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Developing critical thinking in primary school students through an integrative approach

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Abstract. This article analyzes the technologies for developing critical thinking in students based on integrative methods in primary school education. The theoretical and methodological foundations of critical thinking are revealed, the role of interdisciplinary integration and interactive methods in the educational process is highlighted. Also, the possibilities of developing students' independent thinking, analysis of problem situations, and socio-moral decision-making competencies through an integrative approach are substantiated.

Keywords: critical thinking, integrative methods, Education lessons, pedagogical technologies, competency-based approach.

The formation of critical thinking in primary school education classes is one of the important factors for developing students' thinking skills from an early age. Critical thinking means that a child does not just look at events and phenomena superficially, but thinks deeply, asks questions, strives to understand the causes and consequences of the problem, and is able to justify his opinion. Today, the main task of the educational process is to educate a child not as a ready-made owner of knowledge, but as a person who seeks, learns and can form his own opinion. Especially if this task is implemented through "Education" lessons, it will be even more effective. Because the subject "Education" not only provides students with knowledge, but also plays a significant role in developing such qualities as patriotism, awareness of national identity, inheritance of national heritage, respect for national values, and ecological culture in them. Education lessons not only form moral values in students, but also develop their thinking, communication and creative skills. This subject is multifaceted and can be integrated with all subjects: native language and reading literacy, mathematics, fine arts, technology, natural sciences, physical education. The main goal of interdisciplinary integration is to avoid monotony, that is, to prevent the repetition of knowledge given to students. Integration is the convergence and connection of subjects during the differential process. The integration process is a stage of connecting the connections between subjects in a new, high-quality way, and manifests itself in a higher form. It should be noted that the foundations of the integration process are based on folk pedagogy and scientific pedagogy of the distant past. Educator Jan Amos Komensky emphasizes that everything that is connected with each other should be studied in a connected way.





Genetically, integration is a form of content and a higher level of content that is organic, intersubjective, interrelated, and, finally, mutually complementary, expanding and deepening, synthesizing the content of educational subjects at least at the level of educational standards, logically completed. Because each lower level of intersubjective connectivity is established between certain didactic units within the framework of the studied educational subjects and provides for the coordination of the content and terms of their study, in contrast, an educational subject organized on the basis of integrative connectivity or an integrated approach requires the interpretation of the studied subject, phenomena or processes in the form of a holistic system from the point of view of comprehensive connectivity and relationships.

An integrative approach is a purposeful and systematic organization of the educational process, ensuring the connectivity of various disciplines and connecting them with life. Our new, modern, and 4K-compatible textbooks are based on an integrative approach. This is because the topics covered in primary school textbooks complement and reinforce each other. For example, the topics covered in the mother tongue lesson are complemented and reinforced by topics covered in reading literacy, mathematics, natural sciences, technology, and education. This creates an opportunity for the student to systematically and purposefully develop the knowledge they are given.

In pedagogy, the concept of integration is widely used today and is often understood as a synthesis of knowledge from different disciplines. For example, integrated lessons or special courses cover one topic using different disciplines. In such cases, integration is equated with interdisciplinary connections, the task of which is to create a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon being studied and a deeper understanding of specific phenomena. However, this is a very narrow interpretation of integration and does not reflect its specificity. Integration involves not only the unification (complementation) of learning elements (knowledge, methods, etc.), but also the elimination of contradictions that cannot be resolved through a single discipline (field). When discussing integration as a scientific category of pedagogy, it can be interpreted in two ways:

- as a principle of developing pedagogical theory and practice;
- as a process of establishing connections between objects and creating a new, holistic system.

Integrative learning is the implementation of an approach that includes the development of methods of activity, the construction of complex, evolving objects and the process of studying them based on the unification of various properties, models and concepts (the principle of integration).

The object of this design and research is learning, which is considered as a process of establishing a system and integrative relationships. Thus, the integrative





approach encompasses integration as a principle of building a learning system and as a process of establishing relationships between elements of the system. This reveals a specific methodological function of integration in learning (in comparison with interdisciplinary relationships), namely the creation of a qualitatively new product (idea, meaning, element, etc.) based on the resolution of contradictions. This means that the process of integrative learning is carried out in a mode of continuous creative self-development, developing innovative pedagogical tools for building a holistic pedagogical process. What ensures the creative (qualitatively new) self-development of such a process?

The natural law of creative self-development is the law of unity and struggle of opposites. The main meaning of integration lies not in a simple conclusion, but in resolving contradictions and overcoming problems. Therefore, the pedagogical process in integrative learning has an integrative dialectical integrity, consisting of a constant constructive synthesis of opposing positions of various levels and types, leading to a qualitatively new result.

Therefore, a constant creative improvement of the holistic pedagogical process occurs. P. Kapitsa already noted the importance of the interaction of contradictions for development: “In any science, if there are no opposing views, no struggle, this science is headed towards the cemetery, it buries itself.”

Consequently, an important attribute of integrative learning is the solution of problems (subject-related, methodological, organizational, etc.), since any problem contains a contradiction. Therefore, integrative learning provides a developmental effect both for the pedagogical process and for each individual (teacher and student). It can be noted that integrative, personally developing learning implies a systematic, conscious, constructive synthesis of learning elements based on various, including conflicting, theories and concepts.

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