



THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF CREATIVITY IN TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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Annotation

The article is intended to center creative skills in teaching and learning English as a second language. In the article, the author integrated an essential case study with comparison of creative methods and learning strategies of English.

Keywords: language, creativity components, methods, techniques, strategies, skills, Grammar Translation Method (GTM), Communicative Language Learning method (CLL)

Language learning and teaching should not only be about grammar, vocabulary, communication, but also about personal characteristics especially creativity. The purpose of writing this work is to center creativeness in the process of learning and teaching any languages (in essential case it is English) and show its role and importance in SLA. Much language education occurring at the time requires variety for high standards and innovations. As for some linguists, indeed, many personality theories include a prominent creativity component (Kaufman & Sternberg, 2006), essentially this article touches upon demonstrating that if teachers conduct lessons with high creativity, learners also be very interested and eager to learn any new language for them and instructors could observe high creativeness in their acts and responses. Appropriately, creativity could be seen and play weighty role in many sides while conducting the lesson. For example, in choosing the topic, methods, techniques, the speech of teacher, personality of teachers and learners, interaction between them, process of assessing, students responses etc. Taking into consideration all thoughts, ideas, questions relating to creativity this case study will help to open new ideas for both language teachers and learners in order to be in relationship with the language creatively and effectively.

Creativity being one of the most important types of learners' characteristics is relevant not only for language learners but also language teachers. By centering the discussion around this type of characteristic there emerged different kinds of ideas about the particular concept. Academics such as E. Paul Torrance, dedicated an entire lifetime to the advancement of creativity in education. According to his points creativity was considered to be an immeasurable, natural ability. Torrance called for explicit teaching of creativity. He advocated that it was skill-specific, requiring intentional instruction. His life's work ultimately led to the development of the Torrance tests and gifted programs throughout the world. Many linguists' thoughts prove that creativity has long been associated with intelligence. As Sternberg's (2002) theory of successful intelligence posits creative intelligence as one of three core factors and he explains that creativity include aspects of knowledge, thinking styles, personality, motivation and the environmental context in which the individual operates. There was done much research according to this point. Interesting and valuable ideas were brought by Feldhausen and



Westby (2003): Creativity is the production of ideas, problem solutions, plans, works of art, musical compositions, sculptures, dance routines, poems, novels, essays, designs, theories or devices that at the lowest level are new and of value to the creator and at the highest level are recognized embraced, honored, or valued by all or large segments of society. Between the lowest and highest levels is a continuum of more or less recognized and useful creative productions, but always the production is new, novel, or unique relative to some definable context (p95). So, here creativity can be seen wider and we can denote two key prerequisites as originality and adaptiveness, (Simonton, 2000) which are concerned the throughput to provide the solution to some problems. All these can happen in the classroom and accomplish some purposes which have relevant and crucial value. In our case it is teaching English in high standards and learning it effectively realizing the role of creativity. The concept of creativity is also related to the ability to find original solutions to problems and to come up with new way to achieve goals, (Chamorro-Premuzis, 2006).

By means of providing and developing creativity in teaching process tasks can be scared for originality, flexibility and fluency of the responses (Plucker Makel, 2010). Also here is relevant to note Torrance's idea that the classroom environment must be a place where students feel safe to share novel ideas. Allow for flexibility and create norms that foster creative approaches. So here is also important the process of assessing, as Simonton (2000) points out, the assessment of creativity has tended to be very domain specific and teachers should try to engage the curriculum in new ways (Torrance, 1979). Creativeness of teachers and learners cannot be reached immediately, it is a question of time, practice and a huge number of mistakes as Sir Ken Robinson described it best when he said, "If you're not prepared to be wrong, you'll never come up with anything original."

In order to analyze and integrate the case study there was two English teachers Gulzoda Mamadaminovna (Teacher A) and Natalia Vinidiktovna. Teacher (B) and their students for checking results at school number 23 in Jambay, Samarkand. Teacher A has been teaching at school more than 20 years. Her lessons are mostly teacher-centered and she prefers using Grammar Translation Method (GTM). She is 47, her first language is Uzbek. Teacher B has been teaching at school for 4 years. Her lessons are mostly student-centered and she prefers using Communicative Language Learning method (CLL). In order to research the role and importance of creativity we hold our experiment with two groups of 4th grade students. Total number of students in group A is 22, 15 males and 7 females (Teacher A is teaching this group) and total number of students in group B is 18, 10 males and 8 females (Teacher B is teaching this group). All of them are elementary level students and monolingual. Their first language is Uzbek. So, for defining and realizing the role and importance of creativity in these groups Teacher A chose using Grammar Translation Method (GTM) for group A and Teacher B Communicative Language Learning method (CLL) for group B as a basic pointer of creative teaching. This case study includes following sections:

- Pre-interview with both teachers and their students.
- Observation of two lessons
- Post-interview with the students.



First of all, both participant teachers and students were interviewed in order to gain some information about their knowledge, challenges, learning styles, strategies, wants and expectations. At the beginning of interview teachers were asked some questions related to their teaching methods, styles and personality. Then several students were asked some questions which were relevant to their English lessons in order to know about their behavior, wants and expectation during lessons and for defining the role and importance of creativity. The interview was recorded for about 5 minutes for each teacher and 2-3 minutes for each student, in order to define and analyze some characteristics of creative teachers and language learners (see Appendix I,II). Besides the interview the participants were asked to do one psychological test-Torrance test in order to check their creativity. Each of them were given one list where was drawn only one askew line then they were asked to complete a picture of their mars during their English lessons and write their group in the corner of the paper.

In the second section of the research the author decided to use observation research method which involves only watching, recording teachers' and students roles and behavior during the lesson and taking notes for defining the role of creativity. But here we used a trick in order to check students' reaction for creative lesson. So we changed teachers' groups, Teacher A is for group B and Teacher B is for group A. There was chosen a topic "Shopping" according to the schedule of the teachers. I decided to analyze points in parallel and tried to define the role and importance of creativity in both group. For Group A Teacher B preferred using CLL method which is a classic example of an affectively based method (Carl Rodgers, 1970). The principles of this method, student-centered participation, and development of student autonomy (independence), where students' creativity can be developed. As is the case with virtually any method, the theoretical underpinnings of CLL may be creatively adapted to our situation. For Group B Teacher B preferred using GTM which is focusing on grammatical rules, memorization of vocabulary and of various declensions and conjugations, translations of texts, doing written exercises. Finally, last step post- interview with chosen students was carried out so as to gain data about their impressions and experience regarding the process, testing and the methods which were used for checking and improving their creativity .

The process of data collection is considered to be complicated, but systematic, it should be outlined that it was quite absorbing to observe and interview chosen participants and help them to improve their creativity. So I started gaining information about teachers and students, their knowledge, character, teaching methods and learning styles with curiosity, because I wanted to know the role of creativity in the process of conducting lessons and it effects in learning and teaching the English language. For the purpose of collecting all needed data, initially I had to interview teachers and chosen students, hold Torrance test with students, then observe two lessons where used two exactly different methods. Finally, i had post-interview with all findings. By the end of the research it was understandable that a lot of learners preferred integrated lessons, they liked all innovations during the lesson.

So applied sections are follows:

After interviewing both teachers I have come into consideration that younger teachers are more creative than older ones. Even though older teachers are more practiced and know a lot of information about teaching, about language learners, they prefer to use methods which are relevant only for them, maybe



because of tire. So Teacher A seemed one of those teachers, after interviewing it was understandable that she is very tired from her job, and I couldn't see any her desire for teaching with creativity. She uses only GTM, because thinks that this method is efficient for her and she doesn't think about her students. But Teacher B is exactly opposed side. After interviewing Teacher B, I thought that she is a good and effective teacher, who provides her lessons with creative tasks, activities, tools, equipment and so on. She likes her job and her students as well. After interview students of both groups did a very easy but enjoyable test, they were shared with little paper cards and asked to complete the picture with their marks from English lessons. So here we could see high creativeness of students from group B. Because they were taught in a creative way.

When the interview and testing was finished, I began to serve as observer of two lessons. So, in Group B the lesson began ordinary with greetings, Teacher A wrote the date and the topic on the blackboard, then began explanation of a new theme. Central material for studying was a text 'At the supermarket'. Subsequently, Teacher A wrote new words with translations on the board, they practiced pronunciation of words reading and repeating together. Then students read the text one by one and translated the text by using a new vocabulary. After finishing this activity Teacher A assessed active students with ordinary marks like 5 or 4. Home task was to write such kind of text at home. So there I couldn't see any elements of creativity and the lesson was boring not only for students but also for observer. In such kind of lessons language learners can learn words, expressions and phrases as poems and rhymes, which can forget quickly. Because Teacher A couldn't attract them, active students worked during the lesson but passive ones just listened to others and wrote something. It is obligatory to mention that Teacher B was not interested at her lesson at all and used mostly her Uzbek language. Atmosphere in the classroom was very sluggish and there was low reaction to the lesson.

The lesson in Group A was very interesting and effective. After greeting Teacher B used brain storming activity not telling the name of the topic. Students guess the topic of the lesson. Then they read the text about shopping, the same topic which was used in group B. And they tried to find the meaning of words through pictures. So, it was creative organization of learning words from the text. It is also effective for visual learners, they can remember immediately all new learnt words. The next in order Teacher A used a creative activity. First of all, she told her students to read the text one more time quickly and close the text. Then she shared cards with one word for each from the text and students should have said one information according to the text.(see Appendix VI) This creative task helped students to check their memories and to improve their oral speeches. All of them were highly concentrated because of new creative ideas and colorful cards. Then there was given a home task, it was also creative. Teacher told students to go to do shopping and write the text about it. This task seemed similar with the task of Teacher B, but if we take into consideration that children like to tell about themselves very much and a lot of them are talkative, this task would have been very interesting for them. It can be considered also like creativity. With help of such kind of tasks and activities learner's creativity also can be improved. The process of assessing was creative too. Teacher B didn't use ordinary marks like 5 or 4 etc. She used special cards with notes. Students were very pleased of these creative technique. The lesson of Teacher A was creatively conducted, it is obligatory to remember that she used only target language and all



students understood her even though they were taught in another way. Also it is necessary to mention about her great talent in teaching and conducting lessons absorbingly and functionally. All the students were rather contented from the classes.

Finally, I interviewed students of both group (see Appendix) and nearly all of them told that the lesson of Teacher B was much more interesting and creative. Students of Group A said that every stage of the lesson was very enjoyable and they considered that English would not be difficult for them if lessons were taught in such kind of ways. By comparing students of two groups I can say that the students of Group A improved their:

- Level of attention;
- Participation;
- Better comprehension of target language;
- Creativity;

Generally, all things considered were done for defining the role and importance of creativity in teaching and learning processes. Students of Group B mentioned that new method of teaching with creative activities were very effective and they liked it very much. From which we can understand that creativity plays an important role in teaching and learning a second language. As our students were beginners and their age was small, here the role of teacher should be higher, and creative teacher can grow up creative students.

Conclusion

This case study mainly based on comparison methods, personality characteristics , learning styles and strategies. In order to define the role and importance of creativity in teaching and learning a second language. I wanted to work on a topic relating to creativity because I always try to be unique so improving this kind of personality characteristics could help me to be an effective teacher. But knowing how to use creative skills also very useful for language learners to study a language easier and get high levels.

This case study helped to define teacher's role in improving beginner learners' creativity. So, teachers themselves should conduct lessons creatively and in an extraordinary way to reach such kind of results. In order to make lessons more effective and creative teachers should prepare interesting lessons plans and teaching materials by the help of various pedagogical methods for the new lesson, as Teacher B did in the experiment.

It can be comprehensible from the case study, that for every new lesson teacher should use different techniques, creative tools and equipment, prepare various activities or games appropriating to students' interests and levels. For these stages, the role of creativity is very high and a teacher should always take into consideration this fact. Teachers should dedicate an entire time to the advancement of creativity in education because they are working with future generation. Even though a lot of linguists and psychologists considered that creativity is an immeasurable natural ability, from the case study it is understandable that the students of a creative teacher (Teacher B) are more creative than the students of a passive teacher (Teacher A). So, teachers always create opportunities for students to think



creatively. As we did comparisons in this case study, both: teachers and students, can do such kind of activities in order to highlight their creativity.

After writing this case study, it is possible to say that creativity plays one of the most important roles in teaching and learning a second language. Obviously, creativity is an ability which always continue, hence, it is systematic and dynamic.

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