



## DEVELOPING CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS THROUGH LISTENING INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH PHILOLOGY CLASSROOMS

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### ANNOTATION

*In contemporary language education, the development of critical thinking skills has become as important as linguistic competence. For students of English philology, listening is not only a receptive skill but also a key tool for analyzing information, evaluating ideas, and making informed judgments. However, traditional listening instruction often focuses on comprehension rather than deeper cognitive engagement. This study explores how listening instruction can be used to foster critical thinking skills in English philology classrooms.*

*The research was conducted over one academic semester with undergraduate students. A mixed-method research design was employed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. Participants were divided into a control group, which followed traditional listening instruction, and an experimental group, which experienced a critical-thinking-oriented listening approach.*

*The findings indicate that students in the experimental group demonstrated significant improvement not only in listening comprehension but also in their ability to analyze, interpret, and evaluate spoken information. Additionally, students reported higher engagement and greater confidence in expressing their opinions.*

*The study concludes that integrating critical thinking into listening instruction creates a more effective and meaningful learning experience. It is recommended that educators adopt interactive and analytical listening tasks to enhance both language proficiency and cognitive skills.*

**Keywords:** *critical thinking, listening skills, English philology, language teaching, communicative competence, higher education, analytical skills*

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the goals of language education have expanded beyond the simple acquisition of grammar and vocabulary. Educators increasingly recognize that students must also develop higher-order thinking skills in order to succeed in academic and professional contexts. Among these skills, critical thinking occupies a central position. It involves the ability to analyze information, evaluate arguments, and make reasoned decisions. For students of English philology, developing such skills is particularly important, as they are expected to engage with complex texts, interpret meaning, and communicate ideas effectively.



Listening, as one of the core language skills, plays a significant role in this process. Traditionally, listening has been viewed as a passive activity in which learners focus on understanding spoken information. In many classrooms, listening instruction is limited to answering comprehension questions or identifying specific details. While these activities help improve basic understanding, they often do not encourage deeper engagement with the content.

However, listening can serve as a powerful tool for developing critical thinking. When students are exposed to authentic spoken language, they encounter different perspectives, arguments, and types of information. By engaging with these materials critically, they can learn to question assumptions, compare viewpoints, and form their own opinions.

Despite this potential, critical thinking is not always integrated into listening instruction. Many teaching approaches still emphasize correct answers rather than thoughtful analysis. As a result, students may become dependent on surface-level understanding and fail to develop the skills needed for independent thinking.

An alternative approach involves designing listening tasks that require students to go beyond comprehension. For example, students can be asked to evaluate the speaker's argument, identify bias, or discuss alternative interpretations. Such activities encourage active engagement and help students develop both language and cognitive skills simultaneously.

Another important factor is classroom interaction. When students are given opportunities to discuss and reflect on what they hear, they are more likely to develop critical thinking. Collaborative activities such as debates, group discussions, and problem-solving tasks create a learning environment where students can exchange ideas and learn from each other.

This study aims to investigate how listening instruction can be used to develop critical thinking skills in English philology classrooms. It seeks to answer the following questions: How does critical-thinking-oriented listening instruction affect students' analytical abilities? Does it improve listening comprehension? How do students respond to this approach compared to traditional methods?

By addressing these questions, the study aims to contribute to the development of more effective and meaningful language teaching practices.

## **METHODS**

This study employed a mixed-method research design to explore the impact of critical-thinking-based listening instruction on students' learning outcomes. The combination of quantitative and qualitative data provided a comprehensive understanding of both performance improvements and student experiences.

The research was conducted over a sixteen-week academic semester at a university offering English philology programs. A total of 70 undergraduate students participated



in the study. Their English proficiency levels ranged from intermediate to upper-intermediate.

The participants were divided into two groups. The control group followed traditional listening instruction, which focused on comprehension exercises such as answering questions, completing summaries, and identifying key information. The experimental group, on the other hand, was taught using a critical-thinking-oriented approach.

In the experimental group, listening activities were designed to promote analysis and evaluation. Students listened to authentic audio materials, including interviews, lectures, podcasts, and debates. After listening, they were asked to perform tasks such as identifying the speaker's purpose, evaluating arguments, comparing viewpoints, and expressing their own opinions.

Teachers encouraged discussion and reflection, allowing students to explore different interpretations of the material. Feedback focused not only on comprehension but also on the quality of students' reasoning and argumentation.

Data collection involved several methods. Pre-tests and post-tests were used to measure improvements in listening comprehension and critical thinking. Classroom observations were conducted to assess student participation and engagement. In addition, questionnaires were used to gather student feedback on the learning process.

The evaluation criteria included listening comprehension, analytical ability, and communicative participation.

## **RESULTS**

The results of the study indicated that integrating critical thinking into listening instruction had a significant positive impact on student performance. Students in the experimental group demonstrated noticeable improvement in both listening comprehension and analytical skills.

One of the key findings was the improvement in students' ability to interpret spoken information. Instead of focusing only on surface-level details, students began to identify underlying meanings, intentions, and implications. They became more attentive listeners and were better able to follow complex arguments.

Another important outcome was the development of analytical skills. Students showed greater ability to evaluate information, distinguish between facts and opinions, and identify bias. They were more confident in expressing their viewpoints and supporting them with evidence.

In terms of classroom participation, students in the experimental group were more active and engaged. They contributed more frequently to discussions and demonstrated a willingness to explore different perspectives.

In contrast, the control group showed more limited progress. While their listening comprehension improved to some extent, they remained focused on finding correct answers rather than engaging critically with the material.



Student feedback supported these findings. Many students reported that the new approach made lessons more interesting and meaningful. They appreciated the opportunity to think independently and express their opinions.

### **DISCUSSION**

The findings of this study suggest that listening instruction can play a significant role in developing critical thinking skills. By moving beyond traditional comprehension-based tasks, teachers can create opportunities for deeper engagement with language.

One of the main advantages of this approach is that it reflects real-life communication. In everyday situations, listening involves not only understanding words but also interpreting meaning and evaluating information. By incorporating these elements into classroom instruction, students are better prepared for real-world communication.

Another important factor is student engagement. Activities that require analysis and discussion tend to be more interactive and motivating. Students are more likely to participate actively when they are encouraged to share their ideas and opinions.

The role of the teacher is also crucial. In a critical-thinking-oriented classroom, the teacher acts as a facilitator rather than a source of answers. This requires a shift in teaching style and may involve additional training.

However, the approach also presents challenges. Designing effective tasks requires careful planning, and some students may initially find it difficult to adapt to this style of learning. Despite these challenges, the benefits of integrating critical thinking into listening instruction are clear.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study demonstrates that listening instruction can be an effective tool for developing critical thinking skills in English philology classrooms. By incorporating analytical and evaluative tasks, educators can enhance both language proficiency and cognitive development.

The findings suggest that language teaching should move beyond traditional methods and adopt more interactive and reflective approaches. Integrating critical thinking into listening instruction provides a meaningful and practical way to achieve this goal.

Future research may explore how this approach can be applied in different contexts and with learners at various proficiency levels.

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