Degree of Availability of Critical Thinking Skills Among Arabic Language Teachers in Secondary Schools

Taghreed Dinar Sayhoud

Wasit University, Tagr80264@gmail.com

Abstract: The current research aims to identify the degree of availability of critical thinking skills among Arabic language teachers in the Wasit Education Directorate, Kut District, and to reveal differences in this regard based on gender. To achieve the research objectives, the researcher adopted the descriptive method, and the research sample consisted of (40) male and female teachers. The research tool consisted of (46) items distributed across five areas. The validity and reliability of the questionnaire were confirmed, and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. The study reached the following results:

- The degree of availability of critical thinking skills among Arabic language teachers was high.

- There were no statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\propto \leq 0.05$) in the degree of availability of critical thinking skills among Arabic language teachers attributed to gender.

Keywords: Critical thinking skills, Arabic language.

1. Introduction

The ability to think critically is one of the crucial skills that evolve with the changing times and the knowledge explosion. When an individual acquires the ability to think critically, it becomes even more important. This leads to acquiring these skills and the ability to apply them to deal with various types of knowledge (analysis, interpretation, evaluation, deduction, avoiding false beliefs, distinguishing between facts and opinions, and assessing the truth of every knowledge or value claim in light of the evidence supporting it). Evaluate claims instead of jumping to conclusions without evidence as a basis for your judgment.

Critical thinking skills are considered strategic areas in the educational system and a fundamental component of a teacher's personality. They significantly contribute to shaping and building a capable generation and developing society.

Critical thinking is the key to solving the daily problems teachers face. If we do not use critical thinking, we become part of the problem. Teachers often face situations where they need to make critical decisions and adapt to these new circumstances, and continuous updates of information serve as an excuse for critical thinking. The importance of critical thinking lies not only in enriching human life and helping to improve their conditions but also in its positive impact on society (Brookfield, 1987), as it helps individuals make the

right choices and decisions based on the influence of media and the emergence of multiple conflicting ideologies (Nickerson, 1985).

Some studies indicate that Arabic language teachers generally lack critical thinking skills, as mentioned by Radhi (2004), Ziadat and Al-Alaymeh (2009), or in some aspects, such as Husami (2012), who stated that teachers do not use strategies to interpret and evaluate arguments.

The problem of this study lies in the fact that teaching Arabic faces an issue where the material is presented in a lecture format, relying heavily on the learner's memory and excessive mechanical memorization. This makes the scientific material boring for students and exhausts teachers, as it neglects types of questions that stimulate intelligence, develop various thinking skills, and clearly reveal the relationships between facts, generalizations, and principles.

Thus, the current research problem can be summarized in answering the following questions:

1.   What is the degree of availability of critical thinking skills among Arabic language teachers in Kut District?

2.   Does the degree of availability of critical thinking skills among Arabic language teachers in Kut District differ according to gender?

Research Importance

Educational institutions are responsible for keeping pace with the characteristics and requirements of this era and its future challenges and understanding how to use this knowledge to solve students' problems. This can only be achieved by adopting an educational system that effectively integrates theory and practice, making application a faithful reflection and embodiment of theory, thereby bridging the growing gap between what is written and what is implemented, and between what is said and what is actually applied. This problem is not unique to our educational system but is almost universal (Al-Bazzaz, 2001, p. 207).

In light of this development, education bears the responsibility of keeping up with this evolution, training teachers who can successfully adapt to rapid societal changes, and honing these human talents until they can fully contribute to society's comprehensive development. Therefore, education plays a crucial role in building and developing society, and it has become dependent on the creation and development of individuals. As a person excels, so do the things they do (Attiyah, 2010, p. 10).

Here, we focus on developing learners' higher cognitive abilities. Throughout history, philosophers, educators, and others have emphasized thinking, thinking skills, and the various types of thinking that have become central to responding to the rapid changes occurring worldwide. The importance of the current study can be outlined as follows:

1. The results of this study may encourage Arabic language teachers to adopt techniques and methods that contribute to developing cognitive structures, helping to enhance critical thinking skills among students.

2. It will be beneficial for Arabic language teachers in classrooms, as well as for educational supervisors, to train teachers on critical thinking skills.

3. This will benefit curriculum developers by encouraging them to consider critical thinking skills when planning and developing curricula.

4. It will assist those responsible for training and accreditation programs in training teachers to effectively practice these skills in the classroom.

5. This study is one of the attempts to identify the level of critical thinking skills among Arabic language teachers, within the researcher's knowledge, especially considering contemporary trends in Arabic language teaching, where learning these skills is increasingly necessary due to their importance in the field of education.

Research Objectives:

1. Identify the degree of availability of critical thinking skills among Arabic language teachers in Kut District.

2. Uncover the differences in the availability of critical thinking skills based on gender.

Research limited

1. Human boundaries: Arabic language teachers.

2. Spatial boundaries: Schools in Kut District, Wasit Governorate.

3. Temporal boundaries: The second semester of the academic year (2023-2024).

Definition of terms

Critical thinking skills: Ibrahim (2005) defines it as "the skill of distinguishing between hypotheses and generalizations, between facts and claims, and between revised and unrevised information" (Ibrahim, 2005, p. 369).

Arabic language teachers: Those with at least a bachelor's degree in Arabic and who teach Arabic language courses in public schools in Kut District, Wasit Governorate.

Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies

Teaching for thinking or thinking skills is the primary goal of education, and educational institutions must make every effort to provide students with opportunities to think. Educational specialists prioritize training students in learning thinking skills. However, this goal often faces challenges in practice because the existing educational systems do not

provide sufficient opportunities for critical thinking. Educational institutions rarely provide learners with the chance to engage in educational processes that involve personal questioning stemming from their curiosity. Although most educational professionals are convinced of the need to develop students' thinking skills and emphasize that the role of educational institutions is to foster thinking and creativity (Al-Safi et al., 2010, p. 484).

The Importance of Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is one of the most important goals that Arabic language teachers strive to achieve because of its effective role in helping students deal with problems effectively and use information relevant to the problem. Developing critical thinking is a pedagogical necessity to protect the mind. Liberating the younger generation from harmful cultural influences widespread in society and enabling them to confront the cultural invasion coming from abroad can only be achieved by raising individuals' awareness and enabling them to filter their thoughts and information (Al-Naqah, 2016, p. 211).

If critical thinking is one of the goals of general education, then teaching the Arabic language plays a role in this regard. Developing critical thinking is a clear goal of Arabic language education. When practiced correctly, teaching methods play an important role in developing critical thinking skills. Previous research and studies have proven that some teaching methods and techniques used by teachers are effective in developing students' critical thinking skills, regardless of their age (Hamid, 2013, pp. 549-577).

The Importance of Critical Thinking for Educators: (Al-Jallad, 2011, p. 184)

1. Helps them recognize different learning methods and take them into consideration during the educational process.

2. Increases energy and enthusiasm among faculty members and staff.

3. Enhances educational management and encourages cooperation between teachers and students.

4. Encourages educational activities and reduces the mere presentation of academic material.

The Importance of Teaching Critical Thinking Skills to Students: (Saadeh, 2009)

1. Helps them see different problems from others' perspectives.

2. Encourages the precise and clear evaluation of others' opinions.

3. Fosters respect for others' views, opinions, and ideas.

4. Enhances and enriches the learning process.

5. Strengthens students' self-confidence.

From the above, it is clear that in the current world, there is a need to focus on developing critical thinking skills at all educational levels. It helps individuals to participate actively in society, making them citizens capable of making decisions and choices based on their right to free choice, fulfilling their needs, and assisting them in succeeding in the future (Saadeh, 2009, p. 77).

Critical Thinking Skills:

Critical thinking is one of the complex core thinking skills. It is divided into sub-skills that can be identified and broken down into smaller tasks to be practiced and mastered. Several attempts have been made to determine the skills required for critical thinking. Researchers have concluded that there are several categories of critical thinking skills, among the most important being:

Facion's Classification (1988), as cited by Abdullah (Abdullah, 2016, pp. 13-14):

- **Interpretation**: Refers to understanding and expressing data, generalizations, rules, standards, and procedures, including sub-skills such as classification, deriving meaning, and clarification.

- **Analysis**: Refers to clarifying inductive and deductive relationships between statements, rules, concepts, and traits, with sub-skills like forming opinions, guessing, and analyzing.

- **Evaluation**: Refers to the ability to clarify a statement or understand a person's experiences, characteristics, thinking, beliefs, and opinions, including evaluating claims and arguments.

- **Inference**: The ability to draw new information from known or presented data and determine the necessary traits to derive reasonable conclusions, with sub-skills like confirming evidence, guessing alternatives, and drawing conclusions.

- **Explanation:** Announcing and clarifying the results of reflections based on evidence, concepts, statements, context, and persuasive arguments. Sub-skills include announcing results, clarifying procedures, and constructing arguments.

- **Self-Regulation**: The ability to ask questions, verify credibility, and organize thoughts and results. It has two sub-skills: self-examination and self-organization.

Critical Thinking Skills Suitable for Teaching in Secondary Education

After reviewing previous studies and classifications related to thinking skills in general and critical thinking skills in particular, the researcher selected the following skills to develop the research tool:

A- Analysis Skill

This is a deconstructive process aimed at breaking down symbols and contents related to natural phenomena, situations, and data into comprehensible parts, making these phenomena more understandable and interpretable. Students use this skill to deconstruct phenomena, study them, and use them in a way that allows them to draw results, trends, and data that can be used to solve problems (Abed, 2010, p. 68).

B- Deductive Thinking Skill

This skill is used to broaden the scope of relationships based on available information, utilizing deductive or analytical thinking to determine what could be correct. It involves using information or knowledge to reach a specific conclusion (Saadeh, 2009, p. 47).

C- Inductive Thinking Skill

This skill aims to reach generalizations or conclusions through an inductive cognitive process, relying on the individual's previous experiences. Inductive thinking involves moving from particulars or specific observations or experiences (facts) to generalizations or concepts, principles, and theories (Abd Aoun, 2013, p. 51).

Inductive processes contribute to understanding nature by linking phenomena and explaining consistent relationships or laws that connect them. This process allows the researcher to predict the recurrence of phenomena when similar conditions are met (Mustafa, 2011, p. 33), (Sayhoud & Amir: 2023).

D- Evaluation Skill

This skill involves making decisions about ideas based on predefined criteria and measures. It requires other capabilities such as understanding, knowledge, analysis, comprehension, and more (Al-Batashi, 2012, p. 128), (Al-Mousawi & Al-Obaidi: 2022). The purpose of evaluation is to make decisions aimed at modifying or correcting the studied phenomenon toward better outcomes.

Critical Thinking and Its Relationship with the Arabic Language:

Arabic is one of the outcomes of cognitive processes, and through learning it, the human mind can perform various types of thinking, such as analysis, deduction, association, interpretation, and understanding relationships. Arabic has also held a prestigious position as the language of the Holy Qur'an. Ancient and contemporary educators have focused on teaching methods for the Arabic language, searching for the most effective and preferred teaching techniques.

Critical thinking opens new horizons for the mind, enabling it to develop itself and society and discover new facts that contribute to this development. This area offers fertile ground for Arabic language teachers to exploit and cultivate in students through situations and lessons found in the Arabic curriculum, which increases students' efficiency and

ability to think and solve problems. Teachers can pay more attention to developing students' critical thinking abilities if they use effective methods that are suited to critical thinking skills and problem-solving (Al-Isaeli, 2020, p. 166).

Hamid (2013, p. 207) points out several reasons why critical thinking should be taught in schools and why students should be trained in it:

• Critical thinking transforms the process of acquiring knowledge from a passive activity to a mental activity that leads to better content and deeper understanding, as education, at its core, is a thinking process.

• Critical thinking makes students' ideas more precise, helping them make decisions in their daily lives.

• Critical thinking is one of the essential elements of active citizenship in an era where information is vast and media and digital knowledge are widespread. Thus, individuals must be able to think critically to assess the credibility of information presented to them and classify it effectively.

The role of the teacher in developing critical thinking skills:

1. Implementing methods, activities, and strategies that contribute to developing students' critical thinking skills.

2. Creating a suitable learning environment for practicing critical thinking.

3. Encouraging students to express their opinions, conclusions, and ideas.

4. Providing students with sufficient time to think before answering the questions posed by the teacher.

5. Offering necessary support at the appropriate time.

6. Interacting effectively with students to achieve outcomes.

7. Motivating students to read the lesson carefully and understand it.

8. Presenting challenging and engaging problems that capture students' interest.

9. Encouraging students to justify their ideas, hypotheses, and conclusions.

10. Motivating students to derive new ideas from the lesson and record them on a separate paper.

11. Recording what the students learned at the end of the lesson (Al-Dulaimi, 2015, p. 35).

The role of the student in practicing critical thinking:

According to (Ali, 2009), the stages a student goes through to practice critical thinking are:

A.The information-seeking stage: In this stage, the student performs various activities such as paying attention, understanding concepts, identifying and articulating contradictions accurately, organizing knowledge, and using various sources.

B.The information-connecting stage: This stage includes discovering relationships between ideas, identifying relationships between concepts or events, convergent thinking, logical deduction, asking questions, applying knowledge, and divergent thinking (Ali, 2009, p. 289).

C.The evaluation stage: This includes evaluating temporary solutions, assessing new outcomes, and evaluating the thinking process itself.

(Qatami, 2004, p. 98) indicates that for a student to reach the stage of critical thinking, they must perform the following roles:

1. Seek information related to the lesson's subject.

2. Practice deductive thinking in a practical manner.

3. Identify the concepts and ideas presented in the lesson.

4. Evaluate the critique process and the outcomes derived from it.

5. Apply the acquired knowledge practically.

literature review

1- Jerry et al.'s Study (2020): This study aimed to explore the impact of the scientific debate strategy - Think-Read Group-Share-Reflect (TRGSR) on developing critical thinking skills among high school students. The sample consisted of 50 students from the twelfth grade, divided into two groups: one experimental group of 25 students and a control group of 25 students. The experimental group was taught using the TRGSR scientific debate strategy, while the control group received traditional teaching methods. The Watson-Glaser test was used, and the results showed a significant difference in critical thinking abilities between the experimental and control groups. It was proven that students who were exposed to the TRGSR scientific debate strategy improved their critical thinking abilities compared to the control group students.

2- Al-Abti's Study (2014): This thesis aimed to investigate the effect of reciprocal teaching on developing critical thinking skills among second-year middle school students in history. To achieve this goal, the researcher used a quasi-experimental design with matched groups, selecting a purposive sample of second-year middle school students from Al-Bayan High School for Boys in Karbala Governorate. The research sample consisted of 70 students, with 35 in the experimental group taught using the reciprocal teaching strategy, and 35 in the control group taught using the traditional method. The researcher developed a critical thinking test consisting of 45 items, ensuring its validity and reliability. The study found that the experimental group students outperformed the control group students in critical thinking.

Based on the findings, the researcher recommended the adoption of the reciprocal teaching strategy in teaching history to second-year middle school students due to its effectiveness in developing critical thinking compared to the traditional method. The researcher also suggested conducting similar studies in other educational stages and subjects.

The benefit from literature review is:

- A literature review helps define the theoretical basis for the research.

- It identifies the key concepts, models, and theories relevant to the study, providing a solid foundation for framing the research questions or hypotheses.

2. Materials and Methods

The statistical methods used in the research process or in analyzing the results are as follows:

Research Method: The researcher adopted the descriptive method in this study, which is the most appropriate approach for the nature of the current study as it describes a phenomenon, event, or specific issue and suggests steps to be taken regarding this phenomenon (Jaber & Ahmed, 1996, p. 4).

Research Population: The current research population includes Arabic language teachers in the Wasit Directorate of Education, totaling 864 teachers, consisting of 295 male teachers and 569 female teachers for the academic year 2023-2024.

Research Sample: The researcher randomly selected 193 teachers using a stratified random sampling technique, based on gender. The sample represented 22.33% of the study population. Table 1 shows the distribution of the research sample by gender:

Variable	Gender	Number
Gender	Male	86
	Female	107

Research Tool: Since the current research aims to identify the availability of critical thinking skills among Arabic language teachers at the secondary level in Wasit Governorate, the researcher used a questionnaire as the research tool. This is one of the most commonly used tools for such studies. The questionnaire consisted of 40 items distributed across five sub-domains: analysis, interpretation, induction, deduction, and evaluation. The responses were based on a graded scale, with each domain containing several items reflecting the respective skill. The teachers were presented with verbal situations and asked to

select one of the response options that best represented their level of agreement, indicating their response with a checkmark, In front of the appropriate field, these paragraphs were collected, selected, and formulated through educational literature and previous studies that dealt with critical thinking skills, in addition to the researcher's experience in this field, as well as meeting a number of teachers and asking them about the most important skills that Arabic language teachers should have to enable them to employ critical thinking skills in teaching the secondary stage in Wasit Governorate.

The questionnaire was designed in its final form based on the five-point Likert scale. Five alternatives were set for answering the paragraphs: (Agree, Strongly Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree), corresponding to the scores (5, 4, 3, 2, 1), respectively.

The researcher focused on explaining the method of answering by the sample members, clarifying the importance of focusing on and being honest in their answers, not leaving any paragraph unanswered, and reassuring the sample members about the confidentiality of their answers, stating that they would only be used for scientific purposes.

After completing the preparation of the questionnaire, the researcher distributed it to a pilot sample, which the researcher selected from a group of Arabic language teachers in Wasit Governorate District on 15/11/2023, to identify the clarity of the paragraphs and the instructions for answering them, and whether there were any ambiguous or unclear paragraphs. The researcher answered the teachers' questions and inquiries about it and benefited from their comments in modifying it. All paragraphs were approved by the pilot sample members.

Face validity of the tool: It refers to the degree of accuracy of the tool in measuring what it is supposed to measure or its effectiveness in its intended function (Abu Labda, 1982: 234). To verify the validity of the research tool, the researcher presented the initial version of the tool to a group of experts specializing in Arabic language teaching methods, educational psychology, measurement, and evaluation. Their opinions were taken to ensure content validity. Five paragraphs were reconsidered due to inappropriate wording or because they were difficult to observe, and they were replaced with other paragraphs. The tool was approved by the experts in its final form, which consisted of 40 paragraphs, distributed across five domains.

Construct validity of the tool: The validity of the questionnaire was verified using internal consistency by calculating the Pearson correlation coefficient between the score of each paragraph and the total score of the tool, based on a pilot sample of 20 teachers, randomly selected from within and outside the research sample.

3. Results

This section presents the results of the research, which were obtained through the analysis and processing of the data collected via the questionnaire applied to the research sample. They were presented and discussed according to the sequence of the research questions, as follows:

Results of the first question, its discussion, and interpretation: The first question: What is the degree of availability of critical thinking skills among Arabic language teachers in the Directorate of Al-Kut District? To answer this question, means and standard

deviations were calculated for the degree of availability of critical thinking skills among Arabic language teachers in the Wasit District Directorate, at both the individual domain level and the overall level, as shown in Table 2

Table 2: Arithmetic means and standard deviations

Domain Number	Rank	Skill	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
4	1	Inference	4.24	0.56	High
1	2	Analysis	4.18	0.58	High
3	2	Interpretation	4.18	0.60	Medium
2	4	Induction	4.15	0.62	Medium
5	5	Evaluation	4.11	0.63	Medium
		Overall	4.17	0.52	Medium

From Table (2), it is observed that the "Inference" domain ranked first, with a mean score of 4.24 and a standard deviation of 0.56. The "Analysis" domain ranked second, with a mean score of 4.18 and a standard deviation of 0.58, and the "Interpretation" domain also ranked second with a mean score of 4.18 and a standard deviation of 0.60. The "Induction" domain ranked fourth with a mean score of 4.15 and a standard deviation of 0.62, while the "Evaluation" domain came last with a mean score of 4.11 and a standard deviation of 0.63.

The research results showed that the overall mean score for all tool items combined was 4.17, with a standard deviation of 0.52, indicating a high degree of critical thinking skills among Arabic language teachers.

This result differed from the results of the study by Al-Obeidi (2014). The difference in results could be attributed to the fact that the new Arabic language curricula and syllabi focused on this style, in line with the educational development efforts that emphasized the development of critical thinking skills, such as hypothesis formulation and decision-making abilities. Additionally, the training courses attended by Arabic language teachers focused on developing critical thinking. This aligns with many studies that found that training teachers in teaching methods related to critical thinking increases their knowledge and that of their students in these skills. It may also be attributed to the academic and theoretical curricula studied by teachers in universities and colleges, which focused on developing critical thinking skills both before and during their service.

The arithmetic means, standard deviations, and ranks for the Arabic language teachers' estimations of the degree of availability of critical thinking skills were calculated. The skills were ranked within each domain according to the arithmetic means and standard deviations, as shown in Table No. (3).

Descending ranking of the availability of critical thinking skills among male and female Arabic language teachers, by domain, arithmetic means, and standard deviations.

First: Analysis Domain

Rank	No.	Items	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation
1	6	Distinguishing between antonyms or synonyms in meaning	4.56	0.88
2	7	Analyzing literary texts into their artistic elements	4.40	0.83
3	3	Perceiving the relationship between cause and effect in the read text	4.30	0.81
4	1	Distinguishing between opinions and facts mentioned in the texts	4.26	0.79
5	4	Distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant statements to the subject	4.15	0.93
6	5	Recognizing the causes, behaviors, and motivations of individuals and groups in a certain situation	4.11	0.80
7	2	Distinguishing between statements indicating facts and those indicating a general principle in the read text	4.10	0.77
8	8	Ability to identify the writer's point of view	4.07	0.88
9	9	Ability to identify discrimination topics in the read text	3.68	0.97

Second: Induction Domain

Rank	No.	Items	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation
1	6	Ability to identify sub-ideas present in the read text	4.54	0.73
2	7	Extracting rhetorical images from the read texts	4.43	0.91
3	5	Deducing the artistic features that distinguish the text from others	4.35	0.88
4	4	Arriving at generalizations by linking related parts	4.03	0.87
5	1	Recognizing the relationships between cause and effect through verbal reasoning	4.01	0.77
6	2	Recognizing the relationships between cause and effect through logical reasoning	3.91	0.91
7	3	Recognizing the relationships between cause and effect through spatial reasoning	3.79	0.87

Third: Interpretation Domain

Rank	No.	Items	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation
1	1	Ability to give meaning to the read text	4.44	0.74
2	2	Recognizing the interpretation or moral conveyed by the read text	4.40	0.70
3	4	Ability to provide interpretations and explanations for grammatical and morphological issues in the read text	4.25	0.82
4	3	Ability to interpret the writer's point of view or idea	4.18	0.74
5	5	Ability to interpret the implicit meanings carried by words (semantics)	4.16	0.80
6	7	Ability to interpret the information contained in the read text	4.13	0.82
7	6	Ability to interpret results in light of the available information analysis	4.10	0.81
8	8	Ability to provide logical explanations for generalizations and results based on certain acceptable or unacceptable information	3.82	0.94

Fourth: Conclusion Domain

Rank	No.	Items	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation
1	7	Ability to suggest a title for the read text	4.62	0.60
2	2	Identifying the main idea in the read text	4.50	0.83
3	4	Deducing the writer's emotion through the read text and recognizing it	4.42	0.87
4	8	Ability to suggest an alternate ending to the story	4.31	0.84
5	3	Arriving at literary conclusions in light of reading the texts	4.26	0.81
6	5	Providing students with the opportunity to predict potential outcomes	4.17	0.80
7	9	Ability to generate evidence and arguments	4.15	0.85
8	1	Discovering contradictions in certain situations	4.10	0.98
9	6	Assisting students in making defensible conclusions	4.08	0.77
10	11	Ability to track and link ideas to predict outcomes	4.08	0.84

11	10	Ability to formulate assumptions from the read texts and build upon them	3.92	0.88

Fifth: Evaluation Domain

Rank	No.	Items	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation
1	6	Expressing opinion and judgment on the read text objectively	4.22	0.86
2	8	Expressing opinion on literary matters and issues	4.22	0.79
3	2	Ability to evaluate the idea in the read text in terms of acceptance or rejection	4.20	0.78
4	11	Delaying judgment and not jumping to conclusions	4.20	0.96
5	7	Expressing opinion on different linguistic usages and distinguishing the best	4.18	0.85
6	1	Evaluating the accuracy and truthfulness of the information and ideas presented in the read text	4.14	0.79
7	9	Ability to distinguish between strong and weak arguments in the read text	4.09	0.85
8	5	Evaluating arguments, opinions, and evidence in light of appropriate proof	4.04	0.83
9	10	Judging the sufficiency of the information in the read text	4.00	0.91
10	4	Discovering exaggeration and scientific inaccuracies	3.99	0.94
11	3	Investigating aspects of bias and subjectivity in the read text	3.94	0.83

From Table No. (3), it is observed that the skills most possessed by the teachers, according to their estimates, are skill No. (7) in the conclusion domain, which achieved an arithmetic mean of (4.62) with a standard deviation of (0.60). In the analysis domain, skill No. (7) achieved an arithmetic mean of (4.56) with a standard deviation of (0.88), and skill No. (7) in the induction domain achieved an arithmetic mean of (4.54) with a standard deviation of (0.73). In the interpretation domain, skill No. (1) achieved an arithmetic mean of (4.44) with a standard deviation of (0.74), and skill No. (6) in the evaluation domain achieved an arithmetic mean of (4.22) with a standard deviation of (0.86).

The high availability of critical thinking skills among Arabic language teachers may be attributed to the fact that these skills stem from the philosophy of education, which is based on following the scientific method to reach sound results. The research results also showed that the least known skills by the teachers, according to their estimates, are:

Skill No. (9) in the analysis domain, with an arithmetic mean of (3.68) and a standard deviation of (0.97); skill No. (3) in the induction domain, with an arithmetic mean of (3.79) and a standard deviation of (0.87); skill No. (8) in the interpretation domain, with an arithmetic mean of (3.82) and a standard deviation of (0.94); skill No. (10) in the conclusion domain, with an arithmetic mean of (3.92) and a standard deviation of (0.88); and skill No. (3) in the evaluation domain, with an arithmetic mean of (3.94) and a standard deviation of (0.83). The teachers' average possession of these skills may be due to the lack of these types of skills in older curricula, university curricula, and training programs.

Second question: Does the degree of availability of critical thinking skills among male and female Arabic language teachers in the Kut district's Directorate of Education differ by gender?

Table No 4: Arithmetic means and standard deviations for the degree of availability of critical thinking skills among male and female Arabic language teachers

No.	Gender	Analysis	Induction	Interpretation	Conclusion	Evaluation	Overall
1	Male	Mean	3.69	3.06	3.71	3.76	2.94
		Std. Dev	0.47	0.48	0.33	0.50	0.38
2	Female	Mean	3.63	3.08	3.67	3.70	2.93
		Std. Dev	0.66	0.68	0.58	0.57	0.53

It can be observed from Table No. (4) that there are apparent differences between the arithmetic means in the degree of availability of critical thinking skills among male and female Arabic language teachers in the Kut district's Directorate of Education according to the (gender) variable. It is evident that (males) are higher than females, with the mean for males being (3.44) and a standard deviation of (0.33), while the mean for females was (3.40) with a standard deviation of (0.52). To determine the significance of these differences, a three-way ANOVA analysis (no interaction) was used, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Three-way ANOVA analysis

Skill	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Squares	F value	Significance Level
Analysis	Gender	0.310	1	0.310	0.973	0.325
Induction	Gender	0.001	1	0.001	0.002	0.962
Interpretation	Gender	0.222	1	0.222	0.987	0.322
Conclusion	Gender	0.361	1	0.361	1.334	0.250
Evaluation	Gender	0.029	1	0.029	0.142	0.707
Overall	Gender	0.144	1	0.144	0.797	0.373

From Table (5), it is observed that there are no statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\propto \leq 0.05$) in the degree of availability of critical thinking skills among male and female Arabic language teachers in the Kut district's Directorate of Education attributed to gender, where the overall F value was (0.797).

Conclusions:

The lack of focus by male and female Arabic language teachers on most of the skills included in this study, most Arabic language teachers in the study sample are not familiar with modern teaching approaches, which have a positive impact on developing critical thinking skills.

- Teachers may prioritize traditional approaches to teaching Arabic, such as rote memorization, grammar drills, and textual analysis, rather than engaging students in activities that build higher-order thinking skills.
- Skills like problem-solving, evaluation, interpretation, and creative thinking are crucial for critical thinking development but might not be explicitly integrated into the curriculum or teaching methods.

Recommendations:
- The necessity for Arabic language teachers at the intermediate stage to use critical thinking skills during teaching.
- Involving Arabic language teachers in training courses aimed at raising their awareness of modern approaches to teaching critical thinking skills.
- Allocating a subject titled "Critical Thinking" in the College of Education and using its skills as one of the foundations for studying the subject.
- Avoiding rote memorization methods and activating critical thinking skills among male and female Arabic language teachers in the subject of Arabic.
- Shifting to a broader perspective of teaching and relying on critical thinking skills as a foundation for teaching.

Suggestions:
- Conducting a similar study on other stages and subjects.
- Conducting a similar study that includes other variables such as educational qualifications and experience.
- The researcher suggests conducting future studies on the teaching competencies of Arabic language teachers in light of critical thinking skills.
- Conducting more studies to identify the reality of the teaching practices of Arabic language teachers at other educational stages.
- Issuing periodic bulletins distributed to teachers in the educational field, explaining in detail how to teach critical thinking skills.
- Introducing courses in Iraqi universities that encourage learners to practice and apply critical thinking.

References

Ahmad Joudat Saadah. (2009). The importance of teaching maps and globes. Al-Baheth

Journal.

Eyad Ahmad Al-Dulaimi. (2015). Critical thinking skills included in the Arabic language book for the eighth grade in Jordan. Unpublished master's thesis. Jordan: Graduate Studies Deanship, Mu'tah University.

Hikmat Abdullah Al-Bazzaz. (2001). Talks on education and teaching, the educational series (Vol. 2). Baghdad, Iraq: Dar Al-Kutub and Documents.

Khalil Yasser Al-Batashi. (2012). My Child Thinks program. Amman, Jordan: De Bono Center for Thinking Education.

Rashed Faez Al-Asili. (2020). The impact of the KWLH strategy on developing critical thinking and the attitude towards the subject of Fiqh among intermediate school students. Young Researchers in Educational Sciences Journal.

Raed Hussein Hameed. (2013). The impact of cooperative learning strategy in acquiring grammatical concepts and developing critical thinking among fifth-grade science students in the subject of Arabic. Journal of the College of Basic Education for Educational and Human Sciences.

Raed Sobhi Abdullah. (2016). The degree of inclusion of critical thinking skills in the ninth-grade Arabic language book in the United Arab Emirates: An analytical study. Sharjah, UAE.

Said Ahmad Abdel-Fattah Mostafa. (2011). Differences in thinking processes between students with high and low academic achievement, impulsive and reflective. Desouk: Dar Al-Ilm and Al-Iman Publishing and Distribution.

Salah Ahmed Al-Naqqa. (2016). The impact of the WebQuest strategy in teaching science on developing critical thinking skills among sixth-grade students. Islamic University Journal of Educational and Psychological Studies.

Abdul Hakim Mahmoud Al-Safi, et al. (2010). Teaching children in the age of the knowledge economy. Amman: Dar Al-Thaqafa Publishing and Distribution.

Fadel Nahi Abdul Aoun. (2013). Methods of teaching Arabic and its methods of teaching. Amman: Safa Publishing.

Faiz Abdel-Hadi Abed. (2010). The water in teaching thinking skills. Amman: Safa Publishing and Distribution.

Majid Zaki Al-Jallad. (2011). Skills for teaching the Holy Quran (Vol. 2). Amman, Jordan: Al-Maseera Publishing and Distribution.

Magdy Aziz Ibrahim. (2005). Thinking from an educational perspective: its definition, nature, skills, development, and patterns. Cairo: Alam Al-Kutub.

Mohsen Ali Atiya. (2010). Foundations of modern education and education systems. Amman, Jordan: Dar Al-Manhaj.

Naif Qatami. (2004). Effective teaching skills. Amman: Dar Al-Fikr.

Naif Qatami. (2004). Teaching thinking for the basic stage (Vol. 2). Amman, Jordan: Dar Al-Fikr Publishing and Distribution."Foreign sources"

Brookfield, ,. (1987). . Developing Critical Thinking. . England: Edition Open University Press.

Nickcrson, S. (1985). The teaching of thinking Lawrence Erl baum associations. .New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Kadhim, N. M., Mohammed, H. A., Radhawi, S. N., Jabur, A. M., Gottraan, R. B., Abdulridha, M. M., ... & Mohammed, Z. Q. (2023). Investigation of the next generation science standards including in the science book according to E-learn: Analytical study. Tamjeed Journal of Healthcare Engineering and Science Technology, 1(2), 30-35.. https://tamjeedpub.com/index.php/TJHEST/article/view/65

Ramesh, V., Hamad, A. A., Jwaid, M. F., Sathyabama, M., Abdulridha, M. M., Kadhim, N. M., & Belay, A. (2022). Early recognition of skin malignancy in images based on convolutional networks by using dynamic system model. Journal of Nanomaterials, 2022(1), 1754658.

Kadhim, N. M., & Hamad, A. A. (2024). Mathematical Foundations and Principles Behind These Methods. In Coding Dimensions and the Power of Finite Element, Volume, and Difference Methods (pp. 116-133). IGI Global.

Sayhoud, T. D., & Amir, M. J. A. (2023). The Effect of Thestrategy of Thinking Power in Linguistic Enlightenment among University Students and their Attitudes Towards Language Learning. Int. J. of Aquatic Science, 14(1), 136-150.

Al-Mousawi, T. D. S., & Al-Obaidi, R. A. I. A. (2022). The trend of teachers of the Arabic language towards electronic education in the preparatory stage. AL-ADAB JOURNAL, (140 Supplement).