



EFL EDUCATION-ORIENTED READING AND SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH CRITICAL THINKING

A Theoretical Basis for the Degrees in Education

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ABSTRACT

The development of skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is a necessary requirement for communication, but equally for L2 enhancement. Thus, the aim of this paper is to propose a system of activities for the Degrees in Education. This system integrates two skills, that is, reading and speaking, in addition to enhancing the development of critical thinking skills. All these aspects will be intimately linked to the importance of the education-related context for future school teachers.

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1. Introduction

Learning a language requires the development of skills in a simultaneous manner given the interdependence that exists among them. These skills might be developed in different manners, especially when there is a conflation between productive and receptive skills. Traditionally, skills that are related to each other have been the focus of combined tasks. In other words, speaking is tightly related to listening, while reading is linked to writing, and vice versa. In light of this, it has been mentioned that focusing solely on one skill may be detrimental to the quality of other skills (Skehan, 1998). Hence, the development of skills in an L2 is uneven even if two skills are combined at the same time. The main rationale lies in how and when these skills are further associated with each other. Nonetheless, despite recent attempts at showing how skills may be combined, research efforts have been exclusively concentrated on speaking and listening (Hinkel, 2017) or reading and writing (Fitzgerald & Shanahan, 2000; Hirvela, 2004). The integration of other skills, for instance, reading and speaking, has been traditionally disregarded in the language learning programs, and even more in Higher Education.

In this tertiary-level context, combined skills gain more traction insomuch as undergraduates are expected to develop skills that require both reading and writing, or reading and speaking. Such a combination entails that undergraduates are able to critically assess a source (for instance, a text about a topic related to their degree, or a short conference), and present their own views on the basis of the arguments provided in these documents. In the context of Higher Education, and more specifically, in EFL, undergraduates are not habitually accustomed to developing these skills within their field of study. This has been manifested in recent research (Garcés-Manzanera, 2021), where EFL modules in the area of Education did not deal with education-related aspects. Impairing undergraduates from a specific focus on their field of study may result in a lack of competences that will be more evident when they join the labor market. In this sense, undergraduates in the Degrees of

Education, that is, future teachers, are expected to be able to draw content from relevant sources, and develop an opinion that is relevant for their day-to-day teaching duties. Hence, ours is an attempt to fill this gap by providing an activity proposal that combines reading and speaking, as two fundamental skills in Higher Education, and that equally includes education-related content.

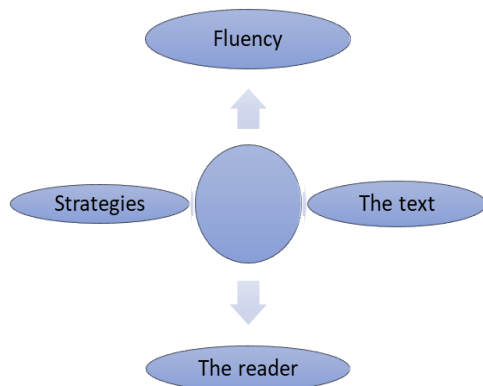
Building on all these arguments, this paper revolves around two central axes: (1) reading skills as pivotal for language learning and the activation of several higher-level processes, and (2) speaking skills, which are intimately related to these processes. Thus, ours is an attempt to integrate these two important skills by exploring how they may be theoretically associated with a special focus on education within the framework of Education degrees at Spanish universities.

2. Reading skills in the L2

Grabe (2014) describes *reading* as the ability to interact with the text in order to “extract, or build, meaning from a text” (p. 8). Other voices (Hill, 1979) regard it as the process whereby the reader gets an understanding suited to their needs based on the contextual resources. Hence, this understanding-what-I-need approach involves a process which Nunan (2003) referred to as the combination of information from the text (input) and the background knowledge whose main goal is to achieve full comprehension.

Nonetheless, Nunan’s (2003) conception of the reading as both a process and a skill entails several agents as depicted in the following figure:

Figure 1.
Conceptualization of reading.



Source: adapted from Nunan, 2003.

As seen, these agents play varied but interrelated roles. Hence, the strategies the reader uses –which are individual-dependent– generally condition the perspective of the text and the fluency variable. This largely coincides with Grabe’s (2014) characterization of the reading comprehension process, which entails the rapid recognition of words, the efficient use of recognition vocabulary, the processing of sentences so as to build meaning, and more importantly, the use of strategic processes and cognitive skills. He also points to the role of the reader as an interpreter and evaluator of texts in line with a set of goals and purposes.

Building on the concept of *reading fluency*, Grabe (2014) reviews the reading abilities into two distinct processes: lower-level and higher-level reading processes. In what follows, I will present Grabe’s (2014) characterization, and a critical assessment of these will be made.

Lower level processing. These processes include automatic (and ideally, fast) word recognition skills, lexico-syntactic processing, and semantic processing of clauses into meaning units (Grabe, 2014; Perfetti & Adlof, 2012). Previous research (e.g., Ehri, 2006; Rayner et al., 2012; Grabe, 2014) has been quite controversial as regards the role of lower-level processes during reading since some empirical studies have attempted to minimize their relevance (Goodman, 1996). Others (e.g., Cunningham et al., 1990; Stanovich, 1993, 2000) have advocated for the importance of textual and word

recognition as lower-level processes as having a considerable impact on higher-level processes, especially in advanced readers. Although reading in the L1 involves a completely different perspective, research (Grabe, 2009; Grabe & Stoller, 2011) has suggested that the amount of vocabulary is positively correlated with reading abilities. Such a finding is aligned with research on L2 vocabulary knowledge, suggesting a similar, if not equal, pattern in the positive correlation between vocabulary knowledge and L2 reading comprehension (see Droop & Verhoeven, 2003; Qian, 2002). Thus, the increasing exposure to reading input in a longitudinal manner is reported to enhance vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension.

Similarly, Grabe (2014, 2009) alludes to the processing of L2 syntax as a lower-level operation. Much as it was reported in the case of L2 vocabulary knowledge, the understanding of syntax, and morphological knowledge, is strongly related to reading comprehension (Shiotsu, 2010). One of the agents mentioned above, fluency, is thought to be associated with automatic semantic processing and syntactic parsing, as was suggested by some voices (e.g. Perfetti & Adlof, 2012). In such a case, the reader is able to comprehend the meaning units in the text and identify the main communicative goal. Nonetheless, the operations related to fluency go beyond the psycholinguistics of text understanding, involving a series of semantic and pragmatic abilities.

Higher-level processing. This type of reading processes is aligned with a deeper comprehension of the text. According to Grabe (2014), these may be identified as the forming of idea meanings, the recognition of related and thematic information, building a global understanding of the text input, and generating a personal interpretation of the text-based upon the reader’s background knowledge and inferencing strategies. In fact, when the reader engages in the act of reading, a series of semantic ideas are created in order to obtain global comprehension of the text *per se*. These ideas may stem from two different sources: (i) the reader’s own background knowledge, and perspectives towards the text, and (ii) the ideas

presented in the text. Such a conception is associated with Kintsch's (2012) views since the readers have to combine the ideas included in each clause, hence maintaining coherence in the interpretation. Thus, coherence aids in fostering the reader's understanding of the text, which leads to interpreting what should be selectively stored in the long-term memory.

Building on the above, the reader's ability to focus his attention on a very specific item of the text, and hence "to attend selectively to certain information" (Grabe, 2014, p. 10) is what makes reading a skill beyond the mere reception of input. In fact, Grabe (2014) point to the strategic behavior while reading with attention, since in an L2, reading involves learning. At that point, comprehension holds a pivotal role since "reading-to-learn" (Perfetti & Adlof, 2012) is precisely interrelated with the readers' effort to monitor the difficulties appearing in the mental representation of the meaning conveyed in the text. Most of the research on higher-level processing in reading has focused predominantly on a variety of pre- and post-reading tasks activities. These have been mainly based upon L1 empirical evidence: for instance, the use of using semantic mapping of the ideas of the text, visualizing ideas from the text, or formulating and answering questions about the main ideas. As reviewed by Grabe (2014), research on these higher level processing operations has been scarce in L2 reading studies, and hence more restricted. Nonetheless, findings point to benefits from reading strategies to reading comprehension.

All in all, both types of reading processing indicate that reading is not merely a receptive skill, but involves cognitive operations that are also part of productive skills. The linguistic encoding when L2 learners engage in reading is aligned with comprehension insomuch as prior knowledge exerts an influence over what the learner understands. Likewise, this prior knowledge serves the reader to establish comparisons at the level of language, but also content. The role of comprehension is essential as the understanding of a given text or passage in an L2 might be boosted when other variables, such as reading fluency, increase. There is, then, an apparent connection between the reading process and other language skills such as speaking.

3. Speaking skills in the L2

Oral production is associated with speaking as a productive skill, and according to Nunan (2003), it entails "producing systematic verbal utterance to convey meaning" (p. 48). Hence, the sole use of the word *meaning* in the previous definition points to the value of speaking as an exclusively communicative activity.

Building on the communicative nature of speaking, there are a number of components that speaking possesses: accuracy, complexity and fluency (Harmer, 2001). While speaking, an L2 learner discloses whether his language knowledge and use are accurate as well as fluency, both at a cognitive and executor level. For oral production to be successful, Harmer (2001) distinguishes among the following components: (1) connected speech, (2) expressive devices, (3) lexis and grammar (accuracy), and (4) negotiation and language. In this context, (1) and (2) are closely related to the construct of fluency given the necessity that L2 learners produce meaningful and linked utterances. Similarly, the appropriate intonation, stress, and speed have to be tailored to the register where communication is taking place. Gestures would be included under (2). Regarding (3), this is strongly associated with the construct of accuracy and complexity, since L2 learners are expected to make varied but also effective use of lexical and grammatical features. In the case of (4), learners' success in its use is largely dependent on (3) since the negotiation of meaning may hinge on linguistic and pragmatic knowledge. Along this line, the absence of comprehension in terms of the content may also involve the activation of negotiation processes.

In relation to the above, most of these characteristics are shared by other skills, for instance, reading and listening in terms of accuracy at the level of understanding, but also connected speech, closely related to reading fluency.

4. The connection between Reading and Speaking

Grabe (1991) proposed six component skills related to the reading process: a) automatic recognition skills; b) vocabulary and structural knowledge; c) formal discourse structure knowledge; d) content background knowledge;

e) synthesis and evaluation knowledge; and f) metacognitive knowledge and skills monitoring. These component skills are associated with the value of communication, and the characteristics involved. In this sense, communication is based on four dimensions, out of which grammatical and vocabulary knowledge are ostensibly the most relevant ones (Lazaraton, 2001).

The four dimensions entail:

1) *Grammatical competence*, which includes phonology, vocabulary, morphological and syntactical features.

2) *Sociolinguistic competence*, which involves the speaker's understanding and social adaptation of the linguistic expression to the communicative setting.

3) *Discourse competence*, which entails the construction of coherently interwoven sentences, and hence, ideas.

4) *Strategic competence*, which alludes to compensatory strategies used when the speaker has to confront comprehension difficulties.

The connection between these four dimensions and the purported reading processes will be established. Both reading and speaking skills require that the L2 learner holds an appropriate command, even if passively, of the L2. Automaticity or automatic identification skills (McLaughlin, 1990) are related to the purported value of grammatical competence and the ability to read, entailing the recognition of words, essential to develop fluent reading abilities. In the case of vocabulary and structural knowledge (Grabe, 1991), this component skill is intimately related to the learner's speaking performance, since vocabulary aids in developing speed at reading, but also at production (Krashen & Terrel, 1983). In fact, reading involves decodifying the meaning interwoven in the words of a text, whose main aim is to communicate certain information. In this sense, reading makes a general contribution to all the competences. Part of the vocabulary knowledge, which is indispensable for effective communication, derives from this specific receptive skill.

In addition to this, the channel of communication (either oral or written) involves several aspects beyond the mere recognition of linguistic items. In this regard, the use of a

different register is visible not only while reading a text, but similarly while producing oral output. Sociolinguistic competence plays a significant role when a situation like this arises. In the case of strategic competence, its relation to both e) and f) from Grabe's (1991) component skills must be made relevant. To establish a parallelism between both reading and speaking, when L2 learners are reading a text which contains unfamiliar vocabulary words, an effort has to be made. Compensatory strategies have to be activated in order to look for the meaning, or to establish connections between the overall meaning of the text and the surrounding phrases. Despite the potential difficulty that a given text may entail, those mechanisms will aid in discerning the meaning. Much as it happens with reading, L2 learners encounter similar difficulties when engaging in speaking. This is particularly related to the role of automaticity in terms of lexical access and of negotiation of meaning. When this oral production entails a two-way interaction, meaning may be negotiated through different communicative strategies. Hence, the comprehension of meanings are closely related to each other in speaking and reading. Lexical retrieval is suggested to be intimately linked to incidental vocabulary acquisition (Lechmann, 2007) insomuch as vocabulary processing may lead to integrating certain words or lexical chunks into the passive lexical repertoire. Subsequently, such incidental incorporation may be conducive to the spoken language (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998).

Levelt's (1989, 1993) model regards vocabulary as a central aspect in oral production, highlighting the purported connection between the former and reading comprehension. Several voices (e.g., Lee, 1995) have manifested that an authentic text possessing intrinsically communicative quality -as occurs during oral production, where a message is to be relayed to an interlocutor- is valuable for speaking. This interweaving between the special communicative feature of a text and the role of oral communication is likely to play a significant role in learning an L2. Thus, the integration of speaking and reading skills allows for more vocabulary processing via the application of this information in real-life situations (Zhang, 2009).

On a long-term basis, L2 learners who keep a steady reading routine are more likely to discover the meaning of words with the help of context, essential elements to develop advanced speaking skills (Hedge, 1985).

Hence, the more vocabulary, the more the speaking skill will be enhanced given the specified route: (1) L2 learners need to read a lot in order to develop sufficiently adaptive fluent reading skills as well as cognitive-related abilities in terms of lexical retrieval, context adaptation, and the integration of common linguistic structures into the learner's own interlanguage (Selinker, 1972); (2) reading allows for creating mental representations of actions through the comprehension of the written word, including meanings, syntax, morphology, and phonology; (3) these mental representations will further create knowledge, as L2 learners are pushed beyond their boundaries; (4) if L2 learners are thus encouraged to read a text, and continue with oral production, certain linguistic structures, and vocabulary words may become part of this discourse. Similarly, the semantic content of the text, if it is maintained in the follow-up speaking task, may contribute to consolidating the vocabulary used.

To finalize this section, one has to bear in mind that the cognitive efforts alluded previously are intimately related to the role of critical thinking. To illustrate this, when an L2 learner is reading a text, a series of cognitive mechanisms are activated with several purposes: (a) understanding the text both at the level of content and language, especially within the L2 context, and (b) a critical assessment of the ideas transmitted in the text is also performed, as evaluation and decision-making are generally present. In what follows, I will attempt to bridge the gap between reading and speaking skills from the global perspective of critical thinking. I will try to link the relevance of critical thinking in the sphere of Higher Education as the main objective of this paper, as anticipated, is to develop a theoretical framework for this type of reading-into-speaking tasks in the degrees of Education.

5. Bridging the gap of Reading-into-Speaking in Higher Education: Critical Thinking

Learning usually takes place in a problem-solving environment, where the abundance of information makes it necessary to engage in the critical assessment of different sources. Hence, problem-solving is commonplace in any real-life situation, and this necessarily involves a certain degree of critical thinking. The definition of *critical thinking skills* has been manifold in the scientific literature, but most authors coincide that they are

"Purposeful, self-regulatory judgment which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as the explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, or contextual considerations upon which that judgment is based" (Facione, 1990, p. 2)

From this definition, one may distinguish two different types of cognitive operations: *cognitive skills* and *cognitive dispositions*. The first one entails the main core cognitive skills such as evaluation, inference, explanation or self-regulation whilst *cognitive dispositions* refer to being analytical, orderly, inquisitive, openminded. Such dispositions also include important interpersonal communicative skills, and abilities to discern between reliable and unreliable information sources. Previous research has suggested that *cognitive dispositions* are relatively slow to develop in sharp contrast to *cognitive skills*, which are more easily enhanced and improved (see Quitadamo et al., 2009).

These are relevant competences that, in tertiary-level courses, are of the utmost relevance (Floyd, 2010). In fact, critical thinking involves the critical assessment of a source beyond mere comprehension. A double challenge arises as a result of this effortful comprehension: learners have to think critically, which is particularly complicated in their mother tongue, but they have to do it in an L2. This, indeed, may lead to several difficulties at the time of getting the gist of the text. Under the premise that any university graduate should be able to manage different sources, and be equally able to assess them critically, critical thinking is a key aspect of Higher Education. *Reading, in itself*, involves not

only the creation of a mental representation, as announced before. It is also a means of developing ideas and fostering self-expression on the basis of the ideas propounded in the text. Thus, the conflation of both reading and speaking is primarily rooted in the fact that these skills are conducive to critical thinking. To illustrate this and framing it within the context of Education degrees, let us picture a situation in which a teacher has to read a text about an article on obesity in children. Afterward, the teacher will develop his own opinion based upon his knowledge and what he has just read. In the ensuing stage, the teacher has to create with other colleagues an activity to raise students' awareness of obesity problems. All these involve a high degree of cognitive skills, in which teachers have to evaluate the material read, and apply it to a context while, at the same time, they engage in a debate with other peer teachers. This pattern coincides with how Halpern (1997) understood *critical thinking*: problem-solving activities, inferring aspects, and developing logical reasoning patterns.

Building on the above, the pertinence of integrating reading with speaking seems to be more than useful in terms of developing both the L2 and critical thinking skills. This gap may be bridged by taking into consideration several language learning theoretical hypotheses that emerged in L2 scientific literature. As seen, the connection between the construct of reading-into-speaking and critical thinking skills has to be regarded from the perspective of the nature of the linguistic skills themselves. When the L2 reader engages in the act of reading a text, interaction occurs between his knowledge as an L2 learner and reader, and the underlying meaning of the text, which may be explicit or implicit. This cognitive conflict, either linguistic or content-related, is linked to the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990, 2001). According to this theory, this type of cognitive comparison or conflict is favored when unknown elements are confronted with previous knowledge. Similarly, through reading, the learner is pushed to create hypotheses regarding the meaning of some words.

After reading a given text, speaking skills may play a role since spoken interaction is necessary

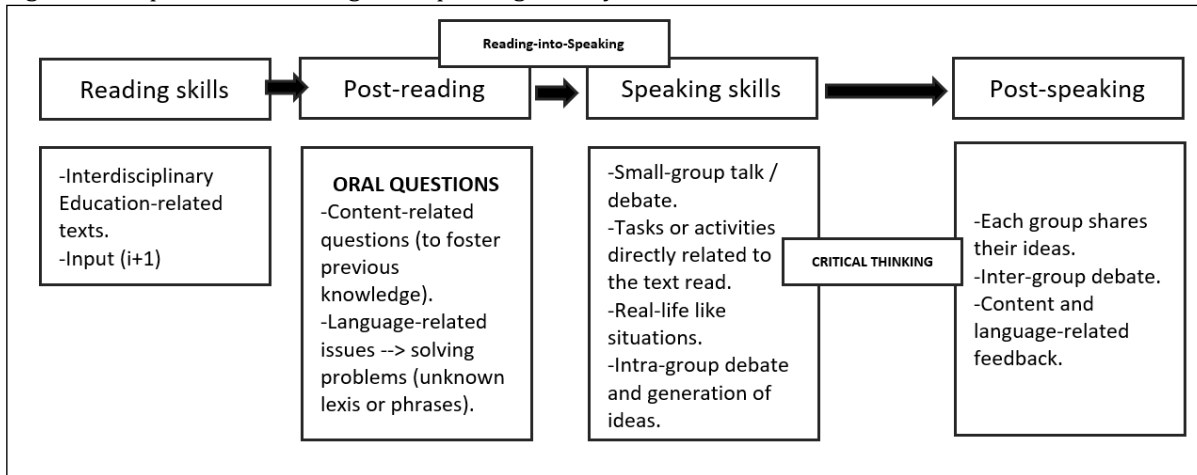
for language learning to occur, but it is in itself insufficient. In this context, Long's (1990) Interactional Hypothesis has a lot to say about this. Globally considered, the Interaction Hypothesis may be summarized, according to Ellis (1991), as follows: (1) comprehensible input is a necessary aspect for L2 acquisition to take place, (2) the structure of conversations may be modified while negotiating the meaning during communication. This way, input may become comprehensible, and (3) tasks involving an exchange of information promote this interaction and situations where there is equality between conversational partners. Building on Long's (1990) hypothesis and taking into account the nature of reading-into-speaking tasks or activities, when L2 learners read a text, they are receiving input that may contain incomprehensible words. Should these words not be understood by the learners, then the engagement in the ensuing speaking task might favor their comprehension. Hence, reading-into-speaking involves two phases: (1) written input and (2) oral output. The relevance of critical thinking in this context is particularly visible in the case of (2), especially when the speaking skill is fostered through dialogues, small-group discussions or debates. Some voices (e.g. Hasibuan & Batubara, 2012; Walker & Warhust, 2000) have underscored that debating is one of the most effective, fruitful methods to enhance both speaking and critical thinking skills. Not only may debating lead learners to conceptualize a topic in a broader fashion, but it will also foster peer-interaction. In turn, such social interaction ensures furthering critical thinking skills. In the case of advocating for or against a certain position or opinion, one has to argue and defend these views. Through interaction with other peers, our opinion may change or be reinforced. This leads us to analyze and evaluate our views in comparison with others', and at the same time, contribute to co-constructing knowledge in relation to the topic dealt with in the activity.

The role of critical thinking might be viewed as central given the presence of potential oral questions that enhance students' critical thinking skills to find solutions to real-world problems (Stephenson & Sadler-McKnight, 2016). Connecting these oral questions with the reality

of the classroom, these might be integrated as part of debates in the classroom, which some voices have suggested as efficient in increasing critical thinking skills and subject knowledge (Walker & Warhust, 2000).

Taking all of the above into consideration, Figure 2 portrays the essence of what reading-into-speaking tasks should involve in the context of Education, and particularly, Higher Education.

Figure 2. Proposal for a reading-into-speaking activity flow.



Source: Own elaboration, 2021.

As seen, the sequencing of a reading-into-speaking activity for Higher Education needs to include aspects differentiating it from other more general EFL courses. In this case, education-related texts will be used – such as the one mentioned above about obesity in children – and debating, as a main critical thinking skill, shall be used to foster ideas generation and reflecting upon the ideas contained in the text. The importance of intra-group debate is mirrored in the enhancement of peer-interaction, which is aimed at providing a solution to the activity itself, but also at creating new mental models of opinion in the learners' minds. This entails that, in addition to their own ideas, learners may be able to change their views and integrate new ideas into their thinking. Likewise, the fact that the proposed reading-into-speaking activity flow includes a text-based activity in the initial stages guarantees that learners make use of their critical assessment skills, which are later translated into critical thinking skills. Assessing a source containing diverse ideas revolving around a specific topic aids in questioning the scope of the learners' content-related knowledge – including vocabulary related to the text– but equally in developing an opinion toward it.

Continuing with the description of this activity sequencing, the immediate organization into groups (i.e. small-group talk / debate)

contributes to consolidating the vocabulary present in the text read in the reading phase. Such a consolidation is only achievable so long as the oral activities are intimately related to the content in the text. Ideally, these tasks or activities should require the learner to resort to the text at some point, in an attempt to reactivate the vocabulary previously seen.

In the same line, once all the groups have successfully completed their tasks or activities and start presenting their task outcomes before their classmates, it is relevant to mention that some processes are equally activated. More frequently than not, some groups may reassess their outcomes while attending to their peers' performance. At some point, this also triggers the generation of ideas even at a post-task phase.

Relating the matter of education-oriented critical thinking to the role of EFL in the degrees in Education at Spanish universities, recent empirical endeavors (Garcés-Manzanera, 2021) have attempted to set the stage for observing the important presence of education-related EFL vocabulary in the different courses offered in the degrees in Education. Garcés-Manzanera's (2021) study shedded light on the actual absence of education-related vocabulary and real-life situations in EFL modules taught in the degrees aiming at educating future teachers. This is one of the main aspects that has driven this study.

Given the specificity of the education context in terms of Early Childhood and Primary Education, and thus the relevance of providing future teachers with the communicative tools along with critical thinking, a reading-into-speaking task involving all these aspects is, at the very least, timely and necessary.

Situating reading-into-speaking activities within the context of education at EFL university courses, these have to be necessarily connected by means of (i) relevant vocabulary framed in (ii) the appropriate, real-life context or providing accounts of situations in the face of their future as teachers. Also, (iii) fostering debate skills (and hence, speaking) through timely questions, enhancing and developing critical thinking skills.

All in all, I have attempted to outline what shared characteristics reading and speaking may have, and the way in which they may conflate to obtain language learning affordances that translate into wider L2 knowledge. Similarly, our activity flow ensures that reading becomes part of the active learning process in addition to the intended incidental vocabulary learning occurring while reading. The integration of oral questions activates the content recently read, and introduces the learners to the subsequent oral practice. The role of *critical thinking* is interrelated to both the action of reading the text, its oral assessment, and the ensuing debate in both the speaking activity and the resulting feedback.

6. Future avenues for Reading-into-Speaking tasks

The main purpose of this paper has been to elucidate the language learning potential of combining reading and speaking skills. Added to this, the inclusion of critical thinking as a trigger for language learning but also for evaluating our knowledge has proven theoretically sound. In a similar fashion, another objective has been to pave the way for the necessary inclusion, as stated in previous research (Garcés-Manzanera, 2021), that EFL modules in Higher Education have to be specifically aimed at fostering specific language learning. More particularly, this paper intended to include the specificities of language learning for the education context. Theoretically,

reading and reviewing a text related to education may activate a series of cognitive processes (Levy, 1997) that lead to critical thinking and language learning through cognitive comparison (Ellis, 2009). Among the competences that teachers might have for their future duties is being able to examine, evaluate, assess, evaluate and make decisions in the framework of their responsibilities. Critical thinking may be a useful resource in furthering teacher trainees' developing skills in this respect. At the same time, using reading as a source for oral production is well-defined as one of the characteristics that teachers engage in, for instance, while keeping themselves up to date regarding new education methodologies or legislation changes.

Despite the apparent contribution that this paper has intended to make, there are a number of limitations that are worth considering. Firstly, this education-oriented proposal relies exclusively on reading and speaking skills, but the inclusion of other skills may be equally timely. For instance, the explanation of some grammatical structures is regarded as very convenient when the need arises. However, this might not be explicitly introduced in the activity proposal or the activity flow. Second, this paper merely presents a proposal for an activity flow from reading to speaking, but does not provide any empirical evidence as regards the actual effectiveness for L2 development. Third, the scarcity of studies where reading-into-speaking activities are proposed, and more importantly, in the context of Education at University level, makes it more difficult to extrapolate or even prospectively indicate how a potential implementation would be.

Finally, several conclusions are to be drawn. It is of the utmost importance to foster critical thinking within an education-related context where future teachers may learn and apply vocabulary related to their field. Likewise, the role of reading resonates well with that of speaking as both include the development of critical thinking skills. These skills favor the integration of vocabulary both explicitly, i.e. through reading, and incidentally, i.e. through speaking. Further empirical research should endeavor to develop didactic proposals based on

reading-into-speaking activities that take into account the relevance of future teacher education, the context where their duties are

framed, and the presence of critical thinking skills.

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