

Critical Thinking Activities to Improve Senior High School Students' Speaking Skills

Yuniar Chrismonia Caesar¹

¹ Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia; yunarcc6@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Many professionals emphasize the importance of teaching English with critical thinking skills, but implementation is still scant, especially in Indonesia ELT. This research investigates the use of critical thinking activities to teach EFL learners speaking skills, describes the challenges teachers and students face, and explains how they overcome them. Foreign Language Department Institute (FLDI) of the Boarding School at Probolinggo completed the research. This descriptive qualitative study used observation, interviews, and documentation for data. Three steps—reducing, showing, and concluding—analyzed the data. This study indicated that FLDI implemented critical thinking through speech, debate, and discussion. Those exercises engaged students throughout the process, allowing them to speak up and think critically. The research also revealed teacher concerns regarding student critical thinking, speaking, and boredom. Students also struggled in critical reading, speaking, and article writing. This study showed how teachers and students used icebreakers, reading and writing instruction, vocabulary memorization, and intensive engagement to overcome such challenges. This study encourages EFL teachers to provide comprehensive tasks to help students practice speaking and thinking. This study may also help EFL teachers and students with speaking issues.

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Corresponding Author:

Yuniar Chrismonia Caesar

Universitas Negeri Semarang; yunarcc6@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

The majority of individuals in non-English speaking countries have felt strong pressure to acquire English because of its importance in global communication. The teaching of English has also been rising substantially in the field of education. The English language has changed how English is taught and acquired in many ways, but it has also given rise to a number of novel approaches around the world. English has been used frequently as a communication language alongside other languages and other English variants, even in environments that are supposed to be monolingual, like the UK education system. English is perceived as a distinct, stable, bounded entity that represents significant cultural capital, whether it is used as a national language or for international communication (Gilmour, 2020, pp. 1–5).

Learning English can be difficult for most citizens of non-English speaking nations because they are global communicators. Additionally, English instruction has steadily increased in the educational sector. English has altered how it is taught and learned, but it has also inspired several cutting-edge procedures around the globe. As a skill that goes hand in hand with learning a foreign language, teaching English is anticipated to become a required subject in the curriculum. Following Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, No. 0487/14/1992, Chapter VII and Undang-Undang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional, No.060/U/1993, English may be taught in Indonesian schools from elementary to high school as a foreign language. Each educational level's English requirement should correspond to the proficiency of the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) student in speaking, writing, and reading English.

English speaking skills have been the case for Indonesian EFL learners, especially those who encounter great English difficulties. Despite spending years learning English and building good linguistic knowledge, they fail to employ that knowledge in real communicative situations. Research by Shen and Chiu investigates common difficulties of English speaking learners, including inhibition and lack of vocabulary. The study further indicates such challenges as worries about making mistakes, fears of criticism, shyness, and not knowing how to construct ideas into speaking (M.-Y. Shen & Wu, 2019).

Unfortunately, the EFL results have yet to materialize. Instead of communication skills, extensive language input is one of the most crucial factors. Reading and writing have always been the main areas of emphasis for English instruction in Indonesia among the four main English skills. Instead, being able to speak a foreign language is the primary objective of learning it. According to Rao (2019), the success of learning speaking skills is evaluated when one has improved their spoken ability. Speaking is a skill that calls for the speaker to be articulate and communicative because speaking's primary goal is to transmit information to receive a particular message. As a result, speaking English is difficult for most EFL students.

For Indonesian EFL students, especially those who struggle with English, oral English proficiency has always been a given. Despite studying English for a long time and becoming proficient, they still need to use it in real-world communication situations. Moreover, Shen & Chiu (2019) examined typical issues English language learners encounter, such as inhibition and vocabulary deficits. The study also identified difficulties like shyness, inability to express one's ideas clearly, fear of criticism, and fear of making mistakes. These issues with the English language may be brought on by the ineffective teaching strategies employed by Indonesian EFL instructors (Anggraeny et al., 2020). Because of the teacher's limited speaking time in class and over-reliance on the traditional method of emphasizing oral input, English language learners become mute English learners, unable to speak but can only read and write.

Educators employ critical thinking. It's important to think rationally. Since Dewey, education has emphasized critical thinking in students. John Dewey's "thinking" and "the development of thinking skills" are schools in *How We Think* (Dewey, 2022). "No one doubts, theoretically, the importance of fostering thinking skills in school is with good habit of thinking," he argues. Dewey believes teachers must incorporate critical thinking into learning so kids can see the connection between actions and results. Schools must teach subjects and train thought. If the mind is separate from observation, memory, imagination, and common-sense assessments of people and things, then particular activities should train it. This implies that to think is to embrace uncertainty and use the power of not knowing, which motivates pupils to reflect and learn. Critical thinking matters in thought. Teachers' strategies affect pupils' problem-solving and truth-proofing abilities. If kids don't care about the subjects, having them think critically will dull them. Thus, as teachers, presenting a stimulus to get student responses using multiple strategies can enhance their thinking in class.

Paul studied critical thinking adaption in learning environments. Paul proposes teaching discipline and self-direction in this study (Paul, 1989). Identifying conclusions, evaluating premises, formulating conclusions, and identifying fallacies were critical thinking skills, he believed. Thus, critical thinking should be 'disciplined, self-directed thinking which represents the excellence of

thinking relevant to a certain mode or domain of thinking. This study also made critical thinking the core goal of undergraduate instruction because Australian academics agree that critical thinking is a vital talent in higher education, even though they define it differently. The study found that critical thinking should be taught as an attitude or practice, even when academics have diverse definitions. In a California research, only 19% of instructors could define critical thinking, even though 89% said they teach it (Moore, 2014). Halx and Reybold examine teachers' views on undergraduate thinking. None of the participants were trained to promote critical thinking. The professors defined critical thinking differently and praised it.

Critical thinking abilities can be taught in school EFL programs. Herbein's research teaches primary school kids public speaking. The study found that the intervention partially worked. Zare and Othman's other study uses classroom discussion to improve students' critical thinking and speaking skills (Zare & Othman, 2013b). The researcher uses critical thinking activities including debate, speech, and discussion to develop speaking abilities in senior high school English classes. EFL students should participate in those activities to improve public speaking, critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, communication, and innovation. Consciously, this strategy will also help students gain confidence and talk with proof. By giving students additional speaking experience in class, these critical thinking tasks will demonstrate their critical thinking skills and help them learn to communicate.

To assist students in achieving certain objectives in their daily lives, the target language is taught. EFL instructors should support their students' ability to express themselves in this way. To accomplish this, some fundamental phonetic components should be carefully considered. The teacher improves the students' oral proficiency in the target language in this way. When learning a foreign language, reading, writing, and listening are all crucial, but speaking the language has its benefits. The main objective of language learning is effective communication (Hussain, 2017). Teachers should practice speaking, listening, and questioning skills with their students while instructing oral English. A highly dynamic and complex skill, presentation requires numerous cognitive, physical, and sociocultural processes. Real-time knowledge and abilities from the speaker must be called upon quickly. Therefore, explicit teaching of spoken language in language courses is essential. In contrast to teacher-centered learning, there is a need for more student-centered learning in English teaching. For all students to understand phonological concepts, EFL instructors must emphasize spoken English using various strategies (Akpan & Beard, 2016a).

It has been hotly debated how to improve students' speaking abilities for a while now. Additionally, the method used in EFL classes in Indonesia needs to be made more inclusive. A well-known method for enhancing speaking abilities is to cultivate critical thinking abilities. Many professionals, particularly those in higher education, are interested in developing their critical thinking skills. As a result, fostering critical thinking in students is a top priority in the educational sector. By honing their critical thinking abilities and developing as critical thinkers, people can use this skill to solve problems and find answers (Vahdani Sanavi & Tarighat, 2014). Critical thinking abilities should be taught in language classes and incorporated into the curriculum (Anjaniputra, 2020). Both teachers and students can benefit from the aforementioned English-speaking challenges involving critical thinking in English teaching and learning. Given the significance of language as a tool for knowledge acquisition, it is crucial to consider the nature of students' abilities to think critically and any potential connections to language proficiency.

Activities that demand the students' intelligence and effort must be used to apply the critical thinking abilities taught orally. Debates and presentations are excellent ways for students, especially high school students, to hone their public speaking and oral communication skills (Zare & Othman, 2013a). In a debate, students are asked to express their opinions on a particular subject. The student's oral skills are tested during the debate to see if they can express their opinions clearly or if they struggle to present their ideas based on their points of view. Students' roles in debates ensure they have a

foundational understanding of the subject and various points of view to support their claims. This study includes speaking and debating exercises that high school students must practice in English classes, even though critical thinking activities are primarily discussed for college students. Activities involving speaking, debating, and public speaking help students gain confidence, expand their vocabulary, and think critically. As a result, researchers at Foreign Language Department Institute (FLDI) are implementing critical thinking activities to teach oral skills to EFL students. The researchers also wanted to learn more about teachers' and students' difficulties when implementing critical thinking exercises in oral English.

Students must be taught broadly to make critical thinking skills more applicable and quantifiable, specifically for EFL learners. In actuality, teachers guide learning that calls for students to ponder, come to conclusions, and work out issues. Students should be able to comprehend hypotheses, make claims supported by evidence, solve problems, and reach conclusions supported by the evidence presented. These are just a few of the expected learning outcomes. Teachers typically design classroom activities that demand a lot of speaking practice and encourage critical thinking to improve speaking abilities. Activities in this study include using language for oral skills and debating.

One way to address this issue is to develop an effective strategy to give students more chances to speak in front of an audience, develop their speaking skills, and gain confidence. Students' oral skills will improve, and their ELT goals will be accomplished with the help of critical thinking strategies. Critical thinking helps teachers with oral skills because it helps students become better problem-solvers and idea-generators. Teachers must create a series of classroom activities incorporating speaking abilities, such as vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and accuracy, to incorporate critical thinking into language instruction (Brown, 2000).

While developing your skills in these areas will help you communicate with native speakers, the primary goal of your language study should be to actually start having conversations in the target language. According to Larson, Backlund, Redmond, and Barbour, one of the primary goals of language study is improved communication (Larson & Others, 2010). A person who has this skill can convey information clearly and effectively when they speak. According to W. Patrick Dickson and Janice H. Patterson, children can improve their speaking, listening, and questioning abilities through active verbal interaction with their teachers (Dickson & Patterson, 1981). Teaching speaking is necessary to help EFL students understand the value of good communication through strategies that generate additional opportunities for students to practice using English in meaningful ways. Teaching and learning to speak a language is an integral feature of every language classroom, as it is the primary means of communication and is central to the curriculum and expected goals. However, many English teachers still find it difficult to teach the art of oral communication.

The ability to communicate effectively is multifaceted and ever-evolving, involving not just mental but also physical and social processes. Speaking requires instantaneous access to one's stored information and abilities. Therefore, it is essential that speaking be emphasized in language classes. There needs to be more "student-centred learning" and less "teacher-centred learning" in English language classrooms. EFL teachers, according to Akpan and Beard, should prioritize oral communication in English by using various methods to ensure that all students understand the underlying principles. If you want your students to learn effectively, you need to employ a variety of teaching strategies. In addition, a number of rigorous activities designed to improve their spoken English skills should be implemented (Akpan & Beard, 2016b).

Although significant strategies for improving students' oral communication abilities have been explored for quite some time, their implementation in Indonesian EFL classrooms remains limited. Improving one's ability to think critically is a tried-and-true method for raising one's level of oratory proficiency. Many experts, especially those working in higher education, are worried about students'

lack of critical thinking skills. Therefore, the primary objective in the field of education is to train pupils to think critically. Thayer-Bacon argues that the ability to think critically is a prerequisite to developing higher-order thinking skills and becoming problem solvers (Thayer-Bacon, 1998). The study discusses a stereotype of critical thinkers based on the Euro-Western understanding of rational thought and analyzes the foundational assumptions of Plato and Aristotle. According to Plato, we all have eternal souls that contain all the knowledge in the world. Since everyone has access to this "God's-eye view," everyone is also a judge of right and wrong. When we die, how do our spirits know all the shapes we'll take? After death, Thayer Bacon argues, the soul merges with the universe (or God) and continues to exist with the forms it has created. At birth, our spirits leave behind our memories and enter our bodies, where they can learn new things. As a result, we devote our entire lives on recalling our prior learning, or what Plato called "coming to recognize that which the soul already knows." To know is to perform the mental act of recalling something one has seen or heard before. An essential foundation for modern theories of critical thinking can be found in Plato's use of logic. According to Plato, we don't need each other or new experiences in the world to develop our critical thinking skills and independence because our souls already know the answer and solution. To recall what we already know, the truth in its most fundamental forms, we need only follow our thoughts to logical solutions.

EFL teachers must first set up the learning environment so that students are 1) exposed to critical thinking activities, 2) willing to participate, and 3) successful before implementing critical thinking activities in physical education, particularly speaking. Finally, students' oral skills are strengthened with practice by incorporating critical thinking abilities (Anggraeny et al., 2020). Speeches, debates, and discussions are the main exercises primarily used to teach oral skills (Harmer, 1987). These exercises are intended to help students gather information on a particular subject, evaluate the veracity of data using critical thinking techniques, assist them in finding solutions to various problems, and hone their public speaking abilities. This study aims to improve the critical thinking activities of EFL learners and describe the challenges teachers and students face during the activity.

2. METHODS

The study was done at the Foreign Language Development Institute (FLDI). This language school specializes in teaching English and Arabic. Twenty students and five teachers at FLDI provided information on using critical thinking exercises to teach oral language skills. Observations, interviews, and records were the data collection methods used in the study. Primary data were gathered by watching teachers engage in critical thinking exercises (debate, speech and discussion) and conducting semi-structured interviews with students about their involvement in oral language practice activities. Auxiliary data is also taken from the document to support the original data. Students in Senior High School at Foreign Language Development Institute (FLDI) serve as the data source. There were 30 students, with grades ranging from tenth to eleventh, but only 15 were chosen to participate. Because these students were still receiving extensive training in various skills-improving activities, the researchers chose students at these levels. They typically take writing classes to prepare for their dissertation before graduating, unlike advanced students. Selection is based on factors like the candidate's openness to interviewing and involvement in presentation-related critical thinking activities.

Using observational tools, researchers employ time-interval methods to ascertain what is occurring in the environment by periodically observing the activity. The type of activities and aspects were observed:

Table 1. Activity 1

Time	Debate
09.00	Opinion delivery
09.15	Opinion value
09.30	Teacher's judgment
10.00	Student's participation

Table 2. Activity 2

Time	Speech
09.00	Speech presentation
09.15	Speech content
09.30	Teacher's judgment
10.00	Student's conclusion

Table 3. Activity 3

Time	Discussion
09.00	Student's presentation
09.15	Opinion Value
09.30	Teacher's judgment
10.00	Student's participation

The teachers and students responded to questions in English during the face-to-face interviews. The researchers meticulously recorded their responses. With the help of critical thinking exercises, EFL students at the FLDI were taught oral language skills. This method was created to collect primary data on those studies (question number 1). Meanwhile, for documentation, all critical activities, methods, and interactions were recorded and noted to give in-depth information about the findings. To gather data and respond to questions 1, 2, and 3 in the interview guidelines, the researcher will identify several areas from observations and audiotapes:

Table 4. Documentation study guide

Aspect
Learning methods
Critical thinking activities

3. FINDINGS

3.1. *Teacher's Difficulties when Employing Critical Thinking Activities to Teach Speaking Skills*

3.1.1 Student's Ability in Critical Thinking Skills

Teachers mentioned students' critical thinking abilities during speaking-based critical thinking exercises (1 of 2 teachers). The teacher clarified that only some students have the same capacity for objectivity. Additionally, they must be critical when giving speeches at FLDI. The critical thinking exercise has been difficult for students who still need it, even though these activities may be simple for some students with advanced language skills. Some students found it difficult to contribute to the discussion for various reasons, including a lack of critical interest, ignorance of the subject matter, poor oral skills, and others (Changwong et al., 2018). They are typically silent, and when chosen, they cannot speak. The instructor added that these problems occasionally impacted the speaking class's learning environment because the critical thinking objectives related to speaking instruction were not well understood.

3.1.2 Student's Speaking Skills

Teachers must use techniques to get their students to speak more of the target language as they learn it (M. Shen & Chiu, 2019). Teachers of English employ techniques to raise students' proficiency levels and foster a lively speaking environment in the classroom. Students participate in speaking exercises in the classroom at FLDI due to using critical thinking exercises during speaking instruction. Teachers (2 teachers) frequently discover that students lack adequate oral skills and struggle to translate critical thinking into spoken English due to the constant integration of critical thinking into speaking activities. Applying critical thinking exercises becomes more challenging for students who lack these elements, just as with the oral skills mentioned earlier, such as vocabulary, pronunciation, accuracy, and fluency. The teachers were open in their admission that this issue always arises in oral English classes. It is indisputable that each student has unique skills and passions for learning English.

3.1.2 Student Boredom

All individuals discover the routine tasks of daily life to be boring. Teachers cannot deny that the FLDI students' two years of the same English learning process increases their level of boredom. One of the two teachers who participated in the interview claimed that FLDI's oral practice is extremely rigorous and is designed to help students improve their oral English quickly. The main justification for the extensive use of critical thinking exercises is this. The teacher added that the students' constant complaining and reporting in the dorm every night was boring. Although it is difficult for teachers to comprehend their students' circumstances, it is now their duty as FLDI members.

To emphasize student-centered instruction and the process of content learning, Brown and Kelley emphasized critical thinking in language teaching (Browne, 2002). Assume that teaching spoken language is the goal of critical thinking. Students should be allowed to explore the subject matter, evaluate the sources, arrange the information, and prepare to participate actively in class in this situation. Teachers now face a new challenge when incorporating critical thinking exercises into their English lessons, particularly when teaching oral English. Additionally, critical thinking is not a natural talent. Even though many students are naturally curious, they need instruction to develop their analytical and open-minded thinking skills. Training is incorporated into FLDI's language classes because speaking requires more practice. Educators have long incorporated critical thinking into speaking engagements. However, there were some implementation-related issues that teachers ran.

Data from the interviews showed that teachers frequently work to overcome students' various critical thinking capacities during the teaching process. The teachers continued by saying that because some students have difficulty making judgments, they do not seem interested in critical thinking. Since speaking in FLDI requires critical thinking, it is regarded as challenging for students who might need more training in this area.

Insufficient stimulation model forced effort model, attention theory of boredom tendency, control value theory of achievement emotion, and emotion theory are some of the causes of student boredom discussed in a study by Zawodniak and Mariusz (Zawodniak et al., 2021). The compulsive effort model may contribute to the FLDI students' boredom. It demonstrates that students become bored when dealing with challenging material or experiencing anxiety. More specifically, spending time on activities that drain students' energy and frustrate them can bore students (Hill, 1985). This feeling is fostered in the students by the weekly events that never end in activities, presentations, debates, and discussions. Teachers remarked that although it involves FLDI student responsibilities, writing an essay and giving a presentation each week must be demanding. Some students with weak English skills might feel isolated in group activities and tend to be quiet.

3.2. Student's Difficulties in Their Involvement of Critical Thinking Activities for Speaking Skills

3.2.1 Critical Reading

The critical thinking exercises used in FLDI are made to improve reading and speaking abilities. The earlier chapters covered how teachers can get their students involved in critical thinking exercises. To gather relevant data for their presentations, students must read every explanation of the activities, debates, presentations, and discussions. Eight of the fifteen students who participated in the interviews said they needed to read critically to extract useful information from the newspapers their teachers had given them (Purwaningsih & Wangid, 2021).

The students mentioned that during the critical reading process, they needed to identify the background and main issues and then use their reasoning to come to conclusions. Ten out of fifteen students reported having trouble reading critically. They mentioned that even though the newspaper was their only outlet, they had to discuss some challenging topics for the presentation every week. Internet use is not allowed because they are boarders and live in a school. However, some students who need help with reading find it challenging to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate topics to gather useful information.

3.2.2 English Speaking Skills

Teachers must organize the learning environment by incorporating critical thinking. They must first engage students in activities that promote critical thinking. Students are also eager to participate. The inclusion of critical thinking in the speaking class in FLDI has made these structures possible. According to the interview data, critical thinking exercises are primarily used to help students improve their oral skills, such as vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and accuracy.

Students still require assistance, though, to take part in activities. Nine out of ten students who participated in the interviews said they had trouble with the critical thinking exercises because of their limited English proficiency. The teachers posed the same query earlier in the section on the student's oral proficiency. Students in this instance indicated that vocabulary, fluency, and accuracy became the most anticipated aspects of their speaking practice among the four aspects of speaking. Since the activity involves stating one's opinion for two to five minutes, it takes more effort to form complete sentences when a student has a limited vocabulary.

Each presentation will also be evaluated by the teacher and watched by other students. Students (8 out of 15) also mentioned that they struggled with accuracy and fluency during the speaking exercises with limited vocabulary. Speaking conveys information while also pursuing predetermined objectives.

3.2.3 Article Writing

Students should prepare for debates, speeches, and discussions by writing essays, among other things. Essay writing is optional for debates, but they do need to organize their arguments properly. They must systematically write essays instead of speeches and discussions and include a thesis statement, background information, a definition, an explanation based on facts and opinions, and a conclusion or recommendation. Data from the interviews revealed that because not all students had strong writing abilities, 10 out of 15 students found it challenging to write essays. To generate their thoughts, they need assistance organizing effective phrases. Ensure reliable data support the information and that the arguments are sound when writing speeches and argumentative papers.

Speaking abilities, critical reading comprehension, and essay writing are covered during the interview. Speaking skills were mentioned as a problem by eight out of fifteen students. The justifications resemble those of them. Students discover that their speaking abilities are greatly influenced by their vocabulary. Sometimes they need more vocabulary to demonstrate effectively. Her speech's accuracy and fluency were somehow impacted by it as well.

The foundational component of learning a second language is vocabulary. It is only possible to communicate effectively in a second language (L2) using words that have a wider meaning (Ellis, 1997). L2 learners must develop adequate vocabulary skills, including word pronunciation, word usage in various contexts, writing, and grammar (Thornbury, 2004). Speaking vocabulary needs to be thoroughly learned, and teaching should emphasize application rather than rote memorization.

Although teaching reading skills can also be a part of these activities, the emphasis of incorporating critical thinking activities in FLDI is on oral language skills. Students are expected to consult materials independently during speeches, debates, and discussions to further their understanding of the materials provided by teachers. Students claimed that to learn useful information, they had to read critically. They use critical reading to make sure the information they present is accurate. Critical reading is an active process in which readers consider a text carefully, build its meaning, reach conclusions, and assess it (Par, 2018). Improving students' reading abilities in second language classes can be accomplished by incorporating critical reading into speech, debate, and discussion activities. However, some students (10 out of 15) who were interviewed claimed that critical reading was challenging because there were not many information sources in the dorms, and they had poor critical reading abilities.

Students (10 out of 15) also had trouble with writing and difficulties with critical reading. Students are required to write essays as part of the speech or presentation preparation process to validate the validity of the student's work. For their presentations, they frequently write analytical or warning

exhibition texts. Her inability to write well contributes to part of her difficulty. It takes much effort to organize ideas to create rich content, as they explained in interviews. Additionally, they must consider the general organization of an analytical or hortatory exposition consisting of a thesis, arguments, and a conclusion or recommendation.

Writing is a sophisticated skill that needs instruction. It differs slightly from imparting speaking abilities. While writers use writing to transmit written information to readers separated by time and space, spoken language is always used for direct communication. Hence, more comprehensive and clear information (Bachani, 2003).

3.3. Strategies to Solve the Difficulties in Critical Thinking Activities for Speaking Skills

Teachers and students discussed solutions to their problems with oral critical thinking activities during the interviews. The following are the methods that students (10 out of 15 students) and teachers (2 teachers) mentioned:

3.3.1 Teacher's strategy

Ice Breaking Activity. The teachers observed that the students were under much activity pressure while conducting the interviews. They must participate in boarding school activities during the day and FLDI in the dorm at night because they live in a boarding school. To achieve this, the teachers created a completely new learning environment by introducing ice-breaking activities. This helped the students feel less pressure and find solutions to their problems with typical speech activities, debates, speeches, and discussions.

Games created to warm up students during conferences, training, or team-building sessions are ice-breaking activities. According to the interviewees (2 teachers), speaking lessons should include enjoyable learning activities. Nevertheless, critical thinking is still a part of the process. Polls, role-playing games, and music listening were all listed as activities.

3.3.2 Student's Strategy

Ten of the fifteen FLDI students mentioned speaking strategies they used to deal with their difficulties with critical thinking. These are the strategies they commonly employ:

1) Intensive Interaction and Practice

Having more opportunities and practice when learning a foreign language is imperative. Making a learning environment where everyone speaks the target language exclusively is essential for quickly improving speaking. In FLDI, English language instruction successfully creates a suitable environment where students cannot speak any language other than English. Students can hone their English skills and way of thinking through various language activities.

However, as mentioned in the previous section, students struggled with speaking and carrying out activities that required critical thought. Students (9 out of 15) said during the interviews that they should have engaged in deeper discussions with other students to get more speaking practice. Students who use this technique can expand their vocabulary and develop accurate and fluent speaking skills. In class, pupils converse with teachers by posing inquiries or voicing opinions.

2) Vocabulary Memorization

Students (10 out of 15) reported that they typically memorized the vocabulary the teacher gave them each day and used it in daily communication to address their speaking skills issues. Additionally, they constantly need to consult a dictionary to learn unfamiliar or challenging words that pop up frequently in articles they read or write. Because of this, students can increase their vocabulary and use words in written or spoken form.

Students can learn English more quickly and easily and relieve stress and boredom by engaging in enjoyable activities. For kids, there are frequent icebreakers available. Through game-based learning, high school students can enhance their English, particularly speaking. A discussion and interactive "ice-breaking" exercise can create a learning environment that lessens students' anxiety (Dover, 2004). These exercises are meant to stimulate original thought. Teachers should designate icebreakers requiring students to talk about key presumptions, clarify new problems, and explain specific details

(Krashen, 1982). In FLDI, the teachers (2 teachers) had the option of speaking while listening to music, voting, or role-playing. Although these activities are enjoyable, they still require critical thought to complete.

Discussion

According to the researcher's observations and interviews with students and instructors at FLDI, critical thinking activities helped pupils strengthen their communication skills. These events allowed students to discuss various issues in class and in front of their classmates. FLDI's essential thinking activities also boosted students' confidence and oratory skills. English language instruction is all about critical thinking. (ELT) Ennis explained how critical thinking in language training may help pupils learn content. Critically thinking students can examine a situation, distinguish reality from fiction, and see a subject from numerous perspectives (Davies & Barnett, 2015).

Critical thinking yields significant results. Debate, discussion, and public speaking at FLDI fostered critical thinking. Harmer says these activities help students think critically and develop general speaking skills. Seniors' English classes focus on public speaking confidence. The English teacher's focus on critical thinking and public speaking will help graduates find jobs.

All students participated and posed questions, according to the researcher. Teachers engaged students in the argument even when they weren't presenting. Klippel argues in Chapter II that students must always be actively learning to avoid becoming passive learners (Klippel et al., 1984). FLDI's public speaking critical thinking exercises improved students' writing and reading skills. These activities taught FLDI students to write articles. For background, students should read. In chapter two, Liaw proposes teaching critical thinking in all facets of English competency. The research examined how Western schools employ critical thinking to enhance language abilities. Brown and Kelley explore critical thinking in language instruction to emphasize content and process (Browne, 2002).

If critical thinking is employed to teach public speaking, students should be free to research, analyze, synthesize, and apply what they learn. When teaching oral communication, ELT teachers have specific problems when including critical thinking tasks. Some children are naturally curious but must help develop analysis and open-mindedness. FLDI used activities in its language lessons to improve oral communication. Oral presentations have always featured critical thinking by educators. However, this project's two instructors encountered some issues. Interviews showed that teachers have to accommodate students' necessary thinking abilities. Teachers said some students were lousy critics and didn't care about critical thinking. Students with essential skills thinking found FLDI speaking assignments easier. Critical thinking includes reasoning, analysis, evaluation, inference, interpretation, explanation, and synthesis. The author also found that although some students are excellent public speakers, developing critical thinking requires effort.

Two professors highlighted pupils' communication skills as a difficulty. FLDI demanded active participation in critical thinking activities for speaking, including spontaneous speaking. Teachers stated that sometimes students could not present well despite using the language. Vocabulary, pronunciation, accuracy, and fluency were issues. The researcher also saw pupils need more confidence. The teacher and audience watch the presenter closely. Students might be nervous even if they did well in dress rehearsals. Students couldn't confidently perform. Hughes found that many kids are hesitant or afraid to speak out in class. Two instructors reported bored pupils while employing critical thinking exercises to develop communication skills. Boredom is a negative feeling caused by inaction or indifference. Teachers must frequently realize how much second language ennui might hurt students' and their peers' learning.

Zawodniak and Mariusz's study report lists various student ennui factors. The under-stimulation model, forced-effort model, attentional theory of boredom tendency, control-value theory of accomplishment emotions, and emotion theory may explain this (Zawodniak & Kruk, 2019). FLDI's forced-effort paradigm likely bores pupils. Boredom might result from challenging work or mental pain. Boring jobs bore pupils. Weekly speeches, debates, and discussions made students feel this way.

Teachers noted that FLDI students' weekly essay and presentation preparation must be exhausting. English-challenged youngsters may stay quiet during events out of shame. Kids needed help with public speaking critical thinking projects. This interview included public speaking, essential reading, and writing. Eight of the fifteen students shared the teacher's worry about their speaking abilities. They justified similarly. Students concluded that vocabulary affected oral presentations. Lack of terminology made presentations difficult. They also spoke poorly.

Foreign language learning requires vocabulary development. McCarthy believes L2 communication requires a broader vocabulary. Second-language learners must learn word meanings, spellings, pronunciations, and grammatical structures. Oral communication must be used to teach vocabulary, not only memorization. FLDI's critical thinking exercises focused on verbal communication but may be used to teach literacy. Public speaking, debate, and group discussion were conducted via independent study. Students believed they must read critically to learn anything. Critical reading verified their presented facts. Essential reading involves inference, analysis, judgment, and evaluation.

Discussion, debate, and public speaking may improve students' critical reading abilities. Ten of the fifteen questioned students were frustrated by their inability to read critically and the absence of resident hall services. According to Par's study, many students need help with critical reading because they can't identify inconsistencies, analyze arguments, establish an author's goal, or create well-reasoned conclusions and inferences from the text. Ten of fifteen students struggled with writing and critical reading. Students were assigned to write an original essay for research and speech preparation. Most talks were analytical or exhortatory. Their poor writing caused issues. In the interview, they said assembling all that material took a lot of consideration. They must consider the thesis, arguments, and conclusion/recommendation while writing their articles.

Writing takes practice. Teaching oral communication is different. Authors write to communicate with readers over time and location, whereas speaking is always straightforward. Thus, more transparent communication is needed. Teachers and students described how they overcame hurdles in the interview. Two teachers recommended adding an icebreaker to speaking events to engage students' critical thinking beyond speech, debate, and discussion. Some instructors thought weekly complex activities could have been more practical, particularly for English- and critical-thinking-challenged children. Having fun while studying English might reduce stress and monotony. Icebreakers may help high students improve their English skills, especially communication. Icebreakers, which Dover calls conversation and engagement exercises, alleviate student anxiety. Krashen says icebreakers are activities that generate fresh ideas and break the ice. Teachers should create icebreakers that start students discussing core topics, new ideas, and background knowledge. FLDI's two professors used role acting, a poll, and music to get pupils chatting. Fun and analytical, those games were.

However, many engagements and practices helped pupils overcome these hurdles. Exercise is crucial to speaking objectives in teaching and learning. 9 of 15 youngsters said they would improve their articulation by interacting with other classmates and instructors. The discussion also helped students practice their communication skills in a realistic context, enhancing their ability to speak effectively and eloquently in front of an audience. Instead of independent critical reading, pupils prefer book discussions. Essential reading is reading to gain new information. Critical reading involves analyzing, synthesizing, and rating material. Group reading helps students discuss the material, learn from one another, and form opinions. Because critical thinking activities like speaking and consulting required pupils to write, extensive practice was supposed to help them better. Students wrote based on group discussion and reading. The dialogue made writing articles easier. Students often submit writing drafts to teachers for comments and grammatical corrections.

They remembered new words. Interviewees claimed professors wrote 10–15 words daily and had students recall and utilize them in the discussion. It improved the vocabulary of 10 of 15 students. Vocabulary acquisition included pronunciation and context-specific application. Language's centrality in class activities helped students grasp its importance in dialogue. They were self-aware enough to use a dictionary before writing or speaking unusual terms. Training students to become independent

learners allows them to take care of their education and develop competence, self-confidence, and curiosity.

Lastly, reading and writing instruction are essential to critical thinking activities since they require necessary thinking skills. Zaiter's study emphasizes reading and writing for second language learning. Reading and writing teachers should begin with a diagnostic exam (Zaiter, 2020). Discuss their mistakes. Teachers then discuss the most severe lesson and writing mistakes with pupils. Data gathering, synthesis, and assessment are essential for improving writing, but this research focuses on speaking abilities. Writing requires critical thinking, opinion formation, and conclusion formation. This helps teachers help children overcome reading and writing difficulties. Use icebreakers more often than every two weeks. Icebreakers may help public speaking students. Use icebreakers in a way that works for your pupils. Icebreakers should use critical thinking to motivate pupils entertainingly.

4. CONCLUSION

Although this research was conducted in a small number of participants and in a short period of time, the researcher tried to provide valuable information about the involvement of critical thinking activities to teach speaking skills that was derived from the teaching of speaking at FLDI. Students' oral skills and critical thinking are developed in FLDI through debates, presentations, and discussions. Students are successfully engaged throughout the process, encouraged to participate in class discussions, and most importantly, their critical thinking abilities are being developed. When students create article presentations, incorporating critical thinking activities will affect their speaking and reading, and writing abilities. Because literacy instruction also involves using critical thinking skills, combining it with critical thinking exercises is crucial. While this study focuses on the interpretation of oral proficiency's key activities, it is crucial to teach students how to gather information from reading materials, synthesize it, and assess it to help them write better compositions. Students need a deeper understanding and knowledge to produce information and ideas and come to reliable conclusions during the writing process. Teachers assist students in overcoming obstacles that prevent them from taking part in the reading and writing process in this way.

The study is not concerned on the effectiveness of critical thinking activities for speaking in which the researcher needs to conduct a test to assess the student's speaking skills. The study includes in its scope those critical thinking activities, such as speech, debate, and discussion which are exclusively employed by FLDI teachers in teaching speaking skills, but do not concern about other critical thinking activities that are not implemented in the teaching of speaking at FLDI. Hopefully, this research can be used as a good reference for the next researcher who wants to conduct the same topic. The researcher suggests for the next researcher to prepare all possibility and problemsolving before conducting a research, so that the research could be done as they expected.

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