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Effects of an Instructional Model on the Improvement of EFL Students' Critical Thinking Skills for Reading Historical Documents

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Abstract

Critical thinking skills are highly extolled and have received a wide attention among educators in the 20th and the 21st centuries. This widespread interest in nurturing students' critical capacities calls for an instruction that goes beyond a mere transmission of knowledge from teacher to student, to also include the development of the knowledge and the skills associated with critical thinking. In civilization courses, fostering EFL students' critical thinking skills is vital for helping them cope with what they learn and how they learn it. This paper explores the concept of critical thinking and the importance of enhancing students' critical thinking skills. It also reports the findings of an experimental study conducted in the Department of English at Blida University to assess the effects of infusing an explicit instruction in critical thinking elements and critical reading strategies into a first-year LMD civilization class. This study revealed that training EFL first-year students in the elements and the reading strategies associated with critical thinking greatly impacted their performance and commitment in class. This paper ends with significant implications aimed at encouraging educators to integrate critical thinking into the LMD English curriculum for effective learning and teaching of civilization.

Keywords: Critical Thinking, Critical thinking skills, civilization course,EFL, LMD system (License, Master, Doctorate), first-year students, University of Blida.

1. Introduction

Nurturing students' critical thinking skills (henceforth CTS) is becoming an essential component of classrooms worldwide. Almost every educational agenda stresses the need and importance of these skills, and set them a major priority in all schools and universities.The introduction of the learner-centered approach as a substitute to teacher-centeredness directed many educators' attention to the role played by students as independent active thinkers in the learning process. Moreover, many educators and researchers call for explicitly instructing students in how to think and not just in what to think. From here emerged the focus on students' mental processes and on the needto cultivate their CTS to help them better process information, make judgments, solve problems, take decisions, and produce their own arguments.

Changing instruction from a mere didactic delivery of bodies of knowledge from teachers to students to an instruction that integrates the knowledge and skills associated with critical

thinking (henceforth CT) is the primary task and the intent of many proponents of the CT movement in education. Many colleges and universities offer courses designed to enhance the learners' abilities to think critically (Halpern, 1999, p.70) believing that the development of CT should be the principal reason for higher education. Based on this, the objective of this paper is three-fold. It first seeks to explore the concept of CT as defined in the literature, and then highlights the benefits and importance of fostering university students' CTS in the civilization course. This paper finally reports the findings of an experimental study conducted in the Department of English at Blida University. The experiment investigated the impacts of infusing an explicit instruction in CT into a one semester first-year civilization course onto the CTS of first-year LMD English students.

The focus of this paper is put onCT in civilization courses at the university level. This is due to the growing desire to see EFL students engage actively and critically in the civilization class and in practicing CTS when interacting with historical documents rather than merely memorizing content knowledge for their examinations.

2. Literature Review on Critical Thinking

2.1. Defining Critical Thinking

The term CT has, in recent years, been increasingly used in education and there exist several attempts to define it. The multitude of definitions available in the literature on CT share to a great extent similar content,hence complicated the issue of having one encompassing worldwide accepted definition of this concept. Tsui(1998, p.2) argues that because CT is complex, "any attempt to offer a complete and definitive definition of it would be futile". Therefore, before any attempt at defining CT, presenting the etymology of the word is warranted. The term CT derives from roots in Ancient Greek (Paul et al., 1997, p.2). The words 'critical' and 'critic' derive etymologically from two Greek roots, 1) Kriticos, from Kites meaning 'a judge' and 'judgment' and 2) Kriterion meaning 'standards' or 'means of judging' (Concise Oxford Dictionary 11th Edition).

In the 1990s and early 2000s, several scholars (Halpern,1990; Robyns, 2001; Facione, 2010; Cottrell, 2005; Ennis, 1993; Fisher, 2001, among others) in various fields including, educational psychology, philosophy, cognitive and developmental psychology, to name a few, have produced a myriad of books, studies and articles on CT. Consequently, to understand its nature, some definitions of CT proposed by leading researchers are presented in this section. Ennis (1993, p. 180) defines CT as "reasonable, reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or do".
He focuses on reasonableness, i.e., having sense and good judgments, on reflection and on the process of making decisions. In the Critical Thinking Community, CT is further delineated as

> the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing and or evaluating information gathered from or generated by observation, experience, reflection, reasoning or communication as a guide to belief and action (Scriven& Paul, 1987)

Paul and Elder (2007a, p.5) support that and also consider CT to be the process of analyzing and assessing what they term elements of thought (i.e., purposes, questions, point of view, information, inferences, concepts, implications, and assumptions). To analyze and assess the thinking of others or one's own thinking, the thinker 1) should recognize all the elements of thought mentioned previously, and then 2) apply the intellectual standards (clarity, accuracy, precision, relevance, depth, breadth, logic,and fairness) to evaluate them. Upon these elements and standards, Paul and Elder(2007b) designed the International Critical Thinking Essay Test (henceforth ICTET) to assess CT.

In addition to Paul, Facione (1990, p.3) reported the definition of CT given by the Delphi panelof the American Psychological Association which comprises forty-six (46) experts in CT instruction, assessment and theory. The panelists' view has been noted as providing the most rigorously defined version of critical thinking (Oderda et al., 2011) and to be highly cited (Turner, 2005).

They have reached a consensus on CT as being

> purposeful, self-regulatory judgment which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, or contextual considerations upon which that judgment is based. Critical Thinking is essential as a tool of inquiry […] and a powerful resource in one's personal and civic life(Facione, 1990, p.3)

This comprehensive and crucial definition of CT includes skills of interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation. This taxonomy of critical thinking skills (henceforth CTS) constitutes the cognitive domain of CT. It recognizes the importance of metacognition (self-regulation i.e., self-examination and self-correction) asa central component in CT as it helps individuals to be mindful of and monitor their own thinking processes. In addition to its cognitive domain, CT includes also an affective dispositional dimension. CT dispositions (henceforth CTD) are certain attitudes and 'traits of mind' (Paul, 1993, p. 6) which are all essential to the effective use of the aforesaid CT skills and abilities in real settings. A person who is proficient in CT skills has the aptitude (i.e., propensity and tendency) to execute these skills. The CTD outlined in the definition of the Delphi panel include namely, truth-seeking, open-mindedness, analyticity, systematicity, CT self-confidence, inquisitiveness, and maturity of judgment (Facione et al., 2000, p.23).

Although CTS and CTD are bound, the scope of the present paper does not focus on CTD. Facione (1990, p.11) argues that experts in CT harbor no ways for designing appropriate instruction that nurtures CTD. Unlike the skills,these dispositions cannot be transmitted or fostered through training but cultivated through modeling and enculturation i.e., through social and cultural contact at both an institutional and interpersonal levels (Perkins et al., 1993, p. 32). The former level refers to the cultural values, attitudes and beliefs existing within the educational surround including the classroom. The latter, i.e., the interpersonal level involves the teacher's behavioral messages, interpersonal contact and social interactions among students, between the teacher and students and even among family members. This paper also does not focus on CTD because dispositions are unobservable traits thatcan be difficult to assess unlike the CTS which are manifest in performance.

The definitions reviewedin this sectionreflect scholars' diverse views on the concept of CT and reveal the extent to which it is extolled and is widely recognized as a vital necessity now in the 21st century as it was more than c. 2500 years ago. The following section is devoted to a discussion of the importance and need for promoting university students'CTS.

2.2. Enhancing Critical Thinking Skills

Being adept to CT involves a proficiency in CTS and an inclination to use them when appropriate.As seen in the previous section, the Delphi panel outlined a number of six skills central to CT that "educators (and researchers) want to see students acquire" (Dean &Kuhn, 2003, p.6). These skills are widely praised and according to Sternberg (1986, p.27) acquiring these skills should be the right of every student and "it is our responsibility to] …[enable them exercise this right". In addition, a preponderance of research from the huge literature on CT accentuates the substantial need for improving students' CTS in schools and universities.Facione (2010, p.18) reports that in a study of over 1100 college students, scores on a CT test significantly increased, thus, enhancing academic achievement and revealing the usefulness of CT instruction in making students think better. McCollister and Sayler (2010, p.41) argue that CTS are essential in education because these skills increase the 'rigor' and 'readiness' of students and make them more motivated, active, challenged, and more importantly able to question and "use the full power of their minds" (Paul et al., 1990, p.5).

Halpern (2003, p.2) believes that every generation and more specifically the generation of the 21st century needs more instruction in CT because the world is becoming more technical and complex. She argues (also Hirose 1992, p.2) that the changes in the workplace require workers to be endowed with CTS that enable them make decisions, face and solve problems. Moreover, the sheer information explosion or what is termed the information flux is yet another reason to prove the benefits of developing CTS. Several researchers (Van Duzer&Florez, 1999; Brem&Boyes, 2000) argue that the multitude of data available on the internet (which is not necessarily accurate and unbiased) require students to develop abilities to interpret, analyze, and evaluate this wealth of information, and not accept everything they read as reliable.

The need for developing CT in education lies primarily in the fact that students are considered active learners no longer engaged in rote memorization of facts but in improving their thinking skills. Integrating CT in civilization classes, then, would help foster students' abilities to think of history not just in terms of past events and dates that should be memorized but as a source of investigation and study. This is discussed further in the following section.

2.4. Critical Thinking Skills in Civilization Courses

The development of students' CTS in civilization classes has been cherished widely (e.g., Pellegrino, 2007; Wineburg, 2004; Robyns, 2001; Reed, 1998). These scholars advocate the need for integrating CT within civilization courses because learners need to be active and participate in the learning process (Reed, 1998, p. 43). This interest emerged from recent research in history instruction and learning which has found that analytical or critical reflection and evaluation are missing in many history classes, and that didactic lecturing is the prevalent method of instruction (Savich, 2009, p.1). Relying solely on lecturing encourages a

mindless (and usually short-lived) memorization of historical facts for scoring better grades, i.e., what is called learning for the test.

Savich (2009) conducted an action research to investigate approaches and techniques that would improve students' CTS in history classes. He found that when integrated in the classroom, CT not only develops students' skills of analysis, interpretation and evaluation, but also increases students' motivation, engagement and interest in the subject taught. Rather than expecting the teacher to spoon-feed them and simply pour facts into their minds, students with CT abilities search and inquire to figure out things for themselves. Put it differently, improving students' CTS helps to nurture their minds, and makes them adept to critically interact with the information and knowledge acquired in class or from historical documents.

Like Savich, Wineburg (2010) expresses the same concern and encouragesimproving students' CTS byteaching them to think critically like true historians. This is by investigating the past searching for evidence about what an event means and what caused it. He offered a list of strategies to help students possess a critical historical approach to reading in the civilization class. The strategiesWineburg (2010)proposed include:sourcing, contextualizing, close reading, using background knowledge, reading the silences, corroborating, and taking a stand(p.3-4). These strategies would help learners in the civilization class, and enable themto read historical documents critically as well as acquire the CTS of interpretation, analysis, evaluation and explanation.

Historical documents (primary or secondary sources) are heralded as effective materials in the civilization or history class, because they enrich the teaching content and help students grasp the significance of the lessons. This is by providing them with new opportunities to "think outside the box" (Lawson, 2010, p.8) of traditional teaching and lecturing. In addition, the use of historical documents properly helps students "engage into debates and into exciting endless learning opportunities that require critical thinking and analysis skills" (Reardon &Freville, 2009, p.2). Curiosity, observation, as well as habits of exploring and evaluation increase within students. Much like detectives, the task before students while critically analyzing historical documents is to approach the evidence with "a skeptical eye and a careful attention towards what the witness or the creator of the document really intended to say" (Lorence, 1981, p. 3).

Research reveals the extent to which the development of students' CTS is highly extolled and considered crucial for an effective learning of civilization. Yet unlike researchers' agreement regarding the importance of enhancing students' CTS, what makes an effective instruction of CTS is an issue of debate between researchers. This is tackled in the coming section.

2.5. Critical Thinking Skills Instruction

The necessity of fostering students' CTS has been widely addressed. Nevertheless, there has been a growing controversy about what makes a good instruction that successfully develops CTS to a higher level. Research on how to teach CTS is abundant in the literature revealing no uniformity among researchers (e.g., Reboy, 1989; McGuiness, 2000; Hatcher, 2006; Chaplin, 2007). Indeed, different approaches for teaching CTS are proposed like the enrichment approach which requires teaching CTS as a separate program or a stand-alone course. These courses instruct the skills in isolation or as separate disciplines without reference to any context (Robey, 1989). On the other hand, the infusion approach rather calls

for an integration and implementation of a critical thinking skills instruction within existing curriculum content.

Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment (1980) is one of the best known enrichment or separate programs. Many reviews of the effects of this program have been published, yet the more recent one by Romney and Samuels (2001, cited in McGuinness 2005, p.112) is a meta-analysis of 40 studies applying pre- and post-test designs and control groups. Modest effects were reported in achievement, and because of its nature as a separate program that teaches thinking skills independent from any content area, this program was seen to be less useful than programs which teach skills in a curriculum context (i.e., programs that infuse skills in content areas). The enrichment approach receives much criticism due to the fact that direct teaching of thinking skills through separate courses raises skill technicians, who apply these skills mechanically" (kanik, 2010, p. 32).

Infusing or incorporating critical thinking into a content-based course (such as the civilization class) is helpful and renders it more effective. At the college level, Warren et al. (2004) argue that using the infusion approach is crucial to the success of CT instruction and is better than teaching CT in isolation. Other researchers have shown the significant effects and superiority of infusing CT into a college U.S. history course (Reed, 1998), a secondary school history course (Swartz, 2008) and first-year Biology course (Chaplin, 2007). These three studies reveal that infusing the teaching of CT into regular course content, significantly improved students' abilities to think critically. The infusion approachcontainstwodifferentlines of thoughts: Proponents of an explicit or direct instruction of CTS, and supporters of an embedded or indirect instruction. For instance Reboy (1989), supporting an explicit instruction of criticalthinking, believesthat in instructing CT teachers should select the specific skills they wish to teach, and should explicitly define those skills with clear and objective descriptions.

The present paper reports the results of an experimental study conducted in the department of English at Blida University. This experiment adopted the infusion explicit approach, and incorporated an explicit instruction of CTS into a first year LMD civilization class. The section below further elaborates the methodology and process of conducting the experiment.

3. Methodology

3.1. Experimental Design and Research Question

This section reports the methods and procedures followed in the experimental study which was conducted in the Department of English at Blida University. The design for this research is a pretest-post-test experimental completely randomized group design. Participants were randomly selected to participate in an experimental (henceforth EXP) groupand a control (henceforth CTR) group. The independent variable for this experiment is the explicit CTS instruction, while students' CTS are the dependent variable. To assess whether infusing an explicit CTS instruction (independent variable) into civilization courses is effective and helps foster students' CTS (dependent variable), the research tools administered to the participants before the instruction (as pretests) were administered again after the instruction (as post-tests). This experimental study set out to answer the following research question:

Does infusing an explicit instruction in CT into a first-year civilization course have an effect on the CTS of first-year LMD EFL students at Blida University?

3.2. Participants

A sample of 100 first-year LMD of English students was randomly chosen to take part in this study. Members of the sample are divided by the administration into two groups (one group was randomly selected as the EXP group and the other as the CTRgroup). However this sample was reduced because some students enrolled but later either changed groups or dropped out. Moreover, other students were excluded from the experiment due to their absences either on the days of the instruction or on the days when the research instruments were administered. Participation in the experiment was crucial because results obtained before the instruction were compared with the results obtained after the instruction. Therefore, the sample was reduced to 64 in the pre-instruction phase and only 34 in the post-instruction phase.

3.3. The Experimental Instruction

The purpose of the experimental study was to evaluate the impacts of infusing into a first-year civilization course an explicit CTS instruction that continued over a period of one semester (≈ 14 weeks). The EXP group was instructed explicitly in CTS, whereas the CTR group (or comparison group) did not receive the instruction and was instead taught using the method (based on lecturing) adopted by most teachers of civilization in the Department of English whentheexperiment was carried out.The objective of the experiment was to explore whether the integration of an explicit (or direct) CTS instruction into a first-year civilization class has an effect on students' CTS.

The experimental instruction consisted of two components. The first component or part of the instruction includes teaching the critical reading strategies (henceforth CRS) proposed by Wineburg (2010, p. 3-4). These strategies include: sourcing, contextualizing, close reading, using background knowledge, reading the silences, corroborating, and taking a stand. Instructing these strategies to EXP students was thought to be an initial stage in the process of developing their CTS. Strategies are defined as "effortful processes, conscious actions and empowering tools" (Afflebach, 2008, p. 368), while skills are more effortless characterized with automaticity and adeptness. Acquiring CRS comes, then, before achieving a fluent effortless application of CTS. For that reason, an experimental instruction was designed to explicitly present and explain the different steps of the CRS while providing sufficient practice so that these strategies may transform themselves into skills (ibid, p. 372).

The second component of the instruction consists of the critical thinking elements (henceforth CTE) suggested by Edmonds et al., (2005, p.6). These elements of CT include: the five W's, main point(s), assumption(s), point of view(s), reasoning, inferences, evidence, assessing completeness, implications, taking a stand. The CTE were intended to give EXP students background knowledge about CT, including the language and vocabulary that associate with it and some basics of CT, such as how to extract arguments, how to analyze and evaluate them, and how to present one's own arguments, etc. The CTE are applicable, like the CRS, to reading and analyzing historical documents.Edmonds et al. (2005, p.4) confirm that explaining that these elements "pertain to the understanding of this concept and applicable to analyzing historical documents".

To carry out and infuse the experimental instruction within the civilization course, the instructional framework by O'Malley and Chamot (1986) known as the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (henceforth CALLA) was adopted. This instructional

framework has five phases (preparation, presentation, practice, evaluation, expansion) which help teachers incorporate and instruct explicitly content, language and strategies.These five phases are often recursive in that the teacher may go back to earlier phases in order to clarify or provide additional instruction. This "provides more flexibility in lesson planning and implementation" (Chamot et al., 1999, p.8). Using the phases of the CALLA model, the CTS experimental instruction was integrated in first-year civilization course over a period of one semester/90min of weekly instruction. During every session of civilization, EXP students were instructed in CRS and CTE and were trained to read critically historical documents following the CALLA model. The students were prepared and asked several questions about what they already know about CT or the instructed strategy(s)/element(s). The benefits of acquiring CTS and of thinkingcriticallywerehighlighted to the students.In addition, historicalinquiry and research as well as the importance of thinkingwereemphasized and discussedthoroughly.Eachstrategy/elementwasexplicitlypresented and modeled by the researcherusingseveralexamples of historical documents (and otherexamples on how to apply the instructedstrategy/elementoutside the classroom to help transfer the use of suchstrategy/element).The students, then, practiced the instructed strategy/element in reading a selected historical document. Their performance was evaluated and they were presented with other reading activities to expand the learned strategy/element.

Table 1 presents a summary of the method and materials used in instructing both the EXP and CTR groups. Appendix 3 provides a detailed description of the contents and objectives of the course proposed to teach CT to first year students.

Method and Materials	**Experimental Group**	**Control Group**
Course Duration (90 min.)	20 min. Lecture, 70 min. CT instruction	90 min. Lecturing and reading activities (suggested reading documents)
Historical Documents	The same documents	The same documents
Content of the lessons	The same, emphasis on CT	The same, no emphasis on CT
Activities	Emphasis on CTE and CRS when reading historical documents	Reading historical documents and only extracting information
CriticalThinkinghandouts	Yes (list of CTS, list of CTE and CRS, CT definition, Glossary of terms)	No handouts

Explicit Instruction in CT	Yes- 70 min. of weekly instruction	None
Questionnaire (pre/post)	The same questionnaire	The same questionnaire
The DBT (pre/post)	The sametask	The sametask
The ICTET (pre/post)	The same test	The same test

Table1. Summary of Instructional Method and Materials for EXP and CTR Groups

To assess the usefulness and effectiveness of the experimental instruction in developing EXP students' CTS, three research tools were administered to both EXP and CTR students as pre- and post-tests. The methods and procedures used for data collection and analysis are presented in the following section.

4. Instruments and Data Analysis

Three instruments were employed to assess the participating students' level of CTS and to determine the effects of the experimental instruction. Given the complexity of CT, it is unlikely that a single tool can cover all its dimensions, and a combination of measurements has been recommended (Ennis & Norris, 1990; Spicer & Hanks, 1995). The instruments used are: A Students' Questionnaire, The Document-Based Task (DBT) and the International Critical Thinking Essay Test (ICTET). The three tools were administered to both the EXP and CTR groups before the instruction and again at the end of the instruction, each accompanied with a reading document. Results obtained from the three research tools beforethis instruction were compared with results obtained from the same tools administered following the implementation of the experiment. Using the research tools as three varying sources of data helps to make this research more comprehensive and objective,since the focus is not merely on a single viewpoint.

The ICTET was used as a pretest and post-test to assess whether any improvement occurred in students' CTS due to the experimental instruction. The ICTET (see Appendix 1)is a standardized CT open-ended essay test designed by Paul and Elder in 2007. It is divided into two sections; the analysis section to analyze the reasoning of the author of a written piece and the evaluation section to assess it. This test was used because it provides an assessment of the fundamentals of CT thatcanbeusedwith content fromanysubject (includingcivilization). It also permits "educators to gatherevidence relevant to determining the extent to which instruction is effective in fosteringstudentcriticalthinking (in the process of learning content)" (Paul & Elder, 2007b, p.6), includingwhetherstudents have developed CTS.

The questionnaire (see Appendix 2) is a self-report tool which contains 25 items rated on a 3 point scale (yes, no, undecided). The students' questionnaire isdesigned to assess the participating students' CRS before the instruction and againafter the instruction. It helps to

know whether EXP studentsundergoing the experimental instruction use CRS more effectivelythan CTR students. The instructed CRS weretestedagainst the questionnaire items. The questionnaire is divided into 3 sections: Before I Started Reading,When I was Reading and After I Finished Reading.Section 1 (items 1-7)intends to gather information about the CRS that students are supposed to use before (i.e. sourcing/previewing) reading the historical document attached to the questionnaire. The second section (items 8-18) isdesigned in order to seewhat CRS students followed while reading and analyzing the document. The last section (items 19-25) depicts what CRS students used when they finished reading the document. From each section useful quantitative data was gathered before and after the instruction, tallied into three categories (yes, no, undecided), tabulated and converted into percentages using MS Excel.

To back up the results obtained from the questionnaire and the ICTET, the DBT was also employed. This task was administered before and following the experimental instruction. It is adopted from the Document Analysis Worksheet initially designed by the Wisconsin Historical Society (2005). The worksheet contains 12 questions and requires students to answer them after analyzing and interpreting a historical document. These questions include:

- What is the type of the document?
- What is the date of the document?
- Who is the author (creator) of the document?
- What do you know about the background of the author?
- Who do you think this document was written for?
- What is the topic or issue of the document?
- What are the things the author said that you think are important?
- Why do you think this document was written?
- What evidence in the document helps you know why it was written? Give an example from the document to support your opinion.
- What are the things the document tells you about the place where the document was written?
- Does the document conflict or agree with other things you have read about the topic?
- What question (s) do you want to address to the author that is left unanswered by the document?

Similarto the data generated from the questionnaire, the large amount of data collected from the ICTET and the DBT before and after the instruction was first checked for accuracy, corrected, organized and entered into the computer for analysis. Analysis included both descriptive statistics (mainly means and standard deviations) and inferential statistics (namely the paired-sample t test),and were run using SPSS version 17.0 and OriginLab version 8.07. The results obtained from these tools are reported and discussed in the following section.

5. Results and Discussion

An analysis and discussion of the results obtained from the three research instruments is presented in this section in order to find out whether infusing an instruction in CTS into a first-year LMD civilization course (which consists of explicitly instructing CTE and CRS to EXP students) affects the participating students' CTS.

5.1. Results of the Students' Questionnaire

The results obtained from the questionnaire are presented to identify the CRS used by the participants. After converting the large amount of data generated from the questionnaire into percentages, the data suggest that in the initial questionnaire (administered before the experimental instruction) both students in the EXP and CTR groups reported a similar use of CRS but in the final questionnaire (administered at the end of the instruction) the results revealed a significant increase in the EXP group performance in comparison with the low performance of the CTR group (see table2, a-b).

EXP	**Section 1**	**Section 2**	**Section 3**
Group			
Initial Q (%)	45	50	45
Final Q (%)	60	61	60
Improvement	**15**	**11**	**15**
CTR	**Section 1**	**Section 2**	**Section 3**
Group			
Initial Q (%)	55	50	46
Final Q (%)	40	39	40
Decrease	**15**	**11**	**6**

Table 2. a) EXP Group's Performance in the Questionnaire, b) CTR Group's Performance in the Questionnaire

These results suggest an increase in EXP students'use and awareness of CRS. Internalizing the importance of these strategies and sufficient practice are crucial at an initial stage before achieving a fluent and effortless application of CTS. On the other hand, a thorough examination of the questionnaire's results revealed a decrease in CTR students' performance, yet, an increase in their indecision (i.e.; students ticking undecided as a response) from the initial to the final questionnaire. Two reasons were assumed to be responsible for this result. The questionnaire includes items of a closed-ended type and thisfacilitates the job for CTR students to guesstheiranswers. In addition, test-weariness (i.e., gettingtiredfromtakingbothpre and post-assessment) mightalso affect negativelytheir motivation. To compensate for this limitation and ensure the reliability of the study'sresults, twofurther instruments wereemployed (the ICTET and DBT). Resultsobtainedfromthesetools are reported in whatfollows.

5.2. Results of the International Critical Thinking Essay Test

The results obtained from the ICTET administered as both a pretest and post-test were analyzed with assistance of SPSS version 17.0 to find out whether instructing EXP students in CTE and CRS helps improve their CTS. The pretest and post-test scores were analyzed using both a descriptive and an inferential statistical procedure.Descriptivestatisticsinclude the mean (henceforth M) and standard deviation (henceforth SD). Calculating the M and SD helps in stating the difference between the scoresobtained by the students of the EXP and CTR groups

in the pretest and post-test. The SD and M of EXP and CTR groups' pretest and post-test scores are presented in tables 3 and 4.Inferential statistics, on the other hand, wererunusing the paired-sample t teststatistical formula. The paired t-test was used to find out whether or not a significantstatisticaldifferenceexistsbetween the pretest and post-test means for both the EXP and CTR groups.

EXP Group Scores on the ICTET

Pretest Scores (X)	**Post-test Scores (Y)**
• Min/Max score (6/30) over 100 • $\text{Mean} = \frac{\text{Sumofscores}}{\text{NumberofScores}}$ = (236/17)= 13.88	• Min/Max score (14/68) over 100 • $\text{Mean} = \frac{Sumofscores}{NumberofScores}$= (667/17) = 39.23
Students' correct answers represent about **14 %** of the test and they missed 86 %	Students' correct answers represent about **39 %** of the test and they missed 60 % : **An increase of 25 % in students' performance.**
SDx= $\sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2}{N}} = \sqrt{\frac{693.76}{17}} = 6.39$	**SDy=** $\sqrt{\frac{\sum y^2}{N}} = \sqrt{\frac{2983,06}{17}} = 13.25$

Table 3.The EXP Group'sPretest and Post-test Means and Standard Deviation

CTR Group Scores on the ICTET

Pretest Scores (X)	**Post-test Scores (Y)**
• Min/Max score (5/20) over 100 • $\text{Mean} = \frac{Sumofscores}{Numberofscores}$= (172/17) ≅ 10.12	• Min/Max score (05/19) over 100 • $\text{Mean} = \frac{\text{Sum of scores}}{\text{Number of scores}}$= (171/17) = 10.06
Students' correct answers represent about **10 %** of the test and they missed 90 %.	Students' correct answers represent about **10 %** of the test and they missed 90 %: **0% increase in students' performance.**
SDx= $\sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2}{N}} = \sqrt{\frac{271.76}{17}} = 3.99$	**SDy=** $\sqrt{\frac{\sum y^2}{N}} = \sqrt{\frac{221.00}{17}} = 3.61$

Table 4. The CTR Group'sPretest and Post-test Means and Standard Deviation

Descriptive statistics revealed an increase in the EXP students' scores from the pretest to the post-test but showed no increase in the CTR students' scores from the pretest to the post-test (see table 3 and figure 1a). The pretest mean of the EXP group is M=13.88 and increased to M= 39. 23 in the post-test. The CTR group's mean, on the other hand, showed no increase (see table 4 and figue 1b). It is also important to note that the initial (before instruction) CTS

of students in the two groups were similar.However, a comparison of the two groups' post-test means shows that the EXP meanishigherthanthat of the CTR group (10.06 <39.23) implying a superior performance of the EXP group over the CTR group.

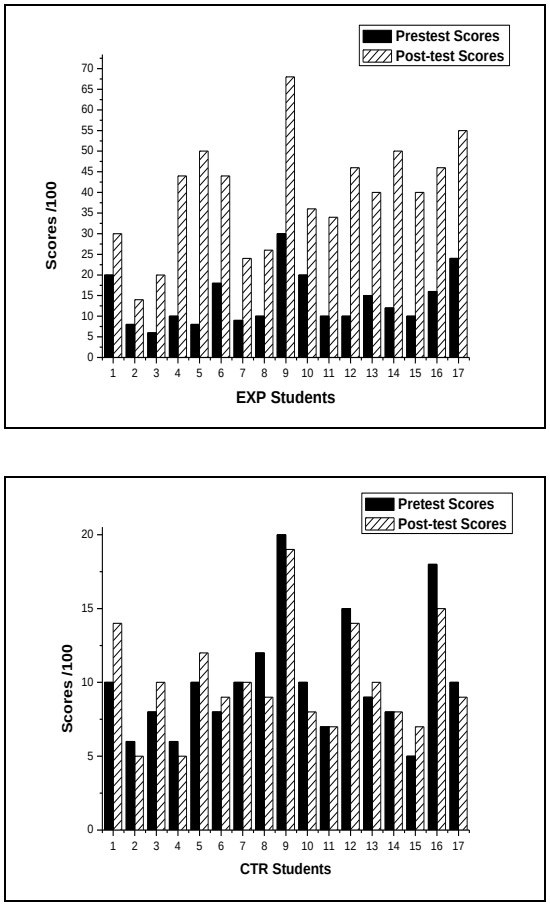


Figure 1.a) EXP Group's Pretest and Post-test Performance, b) CTR Group's Pretest and Post-test Performance

The results of the descriptive statistics were supported with results obtained from the paired sample t test. The t test was used to decide whether or not the results obtainedfrom the descriptive statistics are statisticallysignificant and reliable.The paired-sample t test used in thisexperimentalresearchsuits the type of the data collected. This test isusedfollowingmathematical formula for computing the value of the t (n-1):

$$t(n-1) = \frac{\sum d}{\sqrt{\frac{n(\sum d^2) - (\sum d)^2}{n-1}}}$$

t (n-1)= the observedor the calculated t
d= the differencebetweenpretest and post-test scores
$\sum d$= the sum of the differences
$\sum d^2$= the sum of the squareddifferences
$(\sum d)^2$= the sum of the differencessquared
n= the number of scores

Moreover, this test depends on threefactors, namely:

- The number of the degrees of freedom (df) whichis in a paired t testcalculatedusing the formula: df= n-1.
- The type of the hypothesis
- The level of significance.

In this experimental study, the paired-sample t test was performed with assistance of SPSS version 17.0. The number of the degree of freedomisdf=(17-1)= 16, (17 is the number of the students in the EXP group and CTR group with a total of 34 participants). The type of hypothesis selected is a two-tailed hypothesis (i.e., the nullhypothesis H0 and the alternative hypothesis H1). The nullhypothesis (henceforth H0) claims that there is no significant difference between the pretest and post-test means (M1-M2=0), whereas the alternative hypothesis (henceforthH1) claims that a significant difference exists between the means (M1-M2 ≠0 or M1 <> M2). The third factor is the level of significance (i.e., calculated significance values ig.) which is usually set for the t testat 0.05(i.e. alpha level, α=0.05). The H0 is rejected when the calculated significance value is less than 0.05. But it cannot be rejected when the significance value (sig.) is higher than 0.05. In the case when the H0 isrejected the H1 isretained. In addition, when the significance value issmallerthan 0.05, the resultis statiscically significant and improbably to have occurred due to chance or error.The results of the paired-sample t test of both EXP and CTR pretest and post-test means are reported in tables 5 and 6 thatfollow.

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences							
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Pretest – Post-test EXP Group	-25.35294	10.85093	2.63174	-30.93197	-19.77391	-9.634	16	.000

Table 5. Paired-Sample t test of Pretest and Post-test Means in EXP Group

Table 5 shows that the significancevalueissig.= 0.000, whichislessthan the significancelevelα=0.05. Therefore the H0which claims thatthereis no differencebetween the EXP group'spretest and post-test meansisrejected in favour of the H1. This implies that there is a statistical significant difference between the pretest and post-test means of EXP students, thus confirming the results obtained from the descriptive statistics.The resultsdemonstrate an increase in the EXP group performance from the pretest to the post-test.Table 6 reports the

results of the t test of the pretest and post-test means of the CTR group. Thesignificancevalue sig.=0.89 ishigherthan the alpha level (α=0.05). Consequently, the nullhypothesis H0 cannot be rejected. This implies that there is no significant difference between the pretest and post-test means of the CTR group. This result confims the findings of the descriptive analyses whichrevealed an increase of 25% in EXP students' scores from the pretest to the post-test but showed no increase in CTR students' scores.

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences							
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Pretest – Post-test CTR Group	.05882	1.88648	.45754	-.91112	1.02876	.129	16	.899

Table 6. Paired-Sample t test of Pretest and Post-test Means in CTR Group

To support the findings obtained from the questionnaire and the ICTET, the DBT was employed as a third instrument. The results of the DBT are handled in the coming section.

6. Results of the Document-Based Task

The results obtained from the DBTwereaimed to support the results obtained from the questionnaire and the ICTET. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the results of the task. The mean and standard deviation were calculated to state the differencebetween the scores obtained by the students of the EXP and CTR groups in the pre-taskand post-task (see tables 7 and 8). Inferentialstatisticswerealsorunusing the paired-sample t testwith the help of SPSS version 17.0.

EXP Group Scores on the DBT

Pre-task Scores (X)

- **Min/Max score (4/12) over 20**
- $\textbf{Mean} = \frac{\text{Sumofscores}}{\text{Numberofscores}}$ **= (120/17)= 7.05**

Students' correct answers represent about 35 % of the task and they missed 65 %.

Post-task Scores (Y)

- **Min/Max score (7/18) over 20**
- $\textbf{Mean} = \frac{Sumofscores}{Numberofscores}$ **= (191,5/17) = 11.26**

Students' correct answers represent about 60 % of the task and they missed 35 % ➔ An increase of 25 % in student's performance.

SDx= $\sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2}{N}} = \sqrt{\frac{61.44}{17}}$ **= 1.90**

SDy= $\sqrt{\frac{\sum y^2}{N}} = \sqrt{\frac{107.6}{17}}$ **= 2.51**

Table 7. EXP group'sPre-task and Post-taskMeans and Standard Deviation

CTR Group Scores on the DBT (First-year LMD 2010/2011)

Pre-task Scores (X)

- Min/Max score (2/9) over 20
- $\text{Mean} = \frac{Sumofscores}{Numberofscores}$= (109.5/17)= 6.44

Students' correct answers represent about **32 %** of the task and they missed 68 %

Post-task Scores (Y)

- Min/Max score (2/10) over 20
- $\text{Mean} = \frac{Sumofscores}{Numberofscores}$= (115/17)= 6.76

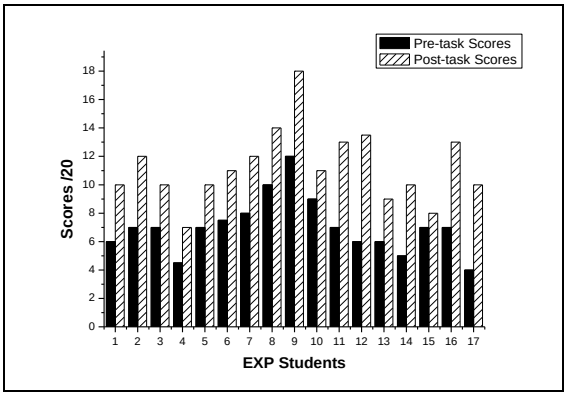
Students' correct answers represent about **34%** and they missed 66% : **2 % increase in students' performance**

SDx= $\sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2}{N}} = \sqrt{\frac{79.44}{17}}$ **= 2.16**

SDy= $\sqrt{\frac{\sum y^2}{N}} = \sqrt{\frac{86.56}{17}}$ **= 2.26**

Table 8. CTR Group'sPre-task and Post-taskMeans and Standard Deviation

Table 7 shows thatEXPgroup'spost-taskmean (M=11.26) ishigherthan the mean of the pre-task (M=7.05). On the other hand, table 8 revealsthatCTR group pre-taskmeanis 6.44 while the post-taskmeanis 6.76. Unlike EXP group's performance, CTR group's performance increasedslightlywith 2%. (seealsofigure 2, a-b)



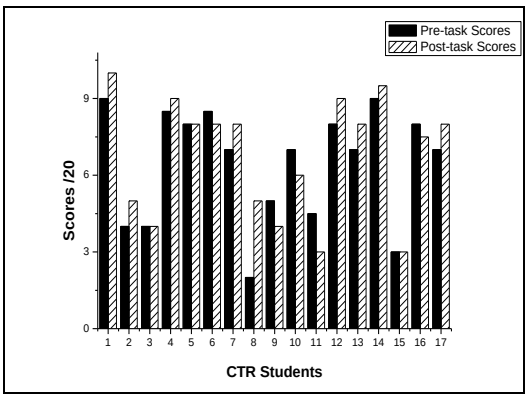


Figure 2.a) EXP Group's Pre-task and Post-task Performance, b) CTR Group's Pre-task and Post-task Performance

The results of the paired-sample t testare presented in following tables 9 and 10.This test wasconducted to seewhether or not a significantdifferenceexistsbetween the pre-task and post-taskmeans of the EXP group and between the pre-task and post-taskmeans of the CTR group.

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences							
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
EXP Group	Pre-task - Post-task	-4.20588	1.73258	.42021	-5.09669	-3.31507	-10.009	16	.000

Table 9. Paired-Sample t test of Pre-task and Post-taskMeans in EXP Group

As canbereadfrom table 9, the significance valueis 0.000 and islessthan the alpha level 0.05. Therefore, thenullhypothesis H0which claims thatthereis no differencebetween the EXP group'spre-task and post-taskmeansisrejected and the H1isretained. This meansthatthereis a statisticalsignificantdifferencebetween the twomeans of the EXP group. This result supports the results of the descriptive statisticswhichshowedthatthe post-taskmean of the EXP groupishigherthanitspre-taskmean. This denotesalsoanincrease in EXP students' performance.

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences							
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
CTR Group	Pre-task-Post-task	-.32353	1.07444	.26059	-.87595	.22889	-1.242	16	.232

Table 10. Paired-Sample t test of Pre-task and Post-taskMeans in CTR Group

Table 10 indicates that the significance valueissig.= 0.232 whichishigherthan 0.05 (i.e. 0.23>0.05). Accordingly, the H0isretained and H1isrejected.This impliesthatthereis no statisticalsignificantdifferencebetween the pre-task and post-taskmeans of the CTR group.The non-differencebetween the CTR group'smeansshows that CTR students' performance did not increase.

In a nutshell, the results obtained from the three research instruments demonstrated that EXP students outperformed CTR students. Both descriptive and inferential statistics revealed a statistical significant increase in EXP students' performance and no improvement in CTR students' performance. The results also revealed that it was improbable for chance or error to cause that augmentation in students' performance. The increase in EXP students' scores may suggest that the experimental instruction, the students were engaged in for several weeks, is beneficial and helps to develop students' CTS. However, further experiments are needed to investigate whether other factors other than the instruction are responsible for the results obtained. Replicating this study will undoubtedly shed more light upon the impacts of the CTS instruction proposed in this paper.

The present experimental study contains a number of limitations which needs much consideration when undertaking future research. The length of the research, sample size, and control of other variables are major constraints.Thelength of the experimental instruction may have been one limitation. Onesemester of instruction mightbelimited and not enough time to guaranteewhether the effects of the explicit instruction in CTE and CRS are significantenough to enhancestudents' CTS. Moreover, the number of the participatingstudentsisrelativelysmall (N=34). It remainsproblematic and difficult to generalize the results of thisresearch to the whole population.A substantialinscrease in sample size, then, isrequired to prove the effectivness of the experimental instruction and the generalizability of the findings.Lastly, several variables wereuncontrolledwhenconducting the experiment.CTR students' motivation and commitmentis an issue of furtherconcern and another major variable in the presentresearch.Thesestudentsshowedlessinterest in completing the post-test, the post-task as well as the questionnaire.The instruction and assessmentweredetermined by the semester system.Post-assessmentwasconductedaweekbefore the second semesterexamination and

thismightexplainthe deterioration in CTR students' performance. The control of the aformentioned variables, then, wouldundoubtedly influence the results of thisstudy.

7. Implications

In the light of the results of the experimental study, some implications can be offered to provide teachers with insightful ideasand approaches to their classrooms for an effective teaching and learning of civilization.

Teachers of civilization need to cross the barriers from a mere transmission of historical informationand recounting of past events or dates to students (which simply reduces learning civilization to taking copious notes in the classroom and rote memorization) to specifically encouraging and training students to think critically. This can be done by changing traditional methods of teaching civilization that focus more on what students learn and less on the students' cognitive development like the development of their CTS.

Lecturing students is crucial but alone may be nearly insufficient for fostering their CTS. More training is neededso that students cease to be only spectators in the civilization classroom, reliant solely on rote memorization to pass their examinations, to actively engage in class and exercise fully the powers of their minds. This will alter their role in the civilization classroom and makes them more active learners willing to inquire, question and assess historical information. For that reason, teachers are encouraged to reduce the time of lecturing and devote more efforts to integrate CT into their instruction.

Providing students with historical documents and getting them practice their CTS are crucially needed to engage students actively in the classroom, and also a successful step towards making civilization an interesting and intriguing field of study and research. This also allows for more interaction among students in authentic activities in groups or individually.

In addition to providing students with authentic reading materials and encouraging practice, teachers should also recognize the crucial need to establish and maintain a positive and stimulating classroom atmosphere that contributes to the growth of CT. In addition, teachers should exhibit pleasant behaviors in the classroom such as: showing respect for every student, including his/her opinions and viewpoints, being flexible, accepting individual differences, acknowledging all responses and allowing students to question, debate and participate actively in class.

To maintain a positive classroom climate, it is critical for teachers to model different dispositions and attitudes associated with CT. Dispositions such truth-seeking, analyticity, inquisitives, open-mindedness, systematicity, etc. (Facione et al., 2000, p. 23) aid in the development of students' CTS in the civilization classroom.

8. Conclusion

CT has long been a cherished goal in education and its importance has been reiterated by various scholars. The literature on CT is abundant with research on the concept, revealing a shared agreement that developing students' CTS is fundamental. Previous studies demonstrated the benefits of infusing the teaching of CT into regular content instruction. Explicitly teaching CT to students including the skills and knowledge that associate with it was found to have greater effects on students' CTS.

The experimental study upon which this paper is based showed positive increase inEXPstudents' achievement on the tests as well as their motivation and engagement in the civilization classroom and with authentic historical documents.The three tools used in the study demonstrated that the students in the EXP group (which received the experimental instruction) performed better than those in the CTRgroup. Replicating this study would undoubtedly help confirm or refute the results obtained. Taking this into account, teachers are encouraged to set the development of students' CTS in the civilization classroom as a primary objective and design lessons that draw upon CT. In doing so, they need also to change and diversify the course materials and methods so that students are challenged to think critically. The effects of these changes will be undoubtedly desirable and worthwhile for both teachers and students.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: The International Critical Thinking Essay Test

Name: …….

Direction 1: After you have carefully read and analyzed the assigned reading, answer clearly the following questions in the form of an essay. Do not write on the test. Use a separate sheet of paper so that you have room for elaboration.

1- What is the author's purpose?
2- What is the most important question, problem or issue in the document?
3- What is the most significant information or data in the document?
4- What is (are) the most basic conclusion (s) in the document?
5- What are the most basic concepts, theories, or ideas in the document?
6- What are the most fundamental assumptions of the document?
7-What are the most significant implications of the document?
8- What is the point of view in the document?

Direction 2: After you have finished your analysis, assess the strengths and the weaknesses of the assigned reading taking into consideration the following: clarity, logicalness, depth, breadth, consistency, accuracy, relevance, and precision. Present your assessment in the form of an essay.

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Appendix 2: Questionnaire to First-Year LMD Students of English at Blida University

Dear student, after you finish reading and analyzing the historical document attached to this questionnaire, please provide us with answers to the following items by ticking the appropriate boxes which correspond to your answer. Your responses are highly appreciated and will remain confidential.

NB: There are no right or wrong answers, we are merely interested in what you do. Thank you very much.

Section One: Before I started Reading… Yes No Undecided

I decided in advance the purpose of my reading and read with this goal in mind

I looked at the title and tried to guess what the text might be about

I quickly skimmed through the text

I made a quick first reading to get an overall picture of the text.

I read the name of the author and tried to guess what these can tell me about the text

I read the source of the book and tried to guess what these can tell me about the text

I paid attention to the date when the text was written and published

Section Two: When I was Reading…

I related what the text is saying with what happened in the time when it was created

I compared what I read with what I already know about the topic of the text

I related what the text is saying with what I studied in the course to understand it

I checked my initial response and saw whether I already know something about the content of the textthat has been left out or is missing

I wrote down questions about the document on a sheet of paper and answered them while reading

I scanned the text looking for the main ideas

I looked for the text's central message

I underlined or wrote down the main ideas and the supporting ideas on a separate sheet of paper

I looked for the author's position or point of view, asking "what is he trying to tell me?"

I held the overall argument (or arguments) in my head looking for the author's given reasons and justifications

I summarized as I went along reading

Section Three: After I finished Reading…

I checked whether the author's reasons and justifications are accurate

I checked the author's arguments for flaws

If I was persuaded by the author's arguments, I considered whether the evidence looks convincing enough

If I was not persuaded, I asked "why not?"

I compared the text with another text (s) I read

I checked whether the text contradicts what I know

I created my own position about the text and checked if my own point of view is clear, convincing and well-supported

Appendix 3:

CRITICAL THINKING INTEGRATED CIVILIZATION COURSE

University of Blida

Department of English

Grade: First Year LMD

American Civilization Course

Length of the Course: Second Semester (14 weeks)

Course Duration: 90 minutes per week

Course Description

This critical thinking integrated course is aimed at developing the critical thinking skills of the course participants (1st year LMD students) to read critically historical documents. It also helps participants understand what critical thinking is and how to apply the elements of

critical thinking (henceforth CTE) and the strategies of critical reading (henceforth CRS) inside the civilisation course. The course is infused into an American Civilisation course and is extended over a period of one semester (semester 2). Incorporated within the scope of this course, students will interpret, analyze and evaluate different historical documents (primary and secondary sources). By explicitly instructing students to use CTE and CRS, it is assumed that students will develop a set of critical thinking skills to closely read historical documents and evaluate the type and value of information presented. This will lead them ultimately to form their own reason-based opinions and conclusions about key events in American history. Following this course, students will be post-assessed to gauge whether they internalized the CTE and CRS and whether their critical thinking skills improved.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

By the end of this semester course, students are expected to achieve the following outcomes:

Linguistic content : Students should be able to

Learn content language that associates with the topic.

Develop new vocabulary that associates with critical thinking and learn how to differentiate between the terms and concepts (argument, conclusion, premise, reasons, evidence, assumption, implication, etc.)

Content Knowledge : Students should

Gain a basic understanding of historical events beginning with the European Explorations, American colonial period, American Revolution and Independence up to the formation of the new American nation.

Gain understanding of terminology and concepts that associate with critical thinking.

Basic Skills: Students should be able to

Recall and organize specific information (name, describe, define, identify)

Comprehend and digest information

Know basic terminology of the subject

Recognize aspects of American civilization and history

Apply the basic terminology as well as knowledge of the subject in their analyses of documents and in their examination.

Critical Thinking Skills: Students should be able to

Interpret

Formulate categories and distinctions for understanding information

Decode the significance of information, intentions, motives or views.

Clarify the intended meaning of words, ideas or concepts and remove confusion and ambiguity.

Analyze

Examine ideas by comparing or contrasting them.

Detect arguments and reasons in support of some claims or opinions.

Analyze arguments by identifying the structure of the arguments, the intended conclusion, the reasons and premises in support of the conclusion and any unstated assumptions.

Evaluate

Assess the credibility and acceptability of claims.

Assess arguments by judging the acceptability of premises, identifying fallacies and doubtful assumptions and judging implications.

Infer

Look for or recognizing evidence for supporting one's opinion or for accepting information.

Conjecture multiple alternatives for resolving a problem or questions.

Draw conclusions for determining what position, opinion or point of view one should take, and for determining which conclusion is most strongly warranted by the evidence at hand, or which should be rejected or regarded as less plausible.

Explain

State accurate results of one's reasoning and one's analysis and judgment regarding an issue.

Justify procedures used in forming one's interpretations, analyses, evaluation or inferences.

Present arguments and reasons for accepting some claim.

Self-regulate

Make metacognitive self-examination of one's opinions and reasons and assessing whether one's thinking (analysis, interpretation, evaluation, and inference) is influenced by deficiencies in knowledge, by stereotypes, prejudices, emotions.

Self-correct errors or deficiencies revealed in one's own thinking.

Component of the Course

Preparation:

Prepare students by finding out what prior knowledge students have about the content to be taught.

Write on the board an outline of the lesson and discuss with students briefly its content.

Find out what strategies students already use when reading and analysing documents (through class discussions).

Develop students' knowledge of concepts in the subject matter to be taught (content and CT concepts).

Identify the meaning of the word strategy and teach new vocabulary that associates with CT.

Presentation:

Use a variety of techniques (demonstrations, modelling, visual support and provision of handouts and worksheets)to present new information (content, CTE and CRS)

Handout a package of photocopied sheet of papers that includes selected definitions of critical thinking, critical thinking skills list, a list of critical reading strategies, the 10 critical thinking elements, and a glossary of critical thinking terms.

Explain the element of critical thinking (one at a time)

Model the strategy (one at a time), name it, explain its value and when and how to use it. The studentsfollowthroughtheirhandouts.

Provide students with examples to understand more when and how to use the element/ strategy

Assign students a critical reading activity the instructed element/strategy help to accomplish.

Practice:

Divide themselves in groups of 4 or 5 and each group practice the newly learnt element/strategy in analysing and evaluating the assigned reading document.

Will be guided explicitly to practice the instructed CRS and CTE, and will be given feedback and encouragement (Teacher scaffold instruction in this phase)

Students in the groups, then will be called out to re-tell the whole process of using the element/ strategy in doing the activity.

Students will then engage in whole class discussions to share their answers.

Evaluation:

Teacher observes students while they apply the instructed element/strategy in doing the activity and record his/her observations, insights, concerns and decisions. This is to evaluate students use of the strategies and elements and also for evaluating the impact of her instruction, planning, use of materials and teaching techniques.

Students explain what strategy and element helped them and what did not help them and why.

Students self-evaluate their use of the critical reading strategies by filling out the questionnaire given to them both before and after the instruction, that is, checking the strategy they used while doing the activity and explaining what strategy helped them and what did not help them and why.

Expansion:

1) Explain why transfer of the element/ strategy is important to new tasks and situations and how it can be used.
2) Assign students a different reading historical document to practice further the instructed CRS and CTE and as a way to expand the use of the element/ strategy to new reading tasks.

Course Evaluation and Requirements

The following tools will be used to assess students' achievement:

- ICTET and DBT
- Continuous assessment and final term examinations

The Materials needed for this course include:

- Critical Thinking Package for students (definitions of CT, glossary of CT, CTE handout, CRS handout, and CTS list)
- Assigned text readings in American civilisation

Course dos and don'ts (Teacher and students expectations)

- Regular class attendance.
- Active participation and engagement in the classroom.
- Full preparation to discuss required readings and materials.
- Participation in class discussions and in small group activities.
- Completion of class and home assignments.
- Students respect themselves and others during class discussions and model critical thinking dispositions.

Hard work, debate and constructive dialogue, respect of different opinions are encouraged.