

Second Language Acquisition & Creativity

Maliha Adnan

Lecturer, International Islamic University, Islamabad Pakistan.

ORCID: 0000-0002-4203-233X

Email: maliha.siddiqi.vt9906@iiu.edu.pk

Received on: 05-01-2023

Accepted on: 07-02-2023

Abstract

This article talks about practical approach to language teaching. Creativity may be used to improve and broaden teaching styles. It familiarizes situations in which students become active and enthusiastic. A creative attitude towards teaching allows students to experience their own learning process and to bring their existing knowledge and skills to class. Teachers should adopt innovative means to teach the language effectively. Classrooms should be updated, curriculum should modernized and teachers should strive to support their students to advance their language learning. In order to be an effective teacher, they need to integrate different learning methods. Traditional methods cannot set aside at any stage, but including some stimulating teaching methodologies will make students motivated. Interesting teaching materials, innovative ideas may be used. Language may be easily learn only through practice. Learners should tryout by communicating with each other so that their errors may be prune. Introducing different tasks would help students to understand the use of language. Now a days students' acquisition of a language is dignify through their ability to communicate rather than their syntactic skill. Using innovative methodologies will lead to a smooth way to learn the language. A creative teacher should teach course books with innovative activities so that this blend would make them dynamic.

Keywords: Innovation, Teaching Methodology, Motivated, Practice, Confident, Efficiently

Introduction:

Language is creative by itself. We can convey an idea through different ways. Every expressed idea can aggravate different situations. Every sentence may be written in a distinctive manner and can be recreated according to the purpose of the speaker. The American psychologist G.W. Allport introduced the term creativity in 1937 after understanding that the psychic substratum of creation is irreducible to skills. (Negoescu, 2020)

From the Islamic perception, creativity may be define as a special attitude that shows craving of work, goal setting, uniqueness, flexibility and above all applying the Divine Principles to all spheres of life. While dealing creatively, one should ensure that his or her work should not contradict Islamic Principles. At the same time, they should deliberately effort to raise Islamic societies. (Faizuddin & An-Nuaimy & Al-Anshory 2016).

Importance of Second Language Acquisition observed after Second World War. Britishers worked very hard to promote English language in their colonies. The University of Southern

Second Language Acquisition & Creativity

California's Steven Krashen, who is a specialist in language development and acquisition, developed the theory of second language acquisition.

Krashen (1981) recommended that second language is effectively learned when the conditions are similar to those prevailing in first language acquisition: that is, when language input is above the ability of the learner; and when opportunities are provided to involve students in meaningful use of that language in a strain free environment. Teachers should think of different activities to enable students to think and react actively and confidently. (Anil, 2017) "Good teaching happens when competent teachers with non-discouraging personalities use non-defensive approaches to language teaching and learning and cherish their students."

(Alatis)

The role of a teacher is unavoidable. Teaching is both mental and social. It is also practical, behavioral and spiritual. In short, teaching is very complex and influential. Teachers need to investigate and judge about their performance. They need to reflect on what they do and at the same time research about others methodology so that they can improve themselves. They need to interact with each other, and try new practices or devise the best method of teaching. (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). It is very difficult, to use only one method in a language class. Teaching techniques and syllabus should be updated according to the interests of learners. (Anil, 2017) Similarly, language classes are not limited so language teachers can formulate their lessons on topics related to daily life and amusement while still focusing on language. That is how students and teachers exchange their knowledge and language classes can easily involve students in creative situations. While thinking about a language teaching, three elements should be kept in mind: Engage, Study, Activate. Every activity or exercise should be part of a lesson that fit into these groups.

The teacher should try to engage the students from the very beginning. A good way of doing this is through activities called warmers. A warmer is a short activity that requires an active involvement from the students." (Acklam, 2000).

Teachers need to plan for an efficient and professional way of teaching. Creative techniques for grammar practice, will inspire students. It will increase their confidence by proving that they can use the language with ease. And it can increase retaining of the grammar items by leading to a deeper understanding of the language. Fostering creativity can range from simple team-building exercises to complex, open-ended problems that may require a semester to solve. (Maley & Peachey, 2015). Similarly, creative writing helps language development at all levels: grammar, vocabulary etc. As learners handle the language in interesting ways, they engage the language at a deeper level. (Maley & Peachey, 2015)

Characteristics for Being Creative:

- Lateral thinking
- Flexible approach
- High productivity
- Originality
- Variety of solutions
- Independent point of view

Second Language Acquisition & Creativity

Objectives of Study:

Objectives of this study is to highlight different techniques through which second language may be taught, in such a way so that students take interest and initiative by their own selves. The process of second language learning should be smooth and gradual not forceful.

Review of Literature:

After Second World War Britishers paid a pivotal role in expanding horizons for language teaching and learning. They worked very hard to provoke people to learn English language and they are still working on it. In this regard BBC and The British Council launched series of different books elaborating innovative ideas for second language acquisition. Some of their work is mention here:

1- “Teaching Materials from the Literature Department of the British Council”

(2001): In this book, different innovative ideas are given through which Creative Writing in second language (English) may be taught in a joyful manner. While using these techniques second language acquisition becomes easy and students do not feel any kind of boredom. Writer has presented these activities in detail and every step is mentioned very clearly so that no ambiguity is left behind. These activities are of 6 different types (Programs), which include: Weaving Texts, Images, Stories and Effects, Characters, (Re) Construction, Experience and Observation. Each program starts up with a “warmer activity” which is indispensable to gain learners’ attention. So it can be seen that this book is quite comprehensive. But still it includes some activities which cannot be applied especially in Pakistan. According to the experts teaching a language means teaching a culture so I felt need of a study with reference to Pakistani society and Pakistani culture.

2- “Innovations in the continuing professional development of English Language Teachers”

Edited by David Hayes, British Council, (2014): This book is a blend of case studies of different countries, like: India, Uzbekistan, Australia, Brazil, Chili, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Greece, Oman, Bangladesh, South Korea and Bulgaria. It describes how they are working on the professional development of their language teachers, so it has become an analysis of these countries’ education policies and systems. It does not have anything about teaching second language, its methodology or conducts.

3- Creative Writing from Theory to Practice, by: Faiza Abdalla Elhussien

Mohammed: This article was published in Arab World English Journal (volume: 10, Number: 3, September 2019). It is about developing creative writing skills in the students of Majmaah University, Saudi Arabia. It was conducted in the academic year of 2018 – 2019, in Zulfi College of Education, Majmaah University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Samples of 64 female students were taken, which were divided into two groups. First group was taught advanced writing course supported by the creative writing multitasks designed by the researchers, while the second group was taught usual syllabus. After completion of subject matter, it was observed that students had a significant impact of creative writing competence, while using multi task approach.

4- Teaching Pronunciation: Revisited, By: Mohamed Basil Al-Azzawi: This article was published in Arab World English Journal (volume: 6, Number: 4, December 2015). It seems by the topic that it is about teaching pronunciation. The research imagines that

Second Language Acquisition & Creativity

pronunciation is teachable, both separately and in conjunction with other skills for fluency and accurateness by experienced teachers. It may be taught with integration of listening, speaking skills and grammar. It was also observed that pronunciation should be taught at more than one levels. Another aspect is that if teachers are expert in phonetics then they can teach it in a better way so it is related to Applied Linguistics.

5- Creativity in Language Teaching, By: Jack C Richards: This article was published in Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research, Urmia University in October 2013. This article discusses importance of creativity in language teaching. According to the author in second language teaching, creativity is linked to levels of achievement. Ability to carry a creative temperament leads to effective teaching. Student-centered and open-ended elements bring creativity in learners. The concept of creativity in language teaching is discovered from three perspectives: the qualities of creative teachers, how teachers apply creativity in their lessons and how creativity can be supported. On the whole it is a very comprehensive article and it covers complete theoretical knowledge about creativity but it does not refer to any practical activities through which creativity may be implemented.

Hypotheses of the Research:

Few hypotheses are produced in this research, which are as follows:

- 1- Today's teachers are not proficient in their teaching methodologies.
- 2- Teachers have failed to provide good coaching to the students in the class.
- 3- Language teachers are lacking in implementing latest trends and techniques in their lectures.

Research Methodology:

Research methodology in this article is based on document analysis and writers' personal experiences. The data was collected from books, articles, Google websites, research and reflection on community particularly in Pakistan. The data was analyzed by using the qualitative content analysis method.

Creative Acquisition of Second Language:

If teachers give chance to use target language through different ways, it can accelerate the learning process. It's important to have diversity of usage at the practice level. To improve fluency students need to use target language through different activities and tasks like discussions, projects and writing activities such as writing letters and keeping a diary. Warmers are being used at the beginning of lessons just because:

- A warmer is an interesting activity.
- Warmers are meant to be short.
- The main objective is to prepare the student for the class.
- Warmers can be adapted to revise previously studied knowledge. (Acklam, 2000).

Here are some suggestions for warmer activities: (Acklam, 2000).

1- Spot the Difference: Divided the students in groups. All the 'A' students are given one picture and all the 'B' students are given the same picture, with a certain differences. These kinds of pictures may be find in newspapers and magazines. If nothing is available you can make simple drawings. Students do not show their picture to each other, but describe to

Second Language Acquisition & Creativity

find the differences. Give a time limit to them. This activity may be used to practice the use of prepositions and grammar depending on the selection of pictures.

2- Describe and Draw: Put the students into pairs. Give student 'A' a picture. He will describe his picture to student 'B' and he will try to draw it. 'A' should not show his picture, but 'B' can ask questions. The pictures should be difficult to define. At the end, let the pairs compare the original picture with the drawing. Then change the roles and give student a different picture. This is an interesting exercise which can provide a wide variety of practice.

3- Picture Presentation: The teacher can lead to the subject by telling an imaginary story with the help of pictures. In this activity the teacher shows first picture to the students and asks them to describe what they have seen. Then the first picture is taken away and the second is shown. The students are asked to describe the second picture in the same way. The teacher then pastes both pictures on the board and asks the students if they can link the two pictures. It may be possible for the teacher to provoke. Teacher may ask the questions.

It is important that at the ending of a lesson students should have some sense of attainment. Some teachers give a review of the day, highlighting the main features. This is a good way to revise and give the students a clear sense of the day. It is also possible to finish the session with activities similar to warmers. The aim here is not to warm up but to end up the lesson with an entertaining activity. (Acklam, 2000).

Other creative adaptations to course books include:

- Students should interpret a text.

- Students may pretend interviewing the characters prevailing in a text

- Students should develop a manuscript by re-writing it from a different viewpoint. (Maley & Peachey, 2015).

Similarly, if students are studying a certain topic in another subject, language teacher can opt that topic like history or physics and students can collect information relevant to their other subjects in the target language. (Lewis & Hill, 1985).

Activities Leading Towards Creativity:

1- Picture Presentation:

Take a picture of a man or a woman. Ask the students to accumulate a fictional life history. You can ask questions from students like: what is the name, how old he or she is, where does live, what does do, what are hobbies, children, and marriage and so on. The rarer the story is, the more interest they will take. So cheer them to use their minds.

Write their responses on the board, but not the whole sentences – only a single word which summaries the whole sentence. For instance, what does he do? He's a teacher - write just 'teacher'. Add date and time also so that the words 'for' and 'since' may be added later. Then ask students to make a sentence using the two words for example 'postman', '1985'. Write the sentence derived by student on the board and explain the language. If the student cannot suggest the sentence, write it yourself. Do this drill again with the word 'for' and compare difference between the two examples. (Acklam, 2000) In this way students play an active role with keen interest in this procedure. They arrange for all the data that the teacher want to show about the target language. The teacher try to prompt it from the students.

2- Memory Test:

Ask students to recall their previous day and find a time when they were emotional, unhappy or very pleased. Ask them to note down this time and the reason behind it e.g. 'around nine

Second Language Acquisition & Creativity

in the morning'. Tell students to write it on the board and use it to describe on a timeline. Make a grammar exercises using students' stories, e.g. put the prepositions at the right places.

3- Exploring Interesting Texts:

Ask students about their fields of interest and to search for related texts. Read the samples before the following session. Compare the texts of the class. Choose a text and ask students to paraphrase it, identifying the main ideas in each text. Vote for the most interesting text, the least understandable text, a text with the highest level of past tense, with widest range of vocabulary, or any other feature the class would like to focus on.

This style of teaching have several advantages for both teachers and students. Teachers do not have to search for the 'best' material for teaching. They get a database from their students. Students, on the other hand more actively get involved in searching for the texts. Each student works in his own area of interest. Students have to make decisions and present their results to class and should be ready to face the reactions. (Maley & Peachey 2015)

4- Peer Review:

Write three to five sentences on a given topic on a sheet of paper. Pass the paper to the person sitting next. Read the text and suggest two changes. Students can write a synonym or they can correct a mistake if they find. Then they can pass it on in the same direction. Return paper to the author of the original texts. The original authors read the suggested changes carefully. Discuss what types of changes they like the most, and which they do not. This activity realize the students that an idea can be written in many different ways. (Maley & Peachey, 2015)

5- Real - Life Grammar:

Grammar is related to drills and students work in uninteresting and uncreative situations to apply certain rules and their answers may be correct or incorrect. The following activity engages students in creative situations to make them successful. Show students some grammar feature in real-life use in a book, text or any audio material. Ask students to search for similar examples of the grammar feature they have just seen in your example. Ask students to share those samples by posting them (or their links) to the course online space.

6- Vocabulary Activities:

- **Similar Words:** This activity help students to focus on similar words. Divide the class into groups. Ask students to write similar words for a particular one (e.g. tell) in ten minutes. Check the highest number of similar words searched. Discuss the differences between the similar words and their use. Ask students to use these similar words in their own sentences.
- **Groups of Words:** Ask students to write the words that are related to some situation in five minutes (e.g. name all the mammals). Ask students to divide the mammals into different categories. Each group will present its own category with examples. Discuss the criteria to divide mammals into categories. A great advantage of this activity is that students share and develop their vocabulary without any previous input from their teacher." (Maley & Peachey, 2015)

7- Picture Composition:

Students must develop their observation and then they have to arrange their ideas in a sequence using vocabulary and grammar concepts. Teacher should select a picture according to the level of the students. The teacher will show a picture before students to observe or he may give a list of words to write paragraph on the picture. The teacher may ask students to develop the composition in their own words. The teacher can give them unarranged

Second Language Acquisition & Creativity

sentences as well and ask them to rearrange them to make a good composition. The teacher may also give a list of questions in a sequence. Then he may ask students to write answers while looking at the picture.

The teacher may also give a picture and complete composition having blank spaces and ask the students to fill it appropriately. The teacher may also give a picture to students and points related to picture and may ask them to write complete composition.

8- Sharing One's Own Feelings:

It is important to know one's own feelings and let others know about it. Give some situations and ask students to express how they would act in those situations.

"What if I ...?" Through this kind of activity students anticipate their own feelings. Being divided into groups, the students have the opportunity to exchange their emotions about particular situations. Students are asked: What if you were in that situation? How would you feel? What if that happened to you? This activity motivates the students' creativity. This kind of activity is quite suitable and it requires students to put themselves in circumstances already established. CDs or DVDs may also be used in this activity. We can give images without sound, penetrating students to imagine dialogues. It will prepare them for unforeseen situations. (Negoescu, 2020)

9- Newspaper:

Newspaper is an important instrument to teach a new language. Reading newspaper should be a habit and it will help them to improve their vocabulary. It can be read according to the interests of the readers. Every reader's interest is being served. Students have a wide range of newspapers. Ask students to bring a newspaper to the classroom. Divide the class into small groups and select an article from the newspaper. Ask students to read the selected passage and underline the difficult words, Ask students to provide synonym to each word then ask students to read the revised passage. In this way multiple words boost their vocabulary and they may have a wide selection a words.

10- Show and Tell:

Ask students to bring an object to the class like photos, souvenirs, artwork they have made. They show it to the class and tell about it, describe the object and discuss about it, like

1. I got this when I was in _____.

2. My grandmother gifted me.

3. I like it because it's cute.

4. This is a souvenir from USA.

5. This reminds me when I was in China.

Then everyone asks about it different questions. (Erdelyi)

11- Topic-Oriented Activity:

Present an issue which is related to real world. Usually issues are talked about by the cooperation of participants. Similarly topics of issues varies from culture to culture because each culture has different norms and principles. Each student should be given chance to talk about and teacher would guide them if they were misled by their own cultural background. (Dai, 2011).

This activity may also be repeated by asking an open-ended question from students and ask them to give the best choice. (Whenham)

*Second Language Acquisition & Creativity***12- One-Minute Paper:**

At the end of the class, ask students to record their most eye-opening questions. This activity reflects their skills and you will get an idea about their understandings and misunderstandings, which will redirect you in future.

13- Re-Writing:

Ask students to write one of their favorite tales from other character's perception, such as changing from first person to third person. Similarly story may be given a different ending. Students may be asked to expand the story. (Pang, 2015).

14- Cloze Procedures:

This activity is basically used to test reading comprehension. Take a passage. Remove every nth word and replace a blank with it. Ask students to fill these blanks with the words which are grammatically and semantically appropriate. It may be used as problem-solving in group work. It requires good guessing and awareness of language skills as well. (Qadir, 1984).

15- Questo - Composition:

It is a composition based activity. It may be done through different ways and teacher can give various hints to accomplish the task for example:

- 1- Teacher sticks a picture on the board and reads a passage about it twice. Then he writes some questions about it on the board and students have to answer them. It is a test of their listening and writing both.
- 2- Teacher writes a short passage on the board and students read it. Then the passage is erased and teacher writes a list of questions on the board and students have to answer them.
- 3- Teacher reads a passage in the class a few times and writes the questions. The answers are discussed orally then students have to write them. Due to these methods level of composition increases. (Qadir, 1984).

16- Class Composition:

One student goes to the board and act as a class transcriber. The teacher asks questions about classroom, for example: How large is your classroom? What are the colors of walls and ceilings? How many windows and doors are there in the classroom? Transcriber will write the answers on the board after discussing them with his fellows and they can correct his mistakes, either of spelling or of grammar. After he has written all the answers, composition is completed and the class may decide if any sentence may be added or improved. When all of them are agreed, they can copy the composition. When they do it, they may be given to write the composition on the same pattern in their home works, describing their bedrooms or study rooms. (Rasool, 1984).

17- Role-playing:

Give each student role of a person affected by a problem and ask them to study the issue from the perception of that person. Provide complete description of the role to the students so that students can play their role confidently.

18- Questionnaire:

Students may be asked to fill a simple questionnaire, such as given below, then students exchange questionnaires and report the results of each other's. (Lewis & Hill, 1985).

My birthday is on _____

-
-

My hobby is ____

The nicest time of my life is _____

Second Language Acquisition & Creativity

because_____

- The three most important dates for me are: __ , __ , and because _____.

19- Food Recipe Exchange:

During this activity the students learn how to describe making of food, they talk about food, and follow recipes in the target language. They write their favorite recipe, using the recipes they had seen or studied in class. The learners prepare their dishes at homes, and brought them to enjoy a lunch. After lunch, the teacher provides the learners a recipe book consists of all the recipes the learner's had submitted. The teacher can add his favorite recipes. The students were cheered to discuss the recipes with each other using the language they had learned. This activity provides an outstanding and soothing end of the session.

Recommendations:

- 1- Weekly lesson plan with healthy activities should be made.
- 2- Time should be provided to students to accomplish activities.
- 3- Teachers should be sincere in conveying.
- 4- Teachers should share interesting and relevant information.
- 5- Teachers should play a crucial role in thought provoking.
- 6- Teacher should create a friendly atmosphere in the classroom.
- 7- Teacher should encourage ideas from the students.
- 8- Teacher should give enough space to students to think and develop their thoughts.
- 9- Teachers should involve students keenly.
- 10- Teachers should provide such sort of curriculum, which lead them towards learning not examining.
- 11- Language classes should not be confined by any specialized topic. Teachers can figure their lessons on topics related to daily life or different subjects like management, law or philosophy. So students and teachers can share their individual knowledge and interests.
- 12- Students should be given plenty of practice time and after that they are expected to write freely.
- 13- Students may not left alone to solve creative activities, rather they need proper guidance otherwise process of learning will be simply wastage of time.
- 14- Activities should designed to study and use second language in a fun and creative way.

Conclusions:

Second language can be learn creatively and the learners can use the language actively if they have been provided practical chance. Teachers should receive specified training, how to practice the language activities and how to encourage their learners to practice the language. Similarly, they should have training workshops on how to use textbooks creatively. Consequently, successful language activities should be inserted in the textbooks, well played by teachers through a collaborative environment. So it should be duty of textbook writers and teachers to foster creativity in an active way. The creativity and innovation should be considered as critical skills that need to be grasped by the learners to survive in this era of knowledge, science and technology. Therefore, teachers have to plan activities that provoke their students to return to learning strategies.

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Second Language Acquisition & Creativity

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