

State of Libya



The Libyan Academy

Western Mountain Branch- Zintan

School of Languages

Department of English

**Implementing Critical Thinking Skills in Libyan EFL Classroom:
Zintan Secondary School Teachers' Perspectives and Challenges**

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for an MA Degree in
Applied Linguistics

By:

Safa Mohamed Hussin Ben Eissa

Supervised by:

Prof. Masoud Ghouma

Academic year: 2025

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الأكاديمية الليبية للدراسات العليا - فرع الجبل الغربي

قرار التجليد

قامت اللجنة المشكلة بقرار السيد وكيل فرع الأكاديمية للشؤون العلمية رقم (10) الصادر بتاريخ 2025/07/29م بمناقشة الرسالة المقدمة من الطالب صفاء محمد حسين بن عيسى رقم القيد 2021102823 لنيل درجة الاجازة العالية (الماجستير) في شعبة علم اللغة التطبيقي التابعة لقسم اللغة الانجليزية وعنوانها ((تطبيق مهارات التفكير النقدي في الفصول الدراسية الليبية للغة الانجليزية كلفة اجنبية: وجهات نظر وتحديات معلمي اللغة الانجليزية كلفة اجنبية في مدرسة الزنتان الثانوية))

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Abstract

This study explored the Libyan EFL secondary school teachers' perspectives on implementing critical thinking in their lessons and the possible challenges they encountered to address gaps between teachers' theoretical knowledge and practical application. Despite growing interest in educators' perspectives and challenges regarding critical thinking integration at the university level, limited research explored the secondary school level, particularly in Zintan. Using a mixed-methods research design to answer the research questions, data were collected from 50 participants in a questionnaire and six participants in the semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire consisted of the modified versions of Teaching Perspectives Inventory (TPI) survey items and constructs, while interview questions were adopted from previous research. A descriptive analysis was used to analyse quantitative data and thematic analysis for qualitative data.

The results showed that while EFL teachers had positive attitudes and strong intentions towards implementing critical thinking into EFL classrooms, still their practical incorporation was limited. Teachers preferred reading and speaking skills to teach critical thinking, but its use across other language skills was inconsistent. Additionally, teachers' attitudes and beliefs toward sociocultural practices integration had a direct effect on their intentions to effectively and contextually incorporate critical thinking. Major challenges involved time limitations, lack of training, exam-orientated assessment policy, and a limited amount of follow-up and feedback, suggesting the inquiry of professional development programmes, curriculum and assessment policies reforms. Finally, the study highlighted the necessity of further research on analysing teachers' training courses and pedagogies, which contribute to EFL education by offering insights for educators, policymakers, and curriculum designers on enhancing critical thinking implementation.

Keywords: critical thinking, EFL, teachers, perspectives, challenges, secondary school.

Declaration

I, Safa Mohamed Ben Eissa, declare that this thesis entitled “Implementing Critical Thinking Skills in Libyan EFL Classrooms: Zintan Secondary School EFL Teachers’ Perspectives and Challenges” is my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree or qualification. I also declare that all sources used to prepare this thesis have been cited.

This thesis has been prepared in accordance with the ethical guidelines set forth by the Libyan Academy, Western Mountain Branch-Zintan, School of Languages, Department of English.

Signed,



Safa Mohamed Ben Eissa

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my husband, family, and friends for their support and endless encouragement throughout my study journey.

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The completion of this thesis included extensive learning and expanded my experience. I am thankful to all the ones who helped me to achieve this, starting with my supervisor, institution, colleagues, and family.

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I am grateful to my family for encouragement and understanding during this phase. Your belief in me kept me motivated even during the most difficult times.

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23rd/Mar./2025

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

EFL	English as Foreign Language
LA	Language Awareness theory
TPI	Teaching Perspectives Inventory

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study:

In education discipline, critical thinking, defined as set of thinking skills and dispositions (Ku, 2009), was widely referenced as a 21st-century skill (Rezaei, Derakhshan, & Bagherkazemi, 2011) due to its fundamental role on developing learners' linguistic, communicative competence, and readiness to face real-life challenges. Particularly, in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, critical thinking has become a requirement to develop and overcome Language learning challenges.

Recently, educational research continues to stress the necessity of critical thinking in language education. For instance, Hove (2011) claimed that "in order to better prepare our students for the challenges they will face, teachers need to explicitly teach critical thinking strategies, equipping young people with twenty-first-century skills" (p.7). According to Lipman (2003) and Brown (2001), it is the teachers' responsibility educating their students on critical thinking and language development, as a successful language program needs to focus not only on developing linguistic skills but also on cultivating critical thinking skills among language learners. In consequence, EFL teachers may have a direct effect on the implementation of critical thinking in EFL classrooms, and their perspectives may play a crucial role by either hindering or encouraging the practice of critical thinking in EFL classrooms.

In the context of Libya, the national secondary school curriculum included critical thinking as a key 21st-century skill that teachers are required to implement into their lessons for better language learning outcomes. However, while teacher's guidance involved clear instructions, it still allows for varied teaching approaches. This flexibility may either facilitate or hinder teachers' practices, making it essential to understand teachers' perspectives and challenges for better implementation. Building on this, this study aims to explore the perspectives and challenges of high school EFL teachers in Zintan, Libya, regarding the implementation of critical thinking skills in their classrooms.

1.2. Statement of the problem:

Despite the Libyan national curriculum's emphasis on the importance of critical thinking skills in EFL classrooms, there remains notable variation in how critical thinking is implemented in these settings. This inconsistency is influenced by teachers' diverse perspectives and the challenges they encounter. The reason for this variation may be that teachers have different views or encounter obstacles that hinder their implementation. Previous research suggests that the main cause of this inconsistency is the gap between teachers' theoretical knowledge and their practical application. Understanding this gap is essential for comprehending how teachers' perspectives linked to the challenges they encounter, ultimately affecting their ability to effectively foster critical thinking skills.

1.3. Aims of the study:

- To explore Libyan teachers' perspectives of the implementing critical thinking in EFL classroom.
- To identify the challenges that hinder critical thinking skills implementation in EFL classroom.
- To investigate whether a gap exists between teachers' theoretical knowledge and practical applications.

1.3. Research questions:

This study was designed to answer two main questions:

- What perspectives do Libyan high school EFL teachers have about implementing critical thinking in EFL classroom?
- What challenges do Libyan high school EFL teachers face when implementing critical thinking in English language learning classroom?

1.4. Significance of the Study:

This study is significant because it has the potential to improve the quality of English language teaching at Zintan secondary schools by emphasising the critical thinking approach. In border level, the study findings of EFL teachers' perspectives and challenges can provide insights that will help improve classroom practices and develop curricula. In Libyan context,

this study can contribute to develop students' language proficiency by equipping them with skills essential for academic success and real-life problem-solving. Additionally, the results aim to inform targeted solutions for teacher support, professional development, and curriculum implementation as well as they may support teachers in adopting more confident and effective teaching approaches, thereby fostering a more supportive and dynamic learning environment.

1.5. Scope of the Study:

Studying the integration of critical thinking skills in the education field is a broad topic, making it challenging to holistically and deeply cover. Therefore, the researcher specifically focused on the EFL context. Additionally, the study was narrowed down to explore the teachers' perspectives and challenges on critical thinking implementation in EFL secondary school classrooms. It is important to note that the study did not cover all Libyan secondary school EFL teachers, due to the large number of potential participants in the study population. Therefore, the population was limited to the high school EFL teachers in Zintan.

1.6. Methodology:

A mixed methods research design, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methods, was used to investigate the secondary school EFL teachers' perspectives and challenges in implementing critical thinking in their contexts. The data for the study was gathered through a questionnaire, building on the Teaching Perspectives Inventory (TPI) survey, and semi-structured interviews. A triangulation technique was employed to ensure the validity and reliability. Finally, the study sample comprised 50 EFL teachers from various secondary schools in Zintan. All of the 50 teachers answered the questionnaire, while only six randomly selected secondary school teachers were interviewed. Finally, descriptive analysis was used to analyse both quantitative and qualitative data.

1.7. Structure of thesis:

The study is divided into six chapters. These chapters were organized as follows:

- Chapter one begins by providing the background of the study, followed by a statement of the research and the aims of the study, along with the research questions.

Additionally, the chapter discusses the significance and scope of the study. Finally, the methodology and structure of the study are presented.

- Chapter two is the literature review which covers the theoretical framework, which includes the critical thinking, perspectives definitions, and the theories which the study built on. Then, it presents a list of appropriate studies aligns with the discussed topic.
- The third chapter of the research paper provides an outline of the methodology employed, which consists of sampling, data collection, pilot study, validity and reliability, and ethical considerations.
- Chapter four presents the findings and data analysis of the information that was collected.
- Chapter five includes the discussions and interpretations.
- Chapter six concludes the research report by summarizing the findings, highlighting the limitations of the study, discussing their implications, and suggesting potential directions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

In the literature review chapter, the researcher presents a critical review of previous insights regarding critical thinking implementation in the educational field in general and language education in specific. This chapter is divided into a theoretical framework and a previous study section. In the theoretical framework, definitions of the terms critical thinking and perspectives are presented in relation to the educational context. In addition, the researcher explains the theories this study is based on: constructivism theory, behaviourism, and language awareness theory (LA). Finally, the previous studies section presents a critical analysis of various previous studies' aims, findings, and instruments, focusing on EFL teachers' perspectives and challenges of implementing critical thinking skills in EFL classrooms.

2.1 Critical thinking in Education

Critical thinking is highly emphasised in the educational field for its essential role in enhancing students' academic outcomes and developing them into more self-reliant, responsible, and respected members of society (Mite & Corebima, 2017) by improving their problem-solving, decision-making, and learning autonomy (Ennis, 1993). This was stressed by Paul, Elder, and Bartell (1997) who highlighted the critical thinking necessity in educational contexts, while the World Economic Forum (2016) referred to critical thinking as one of the most important skills for future employment as first step for more respectful society members.

It was acknowledged that students with critical thinking abilities showed higher academic achievements across all subjects than students with low critical thinking abilities (Thomas & Smoot, 1994; Huitt 1998). To develop such skills, a shift from traditional teaching methods to a more student-centred approach is required, as the implementation of more cooperative learning strategies results in enhancing students' critical thinking dispositions (Garcha & Kumar, 2015).

The critical thinking teaching approach is mainly based on strategies such as problem-based learning and reflective journals (Razak et al., 2022). In problem-based learning, students need to evaluate, analyse, and reason about situations in order to make better decisions.

Schuessler et al. (2012) confirmed that reflective journaling enabled students to critically evaluate the issues and information they learn. Such strategies are usually very useful to achieve the curriculum objectives of fostering students with the needed cognitive skills (Loo & Thorpe, 2002) and a broader education goal such as improving students' societal skills.

Moreover, these strategies help to involve learners in a more cooperative and contextual learning approach by creating tasks to simulate real-life situations, resulting in the enhancement of students' societal skills (Vandana, 2011). Teachers, therefore, are responsible to foster these abilities to encourage learners succeed both academically and professionally.

2.2 Critical thinking in language education

Generally, while the significant of critical thinking is highly emphasised in the education field, particular focus has been placed on the language learning contexts. Extensive research was conducted to explore the correlation between foreign language acquisition and the advancement of critical thinking skills, confirming that the language learning process involves developing both linguistic and communicative competences (Byram, 1989). Mainly, critical thinking skills raises students' awareness and autonomy, leading to the improvement of both competences (Gandimathi & Zarei, 2018), as students with higher critical thinking skills scored better results on language proficiency tests than those students with limited critical thinking (Fahim and Pezeshki, 2012). Moreover, critical thinking influences students' cognitive competence related to language, as critical thinker-students showed a deeper understanding of new vocabularies and grammar structures. This was due to that students with critical thinking skills often employ more effective language learning strategies such as questioning and reasoning skills (Smith & Johnson, 2019).

The questioning and reasoning skills expanded their perceptions of the world, which contributed to their mastery of language use and understanding. Particularly, students with critical thinking skills demonstrated impressive performance in reading comprehension tasks, indicating that critical thinking fosters learners' capacity to engage with complicated texts and make inferences (Birjandi & Bagherkazemi, 2010).

Besides the development of linguistic competence, Critical thinking plays a role in developing students' communication skills, promoting the appropriate language use. According to Glaser (1941), critical thinking includes attitude, knowledge, and skill, all of which are important for language practice. Finally, critical thinking skills development results in the enhancement of language proficiency by improving both linguistic and communicative

competence, highlighting the strong correlation between critical thinking and language learning.

2.3 The theoretical framework

This study is concerned with two main concepts: critical thinking and teachers' perspectives. On the other hand, the theoretical framework for this study is based on three main theories: constructivism, behaviourism, and language awareness theory (LA). Furthermore, the theoretical framework section highlights the previous researchers' assumptions in the field of education regarding the importance of exploring EFL teachers' perspectives and challenges to enhance the teaching process and improve students' learning outcomes.

2.3.1 Critical thinking definition

Previous cross-disciplinary research has elucidated the concept of critical thinking in various ways. Educators, psychologists, and philosophers have described the principle of intellectual development throughout history (Sternberg, 1986; Lewis & Smith, 1993).

Scholars have described critical thinking for over 2,000 years. Socrates was the first to introduce the concept, which generally involved questioning and criticising accepted practices (Hoaglund, 1993). While Socrates did not provide a clear definition of the term, he applied the principle in his questioning approach, encouraging people to reason independently and form their own judgements. Nowadays, this method is known as the Socratic method (Ho et al., 2023).

After that, Thomas Aquinas, during the Middle Ages, contributed to the practice of systematic critical thinking through his writings as well as his teaching (Stump, 2008). He defined systematic critical thinking as a process of comparing effects, causes, and reasoning in the analysis of any thought or idea with its critiques (Steiner et al., 1983). He also regarded systematic critical thinking as the basis for reasoning the causes and effects. He emphasised that critical thinking investigates negative reasons or grounds related to ideas and assumptions that do not have sound rationales, rather than simply negating them all.

In the early 20th century, most scholars associated the principle of critical thinking with the American philosopher and educator John Dewey (Ostovar-Namaghi & Ahmadabadi-Tak, 2017). Fisher (2001) declared that Dewey was the father of the critical thinking principle, stating that critical thinking involves evaluating an attitude or knowledge in light of affirmative reasons

and probable deductions. Dewey (1910) also referred to critical thinking as reflective thinking and provided clearer and more simplified explanations of the term in his later works. Dewey explained that “reasons” are the basis for reaching the most appropriate conclusions and that critical thinking is the key element for properly evaluating these reasons (Tarrant & Thiele, 2016).

Although Dewey extensively discussed critical thinking in his writings, other researchers and philosophers may have various perspectives and definitions of the concept (Walters, 1994). Furthermore, critical thinking encompasses more than just assessing reasoning; it also involved analysing data, recognising other perceptions, and questioning ideas and assumptions (Liu et al., 2014). Later, Glaser (1941), building on Dewey’s definition of the concept, stated that critical thinking consists of three main elements: thoughtful consideration of the evidence, logical examination of encountered problems, and the application of reasoning approaches to reach appropriate conclusions, noting that Glaser changed the concept of “reason” to “evidence”.

In the 1980s, there was a significant shift and growing concern regarding the subject of critical thinking, with numerous scholars striving to enhance it. A more multi-discipline approach was used to define critical thinking. The psychologist Robert Sternberg advocates for a deeper explanation and analysis of wisdom, particularly through critical thinking (Sternberg, 2004). The educator Matthew Lipman conducted a comprehensive analysis of various thinking abilities and designed procedures for evaluating and enhancing critical thinking competency (Lipman, 2003). The views of critical thinking typically vary depending on the field and discipline, such as psychology, philosophy, and education. Scholars Ennis (1989) and Li (2015) suggested that integrating critical thinking perspectives from different disciplines can help define the critical thinking concept properly.

In psychology, researchers concentrated on two aspects: the skills and procedures that critical thinkers perform (Lewis & Smith, 1993). Critical thinking is defined as ‘the use of those cognitive skills or strategies that increase the probability of a desirable outcome’ (Halpern, 1998, p. 450). It is also defined as ‘seeing both sides of an issue, being open to new evidence that confirms your ideas, reasoning dispassionately, demanding that claims be backed by evidence, deducing and inferring conclusions from available facts, solving problems, and so forth’ (Willingham, 2007, p. 8).

In philosophy, the focus was also on two main ideas: the characteristics and the quality of the thinking. The first definition describes a critical thinker as someone who makes purposeful, self-regulatory judgements that lead to interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and

inference while also providing an explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, or other considerations upon which that judgement is based (Facione, 1990). According to the quality of thinking, Bailin (2002) defined critical thinking as a type of thinking that is of high quality, meeting specific criteria or norms of adequacy and accuracy.

In education, researchers focused on learning how to think critically through adopting the discipline's standards and values (Enciso et al., 2017). Critical thinking refers to having the needed dispositions to assess, resolve, and make decisions based on available evidence (Aktoprak & Hursen, 2022). Education professionals also linked critical thinking with Bloom's taxonomy (1956) high-order thinking skills. According to Bloom's hierarchy, comprehension, evaluation, analysis, and assessment, are the highest levels of thinking that are referred to as critical thinking skills (Kennedy et al., 1991). Bloom's Taxonomy is a widely referenced model in the education field and is designed to help teachers assess the learning objectives (Darwazeh, 2017).

2.3.2 Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy, proposed by the educational psychologist Dr Benjamin Bloom in 1956, identifies six stages of learning which are known as thinking skills. The Bloom's Taxonomy begins with the 'Remembering' stage of knowledge, where the students merely recall the concepts, and then the 'Understanding' stage, where the students comprehend and engage with the knowledge. The next stage is "Applying", where students adapt and utilise their knowledge in new contexts. "Analysing": in this stage, students have to break the information into pieces and analyse it, then move on to the "Evaluating" stage, where they make decisions and draw conclusions, and the final stage is "Creating," where they generate new ideas. Each level is built on the previous one and requires students to use a higher-order thinking level of cognitive skills (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Mansoureh & Ahmad, 2022).

Faculty members should prescribe specific learning objectives and assessments that reflect the different forms of knowledge they wish for students to achieve. The objectives of enlightened self-interest are to enhance the learning-teaching process by refining the methods of knowledge transfer, shifting from mechanical transmission to the use of analysis, description, and creation (Adams, 2015). As students employ the knowledge in new roles and critically analyse the components of data when making decisions. Bloom's revised taxonomy serves as a useful tool for teachers, reminding them that their primary role is to enhance critical thinking and guide students from the knowledge level to higher levels of learning, where they must

demonstrate understanding, analysis, application, assessment, and the creation of new ideas (Seddon, 1978).

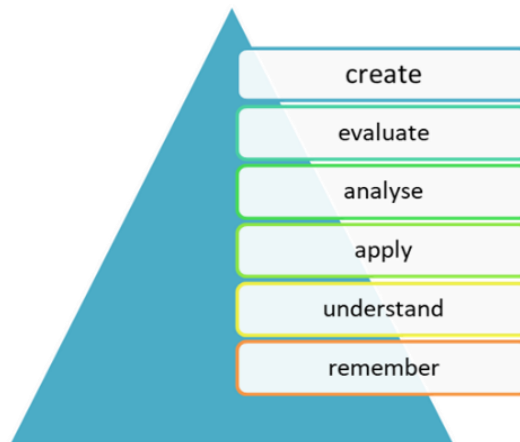


Figure 1: Bloom's Taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001).

Eventually, in the educational field, there was also another debate regarding the definition of critical thinking skills. Researchers discussed whether critical thinking skills were a set of acquired skills (Baron & Sternberg, 1987; Ennis, 1964; McPeck, 1981) or a combination of skills, dispositions, or attitudes (Ku, 2009). According to Ennis (1964), critical thinking is the development of a number of skills, such as judgement and observation. Conversely, critical thinking is defined as a set of critical and reflective skills, attitudes, and knowledge (Halpern & Sternberg, 2020).

Clearly, researchers had different perspectives on defining the concept of critical thinking, but they have not provided a precise definition for the term. The researcher based the study on previous definitions of educational critical thinking and analysed teachers' perspectives on its nature, specifically, whether it is a set of learnt skills or a combination of skills and dispositions.

2.3.3 The teachers' perspectives

It is essential to understand the teachers' perspectives regarding their teaching beliefs and actions, as they can be the basis for designing educational strategies, reducing the gap between theory and practice (Cáceres, Nussbaum, & Ortiz, 2020), and identifying the challenges in the educational system (Portelli, 1994; Eissa, 2021). The perspectives of teachers are particularly important because they define how instructors carry out their work, inspire

students, and form the basis of curriculum (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). Discovering EFL teachers' views in educational contexts is the first step in developing curricula, which helps to create critical learning conditions and effective education (Pordanjani & Guntur, 2019; Zhao, 2019).

The role that teachers play in the design and implementation of educational projects, extension activities, and the generation of a positive environmental impact helps in the improvement of working practices, the achievement of set student outcomes, and the development of an advanced educational system (Bao & Li, 2019; Alharbi & Alshumaimeri, 2020). Lee (2014) also noted that teachers' views on the potential of critical thinking in language learning impacted their approaches to foster critical thinking in EFL instruction. Additionally, several researchers have attempted to provide a precise definition of the teaching perspective (Stofflett & Stoddart, 1994).

a) Teachers' perspective concept:

A teaching perspective specifically includes an individual's beliefs, attitudes, practices, goals, and plans, along with their expectations for how they perceive the learning context (Pratt et al., 1998). In this study, the researcher built on the investigation of the Teaching Perspective Inventory (TPI) tool, which categorises perspectives into five principal types (Pischetola et al., 2022), defining and explaining each perspective individually. The perspectives are transmission, developmental, apprenticeship, nurturing, and social reform, as pointed out by Pratt & Associates in 1998. This approach is primarily applicable to the higher education systems, though secondary education can also adopt it (Adeyemi, 2015).

Transmission perspectives:

Transmitting views is common among teachers, and the teaching process is often characterised as a transmission of knowledge, skills, and values in the behavioural framework of psychology (Cazden, 2001). Within this perspective, students only receive information on topics for which they are assumed to possess no prior knowledge, making it the teacher's sole role to control the students' learning (Trigwell et al., 1994). Teachers operating from transmission perspectives just aim to pass on knowledge, which may lead learners to replicate what they have been taught rather than to understand the content as a whole. Zhao et al. (2016) noted that this view is more prevalent in second-grade schools than at other levels.

Developmental perspectives

This teaching perspective focuses on using prior knowledge and skills to design the lessons to match students' needs. The main objective of these teachers is to incorporate teaching methods and strategies, such as questioning and problem-solving (Snyder & Snyder, 2008), to foster a more engaging learning environment and to progressively develop students' cognitive skills, such as critical thinking skills, from simple to the most sophisticated levels. Teachers with this perspective believe their role is to facilitate the learning process and students to control their learning by setting the goals they want to achieve (Johnston & Wildy, 2017).

Apprenticeship perspective

According to this perspective, teachers believe that it is essential to provide viable and real contexts for learning to enable learners to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills. Instructors strive to ensure that learners apply these skills effectively to achieve the best outcomes (Johnston & Wildy, 2017). Teachers also aim to create an ideal learning atmosphere where innovation is encouraged and general problem-solving skills are enhanced (Carol et al., 2001). This view of learning and teaching emphasises its social practical application, as noted by Michael (1998), in contrast to a reliance on theory as stated by Sandra (2005).

Nurturing perspective

The nurturing perspective aims at the appropriate growth of learners' perceptions, capabilities, and well-being. This perspective views teaching as a supportive and caring process in which the teacher is attuned to the learner's needs, goals, feelings, and skills. Supportive teachers enhance learners' self-perception and provide them with real behavioural contexts where they can feel protected and encouraged to take risks and build self-assurance (Noddings, 1984).

Social-reform perspective:

Teachers who hold this perspective believe that education is a tool for developing society. They help students connect the subject matter with their real-life experiences regarding societal norms; teachers encourage them to critically examine the challenges present in society by using what they have learnt. From this perspective, teachers play the role of society reformers; they believe that they are a part of society's developmental structure (Pratt, 1998).

Almost all of these perspectives encourage the implementation of critical thinking skills and their integration as a teaching pedagogy, except for the transmission teaching perspective, which is based on behaviourism theory. This theory and perspective emphasize teacher-centred approaches and perceive students as passive receivers of the knowledge that teachers provide. Other teaching perspectives are built on constructivism, sociocultural, and cognitive theories, which highlight the active role of students and their responsibility for their learning.

2.3.4. Relevant Theories

As for the educational process, several theories were introduced to enhance the learning and teaching procedures. These theories differed in their focus and perception of various elements of education, such as students, teachers, and the curriculum. For this study, constructivism, behaviourism, and language awareness theory were selected.

a) Constructivism

One of these theories that are associated with the modern learning perspective is the constructivism theory of learning and teaching. It emphasises the effective incorporation of critical thinking aspects as a teaching style to help students better understand the knowledge they acquire and the perceived environment (Brooks, 2012).

In education, constructivism theory emphasises more the progressive development of the learner's independence in learning and the construction of their prior knowledge in mind (Mascolo & Fischer, 2005). The constructivist method demands an in-depth understanding of the subject matter, together with a consideration of a wider context and a holistic approach to teaching and learning (Juvova et al., 2015).

The constructivism teaching and learning approach is based on the integration of two primary theories: cognitive development and sociocultural (Juvova et al., 2015). Piaget's cognitive development theory identifies four stages: the sensorimotor stage, the preoperational stage, the concrete operational stage, and the formal operational stage. Some of these stages are characterised by the learner taking an active interest in the different stages, both personally and from different points of view (Piaget, 1999, as cited in Juvova et al., 2015). The other theory is Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which focuses on how socio-cultural context affects the learning process and achievement of students. Learners' interactions with other people or their observations of society determine how they perceive the world around them.

The constructivist approach makes students active learners. This means they are capable of developing more skills, such as critical thinking (Suhendi et al., 2021). These skills assist students in comprehending the situations they come across in life and also help to acquire knowledge of a particular subject through their interaction with society (Mcleod, 2024). Finally, while critical thinking integration was built on the constructivist perspective, which promotes the encouragement of students' cognitive abilities to apply a more holistic approach to analysing the knowledge they already have to make better decisions about what they are learning now, some teachers still typically adopt a traditional perspective, primarily based on the psychological theory of behaviourism (Tynjälä, 1999).

b) Behaviourism

Behaviourism theory is concerned with observing behaviours and the factors that influence them (Davis et al., 2015). Early 20th-century discoveries revealed that two factors, process conditions and environmental interactions, could determine the learning of all behaviours. John B. Watson and B.F. Skinner are the top contributors to developing the behaviourism theory. Watson prioritised the investigation of the observable behaviours rather than thoughts and consciousness (Watson, 1913). On the other hand, Skinner emphasised the importance of reinforcement and punishment in shaping behaviours (Skinner, 1953). Both emphasised the necessity of studying the behaviours to predict the outcomes based on stimulus-response relationships.

In educational contexts, the teachers' behaviourist perspectives impact their strategies and techniques by hindering them from adopting more effective and communicative techniques that enhance students' critical thinking skills (Anderson, 1997). The focus on the behaviourist teaching methods may emphasise the development of students' memorisation skills while neglecting the self-reflection skills required to develop critical thinking skills. Teachers with this perception fail to provide a balanced teaching methodology that combines both cognitive theories and behaviourism (Dewey, 1933).

c) Language Awareness (LA)

Many researchers, such as Wilson & Marcin (2022), argue that language acquisition involves more than learning grammatical rules or vocabulary. The LA theory is built on this assumption of adopting a holistic teaching approach to teach language in sociocultural contexts.

Leeman et al. (2016, p. 12) define LA as the ability to examine “how ideologies, politics, and social hierarchies are embodied, reproduced and naturalised through language”. This means that students learning different languages must develop an awareness of the uses of language in different contexts (Clark et al., 1990). Language use is contextual, and therefore, social and cultural characteristics play an important role in the way language use. If these factors are well understood by the learners and teachers, they are expected to be well positioned to reason, claim, and involve themselves in situations with ease. Such an approach to language learning enhances not only language skills but also cognitive abilities.

This theory stresses the practice of developing students’ thinking abilities as means to increase their awareness of language use in different settings (Taylor et al., 2018). It was stated that learning a language without being aware and conscious of its cultural and social aspects is impossible (Brewer 1974; Lewis and Anderson 1985, cited in Schmidt, 1990). From this perspective, we can conclude that the LA theory is grounded in two primary approaches to language acquisition: the social practice approach and the cognitive competence development through critical discourse analysis approach. The social practice approach focuses on the student's comprehension of language usage in societal contexts. Fairclough (1989) emphasises the importance of students comprehending the language they use to build and regulate their interactions with others.

The cognitive competence development by the critical discourse analysis approach examines not only the language itself, but also the critical cognitive processes that accompany it, along with the critical thinking skills that aid in analysing the situations arising from language use (Fairclough, 2006). According to Borg's (1994) perspective, the LA approach adheres to constructivist epistemology, which views learners as more responsible for their learning and emphasises the crucial role of critical thinking skills in acquiring language.

2.4 Previous studies

Recently, there was a growing interest in the critical thinking implementation in the EFL context. While critical thinking implementation mostly resulted in the development of students’ linguistic and communicative competences (Byram, 1989; Gandimathi & Zarei, 2018), still previous research findings show teachers’ hesitance to incorporate a critical approach to teaching language. In this section, previous studies' findings, regarding critical thinking concept in education, teachers’ perspectives of critical thinking, and challenges hindered their adoption of critical skills, were presented.

Previous researchers traced the development of the critical thinking concept through history. Consequently, several attempts were made to provide a consensus definition. By the 1990s, the American Philosophical Association (APA) attempted to reach a consensus definition of critical thinking by assembling many experts in the educational field, ultimately defining critical thinking as an essential cognitive skill for learning. For instance, Lewis and Smith (1993) explored critical thinking definitions through literature and found that there was a lack of providing a clear and consensus definition for the term and suggested an attempt to provide a more unified definition and teaching strategies to properly incorporate critical thinking in the education field. Lewis and Smith (1993) tried to identify critical thinking skills as sub-skills, such as analysis and evaluating, and highlighted the necessity for a holistic understanding approach: cognitive and dispositional skills for better reasoning. Similarly, Halpern (1998) noted the importance of careful metacognitive and dispositional monitoring of the critical thinking skills development to smoothly transfer critical thinking skills across disciplines. This unclarity resulted on teachers' encountering some challenges and different perspectives regarding critical thinking implementation.

2.4.1 Teachers' perspectives of critical thinking

In this section, previous studies findings were thematically discussed regarding critical thinking definition, EFL teachers' general attitudes of critical thinking integration, language skills and critical thinking practice, critical thinking teaching strategies, and influence of social and cultural contexts on critical thinking teaching and learning. These themes were stressed previously in literature.

EFL teachers' conceptualisation of critical thinking was highly discussed by many researchers; for example, Kabir (2014) argued that teachers' understanding of critical thinking often reflects their prior theoretical knowledge, which consequently shapes their pedagogical decisions and classroom practices, but the main issue was highlighted that teachers had a fragmented understanding of the concept.

For example, Núñez and Téllez (2009) and Retnawati et al. (2018), using interviews and surveys, claimed that EFL teachers found it difficult to define critical thinking, and their definitions were limited to the cognitive aspect of the term, neglecting the dispositional dimension, which led to inconsistent implementation in their lessons. The same findings were mentioned by Masadeh (2021), who employed both questionnaires and interviews. Masadah (2021) pointed to the reason why teachers had limited understanding of the concept and its

integration by mentioning the lack of curricula sufficient instructions and materials that focus on the critical thinking implementation as main reasons. Similarly, Ayyash (2022) stated that teachers' theoretical knowledge and understanding of the concept could be affected by the curriculum instructions. Ayyash (2022), using survey data, argued that teachers who were using the Cambridge curriculum showed a deeper understanding of the concept because of the detailed instructions and information that were provided in the curriculum. These instructions included an explanation of what critical thinking is and how to integrate it into their lessons.

Conversely, Bachtiar et al. (2023), using semi-structured interviews, reported that while the minority of teachers showed limited understanding of the concept, the majority demonstrated deeper understanding, illustrating that critical thinking is a set of cognitive skills, including active learning, knowledge construction, problem-solving, and considering multiple perspectives due to their participation in tailored professional programmes focused on the student-centred teaching approach.

In summary, studies regarding the critical thinking concept highlighted that EFL teachers often showed limited understanding of the concept due to the curriculum's insufficient materials and instructions regarding critical thinking, but this still can be overcome by providing teachers with the sufficient instructions and involve them in tailored professional development training. Surprisingly, previous studies also revealed that although most of teachers lacked knowledge regarding critical thinking, they strongly believed in its importance and expressed positive attitudes toward its implementation.

Mostly, teachers expressed positive attitudes regarding critical thinking incorporation in EFL contexts in addition to their preference for more explicit instructions, need for a structured framework, and prior experience for better integration. Teachers also expressed negative attitudes toward their traditional perspective on adopting teaching approaches. For instance, Halpern (2013); Stefanova et al. (2017); and Gandimathi & Zarei (2018) argued that the majority of teachers showed positive attitudes by emphasising the importance of high-order thinking skills in enhancing students' communication, learning autonomy, and language skills. Moreover, Kennedy et al. (1991) and Tiruneh et al. (2014) discussed that teachers integrated critical thinking effectively when they had explicit instructions. By using a questionnaire, Khalil et al. (2024) supported this notion and added that to effectively prepare students to overcome 21st-century challenges, teachers should explicitly integrate critical thinking in their lessons.

Regarding the necessity of explicit instructions, teachers expressed their attitudes and opinions on the lack of structured frameworks and experience. Núñez & Téllez (2009) discussed the teachers' emphasis on having a structured pedagogical framework, suggesting scaffolds and

structured strategies such as modelling and chunking information for better integration. For prior experience, Asgharheidari & Tahriri (2015) mentioned that teachers with no prior qualifications and experiences on how to teach critical thinking could not properly incorporate it in their lessons. Boris & Ekiugbo (2021) also added that the absence of professional development among educators could hinder the implementation of the teaching strategies.

Finally, findings also highlighted that while teachers encouraged critical thinking implementation and recognised its role in developing students' language skills, they sometimes failed to successfully integrate it due to their traditional teaching attitudes. As illustration, Hadoud (2020) referred to teachers following traditional teaching methods and restricted by the curriculum constraints. Similarly, Masadeh (2021) and Ayyash (2022) reported that teachers prioritise content delivery over critical thinking development, which reflects teachers' adoption of a transmission perspective.

Previously, teachers clearly showed positive attitudes regarding critical thinking, highlighting the necessity of explicit instructions, structured frameworks, and proper professional training to shift from a teacher-centred approach to a student-centred one. This lack of knowledge and training affected teachers' use of critical thinking to develop all language domains and resulted on favouring some language skills over others.

The main objective of critical thinking implementation in EFL contexts is to develop students' language proficiency level; therefore, its integration across all language domains is essential. Both the present study and previous studies highlighted a varied EFL teachers' preference of some language skills over others for more effective integration.

For example, Yuan & Stapleton (2020) conducted a systematic literature review to collect data related to teachers' beliefs, practices, challenges, and instructional approaches regarding critical thinking and found that teachers prefer writing lessons to promote critical thinking tasks as they offer opportunities to develop evaluation, analysis, and reasoning skills. Similarly, Hadoud (2020) and Eissa (2021) claimed that writing tasks were regularly used by teachers to raise students' argumentative and problem-solving skills. Masadeh (2021), on the other hand, emphasised reading comprehension skills, referring to the opportunities to develop high-order thinking skills while analysing texts and making inferences. Ayyash (2022) found that most teachers encourage the integration of critical thinking across all language skills. They particularly integrated critical skills in writing and reading as more effective practices.

To conclude, critical thinking is recommended to be incorporated across all language domains, but teachers had different perspectives on which skill is more effective and appropriate

to foster students' critical skills. Similarly, teachers prioritized some strategies to integrate critical thinking rather than other skills.

While teachers suggested number of strategies that might help students to foster their critical thinking skills, their applications of these strategies were inconsistent. The highlighted strategies were questioning, discussions, debates, and reflective tasks. For instance, Halpern (2013); Jamil et al. (2024) argued that teachers used open-ended questions to encourage their analytical thinking and reasoning. Bachtiar et al. (2023) and Khan et al. (2025) both used qualitative methods, focus group and semi-structured interviews, to explore teachers' strategies reported that group discussions and debates were most used due to their effectiveness in fostering students' collaboration and communication skills. Moreover, Bachtiar et al. (2023) added that teachers also mentioned problem-solving tasks to help students to link between what they learn and real life. Moreover, Reflective practices were also nominated to raise students' cognitive awareness and self-evaluation Khan et al. (2025).

While these strategies highly recommended, researchers reported the teachers' insufficient integration and professional training programmes were needed to help teachers to vary their teaching methods. Furthermore, the choice of strategies and activities to foster critical skills was based on other factors such as the teachers' belief and disbelief on the essential role of sociocultural contextual implementation.

The social and cultural practices and influence had been acknowledged to have a dramatic effect on critical thinking teaching. Teachers' perspectives had been explored on these issues: the integration of social and cultural context to teach critical thinking and the effect of the students' social and cultural backgrounds on critical thinking dispositions.

In previous research, teachers had acknowledged the value of contextual integration. Yuan & Stapleton (2020), for instance, discussed in their review that EFL teachers believed that linking teaching tasks to students' real lives and sociocultural contexts could be the key for successful critical thinking teaching. Similarly, Abad (2022) argued that Libyan EFL teachers reported that the curriculum encouraged the contextual implementations by including reflective practices, but they rarely followed the contextual teaching approach because of a lack of training and explicit instructions. Additionally, Youcef (2023) reported that while teachers had strong intentions to incorporate social and cultural contexts, the institutional cultural constraints and rigid curriculum hindered their application. Furthermore, Bachtiar et al. (2024) argued that teachers suggested that critical thinking activities would be more effective if they were designed based on the students' social and cultural backgrounds rather than borrowed directly from Western models.

Moreover, the previous research findings showed that students' social and cultural backgrounds had a direct effect on critical thinking implementation. Mashaza (2017) stressed the importance of considering cultural backgrounds when integrating different teaching strategies. Mashaza (2017) noted that students in Norwegian schools tended to be more independent learners and critical thinkers, while Tanzanian students were more passive. She also clarified that, as a teacher, she found it challenging to adopt a learner-centred approach in the Norwegian school due to her prior experience in the Tanzanian school, which was more teacher-centred. Yaun & Stapleton (2020) illustrated that students with a collectivism perspective might hinder the critical thinking teaching process as they encourage the authority and high-power distance. Additionally, Eissa (2021), Masedah (2021), and Abad (2022) found that students tend to be passive learners and avoid involvement in discussions due to their prior social experiences and cultural norms.

To sum up, previous studies showed that teachers had different perspectives and attitudes which sometimes negatively affected critical thinking implementation. These different perspectives highlighted that there was a gap between teachers' prior theoretical knowledge and practical application. This gap was shaped by various encountered challenges restricting their implementation.

2.4.2 Challenges of implementing critical thinking

Researchers also studied the challenges of implementing critical thinking skills that EFL teachers may face as a primary step in accurately incorporating critical thinking into EFL classrooms. These challenges are typically grouped into two main areas: teacher-related challenges, student-related challenges (Alnofaie, 2013; Al-Kindi & Al-Mekhalfi, 2017; Eissa, 2021).

Firstly, the teacher-related challenges. Researchers listed time constraints, lack of knowledge, lack of training, extra-curricular activities, and assessment policy. Alnofaie (2013), conducted a study observing learners' speaking lessons and interviewing their teacher, found that their teacher was hesitant to incorporate critical thinking into the speaking lesson due to limited time for designing different activities. The participant teacher described the critical thinking teaching approach as a demanding approach requiring more time and effort. Moreover, Al-Kindi & Al-Mekhalfi (2017) and (Khalid et al. 2022) reported that teachers mentioned high workload and extracurricular activities as challenges. That study explained that Omani EFL

teachers are responsible for numerous extracurricular activities, leaving them insufficient time for critical thinking instruction in their classrooms.

Furthermore, Hadoud (2020) argued that limited knowledge, a rigid curriculum and a lack of proper training restricted university EFL instructors from incorporating critical thinking into their lessons. Hadoud (2020) recommended providing educators with more professional training, emphasising the necessity of applying certain teaching methodologies and curriculum reforms. In addition, Eissa (2021) noted that the rigid curriculum and assessment policy hindered critical thinking implementation. An inflexible and exam-based curriculum encourages the transmission perspective and did not provide clear instructions on how to integrate critical thinking effectively. Assessment policy, on the other hand, did not provide clear criteria to measure students' critical thinking development. Similarly, Masadeh (2021) and Fattah (2022) argued that the curriculum lacked explicit instructions which limited teachers' adoption of a critical approach. These challenges restricted their methodologies to more traditional approaches rather than adopting modern ones.

Secondly, students, on the other hand, can also present challenges for EFL teachers. Student-related challenges often stem from disengagement and lack of motivation, cultural and social backgrounds, and language proficiency. Aliakbari and Sadeghdaghighi (2012) surveyed 100 Iranian educators to investigate barriers to implementing critical thinking skills. The results emphasised that students often lack motivation because they resist the transformation from traditional learning approaches and taking responsibility for a student-centred learning approach. The researchers argued that this resistance was due to students' cultural and social backgrounds, as they were not familiar with or exposed to such cognitive skills in their everyday lives.

The study by Tan and Gopinathan (2015) emphasised that students' low levels of language proficiency were another obstacle for teachers in integrating critical thinking skills into their lessons. Teachers noted that the biggest barrier was often students' language proficiency. The study also mentioned that these students demonstrated the ability to communicate new concepts effectively, despite having previously shown hesitation regarding critical thinking.

2.3. Summary

EFL teachers play a crucial role in enhancing their students' cognitive and language competence by utilising appropriate and different teaching methods and strategies

(Samarasinghe, 2017). Critical thinking skills are recommended to be integrated into all fields in general and into the educational field in particular. It is considered an effective teaching strategy for developing learners' language proficiency by enhancing their cognitive skills and communicative competence. Previous studies were conducted using different methods such as questionnaires, interviews, and observations so that they could get the teachers' views about their teaching strategies, through which they enabled learners to develop critical thinking skills by discussing critical thinking definitions in educational disciplines, teachers' perspectives, and challenges regarding critical thinking implementation in EFL contexts.

For perspectives, findings presented varied teachers' perspectives relating to defining the concept, teachers' attitudes, language skills, critical thinking strategies, and the influence of sociocultural practice. For challenges, two types of challenges were highlighted: teacher-related challenges and student-related challenges. Finally, recommendations for curriculum reforms and professional development programmes were stressed in the literature review.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology employed in the study. It describes the research design and methods to answer research questions.

3.1 Research design

A research design is a logical description of the research overall strategy, including the selected data collection and analysis tools specifically employed to address the research questions. According to Bryman (2012:715), research design is "a framework for the collection and analysis of data." Overall, in this study, the research design aims to answer two main questions:

- What perspectives do Libyan high school EFL teachers have about using critical thinking in the EFL classroom?
- What challenges do Libyan high school EFL teachers face when implementing critical thinking in the English language learning classroom?

To address these two research questions, a mixed-methods research approach was used. In particular, this design describes the process of employing both qualitative and quantitative research instruments for sampling, data collection, and analysis process (Heigham & Croker, 2009). This design was chosen because the literature review emphasises the necessity of using a collection of quantitative and qualitative research tools to capture a holistic, comprehensive view of the EFL teachers' perspectives and challenges regarding critical thinking integrated into their teaching practice.

For instance, Lewis & Smith (1993) and Halpern (1998) pointed out that it was important to collect both quantitative and qualitative data to explain the critical thinking concept, as this combination provided a comprehensive, holistic view of the relationship between the teachers' perspectives and their conception of critical thinking. Similarly, Li (2023) demonstrated that this combination provides a comprehensive view of the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their understanding of critical thinking. In addition, this approach reduces the bias of adopting either qualitative or quantitative data only (Byrman, 2012).

3.2 Sampling

In the present study, two different sampling techniques were used. Firstly, by a convenience sampling technique, the high EFL Zintan schools' teachers were designated to be the target population for this study. The Zintan EFL teachers were selected to participate in the questionnaire because of their accessibility for the researcher, besides the EFL curriculum used for such levels being the same all over Libya; therefore, the EFL classroom and teachers would not be different. According to Wolf et al. (2016), a convenience sampling technique is a non-probability sampling technique in which the researcher selects the participants based on their accessibility or availability, consequently leading to quick data collection (Golzar et al., 2022). Secondly, by employing a random sampling technique, six Zintan EFL high school teachers were selected to be interviewed. A simple random sampling method is a probability sampling method where each individual in the target population has an equal opportunity to be selected (Adu & Miles, 2023).

Initially, the sampling process started with creating a list of all Zintan secondary school EFL teachers using the schools' records. Then, a questionnaire was distributed to those teachers to collect the quantitative data. Moreover, to ensure the secondary participation level, reminders were sent and clear instructions were provided on how to complete the questionnaire. 50 teachers filled the questionnaire, which was considered to be an appropriate number to generate the statistics for this study and avoid the risk of non-response participants. According to Cohen et al. (2017), thirty is the minimum number of participants to account for statistics requirements; therefore, 50 is a sufficient sample size.

Next, for collecting the qualitative data, a fishbowl random sampling technique was used to select six teachers for the interview. A list of the 50 teachers' names who participated in the questionnaire were used to randomly select participants for the interview. This method was employed for reducing research bias (Adu & Miles, 2023). According to Young and Casey (2018), a six-participant sample size is a sufficient number to collect qualitative data due to the specific context and themes predetermination which led to quickly reach the saturation point. For this study, EFL context, secondary levels, and location were predetermined as specific contexts. Additionally, perspectives and challenges were previously drawn as predetermined themes on the literature review.

3.3 Data collection tools

In this section, a description of the data collection process was provided. The quantitative and qualitative data were gathered through two different instruments. Firstly, the procedure started with the distribution of questionnaire, ended with conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews. The data was collected during the timeframe from 25th December 2024 to 15th January 2025.

3.3.1. Questionnaire

In this study, a questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data, exploring the perspectives and challenges of Zintan EFL secondary teachers regarding the integration of critical thinking in EFL classrooms. The researcher focused on investigating the teachers' theoretical and practical knowledge, which consequently shaped their perspectives and challenges they faced. A questionnaire is defined as "any written document that provides respondents with a sequence of questions or statements in which they respond either by writing out their answers or choosing from an already existing or given answer" (Brown, 2001, p. 6). Besides generating the quantitative data for this study, a questionnaire was used due to its efficiency in gathering information, maintaining participant anonymity, and reducing response bias. According to Creswell (2014), a questionnaire is primarily employed to reduce interviewer bias by standardising the results obtained, ensuring the consistency of data collection across participants. In addition to ensuring participant anonymity, which promotes participants to openly express their thoughts and share experiences (Dillman et al., 2014).

Additionally, the questionnaire consisted of three sets of open-ended questions. The first set included three demographic questions about the teachers' experience, highest educational degree, participation in professional development programmes. The second set was designed to answer the first research question investigating the EFL secondary teachers' perspectives, whereas the last set answered the second research question about the faced challenges of implementing critical thinking in EFL contexts (see Appendix one).

For the perspectives section, the TPI survey constructs and rating scales were adopted to design the questionnaire items. These items were divided into three main constructs: actions, intentions, and beliefs based on the TPI survey classification that was built on the assumption that our perspectives are a consequence of our actions, intentions, and beliefs (Dignath et al., 2022). Firstly, the actions construct consisted of 14 items, exploring how teachers incorporate critical thinking skills in their language lessons. Then, the intentions construct involved 12 items, investigating what teachers intend to accomplish while teaching language and integrating

critical thinking in their lessons. Finally, the beliefs construct had 14 items, investigating the teachers' beliefs of the critical thinking concept and its integration into EFL classrooms.

Moreover, the TPI survey rating scales were also adopted to assess the three constructs. Two different Likert scales were used: a frequency scale and an "agree and disagree" scale. These were mainly employed to provide more precise measurements of the perspectives and reduce the response bias (Sikström et al., 2023). The frequency scale rated the constructs of actions and intentions, using five points ranging from "never" to "always". This scale measured how often teachers repeated their actions and accomplished their intended goals. In contrast, beliefs were scored on a 5-point scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". This scale is widely used to evaluate perceptions, attitudes, and opinions regarding specific issues. Finally, after reviewing the relevant literature, the researcher modified the TPI survey items to specifically investigate the teachers' perspectives of teaching and integrating critical thinking skills in the EFL context instead of generally exploring the teachers' teaching perspectives. Critical thinking and EFL contexts were identified as a limitation of the explored fields.

For the challenges' section, the items were categorised into two sections: teacher-related and student-related. This classification was adopted after reviewing relevant literature related to the topic. Specifically, the teacher-related research aimed to investigate challenges related to the EFL teachers' misconceptions of the critical thinking term, resources and support (Al-Kindi & Al-Mekhalfi, 2017), curricula constraints, extracurricular activities (Khalid, Bucheerei, & Issa, 2022), and time limitations. This section consisted of nine items. The first item was related to the teachers' ability to properly define the critical thinking concept. Then, the following six items were adopted from Masadeh's research (2021). Finally, the last three items were taken from Hadoud's study (2020). In contrast, for the student-related challenges regarding teachers' perceptions, six items were designed to identify the challenges relating to the students' motivation and language proficiency level, in addition to their cultural and social backgrounds (Hadoud, 2020; Eissa, 2021). Similarly, for the challenges section, a 5-point scale starting with "strongly agree" and ending with "strongly disagree" was utilised to identify the teacher-related and student-related challenges. Eventually, participants had to reflect on their answers in the reflection section to add any other details about the issues discussed.

a) Questionnaire validity and reliability

For ensuring the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, the items were translated into the Arabic version to ensure clarity besides enhancing the reliability and validity of the modified items. The translation process involved both forward translation and backward translation to

guarantee a high accuracy level. Initially, the items were translated into Arabic by two different translators, the researcher and another translator, to avoid any possible mistakes. According to Wong et al. (2014) two independent translators should translate the questionnaire items to guarantee their accuracy. In addition, one of the translators should have the knowledge about the tested concepts to have a closely similar translation of the original instrument, while the other translator should not be aware of the questionnaire objectives to help in detecting any differences (Guillemin et al., 1993). Finally, the questionnaire was piloted to avoid any confusion and whether participants have any possible suggestions for improvements. Consequently, this adoption of constructs, rating scales, and modifying the questions of a valid and reliable model helped in enhancing the validity and reliability of the questionnaire.

b) Questionnaire distribution

Finally, the distribution process started with scheduled meetings with schools' administrators to discuss the study's objectives and the questionnaire distribution to the teachers in the school. Additionally, a two-week deadline was set to collect the questionnaires back. To ensure participation, reminders were sent regularly to the schools and teachers, confirming all EFL secondary teachers within the schools answered the questionnaires. Confidentially, the completed questionnaires were collected back directly from the teachers to ensure that all copies were gathered. Finally, these copies were used to select participants for the semi-structured interviews.

3.3.2. Semi-structured interview

For the qualitative data collection, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with six EFL teachers. Kothari (2004) defined interviews as “an interview involves the presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and replies in terms of oral-verbal responses” (p. 97). Interviews are commonly used to explore opinions, attitudes, perceptions, and phenomena (Punch, 2009). Although there are different types of interviews, the researcher selected semi-structured interviews to collect information on both the teachers' perspectives and challenges regarding the implementation of critical thinking. A semi-structured interview is defined as “semi-structured qualitative interviews for individuals and groups that gather data on the more intangible aspects of the school's culture, e.g., values, assumptions, beliefs, wishes, and problems” (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 97).

Moreover, semi-structured interviews were identified as the most appropriate type for the current study due to their flexibility in gathering in-depth information on the topic, resulting in a holistic view. According to Fontana and Frey (2005), in semi-structured interviews, participants can freely and fully express their thoughts, perceptions, and knowledge; therefore, the data obtained are more meaningful and valuable and can more easily generate themes compared to other methods of generalisation (Bryman, 2012). However, some cautions were highlighted when conducting semi-structured interviews. Cohen et al. (2017) and Bryman (2012) pointed out that new researchers should consider these cautions while conducting interviews: standardised questions and leading interviewees. They explained that researchers should avoid both repeating the same types of questions and leading participants' responses by suggesting answers. In the present study, these cautions were addressed by designing an interview schedule (see Appendix C).

The interview schedule consisted of three sets of questions. The first set included three questions enquiring about the EFL teachers' previous theoretical knowledge of the critical thinking concept. The second set contained two questions investigating the teachers' practical and pedagogical knowledge related to implementing critical thinking in EFL classrooms. Finally, the last set consisted of one question regarding the challenges encountered in critical thinking integration.

a) Interview validity and reliability

A list of predetermined open-ended questions was prepared in advance to guide the interview and enhance the natural flow of conversation. These questions were also translated into Arabic to avoid any ambiguity. Then, they were piloted with four EFL teachers to check for wording and any ambiguity. According to Wellington (2015), pilot studies are a good opportunity to practise conducting an interview before the actual study. Furthermore, this preparation of the interview schedule helped the researcher focus on the participants' responses rather than on what to ask.

b) Conducting interviews

Interviews were conducted in January 2024 with six EFL high school teachers from different schools in Zintan. Each interview lasted approximately 35 minutes. They began by reminding participants of the purpose of the study, ensuring the confidentiality and comfort of the participants, seeking their permission to record the interview. The same order of questions was used for all interviews, starting with 'defining critical thinking' and ending with 'teachers'

challenges'. In addition, the flow of conversation raised other questions, resulting in a deeper exploration of the topic. The researcher also used both probes and prompts to explore the participants' knowledge in depth. King and Horrocks (2010:40) defined 'probes' as follow-up questions that require participants to comment on and clarify their previous responses, whereas 'prompts' are short questions to identify the type of data required and are used when participants are unsure about their responses.

Next, the interviews were all transcribed by the researcher, and a sample of transcriptions were included to ensure the accuracy and precision of the obtained data (see Appendix E). A transcription is defined as 'the written translation of a recorded interview or focus group session' (Bryman, 2012:717). Finally, these transcriptions also helped in analysing the data and generating themes."

3.4 Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted on the 25th of December 2024 to enhance the reliability and validity of the data collection research instruments. According to Williamson (2004:307-312), the pilot study is "a small experiment designed to test logistics and gather information prior to a larger study to improve the latter's quality and efficiency." The researcher piloted both the questionnaire and the interview as data collection instruments for this study. Furthermore, the pilot study underwent three stages: development, structured field piloting, and final adjustments.

In the development stage, the researcher designed a draft of the questionnaire items and the interview schedule in both English and Arabic languages to ensure the clarity and relevance of the questions and their alignment with the study context and objectives. This helped to overcome any ambiguity that could be found in the questions. Secondly, in the structured field piloting stage, the questionnaire was distributed first to four EFL teachers from different secondary schools in Zintan, who confirmed their participation in the study. Then, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the same four teachers, lasting approximately 35 minutes. The participants' feedback was taken into consideration and recorded.

For the questionnaire, teachers highlighted that items were clear enough. The flow and the structure were engaging for both the perspectives and challenges sections, but they pointed out that the questionnaire was quite lengthy, which might affect completion rates. Additionally, they suggested having a reflective section or some open-ended questions to provide a chance for more detailed, comprehensive answers. For the interviews, they mentioned that although the

Arabic version of the questions enhanced their understanding of the topic, they still suggested providing examples of critical thinking skills or a definition to help participants understand what exactly they were talking about, as they might not be fully sure of their accurate understanding of the concept.

Finally, for the adjustment stage, a reflective section was added to the questionnaire to provide an opportunity for adding more details and reflecting on answers. On the other hand, the questionnaire length could not be reduced to avoid neglecting any related aspect, as the main aim of this study was to provide a holistic, comprehensive view of the discussed topic. Moreover, the researcher added follow-up questions for the interview schedule, such as, “In your opinion, can you teach cognitive skills, such as analysing, evaluation, and decision-making skills in EFL classrooms?” These questions were added to clarify the meaning of critical thinking without defining it. According to Bloom's Taxonomy classification of the cognitive skills, these skills are referenced as critical thinking skills in the educational field (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). In addition, the researcher purposely avoided defining the concept to figure out if teachers could define critical thinking appropriately or not, as it was considered to be the main challenge for most EFL teachers participated in previous studies (Hadoud, 2020; Abad, 2021).

3.5 Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability are essential concepts in research methodology for achieving the integrity of the study outcomes, as they ensure the accuracy and credibility of the study findings (Heale & Twycross, 2015). Therefore, several procedures were followed to measure both validity and reliability.

3.5.1. Validity

In the current study, efforts were made to ensure the validity of the questionnaire and the semi-structured interview using different types of validity. Specifically, validity refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure or its claimed face value (Blumberg et al., 2005; Robson, 2011). Face and content validity were tested for both the questionnaire and interviews. Construct validity, on the other hand, was established for the questionnaire.

Face validity refers to the extent to which an instrument appears to measure what it is intended to measure, whereas content validity refers to the degree to which an item or question accurately represents the topic it is designed to measure (Kumar, 2011). For the present study,

face validity was achieved through a review of both the questionnaire items and interview schedules by the supervisor. Moreover, both instruments were piloted to test their content validity. The pilot study provided insights into how well the test items perform in practice. Additionally, translating the questionnaire items and interview questions enhanced content validity by ensuring the contextual and cultural relevance of the instruments' items to the discussed topic.

Finally, the adoption of the TPI survey as a design framework for the questionnaire increased its construct validity. According to Pratt and Collins (1998), the TPI survey items are based on established theoretical frameworks, which can be utilized to achieve construct validity. Consequently, the questionnaire was developed using the TPI survey framework by aligning the theoretical constructs (beliefs, actions, and intentions) and rating scales (frequency, agreement, and disagreement) of the TPI survey with those presented in the questionnaire.

3.5.2. Reliability

In the research methodology, reliability is also fundamental to ensure the gathered data is credible and can be replicated. According to Kumar (2011), "If a research tool is consistent and stable, hence predictable and accurate, it is said to be reliable." (p.181). Therefore, the researcher adopted quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments to enhance the credibility of the findings by cross-verifying results obtained from both data collection instruments. In research methodology, this technique is called "triangulation", which involves investigating the same situation using multiple methods.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are essential for conducting research. Researchers should include two main values in their research. These values are "the pursuit of knowledge", and "rights of research participants" (Neuman, 2012, p.53). Participants should be informed consent and maintained confidentiality, highlighting their voluntary participation. In the consent (see appendix A), participants are informed that their personal details and answers would be kept autonomous. Also, their participation is completely voluntary and have the right to withdraw at any time. prioritizing ethical considerations not only enhances the integrity of the research but also contributes to the credibility and validity of the findings.

Before data collection stage, all the participants who ensured their willingness in the participation in this study were required to sign an informed consent form. This form explains the research objectives, procedure and how the data will be saved. furthermore, the consents

inform the participants that their participation is completely voluntary and they may withdraw from the study at any time. In addition, to maintain participants' privacy, all personal data and any personal information including names, recordings and transcripts provided by the participants were securely stored so that only the researcher can access the data.

3.7 Summary

In this section, research procedures and tools were discussed. The mixed-methods research design was adopted to provide a comprehensive and holistic understanding due to the complexity of the study's topic. This research design was included in most of the study's procedures, including sampling and data collection.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a description of the results for both data collection instruments, namely; questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The results of questionnaire were summarized in tables, while the semi-structured interviews were analysed thematically.

4.1 Data analysis

Proceeding the data collection stage, the gathered data obtained from questionnaires and interviews was analysed. The researcher followed a descriptive data analysis type for the quantitative and qualitative data; using frequency distribution analysis for questionnaires data and Thematic analysis for interview data. The frequency distribution measures how often values is repeated within one database and percentage to show what proportion each response represents of the total. This type is suitable for this study, as it helps in identifying themes and patterns. Moreover, the analysed data were summarized in tables. On the other hand, thematic analysis means investigating a group of themes that reflect the core of verbal data and discover recurring patterns (Sarantakos, 2013). The thematic analysis used to analyse the interviews' results.

The analysis procedures started with filling the results of the questionnaire in Excel to measure the means of the values. The researcher used Microsoft Excel software, because of its feasibility and the researcher's lack of training in data management, that usually increase the risk of data collection and recording errors (Elliott et al., 2006). Then, for thematic analysis, starting with transcribing the interviews' recordings. Next, generating initial codes that represent patterns of the data. Finally, grouping related codes into general themes.

4.2 Questionnaire results

The questionnaire results were presented in two themes to answer the research questions: perspectives and challenges. Moreover, the questionnaire started with three questions exploring the participants' backgrounds.

4.2.1. Participants Background

Teachers were required to answer three questions related to their highest educational level, years of teaching experience, and whether they had participated in any professional development programmes.

a) The highest educational level.

The results show that the majority of participants, 88%, have a bachelor's degree; on the other hand, 12% of participants have a master's degree.

b) The teaching experience years.

Relating to the teaching experience years, 62% of the participants have been teaching English as a foreign language for almost five years. However, 26% have been EFL teachers for between five and ten years, whereas the minority of participants, 12%, have been teaching for ten years or more.

c) Professional development programme participation.

Results for item 3 reveal that 58% of participants had participated in professional development programmes, whereas the other 42% had not participated in any programmes.

4.2.2. The teachers' perspectives of critical thinking

The perspectives section represents the first theme that answers the first research question "What perspectives do Libyan high school EFL teachers have about implementing critical thinking in EFL classroom?". The perspectives' section results were presented in three sub-sections; starting with actions, intentions, and ending with beliefs.

a) Actions

The results of the action sub-section show how participants instruct and teach critical thinking in the EFL context. This theme consists of thirteen items, starting with item four and ending with seventeen. Eventually, the results for this section were summarised in the table (4.1).

The items 4-7 explored how teachers perceive and implement critical thinking within the limitations of curriculum and content coverage. Firstly, item 4 explored whether teachers prioritise covering course content or developing students' critical skills. The results of item four show comparable percentages between the options 'Always' 20%, 'Usually' 28%, and

'Sometimes' 24%. On the other hand, a minority of participants, 18%, chose 'Rarely'. Finally, 10% of teachers selected 'Never'. Item 5 investigated to which extent teachers emphasise critical thinking as a separate objective while teaching. The results reveal that 30% of the teachers picked 'usually'. When 26% of teachers selected 'Always', comparably, 24% of teachers chose 'Sometimes'. In contrast, 14% of the teachers rarely emphasise it as a separate learning objective, whereas 6% of teachers selected the 'Never' option. Item 6 investigated how often teachers use the curriculum to teach critical thinking. The obtained data illustrates that the majority of teachers, at 44%, selected 'usually'. Additionally, 22% of participants chose always, while 18% sometimes do so. In contrast, 10% of participants rarely do, and 6% never use it. Lastly, item 7 measures the degree to which the teacher follows syllabus objectives related to critical thinking development. The findings show that half of the teachers (50%) picked 'always', while 22% chose 'usually'. Additionally, 18% sometimes do so. However, 10% selected 'rarely'.

Secondly, Items 8–12 are designed to analyse how EFL teachers integrate critical thinking skills among the four language skills, speaking, listening, reading, and writing, besides their attempts to improve overall language proficiency through critical thinking. Item 8 evaluates the teacher's pedagogy to blend language instruction with critical thinking across all language skills. Teachers show semi-similar percentages: 32% always, 28% usually, and 24% sometimes. However, 12% of teachers rarely help students to improve students' language proficiency by incorporating critical thinking, while 4% never do. Furthermore, item 9 focuses on whether teachers emphasise the critical thinking integration into speaking skills. The results reveal that 32% of teachers selected 'always' to integrate critical thinking into speaking skills, while another 32% sometimes and usually do so. Alternatively, 10% rarely integrate critical thinking in speaking lessons, and 6% do not. Additionally, item 10 investigates whether listening activities are employed to engage students in critical analysis and reflection. Interestingly, data shows that 28% of teachers never or rarely include critical thinking in their listening lessons, while 22% of teachers chose 'sometimes'. Conversely, 12% of teachers selected 'usually', and 10% always do so. Item 11 explores whether teachers use the writing tasks to enhance critical thinking skills. The data illustrate that most teachers rarely implement critical thinking in writing lessons, with 38% sometimes doing so and an additional 24% of participants selecting 'never'. Conversely, 18% of participants usually implement it, while 6% always do. Finally, item 12 explored whether teachers use reading materials to foster critical thinking skills. The data shows that the majority of participants, 38%, always emphasise critical thinking in reading lessons, while 24% usually do so. Additionally, 18% of teachers chose

‘sometimes’. In contrast, 14% of teachers rarely incorporate critical thinking in their reading instruction, and 6% never do.

Next, items 13-15 measure the critical thinking teaching strategies that are used to develop critical thinking, such as modelling, questioning, and encouraging classroom debate. Item 13 assesses whether teachers model critical thinking attitudes themselves to foster students' critical skills learning. The results reveal that most of the teachers (36%) usually model critical thinking for students. Equally, 26% of teachers are always and sometimes modelling critical thinking. Conversely, 12% rarely do. Next, item 14 assesses the teachers' use of questioning strategy. The data shows that half of teachers (50%) ask a lot of questions while teaching to practice critical thinking skills, while 24% of them usually do so. Additionally, 18% of the teachers selected the “sometimes” option, while 8% rarely ask questions. Additionally, item 15 explores the employment of debates as a strategy to engage students in critical thinking activities. The findings show that 38% of teachers always use debates to practice critical thinking skills, while 22% usually do so, and 30% sometimes challenge students' understanding through debates. On the other hand, 8% rarely did this, and 2% selected ‘never’.

The following set of items (16-17) examined how clearly and contextually critical thinking is integrated and instructed in the classroom. Item 16: How explicitly and clearly critical thinking practices and objectives are instructed. The findings show that 36% of teachers make critical thinking instructions very clear, while 32% usually do. Similarly, 14% of teachers chose ‘sometimes’ and ‘rarely’, and 4% never do. Lastly, item 17 explores whether teachers link the critical thinking practice to the real-world, social, and cultural contexts. The results clarify that 24% of teachers always put critical thinking in social and cultural contexts, 30% usually and 32% sometimes do so. In contrast, 12% of teachers selected ‘rarely’, and 2% of them chose ‘never’.

NO.	Statement	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Usually		Always	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Critical thinking and curriculum											
4	I prioritize covering content accurately in the allotted time, rather than developing students' critical thinking skills	5	10%	9	18%	12	24%	14	28%	10	20%
5	I emphasize critical thinking as a separate learning objective in my lesson plans.	3	6%	7	14%	12	24%	15	30%	13	26%
6	I use the course content as a way to teach about critical thinking skills.	3	6%	5	10%	9	18%	22	44%	11	22%
7	I carefully follow the syllabus and course critical thinking learning objectives.	0	0%	5	10%	9	18%	11	22%	25	50%
Language skills											
8	I help students to develop all language skills by incorporating critical thinking instructions in my lessons.	2	4%	6	12%	12	24%	14	28%	16	32%
9	I integrate critical thinking skills in speaking lessons.	3	6%	5	10%	16	32%	10	20%	16	32%
10	I include critical thinking skills in listening lessons.	14	28%	14	28%	11	22%	6	12%	5	10%
11	I implement critical thinking in writing language lessons.	12	24%	19	38%	14	28%	9	18%	3	6%
12	I emphasize critical thinking in my reading lessons.	3	6%	7	14%	9	18%	12	24%	19	38%
Strategies											
13	I model critical thinking skills for students.	0	0%	6	12%	13	26%	18	36%	13	26%
14	While teaching, I ask a lot of questions relevant to critical thinking skills.	0	0%	4	8%	9	18%	12	24%	25	50%
15	I challenge students' understanding through debates to enhance their critical thinking skills.	1	2%	4	8%	15	30%	11	22%	19	38%
Critical thinking integration											
16	I make critical thinking instructions very clear for students to follow.	2	4%	7	14%	7	14%	16	32%	18	36%
17	During teaching, I put critical thinking skills within a social and cultural context.	1	2%	6	12%	16	32%	15	30%	12	24%

Table (4.1) Samples' responses to 'Actions' items.

b) Intentions

The intention sub-section illustrates the results of what teachers try to accomplish when integrating critical thinking skills in their language lessons. Table (4.2) summarized the results for this section.

By examining the first four items (18-21) in this section, results show what the teachers' pedagogical intentions are regarding the balance between delivering subject content and fostering students' critical thinking skills. Firstly, item 18 explores whether teachers prioritise content delivery, neglecting critical thinking improvement. The findings illustrate a significant majority of teachers, 40%, usually do so. Additionally, an equal percentage of teachers, 20%, sometimes and never intend to, while 12% do so rarely. Notably, only 8% of teachers intend to focus on teaching the content itself. Secondly, Item 19 investigates whether the teacher's emphasis on students' examination scores is the most important learning objective. The results show that 40% of teachers expect high exam scores as a result of their teaching, while a comparable 36% usually share this expectation. Furthermore, 16% of teachers expect so. In contrast, only 6% rarely focus on exam scores, and 2% never do. In addition, item 20 assesses whether teachers aim to balance between teaching course material and students' critical thinking skills improvement. The data reveal that 48% of teachers sometimes balance curriculum content with critical thinking, while 28% usually aim for this, and 16% always do so. However, only 8% of teachers selected 'never'. Item 21 explores the teacher's intention to incorporate critical thinking skill enhancement within the covered content. The results illustrate that 44% of teachers usually aim to, and 34% of them always follow the same approach, while 18% sometimes do so. Yet, only 4% never do.

Items 22-25 focused on analysing teachers' aims to teach critical thinking as a set of cognitive skills, dispositions or both. Item 22 investigates teachers' plans to teach critical thinking as a set of high-order cognitive skills. Data demonstrates 32% of teachers usually plan to. Comparatively, 28% always do so, while 18% selected 'sometimes'. However, 14% rarely do so. Only 8% chose 'never'. Furthermore, item 23 assesses the extent to which teachers' instructional intention to cultivate deeper critical thinking levels. The results reveal that the majority of teachers, with 40% always and 30% usually, do so. Additionally, 18% of teachers selected 'sometimes'. However, 8% chose 'rarely', while 6% never do. Furthermore, item 24 explores whether teachers plan to construct their lessons on prior students' critical dispositions and skills. The outcomes illustrate that 26% of teachers plan to. Similarly, 22% of teachers usually or sometimes do so. However, 16% rarely plan so, and 4% selected 'never'. Lastly, item 25 measures the teachers' expectations of students building their learning on critical thinking

skills. The data show that 36% of teachers usually expect students to acquire new knowledge through critical reasoning and analysis of course content. An additional 30% always share this expectation, while 18% sometimes do. Conversely, 12% of teachers rarely hold this expectation, and 4% never do.

Finally, the last items (26-29) were determined to explore teachers' intentions to implement critical thinking meaningfully into classroom practices, with attention to context, strategy, and language improvement. Initially, item 26 studied the teachers' intentions of the contextual integration necessity. The results show that over half of the teachers, specifically 52%, intend to include social and cultural activities to enhance critical thinking skills, while 24% usually use such activities. Additionally, 18% picked 'sometimes'. In contrast, only 6% rarely do so. Next, item 27 examined the teachers' expectations of students to transfer the learnt critical skills in real contexts. The highest percentage of teachers, 48%, always expect so, while the other 28% of teachers usually expect this. Furthermore, 16% sometimes do so. However, 8% rarely expect so. Later on, item 28 measures the diverse teaching strategies to effectively improve critical thinking across different contexts. The findings show that 36% always do so, 28% selected 'sometimes', and 26% chose 'usually'. Conversely, 10% of the teachers picked 'rarely'. Finally, item 29 assesses whether teachers' objective of language skills development is a natural outcome of motivating students in critical thinking activities. The results reveal that mainly 38% of teachers aim to, when a relatively similar number of teachers, 30%, usually do so. Additionally, 22% selected 'sometimes'. However, only 10% picked 'rarely'.

No.	Statement	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Usually		Always	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Critical thinking and course content											
18	I intend to focus on teaching the subject content and neglecting critical thinking instructions.	10	20%	6	12%	10	20%	20	40%	4	8%
19	As a result of my teaching, students are expected to score well on examinations.	1	2%	3	6%	8	16%	18	36%	20	40%
20	I aim to provide a balance between critical thinking and subject content in my lessons.	0	0%	4	8%	24	48%	14	28%	8	16%
21	While teaching course content, I aim to develop students' critical thinking skills.	0	0%	2	4%	9	18%	22	44%	17	34%
Critical thinking definition											
22	I plan to teach critical thinking as set of high-order cognitive skills.	4	8%	7	14%	9	18%	16	32%	14	28%
23	I aim to help students develop more complex ways of reasoning, analysing, and evaluating.	1	2%	6	12%	16	32%	15	30%	12	24%
24	I plan to build my language lessons on prior students' critical thinking dispositions and skills.	3	6%	8	16%	11	22%	11	22%	17	34%
25	I expect students to construct new knowledge by reasoning and analysing course content.	2	4%	6	12%	9	18%	18	36%	15	30%
Critical thinking integration											
26	I intend to include social and cultural practice activities to enhance students' critical thinking skills and language skills.	0	0%	3	6%	9	18%	12	24%	26	52%
27	I expect students to know how to apply critical thinking in real contexts.	0	0%	4	8%	8	16%	14	28%	24	48%
28	I aim to integrate varied strategies to foster students' critical thinking skills.	0	0%	6	12%	13	26%	18	36%	13	26%
29	I aim to enhance students' language proficiency level through critical thinking teaching.	0	0%	5	10%	11	22%	15	30%	19	38%

Table (4.2) Samples' responses to 'Intentions' items.

c) Beliefs

The beliefs section presents the findings of what teachers believe about instructing or teaching critical thinking in EFL contexts. The results for the first two items (30-31) show the teachers' conceptual understanding of the critical thinking concept. Firstly, item 30 explores whether teachers perceive critical thinking as a combination of skills and dispositions. The data reveal that responses varied. 30% of teachers strongly agreed, compared to 4% who strongly disagreed. In addition, 34% agreed, compared to 6% who disagreed. However, 20% were neutral. Secondly, item 31 assesses teachers' belief that critical thinking can be taught as cognitive skills such as reasoning, evaluating, and analyzing. Findings reveal that more than half of the teachers, 40%, agreed that critical thinking skills could be taught, while 36% of the teachers strongly agreed with the idea, followed by 20% who were neutral, 2% who disagreed, and 2% who strongly disagreed.

The second set of items (32-35) investigates how teachers perceive the role of prior knowledge for both teachers and students. Item 32 explores whether teachers understand the role of being critical thinkers themselves to teach effectively. Comparably, results reveal that 40% of the teachers strongly agree, whereas 44% of the teachers agree with teachers being critical thinkers in the first place. Just 2% of the teachers neither agree nor disagree with this idea. Again, 8% of the participants disagree, whereas 6% of the teachers strongly disagree. Additionally, item 33 examines the teacher's belief on the requirement of prior teacher knowledge of the concept regarding critical thinking teaching. The data show that 34% of the teachers strongly agree that critical thinking teaching is based on the teachers' prior knowledge, and 40% of them agree. Although 14% of the teachers neither agree nor disagree. Still, 10% of the teachers agree, and only 2% of them also strongly disagree with the idea. Moreover, item 34 measures teachers' belief in the need for students to have the prior critical dispositions to learn critical thinking. Outcomes clarify that the highest percentage of teachers, 42%, agree that students' effective critical thinking learning is built on their pre-existing critical thinking dispositions. Additionally, 22% strongly agree. Conversely, 30% were neutral, while only 16% of them disagreed with the idea, and none of them strongly disagreed. Next, item 35 explores the importance of students' previously critical thinking habits in determining their ability to be engaged in these skills learning process. The results show that 28% of teachers strongly agree, and 40% agree. While 20% are neutral, 12% disagree.

The third set of items (36 – 38) presents the results related to teachers' beliefs on how critical thinking is integrated in their lessons. Item 36 explores whether teachers value the explicit instructions and structured frameworks as essentials for teaching critical thinking.

Results show 30% of the teachers strongly agree, while the majority of 42% of them agree. Nearly 20% of the teachers neither agree nor disagree. When only 6% of 50 teachers disagree, whereas 2% strongly disagree. Items 37 and 38 investigate teachers' belief on the importance of sociocultural contextual critical thinking learning practices. The results of item 37 show that the majority of participants, 38%, agreed that critical thinking must be taught in social and cultural contexts. However, 18% equally were neutral and disagreed. Whereas, 6% of the participants strongly disagreed with that. While results of item 38 reveal that 34% teachers equally agreed and strongly agreed that critical thinking must be taught in social and cultural contexts. However, 18% were neutral. While only 12% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed.

Finally, the last set of items (39 – 43) analyse teachers' beliefs on the relationship between critical thinking instructions and language skills. Initially, item 39 assesses whether teachers believe that critical thinking teaching success is the important key to improve all language skills. The results show that 36% of the teachers strongly agree and 42% agree with the idea, whereas 16% were neutral. On the other hand, only 6% of the teachers disagree with the idea, and none of them strongly disagree. Next, item 40 explores the teachers' belief on the effectiveness of speaking lessons in practicing critical skills. The results show that 46% of teachers agree, and 28% of them strongly agree. While 18% were neutral. Conversely, 6% of participants disagree, whereas 2% of them strongly disagree. While for item 41, it evaluated how teachers evaluate the integration of critical thinking into listening lessons as more effective than other language skills. The findings reveal that half of the teachers, 50%, agree, while 26% strongly agree. The other 26% of teachers were neutral. Just 12% disagree and only 6% strongly disagree with the idea. Thereafter, item 42 investigates whether teachers believe that reading lessons are best to enhance critical skills. The data present that 44% of teachers agree, while 30% of them strongly agree, while 20% were neutral. Additionally, 6% of them disagree, and none of them strongly disagree. Finally, item 43 explores whether teachers perceive writing tasks as opportunities for students to practice critical skills. The results show that the majority of teachers either agree (42%) or strongly agree (26%); additionally, 30% of them were neutral. Whereas 12% of the teachers disagree, and none of them strongly disagree.

NO.	Statement	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Critical thinking definition											
30	Critical thinking is a set of skills as much as dispositions.	2	4%	6	12%	10	20%	17	34%	15	30%
31	Critical thinking is a number of teachable cognitive skills.	1	2%	1	2%	10	20%	20	40%	18	36%
Prior knowledge											
32	Effective critical thinking teachers must first be critical thinkers.	3	6%	4	8%	1	2%	22	44%	20	40%
33	Teaching critical thinking is built on what teachers already know about the concept.	1	2%	5	10%	7	14%	20	40%	17	34%
34	To effectively learn critical thinking skills, students must already have the critical thinking dispositions.	0	0%	8	16%	15	30%	21	42%	11	22%
35	Prior encountered critical thinking dispositions are the most important key to critical thinking learning success.	0	0%	6	12%	10	20%	20	40%	14	28%
Critical thinking integration											
36	Critical thinking is effectively taught by having clear instruction and structured framework.	1	2%	3	6%	10	20%	21	42%	15	30%
37	Critical thinking teaching and its social practice cannot be separated.	3	6%	9	18%	9	18%	19	38%	10	20%
38	Teaching critical thinking without social and cultural practice is not enough.	1	2%	6	12%	9	18%	17	34%	17	34%
Language skills											
39	Critical thinking teaching success is the important key to improve all language skills.	0	0%	3	6%	8	16%	21	42%	18	36%
40	Speaking lessons are more effective in teaching critical thinking.	1	2%	3	6%	9	18%	23	46%	14	28%
41	Listening lessons are effective in teaching critical thinking.	13	26%	25	50%	13	26%	6	12%	3	6%
42	The best critical thinking teaching is through reading lessons.	0	0%	3	6%	10	20%	22	44%	15	30%
43	Critical thinking is better practiced within writing lessons.	13	26%	21	42%	15	30%	6	12%	0	0%

Table (4.3) samples' responses to 'Beliefs' items.

4.2.3. Challenges of implementing critical thinking

The second main section of the questionnaire is the challenges of implementing critical thinking. Moreover, this section consists of two sub-sections; teacher-related challenges and students-related challenges. These themes were extracted of the literature review.

a) Teacher-related challenges

The teacher-related challenges included nine items. The findings of this section are presented also in table (4.4). Firstly, item 44 explores the teacher's agreement and disagreement that defining the critical thinking concept is challenging. The results show 26% of teachers strongly agree, while 34% of them agree with this. Additionally, 28% of the participants neither agree nor disagree. In contrast, 12% disagree, and none of them strongly disagree with the idea. Secondly, item 45 investigates whether teachers were provided with enough guidance on teaching critical thinking skills. The findings reveal that most of the teachers, 42% agree, and 22% strongly agree. While 20% are neutral. Conversely, 14% of teachers disagree, whereas only 2% of them strongly disagree. Item 46 assesses whether teachers agree or disagree that the curriculum includes a sufficient number of tasks to develop critical thinking. The outcomes illustrate that 26% of teachers strongly agree that, while 36% of them agree. Just 20% are neutral, whereas 14 % disagree, and only 4% of teachers strongly disagree with this.

Next, item 47 traces the teachers' opinions on whether the amount of schools' activities that teachers are responsible for is acceptable. The results show equal results, 22%, between strongly agree and neutral. While the majority of teachers, 36%, agree with the amount of school activities that teachers are responsible for being acceptable. Just 14% of participants disagree, whereas only 6% of them strongly disagree. Furthermore, item 48 explores how the school activities help in teaching critical thinking. Data present that 36% of the teachers strongly agree. Equally, 22% of teachers strongly agree and are neutral. While 14% of teachers disagree and just 6% strongly disagree. In terms of support, item 49 measures whether teachers are receiving follow-up and feedback on how to teach critical thinking. The results demonstrate that 26% strongly disagree and another 28% disagree. Additionally, 20% of participants agree, and equally, 20% are neutral. Whereas 6% of them strongly agree. Then, item 50 explores whether teachers had training to teach critical thinking. The findings show that 28% strongly agree. 38% of them agree with this, while 16% are neutral. Conversely, 14% of teachers disagree, and only 4% of them strongly disagree. Moreover, item 51 investigates whether teachers think the lesson time is not enough for practising critical thinking. The highest percentage of teachers, 42%,

strongly agree that time constraints hinder their integration of critical thinking activities, and 26% of them agree. While 16% of teachers are neutral. In contrast, 14% disagree, whereas 2% strongly disagree. Finally, item 52 focused on the assessment policy. The results reveal that 38% of teachers strongly agree that assessment policy does not focus on developing students' critical thinking. Moreover, 34% of them agree, while 12% are neutral. Just 16% of participants disagree, and none of them strongly disagree.

NO.	Statement	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Teacher-related challenges											
44	It is difficult to define critical thinking.	0	0%	6	12%	14	28%	17	34%	13	26%
45	The teacher's guide provides enough guidance of how to teach critical thinking skills.	1	2%	7	14%	10	20%	21	42%	11	22%
46	The textbook includes acceptable number of tasks that enhance critical thinking skills.	2	4%	7	14%	10	20%	18	36%	13	26%
47	The amount of school activities I am responsible for in the school is satisfactory.	3	6%	7	14%	11	22%	18	36%	11	22%
48	The level of school activities facilitates teaching critical thinking skills in my classrooms.	3	6%	7	14%	11	22%	18	36%	11	22%
49	I received enough follow up and feedback from my supervisor about how to teach critical thinking skills.	13	26%	10	20%	14	28%	10	20%	3	6%
50	There is no staff training for integrating critical thinking.	2	4%	7	14%	8	16%	19	38%	14	28%
51	lesson time is not sufficient for integrating critical thinking activities.	1	2%	7	14%	8	16%	13	26%	21	42%
52	Assessment policy does not focus on developing students' critical thinking.	0	0%	8	16%	6	12%	17	34%	19	38%

Table (4.4) samples' responses to 'teachers-related challenges' items.

b) Students-related challenges

This section consists of five items investigating students- related challenges that EFL teachers face while implementing critical thinking in their lessons. Results are shown in table (4.5). Item 53 discovered teachers' opinions on whether students' language proficiency level is considered a main challenge when integrating critical thinking. The findings clarify that the majority of teachers either strongly agree (48%) or agree (34%). while 12% of the teachers are neutral. Whereas 6% disagree with the idea, and none of them strongly disagree. Item 54 studied

the students' intrinsic motivation impact effect on their critical thinking skills practice. The teachers equally agree, 38%, and strongly agree, 38%. While 16% of teachers are neutral and 6% disagree, 2% of them strongly disagree. Furthermore, item 55 investigates whether teachers can easily engage students in critical thinking activities. Data demonstrate that 22% strongly agree, and 42% of the teachers agree that it is not easy to motivate students and engage them in critical thinking activities. Additionally, 16% of them neither agree nor disagree, whereas 20% of them disagree. Item 56 discovers if students' social backgrounds influence the way students perceive critical thinking. The results show 22% of teachers strongly agree, while 42% of them agree. Just 16% are neutral. Conversely, 20% of them disagree. In terms of cultural diversity, item 57 examined teachers' opinions on how the cultural diversity affects the classroom critical thinking practice and discussion. 28% of participants strongly agree. The majority of teachers, 44%, agree with the idea. Just 16% are neutral, while only 12% of them disagree. Lastly, regarding teachers' opinions on classroom size as a challenge, item 58 results illustrate that 38% of teachers strongly agree, while 28% of them agree that large classrooms hinder critical thinking integration. 12% are neutral. Additionally, 20% of teachers disagree, and 2% of them strongly disagree.

No.	Statement	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
		N	%	N	%	N	N	%	N	%	N
Students-related challenges											
53	Students' language proficiency level is considered a main challenge when integrating critical thinking.	0	0%	3	6%	6	12%	17	34%	24	48%
54	Students' intrinsic motivation significantly impacts their ability to think critically in class.	1	2%	3	6%	8	16%	19	38%	19	38%
55	It is not easy to engage students in critical thinking activities.	0	0%	10	20%	8	16%	21	42%	11	22%
56	Students' social backgrounds influence their perspectives on critical thinking.	0	0%	10	20%	8	16%	21	42%	11	22%
57	The diverse cultural perspectives effects classroom discussions and critical thinking practice.	0	0%	6	12%	8	16%	22	44%	14	28%
58	Large classroom size does not help for implementing critical thinking activities.	1	2%	10	20%	6	12%	14	28%	19	38%

Table (4.5) samples' responses to 'students-related challenges' items.

4.3 Interviews results

The data obtained from semi-structured interviews was thematically analyzed. After transcribing the recorded interviews, the researcher read carefully the transcripts to completely understand the content. Initial coding classified the data based on teachers' actions, intentions, and beliefs, leading to the identification of general themes related to implementing critical thinking skills. These themes included definitions of critical thinking, teachers' attitudes, language skills for teaching critical thinking, social and cultural influences, and strategies for teaching critical thinking. The researcher also identified challenges as another, categorized into teacher-related and student-related obstacles. Each theme was carefully defined and illustrated with participant quotes, highlighting their perspectives. This analysis provided valuable insights into critical thinking integration and its implications for future research and practice.

4.3.1. Teachers' perspectives of critical thinking

The findings of perspective section showed that teachers had different perspectives of integrating critical thinking. The themes are definitions of critical thinking, teachers' attitudes, language skills for Teaching Critical thinking, social and cultural influences, and strategies for teaching critical thinking. The themes were extracted based on the interview questions and teachers' answers. Each theme was carefully defined and illustrated with participant comments, highlighting their perspectives considering their reflection on actions, intentions, and beliefs by using words such as *intend to, believe, think, use.... etc.*

a) Teachers' definitions of critical thinking

Regarding critical thinking definition, teachers provided different perspectives. For example, Teachers A and C offered a very simple definition: *"a process of criticizing what to learn,"* while Teachers B and F described critical thinking as *"a deeper form of thinking"* and *"to think deeply about what you learn."* Finally, Interviewees D and E defined it as developed cognitive skills. Teacher D described the term as *"students' cognitive dispositions to make sense of the information they learn and the skills of analysing information."* Additionally, Teacher E referred to critical thinking as *"students' abilities to analyse, reason, evaluate information, and solve any obstacles they face while learning."*

b) Teachers' attitudes of critical thinking

Almost all of the interviewed teachers emphasized the importance of implementing critical thinking. For instance, Teacher B said *“the critical thinking implementation is effective way to teach language. It helped me to raise the students' learning independence, which consequently, make the lessons goes smoothly and practice more language aspects.”* Additionally, teacher F clarified that *“it is important to develop students' critical thinking skills, as these skills help them to use language more effectively, but it need a qualified teacher to implement these skills in classrooms”* additionally, teacher D highlighted that *“a teacher cannot teach critical thinking, if they have not already had the critical thinking dispositions”* Furthermore, teachers B and E talked about how to teach critical thinking, teacher E confirmed that both teachers and students should have clear instructions to practice critical thinking skills *“ my knowledge as a teacher is limited when it is related to critical thinking. I try to follow the instructions in teacher guide book, which ensures the appropriate integration. So, I think students need the same thing. They need very clear instructions on how to develop critical thinking.”* However, teachers A and C held different opinions regarding the integration. Teacher C mentioned *“... students may develop critical thinking skills, when they are regularly exposed to critical thinking tasks and questions, they will eventually develop their cognitive skills. This helps to focus on teaching syllabus and developing cognitive skills implicitly.”*

c) Teachers' integration of critical thinking in Language skills

Teachers provided various answers, but they all agreed on using critical thinking in reading lessons. Teacher A and C had the same perspective on this issue. For instance, teacher A said *“I am not sure about which skill is more appropriate, but I think reading is suitable for implementing critical thinking, as we ask a lot of questions in reading lessons it may foster students' cognitive dispositions”*, but teacher B, E, and F emphasized using critical thinking in reading and speaking lessons. For example, teacher B mentioned *“I think reading and speaking are the most appropriate skills to teach critical thinking.... to be honest, listening and writing skills do not usually practiced in my lessons, so I do not use them to practice critical thinking.”* While teacher D encouraged critical thinking implementation in reading, speaking, and writing lessons. She mentioned that *“in my reading and speaking lessons, I use critical thinking most the time, but I rarely depend on critical thinking in my writing lessons.”*

d) Critical thinking teaching Strategies

For the critical thinking integration strategies, teachers mentioned four strategies; questioning, debates, group discussions, and problem-solving strategies. Teachers A and C prefer questioning strategy. According to teacher C *“I tend to ask a lot of questions to help students to think deeply about sentence structures, characters mentioned in the text and so on...”* while teacher B, D, E, and F used questioning, debates, group discussions. For example, teacher E said that *“I use questioning in reading lessons to foster students’ cognitive abilities and group discussion and debates to practice speaking”*, but teacher F added *“I depend on the teacher guide book on the strategies selection criteria in my lessons, so I use questioning, debates, group discussions, and problem-solving on teaching critical thinking.”*

e) Influence of Cultural and Social practices

Teachers had two different attitudes on the influence of cultural and social practices on critical thinking development. Teachers B, D, E, and F argued that we could not teach critical thinking without cultural and social contexts, while A and C did not. For instance, teacher F said *“I usually connect between the real world and teaching content. I believe that social and cultural context helps students to link what they learn with their real life, and more motivated to learn.”* whereas, Teachers A and C did not believe in the necessity of cultural and social contexts. Teacher C mentioned *“I sometimes practice critical thinking using logical puzzles and games to foster analytical skills, which do not need to have cultural and social contexts”*

4.3.2. Challenges of implementing critical thinking

In the challenges section, teachers showed almost the same answers. They mentioned number of teacher- related challenges and student-related challenges.

a) Teacher-related challenges.

Teachers listed some challenges that related directly to their critical thinking implementation. Teacher A revealed that *“the main challenge for me is that I do not have the sufficient knowledge about what critical thinking exactly means and I did not have the proper training on how to integrate it in my lessons.”* Furthermore, teachers B, C, E and F added to their lack of knowledge and training, the traditional assessment criteria the school have, and time constrains. For instance, teacher F clarified that *“the school’s focus on examination results and the traditional assessment policy it follows hinder me of integrating critical thinking. In addition*

to the limit of time. 40 minutes are not enough to focus on teaching syllabus and critical thinking skills.” Additionally, teacher D pointed to another issue related to assessment. She claimed that “the teacher guide provided clear instructions on which lesson and how to integrate critical thinking, but did not mention and clarified how to assess the progress students show developing critical thinking skills”.

b) Student- related challenges

Teachers mentioned that lack of motivation, language proficiency level, large classes, and students’ social and cultural background were the main challenges that hindered teachers from developing students critical thinking skills. For example, teacher D revealed that “the integration of any new strategies and approaches such as critical thinking depends on how much students are motivated. Most of students have traditional learning perspective, so they do not prefer to participate in any of these activities, but they focus on passing exams and memorization.” Moreover, Teacher E said “in my class, the majority of students have low language proficiency level. this makes it difficult for them to interact with critical thinking- based activities.” additionally, Teacher F emphasized that large classes are the big challenge for her, she said “I have about thirty students in each class I teach. whenever I try to use new activity, the class becomes noisy and I cannot manage between teaching the lesson content and controlling the class” while teacher C pointed to another challenge related to class size. He mentioned that “I do not integrate any communicative activities in general and critical thinking- based activities in particular in my lessons most of the times, because it is difficult to assess the large number of students in my class” Finally, all teachers confirmed that mostly students do not come from different social and cultural backgrounds, but teachers still think that social and cultural background was a challenge. For instance, teacher B mentioned that “the students used to grow in society that do not promote discussions and inquiry learning and have the cultural norms that do not encourage individual expressing of perspectives, but they emphasise the group decisions and opinions. These issues effect students’ perceptions of critical thinking practice.”

4.4 Summary

In conclusion, the results from both quantitative and qualitative analyses illustrate that the majority of EFL teachers at Zintan Secondary School integrate critical thinking into their EFL lessons using a variety of strategies. Moreover, the findings indicate that these teachers recognise the importance of critical thinking for fostering language skills and that language skills contribute to the practice of critical thinking. However, they still face various challenges

related to both their own integration and their students. These results will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion of the results presented in chapter four, connecting them with research questions, aims, and previous studies. The findings were discussed in two main sections: perspectives and challenges. These two sections are identified to answer the research questions:

1. What perspectives do Libyan high school EFL teachers have about implementing critical thinking in EFL classroom?
2. What challenges do Libyan high school EFL teachers face when implementing critical thinking in English language learning classroom?

5.1. Teachers' perspectives of critical thinking

The perspective theme is explored through the following sub-themes: critical thinking definition, teachers' attitudes, language skills, strategies, and social and cultural influences. The questionnaire results relate to this theme are analysed by comparing alignments and disparities between teachers' actions, intentions, and beliefs. These findings are linked to the interview results and literature review to provide a comprehensive understanding of the study's outcomes.

a) Teachers' definitions of critical thinking

In the context of the critical thinking definition, most participants presented a sufficient understanding of what critical thinking is. This mismatched with most of the previous research results, such as Núñez and Téllez (2009); Retnawati et al. (2011); and Masadeh (2021), who claimed that EFL teachers often struggled defining the concept appropriately, which affected their applications in the classroom. Additionally, teachers failed to provide a unified and consensus definition, as noted in earlier studies (Lewis & Smith, 1993). By comparing questionnaires and interviews' findings, the questionnaire responses showed that teachers understand the dimensional aspect of the concept, while interview results demonstrated the level of teachers' understanding of the definition.

Form the questionnaire, it was clear that the participants understood the multi-dimensional nature of the critical thinking concept. They believed that they should consider

critical thinking as a combination of both cognitive skills (e.g., analysis and reasoning) and dispositions (e.g., open-mindedness and curiosity). This perspective aligned with the previous theoretical definitions introduced by Facione (1990), Ennis (1993), and Halpern (1998), who underscored that critical thinking consists of both cognitive skills and dispositions, as opposed to Bailin (2002), who focused on the quality of thinking and to which extent it meets the standard of reasoning and judgement skills.

The results of the interviews indicated that participants' definitions varied between simplistic understanding as well as descriptions and more complicated theoretical models of reasoning and knowledge constructing. This was in line with the findings of Facione et al. (1996), who argued that while critical thinking can be defined simply, it is essential to recognise its complexity and multifaceted nature. Additionally, data showed that participants presented a deep understanding of the theoretical knowledge of the concept, but they tended to avoid referring to the practical knowledge, which conforms to Ketabi et al.'s (2013) and Li's (2016) explanations that EFL teachers mostly show theoretical understanding but lack practical knowledge on how to implement critical skills into their lessons. This gap was clear in the comparison of participants' actions, intentions, and beliefs, as they showed strong beliefs and intentions on the important role of critical thinking, while their actions did not reflect this in-depth understanding.

The participants' sufficient theoretical knowledge of critical thinking could be obtained from the curriculum instructions, explanations, and professional development programmes. This conclusion was driven of the results reported by participants who acknowledged that the Libyan high school curriculum had a sufficient number of instructions on how to teach critical thinking and Ayyash (2022), who referred to the role of the detailed instructions on Cambridge curriculum which raised teachers' awareness and knowledge of what is critical thinking and how to implement it in their lessons. Moreover, the professional training was identified previously in the research field as a reason why teachers may have a deep understanding regarding critical thinking (Bachtiar et al., 2023). For this study, the significant number of participants had participated in professional development programmes which may positively affected their knowledge.

b) Teachers' attitudes toward critical thinking

Generally, most of the participants had positive attitudes regarding critical thinking implementation and its role in improving students' language learning process. This is consistent with previous analyses, Richards and Schmidt (2010), Halpern (2013), Stefanova et al. (2017),

and Gandimathi and Zarei (2018), who reported that critical thinking was beneficial in fostering students' developing communication, autonomy, and language competence. Additionally, the current findings highlighted those participants emphasised the need for explicit instructions, structured frameworks, and professional development programmes for better critical thinking implementation. Similarly, researchers such as Kennedy et al. (1991), Dawit et al. (2014), and Khalil et al. (2024) also stressed the necessity of providing teachers with clear and structured guidance to effectively teach critical thinking. While other studies introduced structured frameworks to facilitate the process. For instance, Núñez and Téllez (2009) suggested structured scaffolding techniques as an effective framework for better integration.

However, results also reflected participants' negative attitudes toward their applications and teaching approaches regarding critical thinking. As previous research mentioned traditional teaching perspectives (Hadoud, 2020; Masadeh, 2021) and lack of prior experience (Asgharheidari & Tahriri, 2015) as reasons for those negative attitudes, the current study added that lack of confidence was the major cause. In accordance with this finding, studies such as Stefanova et al. (2017) and Khalil et al. (2024) discussed the readiness and willingness of teachers to integrate critical thinking in their lessons but did not explain how teachers may lack confidence despite their positive attitudes, which was assured by Yuan and Stapleton (2020), who confirmed that while teachers often expressed strong beliefs about critical thinking as a pedagogy to learn language, they sometimes were hesitant to integrate it in their lessons because they lacked confidence, time, or support.

c) Teachers' integration of critical thinking in Language skills

Results of this study reveal that teachers frequently use reading and speaking lessons to teach critical thinking. These language skills are perceived as most appropriate for advocating discussion and reasoning. However, writing and listening skills are rarely used because of students' language competence and time constraints.

The data show misalignment between teachers' beliefs, intentions, and actions regarding the suitable language skill for cultivating critical thinking. Teachers' responses show strong belief and intention on integrating critical thinking across all language skills. However, their actions differ, as teachers focus on reading and speaking very often. In comparison of questionnaire and interview results, questionnaire results indicated that teachers mostly implement critical thinking in all language lessons. Conversely, the interview respondents supported this but also explained why they often avoid writing and listening tasks due to learners' low language levels, time limitations, and lack of support.

These results support the previous research of Eissa (2021), who highlighted the necessity of having a balanced teaching approach to teach critical thinking across all language skills. Moreover, findings also align with the belief that reading and speaking are more suitable for developing students' critical skills, as both of them encourage active analysis and discussion (Smith & Johnson, 2019; Jones, 2018). Whereas these findings conflicted with Stefanova et al. (2017) and Gandimathi and Zarei (2018), who illustrated that writing deeply encourages students' involvement in critical thinking-based activities. Alternatively, they also contrasted with the Language Awareness (LA) theory suggests that all language skills, involving listening and writing, are essential for a holistic, comprehensive approach including metalinguistic and sociocultural aspects (Fairclough, 1996). Moreover, the input language skill, listening, is usually avoided regarding the reviewed literature was not mentioned, highlighting a new area of research in Libyan EFL classrooms.

d) Critical thinking teaching Strategies

According to the study results, teachers mentioned that adopt strategies like questioning, debates, modelling, and group discussions to teach critical thinking. This aligned with the established strategies that have been mentioned by Halpern (2013) and Kennedy et al. (1991). Additionally, their application was varied compared to questionnaire and interview responses.

Initially, both questionnaire and interview findings revealed that questioning is highly used in their lessons to promote critical skills. participants attempt to ask questions that help students to think deeply and be involved in active learning. Previously, Halpern (2013) and Jamil et al. (2024) emphasised the necessity of open-ended questions in fostering students' analytical and reasoning skills. Additionally, data revealed that debates and group discussions were regularly employed in reading and speaking lessons to encourage students to openly express their perspectives and raise their argumentative skills. For debates, both Bachtiar et al. (2023) and Khan et al. (2025) illustrated that debates are mostly employed and effective for improving students' argumentative and reasoning skills. While debates were commonly reported, participants acknowledged that their efficacy was frequently hindered by large class sizes and time constraints. For group discussion, Bachtiar et al. (2023) reported that group discussions were among the most commonly used strategies, especially for developing students' collaboration and communicative thinking.

Moreover, the interview responses helped in adding more strategies to those mentioned in questionnaire. For instance, modelling was mentioned in the questionnaire and problem-

solving and group discussion were adopted to practice critical thinking. Finally, relating to literature, Schuessler et al. (2012) underscore reflective journaling, which was never reported in the present study, implying insufficiently used capability within the Libyan context.

e) Influence of Cultural and Social practices

The contextual teaching of critical skills is intensely emphasised in LA alongside constructivism theories. Both encourage that teachers' critical thinking instructional approaches result from restrictions within institutions together with context-specific multiculturalism. In the present study, the majority of participants in both questionnaires and interviews encourage the essential role of contextual practice, which confirmed the previous findings of Yuan & Stapleton (2020), Abad (2022), and Youcef (2023), but limited practice and deep cultural concerns that hinder the effective implementation were also reported. Participants explained that they tend to link the classroom's activity and students' real lives to motivate them to be active learners. This is consistent with Bachtiar et al. (2024), who encouraged culturally based critical thinking activities instead of adopting the Western models.

However, despite the positive attitudes regarding the contextual practice, the minority of participants in the interviews preferred the cultural and socially neutral tasks, such as puzzles, prioritising the enhancement of students' cognitive skills. This misaligns with Fairclough (1996) and the Language Awareness Theory, which highlights that critical thinking has to be intrinsically connected to understanding language in its social context.

Finally, students' social and cultural backgrounds may positively or negatively influence teachers' applications. In this study results show that the students' passive attitude was adopted due to their cultural and social backgrounds, which supports the previous studies' findings of Eissa (2021) and Masadeh (2021), who argued that some cultural and societal norms hinder students from openly expressing their opinions and prefer the teacher-centred approach.

5.2. Challenges of implementing critical thinking

The challenges' theme was analysed through two sub-themes: the students-related and teachers-related challenges. The findings of both quantitative and qualitative data were analysed and compared with previous research findings.

a) Teacher-related Challenges

A significant number of participants referred to obstacles such as insufficient training and knowledge, lack of feedback, time constraints, and assessment policy as challenges that hindered their critical thinking teaching. While more than half of participants had participated in professional development programmes, the majority of them argued that they lack the sufficient knowledge on how to teach critical thinking and emphasised their need to participate in tailored training courses. This finding supported Hadoud (2020), who emphasised that Libyan EFL teachers lacked the appropriate knowledge and training to effectively integrate critical thinking.

In addition, questionnaire results revealed that supervisors' feedback is insufficient and inconsistent, in contrast to interview results, which show that participants did not receive any feedback or structured frameworks. This aligns with Al-Kindi & Al-Mekhlafi (2017) and Khalid et al. (2022), who argued that without proper supervisor support, including classroom observation and pedagogical feedback, teachers could not motivate students to participate in reflective teaching tasks. Eissa (2021) also added that the absence of evaluative feedback restricted their adoption of critical thinking teaching methods.

Time restrictions, likewise, are acknowledged as a challenge in both the questionnaire and interview results. Participants argued that a 40-minute lesson is not enough to cover both content delivery and critical thinking objectives. Their argument confirmed with Alnofaie (2013) similarly found teachers avoided critical thinking in speaking lessons due to lack of time to plan and execute diverse activities. Moreover, the assessment policy was mainly designed to evaluate students' language progress, neglecting the development of critical skills led to the teachers' adopting a traditional teaching perspective that was based on exam-orientated and content coverage.

b) Student-related Challenges

Besides the teacher-related challenges, the analysis of both the questionnaire and interview results highlight some student-related challenges involving low language proficiency level, lack of motivation, cultural and social background, and class size. Firstly, the findings highlighted low English proficiency as the main challenge for critical thinking teaching. Teachers explained that limited vocabulary and grammar skills resulted in difficulties in analysing and expressing opinions. This confirms results in Chapter 2, where Aliakbari & Sadeghdaghighi (2012) and Alnofaie (2013) claimed that low language competence limits EFL

students' higher-order thinking. Similarly, Language Awareness theory (Fairclough, 1996) also emphasises that reflective thinking development needs a high language proficiency level.

Furthermore, teachers referred to the lack of motivation as a barrier. It is difficult to engage students in deep classroom debates and discussions. This aligns with Masadeh (2021), who discovered that there was a strong relationship between students' lack of motivation and their disengagement. According to constructivist theory, critical thinking learning is based on a student-centred approach, which cannot be achieved if students are not motivated.

However, Participants also linked this disengagement to both students' sociocultural backgrounds and their avoidance of making mistakes. Initially, some sociocultural contexts do not encourage the inquiry-based learning and autonomy as was clarified in Aliakbari and Sadeghdaghighi's (2012) findings. Furthermore, learners' fear of making mistakes and being judged lowers their discussion and debate participation. This confirms Esen (2021), who noted that fear of failure restricted students' critical thinking engagement. Additionally, teachers pointed to the fact that even if they can maintain the required students' engagement level, large class sizes would pose another challenge for them. Critical thinking-based activities require high classroom management skills and individual feedback. Teachers reported that they struggled to control the class and provide effective feedback for each student. Masadeh (2021) similarly mentioned that large class sizes limited the effectiveness of student-centred approaches.

Finally, student-related challenges consist of low proficiency, lack of motivation, cultural resistance to independent thinking, fear of mistakes, and large class sizes. These results matched with previous studies, proposing the necessity for more institute support and structural changes.

5.3 Summary

This chapter has critically explored the results from Chapter Four by comparing them to the theoretical framework and literature. Despite Libyan EFL teachers showing strong beliefs and intentions regarding critical thinking implementations, their classroom practices are limited by structural, pedagogical, and cultural factors. The misalignment of belief and action presents the challenges of using a behaviourist and exam-orientated context. To bridge this gap, teacher training programmes, curriculum design, assessment policies, and school-level support should be adjusted to match with critical thinking objectives by building them on constructivist and

language awareness principles and focusing on the reflective and developmental aspects of the TPI teaching perspectives, which will lead to more effective critical thinking instruction.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

6.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive conclusion of the study in addition to implications, recommendations, limitations and suggestions for future research.

6.1 Summary of the findings

This study investigated Libyan secondary school EFL teachers' perspectives on critical thinking skills implementation in their lessons. It was conducted in Zintan secondary schools. By adopting a mixed-methods approach: quantitative questionnaires and qualitative semi-structured interviews the data was collected from 50 questionnaire participants and six interview participants. The results presented that EFL teachers in Zintan mostly realise the necessity of critical thinking in developing students' language proficiency level and cognitive abilities. However, their competence to incorporate these skills successfully is impeded by institutional, pedagogical, and contextual challenges.

The major findings reveal that teachers' critical thinking definitions differ, varying between simplistic definitions (e.g., "criticising what to learn") and deeper comprehension, including skills such as analysis, evaluation, and problem-solving. Although the majority of teachers believed critical thinking was a combination of cognitive skills and dispositions, their classroom actions mostly focused on content delivery over integrating higher-order thinking skills. For language skills, reading and speaking skills were preferred as the most appropriate for practising critical thinking. However, listening and writing skills were less desirable because of a lack of time and an inflexible curriculum.

Moreover, challenges were grouped into teacher-related and student-related challenges. For teachers-related challenges, teachers pointed to lack of training, traditional assessment policies, and time constraints as principal challenges. For student-related challenges, teachers mentioned low language proficiency, lack of motivation, large class sizes, and sociocultural norms hindering the students' learning independence. These results align with previous research highlighting the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical implementation in EFL contexts (Yuan & Stapleton, 2020; Li, 2016).

While this study stressed the importance of building teaching practices on constructivist and LA theories, which encourage the student-centred and contextual integration of critical thinking, teachers still follow a behaviourist perspective focusing on content delivery and exam results due to institutional constraints. Ultimately, the study suggests curriculum and pedagogical reforms to bridge the gap between teachers' intentions and actions, ensuring that critical thinking is an integral aspect of EFL teachers' lessons.

6.2 Implications

Practical, theoretical, and policy implications were highlighted for this study. Firstly, the practical implications were related to professional development, curriculum reforms, and assessment policies. Primarily, schools should focus on professional development programmes to train teachers on the proper critical thinking incorporation strategies across all language skills. A tailored training workshop focusing on explicit instruction, scaffolding techniques, and modern assessment tools (e.g., portfolios, project-based evaluations) would encourage teachers to shift to a more constructive teaching approach, avoiding a content delivery focus.

Secondly, curricula should be redesigned to balance content coverage with critical thinking objectives, highlighting the use of culturally relevant and flexible materials, which help students to link their learnt knowledge and their real-life experiences. These programmes and reforms would bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and teaching application, raising engagement and relevance levels. Finally, a well-planned transformation from exam-centric assessment criteria to a more holistic one is essential. By assessing analytical, evaluative, and problem-solving skills, rather than rote memorisation, assessment instructions could effectively achieve the assessment tool objectives.

Additionally, for theoretical implications, the study emphasised the appropriateness of constructivism and LA theories in EFL contexts. Thereby, the study highlighted the necessity for structured framework instructions to help teachers to effectively improve their students' cognitive skills and raise their sociocultural awareness, which results in enhancing both language proficiency competence and critical thinking. Consequently, models such as Bloom's Taxonomy with intercultural competence strategies should be used to help achieve both objectives: teaching language and fostering critical thinking skills. Finally, for policy makers, schools should ensure they support teachers with a sufficient number of training resources, teaching materials, and a suitable class size. Additionally, they should encourage the teacher's

discussion groups to share thoughts and experiences between teachers for better teaching practices.

6.3 Limitations

Generally, this study offers critical findings, but still there are limitations that need to be acknowledged. Initially, the sample was limited to only EFL teachers in Zintan, Libya, which may restrict the results' generalisability. Secondly, the study relied on self-reported data using questionnaires and interviews, which may raise the response bias due to the possibility of participants' socially desirable responses. As the adopting of a mixed-methods design is due to the need for providing a holistic, comprehensive understanding of the topic, still, classroom observation could offer a more holistic and objective assessment of critical thinking implementation. While the adoption of the TPI survey structure was very beneficial, it still resulted in the length of the questionnaire, which could have led participants to boredly and randomly answer the questionnaire. Finally, the longitudinal study would effectively explore teachers' perspectives and pedagogical changes after implementing critical thinking.

6.4 Further research

On the basis of the previously revealed results and considering the limitations of this study, it is possible to suggest an area for future research. Firstly, researchers can replicate the same study across different regions in Libya. Researchers could conduct comparative studies employing the original TPI survey on the same sample and extend the analysis to other teachers. This approach is supported by evidence showing that the TPI survey can effectively generalise findings (Chan, 1994; Pratt & Collins, 2000). Secondly, researchers can analyse the suitability of professional development programmes regarding critical thinking integration. Additionally, a longitudinal study would be more beneficial to explore the impact of professional development on teachers' implementation of critical thinking in their classrooms. Moreover, researchers incorporate observational data to compare self-reported practices with actual teaching behaviours. Finally, an investigation of students' perspectives of critical thinking and its influence on their language outcomes could be an area for further research.

6.5 Summary

This study focuses on the complications of critical thinking incorporation in Libya's EFL classrooms through exploring teachers' perspectives and challenges. While teachers acknowledged its importance, there was a gap between their theoretical knowledge and their practical application. Their intentions on critical thinking integration were hindered by some challenges, including systematic and institutional challenges. By overcoming these challenges through tailored training programmes, curriculum changes, and policy support, Libyan teachers can develop classrooms where critical thinking is a learning objective as language proficiency. Such improvements would not only develop academic outcomes but also encourage students to be independent to deal with complexities in real-life situations.

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Consent form

The thesis title: **Implementing Critical Thinking Skills in Libyan EFL Classroom: Zintan High School EFL Teachers' Perspectives and Challenges.**

The purpose of this study is to investigate Zintan high school EFL teachers' perspectives in implementing critical thinking in EFL classrooms. Furthermore, the study aims to explore the challenges that these teachers may face while integrating critical thinking skills in their lessons.

By attaching my signature to this document, I express my consent to participate in the present study and my awareness of its purpose and nature. I acknowledge that my participation is completely voluntary, and that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice and without providing an explanation. I am aware that all information collected from me will be treated intimately and will not be revealed to any unauthorized parties. Furthermore, I acknowledge that all data will be stored securely and will be deleted upon completion of the study.

Participant Name:

Signature:

Date;

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear Teachers,

The researcher is an MA student conducting a study to investigate Zintan High School EFL teachers' perspectives and challenges in implementing critical thinking skills in their lessons. You are invited to participate in this questionnaire, and your data and answers will remain secure.

Thank you for your participation.

Please read the directions very carefully, then answer the questions.

Demographic questions:

1. What is your highest level of education?

.....

2. How many years have you been teaching English as a foreign language?

.....

3. Have you participated in any professional development programs related to EFL in the past year?

.....

Section one: Teachers' perspectives

Part1: Actions: -What do you do when instructing or teaching?

For each statement, put (√) where best represents how often you do that action when teaching or instructing someone.

No.	Statement	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Always
4.	I prioritize covering content accurately in the allotted time, rather than developing students' critical thinking skills.					
5.	I emphasize critical thinking as a separate learning objective in my lesson plans.					
6.	I use the course content as a way to teach about critical thinking skills.					
7.	I carefully follow the syllabus and course critical thinking learning objectives.					
8.	I help students to develop all language skills by incorporating critical thinking instructions in my lessons.					
9.	I integrate critical thinking skills in speaking lessons.					
10.	I include critical thinking skills in listening lessons.					
11.	I implement critical thinking in writing language lessons.					
12.	I emphasize critical thinking in my reading lessons.					
13.	I model critical thinking skills and dispositions for students.					
14.	While teaching, I ask a lot of questions relevant to critical thinking skills.					
15.	I challenge students' understanding through debates to enhance their critical thinking skills.					
16.	I make critical thinking instructions very clear for students to follow.					
17.	During teaching, I put critical thinking skills within a social and cultural context.					

Part 2: Intentions: What do you try to accomplish in your instruction or teaching?

For each statement, put (√) where best represents how often you try to accomplish that intention when instructing or teaching someone.

No.	Statement	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Always
18.	I intend to focus on teaching the subject content and neglecting critical thinking instructions.					
19.	As a result of my teaching, students are expected to score well on examinations.					
20.	I aim to provide a balance between critical thinking and subject content in my lessons.					
21.	while teaching course content, I aim to develop students' critical thinking skills.					
22.	I plan to teach critical thinking as a set of high-order cognitive skills.					
23.	I aim to help students develop more complex ways of reasoning, analysing, and evaluating.					
24.	I plan to build my language lessons on prior students' critical thinking dispositions and skills.					
25.	I expect students to construct new knowledge by reasoning and analysing course content.					
26.	I intend to include social and cultural practice activities to enhance students' critical thinking skills and language skills.					
27.	I expect students to know how to apply critical thinking in real contexts.					
28.	I aim to integrate varied strategies to foster students' critical thinking skills.					
29.	I aim to enhance students' language proficiency level through critical thinking teaching.					

Part three: Beliefs: What do you believe about instructing or teaching?

For each statement, put (√) where best represents your Agreement or Disagreement.

No.	statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
30.	Critical thinking is a set of skills as much as dispositions.					
31.	Critical thinking is a number of teachable cognitive skills.					
32.	Effective critical thinking teachers must first be critical thinkers.					
33.	Teaching critical thinking is built on what teachers already know about the concept.					
34.	To effectively learn critical thinking skills, students must already have the critical thinking dispositions.					
35.	Prior encountered critical thinking dispositions is the most important key to critical thinking learning success.					
36.	Critical thinking is effectively taught by having clear instruction and structured framework.					
37.	Critical thinking teaching and its social practice cannot be separated.					
38.	Teaching critical thinking without social and cultural practice is not enough.					
39.	Critical thinking teaching success is the important key to improve all language skills.					
40.	Speaking lessons are more effective in teaching critical thinking.					
41.	The best critical thinking teaching is through reading lessons.					
42.	Critical thinking is better practiced within writing lessons.					
43.	listening lessons are effective in teaching critical thinking.					

Section two: Challenges

Part 1: Teacher-related challenges

For each statement, put (√) where best represents your Agreement or Disagreement.

No.	statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
44.	It is difficult to define critical thinking.					
45.	The teacher's guide provides enough guidance of how to teach critical thinking skills					
46.	The textbook includes acceptable number of tasks that enhance critical thinking skills.					
47.	The amount of school activities I am responsible for in the school is satisfactory.					
48.	The level of school activities facilitates teaching critical thinking skills in my Classrooms.					
49.	I received enough follow up and feedback from my supervisor about how to teach critical thinking skills.					
50.	There is no staff training for integrating critical thinking.					
51.	lesson time is not sufficient for integrating critical thinking activities.					
52.	Assessment policy does not focus on developing students' critical thinking.					

Part 2: Student-related challenges

For each statement, put (√) where best represents your Agreement or Disagreement.

No.	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
53.	Students' language proficiency level is considered a main challenge when integrating critical thinking.					
54.	Students' intrinsic motivation significantly impacts their ability to think critically in class.					
55.	It is not easy to engage students in critical thinking activities.					
56.	Students' social backgrounds influence their perspectives on critical thinking					
57.	The diverse cultural perspectives enhance classroom discussions and promote critical thinking.					
58.	Large classroom size does not help for implementing critical thinking activities.					

Final Section: Reflection

Please write down any comments or reflections about your teaching practice based on the statements above.

.....

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القسم الأول: وجهات نظر المعلمين

الجزء الأول: الأفعال: ماذا تفعل عند التدريس أو التعليم؟

لجميع العبارات الآتية، قم بوضع علامة (√) في الخانة التي تمثل مدى تكرار قيامك بهذا الفعل عند تدريس مهارات التفكير النقدي في دروس اللغة الإنجليزية.

الرقم	العبرة	أبداً	نادراً	أحياناً	غالباً	دائماً
4.	أفضل تغطية المحتوى بدقة في الوقت المحدد، بدلاً من تطوير مهارات التفكير النقدي لدى الطلاب					
5.	أبرز التفكير النقدي كهدف تعليمي منفصل في خطط درس.					
6.	أستخدم محتوى الكتاب كوسيلة لتعليم مهارات التفكير النقدي.					
7.	أتبع بدقة المنهج الدراسي وأهداف التعلم المتعلقة بالتفكير النقدي.					
8.	أساعد الطلاب على تطوير جميع المهارات اللغوية من خلال دمج تعليم التفكير النقدي في دروس.					
9.	أدمج مهارات التفكير النقدي في دروس المحادثة.					
10.	أدرج مهارات التفكير النقدي في دروس الاستماع.					
11.	. أطبق التفكير النقدي في دروس الكتابة.					
12.	أبرز التفكير النقدي في دروس القراءة.					
13.	أظهر مهارات التفكير النقدي والسلوكيات للطلاب.					
14.	بينما أدرس، أ طرح الكثير من الأسئلة المتعلقة بمهارات التفكير النقدي.					
15.	أتحدى فهم الطلاب من خلال المناقشات لتعزيز مهارات التفكير النقدي لديهم.					
16.	أجعل تعليمات التفكير النقدي واضحة جداً للطلاب ليتبعوها.					
17.	أثناء التدريس، أضع مهارات التفكير النقدي في سياق اجتماعي وثقافي.					

الجزء الثاني: النية: ماذا تحاول أن تحقق في تعليمك؟

لجميع العبارات الآتية، قم بوضع علامة (√) في الخانة التي تمثل مدى تكرار النية لقيامك بهذا الفعل عند تدريس مهارات التفكير النقدي في دروس اللغة الإنجليزية.

الرقم	العبارة	أبداً	نادراً	أحياناً	غالباً	دائماً
18.	أنوي التركيز على تدريس محتوى المادة وتجاهل تعليمات التفكير النقدي.					
19.	نتيجة لتدريسي، من المتوقع أن يحصل الطلاب على درجات جيدة في الامتحانات.					
20.	أهدف إلى توفير توازن بين التفكير النقدي ومحتوى المادة في دروسي.					
21.	أخطط لتعليم التفكير النقدي كمجموعة من المهارات المعرفية العليا.					
22.	أخطط لمساعدة الطلاب على تطوير طرق أكثر تعقيداً في التفكير والتحليل والتقييم					
23.	أخطط لبناء دروس اللغوية على استعدادات ومهارات التفكير النقدي السابقة لدى الطلاب.					
24.	أتوقع من الطلاب أن يبنوا معرفة جديدة من خلال التفكير والتحليل لمحتوى المادة.					
25.	أهدف إلى تعزيز مستوى كفاءة اللغة لدى الطلاب من خلال تعليم التفكير النقدي.					
26.	أنوي تضمين أنشطة الممارسة الاجتماعية والثقافية لتعزيز مهارات التفكير النقدي ومهارات اللغة لدى الطلاب.					
27.	أتوقع من الطلاب أن يعرفوا كيفية تطبيق التفكير النقدي في السياقات الحقيقية.					
28.	أنوي تقديم تعليمات واستراتيجيات واضحة للطلاب لممارسة التفكير النقدي.					
29.	أنوي التركيز على تدريس محتوى المادة وتجاهل تعليمات التفكير النقدي.					

الجزء الثالث: المعتقدات: ماذا تعتقد عن التعليم أو التدريس؟

لكل عبارة، ضع علامة (✓) في الخانة التي تمثل مدى موافقتك أو عدم موافقتك للمعتقدات الآتية المتعلقة بتضمين مهارات التفكير النقدي في دروس اللغة الإنجليزية.

الرقم	العبارة	أعارض بشدة	أعارض	محايد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة
30.	التفكير النقدي هو مجموعة من المهارات بقدر ما هو مجموعة من الاستعدادات.					
31.	التفكير النقدي هو عدد من المهارات المعرفية القابلة للتعليم.					
32.	يجب أن يكون المعلمون الفعالون في التفكير النقدي مفكرين نقديين أولاً.					
33.	يعتمد تعليم التفكير النقدي على ما يعرفه المعلمون بالفعل عن المفهوم.					
34.	لتعلم مهارات التفكير النقدي بفعالية، يجب على الطلاب أن يكون لديهم بالفعل الاستعدادات النقدية.					
35.	الاستعدادات النقدية السابقة التي تم مواجهتها هي المفتاح الأهم لنجاح تعلم التفكير النقدي.					
36.	يتم تعليم التفكير النقدي بشكل فعال من خلال وجود تعليمات واضحة وإطار هيكلي منظم.					
37.	لا يمكن فصل تعليم التفكير النقدي عن ممارسته الاجتماعية.					
38.	تعليم التفكير النقدي دون ممارسة اجتماعية وثقافية ليس كافياً.					
39.	نجاح تعليم التفكير النقدي هو المفتاح المهم لتحسين جميع مهارات اللغة.					
40.	دروس المحادثة أكثر فعالية في تعليم التفكير النقدي.					
41.	أفضل تعليم للتفكير النقدي يكون من خلال دروس القراءة.					
42.	يتم ممارسة التفكير النقدي بشكل أفضل من خلال دروس الكتابة.					
43.	دروس الاستماع فعالة في تعليم التفكير النقدي.					

القسم الثاني: التحديات

الجزء الأول: التحديات المتعلقة بالمعلم

لكل عبارة، ضع علامة (✓) في الخانة التي تُمثل مدى موافقتك أو عدم موافقتك لتحديات تضمين التفكير النقدي في دروس اللغة الإنجليزية.

الرقم	العبارة	أعارض بشدة	أعارض	محايد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة
4.	من صعب تعريف مصطلح التفكير النقدي.					
5.	يوفر دليل المعلم إرشادات كافية حول كيفية تعليم مهارات التفكير النقدي.					
6.	يتضمن الكتاب المدرسي عددًا مقبولًا من المهام التي تعزز مهارات التفكير النقدي.					
7.	كمية الأنشطة المدرسية التي أنا مسؤول عنها في المدرسة مُقبولة.					
8.	يُسَهِّل مستوى الأنشطة المدرسية تدريس مهارات التفكير النقدي في فصولي الدراسية.					
9.	تأقبت ما يكفي من المتابعة والتعليقات من المشرف الخاص بي حول كيفية تعليم مهارات التفكير النقدي.					
10.	لا يوجد تدريب للموظفين لدمج التفكير النقدي.					
11.	وقت الدرس غير كافٍ لدمج أنشطة التفكير النقدي.					
12.	لا تركز سياسة التقييم على تطوير التفكير النقدي للطلاب.					

الجزء الثاني: التحديات المتعلقة بالطالب

لكل عبارة، ضع علامة (✓) في الخانة التي تُمثل مدى موافقتك أو عدم موافقتك لتحديات تضمين التفكير النقدي في دروس اللغة الإنجليزية.

الرقم	العبارة	أعارض بشدة	أعارض	محايد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة
4.	يعتبر مستوى الكفاءة اللغوية لدى الطلاب تحدياً رئيسياً عند دمج التفكير النقدي.					
5.	يؤثر الدافع الداخلي للطلاب بشكل كبير على قدرتهم على التفكير النقدي في الفصل.					
6.	إشراك الطلاب في أنشطة التفكير النقدي ليس بالأمر السهل.					
7.	تؤثر الخلفيات الثقافية للطلاب على وجهات نظرهم حول التفكير النقدي.					
8.	تُعزز وجهات النظر الثقافية المتنوعة المناقشات داخل الفصول الدراسية وتحسن التفكير النقدي.					
9.	لا يساعد حجم الفصل الدراسي الكبير في تنفيذ أنشطة التفكير النقدي.					

القسم الأخير: الانعكاس الذاتي

يرجى كتابة أي تعليقات أو انعكاسات ذاتية حول ممارستك التعليمية استنادًا إلى العبارات المذكورة أعلاه.

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Appendix: Interview schedule

Implementing Critical Thinking Skills in Libyan EFL Classroom: Zintan High School EFL Teachers' Perspectives and Challenges

School:

Date:

Interviewee:

The interview questions:

1. How do you define critical thinking in the context of education?
2. What do you think about implementing critical thinking in EFL classrooms?
3. Which language skill do you think most appropriate to teach critical thinking?
4. How do you think cultural and social practices influence the development of critical thinking?
5. According to your experience, what strategies do you find most effective to integrate critical thinking in classrooms?
6. What challenges do you face when integrating critical thinking skills?

الملحق: جدول المقابلة

تنفيذ مهارات التفكير النقدي في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في ليبيا: وجهات نظر وتحديات
معلمي المرحلة الثانوية في الزنتان

المدرسة:

التاريخ:

المُقابل:

أسئلة المقابلة:

1. كيف تُعرّف التفكير النقدي في سياق التعليم؟
2. ما رأيك في تطبيق التفكير النقدي في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية؟
3. ما المهارة اللغوية التي تعتقد أنها الأنسب لتدريس التفكير النقدي؟
4. بحسب خبرتك، ما الاستراتيجيات التي تراها أكثر فاعلية لدمج التفكير النقدي في الصفوف الدراسية
5. برأيك، كيف تؤثر الممارسات الثقافية والاجتماعية على تنمية مهارات التفكير النقدي؟
6. بحسب خبرتك، ما الاستراتيجيات التي تراها أكثر فاعلية لدمج التفكير النقدي في الصفوف الدراسية؟
7. ما التحديات التي تواجهك عند دمج مهارات التفكير النقدي في التدريس؟

Appendix: Sample of Interview Transcript

Interviewer: How do you define critical thinking in the context of education?

Interviewee: Critical thinking is a deeper form of thinking. It means that to encourage students to think deeply about what they learn. **Interviewer:** well, do you think it is number of skills or dispositions? **Interviewee:** I prefer to say it is a combination of skills and dispositions, because I noticed that some students are more curious and ask deep questions about what they learn. this indicates that they have the critical thinking dispositions. but still, they also need to develop the skills to analyse and evaluate information effectively. **Interviewer:** from your perspective, is critical thinking teachable skills or developed naturally? **Interviewee:** I believe that it is a teachable skill which can be developed by exposing students to particular type of activities.

Interviewer: What do you think about implementing critical thinking in language teaching and learning?

Interviewee: in my opinion, it is very important to implement critical thinking to language learning, as it helps students to be more critical and evaluating what they learn.

Interviewer: Which language skill do you think most appropriate to teach critical thinking?

Interviewee: I think reading and speaking are the most appropriate skills to teach critical thinking. When I teach a reading lesson, I tend to ask a lot of questions that promotes critical thinking, I ask about opinions on specific issues, and why a sentence was written in specific tense not another.... etc. also I encourage critical thinking practice in speaking lessons, as I depend on raising debates and discussions in my lessons, which are effective strategies to develop critical thinking. **Interviewer:** what about other language skills? **Interviewee:** to be honest, listening and writing skills do not usually practiced in my lessons, so I do not use them to practice critical thinking. **Interviewer:** why not? **Interviewee:** for listening, we do not have labs for practicing listening and it is not that effective to use only speakers in the classroom. For writing, due to lack of time. I keep writing tasks for home work. **Interviewer:** ok, but do you think they are appropriate for practicing critical thinking if you overcome these challenges? **Interviewee:** may be for writing, but no for listening.

Interviewer: How do you think cultural and social practices influence the development of critical thinking?

Interviewee: I think the cultural and social practices help in developing and teaching critical thinking. They make learning a language more engaging. **Interviewer:** do you think we can teach critical thinking without social and cultural context. **Interviewee:** I usually intend to integrate critical thinking to language learning in social and cultural context, this helps students to make sense of what they learn and connect it with the real world. So no, we cannot teach critical thinking without social and cultural contexts and practice.

Interviewer: According to your experience, what strategies do you find most effective to integrate critical thinking in classrooms?

Interviewee: actually, I usually tend to integrate three different strategies to promote critical thinking skills. firstly, I always use open ended questions such as 'Why do you think this happened?' or 'how would you act in specific context'. Secondly, I usually depend on debates and group discussion on speaking lessons. Finally, I sometimes use problem-solving strategy to link the real-world situations with classroom activities. **Interviewer:** Do use critical thinking strategies to teach language or you use language to teach critical thinking? **Interviewee:** I cannot defernite between whether we use critical thinking to improve language or the opposite. I prefer to say these strategies are used for both developing language and critical thinking.

Interviewer: What challenges do you face when integrating critical thinking skills?

Interviewee: for me, the main challenge is not havening the sufficient knowledge of what exactly means, students do not feel interested in activities related to critical thinking, also their language level does not help in integrating varied activities to improve critical thinking, and time limitation of the lesson. **Interviewer:** do you think you have clear instructions to integrate critical thinking? **Interviewee:** yes, the teacher book provides clear instructions to integrate critical thinking, but I plan to have more training on implementing critical thinking in classroom, as I do not feel that I fully and appropriately integrate critical thinking in my lessons. **Interviewer:** what other challenges do you face? **Interviewee:** these are the major challenges in my opinion, but another challenge is the traditional focus on memorization and exams, which sometimes makes students disable to think critically.

Interviewer: do you have anything to add or to comment on?

Interviewee: No, that's it. **Interviewer:** ok, thank you for your time.

