

## Using the Textbook to Promote Thinking Skills in Intermediate School EFL Classrooms in Saudi Arabia: An Analysis of the Tasks and an Exploration of Teachers' and Perceptions

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**Abstract :** An aim of TS in EFL is to help learners to understand how they learn, which could help them in using the target language with other learners in language classrooms, and in their social life. The early researchers have criticised the system of teaching methods in EFL applied in Saudi schools, as they claim that it does not produce students who are highly proficient in English. Some of them suggested that enhancing learners' TS would help to improve the learners' proficiency of using the EFL. The textbook in Saudi schools is the central material for teachers to follow in the EFL classroom. Thus, this study is investigating the main issues that could promote TS in Saudi EFL: the textbook and the teachers. The purposes of the study are: to find out the extent to which the tasks in the textbook have the potential to support teachers in promoting TS; to discover insights into the nature of classroom activities that teachers use to encourage TS from the textbook and to explore the teachers' views on the role of the textbook in promoting TS in the English language. These aims will improve understanding of the connection between the potential of the textbook content and the participants' theoretical knowledge and their teaching practice. The investigation employed research techniques including the following: (1) analysis of the textbook; (2) questionnaire for EFL teachers; (3) observation for EFL classroom; (4) interviews with EFL teachers. Analysis of the third intermediate grade textbook has been undertaken, and six EFL teachers from five intermediate schools were involved in the study. Data analysis revealed that 36.71 % of the tasks in the textbook could have the potential to promote TS, and 63.29 % of the tasks in the textbook could not have the potential to promote TS. Therefore, the result of the textbook analysis showed that the majority of the tasks do not have the potential to help teachers to promote TS. Although not all teachers of the observed lessons displayed behaviour helpful to promote TS, teachers, who presented potential TS tasks in their lesson encouraged learners' interaction and students' engagement more than teachers who presented tasks that did not have the potential to promote TS. Therefore, the result of the teachers' data showed that having a textbook that has the potential to promote TS is not enough to develop teaching TS in Saudi EFL since teachers' behaviour could make the task more or less productive.

**Keywords :** English as a Foreign Language, metacognitive skills, textbook, thinking skills

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