

THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS OF YOUTH

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ABSTRACT

The article highlights the main issues of the development of youth critical thinking skills: the relevance of this problem is substantiated, the essence and signs of critical thinking as a psychological, pedagogical and social category are considered. The principles and didactic foundations for the development of students' critical thinking are outlined, and the factors that determine the success of this process are identified. The article is aimed at forming a holistic view of critical thinking as one of the conditions for the social success of young people.

Keywords: critical thinking, analyse, reflection, techniques, methods, consistency.

ANNOTATSIYA

Maqolada yoshlarda tanqidiy fikrlash qobiliyatlarini rivojlantirishning asosiy masalalari yoritilgan: ushbu muammoning dolzarbligi asoslab berilgan, psixologik, pedagogik va ijtimoiy kategoriya sifatida tanqidiy fikrlashning mohiyati va belgilari ko'rib chiqilgan. Talabalarning tanqidiy fikrlashni rivojlantirish tamoyillari va didaktik asoslari ko'rsatilgan, bu jarayonning muvaffaqiyatini belgilovchi omillar aniqlangan. Maqola yoshlarning ijtimoiy muvaffaqiyati shartlaridan biri sifatida tanqidiy fikrlashning yaxlit nuqtai nazarini shakllantirishga qaratilgan.

Kalit so'zlar: tanqidiy fikrlash, tahlil qilish, mulohaza yuritish/refleksiya, uslublar, usullar, izchillik.

АННОТАЦИЯ

В статье освещаются основные вопросы развития навыков критического мышления у молодежи: обосновывается актуальность данной проблемы, рассматриваются сущность и признаки критического мышления как психолого-педагогической и социальной категории. Изложены принципы и дидактические основы развития критического мышления учащихся, выявлены факторы, определяющие успешность этого процесса. Статья направлена на формирование целостного представления о критическом мышлении как об одном из условий социальной успешности молодежи.

Ключевые слова: критическое мышление, анализ, рефлексия, приемы, методы, системность.

The modernization of education in Uzbekistan, which is currently being implemented, requires new approaches to teaching young people and is associated with preparing a person for life in the information society. A significant role in the formation of personality and thinking is given to the process of developing the ability of students to independently work with information, critically comprehend their actions, analyze them and apply the acquired knowledge and skills in educational activities. The education system should prepare its graduates for active and creative life in the new information conditions. We are surrounded by information coming from a variety of sources. Since there is a lot of it, people need to understand it and verify its validity. Critical thinking helps to detect contradictions, cut off false data, and analyze facts.

What is it?

Critical thinking is one of the key skills of the 21st century, according to the report “New Vision for Education” at the World Economic Forum. It allows you to analyse, formulate conclusions, make decisions based on the results of the analysis, but also have your own position. If critical thinking is absent, it is impossible to form the basic skills of introspection. A person will not be able to learn from his own mistakes, analyse the experience and draw appropriate conclusions.

Usually, the description of critical thinking comes down to listing the following skills: the ability to reason, analyse information and draw conclusions based on it. However, it is still possible to add atypical, it would seem, signs to this. Which?

Characteristics and signs

The list of skills that indicate the presence of critical thinking:

- observation, the study of all details;
- ability to interpret, analyse, compare;
- ability to generalize, evaluate, draw conclusions;
- presence of logic;
- intelligence, broad outlook;
- clarity of mind, depth of judgment;
- creativity, emotionality;
- sociability;
- independence;
- mobility.

A person with critical thinking:

- builds causal relationships;
- establishes the importance of information, cuts off unnecessary details;
- is respectful of other opinions;
- gives an assessment;
- provides arguments;

- is responsible for the choice he has made;
- finds errors by pointing them out delicately.

Stages

In the process of “pumping” critical thinking, a person goes through several stages:

1. **Call stage.** At this stage, a person updates the existing knowledge and expresses interest in the topic and the discussion of issues. To solve the problem of this phase, educational institutions use complex situations, rhetorical questions, incorrect logical chains. One of the main conditions for effective learning is the ability to independently formulate the objectives of the lesson. Critical thinking is manifested in the reasoning of students. At this stage, the correctness of the answers is not evaluated.
2. **Stage of understanding.** The teacher forms the students’ work with new material. For a complete understanding, it is necessary to combine several methods of work – individual, group and pair. This stage allows students to search for answers to questions, satisfy cognitive interest through search methods of work, logic and methods of processing the material.
3. **Stage of reflection.** It develops the ability to analyse information. Students not only think about new material, but also formulate their attitude to information. Students compare recent facts with what they already know. The result of the reflective stage is the transformation of new knowledge into the personal experience of students.

Ways of development and examples

Obviously, critical thinking needs to be developed. Doing this is much easier than it seems at first glance. There are a large number of different methods and techniques. Let’s consider some of them.

1. Enrich your knowledge base

A lack of knowledge will not allow you to think critically. Good erudition will allow you to look at the problem from all sides and simplify the process of its analysis and comparison.

Draw knowledge from various areas:

- read books, especially fiction;
- watch documentaries and lectures;
- analyse people’s behaviour – so you can establish the cause of actions and think over the concept of relationships;
- communicate with people, learn their opinion and experience – so you can form your own point of view.

2. Formulate questions

Critical thinking is based on curiosity and the desire to learn more. To satisfy this thirst it requires the ability to correctly formulate questions. To do this, you can set the

task to make 50 questions, for example, about your favourite film. While studying any topic, immerse yourself in all aspects as much as possible, thoroughly consider all the details of the problem.

3. Study and analyze

• Regular analysis of information from literature and the Internet contributes to the development of critical thinking. Thoroughly study any read text according to the following scheme:

• What is the purpose of writing the text, what audience is it intended for, what is the author's thought?

• What problem is discussed in the text, how many options for its solution exist?

• What opinion does the author express on the problem raised, what arguments are given, how do they correlate with the formulated problem?

• How the author builds his reasoning: does he provide evidence of all the facts presented or proposes to accept them unconditionally? An interesting point: usually in generalizations like "Everyone knows that ..." false information is veiled. Such formulations act as the reader's manipulators, forming the wrong attitude to the question.

• Distinguish between the given facts and their interpretation.

• Set the hidden meaning, subtext, if there is any.

When analyse the text, it is necessary to formulate an attitude to the problem, which is based on facts, arguments and logical reasoning, and not on the subjective opinion of the author.

4. Use alternative sources of information

The basis of critical thinking is the study of different sometimes opposing opinions about a particular problem. When studying the problem, it is necessary to use various sources, analyse the information, evaluate its consistency, completeness and reliability. Reliable is information exclusively from official sources, confirmed by verified facts.

5. Come up with options

The ability to think critically means fixing options for the development of events and being able to single out the most comfortable of all options.

Learn to predict the consequences of all actions in each situation. When making a decision, write down the likely consequences, evaluate each. Then analyse how to minimize the risk of failure and likely negative consequences.

Make up options for difficult situations and make a list of likely solutions to problems. Analyze the actions of characters in fiction or films that influence the development of the storyline. Create alternative scenarios for the development of events that change the character's life.

6. Analyze errors

A mistake is a way to figure out how to do better in the future. You need to analyse the error with all responsibility: you need to find it, evaluate the causes, and think over solutions.

Techniques and methods

There are various methods and techniques for developing critical thinking. They are actively used by teachers in general education and higher educational institutions, coaches, psychologists.

Brainstorming

This technique has become widespread in the classroom or the business environment, but it can also be used in everyday life. There is a block of questions and ambiguous answers to them. By asking questions, you can analyse not only literary heroes, but also historical figures, current celebrities, famous public people, and much more.

Comparison

First, you need to learn how to compare elementary things. For example, first memorize different varieties of apples and learn to recognize them. Then complicate the task and, for example, evaluate two films of the same director, created at the same time in different periods of his work.

Metacognition

It implies the ability to see yourself from the outside. First of all, this refers to the ability to analyse one's actions and thoughts. Ideally, they should be fully controlled, analyse every word spoken and perfect deed.

Deduction

The ability to draw a specific conclusion from the general, building a logical chain. For example, any metal has the property of plasticity (this is general): gold is a metal, therefore, gold is plastic (this is specific).

Induction

The opposite process of deduction. In the case of deduction, with the correct position, the result is almost always 100% correct, while the conclusions that are made during the induction may not be entirely reliable. For example, the last three mayors in our city were bribe-takers (specific) → so all mayors are bribe-takers (controversial statement).

Analysis

The operation that helps to parse any event into parts that serve as the basis for comparison is called analysis. Everything that happens must be subjected to painstaking analysis.

Synthesis

An operation that is the opposite of analysis. This is the ability to put together different parts. Let's say we analyse various economic news and come to a conclusion about an impending crisis, about which so far everyone is silent.

Consistency

Each judgment passes through 5 main stages that form the systematic method: preparation → problem → alternatives → selection of the final solution → its evaluation. When mastering critical thinking (analysis, synthesis, comparison), any most problematic situation will be resolved very easily.

Technologies for the development of critical thinking

How does critical thinking work? The American scientist Edward Glaser in a study in 1941 listed the skills and abilities of critical thinking:

- recognition of the problem and search for solutions;
- collection and sorting out all the necessary information;
- recognition of unconfirmed assumptions and estimates;
- analysis of information and evaluation of evidence;
- detection of logical connections (if any) between conclusions;
- making systematic conclusions and questioning them;
- restructuring your belief system and the formation of correct judgments.

Techniques for developing critical thinking

• "I know – I want to know – I found out". This technique was created in 1984 by Professor Donna Ogle. The goal is to develop reflection in the process of cognition. It implies the ratio of the previously known and the new, the definition of one's cognitive needs.

• The method of "thick" and "thin" questions. It is important to be able to ask questions. "Thin" are simple questions that require the same monosyllabic answer. "Thick" implies a higher level of thinking. For example, analysis, synthesis. The stable use of the technique helps to learn how to correctly formulate questions and assess the level of complexity.

• "Cinquain". The technique is applied at the stage of reflection. Thanks to this technique, one can express the attitude towards the phenomenon under study. Cinquain is a poem that summarizes the material in short sentences of 5 lines, distinguished by its concentration.

• "Cluster". The method of graphic systematization of the material is the selection of semantic units of the text and their graphic design in a certain order. "Cluster" is used at the stage of call and reflection.

• “Do you believe?”. This technique is used at the call stage with the establishment of the truth being at the stage of reflection. The stage helps to develop the ability to evaluate the result.

• “INSERT”. It implies a special marking of the text when reading. On the margins in the text or in the table with its further filling, it is supposed to correlate text fragments, paragraphs to such categories as: “V” – knew this information; “+” – something new; “-“ – thought differently; “?” – I do not understand, I have a question.

Exercises for the development of critical thinking

Chess and/or checkers

These games are aimed at the development of logic, the ability to detect cause-and-effect relationships and predict the development of events. Both playing chess and chess cases bring benefits.

Rebuses, puzzles and logic games

They contribute to the development of attention and logic, increase the speed of reaction, teach you to pay attention to small details, to divide into the main and the secondary. Choose what you like: Sudoku, Rubik’s cube, crosswords, puzzles, and online games will be equally good.

Board games

A great way not only to diversify your leisure time, but also to develop critical thinking skills by pumping vocabulary, communication skills and consistency.

In conclusion we can say critical thinking should become a strategic basis for the continuous education of people, and the teacher becomes an important link in this process: he can either facilitate or hinder it. Healthy and instrumentally armed systems thinking as a mass cultural achievement is possible. And certainly vital. Therefore, its culture should be purposefully and patiently nurtured at all levels of education - from primary to higher.

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