Creative Box: Promoting the innovative approaches to building educational formats in youth work

IO1 – TEACHING MATERIAL "THEORY OF CREATIVITY FOR YOUTH EDUCATION"

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Content

Introduction

The situation of the 21 st century demands from youth not only basic skills but also cross-cutting skills, attributes, experiences, and dispositions. Theoretical knowledge is not a quality indicator any more. Contemporary youth must have not only teamwork, problem-solving, communication, decision-making skills, but also personal initiatives, self-confidence, emotional intelligence, willingness to learn, creativity, ability to create innovative ideas and many more.

Since creative competence provides important economic, social and personal benefits, its development has become the main goal of education all over the world in recent years (Beghetto, 2010; Vincent-Lancrin et al., 2019; Wyse & Ferrari, 2014; Bereczki & Karpati, 2021). Along with creativity, technology also plays an important role nowadays. Researchers (Bereczki & Karpati, 2021; Glaveanu, Ness, Wasson, & Lubart, 2019; Lubart, 2005; Mishra, Yadav un Deep-Play Research Group, 2013) recognize that digital technologies provide a special contribution to the development of personal creativity, providing new tools and an environment for learning creativity.

The Concept of Creativity

Creativity is an extremely important aspect of our lives and a feature of many of the tasks we perform when using computers for work or pleasure. In business creativity provides new ideas that create and sustain enterprises. In the arts creativity is central, and the value of artistic work of all kinds is measured in part by the novelty it represents. In science and engineering, breakthroughs are made by the combination of creative ideas and systematic investigation. Creativity is understood as a difficult but vital area of research in various disciplines from psychology to design (Coughlan, Johnson, 2006).

Runco and Sakamoto (1999) believe that creativity is one of the most complex forms of human behavior. It can be influenced by a wide range of social, developmental and educational experiences that lead to creativity in different ways in different ways.
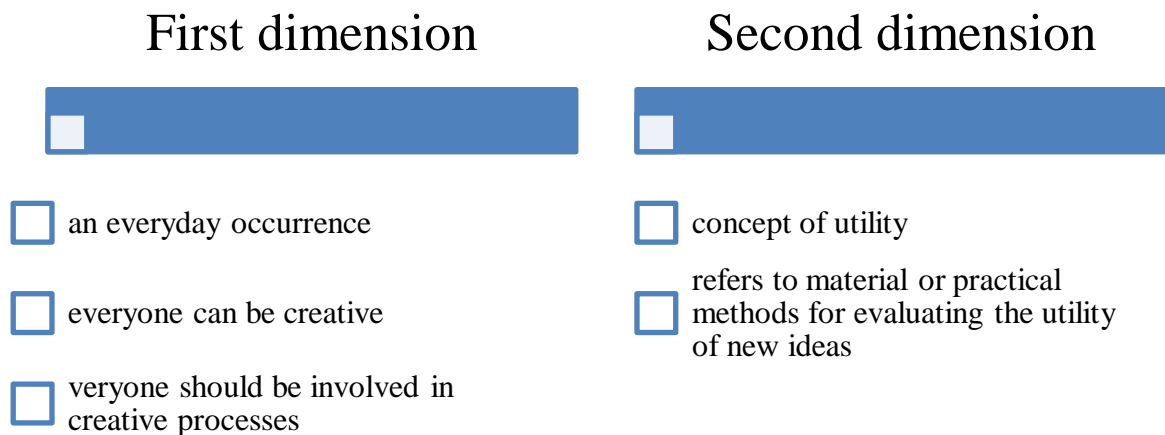
There are different approaches to understanding the concept of creativity, which can be viewed as:

- product – ability to create something new, unusual, original; it is characterized by innovativeness and public importance in various sectors,
- process – special diversity of creative thinking, highly developed imagination, aesthetic perception of the world; it is characterized by creative intuition, rich fantasy, divergent thinking, inspiration, plasticity of the psyche, subconscious and superconscious activity,
- personality traits – openness to new life experiences, independence, flexibility, dynamism, originality, uniqueness of personality, anti-conformism, courage, etc.,
- external conditions – the ability to work productively in situations with a high degree of uncertainty, when there are no previously known algorithms for action that guarantee the desired result.

These approaches are also essential in the learning process, where the main attention is paid to the creativity process itself, and the results (product) of which depend on the personality characteristics of each student and external conditions, which are largely determined by the learning environment.

According to Shalley et al. (2004), creativity includes two dimensions (see Picture 1).

First dimension

- an everyday occurrence
- everyone can be creative
- veryone should be involved in creative processes

Second dimension

- concept of utility
- refers to material or practical methods for evaluating the utility of new ideas

Picture 1 The Dimensions of Creativity (according Shalley et al., 2004)

Creativity is the ability to overcome traditional ways of thinking or acting and develop new and original ideas, methods or objects.

In understanding the concept of creativity, the intellectual prerequisites of creativity are essential. J. Gilford and E. Torrens (1988) recognize that creativity should be seen as divergent or multidirectional thinking (directed in different directions), allowing for a variety of searches that result in unexpected discoveries. The process of creative thinking is characterized by:

- problem identification and installation;
- the ability to generate several ideas simultaneously;
- the ability to produce ideas of various concepts;
- the ability to put forward rare, non-standard ideas;
- the ability to improve the proposed ideas;
- ability to analyze and synthesize information for problem solving.
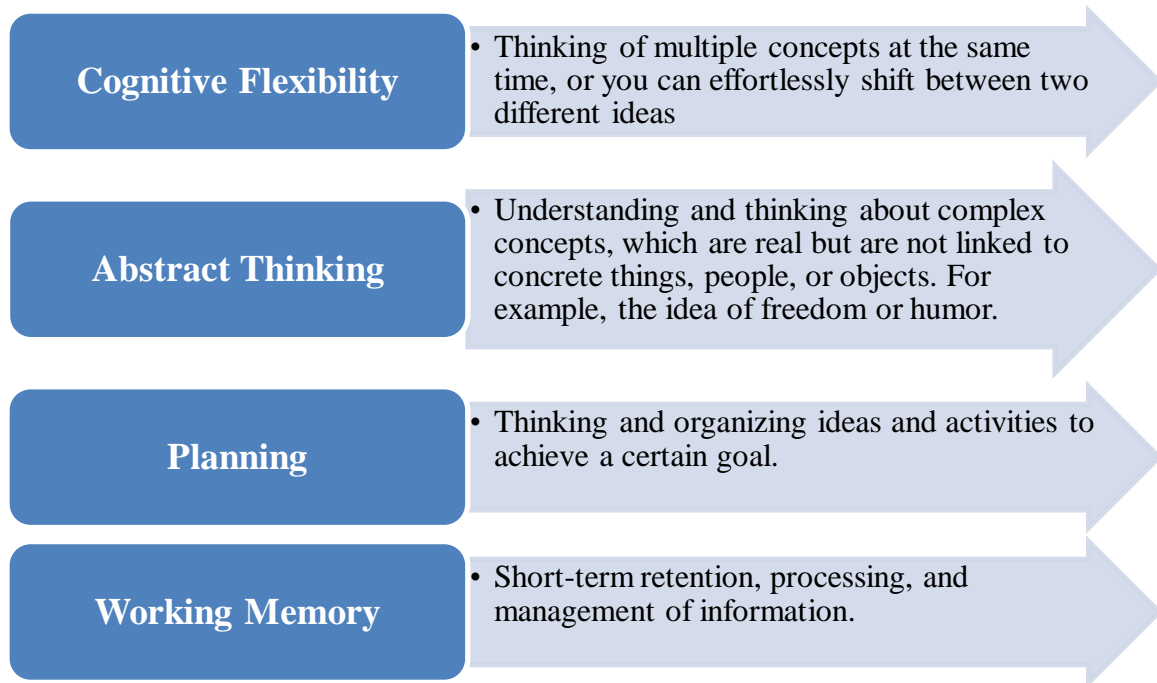
Creativity is the emergence of sensitivity to problems, to existing knowledge deficit or disharmony (P. Torrance, 1988). Explain this definition and give examples from your practice!

In today's world, being creative means thinking outside the box. It is the understanding that action may have limitations that need to be overcome and improve results. Creativity is more than just thinking, it is accepting and developing new and innovative ideas.

The way we think of or define creativity today is something that has only recently come into being. This is because, in past cultures, any ideas were seen more as discoveries or reproductions of what already existed (Artincontext, 2022).

Researches (Artincontext, 2022, Al-Ababneh, 2020) shows that there are several processes in creativity, which can be seen in Figure 2.

Cognitive Flexibility	• Thinking of multiple concepts at the same time, or you can effortlessly shift between two different ideas
Abstract Thinking	• Understanding and thinking about complex concepts, which are real but are not linked to concrete things, people, or objects. For example, the idea of freedom or humor.
Planning	• Thinking and organizing ideas and activities to achieve a certain goal.
Working Memory	• Short-term retention, processing, and management of information.

Picture 2. Processes of Creativity

Many therapies use creative activities such as art, dance and music. Creative activities can help those suffering from a variety of mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, dementia, Alzheimer's disease and post-traumatic stress disorder.

In the process of creation, a person becomes more relaxed, as well as energy and an incentive to concentrate is created. In addition, certain forms of creativity can help improve a person's sense of empathy. Looking at other people's art and creative ways can develop a certain understanding of others, their cultures and situations.

Since creativity is such a complex subject, there are various methods people can use during the creative process. However, there are a few stages that are common, and which were first expressed by a social psychologist, Graham Wallas. He made known these stages in a book in the early 20th century called, *The Art of Thought*. Below is a short description of these five stages (see Table 1).

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Table 1 **Stages of Creativity** (Artincontext, 2022)

Stages of Creativity Names	Description
Preparation Stage	In most cases, an idea does not come from anything; you need to generate ideas, do some research, and draw on past experiences to come up with more original ideas.
Incubation Stage	Once you have your idea, you should step back and view what you have done. You can even work on another project or do something else altogether.
Illumination Stage	Once you allow your thoughts to freely move, it could trigger a "light bulb" moment, when all the information comes together to form a solution.
Evaluation Stage	This is where you take your new idea and scrutinize it, weighing the pros and cons and other relevant information. Does the solution support your original idea? You might have to go back a come up with other ideas, or it could be the right way you want to go.
Verification Stage	This is where most of the hard work is put in, where you have to create the object or design or prove your idea. This final stage is where you finalize the idea and make it a reality.

Creativity is the result of a positive interaction between homogenity and difference. It can't just come out of nothing, it's actually based on learned fundamentals. Creativity, like imagination, is the ability to think differently and create new elements. Effective interaction is creative communication, flexible and open to different contexts.

The most important characteristics of creative personalities are willingness to take risks, persistence, dynamic direction and devotion to the solution of the problem, curiosity, openness to new knowledge and experience, tolerance for ambiguity, broad interests, high rating of originality, intuition and strong feelings, internal activity, the ability to see the problem to be solved "from afar", independence of judgments, orientation in novelties, logical thinking skills, visualization in imagination, the ability to break out of restrictions, stencils, etc.

Please explain how these conditions can inhibit creativity: Supervision; Evaluation; Awards; Competition; Constant control; Limitation of choice; Heightened expectations (pressure). Give examples!

Creativity, creative learning and creative teaching environment encourage communication, emotional and physical development, thus causing changes not only in individual children or youth but also in classes, groups and families. The main stimuli and initiators of creativity are different social agents in the environment of formal and informal education, local government, projects etc. that promote cooperation as essential prerequisite of creativity. These few 'key' people are essential, since they initiate and develop different activities, and different understanding of parties involved, acknowledgment and implementation of their opportunities and competencies are very important for the reaching of common goals.

Definition of Creativity: the ability to generate unique ideas that can help solve problems, create effective interactions, or simply entertain. If you want to improve your creative abilities, you need to do different things, go outside the box.

Practical Exercises:

1. "Draw the Music". Listen to the suggested music and draw your feelings. It can develop of creative thought, emancipation and the ability to convey their vision of the world to others.
2. Based on colored "clouds", it is possible for hearing impaired people to learn dance steps. Each step goes in its own color. As a result, rhythm and dance movements remain in the memory and develop creative thinking.
3. Playing musical instruments, vocal therapy. It allows you to overcome shyness, learn communication skills, develop creative improvisation, and also frees you from suppressed emotions.
4. Feel and play the music in a playful way using gestures or auxiliary objects (for example, colored tapes). This exercise allows you to build attention span, reduce aggression, and develop thinking. During physical activity, young people have the opportunity to get rid of mental stress and post-traumatic stress.

Distance learning activities: Work in groups: The use of various creativity-developing methods for young people - information research, preparation of examples, presentation.

Extra Resources:

1. Baptiste Barbot - Creativity and Identity Development in Adolescence https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H-p113pe_AQ
2. Creativity and Intelligence in Adolescence https://study.com/academy/lesson/creativity-and-intelligence-in-adolescence.html
3. Youth and Creativity https://en.unesco.org/creativity/node/582
4. Creative Youth & Community Development https://creative-generation.org/cycd
5. Why creativity matters and how play nurtures creative minds https://learningthroughplay.com/explore-the-research/why-creativity-matters-and-how-we-can-nurture-it
6. Test my creativity http://www.testmycreativity.com/

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Assessment

1. What is creativity?
   a. **Ability to identify or prepare original solution of problems;**
   b. A form of intelligence that refers to skills that depend on accumulated knowledge and experience
   c. A form of intelligence that depends heavily on information-processing skills including the speed of processing
   d. Creativity is best defined as an IQ of above 200.
2. Which one of the following is NOT part of the definition of creativity?
   a. Novel
   b. Useful
   c. Appropriate
   d. **Unusual**
3. Test your creativity: Torrance Creativity Test. https://www.coursera.org/lecture/startup-entrepreneurship-discovering-ideas/test-your-creativity-torrance-creativity-test-9M7l7