

Improving Students' Speaking Performance through Critical Method

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of the critical method on improving students' speaking performance and identifies key obstacles hindering their abilities. This research employed a mixed method with convergent parallel design. The population of this research was the students of Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Madani Alauddin in the eleventh grade of science consist of 115 students, 53 male and 62 female. Quantitative data were analyzed using Heaton's rating score for accuracy and fluency, descriptive statistics, and paired samples t-test via SPSS while qualitative data were analyzed through miles & Huberman's qualitative analysis to identify patterns and themes related to the obstacles faced by students. The findings revealed a significant improvement in students' speaking scores, with the mean score increasing from 46.25 in the pre-test to 70.625 in the post-test. Key obstacles identified included nervousness, fear of making mistakes, lack of vocabulary, and lack of confidence. Despite cognitive improvements, persistent nervousness highlighted the need for additional emotional and psychological support. A major implication is the recommendation to shift from static to dynamic assessment methods, which focus on continuous evaluation and can reduce anxiety, fostering a more supportive learning environment. This study addresses a critical gap in the literature by providing empirical evidence of the effectiveness of the critical method and suggests future research directions, including the exploration of long-term impacts and the application of dynamic assessments across diverse educational contexts. The study concludes that integrating cognitive and emotional support strategies in language education can significantly enhance students' speaking performance and overall well-being.

1. INTRODUCTION

In an effort to accelerate the learning of English so that it can actually strengthen students' speaking skills, learning English speaking skills for students must be carried out by emphasizing several aspects which in this case are, 1) providing lots of opportunities for students to speak English, 2) providing opportunities for students to actively participate in learning English, 3) motivating students to be able to use English during learning activities, 4) and providing students with English material that is appropriate to their level of mastery (Ur, 1996). Meanwhile, Prastiwi (2022) puts forward several empirical facts related to the weak mastery of students' speaking skills in this case, 1) most students still have a fairly low ability to speak English, 2) most students are not motivated to speak in English during learning takes place, 3) students' activeness in participating in English learning still tends to be low, 4) some English teachers have not implemented innovative learning models in class that require students to actively speak, 5) Indonesian is still dominantly used by most teachers English in class, 6) most teachers are not optimal in utilizing technology to support the implementation of the learning process. Within the empirical framework, learning English still encounters various obstacles in its implementation. This encourages the need to take constructive steps to overcome these various obstacles, one of which can be done by developing various innovative learning methods.

The use of learning strategies is very necessary because it facilitates the learning process so that it can achieve optimal results. Without a clear strategy, the learning process will not be directed, so that the learning objectives that have been set are difficult to achieve optimally, in other words learning cannot take place effectively and efficiently. Learning strategies are very useful, both for teachers and students. For teachers, strategies can be used as guidelines and references for systematic action in the implementation of learning. For students using learning strategies can simplify the learning process (make it easier and speed up understanding the content of learning), because each learning strategy is designed to facilitate the student learning process (Hotmaria, 2021) This suggests that the existence of a method has a very large constructive contribution in accelerating students' speaking skills. With the application of various teaching methods, this will encourage students to be more active in communicating in English.

In relation to the need for a learning climate that empowers students, Rusydi (2022) suggests several empirical facts from education in the Indonesian context showing that, 1) education has lost its objectivity, 2) education does not mature learners, 3) education does not foster patterns of thinking, 4) education does not produce educated people, 5) education does not metamorphose as shackles of students, 6) education has not been able to build

individual learning, 7) education takes place in a linear-indoctrinate way, 8) education has not produced student independence, 9) and education has not been able to empower student.

These phenomena can also be found at Madrasah Aliyah Madani Alauddin where students have not received English learning activities that hone their critical reasoning to speak English. This is what encourages researcher to develop critical methods to improve their ability to speak English. With the application of the critical method in improving speaking skills, this has built students' performance in communicating using English. The purpose of this research can be described as follows: 1) To find out and determine the students' level of speaking performance by implementing critical method; 2) To identify and describe the obstacles of the students' speaking performance in implementing critical method. Based on the grounding theories and concept of the students' speaking performance towards the implementation of critical method, the researcher formulates the following hypothesis as follows: 1) (Null Hypothesis) H0 "The implementation of critical method has no significant improvement to the students' speaking performance at MA Madani Alauddin Paopao Gowa"; 2) (Alternative Hypothesis) H1: "The implementation of critical method significantly improves the students' speaking performance at MA Madani Alauddin Paopao Gowa".

2. METHOD

2.1. Research Design

This research employed a mixed method with convergent parallel design. It is a combination between both qualitative and quantitative data provides different types of information often detailed views of qualitative data and number from of quantitative data and both the data yield results that should be the same (Creswell, 2013:242). The data of the research contain the percentage and description about students' speaking performance in English subject at MA Madani Alauddin Paopao Gowa academic year 2023/2024 towards the implementation of critical method. Here is the design of convergent parallel mixed methods.

2.2. Research Instruments

2.1.1. Test

The test consisted of pretest and posttest. The pretest was administered before implementing the critical method in improving the students' speaking performance. On the other hand, the posttest was administered at the end of the such teaching implementation. The tests are in the form of interview tests which ask about several questions that will be answered orally.

2.1.2. Observation Checklist

The observation checklist was used during the teaching implementation, particularly during the classroom activities. This observation checklist aims at finding out the implementation of critical method and the teacher and students' obstacles in implementing such method.

2.1.2. Interview Question

The interview questions were distributed and asked after giving the post-test. Interviews are used to obtain data from the students about their problems of speaking performance.

2.3. Technique of Data Collection

The data were collected from the instruments of this research. They are test, observation checklist, and interview questions. The quantitative data were collected from the pretest and the posttest of each cycle. At the same time, observation checklist was used to check the teacher and students' activities towards the implementation of critical method in improving the students' speaking performance. The interview questions were used to get the information or the qualitative data about the teacher and students' obstacles toward the implementation of critical method in improving the students' speaking performance.

2.4. Data Analysis

2.4.1. Scoring the students' test results

The students' test result was scored using Heaton's rating score. The students' scores were described separately into the value of speaking accuracy and the value of speaking fluency. Below is the table of the rating score for the speaking performance dealing with the accuracy and the fluency (Heaton's rating score, 1988:100).

2.4.2. Tabulating the students' score

The students' scores were tabulated using the category of Heaton's rating score.

2.4.3. Calculating the mean score

The mean score of the students' speaking performance (the accuracy and the fluency) was calculated using SPSS application version 22.

2.4.4. Calculating the t-test value

The t-test value (at the significant level: 0.05) was used and consulting the t-table value to see the improvement between pretest and posttest using SPSS application version 22.

2.4.5. Identifying and interpreting the qualitative data

The qualitative data of the teacher and students' responses towards the implementation of critical method were identified, classified and interpreted using a descriptive account. Qualitative research is defined by Gay, Millis, and Airasian (2006) as the process of acquiring, analyzing, and interpreting in-depth narrative and visual data to get a deeper comprehension of a particular phenomenon.

3. RESULTS

3.1. The Students' Level of Speaking Performance by implementing the critical method

In this research, the researcher was attempted to find the students' speaking performance by giving tests. For this section, the value of the assessment administered and calculated by using statistical software, which is in SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 22. Besides, the researcher used speaking test that consist of pretest and posttest. The pretest was administered before implementing the critical method in improving the students' speaking performance. On the other hand, the posttest was administered at the end of such teaching implementation. For the test, the researcher used explanation text as the topic that implemented to the students to know their speaking performance in the classroom. Besides, the researcher calculated the mean, percentage and t-test of the test to support the hypothesis.

3.1.1. Pre-test of students' speaking performance

The first, the researcher calculated the pre-test to find the students' speaking performance before implementing the method. The result of the pre-test is given below:

No	Name	Max Score	Content	Fluency	Grammar	Vocabulary	Total	Score
1	Nad	16	2	2	2	3	9	56.25
2	Kha	16	2	3	3	2	10	62.5
3	MA	16	1	2	2	1	6	37.5
4	MDR	16	3	2	2	3	10	62.5
5	MFT	16	2	1	1	1	5	31.25
6	ZAW	16	2	2	2	2	8	50
7	Ral	16	2	2	1	1	6	37.5
8	AM	16	2	1	1	2	6	37.5
9	MD	16	2	2	2	2	8	50
10	NNH	16	1	2	2	1	6	37.5

Table 1. The Students' Pre-test Score of Speaking Performance

The table above showed the students' speaking performance score from the pre-test that all students had been taking. The test assessed the content, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary of the speaking performance. Besides, the following table shows the percentage of the students' pre-test:

No	Classification	Score	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	Excellent	81-100	0	0
2	Good	61-80	1	10
3	Fair	41-60	4	40
4	Poor	21-40	5	50
5	Very poor	0-20	0	0
Total			10	100

Table 2. The Percentage of the Students' Pre-test Score of Speaking Performance

Based on the table above, most of the students were in the poor category (five students), with a percentage of 50%. It has been shown that the students' speaking performance in the pre-test was low because they got poor and fair scores. The following was the descriptive statistic of the students' score in the pre-test.

Score		
N	Students	10
	Missing	0
Mean		46.25
Median		43.75
Std. Deviation		11.487
Minimum		31
Maximum		63

Table 3. Statistic Students' Score in Pre-test

Referring to the table above, the mean score from the pre-test that the students got was 46.25. The table also showed that the minimum value was 31 and the maximum was 63. The value was got from the students' pre-test in the speaking performance. Besides, the information of table asserted the value of standard deviation was 11.487 which indicated that data points are spread out over a large range of values.

3.1.1.2. Post-test of students' speaking performance

After doing the treatment using the critical method, the researchers gave a post-test to each student, and their answers were recorded to determine their speaking performance based on content, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary. The result of the students' post-test is presented below:

No	Name	Max Score	Content	Fluency	Grammar	Vocabuary	Total	Score
1	Nad	16	3	2	3	3	11	68.75
2	Kha	16	4	3	3	3	13	81.25
3	MA	16	3	2	3	2	10	62.5
4	MDR	16	3	3	4	3	13	81.25
5	MFT	16	3	2	2	2	9	56.25
6	ZAW	16	3	2	2	3	10	62.5
7	Ral	16	3	4	3	2	12	75
8	AM	16	3	3	3	3	12	75
9	MD	16	3	3	3	3	12	75
10	NNH	16	3	2	3	3	11	68.75

Table 4. The Students' Post-test Score of Speaking Performance

The table above shows the students' speaking performance score from the post-test that all students had been taking. Then, the result was continued by analyzing the percentage and determining the classification based on the items of the speaking performance assessment. The following was the result of the analysis:

No	Classification	Score	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	Excellent	81-100	2	20
2	Good	61-80	7	70
3	Fair	41-60	1	10
4	Poor	21-40	0	0
5	Very poor	0-20	0	0
Total			10	100

Table 5. The Percentage of the Students' Post-test Score of Speaking Performance

Based on the table above, the data showed that most of the students were in the good category (seven students), with a percentage of 70%. It had been shown that the students' speaking performance in the post-test was good. Some students also got excellent value, including two students with 20%, and just one student got a fair score (10%). As follows, the explanation of the data statistic was based on Table 5:

Score		
N	Students	10
	Missing	0
Mean		70.6250

Median	71.8750
Std. Deviation	8.35933
Minimum	56.25
Maximum	81.25

Table 4.6. Statistic Students' Score in Post-test

Referring to the table above, the mean score from the post-test that the students got was 70.62. The table also showed that the minimum value was 56.25 and the maximum was 81.25. The value was obtained from the students' post-test in the speaking performance after implementing the critical method. Besides, the information in the table asserted that the value of the standard deviation was 8.36, which indicated that the data points signified consistency.

3.1.3. The result of the Rate Pre-test and Post-test

To determine the students' level of speaking performance, this study analyzed the rate percentages from both tests. The data was provided in the following tables:

Classification	Score	Pre-test		Post-test	
		Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Excellent	81-100	0	0	2	20
Good	61-80	1	10	7	70
Fair	41-60	4	40	1	10
Poor	21-40	5	50	0	0
Very poor	0-20	0	0	0	0

Table 7. Rate Percentage of the Pre-test and Post-test of Students' Speaking Performance

Referring to the result, the data showed that there was a significant difference in the mean value between the pre-test and the post-test. In the pre-test, the mean value of the students' scores was 46.25, which indicated that the average students' level of speaking was fair. However, table 4.7 showed that dominant students in the poor category included five students, four students in the fair category, and one student in the good category.

Moreover, in the post-test, the data showed that some students got a good category, which included seven students, and two students got excellent value; another got a fair category. Therefore, it could be concluded from the data that the students' level of speaking performance in the pre-test was fair, and in the post-test after the teaching process through the critical method, the students were at a good level.

3.1.4. Hypothesis testing

To examine the research hypothesis, the researcher first conducted a normality analysis of the data using the Kolmogrov-Smirnov test. The theory states that if the significant (Sig.) value exceeds 0.05, the data is considered normally distributed, and if it is less than 0.05, it is not considered normally distributed. The analysis yields the following results:

		Unstandardized Residual
N		10
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	6.53367556
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.226
	Positive	.137
	Negative	-.226
Test Statistic		.226
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.160 ^c

Table 9. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

Referring to the table above, it showed that the sig. value (Asymp. sig. (2-tail)) was 0.160 and more than 0.05. Consequently, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test, which serves as the basis for decision-making, concludes that the data conforms to the normal distribution. Therefore, the regression model's normality assumptions or requirements have been satisfied. After discovering the analysis, the researchers proceeded to examine the t-test (at the significant level of 0.05) of the data to validate the hypothesis. The result was presented in the table below:

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-Test - Post-Test	-24.375	9.057	2.864	-30.854	-17.896	-8.510	9	.000

Table 4.10. Paired Samples Test Pre-test and Post-test

According to the table above, the data indicated that the t-test was 8.51 and the df (degree of freedom) was 9. By referring to both the t-test and the df, it discovered that the t-table stood at 2.26. Therefore, the t-test value (8.51) exceeded the t-table value (2.26). It indicated that the students' speaking performance improved after using the critical method. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) was accepted.

3.2. The Obstacles of students' speaking performance in the classroom

The critical method emphasizes students' ability to analyze and reflect on their knowledge or experiences related to the subject matter. This study incorporated the essential elements of the critical method, including describing, analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating the data. The topic chosen for classroom discussion was explanation text, and interviews were conducted to identify specific obstacles to students' speaking performance.

3.2.1. Describing

At this stage, the researcher noted that students encountered various challenges when asked to make presentations. Linguistically, students struggled with pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Non-linguistic issues included anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, and a general lack of confidence. These challenges were observed consistently across different speaking tasks, highlighting the pervasive nature of these obstacles.

3.2.2. Analyzing

At this stage, the analysis focuses on elements or aspects of the description. From the point of the description, the researcher found the highlighted aspects of the obstacle students' speaking performance as follows:

- **Feeling Nervous:** Many students reported feeling nervous when speaking, which impacted their concentration and performance.
- **Fear of Making Mistakes:** Students expressed fear of being judged by classmates and teachers, leading to reduced confidence.
- **Lack of Vocabulary:** Students struggled with using varied and appropriate vocabulary, which hindered their ability to effectively present their ideas.
- **Lack of Confidence:** Many students cited a lack of confidence as a significant barrier, contributing to nervousness and difficulty in pronouncing words clearly.

3.2.3. Interpreting

At this section, the researcher spelled out the students' statement based on the result of the analysis. As follows were students' statements:

Extract 1: *Nerves Sir. Gugup ku rasa jadi na bikin ka hilang konsentrasi Sir. Biar sudah ka persiapkan diri tetap gugup ku rasa.* (I feel nervous Sir, so made me lose my concentration. Despite my preparation, I often feel nervous).

Extract 2: *Sedikit gugup karena takut ada yang salah pengucapannya.* (I'm little bit nervous because I'm afraid of making pronunciation errors).

The statements from students highlight the pervasive nature of nervousness. Despite thorough preparation, students found that their nerves often got the better of them during actual speaking tasks. This nervousness disrupted their concentration, leading to performance issues such as forgetting what they had planned to say or stumbling over their words. The fear of making pronunciation errors added to their anxiety, creating a mental block that made it difficult for them to speak fluently and confidently.

Extract 3: *Iyaa Sir, takut ka kalau di komen sama teman atau guru karena kalau takut ma langsung ka tidak percaya diri.* (yes, Sir. I am worried about being judged by my classmate and the teacher. It makes me less confident during presentations).

Students' fear of making mistakes was closely tied to their concern about how they would be perceived by others. The possibility of being judged or ridiculed by classmates and receiving negative feedback from teachers was a significant deterrent. This fear affected their confidence levels, making them more hesitant and less willing to take risks in speaking. The anticipation of negative evaluation created a sense of pressure that impeded their ability to perform naturally and effectively.

Extract 4: *Anu Sir, kadang sulit ka pakai kosa kata yang bervariasi yang cocok sama materinya.* (anu Sir, I struggle to use the varied words needed on the subject).

Extract 5: *Yes Sir, karena kalau tidak ku tau itu kosa kata, tidak paham ka juga apa yang ku persentasikan.* (Yes Sir, if I don't know the words, I will not know the point of my presentation).

The struggle with vocabulary was a recurring theme in students' statements. They often found themselves at a loss for words, particularly when trying to discuss specific topics or use technical terms. This limitation made it difficult for them to articulate their thoughts clearly and accurately. The lack of vocabulary also affected their comprehension of the subject matter, leading to a less effective and coherent presentation. Students' inability to use varied and appropriate vocabulary hindered their ability to engage their audience and convey their message

effectively.

Extract 8: Kalau gugup ma Sir, na bikin lambat ka bicara jadi kadang mi tidak jelas ku bilang (if I felt nervous, it made my speaking slow, so it effected the clarity of my words).

The statements regarding confidence reveal its critical role in students' speaking performance. A lack of confidence not only made students more nervous but also affected their speech clarity and fluency. Nervousness slowed down their speaking pace, leading to unclear and disjointed speech. This lack of confidence often resulted from a combination of factors, including previous negative experiences, fear of making mistakes, and a limited vocabulary. The impact of confidence on students' speaking performance underscores the need for supportive and encouraging classroom environments that foster confidence-building.

3.2.4. Evaluating

In the final stage, the researcher evaluated the identified obstacles. It was found that students' speaking performance was significantly hindered by a lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, nervousness, and fear of making mistakes. These factors collectively contributed to lower performance in speaking tasks. The evaluation stage highlighted the interconnected nature of these obstacles. Nervousness, fear of making mistakes, lack of vocabulary, and lack of confidence were not isolated issues but were interrelated and often compounded each other. For example, a lack of confidence could lead to increased nervousness, which in turn affected vocabulary usage and increased the fear of making mistakes. These obstacles created a cycle that was difficult for students to break, resulting in consistently low speaking performance. To address these issues, it is essential to create a classroom environment that supports and encourages students. Teachers can play a pivotal role by providing constructive feedback, creating opportunities for practice, and fostering a positive and inclusive atmosphere. The shift to dynamic assessment from static, Strategies such as group discussions, peer evaluations, and confidence-building exercises can help students overcome their fears and improve their speaking performance. Additionally, expanding students' vocabulary through targeted exercises and incorporating more speaking activities into the curriculum can help address the linguistic obstacles

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. The Students' Level of Speaking Performance by implementing the critical method

The use of learning strategies is very necessary because it facilitates the learning process so that it can achieve optimal results (Hotmaria, 2021). The implementation of the critical method is emphasized in four components. They are describing, analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating (Musfirah, 2019). The first component, describing, is the students' ability to describe various themes conveyed in the communication process. In analyzing, the students were emphasized to be enabled to analyze the theme in the communication process, including the relationship that builds between what is conveyed and the previous knowledge. In addition, interpreting is an ability possessed by students to interpret the themes presented after analyzing them. The last is evaluating, which is the process by which students evaluate the various stages that they have completed.

Based on the activity, the implementation of critical methods had a significant influence on the students' speaking performance. It was proved by the results of the speaking test, including pre-test and post-test. Referring to the research findings, the result of the test before utilizing the critical method was 45.25 for mean score with standard deviation 11.49. After implementing the method, the mean score increased to 70.63 with standard deviation 8.36. Therefore, the method could improve the students' speaking performance. It supported by Muhammadiyeva et.al., (2020) in their research, they mentioned that to become fluent in a language, students need to practice speaking activities using critical thinking skills. In addition, Thus, the null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H1) was accepted.

4.2. The Obstacles of students' speaking performance in the classroom

Learning methods are very useful, both for teachers and students. For teachers, methods can be used as guidelines and references for systematic action in the implementation of learning. For students, using learning methods can simplify the learning process (make it easier and speed up understanding the content of learning) because each learning method is designed to facilitate the student learning process.

In this study, the critical method is a method of learning English that emphasizes students' ability to reflect on their knowledge or experiences related to the material being studied (Bahrissalim and Haris, 2011). Based on the research findings, the obstacles that the students faced in their speaking performance were feeling nervous, a lack of vocabulary, being afraid to make mistakes, and being less confident. It was related to the research by Prastiwi (2022) that explained that the students, while speaking, felt nervous, so it made them afraid of making mistakes. It also elaborated that when the students reflect on their mistakes and seek feedback to understand them, they can avoid them in the future. This reflection is crucial for the growth the speaking skill.

Unexpected Findings

Despite the overall improvement, some students still reported feeling nervous during speaking tasks. This suggests that while the critical method can enhance cognitive and linguistic skills, additional strategies may be needed to address emotional and psychological barriers to speaking. Furthermore, the reduction in the standard deviation from 11.487 in the pre-test to 8.359 in the post-test indicates more consistent performance among students after the intervention. This consistency was somewhat unexpected, suggesting that the critical method not only improves individual performance but also standardizes it across different learners.

Implication

The results of this study provide several practical implications for language teaching. Firstly, the critical method should be integrated into language curricula to improve students' speaking performance. Teachers should be trained to implement critical thinking exercises effectively, ensuring that students not only learn the language but also develop the cognitive skills necessary for academic and professional success.

One major implication from the findings is the need to shift from static assessment to dynamic assessment to help alleviate students' nervousness. Static assessments, which typically involve one-time evaluations, can heighten anxiety among students who fear judgment based on a single performance. Dynamic assessment, on the other hand, involves ongoing, formative evaluation that focuses on students' progress and development over time. This approach can create a more supportive learning environment, reducing the pressure and anxiety associated with static assessments.

To further support students, teachers should focus on building students' confidence and reducing anxiety through supportive and encouraging classroom environments. Techniques such as mindfulness, positive reinforcement, and public speaking practice could be integrated into the curriculum to help students overcome nervousness and fear of making mistakes.

Future Recommendation

Based on the results of this study, several new research questions emerge. Future studies could explore the following:

4.1.1. Long-term Effects: What are the long-term impacts of the critical method on students' speaking performance? Does the improvement observed in the short term sustain over a more extended period?

4.2.1. Dynamic Assessment: How does the implementation of dynamic assessment impact students' anxiety and overall speaking performance compared to static assessment? What specific dynamic assessment strategies are most effective in reducing nervousness?

4.3.1. Emotional Barriers: How can emotional and psychological barriers to speaking be effectively addressed in language classrooms? What specific strategies can be implemented to reduce anxiety and build confidence?

4.4.1. Diverse Contexts: How does the effectiveness of the critical method vary across different educational contexts and student demographics? Are there specific factors that influence its success in different settings?

Overall, this study demonstrates the effectiveness of the critical method in enhancing students' speaking performance, highlighting the need for a holistic approach to language teaching that includes both cognitive and emotional support. The shift from static to dynamic assessment is particularly important in creating a less anxiety-inducing environment for students. Future research should continue to explore these areas to further improve language education practices.

5. CONCLUSION

By completing this research, the researcher found that implementing critical methods gives positive impact to improve students' speaking performance. This method significantly brings students' performance running well. The data showed that the students' speaking performance in the pre-test was fair, and in the post-test after the critical method teaching process, they were at a good level. Moreover, it also identified that the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) was accepted. Additionally, the utilizing of critical method emphasized of four components. They are describing, analyzing, interpreting and evaluation.

There are some obstacles that the students face in speaking performance by implementing critical method including feeling nervous, lack vocabulary, afraid to make mistakes and less confident. All these aspects contributed to the students' performance value and the process of learning achievement. This study explored the impact of implementing the critical method on students' speaking performance and identified several key obstacles to their speaking abilities. The findings indicate that the critical method significantly enhances students' speaking performance, as evidenced by the marked improvement in their post-test scores. This conclusion offers a lasting impression by highlighting how critical thinking and analytical skills are essential for effective communication, addressing a critical gap in language education methodologies.

The study's key findings reveal that the critical method not only improves linguistic skills but also helps standardize performance across different learners, as seen in the reduced standard deviation in post-test scores. This

suggests that critical thinking activities can provide a more equitable learning environment, enabling all students to benefit similarly. The persistent issue of nervousness, despite cognitive improvements, underscores the need for additional strategies to address emotional and psychological barriers in language learning.

One of the major implications derived from this study is the recommendation to shift from static to dynamic assessment methods. Dynamic assessments, which focus on continuous and formative evaluation, can help reduce the anxiety associated with one-time evaluations, thereby fostering a more supportive and less stressful learning environment. This approach not only enhances performance but also contributes to students' overall well-being.

This study addresses a significant gap in the literature by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of the critical thinking method in improving speaking performance. Previous research has emphasized the importance of critical thinking in language education, but this study offers concrete data to support these claims. Furthermore, it highlights the interconnected nature of cognitive and emotional factors in language learning, suggesting that a holistic approach is necessary for effective language education.

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