The Motivational and Psychological Factors to Encourage Critical Thinking Through Enjoying English Literature: The Case of First Year English Students at Kasdi Merbah University, Ouargla

Thesis Submitted to the Department of Letters and the English Language in Candidacy for the Degree of “Doctorat Es-Sciences” in Applied Linguistics

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The present study examines the motivational and psychological factors that encourage first
tyear LMD students to think critically through reading literary texts. To achieve this aim, the
researcher opted for a descriptive method in most of the field work phases. Both quantitative
and qualitative approaches used to explore the teaching of critical thinking skills in higher
education level. An interview was administered to three teachers from the department of
English at Kasdi Merbah University, Ouargla, Algeria, during the academic year
2016/2017. The sample population of the interview tool was chosen according to the purposive
sampling which focuses on literature teachers. The interview aimed to explore teachers’
perceptions towards teaching critical thinking skills for university students. A questionnaire
was conducted with 60 students of first year LMD students out of 220 registered in the
department of English. The students were selected randomly to respond the questionnaire.
The questionnaire’ aim was to elicit the students’ perceptions towards teaching critical
thinking skills during the literature class. A classroom observation was used to observe the
motivational and psychological factors that influence the teaching of critical thinking as a skill
in an EFL classroom. The findings indicate that teaching critical thinking skills is not
integrated in the official curriculum as a fundamental teaching skill. Teaching critical thinking
through literary texts needs more focus on the teaching of critical thinking concepts for both
teachers and students to be used effectively in the appropriate way.

Keywords: critical Thinking, motivational factors, psychological Factors, critical reading,
Enjoying literature.
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