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Developing Critical Thinking Strategies Through Short-Stories In Learning Foreign Languages

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ABSTRACT

The article defines the concept "critical thinking" and reveals the effectiveness of critical thinking (CT) strategies through short stories in teaching English as a foreign language. According to the results of the study, the authors propose a certain set of critical thinking strategies to encourage students' active involvement and effective use of teaching foreign languages in higher education.

KEYWORDS

Critical thinking, short stories, interactive methods, intercultural competence, English language teaching methods.

INTRODUCTION

A review of modern methodological literatures define that the technology for the development of critical thinking is closely related to the technology of personal intellectual development. We know that one's critical thinking forms the worldview, will develop harmoniously and comprehensively throughout his life, since he can readily take responsibility for making important life decisions and also has the ability to take responsibility for his actions. Critical thinking is not a physiologically determined ability of the human brain, and therefore does not develop with age. It can be attributed to a skill, a skill

acquired by a person as a result of the educational process.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

We can find many diffirent definitions of the term "critical thinking" in psychological and pedagogical literature. According to the expanded multi-component definition, thinking critically means:

- Demonstrate curiosity;
- To put forward tasks;
- Find out the causes and consequences of events and phenomena;
- Undertake a targeted search for solutions;
- To question generally accepted truths;
- Develop the ability to express judgments and the ability to defend them using logical justifications;
- Take into account the arguments given by the opponent and subject them to logical comprehension.

Thus, critical thinking is the ability to assess various kinds of events or situations in a balanced, rational and comprehensive way, to clearly understand the cause-and-effect relationship.This technology for the development of critical thinking consists of three important stages: challenge, comprehension and reflection.

1. The challenge includes the following goals:
- Updating and generalization by students of their knowledge on a particular topic or problem;
- Motivation of students for independent active work (i.e., the search for various solutions) which usually takes about 1 to 3 minutes to conduct the lesson successfully.
2. Comprehension. Students try to compare the information received with their previous concepts and ideas, forming a new understanding of the topic or problem.
3. Reflection. Students have the opportunity to think about new things, objects, phenomena, thus they actively change their views on the problem under discussion in order to expand their ideas through new concepts. In this case, an interesting exchange of ideas is carried out between the participants in the educational process, since students can get acquainted with different views, learn to perceive the arguments of their peers and consistently defend their point of view.

Critical thinking technology can be implemented using a variety of forms of learning, such as: data preparation, analysis of text materials, correlation of opposing views on one problem, discussion within the team, debates, doing various types of work in pairs and mini-groups, etc.

It is necessary to note the role of the teacher in the process of applying the technology for the development of critical thinking. Creative teachers use a variety of literature genres to teach different language skills to provide a more realistic, fun and effective language teaching experience. Fictional literature motivates learners to a greater extent than non-fictional texts, since literature accumulates human experience and represents human reactions to various situations. We must not forget that literature is also a repository of human experiences, ideas and emotions that both educate and entertain readers. It should be noted that among different genres of literature a special place is given to the narrative. Everyone has stories to tell to other people. Short stories, due to their specificity, are attractive to readers, arouse curiosity: what will happen next? Short stories

are important in their own right and have gained general acceptance. They can act as an effective tool for the development of communicative competence in the audience studying a foreign language.

However, teaching short stories to a language-learning audience requires some special techniques. It is impossible to allow the passivity of students, using only the usual, traditional teaching methods, in which the leading role is assigned to the teacher as a source of knowledge.

According to John Dewey (1933), the main purpose of education is to teach thinking. R. Mayer and F. Goodchild (Mayer, Goodchild, 1990) represent critical thinking as an active, systematic process of understanding and evaluating arguments. In the works of R. Sternberg (Sternberg, 1986), critical thinking is considered as a component of mental processes, strategies and ideas. People use it to solve problems, make decisions and develop new concepts and concepts.

We can define that critical thinking is a process of active and skillful conceptualization, application and evaluation of arguments, which does not imply taking anything for granted. In teaching in different situations and contexts, various strategies of critical thinking have been developed and actively applied. The instructor may choose to use critical thinking stimulation strategies to encourage students to think critically.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

We can use the following strategies of critical thinking:

Knew	Want to Know	Learnt
1. 2. 3		

KWL activities are great for structuring an entire session. This strategy allows learners think and say what they already know about the topic of the lesson, raise questions regarding the importance of the topic, and try to find answers to these questions themselves. Another advantage of using this type of activity is the possibility of applying the technology in any audience, consisting of a different number of students. The teacher should choose a topic for discussion and present a table on the board or in paper version so that it can be used to determine what the student already knows about a given short story, topic, title. We can apply this table in a similar way if we want to ask questions and prove our knowledge. This type of activity can be useful at any stage when studying any literary text, including short stories. For example, the instructor starts with the title of the topic, asking students to think about what they already know about it - this allows students to express their ideas and share them with their partners before they answer. After that, the teacher draws with chalk on a blackboard or offers a KWL table on paper. The table may look like the following

The teacher asks the students to say what they know about the topic and enters into the column "What do we know?" suggested options. The next step is to ask students to

formulate questions about the short story topic. They can start by identifying what they know and, having identified where the knowledge gaps are, compile and fill in the column "What do we want to know?" questions. The learners should read the story / passage / text, after which the teacher reminds them to find the answers to their questions. What they learned from the text can be presented in the column "What have we learned?".

Prediction from terms

This strategy involves the teacher choosing five or six words or phrases from the text that he / she writes on the board. The teacher asks the students to compose / write a story, poem, song, essay, or create a picture, present a drama that includes these words.

Cooperative learning

This technique is most effective when trainees are assigned specific roles in groups. Roles can be rotated between group members so that each member has many opportunities to practice in any role. This strategy allows each learner to clearly understand how they contribute to the success of the entire group, and also teaches each learner the skills and relationships that will foster concerted action and the effectiveness of all group members. This type of activity is used at the stage of knowledge formation when teaching a literary text.

Value line

This type of collaborative learning activity is designed to awaken students' opinions on questions to which different answers can be given. In other words, it is an activity that requires trainees to take a position on an issue and support it with appropriate arguments. The teacher begins by posing such ambiguous questions as "Is war for a person good or bad?" During this activity, learners learn to stand up for their beliefs even when friends disagree with them. This strategy can be very effective in teaching extraordinary stories.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we can say that teaching English is aimed at ensuring that students learn to freely communicate orally and write in the target language. To reach the outcome, we use different techniques and methods of working in the classroom. Critical thinking (CT) is widely used in more than twenty-nine countries, including the USA, Canada, Great Britain and Australia. This technology helps students become more active, creative, focused on innovation, contributes to the development of their critical, analytical and constructive thinking. Strategies for the development of critical thinking are based on a personality-oriented approach, which is recommended for active learning in order to increase student motivation. However, the choice of CT strategies should be made in accordance with the purpose of the course, the level of knowledge of the students and the teaching material.

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