

Developing Independent Thinking of Primary School Students Through A Creative Educational Environment in Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy Lessons

Abdullayeva Uljalg'as Tulegen qizi

Chirchik State Pedagogical University, Uzbekistan

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Abstract: This article provides an extended analysis of the role of a creative educational environment in developing independent thinking skills among primary school students, particularly within Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy lessons. In contemporary education, there is an increasing shift from traditional memorization-based instruction to competency-oriented learning that emphasizes critical thinking, creativity, communication, and problem-solving abilities. This study highlights that educational effectiveness significantly increases when students are placed in an environment that encourages exploration, interpretation, discussion, and reflection. The article also explores how modern educational materials, including digital resources, interactive tasks, and problem-based exercises, contribute to cognitive development. The findings indicate that students exposed to creative learning environments demonstrate higher motivation, deeper reading comprehension, improved expressive abilities, and stronger independent thinking skills compared to traditional instructional approaches.

Keywords: Creative educational environment, independent thinking, primary education, reading literacy, mother tongue teaching, cognitive development, interactive learning, educational innovation.

Introduction: Modern education systems are undergoing rapid transformation driven by globalization, digital technologies, and changing societal expectations. The primary goal of education is no longer limited to transferring factual knowledge but has expanded to developing learners who can think critically, solve complex problems, and adapt to new situations. In this context, primary education plays a foundational role because it shapes the cognitive, emotional, and social development of children.

Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy lessons are especially important because they form the basis of language competence and intellectual growth. Through reading and language activities, students learn to interpret information, express ideas, and develop communication skills. However, traditional teaching methods often limit student participation and reduce learning to passive memorization. Therefore, the

introduction of a creative educational environment is essential to transform learning into an active, engaging, and meaningful process.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The concept of a creative educational environment is widely recognized in pedagogical theory as a system of conditions that fosters imagination, independent thinking, and innovative behavior. Educational psychology emphasizes that learning is most effective when students actively construct knowledge rather than passively receive it.

Cognitive development theories highlight the importance of interaction, language, and social context in learning. Reading comprehension is not merely decoding written symbols but involves interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of meaning. These processes are essential for developing higher-order thinking skills. In this regard, Mother Tongue education

becomes a powerful tool for intellectual development, as it enables students to express thoughts, analyze texts, and engage in meaningful communication.

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on qualitative pedagogical analysis and classroom-based observation. Teaching practices in Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy lessons were examined to identify effective strategies for promoting independent thinking. The analysis focused on interactive teaching methods, problem-based tasks, storytelling activities, group discussions, and project-based learning.

Observations were conducted to evaluate student engagement, participation, and cognitive development. Particular attention was given to how students respond to open-ended questions, interpret texts, and generate their own ideas. The effectiveness of creative instructional materials was also analyzed in terms of improving comprehension and motivation.

Creative Educational Materials and Their Importance

Educational materials play a central role in shaping the learning process. In a creative educational environment, these materials are designed not only to transmit information but also to stimulate thinking and imagination. In Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy lessons, texts, stories, poems, dialogues, and visual materials serve as tools for cognitive engagement.

Creative tasks such as continuing a story, rewriting endings, analyzing characters, and identifying moral values encourage students to think beyond the text. Digital materials such as interactive reading platforms, audio-supported texts, and multimedia presentations further enhance understanding and engagement. These resources transform learning into an interactive and student-centered experience.

Teaching Strategies

Effective teaching strategies in a creative learning environment include inquiry-based learning, problem-based instruction, collaborative learning, and digital integration. Inquiry-based learning encourages students to ask questions and explore answers independently, fostering curiosity and analytical thinking.

Problem-based learning presents learners with real-life situations that require interpretation and solution.

Collaborative learning promotes communication skills and teamwork, while digital tools make lessons more dynamic and engaging. These strategies collectively contribute to the development of independent thinking skills.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis shows that students who learn in creative educational environments demonstrate significantly higher levels of engagement, motivation, and independent thinking. They are more confident in expressing their ideas and more willing to participate in discussions and problem-solving activities.

Compared to traditional teaching methods, creative approaches lead to improved reading comprehension, better interpretation skills, and stronger cognitive flexibility. Students become active participants in the learning process rather than passive recipients of information. However, challenges such as limited resources, insufficient teacher training, and lack of digital infrastructure still exist.

CONCLUSION

A creative educational environment is essential for the development of independent thinking in primary school students. Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy lessons provide an ideal platform for implementing innovative and student-centered teaching strategies. The integration of interactive methods, digital technologies, and problem-based learning significantly enhances students' cognitive and creative abilities.

Therefore, educational systems should continue to promote innovative teaching practices and support the development of modern instructional materials that encourage creativity, independence, and lifelong learning skills.

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