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ON THE FUNCTIONAL LITERACY OF STUDENTS: QUESTIONS OF DEVELOPMENT

Zhainagul BEISENOVA
L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University
zh.beisenova20@gmail.com

Kulanda KANAFIEVA
University of Information Technology and Business

Saltanat MOLDAKHMETOVA
Language Training Center
M. Narikbayev KAZGUU University

Zhanar KUANDYKOVA
L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University

1. Introduction

Socio-economic and political transformations in Kazakhstan entailed significant changes not only in the cultural and production spheres, but also in the educational system. The main task of the modern school is the disclosure of the abilities of each student, the education of a free creative personality, ready for life in a high-tech world, possessing certain qualities of thinking. Modern scientists note a lack of high-level skills of students, as well as students who can make independent decisions, articulate arguments, and defend their own opinions in the discussion. To increase the level of functional literacy it is necessary to expand the boundaries of human assimilation of elements of functional literacy. The formation of functional literacy of students of law colleges is the basis of further development of future lawyers' competence. Thus, the topicality of the study is caused by the objective necessity of training highly qualified specialists who feel the need to increase their level of functional literacy, being able to use the information, regardless of the set goals and objectives of the activity.

The comparative analysis of the needs of the methodological theory of teaching practice and the study of philosophical, psychological and pedagogical literature on functional literacy allow us to define existing contradictions in the educational process of law schools:

- between the society's needs for specialists with a high level of functional literacy and its low level of students at the law schools;

- between the capabilities of the subject 'Russian language' and the insufficient development of methods, forms and means of their application in order to create conditions for the development of functional literacy.

These contradictions allow for a definition of the research problem: what pedagogical conditions may contribute to the formation of the functional literacy of law school students in the study of the Russian language? The object of the research is the educational process in the Kazakh University of the Humanities and Law. The subject of the research is the use of technology for the formation of critical thinking of functional literacy among law students. The purpose of the research is to identify the formation of functional literacy of law students based on the technology of critical thinking.

The scientific novelty of the research lies in the following:

- the need to apply critical thinking skills as a methodological basis for the development of functional literacy of law school students;
- the identified structure (motivational, cognitive, activity and reflective components) and the content of functional literacy of law school students in teaching the Russian language;
- the pedagogical conditions of development of functional literacy in learning Russian language (organizational, technological and informative).

2. Literature review

Nowadays, the questions of formation of creative, problem, theoretical and practical thinking are well studied in pedagogy. Pedagogy also has a sufficient understanding of the development of critical thinking, an issue which is carefully studied by foreign teachers and psychologists, such as R.W. Paul (1990), D. Halpern (2000) and others, but, as practice shows, insufficient attention is paid to the development of this type of thinking in the educational process.

Foreign researchers (Galskova and Gez 2007; Heidegger 2007; Lipman *et al.* 2010; Paul 1990; Plaus 1998). T. Sticht (1974) had a significant contribution to the study of functional literacy, having studied the problem of functional literacy in terms of teaching secondary school students with the further development of the academic programme, aimed at the development of functional literacy in the process of learning, reading and writing. K.J. Denny, C.P. Harmon and V. O'Sullivan (2003), as well as A.D. Arko and K. Addison (2009) carried out a study in which they examined the role of functional literacy in social and economic terms.

In the Russian educational theory, the question of functional literacy is studied at the following levels:

- philosophy of education (Gershunsky 1990);
- categorical aspect (Matskevich and Krupnik 2001).

After studying the foreign experience in solving the problem of functional literacy, we identified the guiding principles of the organization of this process:

- the educational process achieves the best results if the relationship between teachers and students acquires a personal nature;
- an academic programme should be clearly defined taking into account the individual needs of students;
- students must be active participants in learning the new material (Gubanova and Lebedeva 2013).

Currently, the most popular and successful model is the school of Sudbury Valley, founded in 1968 by Daniel Greenberg. The main components of the pedagogical concept of the Sudbury Valley are enclosed in the following provisions: 'Freedom with accountability', 'Self-motivation, self-control, self-development', 'Democracy'. The experience of school of Sudbury Valley was taken over by many institutions around the world (Gubanova and Lebedeva 2013).

The technological development of critical thinking significantly supports the process of training activities in the formation of functional literacy of students. Initially, the idea of developing critical thinking was inculcated in the educational system of the United States by J. Dewey (1915) as the concept of reflective thinking, and subsequently realized by M. Lipman (1988). A significant contribution to the study of technology development of critical thinking was made by such theorists as C. Temple (2005), D. Halpern (2000). The sources of pedagogical innovations can be found in the philosophy of education of J. Dewey. He determined the line of educational thought in the 20th century in the United States and indicated the vector transformation of the American school (Malkova 1995).

Today, there are many definitions of critical thinking. Thus, D. Halpern (2000) says: "Critical thinking is the use of cognitive techniques and strategies that increase the probability of obtaining the desired end result". This statement defines thinking as a justification, accountability and focus to resort to this type of thinking in problem solving, decision-making and the formulation of conclusions. Other definitions indicate that critical thinking is a peculiar alignment of logical reasoning (Simon and Kaplan 1988), the formation of interconnected logical models (Stahl and Stahl 1991) and the adoption of reasoned decisions as to whether to agree to any judgment, reject or defer consideration (Moore 2013).

"Critical thinking is not a single skill or ability, but a combination of many skills" (Temple *et al.* 1997). One of the authors of the RWCT technology D. Klooster (2001) set the following parameters of critical thinking:

- critical thinking is to think independently;
- information is the starting point but not the end point of critical thinking;
- critical thinking begins with the formulation of questions and analysis of the problems to be solved;
- the purpose of critical thinking is a convincing argument;
- critical thinking is a social thinking.

Despite the fact that there are many definitions of critical thinking, all theorists agree that critical thinking is a conscious effort to determine what statements considered to be correct or not. The main purpose of critical thinking, in their opinion, is the development of the ability to learn to independently analyse information and express rational arguments.

The technology of critical thinking does not only allow for variation, but also for the achievement of specific learning outcomes:

- development of new thinking (openness, awareness, flexibility, alternatively, reflexivity);
- development of basic personality traits (creativity, mobility, communication, responsibility, independence);
- learning to ask questions;
- promoting a culture of reading and writing;
- promotion of self-search of creative activity;
- applying a variety of support schemes, which intensify the process of critical thinking.

The support scheme helps students to build logically oral statements in Russian, to develop memory skills in pairs and small groups, as well as a creative approach to learning. Students can independently create different support schemes and, in the future, apply them in writing essays, retelling texts, participating in the discussions on the various presentations and so on.

3. Materials and methods

The hypothesis of the research is based on a system of theoretical positions and scientific positions of the authors, according to which the effectiveness of the development of functional literacy of law students is ensured and achieved in:

- characterizing the functional literacy of students as a basic level of education;
- developing, arguing and test technology development of critical thinking on the development of functional literacy of students.
- In order to determine the theoretical methodological approaches to the study of the issue of forming the functional literacy of students, the following tasks must be assigned:
 - to define functional literacy of students;
 - to study the domestic and foreign experience in solving problems of forming the functional literacy of students and identify its main trends and principles;
 - to study the performance and the conditions necessary for the formation of the functional literacy of students;
 - to develop evaluation criteria and indicators of the functional literacy of students;

- to determine the effectiveness of the pedagogical conditions for the development of functional literacy of students based on critical thinking technology.

The methodological base of the research is:

- The methodical system of forming critical thinking through reading and writing (Clarín 1994; Klooster 2001; Leicester 2010; Temple *et al.* 1997; Temple 2005);

- The competence approach (Rychen and Salganik, 2003; Sanchez and Ruiz, 2008);

- A systematic approach (Meadows 2008);

- Ways of organizing the learning process in high school (Cummins 1986; Halpern 2000; Polat and Buharkina 2007; Zeer 2013).

To test the hypothesis of the research and achieve the objectives, the following methods have been used:

- theoretical: analysis of pedagogical, philosophical, psychological literature on research;

- empirical: observation, analysis of results of operations, testing, conducting formative, notes and summarizing experiments;

- statistical: mathematical processing of experimental results.

The pilot experimental research base has been conducted in the High School of Law of the Kazakh University of the Humanities and Law. The research concept consists of the following provisions:

1. The functional literacy of the future lawyers is the appropriate level of knowledge and skills, ensuring the normal functioning of the person in the system of social relations. The functional literacy of law students is a structural element of academic competence. The structure of the functional literacy of law students constitutes the motivational, cognitive, activity and reflective components.

2. Russian language plays an important role in the preparation of today's highly-qualified specialists, being the basis for the development of functional literacy of students:

- a. it provides a relationship of professional education and cultural development of the student;

- b. it ensures the implementation of tasks and understanding the importance of the Russian language for future professional activities;

- c. it ensures the development of skills (cognitive, organizational, generalized), based on which students develop professional skills and creative thinking;

- d. it ensures the formation of skills to facilitate the implementation of the concept of *lifelong learning*.

3. Pedagogical conditions of development of functional literacy as the basis for the formation of academic competence of law school students are:

a. substantial conditions – content orientation course Russian language' for the self-knowledge, self-development of future specialists;

b. technological conditions – the use of modern educational technologies, the organization of independent work of students;

c. organizational conditions – the organization of cooperation between the teacher and students, evaluation of functional literacy through critical thinking.

Experimental work has been conducted in following stages:

- descriptive stage;
- formative stage.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Results of the descriptive stage of experimental work

In the first stage of the work we conducted the descriptive experiment, in which the students of the Kazakh University of the Humanities and Law took part. In the process of the descriptive experiment, different diagnostic methods for determining the level of formation of the components of functional literacy for law students were applied: motivational, cognitive, activity, reflective.

First of all, the motivational orientation of students to study the Russian language had to be determined. This factor is the most important one for the organization of activities on formation of functional literacy of students. The following essay topics were suggested in order to study the attitude of freshmen students to Russian language:

- 'The importance of the Russian language for modern education, and my attitude to the study';
- 'The role of Russian language in the training and practice of law students and my attitude'.

Then, we considered the data obtained in the course of using the 'thematic essays' method. The total number of analysed creative works was 250, and it was considered to be 100%, respectively (Table 1).

Table 1. Analysis of the results of the descriptive stage of experimental work

<i>Motivation performance</i>		<i>Frequency</i>	
		<i>Number</i>	<i>Number,%</i>
Russian language	Positive	35	23
	Neutral	71	48
	Negative	47	27
Russian for future professional activity	Confirmed	115	80
	Absent	38	19
Emotional appearance		63	47
Possibility of using Russian in subject area		82	52
Difficulties in language acquisition		113	73

Examples of statements that characterize the educational motivation of law students in relation to the subject 'The Russian language':

- 'Language acquisition is necessary for a specialist';
- 'Everyone is obliged to know Russian language';
- 'We are studying all this for overall development';
- 'It should be studied, as we are getting a higher education';
- 'Russian language gives us an idea of behavior in the business communication';
- 'It will help when applying for a job because the employer pays attention first to our speech, rather than knowledge', 'A totally unnecessary thing, it is better to study the subjects relevant for the major field';
- 'I did not even think that the university will offer to learn again the Russian language'.

We see that the students are mostly dominated by a neutral attitude (48%) to the study of Russian language', while there is a group of students exhibiting a negative attitude (27%), this number corresponds to the number of students who believe that there is no need to study this subject for the future professional activity (19%). The challenge of development is noted in 73% of the work, the emotional appeal of the process of development of the discipline was reflected in less than half of the students (47%), which is explained by the students as being 'tired of learning the rules at school'. At the same time, students still do not know and do not realize that in high schools the subject includes completely different tasks.

Thus, we can draw the following conclusions: a comparison of data suggesting mostly the neutral and low motivation of law students to the study of the Russian language.

In order to determine the level of formation of the cognitive component of functional literacy of students, one must have tests to check the residual knowledge of the Russian language, including questions on pronouncing, accents, lexical, morphological, grammatical, syntactic, stylistic norms of modern Russian language. The gradation level of development of the cognitive component of functional literacy was as follows:

- high level – more than 70% correct assignments of the test;
- average level – 40-70% correct assignments of the test;
- low level – 40% correct assignments of the test.

An analysis of student works showed that most of the surveyed stated the average level of formation of the cognitive component of functional literacy (67%). Such a result does not meet the modern requirements to the level of education of students of law colleges, the leading of which is competency. Its achievement depends of the quality of the acquired level of functional literacy.

4.2. Results of the formative stage of experimental work

The first phase of the pilot programme revealed an insufficient development of functional literacy in students, as evidenced by the results of the ascertaining experiment: the students failed to master a largely valid and critical level of initial training for functional literacy, which does not meet modern requirements to the level of education of law school students. In order to test the basic theoretical propositions of research and technology performance of critical thinking in the process of studying the Russian language in developing functional literacy, we had to implement the second phase of the pilot programme and conduct a formative experiment.

The formative stage of the experiment was carried out in 2015 at the Kazakh University of the Humanities and Law. Works in the control group were carried out according to traditional methods, and the experimental group of our technology development of critical thinking. The experimental groups implemented technology strategies of critical thinking, proving the development of functional literacy.

The formative experiment was held with students of the Law School. As a result of the conducted ascertaining experiment, we picked up four student groups, identical in terms of functional literacy (two experimental groups and two control groups). For the confirmation of the control and experimental groups to the parity level of functional literacy, we used the student's test criteria, allowing to confirm the likelihood of identity as the average of two samples for the same population.

We used the technology to work with the text for the development of critical reading, which consists of three stages: evocation, comprehension, and reflection. The results of experimental work have shown positive changes in all indicators of the activity component, significantly reducing the number of students who own conclusions and explanations skills at a low level. We pursued the goal to find out how the technology of critical thinking of students contributes to the formation of functional literacy. The results of experimental teaching to students on the proposed technology showed a positive dynamics of changes in all components of critical thinking.

The technological development of critical thinking influenced the motivational component. The students demonstrated a high level of written language, a good vocabulary and the ability to analyse, synthesize and apply knowledge from different sources, with arguments to defend their position. All the students stressed the need to learn to work with information, a change in their attitude to Russian language. Students concluded that a person can critically examine and develop their own thought process, being able to learn to think objectively and logically.

We applied such forms of work on the development of critical thinking as the 'Predictions Tree', 'Semantic Map', 'Insert', 'Bloom's Daisy'. These strategies allow students to carry out various types of analysis, to develop the ability of

interpretation, evaluation, reflection. The main achievement is the active participation of students in critical reading (Table 2).

Table 2. Analysis of written works

<i>Evaluation criteria</i>	<i>% of right answers</i>	
	<i>DS (descriptive stage)</i>	<i>FS (forming stage)</i>
Logical consecutiveness, presentation of material	50	76.1
Pointing out the main part	28.4	47.7
Setting the links between the main ideas of the author	26.1	55.7
Detailed discussion of the topic (issue)	37.5	74.3
Presenting their own attitude to the problem	12.5	87.5
Defining the practical significance of the problem	28.4	76.1

The most important indicator of the efficiency of the FS was a comparative characteristic of students of experimental and control groups.

During the assessment phase in itself, experimental work revealed a positive dynamics of the level of formation of functional literacy in the experimental groups compared to the control, which is reflected in Table 3.

Table 3. The level of developing functional literacy in %

<i>Levels</i>	<i>Experimental group</i>	
	<i>KG</i>	<i>RG</i>
Low (%)	26.7	49.4
Medium (%)	13.1	52.6
High (%)	13.6	24.7

5. Conclusion

Functional literacy is considered by us as the ability to use the students' knowledge and skills to address the widest possible range of life problems in different spheres of human activity, communication and social relationships. In the educational process, they can be acquired by the student, if the following conditions are met:

- training is the nature of the activity;
- the learning process is focused on the development of student independence and responsibility for their performance.

To ensure the efficiency of the formation of functional literacy, students are encouraged to apply the technology of critical thinking, which can be used to form organizational, intellectual and other skills, including the ability to independently carry out teaching activities.

This material is only a part a the comprehensive study, followed by work to develop a set of organizational and pedagogical conditions of formation of functional literacy through the development of critical thinking of students. Therefore, this material only includes a few strategies for the development of critical thinking used in the classroom of the Russian language for the development of functional literacy of students.

The data obtained in the course of experimental work shows that the proposed model is an effective means of development of functional literacy of students.

Our study does not pretend to be an exhaustive solution to the problem, but it can serve as a basis for further research, creative searches in the development of scientific bases of formation of functional literacy of students based on critical thinking skills. Further research on this issue could continue in the following directions: the development of new means of formation of functional literacy; search, identification and implementation of innovative pedagogical conditions to ensure the development of critical thinking of students; development of programs, manuals, methodologies and technologies for lecturers engaged in the formation of functional literacy of students.

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ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to the definition of critical thinking skills, the stimulation of critical thinking in language teaching. One of the requirements of the linguistic globalization is functional literacy, which involves a degree of mastery of native language. Today, the main objective is the establishment of more serious requirements regarding the students' knowledge level and skills. In the current realities, the educational process in higher education institutions should focus on building skills that contribute to the implementation of the concept of *lifelong learning*. It is obvious that the main condition for the formation of such skills is the presence of a certain level of functional literacy. Thus, functional literacy is a social and economic phenomenon related to the welfare of the population and the country as a whole.

Key words: functional literacy, language teaching, methods of forming the functional literacy of students

REZUMAT

Articolul de față vizează definirea competențelor de gândire critică și stimularea gândirii critice în predarea limbilor. Una dintre necesitățile globalizării lingvistice este alfabetismul funcțional, care presupune un nivel de stăpânire a limbii materne. În prezent, principalul obiectiv este stabilirea unor cerințe mai stricte privind nivelul de cunoștințe și de competențe al studenților. În prezent, procesul educațional din instituțiile de învățământ superior ar trebui să se axeze pe dezvoltarea de competențe care contribuie la implementarea conceptului de *învățare pe tot parcursul vieții*. În mod evident, principala condiție pentru dezvoltarea acestor competențe este prezența unui anumit nivel de alfabetism funcțional. Astfel, alfabetismul funcțional este un fenomen social și economic legat de bunăstarea populației și a țării în ansamblul său.

Cuvinte-cheie: alfabetism funcțional, predarea limbilor, metode de dezvoltare a alfabetismului funcțional al studenților

LE DIFFERENTI INTERPRETAZIONI DEL TERMINE “GIUDICE” NELL’ORDINAMENTO GIURIDICO ROMENO

Vanina Narcisa BOTEZATU
Università Danubius Galați
vanina.botezatu@univ-danubius.ro

1. Introduzione

Lo studio dei linguaggi specializzati, in questo caso, quello giuridico, offre l’opportunità di formulare spunti e osservazioni sulla struttura stilistica del linguaggio, sull’interferenza linguistica, sui rapporti linguistici e culturali tra popoli diversi. Il discorso giuridico usa il linguaggio come mezzo di espressione, in questo senso, ogni formulazione giuridica espressa da leggi, sentenze, decisioni ha un proprio stile giuridico come espressione di un’idea giuridica distinta.

Partendo dal principio che la traduzione giuridica facilita la comunicazione giuridica tra due diversi ordinamenti giuridici, la traduzione di un testo giuridico ha sempre sollevato questioni di adeguatezza o equivalenza delle nozioni giuridiche. Nella traduzione ci sono spesso concetti tipici della lingua e della cultura di origine, che funzionano solo nella lingua di origine e che non hanno corrispondenza nella lingua di destinazione, risultando quindi intraducibili o privi di significato. Tutto parte dall’esistenza, in qualsiasi lingua, di termini specializzati che possono essere identici, ma con significati diversi in altri ordinamenti giuridici, poiché ogni ordinamento giuridico si colloca in un quadro sociale e politico che corrisponde ad una storia, ad una tradizione e costumi, ad un particolare gruppo etnico o ad una nazione.

Questa struttura complessa è raramente identica in tutti i Paesi, anche se le origini di questi ordinamenti giuridici possono avere qualcosa in comune. La diversità degli ordinamenti giuridici rende molto difficile la ricerca nel campo della terminologia giuridica, perché un certo concetto in un ordinamento giuridico non può avere corrispondenti in altri ordinamenti, ciascun ordinamento disponendo di un proprio apparato concettuale, di proprie strutture cognitive e, pertanto, di proprie tassonomie, come risultato di eventi storici.

2. Punti di riferimento metodologici

Nel trattare i concetti giuridici, nel corso del presente studio, si farà riferimento a nozioni specifiche di diritto, perché la complessità concettuale dei testi giuridici rende difficile la traduzione e, in secondo luogo, le differenze tra i sistemi giuridici rendono difficile, e, talvolta impossibile, trovare le equivalenze.

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Nel suo trattato di diritto comparato, Sacco sottolinea che i problemi della traduzione giuridica sono proprio quelli, perché esistono diverse fonti del diritto:

Il fatto che esistano differenti ordinamenti giuridici ha come diretta conseguenza la divergenza, e in certi casi, addirittura l'assenza, di concetti e istituti tra i vari ordinamenti. Questo fenomeno può verificarsi anche all'interno di una stessa lingua, quando questa viene utilizzata per più di un sistema giuridico (Sacco 1992: 29-36).

Il concetto giuridico si presenta, quindi, in stretta connessione con la realtà giuridica che produce; è variabile nel tempo ed è soggetta alle trasformazioni della società che si impongono secondo determinate circostanze. Le differenze concettuali e le questioni di equivalenza sono l'argomento più analizzato da coloro che sono coinvolti nella traduzione giuridica "la mancata corrispondenza concettuale degli ordinamenti giuridici rappresenta la più grande sfida per i traduttori giuridici" (Šarčević 2006: 27).

La diversità dei sistemi giuridici rende molto difficile la ricerca sulla terminologia giuridica, perché uno specifico concetto in un ordinamento giuridico non può avere corrispondenti in altri ordinamenti. A volte, un ordinamento giuridico utilizza concetti e termini che, senza equivalenza in un altro paese, non trovano riscontro nei concetti noti ai professionisti legali di quel paese e nemmeno nella terminologia presente nella loro lingua; altre volte, succede che un determinato concetto sussista in due ordinamenti differenti, ma con riferimento a realtà diverse.

3. Varianti del termine *giudice*¹

Nella maggior parte degli ordinamenti giuridici, i giudici sono funzionari dello Stato, il cui compito principale è risolvere le cause attraverso la giustizia pronunciando una decisione. Nella definizione contestuale del termine *giudice* dall'Italiano, nella forma latina *iudex*, proveniente da *ius* (*diritto*, in lingua italiana, *drept*, in lingua romena) e *dicere* (*dire, pronunciare*, in lingua italiana, *a spune, a pronunța*, in lingua romena), notiamo una grande varietà di costruzioni dovute alla necessità di chiarire le fasi del procedimento, questo avendo un doppio significato, indicando sia l'ente che esercita la giurisdizione sia la persona fisica, titolare di questo organismo ed equivalente nell'ordinamento giuridico romeno ad un *judecător* o *instanță*.

È necessario fare alcune precisazioni riguardo a questo termine: l'ordinamento giuridico si basa sulla lingua, e alla base di ogni ordinamento giuridico c'è un concetto. L'evoluzione concettuale di questo termine è difficile da precisare, in quanto richiede un'analisi comparativa delle fonti di diritto e, quindi, un generale allineamento con gli altri ordinamenti europei, quasi impossibile da realizzare.

A seconda delle competenze che i giudici hanno nel prendere decisioni, ma anche a seconda delle fasi del processo, nell'ordinamento giuridico italiano, i