environment are likely to take place, so that students can maximize the understanding and enhance the quality of learning, however students need to know the roles set for them in acquiring the background knowledge from the teacher who needs to organize his instructions, and his conceptual frameworks in order to better understand what is being taught (p.5).

## **2.6.5. Dialogic Approach**

### **2.6.5.1. Conceptual Discussion of Dialogic Education**

The importance of dialogic education has been discussed by many researchers and specialists of the field. Specifically, Fiere & Shor (1987) argued that unlike the traditional teaching methods that depend mostly on oral transformation of knowledge lacking the students' participation, the dialogic teaching approach creates an active learning environment where students are given questions, and problems to solve in a form of dialogue between the teacher and his students i.e. a public presentation that pushes them to think critically and analytically about the given topic. Besides, the dialogue should be done in small groups in which students will have the potential to discuss and interact with each other (p.35).

They declared that after the process of discussion, the teacher devotes the whole session for listening to the deliberation of each group in order to discuss them together. Additionally, Friere and Shor indicated that the systematic use of dialogic method develops the students 'critical thinking, and build 'peer-relations' instead of 'authority- dependent relations'. They wanted liberation in education, liberation from the traditional methods of delivering knowledge (p.40, 41). It seems that this way of teaching is interesting as it increases the students 'willingness, and motivation to learn when it comes to civilization topics. Consequently, students would feel free and comfortable to know new things about education. In this vein, Friere and Shor wrote:

“Liberatory education is fundamentally a situation where the teacher and the students both have to be learners, both have to be cognitive subjects, in spite of being different. This for me is the first test of liberating education, for teachers and students both to be critical agents in the act of knowing (p.33). That is to say; active learning environment is at the heart of liberatory education where classroom discussion is highly emphasized, and both teachers and students are treated as learners looking for new information and benefiting from each other.

The interaction between the teacher and his students needs some special techniques, and activities used for the purpose of enhancing pedagogical understanding of the lesson being taught. These forms of interaction involve creative thinking tasks done in group work. Furthermore, the debate should be an integral part in the process of learning as it develops the students ‘motivation and productive skills and, therefore provides critical attention to real life. Besides, in order to provide heuristic conversations to their students, teachers are required to engage them in an organized discussion followed by the analysis of its main aspects (Pozdeevap, Obskov, 2015, p.169).

Pozdeevap and Obskov (2015) indicated that in the framework of liberatory classroom, the students make use of the critical thinking skills by studying written texts of real world issues. The ultimate aim behind the liberating way of teaching is to enhance the students ‘critical thinking abilities. More specifically, learning is strongly related to reality, it shouldn’t be a memory of text lists, but rather it should raise their critical reflection towards the real world community (p.171).

According to Freire and Shor (1987), the dialogic education focused on the students understanding of their real world activities that are to be applied within the course itself with an aim of promoting their ability to think scientifically and critically about the world around them (p.106). It becomes clear that education is a necessary aspect of life that demands a full awareness of its importance. Accordingly, they said:

Education is simultaneously a certain theory of knowledge going into practice, a political and aesthetic act. These three dimensions are always together, simultaneous moments of theory and practice, art and politics, the act of knowing at once creating and recreating objects while it forms the students who are knowing (p.119).

From the above quotation, education involves the depiction of three main aspects. Firstly, the practice act; knowledge in this sense should be used in different situations, and students need to be engaged in the learning process by discussing and using the acquired information in order to achieve full understanding of any given topic. The second aspect is the political act which is highly related to the liberatory way of teaching where democracy needs to be an integral part in the dialogic classroom in which students tend to focus their discussion on real life experiences that shaped the world around them, and increases the desire for them to acquire new information. Besides, the third aspect involves the aesthetic act of knowledge which involves the artistic ways the teacher uses in order to keep them focused such as telling jokes occasionally in addition to the rapport that can be established between the teacher and his students, including respect and honesty. All these aspects can have great impact on the efficiency of the teaching process.

On the basis of Friere and Shor's view, the dialogic education merges between the information found in teaching curriculum, and the real life experiences faced by the students in their society. In other words, the issues taken from reality should be part of the materials covered during the class (p.135, 156).

Moreover, according to wegerif (2015), sharing ideas and thoughts with the teacher can have great influence on students' deep understanding of the topics presented. Consequently, what strengthens the creative learning inside the class is the study of materials in a form of dialogue in which the differences between the teacher and his students are neglected (p.88). In this sense, active learning environment is likely to take place in the dialogic classroom where students are given the chance to combine their real life experiences and the topics tackled in the program. Accordingly, students will be able to interpret, discuss, and express their ideas and opinions about what they know and what they don't know about reality. As a result, their critical thinking abilities can be increasingly improved (p, 90).

#### **2.6.5.2.Characteristics of the liberating teacher**

It is very crucial to demonstrate what a liberating teacher should be. In this vein, Shor and Freire (1987) investigated what differentiate the liberating teacher from any other teacher. Specifically, the liberating teacher is interested in giving his students

homework activities that promote their ability to think critically and analytically in order to find answers and solutions to problems. In addition, he tends to help them practice what they learn in order to raise their understanding of the information given. Besides, the liberating teacher should also realize the objectives of the lesson, the content knowledge of his lesson as well as the tasks and activities set for the students (p.170-173).

Freire & Shor merge between conventional and innovative means of instruction in which they basically ask students to write few pages about concrete issues such as their real life experiences in order to be read and corrected later by the teacher who uses their writings aiming at teaching them grammatical and syntactic rules, as well as analyzing their production. Therefore, by means of dialogue, this method of teaching enhances the quality of learning and promotes students' critical thinking skills (p.175).

Moreover, the liberating teacher emphasized students' imaginative skills, he always paves the way for their imaginative abilities, and also help them think critically and analytically by giving them problems to solve i.e. Students in a dialogic classroom are required to use their critical thinking skills, and therefore they maximize understanding, performance, and critical thinking abilities. This latter is highly related to students' imagination about the past, the present and the future (p.180).

## **2.7.Promoting Learning Skills through Civilization Courses**

Students' learning skills are determined by the efficiency of civilization teaching methods. Accordingly, Quanchi & So'o (2003) stated that teachers are required to develop some learning skills through civilization courses such as the ability to take notes, and to pick up quickly the information from the teacher, in addition to their capacity to be good listeners. Besides, teachers need to teach his students how to search about information from the internet using different sources like libraries, interviews, diaries, and websites (p.11).

Another skill involves students' ability to analyze the data gathered from the previously mentioned sources. These skills include the arrangement of historical events according to time sequences, and the interpretation of dependable evidences in order to express different points of view. Furthermore, the teacher should simplify for

the students the process of learning civilization using maps, graphs, tables and multi-media tools. In this sense they are required to compare between the facts, periods, and historical incidents for the purpose of understanding them (p.12).

## **2.8. Practical Tools to Teach Civilization**

There are various practical tools that are used in the process of teaching civilization to EFL students. Hunt (2007) suggested different tools necessary for students' effective learning. One of them is the activities of reading comprehension; students find it beneficial to read sources about history in order to acquire detailed information about events, and people from the past. Besides, Hunt used the term exposition and argued that students may enjoy some courses that are explained in a form of story. The thing that leads them to concentrate on the information explained. Most importantly, it becomes increasingly useful if students have written documents that refer to the story or some pictures that serve the goal behind the lesson (p. 5).

The research is another tool that the students may rely on while learning civilization courses. Students may find out information from different sources. However, the teacher must check the validity of these sources because students may misunderstand or misinterpret the data searched, he should also enhance their desire and ability to widen their background knowledge, and make further researches about the topics being taught (p.5-7).

Furthermore, teachers may ask students two types of questions. The first type is closed questions in which the students give one specific answer, while the second type is open questions in which students will have the chance to express their points of view i.e. their answers differ from one student to another. The purpose behind those questions is to engage them in the process of learning, and therefore to help them use their higher-order thinking skills. (p. 13)

Another practical tool may include student's presentation as one of the main ways that promote historical understanding. Hunt argued that students' performance while learning is vital. Instead of just depending on written materials, it is quite necessary to give students the opportunity to orally present historical knowledge in front of students' classmates. However, when it comes to written tasks, the teacher should guide their work and give them organized instructions (p.15).

Historical content and historical skills are interrelated, and not separated from each other. Both students and teachers of civilization should take into consideration the historical information as well as the ways and procedures used. Besides, by mixing content and skills together in civilization courses, students will reinforce their historical thinking and historical understanding (Tan, p.198).

## **2.9. The Relationship between teaching civilization and critical thinking**

Harada argued that the understanding of historical knowledge involves the ability to interpret and analyze historical information. Thus, critical thinking is a necessary aspect of teaching civilization module. Besides, historical analysis requires the students to formulate questions, to access the data using different sources, and to evaluate and detect at the same time the misrepresentations of truth. Additionally, the application of critical thinking skills in civilization sessions make students effective thinkers who are eager to explore, investigate and question the acquired information for the purpose of understanding its main patterns (p. 5-10).

Consequently, Harada said:

In short, students are not only problem-solvers but problem-posers. They develop a sense of ownership for the knowledge they are acquiring and are responsible for their own and others' learning. The skills they demonstrate go far beyond recitation and regurgitation. Students listen and question, visualize and connect, examine and challenge. They collaborate and support others. They are teachers as well as learners (p.10, 11).

In other words, students' and teachers' responsibilities inside the classroom is diverse; while dealing with civilization module, teachers need to encourage learner-centered methods where the teacher should not be the transmitter and the only source of knowledge, but rather a guide or a facilitator of learning. On the other hand, students are supposed to be good listeners, interact with the teacher, challenge ideas and viewpoints with their classmates, enjoy group work activities, solve problems, and ask questions at the same time. All these skills can occur under the fact that good learners are good thinkers.

Civilization teachers may use different strategies that foster the critical thinking of their students. For example, they can ask them to compare, justify, or clarify the issue at hand. They can also ask them to read carefully the given handouts and then propose questions from it. Another strategy that civilization teacher may use is to generate mock exam questions that raise their motivation to think actively and critically. Besides, the teachers can frequently engage their students in “I think” presentation that paves the way for them to freely think and express their opinions and ideas (Harada, p. 11).

## **2.10. Conclusion**

To conclude, this chapter reviewed the literature on some effective and innovative approaches, techniques, and ways to teach civilization in EFL classrooms mainly at universities. Also, it aimed to shed the light on some details about promoting learning skills through civilization courses, along with the significant relationship that links civilization teaching with critical thinking pedagogy. Furthermore, after dealing with the fundamental aspects of teaching civilization, it is highly emphasized that critical thinking plays a major role in the process of teaching and learning civilization topics.

# **Chapter Three**

## **Research Design and Procedures of the Study**

### **3.1. Introduction**

### **3.2. Research Questions**

- 3.3. Choice of the Research Method
  - 3.3.1. Quantitative Research
  - 3.3.2. Qualitative Research
- 3.4. Case Study Method
  - 3.4.1. Purpose of Case Study
- 3.5. Research Setting
- 3.6. Population and Sampling
  - 3.6.1. Rational for Sampling
- 3.7. Data Gathering Procedures
- 3.8. Techniques of Data Collection
  - 3.8.1. Description of Students' Questionnaire
  - 3.8.2. Description of Teachers' Questionnaire
- 3.9. Data analysis tools
- 3.10. Limitations of the Study
- 3.11. Conclusion

### **3.1. Introduction**

After discussing the theoretical concepts of critical thinking pedagogy and teaching civilization to EFL students, the following chapter brings to light the methodological framework of this work, in which a systematic investigation of the use of critical thinking pedagogy in civilization courses among third year LMD students at the university of Amar Thelidji (Laghouat) is considered to be the main concern of the

present study. Therefore, this chapter gives enough information about the choice of the descriptive method used in this study, followed by brief definition of qualitative and quantitative research. The current chapter presents also the setting where the study took place, and the samples of both teachers and students. Besides, it offers a detailed description of the students' and teachers' questionnaires which are the basic research instruments used for the purpose of gathering relevant information about the topic under investigation. Finally, this chapter moves to introduce the procedures of data collection, and determines the limitation of the study.

### **3.2.Choice of the Research Method**

It is widely emphasized that the choice of the method depends on the nature of research. Bryman (2012) assumed that for educational studies, descriptive method is considered to be the suitable one as it provides the researcher with the information necessary to describe the phenomenon under study (p.620). According to Kothari (2004), descriptive method helps solve a particular problem through describing and reporting the gathered data in a short period of time saying that: “the major purpose of descriptive research is description of the state of affairs as it exists at present” (p.2).

As far as the present research study is concerned, the two questionnaires given to both civilization teachers and third year LMD students at the department of English proved the choice of the descriptive method. In here, quantitative and qualitative data are gathered in order to add validity and reliability to the research' main findings which, as a result help giving adequate answers to the questions stated in this research.

#### **3.2.1. Quantitative Research**

According to Walliman (2011), quantitative data analysis depends primarily on the use of numbers and statistics. It is used to measure, to make comparisons between two or more items, to explain the existing phenomenon, and finally to test the already stated hypotheses (p.113). In other words, quantitative method deals with gathering information about the problem under study based on some hypotheses that are to be verified at the end of research. Similarly to Yilmaz (2013), quantitative research involves the mathematical analysis of numerical data (p.312). Besides, the steps of

conducting quantitative research are highlighted by fischler (2010) who suggested that this type of research is concerned with choosing a sample, asking specific questions, collecting the data from the participants, and finally analyzing objectively the numbers, using statistics in order to come up with deductions at the end of the research (p.12).

### **3.2.2. Qualitative Research**

According to Mason (2002), the main principals of qualitative research are to gather and analyze data that are expressed through words, viewpoints, and thoughts rather than statistics and numbers, the purpose behind conducting qualitative research is to provide detailed explanation, mere descriptions, and deep interpretations of the topic to be studied (p.3). Besides, Cohn, Manion, and Morrison (2007) declared that the importance and effectiveness of qualitative research rely on the fact that it helps investigating the reasons behind the obtained results in which for the process of qualitative research to occur, the researcher is required to provide textual analysis of the participants' ideas, thoughts, and attitudes towards a certain phenomenon (p.462). Furthermore, On the basis of Bryman (2012) ' view, qualitative research involves the use of several data gathering tools such as student journals, interviews, surveys, and many others that are practical in nature. Consequently, the data produced demand the researcher's interpretive and intellectual abilities (p.380).

### **3.3. Case Study Method**

Broadly defined, "case study is essentially an intensive investigation of the particular unit under consideration." (Kothari, 2004, p.113). That is to say, case study requires a thorough study of a particular unit, its purpose is to give details so as to get enough information about the topic under research in which the information gathered help producing adequate deductions. Besides, Kothari stated that through case study, the researcher tends to make the whole investigation of an issue covering every single aspect of it. These advantages are because of the fact that it offers deep understanding, real evidences, and adequate deductions. It also strengthens the probability of having generalized knowledge based on formulating accurate hypotheses (p.114, 115). Furthermore, according to Cohn, Manion, and Morrison (2007), case study is a

research method used in field work; it is characterized by the researcher's thorough investigation through which he can widely describe a certain phenomenon (p.253).

### **3.3.1. Purpose of Case Study**

In the current research, the use of case study methodology is necessary for the purpose of having satisfactory and accurate results about the topic under investigation. Thus, the use of teachers' and students' questionnaires are at the heart of this study which attempts to investigate and explore civilization teachers' use of critical thinking methods and techniques while teaching historical information in an effort to raise the readers' awareness, and interest about the importance of this pedagogy. Additionally, in this work, case study helps explore whether third year LMD students of Amar Thelidji university make use of critical thinking skills, and are able to think critically and analytically about civilization topics.

### **3.4. Research Setting**

The current study took place at the University of Amar Thelidji in Laghouat during the academic year 2018/2019. More specifically, the data were collected with the third year LMD students at the department of English language and with teachers of civilization at the same department.

### **3.5. Population and Sampling**

What matters the most in designing a research is the appropriate choice of the sample. Accordingly, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) stated that "The quality of a piece of research not only stands or falls by the appropriateness of methodology and instrumentation, but also by the suitability of the sampling strategy that has been adopted" (p.109). In other words, the sample chosen is quite important for conducting a good research. In addition, Bailey (1978) claimed that the sample under investigation should be chosen randomly so that the results obtained would reflect the entire population (cited in Cohn, Manion and Morrison, 2000, p.102).

Barreiro, and Albandoz (2001) indicated that since it is very difficult to include the whole population while investigating a particular problem, choosing a specific sample is of great importance in which the sample picked up is believed to represent the entire population, however the sample should be randomly chosen so that to add validity to the research findings (p.4).

In this research, the population involves one hundred ninety three (193) third year LMD students at the university of Amar Thelidji (Laghouat). A sample of thirty four (34) students are chosen from the entire population. Besides, a sample of six (6) civilization teachers from the department of English are picked up including five males and one female

### **3.5.1. Rational for Sampling**

Third year LMD students at the university of Amar Thelidji (Laghouat) are chosen as a sample of the present study because the students at this stage are in a position where they are familiar with the ways and aspects of teaching and learning British and American civilization since they have been studying it for three years, so they are able to provide us with the necessary information about the effectiveness of teaching civilization on students' critical thinking abilities. Therefore, these criteria help realize the purpose behind conducting the current research.

### **3.6. Data Gathering Procedures**

Data collection seems to be an important stage in the process of research. In this vein, the researcher should have clear awareness about time, place, and research tools he is likely to work on. Singh (2006) declared that the aim behind gathering data is to test the research hypotheses, to provide valid basis for the study, and to equip the researcher with correct and clear answers to the problem under investigation (p.212).

Furthermore, the questionnaire is one of the research instruments to be used by many researchers while doing their investigations, and it is considered as an effective

tool to collect information for the present study. Accordingly, Babbie (1990) declared that the questionnaire is a document consists of different types of questions designed to gain adequate answers that are to be used later in the analyses (cited in Acharya,2015, p.2). Many types of questionnaires may be used to investigate a certain problem and each of which is chosen for specific purpose. Accordingly, Acharya (2015) suggested three types of questionnaires: structured questionnaire which involves pre-coded and close-ended questions used for quantitative research by getting short and yes/no answers in order to have less-variance, easiness in the supervision, and consistency in the obtained answers. Whereas the unstructured questionnaire involves open-ended questions which may receive different answers in addition to the questions that show the participants' opinions and thoughts. Besides, the last type according to Acharya is suggested to be quasi-structured questionnaire that combines both of the already mentioned structured and unstructured questionnaires (p.3). Similarly to Dornyei (2003), when the respondent is asked to put a tick in the appropriate box, statistical and quantitative analysis are likely to occur. However, if the respondent is asked to express his viewpoints through open-ended questions, the answers are especially suited for qualitative research (p.4).

### **3.7. Techniques of Data Collection**

In the current study, data were collected through two questionnaires that were directed to both third year LMD students and civilization teachers at the department of English at Amar Thelidji University (Laghouat). The two questionnaires were designed to investigate the impact of teaching civilization on the critical thinking skills of EFL students, in an effort to explore the methods and techniques teachers use to enhance students' critical thinking abilities. Moreover, the two questionnaires aimed at exploring whether civilization is taught on the basis of critical thinking pedagogy. Specifically, the teachers' questionnaire was given to six (6) civilization teachers who were required to answer multiple choice questions, and open-ended questions that pave the way for them to express their ideas and opinions. Whereas students' questionnaire was distributed to thirty four students who are asked several close-ended questions about the aspects and conditions of teaching and learning civilization module.

### **3.7.1. Description of Students' Questionnaire**

The students' questionnaire is designed to obtain data about their attitudes towards civilization courses, and the ways they are studying it. Moreover, thirty four randomly chosen students filled out the questionnaire; they are 27 females and 07 males. Throughout the questionnaire, simple words were used to guarantee that they have understood all the questions. Besides, students are asked not to mention their names in order to add more objectivity to this research.

Students' questionnaire consists of sixteen questions that require the students to put a tick in the right box. The first question is designed to know their level in English since this language is used to teach civilization. The aim behind asking the second and the third questions is to know the students' attitudes towards civilization courses in terms of difficulty and interest. Question 4 and 5 are concerned with exploring the methods and materials used by civilization teachers inside the classroom. Whereas the sixth question is used to know whether students like the methods of teaching civilization. The question seven is about the language used by teachers of civilization, and whether it suits their needs to understand historical information, while the question 8 is designed to discover whether teachers of civilization dictate to the students, and give them ready-made information. The questions 9 and 10 seek to see if teachers ask their students questions to assess their understanding, and grasp of knowledge, and whether students interact with the teacher by answering actively and creatively.

In the eleventh and twelfth questions, the aim is to find out if teachers of civilization engage their students in group work activities and homework assignments. Furthermore, in order to check student's motivation towards civilization courses, the thirteenth question is asked. Besides, the purpose of question 14 is to discover the students' preferences concerning the ways they like to study civilization courses. Whereas the fifteenth question is designed to know how students prepare themselves for civilization exam. Finally, the concluding question is asked to know to what extent civilization sessions help improving the students' critical thinking abilities.

### **3.7.2 Description of Teachers' Questionnaire**

The second questionnaire was given to six civilization teachers from the department of English. This questionnaire includes six close-ended question and seven open-ended questions designed to know the methods and techniques used by the teachers to enhance the critical thinking skills of EFL students, and to get enough data about the teachers' opinions and attitudes towards the implementation of critical thinking techniques and tools along with the efficiency of using it. Specifically, the first question is opted to know the years of the teaching experience of civilization teachers. Whereas, questions 2 and 3 are designed to have an idea about the students' level in English language, and if they face difficulties in understanding historical information. The questions 4 and 5 diagnose the methods and the visual aids used by civilization teachers. Whereas, the questions 6 and 7 aimed at knowing whether civilization teachers engage their students in group work activities, and give them homework assignments by attempting to discover the kind of questions asked.

In the question eight, the aim is to know whether teachers of civilization ask open-ended questions, and interact with their students through debate which is the key to students' critical thinking abilities. The purpose behind asking question 9 is to figure out the difficulties faced by civilization teachers in creating a debatable atmosphere inside the class. Besides, the question ten is oriented to know the techniques used by teachers to improve the students' critical thinking skills. The main concern of the question 11 is to see to what extent civilization courses enhance the critical thinking of EFL students. Whereas in question 12, the respondents were asked to put a tick in the appropriate skill tapped by their students during civilization sessions, and to mention any other additional skills. The last question is a chance for teachers to write further information about the topic at hand.

### **3.8. Data Analysis Tools**

The analysis of data is regarded as an important stage in the process of research since it is the preliminary step towards answering the research questions, and testing its hypotheses. Particularly, after gathering the data, the researcher goes through the process of analyzing them. Kothari (2004) highlighted the main steps of data analysis and said: "The analysis of data requires a number of closely related operations such as establishment of categories, the application of these categories to raw data through coding, tabulation and then drawing statistical inferences". In this context, for the

process of data analysis to occur, several procedures seem to take place, the researcher here tends to classify and categorize the information obtained from the questionnaires, and then transform these categories into symbols available in computer programs such as tables, charts, pie-charts and many others (p.18).

### **3.9. Limitations of the Study**

Various limitations have restricted the current study. In detail, this research is limited by time in which the researchers should finish their work in a given period of time during the academic year (2018/2019). Besides, this work took place at the University of Amar Thelidji (Laghouat) where six (6) teachers and thirty four (34) students from third year LMD classes at the department of English were chosen as the two samples of the present study. Furthermore, the research work is limited by two questionnaires which together represent the main research instruments to be used in order to get enough data about the impact of civilization teaching on the critical thinking skills of EFL students. The data obtained from teachers' and students' questionnaires are the only source of information which will highly determine the validity and reliability of the research findings and deductions.

### **3.10. Conclusion**

This chapter sought to provide detailed description of the methodology of this work. Specifically, it discussed the descriptive method used, the sample of the study, the data analysis tools, and the procedures of data collection including thorough description of students' and teachers' questionnaires. The two questionnaires were given to third year LMD students and to civilization teachers at the department of English in an attempt to answer several close-ended questions with yes/no answers, and open-ended questions that require them to express their opinions and attitudes towards the aspects of teaching and learning civilization courses on the basis of critical

thinking pedagogy. Finally, it can be concluded that the research procedures used in this investigation help fulfill the aim behind conducting this research.

## **Chapter Four**

### Data Analyses, Interpretations, and Suggestions

- 4.1. Introduction
- 4.2. Analyses of Students' Questionnaire
- 4.3. Interpretation of Students' Questionnaire
- 4.4. Analyses of Teachers' Questionnaire

4.5. Interpretation of Teachers' Questionnaire

4.6. Pedagogical Implications

4.7. Suggestions for Future Research

4.8. Conclusion

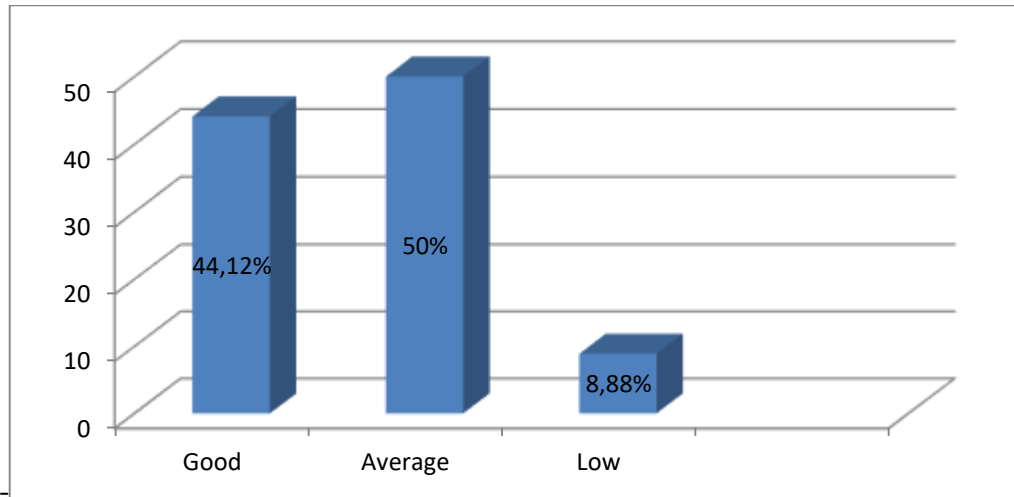
## **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter is concerned mainly with the practical part of the current study. In an effort to confirm or disconfirm the hypotheses stated at the beginning of the research, the analyses and interpretations of these questionnaires are at the heart of this chapter, which seeks to examine the data gathered from both questionnaires to come up with deductions at the end of the study. On the other hand, Excel, the computer program was used to analyse the results by applying different symbols such as tables, charts, and pie-charts. Besides, this chapter seek to answer the research questions, equipp the

reader with pedagogical implications, and eventually suggest some suggestions for future research.

## 4.2. Analyses of the Students' Questionnaire Results

**Question1:** How do you evaluate your level in English language?



**Figure1: Students' Level in English Language**

From the figure above, only (8.88%) of the students have low level in English language. While half of them consider their level average, and (44.12%) of the students have declared that they are good at English. Accordingly, since civilization module is taught in English, the results obtained show that English language does not represent an obstacle for them to understand civilization courses.

**Question2:** How do you find civilization topics?

Option	Number of answers	Percentage
Easy	3	8.82%
Average	22	64.71%
Difficult	9	26.47%

**Table1: Students' Attitudes towards Civilization Topics at the Level of Difficulty**

On the basis of this table, the majority of the respondents with a percentage of (64.71%) said that civilization topics are not difficult, but they are average. While (26.47%) of the students find difficulties in understanding civilization topics. However, only (8.82%) of the participants declared that they are given easy topics which are therefore adequately chosen for them to understand.

**Question3:** For you, the lessons of civilization are:

Option	Number of answers	Percentage
Interesting	7	20.59%
Somehow interesting	17	50%
Uninteresting	10	29.41%

**Table2: Students' Attitudes towards Civilization Topics at the Level of Interest**

As the tables above shows, only (20.59%) of the students find it interesting dealing with the topics of civilization, while half of them have declared that civilization topics are somehow interesting, yet the remaining students have negative attitude towards the topics being taught in which they consider them uninteresting. Therefore, the students' positive and negative attitudes towards civilization topics can be affected by several teaching conditions.

**Question4:** Which method of teaching civilization does your teacher use?

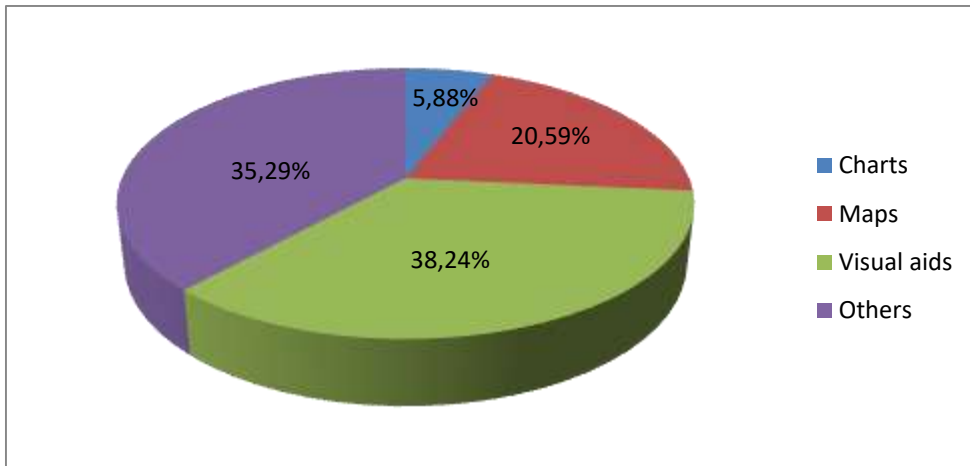
Option	Number of answers	Percentage
Lecture method	16	47.06%
Discussion method	18	52.94%

**Table 03: The Teaching Methods Used by Civilization Teachers**

The obtained results of this question shows that (52.94%) of the students declared that their civilization teachers use discussion method as a way to teach historical

information. While, the second choice (lecture method) was chosen by (47.06%) of them. As a result, making a sort of discussion while teaching civilization can have great impact on the students 'critical thinking abilities.

**Question5:** What materials your civilization teacher uses while teaching?



**Figure2: Types of Visual Materials Used by Civilization Teachers**

As noticed in the figure above, the prominent type of materials to be used by civilization teachers is visual aids with the rate of (38.24%), while (20.59%) of the respondents answered that their teachers make use of maps. Besides, (35.29%) of the students said that there exist other materials in civilization class, but only (5.88%) of the students chose the last option (charts). Consequently, the obtained results from this question can be promising since the application of these types of visual materials may raise their motivation to actively acquire historical information.

**Question6:** Are you satisfied with the methods of teaching civilization used in the classroom?

Option	Number of answers	Percentage
Yes	10	29.41%
Somehow	15	44.12%
No	9	26.47%

**Table04: Students' Satisfaction towards the Methods of Teaching Civilization**

It seems from the table above that the percentage of (44.12%) represents the students who are somehow satisfied with the methods of teaching civilization used in the classroom, while (29.41%) of the whole sample showed satisfaction towards the teaching methods used, however (26.47%) of the participants confessed the contrary, that is; they are not satisfied with the methods applied in the classroom.

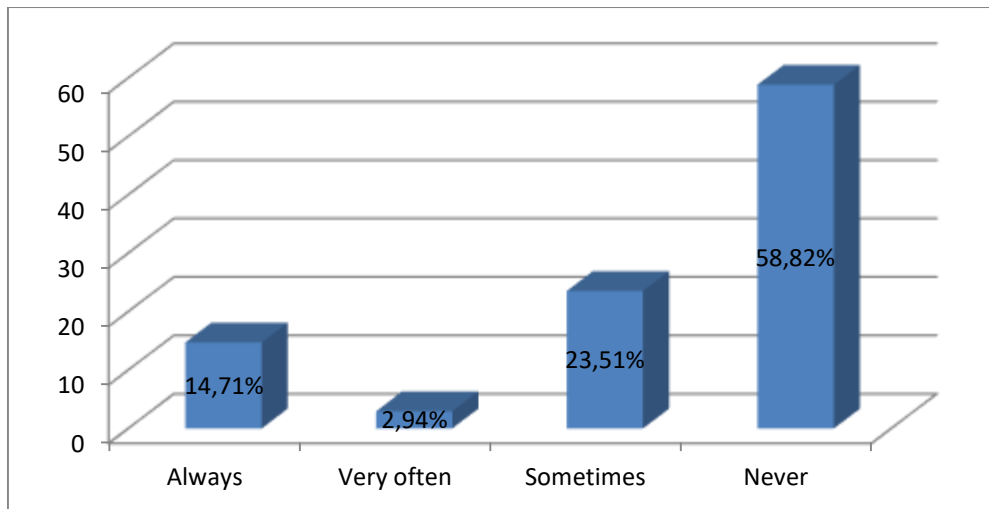
**Question7:** How is the language used by the teacher while teaching?

Option	Number of answers	Percentage
Very easy	6	17.65%
Easy	19	55.88%
Difficult	9	26.47%
Very difficult	0	0%

**Table5: Students' Views about the Language of Civilization Teachers**

The obtained data of this question show that more than a half of the students find the language of civilization teachers easy to understand, whereas (17.65%) of the respondents considered it very easy. However, a percentage of (26.47%) represents the students who claimed that the language used is difficult, and none of them chose the final option(very difficult). Accordingly, it is clearly noticed that the language used by civilization teachers is easy enough to suit their needs in understanding the information received.

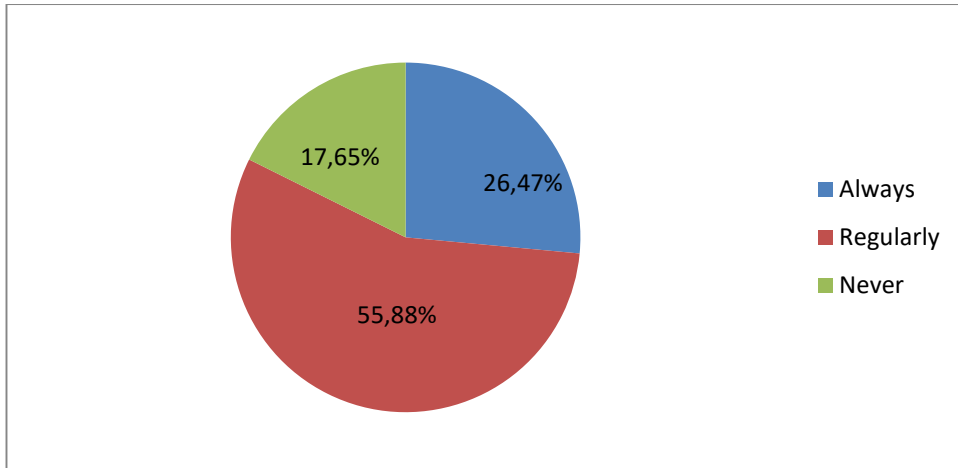
**Question 8:** Does your teacher dictate?



**Figure3: Students' Opinions about Teachers' Dictation**

Since the ready-made information provided by teachers decrease their ability to think critically, the students were asked whether or not civilization teachers dictate to them. As the results of the figure shown above, the majority of the participants with a percentage of (58.82%) declared that they never receive dictation from the teacher, while (23.51%) of the students said that their teachers dictate to them occasionally. Besides, (14.71%) of our informants stated that they have dictation inside the class. However, the last option (very often) has been represented in only (2.94%). Consequently, these answers prove that civilization teachers are aware of the ineffectiveness of dictation that could hamper students from using critical thinking skills.

**Question 9: Does your teacher ask you questions during the session?**



**Figure4: Students' Views towards the Teachers' Use of Questions**

On the light of this figure, participants' views seem to be diverse. Specifically, the students' sample is divided into three categories; the first one represents the majority (55.88%) confessing that their teachers ask them questions during the session regularly. Besides, the second category of (26.47%) stated that the teacher repeatedly asks those questions during the lesson; however, the third category comprising (17.65%) said that their teacher never asks them questions during civilization courses. Since the questions asked are the key to students' critical thinking, the results confirm that civilisation teachers are aware of the importance of questions inside the classroom.

**Question10:** Do you interact with your teacher inside the classroom?

Option	Number of answers	Percentage
Always	3	8.82%
Sometimes	24	70.59%
Never	7	20.59%

**Table 6: Students' Interaction during Civilization Courses**

By taking into consideration the fact that teacher-student interaction plays a major role in enhancing students' abilities in the critical thinking, the aim behind asking this

question is to know whether students interact with their teacher inside the classroom. According to the results shown in the table above, the majority of the respondents (70.59%) stated that they occasionally interact with their teacher, while only (8.82%) of the students have confirmed their interaction with civilization teacher, however the rest percentage (20.59%) represents the students who never interact with him.

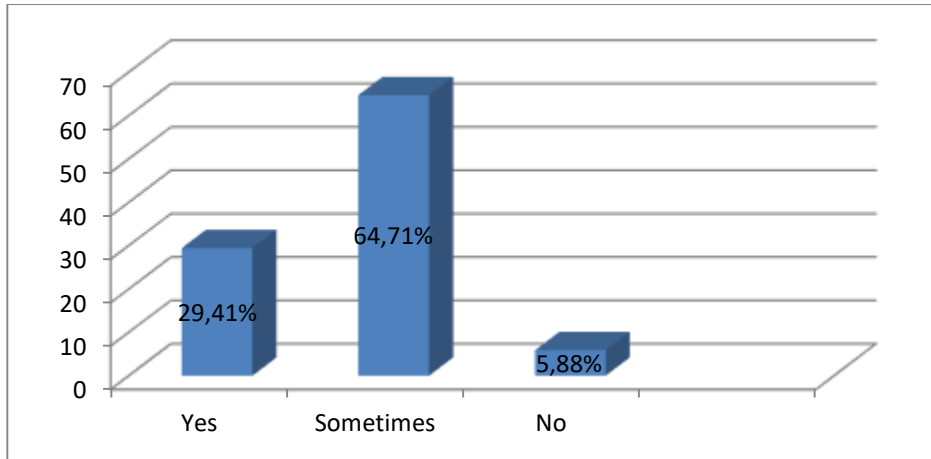
**Question11:** Do you practise group work activities inside the classroom?

Option	Number of answers	Percentage
Always	0	0%
Occasionally	10	29.41%
Never	24	70.59%

**Table7: Students' Practice of Group Work Activities**

Collaborative learning technique is considered effective for the students to develop their critical thinking skills. Therefore this question is designed to discover whether or not students practise group work activities while learning historical information. On the basis of the results shown in the table above, none of the students said that they always practice group work activities, whereas (29.41% ) of our informants stated that they occasionally work in groups inside the class, yet the remaining students with a percentage of (70.59%) asserted that they never practice group work activities. As a result, this lack of group work activities may be due to the large number of students or the insufficient time devoted to teach civilization module.

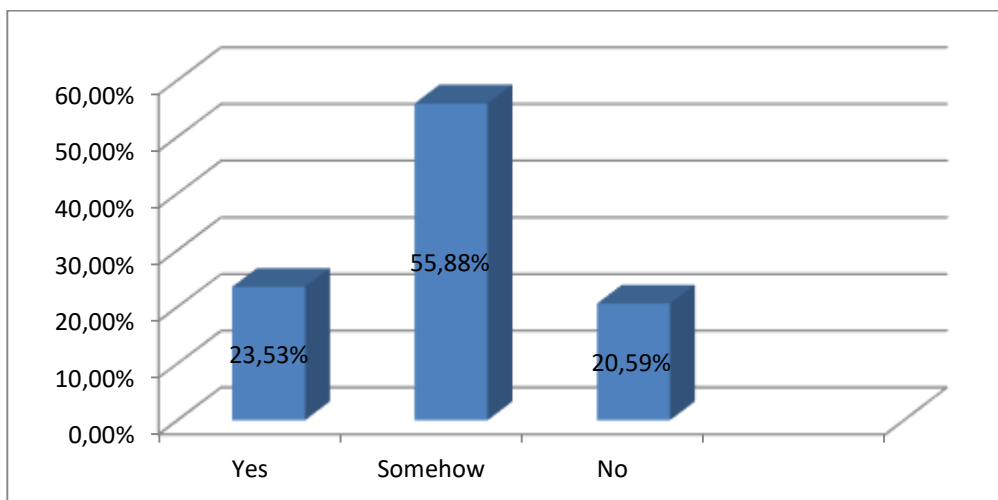
**Question12:** Does your teacher give you homework assignment after teaching?



**Figure5: Students' Practice of Homework Assignments**

In here, the participants questioned about whether or not civilization teachers give students homework assignments. According to the answers shown in the chart above, the majority of the students with a percentage of (64.71%) declared that they practice homework assignments from time to time, while the option "yes" was chosen by (29.41%) of the informants. Nevertheless, only (20.59%) of the whole sample stated that they never practice homework assignments.

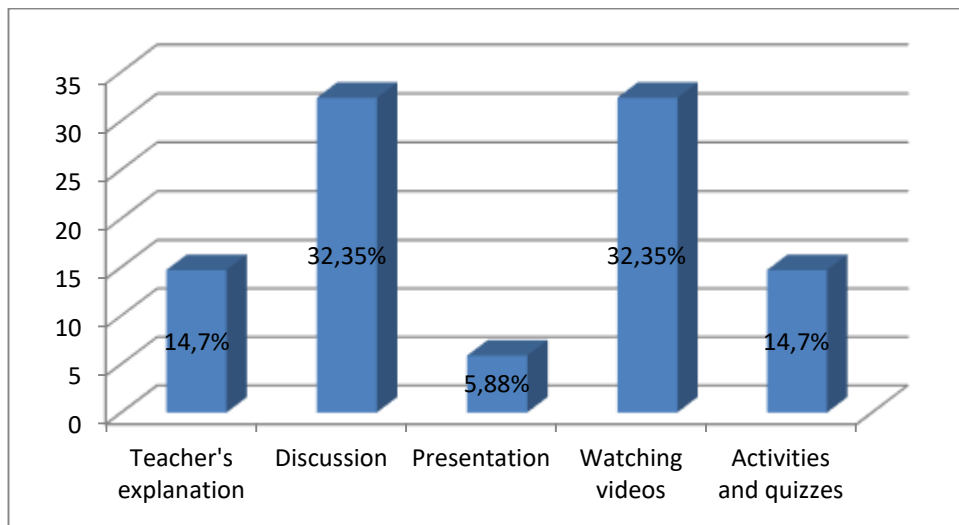
**Question13:** Do you feel motivated while learning historical knowledge?



**Figure6: Students' Motivation in Civilization Courses**

On the light of the figure shown above, the majority of participants with (55.88%) are somehow motivated while learning historical information, while (23.53%) of them feel motivated in civilization courses, however only (20.59%) of the entire sample declared that they never feel motivated while dealing with civilization. Accordingly, this question put emphasis on motivation because it is one of the many aspects that lead students to experience the process of critical thinking.

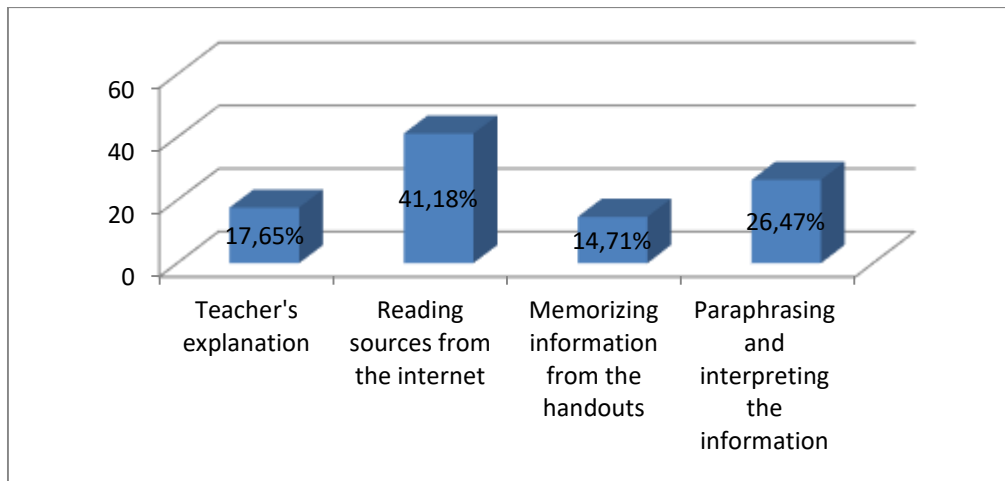
**Question14:** For you, what is the best way to study civilization module?



**Figure7: Students' Preferable Techniques in Teaching Civilization**

According to the participants' answers shown in the figure above, it is clearly noticed that the techniques of watching videos, and making sorts of discussions are the most preferable techniques that holds the same percentage which is (32.35%), while the teachers explanation along with activities and quizzes are less preferable, and they are both represented by a percentage of (14.7%), finally only (5.88%) of the sample have chosen the presentation option. Consequently, the results show that students like to be part in the learning process, they also like to engage in different types of activities and to think both creatively and critically about what they are learning.

**Question15:** How do you prepare yourself for exam?



**Figure8: Students' Preparation Ways in Civilization Exam**

As manifested by the statistics above, the majority of the informants with (41.18%) declared that they prepare themselves for civilization exam by reading sources from the internet about the topics dealt with inside the class. While (26.47%) of the students stated that they tend to paraphrase and summarize the information given to them which may be helpful at maximizing historical understanding. Besides, a rate of (17.65%) represents the participants who rely on the teacher's explanation inside the class, however only (14.71%) of the students depend on the memorization of information found in teachers' handouts.

**Question16:** Do you think that civilization courses help you improving your critical thinking abilities?

Option	Number of answers	Percentage
Yes	11	32.35%
Somehow	14	41.18%
No	9	26.47%

**Table8: Students' Views about the Critical Thinking in Civilization Courses**

Since the critical thinking pedagogy is a necessary aspect of teaching civilization module, the last question aims to shed light on the students' views towards enhancing critical thinking through civilization courses. Thus, it is obviously noticed that the informants' answers are diverse in which the higher percentage (41.18%) is devoted for the students who thought that civilization teaching is somehow helpful for developing their critical thinking skills. On the other hand, (32.53%) of the participants declared that civilization courses are sufficient enough to enhance their critical thinking abilities. Whereas only (26.47%) of students claim that they cannot improve their critical thinking skills through civilization sessions. This can be due to several factors from the part of both teaching and learning civilization.

### **4.3. Interpretation of Students' Questionnaire**

Discovering and investigating the impact of teaching civilization on the critical thinking skills of EFL students at the university of Amar Thelidji (Laghouat), is the ultimate aim of this questionnaire. By taking into consideration the usefulness of critical thinking pedagogy in education, civilization module is advocated to be taught on the basis of this pedagogy. More specifically, students' questionnaire results are open to interpretation in which the analyses of the data indicate that the majority of students showed some satisfaction towards civilization teaching methods, where they declared that the methods of teaching civilization are mainly focused on lecturing and making sorts of discussions about the topics being taught. Furthermore, through discussion method, students have the potential to maximize historical understanding as their motivation and willingness to think critically and analytically become increasingly developed, however some students confessed that they have limited interaction with their teacher which can be due to several factors such as students' lack of interest.

Moreover, students' questionnaire tackled teacher's dictation of information as one of the factors that may hinder students from using critical thinking skills inside the class; students in this situation will not have the ability to think actively and critically about what they are learning because they will become dependent learners. Thus, the results obtained from students' questionnaires exhibited that teachers do not dictate to their students repeatedly but it happens rarely which can be evidence of teachers'

awareness about the effectiveness of critical thinking and the ineffectiveness of dictation technique in the process of teaching/learning historical information.

By taking into consideration the idea that critical thinking involves the ability to analyze, interpret, synthesize, and evaluate any kind of information, students were asked about whether their teacher asks open-ended questions that engage them in problem-solving tasks about the lesson. Accordingly, their answers revealed that they occasionally have these kinds of questions inside the classroom. Besides, when it comes to collaborative learning, enhanced critical thinking skills are likely to take place as students will have the chance to share, and express ideas and thoughts open-mindedly. Thus, students were questioned about whether or not they practice group work activities while dealing with historical knowledge. The informants' responses indicate that the majority of the students are not doing such activities due to the heavy knowledge syllabus of civilization module, the large number of students in each group, and the insufficient time devoted to teach this module. Yet students are doing homework assignments in occasion.

Concerning their preferable teaching methods, it seems from the analyses of the data that students like learner-centered methods of teaching, they want to be part in the learning process, and they like to be active recipients who think creatively and critically about the topics being presented. In addition, students are interested in doing different activities and quizzes inside the classroom which increase for them the potential of creating active and enjoyable learning atmosphere. Besides, some students find it beneficial to make sorts of discussions and debates with the teacher in order to better understand the issue at hand. The teacher at this stage plays the role of a guide or a facilitator of acquiring historical information. Students prefer also visual materials because they like to see and feel the events and facts through videos, pictures, and maps so that they can fully understand them.

The questionnaire dealt also with how students' preparation for civilization exam. Accordingly, the results assert that the majority of the students supported the idea of reading sources from the internet, they are curious and motivated to search, and to read books, articles, magazines, and websites in relation to what is found in the program. Another category of students find it beneficial to prepare themselves for exams by

summarizing, and paraphrasing the teachers' handouts. This can be evident of their ability to synthesize new paragraphs on the basis of what they have understood from the text. Generally, it seems from the analyses of the data that students had acquired some skills in critical thinking through various methods, techniques and activities that are applied by civilization teachers such as the use of discussion, open-ended questions, homework assignments, and visual materials. However, students showed some negative attitudes towards civilization topics in terms of the difficulty and the interest.

#### **4.4. Analyses of Teachers' Questionnaire**

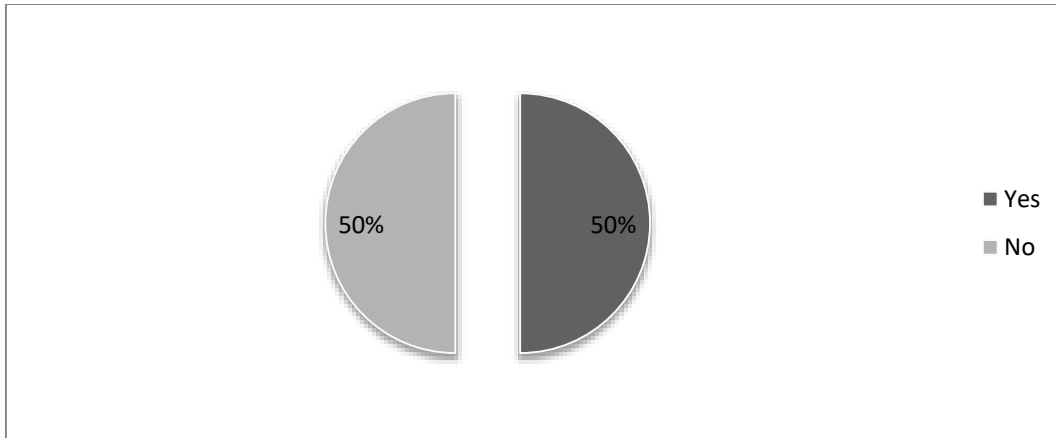
**Question one:** How long have you been teaching English in this university?

On the light of this question, the years of experiences of civilization teachers is between four (4) and ten (10) years. This leads us to say that our informants are of different professional experiences in teaching civilization.

**Question two:** How do you find students' level at English language?

It is obviously known that civilization module is taught in English language; therefore, this question is designed to discover whether students' level in English can suit their needs in understanding historical knowledge. The informants' responses of this question showed that students' level in English language is a mixture of good, average and weak. In other words, students' level in English is diverse in which their competencies differ from one student to another.

**Question three:** Do your students find any difficulty in understanding historical information?



**Figure9: Teachers’ opinions about the difficulties faced by students in civilization**

In here, teachers were asked about whether or not their students face difficulties in understanding historical information. On the basis of their answers, half of them declared that it is easy for the students to understand what is being taught inside the class. However, the other half of civilization teachers stated that students have some challenges and difficulties in understanding civilization topics. In this sense, one teacher mentioned one of these difficulties by saying: “sometimes they fail to relate historical incidents and concepts”

**Question four:** Can you describe the methods that you use to teach civilization?

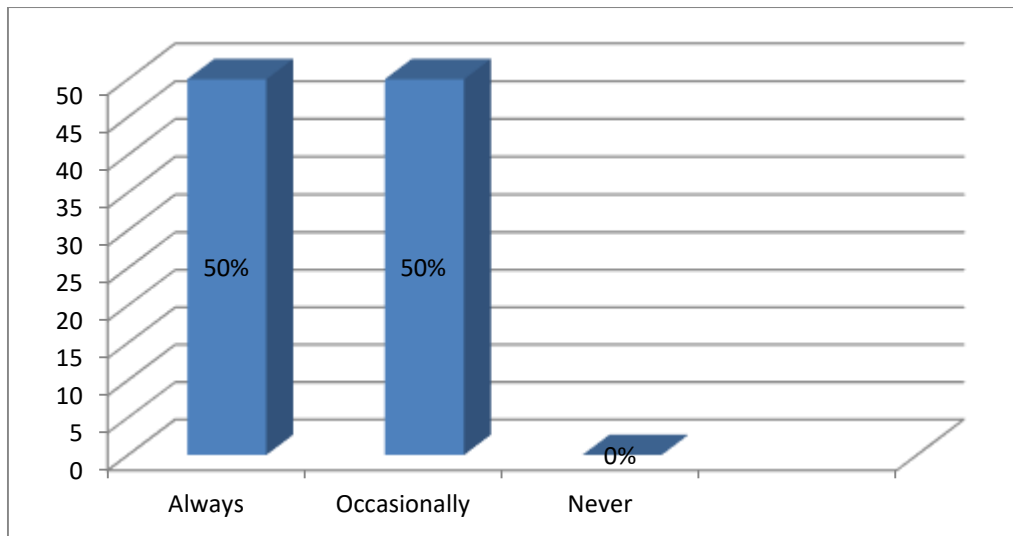
According to their responses, the majority of teachers indicated that they use a variety of methods at the same time, each of which depends on the topic being taught i.e. civilization teachers are eclectic in the teaching process. Specifically, five teachers asserted that they use lecture method as a way to teach civilization module, however they use also other methods like discussion in which they interact with the students, and ask questions after explaining the main points of the course. For example, one of the informants confessed his eclectic way of teaching in which he always asks students to prepare at home what is going to be taught, then he brainstorm students’ ideas. After that he explains and illustrates historical events, and facts using lecture method, and then he moves to discuss with the students the main ideas of the lesson. Finally, he concludes with critical questions that require the students to think both critically and analytically in order to find answers to these questions.

On the other hand, two teachers of the sample declared that they used to explain historical documents and events chronologically rather than thematically, in which they consider it better at maximizing students' historical understanding. Whereas another teacher used to adopt story-telling method to teach civilization as students find it interesting to acquire historical events and facts in a form of story. According to their responses, it seems that civilization teachers are aware of the importance of learner-centered methods of teaching/learning historical information and its impact on students' performance despite their constant use of traditional methods.

**Question five:** which kind of visual aids do you use while teaching? How effective do you find them?

The ultimate aim behind asking this question is to discover civilization teachers' use of visual materials inside the classroom as they can increase students' motivation and willingness to understand what is being taught. Accordingly, the informants' questionnaire revealed that the majority of teachers use multiple kinds of visual materials, mainly data show slides that help them explain historical information (events, facts, dates and so on). More specifically, two teachers of the sample declared that they do integrate multi-media tools into the framework of civilization courses in which they use videos, documentaries, pictures and maps; however, one of them neglects the use of these materials.

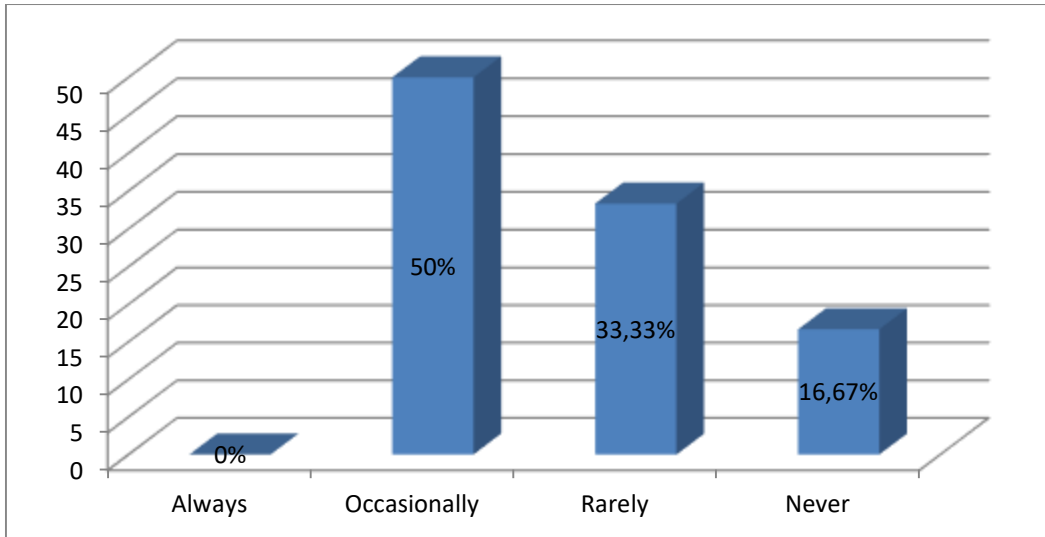
**Question six:** How often do you give your students homework assignments? What kind of questions do you ask them usually?



**Figure10: Teachers' Use of Homework Assignments**

This question attempts to highlight one of the basic teaching techniques that contribute in developing students' abilities in the process of critical thinking. Accordingly, it is designed to know whether civilization teachers give their students homework assignments that require the students to think of solutions to the problems at hand. From the figure shown above, (50%) of civilization teachers declared that they occasionally ask students to do homework tasks, while the other (50%) of teachers stated that they repeatedly ask students to do so. When it comes to the kind of questions asked, two teachers from the sample reported that they usually ask them to summarize and paraphrase the handouts given to them, in which it is obviously noticed that these kinds of questions can help students developing their critical thinking skills mainly analysis and synthesis. Another teacher asks students to prepare and read pre-determined passages about the topic given in order to better understand the lesson. Besides, one teacher asserted that his questions vary from accurate, technical questions to lengthy essays.

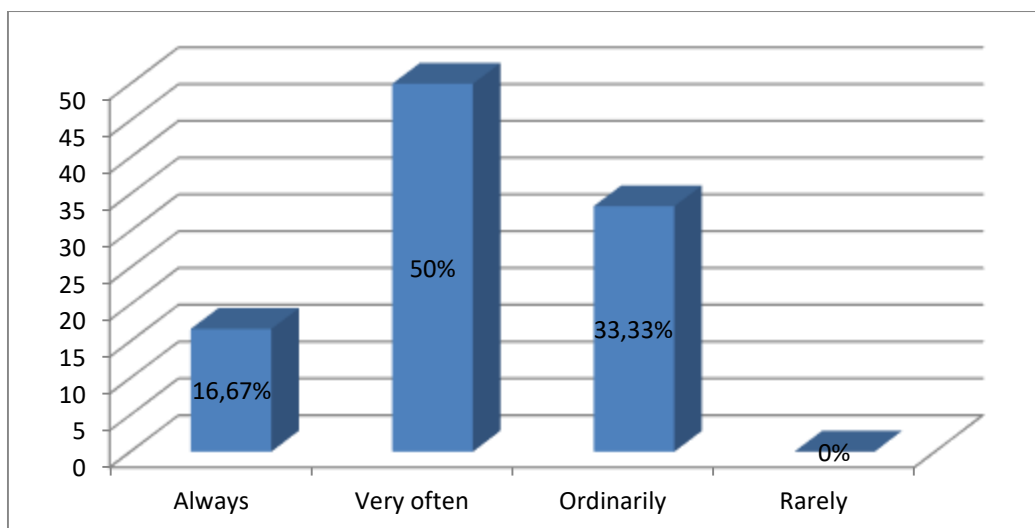
**Question seven:** Do you give your students group work activities? Do they enjoy them?



**Figure11: Teachers' Opinions towards Group Work Activities**

By expressing and sharing ideas and thoughts through group work activities, students will have the chance to be critical thinkers. The aim of this question is to discover whether or not civilization teachers manage group work activities inside the classroom. Accordingly, the figure above shows that (16.67%) of civilization teacher confessed that they never make students practise group work activities, however half of them stated that they occasionally let students work collaboratively, while (33.33%) of them declared that they rarely ask students to do such activities, and none of the teachers chose the (always) option This can be due to the fact that there exist large number of students preventing them from effectively managing these kinds of activities.

**Question eight:** Do you ask your students open-ended questions that make them engage in a debate with you?



**Figure12: Civilization teachers' use of open-ended questions**

Since the open-ended questions are what push students to think creatively and critically about the topic given, civilization teachers have been asked about whether they use these kinds of questions while teaching historical information. From the figure shown above, (16.66%) of the teachers stated that they always ask students open-ended questions, while (50%) of the sample reported that they very often ask them open-ended questions. Besides, a percentage of (33.33%) represents the teachers who declared that they ordinarily ask students these kinds of questions. Whereas none of them chose the last option (rarely).

**Question nine:** what are the difficulties that may face you as a teacher in creating a debatable atmosphere inside the classroom?

Despite the fact that teacher-student or student-student interaction is usefully applied to develop the critical thinking skills of EFL students, there exist many obstacles that may hinder civilization teachers from effectively managing a sort of discussion with the students. According to their responses of this question, teachers reported several difficulties in the process of creating debates while teaching civilization. In this vein, one teacher declared that time management prevents them from enhancing debatable atmosphere inside the classroom in which one hour and a half per week is not enough for teachers to hold debates with students. Besides, it can be noticed from teachers' responses that by interacting and discussing about what is

being taught, the teacher may drift away from the topic being presented. Another teacher stated that the intellectual differences between students are one of the main difficulties that face civilization teachers while managing debates with them by saying:” The only difficulty is managing to control the debate mainly when there is no balance between the groups due to the difference between learners.”

**Question ten:** What are the techniques and strategies that you use in order to increase the critical thinking of your students?

The importance of this question lies in the fact that thinking critically about historical information require civilization teachers to use different techniques and strategies that foster the critical thinking among the students. Consequently, on the light of this question, the informants’ responses are diverse. In this sense, one civilization teacher showed an important teaching technique that can interestingly enhance students’ critical thinking skills in which he stated that after having explained the historical events, he usually asks his students to imagine the role of historical character and behave instead of him or her. Additionally, he always makes them find the link between past historical events and current ones. Another teacher confessed that he used to ask rhetorical questions in order to develop students’ critical thinking abilities.

Furthermore, among teachers’ responses of this question is the use of realistic example as a way to increase the students’ ability to think critically, in this sense; one civilization teacher said:” I give realistic example and assimilate the information to their cultural and historical background”. Besides, another teacher declared that he always tries to make vivid discussions so that the students can retort the acquired information, and consequently be able to think analytically and critically about what they are studying. Accordingly, all of the previously mentioned techniques used to teach civilization module can have great impact on the critical thinking skills of EFL students.

**Question eleven:** To what extent do you think that civilization courses help improving the critical thinking of EFL students?

On the basis of this question, civilization teachers showed interest and awareness about the importance of critical thinking pedagogy in teaching and learning civilization module. More specifically, the majority of teachers stated that critical thinking skills can be extremely enhanced through civilization courses where students seem to have the chance to analyze, synthesize, interpret and evaluate historical knowledge. In this vein, one teacher mentioned the ways in which civilization is the vehicle used by EFL students to promote their critical thinking. By doing so, he wrote: “civilization contributes a lot in improving students’ critical thinking as it is more concretized subject matter”.

**Question twelve:** What are the main critical thinking skills in specific that are tapped by the students during your courses?

After having informed that civilization teachers apply several techniques and strategies that help students reinforcing the critical thinking abilities, this question meant to know the main critical thinking skills used by students while dealing with historical information. Accordingly, the participants’ responses revealed that students use different thinking skills during civilization courses such as analysis, interpretation, synthesis, evaluation, and comparison. This can be evident of the effectiveness of teaching/learning civilization module on the critical thinking of EFL students.

#### **4.5. Interpretations of Teachers’ Questionnaire**

The teachers’ questionnaire attempted to highlight the main aspects of teaching civilization on the basis of critical thinking pedagogy. The answers provided by civilization teachers demonstrated the impact of teaching civilization on students’ critical thinking skills at the university of Amar Thelidji ( Laghouat). Consequently, the data analyses of teachers’ questionnaire exhibited that students’ abilities in critical thinking is diverse, due to the fact that they have distinct levels in English language which may affect their attitudes towards civilization in terms of the difficulty and the interest because this subject matter is taught in English and students’ understanding and grasp of knowledge are highly related to their English competencies.

On the other hand, by taking into consideration the importance of using critical thinking strategies and tools, civilization teachers have been asked throughout the

questionnaire about their methods and techniques used to teach civilization. Specifically, their answers revealed that they use different methods while teaching; some teachers use lecture method, and at the same time they emphasize discussion and interaction with the students inside the classroom where they can increasingly become critical thinkers who listen open-mindedly to others' opinions and ideas. Thus, engaging students in the process of critical thinking is at the heart of discussion method of teaching. Besides, some teachers are eclectic i.e. they use a range of methods at once, here students can have the probability to play an active role in the process of learning historical information, and therefore they can maximize historical understanding.

However, traditional methods are still applied by some teachers who use lecture method and teach historical events and facts chronologically. Story-telling is another method used by some civilization teachers in which students tended to be passive recipients who wait for knowledge from the teacher. Consequently, their ability to think critically and analytically about what is being taught are likely to be reduced.

For the critical thinking skills to take place among students during civilization courses, several techniques and activities need to be applied. Throughout the questionnaire, teachers have been questioned about how they increase the critical thinking of their students. Accordingly, it seems from the analyses of the data that teachers are interested in depicting critical thinking techniques and activities within the framework of civilization lessons. What is mostly important in their answers is the classroom discussion in which students could interact with the teacher, and even with their classmates about the topic at hand. Through discussion, students can clearly demonstrate the questioning skills and, as a result, they would engage in the critical thinking process where they are required to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate historical information.

However, civilization teachers used to face some difficulties in creating debatable atmosphere inside the classroom because of several reasons mainly the large number of students, and the insufficient time devoted to teach civilization module. Moreover, some teachers apply other critical thinking techniques like open-ended questions, and rhetorical questions that promote students' motivation and willingness to acquire civilization topics. There exist also other techniques like asking students to assimilate

past historical events with current ones in which students will have the potential to use their imagination and thinking abilities.

When it comes to visual materials, teachers showed satisfaction and interest towards the implementation of these materials inside the class in which they use different kinds of visual aids. For instance, they use videos, documentaries, data show slides, maps, and pictures. All these materials seem to have great impact on students' historical understanding and performance. However, teachers reported that they rarely or never manage group work activities inside the classroom due to the large number of students. This can be an obstacle because these activities are essential for the critical thinking process where different ideas and thoughts are likely to take place, so that students' analytical and critical abilities will be gradually developed.

Furthermore, the data obtained from teachers' questionnaire showed constant use of homework assignments. In here, teachers tend to make students think and solve problems by asking them different kinds of questions mainly summarizing, paraphrasing texts, writing lengthy essays and reading pre-determined passages which can increase the potential for them to develop their critical thinking skills, particularly analysis and synthesis. Generally, we can summarize this by saying that learning to think need to be the ultimate aim of civilization teachers who are required to promote students' level in the critical thinking using different teaching methods and techniques. Thus, learner-centered methods of teaching civilization seem to enhance the quality of learning, and offer students the chance to practice the critical thinking skills.

#### **4.6. Pedagogical implications**

This modest research would equip civilization teachers with some innovative techniques and tools that emphasize learner-centered methods of teaching. On the light of this research study outcomes, civilization teachers use different methods to teach historical knowledge mainly lecture and discussion methods, but still they take a fundamental role in the process of teaching. Hence, university authorities should encourage teachers to use technology in order to enhance debate inside the classroom. Besides, critical thinking techniques and tools must be widely integrated within the framework of civilization courses, and teachers need to repeatedly assess students'

level in critical thinking. Furthermore, Administrative bodies at Amar thelidji university should reduce the number of students in each group so that teachers could easily use critical thinking activities, and techniques like dialogue, group work activities, problem solving tasks, reading activities and so on.

Interestingly, in order to increase the students' ability to think critically and analytically about historical knowledge, civilization teachers need to devote specific sessions for developing students 'reading skills. In detail, they can bring about a number of articles and magazines in relation to civilization program, and ask students to read them in pairs, and then discuss the main ideas with the teacher. By doing so, civilization teachers could meaningfully enhance the quality of learning and engage students in the process of critical thinking.

#### **4.7.Suggestions for Future Research**

The current study was restricted by two questionnaires; one for civilization teachers and the other for third year LMD students at the University of Amar Thelidji (Laghouat), the two questionnaires are used to investigate the impact of civilization teaching on the critical thinking skills of EFL students. Accordingly, we suggest that teams of future researchers should do comparative studies between different universities and different levels. Besides, they need to extend the sample of both teachers and students, and to adopt different qualitative research methods such as systematic observation, content analysis, surveys, and interviews so that they can maximize the generalizability and validity of the research findings.

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

To conclude, this chapter dealt with the analyses and interpretation of teachers' and students' questionnaires. The research study findings proved that civilization teachers use various methods and techniques that promote students' ability to think critically about what is being taught, yet some obstacles seem to hinder them from widely apply critical thinking techniques and tools. Consequently, this chapter brought to light some pedagogical implications that can help students to not only maximize historical understanding and promote their critical thinking abilities, but also help

civilization teachers to enhance the quality of teaching, and to clarify the importance of critical thinking among teachers and students alike.

## **General Conclusion**

Critical thinking pedagogy is considered as a necessary aspect in education and, therefore it is an extremely important skill to be developed in EFL classrooms. The current dissertation attempted to shed light on the effectiveness of teaching civilization to enhance the critical thinking of EFL students. More specifically, this research aimed at investigating and discovering the impact of teaching civilization on the critical thinking skills of EFL students in an effort to clarify the value of applying this pedagogy during civilization courses. By doing so, this study was conducted using questionnaire as the main research instrument that was given to third year LMD students at the department of English, and also to teachers of civilization at the same department.

This research was divided into three main chapters. The first theoretical chapter tackled mainly the two variables of this investigation. Specifically, it involved two sections in which the first section dealt basically with the pedagogy of critical thinking including its definitions, its strategies and tools, and its importance in education. It presented also Blooms taxonomy of critical thinking followed by its main categories along with motivation and metacognition as the two basic aspects of critical thinking. Whereas the second section was concerned with teaching English to EFL students in Algerian context, then it moved to highlight the teaching of civilization by introducing some innovative approaches and methods that can have the potential to maximize historical understanding. Besides, the second section tackled various practical tools to teach civilization along with the relationship between teaching civilization and the pedagogy of critical thinking. In addition, the second chapter presented the methodology of this work; it offered detailed explanation of the choice of the method, data gathering tools, the research setting, population and sampling, and the limitation of the study. Finally, the last chapter gave emphasis on the analyses and interpretation of students and teachers' questionnaires followed by the pedagogical implications and some suggestions for future research.

Most importantly, the present study sought to investigate the application of critical thinking skills in civilization courses based on three research questions; the first question was designed to know the extent in which civilization courses help enhancing

the critical thinking abilities of EFL students at the university of Amar Thelidji (Laghouat), while the second question was about discovering the main teaching techniques, and activities that develop the students' ability to think critically and analytically about historical knowledge. The aim behind asking the concluding question was to know the basic critical thinking skills that are tapped by third year LMD students during civilization courses?

In order to answer these research questions, the questionnaires for both civilization teachers, and EFL students who belong to third year LMD classes helped realize the purpose behind conducting this research. Consequently, concerning the first question, the data analyses of both questionnaires revealed that civilization courses are the place where teachers of this module apply the techniques and activities that could increasingly help EFL students practicing critical thinking skills. When it comes to the techniques and activities used by civilization teachers to enhance students' critical thinking, teachers seem to use several methods, techniques and activities. More specifically, they use discussion method where teacher-students interaction and student-student interaction are likely to take place.

Furthermore, civilization teachers use open-ended questions along with rhetorical questions that require the students to think both critically and analytically about historical knowledge. Homework assignments are also emphasized by teachers in which they find them beneficial at promoting students' understanding, and performance and, as a result; they would develop their critical thinking skills. Another technique has the probability to increase students' imagination. In detail, during civilization sessions, teachers attempted to make students imagine and play the role of historical character. This can be widely useful in enhancing students' critical thinking. Besides, the teachers make use of different kinds of visual materials inside the classroom in order to help students dealing with historical information actively and creatively. Moreover, the analyses of both questionnaires results answered the third research question which attempted to discover the main critical thinking skills used by EFL students during civilization sessions in which these skills include the analysis, interpretation, synthesis, evaluation and comparison.

Therefore, this research tried to shed light on the usefulness of teaching civilization based on the pedagogy of critical thinking which is the vehicle for students' effective

learning. The analyses of both questionnaires results proved that civilization teachers showed awareness and interest about the importance of critical thinking in which they apply different teaching methods and techniques that would promote the students' ability to think critically and analytically about historical knowledge like discussion method, open-ended questions, and homework assignments in addition to the use of visual materials. Yet some teachers still apply lecture method that is highly considered as teacher-centered method leading to students' negative attitudes towards civilization module. Besides, from the analyses of the data, it was clearly noticed that there exist a lack of group work activities due to the fact that there are large number of students that could hinder teachers from effectively managing collaborative work.

To conclude, since critical thinking must be widely applied during civilization courses, teachers are required to widely emphasize learner-centered methods of teaching, and choose what is suitable for the students in order to help them enhancing their understanding, motivation, and critical thinking skills. Thus, we hope that this dissertation would benefit both civilization teachers, and EFL students in the process of teaching/ learning civilization.

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## ملخص

تعد تنمية التفكير النقدي لدى المتعلم من اساسيات التدريس و ذلك لأهميته البالغة في زيادة التحصيل العلمي للطالب. يناقش هذا البحث اهمية استعمال الطرق و الوسائل التي بدورها تنمي مهارات التفكير النقدي للطلبة و مدى تطبيقهم لهذه المهارات عبر مقياس الحضارة حيث تسلط هذه المذكرة الضوء على طلاب السنة الثالثة في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية. كما تهدف الى دراسة استبانيين موجهين الى كل من طلبة السنة الثالثة واساتذة مقياس الحضارة حيث اظهرت النتائج اهتمام الاساتذة باستعمال عدة تقنيات كالفيدويوهات والخرائط واعتماد اسلوب المناقشة والحوار بطرح اسئلة مفتوحة بالإضافة الى استعمال اسلوب التلقين. من جهة اخرى اظهر الطلبة نظرة سلبية تجاه هذا المقياس وطرق تدريسيه. ومنه يقترح هذا البحث اعادة النظر في ظروف تدريس مقياس الحضارة وذلك بالابتعاد عن الطرق التقليدية لجذب اهتمام الطالب وتحفيز قدراته العقلية وذلك بدمج التكنولوجيات الحديثة واعتماد اسلوب حل المشكلات جماعيا وكذا تقليص عدد الطلبة في كل قسم. كل هذا يهدف الى تعزيز طرق التدريس وخلق فرص اكبر لتعلم مهارات للتفكير النقدي.

# **Appendices**

## Appendix 01

### The students' questionnaire

Dear student,

In order to write a master dissertation, this questionnaire is assigned to explore the application of critical thinking skills in British and American civilization courses at the University of Amar Thelidji. Thus, we would like you to read this questionnaire carefully and to answer the following questions by putting a tick in the appropriate box.

1-How do you evaluate your level in English?

a-Good       b- Average       c- Low

2-How do you find civilisation topics?

a- Easy       b-Average       c-Difficult

If difficult, please explain which kind of difficulty do you have?

.....  
.....

3- For you, civilisation courses are:

a-Not interesting       b- Somehow interesting       c- Interesting

4- Which method of teaching civilisation does your teacher use?

a-Lecture method       b- Discussion method       c- other methods

.....

5-which materials your civilisation teacher uses?

a-Charts       b- Maps       c- Visual aids       d-Other materials

6-Are you satisfied with the methods of teaching civilisation used in the classroom?

- a-Yes                       b- Somehow                       c-No

If no, why?

.....  
.....

7-How is the language used by the teacher while teaching?

- a-Very Easy                       b-Easy                       c- Difficult                       d- Very difficult

8-Does your teacher dictate?

- a-Always                       b-Very often                       c- Sometimes                       c- Never

9-Does your teacher ask you questions at the end of the session?

- a-Always                       b- Regularly                       c- never

10-Do you interact with your teacher in the classroom?

- a-Always                       b-Sometimes                       c- Never

11-Do you practise group work activities inside the classroom?

- a-Always                       b-Occasionally                       c- Never

12-Does your teacher give you homework assignment at the end of the session?

- a-Yes                       b- Sometimes                       c- No

13- Do you feel motivated while learning historical knowledge?

- a-Yes                       b- No                       c- Somehow

14- For you, the best way to study civilisation is:

a-To listen to the teacher's explanation of a certain event and take notes.

b-To make a sort of discussion with the teacher about the given subject.

c-To listen to your classmates' presentation of the topic presented.

d-To watch videos related to civilization lessons.

e-To do some activities and quizzes in a group work that is to be corrected later by the teacher.

15- You prepare yourself for civilisation exam by:

a-Relying on the teacher's explanation during the session.

b-Reading sources from the internet about the subjects given.

c-Memorizing facts, events, and ideas from teacher's handouts.

d-Paraphrasing and interpreting the information received.

16-Do you think that civilisation courses can help you to improve your critical thinking skills?

1-Yes

2- Somehow

3- No

**Thank you for your cooperation**

# Appendix

## Teachers' questionnaire

Dear teacher,

Thank you for accepting to answer this questionnaire which is designed in an attempt to explore and investigate the ways in which critical thinking skills are enhanced during civilization sessions.

1-How long have you been teaching English at this university?

.....

2-How do you find the students' level at English language?

.....

.....

3-Do your students find any difficulty in understanding historical information?

a-Yes

b- No

If yes, what are those difficulties?

.....

.....

4-Can you describe the methods that you use to teach civilisation?

.....

.....

.....

.....

5-Which kind of visual aids do you use while teaching? How effective do you find them?

.....

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

6-How often do you give your students homework assignments? What kind of questions do you ask them usually?

a-Always       b- Occasionally       c- Never

.....  
.....

7-Do you give your students group work activities? Do they enjoy them?

a-Always       b- Occasionally       c- Rarely       d- Never

.....

8-Do you ask your students open-ended questions that make them engage in a debate with you?

a-Always       b- Very often       c- Ordinarily       d- Rarely

9-What are the difficulties that may face you as a teacher in creating a debatable atmosphere inside the classroom?

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

10-What are the techniques that you use in order to increase the critical thinking of your students?

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

11-To what extent do you think that civilization courses help improving critical thinking of EFL students?

.....

.....

12-What are the main critical thinking skills in specific that are tapped by the students during your courses?

a-Analysis  b- Interpretation  c- Evaluation  d- Other skills

.....

13-Do you have anything to add?

.....

.....

.....

**Thank you for your cooperation**