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CRITICAL THINKING AS A TOOL FOR TEACHING LISTENING IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM AT THE UNIVERSITIES

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The article highlights the need for technical university students to improve critical thinking skills in listening at foreign language lessons. Critical thinking skills in the context of teaching English at high school are analyzed. Critical thinking refers to the ability of individuals to think and make the right decisions on their own. Critical thinking is used for learning a foreign language for a long time. Currently, the increase in critical thinking is one of the challenges facing teachers of foreign languages because of its critical importance in class. Three phases of critical thinking (evocation, meaning realization and reflection or thought) that relate to the three stages of work with the audiotext (before listening, while listening and after listening) are considered. Particular methods of critical thinking for students while teaching listening in the classroom on the subject "Introduction into English for technical purposes" are suggested. Such techniques as "table-KWK", "thin and thick questions", "keywords", "tree predictions", "insert", "blog", "Daisy Bloom", "writing poetry", "letter on a circle" and "essay" are offered. Each method is provided with guidelines for the teacher on the use at foreign language lessons. Finally, this article concludes the importance of using the above mentioned methods of critical thinking as they contribute to preparing students for future careers.

Key words: critical thinking, communication, listening skills, information.

Introduction. Modern rate of science and technology, increase of scientific knowledge require improvement of educational sphere. Getting education at higher education institution future engineers should realize that they are laying the foundation for the development of creativity, initiative and mobile personality of modern society.

Most linguists agree that the emphasis on forms such as learning language models is inappropriate. The study of grammar and rendering are insufficient for successful communication. Since English is the universal language in the context of its study as a foreign language students have to use critical approach to its learning and use. Studying a foreign language, students express their thoughts and feelings in English (coaching skills of critical thinking), so they have to take into account the lexical, grammatical and socio-cultural aspects. Currently foreign language teachers use communicative approach to language learning that focuses more on the use of live language, and not on the processing of finished models and the teacher acts as a consultant in the classroom.

The main goal of language education is to create successful communicators or students who understand the language patterns and are able to use them according to specific situations and contexts. Most linguists agree that the emphasis on forms, such as memorizing language models is inadequate. Studying a foreign language, students express their thoughts and feelings in English (coaching skills of critical thinking), so they have to take into account lexical and grammatical and socio-cultural aspects.

Thus, it is necessary to create conditions for formation of personality capable to acquire necessary knowledge independently, to apply them in practice to solve problems, to generate new ideas, to think creatively, to process information, to formulate reasoned conclusions and to identify and solve new problems – their own critical thinking in the classroom.

Analysis of recent research and publications. A number of studies on the use of critical thinking for learning foreign language by university students have increased recently among foreign and domestic scientists. Many different definitions of critical thinking were suggested by various researchers such as Lipmen, Norris, Siegel. According to Elder and Paul critical thinking indicates the ability of people to take control on their own thinking and to develop appropriate criteria and standards for analyzing their own thinking. Maiorana believes that critical thinking is aimed at achieving understanding, evaluating different perspectives and problem solving. Such scholars as Tarvin and Al-Arish emphasize the importance of developing thinking skills of higher order at foreign language lessons. Empirical data obtained by Chapple, Curtis and Davidson confirm the effectiveness of teaching critical thinking skills for learning foreign language.

Supporting Galvin and Terrel who underline that listening is an active process which includes reception, interpretation, evaluation and response to messages, it should be noted that it also includes the ability to recall information and use it to communicate. Listening and critical thinking successfully coexist. The listener is required to be able to analyze and critically judge on the intention of the interlocutor. Furthermore, developing students' ability for critical evaluating we improve their listening skills.

Thus, despite the existence of certain scientific research on the topic, the problem of the use of tools of critical thinking in teaching English at a technical university is not fully resolved. There is no single approach to understanding the concept of “critical thinking” in terms of its impact on listening skills of university students.

Formulation of purposes of the article. The application of critical thinking in the English classroom at technical university is important for several reasons. Firstly, learning a foreign language, students can monitor their own thinking and evaluate ways of learning more successfully. Secondly, critical thinking extends the learning experience of students, makes language learning more essential for them. Thirdly, critical thinking has a high degree of correlation with the achievements of students.

Taking into account the urgency of the research problems, the article is to give an analysis of the critical thinking effectiveness in teaching foreign languages, to identify ways of improving efficiency of developing listening skills of foreign language texts in training of future engineers. This article also aims at highlighting topics of critical thinking skills in the context of teaching English for special purposes, including teaching English for students of technical university. The article is to define basic stages and techniques of critical thinking.

Critical thinking skills in the context of teaching English. Although critical thinking covers a wide range of skills and abilities in teaching English this process can be described in a specific language and cognitive skills (thinking strategies) used for various academic tasks. Basic skills include:

- information processing
- evocation
- considerations
- creative thinking
- skills assessment.

Stages and techniques of critical thinking. Thinking critically means to display curiosity and use research methods that involves asking questions, the implementation of systematic search for answers, definition of certain point of view the issue and the ability to defend this view by logical proofs. To teach students to think critically when forming their listening skills are invited to use the technology of critical thinking when the work on foreign-language audio text is carried out in 3 stages:

- phase of evocation
- phase of realization of meaning
- phase of reflection.

These phases correspond to the phases of the traditional teaching of listening:

- before listening
- when you listen
- after listening.

Let's consider them in detail.

During the *phase of evocation* updating and analysis of knowledge on the subject available at students, motivation of students, the process of structuring further studying of material. To achieve these goals, the following techniques can be used:

- “a table - KWK(I know - want to know - knew) ”
- “thin and thick questions”
- “keywords”
- “tree of predictions” [5].

“Table -KWK (I know – want to know – knew)”. The students individually or in pairs fix everything that they know on the subject of audio text and formulate questions to get the answers during listening. After listening correlation of heard information with the information they had at the beginning of the lesson takes place.

“Thin and thick questions”. Students are encouraged to formulate questions to audio text in the form of “thin” and “thick” questions. Then the teacher writes a number of questions on the blackboard and asks students to answer them arguing their hypothesis. In the course of working with questions requiring simple short answer (“thin”) should be written in the left column. Questions requiring detailed, expanded response or questions that they have not yet answered but would like to answers them (“thick”) should be written in the right column.

“Keywords”. Teacher selects 4-5 keywords or phrases from the text and writes them on the blackboard. Students in the course of individual, pair or group work create a brief interpretation of these terms, arrange them in sequence and make up a story using them. Then at the stage of understanding they seek confirmation of their assumption expanding material [1].

“Tree of predictions”. This technique helps to speculate about the plot of the story. The trunk of the tree is a topic, branch is an assumption, leaves are justification for these assumptions, arguments in favor of a different opinion [3].

Phase of realization of meaning includes search of strategies for solving the problem, theoretical and practical work. While listening audio text students get new information, comprehend it, relate new information with their own knowledge [4].

Authors of educational technology of critical thinking say that in the implementation of the phase of realization of meaning the main task is to support the activity of students, their interest and inertia of movement created during the implementation phase. To do this in the classroom you can use the following techniques:

- “insert”
- “diary”
- “Daisy Bloom” [6].

“Insert”. When listening, students fill in the table with such titles as:

- “has already known”
- “new”
- “thought differently”
- “not clear, have a question”.

After listening audio text discussion on completed tables takes place.

“Diary”. This technique enables students to associate text content with their personal experience. They record those moments of audio text that made the biggest impression on them, evoked some memories, associations, confused them, caused protests, or, conversely, admiration, surprise in the left side of the double diary. On the right they have to give a comment on the reason to record this quote.

“Daisy Bloom”. This technique helps to develop skills in response to different types of questions. Answering simple questions you name any facts to remember and reproduce certain information. The aim of clarifying issues is to provide people opportunities for feedback about what she\he has just said. Interpretation (explanatory) questions usually begin with the word “Why”. Creative questions include elements of conditionality, assumption or forecast. Evaluation questions aimed at clarifying the criteria for assessment of certain events, phenomena, facts [8].

During the *phase of reflection* students create personal attitude to information being heard and fix it using either their own text or their position in the debate. At this stage the interpretation of new ideas and information expressed with their own words, complete understanding and summarizing the information received from the exchange of ideas between students and teacher, forming their own attitude to the material being taught, and a new “challenge”. After listening to text the teacher offers students the following techniques:

- writing poems
- writing a letter in a circle
- writing an essay [8].

Writing poetry helps students to develop skills in creative and reflective written language. When offering the task to make up a poem it is necessary to select its type and explain students the structure of the poem.

Sinquein is a poem of five lines which requires synthesis of information and expressing materials on a particular topic in brief. Structure of sinquein:

- first line – one word that describes the subject (usually a noun);
- second line – two words that describe the subject (usually two adjectives);
- third line – three words that express action on the subject (usually three verbs);
- fourth line – the four- word phrase which is relevant to the topic;
- last line – one word (usually synonymous with word from the first line).

Diamond – a verse form of six lines. Its writing promotes active and passive vocabulary of students. The structure of diamond is:

- the first and seventh lines – nouns-antonyms;
- the second line or two for the first adjective noun;
- the third line –three verb for the first noun;
- the fourth line – two noun-phrases;
- the fifth line – three verbs for the second noun;
- the sixth line – two adjectives for the second noun [9].

Hokku or *haiku* forms the ability to express thoughts laconically. The first line contains five syllables, the second – seven and the third – five. Compliance with this part of the formula often causes difficulty among students. To prevent this, the teacher can give students algorithm of writing according to which the first two lines describe a phenomenon and the third line summarize everything that was said above.

A letter in a circle. This letter is written together. Each participant writes a few sentences on the topic, and then sends a notebook to another student who is to continue his\her thought. Notebooks are passed until each notebook returns to his\her owner.

Essay. After listening and general discussion of audio text students are invited to organize their thoughts using essays. Essay is any letter on the topic that has different autonomy, expression of individuality, original solution, argumentation etc. [10].

Conclusions. Having examined some of the techniques of critical thinking of students while teaching them listening at foreign language lessons, we can conclude that these techniques are able to form the ability of technical university students to work with various types of information, interpretation and evaluation of an information message. Students learn to highlight contradictions in the text and the types of structures presented in it, to argue their point of view based not only on logic but understanding an interlocutor. Students that think critically are able to percept the diversity of the world, the possibility of coexistence of different points of view that teaches them to be tolerant, to work in a team, to feel relaxed etc.

Thus, the use of elements of critical thinking technique in teaching foreign languages allows solving a variety of educational and developmental objectives. Participation in various activities in the classroom at the university prepares them to their own implementation of future professional activity, helps them to become self-organized educational-cognitive, communicative and creative which is a modern essential requirement for the future engineer.

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Н. С. Шалова. Критичне мислення як інструмент навчання аудіювання на заняттях з англійської мови у вищих навчальних закладах.

У статті висвітлено необхідність формування у студентів технічного вузу критичного мислення для вдосконалення навичок аудіювання на заняттях з іноземної мови. Проаналізовано навички критичного мислення в контексті викладання англійської мови у вищих навчальних закладах. Основна мета мовної освіти є створення успішних комунікаторів, тобто студентів, які розуміють мовні закономірності та здатні використовувати їх у відповідності з конкретними ситуаціями і контекстом. Критичне мислення означає здатність людей думати і приймати правильні рішення самостійно. Критичне мислення використовується для вивчення іноземної мови протягом тривалого часу. В даний час поглиблене використання критичного мислення є однією із складних проблем, яка постає перед викладачами іноземних мов у процесі навчання студентів іноземної мови. Особлива увага приділяється трьом фазам розвитку критичного мислення (виклику, реалізації сенсу та рефлексії), які співвідносяться з трьома етапами роботи з аудіотекстом (до прослуховування, під час прослуховування і після прослуховування). Для кожного етапу пропонуються прийоми розвитку критичного мислення у студентів під час навчання аудіювання на заняттях з дисципліни «Вступ до англійської мови загально технічного спрямування». Пропонуються такі прийоми, як «таблиця-ЗХД», «тонкі й товсті питання», «ключові слова», «дерево пророкувань», «інсерт», «щоденник», «ромашка Блума», «написання віршів», «лист по колу», «есе». Для кожного прийому наводяться рекомендації для викладача щодо їх використання на заняттях з іноземної мови. В кінці статті зроблено висновок про важливість використання перерахованих вище прийомів для розвитку критичного мислення, яке сприяє підготовці студентів до майбутньої професійної діяльності.

Ключові слова: критичне мислення, комунікація, навички аудіювання, інформація.

Н. С. Шалова. Критическое мышление как инструмент обучения аудированию на занятиях по английскому языку в высших учебных заведениях.

В статье освещены необходимость формирования у студентов технического вуза критического мышления для совершенствования навыков аудирования на занятиях по иностранному языку. Проанализированы навыки критического мышления в контексте преподавания английского языка в вузе. Особое внимание уделяется трем фазам развития критического мышления (вызова, реализации смысла и рефлексии или размышлений), которые соотносятся с тремя этапами работы с аудиотекстом (до прослушивания, во время прослушивания и после прослушивания). Для каждого этапа предлагаются приемы развития критического мышления у студентов во время обучения аудированию на занятиях по дисциплине «Введение к английскому языку общетехнического направления». Предлагаются такие приемы, как «таблица-ЗХУ», «тонкие и толстые вопросы», «ключевые слова», «дерево предсказаний», «инсерт», «дневник», «ромашка Блума», «написание стихов», «письмо по кругу», «эссе». Для каждого приема приводятся рекомендации для преподавателя по их использованию на занятиях по иностранному языку. В конце статьи сделан вывод о важности использования вышеперечисленных приемов развития критического мышления, поскольку они способствуют подготовке студентов к будущей профессиональной деятельности.

Ключевые слова: критическое мышление, коммуникация, навыки аудирования, информация.