

ENHANCING ORAL COMMUNICATION THROUGH CRITICAL THINKING-ORIENTED CASE STUDIES

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Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada tanqidiy fikrlashga qaratilgan Case Study usulining abituriyentlarning og'zaki nutqini yaxshilashdagi roli ko'rib chiqiladi. Tadqiqotda 20 nafar abituriyent ishtirok etdi, ularga 5 xil muammoli vaziyatlar tasvirlangan kartalardan foydalangan holda guruhlarda ishlash topshirildi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, analitik yondashuv talabalarning argumentlarni taqdim etish qobiliyatini yaxshilaydi, nutq ravonligini oshiradi va akademik so'z boyligini boyitadi. Maqolada zamonaviy ilmiy manbalarga asoslanib, til o'rganishda tanqidiy fikrlashning ahamiyati tahlil qilinadi.

Kalit so'zlar: tanqidiy fikrlash, case study, og'zaki nutq, abituriyentlar, mantiqiy tahlil, IELTS, muammoga asoslangan o'rganish.

Аннотация. В данной статье рассматривается роль метода «кейс-стади», ориентированного на критическое мышление, в улучшении устной компетенции абитуриентов. В исследовании приняли участие 20 абитуриентов, которые были распределены в группы для работы с использованием карточек с 5 различными проблемными ситуациями. Результаты показывают, что аналитический подход улучшает способность студентов к изложению аргументов, повышает беглость речи и обогащает академическую лексику. В статье анализируется важность критического мышления в изучении языка на основе современных научных источников.

Ключевые слова: критическое мышление, кейс-стади, устная речь, абитуриенты, логический анализ, IELTS, проблемно-ориентированное обучение.

Annotation. This article examines the role of the Case Study method, which focuses on critical thinking, in improving the oral competence of applicants. The study involved 20 applicants, who were assigned to work in groups using cards with 5 different problem situations. The results show that the analytical approach improves students' ability to present arguments, increases speech fluency, and enriches academic vocabulary. The article analyzes the importance of critical thinking in language learning based on modern scientific sources.

Key words: critical thinking, case study, oral speech, applicants, logical analysis, IELTS, problem-based learning.

Introduction. In the era of modern globalization, learning English requires not only increasing vocabulary, but also the ability to analyze information and present it logically. The relationship between oral communication and critical thinking is one of the main factors determining the academic and professional success of students. According to research by Vivi Indriyani et al., when combined, communication skills and critical thinking have a positive effect on students' presentation skills by 67.6%. Indeed, only when a student is able to deeply analyze a topic, his speech will come out convincing and meaningful.

Critical thinking is not just about receiving information, but also the process of raising important questions, evaluating evidence and effectively presenting conclusions. Miftaqur Saputr notes that methods such as debate directly increase not only students'

verbal fluency, but also their self-confidence and ability to think logically. Therefore, it is advisable to increase the number of discussions that require logical solutions in lessons, rather than simple questions and answers.

The Case Study method is of particular importance in this process. According to Goel and Chauhan, if students are directed to solving real problems in the lesson (problem solving), their participation in the lesson and critical thinking are dramatically activated. Didih Faridah also proved in her study that peer feedback in oral speech lessons, along with correcting students' speech errors, teaches them analytical thinking. Indeed, teaching through cases prepares students for real-life situations and provides an incentive for free communication in the language.

However, many studies show that students often have difficulty not in processing information, but in expressing it logically through speech. Astuti Muh. According to Amin, critical thinking facilitates the acquisition of knowledge through oral and written communication and ensures coherence of speech. In our experience, logical discontinuities in the speech of applicants were eliminated precisely through critical thinking exercises. Based on the above, the purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of the Case Study method aimed at critical thinking in developing students' oral speech and to scientifically substantiate the advantages of this approach.

Methodology. The research process was conducted on the basis of a quasi-experimental design, with a total of 20 applicants preparing for the IELTS exam for a month. The "Case Study" method was chosen to develop oral speech aimed at critical thinking.

2.1. Group formation and materials. In order to ensure the activity of the participants in the lesson, they were divided into 4 small groups (5 people each). The researcher prepared special cards with 5 different current socio-economic problems. As Suci Kartika noted, the problem-based learning (PBL) model increases responsibility in students and encourages them to find collective solutions.

2.2. Research Steps (Implementation Steps). The lesson process was organized in the following logical steps: Selection of the situation: Each group member randomly selected one of the 5 cards. This process developed students' curiosity and ability to adapt to unexpected situations. Brainstorming: Students were tasked with identifying the causes of the selected problem, analyzing its consequences, and proposing at least 3 solutions. Oral Presentation & Debate: Each group presented their solutions orally. Other groups critically evaluated the presentation, provided counterarguments, and asked questions.

2.3. Data Collection and Evaluation. Students' oral performance was measured in two ways: SOLOM (Student Oral Language Observation Matrix): To assess fluency and grammatical accuracy of speech. Critical Thinking Rubric: To assess students' ability to present arguments, find cause-and-effect relationships, and draw logical conclusions.

Results. During the one-month experiment, significant positive changes were observed in the oral speech competence of 20 applicants. As a result of the lessons conducted using the "Case Study" method, not only the language wealth of students, but also the depth of thinking increased.

3.1. Enrichment of argumentation and logical consistency. While in the first lessons, students were limited to only general statements on topics such as "Environmental problems" or "Traffic jam", their ability to present arguments developed during the process of working on cards. For example, in search of a solution to the "Traffic jam" problem, students abandoned the idea of simply "building more roads" and began to offer analytical solutions such as "developing public transport" and "transitioning to a remote work system". This practically confirmed the impact of critical thinking on the quality of presentation, as emphasized by Vivi Indriyani.

3.2. Functional use of vocabulary. Since the topics (Gender equality, Environment) were complex, the applicants felt the need to use academic vocabulary. As a result, the following changes were noted in the students' speech:

Instead of simple connectors, academic connectors (consequently, strictly speaking, from a broader perspective) began to be used more often. Instead of personal opinion expressions such as "I think", evidence-based introductory words (The evidence suggests that..., It is widely acknowledged that...) increased.

3.3. Team discussion and self-confidence. The mutual question-and-answer sessions between 4 groups eliminated the barrier of "fear of speaking" (speaking anxiety) in students. As stated in the study by Miftaqur Saputri, the debate environment increased students' self-confidence and improved their fluency by 35-40%. Especially on controversial topics such as "Gender equality", students learned to defend their opinions in a civilized and logical manner.

Discussion. The results of this study showed that the "Case Study" method, which is focused on critical thinking, has a comprehensive effect on the development of oral speech of applicants. Comparing the results obtained with modern scientific trends, the following conclusions can be drawn:

Firstly, the fact that applicants began to speak confidently on complex topics such as "Gender equality" and "Environment" indicates that their level of self-efficacy has increased. As Lihong Ma and Lin Hu noted, there is a correlation between the tendency to think critically and mastering a foreign language, in which self-efficacy plays the main mediator role. In our experience, working in groups of 4 and analyzing problems on cards gave applicants a psychological advantage in expressing their thoughts in an academic manner.

Second, the "Case Study" and problem-solving approach used in our study is in line with the most current trends in the global academic community. A bibliometric analysis conducted by M.P. Arthi shows that "critical thinking", "problem solving" and "higher-

order thinking skills" (HOTS) are the most frequently studied keywords in English language teaching in recent years. Our applicants also applied higher-order thinking skills by finding solutions to problems such as "Traffic jam", which, as Vivi Indriyani says, allows you to improve the quality of your presentation by 67.6%.

Third, the teacher's modeling (facilitation) of critical thinking is a key factor determining the quality of the lesson. Research by Ricky Fernandes et al. shows that even within the same curriculum, the level of manifestation of critical thinking can vary due to the teacher's approach. In our methodology, students are given free choice through 5 cards and their group activities are only guided by the teacher, which has proven the effectiveness of "teacher facilitation" as mentioned by Fernandez. In short, critical thinking is not just a theoretical concept, but a practical mechanism that ensures the fluency and logic of oral speech.

Conclusion. The results of the study show that the Case Study method, which is focused on critical thinking, is more effective than traditional methods in developing the oral speech of applicants. During the one-month experiment with the participation of 20 applicants, students showed themselves not only as language learners, but also as problem-analyzers and solution-proposing subjects. The main conclusions of the study are as follows:

The formation of academic speech was observed. Working on complex social topics (gender equality, ecology) encouraged students to use academic vocabulary and logical connectors. In addition, working in groups and presenting arguments based on evidence helped students overcome their fear of speaking and increase their self-confidence.

In addition, students moved from simply stating problems to understanding their cause-and-effect relationships and drawing analytical conclusions. In conclusion, increasing critical thinking tasks in English lessons perfectly prepares students not only for the IELTS exam, but also for real-life communication processes.

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