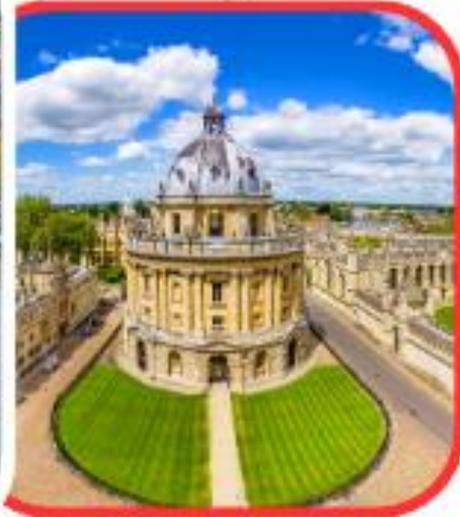




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CREATIVE TASKS FOR KIDS

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ANNOTATION: This article explores the concept, significance, and practical implementation of creative tasks in children's education. The paper examines various types of creative activities, their psychological and pedagogical foundations, and how creativity enhances cognitive, emotional, and social development in children. The study also highlights methodological recommendations for teachers, innovative classroom strategies, and assessment approaches to effectively incorporate creative tasks into early and primary education. The findings indicate that creative tasks play a crucial role in fostering problem-solving, imagination, communication, collaboration, and motivation among learners. Finally, the article provides examples of creative tasks and international best practices to improve children's creative learning environments.

KEYWORDS: Creative tasks, children education, creativity, cognitive development, imagination, problem-solving, pedagogical methods, learning activities, early childhood education, innovative teaching, constructivism.

Introduction

In contemporary education systems, developing creativity in children is considered one of the essential objectives. Creative tasks provide learners with opportunities to explore, invent, design, and express their ideas in unique ways. According to many scholars, creativity is a vital component of 21st-century skills, alongside critical thinking, communication, and collaboration [Robinson, 2011]. Modern pedagogical approaches emphasize that early and primary education is a critical period for cultivating creativity, as children during these years possess high levels of imagination and curiosity [Guilford, 1967]. This article discusses the role of creative tasks in children's education, the psychological and pedagogical basis of creativity, types of creative activities, methodological guidelines for teachers, and evaluation strategies. Practical examples and international experiences are also included.

1. Theoretical Foundations of Creativity in Children

Definition of Creativity. Creativity is commonly defined as the ability to produce ideas, solutions, or products that are novel and useful [Runco, 2004]. From a psychological perspective, creativity involves divergent thinking, imagination, and flexible problem-solving [Guilford, 1967]. In pedagogical terms, creativity refers to engaging children in activities that allow them to





express individuality, discover new concepts, and construct their own understanding of the world [Vygotsky, 1978].

Importance of Fostering Creativity in Childhood. Early childhood is a sensitive period for developing creativity due to rapid growth in neural connections, emotional responsiveness, and exploratory behavior [Piaget, 1959]. Research shows that children who regularly engage in creative tasks demonstrate:

- Higher problem-solving ability
- Enhanced language development
- Increased self-confidence
- Better collaboration skills
- Stronger cognitive flexibility [Sawyer, 2012].

Creativity also helps children cope with challenges, regulate emotions, and engage more deeply in learning processes [Craft, 2005].

2. Pedagogical Principles of Creative Tasks

Creative tasks must align with child-centered pedagogical principles. These principles include:

Constructivist Approach. Constructivist theory asserts that children construct knowledge through active exploration and meaningful experiences [Vygotsky, 1978]. Creative tasks support this theory by encouraging hands-on learning, experimentation, and discovery.

Individualization and Differentiation. Every child possesses unique abilities and interests; therefore, creative tasks must be adapted to individual learning styles and developmental levels [Tomlinson, 2003].

Learning Through Play. Play is a natural learning mechanism for children and provides opportunities for creative experimentation, role-play, and imagination [Bodrova & Leong, 2007].

Inquiry-Based Learning. Creative tasks often involve problem-based and inquiry-based learning, which allow children to ask questions, investigate, and generate solutions [Bruner, 1966].

3. Types of Creative Tasks for Children

Creative tasks vary across subject areas and developmental domains. The following categories are commonly used in educational settings:

Artistic and Visual Creativity: Drawing, painting, collage, Clay modeling, Handmade crafts, Recycled-material construction, Designing posters or storyboards. Such activities develop fine motor skills and visual imagination [Lowenfeld, 1970].

Language and Literary Creativity: Storytelling, Creative writing, Poetry composition, Role-play dialogues, Dramatization. These tasks enhance vocabulary, narrative thinking, and communication [Cameron, 2001].

Musical and Rhythmic Activities: Creating melodies, Using simple instruments, Improvising rhythms, Singing and movement activities. Music significantly contributes to emotional and cognitive development [Hallam, 2010].





STEM-based Creative Tasks: Simple experiments, Building Lego structures, Designing prototypes, Engineering puzzles, Creative problem-solving projects. Such activities strengthen logical thinking and innovation skills [Maker, 2003].

Social and Collaborative Creativity: Group projects, Peer problem-solving tasks, Cooperative art, Role-play scenarios. Collaboration fosters communication, empathy, and social intelligence [Johnson & Johnson, 1999].

4. Psychological Perspectives

Divergent Thinking. Divergent thinking is the ability to generate multiple solutions for a single problem [Guilford, 1967]. Creative tasks stimulate divergent thinking through open-ended activities.

Imagination and Symbolic Thought. Imagination helps children visualize possibilities, transform objects, and create stories. Symbolic play strengthens abstract thinking [Piaget, 1959].

Motivation. Intrinsic motivation plays a vital role in creativity. Children must feel autonomy, competence, and emotional safety to explore freely [Deci & Ryan, 2000].

5. Practical Classroom Strategies

Open-Ended Questions. Teachers should encourage children to think creatively using questions like: “What else can we try?” “How can we make it different?” “What might happen if...?”

Creative Corners. Setting up learning stations such as art corners, building blocks areas, storytelling zones, and STEM tables increases creativity and independence.

Use of Everyday Materials. Simple objects (paper rolls, buttons, cardboard, leaves, stones) stimulate resourcefulness and imaginative thinking.

Integrating Technology. Digital drawing tools, child-friendly coding apps, and educational games can enhance creative learning [Resnick, 2017].

6. Sample Creative Tasks

Task 1: “Invent a New Animal”. Children create an imaginary animal using drawing or clay, describe its habitat, food, and special powers. Task 2: “Build a City of the Future”. Using recycled materials, children design a model of a futuristic city. Task 3: “Magic Story Box”. Teachers prepare a box with random objects; children must create a story connecting them. Task 4: “Science Mystery Bag”. Children experiment to identify materials through observation and simple testing.

7. Assessment of Creative Tasks

Creativity assessment should focus on:

Process Over Product. The goal is not perfection but exploration and originality [Amabile, 1996]. Observation and Rubrics. Teachers evaluate idea originality, effort, collaboration, problem-solving, and imaginative thinking.





Self-Assessment. Children reflect on their work, what they enjoyed, and what they learned.

8. International Best Practices

Finland. Encourages play-based learning and integrates art, music, and movement across subjects.

Reggio Emilia (Italy). Focuses on self-expression, community projects, and creative use of materials [Edwards, 1998].

Montessori Approach. Promotes independence, sensory exploration, and hands-on creativity [Montessori, 1967].

Conclusion

Creative tasks play a crucial role in children's overall development. They nurture imagination, emotional well-being, cognitive flexibility, and social skills. Teachers must design child-centered, open-ended, and engaging creative activities that encourage exploration and meaningful learning. By integrating international best practices, inquiry-based methods, and diverse task types, educators can effectively cultivate creativity as a core competence in early and primary education.

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SOME DIFFICULTIES OF USING THE MOTHER TONGUE IN THE ENGLISH CLASS

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ANNOTATION: This article explores the main difficulties that arise when using the mother tongue in English language classrooms. While the L1 can facilitate comprehension, reduce anxiety, and scaffold learning, excessive or unstructured use often leads to reduced exposure to English, dependency on translation, fossilization of errors, and decreased communicative competence. Drawing on pedagogical theories and classroom research, the paper analyzes psychological, linguistic, and methodological factors behind these challenges and suggests balanced strategies for effective L1–L2 integration.

KEYWORDS: Mother tongue; L1; English classroom; language interference; communicative competence; code-switching; translation dependence; EFL teaching; bilingual instruction.

Introduction

In recent decades, the role of the mother tongue (L1) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms has been widely discussed. Some scholars argue that the mother tongue is a valuable pedagogical tool, while others emphasize that too much reliance on L1 hinders language acquisition. The debate originates from differing teaching methodologies, from Grammar-Translation approaches to communicative and immersion-based methods. Despite the benefits of occasional and strategic use of L1, teachers and researchers continue to identify several difficulties associated with its use in English lessons. This article examines these challenges in depth and evaluates their implications for EFL teaching and learning practices.

1. Insufficient Exposure to English

One of the most significant issues is the reduction of English input in the classroom. According to many acquisition theories, the primary condition for learning a foreign language is extensive exposure to meaningful target language input. When the mother tongue dominates classroom interaction, students hear less English, which slows listening and speaking development. Krashen's Input Hypothesis emphasizes the importance of comprehensible input for natural language acquisition, which becomes limited in L1-heavy classrooms [S. Krashen]. Similarly, researchers note that consistent immersion pushes learners to internalize grammatical structures more effectively than translation-based learning [A. Brown]. Therefore, excessive L1

