INTERNATIONAL MULTI DISCIPLINARY JOURNAL FOR RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
eISSN 2394-6334 Impact factor: 7,854 Volume 12, issue 12 (2025)

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPEECH COMPETENCE AND CRITICAL THINKING DEVELOPMENT IN PEDAGOGY

Tuxtayeva Mehriyo Shavkatovna
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Pedagogy, Lecturer at the Department of Uzbek Language and Literature, Nizami National University of Uzbekistan
Taxmatjonova Vazira Aziz kizi
Student of Primary Education, 102-(Rus) Elite Group

Abstract: The development of speech competence plays a crucial role in enhancing students' critical thinking skills. Speech competence not only enables individuals to express their thoughts clearly but also fosters analytical reasoning, problem-solving abilities, and reflective thinking. This study explores the interconnection between verbal communication skills and critical thinking in the educational process. The findings suggest that activities aimed at improving speech competence, such as discussions, debates, and presentations, significantly contribute to the formation of critical thinking. Promoting speech competence in learners encourages independent reasoning, the ability to evaluate information critically, and effective decision-making.

Key words: Speech competence, critical thinking, verbal communication, analytical skills, educational development, reasoning, reflective thinking

The development of speech competence and critical thinking is increasingly viewed as one of the central priorities of contemporary pedagogy. In the context of higher education, students are expected not only to master theoretical knowledge, but also to interpret, analyze, evaluate, and clearly express their ideas in both oral and written forms. Speech competence, therefore, is no longer perceived merely as the ability to speak correctly or grammatically; it represents a complex phenomenon that integrates linguistic knowledge, communicative strategies, discourse skills, and the ability to engage in meaningful interaction. At the same time, critical thinking is regarded as an essential cognitive skill that enables students to question assumptions, compare viewpoints, construct arguments, and make evidence-based judgments.

The relationship between speech competence and critical thinking is mutually reinforcing. When students are encouraged to formulate opinions, justify positions, participate in discussions, and reflect on different perspectives, they inevitably activate deeper levels of reasoning. Conversely, without sufficient speech competence, learners find it difficult to articulate ideas, defend arguments, and participate in dialogic learning processes. As a result, the educational process risks becoming mechanical, reproductive, and limited to memorization rather than understanding. Pedagogical practice shows that tasks such as debates, problem-solving discussions, case analysis, and collaborative projects create environments in which students simultaneously develop communicative abilities and higher-order thinking skills.

In modern pedagogy, communicative and student-centered approaches play a crucial role in integrating these two domains. Teachers act not only as transmitters of knowledge, but as facilitators who organize interactive learning situations, stimulate inquiry, and guide students toward independent reasoning. Digital technologies, online communication tools, and multicultural learning environments further expand opportunities for authentic communication and critical reflection. However, the effective development of speech competence and critical thinking requires methodologically grounded strategies, continuous assessment, and purposeful alignment with learning outcomes.

Therefore, studying the relationship between speech competence and critical thinking is of great scientific and practical significance. Understanding how these components influence each other helps educators design teaching models that promote active learning, intellectual autonomy, and professional readiness. This research seeks to analyze pedagogical approaches, identify effective methods, and highlight the conditions under which speech competence becomes a key driver of critical thinking development among students.

Scholars in pedagogy and linguistics increasingly emphasize that speech competence is a fundamental component of students' academic and professional development. Early research primarily focused on grammatical accuracy and vocabulary acquisition, viewing speech competence as a linguistic skill. However, more recent studies interpret it as a broader construct involving discourse organization, pragmatic awareness, interaction strategies, and the ability to adapt language to different communicative contexts. Researchers such as Hymes and later communicative language theorists argue that speech competence emerges within social interaction rather than in isolated language drills. This shift highlights the role of dialogue, collaborative learning, and authentic communication in educational settings.

Parallel to this, the concept of critical thinking has evolved from a purely philosophical notion into a practical pedagogical category. Educational psychologists define critical thinking as the ability to analyze information, identify biases, generate alternative solutions, and justify conclusions based on evidence. Contemporary frameworks underline that critical thinking does not develop spontaneously; it requires intentional instructional design, reflective questioning, and problem-based learning environments. Studies in higher education demonstrate that students engaged in tasks involving debate, inquiry, and evaluation show greater autonomy and deeper comprehension compared to those trained through reproductive learning methods.

A number of researchers point to a strong interconnection between speech competence and critical thinking. When learners are asked to formulate arguments, interpret texts, and negotiate meanings with peers, they simultaneously practice cognitive operations such as comparison, inference, and evaluation. Conversely, insufficient speech competence may limit students' ability to verbalize thoughts, which in turn restricts their participation in analytical discussions. Empirical findings indicate that dialogic teaching, Socratic questioning, and collaborative discussion formats create conditions where language use becomes a tool for reasoning rather than simple reproduction of information.

In recent pedagogical literature, communicative and learner-centered approaches are considered effective mechanisms for integrating these two domains. The communicative approach views language as a medium of problem solving, decision making, and knowledge construction. Integrating interactive techniques—such as role-plays, case studies, project-based learning, and structured debates—encourages students to express ideas clearly, challenge viewpoints, and justify positions. Digital learning environments further expand opportunities for feedback, peer interaction, and reflective dialogue, supporting both speech development and higher-order thinking[1]

Despite these advances, several scholars emphasize that many educational programs still prioritize formal correctness over meaningful communication. This results in fragmented learning outcomes where students know theoretical rules but struggle to argue, discuss, or critically evaluate information. Therefore, current research calls for pedagogical models that intentionally align speech competence development with critical thinking strategies, supported by systematic assessment and teacher professional development.

Overall, the reviewed literature shows that speech competence and critical thinking are not parallel skills but mutually reinforcing processes. Their integration contributes to students'

academic independence, professional readiness, and active participation in social and intellectual life.

The analysis of the collected data shows that the development of speech competence and critical thinking is closely interconnected in the learning process. Students who regularly participate in communicative, discussion-based activities demonstrate higher levels of argumentation, clarity of expression, and independence of thought compared to those who engage mainly in reproductive tasks such as memorization or retelling. Classroom observations revealed that when learners are encouraged to explain ideas in their own words, ask questions, and justify their opinions, their speech becomes more structured, while their reasoning becomes more evidence-based.

For example, during debate-type lessons, students were asked to discuss issues related to academic honesty, the role of technology in education, and ethical decision-making. At the beginning, many learners relied on simple statements such as “I agree” or “I disagree.” However, after repeated practice with guiding questions like “Why do you think so?” or “What evidence supports your position?” students began to construct more complex responses. They started to use linking phrases (firstly, however, on the other hand), cite sources, compare viewpoints, and recognize contradictions in arguments. This illustrates that speech tasks designed with analytical components naturally stimulate critical thinking.

Another important result concerns group and pair work. When students worked collaboratively on problem-based tasks, they were required to distribute roles, negotiate decisions, and reach common conclusions. This interaction encouraged them to listen actively, reformulate peers’ ideas, and propose alternatives[2] For instance, in one activity students had to design an ideal “student code of conduct” for their faculty. The process of discussion led them not only to suggest rules, but also to justify why each rule was necessary, predict possible consequences, and evaluate fairness. As a result, both their communicative competence and their ability to reason logically showed significant improvement.

The research also revealed challenges. Some students with limited speech competence experienced hesitation, fear of making mistakes, and reluctance to participate in open discussions. In such situations, the use of scaffolding strategies—such as sentence starters, vocabulary support, short preparatory writing tasks, and structured questioning—proved effective[3] Gradually, these students began to participate more confidently, demonstrating clearer and more coherent arguments.

Quantitative reflections from teacher assessments and student self-reports confirmed qualitative observations. Most participants indicated that interactive and communicative activities helped them better understand course content, organize their thoughts, and express ideas more precisely. Teachers noted that students became more active in asking questions, critically evaluating information, and using language as a tool for problem solving rather than simple reproduction.

Overall, the results suggest that communicative, student-centered teaching strategies significantly contribute to the simultaneous development of speech competence and critical thinking. When carefully designed and systematically implemented, such methods enhance students’ readiness for academic discussion, professional communication, and independent decision-making.

The conducted analysis confirms that speech competence and critical thinking are closely interconnected and develop most effectively when integrated within communicative, student-centered learning environments. Speech is not merely a means of verbal expression, but a cognitive instrument through which students construct meaning, justify ideas, and engage in reflective discussion. When learners participate in debates, problem-based discussions,

collaborative tasks, and analytical dialogues, they gradually move from simple reproduction of information toward independent reasoning and argumentation.

The findings show that the communicative approach creates favorable conditions for activating higher-order thinking. Students learn to compare viewpoints, detect contradictions, evaluate evidence, and formulate well-structured opinions both orally and in writing. At the same time, the absence of sufficiently developed speech competence limits participation in academic interaction and reduces opportunities for critical reflection. Therefore, targeted pedagogical support—such as scaffolding, guiding questions, structured tasks, and continuous feedback—is essential.

Overall, integrating communicative strategies with critical-thinking oriented instruction contributes to learners' academic autonomy, professional readiness, and responsible participation in social dialogue. For sustainable results, universities should systematically incorporate interactive, discussion-based methods into curricula, provide teacher training, and align assessment procedures with communicative and analytical learning outcomes.

REFERENCES:

1. Hymes, D. (1972). **On Communicative Competence.** In J. B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.), Sociolinguistics. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
2. Paul, R., & Elder, L. (2014). **Critical Thinking: Tools for Taking Charge of Your Learning and Your Life.** Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
3. Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). **Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes.** Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
4. Shavkatovna, T. M. (2021, June). THE IMAGE OF A BEAST IN THE WORK OF MY MOTHER. In Archive of Conferences (pp. 22-24).
5. Shavkatovna, T. M. (2024, June). NUTQ MADANIYATINI SHAKLLANTIRISHDA PEDAGOGIK QARASHLAR. In INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INTERDISCIPLINARY SCIENCE (Vol. 1, No. 6, pp. 3-7).
6. Shavkatovna, T. M., & Ruhshona, K. (2024, May). PEDAGOG-PSIXOLOGLARNING NUTQ MADANIYATINI RIVOJLANTIRISH. In INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MODERN DEVELOPMENT OF PEDAGOGY AND LINGUISTICS (Vol. 1, No. 5, pp. 17-22).
7. Shavkatovna, T. M. (2023). BO'LAJAK PEDAGOG VA PSIXOBO'LAJAK PEDAGOG VA PSIXOLOGLARDA NUTQ MADANIYATINI RIVOJLANTIRISHDA KOMMUNIKATIV SIFATLARNING O'RNI LOGLARDA NUTQ MADANIYATINI RIVOJLANTIRISHDA KOMMUNIKATIV SIFATLARNING O'RNI. INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RECENTLY SCIENTIFIC RESEARCHER'S THEORY, 1(3), 6-8.
8. LI, T., MN, A., & Shavkatovna, T. M. (2025). NUTQ BUZILISHLARINING KOMPLEKS KORREKSIYASI: LOGOPED VA OTA-ONANING HAMKORLIGI. TA'LIM, TARBIYA VA INNOVATSIYALAR JURNALI, 1(6), 66-69.
9. Shavkatovna, T. M. (2024). ZAMONAVIY YONDASHUVLAR ASOSIDA BO'LAJAK O'QITUVCHILARNING NUTQ MADANIYATINI RIVOJLANTIRISH METODIKASI. TANQIDIY NAZAR, TAHLILIY TAFAKKUR VA INNOVATSION G 'OYALAR, 1(3), 28-31.
10. Shavkatovna, T. M. (2024). INNOVATSION YONDASHUVLAR ASOSIDA BO'LAJAK O'QITUVCHILARNING NUTQ MADANIYATINI RIVOJLANTIRISH. MODERN PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION AND THEIR SCIENTIFIC SOLUTIONS, 1(3), 337-340.
11. Beknazarovna, Q. O., & Shavkatovna, T. M. (2024). TALABALARNING NUTQIY FAOLIYATINI RIVOJLANTIRISHDA NUTQ MADANIYATINING O 'ZARO BOG 'LIQ XUSUSIYATLARI MAZMUNI. Science and innovation, 3(Special Issue 18), 952-954.

12. Shavkatovna, T. M. (2025). ZAMONAVIY YONDASHUVLAR ASOSIDA BO ‘LAJAK O ‘QITUVCHILARNING NUTQ MADANIYATINI RIVOJLANTIRISH. TANQIDIY NAZAR, TAHLILIY TAFAKKUR VA INNOVATSION G ‘OYALAR, 2(2), 57-59.
13. Shavkatovna, T. M. (2025). O ‘ZBEK TILI VA UNING TILLAR TIZMIDAGI O ‘RNI. BILGI ÇEŞMESI, 1(6), 30-33.