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# DEVELOPING STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS THROUGH VIDEO MATERIALS

**Zilolakhon Qodirova**
Master's student of Linguistics – English, Namangan State University

**Annotation:** This article provides recommendations on developing students' critical thinking skills through video materials. Proposals are given for the use of various pedagogical methods for the use of video materials in the course of the lesson.

**Keywords:** English lessons, students, pedagogical methods, video resources, presentation, reports.

**Аннотация:** В данной статье даны рекомендации по развитию у учащихся навыков критического мышления с помощью видеоматериалов. Даны предложения по использованию различных педагогических приемов использования видеоматериалов в ходе урока.

**Ключевые слова:** уроки английского языка, студенты, педагогические методы, видеоресурсы, презентация, доклады.

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. On the other hand, authentic video materials can create more

Realistic language learning environment and stimulate EFL learners' interest in English learning and enhance their comprehensive linguistic competence. Language learning theories state that the process of language learning includes three key parts:

language input (reading and listening), assimilation (i internal processing and memorization) and language output (speaking, writing and translation) The use of video materials has plenty of advantages such as stimulating student's autonomy and proactivity. When teachers bring video materials into their English classrooms, students can directly acquire a great amount of cultural background information and emotional attitudes about the learning materials. Therefore, they could employ their autonomy in language learning. While viewing the video materials, students can put themselves in the vivid atmosphere created by the video materials and understand the pragmatics of the language used by the characters. Compared with traditional English teaching, such courses truly put into practice the student-centered teaching strategies.

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 enjoyableexperience 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' interest and theirlevel of English proficiency, as well as cultural aspects. In addition, Nunan (2003) stated that the design of listeningcycles 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 learne rs. 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 definitions symbolic cognitive behavior ist 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.

Interrogation, discussion, evaluation and the development of argument are central to the development of critical thought. Therefore it is important to have live interactive access to an expert so that the learner can test and correct their thinking in the moment. The availability of live feedback from a credible expert (someone who knows how to think about the material) has been found to be a crucial element of criWhen we speak about using video in educational process, we should mention that video materials are almost perfect source for teaching, but therefore the requirement to the materials for education should be precisely met and satisfied. Video should be highly informative, with high quality picture, clear sound and logical plot. It is better if the video has subtitles and is not too long and too bright. These recommendations are applicable to all disciplines, but we should focus on teaching critical thinking while teaching English, because English, being the language study, deals with all spheres of life. While learning language people learn to be themselves – to think and communicate, deal with problems and analyze situations, make plans and be able to argue and debate on different topics. So while being taught English language students active more brain operations than while doing mathematical equations, comical thinking development.

Using video materials has a long list of advantages; visibilities, informatively, entertaining function are the most important. The students in groups in which the topics are taught using video materials show better motivation and understanding of the topic. As this issue is of great importance there are some requirements for better productivity that can improve educational process. The video should be short (not more than 8 minutes), preferably with subtitles. They should cover the topic or at least some element of it, be informative and suitable for introducing into lesson plan or as addition to home task from the curriculum. Different tasks should be worked out and offered for working with video. Teachers are obligated to use various educational tools and approaches, therefore students are asked to answer the questions, prepare the retelling, decide if statements are true or false, for videos without subtitles – choose the right word/phrase to put in (open cloze), write the ending or transcript for some part of the video, make a vocabulary for the video etc.[4] But, as the aim is to develop critical thinking skills, students are also asked to write a short review on each video, to make a prediction or explain the advantages or disadvantages of something. This kind of work is not limited by the video theme and plot, because one crucial thing for developing critical thinking is diversity of topics covered, while the video material stands as trigger – the initiating factor for the thinking about some concept, process or issue. The same video can produce dozens of ideas for consideration.

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. Due to the purposes of the article which aimed to look into background of critical thinking and its various aspects; analyze the conditions of teaching critical thinking; produce an analysis of video materials available for teaching critical thinking; give variants of applying video materials into students' learning the following conclusions can be made. [5]The background of critical thinking and its various aspects are briefly

[4]Cederblom, J B.; Paulsen, David (2012). Critical Reasoning: Understanding and Criticizing Arguments and Theories (7th ed.). Andover, Hampshire, UK: Cengage Learning.
[5]Dauer, Francis Watanabe. Critical Thinking: An Introduction to Reasoning, 1989,

covered, with reference to ancient philosophers and educators, who took great interest in development one's thinking skills and processing information, analyzing data etc. The historical chronicles explain the initial conditions of formation critical thinking theory, giving examples of educational reforms involved into processes of establishing and formulating the concept and basis of the critical thinking. Teaching critical thinking depends on conditions teachers and students are put into, the most important condition being the possibility to speak what a person thinks, be free and not restricted by someone's rules or ideas. Video materials are considered to be rich and beneficial material for teaching critical thinking. They are used for teaching various courses, disciplines or themes, but usually are taken just as means of demonstrating some process or phenomenon. However, in the age of digital information video materials should be applied at every stage of teaching notwithstanding the subject or topic. There is variety of video materials on the open source sites that allows choosing any video fragment due to teacher's and curriculum's requirements. It is advised that video materials were not too long (not more than 10 minutes), with rational balance of graphical and sound information, it is better when materials are somewhat entertaining and enquiring, arising some problem or discussion, not just description. As previously mentioned, video materials can be used for many kinds of tasks. Teachers should use all the possible activities for stimulating critical thinking in groups of students. Among such activities are tasks taken from direct, aural, functional, lexical and communicative approaches, for example, predicting the video, analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of the process/object shown, copying the movements from video, giving estimation to the process shown and - give variants of applying video materials into students' learning. Therefore we can conclude that teaching critical thinking skills, or rather focusing students on applying these skills to the tasks they receive and for covering the topics they get becomes more productive by introducing video materials into educational process. We think the same can be used for various disciplines, as video materials are in open access and they cover all topics needed. The questions is that most of them are in English language, especially scientific language, and thus it is often difficult to understand the narrator or characters talking in the video.

As teachers, we have all heard about the benefits of using new technologies such as computers and internet in the classroom. These aides are powerful tools because of the varied input that they provide students as they cater to different learning styles.

However, if used through thoughtfully planned activities, they can also help our students develop critical thinking skills.[6]

One thing to consider is that, in a writing course, input is mostly through written text in a textbook, and while these texts and activities help students develop most critical thinking skills, students respond better to more stimulating input. Through the use of video in a writing course, we can address students' topics of interest in class and at the same time, students can deepen their understanding of certain writing structures or use the main ideas in video for different purposes through the use of their verbal, artistic, logical, and other abilities.

Depending on the type of essay, you will want to find videos that are suitable for analysis of the structure that you are teaching. With internet resources such as YouTube, you can find videos that are relevant and related to any given writing structure. For example, a global warming video could be used to study the structure of a cause-effect essay by asking the students to infer the main ideas in the video and share how they relate to the causes and effects of global warming; this could later be developed into a visual brainstorm for an essay. You could also use one of the PC vs. Mac ads to spark a discussion for a comparison essay. Since these ads target the weaknesses of PCs, students that use PC could help list advantages over Mac.

Additionally, a general rule of thumb is that the video should not exceed 10 minutes of duration; this will help students keep focused on the task. Also, don't forget to introduce the video and give your students instructions as to what to look for.Critical thinking is commonly defined in terms of six core skills: interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation and self-regulation.What follows is a list of four of these skills with a suggested activity you can do with your students after you watch a video:

Analysis: Students can identify the different elements in a video and organize them into an outline for an essay.

Inference: Students can infer the main ideas in a video and develop a brainstorm for an essay on the topic.

Explanation: Students can explain, either visually or orally, the organization of the main ideas in a video. Evaluation: Students can evaluate the ideas from a video to form their own opinions for an argumentative or persuasive essay. These are simple activities that will enable you as a language teacher to add new stimuli in the presentation of writing objectives and that will aid in the development of students'

[6]Fisher, Alec and Scriven, Michael. (1997) Critical Thinking: Its Definition and Assessment, Center for Research in Critical Thinking (UK) / Edgepress (US)

critical thinking[7]. Furthermore, by engaging students through mixed input and allowing them to express their diverse interests (by asking them to suggest videos or topics) and abilities (by offering different activity options such as pair or group discussions, developing visuals to explain concepts, or thinking on their own what a given video is communicating to them), you will find that your students become more creative in their tasks and achieve better outcomes.

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