

Sveučilište u Zagrebu
Filozofski fakultet
Odsjek za anglistku
Katedra za metodiku

WAYS OF PROMOTING CREATIVITY IN EFL CLASSROOM

Diplomski rad

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Zagreb, travanj, 2016.

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ABSTRACT

Creativity is one of those notions taken for granted but the moment one tries to define it, one raises more questions than provides answers. Nevertheless, it plays a very important role in everyday situations and in education. The aim of the present study is to examine English language teachers' beliefs about creativity, its importance in language learning process and the ways of promoting it among their students. The study included 20 EFL teachers and the instrument used was a questionnaire. The results indicate that the majority of the teachers perceive creativity as a characteristic which can be facilitated in everyone. English language classes are seen as offering a lot of opportunities for promoting creativity, unlike schools and general curricula. However, creativity in the classroom is seen rather as a “tool” for raising students’ motivation than something that has to be promoted.

KEY WORDS: Creativity, Motivation, Foreign Language Learning, EFL teachers

INTRODUCTION

In the last 20 years, people have witnessed many changes in technology. For example, we first listened to music either on the radio, anxiously waiting for our favourite song all day or we would buy cassettes. Cassettes were then replaced by CDs, CDs by MP3 players, MP3 players by iPods, while waiting all day along for your favourite song on the radio has been replaced by listening to it over and over again on YouTube. As Ken Robinson (2001), one of the biggest authorities on creativity today, wrote in his bestseller “Out of Our Minds”, “the more complex the world becomes, the more creative we need to be to meet its challenges.” (Preface, xiii)

Creativity in education is not only a “tool” used to motivate students and enhance the learning process, but also something that has to be promoted and developed. We live in a world of constant changes and capitalism and creativity is seen as an engine of economic growth and social dynamism (McWilliam and Dawson, 2008).

Furthermore, every teacher knows that no two classes are the same. Even if you had to teach one lesson to the same class twice, there would be some differences. Classroom is a place of unpredictable and unexpected, it consists of individuals with different abilities, personalities, attitudes, interests and dreams. Lacking creative thinking, teachers may lack the flexibility to respond to all the unexpected situations in classroom, they “may be unable to do much more than follow a coursebook.” (Constantinides, 2012, p. 115)

This paper is based on the belief that there is a connection between creativity and language learning process in that one facilitates the other. It looks at the role of creativity in English language classroom and the ways of promoting it. It is divided in three parts.

The first part deals with creativity in general and it contains an overview of theories and definitions of creativity, ways of measuring it and personality traits of creative individuals.

The second part contains the implications of creativity for education, the role it plays in foreign language learning process (with emphasis on English language) and the ways it can be promoted in a foreign language classroom.

The last part presents a study on English language teachers’ beliefs about creativity and the ways they promote it among their students.

1. WHAT IS CREATIVITY AND HOW TO MEASURE IT

The first chapter examines some theories and definitions of creativity, its importance for humankind and the ways in which creativity can be analysed and measured. The focus is on the investment theory advanced by Sternberg and Lubart (2006) which is complemented by other ideas on the notion of creativity (e.g. Runco, 2004 or Simenton, 2004).

1. 1. AN OVERVIEW OF THEORIES AND DEFINITIONS OF CREATIVITY

What will be discussed first is the difference between the following notions whose meaning is often interchanged: creativity, originality and imagination.

According to Oxford's dictionary (2008), being creative means "involving the use of skill and the imagination to produce something new or a work of art" (p. 345), imagination is "the ability to create pictures in your mind" (p. 744) and originality is defined as "the quality of being new and interesting in a way that is different from anything that has existed before." (p. 1031)

What is common to all of the aforementioned notions is the idea of new, something that has not been seen or done before. From the definitions it can be concluded that imagination and originality constitute creativity, but as most of the theorists agree (e.g. Sternberg, 2012; Runco, 2004), they are not sufficient.

Creativity can be defined either as a personality trait or in terms of achievements or products (Eyesenck, 1993; Torrance, 1965). In the first case, Eyesenck (1993) suggests the word originality instead of creativity, as somebody's behaviour can be considered original but not creative. According to Feist (1998), originality alone cannot distinguish for example, eccentric or schizophrenic thought from creative thought. In addition to this, creativity can be conceived either as a normally distributed trait or as unique achievement (Eyesenck, 1993) and theorists usually make a distinction between ordinary (little "c") creativity and extraordinary (big "C") creativity (Plucker and Beghetto, 2004). Similar to this, Csikszentmihaly (1996) identifies three phenomena that can be called creativity: expressing unusual thoughts, experiencing world in original ways and the individuals who have changed our culture.

There are many theories of creativity, the investment theory proposed by Sternberg and Lubart being among the most prominent ones. According to that theory there are six resources of creativity: intellectual ability, knowledge, styles of thinking, personality, motivation and environment (Sternberg, 2006).

The intellectual abilities or skills necessary for creativity to develop are skills to approach the problems in new ways, to think unconventionally, to recognize which ideas are worth pursuing and which ought to be rejected and finally, to “sell the ideas”, to convince others of the values of one’s ideas. In order to pursue these ideas, one needs knowledge of a field or a discipline. So as to be able to contribute to a domain, he or she needs to master it (Ericsson, 1996, as cited in Simonton, 2004). But there is the other side of the coin, since the knowledge can also hinder a person, it “can result in a closed and entrenched perspective, resulting in a person’s not moving beyond the way in which he or she has seen problems in the past.” (Adelson, 1984; Frensch & Sternberg, 1989 as cited in Sternberg, 2012, p.5)

It is intrinsic and not extrinsic motivation that promotes one's creativity, i.e. people are rarely creative unless they do something they love and are focused on work (Amabile, 1996, 1999; Hennessey, 2010 as cited in Sternberg, 2012). According to Amabile (1996), only under certain circumstances, as in the case when there is a high level of intrinsic motivation, do extrinsic motivators positively affect creativity.

Finally, a person cannot develop his or her creative potential unless there is a supportive environment whose role is to supply an individual with opportunities to display creativity and encourage and reward creative ideas. It is necessary to emphasise that what is creative is perceived differently in different cultures and so are the ways of supporting it (Lubart, 2010 as cited in Sternberg, 2012). For example, creativity might be seen as something less desirable and relevant in more repressive and conformist cultures (Craft, 2003).

According to Simonton (2004) creativity is a “a constrained stochastic process”, which means that on the one hand, it is an unpredictable process involving uncertainty and probability, on the other hand, it is restricted. The constraints he mentions are those imposed by the domains, i.e., the scientific creativity is not equal to artistic creativity. The way creativity is constrained by the domain can be seen in the systems model theory suggested by Csikszentmihaly (1996) according to which the process of creativity must be observed in connection to the domain, the field and the individual. The domain here is a set of rules, procedures and instructions for action which a person has to respect in order to be creative. The field consists of supervisors who decide whether an idea is creative or not, i.e. whether it should be included into the domain. Abuhamedh and Csikszentmihaly (2004) give the example of art as a domain and art critics or art historians as

gatekeepers to the domain. Finally, the third component is the individual who makes a change in the domain when having a new idea or seeing a new pattern (Csikszentmihaly, 1996).

Creative way of thinking is often opposed to conventional one, and the society often opposes creative ideas (Sternberg, 2012). Sternberg claims that they are rejected because people usually perceive an original and different way of thinking as annoying, offensive. He gives the examples of some artistic works and breakthrough scientific articles that had first been given negative reviews such as Sylvia Plath's *Bell Jar*. According to Sternberg, if the society immediately accepts a new idea, it cannot be considered particularly creative. It can be concluded then that it is an individual's choice to be creative; creativity begins with a person's decision to think in an unconventional way. Runco (2004) gives a classroom example where students have to answer an open-ended question "Can you name strong things?" and one of them says "Superman". The conventional answer in this case would be "a rock", while "Superman" represents a creative answer. In order to give this kind of an answer, students have to take into account their peers' and teachers' reactions, so it is in the end their decision to be creative.

Despite the different theories and definitions of creativity, everyone agrees that it is of great importance for humankind. Some stress the creative power that is behind the great works of art or scientific discoveries; others underline the importance of creativity in everyday life.

According to the conceptual blending theory developed by Turner and Fauconnier (2003), even the most basic mental operations are products of human creativity and imagination. Blending is a process by which people create new structures using already existing ones. One of the examples they give is the use of adjective "safe" in the following examples: "The beach is safe" and "The child is safe." Unlike the adjectives of colour, "safe" does not assign any fixed properties of the nouns. Instead, it evokes scenarios of danger with the specific situation of a child on the beach; the blend is an imaginary scenario in which the child is harmed.

Finally, Gardner (1983, as cited in Sprague and Parsons, 2012) perceives creativity as a kind of intelligence people use naturally, it "is not a one-shot thing; it's not even something that occurs at a particular moment. It is more of a way of being." (Gardner, 2012, p. 48)

1. 2. PERSONALITY TRAITS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF CREATIVE PEOPLE

Feist (1998) claims that “the essence of a creative person is the uniqueness of his ideas and behaviour.” (p. 290) Drawing from the published work and research on creativity and using the so-called Five Factor Model¹, Feist concludes that creative people are more autonomous, introverted, open to new experiences, norm-doubting, self-confident, self-accepting, driven, ambitious, dominant, hostile and impulsive. In his study, he compares artists and scientists, and suggests that artistic and scientific creativity are not completely the same; what distinguishes creative artists is emotional instability, coldness and their rejecting group norms (Feist, 2004). However, both successful scientists and artists usually have broad interests and training which goes beyond the disciplines and “the more artistic hobbies a scientist engaged in as an adult has, the greater their probability of achieving eminence within science.” (p. 74)

“Tools for thinking” used by creative people are observing, imaging, abstracting, pattern recognizing, pattern forming, analogizing and empathizing. They do not need external stimulation to recall or imagine the sensations and feelings (Root-Bernstein & Root-Bernstein, 2004).

Based on her two studies, Henderson (2004) made a profile of 21st-century corporate inventors. According to the results, they have a strong intrinsic motivation, enjoy their creative work, are persistent and tenacious, open to experience and confident in their abilities.

In his book “Creating Minds” Gardner studies seven famous people from different fields of work (e.g. Einstein, Stravinsky, T.S. Elliot...) and he concludes that what set those people apart were their personalities, the most important being risk-taking. For Gardner, “creativity is really as much about personality, risk taking and being a certain kind of person rather than having a particular set of cognitive skills.” (Gardner, 2012, p. 48)

Abuhamdeh and Csikszentmihaly (2004) underline the importance of context when it comes to personality traits. They give an example of a painter who, if he or she is emotional, introverted and imaginative will have more chances to be recognized in Abstract Expressionism than in Photo Realism where someone who is cool, rational and outward-oriented would make more contributions to art.

¹ Five Factor Model is a standardization of the basic dimension of personality. Based on factor-analytic studies of personality, it extracts five major factors of personality which are extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, openness (Costa & McRae, 1995, as cited in Feist, 1998). The factors in question can vary according to the researchers.

If creativity is considered as an exceptional trait, then creative people are usually seen as eccentric loners. However, it is generally accepted that children from large families exhibit more creative behaviour because of the lower parental supervision and more group interaction and imaginative play (Sprague and Parsons, 2012).

Looking from the “ordinary creativity” perspective, the characteristics of creative people differ. Some are quiet and reflective, while others are outgoing and love interaction. Then, there are those who express their creativity spontaneously, and those who dedicate themselves to only one passion while giving up other interests (Treffinger, 1965).

According to Treffinger and his colleagues (2002) “characteristics vary within and among people and across disciplines. No one possesses all the characteristics nor does anyone display them all the time ... Many of these characteristics can be taught and nurtured.” (p.12)

In addition, there is a tendency to believe that highly creative people are also very intelligent. A connection between intelligence and creativity does exist, but it is not as strong as one might think. Studies have shown that people with a lower IQ might find it difficult to do creative work, but higher IQ does not necessarily yield higher creativity. In fact, high IQ might hinder creativity as some people with such IQ are secure about their abilities that they lose curiosity, the incentive to question and doubt, which is all important for achieving something new (Csikszentmihaly, 1996).

1. 3. WAYS OF MEASURING AND ANALYSING CREATIVITY

Since creativity has often been associated with talent and considered to be god-given, scientific and objective attempts at defining and measuring it have often been frowned upon.

In order for something to be scientifically measured, it has to be clearly defined, and the basic problem with creativity is its vague definition or its many definitions. One cannot measure something one does not know what it is (Klein, 1967).

Westland (1969) mentions four ways in which psychologists can measure and analyse creativity.

The first technique looks at the ways prominent scientists and artists create their works in that it analyses and compares them. The second technique consists in examining their personality traits. The objective is to see whether personality traits scientists and artists exhibit are the same.

Experiments can also be used to analyse creativity, especially if one wants to see under which conditions creativity is most likely to develop.

The final technique for measuring creativity Westland mentions are creativity tests.

Klein (1967) criticises tests because of their artificiality (the problems in the tests are often irrelevant to real life) and the time given for solving the problems (it is often question of minutes). Among the most used creativity tests are those developed by Torrance in the 1960s. Some examples (Harvey, Hoffmeister, Coates, White, 1970) of Torrance's tests are the Product Improvement Test where the subjects are asked to think of unusual and interesting ways of improving a product (e.g. a toy stuffed animal), the Unusual Uses Test where the subjects have to come up with unusual uses for everyday objects (e.g. cardboard boxes). In the Just Suppose Test, one is presented with an improbable situation and has to think of its consequences and results (e.g. "Just suppose when it was raining all the rain drops stood still in the air and wouldn't move – and they were solid").

The tasks are then evaluated according to four criteria: number of different relevant ideas (fluency), number of different categories of response (flexibility), whether the responses are uncommon (originality) and whether the responses are detailed (elaboration).

1. 4. CONCLUSION

Having examined some of the available literature on creativity, the following can be concluded: creativity is a complex notion; it is often related to imagination and originality which are its constituents but are not sufficient for creative thought to develop. Other important factors are knowledge, motivation, environment and personality. Furthermore, creativity is of great importance for humankind, both in ordinary, everyday actions such as cooking and the greatest inventions and works of art.

2. CREATIVITY IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

2.1. CREATIVITY AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES

*Madman drummers bummers and Indians in the summer with a teenage diplomat
In the dumps with the mumps as the adolescent pumps his way into his hat
With a boulder on my shoulder, feelin' kinda older I tripped the merry-go-round
With this very unpleasing sneezing and wheezing the calliope crashed to the ground*
(Bruce Springsteen, *Blinded by the Light*)

Bruce Springsteen, one of the most prominent musicians in the history of rock music, is also known for his lyrics, which are like short narratives, telling stories. Springsteen is a poet among musicians and, one can say, with his work, lyrics and music he creates, he falls into that category of people possessing exceptional creativity. It can be said that the lyrics cited above are one of his most creative ones, a combination of words that had not been written and heard before. But one does not have to create unusual strings of words, make rhymes and metaphors to be deemed creative. According to Carter (2004, as cited in Maley, 2015), “creativity is an all-pervasive feature of everyday language” and “linguistic creativity is not simply a property of exceptional people but an exceptional property of all people.” (p. 9)

The relation between language and creativity can be summed up in the following: the ordinary creativity (little “c” creativity) is inherent in language itself (Maley, 2015) while “language broadens the child’s imagination by presenting the not here, the not now, the not real.” (Connery, John-Steiner, 2012, p. 140)

Maley’s claim can be seen in the nativist theory about the way people acquire languages. According to the theory whose most famous proponent is American linguist Noam Chomsky (1984), language acquisition is a creative process in which people constantly produce and interpret new forms. The main argument for LAD and Universal Grammar and against behaviourist theory according to which we acquire languages by imitating is the so-called logical problem of language learning. It has been shown that children know more about the structure of their mother tongue than they could learn by imitating input, i.e. the input they receive is much poorer than their knowledge about language and production. The nativists conclude that children

are born with an innate ability which helps them to discover the rules of the language system (Lightbown and Spada, 2006).

Turner and Fauconnier (2004) propose that the process of blending is at core of language production and meaning construction. They support this theory by the fact that language is much poorer than the world of human meaning. Therefore, language has to be “equipotential”, meaning that it has to find a way to express the new situations people encounter using already existing structures. The way to do that is not inventing new grammar and new structures but using the existing ones to construct a blend. With all this in mind, can it be concluded that language classes offer more space for creativity than for example, science or physical education?

Craft suggests that creativity manifests itself differently in different areas; however, there are no limitations to fostering it (Craft, 2002). On the other hand, there are those who claim that language teachers do have some advantages when it comes to creativity in that language classes are not limited by any specialised subject or knowledge and they can easily engage students in creative situations (Stepanek, 2015).

Having shown that the very nature of language production is creative, what follows are implications of creativity in the process of learning a foreign language.

When it comes to the variables that influence language learning, the most important ones are aptitude, motivation, age, language exposure, intelligence and personality traits (Lightbown and Spada, 2006) while creativity is only briefly mentioned, either as one of the personality traits or a factor that enhances students’ motivation. Good language learners are often described as willing and accurate guessers, willing to make mistakes, they constantly look for patterns in language (Lightbown and Spada, 2006), they are tolerant of ambiguity (Naiman, 1976, as cited in Harmer, 2001), autonomous, creative and make intelligent guesses (Rubin and Thompson, 1982 as cited in Harmer, 2001). Note that these traits are usually used when describing a creative person (e.g. Feist).

Lately, however, two other factors have been acknowledged to contribute to the process of second or foreign language learning, critical thinking and creativity (Fahim and Zaker, 2014). According to Fahim and Zaker, “creativity would enable the learners to respond appropriately and relevantly to the myriad of situations that can be faced in the day to day life for which no predetermined and fixed language-wise responses are available.” (p. 3)

There are other benefits of creativity when it comes to foreign language learning. For example, it can act as a memory aid and it can help in building second language (L2) learner's identity (Hadfield and Hadfield, 2015). Moreover, every foreign language learner does not only come into contact with a whole different language system, but he or she also encounters a different culture (Common European Framework of Reference, 2001). Coming up with something original and creative, L2 learners begin to "own" a part of language and no longer feel like "foreigners" or "outsiders" (Hadfield & Hadfield, 1990). Another question that can be raised here is whether there is a difference in the role of creativity in relation to productive and receptive language skills. One might conclude that no creativity is required in receptive skills since nothing is being created when listening to or reading a text; in turn the processes of writing and speaking yield some kind of a product. This conclusion is, however, false. Listening and reading are also active processes where a person creates meaning using their pre-existing knowledge and expectations (Carter & Nunan, 2001; Cook, 1989, as cited in Harmer, 2001). Grammar and vocabulary alone are not enough to grasp the meaning of a text. While reading or listening, people employ different skills, the use of which depends on the type of discourse (e.g. different skills are used when looking for a telephone number in a telephone directory or reading a novel). Some of these skills are identifying the topic which helps to process the text more efficiently; predicting and guessing the content and what is coming next (and then in the process of reading or listening these expectations or hypotheses are either confirmed or rejected); interpreting text which means using clues to see what is implied and suggested and go beyond the meaning (Harmer, 2001).

It can be concluded that receptive skills are not passive and that while reading or listening a certain degree of creativity is required to access the meaning.

As Hadfield and Hadfield claim (2015), everything that students discover in the foreign language can be seen as an "act of creation" but when they produce something original on a piece of paper, they can see the proof of the process.

What has to be kept in mind is that receptive and productive language skills should not be separated as what students write or produce orally grows out of what they hear or read. For example a dramatic story can provide stimulus for students to tell their own stories (Harmer, 2001).

2.2. MOTIVATING CREATIVITY IN A LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

Motivation is one of the key “ingredients” when it comes to language learning success, the second strongest predictor after aptitude (Skehan, 1989, as cited in Gass & Selinker, 2008).

Just like in the case of creativity, motivation is also an ill-defined term. It is usually described as “some kind of internal drive which pushes someone to do things in order to achieve something.” (Harmer, 2001, p. 51)

According to Gardner (1985, as cited in Gass & Selinker, 2008), there are four aspects of motivation: a goal, efforts, desire to attain the goal and positive attitudes toward the activity.

A distinction is made between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, the former being caused by some outside factors and the latter coming out of the individual. In the case of foreign language learning, the examples of extrinsic motivation would be a journey abroad or a job in a foreign country, while in the case of intrinsic motivation a person is motivated by the enjoyment of the learning process or cultural growth. Dorney (2007) suggests that motivation is in a teacher’s explicit control and the motivational process consists of three stages. First, teachers have to establish the conditions necessary for motivation to develop – safe climate, class cohesiveness and a good teacher-student relationship. Creating those initial conditions, teacher’s work is not yet finished. His or her job is then to maintain and protect the students’ motivation and encourage positive retrospective self-evaluation.

What is then the connection between creativity and motivation? NACCCE (1999) distinguishes between “teaching creatively” and “teaching for creativity.” The first term refers to fostering students’ interest and motivation in learning, while “teaching for creativity” refers to developing students’ creative thinking and behaviour. It can be concluded that creativity in classroom can, on the one hand be an objective attain, on the other, a “tool” used to motivate students to enhance the process of learning. “Teaching creatively” and “teaching for creativity” are two inter-connected processes and one depends on the other. Promoting creativity requires creative activities and in order for creative activities to be successfully done, it is necessary for children to be, to a certain degree, creative. Creativity is then something that has to be motivated and something used for motivation.

According to Read (2014), creativity in EFL classroom increases children’s engagement and motivation and makes language learning memorable.

Creativity develops in favourable conditions, not in vacuum (Maley, 2014). A person can possess all the internal resources to think creatively, but without a supportive environment that creativity might never be displayed (Sternberg, 2012). Some general factors for its development that can be applied in any classroom are a relaxed and non-judgmental atmosphere where students feel confident, where they do not have to worry about the errors they might make; making public the work students create either in a class magazine, online or on the classroom noticeboard; encouraging students to notice things by asking them to collect data or to look for information outside their coursebooks. A teacher has to be a role model and work with students, not just tell them what to do (Maley, 2014). According to the results/findings of CREANOVA ² project, in developing creativity, children need both freedom and a mentor, a facilitator. Furthermore, it is concluded that collaboration is more important than individual freedom (Davis, Aruldoss, McNair & Bizas, 2012). NACCCE suggests that in order to foster creativity teachers should secure a non-threatening atmosphere in which students can take risks, encourage an appropriate attitude towards imaginative activity (e.g. a sense of excitement or respect), encourage self-monitoring, reflection and autonomy. Drawing from literature on creativity and her own experience in teaching English, Read (2014) gives the seven pillars of creativity. In order to promote creativity in classroom teachers should help students to build up positive self-esteem; model creativity themselves; let children choose the activities; use questions which interest children and open their thinking and also give them enough time for an answer; encourage children to make connections between home and school and between different subjects; encourage children to explore; and develop students' critical thinking so that they can evaluate their own ideas.

Constraints are usually considered to harness creative development, but as many theorists argue, this is a myth (McWilliam & Dawson, 2008). An example of this can be seen in writing tasks. Maley (2014) suggest that teachers limit the content and language in a writing task as this would relieve students of the pressure to write about everything.

² CREANOVA project was a European Union project which involved universities, vocational education specialists, regional governments, creative and technical experts from several European countries. Its objective was to investigate how creativity and innovation is achieved in learning environments, workplaces and design processes (Davis, Aruldoss, McNair and Bizas, 2012).

Finally, Giaque (1985) argues that every classroom should be turned into a language workshop, “a place where the student can mould his language to his personal tastes or apply it to the canvas of his unique background and interests as he feels impelled.” (p.5)

2.2.1. EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES THAT PROMOTE CREATIVITY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

Having seen some general factors that promote creativity in any classroom, this section contains the examples of activities that can foster creativity in an English language classroom.

2.2.1.1. LITERATURE AS A SOURCE OF CREATIVITY

According to Reyhani and Maghsoudi (2014), reading and writing promote traits which facilitate creativity. These are thinking, reasoning, exploring, remembering, feeling curious, and freedom of expression. Furthermore, the specificity of literary texts is their polysemy; unlike ordinary texts more than one meaning is hidden in them (Séoud, 1997). Due to this openness of language, they make a perfect “tool” for promoting creativity. However, students often do not enjoy literary works due to their complex language. But, as Anh Le (2015) argues, what is needed is a right approach. Students should be encouraged to express their own opinions and not worry whether they are right or wrong. Instead of trying to figure out “what the author wants to say”, they should be encouraged to connect the work with their own feelings and experiences.

After the reading part and discussion, Anh Le suggests the following activities: students write a journal where they express their opinion about what they read or connect it to their personal experience; they search for similar work; dramatise the text or write their own poems.

According to Harmer (2002), “creative writing” is an imaginative task such as writing poetry, stories, and plays the end result being some kind of achievement. To have this sense of achievement, students need to have their audience so Harmer suggests “publishing” their work either on the classroom noticeboard or in a school magazine.

Maley (2006, as cited in Lutzker 2015) argues that since the degree of affective and cognitive engagement in the activities that involve aesthetic creation is higher, those activities will foster a significant improvement in language development at all levels.

One of the examples of creative writing activity is Julia’s story (Harmer, 2001) suitable for all proficiency levels. First, students are divided in groups of about five and they sit in circles. The teacher dictates them a sentences such as “That day, when Julia came back from work, she knew something was different.” After the students copy the sentence on a piece of paper, they have to write another one that continues the one dictated to them by the teacher and pass their sheet of paper to the colleague on the left. Then, they have to write a sentence that continues the one their

colleague wrote. This continues until the pieces of papers return to their owners and the final step is to write a sentence which finishes the story. The activity is concluded by reading out the stories.

2.2.1.2. GRAMMAR AND CREATIVITY

Grammar is “the description of ways in which words can change their forms into sentences.” (Harmer, 2001, p.12) Studying grammar means studying rules and patterns and so it something most students frown upon and makes their language learning a nightmare. Rules and creativity do not seem to go together, but as already noted, this is not always the case.

There are many examples of creative activities for grammar learning; this section brings two examples.

While practising past simple, after the students have learned the rules, teachers usually ask them to retell their day events using past simple. Hadfield and Hadfield (2015) suggest a modified version of this activity. Teachers bring pictures and various objects to the class (e.g. a pen, a glass or a balloon). The objects are then displayed and students, in pairs, choose one of them. Students, each on their own, have to write a list of things that the object might have done during the day and then in pairs compare their lists and write a narrative of the object’s day. They read them out for other students to guess the objects.

2.2.1.3. TECHNOLOGY AND CREATIVITY

Computers and the internet are often seen as “stealing time from other tools of creativity” such as drawing, writing or painting. However, according to NACCCE (1999) new technologies actually enable young people to be creative. Videos have been a staple part of any language teaching. According to Harmer (2001), the advantages of using it in foreign language classrooms are the following: students are able to see language in use, they raise cross-cultural awareness, can motivate students, and spark students’ creativity. One of the activities he suggests is the following: after watching a video excerpt, teacher first makes sure that the students understood it. The students then watch it again, this time they have to imagine what would be different if the participants in the video were the opposite sex. Another way of fostering creativity is letting students to film something for themselves. For example, after reading a story they can film one of its scenes.

2.2.2. DO SCHOOLS CURRICULA AND COURSEBOOKS PROMOTE OR HARNESS CREATIVITY?

Teaching creativity is not a subject per se; it is a general function of education that can be developed in any subject (NACCCE, 1999). Despite the inclusion of creativity into national curricula the general belief is that schools and programmes suppress creativity (Diakidoy and Kanari 1999). The reason, according to the participants in Diakidoy and Kanari's study, is the large amount of content that has to be covered and the emphasis on knowledge acquisition.

Craft (2003) claims that there are conflicts between policy and practice; the means by which creativity is promoted are very constricting for teachers. The inability "to practice what it is being preached" is due to the fact that creativity is an ill-defined term, it is very difficult to assess a creative work and creative process is more time-consuming (Koludrović and Ercegovac, 2010). Looking at the education reforms in the USA, Berliner (2012, as cited in Kurtz, 2015) warns against what he calls "creaticide by design" which is due to the education being conceptualised primarily in terms of testing and measurable outcomes. Other problems harnessing creativity are limited amount of class time and large number of students (Kurtz, 2015).

Regarding creativity in Croatian system of education, Croatian National Curriculum (2011) aims at developing skills such as innovativeness, creativity, problem solving, critical thinking as they are necessary for any individual to work and live in the world of constant changes and competition. The document places creativity among the so-called "interdisciplinary topics", which have to be developed in all subjects. Examples of such topics are personal and social development, health, environment, autonomy in learning and entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial skills include the development of autonomy, creativity and risk taking and they aim at people capable of noticing opportunities in which they can transform their ideas into outcomes. In the section considering foreign language learning, creativity is not mentioned.

Coursebooks are still mostly used classroom material in foreign language classes but they do not usually offer activities which foster creativity (Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2013 as cited in Tomlinson, 2015) and are often considered to be "acting as methodological straitjackets" (Tice, 1999, as cited in Harmer, 2001).

All in all, the situation in education concerning creativity is most negatively described by Csikszentmihaly: "... we aspire to teach our children to be good chess players – but life is more like a poker game." (p. 24)

3. A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH

This section presents the research that has been done on the teachers' beliefs on creativity and the role creativity has in the foreign language learning process.

Studies on the relation between creativity and the process of learning a second or foreign language have been scarce (Dorney, as cited in Otto, 1998). However, the research that has been done so far has shown that there is a positive correlation between creativity and foreign language achievement and proficiency.

Pishghadam, Khodadady and Zabihi (2011) made a study with 272 English language undergraduate students. Using Arjouaud Creativity Questionnaire, they found a significant relationship between creativity and the students' language proficiency in that the group of students deemed as highly creative had higher achievement grades than their less creative colleagues.

Research has also been done on the relationship between creativity and language skills.

For example, in the study with 60 Iranian male and female advanced EFL learners, Reyhani and Maghsoudi (2014) concluded that there is a moderate and positive correlation between students' creativity and writing ability and an increase in students' creativity increases their writing ability.

When it comes to teachers' beliefs about creativity, Diakidoy and Kanari (1999) conducted a study with 49 students majoring in education and found that most of them perceive creativity as something that occurs frequently and not as an exceptional trait or talent. They also believe that the environment plays a crucial role in fostering creativity and a teacher is able to promote creativity in every student. Regarding the connection between creativity and intelligence, the majority (around 75%) think that the two are not connected and that it is possible for a very intelligent person not to be creative. There is also a tendency to believe that creativity is more likely to be manifested in artistic domains. The most frequently cited personality traits necessary for creativity to develop are imagination, self-confidence, autonomy, independence, critical thinking ability and divergent thinking ability. Another crucial thing for facilitating creativity is environment and most of the participants believe that teachers can facilitate creativity in their students. However, they do not consider school environment to be conducive to creativity.

While most of the student teachers' beliefs and opinions agree with the theories and ideas put forward by the major theorists of creativity (e.g. Sternberg, Torrance), there is one major

disagreement in that the subjects of the study do not think that an outcome has to be useful and appropriate in order to be considered creative.

4. PRESENT STUDY

4.1. AIM

The aim of this study is to examine how English language teachers in Croatia conceptualise creativity, the role creativity has in their classes and the ways they try to promote it. The primary research questions were:

- a) How do English language teachers in Croatia conceptualise creativity, i.e. is their perception of creativity closer to the view that creativity is an everyday phenomenon or something exceptional?
- c) Do they consider creativity to be important for language learning and in what way?
- d) Do EFL teachers perceive creativity as something that has to be facilitated and what are some of the ways in which they are trying to promote it among their students?

4.2. SAMPLE

Twenty Croatian EFL teachers, all of them female, participated in the study. Their work experience varies: three of them have been teaching English for less than five years, four teachers between six to ten years, six of them have a teaching experience ranging from ten to fifteen years and seven participants have been teaching English for more than twenty years.

Regarding the institutions they are currently working in, nine teachers are teaching in elementary school, eight of them in high school and two of the teachers are working in schools for foreign languages. One of the participants, formerly teaching in high school, is retired.

4.3. PROCEDURE

The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire partly based on the questionnaire from Diakidoy and Kanari's 1999 study and partly on the issues established as important during the author's classroom observation.

The questionnaire, sent to the teachers via e-mail, consists of two parts. In part A the subjects had to answer twelve open-ended questions. The aim of the first four questions was to examine how teachers conceptualise creativity and how they relate the notion of creativity to intelligence and knowledge. The following set of questions referred to the connection between creativity and language learning process, i.e. the subjects were asked to reflect on the role of creativity in language learning process taking into account the four skills as well as age and proficiency levels. The final set of questions dealt with the relation between creativity and motivation.

In the second part, the teachers had to express their agreement or disagreement with the given statements. In addition, there were two lists of statements and conditions for teachers to indicate which ones they thought were necessary for the process of creativity to take place. In the end they had to provide some examples of creative activities they used with their students.

4.4. RESULTS

4.4.1. Teachers' beliefs about creativity

The definitions provided by the teachers in the first part of the questionnaire reveal two different conceptions of creativity. On the one hand, creativity is perceived as an ability to create something new, original or relevant. It is associated with inventiveness and resourcefulness. On the other hand, it is a way of expressing yourself or thinking differently, solving problems in a new and different way without necessarily creating something original.

The table below shows some of the examples of the teachers' definitions.

Table 1. Examples of the definitions of creativity given by the participants in the study

Creativity is ...

- a) the ability of an individual to create new things whether it is by combining the already existing ones or by inventing/thinking of completely new ones.
- b) is inventing something new, finding new, relationships and connections between different things, generally having new ideas.
- c) the ability to express your thoughts or ideas in a different way through creating something in our professions – different games, ways of practising grammar or vocabulary, role plays, projects, writing essays or poems, etc.
- d) the ability to connect old knowledge and / or experiences in new and different ways.
- e) being able to think in a different, unconventional way, using your imagination to create something, to solve a problem and not only the given knowledge and formulas.
- f) the ability to produce something from what comes your way, being able to find new solutions to problems and obstacles
- g) a process of using your imagination to create something original (which does not imply new, never seen before).
- h) a gift, not something that you can ask for, a matter of moment

An outcome does not have to be new to be deemed creative for 55% of the participants while 35% of them believe the opposite, creative outcomes are novel both for the person and the society. In this case, they are relevant for the society and people usually recognize them as such. Regarding the relationship between the words creativity, originality and imagination, some of the participants find the words synonymous, while for the others there is a clear difference. In the

examples where there is a difference between the three notions, imagination and originality are seen as characteristics, “tools” necessary for the process of creativity to take place.

4.4.2. The perceived connection between creativity, knowledge and intelligence

Three types of beliefs on the connection between creativity and prior knowledge can be extracted from the teachers’ answers: that the knowledge is a basis for creativity, that it is important but not crucial and that it does not play any role in the process of creativity.

Examples of the teachers’ arguments for each are shown in table 2.

Table 2. The connection between creativity and prior knowledge: examples of the teachers’ answers

1. Prior knowledge is a basis of creativity

- a) *Every time we make something new, we try to rely on our knowledge of the subject/problem first. After we have processed what we know, we start thinking about how to alter it to make it our own or more suitable for the new use.*
- b) *Prior knowledge is a basis for creativity, e.g. a writer needs to have knowledge of language, he or she needs to be well-read in order to produce a novel*
- c) *I believe that more prior knowledge will trigger more creativity, as our knowledge of the world around us expands, we get more creative.*

2. Knowledge is important but not crucial

- a) *Knowledge can help, but you have to have it in you; you can't ask a student to be Michelangelo, writer, artist*
- b) *It is beyond doubt that prior knowledge plays a certain role in terms of developing creativity but it is far from being crucial. Although you cannot teach a child without ability to be a wunderkind, prior knowledge can provide an adequate context for manifesting creativity.*

3. Knowledge is not important for creativity

- a) *I do not think that prior knowledge is very important for creativity because small children are more creative than older ones, as well as adults.*

For 50% of the participants creativity is not proportionate to intelligence and 85% agree that it is possible for a very intelligent person not to be creative. In some cases, intelligence is, like knowledge seen as a basis for creativity.

It is interesting to note that intelligence and creativity are seen as two separate constructs by all except two teachers who perceive creativity as “a *subitem* of intelligence” or intelligence is seen as “being creative in a way.”

Regarding the implication of this for education, one of the teachers wrote that intelligence and creativity are complementary and the process of learning should encourage “their free interplay”.

4.4.3. Characteristics and abilities necessary for creativity

The majority of the teachers, 70%, agree with the statement that creativity is a characteristic of all people. Those disagreeing perceive it as an innate talent or a gift. Famous people they consider creative are painters (for example Da Vinci, Picasso), writers (for example Shakespeare, Orwell, Dickens) scientists and inventors such as Tesla, Einstein, Steve Jobs, Mark Zuckerberg. In addition, some gave the names of David Bowie, Josipa Lisac or Lady Gaga people known for their eccentric style and behaviour and described as artists who “stand out” and are opposed to those who “follow the pattern” by one of the participants.

Characteristics and abilities perceived most conducive to creativity are imagination, autonomy, independence and innate talent (table 3). In addition, 90% do not see relation between academic achievement and creativity, i.e. good and successful students are not necessarily more creative.

Table 3: Characteristics and abilities teachers in the study identified necessary for the development of creativity

Characteristics & abilities	%
Need for praise and reinforcement	25
Autonomy	80
Intelligence	45
Imagination	100
Willingness to accept guidance	20
Obedience to rules and expectations	10

Ability to set own goals	60
Ability to set own rules	45
Innate talent	70
Independence	80
Self-confidence	60
Fear of failure	5
Many interests	60
Critical thinking ability	55
Analogical reasoning ability	40
Artistic tendencies	50
Divergent thinking ability	65
Convergent thinking ability	20
Problem finding ability	60
Need for recognition and acceptance	10
Need to avoid mistakes	5

4.4.4. Creativity and language learning process

All of the teachers agree on the importance of creativity in the language learning process. The most recurrent reason they give is that creative activities and teaching methods motivate and encourage students by making language learning process more interesting and fun.

Some teachers consider creativity to be inherent in language and, as one of them wrote, language “cannot be either taught or learned ‘mechanically’”. When inspected closely, each verbal expression has a certain degree of a creative background which enables one to use language properly.” Furthermore, half of the teachers believe that creative activities are more beneficial to students’ language proficiency than grammar and vocabulary drills.

Only 5% do not see any role of receptive skills in developing creativity. However, consistent with the beliefs about creativity, that it is an act of creating something, the majority consider creativity to be more prominent in productive skills (table 4).

Table 4. The perceived relation of creativity to four skills (examples of teachers' answers)

1. *Creativity plays a more important role in productive skills than in the receptive ones considering the fact that both writing and speaking as a result have a text (written/spoken) which is a (new) product.*
2. *Creativity is more prominent in speaking and writing because these are acts of creation, listening & reading – in order to understand the message, it is also important to be creative, imagine, trying to get the message; reading a literary work: creative people appreciate it more*
3. *To a certain extent: listening and reading can be almost as creative as speaking and writing. In a way it is also up to the person using those skills: their IQ, their education, background, emotional & social, creative intelligence, etc. Their ability to go in-depth and analyse the implications of what another human being is saying or writing. It is important for giving the right response and avoiding misunderstandings.*
4. *Writing and speaking are far more demanding when it comes to expressing students' creativity which, by all means, does not exclude the fact that students can be creative while listening (e.g., students perform an action, do a drawing dictation etc.) or reading (e.g., expressive reading).*

4.4.5. Facilitation of creativity

The majority (80%) agree that creativity can be facilitated in everybody; however the activities used should be adapted to age and proficiency levels. Regarding the age, there are those who noted that children are more creative than adults, so creative activities are more appropriate for them.

Environmental aspects (table 5) most likely to facilitate creativity are emphasis on intrinsic motivation (75% agreement), emphasis on autonomy and independence (85% agreement), emphasis on discovery learning (80% agreement), opportunities to correct own mistakes (65% agreement) and acceptance of all work outcomes (65% agreement).

Table 5. Environmental aspects necessary for the facilitation of creativity

Aspects	%
Frequent evaluation of outcomes	0
Emphasis on knowledge acquisition	15
Emphasis on intrinsic motivation	75
Use of external awards	10
Frequent praise	35
Emphasis on autonomy and independence	85
Emphasis on competition	15
Choice in assignments	50
Emphasis on collaborative learning	45
Frequent and detailed feedback	15
Emphasis on discovery learning	85
Opportunities to question theories and assumptions	55
Emphasis on following instructions	10
Opportunities to correct own mistakes	65
Acceptance of all work outcomes	65

Almost all teachers from the sample share the opinion that there is room for creativity in every school subject, however, some promote creativity more easily than others. These are art, music, foreign languages. Teacher's role is also emphasised, since no matter whether a certain subject is considered to be conducive to creativity or not, in the end "it all depends on teachers and teaching methods." The way teachers can encourage their students to be creative is shown in table 6.

Table 6. The way teachers can encourage their students: teachers' suggestions

Teachers can encourage their students ...

- a) by telling them not to believe everything they hear, to use different sources, to talk to their peers...
- b) by offering them activities in which they need to communicate and express their opinions
- c) giving them space, using modern technologies, avoiding repetition

- | |
|--|
| d) using different media, praising them, allowing space for mistakes, stimulating interaction, respecting different opinions |
|--|

95% of the participants in the study consider English language classes as offering a lot of opportunities to promote creativity; however, 60% do not consider English language textbooks as a rich source of creative activities. Also, the opinions on whether Croatian school and school programmes suppress or support creativity diverge. Some consider them suppressing creativity and mention the following reasons: not enough space and time is given to teachers, the emphasis is on knowledge and data acquisition, rote learning and both students and teachers are pressured by tests and grades. Others believe that, in the end, it all depends on teachers and students.

Finally, the teachers' ideas about an ideal language classroom for promoting creativity are shown in table 7.

Table 7. An ideal language classroom for promoting creativity as described by teachers from the sample
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An ideal language classroom for promoting creativity is ...

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) an environment of trust, sharing, respect, valuing other people's contributionsb) large enough for students to be able to move around, communicate more freely, there should be vocabulary posters, mind maps, visual stimuli, realiac) a well-equipped room with books, posters, objects that represent English speaking countriesd) a classroom decorated by the student themselvese) like home where students feel comfortable, safe, self-confident |
|--|

4.4.6. Examples of activities that promote creativity in EFL classroom

The majority of the teachers oppose creative activities to grammar and vocabulary drills. Creative activities are seen as enabling students to create something of their own and, unlike drills, they are described as motivating and fun.

Every teacher used at least one of the activities suggested in the questionnaire. More than 90% worked with tasks where the students had to make up ending of a story or where they have to find

a solution to a problem, 45% gave their students an activity to complete famous proverbs in their own words, and 50% to write a poem.

Table 6 shows the activities promoting creativity suggested by the teachers.

Table 8. Examples of activities suggested by the teachers from the sample

- a) *I asked my students to choose from the cards with different problems e.g. Dear Dan, my friends spend their nights on the Internet. What should I do? Should I talk to... Their task is to solve the problems using modal verb.*
- b) *While doing activities with modal verb can/ can't I told them to imagine their own superhero and describe his abilities using the modal verb. Also, I told them to think of his/ her name and to think of an actor who would play him in the film.*
- c) *Games (taboo), conditional sentences activity where students have to complete sentences (If I hadn't been born ...)*
- d) *Once I gave one topic to all the students that was connected to the topic of the unit. Each of them got a blank piece of paper. The task was group essay writing, and each of them had to write one sentence connected to the topic, flip the paper and pass it along to the next person to the left/right. All the papers circled around the class, and each of them had to write only one sentence. When the papers got back to their original owners, they got the task to connect all the sentences on the paper into a meaningful text.*

4.5. DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study indicate that the beliefs of EFL teachers from the sample are closer to the view that creativity is an everyday phenomenon (little “c” creativity) and not something exceptional (big “C” creativity). They parallel the theories and definitions suggested by Sternberg and Lubart in their investment theory (2006), Gardner (2012) and Torrance (1965) as well as the student teachers’ beliefs in Diakidoy and Kanari’s study (1999). Moreover, the results correspond to two different ways of perceiving creativity: either as a personality trait or in terms of achievements and products (Eysenck, 1992; Torrance, 1965). Regarding the creative outcomes, for 55% of the sample they are not necessarily novel, in contrast to 35% who consider them novel both for the person and the society.

While creativity is described as a process or ability, imagination and originality are defined as traits, characteristics which constitute creativity.

In accordance with ordinary creativity view is also the belief shared by the majority of the teachers that creativity can be facilitated in everybody and that environment plays a crucial role in its facilitation. External aspects most conducive to creativity are emphasis on autonomy and independence, opportunities to question theories and assumptions, emphasis on discovery learning and intrinsic motivation. With only 10% of teachers opting for the use of external awards and 75% for intrinsic motivation, this is in line with Amabile’s theory (1996, 1999) that it is not extrinsic but intrinsic motivators that promote one’s creativity.

Characteristics and abilities underlined as necessary for a person to be creative are partially in accordance with Feist’s (1998) description of creative people as being autonomous, introverted, norm-doubting, self-confident, driven and ambitious.

The results are also similar to the findings from Diakidoy and Kanari’s study, though less importance is given to self-confidence, divergent-thinking ability, problem-finding ability and artistic tendencies.

With autonomy and independence figuring high on the list of the characteristics which promote creativity, teachers do not find guidance and collaboration very important for facilitation of creativity. This is in disagreement with the findings of CREANOVA project that in developing creativity children need both freedom and a mentor.

An interesting part of the study were famous people teachers consider to be creative. Except the recurring names Tesla, Da Vinci and Picasso, there are suggestions such as David Bowie, Lady

Gaga or Michael Jackson. These can be divided into two groups: people whose inventions and creations have changed the world we live in (for example Tesla, Bell or Zuckerberg) and artists known for their unusual ways expression and behaviour often described as eccentric (for example Michael Jackson or Lady Gaga). A parallel can be drawn with Csikszentmihaly's (1996) distinction of three phenomena that can be called creativity: persons who express unusual thoughts, people who experience life in unusual ways and individuals who have changed our culture.

Artists are only slightly more represented in the answers than scientists and inventors. In addition, half of the teachers do not consider artistic tendencies to be necessary for facilitation of creativity, which disagrees with the student teachers' beliefs in Diakidoy and Kanari's study.

The majority of the teachers see a relation between intelligence and creativity, but the two are not considered to be proportionate. In fact, 85% of the sample agree with the statement that it is possible for a very intelligent person not to be creative which corresponds to the studies showing that high IQ might even hinder creativity (Csikszentmihaly, 1996).

Knowledge, on the other hand, is perceived as an important factor for the process of creativity to take place, the view shared with Sternberg and Lubart (the investment theory).

All of the participants in the study agree on the importance of creativity in the process of language learning. Some ideas are in line with Chomsky (1984), Turner and Fauconnier (2003) who claim that the very nature of language is creative while others see creative activities as a "tool" for motivating students. Although teachers were not asked to define creative activities, it can be concluded from the examples they gave and other answers that creative activities are motivating and fun and as such opposed to "boring" grammar and vocabulary drills. Furthermore, they enable students to create something of their own.

Studies have shown a positive correlation between creativity and students' language proficiency and achievement (Otto, 1998); however, 90% of the teachers from the sample disagree that good students are more creative. Moreover, only 50% believe that creative activities attribute more to students' language proficiency than grammar and vocabulary drills. The other half advocates a balance between the two.

Regarding the connection between creativity and the four skills, the majority agree that creativity is present both in productive and receptive skills. However, like Hadfield and Hadfield (2015) they do find it more prominent in writing and speaking since those skills yield a certain outcome.

Harmer (2001) notes that receptive and productive skills should not be separated which can also be observed in some of the answers teachers provided in the questionnaires.

English language classes are seen by 95% of the teachers as offering a lot of opportunities for developing creativity, but, as was also suggested by Craft (2003), there is room for creativity in every school subject. In line with the beliefs from Diakidoy and Kanari's study, the majority consider schools and Croatian National Curriculum as suppressing creativity. The given reasons differ: some attribute these shortcomings to the lack of time, small and badly-equipped classrooms, while others complain about too much emphasis being put on knowledge acquisition. In comparison, a few underline the importance of teachers, no matter how unfavourable to creativity the curriculum is, in the end it all depends on them.

A short section in Croatian national Curriculum is dedicated to creativity, where it is described as a skill necessary for any individual which has to be developed in all school subjects. However, it can be observed that most of the teachers in the study consider creativity, not as an objective to attain but rather as a "tool" to motivate students and enhance the process of learning.

Another interesting question has been raised during the study, and that is whether elementary school teachers conceptualise creativity in a different way than high school teachers or those teaching in schools for foreign languages. The author did not find any differences but due to a small sample further research is necessary.

4.6. CONCLUSION

Teachers' beliefs in the present study are to a larger extent in accordance with the view that creativity is an ordinary phenomenon that can be facilitated in everyone. Moreover, they do not seem to be in line with tendencies to connect creativity strictly to artistic domains.

According to the results, there is a 100% agreement that creativity does play an important role in language learning process, mostly as a "tool" for motivation.

The majority share the opinion that both teachers and the environment play an important role in promoting creativity and that English language classes offer a lot of opportunities for its facilitation. In contrast, Croatian schools and curriculum are perceived as suppressing creativity. Although the Croatian National Curriculum does describe creativity as one of the objectives to attain, most of the participants believe that too much emphasis is still put on knowledge acquisition. Furthermore, the present findings indicate that creativity is seen more as a way to spark students' motivation and make language learning fun than an objective to attain.

However, in order to get detailed and more precise results, further studies with a larger sample are necessary.

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SAŽETAK

Kreativnost je jedan od onih pojmova koje uzimamo zdravo za gotovo, no vrlo ga je teško objasniti i definirati. Međutim, neoporivo je da ona ima vrlo važnu ulogu u svakodnevnom životu i obrazovanju. Cilj je ovog rada istražiti razmišljanja hrvatskih nastavnika engleskog jezika o kreativnosti, njezinoj ulozi u procesu učenja stranog jezika te načinima na koje je nastavnici potiču na satovima engleskog. Istraživanje je temeljeno na upitniku koji je ispunilo 20 nastavnika engleskog jezika u osnovnim i srednjim školama te školama stranih jezika. Rezultati pokazuju da većina nastavnika konceptualizira kreativnost kao osobinu većine ljudi koja se može poticati u svima. Satove engleskog jezika smatraju bogatim izvorom za promicanje kreativnosti, za razliku od škola i nastavnih programa.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: kreativnost, nastavnici engleskog jezika, motivacija

APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE EXAMINING EFL TEACHERS' BELIEFS ABOUT CREATIVITY AND WAYS OF PROMOTING IT

How long have you been teaching English?

I'm teaching currently in *elementary/ high school/ school for foreign languages* (underline).

PART 1

1. What is creativity for you? Think of the differences and similarities between the following words: creativity, originality and imagination.
2. What do you think is a connection between creativity and intelligence?
3. What do you think how important the prior knowledge is for creativity?
4. Can you think of some famous people you consider creative?
5. Are there school subjects that promote creativity more easily? Are there any subjects where there is no room for creativity?
6. Do you think that creativity plays an important role in language learning? In what way?
(Think of other factors that influence the process of language learning)
7. Think about creativity and four skills. Is there a difference in the role creativity in relation to receptive and productive skills?
8. Can creativity be promoted at all age and proficiency levels in the same way? Please, explain your answer.

9. What do you think is the connection between creativity and motivation?
10. Do you believe teachers can encourage students to be creative? In what ways do you encourage them?
11. How important is the environment (classroom) for promoting creativity? What would be an ideal language classroom for promoting creativity?
12. Do schools (school environments and programmes) in Croatia support or suppress creativity? Please, explain your answer.

PART B

1. Creativity can be developed. Agree Disagree
2. Creativity can be measured. Agree Disagree
3. Creative children manifest their creativity in a variety of domains and in a variety of ways. Agree Disagree
4. Creativity is a characteristic of all people. Agree Disagree
5. Good students (the students that have better notes) are usually more creative.
Agree Disagree
6. Which of the following characteristics and abilities do you think are necessary for a person to be creative?

Need for praise and reinforcement

Autonomy

Intelligence

Imagination

Willingness to accept guidance

Obedience to rules and expectations
Ability to set own goals
Ability to set own rules
Innate talent
Independence
Self-confidence
Fear of failure
Many interests
Critical thinking ability
Analogical reasoning ability
Artistic tendencies
Divergent thinking ability
Convergent thinking ability
Problem finding ability
Need for recognition and acceptance
Need to avoid mistakes

7. Is creative thinking different from the thinking required to solve problems in school?

Yes

No

8. Do you think it is possible for a very intelligent person not to be creative?

Yes

No

9. Which of the following do you think is true?

Creative outcomes are novel for the person and the society

Creative outcomes are novel for the person and the immediate social/peer group

Creative outcomes are novel for the person

Creative outcomes are not necessarily novel

10. With which of the following do you agree?

Creativity can be facilitated in everybody

Creativity can be facilitated only in those who are creative by nature

Creativity is innate; it cannot be facilitated

11. English language classes offer a lot of opportunities for promoting creativity. Agree
Disagree

12. English language textbooks offer a lot of creative activities. Agree Disagree

13. Which of the following environmental aspects do you consider necessary for the facilitation of creativity?

Frequent evaluation of outcomes

Emphasis on knowledge acquisition

Emphasis on intrinsic motivation

Use of external rewards

Frequent praise

Emphasis on autonomy and independence

Emphasis on competition

Choice in assignments

Emphasis on collaborative learning

Frequent and detailed feedback

Emphasis on discovery learning

Opportunities to question theories and assumptions

Emphasis on following instructions

Opportunities to correct own mistakes

Acceptance of all work outcomes

14. When it comes to language proficiency, students get more of creative activities than grammar drills/ vocabulary exercises.

Agree Disagree

Please, explain your answer.

15. Receptive skills do not have any role in developing creativity. Agree Disagree

16. Have you used any of the following creative activities with your students?

- a) students have to make up the ending of a story
- b) students complete famous proverbs in their own words
- c) a task where they have to think of a solution to a problem
- d) students write a poem

Can you give some of your examples?

