**ГРНТИ** (16.01.45)

**THE APPLICATION OF CRITICAL THINKING ACTIVITIES**

**IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES**

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Аңдатпа: Бұл мақала тіл үйретуде, атап айтқанда білім беру ұйымдарында, ағылшын тілі сабақтарында сын тұрғысынан ойлауға арналған тапсырмалардың қолданылуына арналған. Мақалада, көрсетілген тапсырамалар ағылшын тілін оқытуда оқушылардың сыни ойлау қабілеттерін дамытуға, сын тұрғысынан ойлау үшін оқу, жазу, сөйлеу және тыңдау қабілеттерін пайдалануға бағытталған, сонымен қатар, бұндай тапсырмалар ағылшын тілі сабақтарында оқушылардың жазбаша және ауызша түрде әртүрлі көзқарастарды білдіре отырып, дәлелдері мен пікірлерін қолдануға үйретеді.

Тірек сөздер: сын тұрғысынан ойлау, сын тұрғысынан ойлау тапсырмалары, мақсат, ағылшын тілі сабақтары, дағдылар,сұрақтар.

Аннотация: Данная статья посвящена применению заданий для критического мышления в обучении языку, в частности в образовательных организациях, на уроках английского языка. В статье, указанные задания направлены на развитие у учащихся навыков критического мышления в обучении английскому языку, на использование навыков чтения, письма, речи и аудирования для критического мышления, а также такие задания учат учащихся использовать аргументы и свои мнения выражая различные точки зрения в письменной и устной форме на уроках английского языка.

Ключевые слова: критическое мышление, задания по критическому мышлению, цель, уроки английского языка,навыки, вопросы.

Abstract: This article is devoted to the application of critical thinking activities in language teaching, in particular in English lessons of educational organizations. In the article, these tasks are aimed at developing students' critical thinking skills in teaching English, using reading, writing, speaking and listening skills for critical thinking, as well as such tasks teach students to use their arguments and opinions expressing different points of view in written and oral form in English lessons.

Key words: critical thinking, critical thinking activities, goals, English classes, skills, questions.

Critical thinking has already evolved into modern education system, despite the subject taught. Critical thinking is not a fad, but it is an important area of interest in education and dating back to the Greek philosophers, in particular Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. [5, 6 p]

Why is critical thinking necessary in educational environment? Critical thinking is an essential modern skill which ensure students to analyze, evaluate, and solve complex problems effectively. In today’s world these skills are crucial for academic success and for navigating real - world challenges. Teaching critical thinking skills is considered to be an integral part of teaching XXI st-century skills. [1, 11 p]

In English language classroom, it is certain that, critical thinking will be valuable for students throughout their language-learning journey. Learners in the English classes take advantage of critical thinking activities because such activities empower students' prior knowledge, foster creative thinking and emphasize the significance of problem-solving that is built on evidence.[2, 23 p]

In this article, diverse and engaging critical thinking activities for students of English language classes will be presented. These activities will help enhance students’ minds in addition, such activities make learning process more interesting and give immersive learning experience.

Activity 1**:** Opinion and reason builder

Aims: To develop the skill of supporting an opinion with reasons. To practise expressing opinion with expressions and giving reasons with the conjunction “because".

Level: A2+ (high elementary)

Rationale: The activity introduces learners the value of supporting an opinion with prove or reasons. This simple activity continues this idea by introducing students to the need for supporting an opinion with reasons and providing the language they need to achieve this. [3, 30 p]

a. A teacher writes this table on the board.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| I think that  I agree that  I don’t agree that  I’m not sure that | doing sport is good for you  social media sites waste our time  teachers are low-paid  travel broadens the mind  our grandparents’ lives were easier  living in the country is better than the city  the internet has improved our lives | because… |

Table 1: Opinion and reason builder

b. Students work in pairs and should express opinions followed by a reason. They can make up their sentences by combining any of the expressions in column 1 with the topic in column 2 and then, using “because”, they have to give a supporting reason.

For example: I think that teachers are low-paid because people like head teachers and head masters earn more money, however they have less obligation.

I’m not sure that travel broadens the mind because I’ve come across some people who come back from other countries and they criticise everything about the country they had traveled to. [3,31p]

Activity 2: Critical questioning

Aims: To enhance students’ critical questioning skills. To perform asking closed and open questions.

Level: A2+ (high elementary)

Rationale: Students need to develop the skill of asking questions so that they become successful critical thinkers. This activity demonstrate them how closed questions which only require yes/no answers do not help them to question critically and that open questions are significantly better. Students simultaneously review the structures they need to make and ask questions. [2, 17 p]

Steps:

a. A teacher write the following question words on the board:

What…? Why…? Who…? How…? When…? Where…?

b**.** Students work in pairs.

Give Student A, a copy of these 8 closed questions:

1. Do you think meat is bad for you?

2. Do you believe that sport is good for you?

3. Would you say that young people use the Internet much?

4. Are bloggers important in our lives?

5. Is the world a more dangerous place than 30 years ago?

6. Should most people use public transports instead of their own cars?

7. Can politicians make a difference to the world?

8. Are traditions and customs are disappearing?

c. The teacher explains that Student A asks the first question and Student B answers Yes or No. Then Student A changes the closed question into an open question using a question word on the board. Student B answers with a full and more reasoned answer. Students may start their conversation like this:

A: Do you think meat is bad for you?

B: Yes, I do.

A: Why do you think meat is bad for you?

B: Because I’ve read about how meat is produced nowadays, and I’m not happy about it.

d. The students work through all 8 questions in the same manner, until they reach the end. And consequently everyone has an equal opportunity to ask and answer the questions, besides Student B can ask all 8 questions in the same way. Or, if the clock is ticking, Student A may ask questions 1, 3, 5 and 7 and Student B asks questions 2, 4, 6 and 8.[2, 19 p]

Variation: For students of higher level of English, the teacher can make the open questions more challenging using the following questions to enhance thinking critically:

* What evidence is there that…?
* Why do you think that…?
* Who says that…?
* How do you know that…?
* When did people start believing that…?
* Where did you read that…?

Activity 3: Where’s it from?

Aims: To identify styles of different text types on the same topic, choose related information and synthesize it. To identify features of written speech. [4. 56 p]

Level: B1+ (pre-intermediate)

Rationale: Students need to foster the ability of researching a topic. They will collect information from different sources and have to determine whether certain text types are reliable sources. For the purpose of this, they should be able to recognize the text style from the writing style.

The teacher gives students three texts on the same topic but written completely in different ways. Ask them to identify what kind of text each one is. Three example texts are given below, which can be used for this activity. They are all on the same topic of online shopping. The teacher asks students to recognize the text type and speak about the information in the text. For instance: Was it formal or informal? Who was it written to (one person or many)? [4, 57 p]

Table 2: Where’s it from?

|  |
| --- |
| Text A  Online shopping is a form of electronic commerce that enables consumers to buy goods or services right away using the Internet. Online shopping creates the same experience of buying products or services from a shopping mall or shopkeeper in the cities, but the buyer does it without leaving his or her home. The three largest online companies in the world are e-Bay, Alibaba and Amazon. |
| Text B  Dear Anita!  I’m writing to thank you for my birthday gift. I have to admit that, I was afraid about buying things on the Internet, but after only two days I have already downloaded three e-books!  Shopping online like this is so much simpler than leaving the house! It’s so convenient.  All my love  Your grandmother Mary |
| Text C  Tips for safe online shopping:  - Ensure you computer’s security software is up-to-date;  - Authoritative websites involve information on how your private information will be used;  - Check what other customers comment on a company;  - When making a payment by a credit card or other bank cards check for the letter *s*after *http* on the web page. |

The answers of an activity 3:

Text A comes from Wikipedia so, the language is completely informational.

Text B is a short mail between two people and it’s informal and chatty.

Text C is from a text advising and warnings about shopping online.

All the above mentioned activities can be used with the offered materials or they can be adjusted to match the materials that a teacher is using in his/her English language program (state or private schools, education centers and language courses).[4, 59 p]

All the given activities focus on developing critical mindsets, using reading, writing, speaking and listening abilities to expand their critical thinking skills, additionally they induce students to use the arguments and opinions into their own point of views both in written and spoken forms in English language classes.[6, 114 p]

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