

РОЗДІЛ 8. ТЕОРІЯ НАВЧАННЯ

STIMULATING THE DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVITY IN THE CONTEXT OF LEARNING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

СТИМУЛЮВАННЯ РОЗВИТКУ КРЕАТИВНОСТІ В КОНТЕКСТІ ВИВЧЕННЯ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ МОВИ

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In recent years the world has changed dramatically. Today all industries require specialists who are able to demonstrate their readiness to act and make solutions independently, as well as learn and obtain new knowledge continuously. These demands seem to be key attributes of modern society. As people are influenced by social expectations and strive to succeed in careers, new skills are reasonably expected from them. Creativity is the ability to turn new ideas into reality and is one of the leading characteristics of a prominent employee. The article studies creativity as a phenomenon in the educational environment. The authors argue that it is necessary to implement existing and develop new methods and technologies aimed to train ESL students' creative skills and thus release their creativity. The analysis of the literature showed that a lot of researches were carried out to investigate the impact of creativity on the learning and teaching processes. The effectiveness of bringing a creative disposition to teaching was proved by the results of a great number of studies.

The main purpose of the contribution was to investigate the attitudes of ESL students towards the creativity as a skill, which helps resolve various issues and challenges easily and efficiently, making it essential for productive employees. The article presents the results of a survey of 125 students of technical university. They gave their responses on 11 questions. The survey questions were designed to provide ESL teachers with instruments allowing to develop creative thinking in ESL students. The data of the survey confirmed the preferences of ESL students to challenging team activities that should enhance their creative thinking in speaking and writing. In addition, some stimulus for students to be a creative person were identified and new research perspectives related to this topic were described.

Key words: *creativity, foreign language learning, educational process, creative teaching methods, creative activity, creative thinking.*

За останні роки світ кардинально змінився. Сьогодні всі галузі потребують фахівців, здатних демонструвати свою готовність діяти та приймати рішення самостійно, а

також постійно навчатися та отримувати нові знання. Ці вимоги являються ключовими атрибутами сучасного суспільства. Оскільки люди залежать від соціальних очікувань і прагнуть досягти успіху в кар'єрі, від них безперечно очікують нових навичок. Креативність - це здатність перетворювати нові ідеї в реальність, що є однією з провідних характеристик перспективного працівника. У статті досліджується креативність як феномен освітнього середовища. Автори стверджують, що необхідно впроваджувати існуючі та розробляти нові методи та технології, спрямовані на тренування творчих навичок студентів, що вивчають іноземну мову і таким чином давати можливість реалізовувати їх креативність. Аналіз літератури показав, що було проведено багато досліджень щодо вивчення впливу креативності на процеси навчання та викладання. Ефективність впровадження творчої складової в педагогічну діяльність доведена результатами великої кількості досліджень. Основною метою даної статті було дослідити ставлення студентів, що вивчають іноземну мову, до креативності як навички, яка допомагає легко й ефективно вирішувати різноманітні проблеми та виклики, що робить цей навик важливим для ефективної роботи працівників. У статті представлено результати опитування 125 студентів технічного університету. Вони дали відповіді на 11 питань. Питання опитування були розроблені, щоб надати викладачам іноземної мови інструменти, що дозволяють розвивати творче мислення у студентів. Дані опитування підтвердили те, що студенти віддають перевагу складним командним видам завдань, що в результаті має підвищити їх творче мислення в усному та письмовому мовленні. Крім того, визначено певні стимули для студентів бути творчою особистістю та описано нові дослідницькі перспективи, пов'язані з цією темою.

Ключові слова: *творчість, навчання іноземної мови, навчальний процес, творчі методи навчання, творча діяльність, творче мислення.*

Problem statement in general and its connection with important scientific and practical tasks. The society of the 21st century faces new demands and challenges, which require us to expand our horizons and be more open-minded and motivated in every kind of work each individual performs. Everything we do must be done more productively and effectively to meet the requirements of the modern world. People constantly use communication in their working environment aiming to solve various work-related

tasks and try to find better solutions in order to perform their responsibilities and duties at work in a better way. To get success while reaching the set targets a person should apply his/her communicative skills in combination with critical and creative thinking skills which are needed to invent new methods for the implementation of advanced ideas. It is undoubtedly that without creativity it seems to be a complex task to generate original plans and solutions. The concept of “creativity” has been studied and discussed for a

long time by many scientists who work in the fields of psychology and pedagogy. Psychologists investigate mostly the origins of this phenomenon while pedagogues attempt to find appropriate approaches to teaching students how to develop and further apply their creative skills for solving diverse educational tasks. To get a deeper understanding of the term here we provide some definitions of creativity, a creative person, and a creative process.

Cremin, T. suggests that creativity is about “thinking, problem solving, inventing and reinventing and flexing one’s imaginative muscles” (Cremin, 2009, p. 4).

Boden, M. (2004) considers the creative process as a set of behaviors that involve combining ideas in innovative ways, exploring conceptual spaces, and, potentially, transforming them (Boden, 2004). Franklin, J. & Theall, M. (2007) in their scientific work mentioned that “Creativity” requires flexibility and divergence in thinking – new ways of thinking or expressing of oneself; pursuing questions for which there is no single, correct answer. It implies a stretching and expansion of the students’ thoughts and ideas and the development of original insights. For these reasons, it often requires overcoming fear and encouraging self-confidence (p. 3).

Creativity plays a crucial role in the educational process. Thus, one of the main targets ESL teachers must follow is to teach students the ways how to generate new ideas by arranging activities that require students to challenge the self and activities that require collaboration and creativity. Teachers should develop and apply modern teaching methods in their classrooms that allow them to motivate, encourage and finally involve ESL students in the creative process. It must be one of the paradigms of the teaching process and teachers need to be fully equipped to create an environment that fosters language learning and supports the development of creative skills in their ESL students. Language knowledge and the ability to provoke new ideas give awesome opportunities to students for further career promotion and to surpass their goals. Creativity is a key component of reaching success in a world that offers new challenges every day. That’s why scientists should study and conduct up-to-date researches with the aim to help develop creative thinking skills in ESL students.

An analysis of recent research and publications.

The issues related to the development of creative thinking skills have been the core aspect of numerous studies which have been actively conducted since the early 70s and a lot of scientific works have been devoted to the investigation of creativity as a phenomenon in the educational environment. The analysis of scientific literature indicates a vital role of creativity as a component of a person’s personality that contribute significantly into achieving his/her

social, educational, and professional goals. The understanding of its impact on the educational process contributed a lot to the organization of the teaching-learning process in the classroom. Thus, we should take into account the fact that a lot of changes are happening in the world nowadays, and the young generation of students must be adapted to work in new working environments their communicative and creative skills will be crucial for their successful performance. There has been much discourse over creativity in educational institutions internationally.

Kirton (1989) suggested that individuals can be classified into ‘adaptors’ or ‘innovators’ and that these are stable personality traits applying across contexts and across time.

Gardner and Sternberg in their theories of intelligence pointed out the relation between creativity and intelligence, or alternatively, creativity as an aspect of intelligence. (Gardner, 2011; Sternberg, 1985).

Lindstrom (2006) questions and considers how we can assess the creativity of artworki. The author suggested that criterion-referenced assessment can help articulate some aspects of the tacit knowledge and emphasize some processual dimensions of the creative work. Similar targets had the work of Esra Kanlı (2020) where a brief overview on assessment of creativity through the eyes of the psychometric perspective and discusses the strengths and weaknesses of various instruments used in the field were presented.

Craft (2003) proposes that in the context of an uncertain environment and future, it may be useful to consider teaching creatively and creative learning as complementary aspects of an education system within a wider society.

Famous psychologist Csikszentmihalyi (2013) uses his famous flow theory to explore the creative process and describes five steps to achieve creativity:

Preparation: Arousing curiosity of a problematic situation.

Incubation: Ideas fly below the threshold of consciousness.

Insight: The moment when the puzzle starts to fall together.

Evaluation: Deciding if the insight is valuable and worth pursuing.

Elaboration: Translating the insight into its final work. (p. 79)

In his works, he explains the necessity to cultivate creativity and its importance for the country’s future, if not the world.

Jeta Rushidi (2013) investigated advantages and disadvantages of applying creative methods and techniques. The results imply that despite some possible downfalls, creative teachers show better results in English language teaching and learning compared to the traditional way of teaching. If the atmosphere in the classroom allows students to

express their creativity while doing some practical activities and they find the class enjoyable they will achieve much better results in studying.

Gursoy E., Bag H. (2018) highlighted that “Language learners should think critically and creatively in order to communicate with people to enhance the global collaboration”. The purpose of their study was to enhance students’ creative thinking skills through appropriate training and to understand the effectiveness of the stimuli type –visual or audio. It was suggested that “although regarded as a higher level of reasoning, creative thinking can be enhanced to some extent among the secondary school learners of English and it should be a part of the EFL curriculum as an essential learning skill”.

Natalia Larraz-Rábanos (2021) in her work stressed that “traditionally, more attention has been paid in education to the development of critical, analytical or formal thinking skills, and creative thinking processes have been neglected”. However, creativity has been an essential competence for curriculum design and development and the focus of its contribution has been centered on highlighting the development of creativity from an educational approach, starting from the description, implication of the use and application of creative strategies in the teaching and learning processes.

Richardson C. and Mishra P. (2018) reported on the creation of an instrument that offers educators a practical tool to aid in the design of learning environments that support student creativity.

Formulation of the goals of study. This paper aims to examine the role of creativity in the ESL learning process for engineering students and evaluate the impact of various teaching methods to develop students’ creative potential in the context of acquiring English as a second language. Students who are able to use their creativity to solve a wide range of both learning and professional tasks will obviously offer more constructive and effective solutions much faster and find this process much easier. That’s why teachers should prioritize creativity while choosing appropriate teaching approaches. We will investigate the relationship between the achievements of ESL students and the level of how they are in touch with their creativity.

To achieve this aim, the following targets are developed:

- to study ELS students’ understanding of the concept “creativity” and its role in language learning
- to explore opinions of ESL students on creativity as a skill that needs to be trained, and suggest approaches to its development in ESL classrooms
- to develop strategies and recommendations for students and teachers for implementing different approaches that will be useful for the development of ESL students’ creativity and increase the level of language acquisition while being involved in ESL

classroom activities and further make them a part of the language learning and teaching processes.

In this study, we hypothesize that the effectiveness of teaching English language learners is directly linked to the approaches, principles and techniques applied by teachers in the classroom and will significantly increase when the teaching process is focused on the development of students’ creative skills in combination with language skills.

Presentation of the main research materials.

In order to define strategies aim at implementing different approaches that will be useful for the development of ESL students’ creativity and increase the level of language acquisition while being involved in ESL classroom activities and further make them a part of the language learning and teaching processes there were used the questionnaires with open-ended questions. Experiences and comments were gathered from students of the National Technical University of Ukraine “Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute”.

The questions of the survey were developed with the aim to get in-depth understanding of ESL students’ viewpoints on the impact of creativity on their ability to generate and implement new and original ideas. Thus, some questions were asked to define the characteristics of a creative student and also a creative teacher, who must ensure the continued development of ESL students’ creative skills. As creativity certainly requires the application of some specific approaches, it is significant to know the opinion of ESL students about some of them. If ESL teachers are aware of such information, their lessons can become more productive and effective on the way to further realization of the main educational aims.

Students were asked to express their thoughts about creativity and activities that are more productive for the development of the ability to turn new and imaginative ideas into reality. The respondents had to choose from the suggested variants. The questions were the following:

1. In your opinion, creativity is?
2. Do you agree that creativity positively affects the second language learning process?
3. Range the following reasons why people are motivated to be creative from most to less important for you?
4. In your opinion, is creative thinking fully integrated into your English lessons?
5. Do you think that by being involved in challenging activities along with their groupmates ESL students have more opportunities to develop their creative skills?
6. In your opinion, task-based activities are more productive for the development of your creativity when done in groups (pairs) or done alone?
7. In your opinion, what Forms and Ideas for Creative Writing are more appropriate for you to develop your creativity?

8. How often do your ESL teachers try out unconventional teaching tools based on personal experience in the classroom?

9. In your opinion what Forms and Ideas for Creative Speaking are more appropriate for you?

10. Do you agree that the following characteristics of a creative teacher are essential for teaching creativity?

11. Do you agree that the following characteristics of ESL student are essential for developing his/her creativity?

The overall results were summarized in Tables I, II, III, IV. A mixed-method research design was utilized in the study to gather, analyze, compare and contrast quantitative statistical results with qualitative findings obtained from the survey. The participants were 67 ESL students who were able to give their responses to 11 questions of the survey. Three types of prompts were used in a survey: multiple choice (prompts 1, 6, 7, 8), ranging (prompt 3) and a Likert scale (prompts 2,4,5,9,10,11) with its varied set of responses to find out responders' attitudes, indicate the level of the agreement and likelihood.

The survey was conducted with the help of Google forms service. The responders were proposed to choose from the suggested variants or range values from the smallest (minimum) to the largest (maximum) ones. To display the distribution of responses on the Likert scale we used a bar chart and calculated the median (Mdn) and the Interquartile Range (IQR) with the aim of measuring a central tendency.

As can be seen from Table 1, that in answering the question " Do you agree that creativity positively affects the second language learning process?" most of all respondents agree (80%) , only 10% disagree (See Table I).

According to the answers of question 2, it can be seen that students definitely agree with the involving

in challenging activities along with the groupmates (See Table II). The IQR indicator of the Likert scale proves this (IQR = 1).

We should note that between the reasons, such as: need for novel, varied, and complex stimulation; need to communicate ideas and values; need to solve problems why people are motivated to be creative, most students emphasized need to solve problems. 56 % of students answered that creative thinking partially integrated into English classes. The aim of the 7 question was to get information from the students about forms and ideas for Creative Writing that are more appropriate for developing the creativity. The forms are given below:

- keeping a detailed or creative journal in your new language;
- creation of short stories;
- writing of poems;
- writing of Essay and Creative Non-Fiction.

From the question 8, it is seen the different forms and ideas for Creative Speaking that are more appropriate for students. 40 % prefer group discussions, 21 – % group projects, 30 % – competitive tasks and games, 20 % – presentations, 10 % – storytelling. The aim of the 9 question was to define the frequency of ESL teachers using unconventional teaching tools based on personal experience in the classroom. From the data of this question, it can be seen that ESL teachers try out these tools. Most students agree that such characteristics of a creative teacher as guiding classes enthusiastically, to individualise contact with students, security and scientific competence, practices exercises and examples, do not impose rules, do not have a routin, to be friend of the students, to promote student autonomy are essential for teaching creativity. The overall results were summarized in Table III.

Table I

Question 2	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Median	IQR
Do you agree that creativity positively affects the second language learning process?	25%	51%	8%	11%	5%	2	0,25

Table II

Question 5	Definetely	Probably	Possibly	Probably not	Definetely not	Median	IQR
Do you think that by being involved in challenging activities along with their groupmates ESL students have more opportunities to develop their creative skills?	37%	29%	18%	11%	5%	22	1

Table III

Question 10	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly	Median	IQR
Guides classes enthusiastically	25	51	8	11	5	2	0,25
Has individualized contact with pupils	24	43	11	16	6	2	1
Has scientific competence	25	41	7	15	12	2	2
Does not impose rules	13	30	15	25	17	3	2
Does not have a routine	25	39	19	10	7	2	1,25
Is a friend of the students	32	35	23	6	4	2	2
Promotes student autonomy	33	47	9	8	3	2	1

Table IV

Question 11	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly	Median	IQR
Transfer knowledge	16	28	22	17	17	3	2
Has ideas and behaviors divergent from the normal class routine	10	26	28	23	12	3	2
Uses alternatives in problem solving	28	44	13	9	6	2	2
Successes in tasks involving reasoning	30	47	10	8	5	2	1
Has unexpected and original ideas	29	45	9	9	8	2	2
Does not accept previous rules	16	25	23	15	11	3	2
Has academic success	26	38	17	10	9	2	2

When analyzing the students' answers about the following characteristics of ESL student for developing his/her creativity, we found that the main essential were: to use alternatives in problem solving, to have unexpected and original ideas and successes in tasks involving reasoning (See Table IV).

The finding of our study, as well as other scientists, emphasizes the importance of developing strategies and recommendations for students and teachers for implementing different approaches that will be useful for the development of ESL students' creativity and increase the level of language acquisition while being involved in ESL classroom activities and further make them a part of the language learning and teaching processes.

Conclusions. Based on the result of our study we can conclude that implementing different approaches will be useful for the development of ESL students' creativity and can increase the level of language acquisition while being involved in ESL classroom activities and further make them a part of the language learning and teaching processes. According to the data of students' survey and observation, they liked challenging activities along with the groupmates. The group discussions, group projects, presentations, competitive tasks and games storytelling create the possibility to development of ESL students' creativity and increase their English language skills.

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