

**DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS' INDEPENDENT THINKING IN THE PROCESS
OF INTERACTIVE LEARNING**

***DESENVOLVIMENTO DO PENSAMENTO INDEPENDENTE DOS ALUNOS NO
PROCESSO DE APRENDIZAGEM INTERATIVA***

***DESARROLLO DEL PENSAMIENTO INDEPENDIENTE DE LOS ESTUDIANTES EN
EL PROCESO DE APRENDIZAJE INTERACTIVO***



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ABSTRACT: The development of independent thinking is an important objective of higher education, particularly in view of the complexity of information and the need to evaluate data, compare alternatives, and make well-founded decisions. This study aimed to identify the conditions and pedagogical mechanisms through which interactive learning contributes to the development of students' independent thinking. A theoretical and analytical review of the literature was conducted, drawing on publications identified in Web of Science, Scopus, and supplementary searches in ResearchGate. The final corpus comprised 25 academic sources, which were analyzed using qualitative content analysis, comparative analysis, and logical generalization. Five categories were identified: student agency and autonomy; problem-solving and decision-making; dialogue, argumentation, and reflection; collaborative cognitive activity; and teacher facilitation. The results indicate that interactive strategies activate cognitive mechanisms and that their contribution depends on students' active engagement in interpreting information, substantiating judgments, making decisions, and reflecting on alternative perspectives.

KEYWORDS: Interactive learning. Independent thinking. Higher education. Learner autonomy. Critical thinking

RESUMO: O desenvolvimento do pensamento independente é um objetivo do ensino superior, especialmente diante da complexidade da informação e da necessidade de avaliar dados, comparar alternativas e tomar decisões fundamentadas. Este estudo teve como objetivo identificar condições e mecanismos pedagógicos pelos quais a aprendizagem interativa contribui para o desenvolvimento do pensamento independente dos alunos. Foi realizada uma revisão teórica e analítica da literatura, com publicações identificadas na Web of Science, Scopus e buscas complementares no ResearchGate. O corpus final compreendeu 25 fontes acadêmicas, analisadas por meio de análise de conteúdo qualitativa, análise comparativa e generalização lógica. Foram identificadas cinco categorias: protagonismo e autonomia; resolução de problemas e tomada de decisão; diálogo, argumentação e reflexão; atividade cognitiva colaborativa; e facilitação docente. Os resultados indicam que estratégias interativas ativam mecanismos cognitivos e que sua contribuição depende do envolvimento dos alunos na interpretação de informações, fundamentação de julgamentos, decisões e reflexão sobre perspectivas alternativas.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Aprendizagem interativa. Pensamento independente. Ensino superior. Autonomia do aluno. Pensamento crítico.*

RESUMEN: *El desarrollo del pensamiento independiente es un objetivo importante de la educación superior, especialmente ante la complejidad de la información y la necesidad de evaluar datos, comparar alternativas y tomar decisiones fundamentadas. Este estudio tuvo como objetivo identificar las condiciones y los mecanismos pedagógicos mediante los cuales el aprendizaje interactivo contribuye al desarrollo del pensamiento independiente de los estudiantes. Se realizó una revisión teórica y analítica de la literatura, con publicaciones identificadas en Web of Science, Scopus y búsquedas complementarias en ResearchGate. El corpus final estuvo compuesto por 25 fuentes académicas, analizadas mediante análisis cualitativo de contenido, análisis comparativo y generalización lógica. Se identificaron cinco categorías: protagonismo y autonomía del estudiante; resolución de problemas y toma de decisiones; diálogo, argumentación y reflexión; actividad cognitiva colaborativa; y facilitación docente. Los resultados indican que las estrategias interactivas activan mecanismos cognitivos y que su contribución depende de la participación activa de los estudiantes en la interpretación de la información, la fundamentación de juicios, la toma de decisiones y la reflexión sobre perspectivas alternativas.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Aprendizaje interactivo. Pensamiento independiente. Educación superior. Autonomía del estudiante. Pensamiento crítico.*

Introduction

The trend toward globalization and the advancement of information technologies requires continuous transformations in all spheres, including both production and education (Syzdykova *et al.*, 2024). Constant changes are reflected in educational standards and approaches, which are regularly updated in response to contemporary social and technological developments (Usmanova *et al.*, 2025; Abdullayev *et al.*, 2026). Modern educational approaches emphasize cognitive engagement and the practical application of acquired knowledge, which can contribute to the development of thinking skills and students' self-realization and self-actualization (Nurjonov *et al.*, 2026; Panjiev *et al.*, 2026). In higher education institutions, the learning process should be organized in a way that fosters students' desire for independent learning and discovery. Additionally, the educational technologies and teaching methods employed must promote the development of independent thinking (Smagulov *et al.*, 2025; Rakova *et al.*, 2026).

The modern world demands the development of well-rounded individuals. Students face information overload, uncertainty, and the need for adaptive thinking (Eflova *et al.*, 2026). Despite the high value of independent thinking, traditional teaching methods may provide limited opportunities for students to independently analyze, interpret, and critically evaluate information when knowledge is predominantly presented in a ready-made form. Therefore, there is a clear need for educational approaches that foster students' cognitive engagement and self-realization. Although interactive learning offers a variety of strategies for increasing student participation, an important issue is to determine which pedagogical conditions and mechanisms associated with these strategies are particularly relevant to the development of independent thinking (Rybakova *et al.*, 2024).

The main objective of this paper is to explore the process of developing students' independent thinking through interactive learning. More specifically, the study seeks to identify and systematize, on the basis of the analyzed literature, the interactive strategies, pedagogical conditions, and mechanisms associated with the development of students' independent thinking. Accordingly, the study addresses the following question: which features of interactive learning are most consistently associated in the literature with the development of students' independent thinking?

Methodology

This study is theoretical and analytical in nature and is based on a qualitative literature review combined with content analysis, comparative analysis, and logical generalization of pedagogical literature on the development of students' independent thinking in the context of interactive learning. The study was designed to synthesize conceptual and empirical findings. The unit of analysis was an individual scholarly source included in the final review corpus.

The review and interpretation of scholarly sources focused on the following issues:

- Development of students' cognitive abilities;
- Application of interactive methods in university educational practices;
- Formation of independent and critical thinking;
- Implementation of students' subject position in the learning process.

The study considered both foundational theoretical works and contemporary national and international publications relevant to interactive learning and the development of independent thinking. Earlier publications, including the works of Rogers and Freiberg (2002), Andreeva (2014), and other authors whose concepts remain relevant to person-centered education, learner autonomy, cognitive activity, and educational interaction, were retained as part of the theoretical foundation. At the same time, priority in the analysis of contemporary educational practices was given to studies published between 2015 and 2026, with particular attention to research from the last five years.

The procedure for searching, selecting, and analyzing sources was conducted in several stages. In the first stage, the thematic focus of the review was formulated as the identification of pedagogical conditions and mechanisms through which interactive teaching methods may contribute to the development of students' independent thinking. Based on this focus, a set of search terms reflecting three main conceptual domains was developed: interactive educational practices (*interactive learning, interactive teaching, interactive methods, active learning*), cognitive independence (*independent thinking, critical thinking, cognitive activity, learner autonomy*), and educational context (*student-centered education, higher education*).

The literature search was conducted using English-language keywords and their combinations. Boolean operators were used to combine the search terms and increase the relevance of the retrieved publications. The principal combinations included: “interactive learning” AND “independent thinking”; “interactive teaching” AND “critical thinking”;

“interactive methods” AND (“independent thinking” OR “critical thinking”); “active learning” AND “higher education” AND “cognitive activity”; “student-centered education” AND “learner autonomy”; and “interactive learning” AND “higher education” AND (“critical thinking” OR “independent thinking”). Broader combinations were initially used to ensure adequate coverage of the literature, followed by more specific searches focusing on the relationship between interactive strategies and students’ independent thinking.

In the second stage, a targeted search for scholarly publications was conducted in Web of Science and Scopus. ResearchGate was used as a supplementary platform for identifying relevant publications and accessible versions of scholarly works. The initial search yielded 76 potentially relevant records, including 31 records identified through Scopus, 27 through Web of Science, and 18 through the supplementary search. After 11 duplicate records were removed, 65 publications remained for title and abstract screening.

During the screening stage, 27 publications were excluded because their content did not sufficiently correspond to the thematic scope of the study. The full texts of the remaining 38 publications were then assessed for eligibility. Thirteen publications were excluded at this stage because they did not focus on higher education, discussed interactive or active learning without examining independent, critical, or autonomous thinking, or didn’t provide sufficient conceptual or empirical information for comparative analysis. As a result, the final analytical corpus comprised 25 scholarly sources.

The criteria for including sources in the review were:

- Scientific validity and the presence of empirical or conceptual data;
- Direct relevance to interactive or active learning and students’ cognitive development;
- Relevance to higher education or to theoretical concepts directly applicable to university learning;
- Consideration of independent, critical, autonomous, or related forms of thinking;
- Availability of sufficient information to identify pedagogical mechanisms, implementation conditions, or cognitive outcomes;
- Publication mainly during 2015–2026, while earlier sources were retained when they represented theoretically significant or foundational approaches.

The exclusion criteria included duplicate publications; studies unrelated to educational contexts; publications in which interactive learning was mentioned without a meaningful

connection to cognitive development; studies focused on educational levels or contexts that could not reasonably inform higher education; and sources that did not provide sufficient conceptual or empirical material for comparative analysis.

The selected sources were subjected to qualitative content analysis. At the first stage of analysis, relevant concepts, arguments, and findings were extracted from each source with particular attention to the structure and conditions of independent thinking, the nature of interactive interaction, the role of the teacher and learner, the organization of cognitive activity, and the cognitive outcomes associated with different interactive strategies.

The extracted material was coded according to the pedagogical mechanisms described in the reviewed studies, the conditions under which interactive strategies were implemented, and the cognitive activities expected from students. The codes were subsequently grouped into five analytical categories: (1) learner agency and autonomy; (2) problem solving, choice, and decision making; (3) dialogue, argumentation, and reflection; (4) collaborative cognitive activity; and (5) teacher facilitation and pedagogical conditions. These categories were used to structure the comparative synthesis of the reviewed literature and to identify recurrent patterns across the studies.

A comparative analysis was then conducted to establish areas of convergence and divergence among the reviewed approaches and to determine the conditions under which particular interactive strategies were associated with the development of independent thinking. Rather than ranking individual methods according to effectiveness, the analysis focused on the pedagogical mechanisms through which different strategies activate cognitive independence and student participation.

Particular attention was paid to interactive methods represented in the analyzed literature, including discussion, case study, brainstorming, didactic and business games, moderation, and the decision-tree method. For each strategy, the analysis considered the form of student activity, the type of cognitive task involved, the role assigned to the teacher and learner, the nature of interpersonal interaction, and the conditions under which the strategy was associated with independent thinking.

The final stage involved logical generalization of the identified patterns. The results of the content and comparative analyses were synthesized to determine which pedagogical conditions were most consistently associated in the reviewed literature with the development of students' independent thinking and how different interactive strategies contributed to these conditions.

Results

The analysis of the selected literature showed that the relationship between interactive learning and the development of independent thinking is associated not with the interactive format itself, but with a combination of pedagogical mechanisms that require students to actively process information, make choices, justify decisions, interact with others, and assume greater responsibility for learning. The findings were organized into five interrelated analytical categories: learner agency and autonomy; problem solving, choice, and decision making; dialogue, argumentation, and reflection; collaborative cognitive activity; and teacher facilitation and pedagogical conditions.

Learner Agency and Autonomy

Thinking and cognitive processes are essential for humans, as they activate the mental operations through which information is perceived, interpreted, compared, and transformed. Individuals may exhibit different forms and styles of thinking, while educational practice can create conditions for the purposeful development of deeper and more diverse cognitive activity.

The reviewed literature consistently emphasizes the importance of providing students with opportunities for independent inquiry, appropriation of information, and autonomous manipulation of acquired knowledge. Consequently, one of the important objectives of education is not merely the transmission of information, but the development of productive techniques of cognitive activity. As noted by Vorobyev and Nizovaya (2006), independent learning is particularly significant because knowledge is retained more effectively when the learning process involves the learner's emotions, attitudes, thoughts, and actions.

A recurrent contrast in the analyzed literature concerns independent inquiry versus the transmission of knowledge in a ready-made form. When students primarily receive pre-structured information, the need to search for explanations, compare alternatives, or independently construct conclusions is reduced. By contrast, independent thinking, understood as a form of subjective activity and a personal characteristic of learners, becomes particularly evident in situations involving choice, contradictions, and difficulties that require students to determine their own course of action (Alimov; Savrieva, 2014).

This finding is closely related to the person-centered interpretation of learning. Students need opportunities to express their opinions, interpret information according to their own

understanding, and participate in resolving problems for which there is no single immediately available answer. Gulyaev (2023) emphasizes that the development of independent thinking depends on the learner's internal engagement with the problem. Internal motivation therefore becomes an important condition for accepting the task and transforming previous experience through learning.

The theoretical principles of Rogers' person-centered approach provide an important foundation for understanding this category (Rogers; Freiberg, 2002). Within this approach, three principles are particularly relevant to the development of independent thinking:

1. The teacher participates in the learning process rather than functioning exclusively as a transmitter of knowledge;
2. An intellectual and emotional atmosphere that provides psychological and pedagogical support is created in the classroom;
3. The learner is given an active role in directing the learning process in accordance with personal interests and educational needs.

These principles indicate that learner autonomy does not imply the absence of pedagogical guidance. Rather, it requires a redistribution of responsibility in which the learner becomes an active participant in constructing knowledge while the teacher provides the conditions and support necessary for this activity. Carl Rogers interprets such educational organization as a broader transformation of learning that cannot be reduced to the acquisition of individual skills, teacher expertise, technical teaching tools, or isolated experimental programs.

Andreeva (2014) further emphasizes that learning is connected not only with motivation but also with memory, emotions, temperament, and other individual psychological characteristics. Taken together, these approaches suggest that learner agency develops most productively when cognitive independence is supported by personal engagement, internal motivation, and opportunities to influence the learning process.

Problem Solving, Choice, and Decision Making

The second analytical category identified in the literature concerns situations in which students must solve problems, select among alternatives, overcome contradictions, and justify

their decisions. Such situations differ substantially from passive reception of information because they require students to mobilize existing knowledge and independently determine how it should be applied.

The need for these forms of learning has become particularly relevant under conditions of information abundance, uncertainty, and the varying reliability of information available to students. Adaptive thinking and the ability to filter information can be supported by educational situations that require choice, comparison, and contradiction resolution. Interactive learning provides opportunities for organizing such situations because students are required to solve problems and discuss substantive questions rather than simply reproduce previously presented material (Minnullina; Aleksandrova, 2022).

A comparison of the strategies considered in the reviewed literature shows that they activate independent thinking through different cognitive mechanisms. Case study analysis, for example, presents students with a realistic situation that may permit several possible solutions. The value of this method lies in the need to connect theoretical knowledge with a concrete problem, identify relevant information, compare possible courses of action, and justify a proposed solution. Cases are particularly relevant when they correspond to students' professional interests and require them to consider the consequences of different decisions.

The "decision tree" method has a narrower but complementary function. It enables students to structure alternative solutions and identify the advantages and disadvantages associated with each option (Valeeva, 2010). Whereas a case study often requires interpretation of a complex situation as a whole, the decision-tree method provides a more structured comparison of alternatives. Both approaches therefore involve decision making, but they organize students' cognitive activity differently.

Didactic, business, and role-playing games also involve problem solving, although learning in this case occurs primarily through simulated action. Students respond to changing conditions, adopt roles, make decisions, and experience the consequences of those decisions within an educationally controlled environment. These methods can therefore link theoretical knowledge with behavioral and professional practice.

The reviewed approaches converge on the idea that the pedagogical value of these strategies is associated with the absence of a completely predetermined cognitive path. Students are provided with a problem and appropriate conditions for its analysis, but they must independently determine how information should be interpreted and which solution is most defensible. Thus, the common mechanism connecting case studies, decision trees, and

educational games with independent thinking is the requirement to move from knowledge reproduction toward analysis, selection, and reasoned decision making.

Dialogue, Argumentation, and Reflection

The third category concerns the role of dialogue and reflective processing of knowledge. Interactive learning primarily implies interaction—a dialogue between teacher and student and among students themselves. In conceptual terms, “interactive” refers to the capacity for interaction, dialogue, or conversation. Bim-Bad (2003, p. 54, our translation) defines interactive learning as a form of education based on the learner’s interaction with the educational environment as a domain of experiential learning.

The reviewed literature indicates that such interaction is pedagogically significant when students are not merely communicating but are required to interpret information, formulate their own positions, respond to alternative viewpoints, and reconsider their initial assumptions. Each participant therefore contributes not only information but also interpretations, arguments, and personal experience to the learning process.

Discussion is particularly relevant to this mechanism. When students are adequately prepared for a topic, discussion exposes them to different viewpoints and requires them to defend their own positions, construct logical arguments, recognize cause-and-effect relationships, and respond to objections. Unlike a task oriented toward identifying one predetermined answer, discussion makes the reasoning process itself visible. Its contribution to independent thinking therefore depends on the opportunity for different participants to express their positions and on the organization of a final synthesis or reflection on the arguments presented.

Brainstorming also uses dialogic interaction, but its immediate cognitive purpose differs from discussion. Brainstorming is primarily aimed at generating multiple possible ideas or solutions and postponing their premature rejection. Discussion, in contrast, places greater emphasis on evaluating, comparing, and defending positions. The two strategies therefore complement each other: brainstorming expands the field of possible solutions, whereas discussion encourages their critical examination.

Reflection is also important because the acquisition of knowledge requires more than memorization. Students need to reinterpret information through comparison, analysis, specification, generalization, and other cognitive operations. Through these processes,

information becomes incorporated into the learner's own system of understanding rather than remaining material reproduced from an external source.

The social conditions in which dialogue occurs are also important. Oreshko (2019) stresses the importance of an atmosphere of friendliness and support, which facilitates assimilation of educational material while strengthening social connections among learners and supporting more complex forms of interaction. The findings therefore suggest that dialogue contributes to independent thinking not simply because students communicate more frequently, but because interaction creates opportunities for argumentation, interpretation, comparison of perspectives, and reflection.

Collaborative Cognitive Activity and Interactive Strategies

The fourth analytical category concerns the organization of cognitive activity through combinations of individual and collaborative work. According to Kashlev (2000), cognitive activity in the classroom involves mental processes such as analysis, synthesis, comparison, generalization, classification, and abstraction; the exchange of cognitive activities among participants; diversity in the forms of cognitive and intellectual activity; and a combination of individual and group work.

This framework makes it possible to distinguish collaborative learning from simple participation in a group. The educational value of group interaction arises when students contribute different interpretations, compare possible solutions, and jointly construct or reconsider knowledge. Group work can therefore expand the number of perspectives available to an individual student while simultaneously requiring each participant to formulate and communicate their own reasoning.

Interactive learning includes a range of strategies that organize this collaborative cognitive activity differently. Brainstorming emphasizes collective generation of alternatives; discussion emphasizes comparison and argumentation; case studies combine individual interpretation with collaborative problem solving; and business or role-playing games organize cognition through coordinated action within assigned roles.

Moderation represents another form of collaborative organization. This approach gives students the opportunity to act as moderators or organizers of group activity. Visual aids such as projectors and flipcharts may be used to structure the discussion. As Vasilieva notes, moderation can be applied to organize discussion during a lesson (Ignatov *et al.*, 2023). The

moderator activates the group and guides participants toward a defined outcome through a sequence of questions and visual representations that structure the discussion.

The comparison of these methods shows that they should not be regarded as interchangeable strategies producing identical outcomes. Their potential contribution to independent thinking depends on the type of cognitive activity they elicit. Brainstorming is more strongly associated with generating alternatives; discussion with argumentation and critical examination; case studies with contextualized problem solving; decision trees with structured comparison of alternatives; moderation with organization and regulation of collective reasoning; and didactic or business games with decision making through simulated action.

At the same time, these strategies share a common feature: students are expected to perform substantive cognitive work rather than remain passive recipients of explanations. The reviewed literature therefore associates collaborative interactive learning with independent thinking when group activity preserves individual intellectual responsibility and provides opportunities to formulate, compare, revise, and justify ideas.

Teacher Facilitation and Pedagogical Conditions

The fifth category concerns the role of the teacher and the pedagogical conditions necessary for interactive learning to support independent thinking. The literature shows a substantial convergence around the transition from knowledge transmission to facilitation of students' cognitive activity.

Interactive technologies can contribute to the development of professionally important qualities by integrating academic, scientific, and professional practice activities of future specialists (Bystrova *et al.*, 2021). However, this requires a form of teaching in which students are actively involved in discovering and interpreting knowledge rather than only receiving information prepared by the instructor.

In interactive settings, the teacher does not provide every conclusion in a ready-made form but organizes the conditions under which students can arrive at conclusions themselves. The teacher may guide discussion, identify irrelevant directions, pose additional questions, and support students in searching for relevant information. Such organization increases the intellectual responsibility assigned to students because they must independently engage with the material rather than simply reproduce the teacher's explanation (Sharipova, 2022).

Reutova (2012) similarly emphasizes the high level of communication between participants in interactive learning. The teacher increasingly performs the role of a group leader who creates conditions for student initiative. This does not eliminate the teacher's pedagogical responsibility; instead, it changes its character from direct transmission toward organization, facilitation, and regulation of learning.

The literature also identifies several conditions that support this form of interaction. These include trusting relationships, a democratic structure of interaction, continuous engagement between students and the teacher and among students themselves, the use of participants' personal experience, variation in learning formats, and the development of both internal and external motivation (Gevorkyan *et al.*, 2024).

Comparison across the reviewed approaches indicates that these conditions interact with rather than operate independently from the methods themselves. For example, discussion requires an environment in which different viewpoints can be expressed; case studies require problems sufficiently complex to permit meaningful choice; brainstorming requires acceptance of multiple initial ideas; and moderation requires a facilitator capable of structuring collective reasoning without replacing students' intellectual activity.

Synthesis of the Findings

Overall, the comparative analysis revealed substantial convergence among the reviewed sources regarding the mechanisms through which interactive learning may support independent thinking. The strongest commonality was the transition from passive reception of knowledge to active cognitive participation. Across different approaches, students were expected to search for information, interpret it, identify contradictions, formulate alternatives, justify positions, make decisions, and reflect on their own and others' reasoning.

At the same time, the analysis revealed differences in the cognitive functions of individual interactive strategies. Discussion primarily supports argumentation and critical comparison of viewpoints; brainstorming broadens the range of possible solutions; case studies connect theoretical knowledge with contextualized problem solving; decision trees provide structured evaluation of alternatives; moderation organizes collective reasoning; and didactic and business games support learning through decision making and action.

The findings therefore suggest that the development of independent thinking cannot be attributed to the use of an interactive method merely because it is interactive. Its pedagogical

contribution depends on how the method is organized and on whether it provides students with genuine opportunities for autonomy, cognitive challenge, dialogue, reflection, collaborative reasoning, and responsible decision making. The role of the teacher is correspondingly transformed from the primary source of ready-made knowledge into a facilitator who creates and regulates the conditions under which students perform these cognitive activities.

The analysis thus identified five mutually reinforcing conditions that are consistently associated with the development of independent thinking in the reviewed literature: learner agency and autonomy; engagement with problems requiring choice and decision making; dialogue combined with argumentation and reflection; collaborative cognitive activity that preserves individual intellectual responsibility; and teacher facilitation within a psychologically supportive and participatory learning environment. These findings provide the analytical basis for evaluating the pedagogical significance of interactive learning and for formulating the conclusions of the study.

Final consideration

The analysis of the reviewed literature shows that interactive learning can contribute to the development of students' independent thinking when it is organized as a process of active intellectual participation rather than the passive reception of ready-made knowledge. The most important result of the review is that the educational value of interactive strategies depends primarily on the cognitive tasks assigned to students and on the pedagogical conditions in which these tasks are performed.

Several recurring conditions were identified across the analyzed sources. These include learner autonomy, problem-oriented activity, opportunities for choice and decision making, dialogue and argumentation, reflection, collaborative reasoning, and teacher facilitation. Together, these conditions create an educational environment in which students are encouraged to interpret information, compare alternative viewpoints, formulate their own judgments, substantiate decisions, and reconsider initial assumptions.

The analyzed interactive strategies differ in the cognitive mechanisms they activate. Discussion primarily develops argumentation and critical evaluation of different positions, while brainstorming supports the generation of multiple alternatives. Case studies connect theoretical knowledge with contextualized problem solving and decision making, whereas decision trees help students structure and compare possible solutions. Moderation supports the

organization of collective reasoning, and didactic and business games allow students to apply knowledge through simulated actions and professional situations. Thus, the contribution of interactive learning to independent thinking cannot be reduced to the use of a single method; it is determined by the correspondence between the instructional strategy, the cognitive demands of the task, and the organization of student participation.

The teacher remains an important element of this process. However, the teacher's function shifts from direct transmission of knowledge toward structuring learning situations, guiding interaction, and supporting students' intellectual initiative.

The study is limited by its theoretical design and by the heterogeneity of the analyzed sources, which restricts direct comparison of individual strategies. Further empirical research should examine how different combinations of interactive methods, learner autonomy, task complexity, and teacher facilitation influence the development of independent and critical thinking in diverse higher education contexts.

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