Напрям 6. Педагогічна та корекційна психологія

TEACHING CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

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The modern information society is characterized by accelerated changes. The information revolution contains a significant anthropological component which involves improving not only the technology but also human thinking. Thus the main capital is not the information itself, but its effective producer. Consequently, the ability to process information will become a valuable asset and the skills of critical thinking will be the key to success in the information society. The ability to think critically provides scientific and technical and social progress which determines the significant role in the education process. Information is the power to make the entire educational process more efficient. The most important goal of the educational process is the transformation of students into individuals who can engage effectively in higher-order thinking.

Higher-order thinking or complex thinking includes the processes people use to solve problems, make decisions and think critically. Critical thinking is based on solving tasks of any level using a basic scientific approach. The idea of critical

thinking development originated in the United States. This topic was analyzed in the works the well-known American psychologists of the twentieth century James and J. Dewey [1, p. 34].

Critical thinking is an ambiguous concept as the processes involved in critical thinking frequently overlap those involved in other forms of higher-order thinking. It is difficult to summarize research findings dealing with critical thinking, because different researchers use the term in different ways. The founder of the Institute of Critical Thinking, Matthew Lipman, defined critical thinking as higher-level mental activity characterized by analyzing and evaluating arguments and opinions.

Many researchers believe critical thinking includes the thinker's conscious process of monitoring and evaluating his or her own thinking and regard critical thinking as reflective and reasonable thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do. Definitions of critical thinking vary in terms of precision. Probably the most precise definition of critical thinking emerges when it is used in conjunction with the concept of problem solving. [3, p. 156].

Critical thinking involves the process of seeking and evaluating the evidence of an argument before accepting its conclusion. Encouraging students to monitor and challenge their own thinking helps to promote critical thinking. It is important for teachers to understand the nature of critical thinking in order to teach more effectively and improve their teaching approaches.

In this regard a three-step approach to teaching thinking skills is worth mentioning. [2, p. 161]. The first level of the intellect model focuses on developing specific creative (brainstorming, generalizing, associating relationships, inventing, visualizing etc.) and critical (comparing, classifying, evaluating, drawing conclusions) thinking skills. The students get direct instructions for gathering information and acquiring skills.

At the second level the teacher creates situations that require students to use creative and critical thinking skills in the process of intense student involvement to think and reason using cooperative learning teaching approach.

The third level implies creative use and transfer of skills and processes though metacognitive reflection. Students can develop productive problem-solving strategies, decision-making tactics and creative, innovative thinking. Applying the skills and processes in diverse academic and personal settings the teacher motivates students to analyze arguments and opinion and try to justify, refute or evaluate them.

Educational programs available in VNTU Center of Technical Translation include Professional English, the theory and practice of translation, terminology science, Business English. Learning English for Science and Technology in the Centre offers benefits in career experience and networking within the major area of study.

In the process of researching, developing and field-testing the materials the students explore their profession and gain significant work experience in their fields.

Practicing communication in management provides an opportunity for learning new ideas, sharing problems, and identifying promising ways of expanding the student’s knowledge.

Covering the topic “Marketing” the teacher introduces three-step approach of teaching thinking skills applying the scientific method in market research. The scientific approach to solving marketing problems is known to involve five steps: defining the problem, analyzing the situation, obtaining data, interpreting data and solving the problem. Finding and focusing on the real problem, the students may be able to move quickly to a useful solution, critical analyzes and decision-making.

To conclude, the main purpose of critical thinking is to solve problems and the main result of critical thinking is judgment. A characteristic feature of this type of thinking is that the process of reasoning is non-standard, non-template; there is no ready-made model of the solution. The idea provides internal motivation for students' learning activities, prompts the teacher to familiarize students with the rules of critical thinking; needs to use problem learning methods and interactive lessons. Teaching creative and critical thinking skills promotes productive problem-solving strategies, innovative thinking and new knowledge.

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