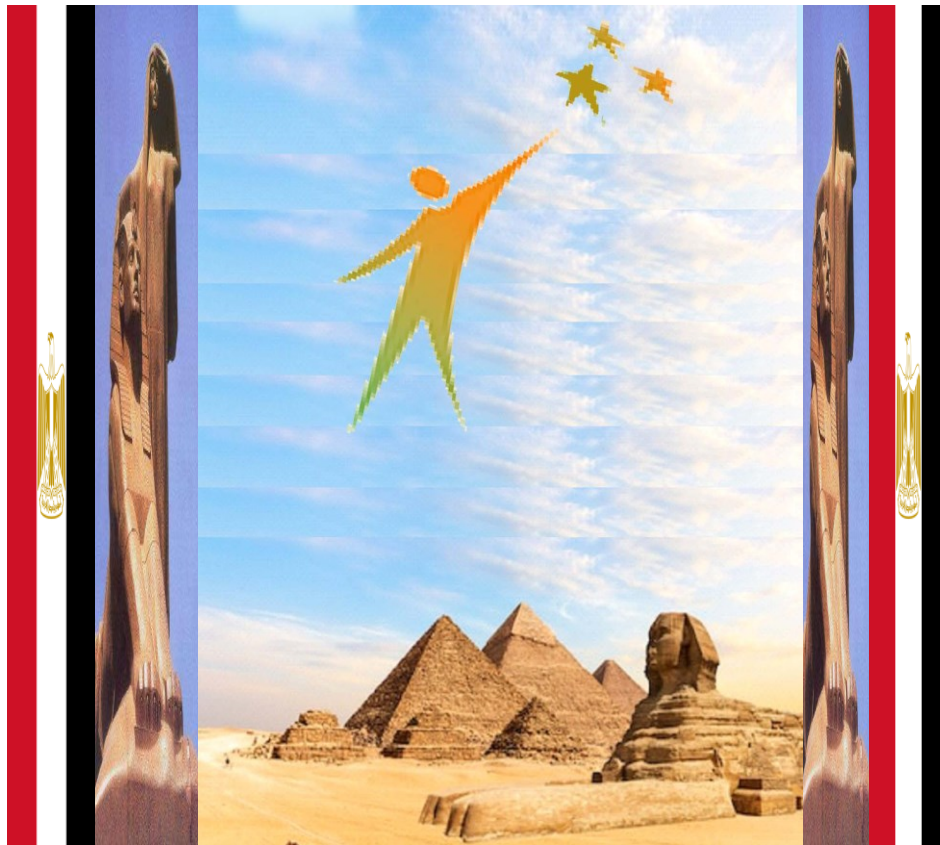




**A Multifaceted Framework for EFL Curriculum
Development to Prepare Students for Building
a 21st Century Egypt**

Abdel Salam A. El-Koumy



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Dedication

I dedicate this book to God, asking Him humbly to reward me for it on the Day of Doom. Praise be to Him for helping me to accomplish it.

I also dedicate this book to the souls of my parents whose wisdom lifted my thoughts and whose unconditional love supported me throughout my life. May God mercy them.

In addition, I dedicate this book to my entire family—especially my sons, daughters, sister, and wife—who provided tremendous support and made many significant sacrifices for the three years it took me to write this book. Without their sacrifices, this book would not be a reality. Words cannot express my gratitude to them. May God reward them for their sacrifices.

Moreover, I dedicate this book to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the sake of Egypt. May God accept their martyrdom and grant them eternal life in paradise.

Finally, I dedicate this book to the memory of the ancient Egyptians who built the greatest civilization the world has ever seen and to the rising generation who will hopefully build a 21st century Egypt. May God bless Egypt and support its rising generation to do so.

The author

Preface

Egyptian education is lagging behind other countries of the world. Despite the fact that we are living in the 21st century, such education still adopts curricula that emphasize inert information and neglects the real life beyond the school walls. It also adopts outdated teaching and assessment methods. The Egyptian teachers still pour obsolete pieces of information into students' heads as if they were glasses to be filled with water. They also devote much time and effort to teaching to tests that measure the recall of these pieces of information. This in turn leads to the graduation of students who possess an enormous amount of fragmented information but they cannot communicate fluently or think deeply to solve the problems they face in everyday life. Nor can they work independently or collaboratively to achieve goals. The lack of these skills in Egyptian citizens resentfully impacts their success in life and negatively impacts the development of Egypt in all areas of life. To overcome these deficiencies, the current education system needs to be replaced by an entirely new one that takes as its aims the development of the twenty-first century skills and dispositions in students to enable and trigger them to construct information instead of receiving it and to create new thoughts instead of rehashing the thoughts of others. To achieve these aims, among many others, the author developed a multifaceted curriculum framework in which curricular content and methods of teaching, learning, and assessment are all tuned to adequately prepare students at the secondary school level and beyond for building a 21st century Egypt at no added cost, both during and after their formal education.

Part I

Fundamentals of the Multifaceted Curriculum Framework

The twenty-first century has posed numerous challenges in all areas of life for both students and educators alike. These challenges require skills and dispositions that enable students to effectively and ethically participate in the development of their own personal and social lives. Undoubtedly, the equipment of students with these skills and dispositions cannot be achieved without curriculum development. Therefore, in this part of the book the author formulates the aims and establishes the theoretical foundations of a new curriculum framework that is hopefully expected to enable students to face these challenges and to play a positive role in their personal and societal development. The importance of this part of the book lies in the fact it will guide the selection of the content and the methods of teaching, learning, and assessment of the multifaceted curriculum.

Chapter One

Aims and Principles of the Multifaceted Curriculum Framework

1.0 Introduction

Education for the twenty-first century requires curricula aiming at developing the functional skills and dispositions that are worthwhile for both the learners and the society to enable the former to act for their own good and the common good and to successfully face the challenges of this century. To effectively achieve these aims, such curricula should be underpinned by the most effective and realistic theoretical principles about teaching, learning, and assessment. Unfortunately, neither the aims nor the underpinning principles of the existing EFL curricula—being taught at Egyptian schools and universities—are reflective of the demands of the twenty-first century or the needs of the Egyptian society. Therefore, following the exploration of the current status of English language education in Egypt, the author in this chapter formulates the necessary aims that the proposed EFL

curriculum framework intends to achieve and identifies the theoretical principles that can guide curriculum developers on the path to achieving these aims at no extra cost.

1.1 Current Status of English Language Education in Egypt

An investigation of the status quo of the English language education system in Egypt in light of the demands of the twenty-first century and the authentic educational theories revealed that this system is out of date and that a new curriculum framework is inevitably needed. The author's observations of teaching and learning English as a foreign language in many classrooms at all levels, over a period of ten consecutive days, revealed that Egyptian teachers fill students' minds with pieces of information piece by piece and nothing more. Such a spoon-feeding method is just like what Freire (1970/1993) refers to as instructional banking where bits of information are deposited by the teacher into students' passive brains to be recalled later for testing purposes. This means that true learning does not occur in Egyptian schools and universities. The teacher only pours bits of information into students' heads as if they were empty jugs without engaging them in learning. This in turn leads to students'

passivity in school and life. It also leads to a graduation of dogmatic and overdependent citizens who are unable to think independently and like to sit and look for others to do things for them.

Moreover, the author's analysis of the content of online discussion postings of 100 secondary and postsecondary students strongly suggests that Egyptian students lack the skills to weigh competing perspectives, detect bias, and identify underlying assumptions in an argument. They also lack the skills to support a claim, create evidence-based opinions, check the credibility and validity of evidence, and reach a conclusion via logical reasoning based on various sources of information. The analysis also revealed that students rely on their feelings to judge competing perspectives. Their emotions such as love, fear, and envy always affect their own judgments and they are powerless to control the ebbs and flows of these emotions. They blindly accept the opinions of people whom they love without subjecting them to a rigorous analysis to determine the degree of their validity. Therefore, they can be easily deceived through emotional manipulation. This is actually due to the fact that teachers do not help them to think critically or to explore thoughts underlying feelings and feelings underlying thoughts.

More than that, findings from the analysis of students' online discussion postings provided evidence that most of the students do not appreciate diverse perspectives and often use unpleasant language to hurt others who oppose their own points of view. This is attributable to the fact that they are being subjected to a rigid teacher-controlled methodology that does not model respect for diverse perspectives through logical discussion. It is also attributable to the fact that the Egyptian education system is test-driven and ignores the cultivation of positive dispositions in students because such dispositions do not count in tests.

Furthermore, an analysis of random samples of English language tests revealed that most of the test items focus on the recall of pieces information out of context and totally neglect applications of what students know to real-life situations. More specifically, language tests ignore areas of critical significance such as communication and higher order thinking skills which are necessary for survival in the real-world. This in turn leads to a graduation of citizens capable of retaining information, yet unable to make educated decisions or put ideas together to create a novel thought.

It is evident from the foregoing that Egyptian students lack the skills needed for survival in the twenty-first century and that English language education does not develop students' higher order thinking skills or prepare them to be independent and collaborative citizens to solve the problems they face in their lives. Nor does it prepare them to participate in developing their own local communities. It only provides them with non-functional information and produces reciters of pieces of other people's thoughts. These shortcomings of English language education are just part of Egypt's failing education system as a whole and at all levels. As evidence of the failure of this system as a whole, the Global Competitiveness (GC) report of 2013-2014 ranked Egypt as 100 for the quality of primary education and 118 for the quality of higher education out of 148 countries, falling behind many Arab, African, Asian, and Western countries. In addition, in the GC report of 2015-2016 Egypt was ranked 96 for the quality of primary education and 111 for the quality of higher education out of 140 countries included in this report. Moreover, in the GC report of 2016-2017 Egypt was ranked 89 for the quality of primary education and 112 for the quality of higher education out of 138 countries. In the latest GC report of 2017-2018, Egypt was ranked 87 for the quality of primary education and 100 for the quality of higher education

out of 137 countries, remaining behind many Arab, African, Asian, and Western countries. (All these reports are available on the internet.)

Based on the previously mentioned exploration of the current status of English language education in Egypt, it is obvious that the English language education system in Egypt is falling short in preparing students to face the complexities and challenges of the twenty-first century. Therefore, a new curriculum framework is necessary if Egypt is to survive and thrive in this century. This new curriculum framework should take as its aims the development of the skills and dispositions currently thought of as essential for success in this century.

1.2 Aims of the Multifaceted Curriculum Framework

As pointed out previously, the current status of English language education in Egypt does not meet the demands of the twenty-first century because it totally neglects the skills and dispositions needed for surviving and thriving in this century. To overcome these deficiencies, amongst others, the multifaceted curriculum framework aims at the development of the twenty-first century skills and dispositions in combination with

language skills to prepare responsible citizens who are capable of serving and developing themselves and their society, both during and after their formal education. More specifically, by the end of the implementation of the multifaceted curriculum framework, students will be able to:

- take responsibility for their own learning and thinking;
- learn and work collaboratively both inside and outside the school walls;
- communicate effectively, orally and in writing;
- read, listen, write, and speak critically;
- create novel and useful ideas that help to solve personal and societal problems;
- think with both the left and the right hemispheres of the brain as appropriate to the situation;
- discuss issues from a multilogical perspective and support their own opinions with evidence-based insights;
- use modern communication and information technology skillfully in their learning and daily lives;
- reflect constantly on their own actions to be aware of what they can do and what they cannot do to guide their learning and daily life actions;
- participate in community affairs as active and informed citizens;

- do competent and responsible actions that protect the local natural environment; and
- contribute in a competent and responsible way to the welfare of their local community.

Along and integrated with the previously-mentioned cognitive and social aims, the proposed framework also aims at developing the dispositions necessary for learning and living in the twenty-first century. More specifically, by the end of the implementation of the multifaceted curriculum framework, students will:

- demonstrate commitment to collaborative learning and working with others;
- display devotion to independence in learning and daily living;
- manifest respect for others regardless of gender, age, social status, occupation, et cetera;
- appreciate diverse perspectives and opposing viewpoints without bias;
- be intrinsically motivated to explore new ideas and alternative views;
- be dedicated to tolerance, dignity, and loyalty to their own communities;
- reflect straightforwardly on their own learning and their own

daily life actions;

- demonstrate interest in community affairs;
- be wholeheartedly devoted to improving their own communities;
- display positive attitudes towards their own society;
- manifest love for their natural and artificial environment;
- participate willingly in community service projects;
- assist enthusiastically in solving the problems that face people in the society; and
- be committed to continuously reflect on their own feelings to be aware of the emotions that underlie their own thoughts and actions so that they can manage them ethically and properly for developing their own practical life skills and their own country.

Each of the broad aims mentioned above, should then be translated into course objectives in accordance with the educational level of the students for whom the course is intended on condition that the dual nature of the objectives (i.e., skills coupled with dispositions) should be maintained throughout the course. After their specification, objectives should be checked against assessment criteria. These criteria include, but are not limited to, significance, consistency with curriculum aims,

functionality for both the learners and the society, and appropriateness to learners' background, interests, and developmental level.

1.3 Theoretical Principles of the Multifaceted Curriculum Framework

To achieve the aforementioned aims, the multifaceted curriculum framework is built upon a set of foundational principles. These principles are derived from: (a) the nature of language and its relation to twenty-first century skills; (b) needs of Egyptian learners and Egyptian society; (c) constructivist theories of teaching, learning, and assessment; (d) existing potentials of Egypt without additional cost or support from others; and (e) recent developments in communication and information technology. These principles are the following:

- 1.3.1 Language and thinking influence and support each other.
- 1.3.2 Higher-order thinking skills drive success in school and life.
- 1.3.3 Language learning is an individual and social process.
- 1.3.4 Whole language is necessary for developing higher order skills and dispositions.
- 1.3.5 New literacies are as important as traditional literacies in

today's world.

1.3.6 Both analytical and global thinking styles are essential for learning and surviving in the twenty-first century.

1.3.7 Twenty-first century life skills are essential for academic success and development of the society.

1.3.8 Dispositions are as important as skills in today's ever-changing world.

1.3.9 Authenticity lies at the heart of effective teaching, learning, and assessment.

1.3.10 Community-based learning is essential for supplementing and supporting classroom learning.

1.3.11 Online learning supplements traditional classroom learning.

1.3.12 Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process.

The previously-mentioned principles of the multifaceted curriculum framework are explained in detail in the rest of this chapter.

1.3.1 Language and thinking influence and support each other

The relationship between language and thinking is extensively documented in the literature. Much of the literature indicates that language influences thought and thought influences language. On the first side of this reciprocal relationship, several scholars believe that language operates not only as a means of communicating thoughts to others, but also as a means of shaping these thoughts. They claim that it is through language that people create new ideas and develop new ways of thinking. As Vygotsky (1934/1986) states, "Thought is born through words" (p. 255). He adds that language helps people to monitor and organize their thoughts and to communicate these thoughts to others. Following Vygotsky's line of thinking, William Chomsky (1957) states, "We think in words, by means of words" (p. 3). Likewise, Markova (1983), Yi-cheng (2009) and Asoulin (2016) agree that language is the primary vehicle for thinking. As Markova (1983) points out, "Language is the form, the content and the instrument of thought" (p. 318). This, of course, leads to the inference that the development of students' language skills can improve their thinking. As O'Keefe (1995)

puts it, "By giving students power over language, we enable them to have power over their thought processes" (p. 9).

Moreover, many psychologists and neurologists (e.g., Gumperz and Levinson, 1996; Levinson, 1996, 1997; Lucy, 1996; Pederson, 1995) go so far as to believe that people cannot think of anything that lies outside the limits of language in which they are born and educated because the brain is bound by it. In support of this assumption, Whorf (1971) found that the Hopi tribes (i.e., Native Americans who live in Arizona today) could not think readily about the past because their language does not have the past tense for verbs. There is also evidence that speakers of different languages perform differently on non-linguistic tasks such as categorization and perceptual discrimination (e.g., Boroditsky, 2001; Boroditsky, Schmidt and Phillips, 2003; Slobin, 1996; Winawer et al., 2007).

In addition, many scholars believe that bilingualism and multilingualism play an important role in shaping people's thoughts and multilinguals think in multiways because of differences among languages. In this connection, Paradowski (2010) believes that persons who learn foreign languages display greater cognitive flexibility, better problem solving and higher-

order thinking skills. Munoz (2014) also posits that bilingualism develops the brain's multifactorial executive control system and the functional and structural properties of the cortical and subcortical structures in the brain and promotes cognitive reserve in elderly people. Likewise, Mains (2015) contends that when a person speaks two languages, s/he is less confined by one single world view because bilingualism opens the door to new ideas and ways of thinking and enables the brain to think outside the box. Similarly, Hogan-Brun (2017) argues that speaking a different language fundamentally changes the structure of brain and that the bilingual brain is structurally different from the monolingual brain. She further believes that a multi-language work team has an ability to find innovative solutions for practical problems because it has different cognitive tools in its tool kit and the greater the diversity in its set, the more it can accomplish. In support of these theoretical arguments, research studies on bilinguals suggest that a foreign language plays an important and unconscious role in thinking and that the bilingual brain resolves conflicts and resists Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia longer. Woumans et al. (2015), for example, found that bilingual patients showed noticeable symptoms of Alzheimer nearly five years (4.6 years) later than the patients who were

monolingual. They further found that such a delay of the clinical manifestation of Alzheimer's disease was significantly longer than what the best modern medicines could do. Jiang, Ouyang and Liu (2016), for another example, found that learning English as a foreign language could foster Chinese EFL learners' analytic thinking and that their level of thinking was improved along with the increase of their English proficiency.

In the same direction, many educationalists agree that meaningful language arts activities develop students' language and higher order thinking skills at the same time. In this respect, Barnes (1992), O'Keefe (1995), Owocki and Goodman (2002) and Ketch (2005) believe that when students interact with each other, they absorb each other's ways of thinking, which can in turn improve both their thought processes and language. In a similar vein, a number of educationalists (e.g., Facione, 1992; Proud, 2013; Trilling and Fadel, 2009; Wolpert, 2009) opine that deep reading expands students' thinking and develops their imagination, problem-solving, decision making, reflection, and critical thinking skills. This is because during this type of reading, the reader interacts with the text by anticipating what it will state next, infers what is between the lines, goes beyond what is on the page and elaborates on it from multiple angles.

There are still a number of educationalists (e.g., Langer and Applebee, 1987; Routman, 2005; Schmidt, 1999) who assert that free writing develops students' thinking skills because it engages them in making meaning, generating thoughts, hypothesizing, problem-solving, and reflecting on their own thoughts.

From the foregoing, it is evident that meaningful language learning can improve students' thinking and the more languages students learn, the greater the opportunities for them to expand their thinking skills. In support of these propositions, research studies revealed that: (1) peer interaction developed critical thinking skills (Anderson, Howe, Soden, Halliday and Low, 2001); (2) interaction promoted individual reasoning abilities (Reznitskaya et al., 2001); (3) students who read, wrote, discussed and interacted with a variety of learning materials in a variety of ways became critical thinkers (Collins and Aiex, 1995); (4) critical thinking improved as a result of communication skills training and participation in public communication skill building exercises (Allen, Berkowitz, Hunt and Loudon, 1999); (5) when teachers persistently used open-ended discussions, students developed critical thinking (Miri, David and Uri, 2007); (6) learning English as a foreign language enhanced all four divergent thinking abilities, i.e., fluency,

elaboration, originality, and flexibility (Ghonsooly and Showqi, 2012; Sehic, 2017); and (7) bilingualism positively impacted creativity (Leikin, 2012).

On the second side of the reciprocal relationship between language and thinking (i.e., thought influences language), several scholars believe that thinking improves language and language learning occurs when the mind makes connections between what it already knows and what is new through thinking. They further believe that higher-level thinking enhances language skills and makes clear expression, effective communication, and deep comprehension possible. As Freire (1970/1993) puts it with respect to dialogue, "True dialogue cannot exist unless the dialoguers engage in critical thinking" (p. 92). In a similar vein, Paul (2005) and Paul and Elder (2003b, 2003c) agree that thinking is essential for skilled reading and writing. As Paul (2005) points out, "Learning how to read closely and write substantively presuppose critical thinking abilities" (p. 32). This, of course, leads to the inference that the development of students' thinking skills can improve language learning and language skills. In support of this inference, research studies revealed that: (1) enhancing critical thinking strategies led directly to better language learning (Malmir and

Shoorcheh, 2012); (2) high critical thinkers' writing was better in both the descriptive and argumentative modes compared to low critical thinkers (Golpour, 2014); (3) teaching critical thinking explicitly had a significantly positive impact on the speaking proficiency of adult intermediate EFL learners (Sanavi and Tarighat, 2014); and (4) critical thinking interventions in language arts improved students' achievement in reading and writing (Ginn, 1997). Research studies also revealed a significant correlation between critical thinking ability and English language proficiency (Grosser and Nel, 2013; Rashid and Hashim, 2008), between critical thinking and reading comprehension (Kamali and Fahim, 2011; Sheikhi, 2009; Zare and Biria, 2018), and between critical thinking ability and listening comprehension (Nour Mohammadi and Zare, 2015).

In light of the preceding literature, it is evident that the relationship between language and thinking is bidirectional and reciprocal. They both influence and support each other. As Paul, Binker, Jensen and Kreklau (1990) put it, "There is no command of language separate from command of thought and no command of thought without command of language" (p. 103). Therefore, the multifaceted curriculum framework suggests that the

development of students' higher order thinking should be one of the key aims of language arts instruction at all levels.

1.3.2 Higher-order thinking skills drive success in school and life

There appears to be a consensus in the literature that thinking is essential for success in school and life. As Merenbloom (1992) writes, "Thinking is a prerequisite for success in the learning process as well as in life itself" (p. 151). For success in school, many scholars agree that thinking is necessary for effective learning. As Perkins (1992) states, "Learning is a consequence of thinking" (p. 8). Likewise, Unrau (2000) asserts that developing students' ability to think is vital for schooling in the 21st century. He further states that "thinking needs to pervade every aspect of the curriculum in every subject area" (p. 13). Similarly, Kagan (2003) believes that thinking must be an important element in education in the twenty-first century, if not the most important. In support of the assumption that the development of students' higher order thinking improves students' academic achievement, several studies demonstrated statistically significant gains in language arts achievement as a result of higher order thinking instruction (e.g., Idek, 2016; Rosli and Maarof, 2016; Teemant, Hausman and Kigamwa, 2016).

For success in life, many scholars agree that thinking skills in general and critical thinking in particular are essential for preparing students to become better informed citizens in the society. They further agree that the development of thinking skills in students enables them to successfully participate in a democratic society and that the success of any democratic system depends on individuals who are able to think critically, weigh competing perspectives, and make thoughtful decisions. In this respect, Beyer (1988) argues that living successfully in a democratic society requires students to be able to think critically in order to make sound decisions about the events around them. Likewise, Pinto and Portelli (2009) state, "There appears to be consensus in the literature that critical thinking is a necessary (though not sufficient) component for democracy. As such, education for democracy requires cultivation of critical thinking" (p. 299). In addition, thinking skills are necessary for success in the workplace. In support of this, a study conducted by some associations, including the Partnership for 21st Century Skills and the Society for Human Resource Management (as cited in Kreitzberg, Reilly and Kay, 2010) found that 78 percent of the companies in the world favored critical thinking as the major skill an employee should have in the twenty-first century because it is vital for the success of all kinds of companies.

More importantly, in the twenty-first century in which information is available in quantities unimagined a few decades ago, teaching students to think critically about what they read, see, and hear has become essential for them to become critical consumers of the information they encounter. As Feuerstein (1999) states, the development of critical thinking skills in students is a must in the twenty-first century because they are continually exposed to an information flood which requires the use of these skills to distinguish between what is important from what is unimportant. Similarly, Wang, Woo and Zhao (2009) point out that the rapid growth of information and communication technologies in the twenty-first century requires persons to "have critical thinking skills so that they can analyze and compare information, construct arguments, respect diverse perspectives and, view phenomena from different points" (p. 95). Likewise, Fisher (2007) believes that critical and creative thinking skills are now seen as basic life skills that should be taught akin to reading and writing. In the same way, Wagner (2008) argues that the accessibility of large amounts of information in today's world requires that we should "all know how to think—to reason, analyze, weigh evidence, problem-solve—and to communicate effectively" (p. xxiii). He further argues that these skills "are no longer skills that only the elites in

a society must master; they are essential skills for all of us" (p. xxiii).

Most importantly, thinking skills help students to effectively solve the complex problems they face in everyday life which, in turn, improves the quality of their personal lives and their communities. Skillful thinking, as Swartz (2001) believes, not only improves students' learning in content areas, but also enhances the quality of their lives and their work after they exit from school. Likewise, Paul and Elder (2003a) state, "The quality of our life and that of what we produce, make, or build depends precisely on the quality of our thought" (p. 4). In the same vein, Bassham, Irwin, Nardone and Wallace (2008) affirm that the development of higher order thinking skills in students helps them to be independent thinkers who can decide the direction of their own lives and play an active and effective role in overcoming the difficulties they face in all fields of life and in developing their own communities.

In light of the foregoing, the multifaceted curriculum framework holds that cultivating higher level thinking skills in Egyptian students, while working toward academic aims, should be the major aim of education and the foremost responsibility of

teachers at all levels. It further holds that higher order thinking skills should be included in the evaluation of students and the accreditation of all educational institutions. In a nutshell, rather than filling Egyptian students' heads with inert and soon-to-be obsolete information in this rapidly changing world, the development of their thinking skills should be a top priority of Egyptian education in all subject areas at all levels.

1.3.3 Language learning is an individual and social process

Individual learning is based on Piaget's cognitive constructivist theory—sometimes called individual or radical constructivism. This theory holds that all humans construct knowledge individually from experiences in their surrounding environments based on their prior schema and newly obtained information. This theory also assumes that all children are born with innate abilities to acquire languages without formal instruction and to take responsibility for organizing their learning experiences. As Esch (1996) writes:

Humans are not only able to adopt to different languages and different learning conditions, but also to progress in their ability to learn, by becoming aware of the processes through which they learn, by conceptualizing their learning experience, by being

actively engaged in steering the process and by taking responsibility for organizing their learning experience. (pp. 37-38)

The Piagetian theory further posits that learning is an individual process because no two individuals bring the exact same previous schema to the new learning situation and that an individual learns through constructing meaning for her- or himself. As Candy (1989) states, "[Cognitive] constructivism is practically congruent with the notion of self-direction in emphasizing active enquiry, independence in the learning task, and individuality in constructing meaning" (p. 95). Advocates of this theory also assert that learning cannot occur without self-regulation. Knapper (2004), for example, states that all learning occurs individually in the sense that no one can learn on behalf of another. Okoro (2011) goes so far as to say, "All learning takes place within an individual, whether within a group or not" (p. 31).

On the other hand, social learning is based on the social constructivist theory which holds that learning is a social process. This theory also contends that there is in reality no individual learning to speak of and that anything one learns comes from social interactions although the learner may be

alone at certain moments. As Dewey (cited in Oxford, 1997) puts it, "Learners do not learn in isolation; the individual learns by being part of the surrounding community" (p. 447). The social constructivist theory also assumes that knowledge is a social product. As Duffy and Cunningham (1996) point out, "Knowledge is a construction, not by an individual in some pristine, autistic isolation, but by participants in a community" (p. 178). Similarly, Posner (2004) asserts that "all knowledge is in a sense social" (p.181).

In addition, the social constructivist theory asserts that learning occurs in a social context as a result of social interaction with members of the community and that the most pertinent and immediately available community for learners is the classroom community where they learn from and with each other under the guidance of the teacher who also learns from and with them. As Brown (1994) puts it, "The best way to learn to interact is through interaction itself" (p. 159). Walqui (2006) goes so far as to say, "The basis for all learning is social interaction" (p. 162).

Furthermore, the social constructivist theory posits that when students interact with others in a group, something collective is produced that is more than the result of the abilities and

dispositions of the individuals who comprise the group; and students who fail to interact with other members of the community fail to learn the language in particular (Murphey and Asaoka, 2006). Therefore, proponents of the social constructivist theory believe that to turn the language classroom into a community of learners, students should carry on dialogues and conversations with teachers and classmates, conduct collaborative projects, solve problems together, and the like.

Despite the fact that the previously-mentioned theoretical perspectives appear to be extreme opposites for those who think in terms of either/or, the multifaceted curriculum framework holds that they complement each other and neither of them alone can provide a complete explanation for language learning. To put it another way, language is shaped by self as well as others' actions and interactions, and language learning occurs both individually and collectively. Therefore, the application of only one of these theories does not guarantee effective language learning. It does not make sense to rely only on one of these two theories to the exclusion of the other. In agreement with this view, Archambault (1964) believes that excessive reliance on one's own unique ideas is likely to limit the meaning-making potential, and excessive reliance on others' ideas is likely to

undermine one's own insights and voice. Damon (1991) confirms this standpoint by stating:

Even when learning is fostered through processes of social communication, individual activity and reflection still play a critical role. Sometimes . . . individual activity may build on collective questions and insights. Other times, however, individual activity actually may need to resist the collective illusions created by a group. . . . Any paradigm that assumes a one-way, deterministic relation between the collective and individual knowledge construction is overly simplistic. (p. 392)

Similarly, in their article entitled "The importance of emphasizing individual learning in the collaborative learning era," Yadin and Or-Bach (2010) affirm that the many advantages of collaborative learning do not mean to "belittle the crucial facet of individual learning" (p. 185). In a same vein, Allwright and Hanks (2009) argue that learners are both unique individuals and social beings who are capable of taking responsibility for their own learning as well as learning collaboratively with others.

It is evident, then, that individual and social learning are intricately interwoven and cannot be divorced from each other. They further strengthen and enrich each other in the sense that

no one can work effectively without the other. Therefore, it is necessary to overcome the false dualism between the two and to consider them as complementary, not contradictory. For more information on this subject, see section three of chapter six.

1.3.4 Whole language is necessary for developing higher order skills and dispositions

1.3.4.0 Introduction

Despite the recent developments in language teaching and learning theories, Egyptian classrooms still reflect the behaviorist theory of teaching which assumes that each macro-skill consists of micro-skills that need to be taught and measured separately and sequentially. In accordance with this theory, Egyptian teachers use the spoon-feeding method that focuses on pieces of language in hope that the student will be able later to put these pieces together and use them for communication, but that later never comes. This lifeless method does not enable students to use language in real life situations because language is a living organism. "If [it] isn't kept whole, it isn't language anymore" (Rigg, 1991, cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 109). To put it figuratively, dividing a chicken into four parts does not result in having four baby chickens. Similarly, language

cannot be learned piece by piece. As McKay and Tom (2003) point out, "One does not learn a language brick by brick" (p. 15).

In addition, the teaching of language through spoon-feeding stifles students' higher order thinking because emphasis on pieces of language blocks higher level thinking and leads to an inability to move beyond literal and rote memorization of these pieces of information. It also makes students focus on trivia rather than important issues and big ideas in their school and daily lives. It is common, for example, to hear Egyptian students arguing about the pronunciation or the translation of an isolated word while neglecting big ideas. It is also common to hear them disputing about the result of a football match for a long period of time while ignoring the most important problems around them. Still another dangerous consequence of the spoon-feeding method is that it leads students to transfer passivity to everyday life and to depend on others to do things for them.

In essence, language micro-skills taught in isolation from the whole language do not achieve more than preparing students for objective tests. The teaching of such micro-skills is also a waste of classroom time without any real evidence or reasoning that supports it. Moreover, there is much theoretical and

experimental evidence that the teaching of micro-skills has a negligible effect on higher order language skills. In the area of writing, for example, Elbow (1981) makes the point that formal grammar is unnecessary and interferes with writing. He adds that the teaching of grammar in isolation does not lead to improvement in writing and hinders such development. He further states, "For most people, nothing helps their writing so much as learning to ignore grammar" (p. 169). As experimental evidence against the teaching of formal grammar, in their review of research on written composition, Braddock, Lloyd-Jones and Schoer (1963) concluded:

In view of the widespread agreement of research studies based upon many types of students and teachers, the conclusion can be stated in strong and unqualified terms: the teaching of formal grammar has a negligible or, because it usually displaces some instruction and practice in actual composition, even a harmful effect on the improvement of writing. (p. 37)

Moreover, Hillocks and Smith (1991) in their review of research on grammar and writing also concluded that "research over the past 90 years reveals . . . that the study of grammar has no impact on writing quality" (p. 600). In her review of research on the same topic, Weaver (1996) agreed with Hillocks and Smith

and reported that research showed that explicit grammar instruction was of negligible value in improving writing. Her conclusion is that "there is little pragmatic justification for systematically teaching a descriptive or explanatory grammar of the language, whether that grammar be traditional, structural, transformational, or any other kind" (p. 23). Furthermore, in a recent review of research on grammar for writing, Wyse (2001) concluded, "The findings from international research clearly indicate that the teaching of grammar (using a range of models) has negligible positive effects on improving secondary pupils' writing" (p. 422). A more recent support for the same conclusion came from Lacina's study (2005) in which she found that explicit grammar instruction did not lead to using grammatical rules in writing.

In the area of reading, Garner (2001) found that readers with poor comprehension work in a piece-meal way, managing text in bits of words and phrases rather than meaning construction across sentences and paragraphs. In the area of speaking, even students who are quite good at grammar, after many years of studying it, have difficulty speaking grammatically correct English. This does not imply that grammar is ineffective for developing students' speaking skill, but the method of teaching

and learning it in isolation from the whole language is the cause of this problem. In support of this, Yim (1998) found that direct grammar instruction did not develop L2 learners' ability to freely engage in spontaneous conversations.

In accordance with the behaviorist theory, Egyptian teachers also correct mechanical mistakes immediately as they occur for fear that students may become habituated to these mistakes. This in turn intimidates students and makes them avoid expressing their own opinions and keep silent so as not to feel foolish in front of their classmates. These consequences of error correction make it harmful and highly undesirable for language learning.

As Lewis (2002) puts it:

Error is intrinsic to learning, and any strategy of error avoidance will be counter-productive. Anyone who learns a foreign language to a reasonable degree of proficiency will inevitably make thousands of mistakes on the way. Correcting every one of them is an impossibility. Fortunately it is also highly undesirable. (p. 173)

As evidence for the harmful effects of the mechanical error correction on language learning, in a review article on this topic, Truscott (1996) concluded that grammar correction could be harmful and ineffective in L2 writing courses and, therefore, it

should be completely abandoned. Truscott supported this conclusion with the results of research studies conducted by Semke (1984), Kepner (1991) and Sheppard (1992).

1.3.4.1 Principles underlying whole-language

Based on the constructivist theory, the whole-language approach emerged in the latter part of the twentieth century as a revolt against the micro-skills approach. The basic principles underlying this new approach are: (1) the whole is greater than the sum of its parts; (2) language is best learned through performance in genuine contexts, rather than receiving it in pieces; (3) there is a reciprocal relationship between language and thinking; (4) oral and written language skills are acquired simultaneously; and (5) students' errors are signals of progress in language learning. In accordance with these principles, the whole language approach focuses on making and expressing meaning for real purposes through such methods as group discussions, reading and writing workshops, problem-solving, dialogue journals, and the like.

1.3.4.2 Benefits of whole-language

Advocates of the whole language assert that there are several advantages of using this approach. One of these advantages is

that it concurrently develops higher order language and thinking skills because it engages students in authentic use of language in natural situations and encourages them to express themselves and put ideas together to create new thoughts. As Weaver (1990) puts it, "Students in whole language classrooms are thinkers and doers, not merely passive recipients of information. They learn to think critically and creatively and to process and evaluate information and ideas rather than merely to accept them" (pp. 26-27). The absence of direct error correction in whole language classrooms also encourages students to engage in intellectual work and explore new ideas without fear of making mistakes. This, in turn, leads to improving their higher order language and thinking skills.

In support of the role of the whole language in developing higher order language and thinking skills, research studies demonstrated that whole language-based instruction improved students' reading comprehension (e.g., Azwell, 1990; Crawford, 1995; Manning, Manning and Long, 1989; Martino, Norris and Hoffman, 2001; Otero, 1993; Stasko, 1991; Stice and Bertrand, 1990), writing performance (e.g., Agnew, 1995; Al-saleem, 2008; Crawford, 1995; Cress, 1990; Loshbaugh, 1993; Lucas, 1988; Maguire, 1992; Roberts, 1991), listening comprehension

(e.g., El-Koumy, 2000, 2002), and critical thinking skills (e.g., Combs, 1992; Saheen, 2008).

Another advantage of the whole language approach is that it supports students' emotional development. When the language is used as a whole, its use comes closer to the way people use it in real life. This, in turn, makes students feel that the foreign language is functional and this increases their motivation to learn it. As Richards and Rodgers (2001) note, "Language learning is also believed to be motivating when students are focusing on something other than language, such as ideas, issues, and opinions" (p. 210). Moreover, the use of whole language for meaning-making and interacting with others also leads to an increase in students' self-efficacy about language learning. In support of this, Stice and Bertrand (1990) found that students in whole language classrooms developed a stronger sense of themselves as readers and writers than students in traditional classrooms. The whole-language approach also develops students' dispositions, including respect, love, and dignity through teachers' display of these dispositions in their own behaviors. As Goodman (1986) puts it:

Whole language teachers . . . believe in kids, respect them as learners, cherish them in all their diversity, and treat them with love and dignity. That's a lot better

than regarding children as empty pots that need filling, as blobs of clay that need moulding, or worse, as evil little troublemakers forever battling teachers. (p. 25)

In addition, the whole language approach respects students' prior knowledge, ideas and opinions by allowing them to choose reading materials and writing topics and giving them the opportunity to take charge of their learning. These in turn, as Vance (1990) affirms, can develop their self-respect and foster their self-esteem.

Finally, but not lastly, the whole language approach can coincidentally develop language micro-skills (e.g., vocabulary, spelling, grammar and punctuation) as students absorb these basic skills in a coincidental way within the context of meaningful learning. In support of this, research studies demonstrated that whole language-based instruction improved spelling (Cunningham and Stanovich, 1990; Shapiro and Gunderson, 1988; Stanovich and West, 1989), boosted the acquisition of grammar (Patterson, 2001), developed phonics effectively (Cunningham, 1990), promoted letter recognition and strengthened letter-sound correspondences (Kasten and Clarke, 1989; Ribowsky, 1985), and resulted in the acquisition of punctuation (Calkins, 1980).

To conclude this section, the multifaceted curriculum framework considers language as a whole and not as a set of isolated micro-skills. Therefore, it calls for the use the whole language approach with secondary school EFL students and beyond because these students have already acquired the English language basics that enable them to make and express meaning individually and collectively in this language.

1.3.5 New literacies are as important as traditional literacies

1.3.5.0 Introduction

As technology advances, so does literacy. In today's world, information comes to us not only through words on a piece of paper but also through influential images and sounds in internet texts, yet Egyptian language teachers still focus only on traditional literacies despite the fact that these literacies are no longer sufficient in the twenty-first century. To be equipped for this century, students should possess a whole range of new literacies, including information literacy, critical literacy, media literacy, computer literacy, internet literacy, and environmental literacy. These new literacies enable them to face the challenges of this century and allow them to receive information and express meaning in a variety of ways that are necessary for

success in today's world (Anstey and Bull, 2006). They also meet their diverse learning styles (Haggerty and Mitchell, 2010), allow them to communicate with one another at anytime from anywhere (Stover, Yearata and Harris, 2016), develop their higher order thinking skills (Rajendram, 2015), enable them to participate in life as active and informed citizens (Anstey, 2002), and help them to meet current social and technological demands (Freebody and Luke, 2003). For these benefits, new literacies are regarded by some scholars and organizations (e.g., Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009; Scardamalia, Bransford, Kozma and Quellmalz, 2012) as twenty-first century skills that should be developed in students if they are to be prepared for this century.

In light of the above, it seems that new literacies can overcome the limitations of traditional literacies. However, these new literacies also have limitations, and traditional literacies still remain powerful and dominant in both social and academic lives. Therefore, new literacies should build upon, not replace traditional ones. Specifically, they should be incorporated into traditional reading, listening, writing and speaking lessons to meet the interests and needs of the twenty-first century generation.

1.3.5.1 Types of new literacies

The term new literacies (also known as twenty-first century literacies or multi-literacies) refers to the literacies that emerged from the wide use of information and communication technologies in today's world. These literacies include, but are not limited to, information literacy, media literacy, critical literacy, internet literacy, and environmental literacy. While showing significant overlap with one another, each of these new literacies, is a distinct area of competence. The most important of these new literacies are discussed in the following subsections.

1.3.5.1.1 Information literacy

In the twenty-first century, information is increasing rapidly because of the rapid growth of information technology and the multiplicity of information resources. This rapid explosion of information requires students to be information literate in order to extend their learning outside the classroom and to become independent lifelong learners. To be information literate, students need to be able to determine the extent of the information needed for any task at hand, locate and use appropriate sources of information and evaluate their utility in relation to task demands. They also need to be able to seek

expert opinions through a variety of social media channels (e.g., Twitter, Pinterest, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and YouTube), maintain a journal or log of activities related to information seeking, participate in electronic communication forums designed to encourage discourse on certain topics (e.g., chat rooms, bulletin boards), use a range of information-gathering methods, and access information in a variety of forms.

In addition to the previously-mentioned information literacy skills, students should be able to assess the quality of search results; examine and compare information from various sources; utilize information-documentation styles properly (e.g., Modern Language Association Style, American Psychological Association Style); make use of obtained information ethically and legally; and present information accurately in written, photographic, infographic, or diagrammatic forms (American Library Association, 2000).

The benefits of the aforementioned information literacy skills are numerous. These benefits include enabling students to use various information sources and databases to quickly and easily find the right information for the task at hand; encouraging them to move beyond the textbook when seeking information and

solving problems; reinforcing traditional literacies; developing problem-solving, decision-making, and critical thinking skills; increasing retention of information; satisfying multiple learning styles; supporting independent learning; and increasing academic achievement (Riedling, 2006; Snively, 2008). The Association of College and Research Libraries (2000) sums up these benefits in the following way:

Information literacy forms the basis for lifelong learning. It is common to all disciplines, to all learning environments, and to all levels of education. It enables learners to master content and extend their investigations, become more self-directed, and assume greater control over their own learning. (p. 2)

It appears, then, that to be fully literate in the twenty-first century, students need to be information literate and educational institutions need to enhance students' ability to locate, sort, analyze, synthesize and evaluate information in its various formats from multiple sources.

1.3.5.1.2 Media literacy

We now live in a media-saturated world. In this world, information is available through multiple media forms, including texts, graphics, audios and videos. People are also exposed to hundreds, if not thousands, of messages per day from television,

newspapers, magazines, and websites (Thoman, 2003).

Statistically, Prensky (2001) states:

Our children today are being socialized in a way that is vastly different from their parents. The numbers are overwhelming: over 10.000 hours playing videogames, over 200.000 emails and instant messages sent and received, over 10.000 hours talking on digital cell phones, over 20.000 hours watching TV (a high percentage fast speed MTV), over 500.000 commercials seen—all before the kids leave college. And, maybe, at the very most, 5.000 hours of book reading. These are today's "Digital Native" students. (p. 1)

The vast exposure to media in today's world influences the way children and adults think about themselves and the world around them. It also shapes people's interpretation of reality and impacts the way they act in the real world. As Buckingham (2003) points out, the media "have now taken the place of the family, the church and the school as the major socializing influence in contemporary society" (p. 5). Unfortunately, despite this fact, Egyptian educational institutions are still dominated by traditionally printed materials and language education still remains heavily print-based and completely depends on printed textbooks.

In today's world, it is insufficient to teach literacy that is heavily print-based while ignoring other ways people receive, process, and create information. The saturation of the society by media as well as media's influence on shaping the insights and behaviors of children and adults make media literacy essential for students to navigate safely through the sea of media information in this century (Feuerstein, 1999). Media literacy also empowers students to be critical thinkers and wise consumers of various media forms (Kellner and Share, 2007). It moreover connects learning to real life, allows students to express and disseminate their thoughts in a variety of ways, prepares them to effectively and efficiently participate in the public life, and helps them to detect different types of media bias and fabricated or photoshopped videos and images on the web.

Drawing on the previously mentioned benefits of media literacy, to be fully literate in the twenty-first century, students need to be media-literate. Definitely, they need the skills to accurately evaluate the information they receive from various types of media (television, radio, newspapers, magazines, internet, etc.) and to communicate through visual, oral, and written forms of expression. They also need to read images and texts deeply and closely to understand the implicit meaning in them. In addition,

they need to determine the credibility and genuineness of the messages they receive from social networks; identify persuasion techniques in aural, written, and visual messages; detect deception and bias in the information they receive from various types of media; and to recognize false and misleading messages in social media advertisements. They moreover need to make objective judgments about the sources of media messages, judge the worthiness of these messages based on the ethical principles of the society, explore what is left out of these messages and, finally, to respond visually, orally or in writing to these messages (Aufderheide, 1993; Bawden, 2001; Singer and Singer, 1998).

The previously-mentioned media literacy skills can be taught through media analysis which is an important method of media literacy education because:

- It strengthens observation and interpretation.
- It deepens understanding and appreciation.
- It challenges stereotyping—both misrepresentations and/or underrepresentations.
- It illuminates bias and point of view.
- It uncovers motivations. (Thoman and Jolls, 2003, p. 20)

Drawing on the previously-mentioned benefits of media analysis, the teacher should help students become discerning

consumers and producers of media information through analyzing and evaluating pieces of what they watch, read, and listen to (e.g., Facebook posts, Twitter entries, radio and television reports, internet articles, etc.). This can be done with the help of questions such as the following (Center for Media Literacy MediaLit Kit, as cited in Thoman and Jolls, 2003, pp. 15-18):

- Who is the author/reporter? Why did s/he write or report this message?
- Who is the target audience?
- Do you think information is accurate? Why? Why not?
- Did the author/reporter give equal attention to all sides of the issue?
- What techniques are used to attract the audience attention?
- Did the author/reporter make any claims that are not backed up by evidence?
- Did the author/reporter distort the ideas of others or present them out of context?
- Did the author/reporter use unfair persuasion tactics such as appeals to prejudice or fear?
- Are there any logical fallacies or errors in reasoning?
- What values and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message?

- Are there examples of bias in the content or the language of this message?
- What makes this message seem realistic or unrealistic?
- Did the author/reporter make unsupported generalizations?
- Is there enough evidence to support the point(s) the author/reporter is trying to make?
- Did the author's/reporter's conclusions logically follow from the information given?
- Do you agree with the author's/reporter's conclusions? Why? Why not?

In concluding this subsection, the multifaceted curriculum framework argues that media literacy is essential for empowering students to live in this media-saturated world. Without the development of this literacy in Egyptian students, they will be easily manipulated by biased and flawed media.

1.3.5.1.3 Critical literacy

The rapid growth and widespread use of information and communication technology have increased the amount of available information. However, most of this information is not filtered and contains bias and prejudice that serve evil purposes. If it is taken for granted, such poor-quality information may lead

to dangerous consequences and poor decisions. Therefore, critical literacy has become a requirement for survival in the twenty-first century. Now more than ever, it is imperative that students become critical consumers of the huge information available to them at the click of a computer key or the press of a TV remote control button.

To become critical consumers of information, students should be able to analyze and evaluate the messages they receive from different types of media to know how much they can count on them (Crowhurst, 1990); understand the tone of what is read or said to them; determine and assess the speaker's or writer's purpose and attitude; detect stereotypes encountered in newspaper articles and other media forms; recognize bias, prejudice, propaganda, and deception; question everything which doesn't make sense; and follow evidence where it leads (Duron, Limbach and Waugh, 2006). In addition, they should be able to recognize the cultural and physical context within which information was created, understand the impact of information presentation methods, "read the world into and onto texts and recognize the correlation between the word and the world" (Morrell, 2004, p. 57), determine whether to accept or reject viewpoints based on objective evaluation, make inferences and

recognize implications, and reach logical conclusions based on factual evidence (Kurland, 1995).

The possession of the previously-mentioned critical literacy skills helps students to understand what is beyond the text to achieve a high-level of comprehension (Chang-Wells and Wells, 1993) and critical thinking (McLaughlin and DeVoodgd, 2004). It also enables them to use reading and writing to enhance everyday life and to change unjust conditions that impact their daily lives for the better (Moller, 2004). To reap these benefits, teachers should involve students in activities that require them to evaluate the trustworthiness of various forms of text types with the help of questions such as the following (Kirszner and Mandell, 1992; Kurland, 1995; Ruggiero, 2009):

- Who is the author? Is s/he an expert in her/his field?
- What is the purpose of this text?
- Where is this text published? What is the impact factor of the journal or the publisher?
- What do you think the author is trying to say implicitly?
- Is information accurate, reliable, and relevant?
- Is there any important information missing?
- Who/what is left out of the text?
- Is the data deceiving?

- What is the mood of the author?
- Do the author's language, tone, and choice of examples reveal any biases?
- Did the author write or speak from an insider's/outsider's perspective? How did this influence what is included in, or excluded from, the text?
- Do you agree with the points the author is making?
- Are the points made by the author adequately supported by evidence?
- Did the author omit any significant evidence?
- Is the evidence recent and referenced?
- Did the author use invalid reasoning?
- What is the logical flaw in the author's reasoning?
- Are the sources of information cited by the author still current?
- Are the experts cited by the author authorities in their fields?
- Do other experts agree with the experts cited by the author?
- Did the author make unsupported generalizations?
- Did the author make unreasonable inferences?
- What conclusions did the author reach?
- Of the author's conclusions, which are justified? Which are not justified?
- On what points do you disagree with the author? Why?

In concluding this subsection, the multifaceted curriculum framework argues that without the development of critical literacy skills in Egyptian students, they will remain passive readers and listeners who can easily be manipulated by flawed and deceptive information.

1.3.5.1.4 Environmental literacy

Nowadays, new technologies can provide innovative solutions to many environmental problems, yet they are also the main cause of other problems. The latter type of problems includes, but not limited to, pollution of air and water and disposal of toxic and radioactive wastes. These problems negatively affect human beings' health and damage plants and animals. Therefore, environmental literacy is essential for preparing citizens to deal properly with the environment and to find evidence-based solutions to its problems. It also makes learning more relevant and more meaningful and links what is learned in the classroom to what actually happens around students (Papadimitriou, 1995). Moreover, it develops students' critical thinking skills, fosters their participatory citizenship, nurtures their appreciation of the natural world and enhances their physical well-being, thus improving the quality of the environment and that of their life (Chepesiuk, 2017).

For the previously-mentioned benefits, several educationalists (e. g., Coyle, 2005; Ramsey, Hungerford and Volk, 1992; Styres and Zinga, 2013) regard environmental literacy as essential for all students in all learning environments at all levels. As Ramsey et al. (1992) point out, education must "provide skills needed to play an effective role in the improvement and maintenance of the environment" (p. 37). These educationalists further believe that without environmental literacy skills, individuals will be ill-prepared for citizenship in the twenty-first century.

To become environmentally literate, students must possess environmental literacy skills. These skills include identifying environmental problems, collecting and analyzing environmental information, problem solving and decision making, and working as members of a group for solving environmental problems. The development of environmental literacy also requires strengthening students' dispositions for improving the quality of the environment and engaging in individual and collaborative environmental activities. That is, an environmentally literate person should be enthusiastic to participate in actions that protect and improve the environment and be eager to investigate environmental issues to find solutions to important and serious environmental problems.

In sum, to become fully literate in today's world, students must become environmentally literate and language educators need to view environmental literacy as important as reading and writing and incorporate it in everyday activities inside and outside the classroom.

1.3.6 Both analytical and global thinking styles are essential for learning and surviving in the 21st century

1.3.6.0 Introduction

Despite the fact that the advantages of thinking styles are documented in the literature, Egyptian students' thinking styles are completely ignored. Egyptian EFL teachers use a one-size-fits-all method for all students at all levels without paying attention to their thinking styles. This method focuses on the bits and pieces of language. The students passively receive these bits and pieces and memorize them for the sake of testing. Therefore, the Egyptian education system fails to develop students who can act outside the left side of their brains. It also leads to stifling students' creativity because this ability is attributed to the right side of the brain. This implies that if this education system remains unchanged, Egyptians will always be consumers rather than producers of new innovations. This does not mean that the

analytic thinking style is useless; it is just not sufficient for preparing students to create innovative solutions to today's complex problems and to effectively contribute to the development of Egypt. Both analytical (i.e., left-brained) and global (i.e., right-brained) thinking styles support each other and work together for effective thinking and complex problem solving. Therefore, if Egypt is to survive in the twenty-first century, teachers should develop both thinking styles in students in a balanced way at all levels of education to enable them to act outside the preferred side of their brains and to use both styles at their optimum to face the complexities of this century.

1.3.6.1 Theoretical background of thinking styles

The literature reveals that thinking styles are based on either the brain lateralization theory or the brain plasticity theory. The brain lateralization theory was developed by the Nobel Prize winner Roger Sperry (1974) through examining patients who had undergone surgical division of the corpus callosum which acts as a bridge between the two hemispheres of the brain. From the perspective of this theory, an individual is either left-brained or right-brained, but not both, and this determines the way s/he thinks. The left-brained individual thinks in a sequential manner, whereas the right-brained individual thinks in a holistic manner.

The brain lateralization theory further assumes that these specialized functions of the two hemispheres of the brain are genetic and, therefore, resistant to change over time. Accordingly, the adherents of this theory argue that the environment can play only a supportive role in the scope of these genetically coded styles. They also suggest matching the learning environment to each student's dominant style and assigning students to homogeneous thinking style groups to allow them to learn easily and efficiently without cognitive conflicts.

In contrast, the brain plasticity theory holds that the human brain's structure and functions are subject to change throughout a person's lifetime due to educational and other environmental factors. As Lefton and Brannon (2003) put it, "Our brains are constantly being organized and reorganized forming new and useful connections" (p. 45). Support for the notion that the brain develops through experience, even during adolescence, came from research on brain plasticity as summarized by Bernstein, Penner, Clarke-Stewart and Roy (2006) in the following way:

The brain continues to mature even through adolescence, showing evidence of ever more efficient neural communication in its major fiber tracts (Gotay et al. 2004; Paus et al., 1999; Thompson et al., 2000). .

. . Throughout the life span, the brain retains its plasticity, rewiring itself to form new connections and to eliminate connections, too (Hua & Smith, 2004). Our genes apparently determine the basic patterns of growth and major lines of connections—the "highways" of the brain and its general architecture. . . . But the details of the connections depend on experience, including the amount of complexity and stimulation in the environment. . . . In any event this line of research highlights the interaction of environmental and genetic factors. . . . Within constraints set by genetics, interactions with the world mold the brain itself (e.g., Chang & Merzenich, 2003). (pp. 89-90)

Further support for the notion that both sides of the brain can be developed in response to educational and other environmental conditions came from Kozhevnikov's (2007) review of research on cognitive styles which revealed that many studies "made it clear that cognitive styles are not simply inborn structures, dependent only on an individual's internal characteristics, but rather, are interactive constructs that develop in response to social, educational, professional and other environmental requirements" (p. 476). Laxman and Chin (2010) also sums up research studies in this area in this statement, "An overwhelming body of evidence shows our brains to be altered by everyday experiences and changing our experiences will change the brains" (p. 3).

In accordance with the brain plasticity theory, several scholars (e.g., Marrapodi, 2003; Paul, 2005; Paul and Elder, 2012) agree that the two hemispheres of the brain can be developed and that effective thinking requires the use of both hemispheres because they are complementary and helpful to each other. In agreement with this view, the multifaceted curriculum framework holds that the development of both sides of the brain is essential to enable students to deal with the complexities of twenty-first century problems.

1.3.6.2 Benefits of the development of both analytical and global thinking styles

There are numerous benefits of developing both analytical and global thinking styles. These benefits include empowering students to think dynamically to get a complete picture of any learning situation, meeting their diversified needs, helping them to adapt to different learning situations, enabling them to use the appropriate thinking style for any task, helping them to look at things from different aspects and multiple perspectives, enriching their interpersonal relationships, and enhancing their motivation and self-esteem (Fan and Zhang, 2009; Zhang, 2001b, 2001c; Zhang and Postiglione, 2001). These benefits can in turn maximize students' learning opportunities and improve

their academic performance. As Monroe (1994) states, "Peak performance comes when both left and right brain thinking are integrated, unified, [and] synchronous" (p. 86). Moreover, Felder and Henriques (1995)—citing Hunt (1971), Friedman and Alley (1984) and Cox (1988)—affirm that "students will inevitably be called upon to deal with problems and challenges that require the use of their less preferred modes, and so should regularly be given practice in the use of those modes" (p. 28). They go on to affirm that the development of both sides of the brain is essential for students to be fully effective learners although such development requires practice in ways of thinking which they may not firstly be comfortable with. In support of this, several researchers found that the development of thinking styles improved students' learning and academic achievement (Bernardo, Zhang and Callueng, 2002; Zhang, 2001b, 2002a), and that a significant correlation existed between thinking styles and academic achievement in various subject areas (Akbarzadeh, 2006; Cano-Garcia and Hughes, 2000; Grigorenko and Sternberg, 1997; Nazarifar, Abolghasemi, Kamali and Hosseini, 2011; Razavi and Shiri, 2005; Zhang, 2001a, 2002c, 2004; Zhang and Sternberg, 2001). Moreover, indirect support of developing both the left and the right brain thinking styles came from studies which revealed that providing

mismatches between teaching and learning styles promoted cognitive growth (Dunbar, 1995), and improved failing students' achievement (Dunn, Griggs, Olson and Beasley, 1995).

Still another important benefit of developing analytical and global thinking styles is that the development of both styles helps individuals and organizations to survive in today's world in which no one thinking style has the capacity to provide solutions for all problems or insights for all decisions. In this complex and ever-changing world, individuals and organizations need to think with both styles to solve the complex problems they face and to shift from one style to another in different situations as the need arises. Even a single situation may require both styles of thinking. Therefore, both styles are indispensable for helping individuals and organizations to deal with the complex problems and tasks that require the use of the less-preferred thinking style. In support of this theoretical claim, researchers found that integrative thinking styles helped to develop managers' decision making and problem solving strategies and decreased their wrong decisions (Emamipour and Seif, 2003; Hassanpour, Ravesh, Bayat, Nasiri and Zand, 2014; Hosainzadeh and Mohammad, 2015).

1.3.6.3 Methods of developing both analytical and global thinking styles

In accordance with the brain-plasticity theory, which assumes that thinking styles are not fixed and can be developed in response to educational training, many educationalists (e.g., De Bono, 1985; Entwistle, 1998; Kang, 1999; Kroonenberg, 1995) suggest using various methods—separately or jointly—to develop both analytical and global thinking styles. As Kang (1999) puts it, "Teaching methods need to be varied to help students develop the flexible use of both hemispheres" (p. 3). These methods employ a variety of strategies and activities that stimulate and enhance both hemispheres of the brain to help students stretch their thinking beyond their stylistic comfort zones. These strategies and activities include, but not limited to, exposing learners to thinking activities that are mismatched with their preferred thinking style without neglecting the preferred one, thinking-style heterogeneity in learning groups, using De Bono's six thinking strategies, using both critical and creative thinking strategies and activities, and blending independent and collaborative learning.

Along with the previously mentioned activities and strategies, the teacher should encourage students to strengthen and develop

their weaker and underdeveloped hemisphere. S/he should also respect and appreciate different ways of thinking. As Herrmann-Nehdi (cited in Goodley, 2007) states, "Difference in thinking preference provides the basis for more creative and efficient thinking. But, for that to occur, there must be an understanding and value for the differences on both sides" (p. 5).

1.3.6.4 Assessment of thinking styles

As suggested before, the development of both analytical and global thinking styles should be a valuable aim for effective twenty-first century education. An essential requirement for achieving this aim is to assess both thinking styles as two independent styles, not as a bipolar style ranging from one extreme to the other (i.e., analytic-holistic). This is because bipolarity does not allow for assessing the dual thinking style, especially when one prefers the two styles to the same extent. Therefore, the multifaceted curriculum framework holds that the Style of Learning and Thinking Questionnaire (SOLAT-Youth Form; Torrance, McCarthy and Kolesinski, 1988) is the most appropriate instrument for assessing analytical, global, and integrative thinking styles, at least for the time being, for the following reasons:

- (1) It allows the teacher to measure the 'dual' thinking style or

what can be termed as integrative thinking style because one may use both analytical and global thinking styles simultaneously or sequentially, depending on the task being tackled.

- (2) It allows the teacher to assess improvement in the non-preferred thinking style at the end of any program or course of study because it regards analytic and holistic thinking styles as two dimensions.
- (3) It is consistent with the brain-plasticity theory which contends that the two hemispheres of the brain can work together and the human brain's functions are subject to change throughout a person's lifetime.
- (4) It is supported by research findings (e.g., Banich, 2002; Beeman and Chiarello, 1998) which assert that the two hemispheres are more dynamic than static and that they are more interactive than it was believed 20 years ago (Zhang, 2002b).
- (5) Reliability and validity statistics for this instrument have been reported in several research studies. In the SOLAT administrator's manual, Torrance (1988) reported Cronbach's alphas of 0.77 for the analytic scale and 0.74 for the holistic scale. In her study of Hong Kong university students, Zhang (2002b) reported Cronbach's

alphas of 0.75 for the analytic scale, 0.70 for the holistic scale, and 0.85 for the integrative scale. In addition, in her study of U.S. university students, she (2002c) reported Cronbach's alphas of 0.75 for the analytic scale, 0.73 for the holistic scale, and 0.83 for the integrative scale.

In closing this section, the multifaceted curriculum framework considers analytical and global thinking styles as two independent styles, not as a bipolar style. It further contends that the flexible use of both styles will enable students to think effectively and efficiently to face the challenges of the twenty-first century which require both critical and creative thinking. Therefore, Egyptian teachers should exert extra effort to enable students to use both styles flexibly, interactively, and efficiently as needed.

1.3.7 Twenty-first century life skills are essential for academic success and development of the society

1.3.7.0 Introduction

Today we live in a complex, ever-changing world where information becomes obsolete in a very short time, life has become more complicated and problems have become more difficult than before, filtered and unfiltered information sources

are increasing, and unfiltered sources provide biased and deceptive information every moment. To successfully face these challenges, educationalists all over the world agree that students are in need of twenty-first century life skills, including communication, collaboration, self-reliance, critical thinking, and creative thinking. However, Egyptian education still prepares students for the world of the past, rather than for the world of today. Egyptian schools and universities still deliver inert information that is largely old and unusable in real-life situations. Moreover, Egyptian teachers narrow the focus of education to only teaching what will be tested without real world application of information or practicing the twenty-first century skills. These, in turn, lead to a graduation of students who are unprepared for facing real life challenges and are unable to shoulder life responsibilities or participate in the development of their society.

It is clear then that the gap between what Egyptian students learn and the skills they actually need in their daily lives is wide because existing curricula and methods of teaching fall short of equipping them with the skills they need to live and thrive in the twenty-first century. To meet the demands of this century and to face its challenges, Egyptian students need to think critically and

creatively, work independently and collaboratively, communicate fluently, and deal efficiently with the floods of the information they receive from various media sources.

1.3.7.1 Definition of twenty-first century life skills

The term twenty-first century life skills refers to a set of skills that are believed—by organizations, school reformers, employers, and others—to be urgently needed for success both within and beyond the classroom in the twenty-first century (Wikipedia). There are a variety of taxonomies of these skills (e.g. Kreitzberg, Reilly and Kay, 2010; Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2003, 2007a, 2007b; Trilling and Fadel, 2009; University of Cambridge, 1995; Wagner, 2008). These taxonomies suggest a wide range of twenty-first century life skills. These skills can be divided into three broad categories: cognitive, personal, and interpersonal skills. The cognitive skills include media literacy, information literacy, critical literacy, environmental literacy, creative thinking, etc. The personal skills include self-reliance, self-regulation, self-management, self-monitoring, self-reflection, etc. The interpersonal skills include communication, teamwork, collaboration, etc. Most of the taxonomies agree that the most important of these skills are

communication, critical thinking, creative thinking, self-reliance, and collaboration.

1.3.7.2 Benefits of twenty-first century life skills

Many scholars and associations (e.g., Ledward and Hirata, 2011; Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2007a, 2007b; Trilling and Fadel, 2009) assert that twenty-first century life skills help students to succeed in school and life. In more detail, they believe that these skills link students to the real world, improve their learning outcomes, prepare them for entering the workplace, and empower them to work individually and collaboratively. They add that such twenty-first century skills enable students to think critically and creatively to solve everyday problems, develop them into active and productive members of their own communities, and improve the quality of their own lives and that of their own society.

In addition to the previously-mentioned benefits, research showed that life skills training: (1) improved interpersonal relationships and reduced aggression and behavioral problems (Naseri and Babakhani, 2014; Smith, Swisher, Hopkins and Elek, 2006); (2) increased teens' flexibility (Tuttle, Campbell-Heider and David, 2006); (3) enhanced students' psychosocial

competencies (Vranda and Rao, 2011); (4) improved social skills and social adjustment (Rahmati, Adibrad, Tahmasian and Salehsedghpour, 2010; Roodbari, Sahdipoor and Ghale, 2013); (5) prevented substance abuse and other negative behaviors during adolescence (Botvin and Griffin, 2002; Moshki, Hassanzade and Taymoori, 2014; Wenzel, Weichold and Silbereisen, 2009); (6) promoted self-confidence, self-efficacy, and self-esteem among adolescents (Ahmadia et al., 2014; Esmaeilinasab, Malek, Ghiasvand and Bahrami, 2011; Hartati and Gusaptono, 2010; Khaledian, Omid, Sepanta and Tavana, 2014; Malik, Anand, Karamvir and Batra, 2012; Niaraki, and Rahimi, 2013; Sobhi-Gharamaleki and Rajabi, 2010; Vernofaderani, 2014; Yadav and Iqbal, 2009); (7) helped the twenty-first century youngsters to achieve their goals and strengthened their abilities to meet the needs and demands of the present society (Prajapati, Sharma and Sharma, 2017); (8) improved emotional intelligence among medical sciences students (Lolaty, Ghahari, Tirgari and Fard, 2012); and (9) had a positive impact on the academic achievement of normal and special-needs students (Amirian, 2012; Arora and Joshi, 2015; Savoji, Ganji and Ahmadzadeh, 2013).

In essence, the twenty-first century life skills are essential for facing the challenges of the twenty-first century and improving the quality of personal and social lives. Therefore, the multifaceted curriculum framework concurs with many scholars and organizations that these skills should be integrated in all subject areas throughout the student's academic life. More specifically, a shift needs to be made to infuse these skills into major language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—during teaching, learning, and assessment of language at the secondary school level and beyond.

1.3.8 Dispositions are as important as skills in today's ever-changing world

1.3.8.0 Introduction

The possession of skills is necessary but not sufficient to meet the demands of the twenty-first century. Today's students also need dispositions to succeed in their learning and social life. As Corcoran (2013) puts it, "It's not enough to only help children [and adults] develop the kinds of skills ... without considering dispositions" (para. 3). The cultivation of dispositions in students is urgently needed in this century more than ever before because today's media display immoral and unethical practices that destroy the desirable dispositions without which

societies cannot survive. Woefully, such immoral and unethical practices can demolish any nation because a nation can only survive if it updates the skills of its own citizens and sticks to ethical behaviors in all areas of life. The great achievements made by skills for many years can be ruined by immorality or corruption in a very short time. Therefore, educationalists (e.g., Acedo and Hughes, 2014; Buckingham Shum and Deakin Crick, 2012; Ng, 2008) agree that twenty-first century education should focus on both skills and dispositions to produce citizens who are intellectually and morally balanced. However, the Egyptian education system focuses exclusively on knowledge to the total neglect of skills and dispositions. It does not develop students' life skills or touch their hearts in order to heal dispositional ills and to strengthen desirable dispositions. Education of this kind leads to separation between life and learning and between head and heart. Therefore, the multifaceted curriculum framework suggests that the development of dispositions should go hand in hand with the development of twenty-first century skills in students in order to develop their whole personalities for the well-being of the individual and the society at large.

1.3.8.1 Definition of dispositions

The term dispositions has been defined in a number of ways. Taylor and Wasicsko (2000) define this term as the personal tendencies of an individual, including values, beliefs, attitudes, and appreciations. Ritchhart (2001) also defines this term as "a collection of cognitive tendencies, habits, behaviors, or attitudes that drive one's patterns of thinking" (p. 3). Along the same line, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (2001) defines this term as the commitments, values, and ethics that influence learning and communities. In the same vein, Borko, Liston and Whitcomb (2007) define dispositions as an individual's tendencies to act in a certain manner. By the same token, Wilkerson and Lang (2007) define the same term as "attitudes, values, and beliefs that influence the application and use of knowledge and skills" (p. 2). For Kentucky Association of School Administrators (2017), "Dispositions are a person's core attitudes, values, and beliefs that are the foundation of all of our behaviors" (para. 3).

As evident from the previously-mentioned definitions the term dispositions involves a mixture of values, attitudes and beliefs. These values, attitudes, and beliefs are not stable over time or consistent over situations and "can be learned and, therefore,

taught" (Resnick, 1987, p. 4). Consequently, a principal aim of education should be to develop and strengthen desirable dispositions in students and to weaken undesirable ones in them at all levels.

1.3.8.2 Key dispositions of twenty-first century citizens

An extensive review of literature reveals that there are a lot of key dispositions that are important to develop in students if they are to succeed in learning and to live in harmony with their natural and social environment in the twenty-first century. These dispositions include, but are not limited to, curiosity for learning new things, appreciation of critical and creative thinking (Learning for the Future, 2017); respect for others' backgrounds and different perspectives (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2016); willingness to take responsibility for one's learning, commitment to collaboration with colleagues and other people in society, willingness to contribute to the well-being of one's neighborhood, society and the world at large (De Souza, 2015); dedication to honesty and flexibility in dealing with others, patience and perseverance in learning and truth-seeking (Gulati and Pant, 2005); tendency to seek help as needed from various sources, including teachers, classmates, and experts (Adderley, 2015); openness to receive

new ideas and to consider diverse points of view without bias, interest in exploring unusual ideas, tolerance for ambiguity, openness to criticism and to learn from mistakes, and willingness to work with others to settle conflicts and solve problems (Dyke, 2006).

The previously mentioned dispositions can be classified into these three categories: (1) dispositions toward one's self, (2) dispositions toward people and society, and (3) dispositions toward learning. These three categories interrelate and do not work in isolation. They also differentiate effective from ineffective learners.

1.3.8.3 Benefits of dispositions

Dispositions are considered by many educationalists as an important factor in learning because they motivate and guide learning behaviors. There is also a positive relationship between learning dispositions and effective learning (Bertram and Pascal, 2002). Moreover, Ng (2008) opines that if students develop dispositions for learning, they will never cease to grow. Along the same line of thought, Buckingham Shum and Deakin Crick (2012) believe that dispositions are important for all students at all levels as they engage them in learning and motivate them to

develop their lifelong learning competences which are a key requisite for life in the twenty-first century. They state, "Learning dispositions form an important part of learning-to-learn competences, which are widely understood as a key requirement for life in the 21st century" (p. 2). Similarly, Acedo and Hughes (2014) write:

A quality education in the 21st century cannot stop at competences, knowledge and concepts alone. It must also address the affective disposition of learners: their attitudes towards themselves, the community and learning itself. The survival of the planet depends as much on ethics as it does on competences. (p. 519)

Furthermore, dispositions are needed today more than ever before to guide the applications of science and technology and to direct them toward what is good and productive and away from what is harmful and destructive. Unfortunately, the current applications of science and technology have many bad consequences such as disposal of toxic wastes and environmental pollution. These application pitfalls, among others, cannot be overcome without the cultivation of dispositions in students, who will become the future scientists. Martin-Kniep and Picone-Zocchia (2009) put this role of dispositions in the following way:

Emerging technologies of today present ethical and values dilemmas. As the technical complexity increases our society needs to advance ethics and

values to guide the applications of science and technology in society—to manage the use of these powerful tools at the personal, community, and governmental levels. (p. 168)

1.3.8.4 Methods of developing dispositions in students

Teachers should support students in developing the dispositions necessary for learning and living in the twenty-first century. To effectively do so, these dispositions should be interwoven into the entire school life and all subject areas at all levels. More importantly, they need to be displayed in teachers' behaviors. Without translating them into actions, teachers will produce citizens who do not behave as they say or preach. In this respect, Dewey (1916/1966) confirms that the development of dispositions in students "cannot take place by direct conveyance of beliefs, emotions, and knowledge" (p. 22). Accordingly, dispositions "need to be interwoven into the entire spectrum of the school life" (Osguthorpe, 2008, p. 297) and to be taught through teachers' everyday behaviors and interactions with students.

From the foregoing it is evident that to cultivate positive dispositions in students, teachers should display them in their own behaviors and incorporate them systematically into teaching

and assessment at all levels. To demonstrate fairness, equity, and respect for diversity, for example, teachers should treat students equitably and exercise fairness in academic assessment (Gulati and Pant, 2005), engage in true dialogue with all of them (Corcoran, 2013), listen carefully to all voices, and appreciate different viewpoints (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2016). In such ways, these dispositions become internalized in the teacher's behaviors. In addition, dispositions need to be put into practice through language teaching/learning methods such as Socratic circles, role playing, storytelling, group discussion, teacher-student interaction, group projects, and collaborative learning (Gulati and Pant, 2005). These methods provide opportunities for learning language skills along with many dispositions, including appreciation of divergent views, respect for others, and equality. These methods also advocate classrooms where learners and teachers are equal participants.

1.3.8.5 Assessment of dispositions

Dispositions are traditionally assessed via the use of standardized self-reporting instruments. However, these traditional instruments are not tied to actual performance although dispositions manifest themselves as behaviors in actual

situations (Freeman, 2007). These traditional instruments, according to Diez (2006), also lead to separation of dispositions from skills although they are codependent. Moreover, these traditional instruments skew the student's choice of dispositional items towards what is logically sound whether it reflects her or his own dispositions or not, and this in turn makes assessment unreliable. Therefore, several scholars (e.g., Buckingham Shum and Deakin Crick, 2012; Gulati and Pant, 2005; Thornton, 2006) argue that disposition assessment need to be evidenced in context through actions and/or interactions. As Buckingham Shum and Deakin Crick (2012) explain, "A disposition can be identified in the action a person takes in a particular situation—for example someone who is disposed to be 'curious' will demonstrate this in the manner in which they consistently generate questions and investigate problems" (p. 92). In the same way, dispositions such as respect and appreciation for individuals' backgrounds, ideas and philosophies can be assessed in relation to the manner in which a student interacts with others (Osguthorpe, 2008).

Thus, effective assessment of dispositions must be done in conjunction with language use through ongoing observation of students' behaviors in controversial dialogues, discussions, and

the like. While observing students in action during language learning, the teacher can make use of criteria or rubrics for assessing different dispositions. S/he can, for example, use Huber-Warring and Warring's (2006) rubric for assessing respect of others during classroom interaction (see Table 1).

Table 1: A rubric for assessing respect of others during classroom interaction (adapted from Huber-Warring and Warring, 2006, p. 49)

Point	Descriptors
3 points	Appreciates multiple perspectives, communicates with a respectful attitude, and asks for clarification of the other's position before providing an alternative position.
2 points	Expresses disagreement/disapproval of others' views respectfully by taking an alternative position and providing a justification for that position.
1 point	Expresses disagreement/disapproval of others' views without providing a justification for that position.
0 points	Expresses disagreement/disapproval of others' views rudely and disrespectfully and relies on a position of privilege (e.g., gender, class, education) to do so.

The teacher can also make use of Diez's (2006) explicit criteria for assessing how students show respect for other speakers in a group. These criteria are the following:

- active nonverbal attention to persons as they speak,

- positively reinforcing the contributions of others,
- explicitly building on the contributions of others, and
- challenging others' ideas without attacking them. (p. 54)

In view of the fact that what is tested determines what is taught and learned, the multifaceted curriculum framework suggests that dispositions should count for 10 percent of the total marks of any course, 0.1% for each disposition the student possesses—as evidenced through students' actions and interactions in and out of classroom—with a maximum number of ten dispositions per course. These ten dispositions should be selected from the key ones mentioned before depending on the nature of the course.

In closing this section, the multifaceted curriculum framework suggests that the development of dispositions should be a major target of Egyptian education in all subject areas at all levels. The acquisition of the twenty-first century skills alone does not guarantee that these skills will be used and applied ethically for the benefit of the individuals and the society. Without dispositions, these skills may even be harmful to both. In contrast, the integration of dispositions and skills will trigger students to employ skills properly and ethically. Therefore,

dispositions and skills should be coupled with each other into curriculum aims, teaching, learning, and assessment.

1.3.9 Authenticity lies at the heart of effective teaching, learning, and assessment

1.3.9.0 Introduction

The English language curricula/textbooks taught at Egyptian schools and universities are composed of non-authentic texts and tasks that are alien to the students and totally neglect their actual experiences, interests, and environments. Accordingly, EFL students spend too much time learning things that are not relevant to them or pertinent to their own environment. Furthermore, Egyptian EFL teachers use non-authentic teaching and assessment methods. These methods teach and assess language in a fragmented and decontextualized way as separate from real life situations. These, in turn, lead to a graduation of students who are passive spectators of the world around them and unable to solve real life problems or manipulate objects in their local community. To overcome these shortcomings, EFL curricula should represent students' real life to make learning more beneficial and more meaningful. In line with this suggestion, John Dewey (1938) holds that students' lived

experiences must be the heart of education. He also rejects the separation between the classroom and the surrounding community and emphasizes that school must represent life outside it. Similarly, Pearson, Raphael, Benson and Madda (2007), among many others, opine that students should learn how to “do life” instead of just learning how to “do school” (p. 36).

1.3.9.1 Definition of authenticity

The term authenticity is defined in different ways by different scholars in different areas of specialization. In the area of teaching and learning, there are numerous definitions of this term. According to McDonough and Shaw (1993), this term "implies as close an approximation as possible to the world outside the classroom, in the selection both of language material and of the activities and methods used for practice in the classroom" (p. 43). For Whitmore and Crowell (1994) authenticity is the weaving of students' experiences and interests and the world outside the classroom into the fabric of teaching and learning. From a social perspective, Widdowson (1998) views authenticity as a social construct and relates it to the learning process rather than to the origin of the materials or language used in classroom interactions. He writes:

The authenticity or reality of language use in its normal pragmatic functioning depends on its being localized within a particular discourse community. Listeners can only authenticate it as discourse if they are insiders. But learners are outsiders, by definition, not members of user communities. So the language that is authentic for native speaker users cannot possibly be authentic for learners. (p. 711)

In the same vein, Littlewood (2013) defines the same term in relation to communication as "using language to communicate in situations where the meanings are unpredictable, e.g. creative role-play, more complex problem-solving, and discussion" (p.12).

It is evident that each of the previously mentioned definitions is restricted to one or two aspects of the curriculum (i.e., materials, methods). However, according to the multifaceted curriculum framework, authenticity is a multidimensional concept that manifests itself in all the aspects of the curriculum, including its aims, teaching/learning materials (i.e., texts and tasks), methods of teaching and learning, and assessment methods and tasks. The authentic curriculum aims at equipping students with the real-life skills and dispositions they require for life beyond school. The authentic texts are real life texts produced by "a real speaker or writer for a real audience and designed to convey a real

message of some sort" (Morrow, 1977, p. 13). These texts include printed, video, and audio texts that students encounter in their daily lives, such as voice mail messages, newspaper articles, radio programs, et cetera (Ianiro, 2007). The authentic teaching/learning tasks are ill-defined activities that have real life relevance (Reeves and Reeves, 1997), and a clear relationship with real life needs. The authentic teaching/learning methods allow students to utilize their prior experiences to construct new knowledge individually and/or collectively. These methods include teacher-student interaction, student-student interaction, writing workshops, problem-based learning, project-based learning, service-learning, group discussion, and the like. Finally, authentic teaching and learning cannot occur without authentic assessment because tests tend to shape the behavior of both students and teachers. Such authentic assessment involves real life tasks that students face beyond the school doors. In short, authenticity is a multidimensional concept that manifests itself in all the components of the curriculum in a dynamic interrelated way, not in isolation.

1.3.9.2 Benefits of authenticity

The benefits of authenticity are many. The first of these benefits is that it engages students in meaningful learning and improves

learning outcomes. As Arnold (1991) points out, "The more authentically the classroom mirrors the real world, the more real the rehearsal will be and the better the learning and transfer will be" (p. 237). Likewise, Daines, Daines and Graham (1993) contend that learning is more likely to happen where the material is relevant to the learner's life and related to what s/he already knows. Similarly, Grabinger (1996) argues that "skills and knowledge are best acquired within realistic contexts" (p. 667). In the same vein, Wolk (1998) asserts that when students learn something relevant to their own life, they will learn significantly more, and knowledge will remain with them longer than when they learn something irrelevant to their own life.

More specifically, several scholars (Bacon and Finneman, 1990; Guariento and Morley, 2000; Rogers and Medley, 1988) agree that language is best acquired within authentic contexts and that authentic materials provide learners with high-quality input which, in turn, supports language development. Supporting evidence for this came from research studies which demonstrated that authentic materials significantly improved students' reading comprehension (e.g., Aftab and Salahuddin, 2015; Belet Boyaci and Güner, 2018; Jooyandeh, 2017; Marzban and Davaji, 2015), writing proficiency (e.g., Belet

Boyaci and Güner, 2018; Vigil, 1987), listening comprehension (e.g., Ahmadi, 2016; Gilakjani and Ahmadi, 2011; Tsuda, 1995), and communicative competence (e.g., Gilmore, 2011; Weyers, 1999).

The second benefit of authenticity is that it connects students with their surrounding environment and gives them the opportunity to see and feel the world around them. This, in turn, allows them to deeply understand the environment in which they live and to apply what they learn to their daily lives. It also equips them with the necessary skills that help them to deal with the complexities of contemporary society (Lombardi, 2007) and the messiness of real-life decision making required for the workplace in the twenty-first century (Splitter, 2009). Moreover, students' interaction with their surrounding environment offers important opportunities for serving the society while at the same time learning is occurring.

The third benefit of authenticity is that it fosters students' motivation towards learning. As Knowles (1975) states, students are motivated to learn when the learning experience occurs in real-life situations. Similarly, Newmann, Bryk and Nagaoka (2001) argue that authentic intellectual work motivates students

to learn because it is relevant to their lives outside of the classroom and involves meaningful, purposeful, and functional experiences. In support of this benefit, research studies demonstrated that authentic tasks enhanced students' motivation for learning (e.g., Gilmore, 2004; Peacock, 1997). Gilmore's (2004) study, for example, revealed that students found authentic materials more interesting and motivating than contrived materials of traditional textbooks. Research studies also found a relationship between authenticity and motivation (e.g., Pinner, 2013a, 2013b)

The fourth benefit is that authenticity helps to develop learner autonomy. As Mc Garry (1995) states, authentic materials and experiences can play a key role in enabling students to work independently. Little (1997) expresses the same notion with respect to authentic texts in the following way:

Authentic texts are directly relevant to the development of learner autonomy in two ways. First, on the affective level, learners who from the beginning have been exposed to authentic texts rapidly develop confidence in the face of the target language. . . . Secondly, on the psychological level, authentic texts accommodate the two-way relation between language learning and language use, encouraging the development of techniques of language learning that entail language use

and techniques of language use that entail language learning. (p. 231)

Similarly, Ketch (2005) believes that learning environments, where students learn authentically, engage students to be in control of their own learning and this, in turn, develops their independent skills. Moreover, linking what students learn in school to real-world issues prepares them for life outside school and enables them to act independently in everyday life.

The last, but not the least benefit of authenticity is that it is an important avenue for developing students' higher order thinking skills because it exposes students to real-life ill-structured problems which require the generation of new ideas and to complex and messy situations which require deep thinking.

In summary, it is evident that authenticity equips students to function effectively in the world beyond the school doors, fosters their language and thinking skills, develops their ability to solve the complex problems of real life, makes learning interesting for them, builds their self-confidence, enables them to take responsibility of their own learning, and improves their learning outcomes. For all these benefits, the multifaceted curriculum

framework suggests that Egyptian EFL curricula must represent real life beyond the school walls.

1.3.10 Community-based learning is essential for supplementing and supporting classroom learning

1.3.10.0 Introduction

Due to the expansion of communication technology, most Egyptian students, if not all, live in a virtual world. The danger inherent in this way of living is that it detaches students from their own communities. This detachment, in turn, leads to decline of personal and social responsibilities (i.e., the actions a student is required to do for the good of her- or himself and the society), inability to interact with the local environment, and loss of sense of community. As Barker (2004) partially explains, "21st century students are being brought up in a world where fantasy and virtual reality predominate and personal responsibility is declining" (p. 1). Moreover, "Being at the receiving end of a virtually one-way flow of information from Anglo-American centres," as Alptekin and Alptekin (1984) state, "the host country runs the risk of having its own culture totally submerged" (p. 15). It is therefore essential for Egyptian schools to be representative of local communities and to be connected to

the society to enable students to deal with real life challenges and to improve the quality of their own life and their communities.

Without building and maintaining strong ties with the community, students will not be able to act in their own lives or make positive changes in their communities. However, Egyptian schools are isolated from life and Egyptian students are deprived of worthwhile real life experiences. These in turn lead to their unawareness of environmental issues and to the lack of skills and commitment to participate individually and collectively in solving community problems. Consequently, a link between Egyptian schools and local communities needs be made if we want education to deal with realities, rather than unreal information. To do so, community-based learning must be integrated into the regular school curriculum. More specifically, Egyptian schools should use a mixture of indoor and outdoor activities as a vehicle for learning and improving local communities because knowledge and skills are of no importance if students cannot apply them right now in solving their personal and social problems and making the community a better place to live in. To put it frankly, development in all aspects of life will not be achieved if we wait for other time or other persons to do

it for us. And if education does not serve to improve life right now, it will be a waste of time and money. Along with this line of thought, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2009) contends that "twenty-first century curriculum and instruction need to be integrated with "community resources beyond school walls" (p. 8).

1.3.10.1 Definition of community-based learning

Community-based learning is an umbrella term that includes a wide range of learning methods that connect school and community. According to Dumas (2002) this term is "a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs, together with structured opportunities designed to promote student learning and development" (p. 249). In the same vein, the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies Office at the University of California in Los Angeles (2010) define this term as "a form of experiential learning where students and faculty collaborate with communities to address problems and issues ... [with] an equal emphasis on helping communities and providing valid learning experience to students" (para. 1). Similarly, Dallimore, Rochefort and Simonelli (2010) define the same term as a learning strategy that engages teachers, community members

and students in partnerships in order to realize academic and community goals via integrating classroom learning into real-life outside the school walls. In the same manner, Ibrahim (2010) defines this term as a pedagogical strategy that deliberately "integrates service to the community with classroom learning in order to help students develop personal skills and a sense of civic responsibility as well as academic skills" (p. 392).

From the previously-mentioned definitions, it is evident that community based learning is a form of experiential learning where the learners and the community are mutual beneficiaries. That is, the improvement of student learning and the development of community is a twin aim of this type of learning.

1.3.10.2 Benefits of community-based learning

The benefits of community-based learning are many. These benefits include linking students to their local community and raising their awareness of environmental problems and natural resources, building bridges between generations, developing a sense of care and respect for the environment (Mannion and Adey, 2011); improving community institutions, fostering students' intellectual capacities (Gallay, Marckini-Polk,

Schroeder and Flanagan, 2016); promoting genuine citizenship (Smith and Sobel, 2010); impelling students to translate theory into practice, assisting them in choosing their careers, developing collaboration skills (Kafi and Motallebzadeh, 2015); improving intrinsic motivation and school attendance, developing lifelong learning and problem solving skills (Eyler, 2002, 2009); meeting the needs of the community, spurring civic engagement, and fostering civic responsibility (Zimmerman and Weible, 2017). Still other benefits of community-based learning include enriching the curriculum, providing an authentic context for learning (Knapp, 1996); developing appreciation of otherness, fostering a sense of caring for others (O'Connor, 2012); fostering environmental attitudes (Jagger, 2016); enhancing appreciation of nature and environment, creating a heightened commitment to serving the community (Sobel, 2004); improving learning outcomes (Miller and Twum, 2017); developing language skills (Lowther-Pereira, 2015); creating active citizens (Mooney and Edwards, 2001); and providing feasible remedy for a plethora of health diseases (New, 2016). In brief, community-based learning makes students productive, service-oriented, and responsible community members; and provides authentic experiences that engage their heads, hands, and hearts.

In support of the previously mentioned benefits, much of the research on community-based learning revealed that outdoor education students scored significantly higher than non-outdoor education students in these areas: reading and writing (Bartosh, 2006; Bartosh, Ferguson, Tudor and Taylor, 2009; Lieberman, Hoody and Lieberman, 2000), critical thinking (Athman and Monroe, 2004b, Cheak, Hungerford and Volk, 2002), problem-solving and strategic thinking (Lieberman and Hoody, 1998). Research also indicated that community-based learning improved learning engagement and motivation (Athman and Monroe, 2004a; Lieberman and Hoody, 1998), enhanced participatory citizenship (Cheak, Hungerford and Volk, 2002), promoted civic engagement and community involvement (Billig, 2004), developed collaboration and conflict-resolution skills (Parrish et al., 2005), decreased discipline problems (Yap, 1998), increased academic achievement (Bartosh et al., 2009), and boosted environmental awareness and personal responsibility (McKenna and Rizzo, 1999; Zint, Kraemer, Northway and Lim, 2002).

In recognition of the previously-mentioned benefits accruing from community-based learning, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2003) states, "Today's education system faces

irrelevance unless we bridge the gap between how students live and how they learn" (p. 3). Elsewhere, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2007a) recommends that making the connection between learning and the real life outside the school walls is imperative for students' success in the twenty-first century. The Partnership further defines literacy as not just reading, writing and communication skills, but knowing how to use these skills in real life. Community-based learning has also been incorporated into education standards in many countries all over the world over the last decade. In its standards for foreign language learning in the twenty-first century, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (2006), for example, requires language instructors to construct learning events in which students "use the language both within and beyond the school setting" (p. 64).

From the foregoing it is evident that the use of community-based learning provides authentic opportunities for learning, extends learning far beyond the classroom walls and develops meaningful relationships among students, schools, and communities, which can in turn have a positive impact on both students' learning and the local communities. Therefore, Egyptian schools should shift from the traditional teaching

methods that emphasize information transmission and passive learning to a combination of indoor and outdoor active learning methods where students take control of their learning and participate in developing their own communities while learning. These methods include project based learning, community problem solving, service-learning, group discussion of local community affairs, and outdoor experiential learning. However, in order to realize its full potential, outdoor learning must be well-prepared in accordance with the aims of the curriculum and the needs of the community. Above all, the safety of students must be ensured prior to any outdoor activity.

1.3.11 Online learning supplements traditional classroom learning

The latest advances in communication technologies have opened up new avenues for teachers to interact with their students and students to interact with each other synchronously and asynchronously. In reality, however, Egyptian teachers still use computer technology only as a vehicle to transport information to students, in the form of audio and video taped lectures or downloadable books and articles, with no attention paid to interaction. This one-way delivery mode does not develop twenty-first century skills, including communication,

collaboration, and higher order thinking skills. Nor does it satisfy the needs of the twenty-first century learners.

In order to prepare students to face the challenges of the twenty-first century, they need to interact with one another and experts beyond the school through CMC tools such as discussion forums, e-mail, wikis, and blogs. However, this type of interaction has many limitations, particularly in the Egyptian context (for these limitations, see chapter three, section 3.4.2.2). Therefore, it cannot be used as an alternative to traditional face-to-face classroom interaction. Thus, there is a need for blending both modes of learning in order to overcome their limitations and to achieve the aims that neither of them can achieve alone. As Moebs and Weibelzahl (2007) state, blended learning is "a way to get the best out of the two worlds of technology enhanced learning and traditional classroom-based learning" (p. 162). Likewise, Kim (2007) writes, "As both the traditional classroom learning and e-learning simultaneously offer strengths and suffer from limitations, it is only natural to combine the strengths of the two into blended learning" (p. 2). The literature also indicates that blended learning provides various benefits over using any single mode alone. These benefits include maximizing learning, providing learners with numerous learning

options, engaging them both inside and outside the classroom, and allowing them to interact more with fellow students (Aycock, Garnhama and Kaleta 2002; Singh, 2003). In addition to these benefits, Marsh (2012) adds the following benefits to the blended language learning environment:

- providing a more individualized learning experience,
- providing more personalized learning support,
- supporting and encouraging independent and collaborative learning,
- increasing student engagement in learning,
- accommodating a variety of learning styles,
- providing a less stressful practice environment for the target language,
- providing flexible study, anytime or anywhere, to meet learners' needs, and
- helping students develop valuable and necessary twenty-first century learning skills. (pp. 4-5)

In support of blending both online and traditional classroom learning, research showed that blended learning: (1) had a positive effect on reducing dropout and withdrawal rates in comparison to purely online or face-to-face learning (López-Pérez, Pérez-López and Rodríguez-Ariza, 2011; López-Pérez, Pérez-López, Rodríguez-Ariza and Argente-Linares, 2013); (2) enhanced students' oral language skills (Al-Ani, 2013); (3) facilitated the development of students' sociolinguistic,

intercultural, strategic, and pragmatic competences (Vlachos, 2009); (4) improved learning satisfaction and increased participation (Daniel, Matheos and McCalla, 2004); (5) fostered English writing skills (Keshta and Harb, 2013); (6) had positive effects on communication and teamwork skills (Kashefi, Ismail and Yusof, 2012); and (7) developed critical thinking skills (Akyüz and Samsa, 2009).

In sum, blended learning takes advantage of the best educational elements that both traditional classroom and online learning environments can offer. Therefore, the Egyptian teachers at all educational levels should involve students in both modes of learning to get the best of both worlds. For more information on blended learning, see chapter three, section 3.4.3.

1.3.12 Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process

The separation of assessment from teaching and learning is a characteristic feature of the current Egyptian education system. In this system, assessment is just tacked on at the end of the curriculum or the syllabus to measure how much information students memorize for grade promotion or graduation. This traditional form of assessment, which is highly consistent with

the behaviorist theory, has now become outdated because it does not guarantee that successful teaching and learning occur. Nor does it improve students' learning or teachers' instruction. Additional disadvantages of this traditional form of assessment include narrowing the curriculum to what is tested, devoting large portions of instructional time to test taking strategies and preparing students for tests, increasing test anxiety, neglecting higher order thinking skills, fragmenting the curriculum, and overlooking the diagnosis and improvement of students' weaknesses.

In contrast to the behavioristic view of assessment, the constructivist theory views assessment as an ongoing process inextricably linked to teaching and learning (Pondhe, 2017). Advocates of this theory further claim that linking assessment with the teaching/learning process is indispensable because it improves the effectiveness of teaching and learning and provides the information needed to modify or adjust them while they are happening. Definitely, such a link offers many benefits to both teachers and learners alike. For teachers, these benefits include providing them with information to adjust teaching at a point when adjustment can be made (Popham, 2008); guiding them to diagnose students' weaknesses and to provide immediate

feedback and feed-forward on an ongoing basis, keeping them informed of students' needs, helping them to check and improve the effectiveness of the method(s) they use and to find appropriate methods that meet the students' needs (Gregory and Chapman, 2007); guiding them to identify their own professional strengths and areas for improvement (Commonwealth of Learning, 2000); allowing them to guide students toward deeper understanding and thinking and to assess their growth over time to know what works for them (Stiggins and DuFour, 2009); and guiding them in creating learning tasks for different learners (Black and Wiliam, 1998).

For learners, the benefits of the integration of assessment into learning include developing their ability to exercise executive control over their own learning processes and to adjust these processes to their own needs at a point when adjustments can be made (Sadler, 1989); encouraging them to take charge of their own learning, stimulating and developing their higher order thinking (Hayward, Simpson and Spencer, 2005); fostering their self-confidence, intrinsic motivation, self-esteem, and attitudes towards learning (Black and Wiliam, 1998; Garrison and Ehringhaus, 2007); empowering them to develop a wide range of learning strategies and to continually check the effectiveness

of these strategies, reducing their test anxiety (Stiggins, Arter, Chappuis and Chappuis, 2007); engaging them in deeper learning, involving them in diagnosing their own strengths and weaknesses on an ongoing basis during or after learning (Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall and Wiliam, 2002); making assessment a learning experience for them, enabling them to become independent and lifelong learners (Wiliam, 2009); giving them a voice in their own learning, and developing their ability to reflect on their own learning (Black, 2004). These benefits can in turn improve the quality of learning and maximize learning outcomes for all types of students, including low ability ones. In support of these considerations, there is enough evidence that formative assessment could significantly improve students' learning and achievement (e.g., Black and William, 1998; Dandekar, 2015; Koedinger, McLaughlin and Heffernan, 2010; Kondri, 2015; Mehmood, Hussain, Khalid and Azam, 2012; Ozan and Kincal, 2018; Wiliam and Thompson, 2007). Black and William (1998), for example, found that formative assessment was effective in improving students' learning regardless of educational levels and content areas. They also found that whilst all learners benefited, the lower achievers gained most from assessment for learning, thus reducing the gap between high and low achievers. Wiliam and Thompson (2007),

for another example, found that formative assessment produced greater increases in students' achievement than class-size reduction or increases in teachers' content knowledge, and at a fraction of the cost.

It is clear then that the integration of assessment into teaching and learning helps both teachers and learners to discover the gaps that exist between the anticipated goals and the current performance and guides them to close these gaps before they get worse. Therefore, many educationalists and organizations (e.g., Chappius and Stiggins, 2002; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2010; Owocki and Goodman, 2002) regard such an integration as an essential feature of the twenty-first century learning environment. As the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2010) points out, "Formative assessment is a central feature of the learning environment of the 21st century" (p. 17). Elsewhere, the OECD (2011) goes so far to state that without its integration into teaching and learning, assessment will be of no value at all.

In closing this section, the multifaceted curriculum framework holds that in order to meet the twenty-first century demands, an integration of assessment into teaching and learning is inevitable

because it allows for continuous improvement of these processes (see chapter eight for integrating assessment into learning and chapter nine for integrating assessment into teaching). This does not imply that we can do without assessment of learning (i.e., summative assessment), but we need to strike the right balance between assessment for and of learning (see section three of chapter ten for integrating these two types of assessment)

Part II

Multifaceted Curricular Content

High-quality curriculum content provides the working capital (i.e., texts and tasks) for practicing and developing the skills and dispositions necessary for students to function effectively and successfully in their own communities, both during and following their formal education. Without identifying the characteristic features of such content, teachers and students may engage in experiences that fall into triviality. They may also engage in experiences that are useless to the society to which the school owes its existence. To avoid these pitfalls, amongst many others, this part of the book, which is composed of a single chapter, provides a subframework within which the multifaceted curricular content is to be developed.

Chapter Two

Development and Assessment of Multifaceted Curricular Content

2.0 Introduction

With the aims and the theoretical principles of the multifaceted curriculum framework in mind, the author is concerned in this chapter with determining the characteristic features of the multifaceted curricular content and the criteria for assessing such content. This chapter consists of five sections. The first section identifies the role of curriculum content, and the second section explores the current status of the content of EFL curricula being taught at the Egyptian schools and universities. The third section defines the multifaceted curricular content, and the fourth section provides the characteristic features of this type of content. The fifth and final section offers ways and criteria for the assessment of content before its wide-scale implementation in classrooms to ensure that the selected and/or created content is in compliance with the aims of the

multifaceted curriculum framework and the theoretical principles upon which it is based.

2.1 Role of Curriculum Content

As an element of the curriculum, content plays a very important role in achieving its aims. It obviates the teacher and the students from the hit-or-miss efforts they may indulge in if it is not identified. Moreover, authentic learning cannot occur without authentic content (Maksimwicz, 1993), and effective teaching cannot take place in the absence of high quality curricular content. Therefore, content is regarded as an important element of the curriculum. This view is echoed by Parker and Lo (2016) in the following way:

Content selection is the fulcrum of curriculum planning and one of the most important professional decisions educators make. All else is tethered to it, from classroom management to interactions between teachers and parents, because the whole educational enterprise, especially in schools, revolves around teaching and learning something in particular: this or that idea, this or that skill or disposition, this or that way of thinking, being, and knowing. (p. 207)

The right kind of content is also essential for the development of the twenty-first century skills in general and higher order thinking skills in particular. In this respect, many scholars and

practitioners assert that thinking cannot exist outside of subject-matter content and that higher order thinking skills are best taught and learned within subject areas, rather than as a separate subject. Without subject-matter content, they declare, there is essentially no thinking because there is no such thing as thinking about nothing. As Nickerson (1984) states, subject-matter content and thinking are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. He adds that "one must think about something" and that "the more one knows, the more effective one's thinking is likely to be. Much knowledge does not guarantee effective thinking, but lack of knowledge surely prohibits it" (p. 35). Similarly, Cornbleth (1985) affirms that thinking cannot exist outside of subject-matter content. She adds that subject-matter learning and thinking-skills improvement proceed hand in hand, each reinforcing and contributing to the development of the other in an integrated way. Likewise, McPeck (1990) argues that thinking skills cannot be taught in isolation or as discrete skills. He further argues that thinking skills must be taught in the context of subject-matter content, and that out of context, such skills are "functionally meaningless" (p. 14). In the same way, the American Philosophical Association (Facione, 1990) reports that the development of critical thinking skills requires application of these skills in discipline-specific content.

In the context of language curriculum development, content is regarded as the stuff language teaching and learning are made of (López Barrios, 2008). This is simply due to the fact that language and content cannot stand apart from each other. Therefore, content is considered "a useful tool for furthering the aims of the language curriculum" (Met, 1999, p. 4). In exact agreement with this notion, Schleppegrell, Achugar and Oteiza (2004) assert that both language and content are integrated and that "language is inseparable from content" (p. 90).

In addition to providing a useful input that helps to develop students' higher order thinking and language skills, high-quality curricular content develops desirable dispositions in students, guides teaching and learning, serves as a resource for independent learning, reduces the teacher's occupational overload, and saves her/his time. In short, content lies at the heart of the curriculum, offers advantages for teachers and students alike and constitutes a useful resource for them. Therefore, it is seen as the backbone of any curriculum.

2.2 Current Status of ELT Curricular Content in Egypt

Despite the important role that content plays in achieving the aims of any curriculum, an evaluation of the content of five ELT textbooks, randomly selected from those being taught at Egyptian schools and universities, revealed that the content of these textbooks lacks social utility and relevance to Egyptian students' needs. In addition, it does not include tasks that develop students' higher order thinking skills. More than that, it is socially and culturally biased and presents stereotypical information about the English-speaking country of the author or the publisher while neglecting the Egyptian students' home culture and society. That is, it is based on the assumption that the foreign culture helps students to interact with the native speakers when they go to where these speakers live. Even if we assume that this is true, how many Egyptian students are likely to go to one of the countries where English is spoken as a native language? Of course, a very negligible number of them may do so. Therefore, it is unreasonable to sacrifice the current needs of students and their communities in anticipation of future events which may or may not occur in the future. In addition, this assumption has become impractical and illogical because of the

emergence of many world Englishes which reflect the cultures of their speakers. As Kumaravadivelu (2008) puts it:

The emergence of World Englishes, with their amazing functionality and spread along with the rich body of creative literature in varieties such as Indian English and Nigerian English, proves, if any proof is needed, that culture and language are not irrevocably linked. (p. 22)

Furthermore, English language is no longer linked to the cultural norms of its British or American origins because it has become a global lingua franca language. To put it in other words, this language is used nowadays in a multitude of ways by too many people all over the world. Therefore, it no longer belongs to a particular country and no longer has a specific culture.

Over and above, exposure to foreign culture undermines students' cultural identity and leads to a lack of loyalty to their own country (Mahmood, Asghar and Hussain, 2012). It also causes feelings of alienation from one's own country (Prodromou, 1988). More than that, it leads to cultural conflicts, preference of imported products to locally manufactured products (Ezewu, Olawepo, Anadi and Adeyanju, 2015), and to serious psychological problems, including low self-esteem, frustration, and schizophrenia (Alptekin, 1993).

The inclusion of home culture in ELT curricular content, on the other hand, connects students to their own community, gives them the opportunity to discover the world around them, activates their background knowledge and experiences, and promotes their social inclusion. It also fosters their self-esteem and motivation for learning. More importantly, home culture preserves students' national identity, enhances their citizenship, arms them against the negative effects of globalization, allows them to potentially live their own life independently of others, and empowers them to make their life better. In short, the incorporation of local culture into the EFL curricula connects students to their own real life, not to the fake life that ELT textbook writers and publishers sell it to them. This in turn brings authenticity to the classroom, engages learners in social and environmental problems, and develops their skills to act on these problems.

The foregoing view does not imply that I am completely against teaching and learning the foreign culture, but it can only be taught to postgraduates who are going to study abroad. Right now, the Egyptian education's first and foremost priority is to adequately prepare students for building a 21st century Egypt. This top priority requires curriculum content that focuses on

developing and nurturing twenty-first century skills, including communication, critical thinking, independence, collaboration, and creative thinking. This priority is acknowledged and acted upon by many countries all over the world. Lee and Mak (2014), citing Binkley et al. (2012), put this priority in the following way:

The twenty-first century has witnessed accelerating change in the global economy with a direct impact on the global marketplace. As a result, employers are seeking out new skills among graduates, such as creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving, learning to learn, collaboration and information literacy skills (Binkley et al., 2012). (p. 66)

The Egyptian education's top priority also requires curriculum content that cultivates desirable dispositions in students to help them face the challenges of today's world and to guide their applications of the twenty-first century skills (see section 1.3.8 of chapter one for these dispositions).

To conclude this section, it is the need of the hour that the content of ELT curricula/textbooks in Egypt should depart from imported culture to local culture where students feel that their national identity is appreciated and respected, and from superficial and fragmented pieces of information to worthwhile

and thought-provoking issues that are beneficial for both the learner and the society at the present time. To put it another way, curricular content should shift away from the behavioral model, which emphasizes segmented and complexity-sequenced information, towards the functional model, which emphasizes desirable dispositions and practical skills that trigger and enable students to develop their own lives and communities. In this sense, the multifaceted curricular content should be sequenced in terms of utility for the students and the society at the present time. This can be done by engaging students in domestic rather than foreign issues, and in tasks that need to be accomplished outside of school at the present time rather than tasks that may be needed in the future. Indirect support for these criteria of content organization came from Gagne's studies (Gange, 1968, cited in McNeil, 2014, p. 298) in which he found—after several investigations of the effects of scrambled versus hierarchical orderings of learning tasks—that hierarchical ordering is not always the best criterion for organizing teaching and learning materials. All in all, the multifaceted curriculum framework holds that EFL curricular content must be selected on the basis of what is important to students and their local communities at the present time to enable students to live in their real world rather than the fake world created by foreign authors and

publishers, and to become participants in developing their own communities rather than spectators of community events.

2.3 Definition of Multifaceted Curricular Content

The multifaceted curricular content refers to multidimensional authentic content that aims at developing the twenty-first century skills and dispositions in union with major language skills. This content is multidimensional in the sense that it encompasses various types of oral and written texts, including mail messages, newspaper articles, radio reports, internet advertisements, etc. It also encompasses multiple pedagogical tasks, including offline and online, indoor and outdoor, and left and right brain tasks that students perform individually and/or collaboratively. It is authentic in the sense that it reflects the situations and the problems that students face outside the classroom.

It is worth reemphasizing that the multifaceted curricular content refers to the multidimensional texts and tasks that reflect the world outside the classroom, not the world of the native speakers of the English language as preferred by some authors and textbook publishers. This is because the foreign culture based

content alienates students from their own community, neglects their background experiences, crushes their national identity, and isolates schools from real life.

2.4 Characteristic Features of Multifaceted Curricular Content

This section identifies the characteristic features of the curricular content that help to achieve the aims of the multifaceted curriculum framework in accordance with its theoretical principles. These features are identified as the following:

- It aligns with the aims of the curriculum.
- It reflects the needs of the students.
- It is linked to community needs.
- It is closely connected to life beyond the classroom walls.
- It integrates language skills in a natural way.
- It integrates twenty-first century skills into language skills and achieves an acceptable balance between the two.
- It reflects the dispositions needed for survival in the twenty-first century.
- It includes a variety of activities that engage both sides of the brain.
- It fuels critical and creative thinking.

- It includes community-based learning activities that have genuine value for students and their community.
- It involves online and offline learning tasks.
- It involves new and traditional literacy tasks and achieves an acceptable balance between the two.
- It is free from all types of bias (e.g., gender, race, etc.) and stigma.
- It includes contemporary pieces of local ecoliterary works (e.g., poems, stories, or essays) for analysis and evaluation.
- It includes a variety of local authentic texts such as newspaper articles, radio/television reports, internet advertisements and the like.
- It involves multimodal authentic texts in which meaning is conveyed through combinations of two or more modes.
- It involves ill-defined complex tasks that echo the complexity of the real-world.
- It involves open-ended local issues that prompt group discussions.
- It is challenging, but not too complicated.
- It focuses on the here at the present time.
- It includes independent and collaborative tasks.
- It includes search tools for staying up to date with knowledge related to specific topics.

- It can be deeply covered within the allotted time.
- It includes self-assessment tasks which require the students to reflect on their learning.

As indicated, the multifaceted curricular content deals with authentic materials drawn from the surrounding community to help students to make deeper and fuller sense of events and issues in their own environment and to participate in activities that make their local community a better place. Moreover, the twenty-first century skills have a significant place in this content.

2.5 Assessment of Multifaceted Curricular Content

The assessment of the multifaceted curricular content is essential to ensure that the selected/created content is in compliance with the aims of the multifaceted curriculum framework and the theoretical principles upon which this framework is based. This assessment runs through three stages that can be carried out in a variety of ways. At the first stage, curriculum developers assess the content before its use in classrooms to ensure that this content is aligned with the aims and the theoretical principles of the multifaceted framework. This pre-use assessment allows

curriculum developers to decide whether to retain tasks as they stand or to modify them, and whether some tasks should be added or removed to achieve the aims of the curriculum. Specifically, assessment at this stage should be conducted in terms of the following criteria:

- relevance of each learning task to the aims of the curriculum,
- authenticity of the purpose of each task,
- authenticity of the task itself,
- consistency of each task with the needs of the students for whom the curriculum is intended,
- appropriateness of each task to the needs of the community,
- consistency of each task with the values of the society,
- wholeness of language required for each task,
- inclusion of traditional and new literacy (i.e., offline and online) tasks,
- inclusion of left and right brain (i.e., critical and creative thinking) tasks,
- inclusion of multimodal tasks,
- integration of oral and written language across tasks,
- inclusion of independent and collaborative tasks,
- infusion of twenty-first century skills across tasks, and
- balance between receptive and productive tasks.

Each of the previously-mentioned criteria can be converted into a detailed scoring rubric to determine level of task development. See, for example, Duke, Purcell-Gates, Hall and Tower's (2007) scoring rubric for judging the authenticity of task purpose (Table 2 below).

Table 2: A rubric for assessing authenticity of task purpose (adapted from Duke et al., 2007, p. 347)

Level	Description
Level 1 (3 points)	The reading, writing, or listening-to-task purpose exists in the lives of people outside the classroom.
Level 2 (2 points)	The reading, writing, or listening-to-task purpose exists in the lives of people outside the classroom, but it differs in that for reading and listening the impetus is less personal and for writing the audience is less exciting.
Level 3 (1 point)	The reading, writing, or listening-to-task purpose does not exist in the lives of people beyond school walls.

The pre-use assessment can also be done by using checklists. In the literature, there are many checklists that help curriculum developers in the assessment process at this stage (e.g., Cunningsworth, 1984; Sheldon, 1988; Skierso, 1991), but these checklists cannot be applied to any curricular content anywhere for any learners since every curriculum is unique in its aims and its theoretical foundations. Therefore, in accordance with the

aims of the multifaceted curriculum framework and the principles upon which it is based, the author developed a specific checklist for the pre-use assessment of the multifaceted curricular content. This checklist consists of twenty-three Likert scale questions (see Table 3). The curriculum developer answers these questions on a 3-point scale, where one corresponds to ‘No,’ two corresponds to ‘Partly,’ and three corresponds to ‘Yes’. If the number of Yes responses is more than 85%, this indicates that the content is outstanding. If it is between 85-65%, this indicates that the content is average and needs improvement. If it is below 65%, this indicates that the content is below average and needs other developers to continue its development.

Table 3: A checklist for assessing multifaceted curricular content prior to its pilotation

No	Questions	1	2	3
1	Is each learning task aligned with the aims of the curriculum?			
2	Is the purpose of each learning task authentic?			
3	Is each task applicable in life outside the school walls?			
4	Does each task meet students’ needs?			
5	Does each task respond to the needs of the local community?			
6	Is higher-order thinking central to each task?			
7	Does the content integrate language skills in a natural way?			

Table 3 (continued)

No	Questions	1	2	3
8	Does the content integrate twenty-first century skills into learning tasks?			
9	Does the content involve activities that extend learning beyond the classroom?			
10	Does the content involve contemporary works of literature that address local environmental issues (e.g., short stories, poems, etc.)?			
11	Does the content involve both new and traditional literacy tasks?			
12	Is there a balance between receptive and productive tasks?			
13	Does the content address important social and environmental problems?			
14	Does the content include independent and collaborative tasks?			
15	Does the content cater for analytic and global thinking styles?			
16	Does the content involve a variety of text types?			
17	Does the content involve information in a variety of forms, including graphics, images, audios and videos?			
18	Does the content include online and offline tasks?			
19	Is the content free from all types of bias (e.g., gender, race, etc.)?			
20	Does the content reflect the values of the society?			
21	Does the content reflect students' home culture?			
22	Does the content strike the right balance between breadth and depth?			
23	Does the content deal with language as a whole?			

After the pre-use assessment of curricular content, it should be piloted, prior to its wide-scale implementation, on a sample composed of learners it is intended to serve so as to test its practicality and utility in a real setting. While being piloted, the curricular content should be assessed through observations of students' behavior during doing tasks and participating in learning activities. Below are some central questions that a curriculum developer can ask and answer to guide her or his whilst-use assessment at this stage:

- Do students actively engage in collaborative activities?
- Do they like to undertake independent tasks?
- Do they use multiliteracies and multimodalities to support their learning?
- Do they actively engage in higher order thinking activities?
- Are they interested in on- and offline communication tasks?
- Do they behave morally and responsibly in group tasks and discussions?
- Is each learning task related to their needs?
- Does each task address a real issue important to them and their community?
- Is each task appropriate to their educational level?
- Is each learning task aligned with the aims the curriculum?
- Is each learning task cognitively challenging?

- Does each task elicit higher order thinking?
- Is there an infusion of twenty-first century skills in all learning tasks?

At the third stage, curricular content should be assessed after its pilotation to determine to what extent this content was effective in achieving the aims of the curriculum. This post-use (i.e., post-pilot) assessment, as Tomlinson (2003) believes, provides the data on which reliable decisions about the use, modification, or replacement of the content can be made. It also helps curriculum developers to decide whether or not students learned what they were expected to learn.

Taking the predetermined aims of the multifaceted curriculum framework into consideration, the author developed a checklist of eleven questions for post-pilot assessment of the multifaceted curricular content prior to its wide-scale implementation (see Table 4). These questions help curriculum developers to decide whether or not the content has met the aims of the curriculum. To answer these questions, curriculum developers should make use of various assessment tools, including examinations, questionnaires, and interviews. These tools should be, of course, used with a rigorous control of intervening variables. The

proposed questions can be rated on a Likert scale from 1 to 5 (1 = To a very little extent, 2 = To a little extent, 3 = To some extent, 4 = To a great extent, and 5 = To a very great extent). If the total score is at or above 85%, this indicates that the content was effective. If it is between 85-65%, this indicates that the content was somewhat effective and needs improvement. If it is below 65%, this indicates that the content was not effective in achieving the aims of the curriculum and needs other developers to improve it.

Table 4: A checklist for assessing the multifaceted curricular content after its pilotation

No	Questions	1	2	3	4	5
1	To what extent has the curricular content helped students to become independent?					
2	To what extent has the curricular content helped students to become collaborative?					
3	To what extent has the curricular content developed students' oral communication skill?					
4	To what extent has the curricular content developed students' written communication skill?					

Table 4 (continued)

No	Questions	1	2	3	4	5
5	To what extent has the curricular content enhanced students' critical thinking skills?					
6	To what extent has the curricular content enhanced students' creative thinking skills?					
7	To what extent has the curricular content developed students' use of multiliteracies inside and outside the school walls?					
8	To what extent has the curricular content developed desirable dispositions in students?					
9	To what extent has the curricular content connected students to life beyond the classroom walls?					
10	To what extent has the curricular content engaged students in serving the surrounding community?					
11	To what extent has the curricular content appealed to students?					

To conclude this chapter, it is noteworthy to emphasize that despite its importance, content is not all in all or the end itself. It is just one component of the curriculum that that needs to be taught and learned through authentic and thought-provoking methods and strategies to achieve the aims of the multifaceted curriculum framework.

Part III

Multifaceted Teaching and Learning Methodology

The aims of the multifaceted curriculum framework in general and the development of the twenty-first century skills in particular cannot be achieved without the development of the teaching/learning methods. All improvements that take place in a curriculum will go down the drain if teachers keep on spoon-feeding students with pieces of information needed to pass objective tests. Therefore, teachers need to abandon the spoon-feeding method and to use multiple authentic teaching methods; and students need to quit their passivity and to play an active role in their learning. This is because no one method or strategy alone can achieve the aims of any curriculum. Each skill requires the use of particular methods and strategies that best suit its nature. Moreover, the use of multiple methods and strategies, separately or jointly, for teaching and learning the same skill meets the needs of students with various learning styles and abilities and makes teaching and learning enjoyable and fruitful. In this part of the book, which consists of five chapters, the author dives into some of the methods and

strategies that comply with the aims and the principles of the multifaceted curriculum framework. Specifically, these five chapters present the methods and strategies that can effectively develop the twenty-first century skills in union with major language skills and can adequately prepare students to serve their communities both during and after their formal education whenever and wherever possible.

Chapter Three

Developing Students' Oral and Written Communication Skills Through a Blend of Face-to-Face and Online Small-Group Discussions

3.0 Introduction

Oral and written communication skills are the most needed and used skills in school and workplace. Therefore, communication—in speech and writing—is considered one of the most important skills for the twenty-first century. More specifically, communication in English is important for speakers of other languages because more non-native than native speakers use it on a daily basis in their academic studies and doing their business. The ability to communicate effectively in English as a foreign language is therefore vital to success in school and work. Generally speaking, communication among students in school, if managed appropriately, as Johnson (1995) argues, can play a key role in students' educational achievements because it helps them to understand, express and exchange ideas in a meaningful

way. It can also, as Johnson maintains, "promote students' abilities to work collaboratively" and establish "positive motivation toward school" (p. 114). Moreover, Logan (2007) argues that communication fosters students' higher order thinking skills because it transfers ideas and thoughts among them. In the workplace, many reports reveal that communication (orally and in writing) is an important characteristic of a successful employee because it helps her or him to work well in a group and enables her or him to participate in decision making (e.g., Evers and Rush, 1996; Zorn and Violanti, 1996). In sum, the ability to communicate effectively, particularly in English, can improve every facet of one's life.

It is clear, then, that the need to improve students' oral and written communication skills is imperative for academic and career success. Therefore, the primary aim of teaching and learning English as a foreign language should be the development of these skills. Unfortunately, Egyptian EFL teachers fall short of achieving this aim for several reasons. One of these reasons is that they do not interact with their students; nor do they provide them with authentic opportunities to interact with one another. The author's observations of many English language classes showed that teachers spend most of the time

transmitting fragments of information to students and do not allow them to talk. Even their questions are display or closed ones that elicit the recall of memorized pieces of information and do not allow students to express their personal views. Another reason is that teachers correct all the errors students make and penalize them for these errors although errors are "natural accidents on the way to interpersonal communication" (Kramsch, 1987, p. 23). The fear of penalization, in turn, discourages students to respond to teachers' questions and to express their own points of view.

Still another reason for the Egyptian teachers' failure to develop students' oral communication in particular is that Egyptian supervisors and principles mistakenly view silent or quiet classrooms as effective learning environments although meaningful noise is essential for learning oral communication in a foreign language classroom and such noise should be tolerated as long as it does not disturb others. As a consequence of this mistaken belief, teachers do their best to control students' behavior and keep them silent by using all types of punishment. This tight control leads to students' inability to use English for oral communication because the development of this skill requires an interactive environment

where students express and share their own opinions, and where teachers tolerate mistakes and respect all points of view. Without creating such an environment, it will be impossible for teachers to maintain control over students' behavior or to develop their oral communication skill.

A final reason for the failure of developing the communication skills in Egyptian EFL students is that teachers use computer technology only as a vehicle to convey information to them despite the fact that advances in communication technologies have opened up new avenues for teachers to interact with their students and for students to interact with one another. In most cases in Egypt, educational technology just reinforces old ways of teaching and learning and primarily focuses on the one-way delivery of content with no attention paid to social interaction. This delivery mode does not develop oral or written communication skills in students. It moreover suffocates students' higher order thinking skills because it is the interaction rather than the medium that ultimately improves these skills.

To develop students' skills to communicate effectively, this chapter addresses offline and online small-group discussions, as modes of communication, to prepare students to be effective

communicators. It first introduces the definition of small group discussion. Next, it presents the theoretical bases of this type of discussion and its benefits. It then addresses face-to-face and online modes of discussion and the advantages and disadvantages of each mode. Finally, it ends with a discussion of blending both modes.

3.1 Definition of Small Group Discussion

Broadly speaking, small group discussion is a teaching/learning method in which a small number of students talk or write about something—while the teacher acts as a facilitator—to exchange viewpoints, weigh the pros and cons of each point, and reach a shared perspective or conclusion. As such, it involves not just the expression of one's own ideas but the comprehension of others' ideas. In addition to using it as a method in its own right for addressing any topic of interest to members of the group, small group discussion can be used as a follow-up to what these members have read, listened to, or written. For the differences among discussion, debate, and dialogue, see Moore and Sonsino (2003) and Alonzo (2012).

3.2 Theoretical Bases of Small Group Discussion

Small group discussion, whether off- or online, is based on Dewey's social learning theory and Vygotsky's social development theory. Both these theories agree that cognitive abilities are socially nurtured and developed. Social interaction, as Dewey (1938) argues, is fundamental to cognitive improvement. Likewise, Vygotsky (1981) states, "[A]ll higher mental functions are internalized social relationships" (p. 164). In other words, both these theories agree that effective learning occurs in an environment in which students co-construct knowledge together through interactive methods such as discussion and in which the teacher plays a supportive role.

3.3 General Benefits of Small Group Discussion

In the literature, a number of outstanding benefits for small group discussion, whether off- or online, have been emphasized. The first and foremost benefit of this method is that it plays an important role in developing oral and written communication skills (Bacay, 2004; Dallimore, Hertenstein and Platt, 2008). This is because this method involves learners in receiving comprehensible input, producing comprehensible output, and

negotiating meaning in a non-threatening atmosphere. Moreover, as learners negotiate meaning with one another, they notice the gap between the language they are using and the language used by their discussion partners and modify their language accordingly without the fear of being criticized for their own mistakes. This in turn encourages students to use language for communication and develops their communication skills. In support of this benefit, research studies demonstrated that group discussion improved students' oral proficiency (e.g., Berriche, 2015; Prayoga, 2018; Riyanto, 2015) and writing performance (e.g., Picciano, 2002; Ping and Maniam, 2015; Reznitskaya et al., 2001).

The second benefit of small group discussion is that it plays a key role in promoting high-level comprehension of texts because it incites students to go beyond the given information to restructure meaning and understanding in light of the unique background experiences, prior knowledge, and assumptions they bring to the discussion (Wilkinson, Murphy and Soter, 2003). This in turn can enrich the quality of their thinking about the text under discussion and achieve a richer and deeper understanding of this text. In support of this benefit, many researchers found positive effects of group discussion on readers' comprehension

(e.g., Damanik and Surbakti, 2017; Goldenberg, 1992; Islamia, 2015; Kahn, 2007; Rahmat, 2017; Reninger, 2007; Sari, 2016; Sirumapea, 2017).

The third benefit of small group discussion is that it develops students' higher order thinking skills because it provokes thought and encourages critical and reflective thinking. Moreover, as students discuss issues with one another, they explore these issues from different perspectives and, in doing so, they acquire new ways of thinking from those with different thinking styles. All these, in turn, develop their higher order thinking skills. As Larson and Keiper (2002) put it, "Discussion is thought to be a useful . . . [method] for developing higher order thinking skills; skills that enable students to interpret, analyze, and manipulate information" (para. 4). In support of this benefit, many studies demonstrated that group discussion improved individual reasoning (e.g., Chinn and Anderson, 1998) and critical thinking skills (e.g., Coster and Ledovski, 2005; Garside, 1996; Miller, 2003).

The fourth benefit of small group discussion is that it enables students to participate as effective citizens in a democratic society because it allows them to practice and develop

democratic skills, including identifying alternative points of view, analyzing multiple perspectives, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, judging the strength of an argument, distinguishing factual claims from value judgments, detecting bias, determining the credibility of sources, making decisions, and drawing conclusions. Therefore, many scholars (e.g., Brookfield and Preskill, 1999; Erickson, 1982; Gutmann, 1987) view discussion as a central feature of democratic life. Erickson (1982), for example, believes that group discussion lays the groundwork for democratic participation. Brookfield and Preskill (1999), for another example, believe that "[d]iscussion is an important way for people . . . to develop the sympathies and skills that make participatory democracy possible" (p. 7).

In addition to the previously mentioned benefits of group discussion as a teaching/learning method, the literature offers a range of other benefits. These benefits include promoting long term retention of information (McKeachie, Pintrich, Lin and Smith, 1986), developing social skills and promoting tolerance for diverse views (King, 1993), fostering a sense of community and developing participatory citizens (Heppell and Ramondt, 1998; Parker, 1996), developing positive attitudes towards

school (Almasi, 1996), and enhancing motivation for further learning (Minchin, 2016).

3.4 Modes of Small Group Discussion

There are broadly two modes of small group discussion: (1) traditional face-to-face discussion, and (2) online discussion. The traditional face-to-face discussion occurs among students in a single classroom while online discussion takes place via the internet. The traditional face-to-face discussion always occurs synchronously while online discussion occurs either synchronously or asynchronously. Although there are currently a wide variety of tools that allow for synchronous discussion via the internet, the Egyptian educational institutions are not conducive to this type of discussion for various reasons. These reasons include, but are not limited to, poor ICT infrastructure, slow internet connection, lack of computers in all classrooms, unreliable internet services, power cuts, and lack of internet access points. This chapter, therefore, addresses face-to-face and asynchronous online discussions because the latter is the only type of online discussion which is applicable in the Egyptian context, at least for the time being. This type of online discussion is also viewed as more educational than synchronous

discussion because it gives participants more time to think before responding and allows for more flexibility as to where and when participants can post their contributions (Bailey and Wright, 2005; Black, 2005). These affordances can in turn foster the depth of discussion and promote higher order thinking skills.

3.4.1 Face-to-Face Discussion

3.4.1.1 Benefits of face-to-face discussion

The benefits of traditional face-to-face discussion are many. One of these benefits is that it conveys more information through facial expressions and gestures (i.e., body language) and this in turn enriches the quality of discussions and allows for conveying and understanding emotions (Gioia and Simms, 1986). Another benefit of this mode of discussion is that it does not need infrastructure cost. Still another benefit is that traditional face-to-face discussion builds real relationships and fosters intimacy among students. A final benefit of this mode of discussion is that it protects confidentiality among group members (Weiner, 1995).

3.4.1.2 Limitations and disadvantages of face-to-face discussion

Along with the previously mentioned benefits of traditional face-to-face discussion, many limitations and disadvantages of this mode of discussion are identified in the literature (El-Koumy, 2004b; Green, 1998; Muilenburg and Berge, 2002; Olson and Olson, 2001). These limitations and disadvantages include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Students have few opportunities to participate owing to large class sizes and limited class time.
- Students who have verbal skills may dominate the entire discussion.
- Discussants do not have time for reflection.
- Some students are not inclined to talk in classroom settings and fear to lose face in front of other classmates.
- Partners have to travel to and from educational settings to participate in discussion which is expensive and time-consuming.
- Shy and introverted students tend to avoid face-to-face interactions.
- The physical set up of the Egyptian schools poses a difficulty to group discussions because classrooms do not have seats

that allow for easy grouping.

3.4.2 Online Discussion

3.4.2.1 Benefits of online discussion

Many benefits of online discussion, more precisely asynchronous discussion, are emphasized in the literature. These benefits include developing lifelong learning skills (Jones and Schieman, 1995); overcoming the time and space limitations of traditional face-to-face discussion and expanding interaction beyond the classroom walls at almost anytime and in anywhere, allowing participants to organize their thoughts before posting them (Collison, Elbaum, Haavind and Tinker, 2000); providing a more comfortable and less threatening environment in which each participant expresses her/his opinions without being dominated by other group members or losing face (Hanson-Smith, 2001); allowing learners to post multiple ideas and to comment on group members' ideas which can elicit different points of view about the topic under discussion and lead to deeper learning and greater depth of thought (Guzdial and Turns, 2000); reducing the level of anxiety of language learning, and allowing shy and less vocal learners an equal opportunity to

express their own views without interruption (Wade and Fauske, 2004).

Additional benefits claimed for asynchronous online discussion include enhancing motivation for language learning (Beauvois and Eledge, 1996), maximizing exposure to language and increasing the amount of participation among learners (Warschauer, 1996), affording participants the opportunity to reflect on their own contributions before posting them or making them public (Lynch, 2004), satisfying the net generation's needs and interests (Oblinger and Oblinger, 2005), developing new literacies (Wolsey, 2004), improving collaborative and negotiation skills (Gilbert and Dabbagh, 2005), fostering learners' critical thinking skills (Mauriano, 2006), allowing for coaching and scaffolding by the teacher at critical times (Hmelo-Silver, 2006), saving the time and effort that students waste in travelling to and from educational institutions, and finally, but most importantly, helping to solve the problem of overcrowding in classrooms and means of travel and reducing the need for building extra classrooms.

3.4.2.2 Limitations and disadvantages of online discussion

Along with the previously mentioned benefits of online discussion, more precisely asynchronous discussion, many limitations and disadvantages of this mode of discussion are identified in the literature (Bender, 2003; Cerruti et al., 2017; Hertlein and Stevenson, 2010; Sit, Chung, Chow and Wong, 2005; Twigg, 1997). These limitations and disadvantages include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Students feel overwhelmed when there are large numbers of messages to read and respond to.
- Absence of body language during discussion may cause misunderstanding of messages.
- Students may feel that they are isolated from their instructor and schoolmates and that they communicate largely with a machine rather than human beings.
- Participants' contributions may appear to the reader as fragmented and disjointed because of the temporal separation of postings.
- The internet is open to hackers and virus attacks.
- Excessive use of computers and mobile phones has its harmful effects on human health.

- Higher levels of internet use cause serious psychological disorders in adolescents, including depression and suicidality.
- Frequent exposure to the internet may lead to internet addiction which breaks down families and reduces production in all areas of life in the society.
- Living in the internet world detaches students from the actual world and from living in reality.
- Egypt's internet speed is very slow.
- Not all Egyptian students have access to the internet at home because of the high cost of internet connection.
- The internet frequently drops and disconnects in the Egyptian context.

From the foregoing, it is evident that online discussion with its advantages and disadvantages is not, in and of itself, sufficient for learning a foreign language and that focusing only on this mode of discussion would be faulty and far from being sufficient. In this light, many scholars (e.g., Graham, Allen and Ure, 2003; McCormick, 2016; Osguthorpe and Graham, 2003; Rizopoulos and McCarthy, 2009; Stein and Graham, 2014a) agree that using online discussion does not mean to reject traditional face-to-face discussion but to supplement and enrich it. As Rizopoulos and McCarthy (2009) state:

Threaded Discussions can be enhanced by follow-up face-to-face discussions that take place in the classroom. ...Threaded Discussions can be used to extend face-to-face dialogue and give students additional time to reflect on issues presented. Face-to-face discussions have elements of immediacy, spontaneity, and energy that allow students to interpret their peers' voice (inflection and intonation), as well as facial expressions and body language. Therefore, these two dialogic approaches to learning can be used to complement and support each other. (p. 381)

Elaborating on the previously mentioned insight, the author presents a detailed discussion of blending traditional face-to-face and online discussions in the remainder of this chapter. In this discussion, he first provides the rationale for blended discussion. Next, he addresses the benefits of this mode of discussion and the strategies for blending traditional face-to-face and asynchronous online discussions. Finally, he discusses the factors affecting this new mode of discussion.

3.4.3 Blending Face-to-Face and Online Discussions

3.4.3.1 Rationale for blended discussion

As mentioned before, both traditional face-to-face and asynchronous online discussions have advantages and limitations. Traditional face-to-face discussion has time and

space limitations while asynchronous online discussion is free from such limitations (Murphy and Coleman, 2004). In addition, asynchronous online discussion lacks body language (i.e., facial expressions, gestures, and eye contact) that allows for conveyance of emotions while traditional face-to-face discussion is free from such limitation. The two modes, therefore, provide different affordances for the learning process (Rizopoulos and McCarthy, 2009). Accordingly, they should be viewed as complementary because no one can completely replace the other. In other words, online discussion cannot function as a substitute for traditional face-to-face discussion and vice versa because each of them has its own strengths and limitations. Therefore, the two modes should be blended into each other. Such a blended mode can, in turn, provide a number of benefits that go beyond the potentials of each individual mode alone because it capitalizes on the advantages of both modes and overcomes their limitations. In support of blending both modes of discussion, research showed that students reported positive attitudes towards asynchronous online discussion when it was blended with face-to-face classroom discussion (Tiene, 2000), and that blended discussion increased participation, interaction, and collaboration (Huang, 2013).

3.4.3.2 Benefits of blended discussion

Blended discussion takes advantage of both online and traditional face-to-face discussions. It incorporates the best of both modes by "using the web for what it does best, and using class time for what it does best" (Osguthorpe and Graham, 2003, p. 227). In more detail, blended discussion allows students to learn from one another both inside and outside the classroom (Brown and Duguid, 1996), develops skills in time management and problem solving (Eklund, Kay and Lynch, 2003), allows students to use a wide range of resources (Trasler, 2002), maximizes learning and achieves better student outcomes than either fully face-to-face or fully online discussion (Carman, 2002; Dziuban, Hartman, Juge, Moskal and Sorg, 2006; Singh, 2003), fosters critical thinking skills (Woo and Reeves, 2007), and increases students' participation (Al Fiky, 2011).

Additional benefits claimed for blended discussion include meeting different learning styles and different educational levels (Marsh, 2002), responding to different learning needs and different situations (Graham et al., 2003), fostering positive attitudes toward learning (Kocoglu, Ozek and Kesli, 2011), making learning less boring and more appealing (McCormick,

2016), supporting independent and collaborative learning (Huang, 2013), and meeting the demands of the twenty-first century (Hicks and Turner, 2013).

3.4.3.3 Strategies for blending face-to-face and online discussions

Blending traditional face-to-face and online discussions can be carried out through several strategies. This section addresses only the two strategies that are applicable to blending traditional face-to-face and online discussions in the Egyptian context. These strategies are the following:

- (1) Traditional face-to-face discussion followed by asynchronous online discussion: This strategy takes the form of using face-to-face discussion in the classroom and asynchronous online discussion after school. In the classroom, the teacher announces a discussion topic. S/he then asks students to discuss this topic in groups to take advantage of spontaneity, immediacy, and facial expressions of face-to-face discussion. Beginning the discussion in this way, as Stein and Graham (2014a) declare, "gets the students excited about the discussion and primes them for the key issues that will drive the discussion" (p. 63). During such a face-to-face discussion, the teacher acts as a facilitator. S/he

moves around the classroom to offer new ways to think about the topic under discussion when group members run out of ideas and to restate discussion goals when discussion becomes clouded. S/he also invites loafing students to participate. Due to the limited time available in class, students continue the discussion online after class. Through asynchronous discussion forums and within a due time-limit, they build on the discussion they started in the classroom by expanding on their own ideas and adding reasons and supporting evidence to them. During such an asynchronous discussion, the teacher intervenes to deepen and extend discussion where and when necessary. After the due time, the teacher and the students evaluate the discussion and pose a new topic for next week discussion.

(2) Asynchronous online discussion followed by traditional face-to-face discussion: In this strategy, the students begin the discussion online a week ahead of face-to-face discussion. The teacher posts a topic for the class to discuss in groups within a week. S/he asks each student to analyze the topic under discussion and comment on the postings of others in the group. Students then discuss the topic in groups at their convenience within the due time. During such an online discussion, the teacher intervenes to

deepen and extend discussion where and when necessary. After the due time, students move the discussion to the classroom. The classroom discussion in this way, as Stein and Graham (2014a) state, will be "much richer . . . because students have come to class with ideas and opinions about the topic" (p. 63). During such a face-to-face discussion, the teacher keeps an eye on all groups to make sure that all members in each group engage in the topic under discussion and fairly contribute to the discussion. S/he also provides the appropriate help at the appropriate time to keep discussion going in each group and to prevent students from losing focus. At the end, the teacher and the students evaluate the discussion and pose a new topic for next week discussion.

3.4.3.4 Factors affecting blended discussion

Blended discussion combines the advantages of traditional face-to-face and online discussions. However, it is important to note that simply blending both modes together does not guarantee that students will reap the benefits of both. The success of group discussion in general and blended discussion in particular depends on many factors that promote this success. These factors include, among others, discussion tasks; questions asked by

participants during discussion; wait time after questions; teacher's role before, during, and after discussion; size of discussion group; group composition; establishing and following ground rules for discussion; and discussion assessment. These factors are discussed in turn in the next subsections.

3.4.3.4.1 Discussion tasks

The success of discussion can be determined by the task assigned to group members because it influences the amount of their interaction with one another. It also affects the way group members collaborate and negotiate for meaning (Smith, 2003). Moreover, if tasks are not properly structured or selected, students will not engage in higher-order thinking and the benefits of discussion will not be realized. Therefore, selecting or creating appropriate discussion tasks is one of the critical actions that a teacher should do if optimal outcomes of discussion are meant to occur.

In recognition of the important role that tasks play in promoting discussion, a large body of literature shows the characteristics of a high quality discussion task that promote discussion and meaningful use of language. This literature

indicates that a high quality discussion task has to be of a problematic nature, ill-defined, authentic and relevant to the needs and interests of the students (El-Koumy, 2004b; Lebow and Wager, 1994). This literature also indicates that a high quality task has to be challenging (Meskill, 1999), complex enough for students to recognize the need to work together (Kirschner, Paas and Kirschner, 2009). Moreover, a high quality discussion task allows for a wide range of possible perspectives (Lou, Abrami and d'Apollonia, 2001), requires knowledge that no single individual possesses (O'Donnell, 2006), focuses on meaning rather than form (Bygate, Skehan and Swain, 2001; Nunan, 1989), addresses complex social issues and problems (Brookfield and Preskill, 1999), stimulates and promotes higher order thinking, and requires independent and interdependent thinking and receptive and productive knowledge (Ellis, 2003; Reeves, Herrington and Oliver, 2002).

In support of the role of tasks in promoting discussion, researchers found that: (1) students were most motivated when the discussion tasks had meaning for them (Jin, 2005); (2) bidirectional tasks increased learners negotiation for meaning and facilitated their focus on form without losing the predominant focus on meaning (Pica, Kanagy and Falodun,

1993); (3) discussion improved the quality of oral interaction when tasks are based on students' interests and experiences (González-Humanez and Arias, 2009); and (4) groups working on synthesis tasks engaged in more interactions than did groups working on application tasks (Paulus, 2005). Researchers also found that increasing task complexity positively correlated with the amount of interaction that occurred among students (Robinson, 2001).

3.4.3.4.2 Questions asked by participants during discussion

Questions are a key component of the discussion process. The success of discussion depends to a great extent on the questions asked by participants during discussion. It is through higher cognitive-level questions that higher levels of knowledge construction occur during discussion. Higher cognitive-level questions also play a significant role in stimulating and developing higher-order thinking (Beyer, 1997). When higher cognitive-level questions are asked, the ideas presented in these questions become stimulants to other discussants who are to advance these ideas by making refinements or proposing other new ideas (Gunawardena, Lowe and Anderson, 1998). On the whole, higher cognitive-level questions help initiate, promote, and maintain discussion effectively. As they play this important

role, the literature identifies the characteristics of such higher cognitive-level questions. These characteristics are the following (Cazden, 2001; Dillon, 1994; Walsh and Scattes, 2005):

- They are open-ended.
- They provoke thought and elicit various perspectives.
- They trigger evaluation, analysis, and synthesis of information.
- They require participants to defend, verify, critique, and justify.
- They support topic maintenance.
- They invite participants to explore alternative views.
- They require reasons and evidence to support points of view.
- They require participants to think more deeply about the topic under discussion.
- They prompt participants to see relationships between and among ideas.
- They invite participants to put forward their ideas, generate possible explanations, and elaborate on their ideas.

Table 5 presents Paul's (1995) six types of Socratic questions as instances of the questions that should be asked by the teacher or the students to sustain discussion and to stimulate higher order thinking. For more examples of these six types of Socratic

questions, see Lipman, Sharp and Oscanyon (1980), Paul (1993), Sharp and Splitter (1995), and Fisher (2003).

Table 5: Types of Socratic questions with examples (adapted from Paul, 1995)

Question Types	Examples
1. Questions for clarification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this relate to our discussion (issue, problem)? • Why do you say that? • What do you mean by ...? • Could you give me an example? • Could you put this another way? • Could you explain that further? • How does ... relate to ...?
2. Questions that probe assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are you assuming? • On what basis do you think this way? • What could you assume instead? • You seem to be assuming How would you justify taking this for granted? • How can you verify that assumption? • What would happen if . . . ?
3. Questions that probe reasons and evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you know? • What makes you think so? • Why is . . . happening? • What are your reasons for believing that? • Do you have any evidence to support your view? • Could you explain your reasons for . . . ? • Are those reasons sufficient for believing that?

Table 5 (continued)

Question Types	Examples
4. Questions about viewpoints or perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you mean by saying that? • You seem to be approaching this issue from...perspective. Why have you chosen this perspective? • What is a counterargument for ...?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the strengths and weaknesses of this viewpoint? • What is another way to look at this issue? • What are the similarities and difference between ... and ... ? • Compare ... and ... with regard to
5. Questions that probe implications and consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the consequences of that assumption? • How does ... affect ...? • Why is ... important? • Is there a more logical inference we can make in this situation? • Is there another possible interpretation? • How did you reach that conclusion? • What generalizations can you make?
6. Questions about the question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the point of this question? • What does this question assume? • Would you put this question differently? • How does this question relate to our discussion? • Why is this question important?

The previously-mentioned six types of Socratic questions were expanded to nine types by Paul and Elder (2006). The three additional types are: (1) questions that probe purpose, (2)

questions that probe concepts, and (3) questions that probe inferences and interpretations.

In support of the important role of questions in promoting discussion, researchers studying traditional face-to-face and online discussions found that certain types of questions could improve discussion. Nystrand and Gamoran (1991) and Nystrand (1997) found that authentic initiating questions promoted face-to-face classroom discussions of literature. Furthermore, Walker (2004) found that challenge questions which asked students to defend a point of view "impelled students to develop an argument thread" (p. 181). Besides, Yang, Newby and Bill (2005) found that Socratic questioning helped students demonstrate a higher level of critical thinking skills in asynchronous discussion forums. Moreover, Wang (2005) found that the use of open questions to initiate discussions helped to establish a climate of equal participation for multiple perspectives and promoted sustained discussion when followed by comparison, probe, and synthesis questions. Likewise, Soter et al. (2008) found that the most productive discussions occurred when students were provoked to discuss texts through open-ended authentic questions, and when discussion incorporated a high degree of uptake. They also found that authentic questions

led to longer incidences of student talk and greater elaboration which generated reasoning and high-level thinking. In addition, Zucker, Justice, Piasta and Kaderavek (2010) found that literal questions elicited literal responses and inferential questions effectively promoted students' ability to engage in inferential discourse. Finally, Gillies (2011) found that higher-level questions—that required students to provide reasons, make connections and think metacognitively during small group discussions—promoted thinking, problem-solving and reasoning skills.

3.4.3.4.3 Wait time after questions during discussion

For discussion to succeed, more precisely traditional face-to-face discussion, the discussants should use appropriate wait time after questions. Such appropriate wait time allows group members to think and link the question to the schemata they already possess before having to articulate the answer. Along this line of thought, neuropsychologists affirm that wait-time is required for the central nervous system to complete cognitive tasks and that students require uninterrupted lengths of time to process the information posed in questions before formulating their responses (Stahl, 1994). In support of the role of wait time in promoting discussion, a synthesis of wait time studies by Tobin

and Capie (1980) demonstrated the following benefits of appropriate wait time:

- increasing the length of students responses,
- making unsolicited contributions that are relevant to the discussion,
- increasing the logical consistency of students' explanations,
- decreasing failures to respond,
- increasing the variety of responses,
- using more evidence to support ideas,
- increasing the incidence of speculative responses, and
- expanding participation by all students.

Added to the positive effects of wait time mentioned above, other research studies demonstrated that giving appropriate wait time after asking questions increased the accuracy of responses (Stahl, 1990) and promoted higher-level thinking (Tobin, Tippins and Gallard, 1994). In light of these benefits, discussants need to take wait-time into account after asking any question. If the response does not come in that time, they should rephrase the question.

3.4.3.4.4 Teacher's role before, during, and after discussion

Whether small group discussion is conducted offline or online, the teacher plays a central role in its effectiveness. The benefits of discussion cannot be reaped without this role. At the beginning of the semester, the teacher should prepare students for discussion by dividing them into groups, setting ground rules for discussion with their help, and providing them with training on effective discussion procedures. Before the start of discussion, the teacher should determine the goals of the discussion and tell them to the students, assign a high quality open-ended topic for the discussion, set a time limit for finishing the discussion, and make sure that students will be exposed to multiple perspectives other than their own by specifying off- and online resources about the topic.

During discussion, the teacher should be there to follow the discussion closely and to act as a facilitator. S/he should provide the appropriate help at the appropriate time to keep discussion on topic and students from losing focus. In more detail, s/he should help students to enrich their own ideas by asking for clarification, requesting evidence, and directing the discussion to new angles. S/he should also invite loafing students to participate, steer the discussion toward the learning objectives,

restate the discussion goals when discussion goes off topic, and maintain a positive atmosphere in which students respect one another's points of view. Moreover, the teacher should give value to all students' opinions, provide prompts such as sentence starters for those who run out of ideas, encourage shy students to take part, pay attention to what students say or write, challenge students' reasoning, invite alternative viewpoints, and encourage different interpretations and flexibility of thinking. In addition, s/he should "pay attention to the message of students' utterances rather than to the form in which the utterances are cast," and "treat the correction of linguistic errors as a pragmatic or interactional adjustment, not as a normative form of redress, for example, by restating the incorrect utterance in a correct manner rather than pointing explicitly to the error" (Kramsch, 1987, p. 23).

In closing the discussion session, the teacher lets the class listen to summary reports of reporters from all groups and synthesize these reports to bring the topic to a conclusion. S/he should also push group members to reflect on their own discussion process and to evaluate each other's participations. Finally s/he should assess all groups' outcomes.

In addition to what is mentioned before, there are specific roles for facilitating learning through traditional face-to-face and online discussions. During traditional face-to-face discussion, the teacher can move around the classroom to keep an eye on all groups, listen to their views without explicitly making judgments or correcting mistakes, invite various perspectives, and provide scaffolds when necessary. S/he can also make sure that all members in each group engage in the topic at hand and contribute to the discussion.

The specific role that a teacher can play in online discussion may vary. S/he can provide timely and regular feedback on discussion boards by encouraging loafing students to participate, inviting certain students to clarify or elaborate on their comments and certain others to link their ideas to those of other students in the group. However, the online teacher should be aware that her or his frequent posting does not lead to more student postings, and the more s/he posts, the shorter the length of the discussion will be (Mazzolini and Maddison, 2003).

In support of the teacher's role in promoting discussion, several studies found that online discussions without the teacher's mediation resulted in superficial discussions consisting of

unsupported personal opinions (e.g., Angeli, Valanides and Bonk, 2003; Duffy, Dueber and Hawley, 1998).

3.4.3.4.5 Size of discussion group

The size of the group affects students' participation in discussion. In order for discussion to be effective, many educationalists (e.g., Bennett, 1998; Bennett and Cass, 1988; Wiener, 1986) argue that teachers should pay careful attention to the size of the discussion group in light of the nature of the discussion task. They further argue that a group should have at least three and not more than six students to be most effective. Such a small group offers an ample opportunity for all members to fully participate in discussion (Nelson, 1999). It is also manageable for group meetings and takes less time to get organized (Johnson, Johnson, Holubec and Roy, 1984). In addition, it decreases free-riding (Johnson and Johnson, 1994), and allows for greater individual accountability (Pennington, Gillen and Hill, 1999). Furthermore, a small group establishes a greater sense of safety and comfort among group members and promotes their self-esteem (Gungor and Un Acikgoz, 2006), allows for quick acquisition of the social skills needed for sustaining discussion (Hertz-Lazarowitz, Sharan and Steinberg, 1980), and improves language proficiency because it gives more

opportunities to all members to extensively interact with one another (Vaughn et al., 2003). In contrast, in larger groups students are less likely to recognize their personal contribution as essential to the group work (Johnson and Johnson, 1996). In addition, larger groups, as Dansereau (1987) points out, "are more likely to result in the formation of coalitions and passivity on the part of some students" (p. 618). The larger the group, as Strong and Anderson (1990) explain, the smaller the effort exerted by individual members, and the greater the likelihood of social loafing. In support of the effectiveness of small group learning, many research studies showed positive effects of small group learning on students' academic achievement (e.g., Johnson and Johnson, 1999; Kalaian and Kasim, 2014; O'Donnell, 2006; O'Donnell, Dansereau and Hall, 1987).

3.4.3.4.6 Composition of discussion group

For optimal discussion outcomes, the composition of the group is important, too. To make discussions effective and productive, group members should be gathered in a way to have something to offer to one another. This can be done by forming groups from members of different thinking or learning styles (El-Koumy, 2009b). The formation of a discussion group in such a heterogeneous way has the advantages of bringing different

perspectives to the discussion and allowing for a greater diversity of views among group members which, in turn, enrich their discussions and expand their perspectives. As Anderson et al. (2001) put it, "The ability and disposition to take more than one perspective arises from participating in discussions with others who hold different perspectives" (p. 2). Moreover, in a heterogeneous thinking/learning style group, everyone learns from everyone else, and no student is deprived of the opportunity to make contributions and appreciate the contributions of others which, in turn, develop their self-esteem and self-confidence. Thinking/learning style heterogeneity in learning groups also "allows students to wrestle with different interpretations and solutions brought forth by group members" (Lamm et al., 2012, p. 18). This in turn can improve all group members' critical thinking and lead to more thoughtful conclusions and construction of new knowledge. As Raphael, Brock and Wallace (1997) state, "Diverse learners have valuable contributions to make to the thinking and learning of their peers" (p. 192). In contrast, thinking/learning style homogeneity leads to a narrow group focus and groupthink (El-Koumy, 2009b). In support of heterogeneous thinking/learning style grouping, El-Koumy (2009b) found that the heterogeneous learning-style group students demonstrated significantly greater pre-to-posttest

improvement in both their non-preferred reading style and reading comprehension than the homogeneous learning-style group students [$f(1, 59)=60.33, p < 0.001$; $f(1, 59)= 43.18, p < 0.001$, respectively].

In essence, due to the disadvantages of heterogeneous ability grouping mentioned in the literature (for these disadvantages, see Barr, 1995; Kulik and Kulik, 1982; and Lindle, 1994), the multifaceted curriculum framework calls for heterogeneous thinking/learning style grouping as an alternative to provide opportunities for multiple perspectives to be brought into discussion and to promote participation among group members. Only when the participants have thinking/learning styles that are complementary, can they make discussion effective and fruitful.

3.4.3.4.7 Establishing and following ground rules for discussion

It is helpful to have ground rules for small group discussions at the beginning of the academic year (Schaible and Rhodes, 1990). These rules set the stage for effective and fruitful discussions. By following these rules, "students' discussions will flow more smoothly and respectfully, and all students will be more likely to feel engaged and involved in the process" (Strang, 2014, para.

5). These rules will be more effective if they are created with students (Soter, Wilkinson and Reninger, 2005). The importance of constructing ground rules for conducting group discussion in collaboration with students is expressed by the Welsh Assembly Government (2010) as follows:

[T]eachers have found great success in establishing basic rules for group work through class discussion; the learners themselves are central to devising a common list of values and rules for participation, and these are drawn up for all to see. As all learners have ownership of these values (having agreed themselves that they are vital), then they are more likely to enforce them. (p. 9)

The Welsh Assembly Government (2010) maintains that the class could be given a prompt list of points such as the one below to create rules from it.

- taking turns,
- listening to others,
- interrupting,
- looking at the person speaking,
- asking for reasons,
- how to agree with someone,
- how to disagree with someone,
- ensuring everyone is treated fairly, and
- coming to a conclusion/decision.

The previously-mentioned prompt list could lead to the following set of rules for discussion (adapted from Welsh Assembly Government, 2010):

- We must talk one at a time.
- If someone is talking, everyone else must listen and look at her/him.
- We must respect one another's opinions.
- We must respond to the idea and not the person.
- We must stick to the topic under discussion.
- We must look at all sides of the topic.
- We must support opinions with reasons, evidence, and examples.
- We must encourage everyone to talk.
- We must try to come to an agreement in the end.

3.4.3.4.8 Discussion assessment

Assessment is an important factor that promotes the effectiveness of group discussion because it prompts students' participation. As Swan, Schenker, Arnold and Kuo (2007) assert, "To encourage online [or face-to-face] discussion one must grade it, and discussion grades must count for a significant portion of final course grades" (pp. 47-48). Assessment also offers an opportunity to provide students with formative

feedback that can improve the quality and quantity of their discussion (Baron and Keller, 2003). In addition, without assessment, some students may get off topic and some may not participate at all (Fung, 2004). The absence of assessment also negatively influences the quality of the posted messages (Gilbert and Dabbagh, 2005). Therefore, assessment of both individuals' participations and the whole group outcome is essential for maximizing students' benefits from discussion and motivating them to focus on individual and group work. This is because assessment of individual participations alone may lead students to ignore contributions to the group work such as interacting with a variety of participants, building on the ideas of others, and providing insightful comments or questions that further the discussion. And assessment of group outcome alone may lead some students to loaf on others and do nothing. There are also specific strategies that can be used in assessing traditional face-to-face and online discussions. These strategies are explained below.

(1) Assessment of traditional face-to-face discussion: During this mode of discussion, the teacher can move among groups to observe group and individual contributions. In doing so, s/he can make a record of her/his observations and audio- or video-tape discussions to be analyzed at a later time (El-

Koumy, 2004b). In addition, students can be asked to evaluate each other's contributions with the help of discussion rubrics (e.g., Pelz, 2004).

- (2) Assessment of asynchronous online discussion: During this type of online discussion, the instructor has the opportunity to assess both individual and group participations in a seamless way. Such online discussion can be also archived for assessment at a later time by the teacher and the students with the help of discussion rubrics (e.g., Grice, 1989; Nandi, Chang and Balbo, 2009) or self-rating scales (e.g., Driver, 2002). The archiving of this type of online discussion also enables teachers and students to perform a thorough evaluation and analysis of content with the help of content analysis tools. For examples of these tools, see Gunawardena, Lowe and Anderson (1998) and Fahy (2003).

In support of the role of assessment in promoting the effectiveness of offline and online discussion, many researchers (e.g., Bures, Abrami and Amundsen, 2000; Hawisher and Pemberton, 1997; Jiang and Ting, 2000; Swan et al., 2000; Swan, Schenker, Arnold and Kuo, 2007) found that the success of group discussion depended on the assessment of the quantity and quality of the group member's contributions, either by the

teacher or the student(s) with the help of assessment rubrics. Bures et al. (2000), for example, found that students who were concerned about their performance relative to that of others sent fewer messages when online activities were not assessed. Swan et al. (2007), for another example, found that students who were given quality assessment criteria for discussion responded significantly more often and at greater length to their classmates and read significantly more of their classmates' postings. They further found that discussions in the criteria classes evidenced more posts, more threads, and a greater depth than did discussions in the classes given no assessment criteria.

In concluding this subsection, the multifaceted curriculum framework suggests that participation in both face-to-face and online asynchronous discussions should count for ten percent of the total grade of any course (five percent for each) and that each student should be required to take part in at least one online discussion forum—with an average of ten high-quality postings per week—before or after traditional face-to-face discussion. This requirement will urge students to participate efficiently and continually in online discussion.

Chapter Four

Developing Students' Critical Thinking in Union with Language Skills Through Multiple Teaching and Learning Methods

4.0 Introduction

Educationalists all over the world agree that the development of critical thinking should be an important aim of education. As Bailin and Siegel (2003) point out, "Critical thinking is often regarded as a fundamental aim and an overriding ideal of education" (p. 188). However, the Egyptian educational institutions fail to achieve this aim. The most obvious manifestation of this failure is that Egyptian students believe that the information they receive is indisputably true and take this information for granted without making sure of its soundness and its foundations. Another manifestation is that they read textbooks with a blind faith that these books present absolute facts and memorize their contents even with misprints. A last but not the least manifestation is that Egyptian students

blindly believe in everything they read or watch on the internet or any other media (e.g., television, newspapers, and magazines).

The failure of developing critical thinking skills in Egyptian students is attributable to a multitude of reasons. The foremost of these reasons is that Egyptian teachers use a teaching method that does not allow students to think critically or to bring alternative points of view to the classroom. Another reason is the teachers' misconceptions about the nature of language and testing. They think of English language as a fixed set of grammar rules and of themselves as deliverers of these rules despite the fact that English native speakers do not speak grammatically correct English and that is the case with speakers of any language. They also think of objective questions (e.g., multiple choice, true/false, matching, fill-in-the-blank) as the most recent type of questions despite the fact that these questions originated from the behavioristic theory (i.e., the oldest theory of learning). Such misconceptions influence what they do in the classroom and lead them to focus on bits and pieces of information, rather than on critical thinking. A last but not the least reason is the superficiality of curricular content at

all education levels and the lack of learning activities that stimulate critical thinking.

Now more than ever, it is imperative that students should become critical consumers of the information they receive aurally and visually because of the flood of biased and fake information transmitted by today's multimedia from all directions. Nevertheless, Egyptian teachers leave students to swim by themselves in this flood without providing them with swimming suits and bags (i.e., without equipping them with critical thinking skills and dispositions); and as a result, the waves of this flood carry them wherever they go. Any observer can easily notice that Egyptian students are actually manipulated by the false information bombarded by today's multimedia. Therefore, it is a must for Egyptian teachers to develop students' critical thinking skills and dispositions. In response to this necessity, this chapter guides English language teachers to achieve this worthwhile aim.

4.1 Definition of Critical Thinking

Definitions of critical thinking vary in focus and scope because these definitions—with the exception of a few ones—emerge from two different academic disciplines, i.e., philosophy and

psychology (Lewis and Smith, 1993). The philosophy-based definitions focus on the quality of critical thinking as a product, while the psychology-based definitions emphasize the cognitive processes and applications of this type of thinking (Fábián, 2015; Reed, 1998). In addition, philosophers focus on critical thinking dispositions, while psychologists focus on its skills such as analysis, inference and evaluation (Atabaki, Keshtiaray, and Yarmohammadian, 2015). Moreover, philosophers view judgment criteria as an essential component of critical thinking, whereas psychologists view such criteria as "outside the definition of critical thinking itself, since they are not behaviours or skills" (Walt and Doyle, 2012, p. 3). The following are some examples of the philosophy-based definitions:

- "skillful, responsible thinking that facilitates good judgment because it (a) relies upon criteria, (b) is self-correcting, and (c) is sensitive to context" (Lipman, 1988, p. 3);
- "a unique kind of purposeful thinking in which the thinker systematically and habitually imposes criteria and intellectual standards on the thinking, taking charge of the construction of thinking, guiding the construction of the thinking according to the standards, [and] assessing the effectiveness of the thinking according to the purpose, the criteria, and the standards" (Paul, 1993, p. 21);

- "judging the quality of something—information, assertions, events, or other phenomena—against some criteria" (Beyer, 1995, p. 8).

On the other hand, the following are some examples of the definitions of critical thinking that emerged from cognitive psychology:

- "the mental processes, strategies, and representations people use to solve problems, make decisions, and learn new concepts" (Sternberg, 1986, p. 3);
- "the individual's ability to do some or all of the following: identify central issues and assumptions in an argument, recognize important relationships, make correct inferences from data, deduce conclusions from information or data, interpret whether conclusions are warranted on the basis of the data given, and evaluate evidence or authority" (Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991, p. 136);
- "the process of unearthing, and then researching, the assumptions one is operating under, primarily by taking different perspectives on familiar, taken-for-granted beliefs and behaviors" (Brookfield, 2005, p. viii).

While some critical thinking theorists continue to base their definitions of critical thinking on philosophy or psychology,

others (e.g., Davies, 2013; Ennis, 1989; McPeck, 1981; Moore, 2011; Paul and Elder, 2003a; Walker, 2003) have noted the importance of drawing on both disciplines to develop a comprehensive definition of this term. The latter group views critical thinking as a composite of both skills and dispositions. In this sense, McPeck (1981) defines critical thinking as "skills and dispositions to appropriately use reflective skepticism" (p. 7). Similarly, the Delphi Report—an outcome of deliberations of a panel of 46 experts representing several academic disciplines throughout the United States and Canada under the direction of Facione (1990)—defines critical thinking as a form of higher-order thinking which requires cognitive skills and affective dispositions. The Delphi Report maintains that educating good critical thinkers requires "furthering students in the development of their CT cognitive skills and affective dispositions" (Facione, 1990, p. 14). Likewise, Mertes (1991) defines critical thinking as a process of interpreting or assessing information and experiences with a set of skills and dispositions.

4.2 Components of Critical Thinking

In line with the comprehensive vision of critical thinking, many scholars (e.g., Ennis, 1996b, 2011; Facione, 2011; Lai, 2011;

Nieto and Saiz, 2011) agree that both skills and dispositions are essential for the development of critical thinking because they support each other. Nieto and Saiz (2011), for example, put it in the following way:

Skills are not sufficient to enable a person to think critically; if that person does not have the disposition or motivation to carry them out, there will be no critical thinking. Likewise, having the disposition is not sufficient either; if a person is disposed or motivated to think critically but does not know how to, there will be no critical thinking. (p. 203)

In support of the close relationship that exists between critical thinking skills and dispositions, Giancarlo and Facione (1994) found a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.41$) between the scores in the Californian Critical Thinking Skills Test and those of the California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory with a sample of 193 secondary school students. Profetto-McGrath (2003) also found that there was a significant relationship between students' overall critical thinking skills and critical thinking dispositions of nursing students. Moreover, Ya-Ting and Chou (2008) found a positive relationship between critical thinking skills and dispositions of university students in Taiwan. These two components are presented in detail in the next two subsections.

4.2.1 Critical thinking skills

Critical thinking encompasses a wide variety of cognitive skills. In this regard, Beyer (1987) identifies ten discrete skills as necessary for effective critical thinking. These skills are: (1) distinguishing between facts and claims, (2) identifying ambiguous claims or arguments, (3) determining the actual accuracy of a statement, (4) distinguishing relevant from irrelevant information, (5) determining the credibility of a source, (6) distinguishing between warranted and unwarranted claims, (7) detecting bias, (8) recognizing logical inconsistencies or fallacies in a line of reasoning, (9) identifying unstated assumptions, and (10) determining the strength of an argument or a claim. In the same vein, Ennis (1987) opines that the ability to think critically involves mastering a number of specific skills. These skills, as he outlines, are judging whether:

1. an argument depends on deceptivity,
2. a line of reasoning is vague,
3. a statement follows from evidence,
4. a statement is indefinite,
5. statements contradict one another,
6. a particular statement is specific enough,
7. a statement is an application of a particular principle,

8. a conclusion follows logically,
9. a statement of observation is reliable,
10. an inductive conclusion is justified,
11. a problem has been identified,
12. something is an assumption,
13. a definition is acceptable,
14. a supposedly authoritative statement is acceptable,
15. a generalization is warranted,
16. a hypothesis is justified,
17. a theory is reasonable, and
18. a reason is relevant.

Moreover, the American Philosophical Association's Delphi Report, as summarized by Facione (1990), identifies six broad skills comprising critical thinking and a number of subskills involved in each of these skills. These broad skills and the subskills involved in them are mentioned below:

- (1) Interpretation: The skill to comprehend and express the meaning or the significance of experiences, situations, data, events, etc. It includes the subskills of categorizing, decoding significance, and clarifying meaning.
- (2) Analysis: The skill to identify relationships among statements, questions, concepts, descriptions, or other forms

of representation. It includes the subskills of examining ideas and analyzing arguments.

- (3) Evaluation: The skill to assess the credibility of various forms of representation (e.g., statements, data, opinions, concepts, questions) and the logical interrelationships in these forms. It includes the subskills of evaluating claims, arguments, and information sources.
- (4) Inference: The skill to identify the elements needed to draw reasonable conclusions from various forms of representation to form hypotheses. It includes the subskills of querying evidence, conjecturing alternatives, and drawing conclusions.
- (5) Explanation: The skill to present one's reasoning in a logical and coherent way to justify that reasoning. It includes the subskills of stating results, justifying procedures, and presenting arguments.
- (6) Self-Regulation: The skill to monitor one's own thinking and correct flaws in logic. It includes the subskills of self-examination and self-correction of one's logical flaws.

Furthermore, Paul and Nosich (1993) identify seventeen skills as the core of critical thinking. These skills are: (1) clarifying issues, conclusions, and beliefs; (2) analyzing arguments,

interpretations, beliefs, and theories; (3) evaluating actions and policies; (4) assessing solutions; (5) comparing analogous situations; (6) reasoning dialogically; (7) developing criteria for evaluation; (8) evaluating the credibility of sources of information; (9) analyzing the meanings of words and phrases; (10) refining generalizations; (11) exploring the implications of beliefs, arguments, and theories; (12) questioning deeply; (13) reasoning dialectically; (14) speaking critically; (15) listening critically; (16) reading critically; and (17) writing critically.

In addition, Cottrell (2005) believes that in order to display critical thinking, students need to develop these skills: (1) breaking information down into its component elements, (2) creating an argument through logical steps, (3) judging the worth and credibility of accounts, (4) recognizing the techniques used to make certain positions more appealing than others such as false logic and persuasive devices, (5) drawing conclusions based on good evidence and sensible assumptions, (6) evaluating evidence for alternative points of view, (7) weighing up opposing arguments and evidence, (8) seeing behind surfaces and identifying false or unfair assumptions, and (9) presenting a point of view in a well-reasoned way that convinces others.

Over and above, Ennis (2011) lists twelve critical thinking skills in these five areas: (1) basic clarification, (2) bases for a decision, (3) inference, (4) advanced clarification, and (5) supposition and integration. The first area includes identifying or formulating questions and criteria for judging possible answers, analyzing arguments, and asking and answering clarification and challenge questions. The second area includes judging the credibility of sources and assessing observation reports. The third area includes deducing and judging deductions, inducing and judging inductions, and making and judging value judgments. The fourth area includes defining terms and judging definitions, and attributing unstated assumptions. The final area includes reasoning from premises, assumptions, positions, and other propositions; and integrating dispositions and other abilities in making and defending a decision. Ennis further adds three auxiliary skills which he considers as not constitutive of critical thinking, but very helpful. These skills are: (1) proceeding in a systematic manner appropriate to the situation; (2) being sensitive to the feelings, level of knowledge, and degree of sophistication of others; and (3) employing appropriate rhetorical strategies in discussion such as reacting to fallacy labels in an appropriate manner.

It is clear then that the previously-mentioned taxonomies of the critical thinking skills are domain general and reflect a considerable overlap. Therefore, curriculum developers should select from these taxonomies the skills that are applicable to the subject area they are concerned with and those that are appropriate to the grade level of students.

4.2.2 Critical thinking dispositions

Many critical thinking theorists (e.g., Facione, 1990; Facione and Facione, 1992; Facione, Facione and Sanchez, 1994; Halpern, 1999; Paul and Nosich, 1991; Perkins, Jay and Tishman, 1993) agree that dispositions are essential for critical thinking because they encourage students to build and use critical thinking skills. As Norris and Ennis (1989) point out, "A person with an ability to think critically under certain conditions will do it, only if so disposed" (cited in Ramasamy, 2011, p. 2). Similarly, Paul and Nosich (1993) assert that without dispositions, engagement in critical thinking will not occur. Likewise, Halpern (1999) writes, "Critical thinking is more than the successful use of the right skill in an appropriate context. It is also an attitude or disposition to recognize when a skill is needed and the willingness to exert the mental effort needed to apply it" (p. 72). Halpern maintains that any instruction that

involves critical thinking must address dispositions to encourage students to put their critical thinking skills into action. In view of this, a number of scholars have proposed key dispositions that are necessary for critical thinking. These dispositions include inquisitiveness (i.e., curiosity and desire for reasoning), truth-seeking, fair-mindedness (i.e., honesty in presenting one's own and others' position), willingness to face one's own biases and to consider multiple perspectives and opposing viewpoints (Paul, 1990, 1992); open-mindedness (i.e., openness to new ideas, perspectives, and alternative viewpoints), self-confidence (Facione, 1990; Facione and Facione, 1992); care to get it right to the extent possible, respect for other people's viewpoints, concern about the dignity and worth of every person (Ennis, 1996b); willingness to think independently and critically (Paul and Nosich, 1991); tendency to take the total situation into account and to look for alternatives, inclination to withhold judgments when evidence and reasons are sufficient to do so, and willingness to consider changing one's own position (Ennis, 1994; Taube, 1997).

4.3 Benefits of Critical Thinking

The benefits of critical thinking are numerous. The first of these benefits is that it is necessary for making sound judgments of the abundance of information provided by media in today's media-saturated world and for detecting bias and flaw in all media transmissions. As Akbar and Wijaya (2016) write:

Media that we are exposed to, most likely, is prone to provide us with information [that] might be influenced by subjective perspectives, biases and even bogus claims. Hence, one's ability to think critically and make a sound judgment about certain issues is indispensable. (p. 20)

The second benefit of critical thinking is that it is essential for success in education in general and language education in particular. In regard to education in general, Norris (1985) states, "Critical thinking is not just an educational option. Rather it is an indispensable part of education because being able to think critically is a necessary condition for being educated" (p. 40). Astleitner (2002) also points out that educational institutions should develop students' critical thinking skills because these skills correlate so strongly with achievement.

Along the same line of thought, Williams and Stockdale (2003) believe that high-critical thinking students are more likely to succeed academically than low-critical thinking students. Giuliano and Sullivan (2007) go so far to say that without critical thinking skills, students will not be able to meet academic demands and failure will be likely to happen very soon. By the same token, Beyer (2008) asserts that if students are taught how to think critically, they are more likely to perform higher on academic tests.

Specifically, in the area of language education, critical thinking is at the heart of effective language learning and language use. In this respect, several scholars (e.g., Adler, 2003; Cottrell, 2005; Perkins, Lochhead and Bishop, 1987; Wellington, Bathmaker, Hunt, McCulloch and Sikes, 2005) argue that critical thinking helps students to formulate, organize, and communicate their own thoughts orally and in writing. Adler (2003), for example, states that students cannot master language skills unless they are trained to think critically. More specifically, Wellington et al. (2005) contend that critical thinking helps student writers to develop their own academic voice which involves:

- judgement which is critical . . . but not dismissive;

- opinions . . . without being opinionated;
- careful evaluation of published work . . . not serial shooting at random targets;
- assessing fairly the strengths and weaknesses of other people's ideas and writing . . . without prejudice;
- making judgments on the basis of considerable thought and all the available evidence . . . as opposed to assertions without reason. (p. 84)

Moreover, critical thinking occupies a crucial place in effective listening. Students cannot listen effectively if they do not think critically. The effective listener decides as to whether s/he should accept or reject what s/he listens to on the basis of critical thinking. S/he analyzes the aural text; makes inferences; and evaluates the speaker's credibility, evidence, reasoning, and emotional appeals (Brownell, 1986; Goss, 1982). In a complementary vein, several scholars (e.g., Kurland, 1995; Lewis, 1991; Wallace and Wray, 2011) agree that reading effectively requires approaching texts with a critical mind and that effective reading is the process of applying critical thinking to what is read. According to Kurland (1995), for example, an effective reader depends on reason rather than emotion, considers the source of material before deciding how much weight to give to it, detects the motives and biases of the author,

and arrives at objective reasons for agreeing with some authors and disagreeing with others.

In support of the important role of critical thinking in improving learning outcomes in general, many researchers found that the teaching of critical thinking skills in conjunction with subject areas improved students' academic achievement (Ennis, 1991; Roberts and Sondel, 2003; Rush, 2004; Swartz, 2003; Van Tassel-Baska, 1994, 2003; Van Tassel-Baska, Johnson, Hughes and Boyce, 1996). In the area of language education, many researchers also found that the teaching of critical thinking in conjunction with language skills had a significantly positive impact on EFL learners' speaking proficiency (Sanavi and Tarighat, 2014), listening comprehension (Zare and Behjat, 2013), writing performance (Assadi, Davatgar and Jafari, 2013), and reading comprehension (Fahim and Sa'eepour, 2011).

The third benefit of critical thinking is that it enables students to become independent learners and thinkers who are capable of making reliable and responsible decisions that improve their own lives. In this connection, Brookfield (2002) posits that critical thinking lays the foundation for lifelong learning and intellectual development when taught to young children.

Likewise, Bassham, Irwin, Nardone and Wallace (2008) assert that critical thinking enables students to decide the direction of their own lives and to face the challenges of life confidently. They add that critical thinking is also beneficial in building up a far-sighted productive mind that thinks independently. Similarly, Dewey and Bento (2009) assert that greater gains in independent skills are made when students learn how to think critically. In support of this benefit, Nosratinia and Zaker (2013) found a significant positive relationship between EFL learners' critical thinking and autonomy ($r = 0.736$, $p < 0.05$).

The fourth benefit of critical thinking is that it is essential for success in everyday life and work. In this respect, several scholars agree that equipping students with critical thinking skills helps them to live a successful life because these skills enable them to solve the problems they face in everyday life. As Connor-Greene and Greene (2002) put it, "Critical thinking is ... an essential skill for living in the information age" (p. 324). In the same vein, Semali (2004) explains that when students think critically, they can make their own judgments, choices, and decisions which enable them to actively engage in creating their personal and social lives and to solve their own problems more effectively. Along the same line of thought, Facione and Facione

(2007) and Mansilla and Gardner (2008) agree that critical thinking is necessary for the development of personal and social lives.

In addition, many scholars and employers agree that critical thinking is important for workplace decision making and professional success in the twenty-first century. In this connection, Tsui (2000) states, "Graduates who can think critically become more productive and successful alumni and citizens" (p. 435). Likewise, Gallo (2004) holds that critical thinking is needed to prepare persons for constantly changing and technologically advanced jobs. Similarly, Facione (2006) asserts that critical thinking helps students to reinforce the skills needed for employment for the benefit of the society and that the society decays in the absence of these skills because they are vital for solving social problems. Carter, Bishop and Kravits (2007) add that "in a world of accelerating change, intensifying complexity, and increasing interdependence, critical thinking is now a requirement for economic and social survival" (p. 26). In support of the importance of the critical thinking in the workplace, many surveys of employers' perspectives in the business sector showed that critical thinking is increasingly demanded in the twenty-first century. In their report of

employers' perspectives on the basic knowledge and skills of new entrants to the twenty-first century United States' workforce, Casner-Lotto and Barrington (2006), for example, ranked critical thinking as the number one skill for this century. For another example, the American Management Association (2010) found that 73.3 percent of business managers identified critical thinking as a priority for employee development in companies.

The fourth and final benefit of critical thinking is that it is necessary for the success of any democratic system and for surviving in a democratic society. As Kurfiss (1988) puts it, "Critical thinking is an essential capacity of citizens in a healthy democratic society" (p. 8). This is because it comprises a set of skills and dispositions that enable students to participate as effective citizens in the democratic society (Facione, 1990). These skills include identifying central issues and assumptions in an argument, making correct inferences from data, recognizing important relationships, weighing competing perspectives, drawing conclusions, deciding whether conclusions are warranted on the basis of the given information or data, and making thoughtful decisions. It also involves dispositions such as open-mindedness, fair-mindedness, honesty

in facing personal biases, valuing diverse perspectives, and willingness to reconsider one's own decisions and make appropriate changes. All of these skills and dispositions are essential for surviving in a democratic society. As such, by developing these skills and dispositions in students, educational institutions can strengthen the crucial underpinnings of democracy and enable students to make informed and rational decisions about the complex issues related to the common good. As Bailin and Siegel (2003) state:

To the extent that we value democracy, we must be committed to the fostering of the abilities and dispositions of critical thinking. Democracy can flourish just to the extent that its citizenry is able to reason well regarding political issues and matters of public policy, scrutinize the media, and generally meet the demands of democratic citizenship, many of which require the abilities and dispositions constitutive of critical thinking. (p. 189)

Facione (2006) also underscores the importance of developing critical thinking for a democratic society in his statement, "Critical thinking employed by an informed citizenry is a necessary condition for the success of democratic institutions and for competitive free-market economic enterprise" (p. 19).

From the foregoing, it is evident that the ability to think critically is necessary for students, not only to become successful learners, but also to participate and function effectively in the twenty-first century society. In light of these benefits, advocates of the twenty-first century skills movement (e.g., Kay and Honey, 2006; Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2007a; Silva, 2009) have identified critical thinking as one of the skills necessary for living in this century. Therefore, the development of critical thinking skills and dispositions should be one of the aims of Egyptian education in all disciplines at all levels. Although significant gains in critical thinking may not be obtained at the elementary stage, teachers should plant the seeds of this type of thinking at this stage and water them regularly at the secondary stage and beyond to get them to grow and produce their flowers and fruit.

4.4 Methods of Infusing Critical Thinking into Language Teaching and Learning

Many researchers and practitioners alike (e.g., Cornbleth, 1986; Facione, 1990; McPeck, 1990; Paul, 1993; Paul and Elder, 2003a; Van Gelder, 2005) agree that critical thinking can be taught and learned. They further agree that critical thinking is best taught and learned within subject-matter content areas,

rather than as an addendum or separate subject. Following from this, various methods are offered to develop students' critical thinking skills and dispositions in the context of language teaching and learning. These methods include Socratic circles/seminars (Paul, Binker, Jensen and Kreklau, 1990; Polite and Adams, 1996, 1997; Yang, Newby and Bill, 2005), group discussion (Brookfield, 1987; Ennis, 1987; Greenlaw and DeLoach, 2003; McPeck, 1990), debating (Rashtchi and Sadraeimanesh, 2011; Tous, Tahriri and Haghghi, 2015), critical listening (Floyd and Clements, 2005; Paul et al., 1990; Ruggiero, 2009), critical/analytical reading (Paul et al., 1990; Wallace, 2003; Wheeler, 2009; Xu, 2011), critical/analytical writing (Conyers, 2010; Fairbairn and Winch, 1996; Rosenwasser and Stephen, 2012), oral/written argumentation (Kuhn, 1991; Nejmaoui, 2019; Pei, Zheng, Zhang and Liu, 2017), text-analysis (Camangian, 2013; Duron, Limbach and Waugh, 2006; Paul et al., 1990), critical media analysis (Thoman and Jolls, 2003), dialogue journals (Bhushan, 2014; Khatib, Marefat and Ahmadi, 2012; Reinertsen and Wells, 1993), reading logs (Khonamri and Farzanegan, 2016; Yung, 1995), controversial dialogues (Zainuddin and Moore, 2003), problem-based learning (Celia and Gordon, 2001; Price and Price, 2000; Sims, 2008), service-learning (Bohlander, 2010; Campbell and

Oswald, 2018; Sedlak, Doheny, Panthofer and Anaya, 2003), and thinking maps (Alper and Hyerle, 2006; Hyerle, 2000).

The previously-mentioned methods can develop language skills alongside with critical thinking skills and dispositions. Each of these methods is compatible with one or more language skills. Therefore, the teacher and the students should use these methods depending on the teaching/learning situation and the language skill being taught or learned. These methods can also serve as assessment methods of language performance and critical thinking.

4.5 Assessment of Critical Thinking Skills and Dispositions

The assessment of critical thinking is important for both students and teachers. It helps students to recognize their own strengths and weaknesses in critical thinking skills which can, in turn, improve their critical thinking and academic achievement. It also helps teachers to diagnose students' gaps in this type of thinking which can successively guide them to fill in these gaps (Norris and Ennis, 1989). Therefore, the American Philosophical Association's Delphi report (Facione, 1990) recommends that

"CT [Critical thinking] assessment should occur frequently, and it should be used diagnostically as well as summatively" (p. 17). In view of this, numerous critical thinking scholars have developed domain-general standardized tests for assessing critical thinking skills such as Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal (WGCTA; Watson and Glaser, 1980), Cornell Critical Thinking Test (CCTT, levels Z and X; Ennis and Millman, 1985), and California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST, Form A; Facione, Facione, Blohm, Howard and Giancarlo, 1998). These domain-general standardized tests are constructed in item-format with multiple-choice questions aiming at testing major critical thinking skills, including analysis, inference, interpretation, and detecting fallacies in reasoning. Examples of these multiple-choice questions include asking respondents to choose from a given set of options the assumption underlying a given inference, the conclusion most strongly warranted or supported by evidence, the most logical implication of an author's position, etc.

Although domain-general standardized tests were carefully tested for reliability and validity, they are not effective indicators of critical thinking ability because "test-takers are not free to determine their own questions or apply their own

evaluative criteria" (Keeley and Browne, 1986, cited in Reed, 1998, p. 33). Moreover, questions that require one right answer do not provoke this type of thinking (Van Tassel-Baska, 1992). The domain-general standardized tests also test critical thinking skills outside the context of a specific discipline although these skills differ according to the domain in which they occur (Brookfield, 1987). For example, "Interpreting a graph is a very different sort of enterprise from interpreting a play" (Bailin, Case, Coombs and Daniels, 1999, p. 272). In addition, such tests do not allow for integrating critical thinking skills into subject matter assessment. Due to these drawbacks, many scholars (e.g., Bonk and Smith, 1998; Ennis, 1996a; Ennis and Weir, 1985; Neidringhaus, 2001; Paul, Niewoehner and Elder, 2006; Paul and Nosich, 1991) prefer using domain-specific performance assessment to allow students to fully demonstrate their critical thinking skills in a specific area. They believe that this type of assessment allows the examiner to tease out critical thinking and the examinees to weigh alternative points of view and apply domain-specific critical thinking skills.

In accordance with domain-specific performance assessment, critical thinking skills can be practiced and assessed in the field of language education when students engage in reading,

listening, writing and speaking critically. This is mainly because these language skill performances involve critical thinking. It follows, then, that critical thinking can be taught, learned, and assessed authentically via group discussions, argumentative writing, controversial dialogues, essay writing, and the like. These forms of language performance propel students towards using critical thinking skills and allow for assessing these skills along with language skills. This can be done with the help of assessment rubrics that incorporate both types of skills. As an example of these rubrics, see Greenlaw-DeLoach's rubric for assessing critical thinking in students' natural discussions (Greenlaw and DeLoach, 2003).

In addition to assessing critical thinking skills, assessment of its dispositions is also essential to get a complete picture of students' critical thinking (Ennis, 1987; Facione, Giancarlo, Facione and Gainen, 1995; Halpern, 1998; Paul and Nosich, 1991). As Paul and Nosich (1991), for example, put it, "Without assessing affective traits, only a diminished idea of critical thinking will be addressed" (p. 19). Just like skills, critical thinking dispositions are traditionally assessed via standardized instruments such as California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (CCTDI; Facione, Facione and Giancarlo, 1992).

However, such traditional instruments lack domain specificity and are not contextualized. They also lead to separating dispositions from skills (Diez, 2006). Moreover, they skew the student's choice of disposition items towards what is logically sound whether it reflects her or his own personal dispositions or not which, in turn, makes assessment unreliable. Therefore, some critical thinking scholars (e.g., Elder, Gorzycki and Paul, 2012; Ennis, 1994, 1996b) argue that for accurate assessment to be possible, dispositions need to be contextualized and tied to actual practice within the framework of specific disciplines without pushing students to evidence them. Ennis (1996b), for example, expresses this notion in the following way:

On the face of it, assessment of actual performances (the more life-like the better) seems to be an excellent way to assess critical thinking dispositions. The person being assessed is then focused on the performance, and will presumably do things as he or she is disposed to do them. Thus, dispositions, given the appropriate circumstances, will generally be evidenced (in context) to the extent that the person has the disposition. (pp. 176-177)

In view of domain-specific performance assessment, dispositions should be assessed along with language skills through actual language performances such as debates, controversial dialogues, discussions, and the like. To sum up, the

multifaceted curriculum framework suggests that teachers need to make critical thinking skills and dispositions a part of language teaching, learning, and assessment.

Chapter Five

Developing Students' Creative Thinking in Union with Language Skills Through Multiple Teaching and Learning Methods

5.0 Introduction

The development of students' creative thinking has become a topmost aim of education in the twenty-first century. Despite the fact that human beings are all equipped with an enormous inner potential for this type of thinking, Egyptian schools and universities suppress this potential for various reasons. One of these reasons is that the curricula being taught at Egyptian schools and universities do not fuel idea generation. Another reason is that Egyptian teachers teach in a way that undermines knowledge construction. They just use the spoon-feeding method which teaches nothing but isolated pieces of other people's thoughts. Still another reason is that teachers disregard students' novel thoughts and fresh ideas and frown upon them. They also dislike students' questions and do not welcome them.

More than that, they think only their opinions are right and force them on students. An extra reason is that teachers consider every language error as a sin and punish students overtly or covertly for making mistakes. This in turn makes them feel uneasy and discourage them to voice their own thoughts and to express themselves freely. A final reason is that the current evaluation system focuses on the recall of bits and pieces of information rather than on creative thinking.

It is clear, then, that the current Egyptian education system inhibits the creative potential of students and stifles their creative thinking. Even students who get high marks in schools and universities are unable to solve the problems that arise in today's world. If this system remains unchanged, Egyptians will remain just consumers of what others create. To change this awful status quo, it is imperative that Egyptian students should come away from their education with an innovative capacity and a creative spirit to face the challenges of the twenty-first century and to meet Egypt's expectations in all areas of life. This chapter is an attempt to help teachers to achieve this aim.

5.1 Definition of Creative Thinking

The literature provides many definitions of the term creative thinking. In this regard, Torrance (1974) defines this term as:

a process of becoming sensitive to problems, deficiencies, gaps in knowledge, missing elements, disharmonies, and so on; identifying the difficulty; searching for solutions, making guesses, or formulating hypotheses about the deficiencies; testing and retesting these hypotheses and possibly modifying and retesting them; and finally communicating the results. (p. 8)

In the same vein, Mayer (1992) defines creative thinking as "a cognitive activity that results in one or more novel solutions for a problem" (p. 63). Elsewhere, Mayer (1999) defines it as a process of creating "new and useful products including ideas as well as concrete objects" (p. 450). Along the same line, Kamyliis and Berki (2014) define it as a process of applying imagination to "generating ideas, questions and hypotheses, [and] experimenting with alternatives" (p. 6). Figuratively speaking, it is defined as "thinking outside the square" (Selby, 2015) or "thinking outside the box" (Doyle, 2018).

It is clear, then, that the consensus among the previously mentioned definitions is that creative thinking is a process of

creating something new and beneficial within domains. As far as language use is concerned, creative thinking can be defined as a process of generating novel and useful ideas that are fit for a particular purpose. This process involves expanding ideas, looking at ideas from different perspectives, and putting ideas together to generate a novel thought (Jackson and Poole, 2003).

5.2 Components of Creative Thinking

Creative thinking has two crucial components. These components are: skills and dispositions. The development of students' creative thinking skills does not mean that they will use these skills unless its dispositions are also developed in them. The two components interact dynamically with each other and work in harmony to enable an individual to think creatively (Boden, 1998; Sternberg, 2006). Therefore, they are explored more fully in the next two subsections.

5.2.1 Creative thinking skills

Creative thinking requires cognitive skills, including ideational fluency, i.e., skill to generate a lot of ideas; ideational flexibility, i.e., skill to generate diverse ideas and to look at things from different perspectives; elaboration, i.e., skill to elaborate on a

given idea; originality, i.e., skill to get away from the obvious and commonplace or to break away from habit bound thinking to generate unique and novel ideas; organization, i.e., skill to organize a number of interrelated ideas into something more complex; problem sensitivity, i.e., skill to sense if something is wrong or if something is likely to go wrong and to see deficiencies, inconsistencies, and missing elements (Adair, 2007; Guilford, 1973; Torrance, 1970); highlighting the essence, i.e., skill to identify what is most important and absolutely essential; breaking through boundaries, i.e., skill to think outside prescribed requirements; visualizing things richly and colorfully, i.e., skill to use vivid, exciting imagery and create colorful and exciting images that appeal to all five senses; using fantasy, i.e., skill to imagine and consider things that are not concrete; visualizing the inside, i.e., skill to visualize the internal dynamic workings of things and to describe the inside of things; putting ideas in context, i.e., skill to put parts of experience into a bigger framework and put experiences together in a meaningful way; synthesis, i.e., skill to combine relatively unrelated elements and make new connections between things; getting glimpses of the future, i.e., skill to predict, imagine, and explore things that do not yet exist, dream about possibilities, and view events as open-ended (Torrance and Safter, 1999).

5.2.2 Creative thinking dispositions

The creative thinking dispositions play an important role in developing and using creative thinking skills. Therefore, many scholars have attempted to identify the dispositions that underlie creative thinking. These dispositions include, among others, persistence in the face of difficulty and disappointment, openness to new experiences, willingness to take risks, commitment to overcome obstacles and face challenges (Lubart, Mouchiroud, Tordjman and Zenasni, 2003); curiosity (Amabile, 1983, 1996); fair-mindedness, open-mindedness (Clarke, 2015); courage to explore ideas (Dollinger, Urban and James, 2004); willingness to listen to one's inner voice, persistence in the face of ridicule and discouragement from others, willingness to challenge one's own assumptions and those of others, eagerness to learn from one's own mistakes and to turn negatives into positives (Treffinger, Young, Selby and Shepardson, 2002); self-confidence (Barron and Harrington, 1981); intrinsic motivation (Saavedra and Opfer, 2012); preference for complexity (Runco, 2007); daring to be different, tolerance for ambiguity and complexity (Lucas, Claxton and Spencer, 2013); self-acceptance, willingness to admit one's mistakes (Selby, Shaw and Houtz, 2005); optimism,

willingness to test one's own assumptions (Shallcross, 1981); love of one's field of study (Torrance, 1993, 1995); enjoying challenges, seeing problems as interesting challenges worth tackling (Harris, 2012); and belief in oneself as being creative (Tardif and Sternberg, 1988).

The author concludes this subsection with Dacey's (1989) contention that not every highly creative individual possesses all creative thinking dispositions. However, the more a person possesses from these dispositions, the more likely she or he will be a creative thinker.

5.3 Benefits of Creative Thinking

The foremost benefit of creative thinking is that it helps students to face challenges in today's ever-changing world. Hence, it is regarded by many educationalists and associations as one of the skills necessary for success in the twenty-first century because the complex problems facing individuals and the society in this century necessitate new and creative solutions. In this regard, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2007a, 2007b) identifies it as one of the 'Four Cs' (i.e., critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration and communication) that are essential for living in the twenty-first century. In the same way, Robinson (2006), a

British expert on creativity and innovation, regards it as important in education as literacy. Along the same line, Resnick (2007-08) contends that developing students as creative thinkers enables them to survive in the twenty-first century society. She states, "In today's rapidly changing world, people must continually come up with creative solutions to unexpected problems. Success is based not only on what you know or how much you know, but on your ability to think and act creatively" (p. 18). Likewise, Batey (2011) holds that creative thinking lies at the heart of the essential skill set of the twenty-first century. He goes so far as to consider it as the number one skill for this century because it is the primary mover of economy.

A considerable number of scholars (Carter, Bishop and Kravits, 2007; Galbraith and Jones, 2003; Holden, 2004; Todd and Shinzato, 1999; Torrance and Safter, 1989) have offered other benefits of creative thinking. These benefits are the following:

- It improves students' academic performance.
- It enhances language learning.
- It enriches the acquisition of knowledge and skills.
- It is crucial in many academic domains, including writing and speaking.
- It supports individual autonomy.

- It builds self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-respect.
- It contributes to economic prosperity and to social and individual wellbeing.
- It is the key driver to new products in industry and the life's blood of the continuous improvement of these products.

It is clear, then, that creative thinking helps students to adapt to the rapidly changing world whose complexity is becoming more obvious. Therefore, the ability to think creatively should be considered one of the most important skills Egyptian students should develop at all levels. Without the development of this skill, Egypt will continue to import creative products from other countries in all fields of life. In essence, creative thinking can play a prominent role in building a better society, creating a life worth living, and making the scholars who can bring a 21st century Egypt into being.

5.4 Methods of Infusing Creative Thinking into Language Teaching and Learning

Many creativity scholars and researchers (e.g., Cropley, 1997; Lindström, 2006; Sternberg, 1997; Swartz, 2001; Wheeler, Waite and Bromfield, 2002) agree that creative thinking is achievable by all students, regardless of their academic levels, if

they are effectively taught the skills and dispositions that enable them to think creatively. They further agree that these skills and dispositions should be developed in all subject areas as they are highly specific and do not transfer from one subject area to another (Gardner, 1993). Following from this, a number of methods have been proposed for infusing creative thinking into language teaching and learning. These methods include creative/imaginative writing (Brayfield, 2009; Morley, 2007; Sharples, 1999), writing workshops (Blythe and Sweet, 2008; Leahy, 2010; Monteith and Miles, 1992; Vanderslice, 2000), creative reading (Holden, 2004; Padgett, 1997), brainstorming (Al-khatib, 2012; Brown and Kusiak, 2007; Paulus and Brown, 2003), SCAMPER (Idek, 2016; Ozyaprak, 2015), storytelling orally or in writing (Albert and Kormos, 2011; Heathfield, 2014; Sefertzi, 2000; Tompkins, 1982), mind mapping (Buzan, 2003; Radovic, 2016; Tassoul, 2006), brainwriting (Rodrigues, Eying, Agner, Lima and Reis, 2008; Van Gundy, 1983), project-based learning (Isabekov and Sadyrova, 2018), experiential learning (Ayob, Hussain, Mustafa and Shaarani, 2011; Cacciamani, 2017), free writing (Elbow, 1981, 1998), ill-structured problem solving (Kousoulas and Mega, 2007; Savery and Duffy, 1995; Ulger, 2018), creative listening (Griffin, 2016; Hawxwell, 2017), collaborative learning and group discussion

(Andre, Schumer and Whitaker, 1979; John-Steiner, 2006; Kershaw, Peterson and Bhowmick, 2016).

The previously mentioned methods can develop language skills alongside with creative thinking skills. However, it is worth noting here that these methods are not sufficient by themselves to improve students' creative thinking. In conjunction with the use of these methods, the teacher should use authentic tasks that stimulate students' imagination and challenge them to think creatively. It is also worth emphasizing that the previously mentioned methods should be implemented in a comfortable teaching-learning environment where students feel that their ideas and questions are respected by the teacher. To create such a non-threatening teaching-learning environment, the teacher should give up her/his authority in order to get out of the creative student's way. S/he should also remove the stigma and fear associated with being wrong, treat students' questions and unusual ideas with respect, accept and encourage their divergent thinking, tolerate their language mistakes and intervene only for correcting logical errors or biases that may occur in their thinking. In addition, s/he should avoid criticism, ignoring students' points of view, and imposing too many rules on them. In such a learning environment creative thinking can grow and

flourish. In contrast, Fleith (2000) found that "[i]n a climate in which fear, one right answer, little acceptance for a variety of students products, extreme levels of competition, and many extrinsic rewards are predominant, it is difficult to foster high levels of creativity" (p. 151).

It is worth reemphasizing that to cultivate creative thinking skills and dispositions in Egyptian students, they need, as Howard Gardner (2007) says, an education that features "tolerance, if not active encouragement, of productive mistakes" (p. 20). Therefore, Egyptian teachers need to know that correcting language mistakes discourages students' generation of ideas. They also need to avoid closed or display questions because such questions encourage rote learning and suffocate creative thinking.

5.5 Assessment of Creative Thinking Skills and Dispositions

Assessment is crucial for the development of creative thinking because it helps students to recognize their own talents and enables them to know and understand themselves better. Moreover, it helps teachers to explore unrecognized talents in their students and guides them in planning and conducting

appropriate creative thinking instruction (Balchin, 2007). For these benefits, a variety of methods have been proposed for assessing creative thinking skills and dispositions. These methods are based on creativity research which revealed that "any identification of a thought process as 'creative' must finally depend on the fruit of that process—a product or response" (Balchin, 2007, p. 4). Such a creative thinking product or response is traditionally measured by standardized tests such as Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (1974) and Wallach-Kogan tests (1965). These standardized tests are independent of domains and rely on content generality despite the fact that creativity is partly, if not mainly, domain specific (Baer, 1998; Han and Marvin, 2002; Lubart and Guignard, 2004; Lubart and Sternberg, 1995; Weisberg, 2006). No one can assume, for example, that someone who is creative in architecture is also creative in agriculture. Moreover, standardized tests do not allow for integrating creative thinking assessment into the context of teaching and learning subject-matter domains.

In order to make instruction and assessment of creative thinking a part of the language curriculum, and not an addendum, creative thinking should be practiced and assessed in the context of language teaching and learning through mind mapping, group

discussion, storytelling, story writing, creative problem-solving, creative reading, imaginative/free writing, and the like. These language performances invite students to come up with new ideas which can then be assessed by two or more domain-specific raters in terms of fluency, flexibility, and originality.

Just like skills, creative thinking dispositions are traditionally measured with standardized assessment instruments. These instruments include self-report inventories such as Khatena-Torrance Creative Perception Inventory (Khatena and Torrance, 1976) and Khatena-Morse Multitalent Perception Inventory (Khatena and Morse, 1994). In these instruments students are asked to check the creative traits relative to their own personalities. However, these instruments do not provide a domain-specific view of creative thinking dispositions although dispositions are not exactly the same in all subject areas and thinking dispositions in a specific area do not necessarily extend to other subject areas (Aizikovitsh-Udi and Cheng, 2015). In view of this, several scholars (e.g., Elder et al., 2012; Simonton, 2009; Treffinger et al., 2002) agree that creative thinking dispositions should be assessed in relation to a specific domain and through the observation of students' behavior in content area activities.

To conclude this chapter, the multifaceted curriculum framework suggests that teachers need to infuse the teaching, learning, and assessment of creative thinking skills and dispositions into language teaching, learning, and assessment by using methods that make creative thinking a part of the EFL curriculum and not an addendum.

Chapter Six

Developing Students' Independent and Interdependent Skills in Union with Language Skills Through a Blend of Independent and Collaborative Learning

6.0 Introduction

In the twenty-first century, independent and interdependent skills have become more essential to students than ever before to help them meet the complex and ever-changing demands of this century. The independent skills enable them to think deeply to find solutions to today's complex problems for all their lifetime and to keep up with the up-to-date information bombarded every minute due to rapid advancements of communication technologies. In addition, the interdependent skills enable them to share their own thoughts with others to make them better and to maximize learning and achieve the best possible results. They also help them to tackle different types of tasks and to accomplish difficult and complicated tasks that

cannot be done by an individual alone. Therefore, students need to learn how to collaborate without losing their individuality.

Despite the fact that both independent and interdependent skills are worthy of infusion in teaching and learning all subject areas at all levels, they are completely ignored in all Egyptian schools and universities. Egyptian students at all levels are totally dependent on their teachers and lack the skills for independent action inside and outside the classrooms. They also lack the skills of teamwork in and out of schools. This is due to the fact that Egyptian educational institutions do not offer opportunities for the development of these skills. More than that, Egyptian students view learning as something done to them, not something they can do to and for themselves. They also lack the cognitive and metacognitive strategies that enable them to direct their own learning. In addition, they are enslaved to their own blind beliefs that language is taught, not learnt and that the teacher is the fountain of all language knowledge. More than that, the Egyptian teacher likes to be the sole authority figure in the classroom and the only one who passes information onto students. So, s/he gives them no opportunities to learn independently or collaboratively. This authoritarian environment

cannot prepare students to be independent or collaborative; nor can it prepare them to become lifelong learners.

The complex and challenging demands of the twenty-first century require changing this woeful status quo through developing students' independent and interdependent skills at all education levels. To effectively achieve these aims, Egyptian teachers should shift away from the spoon-feeding method to integrating both independent and collaborative learning without emphasizing one over the other. In an attempt to posit ways in which the teacher can do so, this chapter addresses these two types of learning in detail and ends with offering a multifaceted method for integrating both of them in and out of the classroom.

6.1 Independent Learning

6.1.1 Definition of independent learning

There are a myriad of definitions of independent learning. This term is defined as a process where the learner generates goals, identifies resources, monitors learning, and assesses progress towards goals (Brookfield, 1981); a process in which the learner identifies goals, uses learning strategies to achieve these goals, and monitors her or his own learning (Wang and Peverly, 1986);

"a process, a method and a philosophy of education whereby a learner acquires knowledge by his or her own efforts" (Forster, 1972; as cited in Candy, 1991, p. 13); a process where the learner takes responsibility for her or his own learning (Dickinson, 1995); a process during which the learner develops the dispositions and skills needed to make decisions and take appropriate actions in regard to her or his own learning (Meyer, Haywood, Sachdev and Faraday, 2008); a method or a process where the learner learns by her or his own actions and regulates and assesses her or his own learning (Livingston, 2012); a process in which learning goals and strategies to achieve these goals are decided, managed, and assessed by the learner (Balapumi and Aitken, 2012); a process that the learner goes through by her- or himself (Lakin, 2013); and a process in which the learner sets her or his learning goals, plans how to reach these goals, monitors progress, adapts or changes the plan as needed, and reflects on what has been learned (Johnson, 2017).

From the foregoing, it is clear that there is little confusion about the definition of independent learning in the literature. It is often described as a process, sometimes as a method, and rarely as a philosophy of learning. The many synonyms used for this term

also add to this confusion. These synonyms include autonomous learning, self-directed learning, self-regulated learning, learning to learn, self-learning, student-centered learning, and lifelong learning. Although many scholars and practitioners (e.g., Broad, 2006; Candy, 1991; Gorman, 1998; Kesten, 1987; Livingston, 2012; Meyer et al., 2008; O'Doherty, 2006; Perry, Phillips and Hutchinson, 2006) believe that these terms mean the same thing, a few others (e.g., Benson, 2001; Skiff, 2009) view them as different from one another.

To overcome the confusion about the definition of independent learning, the multifaceted curriculum framework concurs with those who define this term as a process in which the student learns individually at her/his own level and pace toward an academic goal while the teacher acts as a facilitator for such learning. This process is carried out through a series of actions, including identifying one's own learning needs, setting learning objectives, identifying human and material resources for learning, selecting and implementing appropriate learning strategies to achieve objectives, monitoring one's own learning, and assessing the learning process and outcome to improve learning. These actions are carried out with support from the teacher who gradually withdraws her/his support so that

eventually the student can take full responsibility for the application of these actions alone. The multifaceted curriculum framework also agrees with the many scholars who use independent learning interchangeably with self-directed learning, self-regulated learning, and autonomous learning because these terms, as most scholars and practitioners believe, mean the same thing and describe the same process.

To fully understand what independent learning means, see Table 6 which presents the characteristics of dependent versus independent learners.

Table 6: Characteristics of dependent vs. independent learners (Mynard and Sorflaten, 2003, p. 35)

Dependent learners	Independent learners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rely heavily on the teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are self-reliant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cannot make decisions about their learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can make informed decisions about their learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do not know their own strengths and weaknesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are aware of their strengths and weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do not connect classroom learning with the real world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connect classroom learning with the real world
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • think that the teacher is wholly responsible for their learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take responsibility for their own learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do not know the best way to learn something 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • know about different strategies for learning

Table 6 (continued)

Dependent learners	Independent learners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> do not set learning goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> plan their learning and set goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work only when extrinsic motivators such as grades or rewards are offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> are intrinsically motivated by making progress in learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> do not reflect on how well they are learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> often reflect on the learning process and their own progress

6.1.2 Benefits of independent learning

The literature indicates that there are numerous benefits of independent learning. The first of these benefits is that this type of learning develops students' learning potentials and equips them with learning strategies and skills which help them to learn more and better. As Knowles (1975) puts it, "There is convincing evidence that people who take the initiative in learning (proactive learners) learn more things and learn better than do people who sit at the feet of teachers, passively waiting to be taught (reactive learners)" (p. 14). Brandt (1998) echoes this point by stating that students learn better when they are in control and relate what they learn to their own background knowledge. Similarly, Hagen and Weinstein (2000) state that the more students take responsibility for their own learning, the

more they become deeply engaged in learning and the more meaningful learning is likely to occur. They further state that independent learning incites students to exert much effort in their learning because they become aware that success is due to their own efforts, not to the efforts of others.

Independent learning is also associated with the development of students' learning potentials and academic achievement because it builds their sense of self-esteem (Meyer et al., 2008), fosters their self-efficacy and self-confidence (Zimmerman, 1990), enables them to carry on learning out of school and to adjust their own learning strategies according to learning tasks (Chik and Breidbach, 2014; Gill and Halim, 2008), allows advanced and at-risk students to learn at their own pace (Ciel Language Support Network, 2010), fits in with the rising use of computers in learning (Sinitsa, 2000), and satisfies the needs of introverts and shy students and respects their privacy.

More specifically, in the area of language learning, Ellis and Sinclair (1989) affirm that helping students to take more responsibility for their own learning is essential for language development. Likewise, Little (2007) notes that "the development of learner autonomy and the growth of target

language proficiency are mutually supporting and fully integrated with each other" (p. 14). McCarthy (2011) goes so far as to say, "Learning a second [or foreign] language can be a frustrating process if a learner does not develop effective learning strategies to take control of his/her learning process" (p. 103).

In support of the association of independent learning with the development of students' learning potentials and academic performance, there is evidence that academically successful students tend to use more self-regulated learning strategies than their less successful classmates (Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons, 1986) and a relationship exists between self-regulation and high levels of academic performance (Deng, 2007; Kitsantas, Zimmerman and Clearly, 2000; Sawyer, Graham and Harris, 1992; Zimmerman and Kitsantas, 1999). There is also evidence that high achieving students are able to select and consistently apply appropriate strategies according to the task at hand (Zimmerman, 1986). In addition, Deng (2007) found that "students' English proficiency was significantly and positively related to their ... autonomy" (p. 15). Moreover, there is evidence that the teaching of learning strategies improved students' writing proficiency (De La Paz, 2005; Harris, Graham

and Mason, 2006; Torrance, Fidalgo and Garcia, 2007), listening comprehension (Latifi, Tavakoli and Dabaghi, 2014; Nejabati, 2015; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Taghizadeh and Abady, 2016), reading comprehension (Aregu, 2013; Khodabandehlou, Jahandar, Seyedi and Abadi, 2012; Maftoon and Tasnimi, 2014; Morshedian, Hemmati, Sotoudehnama and Soleimani, 2016; Souvignier and Mokhlesgerami, 2006), and speaking proficiency (Mahjoob, 2015).

The second benefit of independent learning is that it nourishes students' intrinsic motivation which, in turn, leads to greater success in language learning. This is because it makes students value themselves as readers, thinkers, and writers rather than simply as seat holders in a classroom (Little, 2007; Ushioda, 2011). In support of this benefit, in his review article on autonomy and motivation, Dickinson (1995) writes:

There is substantial evidence from cognitive motivational studies that learning success and enhanced motivation is conditional on learners taking responsibility for their own learning, being able to control their own learning and perceiving that their learning successes or failures are to be attributed to their own efforts and strategies rather than to factors outside their control. Each of these conditions is a characteristic of learner autonomy as it is described in applied linguistics. (p. 174)

The third benefit of independent learning is that it develops students' higher order thinking skills because thinking is a personal act and cannot be promoted in the absence of independent skills. No one can think for another. As Dewey (1915) puts it, "A thought is not a thought, unless it is one's own" (p. 50). Isaacson and Herrmann (2007) also argue that independent learning allows for control over one's own thoughts and for coming up with new thoughts and ideas. Similarly, Ku (2009) affirms that independent learning enables students to think as unique persons. Therefore, the development of independent skills in students is essential for enabling them to take decisions for themselves and to play an active role in solving the problems they face in everyday life instead of relying on others to do so for them.

The fourth benefit of independent learning is that it is crucial for building a democratic society because it prepares students to be democratic citizens by enabling them take the responsibility for their own decisions and actions without being led in more than one direction. In this respect, Dewey (1916/1966) states that any society that wants to create and maintain a democratic social system must strive to educate responsible, independent citizens. Similarly, Murchland (2000) writes, "Democracy needs citizens

autonomous in their thoughts and independent in their deliberative judgment" (p. 33). Parker (2003) goes so far as to say that in the absence of individuals' genuine independence, democracy does not occur because non-independent individuals can be controlled by forces such as their own impulses and desires, or an influential crowd. He further adds that discussion with independent individuals is more conducive to democracy than discussion with individuals easily influenced by external forces, and individuals in a democratic society must themselves be capable of development if they are to continuously develop a democratic society. In the same vein, Neill (2004) holds that to prepare students to live in a democratic society, they must be engaged in learning and not be treated as passive recipients of information. In exact agreement with Parker, Giroux (2006) states:

Democracy cannot work if citizens are not autonomous, self judging, and independent—qualities that are indispensable for students if they are going to make vital judgments and choices about participating in and shaping decisions that affect everyday life, institutional reform, and governmental policy. (p. 73)

The fifth benefit of independent learning is that it enables students to continue learning throughout their lives to face the challenges of this ever-changing world. In this connection, Holec

(1981) argues that independent learning develops life skills which enable students to act more responsibly in running the affairs of the society in which they live and to meet the demands of this rapidly changing world. Delors et al. (1996) also assert that independent learning is the key to continued individual growth in the twenty-first century. They write:

The concept of learning throughout life thus emerges as one of the keys to the twenty-first century. . . . It meets the challenges posed by a rapidly changing world. . . . The only way of satisfying it is for each individual to learn how to learn. (p. 22)

In the same vein, Littlewood (1999) opines that independent learning is essential for students because they need to "continue learning after the end of their formal education" (p.71). Similarly, Shetzer and Warschauer (2000) contend that independent learning empowers students to create their own social world and prepares them for the responsible adult life. They further contend that "flexible, autonomous lifelong learning is essential to success in the age of information" (p. 4).

It is clear then that students indispensably need independent skills to be able to depend on themselves during their formal schooling and to continue learning after the end of their formal education to be able to face the daily explosion of information in

the twenty-first century. These skills also help them to think and act independently in their own lives and to responsibly manage personal and social development.

6.1.3 Limitations and disadvantages of independent learning

Though independent learning has been widely recommended, it is not a panacea that could solve all educational problems because it has its own limitations and disadvantages. These limitations and disadvantages include, but not limited to, the following (Hammond and Collins, 1991; Sinitsa, 2000; Wang, Woo and Zhao, 2009):

- It is error prone.
- It leads to selfishness, particularly if it is used alone.
- It creates negative moods such as loneliness, boredom, and depression, particularly if it happens all the time.
- It does not fit all students and low ability learners are not likely to reach learning objectives without the help of others.
- It deprives learners of the benefits of social learning.
- Independent learners may try to achieve narrow personal learning objectives.
- No one can learn or live in isolation all the time.

6.1.4 Independent learning strategies

Independent learning skills do not come naturally or automatically. Definitely, students do not become effective independent learners without giving them a helping hand. They need to be taught how to learn and to be supported on the path towards independence. Accordingly, many scholars suggest developing students' learning strategies to enable them to become independent learners. As Oxford (1990) puts it, "Learners need to learn how to learn, and teachers need to learn how to facilitate the process. Although learning is certainly part of the human condition, conscious skill in self-directed learning and in strategy use must be sharpened through training" (p. 201). Rivers (2001) goes so far as to say that in the absence of correct use of learning strategies, independent learning will not occur. In the same vein, Chamot (2004) highlights the importance of learning strategies by saying that "if students are learning a second language in an academic context, a repertoire of cognitive learning strategies (perhaps combined with affective strategies to develop self-efficacy) will be helpful with academic reading, listening, writing, and speaking tasks" (p. 17). In support of Chamot's view, research showed that learning strategy training improved the language skills of both normal

and special-needs students, including reading comprehension (e.g., Fung, Wilkinson and Moore, 2003; Harris, 2007; LeFevre, Moore and Wilkinson, 2003), listening comprehension (e.g., Harris, 2007; O'Bryan and Hegelheimer, 2009; Rahimirad and Shams, 2014; Zhang, 2012), writing proficiency (e.g., Asaro-Saddler and Saddler, 2010; Cihak and Castle, 2011; Delano, 2007; De La Paz, 1999; Graham and Harris, 1989; Schumaker and Deshler, 2003), and speaking skills (e.g., Cohen, Weaver and Li, 1998; Kosar and Bedir, 2014). Many researchers also found positive correlations between learning strategy use and overall language proficiency (e.g., Al-Qahtani, 2013; Magogwe and Oliver, 2007; Platsidou and Sipitanou, 2014; Tam, 2013; Wu, 2008).

In recognition of the importance of learning strategies in developing independent learning, many taxonomies of these strategies have been offered in the literature. Most of these taxonomies agree that language learning strategies include: (1) cognitive strategies (e.g., activating prior knowledge, making predictions, building mental maps, concept mapping, guessing, questioning the author, summarizing, etc.), (2) metacognitive strategies (e.g., self-planning, self-monitoring, self-reflection, etc.), and (3) affective strategies (e.g., activating supportive

beliefs, generating and maintaining motivation, self-encouragement, etc.).

Many models for teaching learning strategies have also been offered in the literature. Most of these models agree that learning strategies instruction should run through five steps in which the teacher gradually withdraws her/his support so that eventually the student can take total responsibility for the application of each strategy. These five steps are: (1) raising the student's awareness of the strategy under focus, (2) teacher's modeling of strategy use, (3) student's use of the strategy in a real context under the teacher's guidance, (4) student's independent use of the strategy in authentic situations, and (5) assessing the use of the strategy in relation to task performance. For a review of the literature on the models of learning strategies instruction, see El-Koumy (2016).

When students become skilled at using learning strategies, it is important that the teacher should help them to "stay afloat" by maintaining a learning environment in which they exercise choices and control over their learning (Sheerin, 1997). S/he should also exhibit independence in her/his teaching practice because "the promotion of learner autonomy depends (in fact) on

the promotion of teacher autonomy" (Little, 1995, p. 179) and learners are unlikely to become independent if the teacher her- or himself is not an independent practitioner. Above all, the teacher should shift from traditional beliefs about teaching and learning to modern ones (see Table 7 for a comparison of these two types of beliefs).

Table 7: A comparison of the teacher's traditional and modern beliefs about teaching and learning (Scharle and Szabó, 2000, p. 6)

Traditional beliefs	Modern beliefs
I have all the information.	The information is here for us to share.
It is my job to transmit knowledge to you.	I am not the fount of all knowledge.
I am responsible for your learning.	You are responsible for your learning.
It is my job to make sure that you work.	I am here to facilitate your learning by providing resources and support.
I have the expertise to make the right decisions for your learning.	I trust that you will take responsibility for your own learning.

In support of the role of learning strategies instruction in promoting independent learning, research showed that: (1) self-regulated learners engaged in the use of both cognitive and

metacognitive strategies for learning, and learners who used effective strategies were better able to work outside the classroom where teacher direction was not present (Pintrich and De Groot, 1990); (2) high achievers were able to select and apply a diverse range of language learning strategies and to adapt these strategies to their learning environments (Green and Oxford, 1995; Griffiths, 2003; O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Kupper and Russo, 1985; Ya-Ling, 2008; and Yang, 2007); and (3) strategy use enabled learners to depend on themselves and to better manage their own learning (Ertmer and Newby, 1996; Hurd, Beaven and Ortega, 2001; Nguyen and Gu, 2013; Victori and Lockart, 1995; Wenden, 1991; White, 1995, 1999).

6.1.5 Assessment of independent learning process and outcome

As the last phase of independent learning, self-assessment plays an important role in enabling the learner to effectively take charge of her or his learning. The importance of this role comes from the notion that effective learning occurs when the learner actively engages in all phases of independent learning. In this last phase, the student identifies her or his areas of strength and

weakness in learning which can, in turn, help her or him to build on the former and improve the latter. Student self-assessment is also "the key to stronger student motivation and higher achievement" (McMillan and Hearn, 2008, p. 40). However, cognitive theorists emphasize assessment of learning process while behavioral theorists emphasize assessment of learning outcome. The former theorists, on the one hand, believe that assessment of the learning process is more important than assessment of the learning outcome because the process supports progress toward the product and a desired learning outcome results from an effective learning process. They further believe that assessment of the learning process offers many benefits to the learner. These benefits include providing ongoing direction for the learning process, guiding the learner in regulating learning towards goals (Berry and Adamson, 2011); raising her/his awareness of the cognitive and metacognitive strategies s/he employs (Nückles, Hübner and Renkl, 2009); promoting the use of learning strategies (Goetz, Nett and Hall, 2013); and providing the information needed to adjust these strategies while learning (Earl, 2003).

In recognition of its numerous benefits, a variety of instruments have been proposed for assisting the learner in assessing her/his

own learning process. The most frequently used of these instruments are the self-report questionnaires and inventories, including Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI; Weinstein, Schulte and Palmer, 1987), Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI; Schraw and Dennison, 1994), and Inventory of Learning Styles (ILS; Vermunt, 2005). However, these instruments are not tailored to the needs of all learners at all levels. Nor can they be used in all skill areas. Therefore, a large number of scholars (e.g., Carless, 2007; Cazan, 2012; Feletti, Saunders, Smith and Engel, 1984; Gibbs and Simpson, 2004-5) favor performance-based assessment methods that can be adapted to the learner's needs and be used for integrating assessment of learning process into learning activities in skill areas. These methods include, but not limited to, reflective learning logs, reflective diaries, reflective learning portfolios, and self-observations of one's own learning strategies.

On the other hand, behavioral theorists, among many others, believe that self-assessment of learning outcome is necessary for effective independent learning. As Oscarson (2009) states, "Self-directed learning requires the learner to accurately assess learning outcomes" (p. 37). They further believe that self-assessment of learning outcome offers many benefits to the

learner. These benefits include informing the learner of her or his achievement at any time, assisting her/him in exploring the effects of the learning strategies s/he uses on achievement (Oscarson, 1980); allowing her/him to diagnose her/his strengths and weaknesses in skill areas (Fitzpatrick, 2006); encouraging her/him to increase efforts to attain learning goals (Boud, 1995); heightening self-efficacy (Baleghizadeh and Masoun, 2013); enhancing motivation for learning (McMillan and Hearn, 2008); and saving teachers' time and reducing their workload (Falchikov, 2005).

However, some researchers (e.g., Gordon, 1991; Kruger and Dunning, 1999; Woolliscroft, TenHaken, Smith and Calhoun, 1993) found that self-assessment of one's own learning outcome was inaccurate because students tended to overestimate or underestimate their own skills. Accordingly, a large number of scholars (e.g., Andrade and Boulay, 2003; Andrade and Du, 2005; Orsmond, Merry and Reiling, 2000; Panadero and Romero, 2014) suggest that teachers need to develop students' self-assessment skills, provide them with criteria and/or rubrics by which performance on specific skill areas should be judged, explain and model these criteria/rubrics to them, and give them feedback on self-assessments. In support of using these

theoretical propositions for improving the accuracy of self-assessment of learning outcome, Falchikov and Boud (1989) found that self-assessments were more accurate when the teacher provided learners with assessment criteria that were explicit and well understood. Ross, Rolheiser and Hogaboam-Gray (1999) also found that teaching self-assessment skills increased the accuracy of self-assessment, especially for those who tended to overestimate their own skills and had a positive effect on the achievement of low achievers. Moreover, Orsmond et al. (2000) found that students who self-assessed their achievement in relation to a set of criteria thought that self-assessment had been beneficial and helped them to become better critical thinkers. In addition, Andrade and Boulay (2003) found that giving and explaining assessment criteria to students led to deeper understanding of what was assessed. Besides, MacDonald and Boud (2003) found that training in self-assessment improved students' performance in final examinations and students with training in self-assessment outperformed students without similar training. Furthermore, Andrade, Du and Wang (2008) found that 3rd and 4th graders who used rubrics for self-assessment wrote better stories and essays than the control group. Then, Andrade, Du and Mycek (2010) found that rubric-referenced self-assessment helped

middle school students produce more effective writing. Over and above, El-Koumy (2010) found that knowledge achievement and academic thinking improved only when students received feedback on their self-assessments.

In closing this subsection, it appears that assessment of one's own learning process and outcome are not contradictory but complementary and there is no reason to prefer one to the other. In support of this proposition, El-Koumy (2004a) found that the self-assessment process group scored significantly higher than the self-assessment product group on the quantity of writing and that the latter group scored significantly higher than the former group on the quality of writing. Based on these results, he concluded that the best method for self-assessing writing appeared to be a combination of both the process and the product.

6.2 Collaborative Learning

6.2.1 Definition of collaborative learning

There are various definitions of collaborative learning. This term is defined as a process of joint creation in which a small group of students with complementary skills interact together "to

create a shared understanding that none had previously possessed or could have come to on their own" (Shrage, 1990, p. 33); a method in which students learn together in groups to achieve a shared academic goal (Smith and MacGregor, 1992); "an instruction method in which students at various performance levels work together in small groups toward a common goal" (Gokhale, 1995, p. 22); a learning method that uses social interaction as a means of knowledge construction (Paz Dennen, 2000); "a learning and instructional approach typified by self-directed groups working together on a common learning task" (Rose, 2002, p. 6); a process of meaning construction through social interaction (Stahl, 2004); a method whereby students work in a group of two or more to achieve a shared goal (McInnerney and Roberts 2004); a process whereby students construct and understand knowledge together to achieve a joint goal (Hu, Kuh and Li, 2008); "an educational approach to teaching and learning that involves groups of learners working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product" (Laal and Laal, 2012, p. 491); and "a process by which students interact in dyads or small groups of no more than six members with intent to solicit and respect the abilities and contributions of individual members" (Udvari-Solner, 2012, p. 631).

It is evident from the previously-mentioned definitions that the term collaborative learning is defined in different ways by different scholars. Some scholars define it as a process, others think of it as a method, and still others view it as a learning approach. To avoid this confusion, the multifaceted curriculum framework shares the opinion of those who define this term as a process where students work together in small groups to achieve a shared goal. This framework further posits that this process can be carried out through a variety of educational learning methods, including collaborative writing, reading workshops, collaborative project learning, group discussion, collaborative problem-solving, etc. In these methods learners learn together to achieve a shared goal and the teacher becomes a facilitator and an equal participant in the learning process.

It is worth mentioning here that collaborative learning differs from co-operative learning as in the former students try to achieve a shared goal, whereas in the latter they try to achieve their own individual goals (Watkins, 2008). Moreover, in collaborative learning the teacher is a facilitator, whereas in co-operative learning s/he remains in control of learning (Lane, 2016; Panitz, 1997). That is, collaborative learning is viewed as more student-centered than cooperative learning.

6.2.2 Benefits of collaborative learning

The literature indicates that there are lots of benefits associated with collaborative learning. The foremost of these benefits is that this type of learning increases learning outcome due to the variety of prior knowledge and background experiences of individual members within a group. As Whipple (1987) states, collaborative learning leads to the formation of joint knowledge that is "the result of interaction between (not summation of) the understandings of those who contribute to its formation" (p. 5). Similarly, Herreman (1988) holds that the learning outcome of the group is not simply a collection of individual learning experiences, rather it is more than and different from the sum of individual contributions. Likewise, Vygotsky (1989) argues that "learners learn more in groups than individually since collaborative social interaction produces new, elaborate, advanced psychological processes that are unavailable to the organism working in isolation" (p. 61). In the same vein, Wertsch, Del Rio and Alvarez (1995) opine that when students interact deeply and meaningfully with others in a group, the outcome is beyond the abilities and dispositions of the individual students who compose the group. By the same token, Peters and Armstrong (1998) hold that collaborative learning closely

resembles the equation $1+1=3$ where the whole is not only greater than the sum of its parts but also other than its parts, and this leads all group members to gain knowledge that they do not possess before collaboration. In support of this benefit, Williams' (2009) meta-analysis of the experimental research on collaborative learning for the period 1999-2009 indicated that this type of learning had a more positive effect on achievement when compared to teacher-directed, whole-class learning; and that this result was consistent with previous meta-analyses on the same topic.

More specifically, collaborative learning both within and outside the classroom can improve language learning for its many potentials. These potentials include increasing the amount of interaction time available to every learner (Storch, 2007), providing learners with a large amount of comprehensible input and encouraging them to express their own ideas in the target language without fear or anxiety (Jiang, 2009), freeing them from the "requirement for accuracy at all costs" (Long and Porter, 1985, p. 212), and allowing them to express a wider range of language functions. These potentials, in turn, lead to maximizing learners' language practice and improving their oral and written communication skills

Another benefit of collaborative learning is that it leads to the development of higher-order thinking skills because it provides each member with multiple views and new ways of thinking and invites all group members to defend their own opinions, build on one another's ideas, and challenge illogical views (Dooley, 2008). It moreover prompts each member to re-think her or his thinking in light of the interpretations offered by other members (Barkley, Cross and Major, 2005). These pedagogical potentials, in turn, add to the depth and breadth of all group members' thinking and foster their higher-level thinking skills. As Wells (1986) states, when students work together on a task, they do not only learn about what they are engaged in, but they also deepen their thinking. Similarly, Chickering and Gamson (1991) affirm that "[s]haring one's ideas and responding to others' reactions improves thinking and deepens understanding" (p. 65). In support of the pivotal role that collaborative learning plays in improving higher-order thinking, many research studies (e.g., Curtis and Lawson, 2001; Gokhale, 1995; Nelson, 1994; Olivares, 2005; Schamber and Mahoney, 2006) found that collaborative learning promoted students' higher-order thinking skills.

Still another benefit of collaborative learning is that it cultivates and develops democratic citizens because it enables learners to participate as effective citizens in a democratic society (Boyer, 1990) and prepares them to see beyond their own self-interest and to work toward the common good while respecting different views (Hovhannisyan, Varrella, Johnson and Johnson, 2005). This is because all members in a collaborative group share both the power to construct knowledge and the responsibility for such construction, and decisions are made after careful consideration of all points of view. These in turn can cultivate the democratic principle of power sharing in students and build a democratic community.

In addition to the previously-mentioned benefits, the literature offers many other important benefits of collaborative learning. These benefits include improving inter-group relations and sense of collegiality among group members, developing tolerance for diversity and respect of others' points of view (Joubert, 2000); preparing students for real-life employment situations and developing their life skills (Parente, Duck, Zhao and Fazel, 2007); improving problem-solving abilities, increasing information retention rates (Dooley, 2008); reducing teacher's workload, promoting a sharing and caring attitude

towards others, developing a strong sense of community (Orlich, Harder, Callahan and Gibson, 1998); improving intrinsic motivation for learning (Boekaerts and Minnaert, 2006); allowing for authentic assessment of language performance, and fostering self-esteem and self-efficacy (Poellhuber, Chomienne and Karsenti, 2008).

In light of the previously-mentioned benefits, the multifaceted curriculum framework fully agrees with the advocates of the twenty-first century movement that the twenty-first century student must be a collaborator.

6.2.3 Limitations and disadvantages of collaborative learning

Collaborative learning also has its limitations and disadvantages that should be recognized by both teachers and students. These limitations and disadvantages include, but not limited to, the following (Fung, 2004; Harmer, 2005; Hillmann, 2004; Nussbaum, 2002; Roberts and McInnerney, 2007):

- It may undermine and destroy individualism and lead to a decline of individual creation and imagination.
- It is time-consuming to organize and requires excellent management skills.

- It may lead to cruel conflicts particularly when students lack social skills.
- Groups are not always available.
- Some group members may rely too heavily on others to do the work and one or two student(s) may dominate the collaborative work.
- Not all members of a group participate equally in collaborative learning; extroverted and more talkative students dominate collaborative work at the expense of introverted and less talkative ones.
- Learners who suffer from low self-confidence find collaborative work frightening.
- Some students may not trust their colleagues' abilities in the group which, in turn, leads to their withdrawal from the group.
- Group members may agree with one another just to avoid conflict which, in turn, reinforces their mistakes and results in poor quality learning.
- More proficient members who do all the work may feel a sense of frustration because the less proficient members do nothing and obtain the same grades.

- Low ability and less skilled members may not be able to make any contributions in a collaborative group which negatively affects their motivation towards learning.
- EFL students may speak in their native language or engage in off-task talk.
- Scapegoating (i.e., placing the blame on an individual when failure happens) may occur.
- Some students may hate being corrected by other members of the group and find it more humiliating to make mistakes in front of their colleagues than in front of the teacher.
- Not all learners are positively disposed towards learning collaboratively; some of them may not like to learn in groups and prefer to learn by themselves.
- The physical characteristics of the Egyptian classrooms, inflexible seats in particular, make it somewhat difficult to organize collaborative groups.

6.2.4 Collaborative learning methods

A number of collaborative learning methods have been suggested as vehicles for developing higher order language skills and many other skills. These learning methods include reading workshops (Allen, 2009; Lausé, 2004; Miller and

Higgins, 2008; Mounla, Bahous and Nabhani, 2011; Oszakiewski and Spelman, 2011; Porath, 2014; Serafini, 2001; Thomas, 2012; Towle, 2000), writing workshops/collaborative writing (Dobao, 2012; Li and Kim, 2016; Luna and Ortiz, 2013; Montero, 2005; Storch, 2005, 2013; Storch and Wigglesworth, 2007; Wong, Chen, Chai, Chin and Gao, 2011; Zhang, 2018), collaborative project learning (Boss, 2015; Donnelly and Fitzmaurice, 2005; Kapp, 2013; Krajcik and Blumenfeld, 2006; Markham, Larmer and Ravitz, 2003; May, 2018), collaborative problem-solving (Barron, 2000; Care, Griffin, Scoular, Awwal and Zoanetti, 2015; Hesse, Care, Buder, Sassenberg and Griffin, 2015; Katz and Lesgold, 1993; Roschelle and Teasley, 1995; Salem, 2016; von Davier and Halpin, 2013), group discussion (Brookfield and Preskill, 1999; Dallimore et al., 2008; Damanik and Surbakti, 2017; Goldenberg, 1992), collaborative experiential learning/participatory action learning (Bhati and Song, 2019; McIntyre-Mills, Kedibone, Arko-Achemfuor, Mabunda and Njiro, 2014; Parks, 2015; Pretty, Gujit, Thompson and Scoones, 1995; Salunke, Vijayalakshmi and Burli, 2016), collaborative concept mapping (Adesope and Nesbit, 2010; Basque and Lavoie, 2006; Van Boxtel, Van der Linden, Roelofs and Erkens, 2002; Sizmur and Osborne, 1997), interactive storytelling (Eder, 1988; Greef and Lalioti, 2001; Mandelbaum,

1993; Roth et al., 2012; Roth, Vorderer and Klimmt, 2009), literature/learning circles (Aksim, 2005; Daniels, 2002; Lavan, 2008; Maher, 2015; Zounhin, 2017), dialogue journaling (Holmes and Moulton, 1997; Kreeft, 1984; Peyton, 2000; Rana, 2018), and Socratic circles/seminars (Barker, 2017; Chesters, 2012; Copeland, 2005; Gose, 2009; Moeller and Moeller, 2002; Paul and Elder, 2006, 2007; Tredway, 1995).

All the previously-mentioned collaborative learning methods allow students to co-construct knowledge together while sharing responsibility for their fellow members' learning. These methods also provide authentic opportunities for students to practice and develop language and higher order thinking skills at exactly the same time. The selection from these methods should depend on the skill(s) the teacher wants students to learn. These methods can also be implemented offline or online using various communication technologies such as web conferencing, emailing, and blogging.

To reap the benefits of the previously-mentioned methods, the teacher should serve as a resource person and a facilitator workmate. S/he should also create a non-threatening collaborative environment, prepare authentic meaningful tasks

that stimulate students' thinking, set a realistic deadline for each task, ensure that all students contribute to the group's performance, and observe group members' performance to provide feedback whenever necessary. Moreover, it is paramount that Egyptian teachers should use spaces outside the classrooms for collaborative learning such as school courtyards and community sites.

6.2.5 Assessment of collaborative learning process and outcome

Collaborative learning assessment is crucial for helping both students and teachers to see what is going well and what is not going well in collaborative learning groups to maximize group members' learning (Springer, Stanne and Donovan, 1999). It moreover improves the collaborative process and product, increases students' engagement in collaboration, empowers them to monitor their collaborative performance, and allows for assessing the core of the twenty-first century skills (Lopes in Blazic, 2016). These benefits, in turn, can lead to increasing the effectiveness of the collaborative group and its members and to improving the quality of group performance. Therefore, a large number of scholars have proposed various assessment techniques for assessing this type of learning. These techniques

can be categorized under two methods: (1) assessment of the product of the collaborative group, and (2) assessment of the process of working in group (i.e., how each group member participates in the group's performance). Advocates of the first method believe that assessment of collaborative learning should focus only on the assessment of group product because students work in groups toward a shared goal and all members in a group create something that exceeds what any one individual can achieve alone. Therefore, the success of collaborative learning should be seen as a joint effort of all members. However, this method unfairly disadvantages stronger students and violates individual responsibility. As Kagan and Kagan (1998) state, "If we [teachers] assign students a project and grade the project so that each student on the team receives the same grade, based on the quality of the project, we violate the principle of individual accountability" (p. 111). They further state, "Group grades are simply unfair. Two identical students—identical with regard to their ability, effort, and performance—will receive different grades, depending on who their teammates happen to be" (p. 112). Moreover, this method leads to what is called free-riding, where some members of the group sit back and let others do all the work (Salomon and Globerson, 1989). These disadvantages

can, in turn, discourage individual contributions and result in group failure to achieve the shared goal.

The second method is based on the notion that the contribution of each member helps the group to achieve the shared common goal. Therefore, advocates of this method (e.g., Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence, 2016; Kane and Harms, 2005; Loughry, Ohland and Moore, 2007) believe that assessment of collaborative learning needs to focus on the collaborative process of group members, rather than on the end product. They also claim that this method provides formative feedback to individual members of the group and helps them to improve the way they function within the group. And these, in turn, can positively affect all group members' learning and the quality of the group product.

Advocates of the second method further explain that the collaborative process of group members should be assessed in terms of a number of criteria including generating ideas, listening respectfully to others' diverse perspectives, distributing work fairly, resolving group conflicts, staying aware of all group members' progress, and participating in group decisions. Since teachers may not be part of the collaborative process and cannot assess it, they should depend on members of the group to do so

through the following assessment techniques (Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence, 2016):

- Team evaluation: each member of the team evaluates the dynamics of the team as a whole;
- Peer evaluation: each team member evaluates the contributions of individual teammates; and
- Self-evaluation: each team member documents and evaluates her/his own contributions to the team.

To help a group member to provide an assessment of the internal dynamics of the collaborative group, the author developed a checklist for assessing the quality of the collaborative process after the completion of each task to continually improve this process (see Table 8). This checklist consists of thirty items. Each item is rated on a Likert scale from 1 (Not at all) to 5 (Very well).

Table 8: A checklist for assessing the quality of the collaborative process

<p>Rater's Name: Task Name:</p> <p>For each item, please put a check under the number that best describes the collaborative process that happened during the last task (1 = Not at all, 2 = Slightly, 3 = Somewhat, 4 = Well, and 5 = Very well).</p>

Table 8 (continued)

No	Items	1	2	3	4	5
1	Group members were all prepared for the group work.					
2	Group members engaged in joint idea building where they took one another's ideas into consideration and came to a consensus on these ideas.					
3	Every group member supported her or his ideas and opinions with both relevant evidence and clear reasons.					
4	Every group member accepted various roles assigned by the teacher or group.					
5	Every group member offered useful ideas and opinions that are relevant and viable.					
6	Group members discussed alternative opinions and ideas in depth over many turns of speech before taking a position or making a decision.					
7	Group members developed a clear joint understanding of the significant aspects of what was being said and discussed.					
8	Every member received and provided feedback in ways that improved the group's process to produce high quality product.					
9	Every member showed appreciation for the feedback received from others in the group.					
10	Every member showed empathy for the ideas and opinions of other group members.					
11	Group members responded to perspectives and ideas, not to people.					
12	Group members listened carefully and respectfully to one another.					
13	Group members used proper language and avoided unpleasant terms in criticizing the ideas of others.					

Table 8 (continued)

No	Items	1	2	3	4	5
14	Group members were aware of their partners' progress.					
15	Every member showed understanding of the learning needs of other members in the group					
16	Group members built on one another's ideas and opinions in a friendly and gracious manner.					
17	Group members showed a responsibility for one another's learning.					
18	Every member participated in group decisions and made suggestions to promote the effectiveness of the group.					
19	Group members successfully resolved conflicts that arose within the group through discussion and avoided speaking harshly to one another while resolving these conflicts.					
20	Group members managed time appropriately to meet the established deadline.					
21	Every member had an equal chance to interact with others in the group.					
22	Every member displayed a positive attitude towards others in the group.					
23	Group members encouraged one another to openly express ideas and opinions.					
24	Group members tolerated language mistakes and focused on important questions and big ideas.					
25	Group members asked for clarification of obscure contributions.					
26	Group members stayed focused on the task the entire time.					

Table 8 (continued)

No	Items	1	2	3	4	5
27	Group members sought help from others outside of the group (e.g., teacher, other groups) whenever necessary throughout the task.					
28	Every member learned something from the group and the group learned something from her or him.					
29	Group members reflected on their collaborative process and experience.					
30	In the end, group members managed to meet the shared goal.					

To aid a group member to assess a teammate's contributions to the group's performance, Kane and Harms (2005) have suggested a scoring scale that can be used by a partner to assess her or his teammate's contributions to the group work (see Table 9).

Table 9: A scale for scoring a teammate's contributions to the team work (adapted from Kane and Harms, 2005, p. 61)

Evaluation Criteria	Poor 1	Average 2	Good 3	Excellent 4
Listens and speaks almost equally				
Values comments of others				
Helps the group to reach a consensus.				
Prepares for group work				

In the same vein, Loughry et al. (2007) have proposed an instrument, named the Comprehensive Assessment of Team Member Effectiveness (CATME), to help a group member to assess a groupmate's collaborative learning process. This instrument consists of eighty-seven items (thirty-three on a shorter version) that are categorized under five main criteria: (1) contributing to the team's work (e.g., "Did a fair share of the team's work"), (2) interacting with teammates (e.g., "Communicated effectively"), (3) keeping the team on track (e.g., "Stayed aware of fellow team members' progress"), (4) expecting quality (e.g., "Expected the team to succeed"), and (5) having relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities (e.g., "Had the skills and expertise to do excellent work").

To help a group member to assess her/his own contributions to the group's performance, s/he could be given a self-assessment form to complete and submit to the teacher. Figure 1 shows an example of such a form.

Figure 1: A form for assessing one's own contributions to group work (adapted from Chamot et al., 2011, p. 30)

Name:	Date:
Activity:	

Figure 1 (continued)

(I)	Circle the option that best describes your contributions to the group activity					
(1)	I asked questions for information.	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Fairly Well	Very Well
(2)	I offered my opinion.	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Fairly Well	Very Well
(3)	I listened to all group members.	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Fairly Well	Very Well
(4)	I commented on the ideas of other group members.	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Fairly Well	Very Well
(5)	I encouraged others to participate.	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Fairly Well	Very Well
(6)	I fulfilled my role in the group as assigned by the teacher or group.	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Fairly Well	Very Well
(II)	The best thing I contributed to the group today is				
					
(III)	The thing I found most difficult when working with the group today is				
					

However, the data that come from peer evaluation of the contributions of teammates to the group's performance may be interpreted as insulting behaviors, and this in turn may lead to strain among group members (Brew, Riley and Walta, 2009). Moreover, students may not be straightforward when

evaluating one another or themselves. They may evaluate some mates irresponsibly and collude with others.

From the foregoing it is evident that assessment of the collaborative learning process and outcome are mutually supportive to each other, and it is not sufficient to use one of them to the exclusion of the other. Therefore, both the process and the end product merit taking them into account when assessing collaborative learning. This requires supplementing teacher's assessment of the group product with peer- and/or self-assessments of the collaborative learning process. In this way, the assessment of collaborative learning will be fairer and more effective than using one method alone. Along with this suggestion, Nelson (1999) recommends, "The final grade should be a combination of assessments of the group project and individual contributions" (p. 254). The multifaceted curriculum framework further suggests that 70% of the final mark should be assigned to the group product as an overall team mark and 30% should be allocated to the individual contributions as an individual mark, with exclusion of irresponsible peer- and/or self-assessments. This grading scheme can promote the collaborative learning process and outcome. Finally, it is critical to clearly communicate such a scheme to students.

6.3 Blending Independent and Collaborative Learning

As mentioned earlier in chapter one, independent and collaborative learning may appear to be extreme opposites, but actually the two types of learning supplement and complement each other. Neither of them is sufficient by itself for effective learning. An over-emphasis on independence without interdependence leaves the student isolated and an over-emphasis on interdependence at the expense of independence "may undermine and erode individualism and the imaginative spirit" (Hillmann, 2004, p. 1). This points to the need for a thoughtful integration of both types of learning in order to maximize students' learning in and out of the classroom. In the remainder of this chapter, the author discusses the theoretical foundations for such integration and its benefits; and finally he proposes a multifaceted method for achieving this integration.

6.3.1 Theoretical foundations for blending independent and collaborative learning

The rationale for blending independent and collaborative learning lies in the view that language learning is neither a solely individual nor a solely social process, but occurs through both of

them, i.e., the two processes complement each other. In agreement with this view, several scholars (e.g., Gokhale, 1995; Tinzmann et al., 1990) believe that independent learning is an integral part of collaborative learning. As Tinzmann et al. (1990) state, "Self-regulated learning is important in collaborative classrooms" (p. 6). This is simply because "the success of one student helps other students to be successful" (Gokhale, 1995, p. 1). Furthermore, each member in a collaborative group brings his/her previous knowledge and experiences to the group and through such knowledge and experiences s/he interacts with other group members and this, in turn, can benefit all group members and lead to attaining the shared goals.

In a similar vein, several scholars (e.g., Geary, 1998; Little, 1996; Wertsch and Tulviste, 2005) agree that collaborative learning is essential for independent learning and that successful group performance boosts learner autonomy. This viewpoint reflects Vygotsky's theory which holds that social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of self-regulation and what students can do in collaboration today; they will be able to do it on their own tomorrow. This theory also assumes that all learning, including language learning, is first social then

individual and that individuals cannot be separated from their society. As Wertsch and Tulviste (2005) write:

Humans are never as autonomous and as free of outside interference as it might at first appear. Instead, human mental functioning, even when carried out by an individual acting in isolation, is inherently social, or sociocultural, in that it incorporates socially evolved and socially organized cultural tools. (p. 66)

Collaborative learning also leads individuals to achieve academic success because doing well as a group benefits every member in the group and each member's contribution to the group benefits her- or himself as well. In this respect, Lewis (1978) states that the learner's autonomy cannot be pursued without help from others; therefore, anyone who is isolated from the social context could fail to be an autonomous learner. Brockett and Hiemstra (1991) and Candy (1991) also affirm that independent learning cannot be separated from the social context in which it occurs. By the same token, Little (1991) views learner independence in language learning as a capacity that can be developed in social contexts through interdependence. He states that "like all other culturally determined human capacities, it [independence] develops in interaction with others" (p. 1). Elsewhere, he (2003) affirms that "autonomous learners are characterized by an independence that is at once constrained and

enriched by interdependence" (p. 223). Along the same line of thought, Breen and Mann (1997) argue that independent learning is most likely to be developed in "a learning community wherein responsibility for one's own and each other's learning . . . is shared" (p. 144). In the same manner, Geary (1998) affirms that students should go "from dependence toward independence via interdependence" (p. 1). Similarly, Jacobs and Farrell (2001) are of the opinion that collaborative learning is an effective means for developing learner autonomy. Likewise, La Ganza (2004) opines that the development of learner autonomy involves concomitant individual-cognitive and social-interactive dimensions and that collaboration through interaction with other students is important for the development of learner autonomy. In addition, Murray (2014) asserts that independent learning can only be developed in a learning community and that the help the learner receives from groupmates enables her or him to learn independently.

In support of the view that social learning strengthens and reinforces independent learning, some researchers found that collaborative learning improved individual students' performance and achievement (e.g., Anderson et al., 2001; McMahan, Raphael, Goatley and Pardo, 1997; Mercer, 1998).

Mercer (1998), for example, found that a child's abilities to perform on independent problem-solving tasks improved as a result of participating in group discussions and that the co-reasoning or interthinking among participants in conversations improved the intrapsychological development of the individual.

Over and above, several scholars (e.g., Barber, 1984; Dam, 1995; Salomon and Perkins, 1998; Țurloiu and Stefánsdóttir, 2011) go a step further and contend that individual and social aspects of learning are vital to each other in the sense that no one can work effectively without the other. As Barber (1984) argues, individual autonomy supports collaboration and collaboration offers numerous minds that can enhance individual autonomy; and without collaboration, individuals' choices will be limited to their own perspectives and experiences. He maintains that autonomy requires collaboration with others and collaboration empowers individuals to maintain autonomy. In agreement with Barber, Dam (1995) states that independent learning requires a person to learn individually and collaboratively with others. Salomon and Perkins (1998) also believe that learning occurs both individually and socially. They add that "individual learning is rarely truly individual; it almost always entails some social mediation, even if not immediately apparent. Likewise,

the learning of social entities (e.g., teams) entails some learning on the part of participating individuals" (p. 5). Much like Salomon and Perkins, McConnell (2000) stresses the complementarity between individual and social learning as follows:

Individual learning can be less or more socially mediated. . . . [The] two aspects of learning (individual and social) develop in 'spiral reciprocities' where one influences and supports the other. Individuals in groups may learn by themselves, but they also acquire knowledge and skills that benefit the group as a whole. The individual and the social aspects of learning occur side by side and support each other. (p. 11)

Likewise, Koivisto et al. (2006) share the same opinion that independent and social learning interrelate and interact in synergistic ways. They write, "There is no possibility to be totally independent as we are social individuals. Being an independent learner might mean being isolated from the community of other learners which is never the case while learning" (pp. 5-6). Along the same line of thought, Țurloiu and Stefánsdóttir (2011) believe that what a person learns does not only result from what is going on inside her/him but also from the social context. They further explain that interactions between the learner and others enhance individual learning and boost

learner autonomy because doing well as a group benefits every member in the group, and doing poorly leads to group failure.

It is evident from the foregoing that there is a plenty of theoretical information which asserts that independent and collaborative learning support and complement each other. In line with this enormous amount of information, the multifaceted curriculum framework embraces that the development of learners who are able to take responsibility for their own learning—both independently and interdependently—should be regarded as an important aim of any EFL curriculum.

6.3.2 Benefits of blending independent and collaborative learning

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, independent and collaborative learning have potential benefits and limitations. Therefore, it is essential to blend both to reap their advantages and to overcome their limitations. Such a blend can provide a number of benefits that go beyond the potentials of each type of learning alone. It can foster both independent and interdependent skills and improve language performance more than purely independent or purely collaborative learning. It can also extend learning throughout students' time at school and

home and develop a sense of personal and social responsibility in them. Moreover, the blend of both types of learning can meet the needs of all students and cater for diverse thinking and learning styles. Definitely, it can benefit those who learn best individually and those who learn best in groups. Putting it another way, it can benefit both analytic and holistic learners as the former learners tend to be isolated and self-reliant, whereas the latter learners tend to be interdependent and gregarious. In sum, the complementarity between independent and collaborative learning is likely to enhance students' various learning and thinking styles and improve their intra- and interpersonal skills which are essential for surviving in the twenty-first century.

6.3.3 A multifaceted method for blending independent and collaborative learning

To integrate independent with collaborative learning, teachers can start with one or the other. However, the multifaceted curriculum framework holds that starting with the former is more effective than starting with the latter because this allows for individual preparation which not only activates relevant prior knowledge, but also helps each student to effectively contribute to the group's performance. In other words, such individual

preparation for collaborative learning allows each member to prepare information and evidence to support her or his points of view. This in turn makes collaborative learning more thoughtful and fruitful and encourages each member of the group to defend her or his own ideas. Therefore, the multifaceted curriculum framework suggests a method that uses both independent and interdependent learning in sequence, starting with the former. Here is the procedure of this multifaceted method:

- (1) Independent learning at home: In this step, the teacher announces a topic and gives students time to read and listen about this topic at home. The more the student reads and/or listens about the topic, the better prepared s/he will be for the next step. In addition to reading (or listening to) a prescribed text about the topic, the student reads (or listens to) relevant information on- and offline to learn more about the topic. S/he then analyzes, compares and/or contrasts what s/he has read (or listened to) to formulate her/his own perspective on the assigned topic and to prepare evidence to support this perspective. In doing so, s/he engages in active interaction with the texts s/he reads (or listens to) using cognitive strategies such as activating prior knowledge, making predictions, generating questions, building mental maps, drawing inferences, summarizing and synthesizing. S/he also

uses metacognitive strategies such as self-planning, self-monitoring and self-assessment. The use of these cognitive and metacognitive strategies, in turn, leads to the development of her/his capacity to think independently and to have control over her/his learning.

- (2) Collaborative learning in the classroom: In this step, students are assigned to small heterogeneous groups based on their thinking styles. They are then asked to orally discuss the topic, they read (or listened) about. This step allows group members to acquire new ways of thinking about the topic under discussion. It also allows each group member to compare her/his own perspective with the perspectives of others. This, in turn, develops students' thinking and social skills (for more benefits of small-group discussion, see chapter three, section 3.3). The role of the teacher in this step is to join in discussion and to become a helping mate, rather than an evaluator.

Chapter Seven

Developing Students' Functional Skills and Dispositions Together with Local Communities Through Service Learning

7.0 Introduction

The ultimate purpose of true education is to equip students with the skills and dispositions that are applicable to real life to enable them to succeed in life and to contribute to the welfare of their country. To effectively realize this purpose, schools should reflect the real life outside their walls and involve students in learning activities in societal settings. However, the separation between school and real life has been the hallmark of the current Egyptian education system in general. In this system, teachers deal with information as an abstract entity and teach it in a decontextualized way. More than that, students at all levels are not given opportunities to apply what they learn to real life. They consequently find what they learn so alien to life outside the school and this, in turn, leads to their low sense of community. Therefore, it is essential for the Egyptian education

system to shift from socially isolated schools to socially functioning schools so as to promote students' sense of community and to save them from being lost in the swirl of globalization. This, of course, can be achieved through incorporating community service into learning. Such community service learning can break the existing boundaries between the school and the local community and exploit the unlimited power of the Egyptian youth in serving their own communities. In essence, the Egyptian educational institutions need to open their doors to the community so that each can reinforce the other. Only then can we say that we have true education that lasts beyond the last test and a commitment to community service that lasts a lifetime.

7.1 Definition of Service learning

Service learning is a specific form of community-based learning in which the learner translates ideas into actions which are mutually beneficial for her- or himself and the community. According to Jacoby (1996) this term is a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities intentionally designed to promote their learning and community development. Similarly, Cumbo and Vadeboncoeur (1998) define it as a

method in which students learn experientially through active participation in a community service that meets the actual needs of themselves and the community. In the same way, Eyler and Giles (1999) define it as follows:

[S]ervice-learning is a form of experiential education where learning occurs through a cycle of action and reflection as students work with others through a process of applying what they are learning to community problems and, at the same time, reflecting upon their experience as they seek to achieve real objectives for the community and deeper understanding and skills for themselves. (p. vii)

Likewise, Ballard and Elmore (2009) define the same term as a distinct form of experiential learning in which students engage in community service activities as an integral part of the academic curriculum. In a like manner, the Office for Community and Civic Engagement at the University of North Carolina (2016) defines this term in the following way:

Service-learning is a form of experiential education that is developed, implemented and evaluated in collaboration with the community; responds to community-identified needs and concerns; attempts to balance the service that is provided and the learning that takes place; enhances the curriculum by extending learning beyond the classroom and allowing students to apply what they've learned to real-world situations; and provides opportunities for critical reflection. (p. 3)

From the foregoing it is evident that there is a general consensus that service learning is a form of experiential learning, but it is different from pure experiential learning. Service learning combines service with learning in intentional ways that equally benefit both the learner and the community, while pure experiential learning only serves to achieve learning objectives (Furco, 1996). Service learning, therefore, requires a close coordination between educational institutions and community representatives to ensure that service activities are consistent with both the academic objectives of the curriculum as well as the needs of the community, and that the outcomes will be mutually beneficial for both the learner and the community.

7.2 Theoretical Foundations of Service Learning

Service learning is based on Dewey's social learning theory. This theory contends that real life experience is crucial for learning and views learning as a process of interacting with the outside world and the school as a place where the community becomes the curriculum. In Dewey's pedagogic creed, education needs to be part of community life. He (1929/1997) writes:

The only true education comes through the stimulation of the child's powers by the demand of the social

situations in which he finds himself. Through these demands he is stimulated to act as a member of a unity, to emerge from his original narrowness of action and feeling, and to conceive of himself from the standpoint of the welfare of the group to which he belongs. (p. 17)

In his book, *The School and Society*, Dewey (1915) also emphasizes that schools should not be places where disseminated information can, or cannot, one day play a role in students' life, but they should involve students in activities that are vital and important right now. Elsewhere, he (1963) criticizes inert information as disconnected from students' real life and adds that teaching such inert information leads to boredom because students find it "so foreign to the situations of life outside the school" (p. 26). In short, Dewey's educational theory asserts that students learn effectively through hands-on experiences and interaction with persons and objects in their environment.

Service learning is also rooted in the place-based theory (also known as situated learning theory) which holds that learning should be situated in the places where learners spend their time and that the local environment should be reflected in school curricula. As Theobald and Nachitgal (1995) state, the curriculum must grow out of authentic issues that are

worthwhile for the students and the people in the community. This theory further holds that knowledge is inseparably bound up with the social and physical environment. As Beres (2002) points out, knowledge is a by-product of interactions between the people and the environment. Advocates of this theory (e.g., Bartholomaeus, 2006; Brown, Collins and Duguid, 1989; Luddick, 2001; Smith and Sobel, 2010; Theobald and Curtiss, 2000) further claim that there are many considerable benefits that can be gained from its application to teaching and learning in general. Bartholomaeus (2006), for example, states, "Interaction with place and utilising local resources for teaching and learning . . . allow students access to a wide range of expertise and experiences that are found in the residents of their local community" (p. 482). Luddick (2001) adds that the application of this theory promotes decision making, writing, research, problem solving, critical thinking, participatory, and observation skills. The application of this theory also makes learning experiences richer and more memorable because it allows various avenues for fully understanding what is learned (DfES, 2006). Furthermore, Gougeon (2004) states:

Place-based education focuses on holistic development, connects students to the community, creates a meaningful learning context, accommodates differential learning, develops social competencies,

builds a sense of identity, increases the learners' sense of responsibility to the community, reproduces local knowledge, and empowers individuals in the community to change, evolve and be effective. (cited in Bartholomaeus, 2006, p. 487)

7.3 Benefits of Service Learning

Service learning equally benefits both the students and their local community. For students, the first benefit of this type of learning is that it engages them profoundly and actively in authentic learning experiences which can enrich their academic learning and develop the functional skills that are necessary for them to live and thrive in real life. In this connection, Rasmussen (1991), Beebe and DeCosta (1993), and Yoder, Retish and Wade (1996) argue that service learning provides meaningful opportunities for students to functionally speak, listen, read, and write in authentic situations. Likewise, Tucker, McCarthy, Hoxmeier and Lenk (1998) contend that service learning reinforces students' communication skills because it allows them to regularly practice these skills with one another and members of the community. Thornton (2014) adds that service learning develops students' skills to learn and work independently and collaboratively which can, in turn, improve their language learning outcomes and empower them to be

productive citizens. In support of these theoretical arguments, a growing body of evidence showed that service-learning students felt more engaged in learning than nonservice-learning students (e.g., Gallini and Moely, 2003; Melchior, 1998; Miller, 1994). A large number of studies also found that service-learning students significantly improved in writing (e.g., Dorman and Dorman, 1997; Liu, 2012; Wurr, 2000) and interpersonal communication skills (e.g., Bradley et al., 2007; Peters, McHugh and Sendall, 2006; Sun and Yang, 2015; Tucker, McCarthy, Hoxmeier and Lenk, 1998).

In union with the development of the previously mentioned skills, service learning promotes students' higher-order thinking skills through engaging them in a wide range of experiences that are not found in their textbooks (Matthews and Zimmerman, 1999) and giving them the opportunity to interface with people, from diverse backgrounds who hold different points of view which challenge them to rethink and reconstruct their own perspectives (Rama, Ravenscroft, Wolcott and Zlotkowski, 2000). It also engages them in dealing with ill-structured real world problems and in practicing problem identification and problem problem-solving skills to come up with evidence-based solutions to these problems. It moreover engages them in critical

thinking through in-depth analysis of community issues and regular reflection on learning experiences (Hatcher and Bringle, 1997; Hatcher, Bringle and Muthiah, 2004; Stein and Graham, 2014b). In support of this theoretical claim, there is a considerable body of research evidence that service learning students significantly improved in higher order thinking skills, including critical thinking (e.g., Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda and Yee, 2000; Bohlander, 2010; Campbell and Oswald, 2018; Osborne, Hammerich and Hensley, 1998; Sedlack, Dohney, Panthofer and Anaya, 2003), social problem-solving (Guo, Yao, Wang, Yan and Zong, 2015; Matthews and Zimmerman, 1999; Williamson, 2017), and creative thinking (Osborne et al., 1998; Steinke, Fitch, Johnson and Waldstein, 2002).

The second benefit of service learning is that it bridges the gap between learning and living which, in turn, deepens students' understanding of course content and social issues. Definitely, it gets students to make meaningful connections between their in-class and out-of-class experiences, to see theory through reality, and to apply what they have read in their textbooks and what they have heard from teachers in real-life situations. It also gets them to integrate knowledge from separate areas into a coherent whole and to apply it to these situations, thereby getting a deeper

understanding of what they are learning and the world around them (Ballard and Elmore, 2009). In support of these theoretical arguments, many researchers found that service learning helped students to achieve higher course grades than traditional learning (e.g., Astin et al., 2000; Brail, 2016; Eyler, Giles, Stenson and Gray, 2001; Klute and Billig, 2002; Markus, Howard and King 1993; Strage, 2001) and improved their understanding of social issues (Batchelder and Root, 1994; Billig, 2000; Bowen, 2014; Ellerton et al., 2015; Hutchinson, 2005).

The third benefit of service learning is that it gives students insight into specific occupations and career pathways and allows them to acquire job readiness and professional skills which are vital for success in the workplace. Therefore, participation in this type of learning can contribute significantly to career planning and professional preparation (Eyler et al., 2001). In support of this, researchers found that service learning improved students' awareness of career options (Astin and Sax, 1998; Blieszner and Artale, 2001; Fenzel and Leary, 1997; Greene and Diehm, 1995) and developed their career related skills, including planning, management, and teamwork skills (Yamauchi, Billig, Meyer and Hofschire, 2006).

The fourth benefit of service learning is that it enhances students' social skills and pro-social behaviour because it allows for interactions with people who represent diverse populations of the community. These interactions can in turn develop caring for others and dispel the social stereotypes students may hold (Greene and Diehm, 1995). They can also develop social skills such as negotiation, collaboration, and working with diverse groups (Britt, 2014). In support of these theoretical claims, researchers found that service-learning experiences resulted in increases in students' abilities to work with diverse groups (Loesch-Griffin, Petrides and Pratt, 1995; Osborne et al., 1998); improvements in leadership and communication skills (Eyler et al., 2001; Ladewig and Thomas, 1987; Weiler, LaGoy, Crane and Rovner, 1998); and growth in pro-social personality traits, including flexibility and respect for others (Billig, Jesse and Grimley, 2008), tolerance for diversity (Vogelgesang and Astin, 2000), and empathy with community members (Gallini and Moely, 2003).

The fifth benefit of service learning is that it creates a positive climate for learning and makes learning enjoyable and exciting for students because it allows them to discover the community in profound new ways and this, in turn, can enhance their attitudes,

self-esteem, self-efficacy, and motivation toward learning. In support of these theoretical perspectives, research studies showed that service learning developed students' affective domain, including attitudes toward learning (Brown, Kim and Pinhas 2005; Laird and Black, 1999), self-esteem (McMahon, 1998; Scales, Blyth, Berkas and Kielsmeier, 2000), self-efficacy (Bernacki and Jaeger, 2008; McMahon, 1998; Mullins, 2003; Rusu, Copaci and Soos, 2015; Simons and Cleary, 2006), self-confidence (Bradley et al., 2007), and motivation for language learning (Pak, 2007; Pellettieri, 2011).

For the community, service learning acts as a bridge between the school and the community and plays an important role in developing surrounding communities because students and teachers participate in diagnosing and solving the problems that their local community is facing (Wandersman and Florin, 1999). This type of learning also develops a sense of belonging to the country in general and the local community in particular, reinforces the bonds between generations in the community, and develops commitment to community service now and later in life (Moely, McFarland, Miron, Mercer and Ilustre, 2002). In addition, it builds a sense of respect and responsibility for nature in general and for the local environment in particular, creates a

stronger sense of social responsibility, and increases civic engagement and awareness of community needs (Astin and Sax, 1998). These potentials, in turn, develop students' citizenship and civic responsibility. In support of these theoretical arguments, a large number of researchers found that service learning increased students' civic responsibility (Bringle and Hatcher, 1995; Eyler and Giles, 1999; Scales et al., 2000), enhanced their citizenship (Gray et al., 1998; Moely et al., 2002), and developed their commitment to community service (Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon and Kerrigan, 1996; Eyler, Giles and Schmeide, 1996; Fenzel and Peyrot, 2005; Payne, 2000; Payne and Bennett, 1999).

In addition to the previously-mentioned benefits for both students and their community, several scholars have added other specific benefits to this type of learning. These benefits include decreasing absenteeism and behavioral problems (Gallini and Moely, 2003; Wilczenski and Coomey, 2007), providing a wide variety of research opportunities for teachers and students and promoting their observation skills (Gemmell and Clayton, 2009), improving students' muscles and lowering the risk of diabetes and heart illnesses, and finally, but most importantly, solving the

problem of overcrowded classrooms because this type of learning does not depend on seat time in school settings.

To sum up this section, it is evident that community service learning can develop students' functional skills, improve their learning outcomes, and develop their local communities. To reap these benefits, community issues and societal problems should be integrated into school curricula at every grade level. In addition, classes in each school should be alternatively released from their timetable for one day a week to learn outdoors and serve the local community. This, of course, should be done under the observation of a teacher and a community partner to provide guidance, support, and information whenever and wherever needed and to ensure that the needs of the students and the community are being met. In brief, Egyptian teachers should view community well-being as one of the major aims of education, and each school should do its best to develop its surrounding environment above all other things.

7.4 Methods of Incorporating Service Learning into Language Teaching and Learning

Service-learning can be incorporated into any academic discipline at any level. Such incorporation can occur by bringing

the community into the classroom or taking the class out into the community. It can also take many different forms, depending on the content of each discipline. Specifically, it can be integrated into teaching and learning English as a foreign language—both in and out of school—through community-based writing, including letters to the editor about community problems and their solutions (Dorman and Dorman, 1997; Sullivan et al., 2003); critiques and essays on topics related to community issues and events (Adler-Kassner, Crooks and Watters, 1997; Donovan, 2016); community-based speaking, including dialogues and conversations with experts and colleagues about local environmental matters (Ford and Watters, 1995); community-based reading, including articles, short stories, and poems related to community affairs (Walker, 1994); investigating environmental issues and problems (Bardwell, Monroe and Tudor, 1994; Bull et al., 1988; Hungerford, Volk, Ramsey, Litherland and Peyton, 2003; Moore and Gayle, 2010); and finally, but not lastly, carrying out service-learning activities and projects outside of the school walls (Caldwell, 2007; Koliba, Campbell and Shapiro, 2006; Saelee-Hiraoka, 2019; Zapata, 2011).

7.5 Procedures of Outdoor Service Learning

There are various views on the procedures of out-of-school service-learning (e.g., Facing the Future, 2005; National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, 2011; Shumer, 1997). However, most scholars and educational institutions agree on the following five procedural stages to reap the true benefits of outdoor service-learning:

1. **Investigation:** At this stage, the teacher and the students identify the local community needs that are relevant to the objectives of the curriculum. This can be done through surveys, personal experiences, observations and interviews with community members. The teacher also compiles her or his students' interests, skills, and talents at this stage.
2. **Preparation:** At this stage, the teacher and the students identify the service-learning projects/activities that will meet the genuine needs of the community and achieve the curriculum aims. Then, the teacher has these projects/activities approved by a community representative to ensure their potential reciprocal benefits. Next, the teacher, in collaboration with the community representative, prepares a detailed plan for carrying out each service-learning project or activity. This stage also includes

identifying roles and responsibilities for all the involved students, selecting the service site, orienting the students to this site, determining evaluative criteria and sharing these criteria with students to know what is expected of them, and including the service-learning projects/activities into the school weekly schedule with class rotations. That is, releasing a limited number of classes one day a week in a regularly recurring order for doing their own service-learning projects/activities under the supervision of their teacher and the community representative.

3. Action: At this stage, students take action to meet the community needs and to fulfill their learning objectives. They implement the plan prepared by their teacher and the community partner. During this stage, the teacher and the community partner supervise and provide feedback to the students while simultaneously learning and serving the community. They also ensure that work in the environment is safe and that students' skills are being developed while meeting the community needs.
4. Reflection: After completing the service-learning project/activity, each student reflects on this service-learning experience to evaluate whether this experience was worthwhile from a community perspective and whether

curriculum aims were met. S/he also considers the problems s/he faced at the service site and how s/he solved these problems. To help students reflect on their service-learning experience, the teacher should provide them with guiding questions. Here are examples of these questions (Towson University Office of Civic Engagement and Leadership, n.d., pp. 53-54):

- What was the best part of this experience? Why?
- What was the hardest part of this experience? Why?
- What new skills or insights have I gained from this experience?
- What is the most valuable thing I learned during this experience? Why was it valuable?
- What have I learned from the people involved in this experience? What have they learned from me?
- What have I learned about my community by doing this experience?
- How did this experience differ from classroom experiences?
- What are the things I intend to do differently as a result of what I learned during this experience?
- Did this experience contribute to my growth in civic responsibility? How?

- What were the problems we faced at the service learning site? How did we solve these problems?
- How do I feel about this experience now?

Reflection isn't always about finding answers to questions as those mentioned above. It may take the form of an activity as those suggested by Facing the Future Organization (2005, pp. 6-7) below:

- keeping an ongoing journal with specific reflection questions throughout the service-learning experience;
- writing a letter to one of the service recipients, or to a politician about the experience;
- role-playing something that happened during the experience;
- conducting group discussions about the experience; and
- writing critiques and short essays about the experience .

5. Celebration: At this stage, students display what they learned from the service-learning experience and share their accomplishments with students in other classes and people in the community. They display not only what they learned, but also how they learned it by showing off their work verbally and/or visually. This can be done in many ways, including making an internet video about the service-learning

experience, making a video that documents different students' reactions to the service learning project/activity, and writing an article for a newspaper to share the story of this experience.

In closing this section, it is important to note that outdoor service-learning takes place continuously through a cycle of investigation, preparation, action, reflection and celebration. It is also important to note that the use of a rotating school schedule for outdoor service-learning throughout the school year will help to solve the problem of overcrowded classrooms in Egyptian schools.

7.6 Assessment of Service Learning

Many scholars and organizations (e.g., Cooks and Scharer, 2006; Facing the Future, 2005; Holland, 2001) believe that assessment is an essential element of effective service learning due to its benefits. These benefits include determining the effectiveness of this type of learning in meeting the goals for both the students and the community, prompting students to participate and engage in service-learning activities, building a body of knowledge about best practices, identifying problem areas where improvement is needed, illuminating key issues and

challenges, and documenting successes that warrant celebration and sharing with others.

The most common types of assessment tools for service learning include questionnaires, interviews, observational checklists, and rubrics for content analysis of student reflections on service-learning experiences (Steinberg, Bringle and Williams, 2010). The multifaceted curriculum framework embraces that multiple tools are essential for the assessment of the service-learning process and outcome. It further contends that all participants—the teacher, the students, and the community partner—should participate in the assessment of the service-learning process and outcome. Each student should be asked to do self-reflections and to keep an on-going reflective journal. To help students in doing so, they can be provided with reflective questions and/or a self-assessment rubric for service learning (e.g., Shumer's Self-Assessment tool for Service Learning, 2000). The community partner should also write down her/his observations and feedback and keep them in a notebook with a page for each student. S/he can also be provided with a service-learning evaluation form to help her or him to do so (e.g., Bender's Evaluation Form for Community Partner Assessment of Service Learning, 2009; Western Carolina University's Evaluation

Instrument for Community Partner Assessment of Service Learning, 2019).

While students and the community partner should not directly grade service-learning, content analysis of each student's reflections and the community partner's observations should be taken into consideration by the teacher when evaluating a student's performance. On the whole, service learning should represent 10% of the total grade of any course. This percentage should be allocated in terms of these weights: 0.6% for teacher observations, 0.2% for student self-reflections, and 0.2% for community partner's observations of student performance.

Part IV

Multifaceted Assessment Methodology

Assessment is an essential component of the curriculum. Curriculum development is deemed to fail if assessment practices do not support this development or remain unchanged. This is simply because teachers teach to the test and the what and the how of assessment inevitably determine the what and the how of their teaching (Herman, 2004). In addition, assessment "tends to shape every part of the student learning experience" (Orsmond, Merry and Reiling, 2000, p. 24). Furthermore, both teachers and students treat what is not assessed as if it were unimportant. Accordingly, educational reformers all over the world view the development of assessment as a key lever for educational reform because it changes the way teachers teach and the way students learn. They further view that assessment must change if the twenty-first century demands are to be met. As Olcun (2017) puts it:

In an age where we have so much information at our fingertips through the internet, the ability to store facts is not as useful as it used to be. It isn't a useless skill, but it has become less relevant in our digital age. On

the other hand, ‘higher order’ skills, like analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information, are extremely valuable—as are ‘wider’ skills such as working well in teams, using initiative, problem-solving and creativity. These are the skills that employers are looking for, and these are the skills we need for the 21st century. And if we want our curriculum to teach these skills, our assessments need to focus on them. (para. 2)

To meet the twenty-first century demands, evaluation systems across the globe are currently shifting from traditional assessment to constructivist assessment. More specifically, educational assessment is currently shifting from behavioral assessment that measures non-authentic, narrow learning objectives at the end of the curriculum to ongoing authentic assessment that improves teaching and learning while they are occurring and allows for evaluating and promoting the twenty-first century skills. To help both teachers and learners to put this new form of assessment into practice, this part of the book addresses constructivist assessment methods that can work—in harmony with multifaceted curricular content and methodology—toward achieving the aims of the multifaceted curriculum framework. It is divided into three chapters (chapters 8, 9 and 10). Chapter eight deals with integrating assessment into learning through students’ reflective thinking, and chapter

nine is concerned with integrating assessment into teaching through teachers' reflective practice. Finally, chapter ten addresses authentic assessment for and of learning.

Chapter Eight

Integrating Assessment into Learning Through Students' Reflective Thinking

8.0 Introduction

Reflective thinking is a process through which students experience assessment as an integral part of learning (Bond, 2003; Dean, Sykes, Agostinho and Clements, 2012). In this process, the student reflects on what has been learned and how it has been learned to improve the quality of learning. Without this process, deep transformational learning will not occur. As John Dewey (1910/1933) puts it, "We do not learn from experience. We learn from reflecting on experience" (p.78). In complete agreement with Dewey, Gibbs (1988) states, "It is not sufficient simply to have an experience in order to learn. Without reflecting upon this experience it may quickly be forgotten, or its learning potential lost" (p. 14).

Despite the huge benefits of students' reflective thinking, the author's observations of Egyptian students' learning behaviors in various classroom settings at all levels revealed that reflective thinking is completely overlooked in the context of learning. This is actually due to the fact that Egyptian students lack the skills and dispositions that enable and trigger them to think reflectively in general and about learning in particular. It follows, then, that Egyptian teachers at all levels should develop these skills and dispositions in their students to enable and prompt them to reflect not only on their learning experiences but also on their daily life actions. This chapter, therefore, is an attempt to help them to do so.

8.1 Definition of Reflective Thinking

Some scholars define reflective thinking on the basis of self-regulation of cognition. In this respect, Dewey (1910/1933), the originator of this term, defines it as "the kind of thinking that consists of turning a subject over in the mind and giving it serious and consecutive consideration" (p. 3). Along the same line of thought, Boyd and Fales (1983) define this term as "the process of creating and clarifying the meaning of experience (present or past) in terms of self (self in relation to self and self

in relation to the world)" (p. 101). In the same vein, Daudlin (1996) defines it as "the process of stepping back from an experience to ponder, carefully and persistently, its meaning to the self through the development of inferences" (p. 39). Likewise, Campbell-Jones and Campbell-Jones (2002) define the same term as "the inner dialogue with oneself whereby a person calls forth experiences, beliefs, and perceptions" (p. 134).

Some other scholars base their definitions of reflective thinking on social regulation (i.e., coregulation) of cognition. In this vein, Zeichner and Liston (1996) define this term as a dialogic, social process that takes place "within a learning community" (p. 18). In the same way, Brockbank, McGill and Beech (2017) define it as a "process which involves dialogue with others for improvement or transformation" (p. 3).

Still some other scholars (e.g., Jay and Johnson, 2002; Kim, 2005) define reflective thinking on the basis of both self-regulation and coregulation of cognition. As Kim (2005) defines it:

Reflective thinking refers to the process of one's purposeful and conscious activity to monitor, analyze, and evaluate one's own learning in terms of achieving learning goals, sustaining motivation, making deep understanding, using appropriate learning strategies,

and interacting with peers and instructors in order to construct new perspectives of learning that directly lead to improve learning process and performance. (p. 11)

In light of the previously-mentioned definitions, it is evident that reflective thinking about learning is a deliberative process of stepping back from a learning experience to evaluate what has been learned and how it has been learned to improve on future learning in light of learning goals. The features of this process are outlined below:

- It is intentional.
- It is cyclical and continual.
- It requires interaction with oneself and/or other people in the learning environment.
- It involves both skills and dispositions.
- It requires the use of cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategies.

8.2 Components of Students' Reflective Thinking

Students' reflective thinking requires reflective thinking skills and dispositions. Each of these two components is necessary, but not sufficient for students to think reflectively about learning;

that is, students' engagement in effective and efficient reflective thinking is a function of these two components together (Andrusyszyn and Davie, 1997; Boud, Keogh and Walker, 1985). In the next two subsections, the author briefly addresses these two components.

8.2.1 Reflective thinking skills

Reflective thinking requires skills in these three areas: (1) cognition, (2) self-regulation of cognition, and (3) social regulation (coregulation) of cognition. The first area involves skills such as identifying learning problems, skillful use of learning strategies, data collection, data analysis, logical reasoning, drawing conclusions and decision making (Chau and Cheng, 2012; Gibbs, 1988). The second area involves skills such as self-planning, self-monitoring, and self-judgment of the learning process and product (King, 2000; Mezirow, 1991; Zimmerman, 2002). The third area involves skills like peer-monitoring and dialogue with colleagues to deepen and broaden the quality of learning (Chiu and Kuo, 2009; Jost, Kruglanski and Nelson, 1998; Salonen, Vauras and Efklides, 2005).

8.2.2 Reflective thinking dispositions

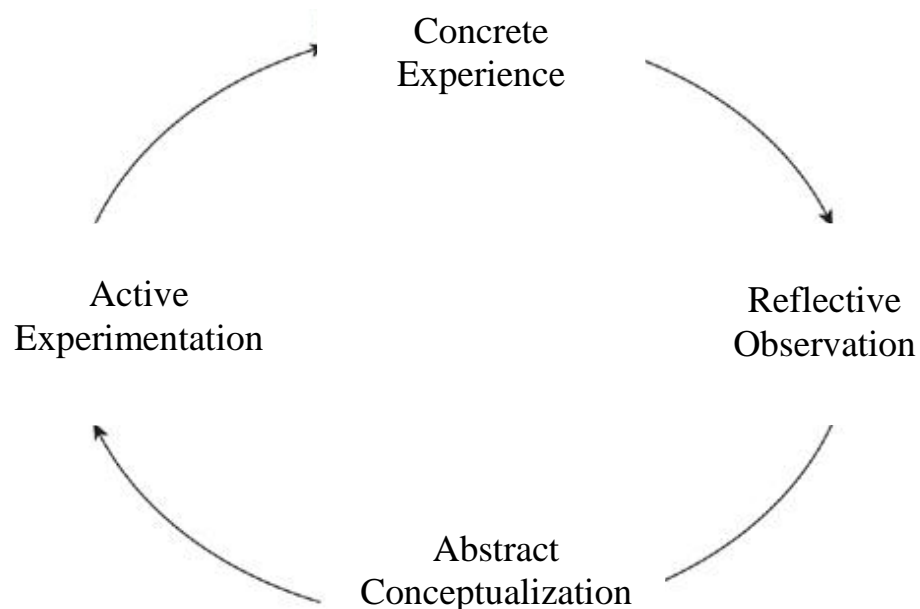
In the literature, a large number of dispositions have been suggested for reflective thinking about learning. These dispositions include, but not limited to, open-mindedness to different perspectives, openness to try different learning strategies, willingness to take risks, openness to receive new ideas, interest in exploring alternative views (Dyke, 2006); leaning to amend one's own perspectives and to change one's mind in light of new experiences, commitment to independent and collaborative learning, desire to consider diverse points of view without bias (Robinson, Anderson-Harper and Kochan, 2001); inclination to reflect on one's own behavior and opinions, desire to be aware of what is known and what is not known and to explore the unknown, liking for knowledge and truth, interest in seeking and offering reasons and objections in an effort to inform and to be well-informed, honesty in pursuing the truth even if the findings do not support one's opinions, inclination to be objective in weighing up evidence (Barnett, 2004); willingness to learn from others and past experience, commitment to continuous improvement, and tendency to take responsibility for one's learning (Buckingham Shum and Deakin Crick, 2012).

8.3 Benefits of Students' Reflective Thinking

The most important benefit of students' reflective thinking is that it improves the quality of learning because of its pedagogical potentials. These potentials include: (1) connecting past and present experiences (Kompf and Bond, 1995; Rodgers, 2002), (2) making students aware of their own learning processes (Mezirow, 2000), (3) prompting them to alter and re-frame their mistaken beliefs and assumptions about learning (Mezirow, 2004), (4) spurring cognitive and metacognitive strategies (Kitchener, King and DeLuca, 2006; Platzer, Blake and Ashford, 2000), (5) enhancing self-esteem and self-confidence and increasing intrinsic motivation for learning (Amirkhanova, Ageeva and Fakhretdinov, 2015; Glaze, 2001; Johns, 1995), (6) inciting meaning making (Lee, 2005; Platzer et al., 2000), and (7) fostering problem-solving and decision-making abilities (Elif, 2018; Hong and Choi, 2011; Moallem, 1998; Wetzstein and Hacker, 2004). For these potentials and others, several scholars agree that reflective thinking is the heart of effective learning. As Boud et al. (1985) point out, the more students involve in reflective thinking, the more learning occurs. Likewise, Samuel (1999) states that "learning improves to the degree that it arises out of the process of reflection" (p. 2).

In light of the previously mentioned potentials of reflective thinking, a student's reflection is considered as an essential step in a large number of learning models (e.g., Boud et al., 1985; Kolb, 1984; Lewis and Williams, 1994; Moon, 1999; Sugerman, Doherty, Garvey and Gass, 2000). In his experiential learning cycle, Kolb (1984), for example, purports that true learning must be done through a combination of experience and subsequent reflection on that experience. He views reflection as an essential activity to complete his four-part experiential learning cycle for learning to transfer to new situations (see Figure 2 below).

Figure 2: Kolb's experiential learning cycle

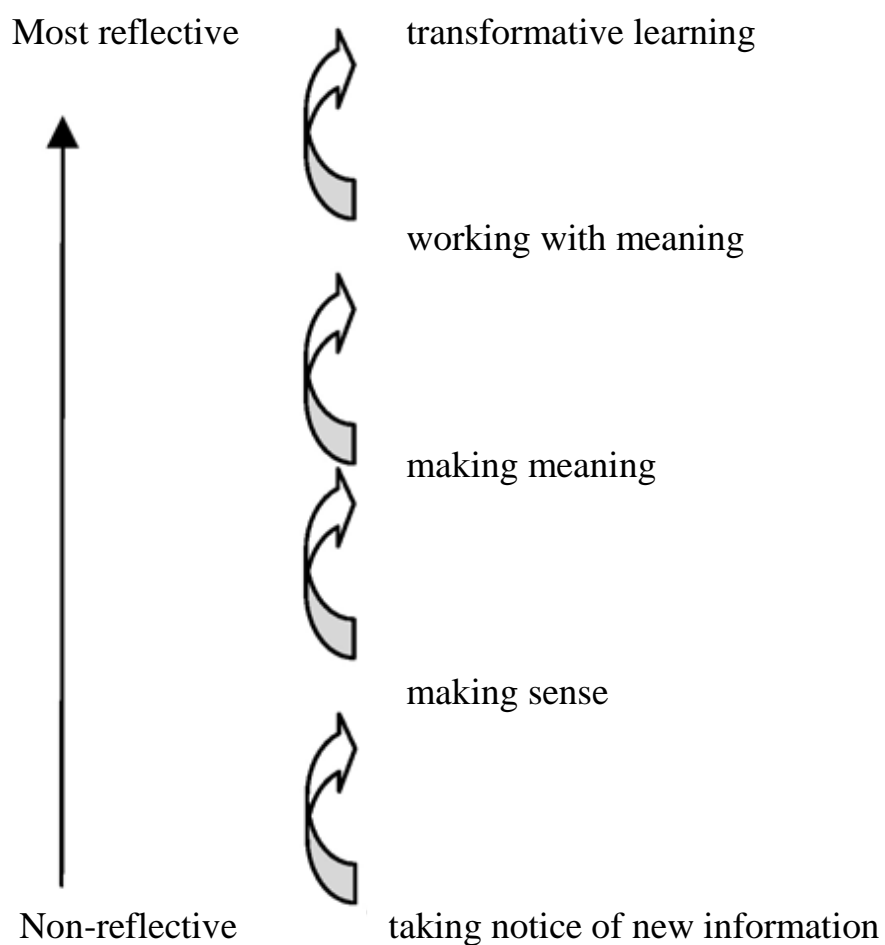


Extending Kolb's model, Boud et al. (1985) have developed a model of experiential learning that incorporates cognitive and emotional reflective processes. This model consists of three stages: experience, reflective processes, and outcomes. In this model, the reflective processes involve: (1) returning to the past experience to analyze it and to give an account of what has happened, including thoughts and feelings; (2) attending to the feelings triggered by this experience to utilize positive feelings and to remove obstructing ones; and (3) re-evaluating the experience through connecting thoughts and feelings, observing relationships, and drawing conclusions. These reflective processes, according to Boud et al., turn the experience into learning and lead to developing new perspectives, new behaviors, new emotional states, and commitment to action. In essence, Boud et al.'s model highlights the need to reflect on both the thoughts and emotions associated with the past experience in order to learn from such experience.

In her learning model, Moon (1999) also regards reflection as the heart of effective learning. According to her model, reflection leads to transformative learning because it helps learners to move from noticing new information to constructive and meaningful learning that goes beyond simple information

acquisition; that is, it helps them to turn surface learning into deep learning. Figure 3 presents this diagrammatically.

Figure 3: Stages of learning (Moon, 1999, as depicted by Xie, Ke and Sharma, 2008, p. 19)



Specifically, several scholars (e.g., Parks, 2001; Paul, 2005; Paul and Elder, 2003a, 2003b) agree that reflective thinking is

essential for improving language skills. Paul (2005), for example, states that a natural relationship exists between reflective thinking and skilled reading and writing. Citing his previous writings with Elder, Paul further states:

The reflective mind improves its thinking by reflectively thinking about it. Likewise, it improves its reading by reflectively thinking about what (and how) it reads (Paul and Elder, 2003b) and improves its writing by analyzing and assessing each draft it creates (Paul and Elder, 2003c). (pp. 31-32)

In support of the use of reflective thinking for enhancing learning, research revealed that this type of thinking: (1) raised students' metacognitive awareness and helped them to self-regulate their own cognition (Kim, 2005), (2) improved their meta-cognitive skills (Langer, 2002), (3) fostered their intrinsic motivation (Liao and Wong, 2010), (4) empowered them to change their cognitive and affective strategies (Boyd and Fales, 1983; Kolb, 1984), and (5) resulted in their academic success (Burrow, McNeill, Hubele and Bellamy, 2001; Denton, 2010; Lee, 2013).

Another benefit of reflective thinking is that it develops students' autonomy and fosters their responsibility. As Habermas (1972) states, reflective thinking empowers the

student to make personal and creative changes in learning and to become independent learner and thinker because it liberates her/him from actions that are purely impulsive or purely routine and frees her/him to confront intrinsic views that affect her/his learning. Bourner (2003) also affirms that "developing students' capacity for reflective learning is part of developing their capacity to learn how to learn" (p. 267). In the same vein, Weimer (2012) explains that students who think reflectively can plan for learning, monitor it as it occurs, and evaluate what has been learned and how it has been learned.

Along the same line of thought, several theoreticians agree that students' reflective thinking is a central element in self-regulated learning. In this respect, Bandura (1997) opines that this type of thinking is the heart of self-regulation and explains that in order for a student to be autonomous in learning, s/he must reflect on how s/he learned in the past to know what did or did not work and change her/his learning strategies accordingly. Bandura further believes that students' reflective thinking improves their feeling of self-efficacy which, in turn, fosters greater self-regulation. In addition, Zimmerman (2000, 2002) has developed a self-regulated learning model in which self-reflection plays an important role in the learning process. This model consists of

these three cyclical phases: forethought, performance, and self-reflection. According to this model, self-reflection influences the forethought phase which, in turn, impacts and fosters the student's performance in a cyclical way. More specifically, Breen and Mann (1997) and Ku (2009) agree that enrichment of autonomy in language classes requires maximizing students' potential for learning through reflection.

Still another benefit of reflective thinking is that it can be applied to real life out-of-classroom which, in turn, enables students to question their surrounding community and to become more enlightened and aware of this community. As Habermas (1972) explains, reflective thinking leads to freedom of thought necessary for empowerment in life and to better understanding of the complexity of the society. It also, as Habermas maintains, helps students to find solutions to the problems that exist in the society, thus enabling them to contribute more fully to the advancement of that society. Similarly, Roberts (1998) and Mirzaei, Phang and Kashefi (2014) believe that reflective thinking empowers students to view real life situations from multiple perspectives and to think of alternative solutions to the problems they face in everyday life.

In addition to the previously-mentioned benefits, students' reflective thinking also enables students to master the skills required of them in the twenty-first century such as critical and creative thinking (Minnesota 21st Century Community Learning Center, 2011) and to think more democratically (Goldstein and Beutel, 2007). In brief, reflective thinking turns shallow learning into deep learning and helps students to make progress in school and life.

8.4 Methods of Practicing and Promoting Reflective Thinking

In the area of language learning, many methods are suggested for practicing and promoting self-reflective thinking. These methods are divided into intrapersonal and interpersonal methods. The former type includes reflective writing (Burton, 2009; Hatton and Smith, 1995a; Lee, 2010); experiential learning (Kolb, 1984; Lewis and Williams, 1994); self-reflective learning journals, K-W-L charts, self-reflective learning logs (Angelo and Cross, 1993; Carrington and Selva, 2010; Woodward, 1998); retrospective writing, self-reflective learning diaries (Ekiz, 2006; Hiemstra, 2001; Wood and Lynch, 1998); and self-reflective learning portfolios (Corley and Zubizarreta, 2012; Zubizarreta, 2009).

The latter type of reflective thinking methods (i.e., interpersonal methods) includes reflective writing workshops, reflective conversations (Bourner, 2003; Wood and Lynch, 1998); reflective discussions (Ellis, 2001); reflective dialogue journal writing (Gibbs and Simpson, 2004/5; Parr, Haberstroh and Kottler, 2000), and the like.

The previously-mentioned methods can be used not only for practicing and promoting reflective thinking skills and dispositions, but also for practicing and developing language skills. Each of these methods can develop one or more language skills alongside with reflective thinking skills and dispositions. Therefore, students should switch between these reflective learning methods depending on the language skill being learned. The multifaceted curriculum framework also suggests that the student should use both intrapersonal and interpersonal methods in sequence, starting with the former, to take her or his own learning experience into dialogue with her- or himself and others. This in turn can develop independent and interdependent skills and eliminate the self-deception and self-inflation which the former type may bring forth. To put it another way, the latter type of methods is essential for supporting and supplementing the former.

8.5 Assessment of Students' Reflective Thinking

Over the years, authors and researchers have offered several domain-general instruments for measuring the levels of students' reflective thinking (e.g., Can and Yildirim, 2014; Kalk, Luik, Taimalu and Täht, 2014; Kember et al., 2000; Kitchener and King, 1996; Van Velzen, 2004). However, these domain-general instruments do not fit precisely in all disciplines because manifestations of reflective thinking are not exactly the same in all subject areas. To overcome this limitation, some authors and researchers have developed instruments with a focus on a specific language skill or the vehicle used for reflection (e.g., portfolios, journal writing, etc.). Examples of these instruments include Hatton and Smith's (1995b) scale for evaluating reflective writing; Kember et al.'s (1999) coding scheme for determining the level of reflective thinking from students' written journals; Kember, McKay, Sinclair and Wong's (2008) scheme for coding and assessing the level of reflection in written work; and Wald, Borkan, Taylor, Anthony and Reis' (2012) scale for assessing reflective academic writing. However, these domain-specific instruments are still very scarce and do not

cover all language areas. Until this gap is filled in, the multifaceted curriculum framework suggests that the teacher can assess students' reflective thinking via prompting questions that provoke the learner to articulate the steps s/he has taken and the decisions s/he has made during learning in a specific domain. The teacher can also assess students' reflective thinking via analyzing their reflective journals, diaries, and portfolios. Moreover, learners themselves can self-assess their own reflective thinking by analyzing their own learning logs and reflective journals with the help of self-reflective guiding questions.

Chapter Nine

Integrating Assessment into Teaching Through Reflective Practice

9.0 Introduction

Reflective practice is a process through which teachers integrate assessment into teaching to improve the quality of their practice and students' learning outcomes (Bartlett, 1990; Sirutis and Massi, 2014; Suskie, 2009). In this type of teaching practice, teachers continually think deeply about how they teach which allows them to adjust and improve their instruction as needed in this ever changing world. Therefore, this type of teaching practice has become a must in the twenty-first century—in which methods of teaching change and increase constantly and rapidly—to link theory to practice and to cope with new methods and assess their effects on students' learning outcomes.

Reflective practice also plays a central role in professional development at both the pre-service and in-service levels of teaching because it promotes teachers' awareness of the impact

of their own actions on students' learning outcomes which, in turn, leads to professional growth. As Ferraro (2000) writes:

Reflective practice can be a beneficial form of professional development at both the pre-service and in-service levels of teaching. By gaining a better understanding of their own individual teaching styles through reflective practice, teachers can improve their effectiveness in the classroom. (pp. 4-5)

Along the same line of thought, Taggart and Wilson (2005) point out that teachers' professional growth comes from reflecting on teaching experiences rather than from the experiences themselves. Ma and Ren (2011) go so far as to say that "teacher professional development becomes possible only when teachers critically reflect upon teaching" (p. 153).

In spite of the fact that reflective practice plays an important role in developing teachers' professionalism and improving students' learning, the author's observations of teachers' behaviors in various classroom settings at all levels revealed that Egyptian teachers in educational institutions, from elementary to university, perform their teaching actions automatically without conscious thinking and adhere to these routine actions all the year round. They never question the one-size-fits-all method they use for all students at all levels in all contexts.

Moreover, they do not adapt their teaching to suit different situations and different students; nor do they try out new methods to respond appropriately to changing circumstances. In addition, they never scrutinize their teaching beliefs, nor do they discuss with others the problems they encounter in their classrooms. More than that, they view students as responsible for their own academic failure, and see themselves as always right, regardless if they are right or not.

It appears then that Egyptian teachers act automatically without reflecting on their own experiences to make links between theory and practice and between their past and present experiences to improve their teaching. This may be attributable to numerous reasons. These reasons include, but not limited to, lack of reflective teaching skills and dispositions; lack of pre-service training in reflective teaching; Egyptian instructional supervisors' autocratic method in which they focus on detecting and correcting teachers' subject matter mistakes, rather than supporting them to be reflective practitioners; and in-service training which is "unconnected to teachers' specific needs" (World Bank, 2018, p. 3).

To overcome the previously-mentioned barriers that exist on the road to reflective teaching and to prepare teachers for the twenty-first century in which pedagogical innovations increase rapidly, it is necessary for instructional supervisors to shift from imposing their opinions on teachers to modeling and demonstrating reflective teaching to them. It is also essential for them to discuss alternative solutions of teaching problems with teachers and to urge them to implement these solutions through action research. More importantly, both school principals and instructional supervisors should regard the implementation of reflective teaching in the classroom as a foremost criterion for evaluating teachers' performance and promoting them to higher positions. In essence, the ultimate aim of instructional supervision should be the development of reflective teachers to enable them to meet the ever-increasing pedagogical innovations in the twenty-first century. This chapter, therefore, is an attempt to help both supervisors and teachers to achieve this aim.

9.1 Definition of Reflective Teaching Practice

Following Dewey's definition of reflection, many scholars have offered definitions of reflective teaching practice as a specific type of reflection. This term is defined by Zeichner and Liston

(1996) as a process that starts when the teacher encounters a problem that cannot be instantaneously solved, then urged by a sense of uneasiness, s/he steps back to analyze her or his experience to solve this problem. Bartlett (1990) also defines this term as a conscious process that involves evaluation of past experiences to improve future teaching performance. In the same vein, Weston and McAlpine (2000) define it as "a metacognitive process for evaluating and improving teaching" (p. 364). To Husu, Toom and Patrikainen (2008) this term means "a process of self-examination and self-evaluation that teachers should engage in regularly in order to interpret and improve their professional practices" (p. 38). According to Rahman (2013), the same term is described as a process of self or group evaluation of teaching experiences to decide future actions for more effective teaching and learning. For Kaur (2016) it is "a process where teachers think over their teaching practices, analyzing how something was taught and how the practice might be improved or changed for better learning outcomes" (p. 121).

As evident from the previously-mentioned definitions, teachers' reflective practice is an ongoing process in which the teacher—in isolation and/or in collaboration with others—thinks over her or his teaching experiences to draw conclusions for better

teaching and learning. The features of this process are listed below:

- It is intentional.
- It is cyclical and continual.
- It requires specific skills and dispositions.
- It involves a dialogue with oneself and/or others.
- It may occur during, after and before a teaching event.

9.2 Components of Reflective Teaching

Many scholars (e.g., Bailey, Curtis and Nunan, 2001; King, 2008; Valli, 1990) agree that skills and dispositions are the key components of reflective teaching. They further claim that these two components are of equal importance and the possession of one to the exclusion of the other is not sufficient for developing reflective teaching practice. In the next two subsections, the author briefly addresses these two components.

9.2.1 Reflective teaching skills

Reflective teaching involves a wide variety of skills. From a cognitive perspective, it encompasses skills such as identifying teaching and learning problems, decision making, problem solving (Mirzaei et al., 2014; Richards and Lockhart, 1996);

raising hypotheses, drawing conclusions, making inferences, supporting claims with evidence (Adeyemi, 1996); questioning one's own teaching beliefs (Cunningham, 2001); skillful use of teaching methods and strategies (Clarke, 1995); formulating research questions from teaching/learning situations (Hargreaves, Earl, Moore and Manning, 2001); critical thinking, creative thinking (Gurol, 2010); making predictions (Neely, 1986); skillful use of different methods of data collection, analyzing and interpreting data (Farrell, 2004; Pollard and Tann, 1993); and designing and implementing action research (Pollard et al., 2008). From a metacognitive perspective, reflective teaching involves self-monitoring and self-questioning during planning and implementation of plans (Larrivee and Cooper, 2006). From a social metacognitive perspective, reflective teaching requires skills such as collaboration within a community of practitioners (Schaler and Fusco, 2003), talking to other teachers about teaching experiences (Farrell, 2004), participating in group discussions of teaching and learning issues (Pollard, 2005), and observation of other teachers within the context of teaching and learning (Mirzaei, Phang and Kashefi, 2014).

9.2.2 Reflective teaching dispositions

A number of key dispositions have been highlighted in the reflective teaching literature. Dewey (1910/1933), the first scholar who wrote about reflective teaching dispositions, identified three dispositions for any teacher desiring to be a reflective practitioner. These dispositions are: open-mindedness, responsibility, and wholeheartedness. Following are the definitions of these dispositions:

- (1) Open-mindedness refers to openness to ideas and experiences of others and using these ideas and experiences to inform one's own thinking and actions. In the words of Dewey (1910/1933), it means "an active desire to listen to more sides than one, to give heed to facts from whatever source they come, to give full attention to alternative possibilities, to recognize the possibility of error even in the beliefs which are dearest to us" (p. 30).
- (2) Responsibility means the desire to take responsibility for one's own actions and the willingness to adopt the consequences of what one has done or learned when they follow reasonably.
- (3) Wholeheartedness refers to the notion that when an individual is thoroughly interested in something, s/he throws

herself/himself into it with a whole heart and searches for opportunities to learn about and improve it.

Following in Dewey's footsteps, many scholars have added other dispositions that need to be acquired by those who desire to be reflective teachers. These dispositions include propensity to learn in professional communities and to exchange experiences with others (Brookfield, 1995); willingness to learn from past experience, commitment to meeting the diverse learning needs of students and to improving the quality of their learning, tendency to question one's own teaching and learning perspectives (Stenhouse, 1975); propensity to engage with students in joint problem solving (Darling-Hammond, Wise and Kline, 1999); intrinsic motivation towards teaching, commitment to lifelong learning, openness to critique and advice (Mirzaei et al., 2014); willingness to participate in professional training activities within and outside the school (Larrivee and Cooper, 2006); commitment to trying out new methods (Hargreaves, Earl, Moore and Manning, 2001); concern in developing greater awareness of self, others, and the surrounding context (York-Barr, Sommers, Ghore and Montie, 2006); desire to link theory with practice, respect for various perspectives (Rike and Sharp, 2009); commitment to treating all

students fairly and equally (Wasicsko, 2007); and tolerance for different perspectives (McAlpine, Weston, Beauchamp, Wiseman and Beauchamp, 1999).

When coupled with reflective teaching skills, the previously-mentioned dispositions can make a reflective teacher. Without these dispositions, it is difficult to expect changes to occur in teachers' behaviors. As Levin and Camp (2002) point out, "Without the disposition to reflect on their performance, teachers are less likely to improve their practice or to be able to see the links between theory and practice" (p. 572).

9.3 Types of Reflective Teaching

Reflective teaching can be divided into three types on the basis of the moment of reflection. These types are: (1) reflection-in-action, (2) reflection-on-action, and (3) reflection-for-action. Each of these types is briefly explained below.

(1) Reflection-in-action takes place during teaching. According to Schon (1983), when the teacher reflects in action, s/he stops in the midst of action to make necessary adjustments or to alter her/his method to improve teaching, if necessary. Elsewhere, he (1987) states, "In the midst of action . . . our thinking serves to reshape what we are doing while we are

doing it . . . when we can still make a difference to the situation at hand" (p. 26).

- (2) Reflection-on-action takes place after teaching. This type of reflection refers to thinking back on what has been done and how it has been done to explore negative and positive actions and draw conclusions which can guide and improve future teaching (Schon, 1983, 1987).
- (3) Reflection-for-action anticipates a future action and its possible outcomes based on the previously-mentioned two types of reflection (Killion and Todnem, 1991). That is, this type of reflection is the desired outcome of both the previous types. As Killon and Todnem (1991) state, "We undertake reflection, not so much to revisit the past or to become aware of the metacognitive process one is experiencing (both noble reasons in themselves) but to guide future actions (the more practical purpose)" (p. 15).

It appears then that the three types of reflection proceed in a spiralling cycle and that they are complementary as they represent the past (reflection-on-action), the present (reflection-in-action), and the future (reflection-for-action). It also appears that they are interdependent and rely on one another. Therefore, the multifaceted curriculum framework suggests that the teacher

should reflect in, on, and for action whenever appropriate as these three types of reflection supplement and support one another.

9.4 Benefits of Reflective Teaching

There are many benefits for reflective teaching. The first and foremost of these benefits is that it helps teachers to continuously adjust their instruction to meet the ever-changing and increasing demands of the twenty-first century (Larrivee, 2000). In this century, there is a huge amount of print and online literature—in the field of teaching, learning, and assessment—which expands nearly every day. This enormous amount of literature includes trivial and beneficial pedagogical information which, in turn, leaves the teacher confused about which methods to use with her/his students. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to act as reflective practitioners to separate wheat from chaff and gold from mercury.

The second benefit of reflective teaching is that it is essential for promoting effective teaching and teachers' professionalism because it helps teachers to continuously refine and improve their own teaching to meet their students' needs. In this connection, Cruickshank, Kennedy, Williams, Holton and Fay

(1981) contend that without systematic reflection on practice, a full professional development is unlikely to occur. Likewise, Richards (1990) argues that experience alone is insufficient for professional growth, but experience coupled with reflection is a powerful incentive for teacher development. Similarly, Allen and Casbergue (1997) hold that experience without reflection will be shallow and "professional growth is unlikely without systematic reflection" (p. 741). In the same way, Day (1999) asserts that reflection is necessary for teachers to remain up to date in their knowledge, wise in their selection and use of instructional methods, and clear about their purposes. He maintains that without engaging in reflective practice, it is unlikely that teachers will be able to understand the effects of their instructional methods upon the achievements of their students. In a like manner, Bullock and Hawk (2001) declare that unless teachers reflect on their own beliefs and actions, their improvements in teaching will be minimal. Along the same line, Mathew, Mathew and Peechattu (2017) explain that reflective teaching is beneficial for professional development because it helps teachers to understand themselves, their practices, and their students. They further state, "Reflective practice is a process that facilitates teaching, learning and understanding, and

it plays a central role in teachers' professional development" (p. 126).

In addition to what has been mentioned above, many scholars see other potentials of reflective practice for promoting effective teaching and developing teachers' professionalism. These potentials include: (1) helping teachers to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Loughran, 2002), (2) addressing their individual needs and helping them to solve the problems which experts cannot solve with theories (Schon, 1983), (3) making them feel more confident in trying new and different teaching methods (Grootenboer, 2009; Richards and Lockhart, 1996), and (4) increasing job satisfaction and improving personal efficacy (Alsop, 2000).

In support of using reflective teaching as a means of professional development, research indicated that this type of teaching: (1) developed teachers' awareness of the effects their own actions and equipped them with professional skills (Downey, 2008; Giaimo-Ballard, 2010; Rock and Levin, 2002, 2003), and (2) enhanced English language teachers' professional development (Başağa, 2005). Moreover, research on effective teaching revealed a positive relationship between EFL teachers'

reflective practice and the effectiveness of their teaching (Jay, 2003; Motallebzadeh, Ahmadi and Hosseinnia, 2018).

The third benefit is that reflective practice nourishes and develops teachers' professional autonomy because it involves teachers in taking responsibility for shaping and developing their own practice. In this connection, Thavenius (1999) describes the autonomous teacher as one who reflects on her or his own teaching practice to improve it. Richards and Farrell (2005) also hold that reflective practice shifts the "responsibility for initiating improvement in teaching practices from an outsider, such as a supervisor, to the teacher" (p. 37). They maintain that such reflective practice empowers the teacher to be a decision maker and a self-directed lifelong learner. In the same vein, Zeichner (2007) asserts that when the teacher reflects on her or his own practice, s/he takes control over her or his own continuing professional development while making improvements to the quality of practice.

The fourth benefit is that reflective practice brings to light those unconscious teaching beliefs that guide teachers' daily actions and impact their practices. This in turn leads them to alter their mistaken beliefs about teaching and learning, change their

routine behavior, and make creative changes in their teaching. As Dewey (1910/1933) puts it, "Reflection emancipates us from merely impulsive and merely routine activity . . . enables us to direct our actions with foresight . . . to know what we are about when we act" (p. 17).

The fifth benefit of reflective teaching practice is that it incites students to become reflective learners. It is unreasonable to expect students to become reflective learners if their teachers are not reflective practitioners because teachers cannot give what they do not possess. If teachers want to develop reflective thinking in their students and to engage them in reflective learning, they themselves should be reflective practitioners; that is, they need to start with themselves and reflect on their own actions and beliefs. In this connection, Dewey (1910/1933) notes that when teachers reflect on their teaching practices, they spur their students to act in the same way. He further notes, "Everything the teacher does, as well as the manner in which he does it, incites the child to respond in some way or other, and each response tends to set the child's attitude in some way or other" (p. 47). Miller, Tomlinson and Jones (1994) put it more explicitly in this way, "Teachers need reflective skills . . .

because if they don't have, it actually means that they are short-changing the students" (p. 23).

The sixth benefit of reflective teaching practice is that it encourages students to become independent learners. In this connection, many educationalists believe that the promotion of student independence depends on teacher independence. As Little (1991) argues, the teachers who wish to promote independence in their students need to "start with themselves, reflecting on their own beliefs, practices, experiences and expectations of the teaching/learning situation" (p. 47). Elsewhere, he (1995) further argues that teachers can only develop student independence when they themselves are independent in determining the actions they take in the classrooms and in applying reflective and self-directing strategies to their teaching. Gabryś-Barker (2012) also puts this idea in the following way:

Teacher autonomy is a pre-requisite for developing learner autonomy. No teacher can promote and develop learner autonomy without himself/herself being autonomous in his/her classroom and feeling a strong individual responsibility for what happens in the classroom (and beyond) and for sharing this responsibility with learners. (p. 97)

Similarly, Smith (2003) affirms that if teachers want their students to learn by themselves, they themselves must take more responsibility for shaping their practice and learn from their own professional experiences. He adds that when teachers become reflective practitioners, they become emancipated and this, in turn, allows them to guide their students towards self-reflection so that they can become independent and emancipated, too.

In addition to the previously mentioned benefits of reflective teaching practice, the literature offers other benefits that accrue from this type of teaching. These benefits include reducing burnout in the teaching profession (Davis and Osborn, 2003), promoting teachers' creativity (Moon, 1999), developing their critical thinking and research skills (Lester, 1998), and strengthening connections among the teaching staff (York-Barr et al., 2006).

In acknowledgment of the previously mentioned benefits, reflective practice has been identified as a critical component of teaching by many accrediting organizations all over the world (e.g., NBPTS, 2008; NCATE, 2008). The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 2008), for example, requires faculty to "inquire systematically into and

reflect upon their own practice and be committed to lifelong professional development" (p. 41). The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS, 2008) also requires teachers to engage in reflection on their practice and to consider reflection as "central to their responsibilities as professionals to steadily extend their knowledge base, improve their teaching, and refine their evolving philosophy of education" (p. 71).

Drawing on the previously mentioned benefits of reflective teaching, the multifaceted curriculum framework suggests that Egyptian teachers need to continually reflect on their teaching beliefs and experiences to cope with the ever-increasing pedagogical innovations in this century and to improve their students' learning outcomes. It further suggests that reflective practice should be incorporated into evaluation standards at both the pre-service and in-service levels of teaching.

9.5 Methods of Practicing and Promoting Reflective Teaching

Reflective teaching requires practice if it is to be developed. Therefore, a large number of methods have been proposed to assist teachers in practicing this type of teaching. These methods can be divided into personal and collaborative methods. In the

personal methods, the teacher reflects on her/his teaching alone without the help of other people. This type of methods include individual action research (Farrell, 2007; Kemmis, 1985; LoCastro, 1994; Mills, 2010), personal teaching portfolios (Bartlett, 2006; Milman, 2005; Murray, 1995; Orland-Barak, 2005), analysis of video and/or audio recordings of one's own teaching (Curry, Lilienthal and Blacklock, 2015; Tripp, 2010; Tripp and Rich 2012), self-reflective teaching diaries/journals (Francis, 1995; Gil-Garcia and Cintron, 2002; Lee, 2007; Woodfield and Lazarus, 1998; Zimmet, Roznau and Verner, 1999), and narrative writing (Brookfield, 1995; Hatton and Smith, 1995b; Mattingly, 1991).

The solitary reflection practiced in the previously mentioned methods, as Chak (2006) and Husu et al. (2008) believe, is essential for developing reflective teaching because it helps the teacher to meet her/his own professional needs and the needs of her/his students. Moreover, "Teachers who reflect in a personalistic way would be caretakers, not just information dispensers" (Valli, 1997, p. 78). Therefore, Zeichner (1993) states that the process of improving one's own teaching "must start from reflection on one's own experience" (p. 8). However, such solitary reflection, as Webb (2000, 2001) states, may not

help the teacher to uncover her or his personal biases or to come up with ideas beyond the scope of her/his beliefs and assumptions. Moreover, Valli (1997) contends that solitary reflection can lead to teacher isolation from her/his colleagues. She maintains, "If left unsocialized, individual reflection can close in on itself, producing detached, idiosyncratic teachers" (p. 86).

Due to the demerits of personal reflection, some scholars favor collaborative reflection on teaching. In this type of reflection, the teacher reflects on her or his practice in collaboration with colleagues and shares her or his own personal insights with them (Collay, Dunlap, Enloe and Gagnon, 1998). This type of reflection provides social support for personal reflection (Wenger, 1998) and deepens teachers' expertise (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002). It also allows teachers to discuss the theoretical principles and ideas and to generate new teaching strategies for their own teaching environment (Bereiter, 2002; Freire and Shor, 1987). In addition, it helps to uncover the false assumptions teachers hold about teaching and brings their personal biases to the surface. As Brookfield (1995) puts it, "Talking to colleagues about what we do unravels the shroud of silence in which our practice is wrapped" (p. 30). In support of

the effectiveness of collaborative reflection, some studies found that this type of reflection promoted teachers' reflection (Lord and Lomicka, 2007); helped them to better understand the relationship between theory and practice, change their beliefs about practice, solve their teaching problems, and to gain different experiences, perspectives, and ideas (Baran and Cagiltay, 2010); and had a positive effect on EFL teachers' instructional practice (Mede, 2010; Özsoy, 2017; Parsons and Stephenson, 2005).

For reaping the benefits of collaborative reflection, a number of methods have been proposed to allow teachers to practice reflection in a teaching/learning community and in interaction with colleagues. These methods include reciprocal peer coaching (Ackland, 1991; Costa and Garmston, 1993, 2002; Dana and Yendol-Hoppey, 2008; Soisangwarn and Wongwanichb, 2014), professional workshops (Hord, 1997, 2004), teacher interactive journals (Alterio, 2004; Andrusyszyn and Davie, 1997; Maloney and Campbell-Evans, 2002), participatory action research (Blair and Minkler, 2009; Hughes, 2003; Rock and Levin, 2002; Whyte, 1991), dialogue journals among teachers (Bain, Ballantyne, Packer and Mills, 1997; Bean and Zulich, 1989; Flores and Garcia, 1984; Richards and Ho,

1994), professional dialogues between teachers and supervisors (Simoncini, Lasen and Rocco, 2014; Valli, 1992; Zeichner and Liston, 1996), audio and video conferencing among teachers and between teachers and supervisors (Drexhage, Leiss, Schmidt and Ehmke, 2016; Hunter, 1980), teachers' seminars/professional group discussions (DuFour, DuFour and Eaker, 2008; Lee, 2008; Ruan and Griffith, 2011), and reflective teaching blogs (Stiler and Philleo, 2003). However, these methods, like other collaborative methods, have their pitfalls. These pitfalls include, but not limited to, groupthink, loafing, diffusion of responsibility, difficulty of organization, and inequality of participation.

It appears then that each type of reflective teaching methods has its own advantages and disadvantages. Therefore, the multifaceted curriculum framework suggests that teachers should use both of them in sequence because a combination of both types will be more effective in enhancing reflective skills and dispositions than either one alone. In agreement with this suggestion, Webb (2000) contends that in order for personal reflection to be effective, professional dialoguing with others has to be a part of it. He maintains that through such professional dialoguing teachers share reflections and personal views with

others, which help them to uncover blind and buried assumptions and beliefs about teaching and learning. Along the same line of thought, Hakkarainen, Palonen, Paavola and Lehtinen (2004) believe that both personal and collaborative reflections are essential for teachers' professional development. In sum, the teacher should reflect on her or his own teaching practice individually and collaboratively through dialoging with her- or himself and others, starting with the former. S/he should also use multiple personal and collaborative methods of reflection rather than adhere to a single method over time.

9.6 Assessment of Reflective Teaching

Numerous scholars and practitioners have offered instruments for assessing reflective teaching. These instruments take various forms. These forms include reflective teaching questionnaires (e.g., Kayapinar and Erkus, 2009; Mirzaei, Phang and Kashefi, 2014) and reflective teaching inventories (e.g., Akbari, Behzadpoor and Dadvand, 2010). However, these instruments are not always available and are not tailored to all teachers' needs or all teaching events. To overcome these drawbacks, the multifaceted curriculum framework suggests the use of self-reflective questions daily after each reflective teaching event or wherever and whenever necessary. These questions will help the

teacher to easily reflect on her or his reflective teaching at any time. They will also provide her or him with insights to continually re-think and re-plan reflection to know what works and what does not work for reflection in particular skill areas. Examples of these self-reflective teaching questions include:

- Why did I reflect the way I did?
- Did the reflection method I used work well? Why? Why not?
- Did the reflection method I employed help me to adjust my teaching to meet students' needs? Why? Why not?
- Did the reflection method I employed help me to accomplish what I planned? Why? Why not?
- Did the reflection method I employed help me to improve my teaching? Why? Why not?
- Did the reflection method I employed help me to improve students' learning outcomes? Why? Why not?
- To what extent was my reflection based on sound and valid data?
- Will I use the same reflection method when I re-encounter the same the problem? Why? Why not?
- Do I need to continue reflection on this experience with the help of my colleagues? Why? Why not?
- What will I do differently next time?
- Am I open to try out another reflection method next time?

Chapter Ten

Assessment for and of Learning Through Multiple Authentic Methods

10.0 Introduction

To harmonize assessment with the skills and dispositions that students need to function effectively in today's world, evaluation systems worldwide are currently shifting from traditional assessment—that focuses on the recall of discrete bits of information in artificial contexts at the end of the curriculum—to authentic assessment for and of learning. This alternative form of assessment focuses on knowledge construction in authentic contexts, mirrors students' real life, and allows for assessing the twenty-first century skills and dispositions. Therefore, many scholars and educational associations (e.g., French, 2003; Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2007c; Shepard, 2000) believe that this new form of assessment is the true path to educational reform. Nevertheless, the traditional form of assessment (also known as objective or standardized assessment) is still widely used in Egyptian educational

institutions at all levels despite its disadvantages. The first of these disadvantages is that the questions of this form of assessment—including true/false, multiple-choice, and matching questions—yield information about minute elements of the language, not about language use in real life situations. Conlan (1986), a specialist in assessment at the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in New Jersey, expresses this disadvantage in relation to the multiple-choice questions (MCQs) in the following way:

No multiple-choice question can be used to discover how well students can express their own ideas in their own words, how well they can marshal evidence to support their arguments, or how well they can adjust to the need to communicate for a particular purpose and to a particular audience. Nor can multiple-choice questions ever indicate whether what the student writes will be interesting to read. (p. 124)

The second disadvantage of traditional assessment is that it fails to assess higher-order thinking skills and dispositions which the twenty-first century demands from students. Thus, teaching to this form of assessment leads to a graduation of citizens capable of retaining information, yet unable to make educated decisions, think independently, or solve real world problems. As Resnick points out, "We must recognize that essential intellectual abilities are falling through the cracks of conventional testing"

(cited in Wiggins, 1990, p. 5). Ayers (1993) also emphasizes that the traditional form of assessment cannot measure higher order thinking or valuable dispositions in the following way:

Standardized tests can't measure initiative, creativity, imagination, conceptual thinking, curiosity, effort, irony, judgment, commitment, nuance, good will, ethical reflection, or a host of other valuable dispositions and attributes. What they can measure and count are isolated skills, specific facts and functions, the least interesting and least significant aspects of learning. (p. 116)

In the same vein, Haertel and Mullis (1996) point out that traditional assessment leads to neglecting students' higher order thinking skills in favor of isolated bits of information. They state, "Overreliance on multiple-choice and similar item formats has led to curricula and instructional methods that encourage learning isolated bits of information and mechanically applying isolated skills, at the expense of more complex reasoning and meaningful problem solving" (p. 287). The emphasis on bits of information also creates the impression that these bits are more important than higher-order thinking. And unfortunately, this is the impression that stays with students throughout their lives.

The third disadvantage of traditional assessment is that it cannot assess students' learning processes (Burke, 1999). Nor does it help them to adjust and improve these processes (Padilla, Aninao and Sung, 1996). Therefore, it leads to a graduation of students who are not aware of their learning strategies and lack the ability to regulate and monitor their own learning in an ongoing way.

The fourth disadvantage of traditional assessment is that it stands as a barrier to developing democratic citizens because it focuses on the selection of one correct answer rather than the exploration of multiple viewpoints (Kovacs, 2009; Michelli, 2005). Flinders (2005) goes so far as to say that this form of assessment is anti-democratic as it limits the opportunities for discussion and reflection. It, therefore, stifles students' ability to authentically probe multiple viewpoints and drives teachers to neglect the skills that students need for participating in a democratic society.

The fifth disadvantage of traditional assessment is that it forces teachers to spend most of the instruction time on teaching bits and pieces of language and drives them to use narrow instructional techniques such as drilling with test items and to devote more class time to teaching test-taking strategies rather than language learning strategies. These, in turn, lead to taking

too much time away from teaching and learning (Teoh, Coggins, Guan and Hiler, 2014), fragmenting the curriculum and separating it from real life (O'Malley and Pierce, 1996), and neglecting real language performance (Shepard, 2000). Teaching to traditional assessment also causes score inflation (i.e., score gains that don't represent actual improvements in learning) which often gives the impression that the quality of learning is getting better although it is not actually improving. In support of this, Amrein and Berliner (2002) examined data from eighteen American states that implemented objective assessment to investigate whether students gained any knowledge that they could apply elsewhere other than performing on a state's objective test. The data revealed that this form of assessment did not increase students' learning although it increased their scores and that such increases in scores were "the result of test preparation and/or the exclusion of students from the testing process" (p. 2).

The sixth disadvantage of traditional assessment is that it leads to many psychological problems, including depression (Noddings, 2008); boredom (Moses and Nanna, 2007), anxiety (Salinger, 1998), and reduction of self-confidence and self-efficacy (Dutro and Selland, 2012). These psychological

problems, in turn, inhibit deep learning and increase dropout rates, particularly among underperforming students (Nathan, 2008; Shriberg and Shriberg, 2006). Falk (1994) adds that this form of assessment demoralizes students. She goes so far as to say that all the growth in dispositions that takes place in a course of a whole year goes down the drain in the two or three hours of taking the test in its traditional form.

In addition to the six disadvantages mentioned above, a number of scholars have added other disadvantages that accrue from the traditional form of assessment. These disadvantages include: incentivizing school cheating behavior (Jacob and Levitt, 2004), alienating learners from their own environment (Stevick, 1976), ignoring different thinking styles and individual differences (Anderson, 1998), undermining teacher professionalism and expertise (Madaus and Kellaghan, 1993), neglecting the demands of the twenty-first century and the skills necessary for success in life (Popham, 2006), and increasing the incentive for guessing the correct answer. In brief, this traditional form of assessment is just an easy way of obtaining inflated scores that mean nothing in the real world because higher-level thinking and authentic performance are lost in its bubbles. To frankly put

it, its benefits are only limited to scoring machine manufacturers and scoring software developers.

Due to the previously-mentioned disadvantages, traditional assessment "failed wherever it has been tried" (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 238). Many studies also revealed the negative consequences of overreliance on this form of assessment (e.g., Herman and Golan, 2005; McNeil and Valenzuela, 2000). Furthermore, this form of assessment is not consistent with the current assessment theories or the demands of the twenty-first century. More than that, objectivity cannot be achieved in the assessment of social sciences in general and language performance—alone or in union with the 21st century skills—is no exception. It is clear then that the Egyptian examination system should shift from assessment for the sake of assessment to assessment for the sake of learning. As Black and William (2005) state, "Assessment in education must, first, and foremost, serve the purpose of supporting learning" (p. 9). This, of course, requires a shift to authentic assessment. Such a shift, as the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2007c) affirms, "is vital to the widespread adoption of 21st century skills in our schools" (p. 2). In support of this shift, research studies revealed that this form of assessment improved students' language and

higher order thinking skills. For a review of these research studies, see El-Koumy (2004b). Therefore, this chapter aims at building teachers' competence in authentic assessment for and of learning to enable them to promote and assess language performance in union with the twenty-first century skills and dispositions.

10.1 Definition of Authentic Assessment

Authentic assessment (sometimes known as performance or alternative assessment) refers to a form of assessment where students create and construct their own responses in authentic real-life situations (Darling-Hammond, Aness and Falk, 1995; Fischer and King, 1995; Mueller, 2011). Mueller (2011), for example, defines this term as "a form of assessment in which students are asked to perform real world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills" (para. 3). The characteristics of this form of assessment are listed below (Hart, 1994; Linn, Baker and Dunbar, 1991; Wiener and Cohen, 1997; Wiggins, 1989, 1992):

- It requires students to produce knowledge rather than reproduce information others have created.
- It has value beyond the school walls.

- It values the process as much as the finished product.
- It makes assessment a learning experience.
- It incorporates student's reflection on her or his own learning experiences.
- It allows students to show originality and creativity that go beyond what is taught or learned.
- It acknowledges different thinking and learning styles.
- It occurs all the time in various situations inside and outside of school.
- It encompasses cognitive and affective domains of learning.
- It is motivating and enjoyable.
- It is challenging, but achievable.
- It focuses on big ideas, rather than fragmented pieces of information.
- It uses complex, ill-structured and open-ended tasks.
- It elicits higher order thinking.
- It allows for multiple points of view and diversity of outcome.
- It incorporates both individuals working alone and/or in small groups.
- It provides multiple ways through which students can demonstrate their knowledge and skills.
- It is criterion-referenced, not norm-referenced.
- It involves students in setting the criteria for grading.

10.2 Types of Authentic Assessment

Authentic assessment is divided into assessment for learning and assessment of learning. Assessment for learning (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the teaching/learning process. It is defined by Chappuis, Stiggins, Chappuis and Arter (2004) as "activities undertaken by teachers—and by their students in assessing themselves—that provide information to be used as feedback to modify teaching and learning" (p. 11). Popham (2008) also defines it as activities that provide ongoing feedback to be "used by teachers to adjust their ongoing instructional procedures or by students to adjust their current learning tactics" (p. 6). This type of assessment makes it possible to bridge teaching and learning gaps before they get worse (Boud and Falchikov, 2006), allows for assessing dispositions in action (Hipkins, 2007), promotes students' metacognition and reflection (Cizek, 2010), addresses immediate students' needs and supports deep-learning (Crooks, 1988), creates a non-threatening atmosphere (Stiggins, Arter, Chappuis and Chappuis, 2007), helps the teacher to "orchestrate the learning process" (OECD, 2010, p. 17), and develops independent learning skills (Clark, 2012b). These benefits can, in turn, lead to improving students' learning processes and

outcomes. In support of this conclusion, research studies showed that this type of assessment was effective in developing effective and self-regulated learning strategies and raising learning outcomes (Black and Wiliam, 1998; Bose and Rengel, 2009; Campos and O’Hern, 2007; Clark, 2012a; Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Stiggins and Chappuis, 2006).

On the other hand, assessment of learning (also known as summative assessment) is used to measure performance at the end of an instructional period to determine whether students have learned what they were supposed to learn to certify their achievement. This type of assessment focuses only on the product of learning and neglects the process that leads to this product.

In short, assessment for learning supports and guides teaching and learning, while assessment of learning decides how much students have learned for promotion or graduation purposes. Thus, they are different, but complementary.

10.3 Integration of Assessment for and of Learning

It is evident from the foregoing that assessment for and of learning are used for different purposes and both have benefits

and limitations. Accordingly, an integrated form of both is needed to take advantage of their benefits and to overcome their limitations. As Glazer (2014) points out, "A combination of the two types of assessment is necessary so instructors can provide formative assessment for learning and summative assessment for assuring that the formative assessment is done appropriately" (p. 276). Still other benefits of the combination of both types of assessment include increasing validity of assessment (Johnson and Schoonenboom, 2016; Wiliam, 2006); serving both formative and summative purposes, accommodating the needs of diverse learners by giving them more opportunities to exhibit their skills (Bourke and Mentis, 2014); minimizing test stress, linking the process to the product and improving both of them (Shavelson, 2006); providing a broader picture of the learners' skills (Siarova, Sternadel and Mašidlauskaitė, 2017); and maximizing the potential of assessment (Bialik, Martin, Mayo and Trilling, 2016). Drawing on these benefits, the multifaceted curriculum framework calls for using an authentic assessment approach that integrates both assessment for and of learning to obtain a broader and multidimensional picture of students' performance and to improve their learning processes and products. In line with this suggestion, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2007c) contends that both formative and

summative assessments supplement each other and "support 21st century skills" (p. 3). The partnership maintains that both types of assessment should be parts of students' overall assessment in the following way:

Assessment must be seen both as an instructional tool for use while learning is occurring (*formative*), and as an accountability tool to determine if learning has occurred (*summative*). Both functions are important and should be used in concert in the classroom. (Italics in original, p. 3)

In agreement with the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, several scholars assert that twenty-first century assessment must take advantage of assessment for and of learning because each can make essential contributions. In this connection, Saavedra and Opfer (2012) argue that "both formative and summative assessments play useful roles in teaching for 21st century skills" (p. 18). Much like Saavedra and Opfer, Siarova et al. (2017) recommend that for assessment practices to fit the twenty-first century learning, policy-makers and schools need to "strike a balance between formative and summative assessment, utilising the benefits of both, without over-relying on one particular method" (p. 10). They add that this balance strengthens the overall validity and quality of assessment. Siarova et al. further

cite research studies, by Earl and Katz and Earl, which support their own view in the following way:

Researchers emphasise that to prepare students to meet the demands of an information and knowledge-based economy, which requires students to work towards higher order thinking, autonomy and self-management, there is a need for an integrated focus on assessment. Such an integrated focus would include a range of formative and summative assessment approaches that complement each other, in order to provide the adequate level of challenge and support to each student (Earl and Katz, 2006; Earl, 2013). (p. 40)

There must be a place, then, for the two types of assessment because they increase student engagement in learning and improve learning outcomes and neither of them excludes the other. Just as the Egyptian education system needs a link among teaching, learning and assessment; it also needs integration between assessment for and of learning. None of them can constitute a sole basis for assessing students' learning particularly when making critically important decisions for grade-level promotion and graduation. In a high-stakes environment that requires students to sit for national tests like Egypt, the multifaceted curriculum framework suggests that both types of assessment should be assigned equal weights (50 percent each) in the calculation of each student's total marks of

any course. However, this suggestion can work only if private tutoring is banned and teachers who work as private tutors are dismissed from schools to avoid bias in judgments. It is also worth mentioning here that simply combining assessment for and of learning is not sufficient for maximizing the potential of assessment. The potential of assessment also depends on other factors, including the quality of assessment methods and tasks.

10.4 Benefits of Authentic Assessment

In order to meet the demands of the twenty-first century and to bring quality education to every student, several educationalists and education associations (e.g. Koh, Tan and Ng, 2012; Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2007c; Price, Pierson and Light, 2011) argue that traditional norm-referenced assessment needs to be replaced with criterion-referenced authentic assessment to allow teachers to assess what they want students to be able to do in the world outside the school walls. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2007c), for example, asserts that such a shift is vital to the widespread adoption of twenty-first century skills in schools. It maintains:

Meeting the demands of today's world requires a shift in assessment strategies to measure the skills now prized in a complex global environment. . . . We must

move from primarily measuring discrete knowledge to measuring students' ability to think critically, examine problems, gather information, and make informed, reasoned decisions while using technology. In addition to posing real world challenges, such assessments should accept a range of solutions to a task. (p. 2)

In agreement with the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, Koh, Tan and Ng (2012), with citation of other scholars' support of their viewpoint, argue that if assessment is to be consistent with the demands of the twenty-first century, constructivist assessment is vital. They state:

In the context of 21st century learning, the preparation of students to become critical thinkers, productive workers, and lifelong learners in the new knowledge-based economies, requires classroom assessment to move toward constructivist learning approaches to promote students' higher-order thinking skills, in-depth conceptual understanding, real world problem-solving abilities, and communication skills (Shepard 1989, 2000; Newmann et al., 1996; Darling-Hammond and Falk 1997). These are the essential skills for students to succeed in the 21st century knowledge-based economy. (pp. 3-4)

Thus, the new trend in assessment is to shift from traditional assessment to authentic assessment because this shift is vital for meeting the demands of the twenty-first century (Darling-Hammond and Pecheone, 2009). Furthermore, the authentic

form of assessment has several benefits for both the students and the teacher. For students, authentic assessment engages their minds and enriches their higher-order thinking skills (Darling-Hammond, 1993; Montgomery, 2002); makes them strategic learners who are aware of their own learning processes, motivates them to excel because of involving them in meaningful activities which are needed in the real-world (Herrington and Herrington, 1998); reduces their test stress and test anxiety because it occurs in a non-threatening environment, transforms them into responsible citizens and enables them to take charge of their own learning (Sweet, 1993); gives them a sense of ownership of the assessment process and fosters their self-esteem and self-confidence because it allows them to participate in creating assessment criteria and to assess themselves and each other via self- and peer-assessment (Newmann, Lopez and Bryk, 1998).

Additional benefits of authentic assessment for students include equipping them to function effectively in the world beyond the school doors, fostering their metacognitive skills, caring about them as humans by taking their needs into account (Baron and Boschee, 1995); allowing for differentiation of assessment by giving various opportunities to them to demonstrate their

knowledge and skills (Darling-Hammond and Pecheone, 2009); transforming them into productive citizens who are capable of performing meaningful tasks in the real world, involving them in the community and developing the skills they need for participating in a democratic society (Fox, Freeman, Hughes and Murphy, 2017); encouraging deep rather than surface learning (Siarova et al., 2017); and improving achievement (Fletcher, Bartlett, Bryer and Bowie, 2001).

For teachers, authentic assessment helps them to improve instruction through identification and remediation of problematic areas (Shepard et al., 1995). It also makes them more aware of their students' needs and allows them to adjust instruction in response to these needs because many of the authentic assessment methods are formative in nature and the information collected from their applications can be used to make immediate decisions about where teaching needs to go next (Vickerman, 2010). In addition, this form of assessment allows teachers to teach and assess the skills and dispositions that are related to functioning in the real world. It moreover allows them to develop and assess the processes as well as the products of students' learning and to integrate assessment into teaching.

It is clear then that assessment should be authentic if it is to drive educational development in the twenty-first century because this form of assessment encourages students to be creators of knowledge rather than receivers of information and urges them to shift from surface learning to deep learning. It also allows the teacher to focus on the twenty-first century skills and to assess what students should be able to do in the world outside the school walls.

10.5 Criticisms of Authentic Assessment and Responses to Them

In parallel to the previously-mentioned advantages of authentic assessment, critics of this form of assessment protest that it neglects language microskills, whereas its advocates hold that language is more than the sum of its elements and that microskills taught or assessed in isolation from context are not likely to become functional. Critics also claim that this form of assessment is still in need of validity and reliability, whereas its proponents believe that it is valid in terms of its consequences, cognitive complexity, fairness, transference, significance, and efficiency. Proponents also contend that this form of assessment achieves reliability by using a variety of formats for data collection, appropriate rubrics for scoring, and more than a

single observer or reader. Critics of authentic assessment further claim that this form of assessment is time consuming, whereas its defenders suggest that integrating it into learning—through using tasks that serve assessment and learning at the same time such as learning projects, group discussions, and dialogue journals—can overcome this limitation and make assessment a learning experience throughout the school year.

10.6 Authentic Assessment Methods

Authentic assessment methods that are highly applicable to language teaching/learning can be divided into methods of assessment for and of learning. The former type integrates assessment into learning while it is occurring. This type includes, but not limited to, oral interviews, discussions, conversations, teacher-student interactions, student-student interactions, reflective journals, dialogue journals, portfolios, learning diaries, learning/reading logs, group projects, storytelling, reading/writing workshops, literature circles, dramatization, role playing, reading/writing conferences, and so forth (Baron and Boschee, 1995; O'Malley and Pierce, 1996; Wiggins, 1993). The latter type is used to determine whether students have learned what they were expected to learn at the

end of a course or a program. This latter type includes, but not limited to, essay writing, brainwriting, mind mapping, ill structured problem solving, report writing, text analysis, letter writing, and so forth (Darling-Hammond and Pecheone, 2009; Wren, 2009).

Although all the previously-mentioned methods of authentic assessment can serve both formative and summative purposes, they are classified here into for and of on the basis of the length of time each type needs to be completed and the consequences that can be placed on its results. The former can be used as an integral part of teaching and learning during the academic year, whereas the latter can be used as final tests at the end of the academic year because it requires a shorter time. The former is also appropriate for low-stakes assessment, whereas the latter is appropriate for high-stakes evaluation. That is, the former can be used with individual students or small groups, whereas the latter can be used nationwide.

To secure a fair and complete picture of a student's performance, teachers should use both types of assessment. They should also employ a variety of methods during and at the end of the academic year because no one method is sufficient for

assessing language performance alone, or in union with the twenty-first century skills. Therefore, the selection from these methods should depend on the skill(s) being taught or learned. All in all, the Egyptian examination system needs to shift from behavioral assessment that measures non-authentic, narrow learning objectives at the end of the curriculum to ongoing authentic assessment for and of learning to transform students into productive citizens who are capable of performing real life tasks and developing their local communities.

10.7 Assessment of Authentic Assessment Tasks

Assessment tasks should be assessed before and after their administration to the students. They should be assessed before their administration to the students to make sure that all aims of the curriculum are met, all tasks are themselves learning tasks, the scoring rubric for each task is fair and covers the important dimensions of task performance, and to make changes, if any, are needed. To help the test developer to do so, s/he can answer the following questions on a 4-point scale, with 1 = Not at all, and 4 = Very much.

- Is each task aligned with curriculum aims?
- Are all the curriculum aims met?

- Does each task promote students' learning?
- Does each task represent a real-life situation at students' educational level?
- Does each task have a realistic value in everyday life?
- Does each task resemble the complexity of the real life?
- Is each task enjoyable and motivating for learning?
- Is each task challenging but achievable?
- Does each task allow for diversity of outcomes?
- Does each task require students to construct knowledge rather than reproduce information others have produced?
- Does each task focus on big ideas, rather than trivial microfacts?
- Is each task free of bias?
- Are the tasks varied?
- Is there a scoring rubric for each task?
- Is the scoring rubric for each task well-defined, explicit, and covers the important dimensions of the task performance?
- Are the tasks appropriate to time allotment?

Once the students' assessment is over, the teacher should also evaluate the test in terms of students' responses to the test tasks to know if the students had difficulty in answering certain types

of questions. To help the test developer to do so, s/he can answer the following questions (O'Farrell, 2009, pp. 17-19):

- What types of tasks did students do well? Why?
- What types of tasks did they struggle with? Why?
- What tasks did students avoid? Why?
- Did each task elicit a variety of responses?
- Do the outcomes of the test mean that the aims of the curriculum have been achieved?

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