



Research Article

## CRITICAL THINKING ORIENTED TEACHING IN ENGLISH CLASSES

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### ABSTRACT

Today, critical thinking oriented teaching in English classes is highly promoted as it provides the ability to recognize and defend personal views on certain issues, the ability to find new ideas and critically analyze problems, participate in debates, the ability to rethink actions and arguments, to foresee the possible consequences of further actions. In order to develop the critical thinking of students, the teacher should activate students' learning, choose interesting topics to develop internal motivation, use strategies and techniques to enable students to comprehend, compare and evaluate the issues during class. This article presents the use of technology of developing critical thinking through reading and writing during English classes.

### KEYWORDS

Critical-thinking-oriented teaching, critical thinking, reading, writing,



## INTRODUCTION

The technology of developing critical thinking through reading and writing was developed at the end of the 20th century in the United States. The researches were carried by the scholars such as J. Steele, C. Meredith, Ch. Temple, D. Dewey, J. Piaget, L.S. Vygotsky and others. It synthesizes ideas, methods of collaborative learning, and group ways of learning, as well as cooperation and developmental learning. Developing critical thinking through reading and writing is an integral system that forms the skills of working with information in the process of reading and writing. It also aims at mastering the basic skills of an open society, included in intercultural interaction. It indicates the importance of the processes of reading and writing for the development of critical thinking. Reading and writing are the basic processes by which we receive and transmit information, therefore, it is necessary to teach schoolchildren and students to read and write effectively. It is possible to develop critical thinking, relying on reading and writing as basic learning processes, only because of the purposeful activity of a teacher who understands the importance of the student's personal interest in learning. To achieve the outcome, it is

necessary to create conditions for its active inclusion in the process of obtaining knowledge.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Critical thinking is defined as "open thinking that does not accept any dogma, developing by imposing new information on personal life experience. According to D. Halpern, in order for the student to use his critical thinking, it is important to develop a number of qualities, among which she highlights: readiness for planning, flexibility, perseverance, readiness to correct one's mistakes, awareness and search for compromise solutions (Halpern, 2000).

Critical thinking is one of the types of human intellectual activity, which is characterized by a high level of perception, understanding of the objectivity of the approach to the information field surrounding it. The term "critical thinking" can refer to almost all mental activity. Critical-thinking-oriented teaching involves not just an active search for information for learning by students, correlating what they have learned with their own experience, as well as comparing what they have learned with other studies in this field

of knowledge (Liaw, 2007). Students have the right to question the reliability of the information received, check the logic of the evidence, draw conclusions, construct new examples for its application, and consider the possibilities of solving the problem.

Critical-thinking-oriented teaching has the following goals:

- The formation of a new style of thinking skills which is characterized by openness, flexibility, reflexivity, awareness of the internal ambiguity of positions and points of view, making alternative decisions.
- To develop such basic personality traits as critical thinking, reflexivity, communicativeness, creativity, mobility, independence, tolerance, responsibility for one's own choice and the results of one's activity;
- To develop analytical and critical thinking: to teach students to identify cause-and-effect relationships, to consider new ideas and knowledge in the context of existing ones, to reject unnecessary or incorrect information, to understand how different pieces of information are interconnected, to highlight errors in reasoning, to be able to conclude

whose specific value orientations, interests, ideological attitudes reflect the text or the speaker, avoid categorical statements, be honest in reasoning, identify false stereotypes leading to incorrect conclusions, identify bias, opinion and judgment, be able to distinguish between a fact that can always be verified from an assumption and personal opinions, to question the logical inconsistency of oral or written speech, to separate the main from the irrelevant in the text or in speech and be able to focus on the main idea.

The technology of developing critical thinking through reading and writing consists of three stages. Each stage has its own goals and objectives, and a set of characteristic techniques.

The first stage is the "call", during which the swarm of students activates background knowledge, interest in the topic, the goals of studying the upcoming educational material are determined.

The second stage - "comprehension" - is meaningful, during which the direct work of the student working with the variety of texts (written text, video material) meaningfully. The reading process is always accompanied by students.

The third stage is the stage of "reflection" - thinking. It is a process of active rethinking of one's own ideas during discussion and taking into account the new acquired knowledge.

The students do not sit passively, listening to the teacher, but become the active participants of the

lesson. They think and remember to themselves, share reasoning with each other, read, write, discuss what they read. When learning English in order to develop reading skills, students are offered the following tasks:

I know	I want to know	I learnt

**KWL Chart** is designed to build a "bridge" between students' prior knowledge and new information. After introducing the topic or title of the text, students accumulate their knowledge about the subject by filling out the first part of the table – I know, presented on the board or poster. The teacher encourages students to discuss their knowledge, and then invites them to comment on what they would like to know in this area, and fill in the second part of the table – I want to know. After collective discussion, the most interesting ideas are filled into this part of the table. The third part of the table – I learnt - is filled after reading the entire text or part of it. This task can also be used in the study of other subjects (for example, history, geography, biology).

The next task focuses students' attention on the content of the text, including its main elements: the scene (setting), main characters (main characters), problem (problem), problem resolution (solution).

**Tell Your Story.** This task contains enough information for students to present the main content of the text and be able to retell it. Its content may vary depending on the type of text, the language knowledge of students, the objectives of the lesson. In this task, students are asked to create their own stories in English by describing the setting, the main character, plot, stating the problem, the most exciting moment in

the story and the solution of the problem/the end of the story.

1. **SETTING:** (Where does your story take place?)
2. **CHARACTERS:** (Who is in the story?)
3. **PLOT:** (What happens in the story?)
4. **LEAD UP:** (The sequences of events that build exciting moments of your story)
5. **CLIMAX:** (This is the most exciting moment of the story).
6. **RESOLUTION/CONCLUSION:** (The end of the story)

**Prediction.** This task develops critical thinking skills of students, their ability to predict, analyze and compare events. Students write down their assumptions after reading and conclude what really happened. As they progress in reading, students pay more and more attention to details and correlate the description of events. The purpose of the task is to arise interest in reading and intrinsic motivation.

What I predict will happen

What actually happened in chapters one & two

Compare/contrast.

By completing this task, students learn to analyze similarities and differences, describe events, and compare several similar texts individually or in small groups, followed by a collaborative discussion or a detailed written statement. The teacher can pre-discuss questions to help students formulate their opinions. One of the conditions for the successful use of interactive reading techniques is discussion. If students are involved in a lively discussion, their reading comprehension is enhanced not only by questions asked by the teacher, but also by interaction with other students. For an effective exchange of views during the discussion, the teacher should follow these recommendations:

1. Act as the facilitator of the discussion and support it by providing interaction.
2. Have pre-prepared questions to elicit comments or judgment from students.
3. Activate various mental processes of students (analysis, synthesis, comparison, evaluation).
4. Give a 5-second "wait pause" to give students time for creative and active thinking.
5. Include all students in the discussion by asking them questions and encouraging them.



6. Record the discussion on audio or videotape for further evaluation of student activity and the success of the discussion.

## CONCLUSION

Thus, the very basic model of technology for the development of critical thinking, its strategies and techniques enable students to comprehend, evaluate and creatively transform information, and the teacher should organize work on the formation of reading literacy purposefully.

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