

### **Critical thinking approach in foreign language teaching**

Critical thinking is an important and vital topic in modern education. To think critically means to function effectively in the changing world of the 21st century. Thus, only conscious learning and reasonably active teaching with the focus on critical thinking skills might help a learner achieve positive results in any field, foreign languages included.

In this specific presentation critical thinking approach is understood as a promising strategy helping to increase learning effectiveness while teaching a foreign language. Its primary objective is to develop a kind of thinking that focuses on ability to identify, question, criticise, analyse, make up own decision and back arguments, summarise and communicate issues effectively.

Novelty of the research relies on the fact that critical thinking skills were already in place in the Science education whereas its relationship with foreign language teaching and learning, the impact of cooperative learning and influence on language improvement were not sufficiently researched.

Critical thinking is part of the basic process of learning, encouraging students to engage with the material through hypothetical problems, examples, and thought-provoking questions. It carries surprise, prediction, finding solutions, alternatives, selection, decision making, and follow up. Through the process of critical thinking and in a collaborative learning environment, foreign language instruction can be more than a required skill; it is an integral part of a liberal education. Thus, a teacher's task is to devise ways to challenge students' old modes of thinking while simultaneously providing structures and support for the development of new ones. Even in elementary foreign language courses, students can be encouraged to think, *e.g.*, to compare and contrast, give opinions, discover patterns, imagine, guess, evaluate given information to make and justify predictions, and reconstruct in their own words. In this way, students feel intellectually challenged and view the course as a worthwhile academic endeavor.