

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL CONDITIONS FOR DEVELOPING INDEPENDENT THINKING IN PRIMARY SCHOOL-AGE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT: This article provides a scientific-theoretical analysis of the psychological and pedagogical conditions for the formation and development of independent thinking in primary school-age students. Independent thinking is considered a crucial indicator of personal maturity. The article substantiates the role of age characteristics, forms of organizing the educational process, the teacher's pedagogical skill, and the psychological environment in its development. Effective pedagogical technologies, active teaching methods, and psychological approaches that serve to develop independent thinking at primary school age are highlighted.

Keywords: independent thinking, primary school age, psychological conditions, pedagogical conditions, educational process.

INTRODUCTION: In today's processes of globalization and informatization, societal progress is directly dependent on human intellectual potential, the ability for independent thinking, and a creative approach. Educating the younger generation as individuals who can think independently, analyze, and approach problems consciously and responsibly is a priority task for the educational system. The formation of independent thinking begins from the earliest stages of human life. Primary school age (6–10 years) is a period of intensive development of thought processes, memory, attention, and speech in students, and it is precisely during this period that the foundation for independent thinking is laid. Therefore, the proper psychological and pedagogical organization of the educational process at this age stage is of particular importance. The aim of the article is to elucidate, on a scientific basis, the psychological and pedagogical conditions for developing independent thinking in primary school-age students and to develop practical recommendations. In the context of today's globalized and informatized society, one of the main tasks set for the education system is to develop students' independent thinking, analytical and creative thought. Particularly, the issue of shaping independent thinking in primary school-age students is one of the pressing problems in pedagogy and psychology. This is because the primary education stage serves as the foundation for an individual's intellectual, moral, and psychological development. The reforms being carried out in the education sector of the Republic of Uzbekistan, including the Law "On Education," the "National Program for Personnel Training," as well as the state educational standards developed for general education schools, define the development of students' independent thinking as an important priority. These documents emphasize the necessity of comprehensively perfecting the student's personality, increasing their cognitive activity, and developing their ability to make independent decisions. From a psychological point of view, primary school age (6–10 years) is considered a period of intensive development of cognitive processes such as thinking, memory, attention, and speech. At this age, elements of logical thinking begin to form in students; they strive to understand cause-and-effect relationships. Therefore, creating psychological-pedagogical conditions that serve to develop their independent thinking in the pedagogical process takes on special significance. Scientific research shows that developing independent thinking is not limited solely to imparting knowledge but is achieved by engaging students in active learning processes, strengthening their internal motivation, and also forming a favorable psychological environment. Therefore, this article provides a scientific-theoretical analysis of the main psychological-



pedagogical conditions for developing independent thinking in primary school-age students. Primary school age is recognized in psychology as a period of active development of a child's cognitive processes. At this age, concrete-figurative thinking predominates in students, and elements of logical thinking gradually begin to form. Students strive to understand cause-and-effect relationships between phenomena, to compare, generalize, and draw conclusions.

During this age period, children's interest is high, but the stability of attention is not sufficiently developed. Therefore, in the educational process, it is important to create interesting, problematic situations and encourage the student to think actively. Psychological research indicates that primary school-age students have a strong need for the evaluation and attitude of adults, especially teachers, when learning independent thinking. A positive psychological environment, encouragement, and support contribute to the successful development of independent thinking. Independent thinking is an individual's ability to freely express, analyze, evaluate, and draw conclusions in problematic situations without relying on ready-made knowledge. A student who thinks independently is not limited to mechanical memorization of knowledge but can apply it in practice. From a pedagogical point of view, independent thinking is a result of learning activity, closely linked to the student's activity, initiative, and responsibility. Developing independent thinking requires organizing educational content and methods based on a new approach. The development of independent thinking in primary school-age students is carried out based on the following psychological conditions:

1. **Formed motivation.** If the student has an internal need and interest in cognition, they will strive for independent thinking.

2. **Positive psychological environment.** An atmosphere of mutual respect, trust, and free exchange of ideas must be created in the classroom.

3. **Relying on personal experience.** If the student is taught to reason based on their own life experience, independent thinking develops effectively.

4. **Forming reflection skills.** It is important for the student to learn to analyze and evaluate their own thoughts.

Pedagogical conditions are related to the content, form, and methods of the educational process. The following are important:

1. Use of active teaching methods (problem-based learning, interactive methods, project-based method).

2. Creative nature of learning tasks.

3. Individual and differentiated approach.

4. The facilitator role of the teacher. The teacher should guide the student towards inquiry rather than providing ready-made answers.

The following methods are effective in developing independent thinking at primary school age:

- Brainstorming
- Problematic questions
- Cluster and concept mapping
- Role-playing games
- Debates and discussions

These methods shape the student as an active participant and develop their thinking. The primary education stage is a foundational period for the formation of an individual's intellectual potential and thinking culture. It is precisely at primary school age that students begin to develop a need to acquire knowledge through inquiry rather than receiving it in a ready-made form. Therefore, developing independent thinking should be considered an integral part of educational



content. Modern psychological research emphasizes that independent thinking is directly related to a child's metacognitive processes—that is, the ability to be aware of, control, and evaluate one's own thinking activity. In primary school-age students, metacognitive skills are just beginning to form, and without pedagogical conditions that support this process, a passive learning style becomes dominant among students. Therefore, developing independent thinking requires not just imparting knowledge but shaping the student as an active subject of the thinking process. There are also factors in the educational process that hinder students' independent thinking, including excessive control by the teacher, tasks oriented towards a single correct answer, and assessment focused solely on results. Conversely, open-ended questions, tasks requiring critical reasoning, and fostering a positive attitude towards mistakes increase the thinking activity of primary school-age students. This situation demonstrates that a psychologically safe environment is an important condition for developing independent thinking. Today, it has been scientifically proven that educational processes organized based on a constructivist approach are highly effective in developing students' independent thinking. In this approach, knowledge is actively "constructed" by the learner, while the teacher plays the role of a guide and advisor. From this point of view, identifying and systematizing the psychological-pedagogical conditions for developing independent thinking in primary school-age students is of scientific and practical importance.

CONCLUSION: In conclusion, developing independent thinking in primary school-age students is a continuous and systematic process, implemented through the synergy of psychological and pedagogical conditions. Proper organization of the educational process, the teacher's professional skill, and a positive psychological environment ensure the effective development of independent thinking. Developing independent thinking in primary school-age students is an important component of the educational process. Research results show that shaping independent thinking activates students' cognitive activity, develops their skills in freely expressing their own opinions, creatively approaching problematic situations, and applying knowledge in practice. The psychological-pedagogical conditions analyzed in the article—creating a favorable psychological environment, considering students' age and individual characteristics, using problem-based learning methods, and establishing effective communication between teacher and student—manifested as important factors in developing independent thinking. Furthermore, in the process of developing independent thinking, the teacher's pedagogical skill, professional competence, and innovative approach are of great importance. When the teacher supports students' activity, initiative, and creative thinking in the organized educational process, their intellectual development proceeds effectively. The conclusions and recommendations presented in this article can serve as a methodological basis for improving the educational process aimed at developing independent thinking in primary school-age students within primary education practice.

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