



# **Study on Cultivating Critical Thinking Ability in BTI in China-Taking English Reading Class as Example**

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## **Author's contribution**

*The sole author designed, analyzed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

It is very vital for students in BTI to grasp the critical thinking ability, but how to cultivate this ability in the fundamental courses is a big problem to be solved. This study is to employ the teamwork, such as group discussion and group representation, and reflection log in the teaching process, investigating the dynamic situation through questionnaires. The results show that group discussion, group presentation and reflection log are the effective ways to promote the critical thinking ability to some extent; however, it can not improve the critical thinking promptly in such a short time and it will be a successive process. Therefore, carrying out some class activities can enhance the critical thinking in English reading class.

*Keywords: BTI; english reading; critical thinking; teamwork; reflection log.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In recent years, (Bachelor degree of Translation and Interpreting) BTI in China has developed

quickly and researchers have attached increased importance to the cultivation of critical thinking in the stage of accumulating fundamental knowledge [1]. In western education, critical

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thinking has caught wide attention [2] and has become the main educational objectives through elementary education even to university education. In China, the critical thinking cultivation, especially of undergraduates, has roused much attention of many scholars, [3-7] focusing on research on combining critical thinking with language ability development. Meanwhile, some scholars pointed out that the critical thinking of students majored in foreign languages needs to be developed. Therefore, Professor Sun Youzhong wrote *College Critical Thinking Course*, the first critical thinking textbook for foreign language major, which has been accepted by many foreign language teachers.

Cultivating critical thinking ability is the important part of enhancing the translation ability. Zhong Weihe [8,9]. Through researches for many years, Miao Ju [9] further proposed that translation ability not only involves bilingual competence, transfer competence and world/subject knowledge but also other competence, which refers to applying strategies to solving problems and displaying mental quality and skills. The transfer competence and the strategies of solving problems are tightly related to the analysis of critical thinking competence and problem-solving competence. The effect of mental quality and skills are consistent with the personality trend in critical thinking competence. We can find out that in the stage of the fundamental course of BTI, we should not only cultivate students' language knowledge but also strengthen critical thinking competence.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on critical thinking in China is on the increase gradually. Though researchers in China have different explanations about the definition of critical thinking competence, yet most researches adopt the term "critical thinking competence" suggested by professor Wen Qiufang. It means that students should have various thinking competence such as analysis and synthesis, abstract and generalization, analyzing problems from many perspectives and innovation competence such as finding problems and solving problems (English Group of the Teaching steering Committee for Foreign language majors in Colleges and Universities [10]).

Elder and Paul argued that "critical thinking" should be defined as applying appropriate evaluation standard and conscious thinking to decide the true value of something and finally making a reasonable judgment. It includes three dimensions: analysis, evaluation and improvement. Wen Qiufang [11] at abroad, the statement which has an influence on critical thinking competence is the two-dimensional critical thinking competence model in American Delphic program and three-dimensional critical thinking competence model of Paul and Elder [12]. In China, professor Wen Qiufang constructed the theoretical model of critical thinking competence hierarchy and triangular structure model of psychological professor Lin Chongde from BNU. However, critical thinking competence hierarchical theoretical model is different from other three models. It includes meta-critical thinking competence and critical thinking competence, which emphasizes distinguishing self-regulation competence from general critical thinking competence (shown in Table 1). It is higher than general critical thinking competence, which means the skills of examining, regulating and evaluating one's critical thinking plan. The critical thinking competence we refer to is the upper-hierarchy competence in this model, which includes skills and standards of critical thinking and emotional qualities displaying personality trends. Its cognitive skills include three core aspects, which are analysis, inference and evaluation. The cognitive standards include clarity, relevance, logic, profundity and flexibility. The emotional dimension of the model includes five emotional characters which are curiosity, open, confidence, integrity and firm. Wen Qiufang [13]. This theory model materializes the abstract critical thinking competence, making the cultivation of critical thinking more manipulative and standardized.

Currently, some domestic scholars have conducted empirical research on critical thinking cultivation in the course of writing and listening. Sun Youzhong [14,15]. The research on the critical thinking cultivation in reading teaching course has also become the key point. Wang Jun [16,17]. However, the empirical research on the critical thinking cultivation in English reading course of BTI has not been focused on. In CNKI, we searched 48 articles in core journal and in CSSCI with critical thinking cultivation as the key words. With critical thinking competence and reading as the key words, we have found 7 articles from core journal and CSSCI in CNKI.

**Table 1. Hierarchical theoretical model of critical thinking ability (modified by Wen Qiufang [11])**

<b>Meta-critical thinking ability (self-regulation ability)</b>		
<b>(critical thinking ability)</b>		
	<b>Cognition</b>	<b>Emotion</b>
<b>Techniques</b>	<b>Standards</b>	
Analysis (classification, identification, comparison, clarification, differentiation, interpretation, etc.)	Clarity (clear, accurate)	Curiosity (Suspicious, great curiosity to ask all sorts of questions, studious)
Reasoning (questioning, hypothesis, inference, elaboration, argumentation, etc.)	Relativity (to the point, detailed correctly, make a distinction between the important and the lesser one)	Openness (tolerance, Respect for different opinions, Be happy to correct one's own misconceptions)
Evaluation (presupposition, assumption, argument, argument, conclusion, etc.)	Logicality (Be well organized, Well founded reasoning)	Confidence (Believe in your judgment, Dare to challenge authority)
	Profundity (Breadth and depth)	Honest (Pursue truth, Advocate justice)
	Flexibility (Rapidly changing angle, Interchangeably use different speculative skills)	Firm and Persistent (With determination or perseverance, Dodo don't give up easily)

With critical thinking competence, reading and translation as the key words, we found 3 articles from CSSCI in CNKI. Therefore, the research on combining translation with critical thinking in China is sparse, especially the research on the critical thinking competence cultivation in fundamental reading competence of BTI.

From the aspect of BTI orientation, many scholars proposed the basic demand of cultivation. Ping Hong [18,8] among them, HeGangqiang [19] who is in FuDan University, held that the training program of BTI should highlight four demands, that is, solid bilingual basic skill, certain sinology foundation, adequate various kinds of knowledge and good critical thinking competence. Tao Youlan and Qiang Xiao [1] who come from Fudan University have discussed the reading teaching aggregative model of BTI in order to enhance students' humanistic literacy and translator competence and train them from the depth and width of reading. They advocated combining reading with thinking to promote students' reading competence and critical thinking competence. Among them, the group work is especially stressed. It is an effective way of enhancing students' competence of understanding text. Reflection log and reading report are the effective evaluation ways in reading class. But in the research it was not pointed out that how to promote students' critical thinking competence through class activities while it focused on

cultivating students' comprehensive humanistic literacy. Based on the current research situation, this paper seek to employ the English reading course in the fundamental knowledge stage of BTI as an example and to find out how to develop students' critical thinking competence through reasonable and efficient class activities.

### **3. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CRITICAL THINKING COMPETENCE AND BTI**

The critical thinking competence involves independent consideration, verifying spirit and innovation spirit as well as general mental competence such as analysis, contrast, synthesis, inference, speculation, examination and evaluation. Cognitive researchers proposed that reading comprehension is a complex cognitive process concerning many cognitive competence such as target establishment, schema establishment, interpretation and reasoning, meaning development and active judgment. Yang Lifang [15] put forward that the cognitive character and critical thinking competence of reading comprehension should be highly consistent. If reading teaching involves the guidance and examination in aspects of interpretation, analysis, evaluation, reasoning and explanation for students, the cultivation of critical thinking competence is supposed to be included.

The purpose of cultivating critical thinking competence in the reading course of BTI is to facilitate students to set the foundation of enhancing translation competence. Translation is a complex process of language conversion. It not only contains language code conversion, but also the decision-making process of the translator in language conversion. Therefore, cultivating the critical thinking competence of students of BTI is the presupposition of promoting translation competence. The autonomous university of Barcelona in Spain has put forward the model of translation capability in terms of translation capacity project PACTE [20]. It was constructed by a series of related, hierarchical, and changeable components including communicative ability, non-verbal ability, psycho-physiological factors, professional operation ability, transformational ability and strategic ability. In 2003 [21], translation competence was further defined as communicative ability, non-verbal ability, transfer ability, psycho-physiological factors, professional operation ability, and strategic ability. Among them, the strategic ability is the operation of knowledge which guarantees the efficiency of translation and solves the appeared problems. Strategic ability is of great importance because it controls the translation process, effects other translation competence and coordinates the relationship among them to fill the gap. It can also solve problems as soon as they are discovered. So in the stage of fundamental knowledge, we could meet the demand of competence cultivation on the senior students of BTI through reading course, laying a foundation for translation competence of BTI. In other words, in the stage of basic knowledge cultivation, we should not only put emphasis on the cultivation of applying language knowledge but also on the skills like analysis, contrast, synthesis, inference, speculation, examination and evaluation and the cultivation on emotional character of personality trend.

This study aims to cultivate the critical thinking competence of BTI with reading class as its medium and lays a foundation for the study of advanced translation courses. The specific research questions are as follows: (1) what are effective ways of cultivating critical thinking competence of students of BTI in English reading course? (2) What's the trend of students' critical thinking competence of English reading course? (3) What are the problems in the development process of students' critical thinking competence in reading feedback?

## 4. RESEARCH DESIGN

### 4.1 Research Object

With the students of one class majored in BTI as an object, this study conducted the survey which lasted three semesters. This class had 26 students including 4 boys and 22 girls. These 26 students come from 24 different provinces across the country with ages from 16 to 18 years old. About 50% of the students in this class were willing to major in translation and 25% of the students followed others' advice. Others were adjusted to this major.

### 4.2 Research Tools

This study adopted some methods including the questionnaire, reflection log, group cooperation, wheel display, class report and other methods to study classroom activities. The questionnaire was divided into two parts, and the first part was the student information: including the living province, the age, the middle school, the attitude to English and eight questions about the English learning situation in high school. The second part was about the current situation of English reading.

The reflection logs were taken in three forms: weekly report, monthly report and special report. In the first semester, students were unfamiliar with reflection logs, so the weekly report was adopted in this semester. It means that the frequency of students' reflection is high, which includes reflection on English reading course, personal reading skills, a difference of study form between high school and university self-adjustment in adapting process. In the second semester, students would be familiar with reflection logs, so the frequency of weekly report it reduces was reduced and the monthly report was adopted instead. The students are supposed to catch the key problems appeared in reading study in reflection logs. The reflection content should be true and efficient with apparent problems. In addition, the reflection result should be tested. In the third semester, students became very familiarly with the reading course. The special module of class learning should be highlighted. Adopting special report this semester means that after demanding students to finish a special activity, so they would take a corresponded reflection for this special activity on the form, including achievements and adjustment.

Group work ran through all the teaching of these three semesters, which includes several forms of pre-class preparation, group presentations, group discussions and group reviews. Wheel presentation is a reported activity which is different from other class presentations. Divided into several groups, students would conduct wheel - type display and evaluation with their own computer and keep their group task in the form of PPT or video in computers. They were going to watch other groups' presentation in wheel type and give their advice and suggestions after watching. This part was added to group discussion. The class report is a traditional form of group activities report. The report of the first two semesters was based on group activities with 5 students. In the third semester, the class report was finished by groups with 2 students. In addition, the group members can take part in the report and be in charge of different content.

The teaching materials used in this study were divided into two parts: textbooks, extracurricular novels and newspapers and magazines. In these three semesters, the textbooks we used were Extensive Reading Course<sup>1,2,3</sup> compiled by Wang Shouren of Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press as learning content in class. In addition, there are some classics and Global Popular Bilingual Reading Newspapers chosen in three semesters respectively as follows, such as *The Old Man and the Sea*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and another two articles selected by students in the first semester, the English classics *Far From the Madding Crowd*, the *Shakespeare Tales* and A Selection of the Global Popular Bilingual Reading Newspapers (man of the hour) published by China aerospace press were selected in the second semester, and *Gulliver's Travels* and A Selection of Bilingual Reading in the World (current affairs and politics) in the third semester. The classic reading materials are chosen from the English reading booklist on <http://www.docin.com/p-1088870544.html>. The booklist is basically the same as reading booklist demanded by an English major.

### 4.3 Research Process

This study aims to cultivate the students' critical thinking competence and take the reading course as a medium, leading students to form the skills of analysis, contrast, synthesis, inference, speculation, examination and evaluation by holding efficient class activities.

In this study, the reading courses were chosen in the two semesters of a fresh year and the first semester of sophomore year, which were the main content of this research. In the fourth semester, the mock exam was arranged for TEM4, so it isn't suitable for this teaching research. In these three semesters, the learning plan and time schedule were introduced for students at the beginning of each semester. The content of textbook ran through the whole semester and special reading activities were held in different stages respectively.

In the first semester, two questionnaires were made at the beginning and the last. The first questionnaire aimed to make a survey of students' reading experience before and the last questionnaire aimed to make a survey of the critical thinking process of students' feedback for class and reading.

Besides regular textbook, this semester included three "special reading activities": choosing *The Old Man and the Sea*, newspapers and magazines of foreign language and a short novel in English selected by students themselves. Each activity was completed in three weeks with 6 periods. The first two thematic activities involved a group discussion and a group report. The content of discussion consisted of problems, difficult points and analysis of language styles that needed to be concerned in reading. The content of report consisted of the cultural background of reading materials, the solution of difficulties in reading, accumulation of language knowledge and enlightenment of real life. The third one was completed independently by students based on the first two theme and students were supposed to submit a written reading report. In every week, students were required to submit the reflection logs according to their own reading condition.

In the second semester, the reading content was added with series of newspapers and extracurricular autonomous reading. Report form was changed from reading feelings into scenarios show. Newspaper reading and textbook learning ran through the whole semester and after-class learning was combined with class discussion according to teaching schedule. Another two reading thematic activities were held, which referred to the reading of English original novel *Far From the Madding Crowd* and the *Shakespeare Tales*. In this semester, reflection logs were demanded to submit after thematic activities and meanwhile

reflected on thematic activities and daily reading activities.

In the third semester, the theme of newspaper reading and textbook learning run through the whole semester. The group of two persons should complete independently three task presentations including background knowledge, language knowledge and putting forward questions of reading comprehension. Reading theme referred to reading English original novels and having a group discussion in the reading process. The main content of the discussion was to comb the details of the novel and discuss the author's intention and the effect of language based on it. This semester has added reading materials of the discussion activities and designed the reading teaching materials in groups

## **5. DATA STATISTICS AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS**

### **5.1 Analysis of Statistical Results of a Questionnaire Survey**

From the first eight questions in the first questionnaire survey, we learned about the students' English reading habits in high school: 85% of the students chose "never" or "sometimes" reading English books and two of the students chose "often" reading English newspapers. English newspapers mainly refer to the high school English learning newspaper, while only 15% of the students chosen "often" or "always" reading English books. But 100 percent of students chosen "often" or "always" in the title of in high school learning, English reading mainly refer to exercises reading.

The result suggested that students have a narrower range of English reading, which is an obvious deficiency in the cultivation of BTI students. Therefore, in English reading course of fundamental course stage, we should expand students' reading range and develop a good reading habit, separating appropriately reading from reading comprehension for the exam. After finishing class activities and questionnaire, we found out that class reading helped a lot for forming the right reading habit of students and efficient group activities will promote students' reading interest and result. Students come to know the native English expression and writing the character of newspaper report by reading newspapers and magazines. And the translation practice accompanied by reading has also laid

the foundation for the translation of political subjects.

In the 20 questions of the second part of the questionnaire, the questionnaire adopted four levels of option mode: Never, sometimes, often and always. We pay for each option in the statistics process: never = 1, sometimes = 2, always = 3, always =4. The questions cover reading effect, reading purpose, reading mode and reading feedback.

In this study, the questionnaire data was gathered in Excel, and the change analysis chart was drawn. Table 1 is a comparison of the statistics of 26 students in the three questionnaires. Table 2 shows the trend of each questions' change in the three questionnaires' results. The final examination results of students in three semesters were collected as the reference data to find out that whether the reading ability is related to critical thinking competence. Final exam papers contain 50% reading ability and 50% basic words and grammar. Since the basic vocabulary and grammar are the foundation of reading ability, then the final result can reflect the students' reading ability.

To analyze the correlation of the results of grade average point in the three semesters and questionnaire results, Pearson correlation inspection was conducted to get the data: correlation coefficient  $r$  of 0.202,  $|r| < 0.3$ , suggesting that relationship between two variables is very weak so there is no correlation. In addition, the  $p$ -value was 0.3445 and the  $p$ -value was much higher than the average confidence level 0.05. The results of the analysis showed no correlation between the reading grade and the mean of the questionnaire survey. Students' critical thinking ability and reading ability displayed in scores of reading class have no correlation. For example, some students have high reading scores, but not necessarily have good critical thinking ability. Some students have low reading scores but have relatively strong critical thinking ability. The problem is that their language comprehension is not high, so they should increase their vocabulary accumulation, become familiar with grammar knowledge and increase their reading quantity.

The comparison between Table 1 and Table 2 shows that the results of reading courses are not completely relevant to the investigation of critical thinking competence. In Table 1, the four lowest

points are student number 2 in the first semester, student number 8 in the first semester, student number 13 in the third-semester t, student number 22 in the second semester. And the corresponding grades are 70, 84, 91 and 78 respectively. The three highest points are student number 11 in the first semester, student number 16 in the third semester, student number 21 in the third semester. And the corresponding grades are 87, 95 and 91. Seen from the highest points, the trend and grade are positively correlated. In other words, for students doing well in the study, critical thinking ability and reading scores have a certain correlation.

The change trend in Table 2 shows that the survey results in the third semester basically showed a steady trend, but the changes of the three semesters did not change significantly. Questions 2, 13, 18, 20 have obvious changes. The third term is superior to the former two semesters and the results are closely related

with three semesters of teaching contents and teaching forms. In this semester, reading activities are carried out including English newspaper reading and collecting the materials of reading background. Question 3, 6, 7, 8, 11, 17 and 19 are steadily rising and the part can reflect that learners have promoted preliminary critical thinking ability. The change is the result of carrying out activities such as group activities in class, reading skills training and communication of reader response.

### 5.2 Analysis of Reflection logs

Reflection logs have been acknowledged by most students. In this process, students could analyze and explain their reading course. They could find the problems and then solve them so as to assess and improve themselves. Analyzing one's learning condition was the beginning of cultivating analysis competence. Try to find solutions to problems after clarifying them.

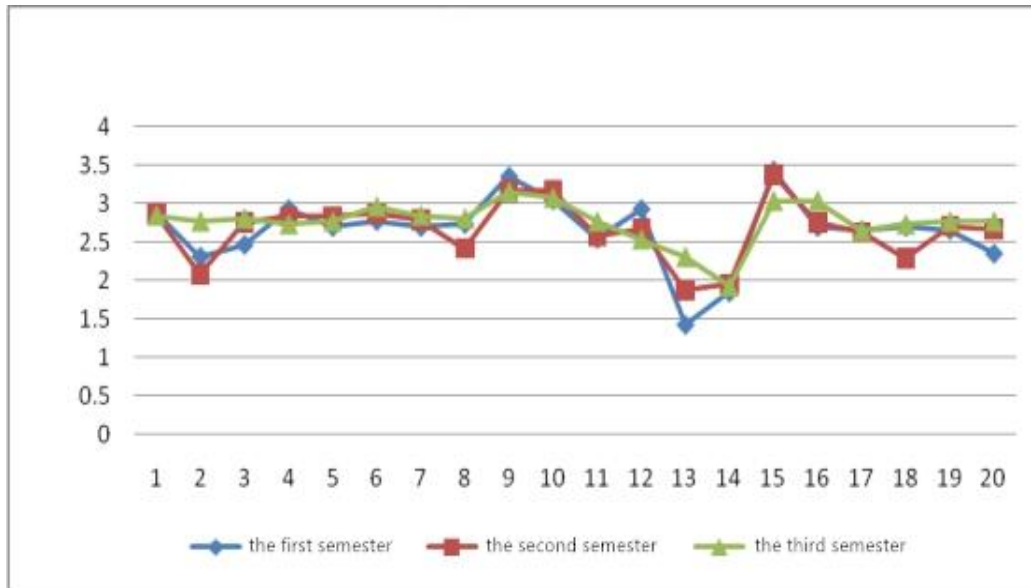
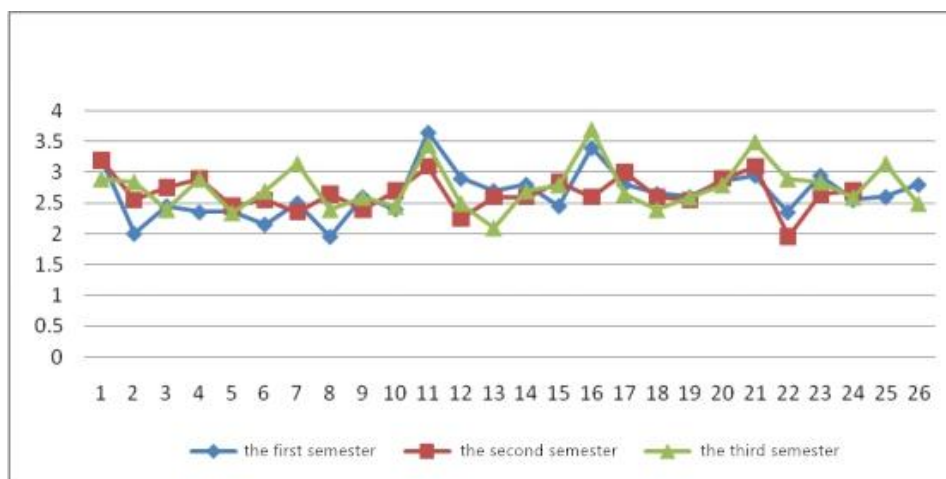


Fig. 1. Data of learning attitude in questionnaire

Table 2. The average score of three semesters

Number Term	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
First	60	70	71	62	70	73	70	84	82	60	87	76	80
Second	70	82	78	71	87	79	79	84	91	73	91	75	83
Third	67	93	94	71	94	92	93	94	97	86	95	91	91
Number term	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
First	67	60	76	79	71	84	75	75	67	67	60	89	68
Second	82	69	88	81	69	90	87	76	78	80	71	85	76
Third	90	84	95	94	77	94	93	91	89	88	91	92	87



**Fig. 2. The tendency of each item in questionnaire**

This point has been indicated in reflection logs. Some students reflected on the progress of reading and reminded themselves of their constant adjustments; Some students reflected on the harvest in group activities and found their own shortcomings, and corrected them in later reading activities; Some students wrote specific reading skills and language knowledge in the reflection log, which can strengthen the memory and highlight the key of learning; Some students reflected on the thinking process of reading, including the approbation and disapprobation of the content of the novel, and state reasons; Some students reflected on their emotional changes when they read a novel, resonating with the author or becoming curious about something mentioned in the novel, which stimulated their own reading interest; However, some students regarded that reflection log is a mission, holding a view that reading class highlights reading instead of reflection. It makes sense to some extent, but if students just take reading as an understanding of characters, not considering the aim of reading and the effect of reading, it will definitely effect the cultivation of translators' critical thinking competence. It is just as the translation emphasizes the meaning of the word, regardless of the context, even the cultural background and other related factors.

### 5.3 Analysis of Group Activities

Group activities are divided into group discussions and group reports.

Reading report was carried out in the form of group report, which contained two types: Five-person group report and a two-person group

report. Five-person group report was carried out in the first and second semester to promote communication and writing among students. Group activity is an efficient way of enhancing students' critical thinking competence. Most students in the reflection log reported that, in the group discussion, the communication with the other students opened their own thinking space and made them reflect on their own reading habits and ways of thinking, etc. In the third semester, with reinforcement of students' self-study ability, two-person group report was carried out. It was more difficult in that it contained selected report of knowledge and put forward the questions in reading materials. Then the questions would be organized to be discussed. This part was a challenge for students. Some students failed to analyze deeply the article and just lingered on the knowledge points and characters, while other students were able to propose some extended and profound questions. In addition, many students couldn't discuss focusing on the main topic. The reason lies in that the individual knowledge accumulation is limited, so increasing reading quantity should be the prerequisite of enhancing critical thinking competence.

There also exist problems in the process of group report. In the first semester, group members showed their PPT after finishing it. In the class, the group members focused on the task of the group, and were indifferent to the report of other groups, so they were unable to achieve the purpose of communication learning. One of the reasons is the difference between group reading materials. Also, the instructor didn't raise a specific claim of paying attention to



other groups' report and the group reports are not so much attractive. Therefore, the form of group report was changed in the later two semesters.

In the three semesters of teaching experiment, sufficient group discussions were carried out in class. Firstly, in the study of textbook reading, students discussed about the organized structure of articles in reading the discussion and analyzed Sentence hierarchy relation. They agreed that this kind of form was very beneficial for them. In this study activity, students could understand article structure without the form of preparing for an exam, which embodied the basic competence of students who will be a translator in the future.

Secondly, in the form of wheel-type group discussion, each group were supposed to prepare their own computer and watch in turn and evaluate other groups' report. Each member in the group was required to seriously consider about it and put forward questions. They should also take their group report into consideration and the results were very effective. The disadvantage of original groups' low participation has disappeared. This form develops students' competence of interpretation, analysis, comparison and evaluation, which strengthen students' curiosity in reading content.

Though group discussion to some extent enhanced the analysis competence of students, yet it fails to go to deep analysis in the process. When showing in wheel type, they can't give a deep evaluation after group discussion but stay on the surface of questions. The reason is that the students' knowledge is limited and they can't form comparative inference and judgment. So a rich fund of knowledge must be a precondition of the cultivation on the competence of critical thinking.

In the competitive group activity of asking words, students tended to prefer the objective form of activities. The process of them didn't demand consideration but test memory effect. So the cultivation of critical thinking competence also needed teachers' positive orientation and encouragement. It was necessary to carry out efficient class activities.

In group activities, teacher's evaluation was combined with group members'. Instructor would

appraise each group and evaluate performances of each student according to the teacher's evaluation form (shown in Table 1). This form could direct students to carry out group activities fluently and served as a standard which student should follow in reading activities and group discussion. It was conducive to the development of classroom activities and the cultivation of integrity and self-confidence.

In this research, reflection log, group report and group discussion are effective ways to achieve the improvement of thinking skills, meet the thinking standard and cultivate the positive personality tendency.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This research took a long time, permeating the spirit of cultivating critical thinking competence in every class activity. The cultivation of ability is not achieved overnight, so a quiet way was adopted to make the students gradually form the competence of analysis, comparison, comprehension, reasoning, conjecture, inspection, evaluation, and cultivate positive personality tendency. Critical thinking competence is invisible, which is a form of cognitive ability. Though many researchers have designed many measuring tools in an attempt to present objectively, which was a good try as well as a research direction, yet in actual teaching, especially in the competence cultivation of BTI, learners' critical thinking competence probably won't emerge as soon as learning finishes. It might require a lot of translation practices. By combining theory with practice, the effect of cultivating critical thinking competence will be displayed in translation practices.

This research is devoted to developing the critical thinking competence of BTI by means of reading class, thus laying the basis for senior translation course. Such group activities as group discussion, group reports and reflection logs are proved to be effective ways of cultivating critical thinking competence of BTI in English reading course to some extent. In these activities, students can learn to think, analyze, reason, judge and evaluate in their pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading. English reading course has a positive effect on fostering critical thinking competence Yang Lifang [16]. It is an abstract notion and an intellectual activity in the brain. It can't be objectively detected. However, the present research aimed to specifically foster abilities and the results reveal that reading

process can improve critical thinking competence, which is yet a slow and gradual process and is implicit in a short time. The research also found out that the reading effects reflected in the improving process of students' critical thinking competence is not always linear but fluctuated with a positive general tendency. Therefore, to some extent, to carry out classroom activities consciously in reading course can improve students' critical thinking competence.

There are also some shortcomings in this study. As a concrete process, teachers work out the structure of development of critical thinking competence, but some students are unable to really think critically. For example, the questions and evaluations they issued are too superficial to present insightful suggestions on their reading contents; the questions they asked about other groups' reports are lack of logic. Meanwhile, their profound and logical standards in critical thinking should be improved. The researches in this field are hoped to continue in-depth studies and solve these problems.

## CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, patient's written consent has been collected and preserved by the author.

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## COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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