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# THE SOCRATIC DIALOGUE AND TEXT CODING AS THE WAYS OF INTENSIFYING ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

**Abstract.** The study examines two innovative methods for enhancing English language training: Socratic dialogue and text coding. The study's applicability depends on giving clear and helpful instructional materials that develop students' cognitive activity and communicative skill development within the parameters of the modern educational paradigm.

The article aims to provide a theoretical proof and a practical illustration of how the text coding method and Socratic debate can be applied to develop the effectiveness of English language teaching. The communicative approach, cognitive linguistics, and constructivist pedagogy make up the study's methodological underpinnings.

Teachers employ Socratic discussion as a helpful way to foster critical thinking, encouraging pupils to find answers independently. This approach enhances analytical abilities, strengthens foreign language reasoning skills, and fosters a deeper understanding of linguistic structures. The method of posing questions that stimulate reflective thought and motivate students to utilize language intentionally is given special consideration.

Text coding is presented as a system for working with authentic texts, which involves their analysis, transformation, and the creation of one's own text products based on specific models. This approach develops analytical reading skills and deepens understanding of text genres and stylistic features of the English language.

The article proves that the integration of both methods into the educational process ensures the comprehensive development of language skills, stimulates students to cognitive activity, and increases their motivation to study English. Practical recommendations for implementing these methods in various class formats are presented.

**Keywords:** Socratic dialogue, text coding, intensification of learning, English language, communicative competence, critical thinking, teaching methodology.

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## СОКРАТІВСЬКИЙ ДІАЛОГ ТА КОДУВАННЯ ТЕКСТУ ЯК СПОСОБИ ІНТЕНСИФІКАЦІЇ ВИКЛАДАННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ

**Анотація.** У статті досліджуються два інноваційні методи інтенсифікації викладання англійської мови: сократівський діалог та текстове кодування. Актуальність дослідження зумовлена необхідністю пошуку ефективних педагогічних інструментів, які сприяють активізації пізнавальної діяльності студентів та розвитку їхніх комунікативних компетентностей в умовах сучасної освітньої парадигми.

Метою статті є теоретичне обґрунтування та практична демонстрація можливостей використання сократівського діалогу та методу текстового кодування для підвищення ефективності навчання англійської мови. Методологічну основу дослідження становлять принципи комунікативного підходу, конструктивістської педагогіки та когнітивної лінгвістики.

Сократівський діалог розглядається як метод критичного мислення, що стимулює студентів до самостійного пошуку відповідей через систему послідовних запитань викладача. Цей підхід сприяє глибшому розумінню мовних структур, розвиває аналітичні здібності та формує навички аргументації іноземною мовою. Особлива увага приділяється техніці постановки

запитань, які активізують рефлексивне мислення та заохочують студентів до усвідомленого використання мовних засобів.

Текстове кодування представлено як систему роботи з автентичними текстами, що передбачає їх аналіз, трансформацію та створення власних текстових продуктів на основі певних моделей. Такий підхід розвиває навички аналітичного читання, поглиблює розуміння текстових жанрів та стилістичних особливостей англійської мови.

У статті доведено, що інтеграція обох методів у навчальний процес забезпечує комплексний розвиток мовленнєвих умінь, стимулює когнітивну активність студентів та підвищує мотивацію до вивчення англійської мови. Представлено практичні рекомендації щодо впровадження цих методів у різних форматах занять.

**Ключові слова:** сократівський діалог, текстове кодування, інтенсифікація навчання, англійська мова, комунікативна компетентність, критичне мислення, методика викладання.

**Problem's Statement.** In the face of Ukraine's increasingly competitive entry into the international educational arena, it is becoming increasingly challenging to ensure a high level of education for students of higher educational institutions, using only traditional methods of study.

The involvement of new, effective methods of teaching a foreign language has become not only desirable but also necessary.

Among the advanced methods in the modern English learning process, much attention is paid to interactive methods based on a person-oriented approach to the student, aimed at developing not only the learner's creative potential but also their ability to think and respond quickly, thereby improving communication skills. Several scientists define interactive learning as one of the forms of dialogic learning: interactivity (from the English interaction – 'interaction') means the ability to interact or be in the mode of conversation, dialogue with something (for example, a computer) or someone (a person)" [1].

**The study's Objective.** There is currently a lack of specialized research on combining Socratic dialogue with text coding in English language learning, making this topic a promising area for scientific research. Therefore, this article aims to analyze this method in the context of foreign language learning and teaching.

**The Review of the Scientific Background.** The ancient Greek philosopher, sophist, and orator Socrates was renowned for his sharp mind, his ability to craft compelling arguments during debates, and his dedication to self-development throughout his entire life. He taught this to his students as well. To this end, he created a list of specific questions that would allow them to reach certain conclusions on their own, using their previously acquired knowledge.

Socrates believed that actual knowledge cannot simply be transferred from teacher to student, but must be discovered through systematic questioning and critical reflection. His dialectical approach was based on the principle of maieutics – the art of intellectual midwifery – where the teacher helps students give birth to their own understanding rather than imposing ready-made answers. Through carefully structured dialogues, Socrates demonstrated that even seemingly simple questions can lead to profound philosophical insights and reveal contradictions in human thinking.

Today, this method is known as the Socratic method. It is widely researched and used by educators around the world in foreign language teaching. The particular value of this approach lies in the fact that it not only conveys information but also develops students' critical thinking, analytical abilities, and argumentation skills. In the context of foreign language learning, Socratic dialogue stimulates active use of language, encourages students to formulate complex thoughts and defend their own position, which significantly increases their level of communicative competence. Modern pedagogical research confirms that the use of systematic questions of varying levels of complexity creates optimal conditions for in-depth assimilation of language material and the formation of independent thinking skills in a foreign language.

For example, H. Crompton et al. studied the use of artificial intelligence in English language teaching in a 2024 study [2]. In turn, F. Koch and P. Savas found in their meta-synthesis that research on language learning with chatbots is based on theoretical frameworks such as the interaction hypothesis and self-determination theory [3]. N. Cooper explored the use of large language models for coding and learning [4].

Among Ukrainian scholars researching Socratic dialogue in education, O. Nefedchenko stands out. In her work, she identifies four key components of the Socratic method: text, questions, leader, and participants [5]. The researcher emphasizes the importance of the teacher's role as a Socratic follower, who supports dialogue by asking questions and creates an atmosphere of constructive discussion. In the field of foreign language teaching methodology, a significant contribution was made by S. Nikolaieva, who headed the collective monograph „Modern technologies for teaching foreign languages and cultures in general education and higher education institutions” [6]. Among international studies, the works of N. Borisko on the theory and practice of foreign language teaching are noteworthy [7]. Contemporary Ukrainian educators are actively implementing Socratic questioning as a technique for developing critical thinking, emphasizing its role in shaping key competencies in students.

**Presentation of the Main Material.** The most important thing, in our opinion, is that Socrates tried to prove in his research that it is important to form the ability of students to think about promising ideas and search for the truth. The philosopher

believed that the desire for knowledge is the main function of the human mind. In addition to the generation of new ideas, the survey had another important function – it is an effective method of persuasion. For this, the priority question should be put in third place, while the first two should be simple, not take a lot of time, and can be answered with agreement. When a person says "yes" at each stage of such manipulation, they gradually calm down, and their psyche automatically adjusts to another consent.

The speaker argued that monologue as a form of persuasion is ineffective, while dialogue is more complex and more productive.

How did Socrates use this technique? He led the discussions unusually: he asked the interlocutor questions in such a way that the answers formed a coherent narrative, where one thought followed from another. During the discussion, the interlocutor independently voices something that he did not know about before, but that he understood on his own, thanks to reflection (in fact, no, these thoughts were somewhat imposed on him).

Why teachers should use Socratic questioning? According to the questions themselves, the Socratic survey seems to have been created to evaluate children's knowledge and competence in a variety of academic subjects. In the process of dialogue, children draw unexpected conclusions, practice formulating their thoughts clearly, learn to establish cause-and-effect relationships, and develop their critical thinking.

The primary task of the teacher is to foster the development of the mind and skills of schoolchildren, rather than imposing their own views and beliefs. Socrates believed that the development of profound and important reasoning in children is productive only when they learn to build complex concepts and solve problematic issues.

What were those questions? There is no list of questions from Socrates personally. However, it is known for sure that the philosopher divided them into several main blocks.

*Practical use of Socratic inquiry in the lesson*

Several fundamental requirements are necessary for the practical application of Socratic inquiry. They should not be ignored, because they will ensure a high level of effectiveness of this training method:

• Take care in advance of the fundamental questions that determine the essence and direction of the dialogue

Divide the information into parts (try to divide the problem into sub-problems in the questions).

• Each question should form a strategy or model for solving the problem.

• The teacher should hint at the idea, and not speak ready-made ideas for solving the problem.

• Ask logical and interesting questions that establish cause-and-effect relationships and help find non-standard ways to solve problems.

• Stimulate children's empirical, analytical, and creative thinking with questions.

Students must explain each of their hypotheses with arguments and assess their plausibility.

• Give children time to think (at least 30 seconds) and follow the logical transition of student reasoning from one thesis to another.

• Periodically summarize what was said with the students and record the key points of the discussion.

• Involve the whole class in the discussion and correct the answers with questions if the student does not quite understand the essence of the problem.

According to N. Sanders, the various types of questions form a hierarchy, with literal questions and erudition questions at the bottom. Questions designed to produce evaluations and judgments are considered by Sanders as questions of the highest level [8].

Undoubtedly, all types of questions are important and valuable because they lead to thinking in different ways through the vast space of conceptual schemes, thought processes, and educational experiences. It is crucial to understand that every kind of inquiry is designed to fit a particular way of thinking and encourages the formation of unique concepts, both of which lead to a more profound and complex knowledge.

However, at the same time, the instructor's goal is to guide students, using questions that range from the simplest to the most complex, to teach them to utilize their knowledge and ideas most effectively.

After all, if thinking stopped at the literal level or the level of erudition, then the student's knowledge would be similar to the totality of information in an encyclopedia, which is on a dusty shelf. Literal questions are those that require the reproduction of factual information. As a rule, they are designed for mechanical recall, and it is enough for a student to know a limited fragment of a particular field of knowledge in order to answer successfully. The answer to such a question is readily available in the text. It consists only of reproducing what was reported. There is a widespread opinion that exceptional students like literal questions the most. However, some researchers have found that because the answers to such questions can only be right or wrong, many conscientious students consider these questions to be the most dangerous.

*Reformulation questions*

They require the student to submit information in a different form. Such questions, for example, can ask students to draw in their imagination the situation, scene, or event they are studying and describe what they see.

Reformulation questions stimulate students to restructure and transform information into new forms. In answering such a question, students must discuss the images they imagine or the sounds they hear while reading. Their task is to experience a specific sensory experience and describe it using language. THIS is an active, creative process of „actualization".

*Interpretation questions*

They are designed to find connections between ideas, facts, definitions, and values. Students are asked to consider how certain ideas and concepts can be combined in a specific way. Students must understand the connections between separate thoughts and generate various contexts in which these thoughts are combined. Questions for interpretation can be, for example, the following: Why, in your opinion, did the main character wait until her father returned home? Or: What, in your opinion, is the reason that the tragic event happened just now? Such questions encourage speculative reasoning. Sanders views interpretive questions as crucial to the development of higher-order thinking, and researchers such as Vaughn and Estes argue that perception is inherently an interpretation.

*Questions on the application of existing knowledge*

They provide students with the opportunity to solve or further investigate logical problems that occur in texts for reading or during learning.

*Analytical questions*

They offer to answer, for instance, whether a specific event was sufficiently determined, or whether other details and circumstances better illuminate its essence. Students can also be asked about the motivations of a particular character, the research plan of a specific scientist, or, for example, whether the ending of the work seems logical enough.

*Synthesis questions*

They encourage creative problem solving and extraordinary thinking. While questions on the application of knowledge suggest solving a problem with the help of existing knowledge, questions on synthesis provide an opportunity to apply the entire array of knowledge and experience to creatively solve a problem. These questions encourage the creation of new scenarios, such as: What do you think these two characters could have done to avoid SUSPICION? Or: What could be another way of overcoming the difficulties that befell us?

*Evaluation questions*

They require the student to make judgments such as: good or bad, true or false, according to the standards determined by the students. Such questions suggest integrating new information into a personal belief system and making relevant judgments. This involves complex processes of understanding and integration, which give the learning process a personal character, and the student - the opportunity to express his own thoughts and principles. Also, these questions involve making an

assessment about the quality of the acquired information, or, in some cases, about their own behavior in the light of new information, for example: Why don't they brush their teeth before going to bed, after they learned about caries? The question may also refer to the behavior of the characters in the work: Was the hero right or wrong, having acted in such a way? Was the character fair or unfair to other people in the work?

It is essential to reiterate that such questions extend beyond literal questions. You will see how students are gradually involved in the process of actively constructing meanings. They build semantic structures using their own words and expressions acquired during a specific period of study. The dialogue created as a result of such questions opens up to the student a vast space of other ideas and ideas expressed by classmates. This, in turn, helps expand the vocabulary and conceptual framework of the whole class, developing the ability to formulate new and creative ideas. Going beyond literal questions, the teacher shows respect for students' thinking. Students begin to understand that acquiring factual knowledge is only one type of learning, and that they must integrate, analyze, and use information to the extent of its value. Students also gradually come to understand that knowledge is not only what is written in a book or spoken by a teacher. They begin to realize that knowledge, in this sense, is first and foremost the construction of meaning based on the incorporation of new thoughts into the existing structure of previous knowledge. It is essential to note that children of any age can participate in surveys of all types, as highlighted by Sanders [8].

Some teachers may think that such a survey is only adequate for older and more developed students. It does not. The questions themselves are not designed for any specific stage of development. Only children's answers carry certain age characteristics. Preschoolers can and will answer each of the described types of questions; their answers will differ in complexity, but at their level of development, they are able to find adequate answers to all types of questions. In fact, children of all ages frequently ask each other these kinds of questions, and they enjoy both asking and answering such questions; however, they often lack opportunities to do so in the classroom.

Many models help to visualize the thinking process. One of them is a four-stage model of understanding that applies in situations where new content is perceived.

**A four-stage model of understanding**

- Global understanding is a form of general understanding that provides us with general ideas about an object or a field of knowledge.

- Comprehension with interpretation is similar to Bloom's level of interpretation. This type occurs when the student is able to discuss subtext, identify connections, and relate thoughts and data from different, at first glance, unrelated areas of meaning.

- Personal understanding describes the process of incorporating new knowledge into the structure of one's own experience and existing knowledge system.

- Critical understanding enables the student to step back from the immediate content, analyze, and consider its value, reliability, usefulness, and importance in the light of what the student previously knew, understood, and believed.

It is appropriate to ask questions that direct the student toward this type of understanding. These types, of course, differ from each other in terms of complexity and imagination. However, each of them requires the student to work with new knowledge, integrating it into a meaningful context.

Students should imagine their learning as a continuous flow of thoughts, information, and experience. Learning is never an isolated act. It is inscribed in the student's living conditions and educational history. Therefore, it is necessary to ask students such questions that would facilitate the identification of connections between what they are studying and what they knew, understood, and believed before they fell and felt.

This means that the teacher must have in mind not only the immediate content of the lesson, but also the entire array of values that their students have learned during the previous stages of education. When a teacher presents content to students, such as, say, an exciting story like the one in this manual, he must help students understand the content and make meaningful connections. In addition, it is necessary to help students build meaningful connections outside the immediate content of the story, allowing them to compare this experience and this content with others that have been learned before. The teacher should ask the students to consider specific topics raised in the story and compare them with similar issues covered in other works or drawn from their own lives, and explain how their own experiences influenced this process of understanding.

The use of the Socratic teaching method develops children's independent thinking skills. This method is unique, and its skillful use is considered mastery.

Text coding can be used to mark up the text during active reading, which is oriented toward developing logical thinking. This encourages students to demonstrate their logical thinking in their papers. The reason text coding works is that it can demonstrate multiple strategies. It reinforces the importance of underlining and annotating the text. Students put their comprehension strategies to work: they can connect, visualize, comment, ask questions, predict, and summarize right on the text. This strategy is effective because students can reflect on how these marks enhance their comprehension. It focuses their attention on understanding what they have read or listened to. They have to code, scan, underline, and use many strategies that are invaluable for life.

**Student Benefits:** Students benefit from this strategy because they are constantly engaged in the text. It encourages them to slow down and track their

thoughts. It will also be easier to find answers and understand what they have read when they track their inner voice [9].

Procedures:

1.) Engage students in the text you will be reading aloud, building background knowledge (give them a copy of the story to annotate on as well).

2.) Have another conversation with students about metacognition or inner voice and how it functions in our comprehension.

3.) Explain how and why readers leave tracks of their thinking.

4.) Model your inner voice to students as you read, tracking your thinking with post-its.

5.) Give student a chance to practice on their papers.

Thus, text coding is a strategy used to help students keep track of their thinking while reading or listening. Students use a simple coding system to mark the text and record their thoughts, either in the margins or on Post-it Notes. As students make connections, self-question, and respond to what they are reading, they are self-monitoring their comprehension and enhancing long-term understanding. The codes help students identify and recall a specific thinking strategy, as well as track their thinking throughout the text. The following are options for students to use while coding. Good readers often have ways of marking or coding text they want to remember. They could use a yellow highlighter, underline or box words, or put marks in the margins to flag questions, exclamations, or wonderings as they read. Marking up the text may be the simplest, practical, and widespread tool that regular readers use. In school, however, students are often discouraged from making marks in their books. In fact, the more challenging the material, the less likely that kids will be allowed to use this effective tool for enhancing comprehension. When books or other materials can be marked up, students need to have a valuable set of response codes.

This is an example version of a text-marking system called the Interactive Notation System for Effective Reading and Thinking (INSERT):

√ / +Confirms what you thought X Contradicts what you thought

? Raises a question

?? Confuses you

* Seems important

! Is new or interesting

If a word Gets repeated Seems important Is unknown Box it:

Word

This is the sample of the Text Coding

*Xan is a character from my another story. Remember the time when I told you about my favorite story? Xan belongs there. Surprisingly, Xan is not a human being. Or an animal.**(????)** Xan is a three-leaved plant that is hardly four inches tall. Legends have it that Xan is the first plant to ever breathe.*

*The leaves were purple when it first sprouted and through its life, it changed to green to yellow to red to orange to currently golden. The property that is most unsettling among all is that it can grant any wish, given the seeker's desire must be a desperate one. Once the protagonist in my other story asked Xan, "But what is a desperate desire?"*

*To that, Xan replied, "Imagine you are swimming in an ocean. And suddenly you feel something touching your feet under the water. And before you realize, you find yourself pulled down into the ocean by something. You try to escape but the grip on your leg is tighter than what you can manage underwater.*

*Within minutes you find yourself to be out of breath and there comes a time when you'd want nothing but some air. You'd not think of your job, or your friends, or your future. You'd be imagining just some air. You'd be desiring to breathe. You'd be desperate.*

*That's a desperate desire. If what you want is not a desperate desire, I know you can do without it, and therefore, I tend not to grant the wish."*

*In the story, a girl, who was looking for her lost friend stumbled upon a cave in which hundreds of thousands of bodies lay dead, nicely arranged in several feet high racks. In one of those racks, she found her friend lying dead.* ***(????)*** *And in the center of the cave, she saw a tiny plant with three golden leaves — Xan. Xan noticed a desperate desire in the girl to see her friend alive and breathing, and that's when it granted her wish.*

*The girl found the friend standing in front of her — alive(****). But every granted wish has a cost. She had to get her memory wiped clean of the incident. XXXX Xan is neither a friend nor a foe. It's as just to a God as it is to Devil. The girl's memory was wiped clean and all she remembers of that incident now is just a story.*

*If she'd be asked, "Tell me about that incident in that cave," she is most likely to start responding along the lines of, "I know a story of a girl who resurrected her friend in a cave far far away…"*

This is especially helpful with dense, content-rich texts, such as poetry or fact-filled nonfiction books, where every word matters.

The next method, the PRESS method, teaches students to develop and formulate arguments, express opinions on a debatable issue expressively and concisely, and persuade others.

Here we offer materials that indicate the four stages of this method:

- Express your opinion, explain what your point of view is (I think that, to my mind, according to my experience, to my opinion);
- Explain the reason for the appearance of this opinion, that is, what the evidence is based on (the fact, the point is that);
- Give examples, additional arguments in support of your position, and name the facts that demonstrate your evidence (for example, for instance).

- Summarize your opinion (conclude, starting with the words: (as a result, in the upshot, in the end, finally, in the long run, in the final analysis).

The structure of the associative bush develops logical thinking, imagination, and memory. With the help of expressions, students express their thoughts on the topic and build all this in the form of a bush.

Another effective interactive method of teaching English language students, in our opinion, is the web quest method, which is defined as a research activity in which most or all of the information used by students is sourced from the Internet. Web quests are designed to make the most effective use of students' time, focusing on using information rather than searching for it, and supporting students' thinking at the levels of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation [10]. Web quests can be classified as short-term, that is, designed for one to three classes, and long-term, which can last for four or more classes. Let us consider the main requirements for a web quest, using the example of preparing and presenting a project on a given topic, such as “Opening a new restaurant.” An obligatory element of a web quest is an instruction, which provides a clear description of the project's essence, the distribution of roles and tasks, and the determination of the final result of joint work. A description of the criteria and conditions for assessing the web quest must also be included in the instructions, along with a list of the required information resources for completing the assignment.

In addition, a necessary element of the instructions is the recommendation on the generalization and form of presentation of the completed work. In the instructions, it is desirable to provide motivational information that highlights the usefulness of the experience students will receive while working on the web quest. For example: “Our company is opening a new restaurant. This restaurant will serve healthy dishes that will appeal to children. The restaurant has hired your team for their new restaurant”. The team includes a chef to prepare healthy meals and assist with menu planning, a nutritionist who must approve dishes according to food guides and contribute to menu planning, a food safety inspector, and a manager who must organize the effective cooperation of specialists, advertise the restaurant, and promote the sale of a special cookbook. Your first task is to complete the Food Pyramid book to show that you understand how the Food Pyramid works. Your second task is to come up with a name for your restaurant based on the type of food on offer. The chef and nutritionist should develop the menu and recipes that the chef will use to prepare the food, etc. Each team member will receive an individual assessment for their contribution to the overall project according to their role. After completing this web quest, you will learn a lot about the food pyramid and how you can use it to plan healthy meals for you and your family." In teaching foreign language students, web quests can be used to prepare and present a project on other topics, for example, “Business negotiations”, “Business meeting”, “Company Office”, “Day in Kyiv”, and so on.

In addition, depending on the educational task, different types of web quests can be used: essay-retelling – presentation of materials on a given topic from various information sources in a new format; quest compilation – virtual museum, portfolio, multimedia collection; design – development of an educational project based on given conditions; analytical task – search and systematization of information in the form of a collection, encyclopedia, catalog, textbook, route; electronic bulletin board, etc.

Because they stimulate cognitive processes and guarantee that students are fully engaged with the learning content, Socratic discussion and text coding are powerful techniques for accelerating English language acquisition. All these methods offer a creative approach to organizing the learning process, helping to form and prioritize active interaction with the material and thereby emphasizing the acquisition of meaningful knowledge over mechanical memorization.

**Conclusions.** The Socratic method stimulates critical thinking, analysis, and evaluation of information. This method is based on the sequential formulation of questions of varying levels of complexity in accordance with Sanders' taxonomy. This method transforms passive perception of material into active dialogue, in which students use logical reasoning to reach conclusions independently. The hierarchy of questions, starting with literal ones and ending with evaluations, creates a pedagogical foundation that gradually leads students to higher levels of thinking. Students not only improve their English communication skills, but also develop the ability to argue, defend their position, and critically evaluate different points of view during such a dialogue.

Text coding, on the other hand, uses a system of visual markings and annotations to enable metacognitive engagement with the text. This method helps students to organize their knowledge, recognize challenging passages, and keep track of what they already know. Constantly marking up text slows down the reading process and makes it more mindful and intentional. Students are given the opportunity to engage in an internal dialogue with the author and record their own thoughts, questions, and associations, which significantly increases their level of understanding and retention of the material. Coding can be used to visualize the thinking process, making abstract cognitive operations concrete and manageable.

Constructivism, which sees students as active producers of knowledge rather than passive consumers of it, is the foundation of both strategies. There is a synergistic effect when Socratic discourse and textual coding are combined. The former develops analytical skills and spoken conversation, while the latter promotes reading and writing communication. This mix of approaches results in the full development of language proficiency as well as lifelong, autonomous learning abilities. The application of these techniques in English language instruction promotes the development of independent learners who can engage in critical reflection, self-analysis, and effective academic communication in a global learning environment.

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