

Critical Thinking in the Moroccan Textbooks of English: Ticket to English as a Case Study

Authors : Mohsine Jebbour

Abstract : The ultimate aim of this study was to analyze a second-year baccalaureate textbook of English to see to what extent it includes elements of critical thinking. A further purpose was to assess the extent to which the teachers' teaching practices help students develop some degree of critical thinking. The literature on critical thinking indicated that all the writers agree that critical thinking is skilled and dispositional oriented, and most of the definitions highlight the skill and disposition to select, collect, analyze and evaluate information effectively. In this study, two instruments were used, namely content analysis and questionnaire to ensure validity and reliability. The sample of this study, on the one hand, was a second year textbook of English, namely Ticket to English. The process of collecting data was carried out through designing a checklist to analyze the textbook of English. On the other hand, high school students (second baccalaureate grade) and teachers of English constituted the second sample. Two questionnaires were administered—One was completed by 28 high school teachers (18 males and 10 females), and the other was completed by 51 students (26 males and 25 females) from Fez, Morocco. The items of the questionnaire tended to elicit both qualitative and quantitative data. An attempt was made to answer two research questions. One pertained to the extent to which the textbooks of English contain critical thinking elements (Critical thinking skills and dispositions, types of questions, language learning strategies, classroom activities); the second was concerned with whether the teaching practices of teachers of English help improve students' critical thinking. The results demonstrated that the textbooks of English include elements of critical thinking, and the teachers' teaching practices help the students develop some degree of critical thinking. Yet, the textbooks do not include problem-solving activities and media analysis and 86% of the teacher-respondents tended to skip activities in the textbooks, mainly the units dealing with Project Work and Study Skills which are necessary for enhancing critical thinking among the students. Therefore, the textbooks need to be designed around additional activities and the teachers are required to cover the units skipped so as to make the teaching of critical thinking effective.

Keywords : critical thinking, language learning strategies, language proficiency, teaching practices

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