

Approaching the curriculum critically: evaluating critical thinking components in High schools of
Skopje



Topic:

***“Approaching the curriculum critically: evaluating critical thinking components
in High schools of Skopje”***

**A thesis presented to the Faculty of Languages, Cultures and Communications of the South-
East University for the Degree of**

Master of Arts

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South East European University

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Skopje

To my family and my husband

Acknowledgement

This thesis becomes a reality with the constant support from my mentor, Prof. Dr. [Brikena Xhaferi](#), who has encouraged and inspired me to go further. She has given me motivation and confidence to never stop believing in yourself and your own dreams. Special gratitude and respect for her patience and assistance throughout the whole process.

Second, I want to thank my family in always believing and supporting my work from the beginning until the end. Special thanks go to my father, my idol who taught me to always set a goal in life and do everything to achieve that goal. He is my life inspiration and the best teacher that I could ever wish for.

Third, many thanks go to my family-in law for their support and believe in me. Furthermore, I want to thank my husband in always and forever believing in me, supporting and helping me to arrive where I am now.

Lastly, I want to thank God for everything he gave me in these past years. Without the faith and believe in God I could not achieve this precious gift in life.

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Abstract in English

A research study conducted to investigate the importance of critical thinking in the curriculum of the high schools in North Macedonia, along with its assessment methodology. The study is divided into two major parts; the first part reflects the literature review of critical thinking throughout the years and the second part presents the research procedure. To Critical thinking skill is being given a lot of importance in the 21st Century and since it is a recent skill, the investigation of it was successful. With the help of three research instruments: a students' questionnaire, a teacher's interview and a classroom observation that were made in three different high schools in North Macedonia, were achieved good results and were brought out interesting findings. According to the research results, the majority of English professors were practicing critical thinking skill in their lectures and were transmitting the same to the new generation. An interesting fact coming from the findings is that critical thinking skill facilitates not just the process of achieving a language proficiency, but it also helps to build one's personality, since it involves a lot of thinking and analyzing of a matter. Furthermore, critical thinking is a language component that can be assessed and graded even though it has a complex nature, due to the fact that it is hard to measure its value from the side of the teacher. Coming to the conclusion, critical thinking gained a positive attitude from both the teacher and the student's side. In addition, it is being taught in the high schools besides the barriers that the ministry of education might set. All in all, critical thinking is an amusing skill, which forms one's logic and intelligence to see the background of a certain situation, beyond what see the eyes.

Keywords:critical, thinking, curriculum, teacher, student, skill, high school, attitude, assessment, methodology, language, result, personality

Abstract in Albanian

Një studim i kryer për të hulumtuar rëndësinë e të menduarit kritik në planprogramin e shkollave të mesme në Maqedonin e Veriut, sëbashku me metodat e vlerësimit të saj. Ky studim është i ndarë në dy pjesë të mëdha: pjesa e parë pasqyron teorinë mbi të menduarit kritik ndër vite dhe pjesa e dytë prezanton procedurën e hulumtimit. Të menduarit kritik i është dhënë një rëndësi e madhe në shekullin 21 dhe pasi është një aftësi e re, hulumtimi ka qenë i suksesshëm. Me ndihmën e tre instrumenteve të hulumtimit: anketa për nxënësit, intervista me profesorë dhe observimi i klasës që janë kryer në tre shkolla të mesme të ndryshme në Maqedonin e Veriut, janë arritur rezultate të mira dhe janë gjetur fakte interesante. Sipas rezultateve të hulumtimit, shumica e profesoreve të anglishtës ishin duke e praktikuar të menduarit kritik gjatë ligjëratave të tyre dhe ishin duke ia transmetuar të njëjten gjeneratë të re. Një fakt interesant që vjen nga rezultatet është që të menduarit kritik përfshijë jo vetëm procesin e arritjes së rrjedhshmerisë të gjuhës, por ajo gjithashtu ndihmon në ndërtimin e personalitetit, pasi ajo përmban shumë të menduarit dhe analizë të çështjeve. Gjithashtu, të menduarit kritik është një pjesë e gjuhës që mund të vlerësohet e të testohet, pavarësisht se ka një natyrë komplekse, pasi është vështirë ta matësh vlerën e saj nga ana e profesorit. Duke arritur tek përfundimi, të menduarit kritik ka marrë një qëndrim pozitiv nga të dy anët, si nga profesori edhe nga nxënësi. Me shumë, ajo është duke u mesuar në shkollat e mesme pavarësisht barrierave që mund të vendosë ministria e arsimit. Si përfundim, të menduarit kritik është një aftësi kënaqëse, që formon logjikën e inteligjencës e njerit të shikoj prapavijën e një situatë të caktuar, përtej asaj që shohin sytë.

Fjalët kyçe: kritik, të menduarit, planprogram, profesori, nxënësi, aftësi, shkolla e mesme, qëndrim, vlerësimi-testimi, metodologjia, gjuha, rezultat, personaliteti

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1. Introduction

This Master Thesis is done in the field of education. The purpose of this research is to investigate critical thinking in education focusing in teaching English as a foreign language in high schools of Skopje. Its implementation with specific focus on the assessment methods. Furthermore, the research indicates also the process of including critical thinking in the school curriculum, how teachers adapt and assess this method in their lectures. Obviously, critical thinking is an important component of the language that one is capable to master. It depicts the parts of our brains which deal mainly with thinking, analyzing, evaluating, explaining, problem-solving of a phenomenon, in our case of a particular part of speech. In addition, it is a human process which activates the brain to scan the information and catch the points which are crucial in the formulation of a final result. Moreover, critical thinking facilitates the process of completing a task, from which the student has taught and remembered certain important points. In the 21st Century critical thinking has become a crucial part of the curriculum in High School and University level too. On one side, it opens the doors of knowledge, of an area in which a student can manipulate and use his/her brain to solve various tasks, which indeed are related to real life situations, where logic and strong communication skills are highly required. On the other side, critical thinking has become enormous difficult to assess, with which most of the teachers face trouble during the lessons.

Although, critical thinking has its roots in the United States, its influence can be also felt here in the Balkan regions. Even in North Macedonia, English teachers started to focus on developing critical thinking and including it in their daily lesson plans. I have faced professors in the High Schools of North Macedonia that use this particular method. The curriculum has clearly changed in these recent years, both the students and some of the teachers are not aware of the practice of critical thinking, even though they do it most of the time randomly and unconsciously. Yet, designing a syllabus which includes critical elements is not easy at all, due to the fact that these activities have to be assessed by the teacher. Critical thinking is an element which belongs to a cognitive and rather complex teaching method. Since, its appearance is relatively new in the field of Methodology, it has its ups and downs. However, being a trend in the education field, in my concern we as English professors have to include critical thinking, due to the fact that it is a method which brings the students' brains to work. Additionally, it serves as a good practice for the student's brain to function properly in solving a

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problem. What is more, thinking critically gives additional importance to our personalities, in that students become self- confident, they allow themselves to solve problems. With one word, they become independent, they can stand on their own feet.

Research questions are:

- 1. *How is critical thinking included in the curriculum of ESL with its main focus on High Schools in Skopje?***
- 2. *What are the students' attitude critical thinking in the classroom?***
- 3. *Which are the assessment methods of critical thinking, how is it evaluated and which are the obstacles that might arise along the way?***

All in all, the research investigates the importance of critical thinking mainly in the curriculum of ESL in the High Schools of Skopje, by analyzing both the student's attitude towards it and the teacher's responsibility in assessing critical thinking through overcoming the possible obstacles in the whole process.

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1.1 Structure of content

The Master Thesis consist of seven chapters that are briefly described as follows:

1. **Chapter I** – It presents a brief introduction on the main concepts regarding critical thinking, its application in the school curriculum parallel with it its assessment. It states also the structure of the thesis with the research questions, attached to it a short conclusion.
2. **Chapter II**– It entails the theoretical part of the thesis, by showing different reviews on critical thinking method and comparing/contrasting them. Additionally, it gives insights in applying critical thinking in schools. Moreover, it deals with the methods of assessing critical thinking components and including it in the curriculum. Last but not least, it ends with a brief conclusion showing different points of views and stressing the importance of critical thinking.
3. **Chapter III** – This stage presents the used methods and instruments in supporting the research questions and giving proper results. It shows the research aims, research questions and the research hypotheses.
4. **Chapter IV** – This part of the research presents a statistic of the results done in the whole research process and a data analysis of the gathered results taken from all the research instruments. Then, it presents a comparison of the whole findings, through which can be taken the differences and similarities. The literature review facilitates the process.
5. **Chapter V** – Results of the data analysis, with a conclusion of the findings and the overall research process. It presents also the limitations of the research and some recommendations dedicated to other interested researchers and professors in the field of teaching methodology.
6. **Chapter VI** – It shows the bibliography used in the research
7. **Chapter VII** – Provides the Appendix

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1.2 Research background

Critical thinking is an important component of the language that one is capable to master. It depicts the parts of our brains which deal mainly with thinking, analyzing, evaluating, explaining, problem-solving of a phenomenon, in our case of a particular part of speech. Musai (2003) argues that "Critical thinking is the ability to think clearly and rationally. Critical thinking embraces logical ideas, identifying, constructing and evaluating arguments, judging possible mistakes, problem solving, identifying important ideas, reflecting beliefs and values"(as cited in Cela & Dimitresku, p.157). It is a human process which activates the brain to scan the information and catch the points which are crucial in the formulation of a final result. Moreover, Facione (2013) states:

that critical thinking enhances the students' work in that it allows them to share their thoughts with the others which results in the improvement of their integrative and communication skills. With the help of critical thinking the students become more self-confident and are able to detect a possible resolution for a particular issue, due to this they are capable to evaluate themselves and to view where they stand (as cited in Cela & Dimitresku, p.158).

From this regard, critical thinking in the 21st Century has to become a crucial part of the curriculum in High School and University level. Critical thinking opens the doors of knowledge, of an area in which a student can manipulate and use his/her brain to solve various tasks, which indeed are related to real life situations, where logic and strong communication skills are highly required. Although, critical thinking has its roots in the United States, its influence can be also felt here in the Balkan regions. Even in North Macedonia, English teachers started to focus on developing critical thinking and including it in their daily lesson plans. Due to the complex nature of critical thinking, it requires hard work from the student in that to them are assigned different tasks using authentic materials only. However, the curriculum has clearly changed in these recent years, by which critical thinking is almost involved in every single activity. The students are not aware of the practice of critical thinking, even though they do it most of the time randomly and unconsciously. For this reason, designing a syllabus which will include critical thinking is a

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great opportunity for the teacher to give priority to activities which mainly require this significant component and in the same time assess the students in the line of using their own critical voice in solving a task.

1.3 Research questions

- 1. How is critical thinking included in the curriculum of ESL with its main focus on High Schools in Skopje?*
- 2. What are the students' attitude critical thinking in the classroom?*
- 3. Which are the assessment methods of critical thinking, how is it evaluated and which are the obstacles that might arise along the way?*

1.4 Conclusion

Since critical thinking is a teaching method that depicts the most crucial part in learning and mastering a language, its usage here in North Macedonia and outside it, is very efficient. First, it triggers students to open their mind and develop their critical skills. Second, it facilitates the students to better memorize language constituents due to the continual practice of them. Last but not least important, critical thinking gives extra credit to the school curriculum and the teacher's work too. Therefore, this recent form in the field of language methodology is an excellent instrument for both the teacher and the students to help envelop the teaching and learning process of the English language through stressing out mainly critical skills.

2. Literature review

This chapter provides an insight into critical thinking as an important tool and method in teaching ESL. Also, it shows different aspects of implementing this recent method and its place in the school curriculum. In addition to this, it explores a variety of ways in actually assessing critical thinking elements, while using it on a daily basis when teaching.

2.1 Literature analysis of critical thinking in ESL

Teaching was never easy and since the time passed it become more and more difficult for the teacher to catch the students' attention and create a classroom atmosphere, in which they would feel comfortable. The new era brought new methods in teaching English language, with which the students now have to work on and manipulate with, using their own minds. On the other hand, the teacher has to put extra energy on his/her job in that he/she has to become more creative. Critical thinking appeared in almost every school and it became an everyday issue, with which the education system in general has to come along with. Every exercise requires critical skills and logic, which are the crucial keys in solving the task and come up with the proper solution of the problem. "Critical thinking refers to thinking that requires careful judgements and the ability to interpret what one hears, sees or reads. When people watch TV commercials, they judge and interpret what they hear, see and read, for commercials usually have verbal, visual and written images"(Erkaya&Rocha, 2005, p.6). Considering this particular context, critical thinking is mainly analyzed as a logical method, which facilitates our perceptions of things that we see or hear. Students become encouraged to participate in the activities that are assigned to them, since they are open to explore with their ideas until they find the correct answer and solve the task. From this regard, you can clearly see that critical thinking requires a lot of work from the students, it requires teamwork and it clearly depicts students' centered approach rather than the traditional teachers' centered approaches. "Critical thinking involves a set of strategies to help student develop reflective analysis and evaluation of interpretations or explanations, including one's own, to decide what to believe or what to do"(Abdel-Hack & Ahmed Helwa, 2014, p.9).

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Consequently, critical thinking appears to show ways in how to become creative, self-confident in order to achieve certain goals in education and outside it. Although, critical thinking is viewed mostly in the field of methodology, it can also be transmitted in other fields too. If for instance the students develop their critical skills, they would be more open to ideas and the chances to come up with a compatible solution would be certainly higher. What is more, the students will for sure learn how to use their minds in order to complete their everyday tasks. They would be prepared to deal with various situations, with which they might be faced during their entire lifetime. Fahim and Eslamdoost (2014) argue that “One should not overlook the fact that CT is a path through reasoning, scientific and analytic method of analyzing the issue, gathering evidence, assessing the evidence, argument, and knowledge impartially, as well as concluding”(p.141). In regard to this, critical thinking is accepted to be not just a solving method with which people find solutions of a problem, but it is so much more than that; it can be also used to evaluate the collected material and actually analyzing what has been done so far.

2.2 The implementation of critical thinking

Critical thinking is being implemented in most of the cases randomly and unconsciously. The majority of the teachers are not aware of the fact that they are using this new method in their lectures. The activities that are designed include within critical thinking, since now in the 21st Century teaching English has become more a student-centered approach rather than a teacher-centered approach. This, in particular requires critical thinking to be active and thinking in general to become the core element with which good results can be achieved. “Critical thinking is often thought of as the capability to clearly and rationally. The concept tends to imply reflective and independent thinking”(Steven Higgins, 2014, p.8). It is a human process which activates the brain and puts it on function. Without stealing information from other sources, you are alone and you have the power to contribute to the activity just through logic and using your own source of imagination. To apply critical thinking in the classroom, the first thing that the teacher has to do is to choose which activities he/she is going to use, that in some way or another represent critical skills. According to Martinez and Nino (2013) “critical thinking is a didactic method which facilitates the students to analyze, criticize, discuss, manipulate, debate upon mainly social issues that concern the society, such as crime, inequality, discrimination, etc”(p.149). One can understand critical thinking as a typical Sherlock Holmes’ method, due to the fact that the students take the role of a real detective and their duty is to find the reason behind a problem and parallel with it to

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reveal the solution. Similarly, to Holmes the students too can participate in solving the task just by using critical thinking as an important weapon towards identifying the right answer and solve the “case”. “Many of the critical thinking related-tasks require interaction, discussion, reflection, and provide arguments”(Martinez&Nino, 2013, p. 149). Therefore, implementing critical thinking in the classroom means to show the students communicative related tasks. Since, critical thinking is a process which involves the brain, it certainly requires more communicative skills from the students. With the help of open discussions, debates, interviews, projects, presentations, the brain automatically functions and creates an atmosphere where the students can exchange information and use their own creativity to address the issue and present reasonable solutions to solve the problem of the given task. Another important technique to apply critical thinking in the classroom is through questions. Duron, Limbach and Waugh (2006) argue that “Questioning techniques can be used to foster the thinking ability of students”(p.162). Considering the interactive approach in ESL, questioning is one of the most popular method that is used in that it actually triggers the students to think deeper and to analyze the task. On the other hand, questioning helps the students to become more open-minded and critical, since it opens the doors of imagination and wisdom. Additionally, to bring critical thinking into function the teacher has to provide an open atmosphere in the classroom in which the learner plays an active role during the whole session. “Active learning can make the course more enjoyable for both teachers and students, and, most importantly, it can cause students to think critically ”(Duron, Limbach and Waugh, 2006, p.160). Students learn more when they are actively engaged in what is happening in the classroom, rather than when they are totally neglected and passive during the lectures. They become self-aware and independent in solving the activities assigned to them. Furthermore, students have to reflect on what they have covered so far. This will reinforce their thinking skills and in the same time it is a good method to fill their gaps that they will detect during their learning journey. What is more, reflecting means in general thinking upon the things you have done so far. Due to that, it has become an important tool which facilitates the process of critical thinking and the students’ work. When you reflect you actually analyze and criticize on what you have done in the previous tasks. Moreover, it serves as an assessment tool, since it provides information on the students’ performance in critical thinking skills.

2.3 The role of critical thinking in the school curriculum

Critical thinking is a relatively new method that has reached its peak now in the 21st Century, especially in the field of ESL. Considering this issue, it has become a serious problem in conducting a syllabus where critical thinking components are part of it, due to its abstract nature. The question that arises is in what circumstances can critical thinking be part of the curriculum, which represents indeed the plan of teaching. According to Radulović and Stančić (2017) “critical thinking becomes part of the curriculum only when to the students is given a role in constructing the syllabus and give personal opinions, create activities, suggest different tasks, in that they become self-confident, which affects their ability to think critically and achieve self-reflection and self-assessment” (p.21). Consequently, to approach the curriculum critically, one has to consider the involvement of both the teacher and the student in creating the syllabus. Due to the fact that this recent skill seeks critical analysis of the tasks, it is also difficult to manage in the classroom. Yet, with the help of authentic materials and engaging peers in the teaching process, critical thinking will have the opportunity to be presented in every single lecture. Putting critical thinking in the syllabus, means that students automatically will get motivated, energetic and excited to participate in open-discussions, debates, interviews, but also in problem-solving tasks, written assignments, essays, in which critical thinking is the dominant required skill for completion. Moreover, putting critical thinking components in the curriculum gives the teacher the opportunity to use authentic materials and advanced methods when teaching. “It seems reasonable to argue that, as the availability of information increases and the status of that information may be more questionable (think of Wikipedia, for example), critical thinking must take a more significant place in the curriculum” (Steven Higgins, 2014, p.19). Due to the new innovation in technology, information has become easily reachable and unfortunately formats like “Wikipedia” took the place of books by making the students’ work easier, whereas making the teachers’ work much harder. Through critical thinking the student becomes at the first line self-aware and accepts his/her responsibility to accomplish the goal and finish the activity by himself/herself. That is the reason why the school curriculum has to include critical thinking in that it brings quality, originality to the teacher and in the same time it facilitates in the process of building ones’ personality. Furthermore, some researches like Radulović and Stančić (2017) argue that “both perceiving knowledge and pupils’ role in the process of creating a curriculum will

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influence the extent to which pupils will be encouraged to question critically, to create ideas, pose questions, and offer their own insights and observations”(p.21). Speaking from this context, the students’ role is enormous when confronting them with critical thinking. If to the students will be given the opportunity to take part in the curriculum, they will critically engage and come up with a variety of activities of different kinds and automatically the curriculum will be richer in terms of its quality not quantity. In addition, the students will practice how to build and structure tasks which are appropriate to the context and the material they are learning. Although, the situation here in North Macedonia is relatively different. Most of the time, students do not have the liberty to choose which particular theme they are going to discuss about or which text they are going to read about. The teacher is the main source from which you can gather information and upon whom the lesson and the students are centered. All in all, students neither have the right to decide which lesson they will learn nor do they have the capacity to use their critical skills, since most of the activities which are designed for them do not include critical thinking.

2.4 Assessing critical thinking components

Another important issue that has to be addressed when speaking about critical thinking is the manner of its assessment. Every component that is being taught during the lessons has to be at the end assessed by the teacher. Due to the fact that critical thinking is difficult to be included and precepted, it faces some obstacles when confronting it with the phase of assessment. Since, it requires mental activities and a lot of thinking the measuring of its quality becomes harder, when the student completes a task using critical thinking. Nonetheless, critical thinking components are considered to be complex and difficult when it comes to evaluate them. It is a challenge for the teacher to choose which assessment tools or methods he/she is going to use in order to get student’s feedback and performance on critical thinking components. “The best assessment tools are those that are compatible with the content of instruction, or the outcomes being assessed, as well as the approach to learning and teaching used in your class”(Parrish, 2004, p.271). In order to reach the goal of assessment, critical thinking has to be assessed using a variety of tools which can give appropriate results to the teacher. However, students’ participation in the assessment area is also useful, due to the fact that critical thinking is an inner process coming from the brain itself and the students’ alone can detect where they actually stand. They can evaluate themselves or their peers in order to check what they lack of and where has to be

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improved more. Additionally, Fahim and Pezeshki (2012) used "RACE model that is introduced by Nugent and Vitale (2008) and is to make the learners "recognize the information in the item then" make them ask" what the question is asking, next try to critically analyze the options available and finally eliminate as many options as possible (p.156)" (as cited in Fahim & Eslamdoost, 2014, p.147). This method of assessment conveys the idea that critical thinking is mostly evaluated through questioning and speaking activities, which activate the brain to detect what is correct and what is wrong in the activity assigned by the teacher. Furthermore, the teacher will gain the title of the superior in having the duty to compile dozens of questions which give him/her students' responses on a critical thinking task. Fahim and Eslamdoost (2014) state that "Considering the challenges in evaluation it is widely believed that pre-test and post-test results in evaluating CT skill do not reveal retention. Cognitive skills improve with practice and real effects of CT will be apparent sometime later, while, long term retention is difficult to assess" (p.147). Taking this point of view, critical thinking tends to be more difficult to assess as it actually seems. The key access to practice critical thinking is the brain itself and therefore assessing it becomes difficult when both the teacher and the students want immediate results of the so far activities. In this matter, critical thinking components have to be evaluated in a longer period of time in that they can only then show appropriate results on the students' success.

From both philosophical and situated psychological perspectives, assessing critical thinking is challenging. Assessing single aspects of critical thinking or discrete skills risks failing to capture either the quality of that thinking or the relationship between the identified thinking skill and the task which aims to assess it. (Higgins, 2014, p.14)

Unfortunately, critical thinking elements are not easy to capture and put into the system of evaluation. The problem arises in the moments when the teacher has to decide which aspect of critical thinking to assess during the task. As this is a cognitive method and it requires high usage of the brain and imagination and creativity from the students, it also requires master tools from the teacher to evaluate it. The assessment has to be done in the way that both the teacher and the student get feedback from their work. It should not damage neither the students' knowledge and his/her way of precepting things nor the teacher's point of view of grading critical thinking in the best way possible. Consequently, today assessing critical thinking, the new language skill has become a real challenge for most of the teachers.

2.5 Conclusion

To conclude, many researches support the brand-new method of critical thinking in ESL. Although, it is a relatively recent method, it has gained many fans who appreciate the usage of critical thinking in the classroom environment. Critical thinking has started to be implemented in many schools and its importance is huge. Many teachers believe that critical thinking should not just be applied in the lectures, but it should be also included in the curriculum. Being part of the curriculum, the teachers will have a clearer view and image of critical elements that are present in certain activities. Furthermore, it serves as a guideline for both the teacher and the students in that it shows steps on how to become critical and more open to discuss and solve different issues. Moreover, the curriculum will gain the status of being a modern and interactive plan, which allows the students to take part actively in developing activities, which indeed again is another method that activates the brain to think critically. However, when analyzing each aspect, it must also contain a negative side. Critical thinking tends to be difficult to assess from the perspective of the teacher. Since it is a cognitive method, it is harder to manage and calculate its quality when giving feedback to the students. Even though, it is a good method in developing communicative and critical skills, it gets hard to evaluate precisely and make a detailed analysis on the students' performance. Nonetheless, critical thinking has won the status of being a method that requires thinking as the main skill in contrast to other skills. Although, applying and assessing it might be difficult, its importance and its effect on the students' improvement is by no means priceless. Therefore, teachers and the school system in general has to offer critical thinking a place in the curriculum, in that it helps the education further and develops logic rather than serving all the activity ready on a plate for the students.

2.6 Studies done on critical thinking

2.6.1 Wing Sum Cheung and Chong Min Cheong(2008)

In Singapore in 2008 a study has been done on critical thinking by Wing Sum Cheung and Chong Min Cheong. This study has been done in a secondary school context. The intention of this study was to detect methods of revealing critical thinking skills by the students and the same components being able as a teacher to evaluate. The critical thinking was interpreted through open online discussions constructed by the teacher. The reason of using discussions was to trigger and awaken the mindset of the students, to incorporate them in various topics in that they automatically active their brains to think and produce answers. The methodology which was used during the study was mainly an interactive method, in which the teacher gives topics that provoke thinking as they present a particular problem in the society. These topics were given to the students. In this study, the 35 students are all male, the age of 13-14, coming from different primary schools. Some of them are not befriended with critical thinking skills yet. In addition, the procedure of this study was made through online discussions, which resemble online forums in the internet. The students were divided into 6 small groups to which the teacher gave different topics to debate on, by setting the deadline after 2 weeks. The evaluation was done with the help of a thinking model, in which every single respond on the forum was analyzed in the depth or surface level. The final results of this study showed that more than half (57%) of thinking skills were classed in depth level, while about 43% of thinking skills were in surface level. In contrast, the students responded relatively positive to the online discussions, due to the fact that they enhanced their critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills and they had fun to work from anywhere and at any time of the day. What is more, this study supported the idea of online discussions in that they are easily compiled and in favor of both the teacher and the students. However, according to the study the teacher has to formulate better the questions and make them more provocative so that the students can think and can produce answers. On the other hand, the students have to not just provide proper answers to the addressed questions, but their duty is to conduct questions and explore more with the topic given on the forum. In conclusion, the study made in Singapore, showed that critical thinking components are being included in the

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school curriculum and there exist methods with the help of which the teacher can assess the students' level of using critical thinking skills and grade them.

2.6.2 Alhasan Allamnakhrah (2013)

Not only in the western world, but also in the east critical thinking has become a hot topic in the field of education. A typical example is a study which was made in Saudi Arabia in 2013 by Alhasan Allamnakhrah. This study depicts the problem of the usage of critical thinking components in the school curriculum by the teacher. Due to the fact that Saudi Arabia belongs to the states who do not manifest democracy and are more conservative, the State's system influenced the educational system too. The majority of universities and secondary schools in Saudi Arabia do not follow the line of using critical thinking in their lectures. There is a lack of critical thinking in the lectures and activities that are designed for the students. The study concerns with finding the reasons that brought this fundamental situation in which neither the students nor the teacher is practicing critical thinking as a recent method. The methodology used in the study was through two group sessions of two secondary pre-service teacher education programs, one from King Abdul Aziz University and one from Arab Open university. The participants were 6 students from each university, having a different level of GPAs, high, medium and low. Each student was interviewed. The interview was then transcribed from Arabic to English. Consequently, the responses of the students were quite impressive. The majority of them showed a sympathy and admiration towards practicing critical thinking in education. They precepted this method as a helping tool to solve real life problems that one may face or as a method with which one has the opportunity to analyze the situation before making any kind of judgement. Interesting is that some of the students relate the usage of critical thinking with the system of the State. They view it as a protection towards the ideology in Saudi Arabia. However, the problem lies in the institutional services and the society, because people in Saudi Arabia are constantly under pressure and they do not have the right to participate in discussions or other kind of activities in which you can raise your voice and state your personal opinion. In both schools critical thinking is not manifested, but rather neglected, by which the importance is given to memorization and rote- learning. To conclude, this study shows a different side of the

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implication of critical thinking with its focus in Saudi Arabia, it presents the desire for a change and the negative perception of critical thinking.

2.6.3 Rosyati Abdul Rashid and Rosna Awang Hashim (2008)

Another important country in which a study has been done on critical thinking is Malaysia. Rosyati Abdul Rashid and Rosna Awang Hashim developed a study in the University of Utara Malaysia in 2008. Due to the fact that Malaysia is seeking to put English language more in usage in order to increase the rate of the employment, the inhabitants are seeing the language and critical thinking as the best solution possible. The purpose of this study was to identify the level of the students in possessing critical thinking skills and whether their previous English knowledge contribute in their language abilities. The participants of this study were 280 second year undergraduate students of the Utara Malaysian University. All participants were of different kinds of English proficiency, starting from poor, fair, good to excellent. Two major methods were used to bring out the desired results of the study. First, demographic questionnaire was used to collect information on the students' abilities of the English proficiency using proper tests given by the Malaysian Examinations Council. Second, to the students was given the CCTT test which has to be completed within 50 minutes. The test is a 76-item multiple-choice test, which is divided into induction, credibility, deduction and assumption identification. If the student received a higher score in the test, than it means that he or she possesses greater critical thinking skills. The results provided from the study showed that Malaysian students did possess critical thinking abilities, however they do not correspond with that of American students. Due to the fact that in Malaysia the educational system practices more the rote-learning method, to the teacher and the students is suggested to use more recent interactive methods which promote critical thinking and do raise English proficiency. Thus, this study manifests the importance of critical thinking skills in forming the students' English proficiency and preparing them for the future, in which those two factors are highly required in order to achieve success. To conclude, critical thinking is being considered to be a major factor in the recent years, especially in the field of education in which thinking is by no means the core element in developing good language knowledge.

3. Research Methodology

This chapter introduces the research aims and objectives, as well as the used methodology to collect the needed data. The information gathered from the research shall present that critical thinking can be included in the school curriculum and it can be assessed. In the next following chapters will be presented the research questions and the process which was used to get proper answers.

3.1 Research aims

This [MA Thesis research](#) aims to elaborate the process of including critical components in the high school curriculum and the students' attitude towards this recent element in education. Additionally, it explores the nature of critical thinking in ELT and the ways in which these components can be assessed by the teacher. Last but not least important, this MA Thesis will examine the assessment methods of critical thinking, including the difficulties and problems that might arise throughout the course and the ways on how to overcome those obstacles.

3.2 Research questions

1. How is critical thinking included in the curriculum of ESL with its main focus on High Schools in Skopje?
2. What are the students' attitude critical thinking in the classroom?
3. Which are the assessment methods of critical thinking, how is it evaluated and which are the obstacles that might arise along the way?

The research questions mentioned above shall prove or disprove the hypotheses stated below.

3.3 Research hypotheses

Hypotheses 1 :If the curriculum of ESL teaching in High Schools in Skopje is directed towards critical thinking, than English will be learnt for the sake of achieving integration, communication and language fluency.

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Hypotheses 2: The teacher is encouraged to use a variety of activities in his/her lecture, mainly authentic materials in order to get the learner's attention on developing critical thinking skill.

Hypotheses 3: Critical thinking has to be assessed with the help of the teachers' and the student's contribution through the usage of different assessment tools and methods in order to give appropriate feedback and results.

3.4 Research methods

The research is a mixture of the three most dominant approaches. This study will follow a qualitative method, along with it the results will be shown using numbers with the help of the quantitative method and also, it will show a chronological flow of data using the historical method. For data collection I am going to use the following instruments: questionnaires, structured observations, textbooks, journals and semi-structured interviews.

3.5 Sample

This research was done at three High Schools: "Zef Lush Marku", "Arseni Jovkov" and Cvetan Dimov", in Skopje. The participants which enhanced the research process were 300 students and 10 English Language professors. The students were of both genders, female and male from the age of 15-16. The English professors were of both genders male and female, from the age of 25-45.

The students' questionnaire was completed by:

100 students of grade I in "Zef Lush Marku"; 50 students of grade I in "Cvetan Dimov"; 50 students of grade II in "Cvetan Dimov"; 76 students of grade I in "Arseni Jovkov"; 24 students of grade II in "Arseni Jovkov"

3.6 Research instruments

This Research was developed through the usage of these following research instruments:

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3.6.1 Student's questionnaire

The first research instrument that was used was the student's questionnaire, which was completed in three different High schools in Skopje. Students of the High School "Zef Lush Marku" (I10, I8,I12 and I9 (100 students), "Cvetan Dimov" (I – economy (50 students) and II- nursing (50 students)) and "Arseni Jovkov" (I (76 students) and II (24 students)) completed the same questionnaire. The questionnaire was constructed with 21 statements in English Language. The statements which were unclear to the students, were additionally explained and translated. The questionnaire was anonymous and the students had the chance to tick the version that best suited them with the help of the adverbs of frequency (always, often, sometimes and never) for each statement. The statements were most about the students, the way they percept the nature of thinking and if according to them it actually has an impact on the learning-teaching process. Also, the questionnaire helped to recognize if critical thinking components were learnt and taught by the teachers in those schools and if yes, how they were assessed.

3.6.2 Teacher's interview

The second instrument was teacher interview. The interview was held with 9 teachers of English language, 3 teachers from the High School "Zef Lush Marku", 3 teachers from the High School " Arseni Jovkov" and 3 teachers from the High School " Cvetan Dimov" in Skopje. Each interview was held separately. The interview was semi-structured, it allowed the teachers to express their own opinion on the topic of critical thinking. Furthermore, the interview consisted of 15 open-ended questions, through which the teachers had the opportunity to show their knowledge on critical thinking and the activities that they use to promote critical thinking skills. In addition, the interview gathered information on how the school curriculum and the way teachers precepted the importance of critical thinking skill. Moreover, it showed the way how these teachers assessed the activities that included critical thinking components and whether they actually support this skill to be taught in the future. The teachers were labelled as Teacher A, Teacher B, Teacher C, Teacher D, Teacher E, Teacher F, Teacher G, Teacher H, Teacher I.

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3.6.3 Observation

Last but not least important was the fully- participatory observation used as a research instrument. I observed 10 English professors in 3 different High Schools: “ Zef Lush Marku” (4 English language professors), “ Cvetan Dimov” (3 English professors) and “Arseni Jovkov” (3 English professors). The classes consisted approximately 25 to 32 students of both gender that were from 15-16 years old. I completed my research in two different grades (I and II grade). The experience that I had during my observation period in these schools brought me information on how the teachers use the material and activities and whether they implement critical thinking components. Additionally, it showed the importance that the teachers gave to critical thinking slightly being unaware of it.

3.7 Procedure

I completed this research in 3 High schools: “Zef Lush Marku”, “Cvetan Dimov” and “Arseni Jovkov” in Skopje. The questionnaire was done together with my colleague who is also in the process of conducting her Master Thesis. First, we have got the approval of the school Principle to do the questionnaire with the students. Second, to the students were given the questionnaire checklists and each statement was explained and translated. Since the beginning of the questionnaire we have informed the students about the aims of this research that the questionnaire has to do with us. Also, we have informed them that the questionnaire is anonymous and that they can cancel it whenever they feel that. We have also encouraged them to ask questions when they do not understand the context of the statement. What is more, we have ensured them for the teacher’s and the student’s protection rights, without causing any harm towards them. The whole research process lasted two weeks throughout the end of October and the beginning of November in 2019.

3.8 Conclusion

To conclude, the student’s questionnaire and the teacher’s interview enhanced the process of my research. They showed real participants who experienced critical thinking in the process of learning and teaching. Furthermore, the observation helped me to see behind the scenes how teachers react and transmit a variety of activities. Also, through the observation I had the opportunity to assess the teaching process and find out the gaps which needed to be filled in the future. Observing the process of

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teaching enhanced me to find out that here in North Macedonia critical thinking skills were learnt and taught, but most of the time in a transparent manner without the student's awareness.

4. Research results and analysis

In this chapter are presented the outcomes from the research and the collected data analysis. It provides also evidence for proving or disproving the set hypothesis. Moreover, this chapter aims to show the research instruments that were used during the research, which had contributed to gather data. In addition, it points out the participants' responses on the research together with the data analysis and its interpretation.

4.1 Data collection

The first research instrument used to gather data was the student's questionnaire. Its intention was to collect data on the basis of how students themselves precepted the way of thinking. Furthermore, it provided evidence on the matter of dealing with a particular problem and finding a proper solution to it. Additionally, the questionnaire showed results on the critical skills that the students possessed to explain and elaborate with a particular topic. However, the questionnaire provided also results on how students visualized a matter, how they felt being the main protagonist of the matter in that it enhanced the research to detect whether critical skills were being actually taught in the High Schools of North Macedonia (See Apendix 1).

The second research instrument which was used during the research process was the teacher's interview. Speaking with English Language professors allowed this research to be conducted in perfect real – life situations. The semi-structured interviews done with English teachers gave insights into the world of teaching and transmitting the language to the other generation. The interviews gave the opportunity to see beyond the teacher's work, as they offered a free and comfort zone to the teachers to speak out about their experience and job. Moreover, it depicted results on their teaching methodology and the usage of their activities and materials. Furthermore, it showed the way they precepted critical thinking as a language skill, the way of its assessment and whether the school

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curriculum included it in their teaching plan. Last but not least important, it presented open-ended questions, which answers offered their own opinion if critical thinking really exists and whether it should be paid more attention to.

The third research instrument is the teacher's observation. Even though this instrument is listed as the last one, it showed extremely important and useful results to enhance the research. With the help of the observation, to the research was thrown more information considering the background of a teaching atmosphere in three different High Schools in North Macedonia. The observation of the English teachers provided data in terms of their plan of teaching a particular lesson comparing with the use of activities which provided or not critical thinking components. Moreover, the observation showed the teacher's performance together with his or her strengths and weaknesses. What is more, observation is a good way to detect the gaps which need to be recovered in the future and the lack of language skills on which has to be paid more attention to.

4.2 Questionnaire analysis and results

The students' questionnaire will be presented through descriptive statistics converting the collected data into numbers and percentage, which was completed by students from first and second grade of three High Schools in North Macedonia: "Zef Lush Marku", "Cvetan Dimov" and "Arseni Jovkov". The overall number of students who have completed the questionnaire is 300. The results of each questionnaire statement is analyzed separately by making a comparison between the three High Schools in North Macedonia.

The table shown below gives information about the grade and the number of the students in every High School.

High School	Grade of students	Number of students
"Zef Lush Marku"	I	100
"Cvetan Dimov"	I and II	I – 50 II – 50
"Arseni Jovkov"	I and II	I – 76 students II- 24 students

Table 4.1.1 Descriptive statistics

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The 21- statements of the questionnaire are shown separately below through descriptive charts. Each data of a statement is given individually comparing the results between the three High Schools in Skopje using the adverbs of frequency (never, sometimes, often and always).

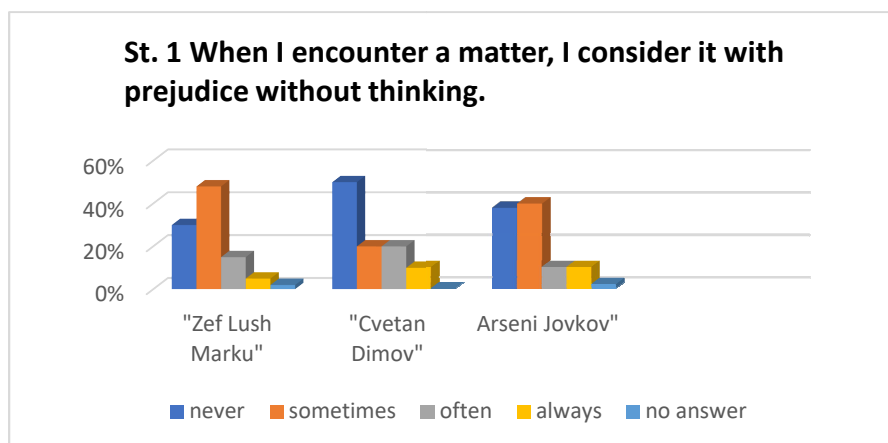


Chart 4.1.2 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

According to the first chart, the highest percentage of students with 50% in the High School "Cvetan Dimov" never consider a matter with prejudice compared to the other High Schools, where the percentage of students is 30% in "Zef Lush Marku" and 38% in "Arseni Jovkov". A lower percentage compared to the two other High Schools, is in the High School "Cvetan Dimov" where the students "sometimes" considered a matter with prejudice.

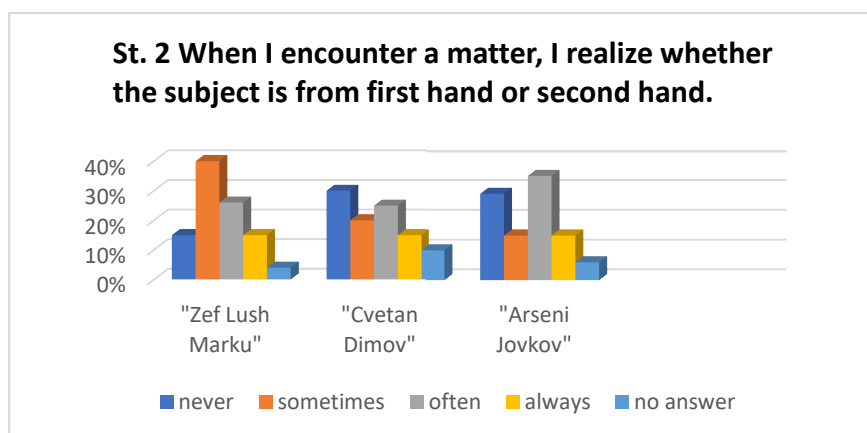


Chart 4.1.3 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

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In the second chart the interesting part is that in all High schools the percentage of students who “always” realize whether the subject is from first or second hand remains the same with 15%. However, an increase can be seen in “Zef Lush Marku” with 40%, where the students “sometimes” realize whether the subject is form first or second hand.

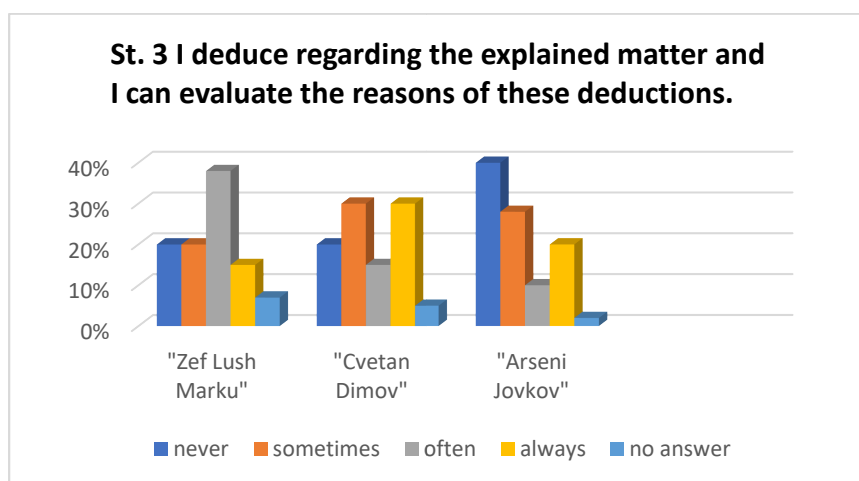


Chart 4.1.4 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

In the third chart, we have a major increase of the number of students who “never” make logical conclusions regarding a particular matter. This is widely seen at the high school “Arseni Jovkov” with 40%. Another significant change we have in the category of “often”. Students in the high school “Zef Lush Marku” make more often conclusions regarding a matter, attaching to it the evaluation of these deductions.

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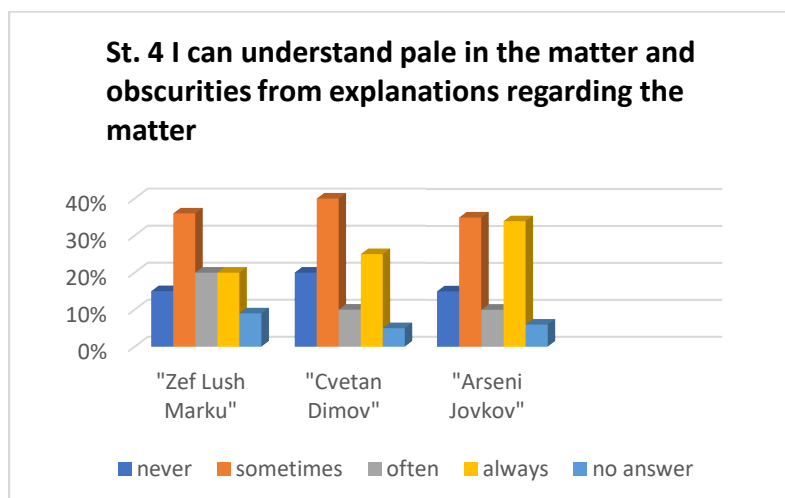


Chart 4.1.5 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

Regarding this chart, the percentage of students in the high school "Arseni Jovkov" who "always" understand the obscurities in the matter is higher with 34% comparing to the other two schools. The number of students who "often" understand the matter remains constant in the high schools "Cvetan Dimov" and "Arseni Jovkov", while the percentage in the high school "Zef Lush Marku" increases about 10%.

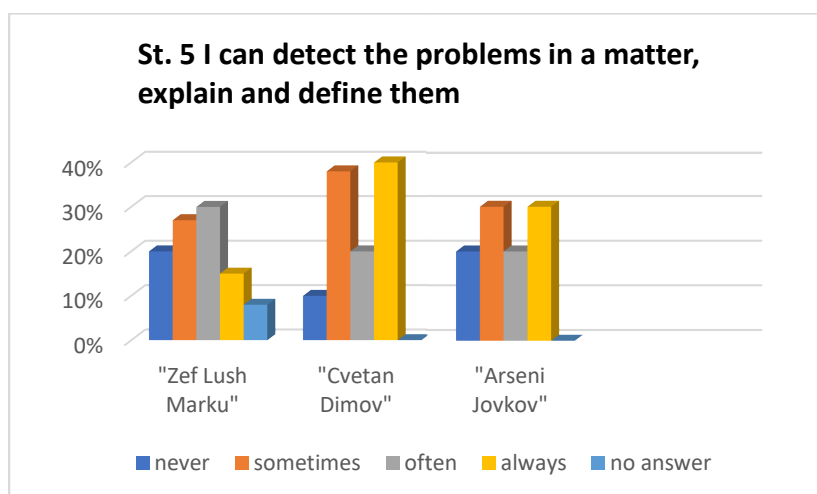


Chart 4.1.6 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

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From the chart above students who “always” detect the problems in a matter and the same can explain and define belong to the high school “Cvetan Dimov” with 40%. Only in the high school “Zef Lush Marku” 8% of the students did not respond to this statement and are marked with no answer.

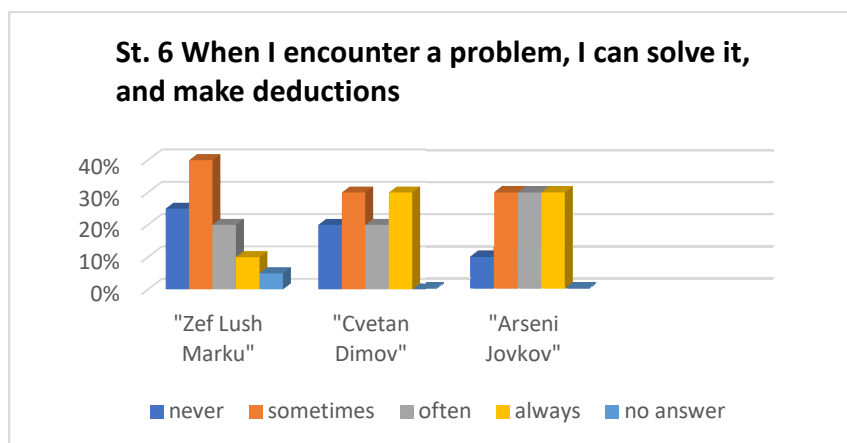


Chart 4.1.7 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

The results of the chart show that students of the high schools “Cvetan Dimov” and “Arseni Jovkov” are “always” prepared to solve a problem in contrast to students from the high school “Zef Lush Marku”, which number is relatively lower with 10%. The majority of students from the high school “Zef Lush Marku” do not solve a problem.

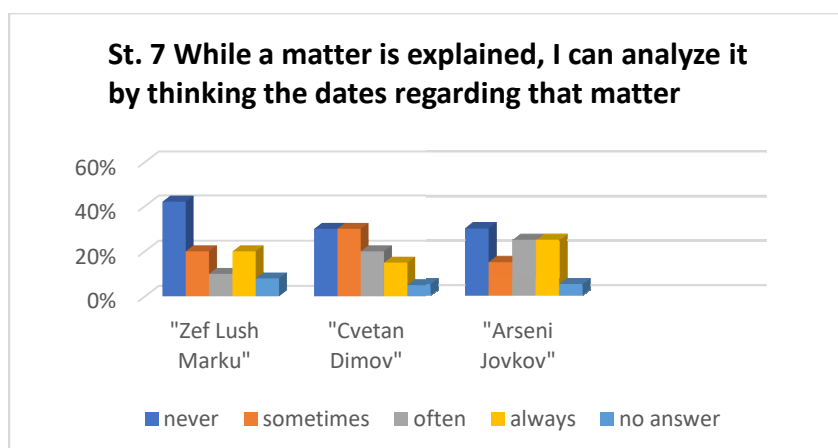


Chart 4.1.8 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

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In this chart, the higher number of students who “never” analyze the dates regarding a matter is in the high school “Zef Lush Marku” with 42%. This statement was not answered by 8% of the students in “Zef Lush Marku” and 5% in both high schools: “Cvetan Dimov” and “Arseni Jovkov”.

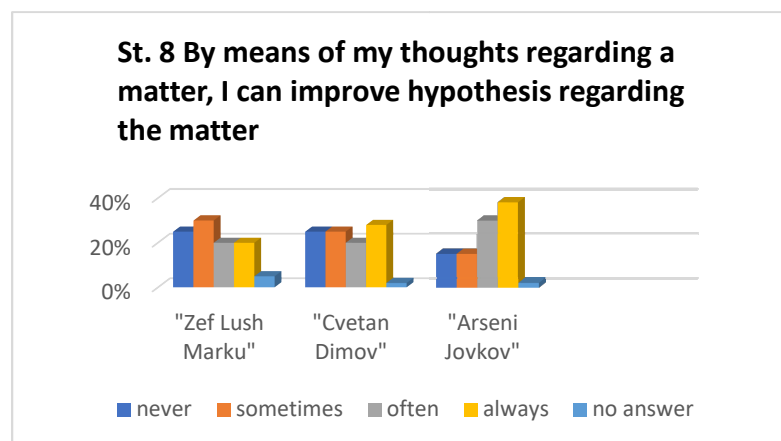


Chart 4.1.9 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

From the chart above a significant rise can be seen in the high school “Arseni Jovkov”, where students with 38% “always” develop hypothesis regarding a matter, whereas 30% of the students “often” improve hypothesis concerning a matter.

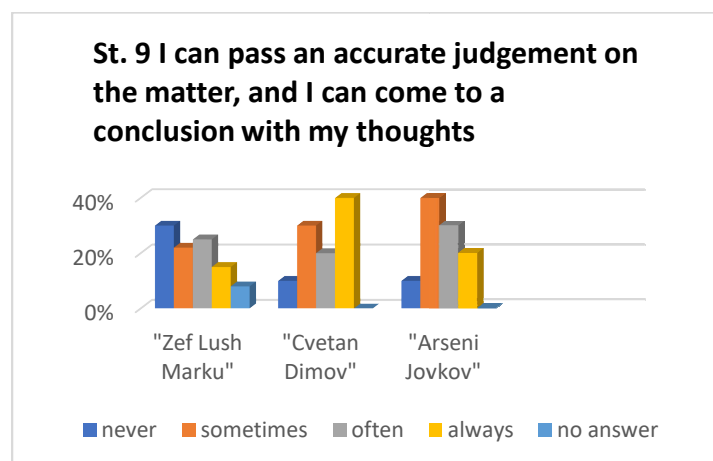


Chart 4.1.10 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

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The results shown above, indicate that the higher percentage of students who “sometimes” make an accurate judgement on a matter and draw the proper conclusion to it is in the high school “Arseni Jovkov” with the value of 40%. 8% of the students from the high school “Zef lush Marku” did not answer the statement.

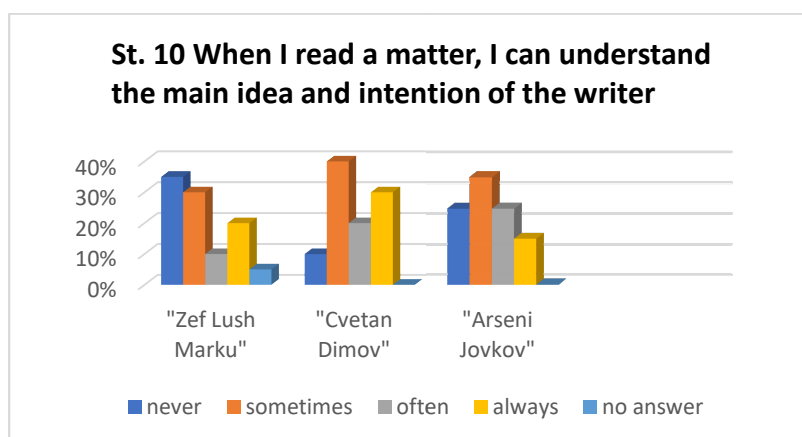


Chart 4.1.11 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

According to the chart (4.1.11) students of the high school “Cvetan Dimov” are more likely to understand the main idea and the intention of the writer when confronted with a matter. In contrary 35% of the students in the high school “ Zef Lush Marku” “never” understand the concept of a matter after reading it.

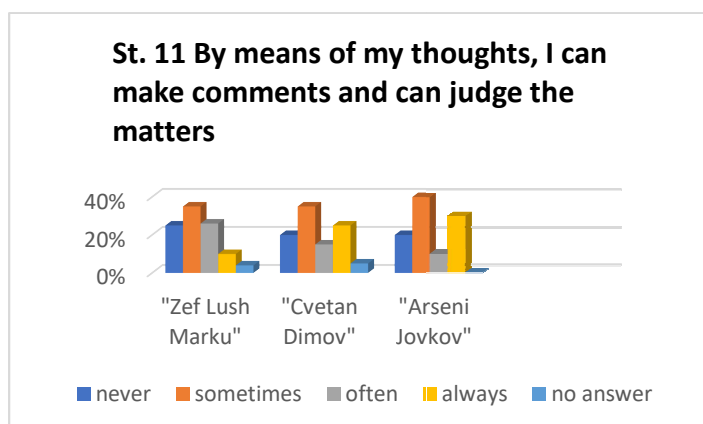


Chart 4.1.12 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

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In this chart 30% of the students in the high school “Arseni Jovkov” always make comments and judgements regarding a matter. On the other hand, 25% of the students in the high school “Zef Lush Marku” never make any kind of comments or judgements on a matter.

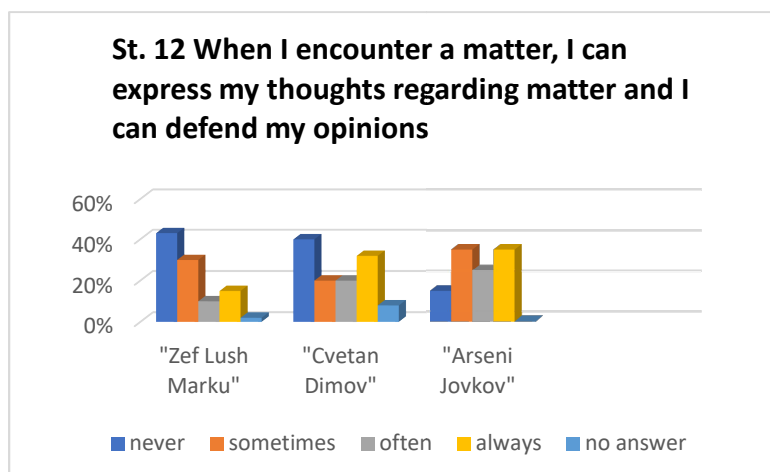


Chart 4.1.13 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

From this chart, both students from the high schools: “Cvetan Dimov” and “Arseni Jovkov” have nearly the same percentage in “always” expressing their thoughts regarding the matter and defending their opinions. Hence, the percentage of the students who negatively reacted to it is in the high school “Zef Lush Marku”, where the percentage of students who never defend their opinions and express their thoughts is 43%.

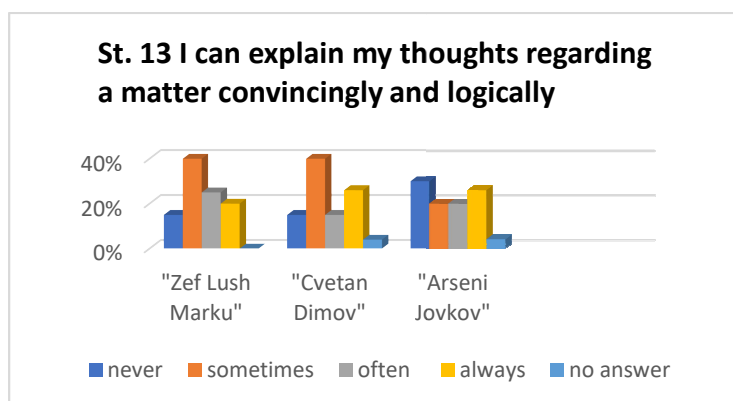


Chart 4.1.14 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

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According to the chart above, the percentage of the students who sometimes can explain a matter convincingly and logically is 40% in both high schools: "Zef Lush Marku" and "Cvetan Dimov". In contrast, the higher percentage of the students who never explain a matter in a logical and convincing way is in the high school "Arseni Jovkov" with 30%.

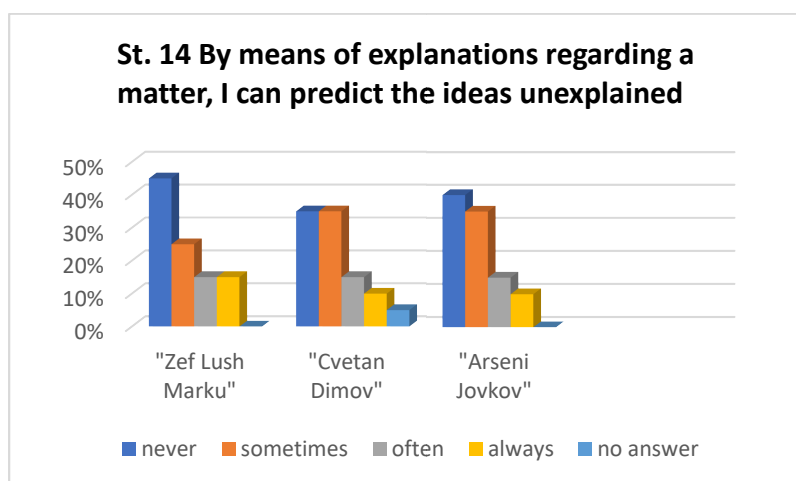
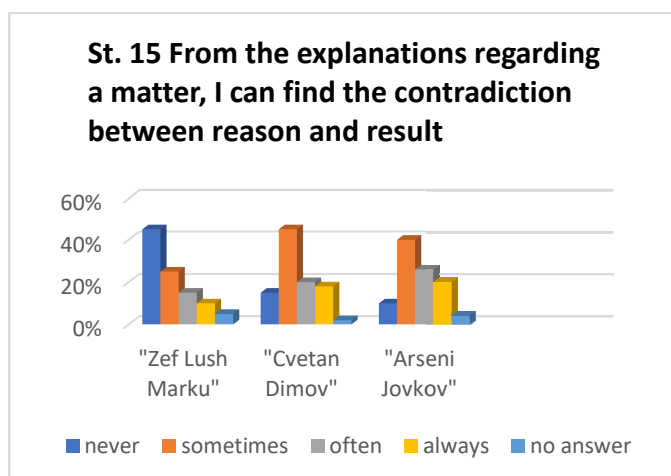


Chart 4.1.15 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

Regarding this chart, the highest point of the students who never predict ideas concerning a matter is achieved in the high school "Zef Lush Marku" with about 45%. Whereas, students of the high schools "Cvetan Dimov" and "Arseni Jovkov" sometimes can predict unexplained ideas regarding a matter with the percentage of 35.



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

In the chart (4.1.16) we have an extremely decrease of the percentage of students in the high school “Zef Lush Marku” who can find the contradictions between reason and result in an explained matter, from 45% to 10%. However, the percentage of the students who sometimes can find the contradictions within a matter in the high school “Cvetan Dimov” is 45%.

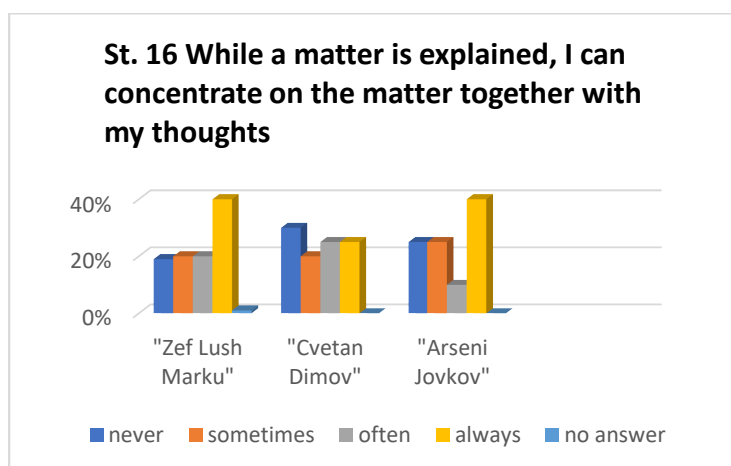


Chart 4.1.17 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

From the chart above, the percentage of the students who always concentrate on the matter while it is explained is 40% in both high schools “Zef Lush Marku” and “Arseni Jovkov”. A lower value of the percentage of the students who often concentrate on the matter is in the high school “Arseni Jovkov” with 10%.

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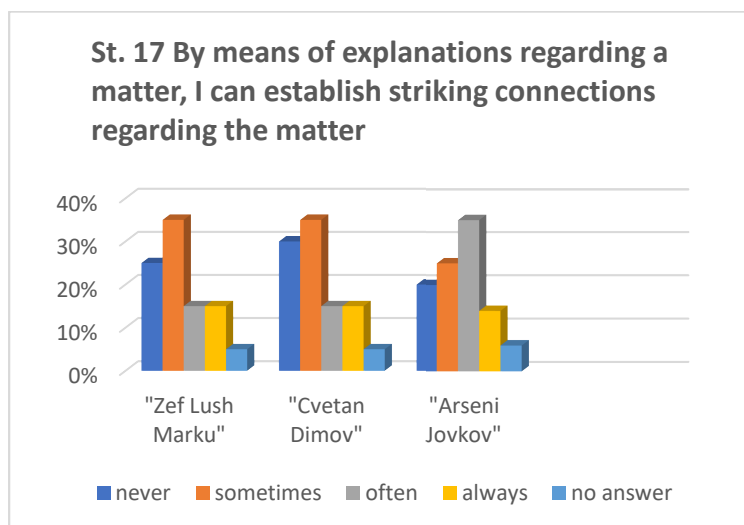


Chart 4.1.18 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

According to the chart (4.1.18), 35% of the students in the high schools "Zef Lush Marku" and "Cvetan Dimov" sometimes can establish connections regarding a matter, while with the same percentage the students of the high school "Arseni Jovkov" often can establish connections.

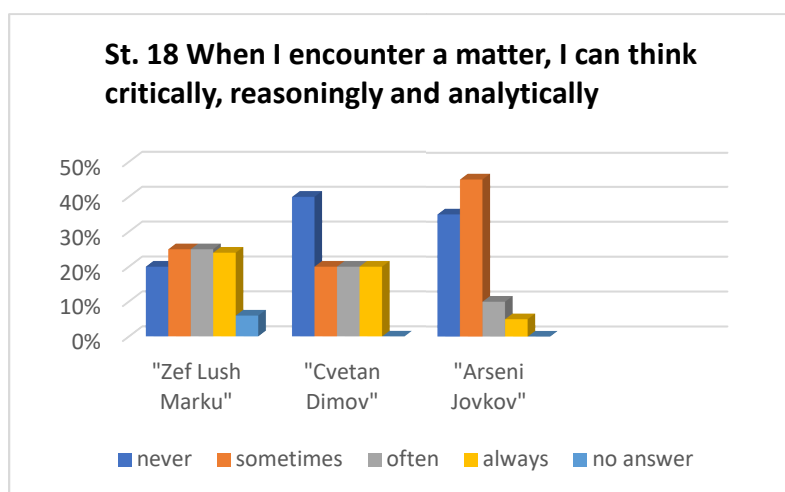


Chart 4.1.19 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

In this chart, students who never think critically, reasoning and analytically regarding a matter are of the high school "Cvetan Dimov" with 40%. Whereas, a higher percentage of the students who sometimes

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think in a critical way when confronted with a matter we have in the high school “Arseni Jovkov” with 45%.

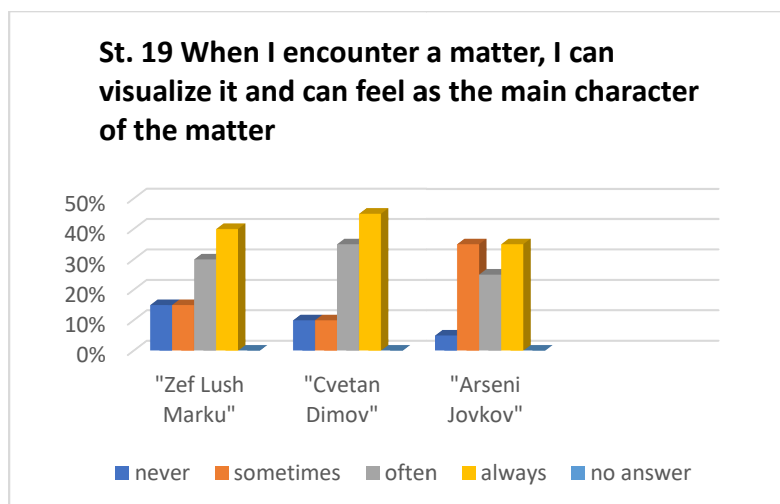
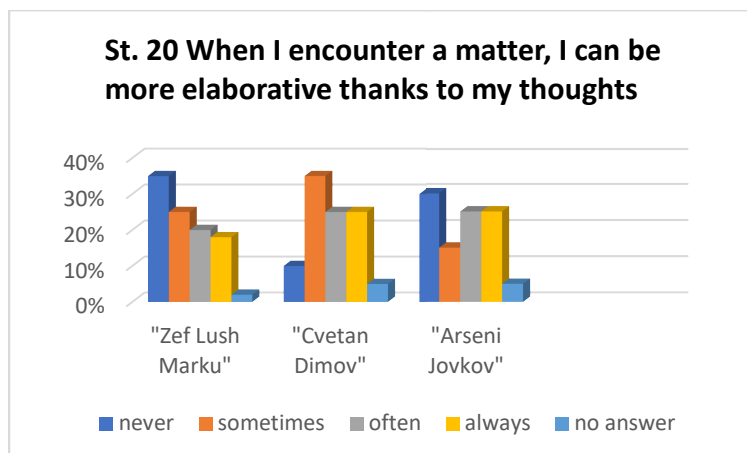


Chart 4.1.20 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

Regarding the chart (4.1.20) the majority of students from the three high schools do feel themselves as the main protagonist when encountered with a matter. However, the peak of this increasement we have in the high school “Cvetan Dimov” with 45% in the category of always. On the other side, the highest percentage of the students who never visualize the matter and feel like the main character in it do we have in the high school “Zef Lush Marku” with 15%.



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Chart 4.1.21 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

In this chart, the percentage of students who elaborate with a matter in the high school “Zef Lush Marku” undergoes a gradual decrease, where the number of students who never elaborate with the matter arrives to 35%.

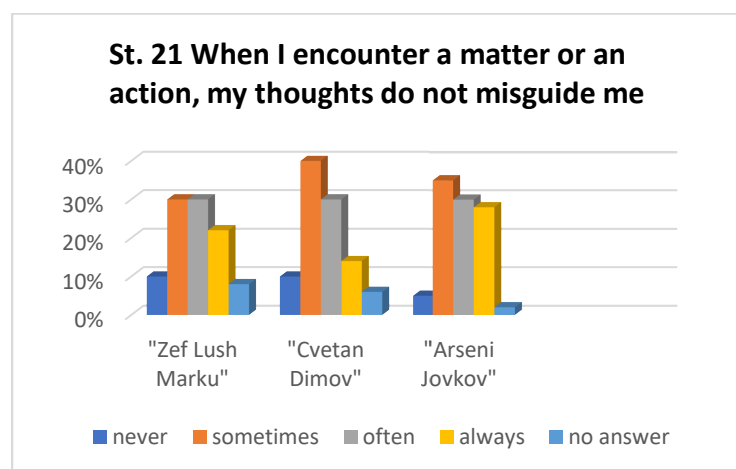


Chart 4.1.22 Results on counts and percentage based on adverbs of frequency and based on the three High Schools in Skopje

From the chart above, the highest number of students who always believe in their thoughts and follow them is in the high school “Arseni Jovkov” with 28%. However, the peak of the percentage is reached in the high school “Cvetan Dimov”, where 40% of the students sometimes follow their instincts and thoughts when encountered with a matter or an action.

4.3 Interview analysis

The semi-structured interview consists of 15 open-ended questions. The total number of teachers who have been interviewed is 9, coming from three various high schools: “Zef Lush Marku”, “Cvetan Dimov” and “Arseni Jovkov”, in Skopje. To the teachers were asked questions concerning the topic of critical thinking, the concept and its implementation in the lessons. Furthermore, they address the issue of its participation in the school curriculum, together with how the teacher value and assess critical thinking

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components. Below follow some excerpts from the teachers who have answered the interview questions:

R – researcher

T – teacher

Excerpt 1

R: Which types of activities do you use to practice critical thinking skills?

T1: Mostly debates, in which the students can freely express their thoughts regarding the particular topic.

T2: Assigning group projects and class debates. In this way, the students have the opportunity to be more creative and expressive.

T3: I would definitely use open-ended questions, open discussions, in which every student can participate and find an answer for the question or topic.

T4: Discussions, any kind of review, reports etc. The students can explore more, which brings them to think.

T5: The activities that I use are questions, story-telling in written or spoken form.

T6: I would give them activities that include writing comments on a specific event, using and posting on a online blog, watching movies. These entertain the students more.

T7: Using essays or oral activities such as class-discussions. Also, giving them books to read.

T8: Essays and discussions are the best activities o practice critical thinking skills.

T9: Every activity is significant, but I will choose writing an essay, organizing debates and presenting on topic when it comes to critical thinking.

The activities that the majority of teachers in the high schools in Skopje use are nearly the same. They prefer most discussions, debates and essays to implement critical thinking skills in their lessons. These activities have been shown to be more “amicable” to the students, in which they can easily find themselves.

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Excerpt 2

R: Do you encourage students to develop critical thinking skills? If yes, how? Please explain.

T1: I do it by asking questions, I try to make them think and when they have an attitude towards something, I always make them think about the other side of the story.

T2: Yes, through writing, which requires students to focus and clarify their thoughts.

T3: I encourage them to read more, to ask constantly questions, in one word to find the WHY in everything.

T4: Yes, I do. They have to read books and watch more movies.

T5: Yes, if they are interested in critically viewing a matter.

T6: Yes, because possessing critical thinking skills make life easier.

T7: Yes, by asking them constantly questions regarding different topics that interest them.

T8: Yes, to an extent. For instance, when they have the duty to solve a problem.

T9: Rarely, when we have class discussions, I encourage students to participate and share their ideas with the whole class.

As we can see from the answers above, the teachers' opinions do not correspond with each other. On one hand, some teachers support the idea of encouraging critical thinking skills through active assignments where the students can freely participate without hesitation. On the other hand, some teachers do not underline the importance of critical thinking and they give a small amount of attention towards it by stating that if only needed it should be learnt.

Excerpt 3

R: How do you assess critical thinking skills? Please explain.

T1: I appreciate it more when something they have said or written comes directly from them. If it is googled, I always tell them that it doesn't count.

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T2: I prepare a quiz, which is consisted of open-ended questions and multiple-choice questions. They usually are logical questions.

T3: Mostly through questions, in which I analyze the quality of the given answers.

T4: I use oral presentations and written essays to assess critical thinking skills.

T5: Through discussions and essays.

T6: I usually assess the students based on their performance in the debate, presentations and essays.

T7: I compile specific tests that include the part of activities that are designed to assess critical thinking skills, such as open-ended questions, writing part or giving comments on a topic.

T8: I assess critical thinking skills with the help of online discussions, logical quizzes, reviews and essays.

T9: It depends which part of critical thinking skills. I use both oral and written assessment.

The majority of teachers assess critical thinking skills by using essays, discussions and their performance on presentations or other kind of oral tasks. Only a small number of teachers prepare quizzes or tests to evaluate critical thinking skills. Expressing the opinions freely is more appreciated and real in testing one's critical thinking skills.

Excerpt 4

R: In your opinion, are there any differences between experienced and inexperienced teachers in case of critical thinking skills? If yes, please explain how can we support inexperienced teachers' critical thinking?

T1: Yes of course there are. Experience makes everyone better. Inexperienced teachers should observe first the experienced teachers when they teach, and also it depends what age the students are and how good are they in English.

T2: Organizing critical thinking courses- how to incorporate critical thinking into everyday lessons.

T3: Yes, experienced teachers know exactly what to teach and assess. Maybe observation and reading helps the inexperienced teachers.

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T4: Yes, there are. Experienced teachers can deal easily with any kind of language skill. Whereas for the inexperienced teachers I suggest to read and study more the methodology of teaching.

T5: The key of a successful competent teacher is experience. In order to gain experience on a field, one should work with himself/herself to become better.

T6: Yes, for sure, experience is all a teacher needs to have an effective teaching-learning process.

T7: Yes, there exists some differences, as the experienced teachers can choose which activity best suits the lecture without having the need to think too much. The inexperienced ones need more time.

T8: No, I think critical thinking skills do not have to do with experience. It is just a skill that one possesses within himself/herself.

T9: There always are, experienced teachers have always an advantage in everything they teach or do. They have the power.

From the responses above, 99% of the teachers support the idea that experience opens the door of success and improvement when it comes to critical thinking. However, only one teacher does not approve the idea that critical thinking skills are related to experience. The teacher thinks that it is a common skill that does not need to be further developed.

Excerpt 5

R: Can you explain the situation here in North Macedonia, do English language teachers pay attention on critical thinking skills? If yes how? Please explain.

T1: Yes, I know a lot of good teachers who encourage students to think critically.

T2: I think that the teachers here in North Macedonia pay more attention on language abilities.

T3: Not so, because teachers here are focused more on translation. Only a few of them seek to use the recent methods of teaching.

T4: They do not pay attention on critical thinking skills, rather they prefer more the traditional activities and way of teaching.

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T5: Yes, to some extent they do. They incorporate both methods of teaching, a mixture of the traditional one with the new one, the latest one includes critical thinking activities.

T6: No, the majority of teachers do not understand even the concept of critical thinking, what it actually means.

T7: Yes, the teachers nowadays use a variety of tasks that require a lot of thinking from the students. This enhances the teacher's work too.

T8: It depends from the lesson itself. I for instance, choose the activities in accordance to the unit I am teaching.

T9: You like it or not, critical thinking skills can be found everywhere, that is why obviously even here in North Macedonia high schools do support this skill.

According to the answers above, half part of the teacher state that here in North Macedonia critical thinking has achieved a place in the school curriculum. In contrast, the other half of the teacher state that critical thinking skill is neither being taught nor learnt in education due to the reason that teachers still are stuck with the old way of teaching.

Excerpts 6

R: What is the situation in the High School that you are teaching, does the school curriculum offer enough space for critical thinking skills? If yes, in particular areas? Please explain.

T1: Yes, it does offer space for critical thinking skills. In areas like: Family, friends, education life, dream jobs etc.

T2: In the language classroom there is enough space for applying the critical thinking skills.

T3: Yes, it offers, however it is the teacher's duty to use the critical thinking skills in his/her classroom.

T4: The school definitely offers space for critical thinking and the teacher can use both written or oral activities.

T5: The school system is controlled by the ministry of education in that teachers do not have the voice to react whether a certain skill should be learnt or not.

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T6: Yes, but only for the teachers who know to use it in the context.

T7: Yes, the curriculum of the high schools in North Macedonia have a specific place for critical thinking skills. However, the language teachers have the lecture in their own hands, in that they can choose which tasks to use.

T8: It depends on the teacher, does he/she use or not. If the teacher uses critical thinking activities, then he/she introduces the students with recent and actual events.

T9: Since the high schools in North Macedonia do not offer space for critical thinking, the teachers' job is to find additional material for the students.

A large number of teachers in North Macedonia react positively in that they state that there is a space left for critical thinking skills in the curriculum. Nonetheless, it is left to the teachers themselves to choose what his/her lecture consists of. Despite the positive view on this question, few of the teachers pretend that the State itself has the power in their own hands when it comes to choose which activities and language skills should be taught in the high school.

Excerpts 7

R: Do your students show interests towards critical thinking activities? Please explain.

T1: Yes, they are always open to give their ideas and make conclusions about certain topics.

T2: They answer different kinds of comprehension questions related to the text, finding evidence, supporting the main points.

T3: Yes, they get more motivated and encouraged.

T4: Yes, by the use of questions, students show more interests towards critical thinking as they have to respond to it.

T5: Yes, the students are eager to know what comes next and if they play the main role in a task, they get more motivated.

T6: The majority of students show interest towards the nature of thinking, as it is a skill which offers space for comments and critical review of a situation.

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T7: Not so much, the new generation of students do not have priority thinking. They think it is boring and requires a lot of work.

T8: Yes, of course. Students are always interested in things that concern with problem-solving tasks and thinking.

T9: Yes, the students are motivated when they confront with critical thinking skills.

From the responses above, the students seem to be very excited and motivated when the teachers serve them activities, which practice critical thinking components. The students view critical thinking skills as their opportunity to express themselves more and show originality.

Excerpts 8

R: Do you as an English teacher support teaching critical thinking skill? If yes, explain why it is important?

T1: I think it is really important, because it helps you a lot in your life after high school when you have to make important decisions.

T2: Critical thinking skills will prepare young people throughout their lives.

T3: Yes, I do, because critical thinking is an improvement, a process through which students develop clear and logical thinking so that they can make right decisions in the future.

T4: Yes, because you can see beyond things and the reasons why a particular thing is so.

T5: Yes, for sure, because it forms your personality and it improves your self-aware.

T6: Yes, it makes a person to think critically upon something, which is indeed for the sake of people in general.

T7: With the help of critical thinking, the students have the chance to not just practice the vocabulary, but also learn additional new words.

T8: It depends in what area the student is going to use it. For instance, if he/she has to make a big decision than critical thinking skills will help him/her in finding the right one.

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T9: In fact, critical thinking is a personality builder too. Through the way of thinking, a person can see where he stands and what he lacks of.

The results show that teachers definitely support learning and teaching critical thinking due to the fact that it does not just help students to solve different tasks, but it is more than that. Critical thinking is a life changer, since students learn how to stand on their own feet, how to make the right decision when they are faced with such a typical everyday situation.

4.4 Observation analysis and results

The observation was done in the high schools “Zef Lush Marku”, “Cvetan Dimov” and “Arseni Jovkov”. The objective of the observation were 10 English professors from the age of 25 to 45 of both gender male and female. The teachers were observed based on an observation protocol, which analysis the teachers’ work during the lecture, his/her methodology, his/her attitude towards the students and the material. Furthermore, it shows the teachers’ strength and weaknesses together with the types of activities he/she uses during the lesson. The results from the observation checklist are shown in the following table:

Organiza tion	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10
Directs student’s preparati on for next class	Accomp lished very well	More emphasi s recomm ended	Not observe d	More emphasi s recomm ended	More emphasi s recomm ended	Not observe d	Accompl ished very well	More emphasi s recomm ended	Not observe d	Accompl ished very well
Presente d topics in logical sequence	Accomp lished very well	More emphasi s recomm ended	More emphasi s recomm ended	Accompl ished very well	More emphasi s recomm ended	More emphasi s recomm ended	More emphasi s recomm ended	Accompl ished very well	More emphasi s recomm ended	More emphasi s recomm ended

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Related today's lesson to previous/future lessons	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	Not observed	Not observed	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	Not observed	Accomplished very well
Summarized major points of the lesson	Accomplished very well	Not observed	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	Not observed	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well

Table 4.3.1 Results from the observation - Organization

From the results above, the majority of teachers accomplish the organization of the lesson. However, when it comes to direct students for the next class and to relate the today's topic with the previous ones some of the teachers lack of the abilities.

Presentation	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9
Explained major/minor points with clarity	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well
Defined unfamiliar terms, concepts and principles	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	Not observed	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well
Used good examples to clarify points	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	Not observed	More emphasis recommended	Not observed	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well

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Showed all the steps in solution to homework problems	Not observed	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	Not observed	Not observed	Not observed	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well
Varied explanations for complex or difficult material	More emphasis recommended	Not observed	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	Not observed	Not observed	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended
Emphasized important points	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well
Writes key terms on blackboard or overhead screen	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well
Integrates material (examples, cases, simulations) from "real word"	Not observed	Not observed	More emphasis recommended	Not observed	Not observed	Not observed	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well

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Active, collaborative, and cooperative learning favored over passive learning	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	Not observed	Not observed	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well
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Table 4.3.2 Results from the observation – Presentation

According to the results above, the teachers faced more problem with issues like giving appropriate yet competitive examples to the lesson or rule explained. Furthermore, A few of them did not accomplish well the part of simplifying the difficult material and explaining the same one to the students. Moreover, what was interesting to observe is their passive attitude towards integrating new material outside the book, with which they have the opportunity to practice the lesson in real life.

Interaction	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8
Actively encouraged students' question	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	Not observed	Accomplished very well
Asked questions to monitor student understanding	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	Not observed	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well
Waited sufficient time for students to answer questions	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	Not observed	More emphasis recommended
Listened carefully to	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Not observed	Accomplished very well

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student questions								
Responded appropriately to student questions	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well
Restated questions and answers when necessary	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Not observed	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended
Demonstrates respect for diversity and requires similar respect in classroom	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Not observed	Accomplished very well

Table 4.3.3 Results from the observation – Interaction

The results show that in general teachers ask the students to check understanding but also to receive their feedback on the lesson explained. However, they do not give the students much time to answer their questions.

Content Knowledge and Relevance	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9
Presented Material at an appropriate level for students	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	Not observed	Not observed	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well
Presented material appropriate to the purpose of the course	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended	More emphasis recommended
Demonstrated command of the subject matter	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	Not observed	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well	More emphasis recommended	Accomplished very well	Accomplished very well

Table 4.3.4 Results from the observation – Content Knowledge and Relevance

From the results above, the material used in the high school corresponds to a certain degree with the students' level of learning English. Still, a few teachers did not use the material rather they made the lessons harder to the students.

4.4.1 Summary comments

Teachers' strengths - The majority of the teachers used constantly questions in that they checked the students' understanding of the material and in the same time they tested them. Furthermore, they used the method of writing the most important points and words on the board so that the students had the chance to concentrate better on the lesson and whenever they get lost, they can easily find their way back to the lecture. In addition, a lot of the teachers observed used additional examples on the matter explained in order to make the students clearer the lesson. They gave importance to put the language on use. What is more, the majority of the professors used a lot of repetition in their lesson, which gave the students extra revision of the covered material.

Improvement of the teacher's skills or methodology – Language teachers should focus more on communication skills and interaction. Their duty is to encourage and motivate the students to participate more in the lessons and be constantly active throughout the whole lecture. Furthermore, the teachers have to incorporate each student to ask questions and participate in open discussions. Additionally, the teacher has to give more hints and examples, rather than explain the whole grammar structure, text or vocabulary section. Last but not least important, the teacher has to pay more attention on writing skills with which the students have more time to think and express their thoughts and feelings.

The teachers' future progress – The teachers definitely will pay more attention on the students and their participation, rather than on lecturing the whole lesson alone in the traditional way of teaching. In addition, teachers will use more examples and they will not complicate the grammar structure rather than they will simplify them. Moreover, communication and interaction will be the peak of the lecture.

4.5 Conclusion

The results of this study show what students think of critical thinking and their experience of this recent skill. Furthermore, they show the teacher's point of view towards critical thinking, its implementation in the high schools in North Macedonia, its assessment and its place in the curriculum. Moreover, the results from this research show the teacher's work and experience with critical thinking skill in lecturing

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English language. In the following chapter the findings and conclusions of the overall research will be discussed in more details.

5 Discussions, Conclusions and Recommendations

In this chapter are given the conclusions based on conducted research. It is followed by discussions, which show the conclusions that can be taken from the results of the study. Also, it provides recommendations for future research on this topic. Furthermore, it reflects on the key issues addressed in this research and the importance of critical thinking skill as a new element in teaching English language. What is more, it presents the outcomes of the collected data in facilitating further implications and research. All in all, the findings of the results shall enhance the process of coming to conclusions and possible assumptions of the set research questions.

5.1 Findings

The collected data from the questionnaire, interview and observation protocol together with the literature review gave various answers to the research questions and enhanced the process of testing the set hypothesis.

Research question 1: How is critical thinking included in the curriculum of ESL with its main focus on High Schools in Skopje?

From the overall research process is argument that critical thinking is included in the curriculum of ESL. The language teachers were using this skill constantly without even being of it. The findings of the study show that even here in North Macedonia, teachers practice this skill during their lecture. They use questions and open-discussions together with essays and debates which bring the students to think critically. Furthermore, the activities in the books which are given in the school curriculum and have to be covered include a variety of tasks that let the students to be in the main attention. They were the main character of a task, which gave them additional power to solve a problem in that they gained critical thinking skills. Teachers believe that critical thinking is very important in not just teaching English but also outside it too, due to the fact that it forms one personality and contributes in decision making.

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Research question 2: What are the students' attitude critical thinking in the classroom?

The results from the research process showed that students reacted positively towards critical thinking. They were entertained, excited and motivated whenever they participated in debates, discussions, and other communicative activities. This is due to the reason that students are free to express their thoughts, their ideas on a interesting and actual topic. Critical thinking makes the students think and use their brain for the sake of completing a task or solving a particular problem. The students want to be involved in activities that challenge them and tasks that require for their logic, intelligence and point of view. Lastly, students appreciate when the teachers let them be the Sherlock Holmes of the story.

Research question 3: Which are the assessment methods of critical thinking, how is it evaluated and which are the obstacles that might arise along the way?

Since critical thinking from its nature on, is delicate to be precepted and measured, it gives difficulty for the teachers too in the essence of its evaluation. However, the findings show that the teachers do assess critical thinking components. They use questions with which they get student's feedback and understanding of the text, task or grammar structure. With the help of open-ended questions, the teachers can grade students on the basis of their logical understanding of a situation but in the same time he/she can assess their creativity, ideas on a topic too. On the other side, critical thinking is also assessed through written activities. For instance, teachers apply essays, blog comments in order to evaluate the students critical thinking skills. These kinds of tasks offer students a large space for thinking and critical perception on a topic.

5.2 Recommendations

After the recent research conducted on this topic, it is by no means important to show several recommendations for other researcher and ESL teachers:

1. ESL teachers should give importance to critical thinking skills, as they bring out the real abilities of the students.
2. Critical thinking skills shall be included in every school curriculum, because they enrich the process of education and enhance in learning the English language.

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3. The new generation of the students and the teachers should have a positive attitude towards critical thinking skills as they facilitate the process of acquiring new language skills, such as problem-solving skills, communicative skills, interactive skills etc.
4. It is highly recommended to construct a curriculum, in which critical thinking components do not miss due to the fact that they complete each activity and lesson.
5. Teachers should assess students on the basis of their way of thinking, precepting things and their creativity.
6. Critical thinking should be taught as a non-separate skill, but rather as a skill which can be found in every single task.

5.3 Further research

The suggestions that can be made from this research are numerous. Teachers should be aware of critical thinking and its nature. They have to incorporate it in their daily lessons, in order to gain success and good results from their students. It is suggested that teachers should let more space for the students to be the center of the attention within the classroom, they should possess the power to change the activities and teaching strategies.

According to the results of this study, the ministry of education has the power to control the curriculum. Therefore, the teachers do not pay so much attention to communicative activities, rather than they follow the steps of the State by involving more grammar structures in their lectures. Consequently, students feel demotivated and discouraged, due to that it is suggested to let the voice of the students be heard in the formulation of the curriculum. The use of critical thinking components is an enormous opportunity for the students to open their mindset and develop their personality further. Teachers who are not familiar with this new language skill, it is suggested to try this approach, which will definitely result a success. In future research, there is going to be conducted a study on critical thinking components in the curriculum, but with a larger number of participants and other research instruments. Not only the questionnaire, interview and the observation, but also online discussions and comments from people who have already experienced this skill will be useful.

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Lastly, another helpful suggestion might be the idea of visiting teacher seminars. It is an efficient way of learning, practicing and then implementing critical thinking skill, just by the listening to the lectures. The workshops are very beneficial for the teacher's job, as they help future teacher to identify the points on which they shall focus more.

5.4 Conclusion

This study investigated the following aspects: the ways in which critical thinking is included in the curriculum of ESL focused in the High Schools of North Macedonia; the students' attitude towards critical thinking in the classroom; the assessment of critical thinking components together with the obstacles, which may occur.

The first hypothesis ***"If the curriculum of ESL teaching in High Schools in Skopje is directed towards critical thinking, than English will be learnt for the sake of achieving integration, communication and language fluency"*** implied that teaching critical thinking skills will bring the sense of achieving a higher degree of language proficiency in terms of communication, integration and fluency. From the results of the research, teaching critical thinking helps the communication among the students and the teacher to grow. The students get more often involved in the lessons, they get motivated and encouraged, which than corresponds with achieving integration in the classroom. However, there is no evidence whether teaching critical thinking skills will lead to language fluency. Through communication and interaction, the students do practice the language more, yet competitive fluency is not arrived if they do not stick to a certain language pattern or structure.

The second hypothesis ***"The teacher is encouraged to use a variety of activities in his/her lecture, mainly authentic materials in order to get the learner's attention on developing critical thinking skill"*** implies that teachers have the freedom to choose materials beyond the textbooks in order to develop critical thinking skill. The findings show that critical thinking skill by nature requires from the teachers to use innovations and situations from the real world in that this is what students interests more and about what the students can debate and discuss.

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The third hypothesis ***“Critical thinking has to be assessed with the help of the teachers’ and the student’s contribution through the usage of different assessment tools and methods in order to give appropriate feedback and results”*** implies that critical thinking shall be evaluated with the help of both sides, the teacher and the students together through the usage of a variety of assessment tools. From the results in the study, there are shown some ways in which the teachers tend to evaluate the students on critical thinking skills. They use open-ended questions, discussions, debates, blogs and essays in order to achieve a good percentage of their contribution. Nevertheless, the teachers have the power to assess the students on a communicative level, whether in written or spoken form. The students themselves do not have the right to get involved in the process of evaluating themselves or their peers.

To conclude, the results imply that critical thinking has won a specific place in the school curriculum here in North Macedonia. Teachers are undergoing a significant change in terms of their teaching methodology; they perceive this trendy new skill very positively. Both the teacher and the student do appreciate critical thinking components being taught and learnt, since this language skill opens the doors to many beneficial opportunities in the future. Students will form a critical view of the things that they might encounter along the way and for the teachers, they will definitely have the chance to teach the language in a real, visual context in which in reality the language is being spoken.

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APPENDIX 1

Students' questionnaire

Me	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. When I encounter a matter, I consider it with prejudice without thinking.				
2. When I encounter a matter, I realize whether the subject is from first hand or second hand.				
3. I deduce regarding the explained matter and I can evaluate the reasons of these deductions.				
4. I can understand pale in the matter and obscurities from explanations regarding the matter.				
5. I can detect the problems in a matter, explain and define them.				
6. When I encounter a problem, I can solve it, and make deductions.				
7. While a matter is explained, I can analyze it by thinking the dates regarding that matter.				

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8. By means of my thoughts regarding a matter, I can improve hypothesis regarding the matter.				
9. I can pass an accurate judgement on the matter, and I can come to a conclusion with my thoughts.				
10. When I read a matter, I can understand the main idea and intention of the writer.				
11. By means of my thoughts, I can make comments and can judge the matters.				
12. When I encounter a matter, I can Express my thoughts regarding matter and I can defend my opinions.				
13. I can explain my thoughts regarding a matter convincingly and logically.				
14. By means of explanations regarding a matter, I can predict the ideas unexplained.				
15. From the explanations regarding a matter, I can find the contradiction between reason and result.				
16. While a matter is explained, I can concentrate on the matter together with my thoughts.				
17. By means of explanations regarding a matter, I can establish striking connections regarding the matter.				
18. When I encounter a matter, I can think critically, reasoningly and analytically.				
19. When I encounter a matter, I can visualize it and can feel as the main character of the matter.				
20. When I encounter a matter, I can be more elaborative thanks to my thoughts.				
21. When I encounter a matter or an action, my thoughts do not misguide me.				

APPENDIX 2

Teacher's Interview

1. Do you know what is the meaning of critical thinking? If yes, please explain.

2. What critical thinking skills do you use in your lectures? Please explain, how do you use these skills?

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3. Are there any gaps (mismatch) between your critical thinking skills that you have and the critical thinking skills that you need for teaching in the English class? If yes, Please explain.
4. What are your efforts, if any, in reducing the gaps?
5. Do you agree on the effective role of experience on having these skills? If yes, please explain.
6. In your opinion, are there any differences between experienced and inexperienced teachers in case of critical thinking skills? If yes, please explain how we can support inexperienced teachers' critical thinking?
7. Do you include critical thinking skills in your curriculum? If yes, please explain.
8. Do you encourage students to develop critical thinking skills? If yes, how? Please explain.
9. Which types of activities do you use to practice critical thinking skills? Please explain.
10. How do you assess critical thinking skills? Please explain.
11. If you assess your teaching in the classroom please answer the following questions.
 - a). Do you think the assessment can help you to improve your teaching? If yes, in which way?
 - b). How do you use the results obtained from these assessments in your teaching?
12. Can you explain the situation here in North Macedonia, do English teachers pay attention on critical thinking skills? If yes, how? Please explain.

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13. What is the situation in the High School that you are teaching, does the school curriculum offer enough space for critical thinking skills? If yes, in what particular areas? Please explain.

14. Do your students show interest towards critical thinking activities? Please explain.

APPENDIX 3

Observation checklist

Observer Name: Blerina Nuhi

Observation Number: 1 2 3 4

Faculty Supervisor: Brikena Xhaferi

Date: _____

Respond to each statement using the following scale:

1=Not observed

2=More emphasis recommended

3=Accomplished very well

Organization

Directs student preparation for next class	1	2	3
Presented topics in logical sequence.	1	2	3
Related today's lesson to previous/future lessons.	1	2	3
Summarized major points of the lesson.	1	2	3

Presentation

Explained major/minor points with clarity.	1	2	3
Defined unfamiliar terms, concepts, and principles.	1	2	3
Used good examples to clarify points.	1	2	3
Showed all the steps in solutions to homework problems.	1	2	3
Varied explanations for complex or difficult material.	1	2	3
Emphasized important points.	1	2	3
Writes key terms on blackboard or overhead screen.	1	2	3

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Integrates materials (examples, cases, simulations) from "real world".	1	2	3
Active, collaborative, and cooperative learning favored over passive learning.	1	2	3

Interaction

Actively encouraged student questions.	1	2	3
Asked questions to monitor student understanding.	1	2	3
Waited sufficient time for students to answer questions.	1	2	3
Listened carefully to student questions.	1	2	3
Responded appropriately to student questions.	1	2	3
Restated questions and answers when necessary.	1	2	3
Demonstrates respect for diversity and requires similar respect in classroom.	1	2	3

Content Knowledge and Relevance

Presented material at an appropriate level for students.	1	2	3
Presented material appropriate to the purpose of the course.	1	2	3
Demonstrated command of the subject matter.	1	2	3

Summary Comments

21. What were the instructor's major strengths as demonstrated in the observation?

22. What suggestions do you have for improving the instructor's skills or methodology?

23. If this was a repeat observation, what progress did you discern in the instructor's skills?

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