

## BUILDING CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS THROUGH VIDEO MATERIALS

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**Annotation:** Critical thinking skill is one of the great significances to foreign language teaching. The article describes concepts and importance of critical thinking skills in language learning classroom. Some video materials are suggested to develop students critical thinking skills.

**Key words:** critical thinking, relevance, conception, assessing, reason, implement, video material, fundamental goal, motivation, recording.

Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. In its exemplary form, it is based on universal intellectual values that transcend subject matter divisions: clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness.<sup>1</sup> Critical thinking skills should be essential for language teaching. It's the ability to: solve problems, express views and feelings appropriately, capture and transmit knowledge, think about thinking, locate the appropriate route to a goal, make product that are valued in a particular culture. Chaffee (1985) and Paul (1995) mention that enhancing students' critical thinking abilities is the core of meaningful education. Chaffee (1985) explains that meaningful education halts students from involving in the unreflective learning of information, and equips them with the tools necessary to understand thoroughly the world they are in<sup>2</sup>. As Siegel (1988) mentions this conception of critical thinking extends critical thinking beyond the skill of assessing statements and actions. There are also significant dispositions, values and traits that a critical thinker needs to

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<sup>1</sup> Edward M. Glaser. "Defining Critical Thinking". Retrieved 22 March 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Chaffee, J. (1985). Thinking critically. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company

develop<sup>3</sup>. Edward M. Glaser stated that critical thinking is self-guided, self-disciplined thinking which attempts to reason at the highest level of quality in a fair-minded way. People who think critically consistently attempt to live rationally, reasonably, empathically. <sup>4</sup>

Although all the above-mentioned definitions differ in scope and emphasis, they all place a premium on both the process and the outcome of learning. As its clear that critical thinking can be taught and learned.

The effects of teaching English with video materials on students are in many cases not well matched with the efforts that teachers and students have made because teachers do not have clear goals in mind in classroom activities. It is necessary for language teachers to keep clear goals in mind in the classroom when they use video materials because they must prepare their teaching plans and implement them in reality in order to achieve their goals. Generally speaking, language teachers could set up three goals for their teaching with video materials. The first and fundamental goal is to facilitate the development of EFL learners' language skills and in particular their listening and speaking skills. Video materials provide visual aids for the listening materials that EFL learners are exposed to. When they are practicing their listening skills, learners often find it difficult to hold their attention long enough once they are exposed to long conversations or passages without visual aids. Videos can provide much more information for listeners and can keep them attention focused on the aural material.

Video also can be more motivating than other forms of authentic material. Christopher and Ho (1996, pp. 86) provide another reason why this is so; it can be entertaining. Music and setting elements can make for an enjoyable experience by learners. Video movies provide topics and ideas for learners to discuss. In order to choose video material for the classroom, topics must be chosen based on students'

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<sup>3</sup> Siegel, H. (1988). *Educating reason: Rationality, critical thinking and education*. New York: Routledge & Metheun

<sup>4</sup>Edward M. Glaser. "Defining Critical Thinking". The International Center for the Assessment of Higher Order Thinking (ICAT, US)/Critical Thinking Community. Retrieved 22 March 2017.

interest and their level of English proficiency, as well as cultural aspects. In addition, Nunan (2003) stated that the design of listening cycles is an important consideration, which involves selecting the content of the video or audio recording and dividing it into sections for presenting in stages to learners. Instructors can design cycles of activities in which learners can participate. The instructor should also be a reflective observer in order not to distract the learners' attention from the video. Therefore, it would be very beneficial for instructors to select video materials that are conducive to language learning. Learners are more motivated to cope with the instruction when given the opportunity to study with the use of video materials.

The advantages of using video in the EFL classroom are many and obvious. Authors point out high motivation and an enjoyable learning environment.

Thanajaro (2000) conducted a study concerning the use of authentic materials to develop listening comprehension in the English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom through analysis of the class observation and interviews with students. The results revealed that the use of authentic materials in ESL classrooms provided a positive effect on ESL student's motivation to learn the language. Maneekul (2002) conducted a study on using authentic material and tasks to enhance listening skill for undergraduate students majoring in English. The results revealed that students' listening skill increased to a higher level when using authentic materials and tasks after watching native speakers' video programs. Videos increase oral comprehension, stimulate student interaction and communication with other classmates, promote cross cultural awareness and are adaptable for use with students at any English language proficiency level (Rice 1993). Tomalin (1992) assumes that "video communicates meaning better than any other media". The usefulness of this technology is almost universally recognized many proponents of using video for EFL teaching maintain that it can be successfully used for teaching culture and agree that videos stimulate students to acquire the target culture as well as language. According to Tomalin (1992) the concept of culture has given rise to a lot of debate in the literature out of many definition symbolic cognitive behavior functionalist

psychological sociological anthropological the two latter ones are of paramount importance to an EFL teacher.

The study found that there is a significant gap in the research literature around the use of video for the development of critical thinking. However, it has been found that video can be an effective medium to present different viewpoints, whilst developing critical thinking.

The development of critical thinking, or the ability to be able to successfully evaluate situations, is best done in the presence of an expert mind – someone who knows how to think about the topic in question.

Teachers should use various kinds of videos, with open-ended tasks and real-world problems, especially those for understanding which students have to go beyond recalling/revising previously learned information. Students should be ready to reason and prove their ideas and positions, using information that goes far beyond covered in video fragment. Such assessment tasks should make students see global picture, however at the same time be focused on some of its aspects. Multiple perspective tasks that are usually covered in videos about new technologies, environment, social development, advanced industry are the best, requiring students to provide evidence or logical arguments in support of their judgments, choices or assertions.

However, studies have shown that the use of videos may not only be limited to students of distance learning per se. This is because the advancement of the Internet technologies created greater opportunities for delivering educational videos more easily and thus can be applied at all levels of education as long as there are internet connections (Vural, 2013). Vural ( also indicated that there seemed to be a lack of research conducted on the use of videos in the YouTube supported by interactive activities. In this study, we explored the use of YouTube videos supported by interactive activities in an attempt to stimulate critical thinking awareness of the students using an action research approach. The interest to assess the effectiveness of using YouTube videos has been prompted given the abundance of such materials from the various sites in the Internet.

## Useful video materials to improve learners critical thinking skills

| <i>Name</i>                                                                                        | <i>Link</i>                                                             | <i>Technique</i>                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Happy Family</b>                                                                                | <a href="https://youtu.be/Sgz1ANHKXuw">https://youtu.be/Sgz1ANHKXuw</a> | Students watch the video and discuss the main factors of being happy family                                                          |
| <b>Eating Lunch to Go Around The World</b>                                                         | <a href="https://youtu.be/GPfXegudHdw">https://youtu.be/GPfXegudHdw</a> | Students watch the video and compares types of the foods                                                                             |
| <b>Schools for Africa - Education a Human Right</b>                                                | <a href="https://youtu.be/UFRIJXKLmD8">https://youtu.be/UFRIJXKLmD8</a> | Students watch the video and tells advantages and disadvantages of living in Africa                                                  |
| <b>Most DANGEROUS Tourist Destinations In Urdu/Hindi . Top 08 Dangerous Tourists Attractions .</b> | <a href="https://youtu.be/-1-TabRMpUY">https://youtu.be/-1-TabRMpUY</a> | Before watching video students tell the types of tourism places and students watch the video, analysis that which place is the best. |
| <b>Cross-Cultural Management</b>                                                                   | <a href="https://youtu.be/rJ4IbhXrqnc">https://youtu.be/rJ4IbhXrqnc</a> | Students compare different cultures and write similarities.                                                                          |
| <b>Bringing Healthcare to the People</b>                                                           | <a href="https://youtu.be/SXN76-EZnsM">https://youtu.be/SXN76-EZnsM</a> | After watching the video, students will judge the condition of healthcare system of countries.                                       |

To sum up, critical thinking emphasizes the ability of independent thinking and judgment which is the quality of thinking. Thus, video materials are vital to help language learners to improve their critical thinking skills and communicative competence.

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