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Comparing Evidence In Tarbiya Lessons To Develop Primary School Pupils' Logical Thinking

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ABSTRACT
This thesis proposes a method for preparing prospective primary school teachers to assess logical thinking in Tarbiya lessons. The method centres on comparing evidence for competing decisions in a familiar classroom dilemma. It uses two versions of the same task to distinguish pupils' initial preferences from their ability to revise a judgment when relevant conditions change.

KEYWORDS: Tarbiya, logical thinking, evidence comparison, primary education, teacher preparation, formative assessment.

INTRODUCTION
A Tarbiya lesson on fairness can prompt pupils to explain why a rule is appropriate in one situation and why it may need to change in another. For prospective primary school teachers, the challenge is to make the reasoning behind such judgments observable. A pupil who reaches the same decision as the teacher may have relied on an irrelevant detail, while another pupil may justify a different decision with relevant evidence. The proposed method therefore focuses assessment on the relationship between the evidence, the criterion for making a decision, and the conclusion.

Methodology
This conceptual thesis applies the emphasis on explicit reasoning in classroom dialogue described by Mercer, Wegerif, and Dawes [1] to the design of paired Tarbiya tasks. Teacher candidates prepare two versions of a dilemma, keeping the aim and available decisions constant while changing one relevant condition. They predict how the change could affect pupils' reasoning and prepare a short assessment guide before discussing the task with peers.

Results and Discussion

In the first version, two groups request the same set of coloured pencils during a joint classroom project. Group A asks first and has ordinary pencils available. Group B asks later and has no pencils. Both groups are expected to complete a drawing by the end of the lesson. Pupils decide how to allocate the shared materials and explain which criterion guides their choice. One pupil might give priority to the group that asked first, while another might divide the coloured pencils so that both groups can begin.

In the second version, Group B receives enough ordinary pencils from another classroom. Pupils reconsider their initial decision and explain whether the new information matters under their chosen criterion. If the purpose is to ensure that both groups can begin, the arrival of additional pencils may justify a different allocation. If the purpose is to give both groups equal access to colour, the new information may leave the original decision intact. The comparison helps candidates see why a justified decision can remain stable even when one fact changes.

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Teacher candidates collect an individual response to each version before opening a whole-class discussion. In evaluating the responses, they look for a stated criterion, a relevant fact used to justify the decision, and an explanation of how the changed condition affects the conclusion. For instance, if a pupil writes that one group should receive the materials because its members are friends, the candidate can ask whether that reason would still be acceptable if the groups exchanged places. This follow-up invites the pupil to test the consistency of the rule.

In a teacher education seminar, two candidates can assess the same anonymised responses and compare their judgments. Where ratings differ, each candidate identifies the sentence that supports the rating. The comparison can reveal whether the assessment guide makes the difference between naming a relevant fact and explaining its significance clear enough for consistent use.

Conclusion

Paired dilemmas give prospective teachers a practical way to elicit and assess logical thinking in Tarbiya lessons. By changing one condition and asking pupils to reconsider their decisions, teachers can observe how pupils connect evidence to a criterion and whether they apply that criterion consistently. The procedure can be examined in classroom research using comparable tasks and independently rated pupil responses.

References

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