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Profiling College Students: Their Communicative Competence and Critical Thinking



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This policy brief profiles how students in tertiary education learn. A review of past studies revealed information as regards language learning and the need to improve critical thinking. Policy recommendations based on these findings are given.

Studies that profile how tertiary students learn, as well as their weaknesses, are important in guiding educators find the appropriate pedagogies and programs to address their needs. Research found that although motivation has always been an important part of learning, when it comes to developing communicative competence, oral language performance of college learners of a second/foreign language is a better indicator (Navas & Gineta, 2013). Moreover, in terms of areas college students need to improve at, critical thinking seems to be one of the skills that need to be given more focus and be developed among them. This is evidenced by a number of students garnering below average performance in critical thinking exam (Obias, 2015).

Here is a summary of policy recommendations for these issues:



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1. It is important to be aware of how students learn specific skills. In the case of communicative competence, oral language performance seems to play an important role (Navas & Gineta, 2013). Thus, this information can be used to come up with policies regarding how certain subjects can be assessed, taught, and what kind of training instructors handing certain courses should be given.
2. Critical thinking is a very important skill that students in higher education must possess. In order to address the low levels of critical thinking (Obias, 2015), policies regarding embedding activities aimed at developing critical thinking in classes must be made and enacted.

REFERENCES:

- Navas, E. A., & Gineta, J. J. D. (2013). College L2 learners' oral language performance and motivation as predictors of communicative competence. *The Normal Lights*, 7(1), 70-82.
- Obias, P. H. (2015). Critical thinking of college students: Inputs to teacher education curriculum. *The Normal Lights*, 9(2), 24-46.



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