

UNIVERSITY OF TARTU
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STUDIES

**EXPLOITING NEWSPAPER ARTICLES TO DEVELOP
HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS IN SECONDARY
SCHOOL ENGLISH CLASSES**

MA Thesis

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ABSTRACT

The topic for this research was influenced by the discussions in the field of education on the topics of 21st century learning skills and the concept of a changed learning approach. The aim of this paper is to use authentic texts found in English newspapers with the purpose to teach higher order thinking skills to students at upper-secondary school level as part of English as a second language classes. So as to answer the research question on how newspaper articles could be implemented to teach and assess the acquisition of higher order thinking skills, a set of exemplary tasks are compiled and conclusions are drawn from both the students' answers and lesson observations.

The study is organised into three chapters. The first chapter gives an overview of the researches of thinking and higher order thinking processes. The second chapter of this thesis looks upon the advantages and disadvantages of using newspaper articles as authentic material in language classes. This chapter also focuses on the issues of choosing suitable material as well as on the production of different tasks that could be designed and used in an English class. The third chapter includes an empirical case study conducted among my students from forms 10 and 11 at Rocca al Mare School. An introductory questionnaire was conducted to map the understanding of critical thinking as the highest of the thinking skills, as well as the students' attitude to the texts found in course books.

The results of the introductory questionnaire demonstrate that the students are not fully aware of what the term critical thinking refers to and that the majority of the students find course books not that motivating. However, they are able to utilise different thinking skills in completing the tasks that were immersed in the regular English lessons. The conclusions also illustrate the difficulties that designing such tasks may pose to the teacher in terms of time and prior knowledge.

In conclusion, the case study conducted in the scope of this research proved to be useful in terms of teaching students of English higher order thinking skills, and in promoting students' interest in using authentic texts as basis for their lessons.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	2
TABLE OF CONTENTS	3
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	4
INTRODUCTION	5
1. THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS IN AN ENGLISH CLASS	8
1.1 Behind the Thinking Processes	8
1.2 Bloom’s Taxonomy of Cognitive Domains	11
1.3 Critical Thinking as the Highest of Thinking Skills	13
1.3.1 The Role of Critical Thinking Skills in Education	16
1.3.2 Different Approaches to Teaching Critical Thinking Skills	19
1.4 Reading and Writing as Integral Parts of Teaching HOTS	22
1.5 The Possible Means to Assess Higher Order Thinking Skills	23
2. EXPLOITING NEWSPAPER ARTICLES TO TEACH HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS	25
2.1 Authentic Texts	26
2.2 The Advantages of Exploiting Newspaper Articles in English Classes	27
2.3 The Drawbacks of Exploiting Newspaper Articles in English Classes	29
2.4 The Methods of Teaching Higher Order Thinking Skills	30
2.4.1 Reflection	32
2.4.2 Questions	33
2.4.3 Content to a Scenario	34
2.4.4 Problem Solving	35
3. RESEARCH METHOD AND PROCESS	36
3.1 The Participants, Procedure, and Instrument	37
3.2 Introductory Questionnaire	38
3.2.1 The Results of the Introductory Questionnaire	39
3.3 The Criteria for Choosing Newspaper Articles	44
3.4 About the Worksheets	46
3.5. Post-Reading Tasks	47
3.6 Feedback to the Worksheets	58
CONCLUSION	61
REFERENCES	64
APPENDICES	69
RESÜMEE	83

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BTCD: Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Domains

CT: Critical thinking

ENC: Estonian National Curriculum for Secondary Schools

HOTS: Higher order thinking skills

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to explore different ways to develop students' ability to implement higher order thinking skills (HOTS) in an English class by exploiting various English newspaper articles presented in a printed form. This paper strives to answer the following research questions: (A) Why are thinking skills important? (B) How could thinking be taught or prompted in a language classroom? (C) Is implementing newspaper articles as stimuli texts an efficient and assessable means of designing writing tasks to enhance HOTS?

The topic of this thesis was partly inspired from my personal experiences and observations but also from the fact that there has been a lot of discussion on the topics of 21st century learning skills, the concept of changed learning approach, and the importance of implementing different social skills to the contemporary classroom. The easy access to media and information in general has turned the educators to opt for new approaches to teaching, such as critical thinking (CT), the ability to evaluate information, problem solving, et cetera (Vinter 2014).

Although there is hesitation in whether critical thinking, which is the highest of the thinking skills, should be emphasised in educational setting at all, it has become evident that teachers are expected to develop more than basic skills in their classrooms. A prime example of this is the compulsory course on critical thinking in Tallinn University for all students in different fields of studies. The instructor of this course, Oliver Lass, states that in Estonian school, teaching is mostly based on factual knowledge, and the syllabi do not support the overall ability to prompt students into being able to think critically (Uuk 2018: 14). Furthermore, another point in favour of enhancing HOTS in classroom setting is that factual knowledge does not necessarily correspond to the change in people's actions or their use of

empathy in real world situations (Urva 2016: 9). Thus, immersing tasks that help develop HOTS in students seems to have become pivotal in language classes as well.

All in all, these examples together with my personal observations prove that critical thinking is, without doubt, a 21st century skill that needs to be implemented by teachers in different fields of life. Teacher expectations have shifted from delivering plain facts to teaching students all kinds of social skills to be able to become successful and meet the needs of today's societies. It is not relevant what you know, but what you can do with this knowledge. The need to know how my students might be able to realise the value of being able to think critically and its importance to their everyday lives fascinated me, and so I started to look for means to implement assignments that could further enhance such skills in my classes.

The reason for choosing newspapers as source for my research lies in the novelty and originality of their content, which, looked from another perspective, makes it impossible to reuse that content after a certain time period has elapsed. However, newspapers continue to be exhaustive sources of new information and it is still possible to implement some common tasks to whichever the news items might be about content wise.

The first chapter of this thesis gives a detailed account of the theoretical background to the thinking processes and higher order thinking skills. The importance of teaching such skills is analysed from different perspectives, more specifically, taking Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Domains (BTCDD) into consideration, and the chapter concludes by presenting the means of teaching thinking skills in language classes. The term critical thinking is used here as being synonymous with the highest of the thinking skills.

The second chapter examines the choice of authentic texts from newspapers and their possible uses in a language classroom in terms of providing opportunities for prompting the use of HOTS. So as to give reason for thinking, one has to have a stimulus. As this paper is

concerned with using authentic newspaper articles as stimuli, the positive and negative implications of using such material are looked upon more closely with reference to the requirements of the Estonian National Curriculum (ENC). Various tasks are then presented on how to exploit newspapers in language classes bearing the purposes of this thesis in mind.

The third chapter presents the methodology and the data gathered during the research process, which, due to its content, resembles that of a case study. This chapter consists of the selection of newspaper articles as sources for HOTS instruction, post reading tasks, and samples from the students' assignments. The third chapter closes with an overview of the most important findings, states possible implications, and gives recommendations for further study. Due to the fact that the process of assessing the development of HOTS is a rather challenging one, Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Domains is used to find evidence from the students' answers of using higher thinking skills, such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, but most importantly, critical thinking.

I believe my thesis could be useful for both novice and practising teachers in gathering ideas or in helping them prepare lessons that motivate students to think and thus use language as a means of delivering their ideas and opinions. Using newspapers in a language classroom exposes students to various types of texts and they become more familiar with different registers. Most importantly, by creating a habit to read current news and by discussing various topics in school, they also practise forming their own opinion on different topics while supporting reasons for their opinion. However, as the topics that newspapers cover are in constant change, the worksheets presented in the scope of this research should be taken as mere examples and they might be in need of alteration taking the content of specific lessons into consideration.

1. THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS IN AN ENGLISH CLASS

The first chapter aims at investigating the background to and the core principles of developing HOTS in an English as a second language classroom. More specifically, it investigates such skills in society in general, as well as introduces different approaches to implement them in educational settings. So as to reach the aforementioned goals, the chapter has five subdivisions.

First and foremost, it strives to analyse what is meant by thinking skills more broadly. Next, Bloom's Taxonomy of Higher Order Thinking Skills is introduced with a focus on the three highest skills, i.e. analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, in particular. The latter is, in this paper, used synonymously with the term critical thinking. In addition, the aspects of assessing thinking skills are looked upon.

Drawing upon these strands, this chapter attempts to present more specific reasons for integrating HOTS at school, and, more specifically, in English as a second language classes.

1.1 Behind the Thinking Processes

So as to tackle the issue of defining thinking skills, one needs to understand what happens in our brains when we think. Although little is known about the latter, according to Willingham (2009: 4), our brains are not actually designed for thinking at all, but conversely, they are designed to avoid it on account of it being a slow and unreliable process that requires effort. Whenever possible, the brain relies on memory instead. Willingham (2009: 6) argues that most of the problems we are faced with, we have encountered before so it is normal that the brain changes itself in a sense that when you have to solve similar problems, the process becomes automatic, our behaviour is guided by memory, and thus it requires no extra effort.

Thinking only occurs, when you try and combine information from the environment in new ways. This ability is a prerequisite for thinking to take place (Willingham 2007: 8).

The task of actually defining thinking skills has proved to be a relatively challenging one. It was Cuban (quoted in Lewis et al 1993: 131) who noted in 1984 that “Defining thinking skills, /.../ is troublesome to both social scientists and practitioners.” Thus far, what we do know of the processes that are connected with thinking come from different fields of studies: philosophy, psychology, neurobiology, and sociology (Fisher 2005: 12). Within the scope of this paper, the two most influential fields of study are philosophy and psychology (Lewis et al 1993: 131). The former emphasises the importance of acquiring HOTS by implementing logic and argument. The latter, however, focuses mostly on studying the underlying processes of thinking.

There has not always been unison agreement upon whether the ability to think is directly related to the person’s intelligence since the things that happen in our brains when we think are not yet known (Kirby et al 2002: 5). These processes are studied by neurobiology and are not subject to observation within the scope of this thesis. However, the different approaches that psychologists and philosophers have to intelligence are worth examining closer.

Some researchers, such as Francis Galton and Charles Spearman (Fisher 2005: 5), state that the higher the person’s intelligence quote, the more complex his / her thinking processes are. According to this view, thinking skills are inherited and it might prove to be difficult to develop them further during one’s lifetime.

On the other hand, however, there are scientists, Binet and Vygotsky among the most prominent of them, who argue that in essence, thinking skills, as any other skills, are something practical that are needed for task completion or problem solving. According to that view, thinking skills, similarly to other skills, can be practised, and as a result, one can

become better at them (Fisher 2005: 5).

Bloom's Taxonomy, which is still considered to be an influential work and that is more closely looked upon further on in this paper, places knowledge on the lowest of six levels of cognitive objectives. The importance of teaching people a wide range of competencies in addition to basic knowledge is an issue that has received considerable critical attention.

Fisher (2001: 1) highlights the inefficacy in storing plain data in students' memories because of vast amounts of information available. So as to be able to handle the complex future jobs, a person needs the skills to understand, judge, and generate knowledge and processes. These skills also build a strong basis for the habits and behaviours essential for lifelong learning.

The higher levels constitute the person's ability to operate on the contents of the so called mental filing cabinet (Fullan 2005: 5). The traditional forms of knowledge, however, might be inadequate due to the fact that some information may go out of date and needs to be changed over time. However, as the intellectual abilities and skills are essential throughout one's life, focus should be on what we can actually do with the knowledge we possess or will possess in the future (Fullan 2005: 6). Thus, the promotion of higher level thinking skills should be advocated in educational settings (Liaw 2007: 49). These practical skills help prepare students for their further work or studies.

Kirby proposes a scheme to demonstrate the importance of thinking and its outcomes (see *Table 2*).

INPUT	THINKING	OUTPUT
Listen		Speak
Observe		Act
Read		Write

Table 2. *Thinking Outcomes* (Kirby et al 2002: 6)

This scheme successfully illustrates the impact that thinking has on what we do with the information we have acquired. Furthermore, it helps educators see the relevance of opting for tasks immersed in their classes to help teach and enhance thinking skills in their students.

Willingham (2007: 8) points out that thinking is about combining information in a novel way. Thinking well, according to this view, requires not only stimulus that gives reasons to think, but also factual knowledge to be able to think and construe one's opinion on the matter at hand.

In conclusion, it should be added that the value and usefulness of teaching and practising thinking skills is the approach mostly associated with the current ideologies in education and thus it is widely implemented in the creation of various curricula (ibid: 4).

1.2 Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Domains

The branch of psychology that is responsible for conducting research on how people think and generate ideas is called cognitive psychology (Fisher 2005: 4). The cognitive skills that enable a person to experience and interpret the world around him / her, are called thinking skills (ibid: 1). These skills are connected with a phenomenon called metacognition, i.e. thinking about one's thinking (ibid: 10).

Benjamin Bloom developed the taxonomy of thinking skills (or *The Cognitive Domains of Education*, see Table 1) already more than five decades ago.

Higher Order Thinking Skills	Evaluation
	Synthesis
	Analysis
Lower Order Thinking Skills	Application
	Comprehension
	Knowledge

Table 1. *Cognitive Domains of Education* (Fisher 2005: 63)

Bloom identifies a number of basic or *lower order* cognitive skills and a number of *higher order* skills (Fisher 2005: 63). The former include knowledge (i.e. remembering plain information), comprehension (putting this information into words), and application (using that information in a new context). On a higher level, however, there is analytical thinking skill or the ability to break chunks of information into parts. Next, there is synthesis that includes using the acquired information in a new pattern (ibid: 63). It should be noted that synthesis is subjective in essence and is strongly influenced by previous knowledge (Houston 2009: VIII). Last but not least, the highest of the thinking skills is the phase of judging new information, which, according to Bloom, is synonymous with critical thinking (Fisher 2005: 63).

According to Liaw (2011: 61), these cognitive domains or types of thinking could be further demonstrated in a following manner, starting from the lower skills:

- a) knowledge is the observation and recalling of information, e.g. dates, places, main ideas, et cetera;
- b) comprehension is about understanding the context as well as comparing and contrasting information;
- c) application process implies the use of new information in novel situations;
- d) analysis is recognizing patterns, organising parts of the newly acquired information and being able to uncover hidden meanings;
- e) synthesis is characterised by using old information to create new ones by making generalisations from facts and being able to infer;
- f) evaluation is about assessing the value of theories and making choices based on reasoned, verified argument.

Both Liaw and Bloom have highlighted the concepts underlined in both the ENC as well as in its Syllabi for Foreign Languages. The former implies that learning is an active

and meaningful process, which aims not only at relating to information, but also at interpreting it. The latter, however, emphasises the goal of using various teaching methods in a foreign language classroom, which is to develop systematic thinking and the ability to express ideas clearly (ENC 2011: 2).

The various thinking skills presented by Bloom should all implemented in an English class, by either assessing students' knowledge, asking them to compare or contrast pictures or information, and by using role-plays, for instance, the students need to use their application skills. By providing different techniques and source materials, HOTS serve as logical continuation to the former.

1.3 Critical Thinking as the Highest of Thinking Skills

As stated above, Bloom and Lewis both regarded CT as the highest of the thinking skills. Historically, the term CT dates back to the time of Socrates, who encouraged the Athenians to think, stated that, "The unexamined life is not worth living" (quoted in Kirby et al 2002: 1). It was not until the 1980s, however, that the first serious discussions and analyses of the notion *critical thinking* started to emerge into the field of education more prominently and since then it has undergone intensive investigation. This emergence was evoked by a branch of psychology, called cognitive psychology, which deals with thought and knowledge; and which examines the skills and strategies used in solving problems, reasoning, and making decisions (Halpern 2003: 8).

Due to the fact that CT has roots in separate fields of study, these academic strands have developed different approaches to CT and thus, several attempts have been made to define CT (Lai 2011: 4). Overall, all three approaches – philosophical, psychological, and educational – which are inspected more closely below, share two distinct ideas. Namely, CT is always goal-directed and purposeful. Also, CT is applied when trying to solve different

problems, make decisions or provide explanations.

The philosophical approach focuses more on the qualities and characteristics of the person who thinks, rather than his / her actions. The notion of an *ideal thinker* is frequently connected with how philosophical tradition sees CT. The qualities that attribute to an ideal thinker are having an open mind, being inquisitive and flexible, understanding different points of view, and being able to draw conclusions after weighing the pros and cons of something. (Lai 2011: 5)

Following the philosophical approach, Day (quoted in Houston 2009: 121) limits the definition of CT to the following 3 areas:

- differentiation between fact and opinion;
- examination of assumptions;
- flexibility and open-mindedness during the process of looking for explanations and solutions to problems.

These ideas are similarly advocated by Robert Ennis, who is considered to be among the key contributors to the research of CT, and who states that, “Critical thinking is reasonable, reflective thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do (quoted in Vieira 2011: 47).” These definitions prove that philosophical approach sees CT as equivalent to evaluation that was proposed as the highest of the thinking skills by Bloom.

Contrary to the philosophical approach, the psychological approach places less importance on the person’s individual characteristics and rather emphasises the underlying processes that are happening when a person thinks.

Perhaps the best definition for CT from a psychological point of view comes from Halpern (2003: 6) who strives to cover the broad context that critical thinking involves:

Critical thinking is the use of those cognitive skills or strategies that increase the probability of a desirable outcome. It is used to describe thinking that is purposeful, reasoned, and goal directed—the kind of thinking involved in solving problems, formulating inferences, calculating likelihoods, and making decisions, when the thinker is using skills that are thoughtful and effective for the particular context and type of thinking task.

So as to complete Halpern's ideas, Sternberg (quoted in Lai 2011: 8) adds that CT consists of “/.../ the mental processes, strategies, and representations people use to solve problems, make decisions, and learn new concepts”.

Overall, psychologists tend to define CT by the types of actions and behaviours that critical thinkers do rather than pointing out the inherited characteristics of an ideal thinker.

According to Chance (1986: 6), who has researched the educational approach, CT is the ability to analyse facts, generate and organize ideas, defend opinions, make comparisons, draw inferences, evaluate arguments, and solve problems. John Dewey is considered to be the founder of the CT movement, which he called reflective thinking (Fisher 2001: 2). Dewey identified *learning to think* as a primary purpose of education already in as early as 1933 (Halpern 2003: 8). His definition of the act of thinking critically could be described as “active, persistent and careful consideration of a belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends (quoted in Fisher 2001: 2)”. Dewey's ideas encourage the use of discussion and the preservation of an open-minded approach in classrooms so as to enhance the acquisition of CT among students.

Willingham (2007: 7) stresses the connection between thinking on problems that are at the appropriate level of complexity for students and their attitudes towards school in general. According to him, mental work appeals to people and offers rewards (Willingham 2007: 7).

It is a challenge to live in such revolutionary times that require new and different abilities, and teaching students to become critically thinking citizens is a prerequisite for being able to meet the challenges of the rapidly changing world (Marin et al 2011: 1). There is a connection between CT and other skills that are sometimes defined as *twenty-first century skills*, such as metacognition, motivation, and creativity (Lai 2011: 18). Rotherham (et al 2009: 16-21) states that, in fact, these 21st century skills are nothing new. What is new,

however, is the extent to which such skills contribute to the universal success alongside with the changes in economy and the world (Rotherham et al 2009: 16-21).

Peter Drucker, who coined the term *knowledge society* at the end of World War II, stated that knowledge has ceased to apply to materials and work, but to knowledge itself (Fullan 2005: 7). It means that what we do with knowledge should give it more meaning, access, reliability, relevance or purpose (ibid).

The ability to think critically extends further to everyday life, relationships, ethical choices and even to the ability to survive in the constant flow and plethora of information offered on the Internet and by various means of social media (Marin et al 2011: 3). The rapid changes that are happening around us make it next to impossible to predict what new knowledge is needed for future jobs. What becomes evident from analysing such progress and information overload is that it is necessary to teach children skills that could be used to gather, organise, and use information (Fisher 2005: vii).

1.3.1 The Role of Critical Thinking Skills in Education

Education makes better minds, and
knowledge of the mind can make better education.
D.T Willingham

The emphasis on implementing tasks that require CT is rooted in new knowledge about different learning styles, how our brains work and, last but not least, in global changes within societies. This knowledge has ultimately led the educationists to re-evaluate current curricula and teaching practices. Subsequently, learners are expected to attain adequate understanding of how to question or judge the validity of ideas and texts, and thus be able to filter information by applying reason instead of accepting things as they are (Alagozlu 2007: 118).

Back in 1992, Wright (quoted in Vieira 2011: 45) stated that “[...] education in itself requires, per its definition, critical thinking“. Wright’s statement implies that each person

should be able to think critically about their beliefs and provide rational reasons for them. The ability to think critically is closely connected with the sustainability of democracy in a sense that a citizen is required to make valid judgments and have the necessary skills for interaction.

A further reason for implementing CT skills, according to Wright (Vieira 2011: 45), is that it helps people break away from egocentric attitudes. People who cannot implement CT skills can be divided into easily manipulated people, and those who are egocentric and thus unable to approach ideas and problems from various perspectives (Fisher 2005: 65).

It is pivotal to practise how to think critically with pupils since the skills are necessary when pupils are asked to, for instance:

- react critically to an essay or evidence presented in a text;
- assess the quality of reading or of discourse;
- build an argument;
- write an essay based on previous reading or;
- participate in class (Fisher 2005: 65).

The reason why language educators have started to emphasise the importance of teaching thinking skills to students is that thinking skills are closely related to language. It is through language that a person can come to understand the world and, subsequently, the use of both written and oral language is crucial to the development of thinking skills (Liaw 2007: 46). Wittgenstein (quoted in Kirby 2002: 11) has even stated that “the limits of my language are the limits of my life”, a quote which places immense importance on the development of both language and thinking skills.

Paragraph 5, Division 2 of “Learning and Educational Outcomes” which is part of the General Competencies chapter in the Estonian National Curriculum of Upper-Secondary Schools lists the values and competencies students need to have acquired upon graduating.

According to this document, good teaching is not only about achieving particular curriculum objectives, but also about developing various competencies and values. More specifically, point 7 states that a student “thinks critically and creatively, develops and values his or her own and others’ ideas, provides justification for his or her choices and positions (ENC 2011: 7).” Appendix 2 of the National Curriculum that outlines the objectives of teaching foreign languages in Estonia emphasises the importance of developing systematic thinking and self-expression skills (ENC 2011: 2). This requirement in itself gives reasons for and heightens the need to implement, teach, and practise CT tasks in language classrooms.

Some further beneficial aspects could be inferred from the use of CT activities in the classroom context. First and foremost, the teaching of such skills is interwoven with the theories of cognition which see learners as active creators of their knowledge and thus the learners themselves are responsible for creating knowledge and finding meaning (McGuinness 1999: para 8). The aspect of developing a sense of responsibility for one’s own learning is similarly advocated by the Estonian National Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools (ENC 2011: 2).

Learners are also expected to adopt a critical attitude to new information and novel situations which subsequently leads them to master the art of argumentation (McGuinness 1999: para 9). Such critical attitude and skills can be achieved by designing tasks that offer open-endedness and are not routine in nature (McGuinness 1999: para 12). Better thinking and reasoning skills are closely connected to the acquisition of specific skills and strategies and thus, open-minded attitude in classrooms boosts the creation of an educational atmosphere, where questioning, predicting, doubting, and contradicting are actively promoted (McGuinness 1999: para 14).

A further advantage of teaching HOTS, is the development of reflective learning in a sense that by reflecting on one’s thinking, more self-control and self-awareness is gained

(McGuinness 1999: para 13). According to the National Curriculum (2011: 2), supporting learners' confidence is the key attributor to lifelong learning. Furthermore, developing learners' confidence also contributes to their motivation and thus, difficult or challenging tasks that emphasise higher-order thinking skills might be easier to solve for students (Lai 2011: 20).

Finally, although CT skills can be taught across different contexts and domains, it could be easier to do this in a specific domain. This idea is supported by Willingham, who argues that it is easier to learn CT within a given domain than in a generic sense (Lai 2011: 13). Drawing from this, teaching students to think critically in a language classroom is something that is as achievable and encouraged as in any other subject.

Overall, it could be said that CT plays an immensely important role in a person's everyday life, as all behaviour depends on what one believes and all human action can be regarded as, to some extent, the decisions of the individuals (Vieira 2011: 47).

1.3.2 Different Approaches to Teaching Critical Thinking Skills

There are various teaching strategies that can help foster pupils' CT skills and the application of such strategies depends greatly on teacher professionalism. Broadly speaking, the practice of developing thinking skills among students has implications for not only students themselves, but also for the teachers' ability to think critically (McGuinness 1999: para 16).

The majority of changes in education that have taken place in the last few decades have stemmed from the diffusion of the ideas of Matthew Lipman. His book, "Thinking in Education" (1982), points out the difficulties that may hinder the application of teaching thinking. The main factor that attributes to the unsuccessful implementation of CT in class, such as insufficient teacher preparation and the narrowness of the approach, is the

educational ideal that still maintain *the schooling without thinking* approach. He firmly believes that the practices of the latter result in the lack of imagination among students who cannot think for themselves, are unable to participate actively in the learning process, and who are far from being autonomous in their studies. (Matthews 2004: 134)

Prior to the implementation of a specific approach, it is worth examining the advantages and disadvantages of the ones available. Ennis (quoted in Lai 2011: 30) introduces four instructional approaches to teach CT: general, infusion, immersion, and mixed approach.

The general approach entails the instruction of CT skills as a separate or stand-alone course and is considered to be outside a specific subject. Some content is still involved so as to generate different tasks and give stimuli for discussion and provide examples. The content, however, is usually taken from the daily lives of students (Lai 2011: 30). Cotton (quoted in Marin 2011: 3) advocates the use of general instruction which includes extensive practice of specific skills, mostly by the use of real-life situations. This approach is also referred to as intervention (McGuinness 1999: para 3).

On one hand, as Staib (quoted in Marin 2011: 4) found, creating real-life situations, stimulating group discussion, and student interaction enhances the development of critical thinking skills. On the other hand, however, such tasks may be time-consuming to prepare and place too much pressure on the teacher.

The infusion approach, which is also called imbedded, represents the teaching of CT skills as infused across the curriculum by systematically identifying opportunities within the normal curriculum (McGuinness 1999: para 3). The basis for instruction of CT is taken from the context of the specific subject (Lai 2011: 30). According to Case (quoted in Marin 2011: 3), in the endorsement of such an approach the teacher strives to cover the course plan plus teach CT skills without direct instruction or drilling. The purpose of acquiring HOTS, thus

happens independently and effortlessly.

A further advantage is that such an approach does not require an extra course in the curriculum. What could be a considerable drawback, however, is that such instruction is teacher-dependent, relies heavily on the interests and professionalism of the teacher, and may not always be applicable for use in classroom situations depending on the subject (Marin 2011: 3).

The immersion approach is somewhat similar to infusion in a sense that students are presented with subject-related instruction but the instruction itself is not made explicit. This means that students are expected to acquire CT skills as a natural consequence of engaging with the subject matter (Lai 2011: 31). This could be done by asking questions not based on reading comprehension, but rather enquire about the students' views on the matter at hand and by letting them analyse the topic by drawing from personal experience.

The mixed approach combines elements of both general and subject-specific approaches. Teachers combine stand-alone courses with the context of specific subject matter in order to teach CT skills (ibid). This approach emphasises the importance of CT development but, on the other hand, uses the content of a specific subject to teach and practise CT skills.

For the purposes of this paper, both the infusion and immersion approaches are implemented, meaning that the students are made aware of the concept of CT as advocated by the infusion approach; whereas the tasks the students are asked to complete require using CT skills without further instruction on the strategies behind using such skills. The latter demonstrates the ideas advocated by the immersion approach. The other two approaches have been rejected on account of them being too time-consuming to implement within the syllabi of the English classes.

1.4 Reading and Writing as Integral Parts of Teaching HOTS

In addition to listening, speaking, and writing; reading is one of the essential language skills which is part of every language lesson, and the whole process of learning in general. Furthermore, it is an integral part of our everyday lives. The importance of reading lies in the fact that it is part of communication and it never fails to have a purpose. Alderson (2000: 28) sees reading as “/.../ an enjoyable, intense, private activity, from which much pleasure can be derived, and in which one can become totally absorbed.”

The purpose of reading determines not only the way we read, but also affects teachers' choices of reading tasks. When the purpose of reading is to understand the mere idea of the text, one focuses less on details. In other words, the reason for reading determines the way you read and the skills you need to convey the meaning (Alderson 2000: 50).

According to Fisher (2005: 180), reading is closely connected to thinking. While decoding the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences, we are actually applying our thinking skills, such as observing and comprehending new information. According to Willingham (2007: 8), the information we read gives us the necessary factual knowledge to think and a reason to do so. Furthermore, reading requires the use of creative thinking since it makes use of imagination, empathy, and problem solving techniques.

Broadly speaking, the same principles that are utilised in reading, apply to writing as well since both writing and reading strive to produce meaning with the use of words and are thus inseparable. Writing, as well as reading, requires good language and text analyses skills, plus the ability to express one's ideas by trying to create meaning with the use words and expressions Writing also enhances reading and thinking skills in a sense that the better one reads, the better one can put his / her thoughts on paper (Fisher 2005: 183).

The main contribution that writing makes to the development of thinking is that it prevents the brain from having to remember everything (ibid: 184). This means that when

we write, the things that we are thinking about are written down and thus, by writing, one can enhance reading and develop thinking skills simultaneously. Expressing our thoughts through writing them down helps us look at our ideas more objectively, bringing clarity and exactness to them (Kirby et al 2002: 7). Although writing is a complex process, comprising of the creation of the text and the writing process itself, it offers ample opportunities for repetition, expansion, and correction. All these aspects give writing an immensely important role in the person's cognitive development (Fisher 2005: 184).

So as to connect the teaching of HOTS with English, the practical part of this research implements reading as well as writing. The latter also provides means to work with use of language and the layout of various tasks, such as essays or formal letters.

1.5 The Possible Means to Assess Higher Order Thinking Skills

There can be a number of assessment challenges connected to CT skills in students. However, there are some suggestions in terms of how to overcome them best.

First, tasks that are more appropriate for CT instruction are open-ended in essence, meaning that multiple-choices should be avoided (Lai 2011: 38). Also, the tasks that require the use of judgement from students are better suited for CT instruction. More specifically, students should be asked to either accept or reject a view and give justification for their choices (ibid: 40).

Second, assessment tasks should reflect authenticity when introducing problems or tasks. The stimuli that are encouraged should be in some way connected to real-world issues. The assessment itself could be made easier when presenting ill-structured problems so that students would be expected to cross the boundaries of one subject domain and draw inferences or make evaluations using various information (ibid: 39). Research has found that contradictions and inconsistencies evoke the use of CT skills (ibid: 40). Such tasks are also

prevalent in the speaking exam at the National Examination in English, for instance. This further demonstrates the importance of teaching HOTS in English language classes.

Third, it should be noted that the correctness of the answer is less relevant in CT instruction than the quality of arguments. These arguments should ideally demonstrate the students' use of knowledge in novel situations and go beyond the scope of the acquired knowledge (Lai 2011: 40). What is also important is the fact that students' reasoning should become visible and that this reasoning could also be assessed according to the evidence and logical arguments that are presented by students.

For the above reasons, the tasks that have been designed for the purposes of this paper have been compiled accordingly.

2. EXPLOITING NEWSPAPER ARTICLES TO TEACH HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS

While preparing for classes, teachers are constantly faced with the question of choosing appropriate material and oftentimes two possibilities arise: to use authentic or non-authentic material. The definition of an authentic material would be that it has not been designed bearing students in mind. On the contrary, authentic material (either texts or videos) has been produced for the speakers of a particular language and thus, they include incidental language which is very often missing from textbooks (Berardo 2006: 60).

There are teachers who opt to use ready-made textbooks of which there is an abundance of, especially English ones. This option, however, might leave little room for creative tasks and may lack relevant information about the local affairs and culture. Textbooks have been specifically designed taking pupils' needs into consideration and the texts there tend to focus on particular grammar items, their language is mostly simplified, the texts are abridged (ibid).

It is true that while using authentic materials has many positive sides, it also has some disadvantages. For instance, the very fact that authentic texts include cultural aspects makes them more difficult to read and understand by someone from outside the particular language community. Also, the language presented in newspaper articles might be overwhelming for students and not always suitable or even relevant to their level (ibid: 63).

As this thesis is concerned with the use of authentic texts taken from English newspapers as stimuli to enhance students' higher order thinking skills with the use of post reading tasks, this area is now explored in more detail. So as to make it possible to assess what level of thinking the students are utilising, the post reading tasks are to be completed with the use of writing.

This chapter is divided into four subchapters. First, it strives to define authentic texts and provides the advantages and disadvantages of choosing such texts. Finally, a variety of

tasks on how to implement authentic texts in a language classroom are presented.

2.1 Authentic Texts

Authentic texts are defined by Wallace (quoted in Berardo 2006: 61) as “/.../ real-life texts, not written for pedagogic purposes.” Such a text differs greatly from a non-authentic one on account of excluding artificial and unvaried writing. Berardo (2006: 62) highlights the indicators which set not authentic texts apart from authentic ones, and these include:

- perfectly formed sentences;
- questions using a grammatical structure which are followed by full answers;
- repetition of structures;
- difficult to “read” the text well.

It is highly unlikely to offer pupils exposure to the real world with the use of non-authentic texts. Authentic material enables pupils to focus more on the context, rather than the form (ibid: 62). This, as a result, makes newspapers valuable materials in implementing the infusion approach and immersion techniques.

When thinking of authentic materials in a classroom context, one often has newspapers in mind. The history of using newspapers in educational settings began to be more prominent in the 1960s and 1970s, which saw a tendency towards the concerns over social and political illiteracy among young people (Gardner et al 2009: 4). Starting from the 1980s, cognitive psychologists and linguists launched more detailed studies on how to exploit newspaper articles in the light of schema theory and discourse analysis.

Contemporary research continues to highlight the importance of using newspapers for teaching purposes as they contribute to students’ learning and thinking skills, to the growth of overall knowledge base, to the stimulation of interest in reading in general, and they are invaluable in developing a strong sense of citizenship (ibid: 3).

All the aforementioned abilities are connected to the 21st century skills that were discussed in the first chapter and that are considered relevant to the overall ability to succeed in life after finishing school.

2.2 The Advantages of Exploiting Newspaper Articles in English Classes

The reason why newspapers have great value in terms of educating people on a range of topics lies in the fact that they are highly versatile. They cover a wide range of topics and can thus be exploited for various purposes, such as for teaching reading skills, for instruction in a particular domain, or even for getting the pupils acquainted with cultural differences (Gardner et al 2009: 2).

Apart from the aforementioned reasons, newspapers contribute to the following teaching purposes. Namely, they:

- spark interest and thus increase motivation and learner autonomy in students;
- provide a variety of style and content as well as information on both local and global matters;
- are useful tools in introducing pupils to contemporary ideas, trends, practices;
- are cost-effective in comparison with textbooks;
- help build up a sense of tradition (ibid: 2);
- are the basis for securing the values of democratic freedom and developing good citizenship by engaging them in discussions about politics;
- include information on current affairs to start meaningful discussions (ibid: 3);
- promote the development of CT skills and analytical thinking (ibid: 6);
- enable students to be able to connect various fields, topics, issues (ibid: 7).

The availability of newspapers should not become a major issue for the teacher since English newspapers are available both online and on paper. The fact that newspaper articles

cover recent events makes them valuable assets in sparking pupils' interest. Furthermore, as cited above, authentic newspapers provide students with cultural background attributing to the development of the schemata about the target society.

Grundy (Harmer 2001: 12) explains that those learners who are used to reading newspapers in the target language can acculturate and acquire the language with more ease than those who do not yet possess such a habit. Harmer (2001: 12) adds that it is of great importance to understand how pupils see the learning of a language. Namely, he states that the learners' sole interest in learning a language is to get more information about the people who speak it and the places where this language is spoken in. Subsequently, implementing tasks based on newspaper articles provide students with excellent opportunities to nourish their needs in the aforementioned respects.

In addition to providing stimuli to generate assignments based on newspaper articles to develop students's CT skills and taking the purposes of this research into consideration, the aspect of motivation in using newspapers in class is discussed further in the following subchapter.

The idea that people's motivation can influence their cognition plays an important role in the instruction of thinking and reasoning (Molden et al 2013: 390). Making use of creative and interesting tasks in class may attribute to student motivation to study a language. Harmer (2001: 13) defines motivation as something that drives students to achieve better results and thus it is a key factor for success. This view is elaborated by Ur (quoted in Harmer 2001: 13) who adds that the motivation of students affects the whole teaching process in a positive way.

When considering the processes of reading in particular, the effect of motivation becomes even more prominent. Grellet (quoted in Harmer 2001: 13) points out that we are motivated when we read for pleasure, but to stay motivated when the purpose of reading is

to find information or complete different exercises and tasks, is of even more importance. Here the suitability of a text in terms of complexity and cultural background is something that the teacher can manipulate with to achieve effectiveness.

Students feel the connection between news and their own experiences, thus shaping their own values about the world. The more students are exposed to various media, the more likely they are to question what they see (Morrison 2015: 12). The latter is directly connected to HOTS which prompt students to analyse and think critically about the input.

All in all, there are a number of benefits in exploiting newspaper articles in a language class. The tasks students are asked to complete should be challenging and novel enough to ignite different thinking processes and in order to retain a sufficient level of motivation.

2.3 The Drawbacks of Exploiting Newspaper Articles in English Classes

Even though there are numerous positive aspects in using newspapers in language classroom, it does, however, have some drawbacks. The most prominent of them is the selection of the most suitable texts to be used with students.

First, although there are no significant problems with the availability of newspapers, there are, perhaps, too many to choose from and thus teachers might encounter problems in finding the most suitable ones for teaching purposes. The problem of such variety becomes evident from the fact that there are some topics covered in newspapers that are irrelevant, unsuitable, and perhaps even de-motivating for students (Harmer 2001: 11).

The second issue that is also connected with the previous one is that there is the level of language to take into consideration while preparing for class. Harmer (ibid: 11) highlights the importance of focusing on meaning rather than form while working on an authentic text. Some texts that use too complicated a language might hinder the motivation of students

instead of creating it (Harmer 2001: 11). This problem is closely connected with cultural aspects and the society the language is spoken in. Both of these aspects are embedded in newspaper texts. These, too, may affect the motivation of students. However, teachers should not abandon the use of newspaper articles in teaching solely due to possible language difficulties but rather, let students focus more on the overall meaning of the content and skip some difficult expressions that do not hinder comprehension (Tafani 2009: 85).

Apart from the issues of availability and suitability, one major drawback could also be that most of the texts in newspapers expire after a while and become out-dated. Thus teachers are put in a situation where they cannot keep up with the construction of new tasks for fresh stories. There are, however, ways to ease teachers' efforts to compile new material. According to Tafani (2009: 84), one could use articles that avoid the mentioning of specific dates or data so that the material could, to some extent, be reused in future classes.

2.4 The Methods of Teaching Higher Order Thinking Skills

One of the most important things to bear in mind when using newspapers in classroom settings is the careful design of tasks. The different texts, such as stories, advertisements, letters, for instance, can serve as examples of writing and be useful in order to hone students' writing ability. Furthermore, tasks based on newspapers are effective means of prompting classroom discussion. An even further aspect of the efficacy is that using such tasks boost students' consciousness of social accountability, language development, and cultural awareness (Mehta 2010: 100). The latter play an important part in promoting the implementation of HOTS in students as the ability to think critically and creatively, is a direct result of having been exposed to various opportunities to learn CT. The latter can effectively be achieved by, for example, using newspaper articles in the learning process (Swaroop 2016: 76).

Willingham (2009: 9) encourages the use of tasks that present moderate challenge in terms of students' individual abilities. Nothing suppresses the person's natural curiosity more than a task that is too challenging and complex to solve. For this curiosity to thrive, the assignments have to have an appropriate level of comprehension. Due to the fact that people actually like thinking, the sense of accomplishment after the task has been solved appeals to us and brings pleasure (Willingham 2009: 6).

The issue of difficulty becomes more prominent in a foreign language classroom since the choice of newspapers needs prior examination from the points of view of language complexity, cultural aspect, and the specific topic at hand.

Second, as Willingham (2009: 8) states, it is important to remember that memory is the cognitive process of first resort. This means that when one encounters a problem, it first searches for a solution from long-term memory. Thus, the aspect of novelty needs to be considered. Gardner et al (2009: 6) also emphasise the importance of novelty since students can only develop their critical thinking skills by the use of stimulating input.

Fourth, the necessity of maintaining students' motivation should be kept in mind. Namely, tasks which are too complex or not interesting for students create little enthusiasm in trying to complete them.

Bearing also the assessment challenges in mind, various tasks could be implemented together with the infusion or immersion approaches in classroom context. What should be borne in mind is that the main goal in these tasks has shifted from the use of correct grammar to the use of higher order thinking skills. The tasks compiled for this paper have been chosen taking all the aforementioned aspects into consideration, but for the ease of assessment, students are asked to express their ideas in the form of writing.

Although the exemplary tasks below could be used to practise different language skills, i.e. reading, speaking, writing, or listening, their primary purpose is to illustrate their

effective use with writing tasks owing to the focus of this paper.

2.4.1 Reflection

Although Kirby et al (2002: 11) have put forth a number activities that might help foster and implement the teaching of the thinking processes in general, several of these could also be utilised in classroom context when compiling tasks that require the application of HOTS among students and one of them is called reflection. This activity involves the use of thinking with the aim of reflecting on the topic presented by the stimuli, and which advocates personal response from the students (Peirce 2004: 6).

Reflection might be done either orally or in a written form, discussing one's personal experiences and drawing, to some extent, from previously acquired knowledge (Kirby 2002: 11).

One specific task under the category of reflection that helps teach HOTS, is the task of writing a journal entry. Depending on the aim, the latter can have different implementations. They could be used either extensively or every once in a while. For instance, a teacher might ask students to keep a journal and reflect on different topics on a regular basis or use this task only occasionally.

Various tasks could be given as instruction for students in connection with writing journal entries. For instance, they could be used to annotate the text as a supporter of the evidence or conversely, as a doubter (depending on the context of the stimuli text).

Another activity which prompts the use of HOTS with the use of reflection, and which is suitable for different levels of students is the use of pictures from newspapers as there are abundance of them, such as photographs of people, pictures describing places, monuments, events, scenery, events. The nature of the pictures and other data presented in a visual way (i.e. pie-diagrams, bar charts, tables, et cetera) also varies thus making them a

handy resource for different tasks (Swaroop 2016: 78). The students could be asked to cut out pictures (either based on a certain topic or on the things they like) and then write reflections (Mehta 2010: 102). Pictures depicting recent news can also be implemented to speculate what the news story could be about (ibid: 103).

2.4.2 Questions

Questions are another means of teaching HOTS to students. The aim of using effective questioning strategies is, first, that the questions that are being asked focus on meaning rather than content. Second, the most productive questions are those which focus attention. They could start with “What is ...?” or “Have you seen...?” Third, CT skills are applied when the questions require comparison and demand explanation. Such questions help in application of one’s thoughts. Next, there are questions that make students delve more into the task at hand. For instance, questions that make students seek for solutions or reasons for their statements. (Fisher 2005: 69)

Asking students questions based on the stimuli text, really enables them to ponder on their own responses, draw parallels with their personal experiences, and evaluate their judgements.

The Philosophy-based Language Teaching approach involves posing philosophical questions so as to develop productive language and thinking skills (Shanini et al 2011: 170). This method uses questioning instruction that has a twofold aim: to enhance thinking abilities and to improve language proficiency. This framework is based on Martin Lipman’s ideas that he demonstrated in his book “Thinking in Education (2003)”. The procedure is to present a stimulus to students, let them formulate specific questions arising from this stimulus, and then choose one question that will be discussed with the whole group of students. These three objectives help in developing thought, expression, and action (Cunningham 2010: 11).

Philosophical questions have no correct answers and they cannot be solved by using knowledge only (Shanini et al 2011: 172). Instead, they foster students' productive skills, make them re-evaluate their perceptions of different issues, and finally, they help students construct their own opinions by use of logical reasoning (ibid: 177).

2.4.3 Content to a Scenario

This activity, according to Peirce (2004: 6), makes use of both critical thinking as well as creativity. So as to apply the topic students have read about to a specific case or scenario, some creativity is required also from the teacher who is designing the specific tasks.

Students might be asked to imagine what they would have done in the same situation that was illustrated in the text and give reasons to their statements. This activity could be implemented as a journal entry or in a form of an analytical essay as these tasks also require reflection and making inferences.

Acquisition of new vocabulary could be done with drawing from the information given to students. Teachers should encourage students to try and understand the meaning of new vocabulary with the use of the overall context of the article, which makes them apply their knowledge to the content at hand. Students could also be asked to compose their own dictionary of new words (Mehta 2010: 100). Practising the use of dictionaries is also beneficial (Mittal 2014: 692).

Speculating about the headlines is also one activity that could be implemented here. The teacher could ask students to look at the headlines that have been cut out by the teacher before the class (Mehta 2010: 102). Then, students could be asked to write a story with the given headline tying it with their own experiences or prior knowledge on the given topic.

2.4.4 Problem Solving

Historically, problem solving has roots in the Gestalt legacy that examined how people understand the problem at hand; and in the legacy of Newell and Simon that examined how people generate the problem's solution (Bassok 2013: 413).

Karl Duncker (quoted in Bassok 2013: 413) defined a problem in the following way:

“A problem arises when a living creature has a goal but does not know how this goal is to be reached. Whenever one cannot go from the given situation to the desired situation simply by action, then there has to be recourse to thinking.”

Thus, problems are subjective in nature. What constitutes a problem for one person may not be so for the other. Nevertheless, some regularities have been found in the processes of thinking that are shared by different people when faced with a problem. The similarities that are unique in the thinking processes can be observed first in the understanding of the problem, and second, in the search for possible ways to reach the goal (Bassok 2013: 414).

Newspapers contain a variety of information on many aspects which could be used further in a classroom setting with the aim of creating problem solving assignments. Students could be asked to observe the different register and use of vocabulary in different types of written texts, such as reviews, opinion articles, sports section, et cetera. Next, they could be asked to add their own reviews to the entertainment section, write an article or a report based on their own interests, or to write a letter to the editor (Swaroop 2016: 78).

All the tasks above require the use of more formal language. The latter are especially useful skills at upper-secondary school level.

Problem solving could be a useful way to teach HOTS among students. Although it might seem an easy task, since people need to solve problems every day, problem solving actually requires different types of knowledge and skills.

3. RESEARCH METHOD AND PROCESS

This chapter gives an account of the methods and processes behind creating worksheets that are specifically designed in order to gather data for the purposes of the research.

So as to define my research among other researches I could say the following. In terms of my research being quantitative or qualitative, I believe it is rather qualitative in terms of analysing and comparing pre-existing sources. The majority of the data for my research is gathered from the answers of my students. The results of my study are mostly described, interpreted, and contrasted to the existing theories. A further characteristic to match this paper with the qualitative research aspect lies in the fact that the instructional materials and teaching activities are compiled in the scope of this paper.

Nevertheless, this research includes some data analyses that could be described as quantitative since the results of the introductory questionnaire are given using statistical measurements. However, this data collection amounts to too little to consider this thesis quantitative in essence but rather, it resembles that of a case study. The hypothesis that this paper strives to find support to is that English newspaper articles as authentic material could be effectively used in helping prompt students think critically on a range of topics supported by the ENC. Furthermore, it strives to emphasise the importance of developing HOTS as students at an upper-secondary school level might not be so familiar with these skills.

The criteria for choosing various task types to teach and enhance the use of HOTS among my students are subjective. The reason behind opting for those particular tasks was derived from their novelty at the time and the fact that I, as a practising teacher, had not used them in my classes before. Also, I considered my students' abilities in choosing the newspaper articles bearing in mind the topics that could spark their interest and maintain their motivation.

Overall, two groups of students participated in this study, altogether 21 students from forms 10 and 11. All those students come from various backgrounds and have different abilities and interests.

The results are given with the emphasis to HOTS, but as critical thinking ability is the highest of the thinking skills, this particular aspect was investigated in more detail.

3.1 The Participants, Procedure, and Instrument

As this study examined the processes of teaching HOTS among pupils of English as a second language, various English newspaper articles, which are the basis for this study, were used to create tasks that should ignite the use of such skills.

The participants of the survey included all together 21 pupils from forms 10 to 11. The reason for choosing these particular pupils lies, first and foremost, in the fact that, being their English teacher and being familiar with their level of English as well as their most common learning styles, it would be easy to make observations of their progress. The other reasons for the choice of this particular sample is that pupils of this age should already be, to some extent, able to think critically, have necessary schemata, and relevant language skills to complete the assigned tasks.

Participation in this survey was voluntary and its purposes fully explicated beforehand. Completing the questionnaire was anonymous and the content of the final analyses were introduced to the participating students after the testing and observation period. The study itself was conducted during regular lesson times within a five-week period.

The study started first with the students completing an introductory questionnaire on their understanding of what CT is and what personal traits a person should have to be able to think critically. They also had to voice their opinion on whether CT should be taught at school and if, in their view, their current textbooks offer enough thought-provoking texts.

This procedure was relevant to be able to measure the usefulness of the assignments in the students' opinions before the testing period and also, to be able to analyse their attitudes towards English newspaper articles as authentic material as opposed to the texts presented in their textbooks.

Next, a testing period followed during which the students were asked to write short papers drawn from the topics that require the use of HOTS and that were provided by newspaper articles. First, students were presented with a stimulus text which they needed to read carefully and then complete a writing task based on it. The students' works were then analysed based on Bloom's Cognitive Domains of Education with the intention of finding evidence of the utilisation of HOTS.

Overall, this research utilised classroom-based studies, i.e. it used classroom observation and research that is interpretive in essence, presenting the analysis of such research, and offering suggestions for improvement.

The instrument was given at the beginning and end of the project. The students' introductory questionnaire was analysed and the observations from the testing period were compared and contrasted with BTCD. Samples from the students' writings are presented in this paper to serve as illustrations. The reason for choosing Bloom's Cognitive Domains of Education to measure the complexity of the students' thinking is that it has been suggested as a useful framework to categorise the levels of thinking processes.

3.2 Introductory Questionnaire

Prior to the stage where different newspaper articles accompanied by tasks were given to students, the 21 students who participated were asked to complete a questionnaire (see Appendix 1, p. 67). The aim of this questionnaire was to map their understanding of CT and whether the ability to think critically is connected to a specific personality trait or if it is

possible, or even relevant, to learn to think critically at school. Another important question regarding the aim of this paper was to assess the students' opinion on their textbook material and they were asked whether the textbooks offered thought-provoking texts. The purpose of this question was also to determine the extent to which using authentic material, as opposed to non-authentic one, has a bearing on the students' motivation.

The questionnaire included four questions that were presented as open-ended in order to get accurate understanding of the way my students think without any intervention from my part.

After having gathered the data, I looked for the means to give the results of the first two questions a more visual appearance, which, at the same time, would illustrate the statistical aspect. Eventually I used *www.wordle.net* to achieve my goal. The word clouds (see Appendix 2, p. 68), emphasise the adjectives that were used to describe what CT is and what characteristics would a person need to be able to think critically. The most frequently occurring adjectives and expressions appear more prominently in these word clouds. It is worth noting that utilising such illustrative material to present the results of the questionnaire created a lot of excitement among my students since word clouds help see the results in a more visual manner.

Questions three and four included a yes / no question and the students' opinion on the degree of interest to their course books. Thus the results of these questions are demonstrated by using percentages or numbers, and their analysis also includes students' comments.

3.2.1 The Results of the Introductory Questionnaire

As the introductory questionnaire included open-ended questions, the results are given separately for each one, comprising some comments from the students.

QUESTION 1

In the first question the students were asked to define critical thinking using their own words. It was interesting to observe that the two most common criteria in all three approaches towards CT as presented in chapter one, were frequently mentioned (see Appendix 3). Namely, students agreed on the fact that CT is about weighing the pros and cons of something and that it requires analytical thinking. Being rational, realistic, and using logic, which tend to be connected with the philosophical approach, were also mentioned more than once.

The ability to see things in a wider perspective, being objective and unbiased were also pointed out to describe CT. Also, it was mentioned that the act of thinking critically makes a person more open-minded supporting the idea that open-mindedness in itself does not always need to be a prerequisite to being able to think critically.

It was interesting to note, however, that some students drew parallels between thinking critically and being emotional. The emotions that CT might evoke could, in the students' view, be either positive or negative. On a negative note, one student wrote, "When you think critically, you don't try to see the positive in things. You don't trust people blindly." Another stated that, "Critical thinking works when you are not happy or angry." In one questionnaire, however, CT was described as "..." thoughts what people have when they think everything is bad and they don't like anything what the others do or are." There was one student who even claimed that CT equals criticising things.

Nevertheless, CT had some positive connotations in one students' mind who noted that "One has to be unbiased to think critically, using only one's logic. Purge all emotion. This will eventually lead to happiness."

Overall, the responses to the first question brought surprising results in a sense that only two answers represented the essence of CT, i.e. that it is purposeful. The idea that such

a thinking skill is purposeful is shared by all three approaches – philosophical, psychological, and educational. One student claimed that CT is used to find solutions and the other student emphasised the importance of utilising CT skills in making more efficient decisions.

Drawing from the students' answers it can be concluded that they are not fully aware of the concept of CT, and thus teaching them about the processes behind this concept would be beneficial.

QUESTION 2

The second question asked students to list the characteristics that people should have to be able to think critically. This question was implemented to further determine the students' understanding of CT and thinking processes in general. The results (see Appendix 3, p. 69) show that numerous personality traits were mentioned.

Not surprisingly, having an open-mind was the most frequently occurring answer. The second most popular was being smart and knowing about the subject one is thinking critically about. These aforementioned characteristics find support from previous research as well. Namely, according to Willingham (2007: 8), the process of thinking is intertwined with the content or domain knowledge. It is very difficult to think thoroughly on a topic plus try to analyse that from different perspectives if you have no background knowledge of that field.

What struck most about the responses from the participants was that critical thinking was seen connected with being strict, critical, and not being an absolute optimist. A person who is able to think critically should be straightforward, confident, and not having strong emotions. Being a good listener and a good judge of character were also mentioned among others, which might refer to the fact that a critical thinker is not someone who has blind faith in what others say and is able to infer not only from the statements that they hear, but also

from the other person's personality. These ideas are supported by Facione (2013: 3) who emphasises that a good listener can, after hearing all sides of the argument and considering all facts, draw rational and relevant decisions of judgements.

Drawing from this data, it could be said that students place great emphasis on the characteristics of an efficient thinker and less on the belief that CT could be learned by anybody. Unfortunately, there is still some tendency that CT excludes emotions. This should not be the case, as Fisher argues (2005: ix) that thinking and emotions do not necessarily oppose to one another. The purpose of teaching CT at schools should be to rid students from presumptions and being irrational, but not from strong emotions (ibid).

QUESTION 3

The responses for question three could be partly demonstrated by the use of statistics. Namely, students needed to state whether CT should be taught at schools or not and provide explanations to their answers.

The data shows that 81% of the students support the idea that CT should be taught at school. The reasons for this vary, but in general, the most common explanation was that CT skills might prove to be useful in the following areas:

- future life (11 responses);
- being able to respond to novel situations (3 responses);
- problem solving skills (2 responses);
- career choices (2 responses).

As the participants attend secondary school, it is, perhaps, natural that they have started to plan their futures and thus these reasons were most frequently mentioned.

What caught the eye apart from the aforementioned explanations was the fact that the ability to think critically, in students' opinion, helps develop a better understanding of

the world and also builds character. Students pointed out that having necessary CT skills can make you more tolerant and down-to-earth. The latter is supported by Paul Richard's (Fisher 2005: 64) claims that CT and objectivity are connected. Being egocentric means that one is unable to see different sides of things can thus easily manipulate other people who have little CT skills into taking their side.

On the other hand, 19% of the participants considered it irrelevant to acquire CT skills at school, but at the same time, they did acknowledge the importance of being able to think critically. A major reason for the fact that CT should not be taught at school is that it is something that comes with time, comes naturally, and that a person should find out more about CT skills themselves as part of a spiritual journey. There was one student who pointed out that instead of CT, problem solving should be taught.

QUESTION 4

The responses for question four fell into four distinct categories. The students were asked to voice their opinions whether their current textbook offers thought-provoking texts and provide reasons for their options. It should be noted that the textbook they are using in their English classes is "Upstream C1 Advanced" (Express Publishing, 2010).

28,5% of the students questioned agreed that the texts presented in their textbook are thought-provoking enough. Some of the reasons for this are that the texts:

- can be easily related to and provide opportunity for imagination;
- have variety and one often continues thinking about them after the lesson;
- offer only one-sided points of view and thus one is required to think;
- are interesting enough and offer something for everybody;
- have a deeper meaning and thus one needs to make an effort to find it.

The majority of the students, however, stated that the current material lacks thought-

provoking texts and the question was answered negatively to by 57% of the students respectively. 9 students wrote that the reason for this is that the texts are boring for them. Other reasons for disagreeing with the usefulness of the texts were that the texts have too much information and the exercises demand too much time and effort to really have time to delve more deeply into the meaning of the text.

Also, what was pointed out by one observant student was that the texts have obviously been “made up” and are thus dull to read and, subsequently, evoke little thought. The reason why so many students opted to say that textbook material is boring might be related to the issue of authentic and non-authentic material which was discussed in chapter two.

The third group of students somewhat agreed with the statement that textbook material can be thought-provoking up to a point. 9,5% of the participants confessed that if one really made an effort to think about the topics, they could be interesting. Also, it was mentioned that some texts are more current and fascinating than others, so the level of interest fluctuates depending on the personal preference of each individual student.

The fourth category comprises 5% of the students questioned who, as it happens, did not have a clear opinion, filling in “I don’t know” as their answer.

3.3 The Criteria for Choosing Newspaper Articles

The idea of choosing suitable newspaper articles has a two-fold aim. First, the topics for the research have to coincide with the learning content set forth by the Estonian National Curriculum. Thus the idea of compiling tasks to go with the articles that serve as stimuli for HOTS enhancement should become more relevant and useful for covering the requirements of the National Curriculum. According to ENC (2011: 13-15), the content of learning a foreign language should include the following broad topics:

- Estonia and the world;
- culture and creation;
- the environment and technology;
- education and work;
- the individual and society.

Next, taking the individuality of the participants into consideration, the content of the articles needed to be evaluated. So as to find suitable articles, the following questions were taken into consideration according to Farmer (2008: para3):

1) Appropriateness

Is the article suitable and appropriate to be used in class in terms of its level and age group?
Do the students have enough prior knowledge of the particular field to be able to complete the post-reading tasks?

2) Interest

Would the topic be relevant and raise interest in my students?

3) Length

Long articles should be avoided or else they make students discouraged.

4) Language

Does the article contain useful lexical sets or grammar components? Is the level of the vocabulary suitable?

5) Generative potential

Does it offer room for compiling post-reading activities that enhance the use of HOTS?

A further point to remember in the choice of newspaper articles was the fact that the tasks accompanying them would offer basis for some assessment.

Taking the students' individual characteristics and the criteria for choosing suitable newspaper articles into consideration, the following topics from the ENC were covered:

The title of the article	Type of assignment	The topics they cover according to ENC
<i>“Romanian job seekers double as border controls relax”</i>	Question	Work; Society; The world
<i>“Skye’s the limit: independence fever spreads to Scottish isles”</i>	Reflection as a journal entry	The world; Society
<i>“Lost” Beckett story sees the light after rejection in 1934”</i>	Applying content to scenario of case	Culture; Individual
<i>“A text and walk plan for those trying to do two things at once”</i>	Reflection as a journal entry	Technology
<i>“School makes English a foreign language”</i>	Philosophical question	Education
<i>“Rome hails first emperor with lavish rebuild of forgotten tomb”</i>	Applying content to a scenario or case	Creation; Culture; The World
<i>“We have been crushed by the climate change deniers”</i>	Problem solving	Environment; Society; The World
<i>“Transport sector needs more freedom”</i>	Problem solving	Estonia and the world
<i>“Children’s minister wants parliament to make hours more family-friendly”</i>	Question	Work; Individual; Society; The world
<i>“The dependent generation: half young European adults live with their parents”</i>	Philosophical question	The society; the World; Individual

Altogether I chose 10 articles from four different sources to create worksheets to teach and prompt the use of HOTS in my students. The newspapers that I used to find articles were: The Guardian, The Baltic Times, The Independent, The Observer. The articles themselves have been added to the appendices section.

3.4 About the Worksheets

The post-reading tasks to go with the chosen newspaper articles (see Appendix 4, p. 70- 80) have been created with regard to the fact that they would be easy to use and follow.

The material has been organised bearing in mind the aim of the tasks. Each worksheet includes instructions, the description of the procedure and last but not least, my evaluations of the successfulness of such tasks accompanied by the analysis of students’ responses in connection with evidence from the use of higher order thinking skills.

All stimuli texts that have been made use of so as to design post-reading tasks are found in the appendices. One very important factor that was considered prior to the design phase was the aspect of assessment. Also, it should be noted that as the aim of all these assignments is to teach and prompt the use of HOTS, this has not been written out separately in the worksheet descriptions. However, some indication as to how the tasks should be approached (e.g. “Provide reasons and justifications for your arguments. The use of personal experience is highly valued) is provided although the worksheets are meant to be used mostly in connection with immersion approach which does not require special attention to critical thinking instruction separately.

The layout of the post-reading tasks has been organised in the following manner:

Title of the article: The name of the chosen article is given.

Topic: Here the topics into which the article falls into are presented according to the Estonian National Curriculum.

Type of activity: This shows the kind of exercise the students are expected to complete.

Procedure: Clear instructions are provided to accompany the tasks.

Evaluation: The evaluation includes my observations of task completion and the analysis and comparison of the written responses in connection with Bloom’s Taxonomy of Cognitive Domains of Education. Recommendations and further suggestions are provided, if applicable.

3.5. Post-Reading Tasks

The following tasks were designed to accompany the selected newspaper articles to teach the use of HOTS. The tasks follow the ideas of an immersion approach since at upper-secondary school level, the students’ language and thinking skills should be appropriate enough to be able to complete the assignments. The worksheets below have been organised

in the same order that they were presented in chapter 3.4.

WORKSHEET 1

Title of the article: *“Romanian job seekers double as border controls relax”*

Topic: Work, society, the world.

Type of activity: Answering questions.

Procedure: Read the article and answer the following questions. Provide reasons and justifications for your arguments. The use of personal experience is highly valued.

- 1) What could be the reasons for moving abroad?
- 2) Is freedom of choice always a good thing to have?
- 3) How can people be affected by the choices of other people?

Evaluation: The first worksheet made use of questions drawing from the topic presented in the printed newspaper article. First, this task was approached with some relief by students since it had specific questions to guide them. On the other hand, however, the responses lacked creativity and the use of higher order thinking skills in a sense that all students based the majority of their answers on the knowledge taken from the article. This was especially evident when answering to the first question.

The second question was more open in essence and provided an opportunity to weigh the pros and cons of whether freedom of choice really is always a good thing to have. Surprisingly, only 43% of the responses for that question included evaluation of both sides. The students' choices on which side to support were not, according to this data, verified and thus evaluation (or CT) as the highest of the thinking skills was not fully implemented. An example from a student's answer is presented below to exemplify the attempt to use evaluation.

“I think that freedom of choice is not a good thing to have because if people have too much freedom, they just do not know how to handle it. We can take, for

example, the situation in some Arabic country. They have had decades of dictatorship and everything was okay, but now they have freedom but what kind of freedom is it really? Many of these countries are in civil war; people are dying, innocent people. Thousands of years old buildings are demolished. Dictatorship is not good, but it prevented that from happening that is happening right now in Iraq, Egypt, Syria.”

67% of the students used synthesis, meaning that they made generalisations and inferences based on their personal experiences to answer question number three.

“People can be affected by the choices of other people in a way that, let’s say, your parents want to move away, to get better jobs, but you do not want to leave your friends behind. But in most cases the parents’ decision overrules all. Also, we can say that there is a bit of keeping-up-the-Joneses feel, because if your neighbour moves abroad and gets a good job, you also want to follow his footsteps.”

Synthesis is one of the HOTS that also makes it possible to implement information in a new pattern. In a language classroom, expressing your opinion in a coherent manner is also something students should be taught. Here is one of the responses that includes the use of synthesis:

WORKSHEET 2

Title of the article: “*Skye’s the limit: independence fever spreads to Scottish Isles*”

Topic: The world, society.

Type of activity: Reflection: journal entry.

Procedure: Read the article. Then, drawing from the content of the article, write a journal entry on what could break people apart. Provide reasons and justifications for your arguments. The use of personal experience is highly valued.

Evaluation: Using journal entries enables students to express their thoughts and ideas in a manner most suitable for them and the task. Here is one example of such a task:

“Have you ever felt that you have no match at all with some people, while with others you fall in love at first sight? The main reason for the arguments that Great Britain has is that people have different world views. The controversial referendum on the Shetland Islands for breaking links with Edinburgh has sparked protests in England. The mainlanders are not pleased with the government on letting the

islands go so easily. John Smith from Edinburgh says, “Man, this is crap! I’ve never been to the Shetland Islands, or anywhere close to it, but we cannot let them go that easily!” Others were more conservative. Michael White, London, “The Shetland Islands have a considerable amount of oil in the bedrock. If the government wants to continue on the current energy policy, we should not let them go that easily.”

What could be concluded from using reflection in a framework of a journal entry is that ample room for creativity and thus synthesis and evaluation is provided. All responses were written from different angles and although they all made use of some knowledge based on the newspaper article, the evaluations given were, at times, even humorous, as the example above strived to illustrate.

WORKSHEET 3

Title of the article: “*“Lost” Beckett story sees the light after rejection in 1934*”

Topic: Culture, individual.

Type of activity: Applying reading content to a scenario or case.

Procedure: Read the article. Imagine that you are Beckett and get a rejection letter from the publishing house. Write a letter to the publisher and explain in detail why your story should be published and express your discontentment. Provide reasons and justifications for your arguments. The use of personal experience is highly valued.

Evaluation: This task was about applying content to a specific scenario, leaving a lot of room for creativity. It was interesting to see that when students were completing the task, they did not find it difficult to choose the correct layout for the letter. Furthermore, they were rather curious to know what the story could be about that was rejected by the publisher. One of the students wrote the following letter:

“Dear Sir/ Madam,

I am Samuel Beckett, the author of *More Pricks Than Kicks*. I understand that you have rejected my story *Echo’s Bones*, the last story of the series *More Pricks Than Kicks*. I have to say that I am very displeased. Publishing the last story meant so

much to me. The series cannot be entirely closed if it doesn't have the last part. I see that many people have read it and feel that it is horrifying. I can understand where it is coming from, but I would like you to hear me out and then consider publishing it again.

This is the story of Belacqua, his life and his actions. People can relate to him and feel for him. I understand that without *Echo's Bones* the story would be ideal, but that is not what I was aiming for. I wanted the story to be different than the others. I wanted to surprise people when they least expected it, even if it meant killing half of the characters and making the story fictional. From day to day you hear about books that people relate to and try to live by. It seems like those kinds of books are being released every single day, you just cannot get enough of them. I got sick of it and really needed to write something different, to add a little spice to literature.

Saying that it is a nightmare is very hurtful and I would like you to apologise for writing such thing in public. It might be good for me as an author, because now people want to read the last story even more, but it is also insulting. The story being undisciplined and wild is what makes it interesting, so I would really like you to reconsider publishing it. Also without the last part it is an unfinished story and nobody likes those.

Thank you for your consideration,
Samuel Beckett"

Although the story itself was unknown for my students, the task of judging new information and providing verified arguments proved to be of interest to them. The example above illustrates the use of assessing information and reasoning on the choices of the editor on the basis of different views. It is an example suitable to demonstrate the use of higher order thinking skills: analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

WORKSHEET 4

Title of the article: *"A text and walk plan for those trying to do two things at once"*

Topic: Technology.

Type of activity: Reflection: journal entry

Procedure: Read the article and write two short journal entries on the following topics: one as a believer of such technological advances, the other as a doubter. Provide reasons and justifications for your arguments. The use of personal experience is highly valued.

Evaluation: Similarly to worksheet number 2, this task was about writing a journal entry to

reflect on the issue of technological advances and their impact on humans. The students were asked to approach the task from two different angles, from the supporter's and doubter's point of view, regarding the actions presented in the article. The layout and organisation of the assignment was left entirely for students to choose. Here is one example answer:

“No More Text n’Fail!

If you are a regular phone user, you might be familiar with problems while texting in an outside environment. When, for example, taking a nice walk on your neighbouring streets and you get a text message from your friend which says that your favourite football team sucks. Before you know it, you are engaged in a one-on-one debate using text messages. You have forgotten everything except texting and walking in one direction. Bam! You have fallen down a manhole. That is the most annoying accident, yet, after walking in front of a bus last week. Maybe you could have somehow avoided this situation. Not to worry! Wise men have dealt with this problem and have come up with an app-grade! It is possible to project live video image onto the background of the messaging app. Truly remarkable! What will they do next?”

It is interesting to note that the task was creatively approached and personal evaluations were provided. 6 students decided upon writing the journal entries in the form of news articles, trying to apply the content to a new situation.

WORKSHEET 5

Title of the article: “*School makes English a foreign language*”

Topic: Education.

Type of activity: Philosophical questions.

Procedure: Read the article. Try to find one question that arose while reading this article and analyse it more thoroughly. Provide reasons and justifications for your arguments. The use of personal experience is highly valued.

Evaluation: This worksheet made use of philosophical questions that originate from the instructions of Philosophy-based Language Teaching. The aim of this task was to give students an opportunity to generate the most intriguing question that arose while reading a stimulus text and then analyse it. Such tasks usually require input that is provoking and

controversial in nature so as to accomplish the aim which, in this case, was achieved, since the responses included thorough analyses.

The most popular question (38%) that was chosen to approach the task was “Why do so many foreigners move to England?” On the second place was the question “Why do many pupils from different countries want to go to school in England?” which was chosen by 33% of the students and the third was “Should English schools teach English as a second language?” (29%). As the students found it easy to relate to the topic, all papers included references to personal experience.

“I think that if a person does not speak English as a mother tongue, it is more useful to learn it as a second language. I have an example from real life. I think that Estonian is also very difficult to learn and the grammar is awful. In our Estonian classes, we take these grammar tests and almost everybody gets Cs or Ds. Our Estonian teacher said that one girl, who had only studied Estonian for a year and a half, took the same tests and got an A. This proves that if you start learning a new language and learn it as a foreign language first, you know the rules better. Of course language needs practise, but if you live in the language environment, it should come naturally. So, in my opinion, it is a really good idea to start learning new languages this way because then you will acquire it better.”

The example above taken from one of the responses illustrates the process of how the student provided reasoned arguments which is one of the characteristics of the evaluation stage according to Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Domains.

WORKSHEET 6

Title of the article: “*Rome hails first emperor with lavish rebuild of forgotten tomb*”

Topic: Creation, culture, the world.

Type of activity: Applying reading content to scenario or case.

Procedure: Read the article. Then, imagine you lived nearby the place that the statue has been planned to be put up. Write a letter to the committee giving reasons why it should or should not be placed there. Provide reasons and justifications for your argument. The use of personal experience is highly valued.

Evaluation: Similarly to worksheet number 3, students again had to read the newspaper article and apply the content to a new situation. Yet again, the task required them to write a letter and by judging the information given in the stimulus text, provide justifications and reasons. An example from one of the responses is given below.

“Dear committee,

I read about your plan to renovate the dilapidated mausoleum of the emperor Augustus and I think that it is about time somebody embarked upon the awful situations, the old building has to face.

Firstly, I think that the current state of affairs is quite shocking. The once flourishing monument is now home to prostitutes and a toilet for tramps. No such old building deserves that kind of fate. The fact that the “former” mausoleum has become a hangout for disputable people also makes the surrounding, normal living environment very dangerous.

Secondly, we have to honour our history, a nation is formidably defined by its past. Roman senate named a month after Augustus and now we cannot keep his mausoleum in a satisfactory state. Also, the mausoleum has not always been in such a horrid state, it has served multiple purposes in different centuries but has never just been left to decay.

I hope that the restoration will start soon. I look forward to seeing it in its former glory.

Kind regards, ...”

As demonstrated in this letter, the student has successfully used the information given in the article and developed a new pattern by utilising inferences to complete the task at hand, thus synthesis was applied.

WORKSHEET 7

Title of the article: *“We have been crushed by the climate change deniers”*

Topic: Environment, society, the world.

Type of activity: Problem solving.

Procedure: Read the article. The author poses a number of questions in connection with the topic at hand and that he feels strongly about. Please choose one of these questions and try to create a solution for it taking your home area into consideration. Provide reasons and justifications for your arguments. The use of personal experience is highly valued.

Evaluation: This worksheet proved to be one of the most challenging ones due to the amount of prior knowledge that was needed to complete the assignment given. Global warming and other changes in environment have been constantly talked about in the media and school settings. Still, the complexity of the topic and the solutions that these problems require prove to be too difficult for my students. Perhaps the problem with this particular news piece was lack of novelty for the students. Although when choosing the articles, I put a lot of effort in trying to select the ones that had a different angle, it was perhaps not good enough. Apart from the issue of interest, the students struggled with choosing this one question that they would like to approach. Most of them (94%) dealt with the task in a general manner as exemplified in the following response:

“Today we have a big problem. The level of CO₂ is rising, there are more floods than ever and also we have global warming. During the last decade there have been big climate changes. And the main reason why there are so many changes is that our society has a lot of people who accept, to some level, that manmade climate changes are happening, but do not want to think about that. They hope that somebody else is trying to save our planet Earth. But it is not too late to teach them that everybody on this planet has a duty to care about our home. The media should present more the causes of climate changes and encourage people to live in a more environmentally friendly way.”

As seen above, the student has utilised synthesis, i.e. making generalisations. However, the use of evaluation is not present and this was the case with the majority of answers. As stated previously, such task could have been more successfully accomplished if, for instance, the article had been on a different subject in connection with the topic of environment. Most likely, the solutions would have been given in a more transparent and direct manner.

WORKSHEET 8

Title of the article: *“Transport sector needs more freedom”*

Topic: Estonia and the world.

Type of activity: Problem solving.

Procedure: Read the article. Imagine you lived in a quiet village near the area where the new railway link is going to be built. Write a short analysis, as a doubter of the usefulness of this plan, and point out the changes it might bring to the lives of the local people. Provide reasons and justifications for your arguments. The use of personal experience is highly valued.

Evaluation: This problem solving task proved to be more engaging for students than the one provided by the previous worksheet with a similar type of activity. Students' responses included more evaluation and personal experience. Six students out of 21 chose to write a solution to the problem as a formal letter, the rest opted for a journal entry style. Here is one short extract from one of such responses:

“Argh! I cannot take it anymore! They have been planning to build a railway that would link Estonia to the rest of Europe. Actually, that is an amazing project. But...they are planning the railway near my home. What? Why? The building of the first part of the railway is already so loud and they are not making any progress at all. In the first place, trains are not necessary-you can drive through Europe, or use planes. In the second place, the trains are going to be so loud that this noise will definitely disturb my sleep. I am afraid I have to move away because the reason I have stayed is that I love the quietness of my village. I believe I should write to the committee responsible and offer some other solutions as to what do next. I hope it is not too late! I would definitely propose building new proper motorways and to make air traffic more frequent. This nice village of ours must remain secluded and peaceful no matter what!”

As seen above, the style of this exemplary journal entry is rather informal, as journal entries usually are. Nevertheless, the student has made excellent use of the information presented in the text and has given justified arguments so as to what to do about the problem. The evaluation stage is not perfect in a sense that only one side of the problem is discussed further after it was stated that the idea of building a railway was indeed a good one. This, however, should not be a very serious issue, since solving problems itself requires a subjective view and this is something that the student has excelled in.

WORKSHEET 9

Title of the article: *“Children’s minister wants parliament to make hours more family-friendly”*

Topic: Work, individual, society, the world.

Type of activity: Answering a question.

Procedure: Read the article and answer the following question, “What is loneliness?”

Provide reasons and justifications for your arguments. The use of personal experience is highly valued.

Evaluation: The specific task that this worksheet presented was connected with answering a question that demanded explanation or examples. It strived to focus attention by utilising “What...” in the beginning. Comparing this task with worksheet number two, the difference in responses is striking due to the fact that in order to answer the question on loneliness, one needed to reflect and use more examples to analyse. An excerpt from a student’s response is given here as an example of this.

“In this particular article, loneliness means spending time apart from your children which is really difficult for the Children’s Minister, Edward Timpson. I think that loneliness means being alone with your thoughts. One must remember, however, that there is a difference between being alone, lonely and loneliness. Some people are introverts, like me. I love being alone on my own, or should I call it as lonely, because then I can clear my head and focus on the important things. “

It is safe to say that higher level thinking skills, especially evaluation as in the given example, was applied by the majority of the students, 86% respectively.

WORKSHEET 10

Title of the article: *“The dependent generation: half young European adults live with their parents”*

Topic: The society, the world, individual.

Type of activity: Philosophical question.

Procedure: Read the article. Try to find one question that arose while reading this article and analyse it more thoroughly. Provide reasons and justifications for your arguments. The use of personal experience is highly valued.

Evaluation: In this task, the emphasis was yet again on students' own choices. Philosophical approach enables them to formulate their own question or questions and then analyse them more thoroughly drawing from personal experience. Knowledge of the field is not sufficient to complete such tasks, the implementation of reasoning and evaluation is required.

Interestingly, asking students to formulate a question they would like to analyse proved to be a challenging task. Only 6 responses included a specific question (e.g. "Why do so many young people still live with their parents?", "What are the benefits of living with your parents?"). The rest of the students chose to start analysing the text and exemplifying their answers taken from the article itself. Evaluation was not really utilised since the majority of the analyses were concerned with only one side of the problem, i.e. the negative reasons why the young live with their parents as given in the following extract:

"A lot of young adults who are in their 20s or 30s still live under the same roof as their parents. And even worse, some young adults, who already have their own families, still live with their parents. I think the reason behind that is the fact that young people who graduate from school have no determination whatsoever to accomplish their dreams and be independent human beings."

I believe one of the reasons this task was especially challenging was due to the choice of material as stimulus. The topic might not have been that interesting or the students found it difficult to relate to it since all of them still lived with their parents.

3.6 Feedback to the Worksheets

The most troublesome assignments in terms of teaching students use HOTS were the ones regarding philosophical questions. Worksheet 10, demanding too much prior information from the student and offering little novelty, proved to be most difficult in that

sense whereas worksheet number 5 provided ample examples of finding proper questions that could be analysed in detail using higher thinking skills. The other reason behind the complexity of using philosophical questions in CT acquisition could be that some instruction is required beforehand on what philosophical questions are and how to formulate questions that could be derived from the text. In that sense such activity is not ideal to be used as part of an immersion approach.

The tasks that most lacked the implementation of HOTS were connected with answering set questions on the topics taken from the newspaper articles. Surprisingly, such tasks were approached with more ease since the students regarded them to be easier than other tasks. However, these assignments lacked creativity and were done with little enthusiasm. Partly, this could have resulted from the fact that students were deprived of freedom and thus, had to use less HOTS. Such tasks that offer set questions should be utilised with care since they might not create opportunities to fully use imagination and be open-minded.

Problem solving was yet another assignment that turned out to be complex in a sense that in order to achieve one's aim, the stimuli texts should be carefully selected. In this paper, the most successful assignment in terms of provoking critical thinking was connected with a text on Estonia. The topic was handled with ease and students could relate to it better. The text on global warming, however, required more prior knowledge and was in essence too broad to give focus on a specific solution.

The most successful tasks were those that provided a lot of freedom of choice for students. Namely, reflections and the application of the content to a scenario were completed with the greatest enthusiasm and creativity. Reflections in a form of journal entries were completed with examples of evaluation and synthesis, the highest of the thinking skills according to Bloom's Taxonomy. The tasks were approached slightly differently and were

even humorous at times. The tasks on the application of content to a scenario were equally well done since valuable personal experience was included and the texts produced by students were interesting to read.

All in all it could be said that the more open the task that has been compiled to enhance the teaching of HOTS, the better the results. The students were not asked to follow one specific form of their writings and this made the end result even more fascinating. In conclusion, the use of reflections and scenarios should be advocated.

CONCLUSION

The theoretical part of this thesis looked upon the issues of teaching students higher order thinking skills with a focus on critical thinking skills. Furthermore, it introduced newspaper articles as authentic material, addressing the effectiveness of including newspaper articles in the process of producing tasks that would enhance the use of critical thinking skills in English classes. Possible strategies and techniques were also presented, highlighting how printed media could be implemented in language classes to create various tasks that would teach and prompt the use of HOTS.

It was emphasised that using newspaper articles as authentic material is very important for learners' connection with "real" English. Both the positive aspects as well as drawbacks of using English newspapers were discussed. Special emphasis was placed on the process of choosing suitable material for English classes and on the tasks that would be suitable to be put into practice for the purposes of teaching HOTS. Subsequently, the issues of assessment such instruction were introduced.

The practical part refers to the theoretical one and deals with activities that had been produced based on newspaper articles suited for upper-secondary school students. Each activity was summarised with evaluation of the completion process and comments were given in terms with the students' responses.

Resulting from the practical part, what could be regarded as the most important finding is that students are not as fully aware of the notion of HOTS and CT in particular as one would think as the definitions varied greatly providing little ground for making comparisons with the available theories. However, students are aware for the importance of having been able to acquire CT skills at school as more than half of them would welcome such instruction in their lessons.

What could also be concluded from this survey period is that students consider their

course books as lacking in a sense that they do not offer enough thought-provoking texts and that the texts have been provided with tasks that offer little room for actually thinking about the issues presented in their content. Thus, when teachers do not create enough possibilities for students to ponder and discuss on different issues freely, they might not help in the development of HOTS in their students.

The observation of my students during this five-week period also demonstrated their interest in reading various authentic texts and in completing the assignments. The written answers gave more information about the way the students think, how they use their language skills, and which language aspect should be revised in terms of grammar of vocabulary.

What I experienced from researching this topic and conducting the survey is that one can encounter many obstacles in teaching higher order thinking skills to students. First, there is no unison agreement on the definition of HOTS. Different fields have taken a slightly different approach and thus, without having an umbrella term to cover all aspects of such skills, the attempt to embed the tasks to teach them to students in classroom situation might turn out to be more challenging than expected. Second, there is a lot of ambiguity in the usefulness of teaching thinking skills in general. Educators seem to fall into two distinct categories: those who consider thinking skills as integral part of education, and those who see little use in teaching them separately. What seems to be agreed upon, however, is the fact that to be a successful citizen in the 21st century, the ability to judge information and evaluate it accordingly is required. Subsequently, there is pressure on the development of curricula and syllabi because the extent to which content is relevant to be able to approach a task critically, is also left to the subjective opinion of teachers.

The most time-consuming and challenging task, however, within the scope of this research, was the selection of suitable newspaper articles to be used as stimuli-texts in my

classes. This selection had to meet various criteria and thus, bearing them in mind, the choice of articles was, truly, a lengthy process.

All in all, it must be said that taking up such a task as to instruct students to implement HOTS has a lot of beneficial results but the process itself requires teacher professionalism and, perhaps, proper training and sufficient background knowledge of the importance of thinking skills and how language teachers could implement different tasks to enhance them.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. If you had to define what critical thinking is, how would you describe it?

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2. What kind of characteristics should people have to be able to think critically?

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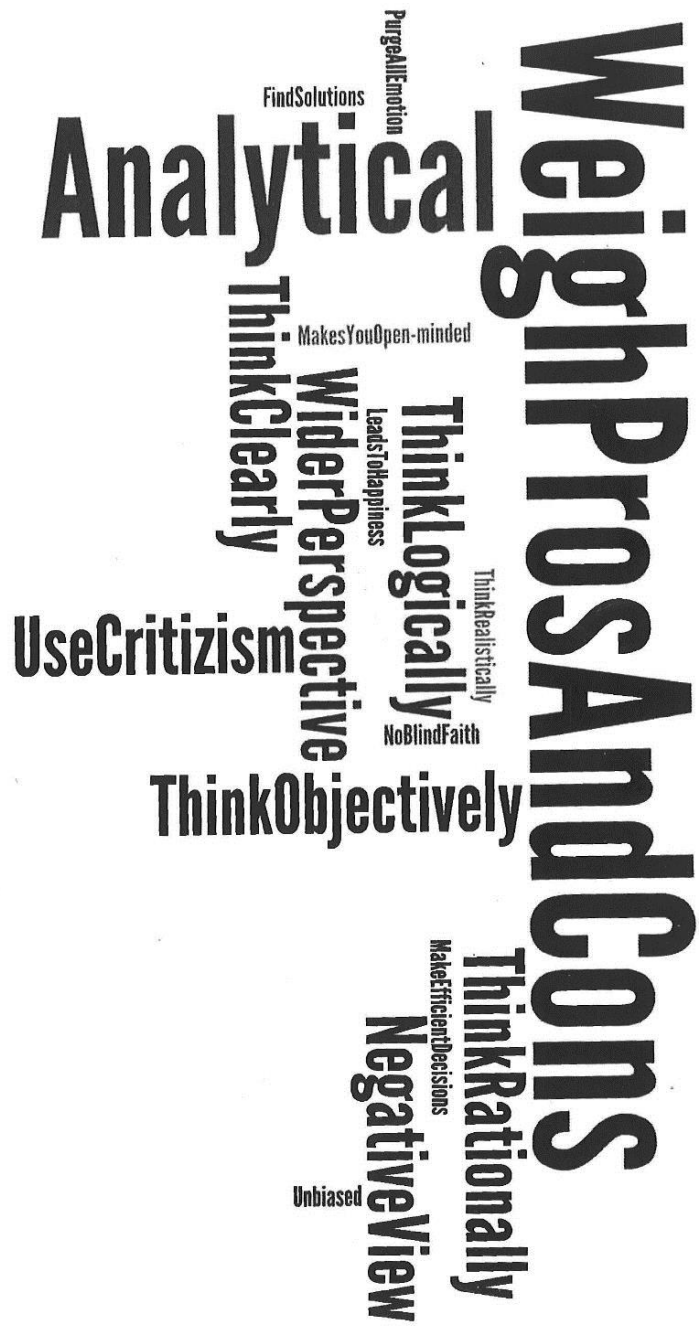
3. In your opinion, is it important to be taught how to be a critical thinker at school? Why? / Why not?

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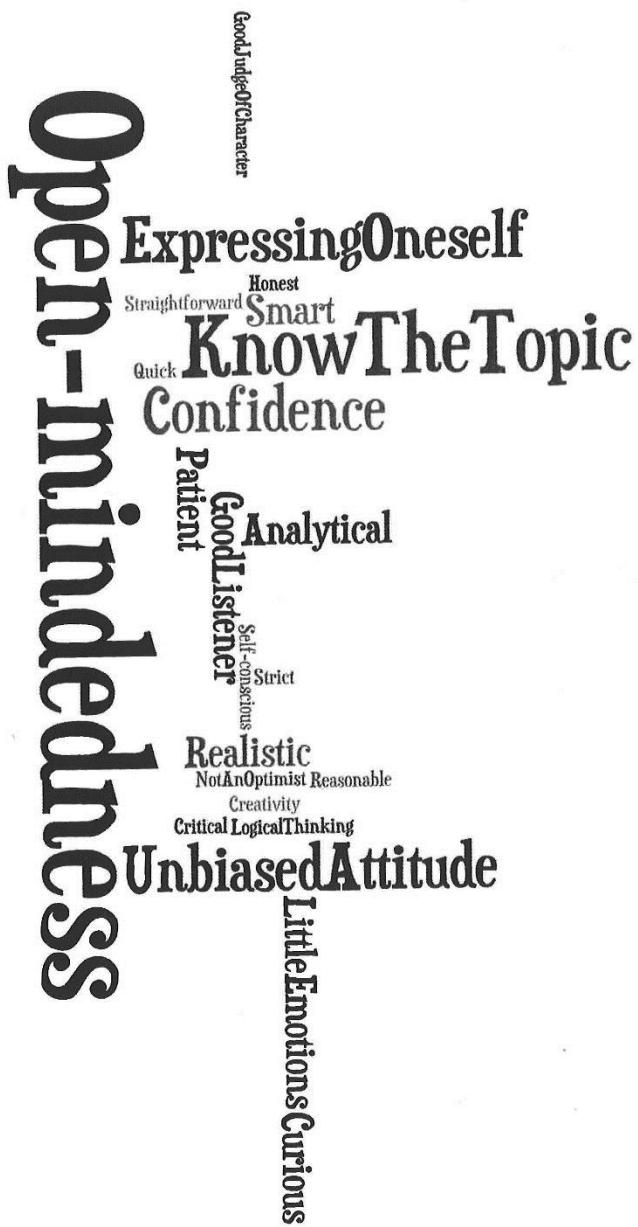
4. In your opinion, how thought-provoking are the texts presented in your English book? Explain.

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Appendix 2



Appendix 3



THE TIMES | Monday March 31 2014 15A

Romanian job seekers double as border controls relax

News

Shaun Turton Bucharest

The number of Romanians applying for jobs in Britain has doubled since European Union labour restrictions were lifted at the beginning of the year, according to latest figures.

The UK has become the top destination for Romanian jobseekers. A Romanian website that hosts more than 200 recruitment agencies has had 42,562 applications for UK jobs from an estimated 23,000 people.

That compares with 18,369 applications by 11,708 jobseekers in the first three months of 2013. Over the same period, Germany, the second most popular destination, received less than half that number of applications.

Recruiters from the UK have posted 31,588 vacancies on the site between January and March, up 60 per cent in the first quarter of last year. Offers to work in Britain outpaced the rest of

Europe, with double the number of vacancies advertised in Greece and triple those from Germany.

"We have had a very high number of recruitment orders from the UK recently," said Kaluca Stefanescu, one of Romania's biggest job websites.

"There is a huge demand, especially in the medical sector, like home care, but also in industry and hospitality and tourism."

Ms Stefanescu said the rise in applications and offers was largely driven by media coverage surrounding the lifting of working restrictions on Romanians and Bulgarians.

She added: "There are always many people who want to work abroad. This is universal and this coverage brought a lot of attention to the opportunities in the UK. Firms had found a 'hard-working, skilled workforce' to fill vacancies" Britain and eight other EU

countries lifted the controls—imposed when the countries joined the EU in 2007—meaning citizens from Romania and Bulgaria no longer needed a permit.

Nigel Mills, Conservative MP for Amber Valley, said that with 2.4 million already out of work in Britain, any import of "cheap" labour was going to make things worse. "It's not any attempt to blame Romanians, but this is a time when we still have unemployment far higher than we'd like it," he said.

"It is sensible to let an unrestricted number of low-skilled labour come in and take jobs, keep wages down, use

public services, further exacerbate housing need and put pressure on schools and the health service?"

According to the Iyob's figures, most advertised jobs were in hotels and tourism, followed by domestic assistants or babysitters, healthcare, agriculture and restaurants or catering.

Most applications were for hotels and tourism, followed by restaurant or catering positions, then elderly care, domestic assistants or babysitters and healthcare.

Audran Priescaru, 26, said that he was both excited and anxious about leaving his home next week and flying to Britain, where he will start work at a

care home for young people with learning difficulties in Essex.

He currently teaches disabled children in Romania and will triple his salary to £900 a month by moving to the UK. He planned to work hard and, in a year or two, bring over his family.

"I think I'll give it a year and, if things go fine, I hope to stay longer," he said. Paul Alexandrescu, 38, a father of two, will arrive on Saturday for a job as a glazier in Twickenham. "My wife is very excited about this offer," he said. "I've been practising my English with her, watching CNN and BBC. I want to bring my family and give them a better future," he said.

Skye's the limit: independence fever spreads to Scottish isles

Calls for a vote on breaking links with Edinburgh are growing among the communities of the Hebrides and Orkney. By **JONATHAN BROWN**

After spending more than half a millennium under Norse rule, it's little surprise the people of Shetland and Orkney might not consider themselves to be British in the same way as the good folk of Surrey. So, too, the islanders of the Outer Hebrides, who offered sanctuary to a fleeing Bonnie Prince Charlie after his defeat by loyalist forces at Culloden. But an unexpected question has crept into the narrowing independence referendum campaign - exactly how Scottish do they feel?

LEWICK, the capital of Shetland, is 18 hours by road and boat from Edinburgh - more than double the journey time from the Scots capital to Westminster. Now members of these storm-lashed, fiercely independent communities are being asked to back a demand to separate the Northern and Western Isles from Scotland - should it vote to go it alone in September.

A petition before the Scottish Parliament is calling for referenda to be held on all three island chains a week

after the rest of the nation votes on the future of the union with Westminster.

If the petition is granted, the 70,000 inhabitants will be given the choice of staying in Scotland or seeking their own independence - in which case a third question will offer the possibility of staying within the UK while seceding from control of Holyrood. So far nearly 800 people have signed the petition, which has generated interest all over the world - not least in other small islands and even in Venice.

Catriona Murray of Referenda on the Islands, which organised the petition, denied claims that the group was a front for the unionist campaign or a ploy to distract attention from the main debate. She said supporters represented all points of view - although the petition had deliberately not included an option of reunification with Norway. Although discussed, this idea had not garnered serious support.

"We exist only to bring about a referendum to give islanders the chance to decide. What matters is the view that islanders should have that right. We are certainly not making mischief," Ms Murray told *The Independent* by email from her home in Stormroy, "Monaco, Liechtenstein and San Marino all thrive well as independent members of

the United Nations. Any of the three island groups currently in Scotland could easily fit on to a list including those countries. Not as rich as the first two, but with more resources than the third," she added.

It is estimated that up to 67 per cent of Scotland's oil and gas reserves lie within the waters off Shetland and Orkney. All the islands also have lucrative offshore renewable energy potential.

Steve Heddle, Convenor of the Orkney Islands Council - part of the non-partisan umbrella group Our Islands, Our Future - said there was an urgent case for the communities to be given greater control over their destinies.

"My personal opinion is that this petition is mischievous here. There is obviously an appetite among some people for this but I don't know exactly how well thought out this is," he said. "We need to keep things realistic and reasonable and keep arguing and then we have a chance of winning," he added.

Since last summer the councils of Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles have been



Shetland's Lib Dem MSP Tavish Scott (left) said the SNP was acting like colonial governors

negotiating with the SNP administration in Edinburgh, as well as the Westminster government and the Labour Party, to see what extra powers they might gain. There have already been successes.

Last July Alex Salmond, the First Minister, held a Scottish cabinet meeting in Shetland where he issued the Lewrick Declaration agreeing in principle to greater autonomy for the islands. Since then island leaders have met ministers five times. The Scottish Labour Devolution Commission has agreed to grant more control over energy, transport and fishing policy and a bigger say in health and economic planning. Talks have also been held with the Secretary of State for Scotland.

A spokesman for Yes Scotland said post-referendum issues were a matter for the Scottish Government. But Shetland's Liberal Democrat MSP, Tavish Scott, said demands for referenda within the islands were "entirely understandable".

"The SNP is holding a gun to the islanders' heads and saying I will not do anything for you unless you vote yes. It is like the proverbial English colonial governor telling the natives what to do.

"People in the islands are very independent minded and they do not like being treated like this," he said.

'Lost' Beckett story sees the light after rejection in 1934

PETER APPS

A previously unpublished short story by Samuel Beckett, rejected as a "nightmare" by his editor, will go on sale for the first time next month, 80 years after it was written.

Echo's Bones, a 13,500-word work, was commissioned as the final piece for his early collection *More Pricks Than Kicks*, but in 1934 was rejected by editor Charles Prentice, who said it gave him "the jim-jams".

It features Belacqua Shuah, the protagonist of the collection of interrelated stories, returning from the grave, and remained hidden in archives since it was rejected.

In a blunt rejection letter to the young Beckett, published in the introduction of the new version, Prentice wrote: "It is a nightmare... It gives me the jim-jams... There are chunks with it I don't connect with. I am so sorry to feel like this."

The new volume, published by Faber & Faber on 17 April, features an introduction by Dr Mark Nixon, director of the Beckett International Foundation and a reader in modern literature at the University of Reading.

"On first reading, one cannot help sympathise with Prentice's decision to reject the story," he writes. "But if the story is rather wild and undisciplined it is also quite brilliantly so..."

"Blending fairy tales, gothic dreams and classical myth, *Echo's Bones* is in parts a fantastical story replete with giants, tree-houses, mandrakes, ostriches and mush-

rooms, drawing on a tradition of folklore as popularised by WB Yeats and the Brothers Grimm."

In correspondence with a friend, Beckett said the "kicking out" of the work "into which I put all I knew... discouraged me profoundly".

The Irish writer of *Waiting for Godot*, who received the Nobel prize for literature in 1969 and died in 1989, had been asked by Prentice to add another story to *More Pricks Than Kicks*. *Echo's Bones*, which would have been the 11th and last story in the collection, picks up the tale of Belacqua, the protagonist of the ninth story, *Yellow*, who has just died after surgery in hospital.

But in his rejection letter, Prentice said he feared the extra tale would "lose the book a great many readers".

"People will shudder and be puzzled and confused, and they won't be keen on analysing the shudder. I am certain that *Echo's Bones* would depress the sales very considerably," he wrote, and *More Pricks Than Kicks* was published in its original form.

Dr Nixon believes the rejection inspired Beckett to write a poem of the same name, and to use the title again for his first collection of poems, *Echo's Bones and Other Precipitates*, published in 1935.

More Pricks Than Kicks was Beckett's first published full-length book, and contains extracts from his earlier work *Dream of Fair to Middling Woman*, which was also rejected by publishers.

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be keen on
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shudder
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A text and walk plan for those trying to do two things at once

PETER APPS

It is a problem every mobile-phone user knows only too well. You are walking along a busy street, eyes down on a text-message exchange, when – bang – you collide with a tree, a lamp post or a fellow pedestrian.

But help may be on its way with a new patent filed in the US by computer giant Apple which would effectively make smartphones transparent.

The idea is very simple. The technology would modify an mobile app's background to project live video images from the camera in the back of the phone on to the screen.

Phone users would then be able see any obstacles looming up on them as they text, although cynics might suggest they could achieve the same result by putting away their handsets and paying attention to the world around them.

In patent designs, the familiar white background to an iMessage chat is replaced by live video – with the text bubbles either opaque or semi-opaque. The system would be activated through an in-app button and could be adapted for use in web browsers, with text floating over the live background.

The system would require users to point the smartphone directly in front of them, as more orthodox phone use would simply provide a megapixel view of the pavement.

The patent said the development would prevent users "colliding with or stumbling over objects".

It was filed with the US Patent and Trademark Office in September 2012, but was unearthed only this weekend by technology journalists. The application, which credits

Stephen Ward as the inventor, says: "The background within the text-messaging session can continuously be a live and current video image of the view seen by the camera at any given moment."

"Consequently, the device's user is less likely to collide with or stumble over an object while participating in a text-messaging session."

It is not clear if or when the software will be available on iPhones, with Apple yet to confirm whether the system will be incorporated into its next iOS system. Many patent applications fail to see the light of day.

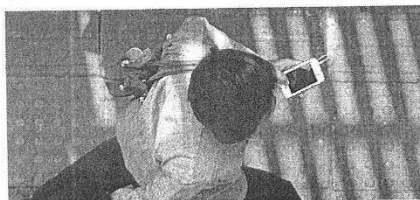
"Due to the visual nature of a text-messaging session, such a user often will find it difficult to divide his attention between his device's display and his environmental surroundings," the patent application adds.

"A user who is walking while participating in a text-messaging session may inadvertently collide with or stumble over objects in his path because his attention was focused on his device's display instead of the path that he was traversing."

"Even if a user remains stationary while participating in a text-messaging session, that user may expose himself to some amount of danger or potential embarrassment if he is so engaged in his device's display that he becomes oblivious to changes in his surrounding environment."

"Alternative embodiments of the invention can be applied to virtually any computer-executable application in which text is presented over a background."

Apple's next software launch is iOS 8 – due in September – which will provide technological updates to iPhone and iPad devices.



National

School makes English a foreign language

The Guardian | Tuesday 25 March 2014

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New lesson for all pupils at City of Leeds secondary Headteacher hopes plan will improve GCSE grades

Helen Pidd
 Northern editor

A secondary school in Leeds at which more than three-quarters of pupils do not have English as a mother tongue has introduced lessons for all pupils to teach them English as a foreign language.

The headteacher, Georgina Sale, said all pupils of City of Leeds secondary school, including those for whom English was a first language, would soon receive the extra 50-minute lesson each week. The extra tuition would "boost their

fundamental English skills and improve their basic spelling and grammar", she said. "We hope this will allow pupils who speak English as a first language as well as our multilingual learners the same opportunity to accomplish A and A* grades at GCSE."

Sale said 55 nationalities were represented among the school's 314 students, including pupils from Europe, several African nations, the Middle East, Pakistan, Afghanistan and India. A growing number were from eastern European Roma communities.

The school's decision follows a poor Ofsted report and disappointing exam results. In recent years the school has faced the threat of closure.

It has also had to cope with an increasing number of arrivals from abroad. Two years ago, just 40 nationalities were represented, according to the 2012 Ofsted inspection report.

Recent parent meetings have been simultaneously translated into Urdu, Czech and Polish, and the school has recently employed teachers who speak Czech, Romanian, Russian and German.

Now, the proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is about four times larger than the national figure, and many are at an early stage of learning it.

The extra lesson would be fitted into the existing timetable so that the school day remained the same length, a spokesman from Leeds city council said.

It is understood the plan is to shorten each of the existing lessons by 10 minutes one day a week to make room for the English class.

No additional staff would be taken on, the council spokesman said.

Sale, who joined the school in 2011, was praised in the Ofsted 2013 report for her "boundless energy" and the "swift

improvements" she had brought about in teaching and students' achievement.

But last summer just 26% of pupils achieved five or more GCSEs at grade A* to C, including English and maths.

In 2010, the school faced the threat of closure because of its poor results but was allowed to remain open after a passionate campaign by parents and staff.

The new scheme was cautiously welcomed by linguistic experts. Dr Dina Mehmedbegovic, from the Institute of Education in London, said: "I think it's excellent that the headteacher is doing this because she is drawing attention to what is wrong in the system.

There really is a big gap in provision for these children in the system which is in stark contrast to the number of non-native speakers entering our schools."

Helen Harrington from Cambridge University Press, which offers Cambridge English qualifications, said 612,000

primary school pupils and 436,000 secondary school pupils in the UK did not have English as their first language. "I'd be surprised if there was a local authority in the country which hasn't had some students who are receiving support for their English language," she said.

Mehmedbegovic complained that the current government had abolished the ethnic minority achievement grant, had ring-fenced funding for children needing additional English language support, and had failed to implement a Labour-commissioned national strategy on improving English as an additional language provision.

Maggie Kudyarova, who co-ordinates Birmingham University's Teaching English as a Foreign Language MA programme, said: "The initiative sounds very unusual and I've no knowledge of a similar scheme being rolled out at other schools. The idea as such is an interesting one."

TheObserver 30.03.14 *

Rome hails first emperor with lavish rebuild of forgotten tomb

On 2,000th anniversary of Augustus's death, work will start to restore a neglected site

by Tom Kington
Rome

He was Rome's first emperor, the founder of a world-dominating imperial dynasty, and a builder of roads and stunning temples who brought peace to a far-flung empire; a man so powerful the Roman senate named a month after him. Now, on the 2,000th anniversary of the death of the emperor Augustus, the city of Rome is getting ready to honour its favourite son by saving his mausoleum from shocking neglect.

Built in 28BC and as broad as a city block, the cylindrical mausoleum has seen better days after being sacked, bombed and built upon down the centuries. It was used as a bullfighting ring and a concert hall before it was finally abandoned, recently becoming a hangout for prostitutes and a handy toilet for tramps. That was a sad fate for one of Rome's most significant and sacred monuments, which once stood 120ft high – topped by a 15ft bronze statue of Augustus – and housed the emperor's ashes, as well as those of his successors, Tiberius and Claudius. Today, as tourists flock to the

Forum and the Colosseum, diners at the pizzeria across the street from Augustus's mausoleum – which lurks behind a fence in a piazza yards from Via del Corso – barely notice it.

But with €2m (£1.6m) in fresh funding, archaeologists now plan to clean up, restore and reopen the site, while the city is to spend €12m on creating a pedestrianised piazza to handle visitors. The marble has long been stripped from his mausoleum, but three concentric outer walls, the widest 15ft thick and the highest 50ft tall, have stood the test of time, while an upper floor is now missing, leaving a surprisingly large open-air circular space inside where the horns and screes of Rome's handeling traffic fade to an eerie silence.

"It's incredible the mausoleum is still standing despite what it has been through," said Elisabetta Carnabuci, one of the archaeologists charged with restoring the site.

Pillaged in 410 by Visigoths who scattered the emperor's ashes, the mausoleum was converted by the Colonna family in the 12th century into a castle, which was demolished by cannon fire during a clash with a rival family, the



Orsini. By the 16th century the site had been turned into a formal garden with a well-to-do palazzo built into the walls, before it was used for bullfights in the 18th century and then firework displays.

Large holes punched through the Roman masonry indicate the exits added when the mausoleum was converted into an elegant concert hall in

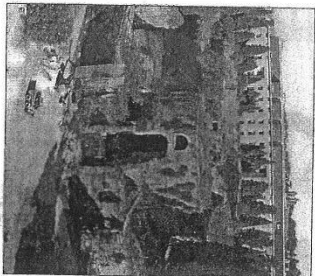
1908, becoming home to the city's main orchestra, with a domed roof added and space for 3,500 spectators drawn by conductors such as Arturo Toscanini.

But in 1936 Benito Mussolini ordered the musicians out and stripped the site down to its original Roman masonry in a bid to honour the emperor he emulated, in time for the 2,000th anniversary of

Augustus's birth in 1937. Cypress trees were planted on top of the mausoleum's walls in the belief Augustus originally planted trees there, and a squat two-storey tower was erected in the open space at the heart of the mausoleum to mark the spot where the ashes were once kept. "It was a real hack job by Mussolini's archaeologists," said Carnabuci, writhing her nose during a visit to the site last week. "When we get the money, that tower is going."

In an attempt to restore the site in time for the 2,000th anniversary of Augustus's death in 2014, the cash-strapped city of Rome looked for a private sponsor, noting how shoemaker Tod's had stepped forward to pay for vital restoration at the Colosseum. "No one wanted to sponsor the mausoleum, and so we missed the anniversary," said Claudio Parisi Presicca, Rome's archaeology superintendent. "But with the €2m in public money now available, we can get started."

That has put off the reopening until 2016, but the city did arrange a sneak preview last weekend, and Carnabuci said the response showed Romans have not forgotten their first emperor.



Augustus, left, was so powerful the senate named a month after him, his mausoleum, above, was used here as a bullfighting ring and a concert hall before a hack job restoration by Mussolini. COPIES

We have been crushed by the climate change deniers

Nick
Cohen



The American Association for the Advancement of Science came as close as such a respectable institution can to screaming an alarm last week. "As scientists, it is not our role to tell people what they should do," it said as it began one of those sentences that you know will build to a "but... But human-caused climate risks abrupt, unpredictable and potentially irreversible changes."

In other words, the most distinguished scientists from the country with the world's pre-eminent educational institutions were trying to shake humanity out of its complacency. Why weren't their warnings leading the news?

In one sense, the association's appeal was not new. The Royal Society, the Royal Institution, Nasa, the US National Academy of Sciences, the US Geological Survey, the IPCC and other national science bodies of 30 or so other countries have said that man-made climate change is on the march. A survey of 2,000 peer-reviewed papers on global warming published in the last 20 years found that 97% said that humans were causing it.

When the glib talk about the "scientific debate on global warming," they either don't know or will not accept that there is no scientific debate. The suggestion first made by Eugene F. Stoermer that the planet has moved from the Holocene, which began at the end of the last ice age, to the manmade Anthropocene, in which we now live, is everywhere gaining support. Man-made global warming and the man-made mass extinction of species define this hot, bloody and (let us hope) brief epoch in the world's history.

If global warming is not new, it is urgent a subject that should never be far from our thoughts. Yet within 24 hours of the American association's warning the British government's budget confirmed that it no longer wanted to fight it.

David Cameron, who once promised that if you voted blue you would go green, now appoints Owen Paterson, a man who is not just ignorant of environmental science but proud of his ignorance, as his environment secretary. George Osborne, who once promised that his Treasury would be "at the heart of this historic fight against climate change," now gives billions in tax concessions to the oil and gas industry, and strips the funds for onshore wind farms and the ability to borrow and lend.

All of which is a long way of saying that the global warming deniers have won. And please, can I have no emails

from bed-wetting kids blubbing that you can't call us "global warming deniers" because "denier" makes us sound like "Holocaust deniers", and that means you are comparing us to Nazis? The evidence for man-made global warming is as final as the evidence of Auschwitz. No other word will do.

Templing thought it is to blame cowardly politicians, the abuse comes too easily. The question remains: what turned them into cowards? Rightwing billionaires in the United States and the oil companies have spent fortunes on blocking action on climate change. A part of the answer may therefore be that conservative politicians in London, Washington and Canberra are doing their richest supporters' bidding. There's truth in the bribery hypothesis. In my own little world of journalism, I have seen rightwing hacks realise the financial potential of denial and turn from reasonable men and women into beetle-brained conspiracy theorists.

But the fight is also going along with an eruption of know-nothing populism. Just as there are leftish greens, who will never accept that GM foods are safe, so an ever-growing element on the right becomes more militant as the temperature rises.

Clive Hamilton, the Australian author of *Reason for a Sceptic*, made the essential point a few years ago that climate change denial was no longer just a corporate lobbying campaign.

The opponents of science would say what they said unbridled. The movement was in the grip of "cognitive dissonance", a condition first defined by Leon Festinger and his colleagues in the 1950s. They examined a cult that had attached itself to a Chicago housewife called Dorothy Martin. She convinced her followers to resign from their jobs and sell their possessions because a great flood was to engulf the earth on 21 December 1954. They would be the only survivors. Aliens in a flying saucer would swoop down and save the chosen few.

When 21 December came and went, and the Earth did not despair, Martin and the group did not despair. Martin announced that the aliens had sent her a message saying that they had decided at the last minute not to flood the planet after all. Her followers believed her. They had given up so much for their faith that they would believe anything rather than admit their sacrifices had been pointless.

Climate change deniers are as committed. Their denial fits perfectly with their support for free market economics, opposition to state intervention and hatred of all those late-slurping, quinnom-munching liberals, with their arrogant manners and dandy hybrid cars, who presume to tell honest men and women how to live. If they admitted they were

wrong on climate change, they might have to admit that they were wrong on everything else and their whole political identity would unravel.

The politicians know too well that beyond the corporations and the cultish fanatics in their grass roots lies the great mass of people, whose influence matters most. They accept at some level that manmade climate change is happening but don't want to think about it.

I am no better than them. I could write about the environment every week. No editor would stop me. But the task feels as hopeless as arguing against growing old. Whatever you do or say, it is going to happen. How can you persuade countries to accept huge reductions in their living standards to limit (not stop) the rise in temperatures? How can you persuade the human race to put the future ahead of the present?

The American historians of science Naomi Oreskes and Erik M. Conway quoted a researcher, who was asked in the 1970s what his country's leaders said when he warned them that CO2 levels would double in 50 years. "They tell me to come back in 49 years," he replied.

Most of the rest of us think like the Washington politicians of the Carter era. And most of us have no right to sneer at Dorothy Martin and her cult either. We cannot admit it, but like them, we need a miracle to save us from the floods.

Transport sector needs more freedom

From wire reports, BRUSSELS

Slim Kallas, the European Commission vice president who in mid-March cut short the creation of a new Estonian government and flew back to Brussels, used a speech at the EU Transport Business Summit 2014 to demand more market freedom in his sector of the economy.

Mr Kallas, who will probably continue as EU transport commissioner until expiry of his term this fall, last Thursday addressed a company of European transport group chiefs and officials in Brussels. Listing the trouble spots of various means of transportation, he noted that the basic trouble is working against market rules, in the entire sector – both by member states and representatives of the transport sector.

"I see in Europe too many standpoints that consider the market economy a problem, not a solution," said Mr Kallas. "It is looked at with suspicion, at times with outright hostility."

In his opinion, ignoring market rules is dangerous, causing growth of unemployment and loss of competitiveness as compared to other regions of the world.

Asked if he wanted his 5-year work as transport commissioner to be remembered as a time when liberalisation ideology was eroded, Mr Kallas answered that his proposals were of the pragmatic kind. "Naturally, I believe in market economy and private business," he

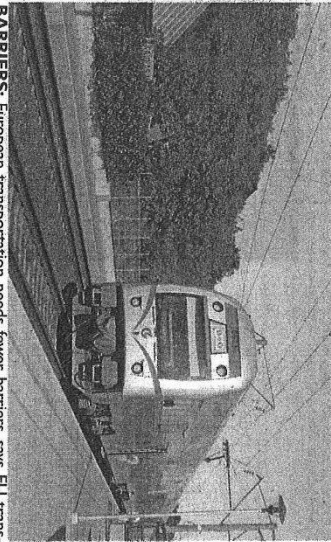


PHOTO CREATIVELT

BARRIERS: European transportation needs fewer barriers, says EU transport commissioner Slim Kallas.

noted. "But my activities are not carried by ideology alone. Even in the European Parliament there are people who say they are always against my plans to liberalise. What kind of liberalisation is that, if I want railways to function over borders and over all of Europe?"

In his speech at the conference, Mr Kallas sharply criticised the current situation with the single railway area of Europe, among other things, he pointed to huge subsidies paid by taxpayer money to regional railway lines.

"For me, the basic choice with railways is clear. Either we will have more cross-border business-based railway transport all across Europe, or our railways simply cease to be a serious alternative to highway and air transportation. That would mean irreversible

backsliding into the kind of Europe where railways are a luxury for some single rich countries, but for the majority they will be too expensive due to lack of public funds."

Pulling down barriers between current European railway connections has been an issue targeted by this European Commission, even so, a number of problems persist. In one of the panels at the conference, the Austrian federal railway (ÖBB) chief Christian Kern jokingly related an example where a train is bound from Austria to Hungary and, at the border, will have to replace its rectangular tail lights for round ones.

The call to bring more market economy into the transport sector was also echoed by the main speaker, former Italian prime minister Mario Monti. In his speech,

Mr Monti admitted that he had listened carefully to what Mr Kallas had to say about it.

"I fully share your view, as we all live in a place which, a few years ago, used to be called single market," said Mr Monti.

"The European integration process is built on the notion of a market. Sure, it's a market, not a jungle – but without the European Union it could be a jungle, and doubtless the integration would then be a lot weaker. In that case, a fragmented European market would be in the hands of monopolies and oligarchs, in which both consumers and smaller companies would suffer."

In the near future, the European Commission itself will be promoting transparency of the European transport market by publishing the EU Transport Scoreboard, featuring all member states.

The mobility and transport directorate under the domain of Mr Kallas will set member states in a table according to transport conditions and development, based on development of infrastructure, prevention of accidents, and the amount of infringement proceedings.

The aggregate table is still being compiled. In the preliminary version, Estonia is among the EU's worst when it comes to air transport infrastructure while its railway and highway infrastructures rank as average. These, however, are but snippets of the big picture. □

ARTICLE 9

Children's minister wants parliament to make hours more family-friendly

Edward Timpson says he misses children during week and believes fixed holiday dates for MPs would be beneficial.

Edward Timpson wants fixed holiday dates so MPs can guarantee to their children when they will be around the family home.

The children's minister, Edward Timpson, has said he misses his children during the week and that parliament should "go a lot further" to make its hours more family-friendly, primarily by setting fixed holiday dates so that MPs can guarantee to their children when they will be around the family home.

The MP for Crewe and Nantwich spends Fridays and weekends in his Cheshire constituency, living alone in London during the week. "I obviously don't see the children, which I wish was different," he told the Guardian. "The fact is, children thrive on routine and stability and one thing that would make a massive difference is to have regular recess dates – so we can plan ahead in the knowledge that arrangements won't fall apart, causing huge disappointment."

There has been a decade-long debate about changing the hours of parliament to make them more family-friendly, but there are tight constraints on what can be achieved if the MPs' head office is in London and families live in constituencies. House of Commons sitting times have been changed so that it is easier for MPs to go to their constituencies on Thursday and to return to London on Monday morning.

"A lot of us now have young families and we could do much more to recognise that life has moved on," said Timpson, 40, who has children aged 10, eight and six. "At this stage I'm not convinced MPs job-sharing is the answer, but let's look at whatever is going to make parliament more attractive to those who face the competing pressures family life brings, so it doesn't become too narrow in the people who are ending up there."

Timpson, a former family lawyer who last year pushed through reforms that will allow young adults to stay in foster care until they are 21, said: "The outcomes for children who have been in care are still far too low. We need to push further our shared aspirations for them, they have as much right to achieve as any child."

His parents' decision to foster almost 90 children and adopt two sons while he was growing up shaped his life. "I wouldn't be children's minister and I wouldn't have gone into family law if my parents hadn't fostered," he said. Following a 10% rise in the rate of adoptions, he wants a "better range of people" from more diverse backgrounds to become foster carers.

The Liberal Democrat deputy leader of the house, Tom Brake, has called for MPs to work as job shares, so long as they have been elected as such, and this is now Liberal Democrat policy.

MPs last voted to change the hours they sit in July 2011, starting business earlier on Tuesday and Thursday. Proceedings in the Commons now begin at 10.30 am on Tuesday, rather than 2.30pm, while Thursday's business starts an hour earlier at 9.30am.

ARTICLE 10

The dependent generation: half young European adults live with their parents

Eurofound report says it's not just people finishing education who struggle to live independently, but those in their 30s too.

An Italian family eating their meal. In Italy, 79% of young adults were living with their parents in 2011, according to Eurofound.

Almost half of Europe's young adults are living with their parents, new data suggests – a record level of dependency that has sobering social and demographic implications for the continent.

One of the most comprehensive social surveys of 28 European countries reveals on Tuesday that the percentage of people aged 18-30 who were still living with their parents had risen to 48%, or 36.7 million people, by 2011, in tandem with levels of deprivation and unemployment that surged during five years of economic crisis.

The data from EU agency Eurofound, obtained by the Guardian, shows that few countries are immune and that the phenomenon is not exclusive to the debt-laden Mediterranean rim. The figures show large rises in the number of stay-at-home twentysomethings in countries such as Sweden, Denmark, France, Belgium and Austria. In Italy, nearly four-fifths (79%) of young adults were living with their parents.

However, Germany, the Netherlands, Ireland and the UK saw decreases in their numbers over that period – in Britain, the figure fell from 30% to 26%.

One of the report's authors, Anna Ludwinek, said: "The situation of youth has really fundamentally changed. And it looks different from the situation of their parents and grandparents.

"It's not only the world of work that has changed but society is changing, so the transitions are becoming much more unpredictable; people are not having a job for life or live in one place for life."

She said it was a myth that living with children and parents in a multi-generational household was all "happy clappy": "Really we see that multi-generational households have very low life satisfaction and a very high level of deprivation and perceived social exclusion.

"One could argue that if you are at the age of 30 and are still living with your parents and, on top of that you have your own family, it is really difficult to start an independent life."

The data underscores the predicament of "Generation Y" – who are better educated than their forebears, but condemned nonetheless to dimmer prospects than their parents' generation.

The growing phenomenon of adults stuck living in their childhood bedrooms has, moreover, raised concerns about birthrates and demographics in an ageing continent.

The trend for parental dependency, the report's authors say, cannot be solely explained by increases in the number of people studying later into their life, as millions more 25- to 29-year-olds have also been found to be living with mum and dad.

For women aged 25-29, this figure rose by five points to 26% while the proportion for men is up three points to 34%. Even among those who have a job, the overall figure rose one point to 34%.

While young adults tend to be as trusting of institutions as their parents, faith in their national government, legal system and the press all fell among the young between 2007 and 2011.

Bobby Duffy from pollsters Ipsos Mori said he had found similar results in the UK: "Our generational analysis of attitudes in the UK has shown how much pressure the youngest generation feel under – they're the most likely to see themselves as poor even a good few years into their careers, which is historically unusual.

"This echoes the Eurofound research – it's not just those straight out of school or university who are finding it more difficult to get going with independent lives, it's people well into their 20s and 30s."

He said these results demonstrated that class and background was becoming even more of a factor in later life success.

"Those from better off or higher social class families will be much better set to deal with the pressures. The real story here isn't about generation alone; it's about how it interacts with wealth and class, leaving some younger people behind."

Peter Matjašič, president of the European Youth Forum, which represents young people across the EU, said that Europe's youth were still "in the full force of the storm" despite talk of a recovery.

He said that too many were still unemployed or, if they were in work, this was "precarious and often without the safety net of proper social security".

"This report makes worrying reading because it provides more evidence that, at the time that young people should be becoming autonomous adults making their own way in the world, they are forced to continue to live at home with their parents for much longer than before, and this is now becoming the norm in many countries where it was not common practice before."

He called on European leaders to implement concrete measures and said that young European adults should not be discriminated against on the basis in matters of social security spending.

The Eurofound report also reveals that 49% of all Europe's young adults were living in households experiencing some form of deprivation. In 2011, 27% of young adults were living in "mid level" deprivation – meaning they could not replace worn out furniture, were unable to invite friends over and could not afford to take an annual holiday.

More than a fifth (22%) were found to be experiencing "serious deprivation" and were struggling to heat their home or buy new clothes. This figure rose by six percentage points since 2007.

The rise in deprivation for young adults was worst in countries such as Greece (+15 points) Spain (+20) and the UK (+10).

Though their situation is less acute, when compared with other generations, European youth fare worst overall. "In nearly all countries young people are more likely to experience moderate levels of deprivation than the general population, but they are less likely to experience the more serious forms of deprivation," the report says. From the survey of 7,300 young adults for the European Quality of Life Survey, the report's authors point towards a growing trend of multigenerational households in which parents are increasingly having to house both their children and their grandchildren.

Correspondingly the number of working families raising a new family in their own home fell by 3 percentage points.

Family units in which three generations all live under one roof are more likely to experience serious deprivation, "suggesting that for some, such living arrangements may be involuntary and be a result of the economic crisis", says the report.

RESÜMEE

TARTU ÜLIKOOL
ANGLISTIKA OSAKOND

Katrin Rääk

Exploiting Newspaper Articles to Develop Higher Order Thinking Skills in Secondary School English Classes.

Ajaleheartiklite kasutamine kõrgema taseme mõtlemisoskuste arendamiseks gümnaasiumiastme inglise keele tundides.

Magistritöö
2018

Lehekülgede arv: 81

Selle magistritöö eesmärk on näidata ajaleheartiklite kasutamist gümnaasiumi astme inglise keele tundides kui üht viisi arendada õpilastes kõrgema astme mõtlemisoskusi. Kuna kõige kõrgem eesmärk vastavalt Bloomi taksonoomiale on omandada kriitilise mõtlemise oskus, siis on nii teoreetilises kui ka praktilises osas rõhk just selle oskuse arendamisel.

Töö koosneb kolmest peatükist, millest esimene on ülevaade mõtlemisoskustest ning nende olulisusest koolitundides ning ühiskonnas üldiselt. Mõtlemisoskuste arendamise eesmärkidega on välja toodud terminid nagu 21. sajandi oskused, muutunud õpikäsitus ning Riikliku Õppekava eesmärgid. Töö esimese osas tuuakse välja erinevad aspektid mõtlemisoskuste arendamiseks ning kirjeldatud on Bloomi taksonoomiat kui üht viisi kuidas mõtlemisoskuste arengut hinnata. Põhjusel, et see töö on limiteeritud trükimeediale ning selle praktilises osas kasutatakse lugemisülesannete põhjal kirjalikku väljendust, siis kirjeldab see peatükk ka nende osaoskuste seotust mõtlemisoskustega.

Teise peatüki eesmärgiks on esitada põhjuseid miks just autentsete tekstide kasutamine võiks olla üks efektiivne viis mõtlemisoskuste arendamiseks. Välja on toodud nii positiivseid kui ka negatiivseid külgi ning konkreetseid tegevusi mida ajaleheartiklitega keeletunnis teha. Need ettepanekud on seotud eesmärkidega kuidas erinevad ülesanded võiksid arendada üldist ja kriitilist mõtlemisoskust ning millise sisu ning fookusega need konkreetset ülesanded peaksid olema.

Viimane peatükk hõlmab endast töö praktilise osa kirjeldust ning tulemusi. Töö praktiline osa oli esmalt teada saada õpilaste arusaam kriitilisest mõtlemisest kui kõige kõrgemast mõtlemise oskusest. Küsitluses milles seda uuriti oli küsimus ka selle kohta, kas nende arvates peaks koolis eraldi kriitilist mõtlemist õpetama ning kas õpilaste praegused inglise keele õpikud pakuvad piisavalt mõtlemisainet. Küsitluses osalesid 10. ja 11. klasside õpilased ning sellele järgnes viienädalane periood kus õpilased pidi lugema erinevaid ajaleheartikleid teemadel mis põhinevad Riiklikul Õppekaval ning vastama kirjalikult erinevatele mõtlemist arendavatele harjutustele. Need ajaleheartiklite põhjal valminud töölehed ning õpilaste vastused koos õpetajapoolse vaatlusega moodustavadki töö praktilise töö ning tulemite analüüsi.

Kokkuvõttes võib öelda, et kuigi antud töös uuriti just ajaleheartikleid ning tulemused saadi vaid ühe kooli õpilaste tööde näitel, on töö tulemuste põhjal alust arvata, et mõtlemist arendavaid tegevusi peab koolitundides praktiseerima ning et autentse materjali kasutamine on õpilastele huvitav ning väljakutseid pakkuv.

LITSENTS

Lihtlitsents lõputöö reprodutseerimiseks ja lõputöö üldsusele kättesaadavaks tegemiseks

Mina, Katrin Rääk, annan Tartu Ülikoolile tasuta loa (lihtlitsentsi) enda loodud teose *Exploiting Newspapers to Develop Higher Order Thinking Skills in Secondary School English Classes*, mille juhendaja on prof. Katiliina Gielen,

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