

## USING OF CRITICAL THINKING AS A MEANS OF INCREASING THE EFFICIENCY OF MASTERING LEXICAL MATERIAL IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LESSONS

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*The article is devoted to the problem of the development of critical thinking in the process of teaching a foreign language in the context of increasing the efficiency of mastering lexical material. The author reveals the essence of the concept of «critical thinking», defines the characteristic features of this technology in the process of working on lexical materials, and presents a set of techniques and strategies of critical thinking technology aimed at the development of mental operations and the formation of lexical skills.*

**Keywords:** critical thinking, techniques and strategies of critical thinking technology, learning a foreign language, the efficiency of the mastering lexical material

*Статья посвящена проблеме развития критического мышления в процессе обучения иностранному языку в контексте повышения эффективности усвоения лексического материала. Автор раскрывает сущность понятия «критическое мышление», определяет характерные особенности данной технологии в процессе работы над лексическим материалом, представляет комплекс методических при-*

*емов и средств развития критического мышления, направленных на развитие мыслительных операций и формирование лексических навыков.*

**Ключевые слова:** критическое мышление, приемы и средства технологии критического мышления, изучение иностранного языка, эффективность усвоения лексического материала

The relevance of the development of students' critical thinking follows from the peculiarities of the current need in active, critical-minded citizens who are responsible for their own destiny and the destiny of their country. The relevance of the problem is also confirmed by the fact that a graduate must have not only a certain amount of knowledge, but also other abilities like critical thinking, the ability to act in real social conditions, be able to identify, observe, distinguish, classify, evaluate, critically analyze, model, draw conclusions, make informed decisions.

The essence of critical thinking is very accurately conveyed in the words from the poster: «Tell me, and I will forget, show me, and I will remember, involve me, and I will understand.» The ability to extract the necessary information, to approach information critically, to structure and record it in various ways; understand information presented in different forms: pictorial, schematic, model; analyze, synthesize, compare, classify, generalize; to establish causal relationships, to summarize, to prove are cognitive universal educational actions that can be successfully formed using strategies and techniques of critical thinking [1].

First, critical thinking is independent thinking. When the lesson is based on the principles of critical thinking, everyone articulates their ideas, assessments and beliefs independently of others. Students should have enough freedom to think and solve independently even the most difficult issues. Nevertheless, critical thinking does not have to be completely original. Students have the right to accept the ideas or beliefs of another person.

Second, information is the starting point for the development of critical thinking. Knowledge creates motivation without which a person cannot think critically. To generate a complex thought, you need to process facts, ideas, texts, theories, data, and concepts.

Third, critical thinking begins with asking questions and clarifying the problems that one needs to solve. Curiosity is an inherent property of all living beings.

Fourth, critical thinking seeks convincing reasoning. A critically thinking person finds his own solution to the problem, supports this decision with reasonable, well-founded arguments. He is also aware that other solutions to the same problem are possible, and tries to prove that the solution he has chosen is more logical and more rational than others are.

Fifth, critical thinking is social thinking. Every thought is honed when it is shared with others. When we argue, read, debate, object, and exchange opinions with others, we clarify and deepen our own position. Therefore, teachers working in the mainstream of the development of critical thinking always try to use in their classes all kinds of pair and group work, including debates and discussions, as well as various types of written work. Teachers who develop critical thinking in their students pay great attention to the development of such qualities necessary for a productive exchange of views as tolerance, the ability to listen to others, responsibility for their own point of view.

Work on the development of critical thinking in the process of teaching English allows students to form socially significant, moral and value motives of behavior, increase the level of socialization, develop creativity and reflection, foster initiative, communication, dynamism.

Thus, the use of critical thinking in English lessons can significantly increase the time of speech practice in the lesson for each student, achieve the assimilation of the material by all group members, and solve various educational and developmental problems. The teacher, in turn, becomes the organizer of independent educational, cognitive, communicative, creative activities of students, he has opportunities to improve the learning process, develop the communicative competence of students.

The most common techniques and strategies in using the technology of critical thinking in foreign language classes are: «Brainstorming», «Clusters», «Forecasting», «Formulation of questions for which you need to find answers in a text document», «Fishbone», «Reading text with labeling according to the insert method «,» Cinquain», «Concept wheel», and much more [3, 4, 5, 6].

Here are some examples of the use of the above mentioned techniques in the classroom.

When studying the topic «Environmental problems», a picture is placed on the board, which depicts a problem. The task of the trainees at the first stage is to formulate and outline the ways of its solution within 10 minutes. At the second stage, there is a collective discussion of the proposed ideas. At the final stage, the formulation of rational ideas for solving the problem occurs.

Working on the topic «Sport» an effective technique is «cluster». The word sport is placed in the center; the task of the trainees is to enter as many lexical units as possible (for example, organized sports, sports equipment, etc.).

Equally fascinating is the «Concept wheel». Studying the topic «The world of my hobbies», you can ask the learners to choose the maximum number of synonyms and antonyms for individual words and expressions (for example, to be fond of, to like, to be keen on, to be interested in and etc.).

Working with the dialogues or texts it is important to remember that thinking is not driven by answers but by questions. Where, Why, What, Who ... with and How type of question will make learners develop a number of critical thinking skills [2].

The «Prediction tree» strategy is used when working with the plot of the text. A future-facing question is written on the barrel: What will happen at the end? The text is divided into 3-4 parts. After reading each part, the students write down their predictions on the content of the story on the leaves of the tree, arguing them on the branches. Each version must be substantiated verbally. When the text is read to the end, students check to see if their predictions came true.

Role-playing games, conferences, teleconferences, talk shows on the topic under study, as well as disputes and debates are an effective means of forming and developing critical thinking. They contribute to the development of such important characteristics of critical thinking as the ability to analyze and compare different ideas, events, points of view; the ability to hear the arguments of opponents; the ability to defend one's position in evidence, at the same time fostering a tolerant attitude towards different points of view. When making a decision on the problem under discussion, the participants in the role-play should take into account all its aspects. It becomes clear to them that not only in the game, but also in real life, there are often no solutions to the problem that are uniquely satisfying for everyone.

Analysis of work with techniques and strategies of critical thinking as a means of increasing the efficiency of mastering lexical material allows us to conclude about its effectiveness in the development of intellectual abilities and the formation of the skill of mental operations, allowing the student to increase the efficiency of information perception and interest both in the material being studied and in the learning process itself; to understand the features of critical thinking; be responsible for your own education; learning to work in collaboration with others.

The considered techniques and strategies of developing critical thinking in English lessons make it possible to make work with lexical material in lessons more interesting and creative, and what is the most important effective.

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