

УДК 811.541

## FEATURES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING OF STUDENTS IN THE PROCESS OF TEACHING ENGLISH

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**Abstract:** *The article is devoted to the peculiarities of the development of critical thinking of students in the process of teaching English, techniques for the formation of critical thinking. The problem of technology for the development of students' critical thinking in the process of teaching English, the ability to analyze information and make independent decisions in the process of teaching English. The article discusses the technology for the development of critical thinking, which involves the use of pedagogical strategies and techniques related to working with information.*

**Keywords:** *Critical thinking, developed critical thinking, learning, English language, skills, critical thinking development technology.*

## ОСОБЕННОСТИ РАЗВИТИЯ КРИТИЧЕСКОГО МЫШЛЕНИЯ СТУДЕНТОВ В ПРОЦЕССЕ ОБУЧЕНИЯ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА

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**Аннотация:** *Статья посвящена особенностям развития критического мышления студентов в процессе обучения английского языка, техникам формирования критического мышления. Проблеме технологии развития критического мышления студентов в процессе обучения английскому языку, умения анализировать информацию и принимать самостоятельные решения в процессе обучения английскому языку. В статье рассматривается технология развития критического мышления, подразумевающая использование педагогических стратегий и приемов, связанных с работой с информацией.*

**Ключевые слова:** *Критическое мышление, умения критического мышления, обучение, английский язык, навык, технология развития критического мышления.*

## АНГЛИС ТИЛИН ОКУТУУ ПРОЦЕССИНДЕ СТУДЕНТТЕРДИН КРИТИКАЛЫК ОЙ ЖҮГҮРТҮҮСҮН ӨНҮКТҮРҮҮНҮН ӨЗГӨЧӨЛҮКТӨРҮ

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**Аннотация:** *макала англис тилин окутуу процессинде студенттердин критикалык ой жүгүртүүсүн өнүктүрүүнүн өзгөчөлүктөрүнө,*

*критикалык ой жүгүртүүнү калыптандыруу ыкмаларына арналган. Англис тилин окутуу процессинде студенттердин критикалык ой жүгүртүүсүн өнүктүрүү технологиясы, англис тилин окутуу процессинде маалыматты талдоо жана өз алдынча чечим кабыл алуу. Макалада маалымат менен иштөөгө байланышкан педагогикалык стратегияларды жана ыкмаларды колдонууну камтыган критикалык ой жүгүртүүнү өнүктүрүү технологиясы талкууланат.*

**Өзөктүү сөздөр:** *Критикалык ой жүгүртүү, критикалык ой жүгүртүү жөндөмү, окуу, англис тили, чеберчилик, критикалык ой жүгүртүүнү өнүктүрүү технологиясы.*

## **1.Introduction**

Internationalization has led to the use of English as a "world language", which helps to receive and study information from all over the world, which is becoming more diverse and difficult (Yang, Y.-T & Gamble, Jeffrey 2013; 67. 398-412). The importance of the development of critical thinking was also proved by Elena Konstantinovna Vdovina (Vdovina, E. & Gaibisso, C. 2013). Practicing critical thinking in an attempt to identify similarities and differences in how the same cliché is expressed in words in another language makes the learning process more enjoyable and culturally enriching, even at an elementary level. With the development of critical thinking, there is also a development of such intellectual qualities as empathy and tolerance, not only for various problems, but also for different points of view and ways to solve it, as well as for the difficulties of finding different solutions, thereby preparing for communication in a cultural context. And due to the rapidly growing trends of international student mobility and the use of English as the language of instruction in universities around the world, the integration of critical thinking plays an important role in the self-development of each person. Moreover, critical thinking is not a natural skill acquired innately, but is a consciously developed complex set of skills and traits, the acquisition of which takes years of study of theory and practice.

Similarly, mastering any foreign language requires years of hard study and practice. Thus, by practicing both at the same time, we save time and get a synergistic effect: by developing the first, we improve the second and vice versa (Galskova N. D. 2008). At the same time, the specificity of the subject "Foreign language" directly provides an opportunity for the development of critical thinking. The goal is, first of all, the formation of communication skills, which are an important tool for the development of critical thinking, on the one hand, while high-quality communication is the result of the development of the ability to think critically, on the other hand, it allows you to harmoniously combine learning a foreign language with the development of critical thinking (Korzhuev A. V., Popkov V. A., Ryazanova E. L. 2012). Also, acquaintance with the culture of other countries, comparing it with the culture of their own state provides an opportunity to teach students to critically comprehend the socio-cultural realities of another state, to cultivate a tolerant attitude towards its traditions and ethical norms, to cultivate the ability to communicate with representatives of a different society using verbal and non-verbal language means. This contributes to the acquisition of sociocultural competence.

## **2. Materials and research methods**

that are not used in the classroom in various disciplines will simply atrophy and disappear. Therefore, it is important to

introduce critical thinking training in the classroom more often so that students have the opportunity to practice it and evaluate themselves accordingly. Finally, the development of critical thinking can only be ensured if the learning process includes the solution of real problems and students' decision-making in various situations (Popkov V. A., Korzhuev, A. V., Ryazanova, E. L. 2001).

formulation, the use of reliable and relevant sources, it also includes a holistic consideration of situations and a tendency to apply critical thinking skills in life (Bolotov V., Spiro D. 2009).

It is possible to integrate exercises, techniques and methods aimed at developing critical thinking anywhere in the English language class, since there is no necessary clarity of the recommended place. It depends on the objectives of each individual lesson or exercise. In a number of cases, there is no doubt that critical thinking should occupy one of the main places in a higher educational institution, because this technology first of all helps to form the cognitive need of students (Fedotovskaya EI. 2003). According to the role and place of critical thinking in a higher educational institution, this technique aims to provide certain conditions: 1) to propose problematic tasks and solutions; 2) organize a dialogue to solve problematic tasks; 3) give the student the right to make mistakes and create situations for correcting mistakes; 4) provide for a written presentation of students' thoughts with subsequent reflection (Klarin M.V. 2004). Choosing the technique and intellectual methods for the development of critical thinking, we can offer the following methods: studying the foundations of logic; teaching the technique of critical analysis: drawing up clusters, syncwine; reviewing speeches, defense of presentations, mini-projects; discussion of

scientific articles of journals, critical reviews of Internet information; organization of discussions, debates. Students who do not have the natural charisma and courage to express disagreement with other opinions do not have the opportunity to participate in the discussions necessary to develop the skill of critical thinking, which prevents the teacher from integrating this ability into their classes. When teaching a foreign language, educational consider giving students the right to make a mistake, since the fear of making a mistake limits students in their abilities and does not allow them to complete all tasks for the development of critical thinking, where you need to use a foreign language a lot. Working in pairs, groups, formulating thoughts aloud, discussion in a general circle causes students to fear making a mistake, being ridiculed, which reduces the craving for communication. This problem is especially acute in the classroom of a foreign language, where the language barrier prevents students from concentrating on the idea. Students are more likely to think about how to construct a sentence correctly than about what meaning they put into their statement. Therefore, the teacher should educate in himself and his students an attitude towards error as an integral element of learning - an indicator of difficulties, a motive for new knowledge - and form the desire to express their thoughts, taking into account the inevitability of errors (Skinner, B. 1971). According to Skinner, sometimes it would be better to plant false information in order to mislead students and help them learn to distinguish false and misleading data from the truth. Teachers should present students with problems for which there are no correct answers, these may be some global problems with ecology, religion, patriotism or career choice. These questions are considered the most appropriate for critical thinking as they

allow students to choose alternatives and do not have one correct answer. In addition, it is argued that students need to develop a tolerance for complexity. Sometimes the solution of any problems requires a lot of effort and time, often many problems cannot be solved immediately. Many students give up too early without seeing through. The teacher must show the students that this situation is normal and one must be prepared for the difficulties in solving many problems.

strategies for developing higher-order thinking skills in the field of teaching.

- 1) the ability to assess the reliability of evidence
- 2) the ability to distinguish facts from opinions
- 3) the probability of affective and informative connotations of words
- 4) the ability to recognize the bias of the author (or speaker)
- 5) the ability to recognize the conclusions of the writer (or speaker).

According to Elena Konstantinovna Vdovina, the first step to take in developing critical thinking is planning, experimentation, and reflection. This can be done by drawing on students' previous experiences, such as world events or personal issues, asking a clarification question to make the thinking process clearer and more accurate, comparing opinions, identifying underlying factors, and looking for alternative solutions.

According to Ya-Ting K. Yang and Jeffrey Gamble, the development of listening and reading skills is more successful when the development of critical thinking is included in the training, namely self-regulated learning, interaction in pairs and teacher support. It has been proven that the successful development of listening and reading in foreign languages is facilitated by

the introduction of the development of critical thinking. As educators provide students with models, examples, and opportunities to perform increasingly complex tasks, students themselves can better understand the basic concepts and ideas that underpin reading and listening content. Students can also use authentic texts to promote engagement and interest in the topic. Most critical thinking skills have counterparts in critical reading and critical listening, which are the goal - who develops the critical thinking skills in their students can proceed with several conditions involved in developing the relevant skills through reading and listening. But for this development to proceed successfully, several important conditions must be taken into account. For example, teaching materials designed to develop critical thinking through reading should be at an accessible level to ensure understanding of not only the language itself, but also of the topic by all students in one group, and also contain interesting or humorous content to focus students' attention. In addition, direct instruction in information literacy skills, such as identifying information needs and assessing alternative sources of information, is important as it allows students to select appropriate sources of information to answer research questions in a relevant way. With regard to writing, the literature is encouraged to use problematic and controversial topics, while students should interact with each other in the language they are learning. An English lesson should include enough thematic material on each topic to develop the vocabulary and key concepts needed to critically assess meaningful writing needed to improve the level of English and critical thinking as a whole. In order to develop critical thinking through listening, it should be taken into account that in order to increase the interest

of students, it is important to select authentic and diverse materials, which will allow students to learn to compare and evaluate different points of view. Critical thinking speech activities can include debates and various “puzzles” that help learn to evaluate assumptions and new ideas, weigh evidence and arguments, reinforce statements and reflect on questions, successfully promoting both critical thinking and oral skills.

There are several classifications of stages in the development of critical thinking, for example, according to Skinner, these are: defining a problem, formulating hypotheses, establishing facts and collecting data, testing a hypothesis, formulating a conclusion. As well as the three-stage strategy taken as the basis of our work, described by D. Kluster, namely “actualization - awareness - reflection” and described by D. M. Shakirova and I.O. Zagasheva. These two structures for the development of critical thinking are the main ones in our work, since they are of the deepest interest.

The technique of forming critical thinking can be used by the teacher on a daily basis. Its key steps:

1) Challenge. The goal is to form a personal interest in obtaining information. Also, this stage can be called actualization, during which the “brainstorming” technique is used, which requires students to review existing knowledge on a given topic or set goals and is carried out in individual, pair or group mode. One of the important principles of this exercise is to accept both correct and incorrect answers and to guide the work of the students by eliciting their thoughts. In order for the previously acquired knowledge to be comprehended and become the basis for new ones, students should think and tell others (using group, individual work; brainstorming; general forecasting; voicing

problematic issues, etc.) about what they know about the chosen topic for discussion. The task of the teacher at this stage is to help everyone determine “his knowledge” and the main goals for obtaining new ones.

2) The next step is reflection. This stage occupies the largest part of the lesson, as it includes a more complex structure and tasks, because students move on to familiarize themselves with information and process it, which can be done using the following technologies, while simultaneously optimizing the development of students' dialogical competence: comparison, evaluation and analysis. When exposed to new information, students should monitor their understanding and write down any questions they did not understand. Next, they should point out the landmarks that helped to understand the information in more detail and which, on the contrary, interfered. That is why, the main principle of the stage we are describing is that the teacher should give students the opportunity to individually search for information, and then discuss and analyze it in a group.

3) The last stage is reflection, which is based on a discussion of this topic. At this stage, students can not only evaluate their views, but also compare them with the views of their classmates. Students should reflect on what they have learned and how to incorporate new concepts into their concepts and discuss how this has changed their world view. Preparing the teacher for this technique:

- Determine the purpose of the lesson (what we want to learn) and the topic.
- Think what you already know about it? What can be helpful? Which of these pieces of knowledge are you biased towards?

- What learning resources do you have?  
How much time do you have for training?
- Gather Information: Try to be as open and impartial as possible to new information.
- Ask: What are the authors/sources biased against?
- Systematize the collected information, look for new connections - both between key concepts and between the whole topic and everyday life.
- Ask the question again: Is there anything you don't understand?
- Think about how you could demonstrate your knowledge on this topic? And how could you make an interesting test on this topic, using the information collected and structured in a new way?

As we found out, the technology for the development of critical thinking involves the distribution of classes into three stages. The first stage is the actualization of cognitive processes - the “challenge”. This stage should solve three problems:

- 1) Reliance on the acquisition of knowledge, experience. Students are encouraged to recall what they know about the subject. This encourages them to analyze their own knowledge, direct memory and thinking in the right direction. At the same time, the level is determined and the range of knowledge that the student owns and which will subsequently be replenished with new ones is determined, errors are corrected. This is important because new knowledge becomes more solid if it is learned in the context of what has already been acquired. That is, the basis for understanding, assimilation and longer preservation of new knowledge, errors are revealed in those that are.
- 2) Students are encouraged to be active. Learning should be an active, not a passive activity. Therefore, in order for a student to consciously and critically approach the understanding of new information, he must

take an active part in the learning process, and for this it is necessary to purposefully express thoughts in his own words, demonstrate his knowledge. Thus, the information is rethought, and an effective interaction of existing and new knowledge is created in memory.

3) Formation of interest in a particular issue and understanding of the purpose of its study. Here you need to remember about two types of purposefulness: set by the teacher and chosen independently by the student. The problem is this: the motivation for learning activity decreases if there is no interest, that is, it is necessary to maintain interest in the topic being studied.

The second stage is awareness - the assimilation of the content. The main task of the stage is to support the interest set forth in the first stage, stimulate students and track the assimilation of new knowledge. At this stage, direct acquaintance with new information takes place through listening to lectures, word processing, watching a movie, and the like. The teacher stimulates the activity of students.

The third stage is comprehension (reflection). At this stage of the lesson, students comprehend new material, adapt new concepts in their own system of knowledge, that is, change the already learned idea and restructure existing relationships, “prepare” a place for new information. At this stage, two important tasks are solved:

1. Encourage students to express information in their own words, because knowledge is better remembered if it is formed in its own context.
2. Facilitate the exchange of ideas between students. As a result, the vocabulary is enriched and the ability to self-affirmation is activated. Therefore, the starting point of critical thinking is information, which gradually turns into

knowledge, and they, in turn, create motivation.

D. Halpern in his work indicates that all students have a common problem - they often cannot realize when their actions are impulsive, and when they think "rigidly", which leads to the fact that students will experience difficulties in developing an attitude to think critically. D. Halpern also makes a very important conclusion for our work: if a person wants to correctly solve the set tasks and think critically, he just needs to adopt a critical thinking attitude and be ready to develop the above-described qualities of critical thinking (Halpern, D. 2014).

There are three main types of critical thinking programs in the literature: (1) programs that help teach cognitive skills in isolation from a specific learning context; (2) programs in which teaching critical thinking is tied to a specific learning context (embedded learning), while some make the development of critical thinking an explicit goal (infusion programs) and others do not (immersion programs); (3) mixed programs, where the development of critical thinking is an independent direction within the specific subject content of the course. The analysis of which showed that blended programs that combine the specific content of teaching and teaching critical thinking are more effective than other types of programs. Least effective were immersion programs that viewed critical thinking as a by-product of learning. Teaching skills relevant to critical thinking and using them when confronted with specific problems proved to be the best strategy, while engaging students in critical-provoking learning activities without clear instructions and indicating the importance of critical thinking was the least effective strategy. Another important finding shows that programs that included specialized teacher training for teaching organization,

aimed at encouraging students' critical thinking, were more effective in the long run.

Along with the understanding that not all programs and methods are equally suited to the development of critical thinking, the study found that some common elements can be found in those programs that are really effective, and they are as follows: (1) continuous learning / training critical thinking for specific content; (2) explaining the learning objectives and demonstrating the student learning process so that students think about how and why they learn; (3) a combination of several different methods and dynamic learning; and (4) relevant training for future teachers aimed at developing critical thinking.

The question was raised: "How can we fit critical thinking classes into an already crowded English curriculum?" An English teacher who wants to turn his students into critical thinkers may not need (according to the point of view of this article) to radically change his program. By refocusing and revising existing classes and units, an English teacher can provide more significant growth. We have suggested that the most effective methods of developing critical thinking in the process of teaching English are: the method of brainstorming, the method of "Daisy questions", the method of "Six hats of thinking".

The methodological basis of the research is a personal-activity approach focused on the development of students' personality as a subject of educational and cognitive activity; a competence-based approach that defines critical thinking as an important component of the competence of a modern student; a professionally-oriented approach to teaching English, focused on taking into account the needs of students in learning English, which is based on the formation of students' new knowledge, skills, style of thinking in

accordance with the future profession or specialty; communicative and cognitive approach in teaching English.

In the work we used the following methods: theoretical analysis of psychological and pedagogical literature on the problem of the development of critical thinking, psychodiagnostics methods: the "Test" method by Robert H. Ennis, empirical methods: observation, conversation, formative method: the use of such methods of developing critical thinking in English classes as the "Brainstorming" method, the method of "Daisy of questions", the "Six hats of thinking" method, methods of quantitative and qualitative analysis of research results.

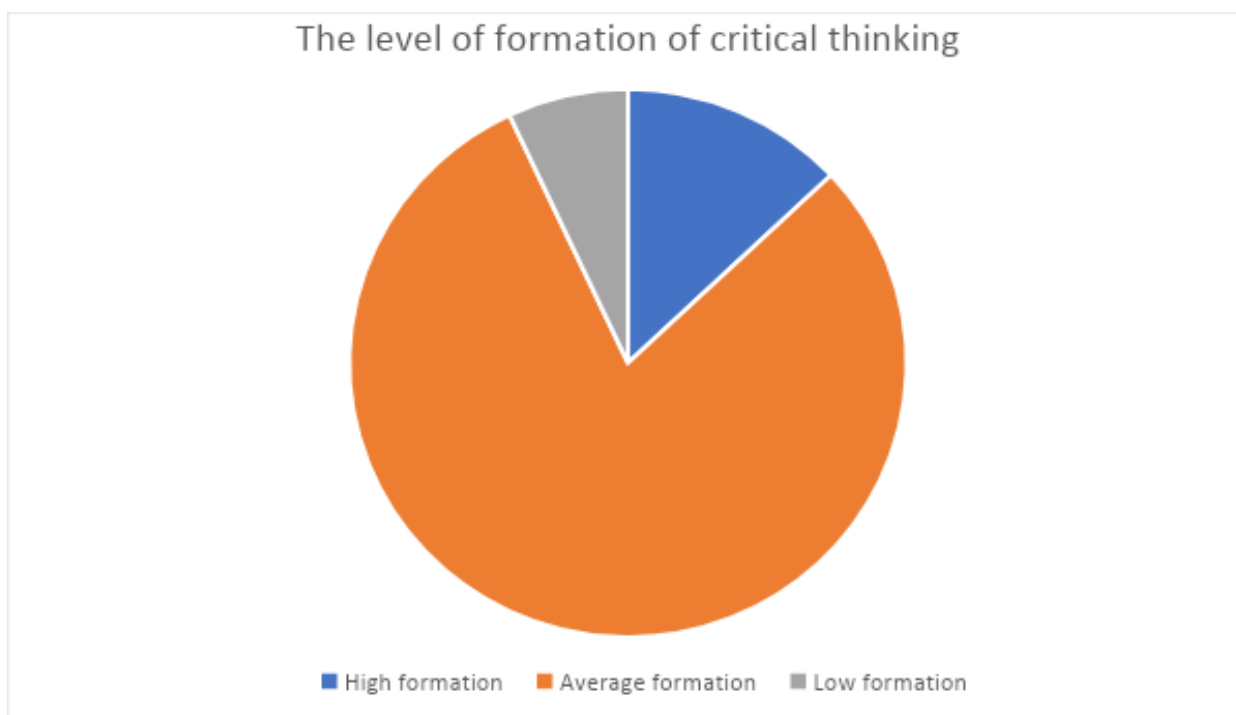
### 3. Research results

The study was conducted at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities. The study involved 30 people – 1st year students in the experimental and control groups.

The study of the development of critical thinking in the process of teaching English included 3 stages:

1. The purpose of the ascertaining stage was to study the current level of development of students' critical thinking.
2. The purpose of the formative stage of the study was to test methods that contribute to the development of critical thinking of students in the process of teaching English: the method of "brainstorming", the method of "Daisy questions", the method of "Six hats of thinking".
3. The purpose of the control stage of the study was to evaluate the work carried out and its impact on the development of critical thinking in students.

The result obtained, in accordance with the 3 levels of critical thinking formation, can be presented in the form of the following diagram (Figure 1):



**Fig. 1.** The level of critical thinking formation before the formative experiment (Compiled by the authors)

The results of the ascertaining experiment showed that 80% of the tested students have the development of critical thinking at the level of "average formation", which is characterized by the presence of some difficulties in finding and analyzing a new, extraordinary approach to solving a problem, not the ability to determine the main property of an object and propose a new property of its use. In 7% of students, the indicator of the formation of critical thinking is at the level of "low formation", and only in 13% this indicator is at the level of "high formation", which directly indicates the ability to respond non-standard to problematic situations, isolate the key and find unusual approaches to solving

problems.

#### 4. Discussion

A comparative analysis of the results of the study of critical thinking of students in the experimental group before and after the formative experiment using the Robert H. Ennis test of the data obtained showed that there is a significant difference in the level of development of critical thinking of students before and after using techniques that promote the development of critical thinking. The result obtained, in accordance with the 3 levels of critical thinking formation proposed to the authors of the test, can be presented in the form of the following diagram (Figure 2):

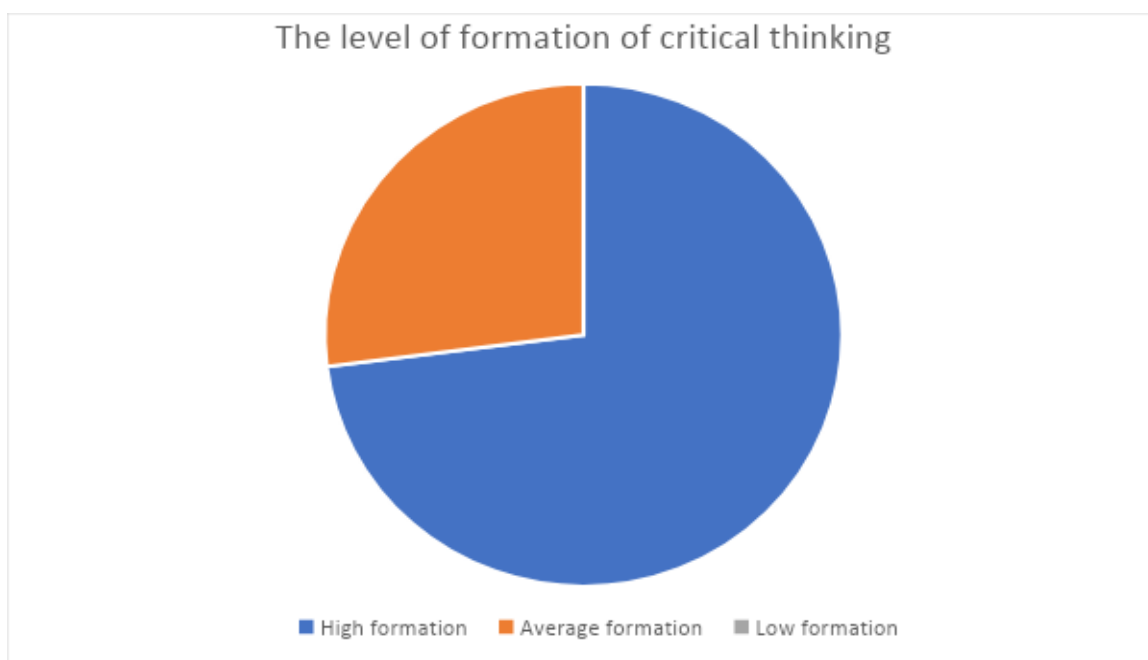


Fig. 2. The level of critical thinking formation after the formative experiment (Compiled by the authors)

Thus, the results of the experimental group of subjects showed that the level of "high formation" increased from 13% to 73%, the level of "average formation", on the contrary, decreased from 80% to 27%, and the level of "low formation" is completely absent, which in turn indicates the acquired ability of students to react

unusually on problematic situations. Statistically significant changes in all indicators of the development of critical thinking of the experimental group indicate a constant search for new ways and ways of thinking, the study of new things and ideas, interest in the study of new material.

The statistical verification data

suggest that after conducting a program with the experimental group for the development of critical thinking in English lessons, the indicators of the formation of critical thinking became higher than before the use of the presented methodological techniques.

## **5. Conclusion**

Thus, it can be considered proven that as a result of using such techniques as "Brainstorming", "Daisy of Questions" by Bloom and "Six Hats of Thinking" by Edward de Bono in English lessons, students' critical thinking develops, the ability to think outside the box and search for a new, unusual approach to the tasks set develops.

The results of the study allow us to draw the following conclusions:

1. The use of modern methodological and pedagogical techniques contributes to the development of critical thinking among students, including: creativity, imagination, flexibility and mobility of thinking, formulation of reasoned conclusions and assessments, interpretation of the problems posed or ways to solve it;
2. The use of the presented methods is a necessary tool in English classes for the development of students' critical thinking.
3. The implementation by students of various types of exercises that contribute to the development of critical thinking helped to develop three important components characteristic of the personality of a modern person: subject knowledge and skills; relevant thinking processes (cognitive, cognitive processes of the individual that contribute to unconventional thinking, the search for new, non-standard solutions); motivation to the goal (in particular, internal motivation to participate in an activity, in this case – learning English, out of interest, pleasure or self-expression).

English teachers are in a unique

position to help students learn how to think critically. Students will not learn to do this by discussing only the importance of developing critical thinking skills; they will learn to think critically by practicing these skills and abilities. Although direct teaching of critical thinking skills may not be possible, it is possible to promote the development of critical thinking skills through critical reading and critical listening, as already noted in our work above. Therefore, an English teacher may not be able to teach "inference recognition" but may "induce the writer's inference as part of regular group work through reading exercises, and may help to increase the ability to "recognize the speaker's inference." as part of exercises aimed at developing listening skills.

We need such a pedagogical model of the learning process that would take into account the cognitive, emotional, value and behavioral aspects of critical thinking and allow us to provide appropriate pedagogical influences. Accordingly, the problem lies in a certain complexity. It should provide for a clear planning of the expected learning outcomes as an increase in the level of critical thinking of the student (goal setting), organizing active learning in such a way as to create space for independent reflection and decisions for everyone, providing a positive learning climate that will create emotional incentives for successful learning of critical thinking by means of various academic disciplines.

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