

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ART AND SCIENCES
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**



TOPIC:

**Extensive Reading: A meaningful Tool to
Develop Critical Thinking in ESL Students at
a University Level**

STUDENTS:

**GUEVARA JIMENEZ, LAURA HAYDEE
OSORIO ROSALES, ELDA ANJANNATTE SORAYA**

PROFESSOR:

MAT. RHINA FRANCO RAMOS

DATE:

UNIVERSITY CAMPUS, AUGUST 30th 2010

**UNIVERSIDAD DE EL SALVADOR
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS Y HUMANIDADES
DEPARTAMENTO DE IDIOMAS EXTRANJEROS**

**Extensive Reading: A meaningful Tool to
Develop Critical Thinking in ESL Students at
a University Level**

PRESENTADO POR:

GUEVARA JIMENEZ, LAURA HAYDEE
OSORIO ROSALES, ELDA ANJANNATTE SORAYA

PARA OPTAR AL TITULO DE:

LICENCIATURA EN IDIOMA INGLES OPCION ENSEÑANZA

DOCENTE DIRECTOR:

MAT. RHINA FRANCO RAMOS

SAN SALVADOR, EL SALVADOR, CENTROAMERICA, AGOSTO DE 2010

AUTORIDADES DE LA UNIVERSIDAD DE EL SALVADOR

ING. RUFINO ANTONIO QUEZADASANCHEZ

RECTOR

ARQ. MIGUEL ANGEL PEREZ RAMOS

VICERRECTOR ACADEMICO

MTRO. OSCAR NOE NAVARRETE ROMERO

VICERRECTOR ADMINISTRATIVO

LIC. DOUGLAS VLADIMIR ALFARO CHAVEZ

SECRETARIO GENERAL

AUTORIDADES DE LA FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS Y HUMANIDADES

LIC. JOSE RAYMUNDO CALDERON MORAN

DECANO

DR. CARLOS ROBERTO PAZ MANZANO

VICEDECANO

MTRO. JULIO CESAR GRANDE RIVERA

SECRETARIO DE LA FACULTAD

AUTORIDADES DE LA FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS Y HUMANIDADES

MSc. EDGAR NICOLAS AYALA

JEFE DE DEPARTAMENTO

M.Ed. RICARDO GARAY SALINAS

COORDINADOR GENERAL DE LOS PROCESOS DE GRADO

MAT. RHINA FRANCO RAMOS

DOCENTE DIRECTOR

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To the powerful God for giving me life during these years that I have worked on this research paper to face all difficulties along this time. Because He gave me life and the strength to continue although sometimes I felt weak, he always supported me. When I am in trouble he takes out my foot from the hole.

Also I want to thank my husband, Jaime Eduardo Ramos, who has been with his unconditional love, patience and motivation to finish my career. Also he has always supported me whenever I needed. While I worked on this, what I can call the biggest work that I have done in my life. This thesis is dedicated to my children Jaime André, Josué Eduardo and Emma Karolina Ramos Guevara, who have always stood by me and dealt with all of my absence from many family occasions with a smile.

To my parents José Guevara and Bertha de Guevara for giving me the necessary tools that I have needed to develop my life. Now I just want to thank them for their dedicated education, for their unconditional love and patience and for everything I am. To my whole family, because they are very the important and they are always by my side.

To my partner on this research Eldaa Anjannatte Soraya Osorio Rosales to whom I admire for her patience and all the ideas she gave for the creation and completion of our goals during this time. Also I want to thank her special family who has been always unconditional and helped us a lot.

LAURA HAYDEE GUEVARA JIMÉNEZ

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am heartily thankful to God and Virgin of Fatima, whose encouragement, guidance and support from the initial to the final level enabled me to develop an understanding of this research paper.

I wish to thank, first and foremost, my mother Lila del Carmen Rosales Renderos. She bore me and raised me with all her love and patience. At the same time she has always supported me, loved me, and taught me everything to begin and finish my career. Also I dedicate this thesis in memory of my father Juan Antonio Osorio López, who always helped me and believed that I could do it.

I would like to thank my step-father Santiago Henriquez Arévalo. He is now under God's presence but he supported me, loved me and spent a lot of time helping me with everything he could. Besides I am grateful with my sister Claudia Marielos, her husband Pedro Fuentes and my brother Santiago Geovanny Henriquez Rosales. And my beloved nephew Ernesto Karol who gives me a lot of emotional support and caring love. I owe my deepest gratitude to my grandmother Antonia Renderos and my aunt Gloria Renderos.

At the same time I offer my regards and blessings to all of my family who supported me pray God for the completion of this research paper. I would like to show my gratitude to my dear friend Amy Diaz for all the emotional support, entertainment, and caring she provided.

It is with immense gratitude that I acknowledge the support and help of my Professor Rhina Franco Ramos. She provided encouragement, sound advice, good teaching, and lots of good ideas to make this research paper possible.

I share the credit of my work with my partner Laura Haydée Guevara Jiménez for her great contributions and patience to complete the research paper.

SORAYA OSORIO ROSALES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction.....	i
II. Objectives.....	1
II.1 General Objectives	
II.2 Specific Objectives	
III. Justification.....	2
IV. Extensive Reading: A Meaningful Tool to Develop Critical Thinking in ESL Students at a University Level	
IV.1 Introduction.....	4
IV.2 Reading Technique	
IV.2.1 Scanning.....	5
IV.2.2 Skimming.....	5
IV.3 Reading Approaches	
IV.3.1 Intensive Reading.....	6
IV.3.2 Extensive Reading.....	6
IV.3.3 Roles of Extensive Reading.....	7
IV.3.4 Benefits of Extensive Reading.....	8

IV.4 Definition of Critical Thinking	
IV.4.1 What is Critical Thinking?	9
IV.4.2 Benefits of Critical Thinking.....	10
IV.4.3 Characteristics of Critical Thinking.....	11
IV.5 Academic Benefits of Extensive Reading and Critical Thinking for ESL students.....	13
IV.6 Professional Benefits of Extensive Reading and Critical Thinking for ESL students.....	16
IV.7 Academic Benefits of Extensive Reading and Critical Thinking for ESL students.....	19
IV.8 Conclusion.....	21
V. Recommendations.....	23
VI. Methodology.....	24
VII. Bibliography.....	27

I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching English as an International Language has emerged in response to the global spread of English and the subsequent changing needs of learners. So, ESL students at University level have the necessity of developing many aspects in their studies that can help change their lives. A way to do this is by developing their critical thinking. And a technique of developing this skill is Extensive Reading. Critical thinking can contribute to think about all the possibilities to solve a problem, to consider different points of view and to identify people's arguments as good contribution or conclusions on a specific topic.

The term ESL is used in the work because the literature found that supports the report makes reference to this type of students. This is a tool mostly used and applied in other countries, and there is evidence of it. This happens because even though when students get to a university level even they have taken different subjects in which they are required to read. It is difficult for them to do that since they have not been developed that habit in those previous school years of study. Also this topic was focused on ESL students rather than EFL students because there are many references available and there exist communities which are using these tools. While with EFL no reference is available at the university and in the country.

The ESL term, as a primary setting to show the university that other countries use these tools, which benefit students, to obtain better academic, professional and personal development. So this paper is intended to motivate students and teachers to start investigating and applying Extensive Reading and Critical Thinking in their lives; it is intended for them to present some advantages

these two skills can provide so that they can continue developing this habit for the rest of their lives.

Reading is a tool to obtain information around the world. This ability provides thoughts that encourage students to think; and when people think they can shape their lives and they can choose how to live, act and make decisions. Students can also learn through this skill how to question and analyze the information supplied in various forms. These were the main reasons of choosing this topic because they help us analyze how extensive reading helps develop the critical thinking skill in ESL students at a University level.

This research work is divided in several parts. The first one is the introduction which gives a general view of the development of this research paper. The second part is the objectives. These objectives set the goals to reach while this research is carried out. The third part includes the justification which states the reasons why this research is important and the ones who will be benefited by. The fourth part is the body of the research paper. Here the importance of extensive reading as a meaningful tool to develop critical thinking skills is developed. The fifth part is the conclusion of the research work. It summarizes the principal points of the research paper. Then the sixth part describes the recommendations to take into account for possible changes in the study of English. The seventh part is related to the methodology which explains briefly the steps followed to carry out the work. As the last part of this research paper there is the bibliography, which lists all the books, websites and articles consulted to support the arguments established for extensive reading and critical thinking.

II. OBJECTIVES

GENERAL OBJECTIVES:

1. To determine how extensive reading is used to develop critical thinking skills of ESL students at a university level.
2. To find out that critical thinking skills are necessary to gain benefits, by using extensive reading in the daily routine of ESL students.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

1. To discover if doing extensive reading for pleasure increases a person's critical thinking skills to obtain an open mind of life.
2. To identify the academic, professional and personal benefits ESL students gather with critical thinking skills and extensive reading.

III. JUSTIFICATION

In order to successfully learn English, ESL students not only need to acquire the four macro skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, but also need to develop critical analytical skills. Traditionally, the educational emphasis has predominantly been on the acquisition of speaking and writing skills. The importance of reading and listening, and the development of critical skills, has most often not been emphasized in the context of ESL classes; however, the skill of reading needs to be given more attention to develop critical thinking among students at a university level. Distinguishing among four types of reading, it can be said that 'extensive reading' is one of the most beneficial, since it promotes the development of critical thinking. Its benefits for the development of critical thinking, will serve ESL students beyond the confines of the academic world.

We consider extensive reading as a very important element at a university level, the reason for arguing this is because, among other benefits, it helps to increase and expand students' critical thinking skills. The type of thought being widened by the environment students are surrounded by can be academic, religious, political, technological, and social. Another relevant reason for developing critical thinking is that the time we are living at this moment needs a society that can think critically. This can be achieved by expanding the frontiers of better thoughts that make the population and the country grow as individuals, capable of thinking by themselves following their own leadership and not just going behind others ideas. This can be reached by having a better academic development.

Moreover, if students can practice extensive reading as an everyday activity they will gain a broader culture. This is reflected in the way they speak because they have more vocabulary to express their own ideas and thoughts. It opens as well a bigger perspective for them to face life by identifying the kind of decisions to make. But the reading routine needs to be practice carefully to comprehend and apply what it is been understood. This avoids a closed mind that will limit the opportunities of accepting others' points of view without a critical mind. This work is important because it intends to awaken students' interest in extensive reading. Besides it is expected that through this pages teachers can find some new ideas that can be used in their classrooms

Finally some of the contributions that can be obtained through this work are based on including extensive reading in every subject students are in, take laboratory sessions, conversation clubs and an extensive reading corner in the faculty's library. So ESL students are should be surrounded by this approach everywhere they are to build their critical thinking skill. Another part of the population that can be benefited by these contributions is teachers; because they can find another tool to help their students develop critical thinking. Consequently this can motivate them to choose extensive reading as a way to contrast their everyday teaching. So students can be active human brains at home, at the university, at their workplace and with the society as conscious citizens of the reality that surrounds them.

IV. Extensive Reading: A Meaningful Tool to Develop Critical Thinking in ESL Students at a University Level

1. Introduction

In order to successfully learn English, ESL students not only need to acquire the four macro skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, but also need to develop critical analytical skills. Traditionally, the educational emphasis has predominantly been on the acquisition of speaking and writing skills. The importance of reading and listening, and the development of critical skills, has most often not been emphasized in the context of ESL classes. In this essay, we will argue that the skill of reading needs to be given more attention. Distinguishing among four types of reading, we will furthermore emphasize that 'extensive reading' is most beneficial, since it promotes the development of critical thinking.

As it is known, reading has many benefits. It allows the reader to obtain answers to specific questions. These questions may come from our daily lives which are experiences we need to explain ourselves. The reader finds the meaning of their origin and gets the possible answers for them. One more benefit from reading is that it facilitates the acquisition of new vocabulary and thoughts. This means that the reader gets a book and finds a lot of new words. Not all these words the reader is going to look for a definition in a dictionary instead of he may infer or associate them to the context. So he makes a further use of these words to communicate in different forms. An extra benefit it is that it instills different ways to state opinions, or simply obtain or know other techniques to discuss any topic that can refer to an academic issue, professional or personal one.

The author Roy Harris's assertion in *Rethinking Writing* (2000) states that: "The message is not something given in advance or given at all but something created by interaction between writers and readers as participants in a particular communicative situation." This message indicates that writers have the intention to communicate it and the readers to decode it. Consequently this specifies that a cognitive process is involved in producing and understanding the linguistic communication practice of a written message. The importance of developing this reading skill is to be able to generate logical ideas, to be informed in general and specific areas, to get specific and updated knowledge to analyze and comprehend different reading materials. It is necessary to apply the some reading techniques to minimize the complexity of reading: scanning, skimming, predicting, previewing, asking questions, taking notes, summarizing. Additionally it will be explained the approaches of intensive reading and extensive reading.

2. Reading Techniques

2.1 Scanning

As said by Annette Lamb and Larry Johnson scanning is a technique often used when looking up a word in the telephone book or dictionary. The purpose of this technique is to search for key words or ideas. In most cases, the reader knows what he or she is looking for, so the reader concentrates on finding a particular answer. This technique involves moving the eyes quickly down the page seeking for specific words and phrases.

2.2 Skimming

On the word of Annette Lamb and Larry Johnson skimming is used to quickly identify the main ideas of a text. Skimming is done three to four times faster than normal reading. It allows the reader to quickly assess whether a specific article is relevant for the research. An example of this technique is reading the newspaper.

3. Reading Approaches

3.1 Intensive Reading

Intensive Reading often refers to the careful reading of shorter, more difficult foreign language texts with the goal of complete and detailed understanding. Intensive reading is also associated with the teaching of reading in terms of its component skills (Bamford, J., & Day, R.R., 1997). Texts are studied intensively in order to introduce and practice reading skills such as distinguishing the main idea of a text from the detail, finding pronoun referents, or guessing the meaning of unknown words. Intensive reading involves learners reading in detail with specific learning aims and tasks. For example, intensive reading activities include skimming a text for specific information to answer true or false statements or filling gaps in a summary. As well with intensive reading, scanning texts can be used to match headings to paragraphs, and scanning jumbled paragraphs to read them carefully by putting them into the correct order.

3.2 Extensive Reading

Extensive reading is, in contrast to intensive reading, generally associated with reading large amounts of text with the aim of getting an overall understanding of the reading materials. Readers are more concerned with the meaning of the text than with the meaning of individual words or sentences or the finding of specific information. Extensive reading as an approach to teaching reading may be thought of in terms of purpose or outcome: Beatrice Mikulecky (1990), for example, calls it pleasure reading.

It can also be viewed as a teaching procedure, as when Stephen Krashen (1993) terms it free voluntary reading, or when teachers give students time for in-class Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) a period of 20 minutes, for example,

when students and teacher quietly and independently read self-selected material.

3.3 Roles of Extensive Reading

Krashen (1983) lists some of the roles extensive reading has in Language Learning. These roles can be achieved by doing an extensive reading routine that gives the reader confidence to speak about many topics to consolidate previous knowledge. Also they facilitate new words to communicate effectively and express ideas, predictions, summaries and other ways to share the information about the text being read. Stephen Krashen mentions ten roles of extensive reading to motivate readers to gain them in order to satisfy their knowledge and necessities as ESL students. These are the roles by Stephen Krashen of extensive reading:

- It can provide “comprehensible input”
- It can enhance learner general language competence
- It increases the students' exposure to the language
- It can increase knowledge of vocabulary
- It can lead to improvement in writing
- It can motivate learners to read
- It can consolidate previously learned language
- It helps to build confidence with extended texts
- It encourages the exploitation of textual redundancy
- It facilitates the development of prediction skills

3.4 Benefits of Extensive Reading

The following chart that Richard Day did in 2009 is a summary of the results of different studies done in ten countries. This chart indicates shows the benefits of extensive reading on EFL and ESL learners.

Table 1. Results of Studies of the Benefits of ER on EFL & ESL Learners

Study	Population	Results
Iwahori 2008	EFL; secondary; Japan	Increase in reading rate & general language proficiency
Nishono 2007	EFL; secondary; Japan	Increase in reading strategies & motivation
Horst 2005	ESL; adults; Canada	Increase vocabulary
Kusanagi 2004	EFL; adults; Japan	Increase in reading rate
Taguchi et al. 2004	EFL; adults; Japan	Increase in reading rate
Sheu 2003	EFL; junior high school; Taiwan	Increase in general language proficiency
Asraf & Ahmad 2003	EFL; middle school; Malaysia	Increase in attitude
Takase 2003	EFL; secondary; Japan	Increase in motivation
Bell 2001	EFL; university; Yemen	Increase in reading rate & general language proficiency
Mason & Krashen 1997	EFL; university; Japan	Increase in writing proficiency
Tsang 1996	EFL; secondary; Hong Kong	Increase in writing proficiency
Masuhara et al. 1996	EFL; university; Japan	Increase in reading proficiency & rate
Cho & Krashen 1994	ESL; adults; USA	Increase in reading proficiency, oral fluency, vocabulary knowledge, & attitude & motivation
Lai 1993a, b	EFL; secondary; Hong Kong	Increase in reading proficiency & vocabulary
Elley 1991	EFL; primary; Singapore	Increase in reading proficiency & attitude & motivation
Hafiz & Tudor 1990	EFL; primary; Pakistan	Increase in writing proficiency & vocabulary knowledge
Robb & Susser 1989	EFL; university; Japan	Increase in reading proficiency and attitude
Pitts, White, & Krashen, 1989	ESL; adults; USA	Increase in vocabulary knowledge
Janopoulos 1986	EFL; university; USA	Increase in writing proficiency
Elley & Mangubhai 1981	EFL; primary; Fiji	Increases in reading proficiency & general language proficiency including listening & writing; increase in attitude & motivation

The chart emphasizes on an extract of the four most common benefits an ESL learner obtains with extensive reading materials. The following benefits extracted from the table are:

- Vocabulary growth
- Improvement in the other macros skills
- Gains in motivation and attitude so students become eager readers.
- Increasing reading rate.

4. Definition of Critical Thinking

4.1 What is Critical thinking?

Richard Paul states on his website called Critical Thinking Community a definition of critical thinking which is the art of thinking about thinking in an intellectually disciplined manner because it is a process which involves a wide range of skills to be developed. Critical thinking involves following proofs, thinking about all the possibilities, relying upon reasons instead of feelings, considering different points of view, taking into account the effects of prejudices, and not refusing popular opinions. Consequently it entails being able to identify other people's arguments as well as their conclusions on a particular topic. This means critical thinking is an important skill ESL students need to develop from extensive reading materials which are books of their pleasure to become analytical and conscious people about the environment that surrounds them.

Moreover an investigation done by Zaid Ali Alsagoff (2008) characterizes critical thinking as the intellectual disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and /or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. It is a great tool to develop critical thinking skills in order to create an interest in finding new solutions to different problems. Also a critical thinker develops an open mind to participate in debates, forums, chat rooms. The reader has the confidence on the information gathered on the extensive reading routine done on a certain period of time.

4.2 Benefits of critical thinking

There are many writers that list many benefits of critical thinking but for this paper are considered these ones which are taken from Zaid Ali Alsagoff (2008). These could be of academic, professional or personal nature.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

- Increases understanding of the arguments and beliefs of others
- Fosters a critical evaluation of those arguments and beliefs
- Allows for the development and defense of one's own well-supported arguments and belief

WORKPLACE

- Helps us to reflect and obtain a deeper understanding of our own and other's decisions.
- Encourages us to obtain an open-mindedness for a change
- Aids us in being more analytical in solving problems

DAILY LIFE

- Helps us to avoid making rash personal decisions.
- Promotes an informed and concerned citizenry capable of making good decisions on important social, political and economic issues.
- Aids in the development of autonomous thinkers capable of examining their assumptions, dogmas, and prejudices.

4.3 Characteristics of critical thinking

C. Wade (1995) affirms a number of important characteristics of critical thinking when he states that “[it] involves asking questions, defining a problem, examining evidence, analyzing assumptions and biases, avoiding emotional reasoning, avoiding oversimplification, considering other interpretations, and tolerating ambiguity” (C. Wade 1995). In sum, critical thinking helps to develop a critical mind and a broad theoretical framework of a variety of topics. It also helps one to support one’s viewpoint with argumentative and well-founded claims.

Jones & Ratcliff (1993) express that critical thinking has another relevant characteristic which is related to metacognition. Metacognition is thinking about one's own thinking. More specifically, "metacognition is being aware of one's thinking as one performs specific tasks and then using this awareness to control what one is doing" [Jones & Ratcliff, \(1993\), p. 10](#). For example, you may use a self-questioning strategy while reading as a means of obtaining knowledge (cognitive), or as a way of monitoring what you have read (metacognitive). This means that metacognition is a self-control process which guides us to get our learning strategies. When you are doing extensive reading you are applying thinking about thinking and getting knowledge about knowledge with your own strategies.

In addition, there are three aspects that critical thinkers develop. First, they learn to ask good, logically-sound questions, by assessing the implications of all implied premises Gerald Nosich (2005). Critical thinkers tend to focus their attention on formulating assertive questions. By asking well-founded questions, the likelihood of obtaining reliable answers increases. Secondly, critical thinkers learn to use and comprehend language with accuracy, clarity,

and discrimination according to Edward Glaser (1942). A sound textual comprehension consists of a full understanding of the various meanings implied in the materials being read. Last, critical thinkers have to reconstruct their patterns of beliefs as the basis of wider experience, evaluating an argument in terms of reasonability and practicality. All these assertive declarations can be practiced by reading habits. It is vital to include the reading speed and method according to the type of materials and the purpose of reading.

We argue that extensive reading develops critical thinking skills in ESL students at a university level considered necessary for academic, professional and personal growth. According to Bamford and Helgesen (1998) extensive reading is a very effective way of reinforcing, confirming and deepening knowledge of vocabulary, expressions and structures, and of developing an implicit understanding of when and how words are used. Critical thinking is thinking that helps establish well-founded judgments and utilizes appropriate evaluation standards in the attempt to determine the true worth, or value of their reading. If extensive reading is encouraged in English class, it will promote critical thinking, which in its turn will instill a critical and reflexive attitude in ESL students. As such, ESL students will be more likely to form well-founded and fair judgments and beliefs in their academic endeavors, but also in their future careers and personal lives.

5. Academic Benefits of Extensive Reading and Critical Thinking for ESL students

As is indicated by the previous definitions, students at a university level need to have extensive reading as an important component of their academic curriculum as this promotes a superior comprehensive level. The way information is obtained when engaging in this reading method allows for a more critical mode of interacting with the reading materials. When implementing this method, information is processed by analyzing it, questioning, making inferences and obtaining unique conclusions. As Zaid Ali Alsagoff (2008) puts it, when one starts asking questions and seeking answers one is in fact thinking. When one reads material of personal interest and asks why it has been written in that form, one's brain is encouraged to look for the answers for your own interrogations. Thinking critically, one is using one's brain to make sense of one's own world. Because you are analyzing, evaluating and reasoning for problem solving and decision making.

Students can develop academic arguments for any topic that they encounter. For this purpose, they can use critical vocabulary, exploring their beliefs and argumentation, clarifying and questioning their work. Furthermore, in order to criticize a well-constructed argumentation, students must examine or evaluate the assumptions they face in their argumentation. They need to be diligent in seeking relevant information, being able to read between the lines, analyzing, evaluating and inferring. Additionally, good critical thinkers can do two more things: they can explain what they think and how they arrive at that judgment. A critical thinker is someone who has developed a knowledgeable understanding of the complexities inherent in the world, a thoughtful perspective on important ideas and timely issues, the capacity for penetrating insight and intelligent judgment, and the ability for sophisticated thinking and

language abilities John Chaffee (2006). Critical thinkers then can relate all these characteristics mentioned above to improve their previous opinions.

Richard Paul (2004) and Peter Facione (1998) state that ESL students develop critical thinking skills through extensive reading. According to their argument, it is important to use critical thinking criteria to obtain authentic active learning and academic success. Students apply course concepts in real life situations, having the opportunity to think independently, basing their judgments on what they have read. Within educational environments, both students and teachers engage in active learning when participating in extensive reading, since this method allows for critical analysis. The more students read the more they come to understand the world.

Students can be aware of the relationship between critical thinking and extensive reading, especially for academic studies which provide a context in which the two skill sets interrelate significantly. Students should know that they should not accept everything they read. They have to examine reading materials to obtain their own points of view and perspectives. Because human beings naturally create and build concepts through the information available about them, reading creates the unique opportunity to build academic success by thinking critically. Students need to think about the materials they read and use their own conceptualizations.

Scrutinizing new information by engaging in critical thinking, students become independent thinkers and autonomous learners, trying out new ideas and actively making sense of cognitive structures. To maximize the quality of thinking, however, you must learn how to become an effective critic of your

own thinking. In order to achieve this, you have to make learning about thinking a priority Paul and Elder, (2001).

ESL students develop a reflective mind when they engage in reflective thinking of what they are reading. They can decide what information is important to face the issues that concern them. At the same time they will be more aware to collect opinions from trustworthy sources. A reader with a reflective mind has the following characteristics: (s)he is purposeful and adjusts the extensive reading to definite goals to achieve in order to be successful in the academic field. Moreover, the reader has the ability to integrate ideas and information, which implies that (s)he joins the ideas obtained from the text to the ones (s)he already had. What is more, a reader with a reflective mind is critical in the sense that (s)he is looking for clarity, precision, relevance, logic significance and fairness. And a last characteristic is for the reader to be open to new perspectives in order to acquire the knowledge to be an active citizen in this complex world.

Students will be able to agree or disagree with the texts they have read in order to express their points of view. Subsequently, teachers will have more opportunity for group and class discussions, debates, forums, and interviews. What is more, these activities will be facilitated by the fact that students will most likely be more inclined to participate actively, since they are more likely to feel comfortable to express and criticize the situations they encounter while reading to contexts pertaining to their everyday lives. Moreover, students are less likely to feel the pressure of having to answer questions, since the latter will only be asked at the end of each section and since no dictionary is required. Students are more likely to aware of their own choices when they are engaging a pleasurable activity, and, as was cited earlier, extensive reading is often considered pleasurable. The rewards students will obtain will be of

academic, professional and personal nature and as such they will obtain more growing opportunities in their country.

Critical thinking is thinking that explicitly aims to establish well-founded judgments and utilizes appropriate evaluation standards to determine the true worth, or value of what we have read. We can also describe it as reasonable, reflective, responsible and skillful thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or to do in life. Someone who applies critical thinking skills in his or her life is engaging in an analytical and profound study, because this person is concerned about the results obtained from analysis. According to Victor Maiorana (1992), the purpose of critical thinking is to understand the situation to evaluate different points of view and to solve problems. Also, Barbara Fowler (2002) affirmed that critical thinking is connected with rationality, liberalism and clarity of mind while it is contrary to mental inactivity and insularity. Critical thinking means to think open-mindedly with your feet on the ground to make assertive and objective decisions.

6. Professional Benefits of Extensive Reading and Critical Thinking for ESL students

ESL students at a university level should apply extensive reading to expand and increase their critical thinking talents. The latter will be gained when students develop their reading abilities beyond the classroom. Students will become good critical thinkers within their jobs by contributing to the development of the companies they work for. In addition ESL students will look beyond their jobs and communities to have a say in defining a set of criteria to analyze ideas and find new solutions to particular problems. Also they can support beliefs and change opinions with new facts they found while doing

extensive reading. At the same time the employee who reads for pleasure is a good candidate to be the company advisor's based on the critical thinking ability that this person shows to company's manager.

Becoming good readers of English is helpful to keep active critical thinking skills, which in turn will help gain benefits in the professional sphere. In this multifaceted world graduates who can adapt quickly to new changes improve their chances to obtain, retain and succeed in any job, and particularly in jobs that require English fluency. The ability of critical thinking developed in students of English through extensive reading is beneficial for their professional careers since it improves their ability to make objective decisions, which helps the company they work for to maintain a better position in the market, despite obstacles or difficulties. Graduates formulate objective decisions based on a careful evaluation to produce the best and more accurate solutions to problems. To face problems they need to have acquainted all the information about different aspects of their work. So, their ability to engage in extensive reading, acquired in ESL class, will help them to find the right solution.

What is more, to face problems these decisions have to be based on solid information and reasoned hypotheses. They need to impact the listener to avoid emotional manipulation, deceiving reasoning and lazy thinking. Using their critical thinking criteria, analysis and judgment, graduates can use their cognitive development Lev Vygotsky (1978). In this sense, critical thinking skills help graduates climb the ladder of corporate success. A person whose thoughts and solutions are assertive is known as a person that can fit in new positions, because of his ability to think critically. The path to obtain, retain and succeed in the job is not without pitfalls but in the end the results are likely to be very positive.

Also, graduates who can think critically and communicate effectively are easily promoted to a higher position in their workplaces. This opportunity of being promoted gives them the chance to put into action their proficiency skills to deal with a customer and with internal difficulties in the company. Consequently, they must apply critical skills to obtain satisfactory results when dealing with a purchaser's issue, so that they cover their expectations. They need to display confidence to the person they are talking to. To facilitate an effective communication it is necessary to engage in direct and transparent communication and to use visual images to help people understand what is being said. Indeed, it is necessary to keep active critical skills to learn to add more value to the promotion with a plan to acquire them.

It is essential to demonstrate critical thinking when talking to the supervisor and the colleagues. It is necessary to be clear in the formulation of ideas, positions, arguments, and analysis to send an exact message when necessary. Rather than to accept things the way they are, it is necessary to think how to improve them and how to come up with innovative solutions to perform those things much better, how to create a good environment around, to obtain promotions position in their workplaces.

Graduates who apply their critical thinking skills implement the idea underlying critical thinking, namely that the reader (re)constructs the text's information based in part on the knowledge drawn from the text and in part from the reader's prior knowledge. Critical thinking skills and the extensive reading habit create an environment of commitment in their workplace. This helps the people realize that their voice is heard and that they are allowed to speak more. They will also build up a sense of ownership and pride in what they do and will take a great pleasure in their workmanship. It has a positive effect on the other staff's attitude, too. It generates an inclusive environment in which everyone is

valued for their distinctive contributions. Because of their skills and talents, graduates can gain respect among colleagues. They are motivated to grow and develop their interests and skills in ways that both give personal satisfaction and match with the needs of the business. The main goal inherent in the creation of a work place characterized by commitment is to construct a positive and respectful workplace where everyone feels proud of their work. The work place will not only be an environment in which workers take good decisions, and offer assertive analysis, but it will also be a setting free of any tension and discrimination.

7. Personal Benefits of Extensive Reading and Critical Thinking for ESL students

ESL students are going to analyze and assess the information that they gather from reading extensively because it brings benefits to them. By thinking critically, these students are less likely to be emotionally involved in what they are reading. They can view reading materials in a more scientific style and can think logically instead. They will turn into more observant people as well. This takes place because written thoughts give students the opportunities to think through arguments and make use of their high-order thinking skills to react and answer to difficult problems. So extensive reading and written thoughts are tied to one another because they build up a reflective mind by analyzing and assessing all the information collected from the text.

ESL students will develop their critical thinking skills by reading extensively, so they avoid making foolish personal decisions in their life. Besides they are less likely to express an opinion on a topic they have never read about before. As a result, students are less inclined to judge people's points of view without offering solid arguments. It is particularly important to postpone judgment when

speaking another language, including English, since the foreign customs and culture need to be taken into account before offering any judgments. People who maintain the custom to read extensively continue on a high level of judgment since their mode of reading will adjust to their mode of thinking and not vice versa. In everyday life an endless sequence of decisions has to be taken. Whereas some might be relatively inconsequential, others are large and life-determining. So decision-making needs to be rational and coherent. These characteristics will maximize life quality and opportunities of pleasant living. Thus Critical thinking increases the level of consciousness and deliberate choices.

ESL students will become individuals who are informed and concerned citizens of their own growth who think critically independent in order to make assertive contributions to the society. Society needs this kind of people, critical thinkers. Developing these two important components ESL students are able to set goals that are reachable because they have obtained a more ample and knowledgeable understanding of this complex world. John Chaffee (2006) argues that a critical thinker is someone who has a thoughtful perspective on important ideas and timely issues, the capacity for penetrating insight and intelligent judgment, and sophisticated thinking and language abilities. Not all people can reach this kind of judgment. Another important element is to have self-confidence in one's own abilities to reason when making decisions. Also, it is necessary to have the ability to distinguish relevant from irrelevant choices and to be aware of how these choices will affect life.

As Zaid Ali Alsagoff (2008) through extensive reading and critical thinking students judge, analyze and evaluate political, economic and social problems to avoid being only a consumer of society's distractions. While practicing extensive reading they will obtain information about political, social and

economic problems the other countries and people have had. They will use their critical thinking skills to make judgments about those situations and connect them to the present time. So this will create a guide for making intelligent decisions in order to have a better quality of life. Also they will analyze and evaluate how to formulate rational choices to gain personal liberation and improvement so that they are not only the shadow or the consumer of someone or something else. A vital point to mention is that all this is done by using their thinking skills in an ethical manner. Moreover, ESL students, as conscientious citizens, use reasoning elements to accomplish some purpose, use concepts or ideas obtained from their extensive reading habit and unique experiences. Using extensive reading, they use reliable information to draw logical conclusions, when dealing with societal or political issues.

8. Conclusion

ESL students at a university level apply extensive reading, which helps develop critical thinking skills, which, in turn, facilitate academic, professional and personal benefits. When becoming well-versed in the skills of extensive reading and critical thinking, students are able to connect the knowledge they obtain while reading to real life difficulties and to find logical attitudes to deal with the latter. On the other hand, students are encouraged to become lifelong readers of English to keep active their critical thinking skills. Students who have an advanced aptitude in extensive reading and critical thinking will more likely be open-minded towards new ideas and perspectives, which foster a continued intellectual and professional growth. They do not take a simplistic view of their work environment. They look for better job opportunities to have a different quality of life.

Moreover, students will develop their critical thinking skills to avoid making irrational personal decisions in their lives. People who develop their critical thinking skills jump over the barrier of self-commodity and passive status. They evaluate and consider new viewpoints or perspectives to solve problems or to make changes that benefit themselves and their surroundings. People who know how to obtain success in life do not stay in one place; they move through better positions, opportunities, decisions, and so on so as not to fail in big life decisions. These decisions rely on knowledge acquired in day-to-day extensive reading of texts that can help in life.

Extensive reading really widens people's critical thinking skills to make them active human beings in the world, so that they are not like robots whose life and thoughts are controlled by others. When they realize that they are free and have freedom to think, a new person is born with an open-mind to draw objective and warranted conclusions. If these two elements of extensive reading and critical thinking are implemented in education they will create intellectual and disciplined people with an interest in new and innovating perspectives. Finally, on our own experience with this topic our life has been enriched with relevant information that has made us aware of the way we view our surroundings. We realize that it is important to maintain our extensive reading habit because the decisions we make now are done more rationally as we are more conscious of the importance of the results we will obtain. If we do not read and further develop our critical faculties, we will lose many opportunities of life development.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To create an Extensive Reading club that includes a variety of Reading categories that covers the majority of necessities so the actual conversation clubs are kept to motivate students share their reading experience with other students and teachers with discussions and debates.
2. To make a multilevel extensive reading program done by students from the social service department where students are divided in elementary, intermediate or advanced levels to participate in extensive reading activities.
3. To make a better use of the laboratory by having books on CD's, so students can listen and read them at the same time. This gives more excitement to read by pleasure.
4. To motivate teachers that have Reading and Conversation classes use the reading approach of extensive reading that is more beneficial in the sense that provides free reading activities than intensive reading, which are controlled reading activities.
5. To obtain updated books which can be used as research reference of the different subjects taken at this Department, so the English Department Library and post on a white board the two books for the week and this reduces the use of the web resources.
6. To create a data base of online books where students can access by a facebook account from the English Department Library to select the books they want to read. This project can be carried out by the social service department students.

VI. METHODOLOGY

The first step was selecting a topic. The topic selected Extensive Reading a Meaningful Tool to Develop Critical Thinking Skills in ESL students was chosen because of the benefits it can bring not only to university students but also teachers. The academic field of this subject is ESL students at a university level with three types of advantages the academic, professional and personal ones. So the selection of this topic was that extensive reading and critical thinking both are the main components a person needs to get a different point of life.

The second step was searching the literature before this step with discuss the topic together with our mentor to have a clear picture of what the research would be about. After having much clearer the topic we look for literature referring to extensive reading and critical thinking. The support to the topic with reliable information comes from well-known researches like Harmer in his book "The practice of English Language Teaching. Another author consulted was Patricia Carrel with her book English for specific purposes Extensive and Intensive reading in an EAP setting, and we prepared cards to keep track of authors consulted. All of these reading selections above guided us to have a scaffolding to relate extensive reading with critical thinking and to develop our arguments. During this step, we applied some reading techniques such skimming, scanning to select the material to be used.

The third step was developing the argument before starting writing the essay, we investigated the meaning of some terminology and other aspects related to the work to be presented. Then we started the work by preparing an outline and doing some free writing based on ideas gotten from authors consulted and

personal experience. The argument was created by giving an opinion that extensive reading develops the critical thinking skill of ESL students. It is supported with three reasons which established that ESL students open themselves to obtain three types of benefits which are academic, professional and personal ones. Each reason is sustained with bibliographical reference and personal experiences.

The fourth step was surveying the literature. There are two types of argument: complex and simple. The type of argument that we have chosen is simple. Because the thesis statement has the argument position followed by three supporting ideas which are claims with reasons. They have evidence to clearly mark the author's ideas. First the literature was explored to have the right relation with our thesis statement. At the beginning we did not find resources that connected the two purposes which are extensive reading and critical thinking. We did not find books with the two topics already joined. So for this reason the next step we took to obtain evidence from each part was to investigate them separately.

We got important information to justify our point to argue that extensive reading is a tool that develops critical thinking skills in ESL students at a University level. This was done by consulting books that we download from the internet. We read essays written by students from other universities, from different countries, and they gave us support to our thesis statement. Then another resource consulted were different websites that have updated information from both parts of the topic. They are listed in the bibliography section. Then we structured the claims with their reasons for each topic to form the paragraphs of our research work.

The fifth step was critiquing the literature. At this step we started organizing the ideas to write our first draft and then a second draft which included all the information gotten from the sources consulted which is in respond to the argument given by us and the authors' proofs supply justification to the research work.

The final step was writing the review, during this step we wrote our final draft which is the result of the different steps carried out along this bibliographical research. It is important to mention that this was not a lineal process; it was a cyclical one; meaning this, that we occasionally revised previous steps to improve them and to write the final product.

VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

- Bamford, J., & Day, R.R. (1997). *Extensive Reading: What is it? Why Bother? The Language Teacher*, University of Hawaii, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Cites: Beatrice Mikuleky(1990).
- Krashen, S. (1993) *The Power of reading*, Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.
- Maiorana, Victor P., 1992. *Critical Thinking across the Curriculum: Building the Analytical Classroom*. Boomington, Indiana.
- Paul, R & Elder, L. (2008) *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking: Concepts and Tools*, Foundation for Critical Thinking, Dillon Beach, CA, USA

WEBSITES

- Lamb, Annette, Johnson, Larry. January, 1999. Updated, April 2001. *Scanning and Skimming Definitions*.
Online
Available: <http://42explore.com/skim.htm>
- Paul, Richard. (2004). *The state of critical thinking today: The Need for a substantive concept of critical thinking*. Retrieved Feb. 27, 2006, from
Online
Available: <http://www.criticalthinking.org/resources/articles/the-state-ct-today.shtml>
- The Critical Thinking Community, Dillon Beach, CA.
Cites: Paul and Elder, 2001. Gerald Nosich, 2005. Edward Glaser, 1942. Richard Paul, 2004. Peter Facione, 1998. *Critical Thinking definitions*.
Online
Available: <http://www.criticalthinking.org/>

- Surry Community College Critical Thinking, Dobson, North Carolina. Cites: John Chaffee, 2006.
Online
Available: http://www.surry.edu/about/ct/why_ct.html
- Handout from the Extensive Reading Forum, Omiya, Japan Sunday, November 22, 1998.
Online
Available: <http://www.extensivereading.net/er/JALT98.html>
- Extensive Reading and its role in Japanese High Schools.
Online
Available: <http://www.readingmatrix.com/articles/powell/article.pdf>
- The Language Learning Benefits of Extensive Reading, Paul Nation, *Victoria University of Wellington*
Online
Available: <http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/files/97/may/benefits.html>

ARTICLES

- Alsagoff, Zaid Ali. Introduction to Critical Thinking, 2003.
Online
Available: <http://www.slideshare.net/zaid/introduction-to-critical-thinking>
- Bell, Timothy, Extensive Reading: Why? and How?, *The Internet TESL Journal*, Vol. IV, No. 12, December 1998. Cites Stephen Krashen, 1983.
Online
Available: <http://iteslj.org/Articles/Bell-Reading.html>

- Chandra Dugar, Dr. Paritosh, 2009. The Role of Critical and Creative Thinking in TESL Context, Vice-Principal, SMB Govt. P.G. College, Nathdwara (Rajasthan). Cites C. Wade 1995.
 Online
 Available:
<http://www.elweekly.com/elt-newsletter/2010/06/60-research-...>
- Powell, Steve. 2005. The Reading Matrix, Vol 5, No. 2, Extensive Reading and its Role in Japanese High Schools, Japan, Hiroshima. Cites: Harold Palmer, 1968 and Bamford and Helgesen. 1998.
- Adsit, Karen I. Teaching Critical Thinking Skills, 2007. Last Updated: Thursday, March 22, 2007. Cites Jones and Ratcliff 1993.
 Online
 Available
<http://academic.udayton.edu/legaled/ctskills/ctskills01.htm>
- Bilgin, A., Eldeleklioglu, J. from H.U. journal of Education, 2007 pages 55-67. Cites: Fowler 2002 who is cited by Kurland and Daniel
 Online
 Available
<http://www.efdergi.hacettepe.edu.tr/200733ASUDE%20B%C4%B0LG%C4%B0N.pdf>
- Benson, Professor Clare. , University of Central England, Faculty of Education cites: Vigotsky, 1978. Mind in society. Cambridge, Harvard University Press
 Online
 Available
http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/ste/pdf_files/connect/ClareBenson.PDF