

The Effectiveness of Critical Thinking on Enhancing Productive Skills among Iranian EFL Pre-Intermediate Learners

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Abstract: In regard to recent revolution in the education domain, English Language Teaching (ELT) assigns a sociopolitical dimension to itself in the light of Critical Pedagogy. The present study, in line with the recent educational revolution, aimed to investigate the effectiveness of critical thinking on improving EFL learners' productive skills. The statistical population consisted of 164 pre-intermediate attendees of EFL in an English Language Institute in the city of Babol selected for taking an Oxford Placement Test (OPT). The participants were 80 Iranian pre-intermediate EFL students within 10-20-year range, enrolled in Shokouh English language institute in Babol, who were randomly divided into two experimental and two control groups of (N=20) for each group during summer 2018 through the non-probability sampling design. Then, IELTS pre-intermediate speaking and writing tests were taken as the pre-test to make sure that they have failed to have a previous knowledge of objective structures. Unlike the control group, the participants in the experimental group were told to apply critical thinking instructions in learning speaking and writing skills. After intervention, the same pretest was taken to the participants in both groups as the posttest to determine the result of gaining the medical aid. Independent and paired sample t-tests were run to answer the research questions. The results indicated that critical thinking is highly contributive in learning productive skills. The findings of this study can be applied in methodological issues.

Keywords: Critical Thinking, Productive Skills, EFL, Pre-intermediate Learners, ELT.

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Introduction

In this dynamic world, the ability to think critically has become a definitive expected feature among English language teachers. In higher education, the endorsement of critical thinking (CT) has been and is a great challenge in its growing cultural, social and economic diversities in English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms. In terms of Critical Pedagogy, a new dimension named the sociopolitical approach is added to education, including English language teaching (Atagi, 2002; Curtis, Martin & Broadley, 2019).

It appears that the CT concept has not been valued in instructions in the past decades, and many EFL teachers are keen on applying the basic speculative abilities in their classes to urge the participants to think obviously, just as thinking about what to do or accept. According to Scriven and Paul (2004), basic reasoning is a mentally sorted out procedure consisting of dynamic conceptualization, data integration assessment and their application thereof. Romeo (2010) claims that there exists no single or generally applied hypothetical definition on CT; Ivie (2001) accepted that this sort of capacity enables people to decide on an unmistakable and legitimate correlation among the beginning reason, significant actualities, and justified ends; Ennis (1985) believes that CT is a solid and sensible reasoning focused on choosing what to accept or do. Applying such intervention programs in EFL with different definitions may not be regarded as an easy task.

Consequently, focusing on CT by *encouraging a positive attitude*, Chaffee, (1992) promoted students to apply their background knowledge, and Norris (1985) encouraged them to evaluate their own thinking behavior as the most important factors in teaching CT skills. According to Ketabi, Zabihi and Ghadiri (2012), it is assumed that EFL instructors do not apprehend what CT really means and whether or not it should be incorporated in the EFL course of study. EFL lecturers or teachers themselves should be critical thinkers to equip students with CT skills.

In this ever changing world, there is no need to apply the traditional approaches of teaching where teachers can play a pivotal role in transferring their knowledge to their students. Now, it is possible for students to take advantage of the available opportunities and be regarded as autonomous learners, and according to Tilfarlioglu and Ciftci (2011), these types of learners can analyze new topics and think differently by implementing their ability and willingness to learn independently.

Unlike training based on enhancing rote learning in traditional public schools which

was regarded as a structural manner of learning, today learning is considered as an ever advancing procedure of assessment, addressing and re-development of speculation (Pennycook, 1994). Consequently, the requirement for learning unique abilities including basic leadership and CT form the bases of EFL students in their scholastic and public activity.

According to Patel (2013), CT is regarded as a trained ability which should be taught by the trained and knowledgeable instructors, where the latter apply different techniques to encourage students to practice CT, especially in English language classes, because language is the key for understanding different subjects.

There exist few studies on the lack of CT skills development among Iranian EFL learners. Fahim and Saeedpour (2012) reported that low level CT ability among EFL learners is regarded as a special concern for Iranian scholars and instructors, thus, making it necessary for Iranian EFL teachers to concentrate on the advancement of learners' CT as to life skills before language-related skills.

An instructor should be critical if teaching CT and decision-making skills are sought. He/she is responsible for understanding and implementing the mandatory parts of developing critical literacy in the classroom. In this context, there exist some factors which should be considered by instructors or teachers in their in-service coaching classes as to enhance their teaching techniques (Fahim & Ahmadian, 2012), and to allocate the required time and resources towards the project (Asgharheidari & Tarihi, 2015).

An English level test dependent on a four-expertise program can uncover huge backhanded impacts on the two students and the program. Responsive and gainful abilities are combined with etymological projects as indicated by new methodologies and techniques (Morrow, 2004).

As to the large scale aptitudes of English language, talking is considered as the most troublesome expertise for evaluating the significance of learning because of the trouble in perceiving the oral capacity (Joiner & Jones, 2003). Talking is a shared procedure of making meaning, which includes developing, obtaining and handling data (Burns & Joyce, 1997).

Some scholars believe that speaking skill is considered as the most vital part of an EFL course. Many students attend English language classes to improve their abilities in speaking. According to Malmir and Shoorcheh (2012), EFL students with the higher and better experiences in the society tend to interact more successfully in speaking skill.

According to Luoma (2004), there exist two strategies for decoding and assessing speaking aptitude: the first is identified with observational methodology where the understudies' conduct and execution are watched and evaluated shamelessly. As to organized methodology, students are in charge of performing at least one explicit oral correspondence errand. At that point, the students' presentation on the undertakings is assessed. The undertaking can be executed individually or inside a gathering (Luoma, 2004).

Writing, as another productive skill, improves learning in different manners by demonstrating that learning is on. Students are exposed to listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in a simultaneous manner in the ESP program for seafarers. As to thinking, writing is considered as a medium of representing thought (Alidmat & Ayassrah, 2017). The productive nature of writing skill can be difficult when the tasks are not well-recognized, because writing involves detecting the way for finding the most influential manner for communicating ideas. The exercising EFL learners' thinking in the target language may be challenging when writing skill is disregarded (Tran, 1997). Now EFL instructors are not only tasked with preparing students to become future critical thinkers in a changing, demanding classroom environment, but of also ensuring that these future critical thinkers are competent and knowledgeable. The evolution of critical thinking is important in that possessing the skill can determine whether or not EFL teachers will correctly determine a course of action in the varied and complex situations of EFL field.

Since the use of many academic strategies for the first time facilitates the capability to think critically in the ELT classroom, this tacit knowledge should then be used and transferred into the delivery and provision of expert educators in the educational area as the novice educator or instructor gains more experience and becomes more competent in translating theory into practice. Iranian EFL educators must be prepared to utilize the attributes of a critical thinker in order to survive and adapt in the classroom environment so that the best possible decisions about the situation can be made. In this regard, the objective here is to shade light on the CT impact on speaking and writing as productive skills among Iranian pre-intermediate learners, thus, the following research questions are made:

Q1. Does CT have any significant effect in promoting speaking skills among Iranian EFL pre-intermediate learners?

Q2. Does CT have any significant effect in promoting writing skills among Iranian EFL pre-intermediate learners?

Literature Review

Theoretical Background

The necessity of foreign language learning skills in addressing the actual needs of future professionals has been and is widely assessed in different studies on teaching English as a Foreign Language (e.g. Steffensen, Fowler & Trousdale, 2017; Nazari & Warty, 2018; Zhang & Ardasheva, 2019).

The many concepts and definitions concerning the features of critical thinking, as to teachers', instructors' and students' behaviors and the disposition of critical thinkers presented by different researchers, signify some drawbacks in good thinking (Cross, 2004; Dunn, 2005; Emir, 2013; Hashemi & Zabihi, 2010; Lipman, 2003; Montano & Kaprzyk, 2008; Pithers & Soden, 2000; Zhang, 2003). Making this procedure less theoretical for many teachers may be possible by providing concrete measures. In fact, this would promote reflective practices, while relying on criteria, being self-correcting and depending on the context (Lipman, 2003).

According to Lipman (2003), critical thinking provides intellectual empowerment, while relying on criteria; it is self-correcting and sensitive to the context. Critical thinking, according to Pithers and Soden (2000), in any area involves, "being able to pursue one's questions through self-directed search and interrogation of knowledge, in a sense that knowledge is contested, and being able to present evidence to support ones' arguments" (p. 2). Also, creative thinking could be achieved by guiding students to run independent assessments and thereby encouraging them to ask questions, challenge any claim, and then offering their own fact-based solutions.

Zhang (2003) points to the specific traits or dispositions of CT, by claiming:

"The ideal critical thinker is habitually inquisitive, well-informed, trustful of reason, open-minded, flexible, fair-minded in evaluation, honest in facing personal biases, prudent in making judgments, willing to reconsider, clear about issues, orderly in complex matters, diligent in seeking relevant information, reasonable in the selection of criteria, focused in inquiry, and persistent in seeking results which are as precise as the subject and the circumstances the inquiry permit" (p. 1).

Critical thinkers are intellectually curious, systematic and methodical in their approaches in solving problems by identifying manners in passing through potential barriers and difficulties (Zhang, 2003; Siegllová, 2017).

Idealists underscore the significance of psyche contrasted with CT. They consider

individuals as mindful animals to assess nature of their thoughts just as their perspective. Optimists do not ruin the simple activities like reading newspaper or watching news. In spite of the fact that they accept that it is not adequate to just find out about events as to realize the world, they propose to investigate about the root of wonders so as to accomplish a more profound comprehension of the issue (Ozman & Craver, 2008).

The supporting hypothesis for basic reasoning likewise proposes far reaching learning or seeing the entire picture instead of simply managing points as a discrete arrangement of units. In practice a comprehensive educational plan is substantially more successful than different immature points in improving the nature of reasoning. Moreover, the assessment run in the past provides the chance to break down patterns and realize higher comprehension of current issues. These assessments likewise provide the sufficient learning to anticipate future events with a sensible precision (Thompson, 2011).

One cannot be a good critical thinker if there is no change in EFL pedagogy. It appears that a reevaluation of the educational program is necessary to decide its effect on the incitement of critical thinking in students learning foreign language (Temel, 2014).

Accordingly, the students should be taught more advanced information-gathering skills which will equip them to unearth the correct resources and solve the complex problems. Although there exist some contradictory definitions regarding the critical thinking, all are in agreement with the fact that CT has the influential effect in almost every discipline and career due to its association with abilities including decision-making and problem solving (Barjesteh & Vaseghi, 2012; Belcher, 2009; Chaffee, 1992; Lipman, 2003; Matthews, 2006; Patel, 2013; Steffensen et al., 2017).

Related Studies

Glaser (1941) did an experiment to consider the instructing of critical thinking employing a range of instructing English materials that were based on a number of specific critical thinking abilities such as differentiating relevant from irrelevant writing. The students used these critical thinking abilities during a reading task on a subject taught by instructors. At the end of a ten-week course, the students' critical thinking abilities were analyzed. The results showed that critical thinking helps English learning.

In 1994, Kumaravadivelu introduced a new term "postmethod condition". His ideas are related to CT. CT has been an important issue in education for many years (Schneider,

2002). Halvorsen (2005) argues that CT is not a straightforward concept to define since it can mean quite different things to different people in different contexts and cultures.

Buranapatana (2006) used dialogic inquiry to enhance undergraduate Thai students' critical thinking. He uses this model of learning which involves students in searching viewpoints which help them to challenge, and finally, to improve, the understandings in which they frame their relationships. Consequently, by indicating the quality of students' social involvement, he evaluated the quality of students' learning in his study. As a result, the students' strategic involvement in social relationships let him ignore the conventional concerns because of the interaction between real-world tasks and classroom learning.

Choy and Cheah (2009) run a research to determine the instructors' teaching impact on comprehension of CT by students, where it is deduced that instructors knew the importance of CT teaching and believed that critical thinking will equip students with intellectual stimulants that facilitate learning.

Fahim and Saeedpour (2011) emphasized on the effect of critical thinking skills on the speaking and reading comprehension of Iranian learners. They found that debates in a critical thinking activity during their instruction are highly contributive and they deduced that the critical thinking activity enhances reading and speaking.

Ketabi et al. (2012) assessed the contribution of the CT in English courses curriculum. They studied the behavior of teachers in terms of creative thinking instruction through a mixed method, where the quantitative data for language teachers were collected through the presentation of short-scale questions adopting the Likert method. The results revealed that EFL teachers are interested to insert critical thinking into the ELT curriculum.

Castaldi and Lopes (2013) run a study on how to improve the speaking skills through critical thinking, based on the importance given to oral communication during instruction through the critical thinking abilities. They revealed that the CT abilities and communicative approach actuate the EFL students' motivation while promoting the target language.

Taghva, Rezaei, Ghaderi and Taghva (2014) sought to analyze the type and the degree of the correlation between critical thinking skills and students' instructional achievement in Eghlid Universities, Fars, Iran and found many factors influencing this theme. Their results indicated that there existed a significant correlation between the critical thinking of teachers and students' instructional achievements.

Omidvar and Ravindranath (2017) assessed the status of critical thinking in teaching English in instructional system of India. They examined the curriculum framework and content

organized for schools and the practices or teaching methods applied through the instructors in the system and found that critical thinking had a positive effect in teaching English.

Gandimathi and Zarei (2018) run a study on the CT impact on learning the English language. They applied a qualitative method and collected the data through a semi-structured interview run with 30 graduated students in Selangor, Malaysia with the objective to obtain a general understanding of critical thinking progress in language learners. Their findings indicated that students are able to exercise a reflective and independent thinking pattern during ongoing CT.

Methods and Materials

Participants

The participants are 80 Iranian pre-intermediate EFL students within 10-20 year range, enrolled in Shokouh English language institute in Babol, Mazandaran, Iran who were randomly divided into two experimental and two control groups of (N=20) for each group during summer 2018. The Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was run to determine the homogenous participants.

Instruments

The OPT designed for pre-intermediate level was applied to assure the homogeneity level of the participants. Samples were classified randomly into experimental and control groups. Speaking and writing skills were taught to the students in the experimental group based on Mahyuddin's model (2004), where teachers focus on improving CT by developing correlations, examination and contradicting, categorizing, assessing, ranking, recognizing right from wrong, facts from ideas, cause and effect, summarizing, interpreting, recognizing the main, supporting detailed ideas, making decisions, and solving problems. The main strategies are extracted from the book 'Developing critical thinking (Speaking/Listening/Reading and Writing Connection)' by Virginia O'Keefe, (1999). This book is suggested for all teachers who are interested in raising the students' literacy standards and preparing them for their participation in an informed society. After the treatments, the IELTS speaking and listening tests were taken to determine the effect of the mentioned parameters.

Procedure

The 80 participants were placed between one SD above and below the mean and were

selected based on non-probability sampling design. They were divided into two experimental and two control groups, each with 20 participants, to assess the effect of CT strategies as to improve speaking and writing skills separately. Regarding the students in two experimental groups, the researchers applied two different CT strategies as the two treatments for improving productive skills separately. No direct method of critical thinking strategies is applied for the control group.

To begin, the first experimental group was taught speaking skill through critical thinking strategies and the second experimental group was taught writing skill through CT strategies. It should be mentioned that the participants were informed before the treatments. Because the treatments were provided during the usual class time and the researchers were the instructors of the same institute, their approval was fixed according to the participants consent. In fact, this approval was recorded in written format. The researchers managed the one and a half hours classes p/week. They selected IELTS speaking and writing tests for collecting the data. The first experimental group answered the IELTS speaking test including 15 questions in three parts, while the students in the first control group were given the same post-test and were asked to answer the questions as usual without resorting to their critical thinking ability. This was while the control group also was informed of the purpose of the study.

As to the second experimental group, the students answered IELTS writing test regarding a pie chart indicating the amount of money spent and received in one year for the children spent for charity in the USA. The students were requested to summarize the relevant information by selecting and reporting the main features and make comparisons in at least 150 words. The second control group received the same post-test, while they were asked to write and summarize as usual without resorting to critical thinking ability. This was while the second control group also was informed of the purpose of the study. Finally, after 12 sessions, two post-tests in terms of speaking and writing were given to the participants to measure their improvement in productive skills and to evaluate the effect of critical thinking strategies on both the speaking and writing skills as productive skills. Two raters scored and assessed on the pretest and posttest based on IELTS Speaking and Writing Checklists and rubrics.

Results

To estimate the homogeneity of participants, a non-probability sampling design was run after collecting data from OPT. Due to the normal distribution of the data, an independent sample t-test was run to compare the students' performance on both the pre- and posttest in

experimental and control groups. A paired sample t-test was run to analyze the students' performance during pre- and posttest in each group.

The students' scores in both the experimental and control groups were evaluated by two raters, for a single test scoring, based on speaking and writing checklists and to allow the reliability of the scores assessment. The scores in all groups were highly consistent, $r=0.857$.

Answering Research Question 1

Pretest 1. Critical Thinking vs. Control Group 1

As tabulated in Table 1, group statistics are estimated between critical thinking strategies for speaking skill as the experimental group and control group.

Table 1. Results of Critical Thinking and Control Group for Pretest Speaking

	Group	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
<i>Speaking</i>	Experimental critical thinking group	20	16.10	2.972	.665
<i>Pretest</i>	Control 1	20	15.90	2.713	.607

As tabulated in Table 2, no significant difference is observed between the students' performance in the experimental and control groups for speaking skill where $t=.22$ and $P=0.825$).

Table 2. Results of Independent Sample T-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper	
<i>Speaking</i> <i>Pretest</i> <i>score</i>	<i>Equal</i> <i>variances</i> <i>assumed</i>	.020	.88	.22	38	.825	.200	.900	-1.621	2.021
	<i>Equal</i> <i>variances not</i> <i>assumed</i>			.22	37.6	.825	.200	.900	-1.622	2.022

Posttest 1: Critical Thinking Group vs. Control Group 1

The results of the students' performance during the posttest through group statistics and independent sample test are tabulated in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3. Results of CT as Experimental Group and Control Group for Posttest Speaking

		Groups of students	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
<i>Speaking posttest score</i>		Experimental critical thinking group	20	26.35	2.540	.568
		Control group 1	20	16.10	3.493	.781

As tabulated in Table 4, a significant difference is observed between the posttest scores in the experimental CT as experimental group and control group $T=10.614$ and ($P=.000$).

Table 4. Results of Independent Sample T-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower		Upper
<i>Speaking Posttest score</i>	<i>Equal variances assumed</i>	.522	.474	10.614	38	.000	10.250	.966	8.295	12.205
	<i>Equal variances not assumed</i>			10.614	34.701	.000	10.250	.966	8.289	12.211

Thus, Based on this study, CT can play a positive role on teaching English speaking skill among Iranian EFL learners.

Answering Research Question 2

Pretest 2: Critical Thinking Group vs. Control Group 2

As shown in Table 5, no significant difference is observed between the students' performance in the experimental group and control group in writing skill ($t=0.299$; $P=0.766$).

Table 5. Independent Sample T-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower		Upper
<i>Writing pretest</i>	<i>Equal variances assumed</i>	3.801	.059	.299	38	.766	.200	.668	-1.152	1.552

<i>Equal variances not assumed</i>	.299	31.134	.767	.200	.668	-1.162	1.562
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Posttest 2: Critical Thinking Group vs. Control Group 2

After the students in the critical thinking group as experimental group are trained based on intervention program, a post-test is given to measure their gains in improving writing skill. Tables 6 indicates the results of independent sample test are tabulated in Table 6, where, a significant difference is observed between the students' performance in experimental and control groups in the posttest writing $T=7.540$ and $P=0.000$.

Table 6. Results of Independent Sample T-test

		t-test for Equality of Means								
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper	
<i>Writing posttest</i>	<i>Equal variances assumed</i>	6.978	.012	7.540	38	.000	6.800	.902	4.974	8.626
	<i>Equal variances not assumed</i>			7.540	32.43	.000	6.800	.902	4.964	8.636

Based on this study and this context, it is understood that critical thinking has a positive effect on teaching writing skill among Iranian EFL learners. In general, critical thinking could be highly contributive on both speaking and writing skills.

Discussion

The objective here is to assess the CT practice with respect to enhancing productive skills among Iranian EFL learners. Based on the results, the effect of critical thinking directions and instructions as a pedagogical shift in the EFL students' is confirmed for improving productive skills, that is, the students performed better when they realized the CT strategies and guidelines in learning the speaking and writing skills, indicating their tendency to rely on these strategies for improvement. The results here are consistent with some of the available studies like Atagi, (2002); Brown, (2004); Ketabi, et. al. (2012); Castaldi and Lopes, (2013); Kaur, (2013); Shabani, (2013); Mahmoudi and Yaghoubi, (2015); Nemat Tabrizi and Mohammadi, (2015), Uum, Van, Verhoeff and Peeters (2017); Dehghayedi and Bagheri,

(2018); Saputri, (2019) and Riemer, (2019).

According to Birjandi and Bagherkazemi (2010), rote memorization leads to prejudice and misunderstanding in learners, together with the absence of creativity, order, and responsibility. It seems that adopting these methods for learning will block the students' thinking about what they learn. In order to understand educational effects, the teachers and students are required to be critical thinkers (Paul, 1990). Hence, Iranian EFL professionals and teachers can pave the way for enhancing the whole-person approach among the subjects through teaching critical thinking abilities in their academic and social life rather than applying the rote memorization techniques (Ketabi, Zabihi & Ghadiri, 2012).

There is an undoubted fact that the field of academic instruction has faced with essential changes during the last few decades. Earlier, instructors were at the center of program, they tried to simply transfer their knowledge to their students, and the focus was on what to think, but in today's education students are at the center in order to think critically. In addition, whereas earlier the learning was studied as rote instructing, nowadays learning is conceptualized as a constantly evolving process of discovering, questioning, and reformulating hypotheses. Because, in our challenging and ever-changing world, improving the special skills such as decision-making, problem-solving and critical thinking are necessary for learners' success in their academic and social life (Romeo, 2010).

Meanwhile, critical thinking is not an inborn skill that EFL learners have it. Professional and informed instructors have to teach this learned ability (Patel, 2013). So, based on Schafersman (1991), EFL teachers are needed to have knowledge about the value of CT skills and the strategies of teaching them and try to identify different classroom areas as the proper place to focus on and teach these skills. "Teachers would like to expressly teach critical thinking and providing young people with twenty-first century skills in order to better prepare the students for the challenges they will face" (Hove, 2011, p. 7).

Language improvement and language thinking are closely interrelated, and based on Brown (2004), the aim of an ideal language program should go beyond the linguistic factor. It should improve CT skills among EFL students. EFL instructors can have a decisive role in promoting CT skills among learners. They are responsible for presenting different aspects of CT to their students and help them to achieve these skills while learning the language (Limpman, 2003).

In general, every English language instructor may know that finding the way to apply and enhance lesson planning which would easily promote English teaching is a difficult task.

Because he/she is teaching another language with different structures, she/he should adopt the methods, relying on his/her high psychological knowledge, which is more appropriate and applicable (Patel, 2013). In this context, there exist some new methods like critical thinking in language teaching through which the processes of learning will become easier and more applicable, then we have different contexts and learning traits that may influence the degree to which critical thinking can be introduced and developed, while the researchers definitely have faith in that the first steps can be taken by planning, experimenting and reflecting. They believe it can be beneficial if the degree of different influencing factors on this contributory method is measured (Shirkhani & Fahim, 2011).

The results here have important implication on the appropriateness of CT. As CT has been the major emphasis in EFL curriculum, the findings here actually indicate that critical thinking is not something inapplicable to Iranian students. Iranian EFL teachers' and students' attitude toward critical thinking can be a factor that affects incorporating critical thinking in the Iranian English classrooms. Therefore, encouraging a positive attitude toward critical thinking can be an important factor in teaching critical thinking skills.

The educational system of Iran should make some practical plans to promote the teachers/learners' attitudes towards critical thinking through vital and special shifts so as to improve English learning. The recognition of affective factors on critical thinking in Iran society may not, interestingly, lead learners to have active steps in English learning process. One of the reasons behind this result may be the fact that there is no enough knowledge on employing useful techniques and up-to-date shifts in English education. Educational system in Iran should provide this knowledge for both teachers and learners.

Hence, this way of thinking should be institutionalized in Iran. When teachers and students are motivated to use these techniques in ELT, cognitive magic will be possible. However, their function is related to the susceptibility of both the teacher and learner to engage in the hard work to understand that exciting aspiration.

Following is a short outline of these techniques:

1. Creating supportive educational setting at English language institutes whose learners' self-confidence is low. EFL students should accept themselves in order to realize that they can learn English through differently innovative techniques.

2. Developing awareness among EFL learners of the importance of innovative methods of English so that they think they can learn English easier if they use these methods.

3. Providing EFL instructors the educational materials to clarify the importance of new ways of teaching English such as critical thinking.

4. Schools, universities, and English institutes should be encouraged to provide dynamic and progressive tutorial curriculums and to offer complete instructional sessions so as to help EFL students whose levels of English are low.

5. Exploring the effect of different factors on attitudes towards innovative techniques in ELT.

It is deduced that the practicability of CT in English has its limitation, including the sample size, context, age, gender, students' level of knowledge and teachers' and students' capabilities.

Further, the researcher did not have full control over the veracity and truthfulness of both the EFL teachers and learners like their attitudes, motivation and also their special prejudices as the participants of this study. Furthermore, the study is restricted by the effect of CT on merely the productive skills, in which English learning involves both productive and receptive skills.

Conclusion and Implications

A good command on a foreign language is instrumental for achieving professional objectives in a globalized workspace. This trend is expected to gain momentum, especially for the English language, given that English continues to be the lingua franca in many contexts worldwide (Serafini, Lake, & Long, 2015; Marina, Yakusheva & Demchekova, 2019).

This study data showed that the underlying reason behind English language in educational system in Iran is that typically teaching and learning language mostly the English is more initially foreign to the country. Consequently, the progressive use of English as an instrument of instruction has come to be considered by some as 'linguistic imperialism' in the literature.

English language has influenced the instructive exercises. It makes the understudies ready for reacting to general requests by concentrating on language learning. Also it provides a profound comprehension of instructional subject substance (Short, 1991).

Basic speculation as one of the questionable and interdisciplinary issues has become a critical issue in the realm of instruction, with a specific focus on English language teaching (Halpern, 1998). When we will expect something, we are assessing the arrangements of our reasoning procedures. The basic reasoning is that of intelligent reasoning, stressed on

understanding an issue, making and gauging arrangements, and settling on learned choices and decisions. In this context, one of the fundamental missions of training is that the participants must acquire basic reasoning abilities to gain simple access to data and overcome the difficulties therein (Dehghayedi & Bagheri, 2018; Riemer, 2019; Semerci, 2011; Serafini, et. al., 2015; Temel, 2014; Zhang & Ardasheva, 2019).

With respect to recent advances made in the instruction realm, the need of basic reasoning aptitudes is accentuated for scholarly achievement and life. The learners must realize how to think and reason basically with respect to the fact that it is significant for them to achieve their highest potential in the contemporary environment (Fahim & Hajimaghsoodi, 2014).

Critical thinking is characterized as one of the interdisciplinary issues. Lately, it has become a vital issue in the region of instruction. Consequently, one of the fundamental motivations behind instruction is that the learners must gain the basic speculation abilities to get to data without any difficulty and to overcome difficulties therein (Halpern, 1998; Semerci, 2011).

Although critical thinking must be instilled in the educational courses at all levels, it has not taught extensively in Iran. Lack of critical thinking skills advancement among Iranian EFL learners is indicated in a number of studies, and unsatisfactorily in low level of critical thinking ability in EFL learners and classrooms contexts are special concerns for Iranian scholars and instructors (Birjandi & Bagherkazemi, 2010; Dehghayedi & Bagheri, 2018; Fahim & Saeedpour, 2011; Ketabi, et. al., 2012; Shabani, 2013). The latent assumption of recent viewpoints of applied ELT, instructional language teaching and life syllabus is that Iranian EFL instructors should focus on the advances made on the learners' life skills and CT before focusing on language-related skills (Nazari & Warty, 2018).

Despite the importance of improving CT in educational programs, and the fact that English instructors have an unrivaled potential for teaching language skills, it seems that Iranian EFL instructors are not successful in understanding the true meaning of CT and the process-based learning and the fact that whether it should be applied in the ELT curriculum in Iran or not.

Based on the results here, CT as a methodological shift can promote learning. In fact, adopting new techniques which can assist learners to improve four different skills should be highlighted. Indeed CT as the productive skill can be contributive in speaking and writing skills among EFL learners. CT can provide an opportunity to learn these skills better than the

common traditional approaches in which CT instructions are not applied. This statement is in line with some studies like Buranapatana (2006), Choy and Cheah (2009), Dunn (2005), Emir (2013), Gnadimathi and Zarei (2018), Hashemi and Zabihi (2010), Kaur (2013), Marina, et. al. (2019), and Saputri, (2019).

It is important for Iranian English instructors to teach themselves and have knowledge of their countless responsibilities in the classroom in order to prepare Iranian EFL learners to promote their CT and decision-making skills. Moreover, holding in-service teaching classes to accelerate teachers' CT skills and to promote their training technique is of great significance in language learning context (Fahim & Ahmadian, 2012). English language departments of the universities and English institutes must provide instructors with sufficient time and resources essential for professional development in order to advance Iranian EFL instructors' abilities related to CT.

Both EFL instructors and learners should be informed about new strategies to teach and learn English. The Ministry of Education should provide flexible strategies for both the instructors and learners to apply new methods in ELT, therefore, creativity should be prioritized in learning a foreign or second language. Decision makers, EFL developers and syllabus designer should design and develop syllabi and create pamphlets and English textbooks which maintain EFL professors' and students' interest and attitude towards innovative techniques of teaching. They can use foreign exchange programs to help EFL teachers meet and converse with different teachers and students and encourage them to understand and employ their way of English teaching in using techniques to facilitate English teaching. Also, EFL students should accept innovate techniques of English learning and improve their view about these procedures.

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