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Teaching Methods and Techniques of Developing Creative Thinking of Future Economists and Managers in the Process of Foreign Language Learning

Abstract. *The article highlights the necessity to develop creative thinking of future economists and managers in the process of foreign language learning. Creative thinking is considered as an essential competence of future specialists. Different approaches to the definition of creative thinking are given in the article. The most important components, features and characteristics of creative thinking of students of economic and managerial specialties are presented by the author.*

The article reveals the most effective teaching methods for students' creative thinking development in the process of teaching English to future specialists. A system of language activities aiming to develop creative thinking of students of economic and managerial specialties has been elaborated by the author. It comprises a range of interactive activities such as creative writing, describing a picture, creative projects, brainwriting, finding a connection, creative reading, game-based activities. A detailed description, aim of development of particular creative thinking skills, stages and special recommendations for the successful implementation of the system of language activities are presented in the article. The author underlines a great potential of English classes for the purpose to foster students' creativity and make the process of foreign language learning more interesting, student involved and personally oriented.

Conclusions of the scientific research and further researches are disclosed. It is also emphasized that creative thinking skills of future specialists can be developed in the process of extra curriculum activities. Thus, creation and functioning of students' problem group on creativity development in the process of learning English has been proposed as one of the effective means for fostering students' creativity.

Keywords: *creative thinking, future economists and managers, foreign language study, interactive teaching methods, learning English as a foreign language, effective teaching methods, creativity development, creative thinkers, components of creative thinking.*

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Introduction

Creative thinking is considered to be one of the most demanded and desired ability of a future professional. Therefore, it is essential to develop students' creative thinking at the stage of their study. It will help them to solve problems in future career and also better and easier adjust to different changes that can occur in professional activity. Moreover, creative thinking skills are to be among necessary qualifications of competitive economists.

The ability to think creatively is an important competence of a future economist. Creative thinking skills and the ability to apply creativity in future career have recently been studied by many scientists, that is reflected in modern scientific researches. Thus, Natalia Larraz (2021) viewed creativity as one of the most appreciated learning ability that helps students to achieve an effective and a high-level learning. Ola W. A. Gafour and Walid Gafour (2020) in their study analyzed such components of creative thinking as innovative thinking, problem-solving, critical thinking and underlined the necessity to develop students' creative thinking ability. The authors gave characteristics of creative thinkers, described creative thinking techniques and compared critical and creative thinking processes. Daniela Roxana Andron (2011) stresses upon the promotion of creative ability development of economical sciences students in her study. Brad Hokanson (2017), in his turn, investigated modes of thinking, creative process and creativity evaluation, techniques for idea generation and gave recommendations how to be more creative and express one's own creativity. A. Shegda, T. Onysenko and T. Kravchenko, (2018) researched creative approach to management in modern creative economy. O. Budnyk, P. Mazur, L. Matsuk, L. Berezovska, and O. Vovk (2021) studied non-verbal creativity of Ukrainian and Polish students based upon the index of originality, paying

special attention to the necessity of reorganization of the educational process in higher education and putting in focus the development of unconventional features in organizing the educational process, working out of innovative pedagogical ideas, or teaching techniques (Budnyk et al., 2021). M. Cutajar and S.Cutajar (2016) described the workshop and tasks for fostering creativity based upon such principles as: the association principle, the withholding information principle, the constraints principle, the random principle, the principle of heuristics and the divergent thinking principle (M. Cutajar & S.Cutajar, 2016, pp. 59–63).

In scientific researches the following teaching methods are considered as effective ones in students' creativity development: technology of situational learning; didactic games; projects; problem-based learning; portfolio; problem solving (Shkabarina et al., 2020).

Despite numerous publications devoted to the creative thinking skills of future professionals, the process of creative thinking development of future economists and managers while learning foreign languages has not been investigated to the full extent.

The aim of our research is to study the effective teaching methods of developing creative thinking skills of future economists and managers in the process of learning English as a foreign language.

Methodology

Methods of the research included theoretical study of the problem of creative thinking skills development, interview of students and teachers upon the role of creative thinking for future career opportunities and most effective teaching methods for fostering students' creativity, tests to determine students' creative potential.

Scholars have considered different approaches to the defined problem. Thus, L. Nurlela focuses on two characteristics of creative thinking – a process and a result. The end result is considered to be more important for creativity manifestation (Nurlela, 2015). Brad Hokanson in his turn focuses on divergent thinking as the main feature of creativity as well as collaboration skills, ability to generate a wide range of extraordinary ideas. A. Shegda, T. Onysenko and T. Kravchenko (2018) defined creative thinkers as those active

participants who are able to create ideas that “can be turned into new or innovative valuable products and services”. Natalia Larraz (2021) viewed creativity as an essential competence in the teaching and learning processes. The stress is also made on the incorporation of strategies in the problem-solving process. Daniela Roxana Andron underlined the range of creativity implementation, paying special attention to its role in business and economics: “it is required in developing business solutions, in pertinent decision-making processes in clear and innovative analysis” (Andron, 2011). Creativity is also associated with the ability of an individual who is capable of unconventional thinking, producing new and unusual ideas, creatively and quickly solving problems (Vasylenko et al., 2022). H. A. Avila (2015) suggested such language activities for creativity development as creative writing, working with vocabulary through screenwriting, writing and sharing a speech on different topics students would prefer, asking and answering questions etc.

Results of the research

Taking into account the above mentioned research results we have come to the conclusion that creative thinking of future economists and managers in the process of learning foreign languages can be defined as a complex phenomenon, dynamic formation associated with divergent thinking, which is manifested in the ability to generate extraordinary ideas, collaborate and work in a team, brainstorm, express flexibility of thinking and skills to elaborate and improve one’s ideas or results of foreign language activity. It also implies the tendency and the ability of taking decisions and being responsible for their results, leadership skills and ability to create innovative products.

Among the main characteristics and components of creative thinking of future economists and managers can be named such as: fluency, problem-solving skills, flexibility, collaboration skills, idea generation, self-analysis and self-improvement abilities, leadership skills, ability to take decisions and be responsible for the results.

In the process of the research we have interviewed students of SUET (State University of Economics and Technology) upon their personal opinion concerning the role of creative thinking for their future career opportunities. The results of the interview showed that students themselves consider creative thinking as:

- an ability, that everybody can display and further develop;
- an important quality for any profession, that helps to generate innovative ideas and conduct productive communication;
- something indispensable that is needed everywhere;
- one of the most important skills of a future professional;
- thinking out of the box that depends upon your knowledge, skills and intelligence.

In the course of foreign language training we have worked out a system of language activities aiming to develop creative thinking of students of economic and managerial specialties. The table below presents the information about the type of a language activity, its aims and students' skills to be developed, stages of organization and implementation, some recommendations for the teachers and students how to develop creative thinking more effectively.

Table 1

Foreign language activities for fostering creative thinking development of future economists and managers

A language activity	Aim	Stages of organisation and implementation	Recommendations
Brainwriting	Development of creative writing skills, unique idea generation, skills to express one's own opinions.	1 Preparation (choice of a topic, formulating of a problem, preparation of didactic material). 2 Presentation of an educational problem to students. 3 Writing solutions (both rough and good thought out ideas). 4 Idea analyzing and elaboration. 5 Discussion, competition of ideas.	A thorough preparation and clear formulation of a task are essential. The more ideas the student presents, the better the result is. Discussion of ideas is necessary.
Connection finding	Giving associations and finding the possible	1 Preparation (composing a list of	The result may be a composing a story from

	connections (between words, word combinations), working with synonyms and antonyms.	words). 2 Presenting a task to a group. 3 Working with word bank, composing a story. 4 Presenting students' results to an audience.	a box of words that seem to be not connected from the first sight. You may supply the learners just with word phrases and word combinations and they compose a story by themselves. Students may use similarity and contrast techniques.
Initial draft	Development of communication skills, critical thinking, ability to find the problem and think of various ways to solve it.	1 Students are given the topic for discussion. 2 Learners should write their thoughts into two tables. The first one contains information they already know about the subject (the topic). The other one comprises facts of knowledge they lack about the topic or tend to know. 3 They share their thought with a partner. If one of them is able to answer other student's question about unknown facts he/she fulfills this gap in the area your partner is eager to know. 4 You can share your answers with other groups of students.	Students should be divided into small groups for the topic discussion. The topic should be familiar to them, but learners should lack some facts of information about it. Development of students' communication skills should be fostered (help them with the list if needed, give word bank of phrases or word combinations).
Creative reading	Development of imagination, curiosity, story-telling skills.	1 Students are given a story to read. 2 The story contains an open ending. 3 Learners compose the ending themselves. 4 Discussion stage.	Students may be given a word bank to compose an ending. Discussion of possible endings is necessary to share different ideas, explaining why such an ending was chosen.

Describing picture	<p>Idea generation by means of visual thinking.</p> <p>Communication skill development.</p> <p>Imagination.</p>	<p>1 A teacher finds a photo according to the topic.</p> <p>2 A certain context should be given.</p> <p>3 A teacher may ask questions whether the people or the event on the photo is familiar to the students <i>(Who are those people? Do you know their names? What are they doing? What are they famous for? etc).</i></p> <p>4. The learners may be given a list of words for the photo description (use the following phrases: <i>They seem to, they are considered to be, it is time for them to, I consider them to be, they want to, they are expected to etc).</i></p>	<p>Try to raised students' curiosity.</p> <p>Idea generation and brainstorming are necessary before the photo description.</p> <p>A teacher should supply students with a certain context about the picture (if it is a famous person or an event) for them to get to know the interesting facts about the depicted events.</p>
Creative projects	<p>Development of collaboration skills.</p> <p>Improving creative thinking skills.</p> <p>Improving elaboration skills.</p> <p>Usage of knowledge in professional fields.</p>	<p>1 Students are divided into small groups.</p> <p>2 Learners create their business projects.</p> <p>3 The think about the business plan, choose marketing strategies, thinks of best ways of business promotion.</p> <p>4 Presentation of the projects.</p> <p>5 Answering the questions.</p> <p>6 Choosing the best project.</p>	<p>A teacher choose a topic for the projects according to students skills and syllabus (for example, if you study the topic "Food" students may create a project about the café/restaurant they would own).</p> <p>A teacher should give a plan for the project development (what issues students should discuss: if it is about the café, then speak about the location, the menu, the prices etc.).</p> <p>Discussion is necessary as it helps to think of some necessary issues about the project.</p>
Creative Games	<p>Developing collaboration skills, competition between students, improvement of communication skills (learners practice forming statements, questions, learn</p>	<p>1 Choosing a game-based activity according to the syllabus (puzzles, quizzes, riddles, poem writing, simulations).</p> <p>2 Preparing a game.</p>	<p>Choose the format of a game, it may be connected with a future career of students (conducting a negotiation, a</p>

	to explain etc.)	3 Giving instructions to students. 4 Game itself. 5 Discussing the results, choosing a winner.	conference call, signing a contract, a business meeting etc.). Students themselves may choose the roles. Let learners generate as many innovative ideas and solutions as possible in order to win the game.
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In our research when composing a system of language activities we took into account some recommendations of scientists concerning effectiveness of fostering students' creativity in English language audience: encouragement of a free flow of students' ideas, value of each learner's contribution, support of different ways of a task fulfillment, unexpected questions and answers are respected, you should challenge the students, you may use mixed-language storytelling, students should focus on fluency and clarity rather than on accuracy, equality is important (Heathfield, 2015); exclusion of critical judgment, approval of free imagination, search for a combination and improvement of the ideas offered by the learners (Larraz-Rábanos, 2021); encouragement of teamwork and peer editing, provision of an opportunity for students in liberty of expression, interest, and purpose in the process of carrying out a task (Avila, 2015); giving time for thinking, engaging the emotions, using visualization, adding details and elaboration is important (Clare, 2016).

In our research we suggested the generalized the stages of organising and conducting such language activities as preparation, presenting an educational task or a problem to students, giving instructions to students, conducting the task and final discussion upon the reached results. The presented activities are also aimed at the development of all four skills, which are speaking, writing, reading and listening. It is also important to provide a constructive feedback. N. Larraz-Rábanos (2021) offered such stages of creativity development as presentation of the activity, development and supervision of the creative performance, shared discussion and evaluation. We can also suggest not only teacher's evaluation of the outcomes but also peer review as a as a form of self-regulation. H. Avila

(2015) in her study presented different types of activities arranged in order of complexity, and comprising the development of the four language abilities. Therefore, we also supported the idea that the language activities for fostering students' creativity should also develop foreign language competence.

We have also conducted an interview of students and teachers concerning their attitude towards the most effective teaching methods of promoting students' creative thinking while learning a foreign language. According to the results of the interview of foreign language teachers of SUET and based upon their teaching experience the most effective methods are considered to be brainwriting, creative reading and creative games. Such methods are able to disclose creative potential and, moreover, develop foreign language communicative competence under conditions of their systematic implementation, support of students' efforts and constructive feedback provision. It was also underlined that students were initially reluctant to participate, but later responded very positively to the teaching techniques. The interviewed teachers also noted a significant increase in the number of students with a non-trivial approach to educational problem solving when using the above mentioned teaching methods in their teaching practice. Training systematically with the use of the mentioned teaching methods and techniques equips participants with better tools for their final learning outcomes. According to the students' interview, among the most effective and favorite teaching methods to foster students' creative thinking respondents enumerate such interactive methods as game-based activities, creative writing, creative projects and creative reading.

Conclusion

Development of creative thinking is the most important issues in the process of professional training of future specialists. English classes have a great potential to foster students' creativity and make the process of foreign language learning more interesting, student involved and personally oriented. Foreign language teachers may implement such language activities as brainwriting, creative games, creative projects, creative reading, finding connections and others in order to develop creative thinking of future economists and managers. Such techniques help to improve students' collaboration and foreign

language communication skills, encourage competition between students, stimulate development of imagination, curiosity, story-telling skills, creative writing skills, unique ideas generation, skills to express one's own opinions.

In the frame of the research the interview of students and teachers was conducted in order to get to know which teaching methods and techniques were considered to be the most effective ones in promoting students' creative thinking in the process of foreign language learning. The interview teachers singled out brainwriting, creative reading and creative games while the future economists and managers underlined such methods as game-based activities, creative writing, creative projects and creative reading. Some of the tasks seemed to be challenging as at the beginning stage students were reluctant to show their active participation as they should have followed grammar rules or experienced lack of vocabulary to express their ideas. However, systematic usage of the activities, starting with simple ones like finding connections and then working with more complicated tasks like creative projects, future economists and managers showed better learning outcomes and their personal involvement in the process. Therefore, for the effective development of creative thinking skills teachers should start working with simple tasks and then they move on to more complex ones. Thus, students with the level above Elementary can work with creative reading or creative writing such as dialogues, and participate in extended communicative activities that require spontaneous speech, such as negotiations and game-based activities.

A system of language activities developed in the frame of the research proved to be beneficial as it fostered students' creative thinking abilities and developed their foreign language competence. These teaching techniques can certainly be repeated in any group of students that the teacher encounters.

Further researches are to be connected with the creation and functioning of students' problem group on creativity development in the process of learning English on the basis of State University of Economics and Technology.

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Розвиток креативного мислення майбутніх економістів та менеджерів у процесі вивчення іноземних мов

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***Анотація.** У статті висвітлено необхідність розвитку творчого мислення майбутніх економістів та менеджерів у процесі вивчення іноземної мови. Креативне мислення розглядається як невід’ємна компетентність майбутніх спеціалістів. У статті подано різні підходи до визначення креативного мислення. Представлено найважливіші складові, особливості та характеристики творчого мислення студентів економічних спеціальностей.*

Розкрито найбільш ефективні методи розвитку креативного мислення студентів у процесі навчання англійської мови майбутніх спеціалістів. Автором розроблено систему активностей, спрямованих на розвиток творчого мислення майбутніх економістів та менеджерів у ході оволодіння англійською мовою, що включає низку інтерактивних вправ, таких як творче письмо, опис малюнка, творчі проекти, творче читання, ігрова діяльність тощо. У статті представлено детальний опис, мету й рекомендації щодо розвитку певних навичок творчого мислення, етапи та спеціальні рекомендації для успішного виконання системи видів діяльності з розвитку креативного мислення студентства. Автор підкреслює значний потенціал занять з англійської мови для сприяння розвитку креативності студентів, що також дає змогу зробити процес вивчення іноземної мови більш цікавим, особистісно орієнтованим, допоможе залучити студентів до активної мовленнєвої діяльності.

Оприлюднено висновки наукової розвідки та подальших досліджень. Також наголошується на тому, що навички креативного мислення майбутніх спеціалістів можна розвивати в процесі позааудиторної роботи. Таким чином, запропоновано створення та функціонування проблемної групи студентів з формування навичок креативного мислення в процесі вивчення англійської мови як один із ефективних засобів розвитку їхнього креативного мислення.

Ключові слова: творче мислення, майбутні економісти та менеджери, вивчення іноземної мови, інтерактивні методи навчання, вивчення англійської мови як іноземної, ефективні методи навчання, розвиток креативності, творчість, компоненти творчого мислення.

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