



***Topic:* Techniques which promote critical thinking in ELT- A study
conducted in High schools of Skopje**

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To my family and my husband

Abstract in English

The field of ELT is evolving every day. Analytical thinking is one important skill in learning a language. It also means that one understands various aspects of the language and its usage in different contexts. At the same time it increases one's knowledge and develops the 4 language skills. Since critical thinking is considered a difficult skill to master, in order to develop and improve one's CT, it's the teachers' duty, during their teaching, to use various techniques and methods and to find a way to implement it and aid the teaching-learning process. It's difficult to find a suitable technique in order to keep the students' motivation to use critical thinking when acquiring a language, to understand and explain what critical thinking is and to draw personal conclusions and results from each aspect of the language. The objective of this research is to investigate whether there is a significant difference of students' achievements and acquirement of the language by implementing critical thinking techniques, to find out the degree in which critical thinking is used in ELT, the benefits that it presents in facilitating the teaching process and to find out if critical thinking techniques can be successfully implemented in our schools or not, even as a 5th language skill.

The results of the study showed that students, in various questions, had varying degrees of approval, and that almost all teachers had at some point used critical thinking techniques in ELT, resulting in students' growth and improvement in motivation, fluency and linguistic proficiency.

Keywords: critical thinking skill, techniques for critical thinking, student- centered classroom, the impact of critical thinking in ELT, students' attitude towards CT, implementation of critical thinking

Rezyme

Fusha e mësimdhënies së gjuhës angleze është duke evoluar ç'do dite. Mendimi analitik është një aftësi e rëndësishme në mësimin e një gjuhe. Gjithashtu, do të thotë se njeriu i kupton aspektet e ndryshme të gjuhës dhe përdorimin e saj në kontekste të ndryshme. Në të njëjtën kohë e rrit diturinë e njeriut dhe zhvillon 4 aftësitë gjuhësore. Meqë mendimi kritik konsiderohet një aftësi e rëndë për t'u përvetsuar, në mënyrë që të zhvillojmë dhe përmirsojmë mendimin kritik të njeriut, është detyra e mësimdhënësit, gjatë mësimdhënies së tyre të përdorin metoda dhe teknika të ndryshme dhe të gjejnë një mënyrë për t'a implementuar atë, si dhe të ndihmojnë procesin e mësimdhënies-mësimit. Është e rëndë të gjindet një teknikë e përshtatshme në mënyrë që të mbahet motivimi i nxënësve për të përdorur të menduarit kritik gjatë pranimi të një gjuhe, të kuptojnë dhe të shpjegojnë ç'ka është mendimi kritik dhe të nxjerrin konkluzë dhe rezultate personale nga secili aspekt i gjuhës. Qëllimi i këtij punimi është të hulumton nëse ka ndryshim të rëndësishëm në arritjet dhe pranimin e gjuhës nga ana e nxënësve duke implementuar teknikat e mendimit kritik, të zbulon nivelin në të cilin mendimi kritik është i përdorur në mësimdhënien e gjuhës angleze, benefitet që i përfaqson me lehtësimin e procesit të mësimdhënies dhe të zbulon nëse teknikat e mendimit kritik mund të implementohen me sukses në shkollë ose jo, madje edhe si aftësi e 5të e gjuhës.

Rezultatet e studimit treguan që nxënësit, në disa pyetje, kishin nivele të ndryshme miratimi dhe pothuajse të gjithë mësimdhënësit në një moment apo tjetër, kishin përdorur teknikat e mendimit kritik në mësimdhënien e gjuhës angleze, duke rezultuar në rritjen dhe përmirsimin e motivimit, të të folurit rrjedhshëm dhe mjeshtërisë së gjuhës.

Fjalët kyçe: të menduarit kritik, teknikave e mendimit kritik, nxënësi në qendër, ndikimi i mendimit kritik në mësimdhënien e gjuhës angleze, qëndrimi i nxënësve, zbatimi i teknikave të mendimit kritik

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1 Introduction

This research is done in the field of education. It investigates the ability to focus, clarify and judge a problem by using problem-solving and decision-making skills, as they represent the foundation of critical thinking. Critical thinking is a skill that involves evaluation of thoughts and their thorough analysis. Even though it emerged lately in the field of teaching, many teachers and researchers on the discipline still do not have a clear depiction of what it really involves. Consequently, they believe that to be critical about something is to evaluate the negative aspects of it. However, it means to analyze thoroughly all the aspects of an item or tool of studying, both positive and negative. Moreover, critical thinking enhances the student's ability to solve problems and make decisions without being biased around a topic. Furthermore, it promotes learners' higher efficacy in acquiring a language, professional growth in the area of judgment, independent learning as well as objectivity.

Critical thinking in ELT enables does not approve of passive learners that rely on the teacher and limit their knowledge sources. On the contrary, it requires students' thinking improvement and their thorough discussion and understanding of subjects. Apart from these positive aspects of critical thinking in the area of teaching, it is a skill that is nowadays welcomed in any profession. In that, this skill incorporates the most important attribute of a person, the ability to foresee the future possibilities, saving the employer from great crash and dilapidation.

In the high schools of Skopje and all around the country, many teachers and professionals on the field, believe that critical thinking should be incorporated in the syllabus and curriculum. Nonetheless, teachers aren't prone to using activities and approaches which enhance critical thinking in their students' learning process. During my practicing internship and observations in the High School "Zef Lush Marku" in Skopje, I have encountered many teachers that skip exercises and questions which train the critical thinking skill in students. Consequently, many areas of the language remain untouched and undiscovered, since students are not guided to analyze them. This experience has given me the opportunity to observe various teaching methodologies and as a result apply them during my teaching experience. By combining them with something new and innovative like critical thinking, students' interest on the subject of discussion and the language itself improved. Since their intellect and personal opinion has been

given attention, students followed to practice the skill subconsciously, since it promotes their inner ability to judge issues from an independent and professional point of view. In other terms, the teacher's effort to involve students into the teaching/ learning process would be in vain. Since they remain passive and the teacher is lecturing on the center of the class, students' involvement is not something they can count on. Consequently, teachers should incorporate critical thinking into the teaching process, in order to make students responsible for their learning process. In many high schools in the country, when a teacher struggles to maintain the order within the classroom, the misbehaved students are asked to leave the class, Even though it is strictly forbidden according to the regulations, older teachers aren't capable of lecturing if any disturbance is on their way. Thus, in order to control the students' boredom and lack of interest during the teaching/ learning process, critical thinking is a skill that would help keep the students intricate during the learning process. Apart from providing them with endless activities and self- growth, it is beneficial also to the teacher, as an interaction and expansion of knowledge and information.

Research questions are:

- 1. What are some techniques and tasks which are used by English language teachers that enhance and develop critical thinking, besides do they necessarily assist and encourage English language learning?***
- 2. Which components impede teachers to incorporate critical thinking as a skill in the teaching process, as well as the curriculum?***
- 3. How to contribute in order to raise the usage of critical thinking as a skill within the classroom and the curriculum, as well as incorporate it as a 5th language skill?***

In essence, this research has been conducted to prove that when language teachers and professionals use critical thinking as a skill and its techniques in the teaching process, it boosts students' responsibility for their learning process and well as their self- growth in the area of their study.

1.2 Research background

“...learning occurs inside the head of the learner; the role of instruction, therefore, is to prompt the internal cognitive processes required for learning to take place.” (Murcia. M.C., 2014, pg. 41). Critical thinking covers an important place in language teaching, since it trains students to analyze, compare, evaluate and rationally use the acquired language and learning process. Other aspects of English language, such as cultural connotations, usages in different contexts as well as mastering the four language skills may be achieved only through scrutinized inspection of the language. Thus, critical thinking as a skill enables learners to master problem- solving and decision- making skills, which will later account as the grounds of successful academic language achievements. Language professionals have various ways how to incorporate the critical thinking skill into the teaching process. “It is the responsibility of educational institutions to promote and develop students' critical thinking abilities.” (Kaarbalaei. A., 2012, pg. 2). Thus, it is up to the instructor, curriculum and learner whether or not the techniques which promote it will be used accordingly. Promoting critical thinking skills encourages students to plan, implement and evaluate their own learning styles and process. Self- awareness is one of the several aspects that critical thinking encourages students to nurture and maintain throughout their learning process. Thus, it enables students to actively participate in the teaching- learning process, as analytical evaluators to the unlimited usages of language.

1.3 Research questions

1. What are some techniques and tasks which are used by English language teachers that enhance and develop critical thinking, besides do they necessarily assist and encourage English language learning?
2. Which components impede teachers to incorporate critical thinking as a skill in the teaching process, as well as the curriculum?
3. How to contribute in order to raise the usage of critical thinking as a skill within the classroom and the curriculum, as well as incorporate it as a 5th language skill?

1.1 Structure of the thesis

This thesis consists of seven chapters as presented in the following paragraphs.

The first chapter opens up with an introduction that outlines the whole thesis and the setting of the research. It briefly discusses the need for this research and its importance. Furthermore, it states the aims of the research as well as the instruments that were used to conduct it.

The second chapter provides a literature review organized into five subheadings. It begins by briefly presenting an overview upon the importance of critical thinking usage in the classroom and its benefits in the language learning and teaching process. The review continues on to elaborate the background and meaning of critical thinking as a skill and techniques which promote it in a language teaching environment. Additionally, it discusses teachers' and students' roles when incorporating this innovative and thought-demanding skill within the classroom. Moreover, it will briefly touch various exercises and approaches which enhance and promote it.

The third chapter shows the methodology that was utilized to support this research. Initially, it presents the research aims, the research questions, and the research hypotheses. Then, it

discusses and reveals the research methods, samples, and instruments used to conduct and support the research.

The fourth chapter presents the results of the research concluded from: a) students' questionnaires in the high schools of Skopje, b) interviews with English Language teachers from the high schools of Skopje, c) results from firsthand classroom observations

The fifth chapter presents the data analysis and the findings of this research gained from the students' questionnaires, interviews of English language teachers and classroom observations at several high schools. Furthermore, it shows a comparison made between the main findings and the literature review assumptions, questionnaire, and interview analysis.

The sixth chapter discusses the main findings from data analysis. Moreover, it provides conclusions for the overall research according to the research hypotheses.

The seventh chapter reveals the limitations of this research and provides recommendations for other researches related to language teaching methodologies.

1.4 Conclusion

Considering that a language is taught and learned only to be used effectively, transparently, objectively and academically outside the classroom, following the techniques which promote the critical thinking skill is an essential step for language professionals in the field of ELT. To sum up, a combination of critical thinking techniques and approaches are a good way of meeting nowadays students' needs. Consequently, promoting critical thinking skill in the field of teaching may be used to create a relatively student- centered classroom, where learners grow as independent individuals and take responsibility of their own learning process and future achievements in a professional and unbiased way.

2 Literature Review

In this chapter, the literature review presents goals to be elaborated in terms of critical thinking techniques in the field of ELT. Simultaneously, it proves their importance and benefits in education and teaching. In addition, it scrutinizes and conducts ways of using critical thinking techniques in ELT that promote learners' self-awareness, competence and independence during the teaching-learning process.

2.1 What is critical thinking?

Critical thinking involves an objective analysis of a certain topic in order to come to unbiased conclusions upon it. It provides the person with the ability to think independently and create their own opinion about a specific matter. A person who thinks critically must be creative and innovative, open-minded about different opinions of others, should master communicative and problem-solving techniques which are highly recommended in any job-position. What is more, critical thinking enables a person to understand deeper connections between ideas, as well as foresee upcoming issues that rise from a present problem.

2.2 The importance and benefits of critical thinking in teaching

Teaching provides a sense of illumination for each one of us. Even though it relies upon the skill and passion to work on this profession, it also requires personal knowledge and a deeper understanding regarding various topics and themes. Thus, critical thinking is the key aspect which transforms basic teaching and learning into an academic and fruitful experience. Critical thinking is the process of observing and evaluating data, information and facts from a personal point of view without being biased about it. Learners that master this skill are able to identify errors, pre-scan risks and discriminate between useful and less useful details.

Even though each language professional has their own methods of teaching, they must incorporate critical thinking as a skill in their approach regardless of students' age, background or reason of learning the language. In that way, language learners not only will acquire the language independently, they will also be able to successfully use it outside the classroom in an evaluative manner. What is more, nowadays employers seek for employees which can comprehend beforehand the risks and dangers that await them in the future.

One of the benefits of using critical thinking in ELT is in the development of our well- informed and independent thinking. Language learners cease to depend upon the teacher as the only source of information. Consequently, a student's thought is authentic and open- minded regarding other opinions within the classroom. Moreover, this would bring methods in which critical thinking could be used to acquire a language easily. In that, language learners would become eloquent and fluent in the targeted language, apart from being critical about its endless usages. Moreover, the learning styles would be determined by the student and how it suits them the best to acquire new information, without being pushed to do so by the teacher. They must be responsible and decide whether or not they believe what they read, hear or see. Consequently, students must argue their own case with providing arguments if someone doesn't believe them.

Another benefit of using critical thinking in ELT is that it leads to higher academic achievement. In that, language learners are able to distinguish fact from opinion and keep their minds open to various possibilities and solutions. In that, critical thinking is a skill that would help them later in their careers. *"An individual, to participate fully in the new economy – as worker, consumer and responsible citizen – needs to be even better informed (and about global as well as local issues) and needs higher-order and more flexible skills."* (G.David, 2006). Thus, without creativity and imagination one cannot succeed in a world full of rivalry and competition. Apart from having personal responsibility for our learning, one must also have social and professional awareness. Accordingly, by respecting everyone's views, a critical learner must obtain their opinion based on substantial facts. Only then, can we admit and fully

understand that a person needs critical thinking skills in order to progress to higher levels of academic study.

The third benefit of using critical thinking in ELT is that the classroom would become more student- centered rather than teacher- centered. In the past, teaching methods required zero involvement of the students during the teaching- learning process, where all the work was done by the teacher. The teacher was thought to be the only source of information inside and outside the classroom. However, in the 21st Century, many things have changed with the rise of Internet and numerous apps that students are able to use at any time. Hence, critical thinking would create a more welcoming environment within the classroom for students who are shy or withdrawn from the learning process. The class would become more cooperative and critical thinking techniques would enhance students to use communication among each- other in order to interchange ideas. *“...instructional activities that encourage learners to engage in language play and to form an emotional identification with the targeted language” (Murcia, M.C., et al., 2014, pg. 42)* In this case, students would not only take orders and obey them, rather they would become active participants in the teaching process. What is more, they would be responsible for their own learning process, the place and pace as to where and how they accept additional information. As a result, students would become more mindful of their language usage, fluency and accuracy. On this matter, both the teacher would take the role of an assistant and supporter and the student would be more satisfied with the freedom and opportunity to be a part of the teaching- learning process.

2.3 Techniques which promote critical thinking in the language environment

“During Renaissance, people at that time knew that knowledge is very important and the best method to understand the knowledge is by asking ‘why’”. (Z.Amalina. M., R. Nik. S, 2012, pg.72) Critical thinking is a generally accepted tool that entails elements of thought, analysis and unbiased judgment upon an issue. It is a way of providing arguments upon something when a person believes firmly in it. Thinking critically involves peculiar tests upon whether or not something is useful or less useful for our interest. In that, it is an unbiased personal belief upon a matter which is perceived only through attentive and authentic means.

“The ambiguous connection between “critical thinking” and “critical thinking skills” is considered another barrier of effective implementation”. (W.Xiaoli, Zh. Huibin, 2016, pg.2) On one hand ‘critical thinking’ is the process of thinking carefully on a specific matter without attaching ourselves emotionally or personally to it, while on the other hand ‘critical thinking skills’ is the ability to do something. Thus, being able to think critically is a process which we have to learn at the time when we acquire the targeted language, so we may judge its correct usage in various contexts. These two aspects go together synchronized, in that a learner must attain and nurture the skill while still learning the language, so later on they can use it in other aspects outside the classroom.

Things get more complex when a learner thinks critically about critical thinking itself. Language professionals have distinguished critical thinking as a skill which requires self-reflection and at the same time goes along with the higher educational policies and contexts. “Critical thinking is to challenge a theory or an idea” (M.Jennifer, 2008, pg.21) A critical thinker is someone who believes firmly in their ability to think critically. Moreover, it is someone who is concerned to become well- informed upon a specific matter of interest, in that they are open-minded upon other people’s opinions. What is more, critical thinkers have the ability to anticipate consequences of a before- made decision as well as being inquisitive about a range of issues. “Good critical thinkers can often detect a poor argument without a good knowledge of the

subject". (*C.Stella, 2005, pg.5*)Critical thinking as a skill enables learners to approach a matter from a number of perspectives and aspects. After collecting all the information about it, critical thinking helps them categorize and divide them in a logical sequence. Upon scrutinizing them thoroughly, a learner then comes to the desired unbiased conclusion. Less but not least, critical thinking helps learners to go from 'general' information to 'particular' information about a topic. Consequently, it will not only help them choose their learning styles, it will also help them accurately and academically use the four language skills. Thus, critical thinking as a skill which aids learners to upgrade their knowledge about the targeted language and broad their ideas by connecting them with something outside the classroom.

Even though many teachers try to use critical thinking in the classroom, there are a number of issues which impede them to do so. A reason as to why they might not incorporate critical thinking techniques in the teaching process is that the curriculum doesn't allow them to do so. Some schools don't provide materials and annual plans in which critical thinking is included. Another reason may be that students aren't trained to think critically, so they don't respond to intriguing questions posed by the teacher. Hence, the contact remains unfinished since learners aren't participating actively in the teaching process. Nonetheless, techniques which promote critical thinking are endless, regardless of students' age, language proficiency level or background. A technique which promotes critical thinking may be the usage of 'cause and effect' activities. In this case, students are expected to know the effect which a particular cause provides. For instance. alarm was not set= late for work; smoking cigarettes= lung cancer etc. This technique may be found useful for beginner or lower intermediate level of language learners, since the vocabulary is simpler and the cognitive aspect isn't trained well- enough at this stage of their learning.

Another way which promotes critical thinking is to make students do research upon a given topic and bring the information in class. After analyzing and categorizing the information, the teacher presents and explains the topic. Students then are asked to determine which part of the information that they gathered is well- grounded and which is less important regarding

the solution of the issue. For instance. global warming and ways on how to put an end on it. Students may share ideas among classmates and debate on which solution is best for the issue. Consequently, they will practice oral skills as well as critical thinking skills. Even though it is done unconsciously, learners train themselves to do so even in future occasions outside the learning environment. In this case, the vocabulary becomes more complex, depending on the language proficiency of the learners, which also increases cognitive understanding and usage of critical thinking skills.

A third way of promoting critical thinking skills within the classroom is by creating intriguing questions related to the material taught during class. As a result, the teacher will be able to follow the students and determine whether or not they are using critical thinking and being attentive during class. For instance. the teacher asks tricky and intriguing questions upon how can we change the ending of a novel and its characters, a sort of a twist in the story. Students analyze the facts and observe the happenings from a various points of view before providing an answer. In this case they may revise a given part by the teacher and focus on that part only. What is more, the reading skill can be trained along with the critical thinking one. Since each learner has different opinions upon the ending of the story, they use imagination and creativity in order to complete this critical thinking task. Thus, they use their previous knowledge related to the matter and add some elements from the events provided in the piece of reading. As a consequence, the teacher is only a participator in the major picture of what students are in charged to lead. Students' role in critical thinking activities and techniques is crucial and undoubtedly primary in comparison to the teacher's role.

2.4 Teacher and student roles within the classroom

In order to help students to develop critical thinking skills and to take critical action, teachers need to encourage students to question and challenge existing beliefs, practices and rules. Moreover, the language instructor needs to structure lessons so that students can work cooperatively, without hurting the feelings of others and imposing their views upon their classmates. In addition, responsibility is a vital element in creating successful critical thinking learners, since each learner needs to know how to share equally the work and effort that they put into a project or assignment. Thus, in order to not be the only source of information in the classroom, the teacher must engage students equally into the teaching process. As a result, they become independent learners and train themselves to do so outside the classroom. Each added information is useful for the other learners and the teacher as well, in order to understand better their students' personalities and learning styles. Hence, the teacher may avoid or bring up certain topics and materials for future teaching.

Since thinking is an ongoing natural process in everyone's mind, one might argue that each critical thinker has their own strategy and manner of thinking. It all depends on their previous experiences in life as well as their personality. *"...the physical stimulation from sensory receptors of an individual give relatively limited information and cannot be interpreted unless there is additional information derived from past experiences and memory".(Ch.S.Chee, Ch.K.Phaik, 2009, pg.98)* In this case, students' feedback and input during the teaching process is crucial for the teacher, in order to convey the message of using critical thinking. Nonetheless, we go back again and state that if the teacher perceives themselves as a communicator of knowledge rather than an arbitrator, the critical thinking techniques cannot be fully understood and used by students. Because the students believe that the teacher is in charge, they remain uninterested in participating actively; rather care only about their grade and success by the end of the course.

Teachers and learners must define their roles in the development of teaching-learning. In that, traditional methods of teaching must be changed into more recent and genuine ones. Critical thinking may only be achieved in an environment where learners are engaged and interested in the teaching process, as well as bring new ideas and perspectives into the classroom. Since there is an increasing and diverse student population, teachers need to be prepared for various approaches which enhance different critical thinkers. For instance, if one student engages into the teaching process only when they are interested into a topic, another may find it difficult engaging in it without the teacher's triggering or evocation. Thus, the process of teaching needs to be focused on the learner exclusively and try to elicit as much as it can their inner beliefs, judgments and prejudices. By doing so, critical thinkers (learners) get rid of their biases and try to understand and evaluate problems from an objective point of view. Providing students with a number of opportunities to contribute to thought-provoking discussions surrounding content increases student participation and willingness to present their ideas related to topics of instruction. Substantive conversations require considerable interaction and that involves higher order thinking processes during the negotiation process or debate (i.e., drawing conclusions, challenging ideas, asking questions, scrutinizing etc.) Teachers using substantive conversations encourage students to bring to mind their own ideas and views of a topic, authentic views and standpoints about matters that are not only educational or linguistic, but also social, economic and psychological.

Language learners and professionals on the field of ELT might argue as to whether or not critical thinking as a skill is innate or made. There is no question that each one of us is born with lesser or greater natural capacity. However, critical thinking can be trained and acquired through academic and professional disciplines and material.

2.5 Exercises and approaches which enhance critical thinking in ELT

Teaching critical thinking skills is a necessity with our students since it is for their personal and academic growth. As such, every teacher needs to look for exiting ways to engage student to think critically, Nonetheless, this can't be done if the learners don't have the requires information upon a subject beforehand. Thus, the teacher needs to begin by asking simple questions and later add some key information about the topic that they are interested the students to think critically about. Regardless of how thinking critically may be understood as to think rationally, it all falls down to the fact that one must always think independently.

One of the most unchallenging exercises of including critical thinking skills in the teaching process is the problem- solving one. Students are expected to find a possible solution upon an issue that the teacher provides. For example. How can you escape from a room which is locked, you have one key, 5-10 clues or hints and one rope? Students are expected to analyze the issue, collaborate with peers, determine what to do next, implement the plan and come to a plausible conclusion. Thus, the essence of critical thinking is to require discovery and knowledge from learners using the targeted language. As a consequence, targeted language is used properly and fluently, while at the same time critical thinking has been included.

Another exercise which induces critical thinking is the usage of the Bloom's Taxonomy pyramid. The lowest three levels include: knowledge, comprehension and application. The highest ones include: analysis, synthesis and evaluation. In order to practice students to think critically according to Bloom's Taxonomy, they may start with the lowest levels and proceed with the highest later. Critical thinking as a skill can only be acquired in a specific period of time; and it can't be acquired the same for every learner. "...critical thinking cannot be developed overnight, it is a process and as such there are many steps to be taken". (V.Elena, C.Lourdes, 2013, pg. 62) Similar exercise which uses this type of ranking is a writing exercise regarding some type of reading (novel, poem etc.) Students are expected to analyze and determine specific dialogue and character's involvement in order to choose whether or not it was analysis,

synthesis, application etc. For example; the teacher gives them a list of assignments related to the reading; write a 200 word essay, describe a character, analyze the protagonist views etc., in that students are required to determine the level of difficulty and complexity of the assignments. Thus, it is important to determine the level of cognitive complexity of each one.

Other possible approach to incorporate critical thinking in ELT is to ask students to differentiate between an opinion and a fact. However, learners need to have prior knowledge to the topic they are debating and working on. Only after familiarizing them with a topic, the instructor can create a list of opinions and facts or via pictures and ask students to determine which one is which. After weighing opinions and asking questions among themselves, students present their ideas and discuss them in class. The goal is for the teacher to create a debate and students come across various ideas that collide with one another. So that, peers consider and dispute them with strong arguments. Even though the vocabulary may not be rich, the essence is to push them to become successful critical thinkers. As a consequence, students' beliefs will be widened, their perspectives will expand and at the same time their ability to become flexible with other people's ideas will be trained.

2.6 Conclusion

Taking into account that mastering critical thinking skills is crucial to professional and academic success, language learners must attain it as soon as possible. Its basis is acquired during the teaching- learning process within the classroom at any age, regardless of language proficiency, background and reason of learning a language. Since creating critical thinkers is easier said than done, language instructors need to pay more importance to student's general knowledge and manner of accepting various perspectives. Being the key to training critical thinking skills, evaluating, scrutinizing and identifying an issue are the essential that each critical thinker needs to master. Even though in the past teachers and professionals on ELT used methods which didn't require critical thinking as a skill, it is an indispensable tool for success in the 21st Century.

Regardless of the area of application, critical thinking skill builds future academic educated citizens.

2.7 Recent studies conducted on the topic of critical thinking in ELT

2.7.1 Kawamura Michele, Wu Natalie Ping-Hsing, 2015

Nowadays, everyone is living a technology dependable lifestyle, thus using 'Youtube' as an educational source has been very helpful for students of the 21st Century. Apart from providing endless entertainment sources, it also provides educational sources. One of the studies that has been conducted in 2015 is about developing critical thinking skills through the usage of media, more specifically 'Youtube'.

This study was conducted in Taiwan, Japan and its goal was to test students' attitude of developing critical thinking skills via 'Youtube' documentaries and news. The number of participants was 86, varying from the age of 18-19, Majoring Economics. These students, both male and female, were acquiring English language as a foreign one. All participants were exposed to 'Youtube' as a language learning source, by working on the social and economic issue, using activities which require reasoning, research and analysis. The methodology included questions that researchers have used, more specifically 13 questions, and were conducted for quantitative purpose. The survey analyzed the perception of students regarding three topics: English and employment, women in the workforce and first impression on the foreign language.

Some of the terms that were explained thoroughly during the study were inference and argumentation. Inference incorporates the conclusion or result from data, whereas argumentation incorporates to effectively argue upon a specific topic. *"Argumentation means having the power and the knowledge to argue effectively."* (K.Michele, Wu.N.Ping-Hsing, 2015, pg.2) The usage of 'Youtube' in this study, as a resource to develop critical thinking skills in students, has also shown the improvement of the listening and speaking skill for them. In that,

by listening and pronouncing various terms in English by natives, students have also developed this aspect of the foreign language. Apart from the critical thinking skill, auditory and speaking one, students have also managed to work on their personal development. In that aspect, they have reached to think and solve exercises on their own, independently.

The study has come to two different conclusions. Most students remembered only about 70% from the material in class, both via 'Youtube' videos and textbooks. 1/3 proposed convincing statement regarding their critical thinking development. Another issue was raised when female students showed more interest in the topic of women in the workforce, since it was related to their gender. Thus, this type of media has significantly helped them, however the remained had written unsatisfactory sentences. What is more, students have unanimously agreed that 'Youtube' is a beneficial source for critical thinking development in EFL, nonetheless most of the students wouldn't feel motivated to search outside the classroom or use it in other classes. This is because some of the native speaking videos from the listening section were too difficult to understand without the teacher's assistance.

2.7.2 Aryani Farida, Rais Muhammad, Wirawan Hillman, 2017

Another study that was conducted in 2017, which targeted the learning of critical thinking skills in students by making it a priority for them to think "why" and "how", instead of just "what". The study was conducted in Indonesia and it is about the influence of the reflective learning model in improving the critical thinking skills in students. Moreover, it focuses on the aspect of how students need to know how to describe phenomena, relate it to various theories, explain it based on facts and finally develop plans in solving an issue, which is based on theoretical perspective. The model was conducted based on a number of aspects including: learning skills, identifying the problem, analyzing data and results, come together to a unanimous plan or conclusion. The study contained pre- test and post- test groups of students. The students were 32 randomly chosen participants that were majoring in Agro technology. The test's goal was to measure the critical thinking skill involving: conceptual critical thinking skill, a conceptual skill,

analytical skill as well as skill to analyze and evaluate materials. The learning activities are non-boring and increase curiosity in learners. For instance, adapting to the new school system, student life or making new friends.

The method of this study was a quasi- experimental one and the design covered 8 meetings. The first meeting was a pre-test one, the other six meetings included the process of reflective learning and the last meeting was a post- test one. The instrument was in the form of an essay- test in a scale from 1-5. There were 6 reflective- learning groups. The first group was tested on the topic of 'educators as a factor in successful education'. The second group was tested in the topic of 'students as a factor in successful education'. The third group was tested for 'materials as a component in successful education'. The fourth group was tested on 'learning environment as a factor for successful education'. The fifth group was tested on the topic of 'family as a factor for successful education'. And finally, the sixth group was tested on the theme of 'education process foundation'. The pre-test score was 30.97, whereas the post-test score was 36.06. In that, the difference was about 5.09, which means that critical thinking skills using the reflective learning model in students improved by 16.44% on average. The results of the study, both pre-test and post-test, showed that there was a significant improvement in critical thinking skills in students. The tests and instruments used in this method in order to test them were successful in preparing students to think critically and effectively.

2.7.3 Firdaus, Kailani Ismail et al, 2015

A third study was conducted in 2015 in Malaysia, Indonesia. The study examined the development of critical thinking skills in language learning students, using the language learning modules based on problem- based learning or PBL. It also analyzed the usage of critical thinking techniques in solving non- routine language learning issues. Since the school system in Indonesia is focused only in exams and memorization of facts, not using the critical thinking techniques from a young age affects the students' independent thinking. It was analyzed that language learning students in Indonesia are able to solve linguistic problems covered in the

workbooks, however were unable to solve non- routine problems. This information was retrieved by an earlier study done by TIMSS, 2011 and PISA, 2012. The participants were grade 12 students, 38 participants from the city and 30 participants from rural places. In total there were 68 participants that were studying at the Science Secondary school (SMAN) in Bone District of South Sulawesi, Indonesia. Even though the students were 12 year olds, the study was based on Piaget's theory of development, that an average 12 year old student is capable of thinking critically.

The PBL system of learning encourages language learning students to use critical thinking in order to generate new knowledge and solve issues. Consequently, this study used dependent and independent variables. The dependent ones come from the learning modules based on PBL, whereas the independent one represents the critical thinking skill in mathematics. The method was a quasi- experimental one with one group of pre- test and post- test students. The design included questions, earlier analyzed by experts according to their validity and reliability. The pre- test and post- test methods were constructed based on three components. The first one was 'the usage of critical thinking in identification and interpretation of an issue', 'critical thinking skills used in information analysis' and 'evaluation of evidence and argument'. Teachers didn't lecture in class as they usually did; instead they actively involved students in the teaching- learning process. The activities were divided into: individual (which helped students to think independently) and collaborative (which helped students to communicate, share ideas and convince others of their own findings).

Both the pre- test and post-test contained 4 non- routine language learning problems, the pre- test had issues which were covered during lectures, whereas the post- test had issues related to real life situations. Moreover, both of the tests had a scale of 0-4. The results showed that there was a good improvement from the pre-test and the post- test of identification and interpretation of language learning issues for 73.25%. Regarding 'the critical thinking skills in information analysis' there was a fair level of improvement with a difference of 48.88%. In regards to 'the evaluation of evidence and argument' there was a fair level of improvement

from the pre- test and post- test, 44.19%. The overall improvement of the usage of critical thinking skills in 'solving non- routine language learning problems' showed a percentage of 54.44%. Thus, there hasn't been shown any greater improvement in the critical thinking of Indonesian students regarding the language learning subject, only an improvement from a fair level to a good one.

2.7.4 Conclusion

To conclude, critical thinking techniques should be applied in all school subjects, not just mathematics. Moreover, teachers should not focus only on passing or failing the student, instead they should pay more attention to the process in which an average student goes while analyzing and scrutinizing a language learning issue. The study came to a conclusion that instead of evaluating only the language learning knowledge of a student, teachers should pay more attention on developing the critical thinking of the students. Consequently, the school system will create independent learners not just in the field of language learning but also in real- life issues.

3 Research methodology

This chapter introduces the objectives of this research as well as it presents the methods and materials which were used to gather data. These data support the theory that critical thinking techniques promote critical thinking skill in ELT. The research questions and hypotheses which led this research along with the procedure that was undertaken to realize it shall be explained in details in the following paragraphs.

3.1 Research aims

This research aims to elaborate the importance of implementing critical thinking techniques in ELT as advancement in general education, but also, the development of critical thinking skill in

English language students. Moreover, it analyses and conducts ways in which to use critical thinking skill and techniques in order to acquire the English language masterly and proficiently.

3.2 Research questions

- 1. What are some techniques and tasks which are used by English language teachers that enhance and develop critical thinking, besides do they necessarily assist and encourage English language learning?***
- 2. Which components impede teachers to incorporate critical thinking as a skill in the teaching process, as well as the curriculum?***
- 3. How to contribute in order to raise the usage of critical thinking as a skill within the classroom and the curriculum, as well as incorporate it as a 5th language skill?***

These questions attempt to prove or refute the research hypotheses mentioned below.

3.3 Research hypotheses

H1- Critical thinking is a demanding skill that improves the overall language proficiency and knowledge on various aspects of a language, therefore learners should incorporate it outside the classroom in order to master it completely.

H2- If critical thinking represents the mind's ability to individually analyze and think analytically, than tasks and techniques that enhance learners' interest upon it should be flexible, motivational and student- centered.

H3- The level of critical thinking development in a language learner is anticipated based on teacher's approaches and exercises used within the classroom.

3.4 Research methods

This research investigates whether the usage of critical thinking skill positively influences the overall successful acquirement of the English language, as well as the techniques which promote critical thinking are beneficial to ELT. It is conducted mostly through the usage of quantitative data, but it also consists of some elements of qualitative data analysis.

3.5 Sample

This research was carried out at 3 high schools “Zef Lush Marku”, “Cvetan Dimov” and “Arseni Jovkov”, in Skopje, North Macedonia.. Subjects of this research were 300 students and 9 English language teachers. Students were of both genders; their age was between 16-17 years old. Teachers were of the female and male gender, their age was 25-35. Moreover, there were 9 interviews made with 9 ELT teachers in “Zef Lush Marku”, “Cvetan Dimov” and “Arseni Jovkov” high schools.

1. In “Zef Lush Marku” high school there were 100 participants from the 1st year for the student questionnaires and 3 English Language teachers for the observations.
2. In “Cvetan Dimov” high school there were 100 participants from the 1st and 2nd year for the student questionnaires and 3 English Language teachers for the observations. There were 50 student participants from the 1st year and 50 student participants from the second year.
3. In “Arseni Jovkov” high school there were 100 participants for the student questionnaires and 3 English Language teachers for the observations. There were 40 student participants from the 1st year and 60 student participants from the 2nd year.

The teachers’ interview questions were 10 questions in total, conducted with 9 ELT teachers, 3 female teachers from “Zef Lush Marku” high school, 2 female teachers and 1 male teacher from “Cvetan Dimov” high school and 2 female teachers and 1 male teacher from “Arseni Jovkov” high school. These were the same teachers with whom it was completed the observation.

3.6 Research instruments

This research was conducted through the usage of the instruments explained below:

3.6.1 Student questionnaire

The first instrument was the questionnaire that was completed in 3 high schools, “Zef Lush Marku”, “Cvetan Dimov” and “Arseni Jovkov” in Skopje, North Macedonia. Students from the 1st and 2nd year completed the same student questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 20 questions which were in English Language. However, each question was explained and translated to students step by step as they were answering them anonymously. These questions were designed to bring out information about students’ learning experiences in ELT, usage of critical thinking skill in developing and acquiring the language and the involvement of critical thinking in the teaching process of the language. Furthermore, it gathered data about whether students learn English better by following the principles of traditional teaching techniques or the usage of critical thinking skill. All of the questions were answered according to the adverbs of frequency (very often, often, sometimes and never). Students had the option to choose only one of the adverbs of frequency (always, often, sometimes, rarely and never) for each question.

3.6.2 Teacher observation protocol

The second instrument that was used in this research was my full-participatory observations. It was completed in 3 high schools “Zef Lush Marku”, “Cvetan Dimov” and “Arseni Jovkov” in Skopje, North Macedonia. Each classroom consisted of approximately 20 to 30 students, who were from 16 to 17 years old. I conducted my research by gathering data from the observations conducted in four different grades (I-II). It gave me the chance to see firsthand, how the implementation of critical thinking techniques in ELT influenced and trigger students’ interest and imagination regarding the classroom topic. Moreover, it was an experience where the students had the chance to implement their previous and general knowledge by using these critical thinking techniques.

3.6.3 Teacher interview

The last instrument was teacher interview. Nine teachers of ELT were separately interviewed. Three of them work in “Zef Lush Marku” high school, the other three work in “Cvetan Dimov” high school and the last three work in “Arseni Jovkov” high school. The three high schools are

located in Skopje, North Macedonia. The interview consisted of 10 open- ended questions. It was semi-structured; therefore, it gave them the freedom to express themselves in their own words. It elicited information about these teachers' usage of critical thinking techniques and skills within the classroom and beyond. Also, the strategies they use to incorporate critical thinking techniques in ELT and how they handle the curriculum, in that do they do any modifications of it.

3.7 Procedure

The observations were conducted with the approval of 9 ELT teachers from the three high schools "Zef Lush Marku", "Arseni Jovkov" and "Cvetan Dimov" in Skopje, North Macedonia. The research was conducted in three high schools "Zef Lush Marku", "Cvetan Dimov" and "Arseni Jovkov" in Skopje, North Macedonia. The questionnaire has been conducted in three classes per each high school, where students were target of this research questionnaire. Prior approval was secured from the Principal of the school to allow students to participate in this research. Students, who completed the questionnaire were informed about the aims of this research. The procedure was explained to the students and they were asked, whether they were willing to complete the questionnaire. We also informed them that they can withdraw from the research at any time. Afterwards, participants were instructed how to fill the questionnaire. Each question had a translation and explanation, and it followed with an answer simultaneously by the whole class. Furthermore, special care was exercised to ensure that students' and teachers' anonymity is protected. They were guaranteed the protection of their rights. The whole process has been carried out during a period which lasted two weeks, throughout the end of October and beginning of November, 2019.

3.8 Conclusion

Teachers' interview and students' questionnaire were a very important part of this research. These two instruments gathered data based on results gained directly from the point of view of the participants. Moreover, the participatory observations of ELT teachers in the same high

schools, where the research took place, aided the process of my study. Observing, in practice, the combination of critical thinking techniques along with the two ELT techniques, communicative language teaching and learner centered education brought me to conclusion that they are bound to have a very positive impact in language teaching and learning.

4. Research Results

In this part of the thesis, all of the collected data for this research are presented. Firstly, students' questionnaire results are presented. The questionnaire intends to identify and investigate students' language learning techniques, including the usage of critical thinking. Furthermore, it determines whether following the principles of critical thinking techniques in promoting learner-centered education is beneficial, motivational, and engaging for students. Afterwards, teachers' interview responses are presented. The interview aims to elicit information about the teaching methods that these teachers use. Especially, whether they use communicative language teaching. Moreover, reflecting on their teaching experience, whether or not these teachers agree that critical thinking techniques have an impact in language requirement advancement. The last instrument shown in this chapter is the ELT observation of students' learning attitudes and reactions, when the principles of critical thinking skill and learners' reaction, agreement and reception towards it were implemented in the classroom.

4.1 Data analysis

This study uses three instruments for data collection: questionnaire, interview and observation protocol. The first phase gathered data, with the help of a questionnaire. The aim of this questionnaire is to find students' familiarity with critical thinking techniques in the language learning process, students' views on the implementation of this approach, and teachers' reasons for avoiding the use of critical thinking in their EFL classrooms (See Appendix 1). So, apart from having many advantages as a method, the data is also easily measured and administered.

The second phase consists of an interview. This method is chosen because it provides significant insights into teachers' experience and perception of the benefits that critical thinking techniques have in ELT. The interview is semi- structured. It deals with questions regarding the

content of the textbooks, teachers' views, possible challenges of using CT, the adjustability of these techniques and its evaluation (See Appendix 2). To put it differently, this fact makes qualitative research very influential. It is through this method that one can analyze teachers' responses and speak on behalf of different point of views and perceptions. I found this method the best way to investigate my research questions, by having asked the teachers how they value the CT skill approach, by not giving teachers limited responses that they would have to pick. In other words, interviews were chosen because they are effective and provide in-depth insights through open-ended questions.

4.2 Questionnaire analysis and results

The first instrument of this research was students' questionnaire, which was completed by: 100 students of 1st year in "Zef Lush Marku" high school, 50 students of 1st year and 50 students of 2nd year in "Cvetan Dimov" high school. Last but not least, 40 students from 1st year and 60 students from 2nd year in "Arseni Jovkov" high school in Skopje, North Macedonia. Each year consisted of three different classes and a total of 300 students took the questionnaire. The results of each question have been analyzed individually using the descriptive statistics.

The table shown below contains data about the year and number of students from each high school.

High School	Year of students	Number of students
"Zef Lush Marku"	I	100 students

"Cvetan Dimov"	I and II	I-50 students II-50 students
"Arseni Jovkov"	I and II	I-40 students II-60 students

Table 4.1.1 Descriptive statistics

The 20 questions of the questionnaire are shown separately below through descriptive charts. Each data of a statement is given individually comparing the results between three High Schools in Skopje, using the adverbs of frequency (very often, often, sometimes and never).

Question 1: Asked questions in class/ contributed to class discussions

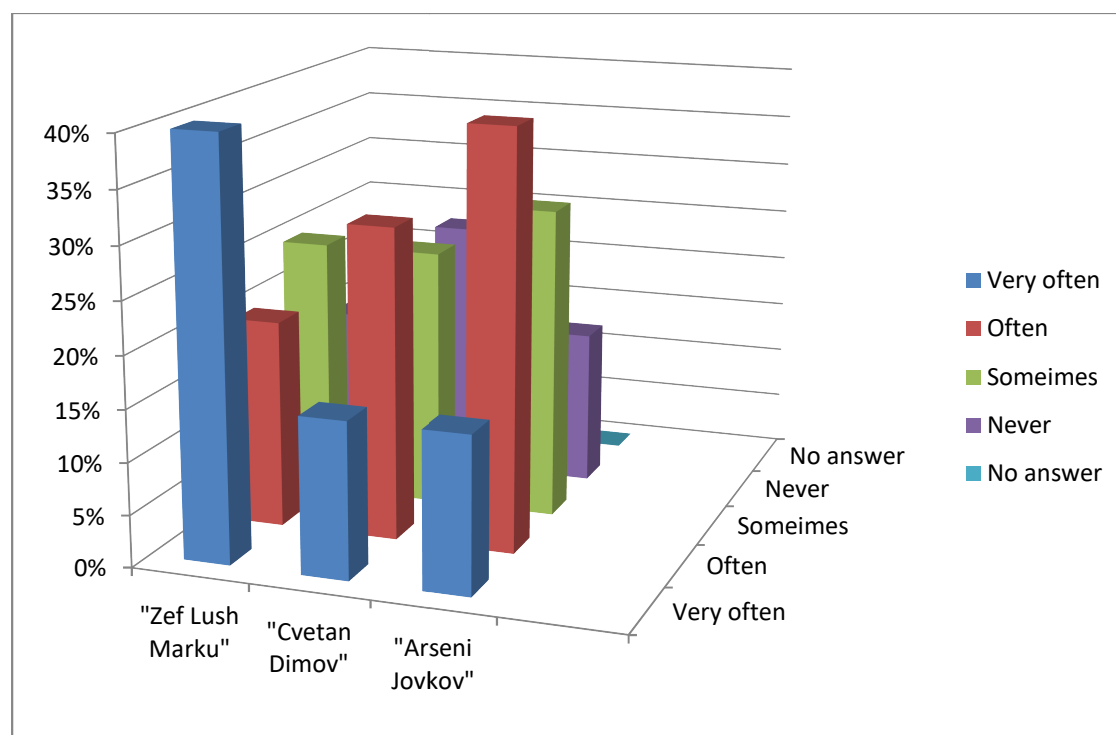


Chart 4.1.2 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

According to the chart, the highest percentage of students with 40% chose 'very often' in "Zef Lush Marku" high school, whereas "often" in "Arseni Jovkov" high school. The lowest

percentage included the adverb of frequency 'never' with 15% in "Arseni Jovkov" high school. Only in "Cvetan Dimov" high school there is a 5% value of the adverb of frequency 'never', whereas in "Zef Lush Marku" and "Arseni Jovkov" high schools it is 0%.

Question 2: Worked on a paper/ project that required info. From various sources

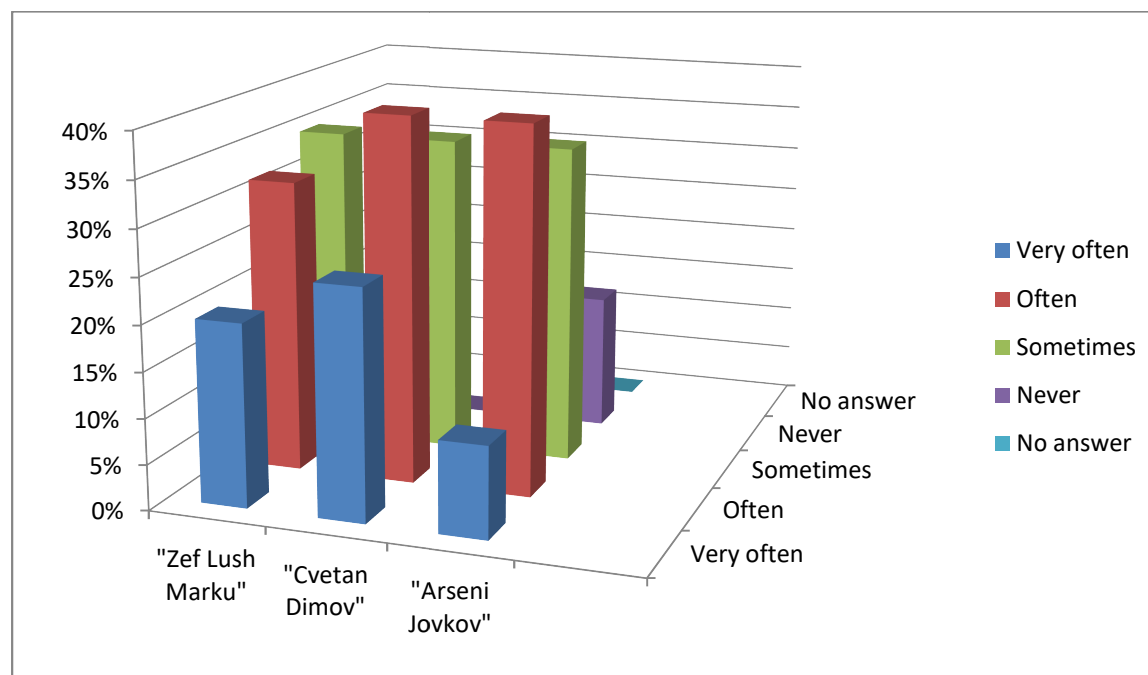


Chart 4.1.3 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

From the chart above, the adverb of frequency 'often' was the highest in all three high schools, with 40% in "Arseni Jovkov", 40% in "Cvetan Dimov" and 32% in "Zef Lush Marku" high school. The most appealing feature is shown in "Cvetan Dimov" high school with the adverb of frequency 'never', that resulted in 0%.

Question 3: Received comment feedback from your written or oral assignments

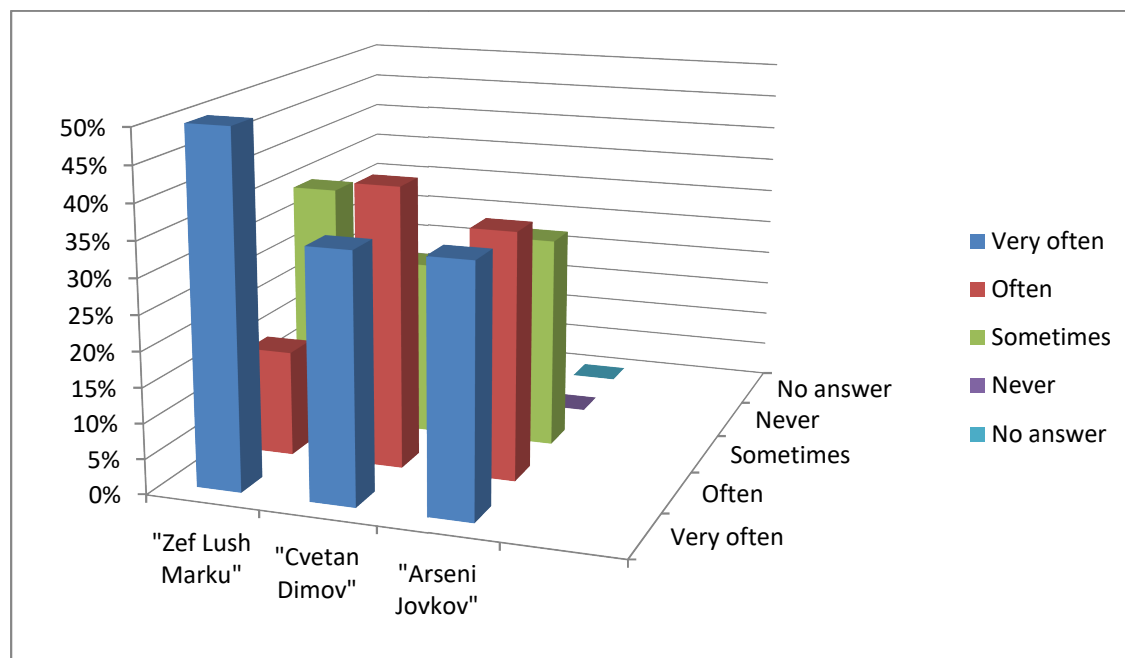


Chart 4.1.3 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

In the chart above it can be clearly depicted that the most prevalent feature is that all students have answered this question, with the result of 0% in the adverb of frequency 'no answer' or in the part of 'never'. In that, all students have received feedback on their written/ oral assignments.

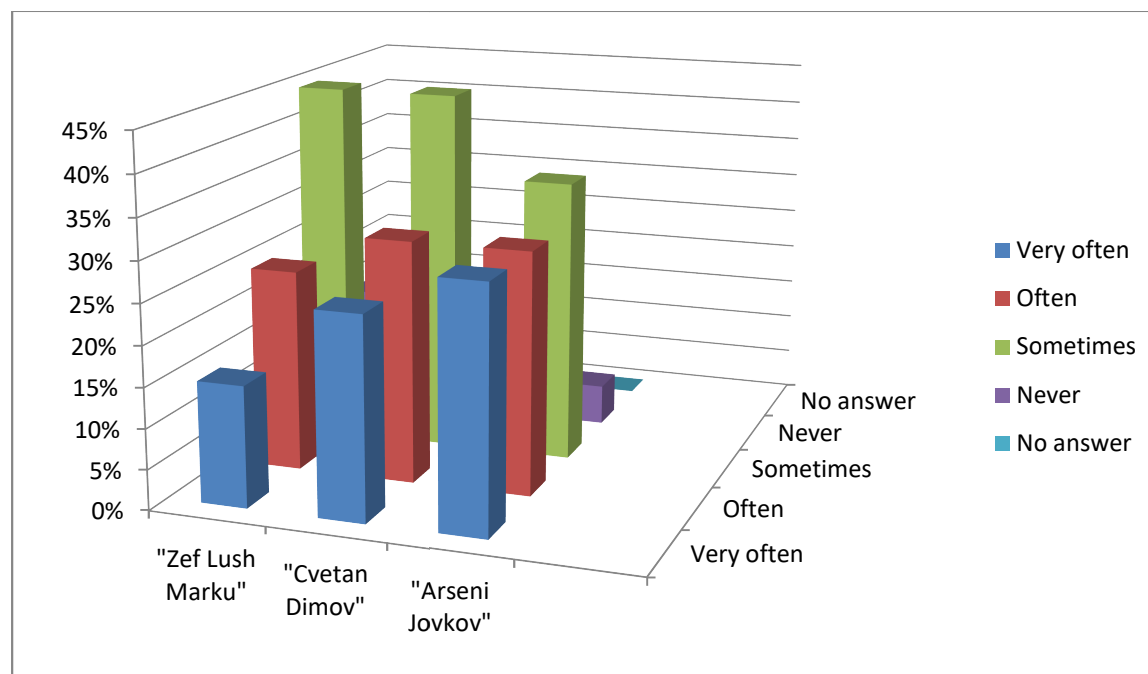
Question 4: Memorize facts and material

Chart 4.1.4 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

According to the chart above the lowest percentage that students have answered is upon the adverb of frequency 'never'. An interesting and astonishing feature of this chart is that students from all three high schools have answered the highest upon the adverb of frequency 'sometimes' and often. For instance, for the adverb of frequency 'sometimes' there is 45% in both "Zef Lush Marku" high school and "Cvetan Dimov", whereas only with 10% difference in "Arseni Jovkov" high school, with a result of 35%. Moreover, for the adverb of frequency 'often' the result shows 30% in both "Cvetan Dimov" and "Arseni Jovkov", whereas 25% in "Zef Lush Marku" high school, with only 5% difference.

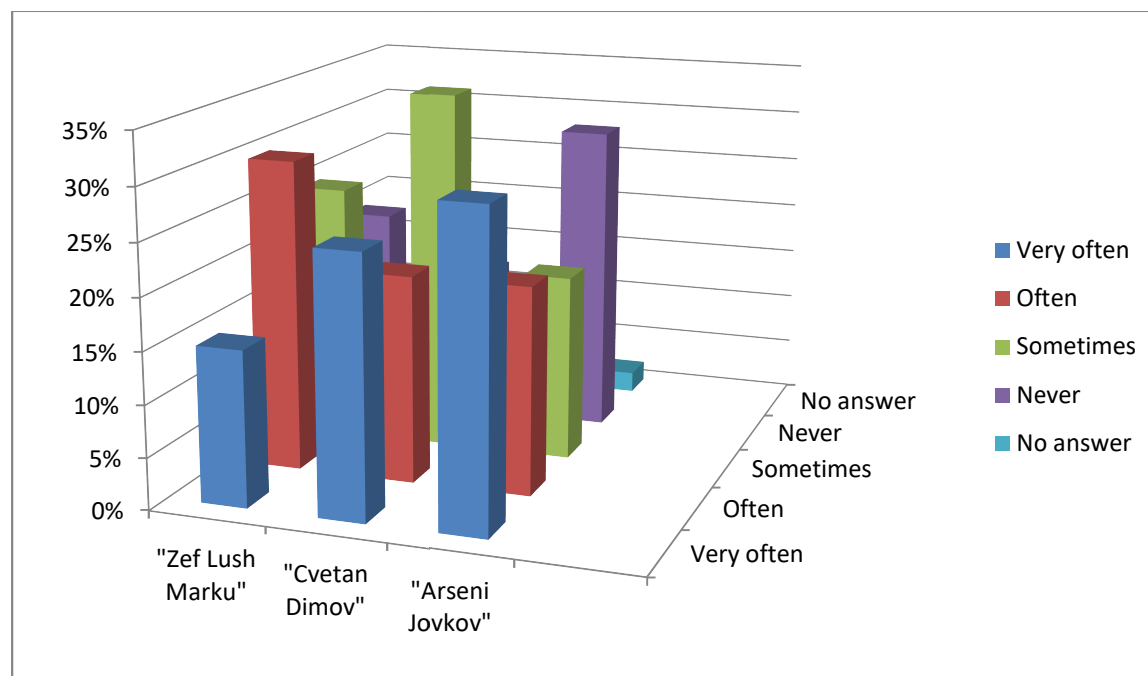
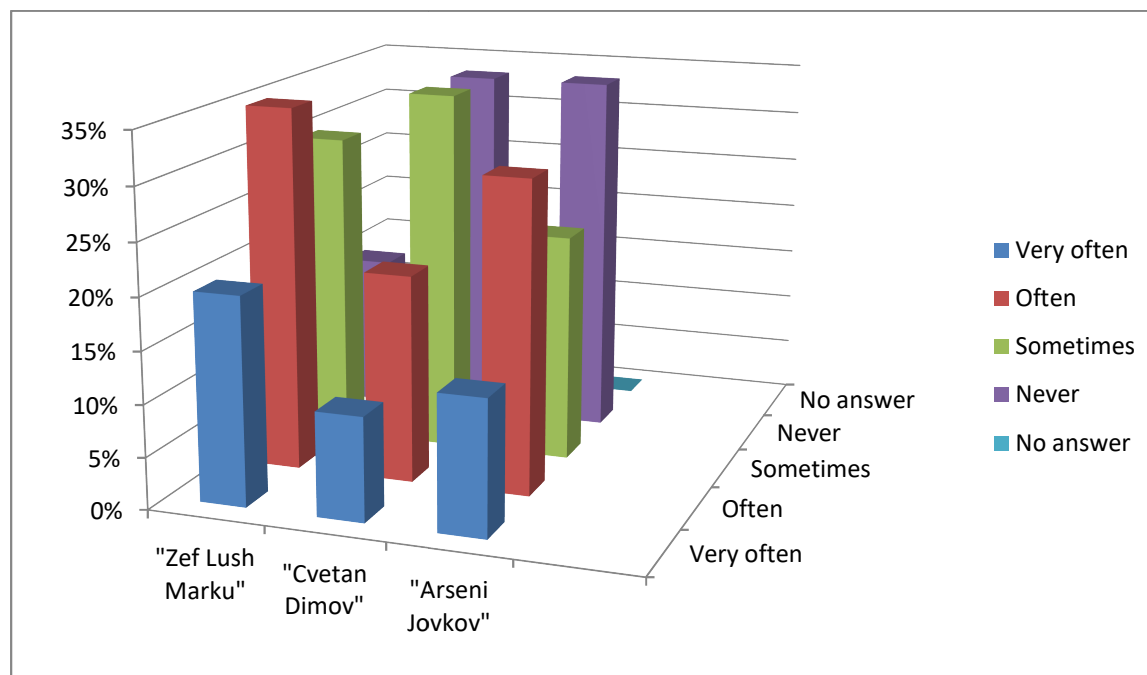
Question 5: Analyze and make judgments upon a topic in class

Chart 4.1.5 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

The chart above shows that the analysis and judgment of materials has been the highest in percentage in "Arseni Jovkov" high school with 30% and in "Cvetan Dimov" high school with 25%, whereas the lowest in "Zef Lush Marku" high school with 15%. An appealing feature of this chart is that only 2% of students didn't answer this question.

Question 6: How often tests challenged your overall knowledge?



The chart below shows some alarming results regarding tests, in that the highest percentage stands for the adverb of frequency 'never' in both high schools "Cvetan Dimov" and "Arseni Jovkov", with 35% and only 15% for "Zef Lush Marku" high school. Moreover, every student has answered this question, resulting in 0% of 'no answer'. Similarities can be found also in the usage of the adverb of frequency 'very often', the highest is 20% in "Zef Lush Marku" high school, then "Arseni Jovkov" high school with 13% and the lowest is in "Cvetan Dimov" high school with 10%.

Question 7: Learning effectively on your own.

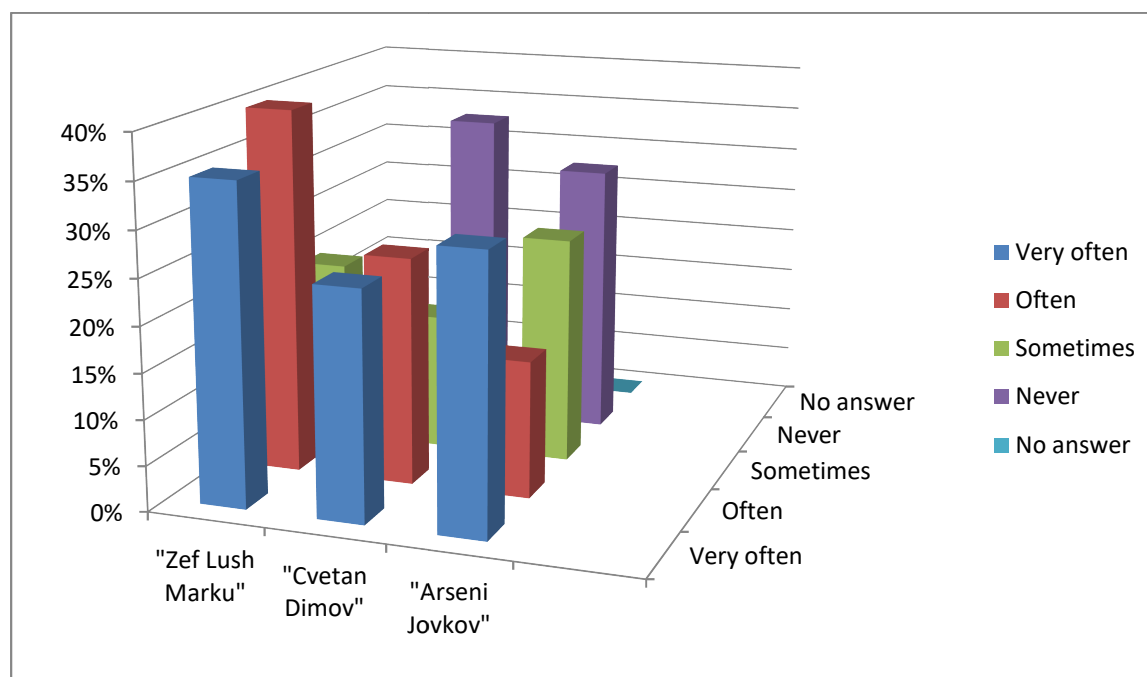


Chart 4.1.7 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

The bar chart deals with a significant decrease in each high school regarding the adverb of frequency 'often', with 40% in "Zef Lush Marku" high school, decreasing by 15% in "Cvetan Dimov" and finally dropping for 5% more in "Arseni Jovkov" high school in comparison with the last high school "Cvetan Dimov". Every student answered this chart.

Question 8: Working effectively with others in class

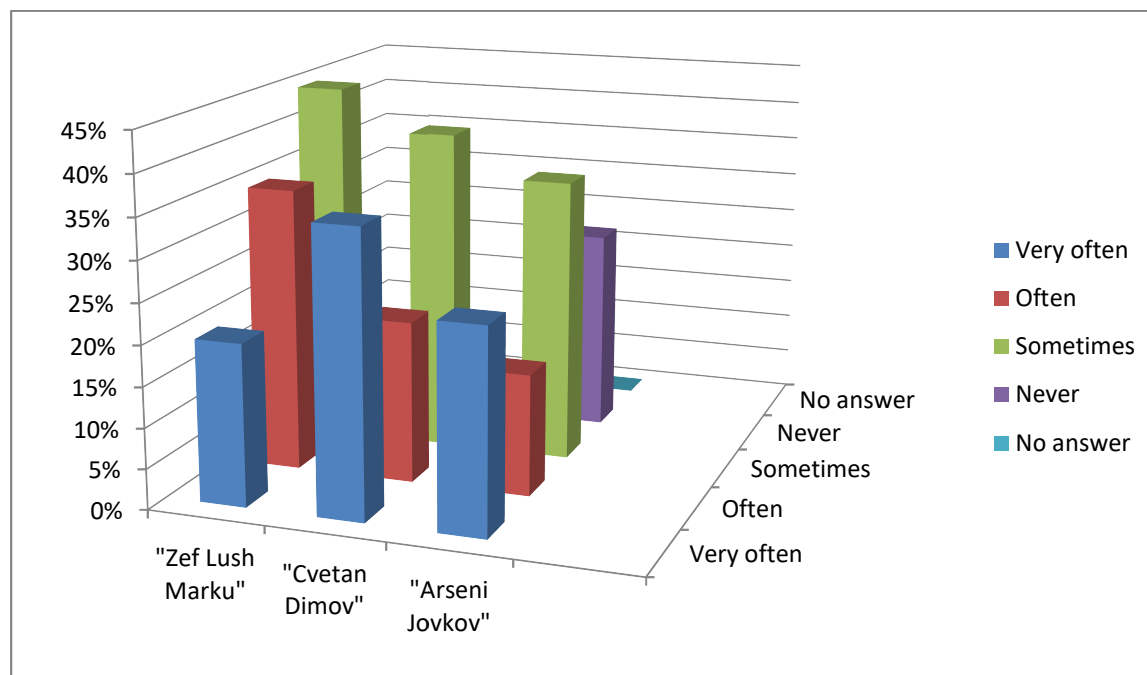


Chart 4.1.8 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

The chart above shows that the adverb of frequency 'sometimes' goes down continuously. It is the highest in high school "Zef Lush Marku" with 45%, then decreases by 5% in "Cvetan Dimov" high school, resulting in 40% and finally in high school "Arseni Jovkov" falls in 35%.

Question 9: Thinking critically and analytically

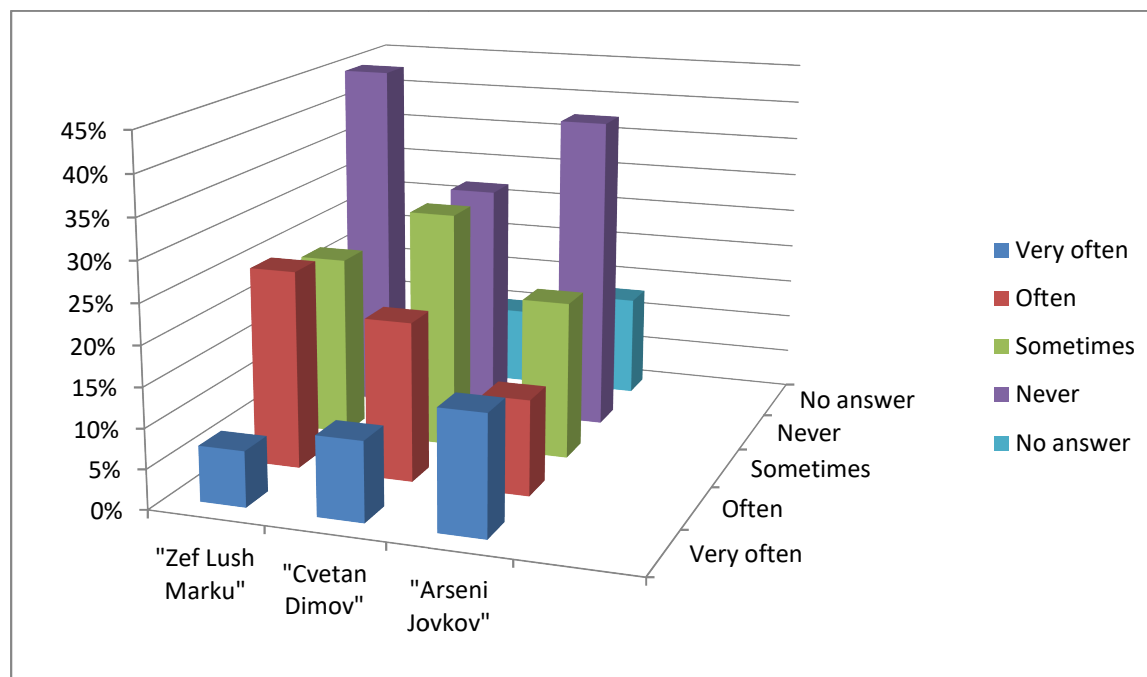


Chart 4.1.9 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

The chart shows really surprising and disturbing results in that the inflated percentage is focused mostly on the adverb of frequency 'never'. In that all three high schools used moderately or didn't use at all critical thinking as a skill or as a technique. What is also alarming is the fact that the part of 'no answer' is twice as high as in all the previous questions until now. This can be seen in the two high schools "Cvetan Dimov" with a result of 10% and "Arseni Jovkov" with a result of 13%. In that, a considerable number of students either didn't know what thinking critically means or didn't remember whether or not they used it in class.

Question 10: Acquiring the 4 language skills at same rate

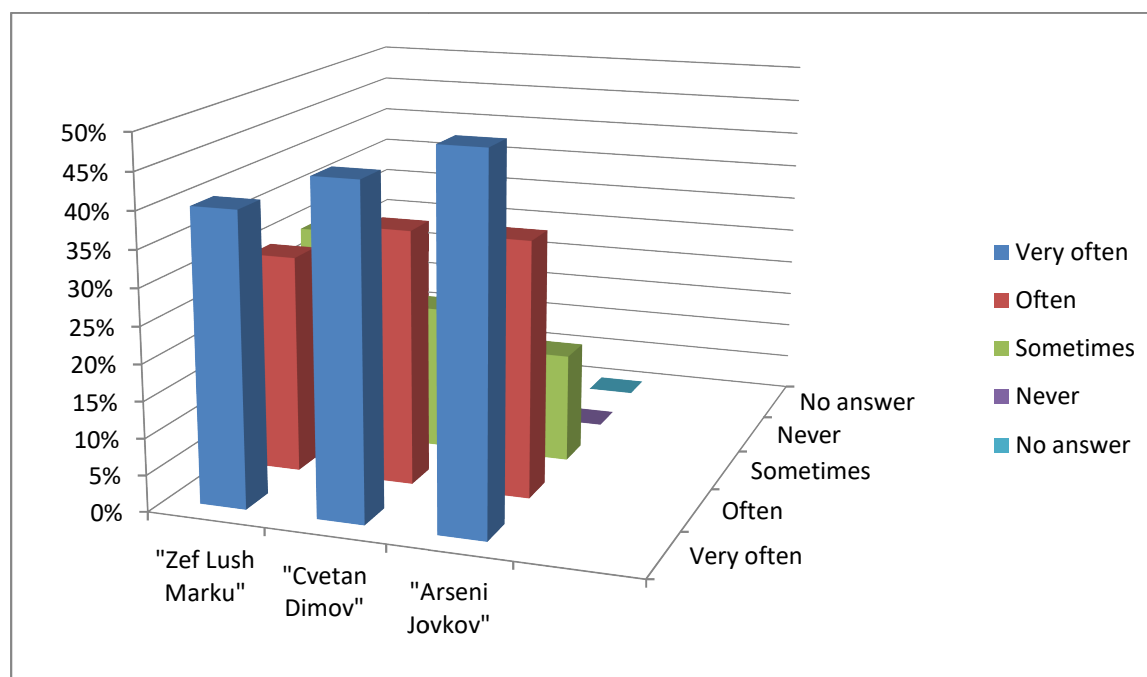


Chart 4.1.10 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

In this chart it is really surprising that the percentage for the adverb of frequency 'very often' grows by 5% in each following high school, resulting in 40% in "Zef Lush Marku" high school, 45% in "Cvetan Dimov" high school and 50% in "Arseni Jovkov" high school. Thus, in this question the chart shows more positive results in the area of the usage and implementation of the 4 language skills in moderation within the ELT.

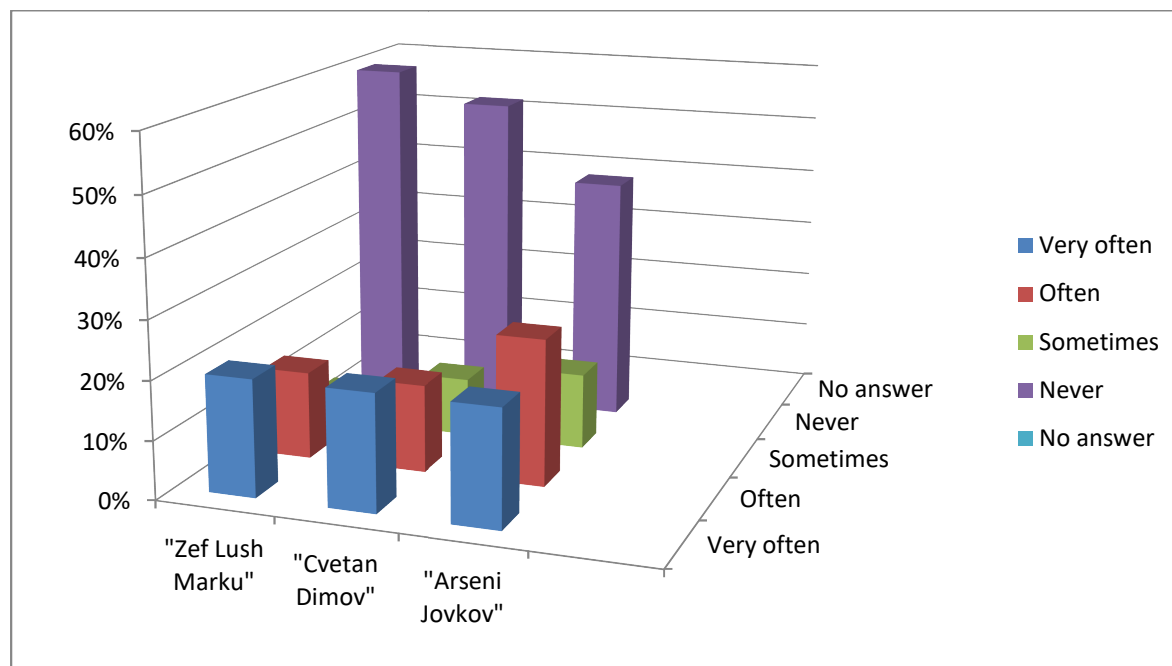
Question11: Analyzing/working on problem-solving exercises

Chart 4.1.11 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

The chart shows that the usage of the adverb of frequency 'very often' remains stable throughout the three high schools with 20%. What is shocking is that the highest percentage is in the usage of adverb of frequency 'never', which shows incredible 60% in "Zef Lush Marku" high school, then decreases in "Cvetan Dimov" high school in 55% and finally in "Arseni Jovkov" high school with 42%.

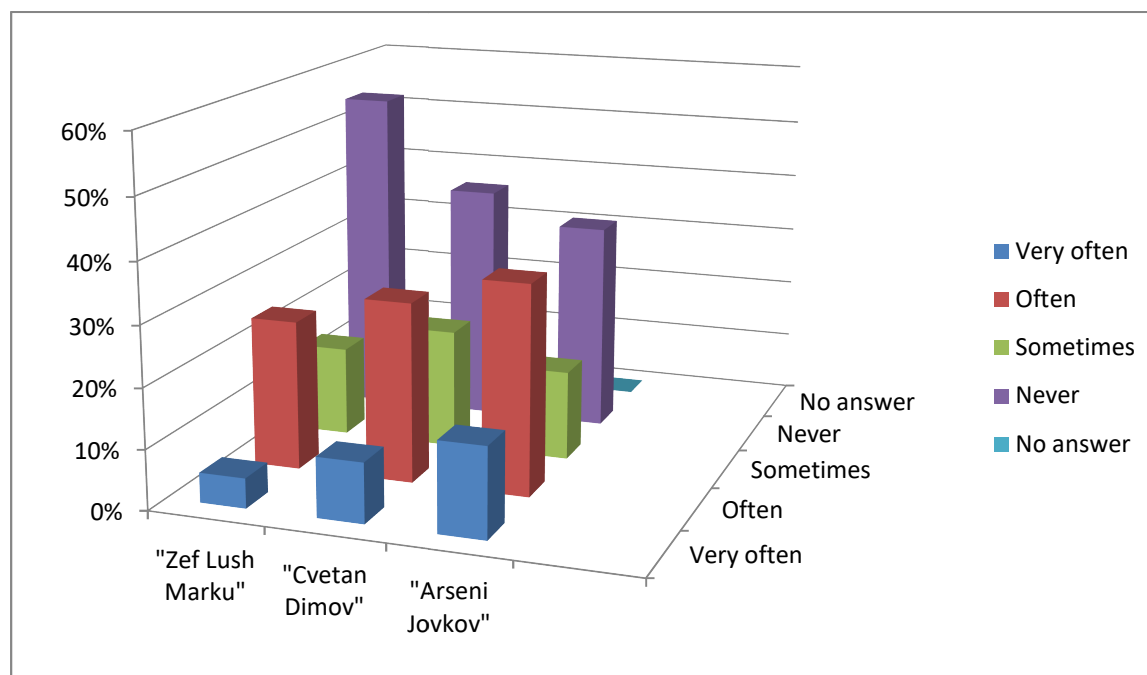
Question 12: Spending significant amount of time learning new info

Chart 4.1.12 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

In this chart it can clearly be seen that the usage of the adverb of frequency 'very often' goes up by 5% in each high school, resulting by 5% in "Zef Lush Marku", 10% in "Cvetan Dimov" and 15% in "Arseni Jovkov" high school. A feature that stands out is the usage of adverb of frequency 'never', which means that students never spend significant time learning new info. In that it is 35% in "Arseni Jovkov" high school, 40% in "Cvetan Dimov" high school and increases in "Zef Lush Marku" high school twice as much from "Arseni Jovkov" high school.

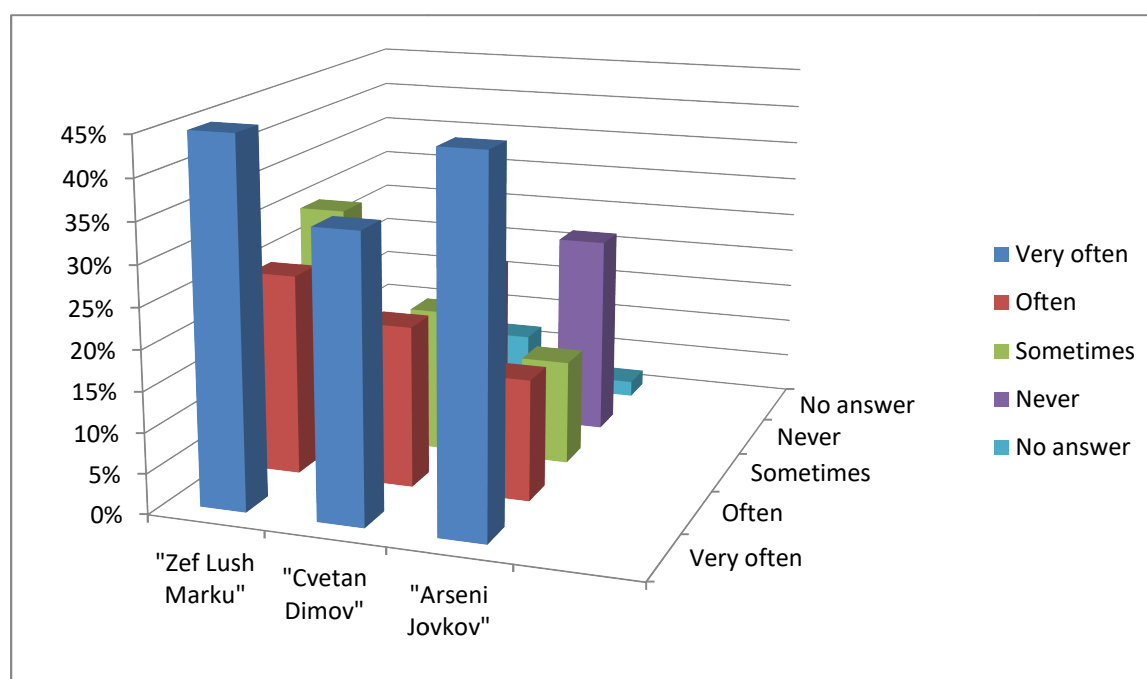
Question 13: Instructor providing material which helps you succeed academically

Chart 4.1.13 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

The chart above explains the radical decrease in the usage of the adverb of frequency 'sometimes' from 30% in "Zef Lush Marku" high school, to 18% in "Cvetan Dimov" high school and 13% in "Arseni Jovkov" high school. A slight drop was also noticed in the usage of the adverb of frequency 'often' from 25% in "Zef Lush Marku" high school, to 20% in "Cvetan Dimov" high school and finally 15% in "Arseni Jovkov" high school. It had a difference of 5% in each. Nonetheless, in the two high schools "Cvetan Dimov" and "Arseni Jovkov" there was a

significant alteration in the usage of the adverb of frequency 'no answer', in the first one by 7% and in the second by 2%. Another important aspect to mention in this chart is that 'never' was not used by any student in "Zef Lush Marku" high school, only in "Cvetan Dimov" by 20% and "Arseni Jovkov" by 25%.

Question 14: Instructor providing support which helps you to succeed socially

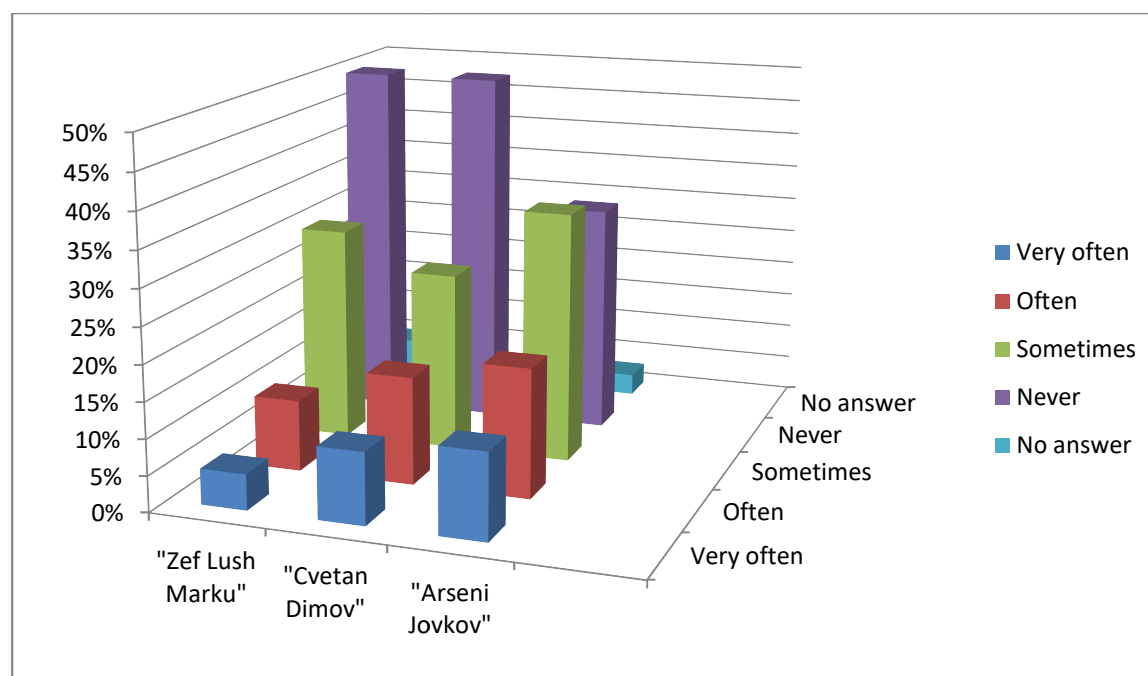


Chart 4.1.14 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

In this chart it can be seen that the usage of the adverb of frequency 'never' is the highest of all other adverbs of frequency. In fact, it does not change in "Zef Lush Marku" high school and "Cvetan Dimov" high school by 50%, whereas it sinks by 18% in "Arseni Jovkov" high school, resulting in 32% of its total usage of this adverb in the last school. Another notable change can be seen in the usage of the adverb of frequency 'very often'. The percentage goes up from 5%

in “Zef Lush Marku” high school to 10% in “Cvetan Dimov” high school and finally reaches its peak in “Arseni Jovkov” high school with 12%.

Question 15: Instructor tests only what is covered in the book

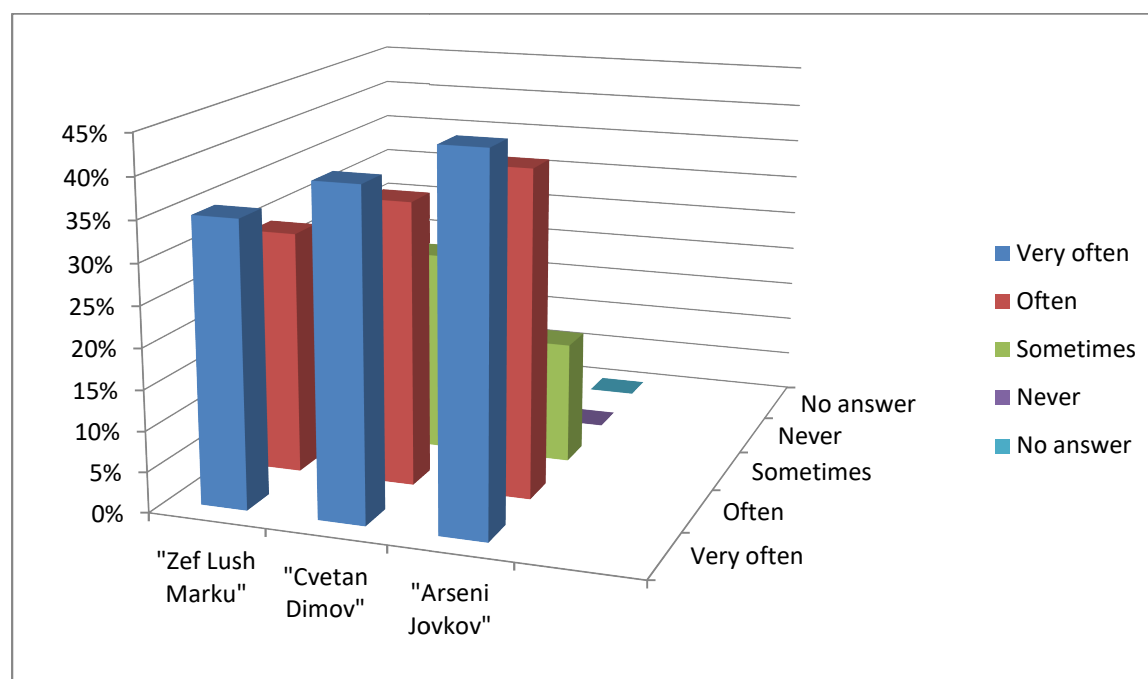


Chart 4.1.15 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

The chart depicts a considerable increase in the usage of two adverbs of frequency ‘very often’ and ‘often’. They both grow by 5% in each of the three high schools. On one hand, the usage of ‘very often’ in “Zef Lush Marku” high school is 35%, in “Cvetan Dimov” high school is 40% and in “Arseni Jovkov” high school is 45%. On the other hand, the usage of ‘often’ in “Zef Lush Marku”

high school is 30%, in “Cvetan Dimov” high school is 35% and in “Arseni Jovkov” high school is 40%.

Question 16: Instructor making clear and understandable explanations

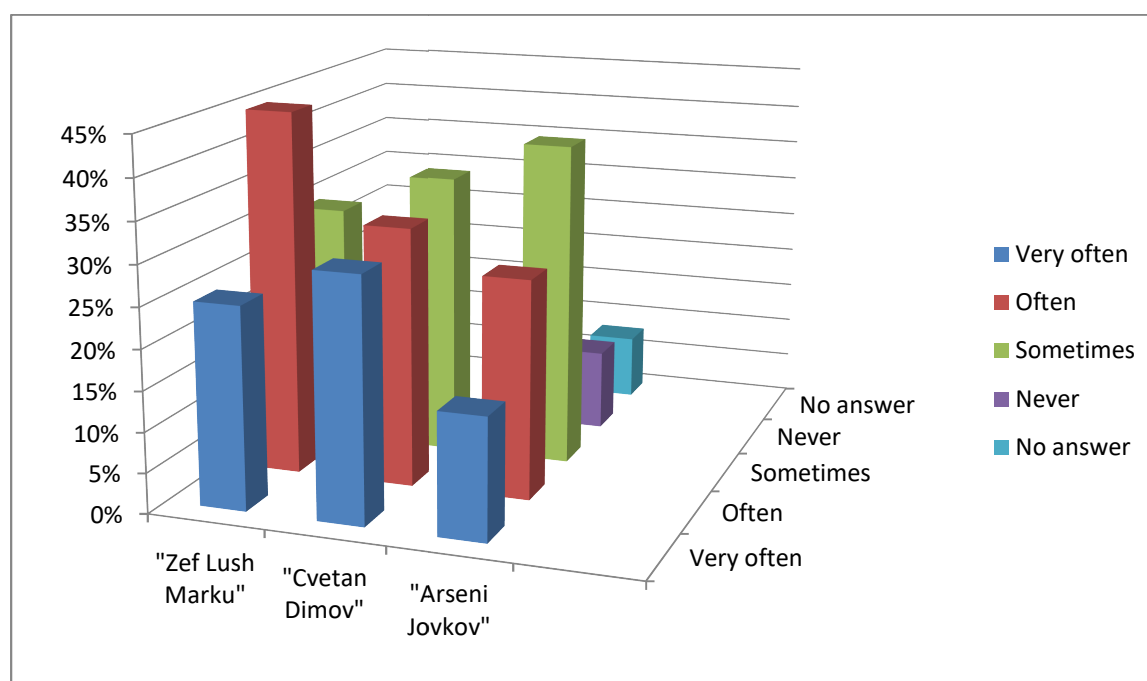


Chart 4.1.16 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

In this chart, the usage of the adverb of frequency ‘often’ reaches its peak in “Zef Lush Marku” high school with 45%, then has a slight decline in “Cvetan Dimov” high school resulting in 32% and reaches its lowest point in “Arseni Jovkov” high school resulting in 27%. In “Zef Lush

Marku" high school all students answered this question, resulting in 0% for 'no answer'. However, in "Cvetan Dimov" high school 3% of students did not answer this question and in "Arseni Jovkov" high school 8% did not answer this question. Another crucial element is the increase in the usage of the adverb of frequency 'sometimes', going up by 5% in each of the three high schools. 'Sometimes' was used 30% in "Zef Lush Marku" high school, 35% in "Cvetan Dimov" high school and finally 40% in "Arseni Jovkov" high school.

Question 17: Enhance/usage of students' general knowledge within classroom topics

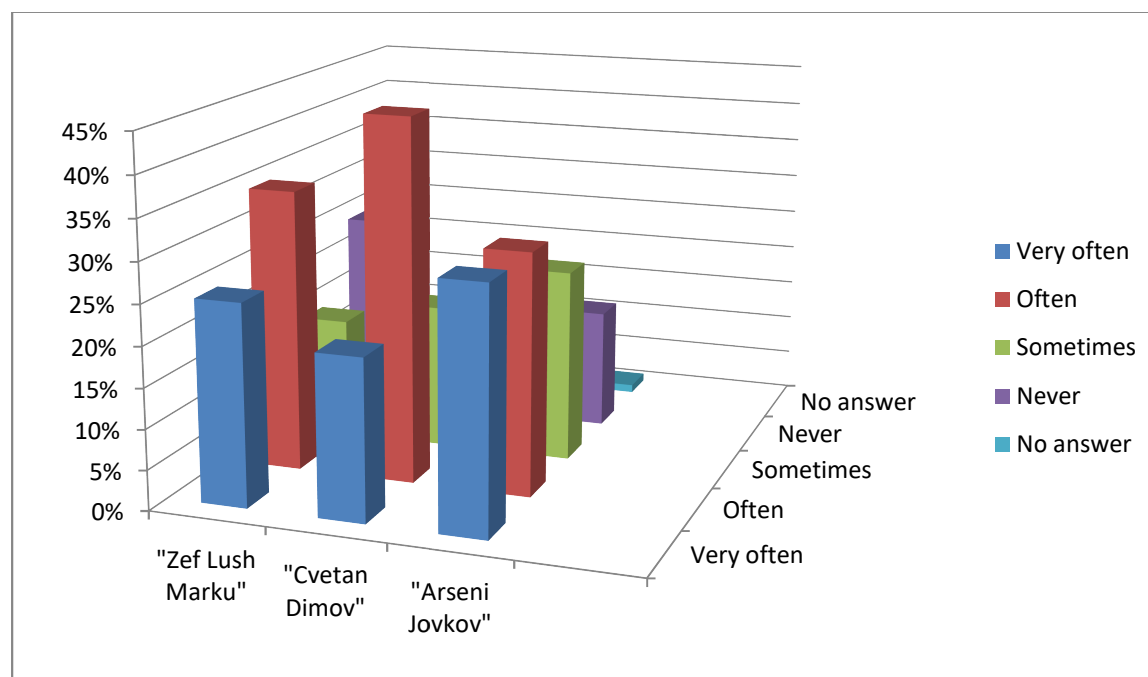


Chart 4.1.17 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

This chart represents the usage of students' general knowledge apart from the materials provided by the teacher and the high school. It can be unfolded that there was a slender increase in the usage of the adverb of frequency 'sometimes'. In "Zef Lush Marku" high school it shows 15%, in "Cvetan Dimov" high school it goes up to 18%, in "Arseni Jovkov" high school it reaches 24%. Moreover, only in "Zef Lush Marku" high school all students answered this question, resulting on 0% of 'no answer'. Nonetheless, in "Cvetan Dimov" high school it goes up to 2% and in "Arseni Jovkov" high school goes down to 1%.

Question 18: Exchange of ideas between peers/ debate

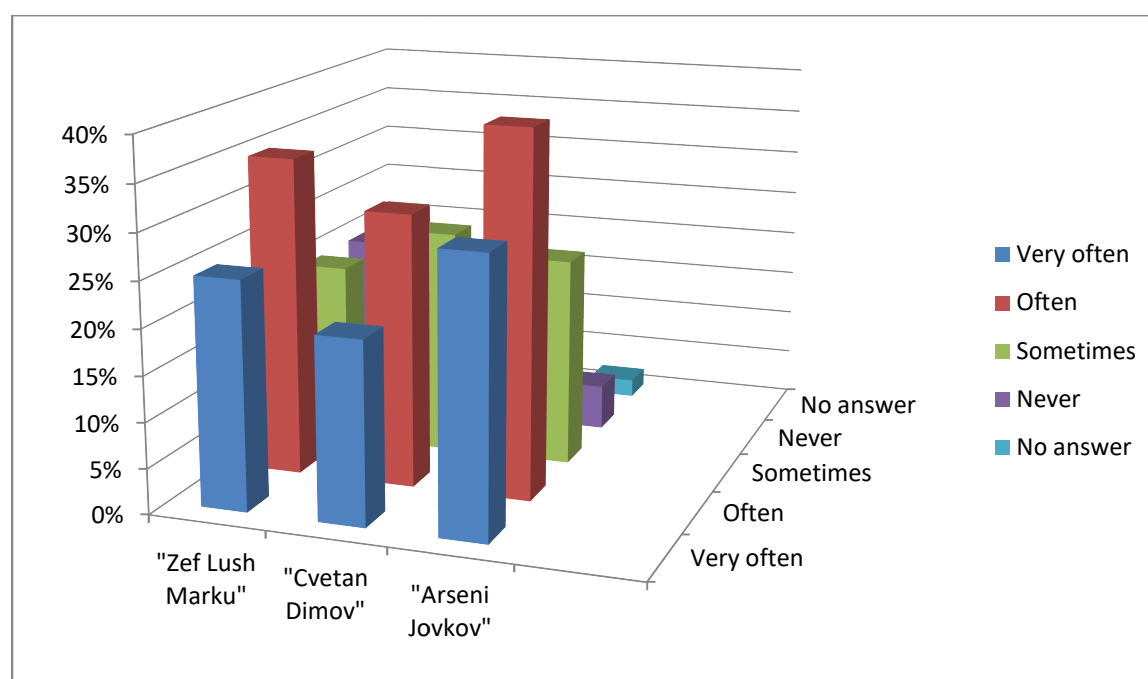


Chart 4.1.18 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

The chart displays a substantial increase in the usage of the adverb of frequency 'often'. It conveys 35% in "Zef Lush Marku" high school, slightly decreases in "Cvetan Dimov" high school by resulting in 30% and finally reaches its highest point in "Arseni Jovkov" high school resulting in 40 %. Only 5% of students did not answer this question in "Cvetan Dimov" high school and only 2% did not answer it in "Arseni Jovkov" high school. But, in "Zef Lush Marku" high school, this question was answered by every participant.

Question 19: Testing of 4 language skills, including critical thinking

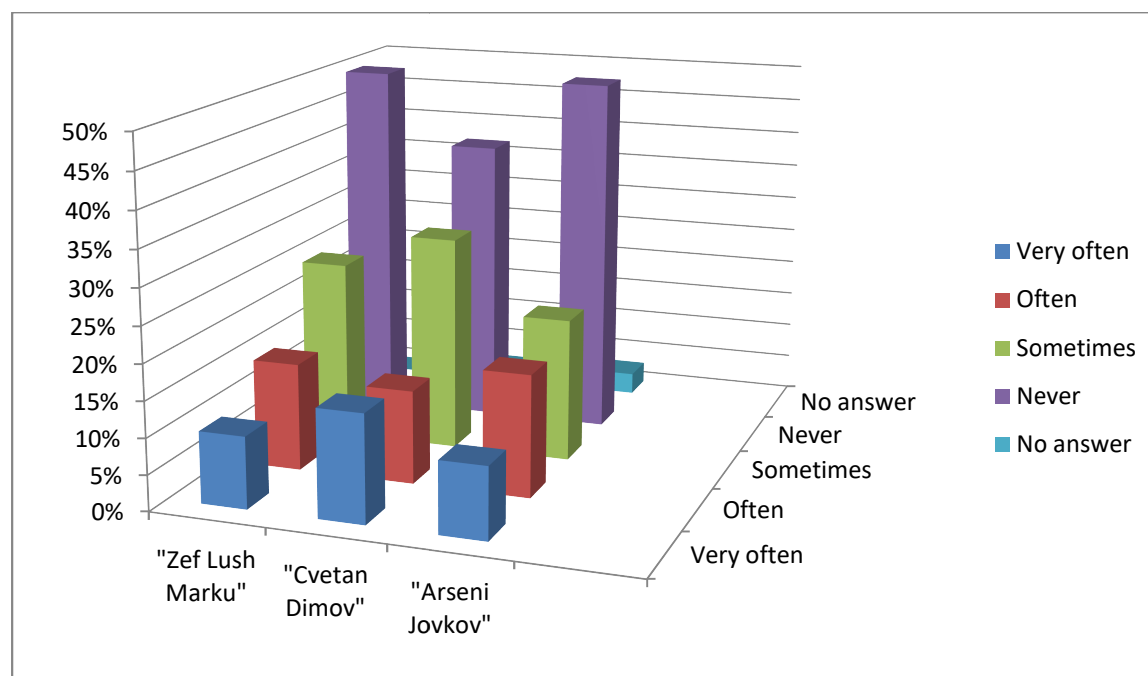


Chart 4.1.19 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

The chart above arrays influential and vital information regarding the usage of critical thinking in ELT in the above mentioned high schools. It represents a major decrease in the usage of the adverb of frequency 'often' and 'very often' in all three high schools. In "Zef Lush Marku" high school 'often' is portrayed with 15%, whereas 'very often' with only 10%. In "Cvetan Dimov" high school 'often' is exhibited with only 13% and 'very often' with 15%. In "Arseni Jovkov" high school the adverb of frequency 'often' is conveyed with 17%, the adverb of frequency 'very often' with only 10%.

Question 20: Instructor tests the overall knowledge of students on the subject (orally, written form)

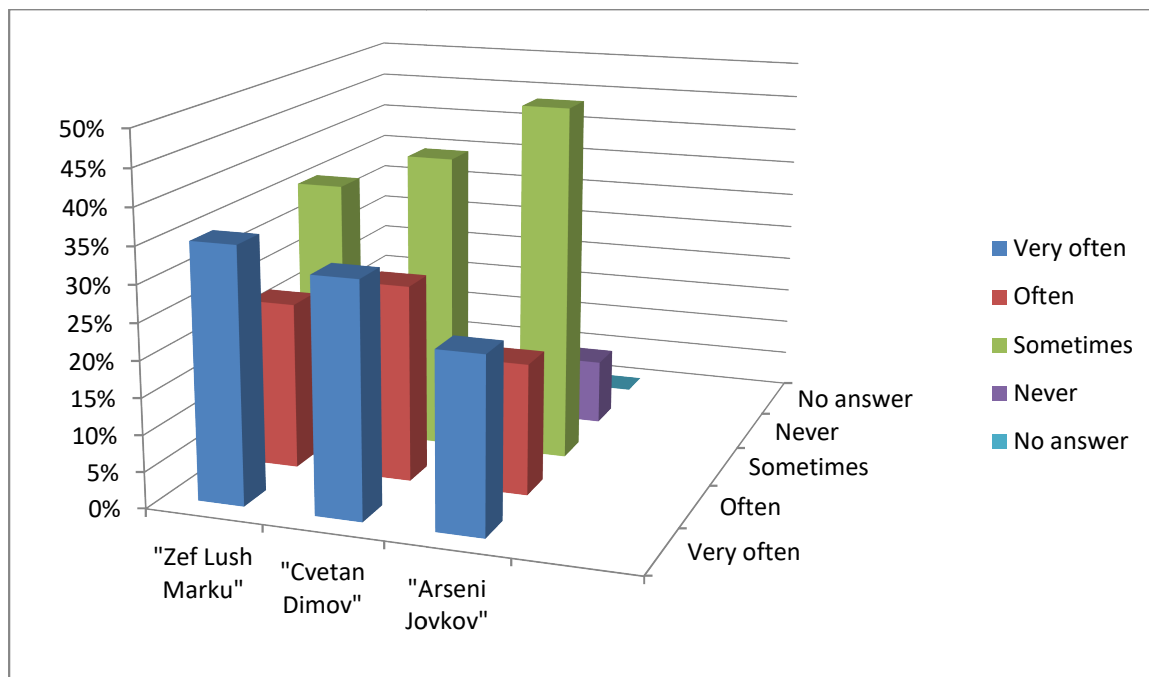


Chart 4.1.20 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

The final chart shows a continuous and significant increase in the usage of the adverb of frequency 'sometimes'. In "Zef Lush Marku" high school depicts 36%, in "Cvetan Dimov" shows 41% and in "Arseni Jovkov" goes up to 49%. Anyway, there is a slender drop in the usage of adverb of frequency 'very often'. In "Zef Lush Marku" high school shows 35%, in "Cvetan Dimov" high school 32% and in "Arseni Jovkov" high school goes down, resulting in 24%.

4.3 Interview analysis and results

In this phase, there were 9 respondents interviewed. They were chosen from three high schools: "Zef Lush Marku", "Cvetan Dimov" and "Arseni Jovkov" in Skopje, North Macedonia. They responded to 10 open- ended questions. They expressed their views toward the implementation of techniques which promote critical thinking in ELT and in their classes and discussed possible drawbacks. Below are some excerpts contemplated from teachers' interviews:

R- Researcher

P- Participant

Excerpt 1:

R: Do you ever teach material outside the curriculum, but related with the topic of discussion in the class? Please explain.

P1: I tend to go beyond the teaching curriculum and planning, since I believe it is needed to enhance students' views upon specific topics.

P2: I never go outside the curriculum and material. I prefer to teach based on the plans that are given to us from the Ministry of Education of North Macedonia.

P3: Sometimes I consider doing this, but only with students who are linguistically advanced in the field of English language.

P4: I try to create debates and come up with debate topics, just to develop and train the speaking skill of the language.

P5: I believe asking for students' personal opinions upon various topics is beneficial to the classroom and the teacher as well. Sometimes we as teachers learn new information from our students, for instance. we are not so advanced with technology and now they become informed quicker than us teachers do.

P6: I do not prefer to go outside the curriculum and expand their views upon a topic. I believe the material is hard enough to be captivated by lower level of language students, so they do not need to become even more engaged with more difficult information.

P7: I agree that teachers should implement this method in ELT, more for the reason of developing critical thinking and speaking skill.

P8: I believe that ELT professionals should create a student- centered environment, which results in students' opinion taken into consideration.

P9: I tend to do these type of discussions with my advanced students, since it helps them enrich their vocabulary and minimize/ avoid grammar mistakes.

As for the question whether they use material outside the curriculum or not, most of the interviewed teachers answered positively. Using extra material is a way of helping students in understanding better the target culture and being exposed to examples of real-life context.

Even though we can see from teachers' responses that many teachers expressed a positive attitude in using authentic material in their ELT, there are still some teachers who strictly follow the course books which have been assigned to them. So, it is very important to raise teachers' awareness and help them understand that the usage of extra material and expansion of the topic outside the boundaries of a plan can be beneficial for their students' professional growth. Using extra material related to the topic of discussion can reinforce a better understanding of the world outside the classroom. After all, language is a tool and as such it should serve for practical reasons.

Excerpt 2:

R: How do you handle a student that is not interested to take part in a discussion? Please explain.

P1: I ignore the student and carry on with my classroom discussion/ explanation.

P2: I prefer to ask the student what bothers him/her and approach them with understanding.

P3: It happened quite a few times and the student started interfering with my teaching. I asked the student to leave the class.

P4: I usually punish him/ her when I grade them.

P5: I tend to ignore them and they stop bothering their peers. The more attention you give to them, the more they become difficult to handle.

P6: I prefer to send the student to the school's Principal and they handle the issue by themselves.

P7: I do not want to get too attached with the students' problems and sometimes I do not ask them what is wrong.

P8: I try to ask them whether they would like to work on something else and discuss other topic.

P9: I prefer to discuss the issue with the student and ask them whether or not they feel good to stay in class or they need a break from the teaching/ learning process.

As it can be clearly seen, most teachers prefer to not deal with this issue alone, rather they ask for help from a person who is in charge of the school order (the Principal). Others, try to calm and understand the student by aiding them in the learning process or allowing them to leave the class for a while.

However, the ones that do not take into consideration the background and root of the issue, it is of my outmost belief that they do not want to raise larger issues at school, since the children are hyperactive and unpredictable.

Excerpt 3:

R: Have you ever been criticized? How did you handle it? Please explain.

P1: Yes, I have been criticized by my students. They do not tend to like my grading methods. I have tried to change the methods and come to a mutual agreement with them.

P2: The issue arises always with the grading criteria. Students usually do not prefer the criteria that I provide. I do not accept to change it.

P3: It happened to me when colleagues criticized me for the grading criteria. I decided to not change it, since it had worked for years and it is still applicable.

P4: Everyone gets criticized once in a while. However, I prefer ignoring criticism and go on with my teaching plans when the issue arises at work.

P4: In the teaching environment there is always space for criticism. I believe I handle it OK. I try to take into consideration other peoples' words and maybe their advice in order to improve myself in the teaching process.

P5: I try to take into consideration other peoples' criticism and change myself for the better.

P6: I acquire this type of behavior very well, since it is everyone's freedom to express their opinion.

P7: When the critique comes from many students I try to improve myself in the teaching process or grading criteria, since I believe is for the best of all of us.

P8: I do not like critiques, since I think everyone has their own point of view and it is very difficult to change our habits.

P9: Criticism is always welcomed when it means that it can improve me as a person or teacher.

As we can see from the teachers' answers, most ELT professionals welcome criticism and try to improve themselves in the teaching process. They tend to believe that everyone does mistakes and we need to upgrade one another in the field of teaching, since at the end of the day the teachers hold the greatest responsibility for their students' success. Nonetheless, there are always exceptions. Some of the teachers do not prefer criticism and do not handle it positively, since they believe everyone has their own views, beliefs and manners of working in the classroom.

Excerpt 4:

R Have you ever anticipated an issue and took measures to prevent it? Please explain.

P1: Yes, it happened with a student and I anticipated that their final grade would be a low one, so I provided extra material for them to read.

P2: I look upon students' achievements during the school year and by the end I always guess what their final grade will be.

P3: I always anticipate each student's final achievements.

P4: My intuition never fails me, I anticipated that a student would fail my class and provided extra assignment for them in order to pass the class.

P5: I anticipate when my students are not prepared for a revision.

P6: As language teachers, we are prone to anticipate students' responses, but always fail when something unexpected happens.

P7: In teaching, it happens many times to not have the talent to anticipate issues, since every year is different and each student differs from one- another.

P8: I tend to anticipate issues with my students after I pass a long time with them, but every year some unexpected issue arises.

P9: I prefer to wait for the outcome, rather than anticipate something which is not sure to happen.

In excerpt, most teachers have anticipated the general knowledge and capacity of most of their students. In that, they are aware of each and every one's ability in the aspect of English language proficiency and fluency, because they have worked with them for a longer period of time. Nonetheless, each teaching class or situation is a new beginning and sometimes they come across some unexpected situations, like sudden positive or negative development of their students' abilities and learning.

Excerpt 5:

R Have you ever been in a leadership role? What was the experience? Please explain.

P1: As a teacher, I am always in a leadership role. I like it when I provide information and everyone else just accepts it.

P2: Leadership in teaching does not mean to enhance fear into our students; it means understanding and freedom to express ideas.

P3: During my teaching I always take the leadership role, however I provide space for students' opinions and feelings towards an issue.

P4: My experience was that students tend to fear me because I ask the questions and they are supposed to answer. But, even we teachers do not have all the answers and often we need to collaborate with our students instead of 'leading' them.

P5: I prefer working along with my students and allowing them to think personally.

P6: I do not see myself as a 'leader' during the teaching process, I usually feel as a 'facilitator' to my students.

P7: Leadership is not about knowing everything, is about allowing others help into expanding our knowledge together. The same happens in teaching, as teachers we need to allow students sometimes take the leadership role.

P8: I prefer to be in the role of 'instructor' rather than 'leader' in the teaching process.

P9: In teaching, everyone is free to express their opinion without the permission of a 'leader' (teacher).

In Excerpt 5, we can see various teacher responses. Some of them feel as if their role is to lead and others seem to facilitate the teaching process. Teachers' role in the classroom depends strongly on the classes where they have to teach. In other words, the class size, learners' background and level of proficiency, as well as, their needs. Teachers who facilitate the teaching process believe that in this way they encourage their students and help them in becoming autonomous learners, which in promoting critical thinking techniques is crucial.

4.4 Observation analysis and results

Object of the observations were ELT teachers of three different high schools in Skopje, North Macedonia, as well as high school students from 1st and 2nd year of high school. Observations were carried out in three classrooms of 1st year students in "Zef Lush Marku high school, one classroom of the 1st year students in "Cvetan Dimov" high school and two classrooms of 2nd year students. The last 3 observations were carried out in "Arseni Jovkov" high school with 1 classroom of 1st year students and 2 classrooms of 2nd year students. Teachers were observed being based in a set of principles related to students' attitudes and reactions towards the implementation of the principles of critical thinking techniques and its enhancement in ELT. Also, it was observed whether these principles impact students learning autonomy in the classroom.

One observation was made in "Zef Lush Marku" high school with students from the 1st year. The lesson was about grammatical structures 'used to' and 'did not use to' in Past Simple tense and 'use to' and 'do not use to' in Present Simple tense. In this observation, the teacher did not

make any predictions or ask students beforehand what they believe the lesson will be about. Instead they directly started teaching, without making any revision of the last material. What is more, no critical thinking techniques were used at all. Since this was a class related to grammar, it did not ask for students' imagination and contribution, only repetition and understanding of structures. Some of the students asked the teacher questions related to material, but most of them did not show interest in collaborating with their peers or teacher. Students exchanged ideas only when prompted by the teacher, however did not have a sense of responsibility and worked slowly. The activities and sentences were related to the real world and real-life situations. Nonetheless, students were not challenged with material or questions outside the book, only what was planned in the curriculum. The classroom was not equipped with latest technology, students did not use any projector or laptops in their learning process. The teaching was done mainly using the board and books, without extra materials. This observation was mainly focused on the traditional methods of teaching, where students' opinion was not elicited or exchanged with their peers.

Another observation was done in "Cvetan Dimov" high school with students from the 2nd year. The teaching was student-centered and most students were fluent in English language. The topic of the lesson was the explanation of the plot and characters of the novel "Pride and Prejudice" by Jane Austen. The students exchanged ideas and corrected one another when they did some mistakes related to the topic of explanation. The teacher did a short revision of the plot and later allowed students to express their ideas freely, without imposing essential questions. A negative feature of this ELT observation was that not all students were involved in the discussion, only the advanced ones. Thus, the remaining ones only listened and corrected their character descriptions in the notebooks. Moreover, the teacher checked whether or not all students in class have written a summary of the novel and character analysis. A mutual aspect of this high school and "Zef Lush Marku" is that not all classes had technological support. In the class where this observation took place, instead of showing it into a projector, the teacher showed an excerpt of the novels' movie from their own mobile phone. Consequently, not all

students felt engaged into the teaching/ learning process, only some of them took part in it. Last but not least, in this observation the teacher used some critical thinking in the description of the characters. In that, the teacher gave hints to the students and they tried to find out whether or not a character had positive or negative traits. This part of the lesson also helped students to revise character and physical appearance adjectives. What is more, it motivated student to discuss with each-other and sometimes even disapprove of their peers' answers.

A further observation was done in "Arseni Jovkov" high school with students from the 1st year. The topic of the lesson was about aquatic animal life and a description of a place from the pictures in the book. The lesson was student- centered and the explanations were mostly done by the students. Thus, the communicative method was used and the teacher tried to initiate student- student responses using critical thinking techniques. In that, students were encouraged to speak about real- life situations or movies/ documentaries that they saw and were related to the classrooms debate/ topic. Consequently, even the least fluent students took part in the discussion and expressed their personal views and beliefs. This observation was done with a classroom of mostly linguistically advanced students, since they were in 2nd year of high school.

4.5 Findings

The data gathered from this combination of qualitative and quantitative research along with the reviewed literature, provided answers to the research questions raised in the beginning of the research. By answering these research questions this research will provide evidence for proving or refuting research hypothesis.

1) What are some techniques and tasks which are used by English language teachers that enhance and develop critical thinking, besides do they necessarily assist and encourage English language learning?

Taking into consideration the dynamics of ELT and various student backgrounds, attitudes and aptitudes, some ELT professionals have taken into consideration the promotion of critical thinking techniques in their teaching environment. Nonetheless, it is difficult to use critical thinking within the classroom, since the curriculum does not promote it and most students are not aware of what critical thinking skill/ technique is. Some of the techniques that ELT teachers use to promote critical thinking is the elicitation of students' previous knowledge as well as asking for explanations of personal experiences. Another method of promoting critical thinking is that teachers nowadays go to various seminars that help them teach with the latest advancements in technology and improve their methods of teaching. The issue arises in that the schools and the state does not aid them by equipping the schools with projectors, smart boards, laptops for students etc. Thus, sometimes is not the fault of the ELT professionals, rather it is a larger issue to be taken into consideration. Last but not least, most teachers believe that enhancing critical thinking skill and techniques within the classroom broadens their students' overall knowledge of the language and their linguistic proficiency. In addition, with the help of these critical thinking methods, providing a student their autonomy and freedom of expression, definitely enables and motivates them to acquire the language more easily and voluntarily.

2) Which components impede teachers to incorporate critical thinking as a skill in the teaching process, as well as the curriculum?

Even though most ELT teachers have improved their teaching methods and skills to oversee and follow the new teaching trends, some of them still prefer the old/ traditional method of teaching. However, the later do not know that the traditional way of teaching does not use and promote any critical thinking techniques at all, it only floods students with information that is maybe not even relevant in the long term. Some of the component that impede teachers to incorporate critical thinking as a skill in the teaching process or the curriculum is the System of Education and even the high school itself. In that, even though teachers want to incorporate critical thinking techniques into the teaching process, whenever advisers or counselors are sent to evaluate the teaching process, they do not evaluate anything that is outside the curriculum. Thus, teachers are forced to stay inside the borders of the

curriculum, since students later on will lack of knowledge from the book material and focus on critical thinking skill only. Moreover, there does not exist grading criteria in the high schools of the Republic of North Macedonia for critical thinking. Consequently, a students' critical thinking and its usage within the classroom will not impact their final grade at all. Besides, ELT teachers do not have a huge impact into changing the state teaching curriculum, except when there is a major strike planned and most of the teachers may refute and achieve to change this issue.

3) How to contribute in order to raise the usage of critical thinking as a skill within the classroom and the curriculum, as well as incorporate it as a 5th language skill?

The usage of critical thinking as a skill and promotion of its techniques is minimal in our high schools, due to the lack of knowledge from the ELT teachers but also professionals on the field. A possible option in order to raise the usage of critical thinking is by organizing seminars where high school ELT teachers will go and inform themselves about the importance of its usage. Only after some advancement into the classrooms regarding technology and ELT teachers' training, may high schools understand the importance of critical thinking. Another possible option is for high school students to raise the awareness of critical thinking techniques in ELT teaching by making presentations and projects on the issue and present them across the high schools of the country. In order to incorporate critical thinking as a 5th language skill into the curriculum, teachers need to become aware of the influence that it has in aiding students to acquire the English language more easily. What is more, critical thinking helps to develop the 4 language skills, for instance. in speaking-it helps in the lexis for debates and interviews, in listening- it helps in grasping a missing piece of information, in reading- it helps to 'read between the lines' and infer a specific meaning, in writing- it helps to enrich and expand vocabulary, thus making the writing look more academically and professionally. As a consequence, the only way to incorporate techniques which promote critical thinking and critical thinking itself within the curriculum is in behalf of ELT professionals and their will to change and dispute some of the present methods of teaching. In that case, some unnecessary teaching programs will be eliminated and critical thinking will become the new trend within the EFL classrooms.

4.6 Conclusion

The analyses provided above, brought to surface the overall conclusions that the implementation of critical thinking techniques in ELT facilitates language learning. Moreover, using the teaching techniques that produce truly critical thinking activities provide a student-centered lesson. Hence, students prefer learning the language through practicing different communicative and critical thinking activities. Also, lessons focused on speaking and communications are students' preferred lesson type. Furthermore, students prefer working together, giving ideas, being independent, and participating a lesson that focuses on them and their needs. Similarly, critical thinking is the latest method that promotes all of the above mentioned aspects of the English language.

5. Conclusions

The aim of this research was to find out if techniques which promote critical thinking can be used as a basis to promote critical thinking as a 5th language skill. Moreover, if a combination of both critical thinking techniques and communicative method is efficient and beneficial to the process of language teaching and learning.

The first hypothesis **“Critical thinking is a challenging skill that demands learners' integral engagement upon it (outside the classroom) in order to master it completely”** stated that students need to use critical thinking outside classroom in order to provide its highest results. The result of students' questionnaire, teachers' interview and classroom observations support the first hypothesis. All of the teachers interviewed that had used critical thinking in teaching, admitted that the usage of critical thinking in ELT has shown to have positive results in motivating students to acquire the language. Since it promotes and improves students' communication, it is also beneficial to students of lower level of linguistic proficiency.

The second hypothesis **“Critical thinking is a skill that improves the overall language proficiency and knowledge on various aspects of a language”** implied that critical thinking has

benefits in upgrading and boosting language proficiency in general. All of the research instruments provided above support this hypothesis. Students' questionnaire prove that students prefer and learn better through working effectively on their own or debating about issues with their peers. Additionally, students preferred to be the center of attention during ELT and asked frequent questions and contributed to class discussion. Furthermore, from the teachers' interviews we can understand that all teachers elicited critical thinking via debates, classroom discussions or via the usage of communicative teaching method. Whereas, regarding classroom observations, each of the teachers observed incorporated critical thinking techniques through essential questions related to the material.

The third hypothesis **“Techniques which promote critical thinking should be student- centered since it is an individual skill that differs in every learner”** demands that critical thinking differs in every student, since every student is different from one another. Thus, techniques which promote critical thinking should not have one mutual criteria of grading; however they should be created to suit at least some student-types of learners. For instance. advanced, beginner, shy, communicative, withdrawn etc. It is true that not every student has the same capacities and possibilities as their peer, nonetheless critical thinking is understood differently by everyone. This hypotheses is supported by the student questionnaire and by the teachers' interview, but is not supported by the observation checklists. Thus, students and teachers believe that critical thinking is different for each student but only in theory, only some of them tried to prove it in practice. Most of the students agree that they are responsible for their own learning. Moreover, they agree that different communicative teaching techniques such as self-assessment, peer feedback, and real-life situations help them reflect on their learning methodologies and become more independent. Furthermore, all of the teachers stated that they believe that promoting critical thinking techniques in teaching has an impact in learner centeredness.

This research brings us to conclusion that all activities, which seek and develop critical thinking competence and promotion of its techniques in ELT, serve also as means of putting the student in the center. While developing learners' critical thinking competence through performing different communicative activities, teachers will simultaneously encourage students to think critically and analytically about their learning. In such way, students become conscious about the purpose of learning a lesson or performing a particular task, hence, understanding that it is their duty to consistently engage in the learning process and thoroughly scrutinize it in order to draw specific conclusions.

6. Limitations and Recommendations

In cooperation with students and teachers, this research has been successfully conducted. Also, it has reached the goals that were set before it began. However, there were a few limitations, which will be discussed in the following paragraph. Moreover, this chapter will also provide some recommendations for further research.

6.1 Limitations

Firstly, teachers who were interviewed were from different schools and places. Moreover, the teachers have finished their academic studies in different universities and come from various backgrounds. Classroom observations were conducted in three schools: "Zef Lush Marku", "Cvetan Dimov" and "Arseni Jovkov" and the curriculum was the same in all three high schools. The student questionnaire was conducted in all above mentioned high schools, but there was a specific limitation to it. Although the questionnaire was anonymous and each question was translated and explained carefully. There is always room for students to misunderstand or interpret the meaning of the questions in their own way.

6.2 Recommendations

A recommendation for the next research is to conduct it with students from different years from the same high school, for example. In one high school do the questionnaire with the 1st year, 2nd year, 3rd year and 4th year of students. In that case, that the results can be based on a larger sample of students. Also, to investigate the understanding of critical thinking by the students and its meaning in broader terms by the teachers (via teachers' interviews).

Another recommendation is that teachers must always challenge themselves, be creative, and explore different teaching strategies. In that, to include extra material and their own teaching experience in order to incorporate and develop the usage of critical thinking techniques in ELT. In order for them to meet nowadays students' needs, especially to enhance students' critical thinking and evaluate it as a 5th language skill, schools must provide internet access and modern equipment with the latest technology such as: computers, projectors and smart boards.

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8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1: Students' questionnaire

Student Questionnaire Used to Evaluate Undergraduate Student Learning

*Please tick how often have you done the following activities/issues in class

Questions	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never
1. Asked questions in class/ contributed to class discussions				
2. Worked on a paper/project that required info. from various sources				
3. Received comment feedback from your written or oral assignments				
4. Memorize facts				

and material				
5. Analyze and make judgments upon a topic in class				
6. How often tests challenged your overall knowledge?				
7. Learning effectively on your own				
8. Working effectively with others in class				
9. Thinking critically and analytically				
10. Acquiring the 4 language skills at same rate				
11. Analyzing/working on problem-solving exercises				
12. Spending significant amount of time learning new info				

13. Instructor providing material which helps you succeed academically				
14. Instructor providing support which helps you to succeed socially				
15. Instructor tests only what is covered in the book				
16. Instructor making clear and understandable explanations				
17. Enhance/usage of students' general knowledge within classroom topics				
18. Exchange of ideas between peers/ debate				
19. Testing of 4 language skills including critical thinking				

20. Instructor tests the overall knowledge of students on the subject (orally, written form)				
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***Thank you for your time and help**

8.2 Teachers' observation protocol

Observation Checklist and Comment Form

DoDea Grant Peer Observations, 2012-13

Teacher Date Class School

What did you observe?	Comments
1. Students asking questions	
2. Students making predictions and/or testing them	
3. Students working collaboratively	
4. Students using technology	
5. Students on task/ engaged in their work	
6. Student ownership and responsibility	
7. Active exchange of ideas	
8. Teacher connecting with students' prior knowledge	
9. Teacher is facilitator of learning	

10. Activity/assignment/discussion connected to real world	
11. Problem-based learning	
12. Formative assessment being used	
13. Students are challenged	
14. Instruction is more standards-based ,less textbook driven	
15. Learning is framed by essential questions	
16. Multiple subject areas are integrated	

Observed by:

Comments:

8.3 Teachers' interview

Semi-structured interview for ELT teachers

1. Have you ever gone beyond and above a project? What was the topic about and what was interesting about it? Please explain.
2. Have you ever been in a leadership role? What was the experience? Please explain.
3. How do you handle disagreements with students? Please explain.
4. Have you ever struggled with lack of motivation? How did you overcome it? Please explain.
5. Have you ever anticipated an issue and took measures to prevent it? Please explain.
6. What did you last read and what did you like about it? Please explain.
7. Do you ever teach material outside the curriculum, but related with the topic of discussion in the class? Please explain.
8. Have you ever been criticized? How did you handle it? Please explain.
9. How do you handle a student that is not interested to take part in a discussion? Please explain.

10. How often do you ask for students' personal opinion regarding classroom topics? Please explain.

*Questions created by Arbnora Sulejmani

