

Critical Thinking Practice and Development in Teacher Education: Current Challenges and Next Steps

Friday, 26 July 2024 13:00 (45 minutes)

Our research explores the understandings about critical thinking (CT) and approaches in CT practice and development (CTP&D) among teachers and students in initial teacher education programs. The analysis is informed by an adapted version of Halonen's (1995) CT model, which encompasses dispositions, cognition, and metacognition, and Bredo's (2000) concept of interactional constructivism.

Our findings reveal a gap between participants' reported understanding of CT and their CTP&D approaches in the classroom. While teachers and students articulated a wide set of beliefs and understandings about CT key components, their actual classroom practices were linked to a narrow set. Despite this gap, instances of teacher-generated questions and student-student exploratory talk provided valuable, albeit limited, opportunities for CTP&D. Building on these insights, our recommendations prior to 2023 emphasised the need to align classroom practices with the theoretical foundations of CT. We advocated for targeted interventions in teacher education courses to enhance pre-service teachers' understandings and approaches in the practice and development of CT.

Today, teachers and students face a new challenge in the form of Artificial Intelligence (AI). There is an urgent need to empower educators to cultivate critical thinkers capable of thriving in a technologically advanced world by linking CTP&D and AI literacy development. As such, this keynote presentation underscores the imperative to align pedagogical practices with the evolving technological landscape, ensuring that educators are well-equipped to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

Online Profile

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Biography

Dr. Trang Tam Nguyen is an associate lecturer cum a learning support advisor at Victorian Institute of Technology, Australia. Her current work involves supporting study activities, monitoring course progress, developing and monitoring online modules, and integrating critical thinking development and practices into different units. Previously, she engaged in teaching and training the Vietnamese pre-service and in-service teachers. Her interests are academic study skills, assessment, critical thinking, and ELT methodologies. She can be reached at trangtamnguyen5@gmail.com.

Dr. Anna Podorova brings extensive language teaching experience in various Australian and overseas contexts. She is currently serving as a Lecturer at Monash University's Faculty of Education. Her professional trajectory showcases a progressive leadership role, culminating in her current position as Academic Development Coordinator. In this capacity, Anna provides strategic advice on academic language, literacy, and numeracy development, integrating these essential skills into the faculty's courses and creating resources for academics and students (e.g., <https://alf-tool.monash.edu/>). Anna's research focuses on the use of English as an international language and post-entry English language proficiency development in tertiary settings. Her work has involved projects on improving international students' school placement experiences in Australian contexts, exploring teaching English as a global language in local contexts, as well as assessing initial teacher education students' literacy and numeracy skills. Recently, Ana turned her attention to AI literacy and critical thinking development in higher education settings.

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Session Classification: Doctoral Forum

Track Classification: Professional Development