

The Relationships of Critical Thinking with English Reading Achievement of Taiwanese EFL Students

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Abstract

Critical thinking has been considered an essential competence not only in learning or at working (Allen, 2004; Nilson, 2003; Paul & Elder, 2006). Studies have found that critical thinking has significant impact on students' learning ability and academic achievement (Betoret, 2007; Hsu, 1997; Hung, 2007; Kuo, 2000; Sternberg, 1997).

The study aims to discover what levels and what types of critical thinking Taiwanese students possess, the differences of critical thinking that good and poor language learners possess, and the relationships between critical thinking and EFL students' English reading achievement. A total of 341 first-year students in a private junior college in south Taiwan participated in the study. All participants were asked to complete an English proficiency reading test (GEPT, elementary level) and a critical thinking test (CTT, II) regarding identifying assumptions, inferences, deductions, interpretations, and evaluations. All available data were processed by SPSS 16.0. It's hoped that the findings can help to gain more understanding about the diversity of language learner and to keep an eye on the training of critical thinking for both teachers (to participate in strategy training) and language learners (to learn more efficiently and effectively).