INTEGRATION OF STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE CREATIVE THINKING THROUGH TEACHING OF ENGLISH

[1]Ms. Asha M. Mathew
Research Scholar
Department of Education (CASE), Faculty of Education and Psychology
The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda
Vadodara, Gujarat
[2]Prof. Ashutosh Biswal
Department of Education (CASE), Faculty of Education and Psychology
The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara

Abstract

Every individual possess the ability to think, yet specific ways of thinking are learned. In learning, thinking has a unique role. Higher cognitive results can be accomplished by applying thinking during learning, depending on the cognitive process used. In light of this, it is claimed that creative thinking plays a part in giving learning purpose and fostering both retention and transfer. With this help of creative thinking skills, one may genuinely push their mind outside their comfort zone and generate ideas and possibilities that occasionally require further investigation. The individuals struggle to think outside of the usual range of approaches, even when they are brainstorming which is much needed in today's time. The incorporation of strategies and approaches enhance the creative thinking through teaching of English. Also, the teachers' willingness to allow their students to take risk, to explore and experiment is related positively to students' creative thinking.

Keywords: Creative Thinking, Teaching of English, Strategies

INTRODUCTION

Thinking is the cognitive process of mentally analysing data, creating concepts, coming to conclusions, and resolving issues. It calls for a variety of mental processes, including memory, perception, reasoning, and creativity. The process of thinking is intricate and diverse, and it is the foundation of our capacity to see, comprehend, and engage with the environment. It includes a broad variety of mental processes and abilities that help us efficiently negotiate obstacles, make choices, and adjust to changing circumstances. The value of experiential learning, critical thinking, creativity, and core knowledge is emphasized in the National Curriculum Framework (2023). It also demands that education be given a more adaptable and inclusive approach that meets the various needs of every student.

According to National Curriculum Framework (2005), education must provide the means and the opportunities to enhance the child's creative expression and the capacity for aesthetic appreciation. Schools as institution provide new opportunities for all the learners to learn themselves, others and society as a whole. Learning to learn and the willingness to unlearn and relearn are important as means of responding to new situations in a flexible and creative manner. The debate approach paves the way for the application of knowledge and generalization. In order to make our curriculum and pedagogy relevant and answer societal issues, it is essential to take insights from the past and implement new strategies.

The Kothari Commission (1964-66) proposed that providing education at the secondary and higher levels is a significant tool for societal development and evolution. Secondary education facilities should be promptly expanded to locations and classes that have hitherto been excluded. The goal is to create a transformed learning environment where students establish a fresh connection with the subject matter, and where knowledge and skills are scrutinised, investigated, and extended. As people gain knowledge, they should also be enabled to think and rationalise. Schools and universities must extend their understanding of what is required for a high-quality education.

CREATIVE THINKING

The development of thinking skills is reflected in the improvement of communicative competence in learning, and students nowadays especially require this when learning the English language. Children lack the maturity to completely understand concepts such as convergent viewpoints and rigorous logic, yet they nevertheless possess creative thinking skills and ideas. They are divergent, open, inventive and playful which are features of creativity. Oza (1995) highlights that for nurturing the learning potentials; the school has been regarded as the potent force. Cognitive styles are separate, unique patterns of perceiving and receiving information. Thus, the primary objective that guides all other educational objectives is the growth of the thought process. It serves as the basis for all other objectives. According to Khalil et al. (2023), fostering creativity in the classroom helps kids grow into more well-rounded people as they progress intellectually, emotionally, and socially. In light of this, promoting creativity in the classroom is crucial because it helps students develop the skills and perspective necessary to thrive in a world that is changing quickly, enriches their lives and cultures, and fosters critical thinking and innovation as these are advantageous to individuals as well as the community at large. Creative thinking has been defined by various scholars in different ways. Following are a few definitions on creativity and creative thinking.

As per Roger's (1954) assertion, creativity is the result of a novel relational product emerging from the individual's individuality and the materials, events, people, or circumstances of his existence.

According to Guilford (1986), 'Creativity is a multifaceted phenomenon and the abilities under the operation category of divergent production and the product category of transformation are considered as creative thinking abilities.'

Dr. Edward de Bono (1996) stated that creativity is a skill that can be learnt, rather than solely relying on individual talent. It is not only about inspiration; it goes beyond being unique. A creative concept must not only be unique but also provide value.

According to Sternberg (2003), 'Creative thinking enables children to capitalise on their strengths and to correct or to compensate for their weaknesses and it allows children to encode material in a variety of interesting ways.

A definition of creativity that can be derived from the definitions available is "Creative thinking is a form of thinking which is a skill that can be learned helping out in developing various possibilities and experiences using new and unusual transformation of thinking." It is thought that developing one's capacity for creative thought is essential to achieving advanced learning.

NEED FOR CREATIVE THINKING IN TEACHING LEARNING PROCESS

Learning becomes an active process when the student participation in a task is significantly more than the passive process of absorbing facts. Because they are seekers and thinkers rather than only memorization and execution, creative people are effective.NCF (2005) states that the students continue to develop a range of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that provide opportunities to look through the text carefully and get greater opportunity for comparisons and summation of work done by themselves and others. These experiences help students to develop critical and creative thinking skills enabling them as independent lifelong learners. To translate intrinsic talent for creativity into concrete creative outputs, deliberate and conscious growth of imaginative thinking skills is essential. Students can effectively turn their potential for creativity into actual productive endeavours by purposefully cultivating their creative skills. Nonetheless, despite the evident need to encourage uniqueness within the curriculum, there is a general tendency to stick with traditional teaching and learning methodologies. Additionally, teachers frequently encounter obstacles when attempting to implement novel approaches to foster students' creativity, which limits their ability to foster originality and places an undue emphasis on memorization. Creativity plays a constructive role in teaching and learning. It also incorporates novelty that has a beneficial effect on the process and result of teaching and learning.

Cropley (1992) as cited emphasised three aspects of teachers' attitudes, behaviours and practices that could affect students' creative thinking in real classroom settings. a) the teacher as role model for creativity b) the classroom atmosphere that he establishes and that may encourage or discourage students' creative thinking

and performance and c) how the teacher foster students creative thinking through appropriate activities in the classroom.

Kampylis & Berki (2014) reflected that being creative is not limited to those in the arts or those connected to them. The rigorous curriculum is one of the biggest obstacles to creativity in the classroom. The way that academic courses and skills are traditionally divided has to be rethought, and a more flexible, balanced, and condensed curriculum with opportunities for a variety of extracurricular activities including creative projects, creative corners, and magazines needs to be designed. Increase in the number of open-ended questions employs the students to think critically and creatively by challenging them to find, combine, and assess material instead of simply memorization of answers. There exist an abundance of non-predefined possible answers.

Creativity requires failure, and before developing a good idea or product, creative people frequently go through several failed iterations. Playful and adventurous behaviour is not valued at schools; discipline is. A common educational technique that stifles creativity is placing too much emphasis on the right answer, which in turn feeds students' concerns of making mistakes. Because of this students are not willing to take risks within schools. Instead of attempting to investigate more concepts and options, they would rather play it safe and provide teachers just one right answer.

Srivastava (2021) highlighted the description of the Vedic era's teaching techniques. These methods of instruction can shed light regarding the developed policies and methods for education: a) Memorization: This approach places a strong emphasis on the value of rote learning, in which pupils learn texts by heart through teacher-facilitated repetition and recitation. b) Introspection: In this activity, pupils absorb information by thinking and reflecting by hearing the teacher recite texts. It calls for a more thorough comprehension of the matter and its ramifications. c) Critical Analysis: Pupils gain the ability to critically analyse material and formulate their own judgments. The children might even persuade their teachers to embrace their viewpoints by contesting their own. d) Hands-on Learning: Since many pupils ultimately entered the trades, learning by doing was encouraged. In fields like medicine, practice and observation were essential. g) Seminars: Discussions and debates were frequent occurrences. Learners might voice their opinions and engage in discourse on topics that interest them.

Children can experience less stress and anxiety by incorporating these techniques into their lives in the competitive world of today. Vedic education is a way of life, not just a system of instruction. These days, teaching incorporates both traditional and modern techniques for the student's complete growth.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

English instruction has never been easy in India, neither for the teachers nor for the students they are teaching. It eventually made its way into university curricula and became the preferred language of the affluent. Everyone in our nation is bemoaning the state of English education in schools and institutions, despite the fact that language is the foundation of civilizations and cultures everywhere. The irony is that most students still struggle with language anxiety and lack confidence while speaking it, despite having spent ten or twelve of their most formative years learning English.

The goal of teaching English language lessons nowadays is to support the students' language learning objectives, activities, and material. The interactive approach to teaching is one of the newer, more successful interactive methodologies in English language instruction that can boost students' confidence and produce successful language learners. The real use of language is connected to the Interactive Approach. Thus, brainstorming, think-pair-share, buzz sessions, and incident processes are examples of interactive teaching methods. The contemporary model for teaching languages is task-based, with learning by doing or experimental learning serving as its primary conceptual underpinning. Abraham M. et al (2022) has cited that there are numerous academics worldwide have strongly advocated for the use of interactive methods in education for instruction and learning, highlighting its contribution to better teaching and learning. The teaching of English is highlighted with the commitment, knowledge, and abilities of teachers in integrating technology into their instructional practices in the process.

The learner's function has changed dramatically, and the traditional classroom is no longer viable. As a true facilitator, the teacher is supposed to lead by example. That being said, English ingenuity does not stop there. Therefore, the process of teaching and learning English serves as a medium for the development of creativity.

SCOPE OF CREATIVITY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Language is a methodical way to express ideas and feelings, and it offers a vast amount of opportunity for the development of both original and flexible concepts. Creativity is the outpouring of fresh ideas and emotions, and language is the core of creativity, giving it significance. According to NEP 2020 (National Educational Policy), the main goal of curriculum and pedagogy reform at all levels will be to shift the concentration of education from the rote learning culture that is still prevalent today to actual understanding and learning how to learn. At every learning level, from early childhood to higher education, particular values and skill sets from various domains will be selected for integration and absorption. To guarantee that these values and skills are ingrained through interesting teaching and learning processes, curriculum frameworks and transaction systems will be created. Each subject's curriculum will be pared down to its most necessary components to foster critical thinking and more inquiry-based, holistic, discovery-based, discussion-based, and analysis-based learning.

Present day instructional strategies place a strong emphasis on active learning, motivating students to take part in group projects, conversation and activities. This participatory approach fosters creative thinking by providing opportunities for expression and collaboration. The importance of creative writing as a form of self-expression and original thought is growing. Pupils are encouraged to write stories, poems, and essays as a way of using language to express their creativity. In order to promote a greater grasp of language and literature, students are encouraged to analyse, challenge, and interpret texts. In the teaching of English, the use of technology including online platforms and multimedia resources has increased. Through this integration, the learning environment is extended outside of the classroom and expands the learning environment beyond the classroom for creative expression. Project based learning approaches are increasingly used to engage students in real world applications of language skills. The innovative English language instructor was seen as self-assured and independent, according to Alkhars (2013). Creative English language teaching was linked to meeting the requirements of students in the language, building strong relationships with them, and utilizing innovative and effective teaching materials and techniques. To enhance their capacity for thought communication and create the potential for a discussion, educators must be afforded the chance to reflect on how they implement their understanding of creativity in the classroom. Enhancing the program's effectiveness and relevance to real-world scenarios is a teacher's interest in understanding the factors that stimulate or inhibit creativity from their point of view as a facilitator.

Modern teaching methodologies often position the teacher as a facilitator rather than an authority figure. This change makes it possible to take a more student centered approach that encourages self-reliance and originality. It illustrates the effectiveness of creative thinking strategies in promoting the creative thought process. In order to foster a supportive and intellectually stimulating learning environment, educators should be able to encourage and mould creative thinking in the pupils. Prospective educators can cultivate the qualities required to inculcate autonomous and critical thinking in themselves and their students by encouraging qualities like curiosity, a research oriented mindset and the capacity to ask questions. Their goal of inspiring and shaping creative minds depends on their constant search of knowledge and use of these techniques.

STRATEGIES TO DEVELOP CREATIVE THINKING

By considering the different models of creative thinking, techniques of creative thinking, and the methods of teaching during the Vedic period has helped in the integration of these strategies in the teaching learning process to enhance the creative thinking among students.

Questioning: The process of questioning is to probe students' thinking. For the development of creativity, questioning should be disciplined that can be used to pursue thoughts in many directions like to explore

complex ideas, to get to the truth of things, to open up issues and problems, to uncover assumptions, to analyse concepts, to distinguish what we know from what we don't know, to follow out logical implications of the thought.

Brainstorming: The process of brainstorming involves analysing students' impromptu thoughts regarding the chosen theme or issue without the instructor providing insightful feedback.

SCAMPER: The SCAMPER uses specific directed, idea spurring questions to suggest some addition or modification of something that already exists. S- Substitute, C-Combine, A- Adapt, M- Modify, P-Put to other Uses, E- Eliminate, R- Rearrange.

Creative role-playing: Role-playing helps students understand the more subtle aspects of almost all the subjects. Further, students become more interested and involved, not only learning about the material, but learning also to involves the knowledge in action, by addressing problems, exploring alternatives, and seeking novel and creative solutions.

Concept mapping: Concept mapping is a necessary technique for visualizing the relationships among different aspects of an idea. In the creativity session students can use it effectively to present the generated ideas and to show the connections between them.

Creative Projects: Students are assigned projects in which they must analyse the situation, gather data about it, synthesis the answer, and assess it on their own.

Discussion: Discussion is an open ended, collaborative exchange of ideas among a teacher and students or among students for developing students' creative thinking in problem solving, understanding or literary appreciation.

Plot Building: Plot Building is developing an entire story right from the exposition to the solution, as it supports to build in the sequences through different rising action taking climax or anticlimax at the peak and moving down to falling action with a possible solution or end to it. Employing such technique enhances the thinking ability of the students.

Dialogue writing: Dialogue writing is to create dialogues between two or more people talking. It is usually a conversation which brings characters to life and adds interest.

Poem writing: Poem writing is a way to create students' imaginative level with varied figurative devices and images. Writing a poem means to observe the world within or around you.

Students were more willing to participate in the activity and interact with the teacher and other students, as seen by the English instruction. All things considered, the techniques helped the students become more proficient in the HOTS domains (analyzing, evaluating, and producing).In order to evaluate their learning, students were able to analyze the concepts they had acquired, look up and contrast different ideas on the same subject, and develop original viewpoints that they could share with the class. These smart teaching strategies

enhance the concepts of adaptation, group effort, and continual development through applying creative learning activities in a classroom setting. The evaluation of students' skill achievement before and after each exercise produced encouraging results in the teaching learning process. Variation in teaching methods has a positive impact on students' general engagement and creativity in class activities.

According to Venkatraman, S. et al. (2022), the goal is to create learner-centric practices that would encourage students' enthusiasm and engagement in the classroom. However, the primary obstacle to the integration of training and education processes must be overcome as part of the current classroom digital revolution. the development of creative tactics and learner-centric modeling to support experiential learning and improve higher order thinking abilities. Enhancing student engagement and performance is the goal of putting such learner-centric teaching practices into practice.

To conclude, integration of the strategies in the teaching not only prioritizes creative thinking in the school, but it is seen as a fundamental goal of education. It will encourage pupils to thrive in the world that is increasing complex and our curriculum and pedagogy would become relevant and answer societal issues that must be learnt from the past and implement new strategies. Also, the strategies offer enhancing creative thinking skills. Techniques such as brainstorming, mind mapping, and giving a diverse environment have been shown to stimulate innovative thinking and problem-solving. In addition to being necessary for solving today's problems, creativity will also be crucial in determining how different fields and industries will develop in the future. It is critical that we carry on investigating and improving these tactics in the future, tailoring them to various situations, and cultivating an environment that encourages innovation and trial and error. Through the active integration of these tactics into our daily lives and professional settings, we may unleash our creative potential and propel significant advancements and innovations within our communities and beyond.

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