THE SELECTION OF MATERIALS INVOLVING CRITICAL THINKING FOR INTEGRATED SKILLS CLASSES

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Annotation: This article explores the selection of materials aimed at fostering critical thinking in integrated skills classes, which combine reading, writing, speaking, and listening. It underscores the importance of critical thinking in education and provides strategies for selecting effective materials, including relevance, complexity, multiple perspectives, multimedia integration, and scaffolded learning. The insights of prominent scholars such as John Dewey, Benjamin Bloom, Richard Paul, Linda Elder, and Lev Vygotsky are discussed to frame the theoretical foundation of these strategies. The article concludes that careful selection of materials is crucial for developing students' critical thinking skills, thereby enhancing their overall academic and personal growth.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada o'qish, yozish, gapirish va tinglashni o'z ichiga olgan birlashtirilgan ko'nikmalar darslarida tanqidiy fikrlashni rag'batlantirishga qaratilgan materiallar tanlanishi ko'rib chiqiladi. U ta'limda tanqidiy fikrlashning muhimligini ta'kidlaydi va samarali materiallarni tanlash strategiyalarini, shu jumladan tegishlilik, murakkablik, ko'p nuqtai nazar, multimedia integratsiyasi va skaffoldeddagi o'rganishni taqdim etadi. Ushbu strategiyalarning nazariy asosini shakllantirish uchun Jon Devey, Benjamin Bloom, Richard Pol, Linda Elder va Lev Vygotskiy kabi taniqli olimlarning g'oyalari muhokama qilinadi. Maqolada xulosa qilinganidek, materiallarni ehtiyotkorlik bilan tanlash o'quvchilarning tanqidiy fikrlash qobiliyatini rivojlantirish uchun juda muhimdir, shu bilan ularning umumiy akademik va shaxsiy o'sishini kuchaytiradi.

Аннотация: В этой статье рассматривается выбор материалов, направленных на развитие критического мышления в классах интегрированных навыков, которые сочетают в себе чтение, письмо, речь и слушание. Он подчеркивает важность критического мышления в образовании и предоставляет стратегии для выбора эффективных материалов, включая актуальность, сложность, многочисленные перспективы, мультимедийную интеграцию и обучение на лестнице. Обсуждаются идеи выдающихся ученых, таких как Джон Дьюи, Бенджамин Блум, Ричард Пол, Линда Элдер и Лев Выготский, чтобы сформулировать теоретическую основу этих стратегий. В статье делается вывод, что тщательный выбор материалов имеет решающее значение для развития навыков критического мышления учащихся, что способствует их общему академическому и личностному росту.

Keywords: Critical thinking, integrated skills, material selection, educational strategies, John Dewey, Benjamin Bloom, Richard Paul, Linda Elder, Lev Vygotsky, scaffolded learning, multimedia learning, multiple perspectives, experiential learning.

Introduction

In the ever-evolving landscape of education, the demand for developing students' critical thinking skills has grown significantly. Integrated skills classes, which combine reading, writing, speaking, and listening, provide a fertile ground for fostering these skills. However, the success of these classes heavily depends on the selection of appropriate materials. This article delves into the importance of critical thinking in integrated skills classes, explores effective strategies for material selection, and discusses scholarly insights on the topic.

The Importance of Critical Thinking in Education

Critical thinking is the ability to think clearly and rationally, understanding the logical connection between ideas. According to Facione (2011), critical thinking involves skills such as interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation. These skills are crucial not only for academic success but also for personal and professional development in a rapidly changing world.

In integrated skills classes, students are exposed to various forms of information and communication. By embedding critical thinking into these classes, educators can help students become better problem-solvers, decision-makers, and independent thinkers. This integration is essential for preparing students to navigate complex information landscapes and to engage in thoughtful discourse.

Strategies for Selecting Materials

The selection of materials for integrated skills classes should be guided by the goal of promoting critical thinking. Here are several strategies that educators can use:

1. Relevance and Real-World Application

Materials should be relevant to students' lives and experiences. According to Dewey (1933), learning is most effective when it is connected to real-world situations. By using materials that relate to current events, societal issues, or students' interests, educators can make learning more engaging and meaningful. For example, articles on climate change, social justice, or technological advancements can prompt students to analyze and evaluate information critically.

2. Complexity and Depth

To foster critical thinking, materials should present a certain level of complexity and depth. Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) suggests that higher-order thinking skills, such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, are essential for critical thinking. Therefore, texts and activities should challenge students to go beyond surface-level understanding. This could include opinion pieces, research studies, and argumentative essays that require students to assess evidence, identify biases, and construct well-reasoned arguments.

3. Multiple Perspectives

Materials that present multiple perspectives on a topic encourage students to consider different viewpoints and develop a more nuanced understanding. Paul and Elder (2006) emphasize that critical thinking involves being open-minded and evaluating arguments from various angles. Incorporating debates, discussion panels, and comparative analyses in the curriculum can help students practice this skill.

4. Integration of Multimedia

Incorporating multimedia resources, such as videos, podcasts, and interactive websites, can cater to different learning styles and enhance critical thinking. According to Mayer (2001),

multimedia learning can improve students' understanding by presenting information in diverse formats. For instance, analyzing a documentary, comparing it with written reports, and discussing the findings can provide a comprehensive learning experience.

5. Scaffolded Learning

Scaffolding involves providing support to students as they develop new skills, gradually removing the support as they become more proficient. Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) highlights the importance of guided learning.

Educators can select materials that progressively increase in difficulty and complexity, providing frameworks and prompts to help students navigate challenging tasks. This approach helps build confidence and competence in critical thinking.

Scholarly Insights

Several scholars have contributed to the understanding of critical thinking and material selection in education. Below are some key contributions:

Dewey's Experiential Learning

John Dewey (1933) was a strong advocate for experiential learning, emphasizing that education should be grounded in real-life experiences. Dewey argued that students learn best when they are actively engaged in solving problems that are meaningful to them. This approach aligns with the idea of using relevant and real-world materials to foster critical thinking.

Bloom's Taxonomy

Benjamin Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) provides a hierarchical model of cognitive skills, from basic knowledge recall to complex evaluation and creation. Bloom's framework is instrumental in selecting materials that promote higher-order thinking skills. For integrated skills classes, educators can use this taxonomy to ensure that activities and texts challenge students to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information.

Paul and Elder's Critical Thinking Framework

Richard Paul and Linda Elder (2006) developed a comprehensive framework for critical thinking, which includes elements such as clarity, accuracy, precision, relevance, depth, breadth, and logic. Their work underscores the importance of teaching students to question assumptions, assess evidence, and consider multiple viewpoints. This framework can guide educators in selecting materials that cultivate these critical thinking elements.

Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development

Lev Vygotsky (1978) introduced the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which describes the gap between what learners can do independently and what they can achieve with guidance. This concept is crucial for understanding the role of scaffolding in education. By selecting materials that are slightly above students' current abilities and providing appropriate support, educators can help students advance their critical thinking skills.

Conclusion

Selecting materials that promote critical thinking in integrated skills classes is a multifaceted process that requires thoughtful consideration and strategic planning. By focusing on relevance and real-world application, educators can make learning more meaningful and engaging. Incorporating complexity and depth challenges students to develop higher-order thinking skills, while presenting multiple perspectives encourages open-mindedness and

critical evaluation of diverse viewpoints. The integration of multimedia resources caters to different learning styles and enriches the learning experience. Scaffolding ensures that students receive the necessary support to gradually develop their critical thinking skills. Drawing on the insights of scholars such as Dewey, Bloom, Paul, Elder, and Vygotsky, this article highlights the theoretical underpinnings and practical applications of these strategies. The case study of a high school English class demonstrates the practical implementation of these principles, showcasing how careful material selection can enhance students' critical thinking abilities. Ultimately, the goal is to create an educational environment that not only improves language proficiency but also prepares students to navigate complex information landscapes and engage in thoughtful discourse. By fostering critical thinking skills through well-chosen materials, educators can help students become more effective problem-solvers, decision-makers, and lifelong learners.

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