

# Research on English Speech Teaching Based on Cultivating Students' Speculative Ability

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**Abstract:** *Critical thinking ability is one of the most important abilities in university education, but the cultivation of students' critical thinking ability is widely absent in college English speech teaching. College English speech is not only a practical skill, but also an effective way to cultivate English comprehensive language ability and promote the development of thinking ability. English speech can fully show the comprehensive quality of the speaker, especially the critical thinking ability. Based on the cultivation of students' critical thinking ability, this paper studies and discusses the teaching of English speech, trying to construct a more effective thinking-inspired teaching mode, so as to improve students' comprehensive quality in all-round development. The course of college English speech should focus on cultivating students' critical thinking ability, internalizing solid knowledge by flipping the classroom, enriching cultural connotation, guiding students to flexibly use logical thinking and creative thinking according to communication tasks, and perfecting the speech content. Generally speaking, English speaking can not only improve students' dialectical thinking ability and writing level, but also encourage students to actively strengthen the horizontal connection between literature, history and philosophy subjects, broaden their horizons, improve the flexibility of thinking, and be conducive to the cultivation of innovative talents.*

**Keywords:** *Speculative ability; English speech; Language teaching*

## 1. Introduction

The purpose of learning lies in application, especially in English language learning. Generally speaking, in the current practical application of English, students can cope with basic daily expressions [1]. That is to say, students can easily achieve shallow communication, but when it comes to deep communication, they often feel blank in their minds and can't think of suitable words and sentences to express. Critical thinking ability is an important content in the cultivation of quality education, an important goal of higher education, and a hot topic in educational circles at home and abroad [2]. With the development of economic globalization and increasingly frequent cultural exchanges, English public speaking courses have sprung up in more and more universities. English speech course pays attention to the output of language, and takes the training of students' English writing and speaking ability as the foundation. On this basis, it develops students' critical thinking ability and psychological adjustment ability, and comprehensively develops students' thinking and analysis ability [3]. However, in fact, judging from the "College English Speech Contest" held all over the country, "speculative absence" widely exists among college English learners [4]. Practice shows that many students' English speeches are fluent, flowery and cadenced on the surface, but the contents of their speeches are mostly empty and empty, lacking in knowledge and depth of thought, and unable to calmly respond to the judges' questions.

Language is the carrier of thinking, and thinking is the commander in chief of language. As the most important "transferable ability", critical thinking ability is one of the key training abilities in university education [5]. Only when a person has good speculative ability can he deeply think and analyze the problem from an objective perspective, question and judge the information obtained from the outside world, and then solve the problem efficiently and at a high level [6]. At present, most students can't use their language knowledge flexibly and flexibly because of their dull language learning. I can't say anything new, and I lack the depth of thought and the strength of persuasion. This lack of students' ability to analyze, synthesize, judge, reason, think and discriminate is the lack of critical thinking ability [7]. Therefore, colleges and universities also adopt various and colorful teaching methods in and out of English classes, paying attention to the cultivation of students' language

ability and critical thinking ability, and have achieved certain results. As an important part of students' comprehensive quality, the cultivation and training of abstract thinking discrimination ability is very important [8]. The English public speaking course supplemented by language learning and ways of thinking with different cultural backgrounds can improve students' ability to analyze, reason, judge and discriminate things from various angles from both breadth and depth, thus cultivating important practical skills for students' future employment. Based on the cultivation of students' critical thinking ability, this paper studies and discusses the teaching of English speech, trying to construct a more effective thinking-inspired teaching mode, so as to improve students' comprehensive quality in all-round development.

## **2. The relationship between college English speech and critical thinking ability**

On the university campus, English speech contest is in the ascendant. Therefore, college English speech teaching is particularly important. The purpose of English speech is to preach a certain point of view in English, so that the audience can accept and be convinced [9]. The audience, as the audience of the speech, is not passive acceptance, but acceptance and feedback. English learning includes language, culture and logical thinking, and English speech is an activity that allows learners to integrate language knowledge, cultural knowledge and logical thinking. In fact, the evaluation criteria of cognitive level in critical thinking ability are also suitable for evaluating the success of a speech: whether the views of the speech are clear, whether the main points of the speech are logical, whether the content is deep, whether it can impress people, and whether the speaker can flexibly adjust the speech according to different audiences, occasions and environments. Therefore, it is a good way to cultivate and improve students' critical thinking ability through English speech contest. The cultivation of critical thinking ability is accompanied by a multi-level and multi-angle catalytic effect, which is more efficient in promoting English speech teaching and can steadily improve teaching efficiency. Moreover, the teaching of college English speech around the cultivation of critical thinking ability can also improve students' escape psychology, stimulate their learning enthusiasm and promote the formation of a sound knowledge system. English speech is not a one-way transmission of language information, but a two-way communication. Speakers need to adjust their speech content, skills and strategies according to the response of the audience. This process involves how to choose the topic and analyze the audience, so as to think about the problem from different angles, analyze it in depth and express it clearly and coherently. Therefore, the cultivation of students' critical thinking ability should be integrated into college English speech teaching, so that students' critical thinking ability, comprehensive language ability and cross-cultural communication ability can be effectively exercised and improved.

## **3. The present situation of critical thinking ability of English majors**

As a unique and advanced form of communication, speech requires the speaker's critical thinking ability to be typical. Foreign language talents in the 21st century should have the following characteristics: solid basic language skills, broad knowledge, certain professional knowledge, strong ability and good quality. However, at present, college English teaching attaches importance to the teaching and cultivation of language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation, and emphasizes imitation and memory, but ignores the cultivation of students' thinking ability, innovation ability, problem analysis ability and independent opinion raising ability in language acquisition. According to the survey, in the ranking of "what can be done after getting a topic" by students' self-evaluation of their speech ability, about 74% students said that they could think about the topic and conceive the structure and breakthrough point of the speech; About 51% students can find arguments and examples through various channels [10]. Through practice, it can be found that many contestants' English speeches have good pronunciation and intonation, but they show the following problems in the content of their speeches: lack of ideological depth, narrow knowledge, insufficient arguments, imprecise reasoning, confused logical thinking, inability to calmly respond to questions from judges and audiences, and insufficient ability to comprehensively study, analyze and solve problems. These are all manifestations of the lack of speculative ability. The grading standard of English speech is shown in Figure 1.

Only by empirical observation can we distinguish that it is not the application of critical thinking ability, but that critical thinking ability is an abstract thinking ability. Critical thinking ability includes judgment and analysis ability, logical thinking ability, problem-solving ability, etc. By implementing relevant training work in college English teaching, teaching efficiency can be effectively improved and

students' academic ability can be promoted. The main characteristics of critical thinking ability are clear-cut and coherent analysis, clear and accurate reasoning, which is also the ability that a good speaker needs. At the same time, the emotional factor in critical thinking ability is also an indispensable factor for an excellent speaker in the process of preparing his speech and giving a speech. The speaker's speculative thinking is innovative, which can make the speech innovative, attract the audience's attention and inspire them. The results of random interviews with English speaking students show that most students have a positive attitude towards the opening and teaching of English speaking courses, which stimulates their interest in learning from the perspective of professional language learning and improves their critical thinking ability and organizational ability of speaking and writing languages to varying degrees. This shows that students' critical thinking ability has developed to some extent after learning English speech course.

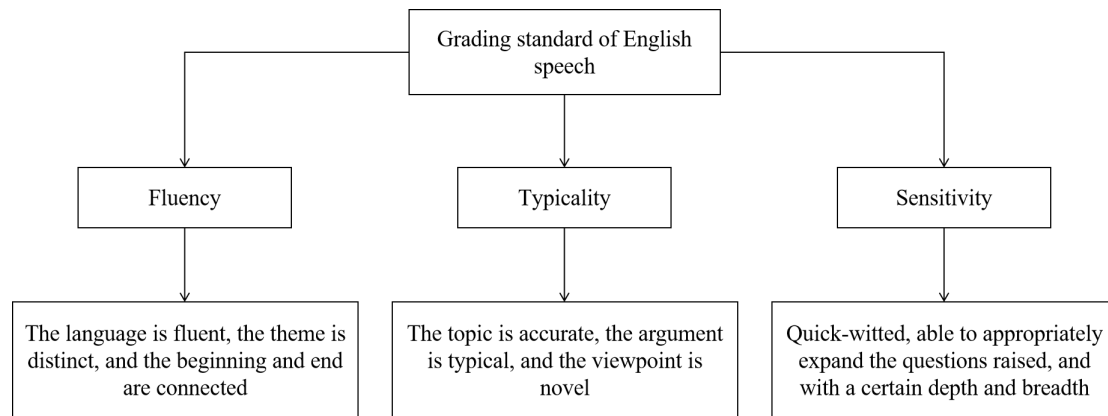


Figure 1: Grading criteria for English speeches

#### 4. English speech teaching model based on the cultivation of students' critical thinking ability

##### 4.1. In-class guidance of English speech

In order to achieve fluent, effective and profound speech, it is necessary to improve the acceptability of the language, the richness of the speech content, the logic of the speech text and the persuasiveness of reasoning. This requires the speaker to constantly cultivate and improve his own English critical thinking ability. First of all, in English speech teaching, teachers can choose wonderful speech fragments from film and television works to make students feel the effect of the speech, then think about the reasons for the success of the speech, and let students organize their own language to complete the speech. Students are free to express their views, and they can discuss and compare the opening and closing of the speech, the collection of arguments, the validity of arguments and the drafting of outlines in depth, extending horizontally from the same topic, and discussing the methods of solving problems from all angles. Although there is relative independence between language and critical thinking ability, they are closely related, promoting and influencing each other. Teachers should attach importance to the cultivation of critical thinking ability in subjective consciousness, shift from paying attention to language itself to how to express and expound their views clearly and reasonably, fundamentally change the method of speech guidance, and regard critical thinking ability as an important measure to evaluate learners' mastery of speech ability. The teaching content of English speech course and the teaching goal plan of "critical thinking ability" are shown in Figure 2.

English speech is actually a cross-cultural information transmission. In this complicated cross-cultural information transmission activity, only by constantly contacting, learning and comparing can speakers better understand the cultural differences and evaluate the differences between the two cultures. Teachers can analyze the purpose and theme of the speech, let students discuss the object and environment of the speech, and think about how the speaker organizes the content to achieve the purpose of the speech. Through a series of training, students understand the elements of speech, make clear the elements that a successful speech should have, learn to explore the subject matter in depth, effectively improve their critical thinking ability, and at the same time exercise their writing skills to achieve the expected goal. At the same time, in teaching, teachers should pay attention to guiding students to analyze and evaluate the characteristics of these speeches in terms of relevance, clarity, logic, profundity and flexibility, so as to cultivate students' critical thinking ability and cognitive skills. Students can also imitate speech skills, expand their knowledge and provide rich soil for in-depth

thinking.

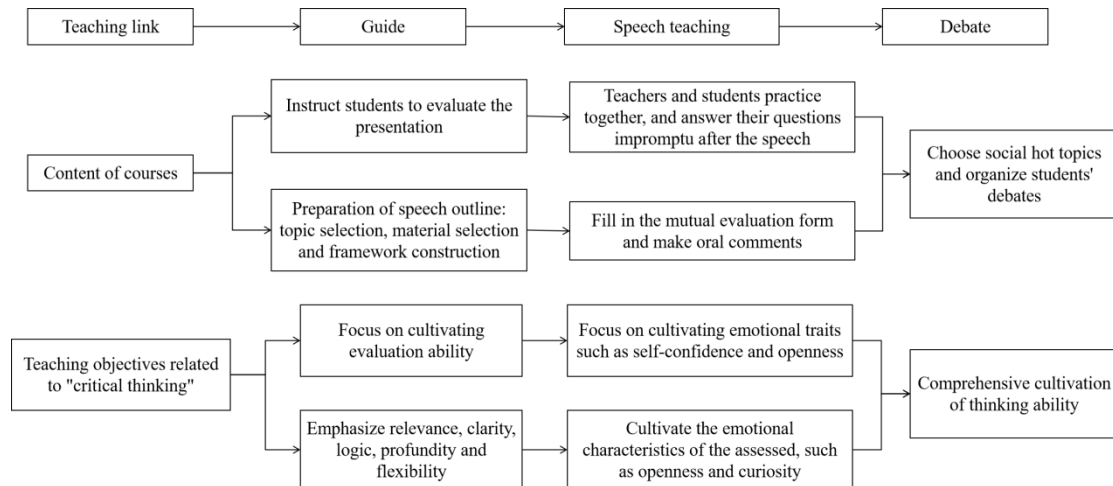


Figure 2: The teaching content of English speech course and the teaching goal plan of "critical thinking ability"

#### 4.2. Extracurricular practice of English speech

Speculative ability requires students to actively think and judge around the problem, so as to see the essence through the problem and realize the leap of speculative ability. In order to reduce the difficulty and improve the enthusiasm of students, colleges and universities can hold grade speech competitions with students as the main body. After the grade speech contest, let the outstanding students tell their own process of topic selection, conception, cutting and modification, so as to help other students learn from it. Topic-based lecture teaching materials can choose all kinds of original themes and topics in the target language, such as economy, politics, family, food, music, etc. in English-speaking countries; At the same time, we also choose the culture, traditions and stories of China. In the choice of theme, the combination of Chinese and western will give students more infiltration of multicultural knowledge and edification of customs and etiquette. From the structure, language, logic of a speech, the argumentation of each argument, and even the analysis of the background of the speech and the positions of different speakers in the same scene or topic, students can be inspired to think logically and conceive. English public speaking course is a practical course in essence, and the practical teaching of English public speaking should be an activity with students as the main body and teachers and students participating together. Because emotional factors occupy an important position in critical thinking ability, teachers' self-confidence, openness, tolerance, integrity and perseverance in guiding demonstrations can play a very important role in cultivating students' positive emotional characteristics. At the same time, the participation of teachers and students can not only make teachers play an exemplary role, but more importantly, cultivate students' emotional characteristics in their critical thinking ability.

In English speech course, propositional speech and impromptu speech are important links and one of the main course activities in the teaching process. Most speeches are prepared by students after class. English speech contests can be organized among colleges and universities, the topics of which are current social hot issues, with clear themes, vivid content, clear structure and strong logic, which can attract the audience. Choosing social hot issues can not only attract students to participate, but also ensure that students have something to say. In order to write a speech with vivid content and novel ideas, most students take the initiative to consult the materials, determine the arguments and demonstrate the process, and form the final speech after repeated revision and deliberation. The impromptu question and answer after each speech is a win-win activity for the speaker and questioner to improve their critical thinking ability. In this process, students' critical thinking ability can be effectively cultivated. In addition, evaluation is the core of critical thinking ability, and students reflect through mutual evaluation. Classroom comprehensive evaluation can be evaluated from the following dimensions: the correlation between the content of the speech and the theme; Explore the relevance of the speech content between the cooperation group and the cooperation group; Evaluate the relevance of this speech to its previous speeches.

## 5. Conclusions

The development of society pushes education into a high-quality development stage. As an important part of the higher education system, English has the functions of cultivating students' language application ability and strengthening their critical thinking ability. English speech is the embodiment of students' comprehensive quality, which can cultivate students' critical thinking ability and is a good form of oral and writing teaching. By analyzing the relationship between critical thinking ability and English speech in the theoretical model of critical thinking ability hierarchy, it is found that the requirements for critical thinking ability in English speech are extremely typical, and targeted English speech teaching can improve students' critical thinking ability through a series of teaching methods. In the teaching mode and teaching links of college English speech course, we should set up teaching links and activities of critical thinking ability training as far as possible to encourage students to think more, analyze more and discuss more. While learning language and culture, and exercising the ability of self-speaking, we can expand their thinking depth and ability. Based on the investigation and analysis of English majors' critical thinking ability, this paper tries to introduce English speech into teaching practice in and out of class, in order to provide effective reference suggestions for related work. Classroom teaching practice shows that determining the appropriate topic of speech based on learning situation is the basic premise of cultivating critical thinking ability; Encouraging students to actively participate in exchanges and debates is the key to cultivating critical thinking ability; Creating a democratic atmosphere of speaking freely and giving students a sense of psychological security are psychological conditions for cultivating critical thinking ability.

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