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Faculty of Letters and Languages  
Department of Foreign Languages

# **MASTER THESIS**

Letters and Foreign Languages  
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Submitted and Defended by:

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On:

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE USE OF READING  
STRATEGIES TO DEVELOP LEARNER'S CRITICAL  
THINKING**

**The Case Study of Master One Civ & Lit at Biskra University**

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**Declaration**

I, **Soumia BOUAOUN**, hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work and has never been submitted to any institution or a university for a degree. This work was conducted and completed at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra, Algeria.

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**Dedication**

I dedicate this work:

To the spirit of " **My Father**" may he rest in peace.

To the wonderful woman in my life "**My Mother**" who prayed a lot to pursuit my higher studies. I'm indebted to all what you have done for me. Thank you for your love, care, support, inspiration and wise. You are my miracle in this life.

To my lovely sisters: **Selma** and **Sabah** who helped me through my path.

To my Brothers: **Abdelah**, **Soulaimane**, **Rayan**, and my little one **Iyad**.

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### **Abstract**

Many students enter higher education without the ability to use their critical thinking skills; they do not question, are not curious and rely on others to think for them, which reflect on their achievements and educational career. Being concerned with this matter, we attempt to investigate, in this study, the use of reading strategies in developing EFL learner's critical thinking. Through this work we proceed to find out to which extent English students use strategies while reading and how can reading strategies influence English students 'critical thinking. In accordance with our research questions, we hypothesized that reading strategies have a great contribution to the development of EFL learner's critical thinking. Based on a qualitative approach, 20 first years Master civ&lit students from Biskra University (Algeria) volunteered to be participants in the descriptive study "filling in questionnaire" as data gathering tool. Ultimately, and regarding the results obtained, (85%) of students agreed upon the importance of critical thinking in learning English as a foreign language and the effective role of reading strategies as a technique to develop students' critical thinking. Thus, the study findings confirmed the validity of our hypotheses.

**Key words: critical thinking skills, reading strategies**

## **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

**CTS:** Critical thinking skills

**EFL:** English Foreign Language

**ADEA:** American Dental Education Association

**RQ:** Research questions

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# **General Introduction**

## **Introduction**

Academic study requires increasingly sophisticated levels of critical analysis at every level. Critical thinking seems to be more important when students enter higher education programs, because it is needed in most their learning subjects. It may be expected to apply critical thinking to: what you hear, see and the material you read. Critical thinking is a cognitive activity, associated with using the mind. Learning to think in critical, analytical, and evaluative ways means using mental processes such as attention, categorization, selection, and judgment. However, many people who have the potential to develop more effective critical thinking can be prevented from doing so for a variety of reasons apart from a lack of ability. M.Neil and M.Kelly (2007) stated that:” If knowledgeable people agreed about answers to important questions. If this were the case, we could read and listen passively and let others do our thinking for us.”In short, critical thinking is about searching for hidden assumptions, noticing various facets, unraveling different strands, and evaluating what is most significant.

This skill is crucial in facing obstacles and issues while study like at university namely in foreign languages. Allen (2004) in his book *Smart Thinking* mentioned that” unless we are smart thinkers , we cannot understand the world as well as we should , we cannot solve problems effectively and consistently; we cannot be successful in the areas of our life that concern information”. For this reason, reading has an important effect on the development of critical thinking. A reader must recognize patterns within text, fit details into these patterns, then relate them to other texts and remembered experiences; critical thinking skills is a complex process that targets a certain modules such as literature, civilization, and literary criticism. The mental process of literature reading requires readers to recall, retrieve and reflect on

their prior experiences or memories to construct meanings. Reading strategies expected to have a great role in developing this skill by raising student's awareness.

### **1. Problem Statement**

Many EFL learners encounter the problem of critical thinking during their studies. The need to think critically is an important and predominant skill for postgraduate learners because this skill enables learners to evaluate, analyze, synthesize and deliberate facts and opinions. Master one (civ/lit) students at university of Biskra face such problems in some modules such as: literature, civilization, literary criticism and so on. The issue of critical thinking do not only affect student's way of thinking, but also their achievement.

To succeed and become competent, learners should possess the needed critical thinking skills and utilize them in all their learning aspects. In the present study we will investigate whether there is correlation between the reading strategies used by English students and developing their critical thinking.

### **2. Research Questions**

This research seeks to answer the following questions:

**RQ1:** What do English students read?

**RQ2:** Do English students use strategies while reading?

**RQ3:** How can reading strategies influence English students 'critical thinking'?

### **3. Research Hypotheses**

It is hypothesized in the present study that;

**RH1:** reading can develop the aptitude of the critical thinking skill in EFL students.

**RH2:** we hypothesize that reading strategies have a great contribution to the development of EFL learner's critical thinking.

#### **4. Research Design**

Seeking to investigate the effectiveness of reading to develop EFL learner's critical thinking. This study employs qualitative method; the research is designed for a descriptive analysis and case study. According to the nature of the research a combination of data gathering tools will be used. Firstly, a test will be carried out to evaluate the students' performance in critical thinking. The second tool is a think-aloud questionnaire which will be administered to the respondents to see their opinions and attitudes towards the strategies they use also it aims at gathering information about which strategy students use while reading. We have chosen these tools to get more valid result.

Master one( civ / lit) students of English language will be chosen as population of our research due to the fact that during this level students are obliged to learn how to think critically in order to be able to solve problems and make decisions whenever they face an obstacle , also to train their minds to think critically. The sample used in this study is a group of 30 students.

#### **5. Aims and Objectives**

##### **General aims**

To find out which reading strategy improves learners' critical thinking

##### **Specific aims**

Raise EFL learners' awareness about the value and importance of critical thinking skills.

Showing the effectiveness of reading as a strategy to develop the learners' critical thinking.

### **6. Significance of the study**

This study may have significant contribution in our domain of learning foreign languages. It focuses on how to develop learners critical thinking and to make them aware of its value in their academic career. The research also suggests solutions for teachers to help their students to be good critical thinkers. Moreover, this study seeks to show the importance of reading strategy for EFL learners because it deals with the role of reading in making perfect critical thinkers.

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## **1.1. Introduction**

In this modern society and in everyday life, we frequently need to deal with public issues, make decisions and solve problems. In order to encounter this efficiently and effectively, we need to be able to critically evaluate and analyze what we see, hear and read. These phenomena also related to the educational field. Thus; this chapter attempts to provide a deep clarification about critical thinking it contains a general overview and definition of critical thinking. Also, it mentions the relationship between creativity and critical thinking, the process of critical thinking, and its importance in both sides occupational and educational one. Moreover; it deals with critical thinker: the characteristics and the personal strategies. Furthermore; it comprises integrating critical thinking in teaching, and barriers that face teaching critical thinking. Finally it tackles the critical reading process and its relationship with critical thinking.

## **1.2 Theoretical background of critical thinking**

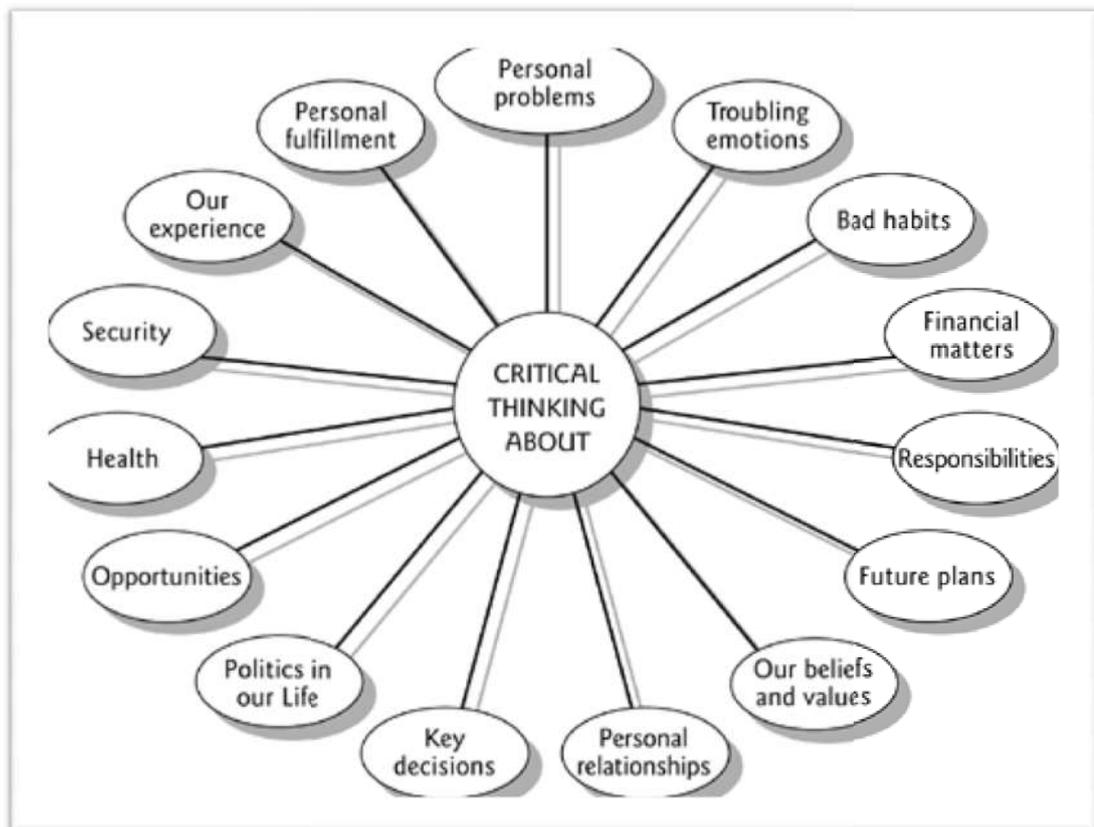
The intellectual roots of critical thinking traced back to the teaching practice and vision of Socrates 2,500 years ago who discovered by a method of probing questioning that people could not rationally justify their confident claims to knowledge they just need asking questions about what happens around them before any acceptance of any idea and this took the name of "Socrates questioning theory (Amer, 2016).In the 21th century our understanding of the power and nature of critical thinking has emerged in increasingly more explicit formulations. Today's' world knowledge lies the advantage with those who can think critically and keep improving their capacities. Critical Thinking helps you in developing your analytical skills so

that you can evaluate the data given to you and interpret it in the most optimal way. This helps in taking correct decisions quickly in crucial situations. According to (American dental education association, 2019) researchers debate whether critical thinking can be learned or if it's a developmental process regulated by motivations, dispositions, and personality traits. Despite differences of opinion, many researchers agree that critical thinking is Purposeful, self-regulatory judgment which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, or contextual considerations upon which judgment is based. In principle, the general purpose of education is to develop critical thinking skills that will be used in real world problem solving. Critical thinking has been considered one of the central goals in all levels of education and it has been generated a wealth of literature.

### **1.3 Definition of critical thinking**

Critical thinking has been a controversial issue among philosophers, researchers and educators although there is no general consensus on a definition. Everyone provided a definition according to he/she point of view. (Zhou, Huang, and Tian, 2013) mentioned that Critical thinking should be not only an educational option but an integral part of education practices. In the same context; (Beaumont, 2010) argued that high-level thinking skills and thought processes, not limited to reflection, inference, and synthesize the information, but it allows individuals to make reasoned judgments not only in the classroom but also in everyday life. However; Epstein and Kernberger (2006, p.22) stated that Thinking critically is a defense against a world of too much information and too many people trying to convince us. But it is more. Reasoning is what distinguishes us from beasts. They cannot plan, they cannot think

through, they cannot discuss in the hopes of understanding better. Moreover; (Moon,2008,p.30) claimed that Critical thinking is the analysis of a situation based on facts evidence to be able to make a judgment or come to a conclusion, taking into account empathy, culture, and history. Elder and paul (2007) added that the concept of critical thinking is self-guided and self-disciplined thinking which leads the quality of thinking to its highest level in a fair-minded way. Hence, it is important to be aware of the fact that critical thinking requires careful and intentional development of specific skills in processing information, considering creativity, opinions, solving problems and beliefs.



**Figure 1: critical thinking in everyday life (Paul and Elder,2002)**

#### **1.4 Creative thinking Vs Critical thinking**

Creative and critical thinking skills are considered essential for students. In the educational context, creative thinking is about applying imagination to finding a solution to your learning task. Critical and creative thinking are two different ways of processing information but they can be used together and work well when combined. In order to clear the gaps between the two concepts Pearce (2019) explained that if you are a critical thinker you examine the situation and facts and think in a linear and rational way, but if you are a creative thinker you look at things from various perspectives, coming up with ideas and making novel and uncharacteristic connections. In brief; when you think critically you glean information. When you think creatively you come up with new solutions to problems. In addition; (Beyer, 1989; p.35 as cited in Baker and Rudd, 2001) mentioned that whereas creative thinking is divergent, critical thinking is convergent; whereas creative thinking tries to create something new, critical thinking seeks to assess worth or validity in something that exists; whereas creative thinking is carried on by violating accepted principles, critical thinking is carried on by applying accepted principles. Although creative and critical thinking may very well be different sides of the same coin they are not identical.

#### **1.5 The process of critical thinking**

During their studies learners' encounter the problem of critical thinking; what is it how it occurs or, how can I be a critical thinker and so many questions. According to (Dewey, 1933, p. 106–107 as cited in Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy, 2018) the process of thinking critically consisted of five phases as follow:

- **Suggestions**, in which the mind leaps forward to a possible solution.

- **An intellectualization** of the difficulty or perplexity into a problem to be solved, a question for which the answer must be sought.
- **The use of one suggestion after another** as a leading idea, or hypothesis, to initiate and guide observation and other operations in collection of factual material.
- **The mental elaboration** of the idea or supposition as an idea or supposition (reasoning, in the sense on which reasoning is a part, not the whole, of inference).
- **Testing the hypothesis** by overt or imaginative action.

Cottrell (2005, p. 16) added that critical thinking is a complex process of deliberation includes the next steps:

- 1) Identifying other people's position, arguments and conclusions.
- 2) Evaluating the evidence for alternative points of view.
- 3) Being able to read between the lines, seeing behind surfaces, and identifying false or unfair assumptions.
- 4) Recognizing techniques used to make certain positions for instance: false logic and persuasive devices.
- 5) Reflecting on issues in a structured way.
- 6) Drawing conclusions about whether arguments are valid and justifiable or no.
- 7) Presenting a point of view in a structured and clear way that convinces others.

## **1.6 The importance of critical thinking**

Critical thinking plays an important role in getting success in all professional fields. Critical thinking deals with careful interpretation of information and using it to reach particular goals. The principle of critical thinking is valued it can be applied in both in the university setting and in the Professional situations.

### **1.6.1 Educational context:**

It encourages curiosity through extends to the topics we teach in school, and also the ones that we find relevant in our daily lives. Secondly; Critical thinking in business, marketing, and professional alliances relies heavily on one's ability to be

creative it is a valid skill that enhances creativity. In addition; it reinforces problem solving abilities those who think critically tend to be instinctual [problem-solvers](#). Probably it is the most important skill we can help our learners build upon.( Wabisabi, 2020). According to (University of Florida, 2018) exposing students to think critically involves helping them set goals. It can be helpful to divide the process into three parts: planning a task, executing and monitoring the task, and doing a post-task evaluation and reflection. Also, it allows them to plan and think strategically, take responsibility for analyzing and evaluating information and become broad and adventurous thinkers.

### **1.6.2 Professional context:**

For career success in law, education, research, medical, finance and many other career fields, it's important to display critical thinking skills. It aided to analyze the context, solve creative problems, improve decision-making and come up with realistic solutions. Moreover; it encourages self-reflection critical thinkers are more self-reflective and can change their minds and opinions in new information and new issues. (indeed.com, 2020). However; (Dumitru, Bigu and Elen, 2018) clarified that for professionals, ideal Critical Thinker employees hold a well-educated way of thinking, fed by the motivation and willingness to learn and improve, and anchored on a set of interdependent cognitive and propulsive tools allowing them not only to anticipate and be ready for any situation, but also to regulate and monitor their own thinking and behavior during the process.

### **1.7 The critical thinker**

Critical Thinking is about becoming a better thinker in every aspect of your life: in your career, and as a consumer, citizen, friend, or parent,. Discover the core skills of

effective thinking; then analyze your own thought processes, identify weaknesses, and overcome them. Learn how to translate more effective thinking into better decisions, less frustration, more wealth, and above all, greater confidence to pursue and achieve your most important goals in life.

### 1.7.1 Characteristics of the Critical Thinker

Patel (2018) argued that critical thinkers shape several traits such as:

- 1) **Curiosity:** Curiosity is a core trait of many successful leaders. Being interested in the world and people around you is a hallmark of leaders who are critical thinkers.
- 2) **Objectivity:** Objective thinkers seek to keep their emotions from affecting their judgment. Good critical thinkers are able to stay as objective as possible when looking at information or a situation.
- 3) **Introspection:** the art of being aware of your own thoughts; Critical thinkers need introspection so they are aware of their own degree of alertness and attentiveness, as well as their biases. Introspection is closely related to self-reflection, which gives insights into emotional and mental states.
- 4) **Analytical thinking:** The ability to analyze information is key when looking at any almost anything, whether it is a contract, report, business model or even a relationship. Analysis relies on observation; on gathering and evaluating evidence so you can come to a meaningful conclusion.
- 5) **Inference:** inference is the ability to extrapolate meaning from data and discover potential outcomes when assessing a scenario. Critical thinkers need to assess the information and draw conclusions based on raw data. Because, Information does not always come with a summary that spells out exactly what it means.
- 6) **Compassion and Empathy:** the point of having compassion is to have concern for others and to value the welfare of other people. Without compassion, we would view all information and situations from the viewpoint of cold, and heartless. A good critical thinker must always take into account the human element.

**7) Creative thinking:** Creativity is important to bring in new ideas. Creative thinkers reject standardized formats for problem solving -- they think outside the box. They have a wide range of interests and adopt multiple perspectives on a problem.

**8) Effective communicators:** Effective communication starts with a clear thought process. An effective critical thinker must be able to relay his or her ideas in a compelling way and then absorb the responses of others.

In the same context Paul (1993 as cited in Nourizi and Hernandez, 2011) claimed that a good critical thinker must ask the following questions:

- What is the purpose of my thinking?
- What precise question (problem) am I trying to answer?
- Within what point of view (perspective) am I thinking?
- What concepts or ideas are central to my thinking?
- What am I taking for granted, what assumptions am I making?
- What information am I using (data, facts, observation)?
- How am I interpreting that information?
- What conclusions am I coming to?
- If I accept the conclusions, what are the implications? What would the consequence be if I put my thoughts into action?

For each element, the thinker must consider standards that shed light on the effectiveness of his/her thinking.

### **1.7.2 Personal techniques for critical thinking**

No one has born with critical thinking skills. Yet, it is easier to acquire for some people than others. Everyone has a certain strategies allows him/her to grow their critical thinking skills. Wiley (2015) mentioned that critical thinker have a natural sense of curiosity about the world and their profession thus, they have to be a continuous learners. Also they are capable of make the right decision, listen to others opinions, and change their views when they are provided with new and different information. In addition ;( Paul and Elder, 2008. As cited in Karakoc, 2016) listed that

critical thinkers Think open-mindedly within alternative systems of thought, Raise vital questions and problems, then formulating them clearly and precisely, gather and assess relevant information, using abstract ideas to interpret it effectively and Come to well-reasoned conclusions and solutions.

### **1.8 Integrating critical thinking in EFL classrooms**

Today, the main purpose of curriculum is to develop thinking skills and to raise thinking individuals. Integrating critical thinking in the language classroom become the interest of educators. Brown (2004) asserted that in an ideal academic language program, the objectives of the curriculum should go beyond linguistic factors to develop critical thinking among learners. Paul and Elder (2002) also emphasized that If critical thinking is valued by students they should imagine the classroom content as a form of thinking. Informing students that they are expected to practice critical thinking skills during class and outside of class helps prepare them for future challenges. In addition; Walke rand Diaz (2003) as educators we must promote and nurture critical thinking skills by using various evaluation techniques and teaching methods.

#### **1.8.1 Critical thinking and Teaching**

The possibility of teaching critical thinking has been argued weather it could be taught or not. According to Lin (2018) the teaching of critical thinking made it possible for the students to become active learners, which established positive attitudes towards their learning. Integrating critical thinking with language learning enabled the students to recognize the usefulness of thinking skills, and thus increased their motivation to learn about and improve their thinking. However; Kaminske (2019) argued that we can teach critical thinking but with certain limitations because

critical thinking is a complex, higher-order skill that is hard to learn and even harder to transfer across domains. In overall improving critical thinking required some strategies and tactics that allowed you to understand each domain. In the same context; Abrami et al (2008) as cited in Dewar (2009), analyzed 117 studies about teaching critical thinking. The teaching approach with the strongest empirical support was explicit instruction which means teaching kids specific ways to reason and solve problems. In studies where teachers asked students to solve problems without giving them explicit instruction, students experienced little improvement.

### **1.8.2 Barriers in teaching critical thinking**

Critical thinking is important to be entrenched in education system. Yet, it can not be ignored that there are some difficulties involved in teaching critical thinking. Aliakbari and Sadeghdaghda (2013) reported three major barriers to their implementation of critical thinking teaching strategies. The highest barrier was related to student characteristics. Self-efficacy, with the total mean of 2.59 was the second main obstacle. The respondents reported lack of knowledge of the concept of critical thinking as the third high barrier to the implementation of critical thinking teaching strategies. Moreover; Fani (n.d) presented multifold obstacles facing the teaching of critical thinking. Firstly; Alack in proper assessment that effectively and objectively measures students' strength and weaknesses in critical thinking. Secondly; vague conceptualization of critical thinking i.e. teachers and scholars are still in need of clear and tangible definition of critical thinking. Thirdly; there is a lack of training on the part of the teachers, most teachers are unfamiliar with the components and approaches to teach critical thinking. Finally; the most remarkable barriers that teachers confront in teaching critical thinking is that there does not exist an organized approach for teaching critical thinking. Additionally; Heath (2012) pointed that two of

the key barriers to taking up critical thinking are cultural disapproval and confusing critical thinking with criticism, she mentioned that we have to consider how we can communicate critical responses in ways which build relationships rather than damaging them. Also she added that some people resist critical thinking because they believe critical thinking is the same as criticism. In the same path; Synder and Synder (2008) argued that there are four barriers often impede the integration of critical thinking in education: lack of training, lack of information, preconceptions, and time constraints.

In brief, teachers must consider these barriers because of its importance and usefulness for learners. Teaching critical thinking it is not an easy task, it requires a solid basis and approaches to apply.

### **1.9 critical reading**

Reading is the key component of learning; many scholars try to shed light on the concept of critical reading. According to McDonad (2004, p.18) as cited in Demiroz (2007) stated that Critical ways of reading are intended to construct readers who, are alert to the values and interests espoused by the text, who recognize their position as compliant or resistant readers, who can identify texts as crafted objects. Additionally; University of Leicester (2009) provided a definition for critical reading as being featured by the following notice:

- Examine the presented evidence
- Checking out any impacts or influences on the evidences
- Verify the limitation of study design
- Have a look at the interpretation made, and then decide to what extent you are prepared to accept the authors' arguments, opinions, or conclusions.

Finally, Tran (2015) mentioned that critical reading requires us to develop skills that allow us to get more from what we read, not passively taking in information provided.

### **1.9.1 The process of critical reading**

Critical reading plays a central role in higher studies; it is the process of making judgments about what you read and deciding what to believe and what not to believe. If you do not understand the facts and what they imply, you are not in a position to make any judgments. McGraw (1978) as cited in Corry (2002, p.2) claimed that critical reader

- Does not believe everything he reads.
- Questions everything which doesn't make sense to him.
- Questions some things even though they do make sense to him.
- Rereads when he thinks he may have missed something.
- Considers the type of material he is reading before deciding how much weight to give to it.
- Admits that the effect of what the author says may be caused more by the author's style of writing than by the facts presented.
- Analyzes arguments.
- Discounts arguments based on faulty reasoning, has good reason for believing some things and disbelieving others—for agreeing with some authors and disagreeing with others.

However; Sahagian (2015) argued that if you are willing to read more critically then you should follow these steps:

#### **1. Read up on the author**

Doing your research on the book's author can give you a lot of insights; it is very useful for further understanding the context from which the book was written.

#### **2. Identify the author's style**

Researching a writer can help you learn about what their work is like stylistically before you begin reading, also to understand the book you're reading much more deeply and know why the author does certain things that are common within that style.

### **3. Take notes while Reading**

It is a highly useful way to improve your critical reading skills. The more difficult a book is to understand, the more helpful note-taking will be for getting a grasp on it

### **4. be aware of the narrator**

The narrator of a book is a very important character to pay attention to, but you can't always assume that the narrator's voice is similar to the author's thoughts and opinions. Never take for granted who is telling you the story when you're reading a book.

### **5. Don't just breeze over difficult passages**

When slogging through a really hard book, it can be tempting to just skim over passages that you don't understand, skipping over them is essentially pointless if you're trying to read critically.

### **6. Realize everything is there for a reason**

Sometimes some things can seem like they are mistakes or even typos, but it's much more likely that the author is doing something grammatically incorrect on purpose. Simply, everything that's in a book was carefully considered and placed there by the author for a reason.

In the same path; Skills for learning (2018) a good place to start is to try and identify why the article was written. The author of an article will have a reason for writing it Secondly; try looking at the author's conclusions. Read the article with

these conclusions in mind and see if you think the author has offered enough evidence to support them. Finally; considering why the article was written, you also need to consider who it was written for. Depending on the target audience, the information will be presented at different levels.

### **1.9.2 Critical reading Vs Critical thinking**

Critical thinking skill is integrated with subjects of various courses, in actual practice, critical reading and critical thinking work together, they are interrelated skills. According to Kurland (2000) critical reading is concerned with figuring out whether, within the context of the text as a whole, or whether the text supports that practice, While critical thinking would come into play when deciding whether the chosen meaning was indeed true, and whether or not you, as the reader, should support that practice. Moreover; The writing center (2014) presented that critical thinking involves evaluating or considering ideas from an unbiased perspective, being able to differentiate facts from opinions, determining validity, and understanding how the ideas or thoughts fit within a larger context. However: Reading critically means reading for more than just facts and understanding; it means reading to understand the author's purpose, possible biases, and how the argument is constructed effectively. Duncan (n.d) argued that Critical reading is a more active way of reading. It is a deeper and more complex engagement with a text. Critical reading is a process of analyzing, interpreting and, sometimes, evaluating. When we read critically, we use our critical thinking skills to question both the text and our own reading of it. In short; Critical reading is a technique for

discovering information and ideas within a text. Critical thinking is a technique for evaluating information and ideas, for deciding what to accept and believe.

### **1.10 Conclusion**

Critical thinking is one of several learning and innovation skills that are necessary to prepare students in the field of education and in the workplace. Thinking critically is an ability that helps to think in an appropriate, rational, and logical manner. That is, critical thinking is needed in every domain of life. Through this chapter we attempted to present a general overview on critical thinking. Initially it presented the history and definition of critical thinking then, it differentiates between critical thinking and creative thinking. Additionally; it provided the characteristics of critical thinker and its barriers; moreover, it spotted light on the relationship between critical thinking and EFL classrooms. Finally; it clarified the connection between critical reading and critical thinking.

# **Chapter two: Reading and Reading Strategies**

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## **2.1 Introduction**

Reading is one of the primary skills students have to learn. Inside or outside classrooms people read for different reasons and purposes, EFL students in particular acquire much of their knowledge and understanding through reading. Reading proficiency is developed over time. Learners read a variety of sources such as; text books, newspapers, instruction manuals, maps and so on. In this respect a wide array of questions about reading may be asked. Why do you read? How do you read? Are you equally good at reading all types of materials?

This chapter attempts to provide a deep clarification about Reading. It offers a definition of the reading skill, models of reading, and types of reading. Furthermore; it sheds light on defining reading strategy and some of the reading strategies .In addition to the importance of reading strategies in EFL classes.

## **2.2 Definition of reading**

Reading effectively and efficiently is a vital skill in life. In the educational context the ability to read well is a crucial asset for students, as they have to attain a certain level of academic achievement. Reading has been investigated by many scholars and researchers who tried to give a profound view about the concept of reading. Learners are expected to read and understand what they are reading according to zadina, Smilkstien, Daick, and Anter(2014) there is more than one way to define reading it involves numerous items listed as follow:

Reading is:

- Learning
- Intentional (for a purpose)
- An active process (processes)
- A task that requires focus and concentration
- Contextual (authors use clues to help readers understand information)
- A two-way communication between an author and the reader
- A two-way communication using written language or symbols
- A medium or a way for authors to share information
- Understanding and interpreting
- Thinking and reflecting
- Making connections to previous experiences and learning

In addition (Johnson, 2008, p. 17) describes that Reading is a constantly developing skill. As most skills, readers get better by practicing reading through their different life stages. He added reading is also an integrates visual and nonvisual information by means that during the process of creating meaning readers should bear in mind that what's in their head is just as important as what's they read. He ended by mentioning that reading is the act of linking one idea to another in order to create the necessary meaning.

Moreover (Badrawi ,1992,p.16 as cited in Mangoma, 1997, p. 43)) defines reading as follows:

"Reading is both a process and a product. It is more than just receiving a literal sense. It involves bringing an individual's entire experiences and thinking powers to bear to understand what the writer has encoded. Thus prior sensory experiences provide the basis for comprehending what is read".

Harrison (2004,p89) believed that “Reading is a dialogue between reader and writer; readers bring their imaginations, memories, thinking processes, moral and social values, historical knowledge, and prior experiences to every text..”

Moreillon (2007.p.10) argued that reading is the process of making sense of the print; this process is based on what is in front of the readers’ eyes.

### **2.3 Models of reading**

Reading has been divided into three models: the bottom- up reading model, the top-down reading model, and the interactive reading model. Reading models are methods used by readers to proceed with the text. It exists in different kind of models; each model has its own users; they are used to make the process of reading easier.

#### **2.3.1Bottom-up model**

This kind of reading model is defined as to start decoding the smallest unit in the language then combine these units to have words then from each word alone learners get the meaning of the whole text. In the same context Rumpets (2003) claimed that to get the meaning of the whole text is to understand three components words, sentences, and the text; which means that to get the meaning of the text begins with word level, sentential level and the text level. The model is based on the assumption that reading is "a process in which small chunks of text are absorbed, analyzed and gradually added to the next chunks until they become meaningful" (Barnett, 1989: 13). As Shahnazari and Dabaghi (2014) Confirmed bottom up model is data-driven and the role of the lower level recognition skills, it includes orthographic, semantic, syntactic and phonological processing is crucial. In brief, this model summarizes three major points: it emphasizes the written or printed text, argues

that reading is driven by a text, and proceeds from part to whole (Boothe, Walter, and Stringer, 1999).

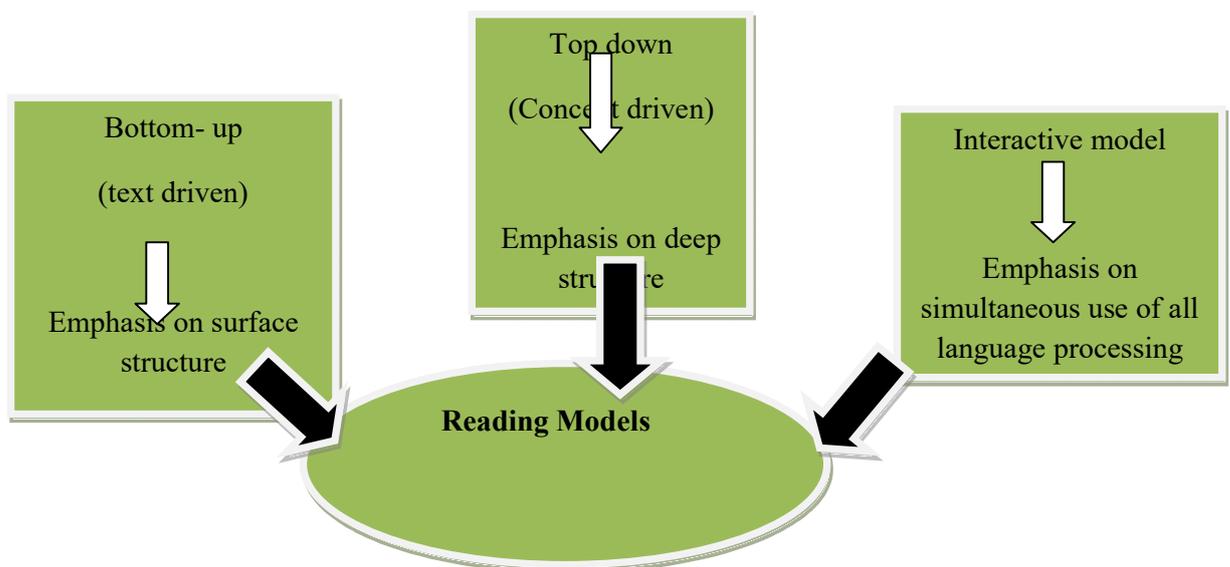
### **2.3.2 Top down model**

The top-down reading model is a method which learners rely on previous knowledge to decode a text. It helps students to concentrate on the whole meaning of text. According to Davoudi (2005) as cited in Davoudi and Moghadem (2015) during the comprehension stage reader's background knowledge and other interpretive skills accompanied by the cognitive and metacognitive strategies in order to foster the speed of lower level processing. In other words when a linguist reads a text related to his domain, he skips various expressions and words and this does not pervert his understanding in the text due to his background knowledge. However; a non professional person will find it difficult to skip any terms because of the lack of his background knowledge. Moreover; the main mechanisms for the processing of the text are in the mind of readers. Thus Grabe (2009) mentioned that in top-down reading models, the comprehension process is neither linear nor mechanical, but controlled by the reader actively. In addition; Tracy and Morrow (2006, p.149) asserted that top-down reading model depends on what the readers already know rather than the data of the text. The core of this approach is the significance of the prior knowledge about the theme of the given text. In the same context; Chinwono (2001) argued that readers' prediction and background knowledge play a significant role in their reading process. In an attempt to explain this model Feryal (2008) added that:

“In this approach, highly explicit instruction in applying strategies to learning tasks is gradually faded so that students can begin to assume greater responsibility in selecting and applying appropriate learning strategies”.

### 2. 3.3 Interactive reading model

Theorists have developed the third and latest reading model: the interactive reading model. It is clear that none of the models are without their flaws. Although the interactive model is not a perfect system, it is currently being used more frequently as it seems to provide a better synthesis of top-down and bottom-up processes. Bilokuoglu (2012) suggested that in interactive model, readers are expected to go through both bottom-up and top-down processing before eventually settling upon an interpretation of a text topic. Neither neglecting the textual information nor the prior knowledge of a reader. Whereas; Carell (1988) viewed that the interactive model offered the reader processes of reading by starting with a linguistic surface representation encoded by writer and ends with meaning which the reader constructs. However; Stanovich (1980, p. 15) stated that “interactive model of reading appear to provide a more accurate conceptualization of reading performance than do strictly top-down and bottom-up models. They provide a better account of the existing data on the use of orthographic structure and sentence context by poor and good readers”.



**Figure 2 : Reading models (Dechant,1991 as cited in Hashemi,Mobini and Khanlooie, 2016)**

## **2.4 Types of reading**

In foreign language teaching two approaches of reading is recognized: intensive reading and extensive reading.

### **2.4.1 Extensive reading**

Many scholars define extensive reading through different points of view; for example Susser and Robb (1990) described extensive reading as a kind of reading that ask the learners to read large amount of books which are relative easy and understandable for the learners. It also means reading for pleasure, because the learner read what they want to read or their favorite books.

### **2.4.2 Intensive reading**

(Mikeladze, 2014, p19) argued that Intensive reading approach deals with short texts under a teacher's guidance for detailed understanding. The Intensive reading technique is reading for a high degree of comprehension and retention over a long period of time. Sometimes this approach is also called as sub-skills approach, which divides reading skill into several sub-skills.

There is a difference between 'learning to read' and 'reading to learn'. Both of these are valid forms of reading but they have various goals. When students 'read to learn' (Intensive Reading) they are reading a text to learn something about the language itself. When students 'learn to read' (Extensive Reading), they are practicing the skill of reading by reading for information – reading a story book for instance with the aim of enjoying the reading without consciously knowing they are learning.

## **2.5 Reading strategies**

Reading effectively is a vital skill. In the educational context the ability to read well is a crucial asset for students, as they have to attain a certain level of academic achievement. Many empirical studies have linked success in reading to the quality and quantity of the used strategies. According to (Nordin, Rashid, Zubir and Sadjirin 2013, p.469) the use of appropriate reading strategies should be exposed to students to help them enhance their comprehension of a reading text. Moreover; Wangsgard (2010) added that reading strategies are “methods or procedures readers may use to gain a better understanding and a successful reading. However; reports in reading strategies had been assumed that the individual characteristics of readers may have an effect on reading performance. For instance, one text may be processed in various ways by different readers depends on their purpose, attitudes, interests and knowledge.

### **2.5.1 Definition of reading strategies**

(Nordin et al,2013, p.470) defined reading strategies as any processes that the readers are conscious of performing with the intention of constructing meaning from written texts. In addition, Carrell (1998) described that reading strategies include any of a wide array of tactics that readers use to engage and comprehend texts. In the same context, Mc Namara (2007:6) viewed reading strategy as a “cognitive or behavioral action that is enacted under particular contextual conditions, with the goal of improving some aspect of comprehension”. This means that the concept strategy is a set of operations and conditions that is carried to improve reading comprehension Whereas Grabe. (2009, p. 220) stated:

“The strategic reader is one who automatically and routinely applies combinations of effective and appropriate strategies

depending on reader goals, reading tasks, and strategic processing abilities. The strategic reader is also aware of his or her comprehension effectiveness in relation to reading goals and applies sets of strategies appropriately to enhance comprehension of difficult texts.”

### **2.5.2 The importance of reading strategies**

The ability to read and furthermore, to understand what is written, is critical to success in our educational system. Reading is the basis of knowledge and cognition which shapes our mentality and gives insights. Davis (2008) believed that having the ability to read in one’s own language is a need for the students of all languages. Moreover, comprehension problems become most apparent when students are faced with books material, textbook, articles and dissertations. Many researchers affirm that using some reading strategies help learners to overcome their reading problems. They view that learners who used reading strategies are more motivated and comprehended than those who are not. According to (McNamara, 2004; as cited in McNamara, 2009) strategy instruction is particularly needed and effective for those students who are struggling most, namely those with less domain knowledge or lower reading skills. McLaughlin and Allen (2002) assumed that:

Good readers use comprehension strategies to facilitate the  
Construction of meaning. These strategies include previewing, self-  
Questioning, making connections, visualizing, knowing how words  
Work, monitoring, summarizing, and evaluating. Researchers believe  
That using such strategies helps students become metacognitive readers

### **2.5.3. Some Reading Strategies**

Good readers are most often strategic readers, in the sense that they make use of different reading strategies. The appropriate use of reading strategies is said to be the distinct remark of efficient reading.

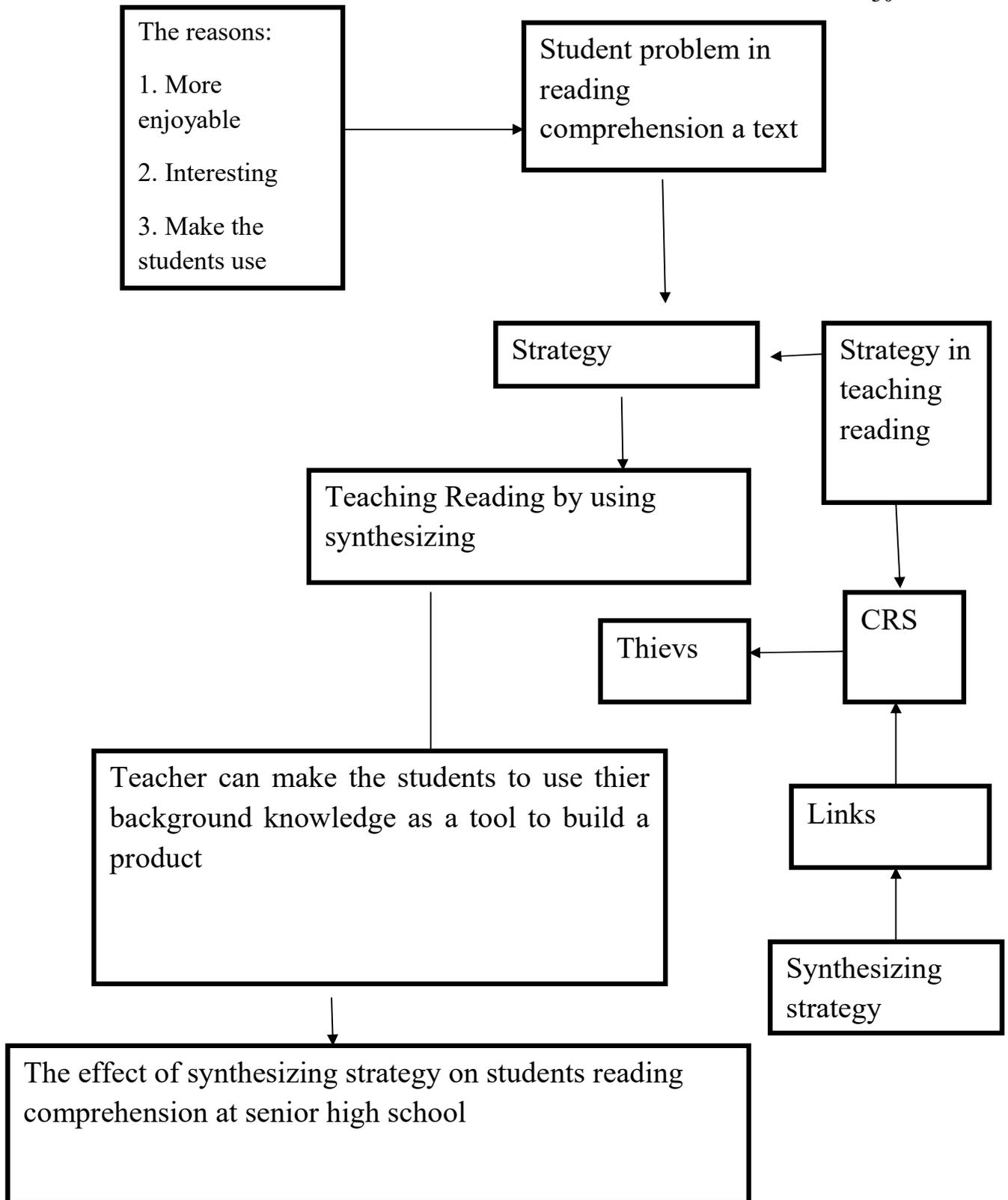
#### **2.5.3.1 Predicting strategy**

Block and Israel, (2005) mentioned that one strategy for enhancing comprehension is predicting, which helps the reader set a purpose for their reading. Research has shown that smart readers use their experiences and knowledge to make predictions and formulate ideas as they read. However; Decoda (2015) argued that Predicting belongs to a set of strategies called Reciprocal Teaching or Collaborative Teaching. It is about asking students to take in information from a headline or title, a picture, a summary, or a chart then make an informed guess as to the ideas or concepts that might appear in a text. The predicting strategy activates students' background knowledge and starts engagement with key concepts. It activates background knowledge and shows students that they are smart enough to discover things even if they have trouble with reading. In psychological terms, prediction is considered as a mental activity in which the brain decides to make decisions. In the act of prediction, one's knowledge of the world provides him with possible occurrences, and then the brain is left to decide among these alternatives, until it comes to the most likely occurrence. Then, one's doubt is reduced to the minimum. (Smith, 1985). In addition; Richardson (2010, p.25) you make informed guesses about the text. You use what you already know and clues (like text features) from the text to make a judgment and predict what will happen next. Making predictions encourages readers to use critical thinking and problem solving skills. Readers are given the

opportunity to reflect and evaluate the text, thus extracting deeper meaning and comprehension skills.

### **2.5.3.2. Synthesizing strategy**

For more understanding reading comprehension, students must develop synthesizing strategy According to Shannon (2014) Synthesizing is the process whereby a student merges new information with prior knowledge to form a new idea, perspective, or opinion or to generate insight. Moreover; Rajagukguk (2017) affirmed that Synthesizing Strategy can be useful at increasing the students' capacity in reading comprehension. Through this strategy, the students can be motivated to be more active in the class. It overcome students' difficulties in getting some interesting message or information of reading text and also give the teacher easily to prepare the material and comprehensive in their teaching reading comprehension. Taylor assumed that to review the literature on a topic student should synthesize which is about concisely summarizing and linking different sources, usually synthesizing goes together with analysis because you break down a concept or idea into its important pieces "analysis", so you can draw useful conclusions or make decisions about the topic or problem "synthesis». Finally; Synthesis is the ability to combine parts of a whole in new and different ways. It requires students to think flexibly, determine alternatives, and find new ways to accomplish a given task. The sequential activities featured here are sure to develop critical thinking skills.



**Figure 3 : Conceptual frame work of the effect of synthesizing strategy on student reading comprehension at senior high school Serding year 2016 2017**

### **2. 5.3.3 Scanning strategy**

According to the teaching and learning unit (2010) scanning is reading quickly to search for specific information. You may not realize it, but you are already good at scanning. For instance, people scan when checking a TV guide or a phone book. Scanning may allow you to 'read' up to 1,500 words a minute. However; Maxwell(1970) as cited in Diaz and Laguado (2013, p38) stated that scanning is when the students look for specific information within a text such as dates, names, places, among others and to defined as the ability to locate specific facts and details quickly, is regarded as a desirable reading skill and is taught in most development reading courses.

### **2. 5.3.4 Questioning strategy**

Questioning strategy requires deeper reading comprehension skills. Readers can use the questioning before, during, and after reading. According to Harvey and Goudvis (2000) the process of questioning needs from readers to ask questions of themselves to construct meaning, enhance understanding, find answers, solve problems, , and discover new information. However; Hedge (2008) viewed that, teachers can encourage learners to ask questions and find the answers to the questions posed in order to help them become critical and strategic readers. In the same context Blachowicz and Ogle (2008, p. 124) argued that Questioning is an important active thinking technique learner's use while reading and trying to make sense of text. It is also an ongoing process used by teachers to guide instruction and determine what students know. This strategy is a central part of comprehension for students and teachers alike, because both commercial materials and tests rely on questions. Questioning is an important component of the teaching/learning process

and it is embedded in quality instruction and strategic thinking. Questions are used to teach as well as to assess student understanding, and thus questioning plays a critical role in the overall success of a classroom.

### **2. 5.3.5 Think aloud strategy**

The Think Aloud Method is known to be one of the methods that are able to assist language learners in improving their EFL reading comprehension. According to Clarke, Truelove, and Snowling(2014,p.106),think aloud strategy aims at helping readers to monitor their comprehension by sharing their ideas and thoughts with others. In addition: Ostar (2001) defined Think Aloud as a method in which students verbalize their thoughts as they read. In Think Aloud students are encouraged to recognize the differences between reading the words and comprehending the text by talking aloud about what they are thinking. Moreover; Jahandar , Khodabandehlou, Seyedi and Abadi (2012) viewed that using the Think Aloud Method in teaching EFL reading comprehension will enable students to raise their awareness of becoming strategic readers. Also for teachers, using the Think Aloud Method will provide information about the needs of individual students and will enable them to provide appropriate instruction for students learning reading to improve their comprehension. In the same sense; Bahri, Nasir , and Rohiman ( 2018.p.4) claimed that think aloud is a useful method where students can verbalize their thoughts in order to create understanding of the reading texts. Therefore, as the students think aloud, they learn how to learn, and they develop into reflective, meta-cognitive, independent learners, an invaluable step in helping students understand that learning requires effort and is often not easy. This later has a great relation with the thinking tasks it requires readers to stop during their reading to think, reflect and discuss their process. The Think Aloud strategy facilitates conversations about reading for understanding, giving you

aloud is a meta-cognitive process it is also used to model comprehension processes such as making predictions, creating images, linking information in a text with prior knowledge.

### **2. 5.3.6 Skimming strategy**

Skimming is a technique that enables the reader to cover a vast amount of material very rapidly. As cited in Aritonang , Lasmana, and Kurnia (2018) Harmer (2007 ,p. 100) argued that skimming is a skill where students casting their eyes over a surface in order to get the general idea of what is the topic about. Students in this strategy are concentrating too hard on specifics only. Also; Brown (2000, p.308) mentioned that skimming is a quick reading. The readers move rapidly across the text to reach and get the main idea. It allows the reader to anticipate the theme of the text and the author's intention. However; Sutz and Weverka(2015) as cited in Santoso (2017) said that when the readers skim a page, they take the main ideas from the reading material without reading all the words. The readers look for and seize upon words that appear to give the main meaning. Moreover; Mohsin (2019) viewed skimming as a strategy that can be taught to students to help them identify the main ideas in text. There is a correlation between skimming and reading which is not word-by-word reading. Rather it is three to four times faster than normal reading. Generally; skimming is used when students have a lot of reading material to get through, or have been assigned a task in an activity that requires some quick reading. Skimming does not need from reader to be critical thinker he can just skim the required document or material to get the relevant data.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

Reading is a lifelong skill to be used both at school and throughout life. This chapter outlined the main elements of reading skill and reading strategies which learners should understand and comply with. Reading is the basis of knowledge and cognition which shapes our mentality and gives insights. However, it is all too common for students to pay little attention to their own approaches to reading, that is, how they read, and how they can improve the effectiveness and speed of their reading. It is very important for readers to use certain reading strategies while reading a text, an article, or any kind of written passages and knowing how to apply them appropriately and successfully to become efficient readers.

## **Chapter Three: Field work**

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### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter is devoted to the practical part of this study, which aims at presenting and analyzing student's perception towards the use of reading strategies in developing EFL learner's critical thinking. In order to test the research hypotheses two means of data collection were suggested, a questionnaire is administered to students to see their opinions and attitudes about the reading strategies. A performance test in critical thinking to depict the thinking level of student, but regarding to the current circumstances (coronavirus-covid19) we could not administer the test to student so we used only the questionnaire to achieve the aim of this research.

### **3.1 Research methodology and Data gathering tools**

Since the aim of this study is to describe the role of reading strategies in enhancing EFL learners' critical thinking and to find out the link between these variables, this study adopted the qualitative approach. For the reason that it is suitable for the nature of the present study more accurately; it helps knowing students' attitudes and ideas towards the use of reading strategies.

A questionnaire is a data-gathering tool, which is designed to extract specific information. The questionnaire used in this study is distributed to first year master students civ and lit to investigate their perceptions about the impact of the reading strategies on the development of CTS.

### **3.2 The sample and population**

The target population is first year Master students at the department of foreign Languages at Mohammed Khider University of Biskra who enrolled for the academic

year 2019-2020 The aim behind this selection is that students at that level are expected to have a wide view about the topic under investigation. Thus, they may provide consistent and helpful data.

### **3.3 The administration of the questionnaire**

The questionnaire has been administered to first year (Civ and Lit) Master students at the department of foreign Languages; University of Biskra It was distributed to 20 students divided into two groups. This questionnaire was administered on 08 March 2020, and handed back in the same day. The reason behind choosing the questionnaire as a data gathering tool is to check students familiarity with reading strategies and critical thinking and whether they apply those strategies during their studies or not. Furthermore, it attempted to collect EFL students' feedback, comments, thoughts, and attitudes towards the use of reading strategies as a technique to enhance their critical thinking skills. The major problem that faced the researcher while distributing the questionnaire was the reluctance of some students to answer some questions.

### **3.4 Description of Students' Questionnaire**

Students' questionnaire contains 26 items grouped into five sections. The questions are a mixture of closed-ended (multiple-choice and yes/no questions) and open-ended questions.

#### **3.4.1 Section one: Background information (Q1-Q4)**

This section is composed of four questions contains general information about the student it is designed to know the gender and age of student and whether it was their choices to apply for the master degree.

### **3.4.2 Section two: reading habits (Q1-Q3)**

This section intended to inform us about the reading habits of the students in English, we asked them if they read, also what and how they read (ease/difficulty).

### **3.4.3 Section three: reading strategies (Q1-Q11)**

Seeking to gather the data about student reading strategies we asked a number of questions. Firstly; (Q1) students are asked to set the reason why they read, then they were also provided with choices to specify what make them read. The following questions (Q2) and (Q3) students are required to say what they do before and during the process of reading a text they also provided with choices to choose. Next (Q4) they asked to mention what they do if they did not understand a word in the given text. In (Q5) students are asked to select among the columns the way they read English passages, however; in (Q6) they required to set the way they look for details and information. Additionally; in (Q7/Q8) they were asked about their reaction when facing any problem in grasping the sentence or the text meaning. The ninth (Q9) question they asked to choose which tip helped them understand the text (underlying, outlining, taking notes...). Moreover; the question (Q10) was about selecting the appropriate strategy they opt for during reading a text among a list of a given strategies. The last question (Q11) students are asked to show how they determine if their reading goal have been met what steps to do after finishing their reading they were provided with some choices.

### **3.4.5 Section four: critical thinking and reading strategies (Q1-Q7)**

The fourth section of the questionnaire consists of seven (7) questions which focused on the critical thinking skill and its relationship with reading strategies. In this section students were requested to give a short definition of the critical thinking to depict their understanding. Also, they were asked if they consider themselves a

critical thinkers and to choose the main traits of the critical thinker. In addition; it attempted to know their opinions about reading and its effectiveness as technique for developing critical thinking skills with justifying their answers. Moreover; it aimed to collect their opinions about the existence of relationship between critical thinking and reading with specifying which kind of relationship is being existed between them. Finally, in the last question we aimed to gather students' thoughts about what strategies they think can improve their critical thinking skills by suggesting to them a number of reading strategies.

#### **3.4.5 Section five: further suggestions**

This section is an opportunity for students to make any comments or suggestions they would like.

### **3.5 Analysis of Results**

This section provides an analysis of the results to the previously described questions.

#### **3.5.1 Background information**

##### **Q1 : Gendre**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 1: Students' gender**

According to the table above majority of students are female ( 65%) however; male represent just (35%) that means girls are more interested in learning foreign

languages, but it remains a personal choice, gender has no relation in the learning process as it has not an important role in the reading performance.

**Q2: Age:**

20 – 25

26 – 30

More

Age	Number	Percentage
20-25	19	95%
26-30	00	00%
More	1	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 2: Students' age distribution**

This table indicates Master One LMD students ages that included in the sample it shows that most students are between the ages 20-25 years old (95%); however only one participant (5%) is more than 25 years old which clarifies that most foreign learners are adults who willing to finish their studies early. Also it can be noticed that age differences influence the reading process due to the fact that the brain structures are vary from one person to another so the information processing will be different. According to (Morrow, Gagne and Dewal, 2004) age equivalence in text comprehension may be accomplished through different processing routes.

**Q3: Applying for the master degree was**

- a) Your own choice
- b) Your parents' choice
- c) Someone's advice

Choice	Number	Percentage
--------	--------	------------

<b>A</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>80%</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3: Students' choices for applying to the master degree**

The table illustrates that (80%) of students who applied for the master degrees were their own choice. In contrast; the minority of students (5%) have been advised from other persons to apply for master. This indicates the students 'desire to continue their high studies and go deeper in learning languages, also it shows their maturity and responsibility towards their future achievements and gives positive hints.

### 3.5.2 The students' reading habits

#### Q1. Do you read in English?

1. Yes
2. No

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>85%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>15%</b>

Students were asked if they read in English a high percentage of them answered yes (85%) and few of them answered no (15%) This means that the majority of students are treasuring reading, and they are aware of its importance and benefits in their specialty area.

#### Q2. If 'Yes', what do you read and how often?

- a) Documentation linked to your specialty.

- b) Books of fiction and stories.  
 c) Newspapers and magazines.  
 d) Other: Please Specify.....

	Always		Sometimes		Rarely		Never		No answer		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
<b>A</b>	7	35%	10	50%	1	5%	0	00%	2	10%	100%
<b>B</b>	5	25%	6	30%	3	15%	1	5%	5	25%	100%
<b>C</b>	2	10%	4	20%	4	20%	4	20%	6	30%	100%

**Table 4: Students' reading habits**

The overwhelming majority of the sample (50%) for option (A) asserted that they sometimes read documentations related to their studies. While (35%) of them claimed they always read documentations and few of them who rarely read (5%). However; for the option (B) there seems to be a balance in the values some students (30%) read books of fiction and stories in regular times; while others have answered that they do not read at all (25%). In option (C) majority of learners claimed that they do not read newspapers (30%) while few of them who rarely read it (20%). Some students suggest other options like reading websites articles, comic books, and magazines. From the illustration above it could be noticed that each learner choose to read what motivate him/her but most of them argued on reading documentations linked to their specialty may be due to its necessity in their domain.

**Q3. . How do you do read in English?**

- a) Easily.  
 b) Fairly easily.  
 c) With difficulty

Option	Number	Percentage
A	8	40%
B	7	35%
C	5	25%

**Table 5: Students' reading level in English**

According to the table (40%) of students read in English easily and (35%) read fairly easily, while a few of them read with difficulty (25%) This may imply that the respondents do not consider reading as one of their primary preferences rather they may read just for their academic purposes or for enjoyment.

### 3.5.3 Reading strategies

#### Q1. You read in English because

- a) You find the topic interesting.
- b) You have questions to answer about the text.
- c) You want to learn English.
- d) Other: Please, specify.....

Options	Number	Percentage
A	6	30%
B	1	5%
C	2	10%
Ab	2	10%
Bc	4	25%
Ac	1	5%
D	3	15%
Abc	1	5%

<b>No answer</b>	<b>00</b>	<b>00%</b>
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**Table 6: Students' purpose for reading in English**

The table demonstrates the values of some reasons that allow student to read. As shown above there is variation in the use of the mentioned options some students use a single strategies while others tend to combined two or three together according to their reason for reading: 30% of students choose to read because they found the topic interesting, while 25% choose to read because they have questioned to answer or because they want to learn English. However; the other percents are divided equally between the remains purposes depending on students' motivation to read. Regarding the 'Other' option (D), three respondents proposes other reasons the first said he read because he found more sources in English than other languages, the second mentioned that he read to develop his vocabulary and language skills, the last one for entertainment. All in all; reading can be done for different purposes, students should seek to balance Between them.

### . Previewing

#### Q2. Before reading the whole text, you:

- e) Guess the general idea from the title.
- f) Read headings and subheadings to predict the content of the text.
- g) Read the first and the last sentences of the text.
- h) Read the introduction and the conclusion before you decide to read the whole text.

<b>Options</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>G</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>00%</b>
<b>H</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Eh</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Eg</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Ef</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>20%</b>

**Table 7: Students' answers for previewing strategies**

The data shown above presents a statistics about strategies used by students before they read a whole text, 40% of students answered that they guess the general idea from the title and 20% of them answered they read the introduction and the conclusion before they decide to read the whole text. However; the other 20% prefer to combine two strategies together such as (e) and (f) while a few students (10%) prefer to read headings and subheadings to predict the content. It is worth mentioning from the above data that using previewing reading strategies help students get general information about a given text especially for those who do not like reading so they find it useful to just preview a text.

**While-reading strategies****Q3. . In the process of reading, you think:**

- a) All the words are important.
- b) Some words can be skipped without disturbing understanding.
- c) You need to look in the dictionary for the words you don't know.

<b>Option</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Ab</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>00%</b>
<b>Ac</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Bc</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10%</b>

**Table 8: Students' answers to while reading strategies**

The table illustrates percentages of strategies used by students in the process of reading a text. High percent of students (40%) claimed that while reading a text some words can be skipped without disturbing understanding; while (25%) answered that

while reading all words are important. A few of them (15%) necessitated on the use of dictionaries to look for vague words; however, the rest (10%) choose to gather more than one strategy. According to the figure it could be mention that majority of students skip words which they do not understand while others tend to use dictionary while reading a text.

**Q4. If you do not understand a word, you:**

- e) Skip the word and come back to it later.
- f) Guess what the word might mean and go on.
- g) Guess what the word might mean and reread the sentence.
- h) Look up the word in a dictionary and write the English meaning on the page

Choice	Number	Percentage
<b>E</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>G</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>H</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Ef</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Gh</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Fh</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10%</b>

**Table 9: Students' reaction towards unundrstood words**

According to the results displayed in table (35%) of respondents answered that they look up to the word in dictionary and write the English meaning on the page, a (25%) affirmed that they guess what the word mean then reread the sentence while the other percents prefer to mix more than one strategy or skip the word and back to it later (5%). In handling vocabulary problem (ununderstood words) learner may opt for different steps vary from one student to another.

**Q5. You read all English passages:**

- a) The same way because English passages are usually difficult for you.
- b) The same way because they are in English.
- c) Differently depending on what you need to learn from them.
- d) Differently depending on what kind of passages they are.

Options	Number	Percentage
A	0	00%
B	3	15%
C	6	30%
D	8	40%
Cd	3	15%

**Table 10: Students' way of reading passages**

This table demonstrates statistics on the ways students use to read a passage. (40%) of students agreed on reading passages differently depending on the kind of passage, while (30%) answered that they read it differently depending on what they need to learn from a passage. However; there is equivalence between option (c) and (cd) there are whom read all passages the same way because they are difficult and others read them because they are in English (15%). This entails that learners read English passages depending on what suit them and on what they want to learn from that text.

**Q6. To find details in a reading passage, you:**

- d) Read only the part you are interested in.
- e) Pay attention to all the information in the text.
- f) Read more than one time in order to understand what the writer stated or implied

Option	Number	Percentage
D	3	15%
E	3	15%
F	13	65%
Ef	1	5%

**Table 11: Students' reaction to find details in reading passages**

As indicated in table above students were asked to set their reaction when they are looking for details in a given passage, the highest percent (65%) goes for option (f) where they mentioned that in order to understand the author's aim students read the passage more than one time, however; (15%) opted for option (d) and (15%) for option (e) there are whom stated that they pay attention to all information whereas others they read only the interesting part to find a needed details in a text.

**Q7.If you do not understand the meaning of a sentence, you:**

- e) Read it word by word.
- f) Guess the meaning from the general context.
- g) Relate it with the preceding and the following sentences.
- h) Ignore it.

Choice	Number	Percentage
E	3	15%
F	9	45%
G	3	15%
H	0	0%
Ef	1	5%
Fg	4	20%

**Table 12: Students' reaction when they do not understand the meaning of a sentence**

The table reveals that (45%) of students guess the meaning from the general context when they do not understand the meaning of a sentence whereas (20%) of

them declare that they may combine between two strategies to grasp the meaning. A few of them (15%) stated that they relate it to the preceding and following sentence while others may prefer to read it word by word . In brief; to handle a reading problem (ununderstood sentences) learners may opt for different strategies depending on the difficulty of a given text

**Q.8 In facing any problem in grasping text meaning, you:**

E) Read it many times.

f) Give up reading.

g) Ask for help.

h) Consult other reading references related to the same topic

<b>Option</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>G</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>H</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Eh</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10%</b>

**Table 13: Students' reaction when they do not grasp the meaning of the text**

The obtained results for students' reaction when they face problem in grasping the meaning of a text clarified that (45%) of students tend to read the text many times while (30%) tend to consult other reading references related to the topic, however; an equal percentage (10%) goes for option (eh) and (f) where students stated that they give up reading . Regarding asking for help a minority of students opted for that choice (5%). To deal with comprehension problems in grasping the text's meaning students may rely on their own capacities as they may consult other sources.

**Q9. While reading, to understand the text, you:**

- f) Underline the main ideas.
- g) Make an outline.
- h) Take notes.
- i) Do not write anything; just keep the information in your mind.
- j) Other: Please specify .....

<b>Option</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>G</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>H</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>I</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>J</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Fg</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Gj</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Fh</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10%</b>

**Table 14: Students' while reading strategies to understand a text**

According to the table it could be noticed that the most effective strategy used by students while reading in order to understand a text is underline the main ideas with percent of (35%) followed by taking notes with percent of (30%), whereas; a (15%) of them declare they do not write anything they just keep the information in their minds while others (10%) choose to use two strategies in one time. As for option (j) they suggested other strategies such as highlighting words, using note-cards then put each one next to its idea.

**Q10. What are the reading strategies do you apply to overcome reading comprehension difficulties?**

- a) Scanning
- b) Skimming
- c) Predicting
- d) Questioning
- e) Synthesizing
- f) Think aloud strategy (i.e. to think about your thinking: describing orally while you are reading in order to monitor what you have understood.)

Options	Number	Percentage
<b>A</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>00%</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>00%</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>00%</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>00%</b>
<b>Af</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Bc</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Ad</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Cd</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Df</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Cf</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Acf</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Abdf</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Acdf</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Cdf</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>

**Table 15: Reading strategies used by students**

Students' responses show approximate values, as it is seen (25%) of students indicated that when they do not understand a particular material they depend on the questioning strategy, they ask questions to simplify the process of grasping the meaning of the reading content. Nearly the same percent (20%) adopted to the scanning strategy; moreover, the same percent number (5%) has opted for the following strategies combined together: predicting/skimming, scanning/think-aloud and scanning/predicting/questioning, However; only (10%) of the participants use questioning/think-aloud strategies together to overcome reading comprehension difficulties. The results of this question demonstrated that the reading strategies

scanning and questioning are the most used ones may be because they are easy to apply contrary to others like synthesizing or think-aloud.

**Q11. After reading the text, in order to determine if reading goals have been met, you:**

- e) Engage in self- questioning.
- f) Summarize the text.
- g) Outline the ideas.
- h) Other: Please, specify.....

Option	Number	Percentage
E	7	35%
F	3	15%
G	6	30%
Gh	2	10%
Fg	2	10%

**Table 16: Students' strategies to determine their reading' goal**

According to data in this table (35%) of students declared that after finishing reading the text they engage in self-questioning, while (30%) outline the ideas and (15%) try to summarize the text. However; an equal percent of the respondents combine between two to three strategies (10%), only one has mentioned that he explains it to someone else to gain additional information about what he has read. In short; whatever the used strategy, the reading goal will be determine.

### 3.5.4 Section four: critical thinking and reading strategies

#### Q.1 Give a brief definition of critical thinking?

Students' answer	Number	Percentage
Who answered	17	85%
Who do not answered	3	15%

**Table 17: Students' definition of critical thinking**

The table represents the answers of students' definitions of critical thinking. Among 20 students 17 who provided a definitions (85%) and only 3 students (15%) did not answer one left a blank line while two others stated they do not know. The following are some definitions provided by the respondents who defined critical thinking skill:

- ✓ It is an evaluation and analysis of facts.
- ✓ The ability to observe and have a perspective.
  
- ✓ It means analyzing and evaluating objectively a matter or a subject to make an opinion or judgment.
  
- ✓ To look beyond the words & try to decode the text for a deep understanding.
- ✓ Critical thinking is the art of questioning everything.
- ✓ To think creatively using what you already know to come to new and unique conclusions.

According to the previous definitions and the other definitions, it appears that the questioned students are conscious and knowledgeable about the CTS if not all of them a high percent gave an answer as shown all the definitions that have been provided contain the key aspects of CTS including analyzing, problem solving, evaluating, questioning and judgment.

### **Q.2 Are you a critical thinker?**

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I do not know

<b>Choice</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>45%</b>

**Table 18: Participants opinions about themselves as critical thinkers**

The table shows opinions of participants about themselves as critical thinkers. As it is mentioned there is an equal percent between “yes” and “I do not know” choice (45%) half of students declared that they are critical thinkers while other half stated they do not know, however; few percent (10%) answered “No”. As a result it could be seen that a considerable number of students are familiar with the concept of critical thinking and they consider themselves as critical thinkers, but it can not be ignored that there are also a considerable number whom said that they do not know which revealed either their level of self-confidence is weak, or they lack critical thinking skills and its meaning .In the other hand; (10%) asserted they are not critical thinkers, this may be due to their lack of practice.

**Q.3 according to you, critical thinkers are: (you may choose more than one answer)**

- a) Those who ask a lot of questions
- b) Those who are curious
- c) Those who provide evidence to support assumptions and beliefs
- d) All of them

Choices	Number	Percentage
<b>A</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>50%</b>

**Table 19: Characteristics of critical thinkers**

According to the data above the highest percent goes to option (d) where (50%) of students confirmed that all the provided choices are characteristics of critical thinkers. in the same path; (30%) declared that critical thinkers are those who ask a lot of questions, followed by (15%) for those who provide evidences to support beliefs.

While; few percent (5%) stated that critical thinkers are those who have sense of curiosity. As a result, majority of learners argued that critical thinkers are the ones who cover all the mentioned traits.

**Q.4 To what extent do you agree that reading is a thinking process?**

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Strongly disagree
- d. Disagree

Options	Number	Percentage
A	14	70%
B	6	30%
C	0	00%
D	0	00%

**Table 20: Students' agreement about reading as a thinking process**

Students were asked to give their opinions about reading as a thinking process, most of them (70%) claimed they are strongly agree with the idea that reading is a thinking process , in the same respect; (30%) claimed they are agree to this idea. However; no one has disagreed on the idea which means that all students are aware that reading requires cognitive skills such as thinking. In response to this question, students were requested to justify their answers and the following are some of their justifications:

- While reading we use our thinking process we analyze and understand words.
- While reading the reader asks a lot of questions.
- When you read you are mentally involved with the ideas and information. To understand and ask question while reading through the lines. When we read

we got a cognitive image which represents the concepts. When we read we dive into the text and creativity will start. All these are hallmarks of critical thinking.

- While reading our brains constantly processing memories, information, feelings, and pre-knowledge that we acquire through experiences and learning.
- Only through reading one can dig deeper & explore new things.

**Q.5 Do you think that critical thinking skill can be enhanced through reading?**

- a. Yes
- b. Not sure
- c. No

Options	Number	Percentage
a	17	85%
b	3	15%
c	0	00%

**Table 21: Developing critical thinking through reading**

The majority of learners (85%) stated that critical thinking skill can be enhanced through reading. Only (15%) of the respondents mentioned that they are not sure and no one has denied this. This may indicate that most students believe that reading requires thinking to understand what you read. Thus, the more students read the more they will develop these skills.

**Q.6 what kind of relationship exists between them?**

- a) Critical thinking affects reading process
- b) Reading develops critical thinking
- c) They are inter-related

Options	Number	Percentage
A	2	10%
B	6	30%
C	12	60%

**Table 22: Relationship between reading and critical thinking**

This table designed for the sake to discover EFL students' opinions about the existence of relationship between critical thinking and reading. It reveals that the majority of respondents (60%) agreed on the idea that critical thinking and reading are interrelated,

which means that reading enhances critical thinking and vice versa. However, a percentage of (30%) referred for those who have selected that reading develops critical thinking as it has been confirmed in (Q5). In the other hand a few percent (10%) stated that critical thinking affects reading process which confirmed (Q4) reading is a thinking process. In brief; it resulted that both skills affect each other and enhance each other they are exchangeable.

**Q.7 which of the following reading strategies do you think can better develop your critical thinking skill?**

- a) Predicting
- b) Synthesizing
- c) Questioning
- d) Think-aloud
- e) Others: .....

Options	Number	Percentage
<b>A</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>55%</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>00%</b>

**Table 23 : Reading strategies that can develop critical thinking**

In this question students were given a list of strategies that can improve EFL students' critical thinking skills then; we asked them to identify which one(s) they think is (are) the most effective. According to the table majority of participants (55%) agreed that questioning is the most effective reading strategy that can ameliorate their critical thinking skill may be due to the fact that questioning is an active thinking technique which allows learners to construct meaning and find solutions through asking a lot of questions. Second percent goes to synthesizing strategy where (25%) of students selected it, followed by (15%) for predicting strategy and few of them (5%) have

chosen think-aloud may be because it is a new strategy for them and they did not experience it before. Consequently; previously answers indicated that students are aware of those reading strategies and which one can improve their critical thinking.

### 3.5.5 Further suggestions

#### Q12. Would you like to add any comment or suggestion?

Option	Number	Percentage
They answered	7	35%
They do not answered	13	65%

**Table 24: Students' answer to Q12**

The majority of students (65%) did not add any further suggestions or opinions. They may have felt that the previous questions were sufficient for them to express their ideas. The remaining respondents (35%) have provided only some comments about the topic. Some of them commented that the topic is an interesting, some add other reading strategies, others claim that it is a difficult one, and the remaining ones wished for the researcher a good luck.

### 3.6 Summary of the results and finding of students' questionnaire

The analysis of students' findings provided different information and valuable responses that supported our hypothesis. The first section of students' questionnaire "General Information" indicated that the majority of first year master (civ&lit) students have chosen to study English at University and most of them are between good/average level of English which intimates that they have considerable capacities and high motivation that would allow them to learn more and develop their level. As for section two "reading habits" it reveals that most students do read in English some

of them read easily and others fairly easy, they mostly read documentations related to their studies and few read books and short stories.

The results obtained from the analysis of section three showed that majority of Master one student do use strategies while reading also they set a purpose of reading mainly they read because they are interested in the topic or because they have question to answer. Concerning the use of pre-reading strategies, we can say that most students (40%) before they read a whole text they guess the general idea from the title or they read the introduction and conclusion, some respondents may use headings and sub-heading to predict the content. As for in the process of reading (40%) of participants claimed that while reading a text some words can be skipped without disturbing understanding, while (25%) agreed that all words are important. This section reported also when students do not understand a word they consider the use of dictionaries more beneficial than skipping the word or guessing its meaning. In the other hand ; when students fail to grasp the meaning of a sentence or of the whole text they tend to use effective strategies as well (45%) claimed they guess the meaning from the general context to understand a sentence and (45%) stated they read the text many times to grasp its meaning. As for comprehension difficulties is concerned majority of learners agreed on using scanning and questioning as a useful strategies. Finally; when they asked what to do to determine the goal of reading (35%) of students declared that after finishing reading the text they engage in self-questioning, while (30%) outline the ideas and a few percent summarize that text. In the same vein; section four which is concerned with the relation between critical thinking and reading strategies revealed that students have a good idea about critical thinking they defined it according to their understanding and gave a fair explanation on what is meant by critical thinking. Also, half of respondents declared that they are critical

thinkers while the other half they were not sure may be because they lack the main characteristics of critical thinkers. In the same respect; when students asked to mention the main traits of critical thinkers they all agreed on curiosity, asking questions, and providing evidences as the main hallmarks for critical thinker. Additionally; students' responses confirmed the exchangeable relationship between critical thinking and reading, high percent agreed that they are inter-related. The most important result in relation to the topic under investigation is when the majority of students highlighted a positive attitude toward enhancing critical thinking through reading. Lastly; more importantly when we asked students to choose among the provided strategies which one is most effective in developing their critical thinking they all opt for questioning as the most effective one followed by synthesizing then predicting. To sum up, from the analysis of students questionnaire we conclude that most students aware of the importance and value of reading skill. Secondly, they are strategic readers and this is obvious from their choices of the given strategies, moreover; the findings proved that students are able to deal with any reading difficulties they may face at any level. As for critical thinking is concerned the questionnaire showed that learners at Biskra University are aware of this skill although some of them could not evaluate themselves as critical thinkers but high percent have a clear vision of what is it. In the same path; the findings validated the role of reading strategies as a technique to develop critical thinking. All in all; the study results answered all the research questions and achieved all the study aims. Furthermore, all research hypotheses have been confirmed.

### **3.7 Conclusion**

This chapter was devoted to the field work of the study which consisted of the theoretical background of the research methodology of the study particularly; data

collection methods, sampling and population, the administration of the questionnaire, the description of the questionnaire, and analysis of the questionnaire. We concluded that reading comprehension as a process requires from students to make a connection between the text and their own background knowledge in order to gain meaning from that text. Also; the overwhelming majority of students confirmed that reading strategies have a great impact in developing critical thinking.

### **General conclusion**

Critical thinking is labeled to be a frightening skill for students at all levels especially Master level where learners became more aware of the necessity of improving this latter. Due to the fact that critical thinking allows students to be more competent at evaluating, synthesizing, and solving problem whenever faced in all domains of life not just educational one. This research attempted to answer all the research questions in addition to the hypotheses validity, which highlighted that reading strategies have a great contribution to the development of EFL learner's critical thinking. Thus, we opted for a descriptive method and a case study to investigate which reading strategy promotes EFL learners' critical thinking.

In chapter one we attempted to present a general overview on critical thinking. Initially it presented the history and definition of critical thinking then, it differentiated between critical thinking and creative thinking. Additionally; it provided the characteristics of critical thinker and its barriers; moreover, it spotted light on the relationship between critical thinking and EFL classrooms. Finally; it clarified the connection between critical reading and critical thinking.

Concerning chapter two it devoted to highlight all the basics of Reading. It offered a definition of the reading skill, models of reading, and types of reading.

Furthermore; it shed light on defining reading strategy and some of the reading strategies .In addition to the importance of reading strategies in EFL classes.

The theoretical part dealt with the students' questionnaire; the results showed that students give highly important to the reading skill and treasure it as a process of learning foreign languages also; reading strategies are helpful and more effective to get the meaning of what students read. Accordingly, the obtained results that gathered from the questionnaire learners are knowledgeable of critical thinking skill and its main features. In addition; it is proved that the use of reading strategies have a great role in promoting students' critical thinking i.e. The more students dig in practicing reading the more their thinking evolved and the more they became critical thinkers because real reading involves deeper thinking that leading to a real discussing and analyzing. All in all, it can be deduced that using reading strategies as a technique are very effective at enhancing EFL learners' critical thinking.

### **Limitations and Recommendation of the research**

We may be aware that our research may have different limitations. The first is the current circumstances concerning the widespread of the epidemic (corona-virus covid19) which impede us from proceeding the practical part mainly "students' test." which makes it very hard to do the research in an appropriate way. In other words, this research would have been better conducted, if the conditions were in our sake. Moreover, other obstacles that have hindered this study were the lack of printed data at the level of the University's library. Thus, the researcher depended much more on online e-books that were available as pdf formats. Consequently; other studies should be done to stress more the importance of developing critical thinking skills.

Based on the finding of this study and the researcher modest experience, the following recommendations should be considered for future research:

➤ **Reading**

1. It is highly recommended for the administration' department of foreign languages at Biskra University to integrate Reading as an independent course due to its role in feeding students' mind.
2. Giving highly important to reading strategies at classes to be strategic readers.
3. Before, while and after reading any foreign language passages student should ask the following questions:
  - Am I a good reader?
  - Will I understand what I have read?
  - Do I have enough background?
  - How can I improve my level in reading comprehension?
  - Do I know how to use reading strategies to achieve and overcome comprehension difficulties?
  - Do I apply these strategies appropriately and perfectly?

➤ **Critical thinking**

1. To be a good critical thinker it is recommended to be: curious, reflective person, open-minded, and a seeker for clarifications and new solutions.
2. Questions to students must motivate them to dig up background knowledge. Teachers should not opt for surface-level questions, rather; they have to ask thoughtful questions to get valuable and reasonable answers.
3. It is highly recommended from teachers when receive answers from students to use these tips to promote further thinking:
  - Could you elaborate further on that point?

- Would you give me an example?
- Is there another way to look at this question?
- Will you provide more details?
- Do we need to consider another point of view?

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# **List of Appendices**

# STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear students,

This questionnaire is an attempt to collect data for accomplishment of a master dissertation on “The use of reading strategies in the Development of EFL Learners’ Critical Thinking”. Therefore, you are invited to participate in the current research through filling in the questionnaire below. Please, answer each statement by ticking /  / in the right box, and write full statement(s) whenever it is necessary according to what you do as you read in English.

**Thank you for your collaboration, time and effort.**

**Prepared by:** BOUAOUN Soumia

**Supervised by:** BETKA Rezig Nadia

**Academic year: 2019-2020**

**SECTION ONE: Background Information**

**Q1: Gender:** Male  Female

**Q2: Age:**

20 – 25

26 – 30

More

**Q3: Applying for the master degree was**

a) Your own choice

b) Your parents' choice

c) Someone's advice

**SECTION TWO: THE STUDENTS READING HABITS**

**1. Do you read in English?**

**Yes**

**No**

**2. If 'Yes', what do you read and how often?**

a) Documentation linked to your specialty.

b) Books of fiction and stories.

c) Newspapers and magazines.

d) Other: Please

Specify.....

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**3. How do you do read in English?**

a) Easily.

b) Fairly easily.

c) With difficulty.

**SECTION THREE: READING STRATEGIES**

**1. You read in English because:**

- a) You find the topic interesting.
- b) You have questions to answer about the text.
- c) You want to learn English.
- d) Other: Please, specify.....  
.....

- **Previewing**

**2. before reading the whole text, you:**

- e) Guess the general idea from the title.
- f) Read headings and subheadings to predict the content of the text.
- g) Read the first and the last sentences of the text.
- h) Read the introduction and the conclusion before you decide to read the whole text.

- **While-reading strategies**

**3. In the process of reading, you think:**

- d) All the words are important.
- e) Some words can be skipped without disturbing understanding.
- f) You need to look in the dictionary for the words you don't know.

**4. If you do not understand a word, you:**

- e) Skip the word and come back to it later.
- f) Guess what the word might mean and go on.
- g) Guess what the word might mean and reread the sentence.
- h) Look up the word in a dictionary and write the English meaning on the page.

**5. You read all English passages:**

- a) The same way because English passages are usually difficult for you.
- b) The same way because they are in English.
- c) Differently depending on what you need to learn from them.
- d) Differently depending on what kind of passages they are.

**6.To find details in a reading passage, you:**

d) Read only the part you are interested in.

e) Pay attention to all the information in the text.

f) Read more than one time in order to understand what the writer stated or implied. .

**7.If you do not understand the meaning of a sentence, you:**

e) Read it word by word.

f) Guess the meaning from the general context.

g) Relate it with the preceding and the following sentences.

h) Ignore it.

**8.In facing any problem in grasping text meaning, you:**

E) Read it many times.

f) Give up reading.

g) Ask for help.

h) Consult other reading references related to the same topic.

**9.While reading, to understand the text, you:**

f) Underline the main ideas.

g) Make an outline.

h) Take notes.

i) Do not write anything; just keep the information in your mind.

j) Other: Please specify .....

.....

**10. What are the reading strategies do you apply to overcome reading comprehension difficulties?**

Scanning

Skimming

Predicting

Questioning

Synthesizing

Think aloud strategy (i.e. to think about your thinking: describing orally while you are reading in order to monitor what you have understood.)

**11. After reading the text, in order to determine if reading goals have been met, you:**

e) Engage in self- questioning.

f) Summarize the text.

g) Outline the ideas.

h) Other: Please, specify.....

(Mebarki, 2008)

**SECTION FOUR: Critical thinking and reading strategies**

**Q.1 Give a brief definition of critical thinking?**

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

**Q.2 Are you a critical thinker?**

a) Yes

b) No

c) I do not know

**Q.3 according to you, critical thinkers are: (you may choose more than one answer)**

a) Those who ask a lot of questions

b) Those who are curious

c) Those who provide evidence to support assumptions and beliefs

d) All of them

**Q.4 To what extent do you agree that reading is a thinking process?**

a. Strongly agree

b. Agree

c. Strongly disagree

d. Disagree

Whatever your answer, please

justify.....

**Q.5 Do you think that critical thinking skill can be enhanced through reading?**

a. Yes

b. Not sure

c. No

**Q.6 what kind of relationship exists between them?**

a) Critical thinking affects reading process

b) Reading develops critical thinking

c) They are inter-related

**Q.7 which of the following reading strategies do you think can better develop your critical thinking skill?**

a) Predicting

b) Synthesizing

c) Questioning

d) Think-aloud

e) Others: .....

**SECTION FIVE: FURTHER SUGGESTIONS**

**12. Would you like to add any comment or suggestion?**

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

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR COLLABORATION**