

A GYEREKEK KREATIVITÁSÁNAK FEJLESZTÉSE AZ ISKOLÁBAN, KÜLÖNÖS TEKINTETTEL AZ ANGOLÓRÁKRA

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2015. január 5., Budapest

FOSTERING CHILDREN'S CREATIVITY IN THE YOUNG LEARNERS' CLASSROOM WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON TEFL

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Budapest, 2015.

**”If you’re not prepared to be wrong,
you’ll never come up with anything original.”**

Sir Ken Robinson

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Introduction

The Importance and Actuality of the Topic

The topic of this essay is a look at the theories on children's creativity and their application in the young learner's classrooms. First I would like to establish that the term '*young learners*' here means children from age 6 to 12 (URL17). I have chosen this topic because thinking in a creative way is extremely important nowadays especially if we take into account the frequently mentioned, almost trite, but still significant global issues like the climate change, the lack of fuel fossils in the future or the overpopulation of the world (URL1). There are other serious problems also true for Europe and within it Hungary as well as the rest of the continents such as the senescence of the society (*Barakonyi, 2010*) or the high rate of unemployment for instance (URL3). Also these days social, economical and technological changes happen rapidly, so we have to adapt to these changes faster than before. We have to admit that in the solution of these issues and in the adaptation to these changes creativity and educating for creativity have a much more important role. And as if these were not enough, creativity is also important for our everyday life as it can help to solve our problems. That is why I think enhancing children's creativity is essential.

The Aim and Organization of the Essay

The aim of my essay is to present ways of developing creativity according to experts. These may be short-term techniques, methods, games or long-term programs and also useful pieces of advice for teachers including both Hungarians' and foreign experts' views. I included a separate section about how to foster creativity in English lessons, as I will be an English teacher and I wanted to know more about this topic. This also contains activities of different types and useful recommendations. Another important purpose of the paper is to show the role of education in terms of fostering children's creativity. I have also done research among would-be primary school English teachers, practicing English teachers in primary school and university lecturers teaching English about their knowledge of creativity itself and about their attitude towards developing it in terms of TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) as well. My essay will include this research and the conclusions which came about from it.

The structure of my essay will be the following:

The first part is the Introduction where I establish the reasons for my research and the manner in which I have organized this presentation. After the Introduction comes the Theoretical Part with nine sections. In the first one, I discuss different definitions and points of view of creativity according to psychology and pedagogy. In the second, I state the role of schools in the development of creativity. In this part I also write about positive and negative effects, and about the situation of the development of creativity nowadays. The third section gives a general idea about the brief history and the importance of developing creativity. The fourth, which is also the longest section, is about several methods, techniques and strategies for developing children's creativity in schools. These are mainly thinking techniques which are taught in creativity courses and can be applied to teaching. I also write about a few longer term programs enhancing children's creativity in section five. Without attempting to be conclusive, I have included some games for young learners which develop creativity in the sixth section. The seventh contains a few teaching methods which foster creativity as well among other important abilities. The eighth section contains more general recommendations for teachers about creativity development. It does not include concrete methods, but some useful pieces of advice from experts. I included a separate section, the ninth, which contains ideas about how to foster learners' creativity in English lessons. The Research Part includes the details of the research among different groups of teachers. The Conclusion summarizes teachers' different opinions about creativity and the opportunities for enhancing it.

The References section includes all the sources I used for this research. References are both English and Hungarian books, articles and websites.

Hypothesis

I set out from the starting-point that the education system nowadays does not enhance creativity and we need new attitudes and also methods and strategies for developing children's creativity or at least not ruin it. On one hand, I came to this opinion due to my personal experiences. On the other hand, nowadays we can hear more and more about the negative effects of education in terms of children's creativity (URL5). I also have the idea that teachers have their own ideas about what creativity is and how it can be developed in school. In my essay I will also discuss to what degree teachers agree with the statement that *"we are educating people out of their creative capacities"* (URL5) and that English can be an appropriate subject to develop learners' creativity. I will also include in my essay what

teachers can do to enhance learners' creativity. These days fostering creativity has begun to get into focus due to recent studies and results that I will refer to in my essay (URL8). Experts have written books and created new ideas for upbringing and educating children fostering their creativity, so this topic has an extended bibliography and teachers can choose from a variety of useful advice.

Theoretical Background

What Is Creativity?

The word 'creativity' derives from the Latin verb '*creare*' meaning to create, to produce. *Schmercz* (1998) tells us that the social importance of it was recognized in ancient times. For example Confucius carried out systematization about creative persons and Plato regarded creativity as a state interest. Pedagogical and psychological research took place and increased mainly in the 20th century as a criticism of intelligence measuring. First *Guilford* (1959) pointed out that creative persons possess a wide range of qualities that intelligence tests cannot measure. As a result, these persons were often put at a disadvantage in terms of their advancement in school.

Schmercz suggests that creativity is an idea which contains or may contain several other notions. Consequently, creativity has many definitions in professional literature, mainly because experts have different views about it. *Schmercz* also tells us that before the decades of 1998 the definition of creativity was approached from three different points of view: a product, a process or a personal quality. Each expert emphasized different components of it according their point of view.

Guilford (1986) suggests that the idea of creativity is strongly connected to personality. According to him, psychologists are mostly interested in what makes a creative personality. He also tells us that personality depends on the pattern of traits, such as '*aptitudes, interests, attitudes and temperamental qualities*' (p. 1.). These are individual features of every person. He comes to this conclusion: "*A creative pattern is manifest in creative behaviour, which includes such activities as inventing, designing, contriving, composing and planning*" (p. 2.). Accordingly, creative persons are those people who represent the above mentioned types of behaviour to a relatively great extent. He also emphasized the importance of *divergent thinking* (*Guilford*, 1950) in terms of creativity that intelligence test are not able to measure, because they usually require a certain, exact answer. Contrary to convergent thinking divergent thinking means thinking in different directions, and we usually use it when there are more possible solutions to a problem (*Schmercz*, 1998).

Tezci (2008) tells us that creativity has some common features which define it; these are fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration as follows. It was Torrance (1979) who described a common framework for creative thinking.

Fluency: “*Fluency refers to the production of a great number of ideas or alternate solutions to a problem.*” (URL14)

Flexibility: “*Flexibility refers to the production of ideas that show a variety of possibilities or realms of thought. It involves the ability to see things from different points of view, to use many different approaches or strategies.*” (URL14)

Originality: “*Originality involves the production of ideas that are unique or unusual.*”

Elaboration: “*Elaboration is the process of enhancing ideas by providing more detail.*” (URL14)

As Szabó (1994) stated creativity is a kind of thinking that enables people to create valuable products. He adds that other definitions mainly concentrate on the ability of separating our thoughts from ordinary solutions and creating something new and extraordinary. He firmly believes that these kinds of definitions have mistakes. He gives an example as well, about an innovative architect, whose bridge has to meet the laws of mechanics. Therefore if he or she creates a nice bridge, which collapses, then we cannot call it a creative product. In conclusion he claims that the ability of thinking originally has to meet with reality and has to be useful in some way.

Edward de Bono (URL3) points out the same. To quote from him, ‘*the creative idea must have value.*’ He also tells us a similar thought as Szabó, that just being different does not mean being creative. He adds ‘*that is what gets creativity a bad name*’. He also presents the term, as *thinking outside the box*, which means being creative, thinking in an unusual way. The notion of box in this term means that we are all within a box which is formed by constraints, concepts, expectations, rules, and views, so it refers to our usual way of thinking. As de Bono points out, if we can break out of this box, this is creative thinking. *Lateral thinking* is another term he uses and also prefers, which means the following according to Oxford Dictionaries: “*the solving of problems by an indirect and creative approach, typically through viewing the problem in a new and unusual light. Contrasted with vertical thinking*” (URL4).

Csikszentmihályi (2008) differentiates creativity and Creativity. As he writes creativity with a small c contains everyday situations like how to decorate our room nicely before a party or inventing new ways of preparing a certain food. He considers this kind of creativity very important, but he adds that for the flowering of this first we should understand Creativity with a big c. Creativity with a big c in his interpretation is a process, in which a symbolic realm changes in culture. This means that new machines, new songs, new ideas are being created. He also tells us that for creating a creative idea three factors are inevitable: a culture which contains symbolic rules, a person who can take innovation to this system and experts who verify the new idea. His view is completely different from the above mentioned ones, because he does not only concentrate on creative people, but also on other important and inevitable factors, such as culture and people who verify ideas.

There are also pedagogical definitions and opinions about creativity. Referring to Soósne Faragó (2003), creativity is strongly connected to originality and divergent, problem-solving thinking. According to her, it is a part of intelligence. In a broad sense creativity is a tool for achieving self-realization, therefore developing creativity is one the main goals of upbringing.

Réthy and Vámos (2006) connect the idea of creativity with the idea of talent. They state that talent cannot be identified only by high intelligence, but it means something more, and this plus is creativity. Dispositions are the basis of talent, which can be evolved by activities. The possibilities of developing abilities vary between individuals, but personal creativity has also got an effect on talent, as it affects the formation of the abilities and the activities the person carries out. Saving and protecting talent is a very important challenge for education.

Education and Creativity

I have chosen this title for this chapter because the relation between education and creativity is a many-sided theme. Nowadays more and more people think that schools have a negative effect on children's creativity or even that they have not got an effect on it at all. Robinson (URL5) in his well-known *TED* talk states that “*we are educating people out of their creative capacities*”. He points out that children have a great potential for being creative, because they are not afraid of being wrong. As schools stigmatize mistakes, children are becoming to be frightened of committing mistakes, therefore their creativity is being hindered. He also tells us about the hierarchy of subjects in general. According to him, all education systems in the world have some hierarchy of subjects. Usually we can find Mathematics and Languages on

the top of these hierarchies, while Arts are at the bottom. Consequently, academic ability and knowledge predominate. *Atkinson* and *Hilgard* (2005) say that *Gardner* (1983) had a theory about multiple intelligences, and *Robinson* and many other experts suggest that creativity has many sides, too. For this reason, education should encourage subjects like Drama, Music, Physical Education and Dance as well.

Csikszentmihályi (2008) gives us an even more extreme statement. According to him schools, even high schools have irrelevant effect on children's creativity. He came to this conclusion due to his study on ninety-one "exceptional persons" as he calls them, such as well-known Nobel Prize winners. He goes on to explain that the only effect of schools on creativity perhaps is that they threaten with the extinction of curiosity and interest outside from school. He does add however, that some of the people he asked told him that they had had at least one encouraging teacher, for example *Jenő Wigner* the well-known physicist. Some of the persons asked like *György Klein* told him that they cannot recall a teacher who had an effect on their interest. Another group gladly remembers extracurricular activities instead of subject or teachers such as *Robertson Davies*.

Educational psychologist *Kyung Hee Kim* (URL15) conducted research on children's creativity with the help of the well-known *Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT)* involving 300, 000 American adults and children. Results showed that Americans' creativity declined over the last few decades. In the article I referred to, she tells us about the results in details and also about possible reasons.

According to *Kim* the TTCT was developed by *Ellis Paul Torrance* in 1966, but the test has been updated in 1974, in 1984, in 1990, in 1998, and in 2008. This is the most commonly used and most reliable creativity test so far known. The article also says that this test measures creativity broadly, in areas such as art, literature, science, mathematics, architecture, engineering, business, leadership and interpersonal relationships. Unlike IQ tests the TTCT measures more subscales of creative potential, these are the following: Fluency, Originality, 13 Checklists of Creative Strengths, Elaboration, Abstractness of Titles, and Resistance to Premature Closure. According to *Kim* these subscales can be grouped under the three main concepts of creative potential as follows:

1. Lateral/Innovative Thinking factor (Fluency & Originality): see above in the "What is Creativity?" section

2. Vertical/Adaptive Thinking factor (Elaboration & Abstractness of Titles): see elaboration in the session I referred to at point one. Abstractness of Titles means that the person measured uses the thinking processes of synthesis and organization. It also measures if the person is able to catch the essence of the information concluded in the test. This idea is mainly based on the thought that creativity requires abstract thinking.
3. Creative Personality factor (Resistance to Premature Closure & 13 Checklists of Creative Strengths): The former means open-mindedness and intellectual curiosity. The latter includes the following: Emotional Expressiveness, Movement or Action, Storytelling Articulatness or Expressiveness of Titles, Humor, Fantasy, Extending or Breaking Boundaries, Richness of Imagery, Colorfulness of Imagery, Synthesis of Incomplete Figures, Synthesis of Lines or Circles and Unusual Visualization or Internal Visualization.

The results of the test showed that over the last twenty years Americans' creativity decreased in all of the above mentioned factors. (For details, see URL15).

Kim gives us some possible reasons for that (URL15 and URL16). According to her, kindergarteners and first graders are mainly affected by their families rather than school. Home environment can be held responsible in many ways. For instance, children nowadays spend a lot of time in front of televisions, computers, cell phones and video games, so they spend plenty of time wired, using machines instead of spending time with people, or doing outside activities exploring the world. Although there are some TV programmes and games which report some kind of merit or help children explore the world, the majority of these games and programmes do not have real value. Video games for example limit problem solving, and the television makes children passive consumers. It does not foster children's creativity as for example book-reading, where their brains create images while reading. Other problems in terms of upbringing can be contemporary parenting styles. Nowadays many parents tend to over-protect and over-schedule their children, which lays a great amount of pressure upon them. It is also a problem that parents, but also schools and the whole society, tend to be perfectionist, which has got a similar effect.

Kim adds that later on education has a bad effect on creativity due to the lack of creativity development. She also tells us that creative personalities are not really appreciated and tolerated nowadays, for example creative children are also labelled as classroom behaviour problems. *Kim* points out that children with ADHD (attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder)

share common characteristics with creative children, such as being more rebellious, emotionally expressive, spontaneous, impulsive, energetic, excitable and more easily bored than others. That is why creative children are often misdiagnosed. According to what they say, teachers appreciate creative personalities, but in fact they rather feel them inconvenient because these individuals are definitely hard to control. Education system can stifle children's creative opportunities in classrooms in other ways as well, for example, by giving them standardized test, exercises which have restricted solutions, and by prising efficiency more than innovation.

However, some Western European countries and mostly Asia nowadays admitted the importance of creativity, and they also invest money in it. *Kim* mentions that countries such as China, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan have modelled their educational systems after the earlier American one because of America's previous success in encouraging creativity in children, so America should return to these ideas as well.

To sum up; these days fostering creativity has begun to get into focus due to recent studies and results. Experts have written books and created new ideas for upbringing and educating children with fostering their creativity.

Developing Creativity

Mező (2011) tells us that over the past few decades not only defining creativity has got into focus but also some ways of developing it were born. He adds that therefore for the question "Can creativity be developed?" the answer is "yes" or "yes, at least to some extent" as for many experts. The author also differentiates creativity with "big c" and with "small c" (see above: *Csíkszentmihályi*, 2008), suggesting that "small c" can definitely be developed.

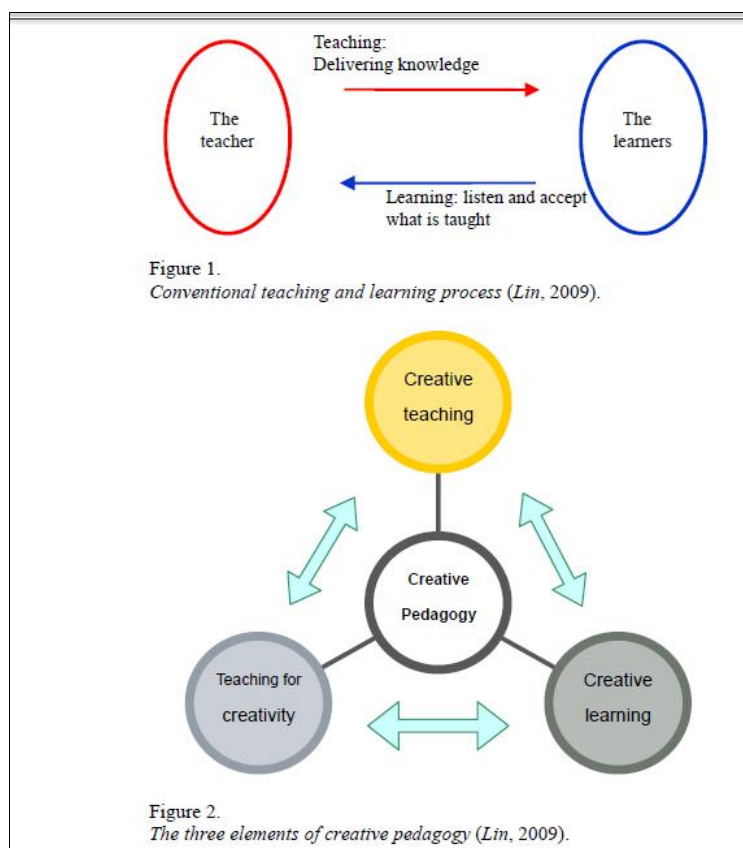
Developing creativity got into the center of experts' interest at the middle of the last century in the time of the Cold War around the Sputnik crisis. Referring to *Dávid* (2002) *Mező* writes that by this time the USA realized the imperfection of its education system, which neglected the development of creativity. As a result, they were left behind compared to the Soviet Union and for this reason considerable research has been made on this topic in the country.

Later on, economy and labour market became determining, therefore in his study the author refers to creative industries which are "*those in which the product or service contains a*

substantial element of artistic or creative endeavour and include activities such as architecture and advertising” (URL 12, p. 3.).

Thus we can see and *Mező* also emphasizes the cultural, economical and social importance of creativity. Over the past few decades the importance of this area has caught the attention of researchers as well, so a wide range of methods have been devised. Among these, there are simple techniques requiring only a few minutes, games and programs which may last for years. We can see that this approach mainly emphasizes the time required for these procedures.

Another approach that we can read in *Fostering Creativity through Education—A Conceptual Framework of Creative Pedagogy* tells us about *creative pedagogy*. *Lin* (2011) tells us that this term means pedagogical practice that enhances creative development and consists of three elements that interrelate: *creative teaching*, *teaching for creativity* and *creative learning* as Figure 2 suggests.



While creative teaching means “using imaginative approaches to make learning more interesting and effective” (NACCCE, 1999: p. 89.) teaching for creativity means identifying

people's creative abilities and also encouraging and providing opportunities for the development of them. The author also states that in terms of pedagogy the main focus is usually on teachers, but learning is an important feature as well. Referring to Torrance (1963) Lin contrasts learning creatively and learning by authority. In case of the former children accept the ideas of the authority (e. g. a teacher) and are told what to learn. The latter uses means as questioning, experimenting, and searching, inquiring, manipulating and even aimless play. Teaching and learning are strongly connected in this idea as during the learning process children need creative skills and if the context involves curious problems it stimulates spontaneous learning, so it leads to learning and thinking creatively. The author also refers to studies which show that creative learning has the following features: playfulness, collaboration, development for imagination, possibility thinking and supportive context.

Methods and Thinking Techniques for Developing Creativity

Here my aim is to introduce some methods for fostering creativity. In this section I include more general ideas, thinking techniques, which are not essentially for children, but serve as well for anybody. These are important for both teachers, who can use them effectively and for children, because many of them can be taught to children if we find the right way to do it. *Davis and Rimm* (1985) believed that these thinking techniques can be divided into two different kinds: personal and standard techniques and both kinds could be developed. While personal techniques are unique, standard techniques, /e. g., brainstorming/ can be learnt in creativity courses. This session is mainly about these standard creative thinking techniques. There is a wide variety of these techniques in professional literature, so I do not intend to include all of them, just a few examples.

Brainstorming

According to *Szabó* (1994) creative thinking has two phases: the creation of the ideas and the evaluation of them. The obstacle to creativity is often in the generative phase, when new ideas are born. The method of brainstorming helps in this part. It is a method by *Alex Osborn*. The main principle is to delay evaluation and think freely, without any negative feelings or criticism. The main rules of brainstorming are the following:

1. Criticism and evaluation are prohibited.
2. The idea of the wilder, the better.
3. The more ideas come to our mind, the better.

4. It is recommended to combine new ideas.

Guilford (1986) also emphasizes the idea of bypassing evaluation. Referring to *Osborn* he points out that the more ideas we produce the higher the probability of having good ones among them we are likely to have, as long as the average quality of the solutions does not decline. He adds that the ideas created later are more likely to be of higher quality than the ones created earlier. *Guilford* (1986) also states that brainstorming is generally used in group thinking, but can be applied by individuals, too. He points out that according to *Torrance* this is the most effective way of improving problem-solving skills.

Cambridge University Press (URL9) suggests that brainstorming can encourage children to share ideas and speak out. It is also important for teachers as it gives instant feedback to them about the knowledge of students. The website also gives us some practical ideas for using brainstorming in the class. These are the following:

- Writing down the ideas by using a mind map drawn on the blackboard.
- Working in small groups.
- Playing some soft music while working.
- Putting on the ideas on a poster which can be used later on.
- Using brainstorming for things which students do not know, but they would like to, making a question poster.

Synectics

This method was designed by *Gordon* and is based on making familiar things unusual by using analogies. There are different kinds of analogies this method uses. In *direct analogy* the person compares the issue to another known system. *Szabó* gives us the following example: when we are thinking about how to build bridges and underwater buildings, we can consider how sea storms form caves; therefore the biological system helps us solve the problem. In *personal analogy* the person imagines himself or herself as a part of the problem, for example an inventor can imagine himself or herself as a big wheel. Both kinds of analogies help innovation in a way that they give us new perspectives.

Seligmann (2007) points out that there is no unity between developmental psychologists concerning using synectics with young children. According to *Piaget's* theory of cognitive

development children at the preoperational stage (around the age of two to seven) have an egocentric way of thinking, which means that they are only able to see situations from their own point of view. However, seeing things from a different point of view is essential for the above mentioned *personal analogy*. Also children at that age are usually unable to focus on more than one or two superficial aspects at the same time. Contrarily, the method of synectics shows similarities with the so-called symbolic plays which are typical of children at this stage according to Piaget. This means that young children may be even more susceptible to metaphorical instruction than children who are at a higher stage of development.

Social-interactive theorists, like Vigotsky think that parents and teachers can have an effect on the child's development. Therefore according to them a child who is not able to draw analogies on his own may be able to do it on his own with assistance and after some practice. Referring to research documents *Seligmann* (2007) says that there are examples for the use of synectics in the fourth grade and in kindergarten as well. She also suggests the use of synectics cooperatively, as it both helps children's own understanding and that of their peers as well. Besides, it also develops social and interpersonal skills and helps to connect the two hemispheres of the brain. Among the drawbacks she mentions that synectics requires a curve in thinking and learning, and for some students it may take some time to let go their general way of thinking. It is also important to create an environment which encourages students to share ideas. The teacher also has to be able to tie student's ideas to the original matter.

The Five Whys Method

Mező (2011) tells us that in case of any problem we should ask "why". After we answer the question, we should ask again "Why is that?" If we repeat "why" five times it is guaranteed that we will understand the substance of the problem. The author suggests that this method contributes to the deeper understanding of a problem. *Mező* says that according to *Kao* (1999) the car manufacturer Toyota has a high opinion of this method.

Scamper

This method was created by *Osborn* (1953). From the point of view of this method creating something new simply means changing something extant. Within scamper there are seven kinds of techniques. These are the following:

1. Substitution: It means using other parameters in case of a certain problem, such as other persons, objects, environment, time, materials, places, approaches etc.
2. Combination: In this technique we combine information we already have, like ideas, appeals, purposes or units.
3. Adaptation: This technique suggests using effective methods which are originally used for other areas.
4. Modifying: Enlarging something physically or in figurative sense using hyperbole.
5. Putting to other uses: *Guilford* (1986, see below) also wrote down a similar method, he called it *attribute listing*. It means using a certain object or a piece of information in a different way from which is generally used.
6. Elimination: Considering substantial information and leaving out not so important ones.
7. Rearrangement: Thinking of a problem from a different point of view or redefining it.

Broaden the Idea

According to *Guilford* (1986) during the sixties and the seventies people working mainly in technology and industry developed methods to enhance the effectiveness of problem solving. The majority of these methods were created without the background knowledge of the underlying psychology, yet there were some successful ones among them. One of the tactics he mentions is broadening the idea which means not narrowing the problem too soon. For example instead of asking, “*How can I build a better mouse trap?*” sometimes it is more useful to say, “*How can we get rid of mice?*” This way we can go into other directions, which may be more promising. He adds that in some cases a seemingly opposed method can be effective, which is breaking the problems into subproblems.

Extended Effort

Guilford simply points out that at the beginning of problem solving we tend to generate a lot of ideas and then the rate of the production of ideas naturally decreases. That is when we should ask: “*What else?*” and think a bit more. Referring to *Parnes* he provides us with the information that according to some studies the second half of the ideas produced contains 78% more useful ideas than the first.

Attribute Listing

This method is also mentioned by *Guilford* and has the effect of reclassifying things. It also makes our ideas more generally adaptable to other less usual uses. A very simple example is the brick-uses task in which other uses of the common brick are listed instead of the usual way of applying it. Some examples: a brick can be used as a paperweight, a doorstop, a hammer, an abrasive or to draw straight lines and to filter water.

Forced Relationships

This method, which is also written down by *Guilford*, aims to connect to different things although the connection between these things was not known before. We can ask, “How can I relate X to Y?” Such inventions like the wheelchair, the clock radio and the amphibious landing craft were invented the same way. This method can be effective when the solution of a problem requires features which belong to different objects and it can lead to useful products. To quote from *Guilford*, “*One would then experience the unusual event of having a solution looking for a problem!*” (p. 14.)

Programs for Developing Creativity

Mező (2011) introduces some programs for developing creativity. These are designed for developing one or more creative sub-abilities. Their duration varies between a few hours and a few years. They may be methodological programs which teach or train techniques developing creativity or programs which expect creative products from their participants. A document is also attached to these programs for trainers containing the aims, the syllabus, the process, and the criteria of the program.

Cropley and *Urban* (2000) show us several programs like this which *Mező* includes in his work and I also write about the ones which can be used in a primary school.

Name (target audience)	Tools	Development goals
Imagi/Craft (Primary school)	Records about staged life events of well-known inventors and explorers	• To make children feel that their own ideas are important • To make children more open-minded • Work orientation (towards jobs requiring creativity)

Purdue Creative Thinking Program (Fourth grade)	Tapes and printed exercises.	• Verbal and figural fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration
Productive Thinking Program (Fifth and sixth grade)	Exercise books including caricatures. These use the principles of programmed learning.	• Problem-solving abilities • Attitude towards problem-solving
Myers-Torrance Workbooks (Primary school)	Workbook.	• Perceptual and cognitive skills that are necessary for creativity
Creative Problem Solving (Everybody)	There are no special materials. It mainly uses brainstorming.	• To find problems • To collect data • To find ideas • To find solutions • Practice
Talents Unlimited (Everybody)	Workbooks based on “inventive thinking”, aiming problem-solving. The emphasis is on brainstorming.	• Productive Thinking • Communication • Planning • Deciding • Anticipation
Khatena Training Method (Adults and children)	There are no special materials – it is simply about the support of teachers.	• Breaking away from the routine • Transposing ideas • Realizing analogies • Rearranging information • Synthetizing ideas

Table No. 1: Programs for developing creativity

The Future Problem Solving Program (FPS)

Mező tell us that this program was established by *Ellis Paul Torrance* and his wife, *Pansy Torrance* in 1974 and its aim is to teach thousands of children problem-solving in America and in foreign countries. According to the *Encyclopedia of Special Education* (p. 20-21.) “it was motivated by the belief that we have reached a point in civilization in which education must devote a considerable part of the curriculum to helping students enlarge, enrich and make more accurate their images of the future” (Torrance, 1980). The concept of FPS is that problem-solving can be developed successfully if we concentrate on the solutions of real problems. In this program children have to work out solutions to global future problems such as issues connected to racial discrimination, wars, epidemics or illnesses. Besides, they also have to make solutions for everyday problems. There are also competitions organized by this

program. First children in groups of four are given three practical problems that they have to solve by brainstorming. Then the solutions are sent to experts who make constructive comments on them. One speciality of this competition is that children participating in it decide on the issues of the one held next year by voting. Referring to *Davis and Rimm* (1996) *Mező* tells us that these are such problems like colonization, space research, the increase in the elderly population, child abuse, mental abilities that differ from the average, drug addiction, sports medication, nanorobotics, e-trade, DNA identification etc. According to their solutions to the three practical problems, teams are invited to a national and then to an international competition.

Games that Improve Creativity

According to *Mező* (2011) Hungarian professional literature does not include so much playful creativity development for young children, but foreign experts provide a wide variety of these games for primary school students as well. These games often do not require any special tools, just paper and pen or simple tools like a balloon or a pebble, or they simply need verbal performance. Referring to *Guilford* (1959) the author lists some activities that can be regarded as games; although *Guilford* used them to examine divergent thinking.

For example:

- Word fluency: “*the ability to produce rapidly a list of words each of which satisfies the specified requirement that it contains a certain letter*” (URL15)
- Association of ideas: for example listing objects which are both round and edible
- Making connections between figural elements, for example letters, symbols of cards
- Exercises like: “*How can we get eight with the help of four smaller numbers?*”
- Associational fluency: “*the ability to produce rapidly words that bear some specified, meaningful relation to a given word*” (URL15)
- Organising stripes or other symbolic elements
- Exercises in which we should finish words or sentences, for example making sentences from given initials
- Adaptive flexibility: for example match problems
- Originality: for example searching for a lot of extraordinary titles for a given text
- Drawing objects from given stripes using as many stripes as one is able to

Mező tells us that of course there are more complex ones among games; it is enough to think of construction games which can be bought in toyshops or softwares or parlour games which may require only mental activity.

Games, developed by the Hungarian association *Kocka Kőr* called *Scientific Challenges* also improve creativity in a way that participants (both children and adults) can reach the creative products of well-known scientists such as Pavlov, Darwin or Einstein because they are given similar visual or semantic signs to the ones that these scientists had. The big question of the game is whether participants are able to produce the same results as those scientists with the given information. This game can also bring scientific thinking closer to children besides improving their creative abilities.

Teaching Methods for Developing Creativity

After discussing some useful thinking techniques I would also like to write about a few teaching methods, which are the basics of teaching. According to experts, these are mainly indirect methods and can enhance creativity among other important skills, abilities and competences.

The Inquiry-Discovery or Problem-Solving Method

Feldhusen and Treffinger (1980) considered this as an indirect teaching method. To quote from them: “*experience with discovery learning enhances creative performance by forcing the learner to manipulate the environment and produce new ideas*” (p. 34.)

Recommendations for this method:

- Supply children with manipulative situations and materials in order to help them begin exploration.
- Provide information sources for children’s questions.
- Provide materials, tools and equipment that start and encourage student’s experimentation.
- Provide enough time for the problem solving process: to experiment, manipulate, share, discuss as well as fail and succeed.
- Provide guidance, reinforcement and reassurance for children’s ideas and suppositions.
- Reinforce and support acceptable solution strategies.

Teaching Methods Based on Co-operation

Co-operative learning is a teaching method in which students work together in relatively small groups (3-6 persons) for a mutual goal. It is usually activity-centred (URL10). According to *Bacskey, Lénárd, Rapos and L. Ritók* (2008) it develops creativity and problem-solving skills among other important competences such as flexibility, adaptability, individual and group learning ability, communication skills and social competences. It also contributes to the deeper understanding of a certain idea. The authors also suggest that this method is extremely effective with heterogeneous groups including underprivileged children.

The Project Method

The project method was first applied by the American philosopher and educator *John Dewey* at the turn of the past century. Later his follower *William Kilpatrick* wrote down its methodology and practical application (URL11). This method is based on the interest and active co-operation of students and teachers solving together a practical problem or processing a certain topic in a complex way and from different points of view. The project is a complex sequence of activities done together and usually integrates a wide range of disciplines. The result of a session like this is a product, which can be an object, a model, a writing, a performance, a presentation or many other things depending on the topic and the participants. Projects can be of different types, such as technical, arts, environmental, economic or research project, which are the commonest ones, but there may be many other kinds as well. The organisation of project has different phases. First children and the teacher have to choose a topic collectively. According to *Knausz* (2001) the topic has to meet both the teacher's expectations and teaching goals and the student's interest. It is essential for the students to be intrinsically motivated. Collective topic selection can be realized and helped by the above mentioned brainstorming technique. The other steps are the following: identifying goals and targets, planning and organizing, and evaluation.

Recommendations for Teachers

Fasko (2000-2001) tells us that *Davis* (1991) and *Feldhusen and Treffinger* (1980) pointed out that it is important to create a 'creative climate', one which enhances student's creativity. The ideas they gave us are the following:

- Encourage students' unusual ideas, answers.
- Create a supportive environment where failures can be used as positive to help students realize their mistakes.
- Whenever it is possible, try to accommodate to children's ideas and interests.
- Provide enough time for children to think and develop ideas as creative ideas are not necessarily produced spontaneously and instantly.
- Establish a warm environment which is built upon acceptance and mutual respect, between children and between children and teachers in order that students be able to share, develop and learn from each other or together and individually as well.
- Consider the role of creativity in other areas and disciplines besides arts such as verbal and written responses, the latter both in prose and poetic style, fiction and non-fiction.
- Provide activities and situations when divergent thinking is necessary. It is important that teachers be directors and resource providers.
- Make children a part of their learning process; let them also have their own choices and decisions.
- Get every student involved and show the value of involvement by appreciating and supporting children's ideas and solutions.

Sternberg and Williams (1996) presented 25 ways to develop creativity in terms of teachers and students, but they alleged that these can be also applied by administrators working with teachers, parents or people trying to develop their own creativity.

Figure 3. 25 Ways to Develop Creativity (p. 5.)

The Prerequisites

1. Modeling Creativity
2. Building Self-Efficacy

Basic Techniques

3. Questioning Assumptions
4. Defining and Redefining Problems
5. Encouraging Idea Generation
6. Cross-Fertilizing Ideas

Tips for Teaching

7. Allowing Time for Creative Thinking
8. Instructing and Assessing Creativity
9. Rewarding Creative Ideas and Products

Avoid Roadblocks

10. Encouraging Sensible Risks
11. Tolerating Ambiguity
12. Allowing Mistakes
13. Identifying and Surmounting Obstacles

Add Complex Techniques

14. Teaching Self-Responsibility
15. Promoting Self Regulation
16. Delaying Gratification

Use Role Models

17. Using Profiles of Creative People
18. Encouraging Creative Collaboration
19. Imagining Other Viewpoints

Explore the Environment

20. Recognizing Environmental Fit
21. Finding Excitement
22. Seeking Stimulating Environments
23. Playing to Strengths

The Long-term Perspective

24. Growing Creatively

25. Proselytizing for Creativity

We can find thorough explanations in the sources cited. However it is essential to present some of these. Modeling creativity means that teachers who would like to develop children's creativity have to be role models for them. Teachers can show students their own creative process to help and encourage children's own creative thinking.

Building self-efficacy is also important, quoting from *Sternberg and Williams* (1996) "The main limitation on what students *can* do is what they think they *can't do*" (p. 8.). Both teachers and parents sometimes express or imply messages not consciously which can have a negative effect on children's initiative and self-confidence. This may be overt or covert communication and can express or imply that a person has not got the ability, the personality or the motivation to do certain things. Hundreds of studies have been done on how teacher's expectations influence student's accomplishment. Among these a well-known one is *Rosenthal and Jacobson's* experiment (in 1968). They told teachers that according to psychological tests some student would bloom and others would not. In fact they choose the "bloomers" accidentally, and the result was that by the end of the year the randomly chosen "geniuses" did perform better than the others. This result is sometimes called the *Pygmalion effect*. The conclusion is that teachers should encourage children and let them know that they possess the ability to solve problems and face the challenges of life.

Another important strategy is questioning assumptions. *Sternberg and Williams* (1996) points out that creative people often question assumptions which are widely shared or accepted. It is enough to think for example of Copernicus' and Galileo's ideas about heliocentrism. In some cases other people realize the value of these ideas after many years. Thus teachers have to teach their students how to ask good, thought-provoking and interesting questions.

Defining and redefining problems are also important strategies. It means that teachers sometimes have to let their students choose their own topic for a project for example as well as their own way of solving a problem. At times they make a mistake and they have to rechoose and redefine the problem. As a result, they learn how to make choices and it also helps them to develop taste and good judgement. Learning to realize a mistake is essential for enhancing creativity.

Teachers should also encourage idea generation by providing enough time and an environment which is friendly and not so critical, and by praising students for their many ideas.

Cross-fertilizing ideas means having cross-curricular activities and thinking across subjects and disciplines. *Sternberg* states that creative ideas and insights frequently result from integrating material across disciplines. This strategy is even more effective when children can link their weak area with their stronger areas or when children can solve a problem related to their weaker area with the help of some borrowings from their strongest ones.

Kim (URL8) believes that our first task before enhancing creativity is to know the ways of preserving it and she also gives us some ideas, as follows:

- Raise Girl-like Boys and Boy-like Girls: The psychologist suggests that creative persons integrate feminine and masculine characteristics, although they often try to meet the role expectations that parents and teachers imply, so therefore they sacrifice their creativity.
- Raise Nonconformists: This means that parents and teachers should welcome if a child questions rules and norms and wants to be different.
- Be Playful: Teachers should not force children to think or act mature, as creative persons are often very playful, flexible and spontaneous.
- Be Ready for Drama: As I mentioned in the session “*Education and Creativity*” creative children tend to be hard to deal with, but teachers should be prepared for this by learning about creativity from books or articles for example.
- Be Less Protective: Children experiencing difficulties are tend to be more resilient and persistent, so *Kim* suggests observing and discussing issues with children instead of preventing them from having difficulties.
- Foster Independence: it is a recommendation mainly for parents, which leads to more independent thinking.
- Travel: Meeting new people, places, cultures or food and speaking more languages enhances open-mindedness and helps to see things from different points of view, thus it fosters creativity as well.

- Give Time Alone: This suggestion is also mainly for parents. It is important for the incubation phase which I also mentioned above in “*Creative Problem Solving Techniques Based on CPS*”.
- Teach in Nonconventional Ways: It is essential to build children’s intrinsic motivation to give them open-minded assignments and to encourage risk-taking and brainstorming.
- Find a Friend: Creative children tend to have imaginary childhood playmates or friends not belonging to their peer-group, which helps them to see things from other perspectives than their peers.
- Find a Mentor: Referring to *Torrance*, Kim tells us that successful creative people often have in their lives at least one mentor who is significant, which inspires them. Books and movies depicting creative individuals can also help children to understand and accept themselves.
- Be Educated: It is important to recognize creative talent and appreciate it. I previously mentioned teachers’ attitude towards creative children in session “*Education and Creativity*”.

Developing Creativity in English Lessons

Introduction

In the previous sections I introduced some general ways of developing creativity in the young learners’ classroom. These methods, thinking techniques, programmes, games, teaching methods and recommendations can be useful regarding every subject in primary school. The aim of this section is to provide some ways of developing children’s creativity in second language teaching, mainly in teaching English to young learners. According to *Sharp* (URL20) creativity is not subject specific. She also points out that contrarily to what the word “creativity” is usually associated with it is not only Arts and Music that help develop it. All the other subjects can be developers as well. However, she adds that the way of expressing creativity can be different in different subject areas. *Craft* (2002) also claims that creativity can be a part of all kinds of human activity or even our daily life including work, art, science and play for example. She adds that everyone has creative abilities which can be different in every person. Therefore, after my literature review about creativity I came to a conclusion that English as a second language can also be a developmental subject in terms of creativity.

Making reference to *Kovács Ilma* (1985) in this section I would also like to establish why creativity is important in terms of language teaching. *Kovács* mentions that *Erdei* (1980) claims that if the aim of language teaching is improving speaking skills, then developing creativity is crucial. She supports this statement with the following explanation: speech production can only be complete if the language learner can choose individually what his or her aim of communicating is and if the person can choose the situation of speaking as well. Therefore speech production needs individuality, independence and own decisions, in other words, it needs creativity. She adds that creativity in this sense has a double role: on one hand, one of teachers' objectives can be to form creative personalities, but on the other hand creativity is a tool for language learners, because it helps improving students' speech production as well.

Other experts like *Lee* (2013) also admit the importance of developing creativity in the field of English education. The author also emphasizes the adaptation of Gardner's multiple intelligences theory to language learning and suggests that *"A variety of activities, therefore, need to be employed in order to nurture language learners' language development and creativity through the recognition and encouragement of the students' multiple intelligences."*

It is important to add that the notion of *creativity* has different interpretations among experts. In my previous section *"What is Creativity?"* I listed some ideas of pedagogues and psychologists. According to *Gyöngyössi* (1985) creativity, from a psychological point of view means being able to apply our knowledge and experience in new situations and contexts. She adds that from a linguistic point of view creativity is an ability that enables us to create new messages. Referring to *Chomsky* she adds that while the elements of language are limited in amount, the possibilities of combining them are limitless, so creativity means being able to combine the elements of language. This kind of creativity is also called *generative creativity* (URL26). From a cognitive perspective *"linguistic creativity is primarily the online activity of making new meaning by a speaker (in the broadest sense of the user of language in all forms and in all mediums), and the re-creation and re-interpretation of meaning(s) by a receiver which "is manifested in all domains of language (lexis, grammar, text and discourse, as well as medium" (URL26).* It is important to add, that according to *Szerencsi* (2010), who cites *Maybin & Swann* (2007) linguistic creativity is an essential and pervasive part of everyday life, therefore it is not only a privilege of the highly educated and gifted. As we can see, there are a lot of definitions of creativity from psychologists', pedagogues' and linguists'. I only

intended to introduce some of these. The authors of the activities mentioned below did not indicate from which point of view their activities improve creativity, but in my opinion these methods can be developmental from different or from more perspectives at the same time.

Activities Improving Creativity

Mayesky (1986) recommends some useful games and other activities for early primary grades that are both creative in a sense of being original and contribute to reach learners' creative potential to the fullest extent. In her book she writes about several subject areas including Language Arts the aim of which is to develop children's language skills. In her book she writes about three main areas of Language Arts: expressive language (speaking and writing), receptive speech (reading and listening) and writing. Although this subject in the United States of America is originally for native speakers, the *International Reading Association* and the *National Council of Teachers of English* published their standards (URL21) of Language Arts in which a separate point was dedicated to students whose first language is not English, and who mainly learn in English as a Second Language program (ESL). Besides, the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR)*, (URL23) also has the following illustrative descriptors: Understanding (Reading and Listening), Speaking (Spoken Interaction, Spoken Production) and Writing, which are basically the same as the above mentioned ones. These are my main reasons to include some of Mayesky's games in my essay, which can be useful in ESL classrooms and I also intend to include a similar division of language skills as hers.

In the Speaking section the author emphasizes the importance of role playing. She also provides some examples of situations: a mother losing her child at the fair, a child missing a bus, a child having her first birthday party etc. Besides role playing storytelling can also be useful. Sometimes we can begin it with open-ended questions, for example: "One day in school John took Ken's eraser and wouldn't give it back. What should Ken do?" These are some storytelling ideas from the author:

- Telling a story and letting learners add to it if they have ideas
- Telling stories by interpreting pictures
- Asking learners to tell a story about their own painting
- Telling stories and letting children anticipate what will happen, then incorporate these in the story

She also provides ways of encouraging conversations and discussions:

- Starting a sharing club: learners can share riddles, stories, books poems etc.
- Stimulating problem-solving by asking “*How would you spend_____?*”
- Initiating enumeration activities, for example with questions like “*How many different ways does an animal get food?*”
- Generate comparisons by asking questions like “*In what ways are hockey and soccer alike?*”
- Using specific topics, for example asking children what they are afraid of
- Asking “What if” questions. For example: “*What if you were a little green frog in a boy’s pocket?*”
- Asking children to retell a fairytale from the villain’s point of view
- Speculating on the ending of a story before reading it

Here are some writing ideas mainly from *Mayesky* (1986), *Lee* (2013) and *Maley* (1997):

- Encouraging learners to make a (daily) newspaper about news that happened to them. Children can write about important events during their day and they can also illustrate them. A chosen reporter can collect them, and they can be read in front of the class (*Mayesky*).
- Beginnings and Endings: the teacher can begin or end a story that learners can complete according to their own ideas. Examples: I like to..., We went to..., Did you ever... or ...so they all ran home, ...but no one could find it (*Mayesky*).
- Using nursery rhymes: dramatize them, asking children to make individual pictures of them or using them for riddles, for example “Who Am I?” (*Mayesky*)
- Fill in the Blanks: using a skeleton story that learners have to fill in. Example from the book (*Mayesky*):

She is a ____ girl.

She has_____ eyes and _____ hair.

She is very_____.

She likes_____, _____ and_____.

One day a _____ thing happened.

She _____. (finish a story)

- Making sentences grow: supplying incomplete sentences to write as many different endings as they can. For example: “*The mouse ran_____.*”(Mayesky)
- Writing from somebody else’s point of view, for example from a family member’s (*Lee*).
- Creative writing: according to *Paul* (2000), *Lee* also suggests creative writing ideas. This includes the sharing of stories, having children in different groups create stories cooperatively, brainstorming with the class in order to find different conclusions to a story, finding synonyms for some words from the story, creating dialogues for characters in groups, acting out the story created, drawing artwork related to the story and collecting each student’s own work in their creative writing folder.
- Word arrays: selecting a short poem consisting of words that are frequently repeated, making an array of words and asking students to compose sentences from these words. The advantage of this method is that students of different levels can participate. Learners on a lower level can create simpler, higher-level students can create more complex ones. Then learners in groups of three compare their sentences and create a new text. Finally, students are given the original text and they can compare it to the one they created (*Maley*).
- Simplifying texts: choosing authentic, but fairly dense texts (for example newspaper articles or extracts from a short story) and ask children to make a simplified version of it in order to enable students on a lower level to understand it. It is a complex and relatively difficult task, but it allows learners to have a deeper insight into texts as they can decide on what makes a sentence difficult, and they may also discover that in order to make a text simpler sometimes it is necessary to make it longer (*Maley*).

Lee (2013), *Mayesky* (1986) and *Maley* (1997) also have some ideas about creativity development through reading activities:

- Hopscotch: Drawing a hopscotch court. Learners have to hop on a square and say a word beginning with the blend in the square. Students may mark their places with buttons (*Mayesky*).
- Bean Bag game: Making up a board on a piece of heavy paper with different letters on it. Pupils have to throw a beanbag, hit one of the letters and give a word that begins with the letter he or she hit (*Mayesky*).

- Describing pictures: *Lee* (2013) recommends introducing picture descriptions or narrative performances. The latter may be used at a higher level using more complex pictures. Well-chosen pictures for narrative performances stimulate students' imagination and they also have to think about various aspects, like circumstances, dialogues or the sequence of events.
- Employing critical literacy: *Lee* (2013) tells us that critical literacy provides students with new perspectives and that they can go beyond the primary meaning of texts. This makes them able to use strategies like reorganizing, analyzing, synthesizing or evaluating their perspectives. Referring to *Rice* (1998) the author lists some useful questions: *Where might you find this text? How can you tell this? What is the topic? What is its purpose? To whom is it written? Who probably wrote it? In what institution? Why was the text written?* etc.
- Using Creative Texts: according to *Lee* (2013) creativity development on English lessons can involve the use of a wide variety of texts. These texts are most suitable if they are somehow connected to students' life experiences and if they stimulate learners' imagination. The author adds that they also need to be suitable for reformulation, which can include expansion, contraction, reordering, comparison and combination.
- Permutation: finding and reading out texts, poems the lines of which can be read in any order, or writing one. Later it can make children write their own ones (*Maley*).
- Reading in different moods: choosing texts that can be read in different moods and read them out in different ways (*Maley*).
- Orchestrated choral reading: finding a text that is suitable for choral reading, for example a text that has a refrain or it also can be the chorus of a play. Students can practice it by dramatizing, for example reading some parts of the text together and other parts individually, or reading some parts of the text by certain students, other parts by other ones, etc (*Maley*).
- Reading in role: this kind of reading activity enhances different interpretations. It is even more effective if students are supposed to write a screenplay, because it can also involve aspects like planning movements, positioning, dialogues and other things (*Maley*).

Another group of activities fostering learners' creativity in ESL classrooms is *brainstorming activities*. In a previous section of this paper I have already introduced the method of brainstorming, now my aim is to provide some examples of how to apply this method in English lessons. According to *Cullen* (URL24) brainstorming activities can be suitable warmers as they require little time and they can be applicable in terms of any topics. The following list shows the author's ideas:

Figure 4: Brainstorming Activities in the ESL Classroom

1. Simple Word Lists

- List words to describe people's appearance.
- List all the items you need for a party.
- Make a list of house furniture.

2. Lists Based on a Principle

- Write down a food that begins with each letter of the alphabet.
- Make a list of animals starting with the smallest animal and getting bigger.
- Finding Alternatives for a Blank in a Sentence.

3. Brainstorming on a Picture

- What are these people doing?
- List the objects in the picture.
- What is this man thinking about?
- Write four words to describe this person.

4. Brainstorming Using a Song

- How does the singer feel?
- What do you think the singer looks like?
- Suggest titles for this song.
- When do you think that this song was written?

5. Word-mapping or Phrase-mapping Around a Central Theme.

6. Changing One Word in a Sentence Each Time

Example:

Peter played flute in the orchestra.

Peter played flute in the park.

John played flute in the park.

John played soccer in the park.

John watched soccer in the park.

John watched soccer near the park.

John watched soccer near a park.

Variations: add one word, take away one word.

7. Listing Different Ways of Expressing a Particular Language Function.

Example : Ask Someone to Move his Car.

Please move your car.

I'd appreciate if you could move your car.

Get your car out of my way.

8. Prediction

Guess what the speaker will say next. This can be used in conjunction with dialogues in textbooks. It is a powerful technique to encourage students to take a risk. If the dialogue is recorded, stop the tape and ask the students to predict what the speaker will say.

9. Free Association

This is best done orally and can be a lot of fun. One student gives a word in your chosen topic and asks another student to say the first word that she thinks of. The second student continues to make associations. The first student simply repeats the word in each case. After making about 10 associations, the first student should try to work backwards from the last association to the original word.

Example :

A : apple

B : red

A : red

B : rose

and so on.

Variation : Free association in pairs or in groups. Students make the associations from the previous student's word.

10. Group Storytelling

Students work in groups and take turns adding to a story, either spoken or written. It is usually better to give the first line of the story.

Example :

John was late for school because

Student A : he missed the train

Student B : and there wasn't another for 20 minutes

Student C : so he went to a game center

Student D : but he lost his wallet

If the students are writing, it is interesting to write several stories at the same time.

Besides brainstorming activities *drama activities* can also foster learners' creativity. According to Zafeiriadou (URL25) applying drama techniques in ESL classrooms does not only contribute to the development of students' emotional and language skills but it enhances creative thinking as well. As the literature of drama activities is excessively wide, I do not intend to include a wide variety of drama techniques, this could be a topic of another essay. I would only like to provide some examples. The above mentioned author gives us some examples of drama activities: *dramatic play* and *improvisations*, *story enactment*, *imagination journeys*, *theatre games*, *music*, and even *dance*. Maley and Duff (2005) also argues that drama activities enhance open and more creative work. In their book they list several kinds of drama activities including verbal and nonverbal ones. Here are some examples of the verbal type:

- The sun and the moon: assigning two ends of the room that correspond to two words, for example the sun and the moon and then asking children to go to the end of the room whose word they can identify with. Then students can discuss in their groups why they have chosen the certain word, and then each student can discuss with one or more members of the other group why they have chosen their word. Teachers can find out various alternatives. One version of this activity is to tell children to position themselves according to likes and dislikes on an imaginary line. One end of the line can be the negative, the other is a positive degree, and students may choose to stand on any part of the line. Then they can discuss and explain their choices.
- Back writing: This activity strongly encourages visualisation. Children have to play in pairs, one has to be behind the other. The students standing or sitting behind has to draw or write a simple message on the back of the other student with his or her forefinger. The other student has to interpret what he or she could feel. After some tries students can change roles or partners. It is important to encourage children to ask for reinforcement during playing, the author of the activity also provides some

examples: “*Was that an ‘A’?*” “*Can you please write it again?*” “*Can you go a bit more slowly, please?*”

General Recommendations for Language Teachers

In one of my previous sections with a similar title I have already written some important, but not subject specific recommendations for developing students’ creativity in schools. The aim of this part of my essay is to list some recommendations that are specifically for language teachers.

Lafayette (1973) tells us that it is essential to reinforce that language is a real communicative device and not just something students can read in course books. For this reason learners should ask questions in the target language from the very beginning and also teachers should give simple instructions in that language, too. He also tells us about creating a warm environment for which it is crucial to think over the ways of correcting mistakes for instance. The author recommends not correcting grammar mistakes when a task is about real communication. He also suggests not correcting structurally incomplete sentences in this case as they often appear in everyday communication. Another important thing he mentions is accompanying speaking with emotional overtones in certain situations. It also contributes to the feeling that language is something real and meaningful. He goes on with suggesting not sticking to textbooks all the time. He believes that singing songs for example can be a pleasant and useful non-textbook activity as it motivates learners but at the same time it can be a teaching device as well. Although, sometimes it can be necessary to use drills in order to gain practice at certain grammar structures for example, but these exercises can be made creative, too. *Lafayette* (1973) also has some ideas for these cases. He gives us an example of teaching the indirect speech, for which he once saw a teacher who directed a short play including an accused man, a prosecutor, a judge and a narrator. This play turned out to be so successful that it was performed later in front of parents. He also mentions the importance of role-plays like *Mayesky*. Referring to his own previous writing (*Lafayette, 1972*), his final suggestion is a technique that he calls “culminating experience” the point of which is to simulate or create real life situations. The followings are some examples for this technique:

Material Covered	Culminating Experience
greetings	real or simulated meetings
travel expressions	real or simulated trip
foods	market experience
clothing	style show
home furnishing	model home show
magazine ads	sales pitch
occupations	career hour

Table No. 2: Topics for the culminating experience

Iakovos (2011) has some recommendations for how to foster language learners' creative and critical thinking. *Paul and Elder* (2008) citing from an anonymous author tell us that *"The critical and the creative functions of the mind are so interwoven that neither can be separated from the other without an essential loss to both."* They add that while creative thinking is a process of producing, 'criticality' is that of assessing or judging. Both kind of thinking are considered high-quality thinking processes that are interdependent: *"When engaged in high-quality thought, the mind must simultaneously produce and assess, both generate and judge the products it fabricates."* *Iakovos* (2011) in his work suggests using inquiry-discovery teaching techniques and project-based learning that I have also included in my essay in section *Teaching Methods for Developing Creativity*. He also has some more general recommendations for language teachers who would like to foster their students' thinking skills referring to *Pierce* (2004). These are the following: develop learners' metacognitive thinking, applying effective questioning strategies, ask students to use oral and written language informally as often as possible, prepare with tasks in which children have to concentrate on the content primarily, teach strategies for thinking about how to do certain tasks and have an atmosphere in the classroom that encourages speculative thinking and risk taking.

Research Part

Preface

This section presents the research I conducted on creativity. The research is three-sided often referred to as *triangulation* expanded with a fourth one, a document analysis. According to *Flick* (2014) in case of triangulation we use different research strategies and approaches. It was created for overcoming possible biases and imperfection caused by the use of only one type of research method (URL18). *Guion, Diehl* and *McDonald* (URL27) differentiate and introduce five types of triangulation. Among these kinds I have chosen the so-called data triangulation, which means using different sources of information involving different stakeholders. The aim of this type is to increase the validity of one's research; therefore I intended to ask different groups of stakeholders. One part of my study was to ask would-be English teachers what is their knowledge and opinion on creativity in terms of English teaching. Another group was asked about the same topic, which was practicing English teachers. The third group queried was university lecturers teaching methodology to would-be English teachers. My aim was to get a deeper insight to these groups' thoughts about creativity and then to compare their views on it. Another essential part of the research was to analyze the *National Curriculum* in terms of creativity, special emphasis on Foreign Languages.

Interviews with Would-be English Teachers, English Teachers and University Lecturers

Hypotheses

As I mentioned in the *Introduction* I believe that teachers, including English teachers nowadays may not know conscientiously how to preserve and develop children's creativity, but they may practice ways which develop children's thinking capabilities '*outside the box*' and these are of interest for my research. Therefore I do not require them to list any activities that I previously included but I would like to know their own ideas. I also think they have their ideas about what creativity is including language creativity as well. The other important fact I wanted to find out is the attitude teachers have towards the development of creativity in English lessons and in other lessons. Finally, I wanted to know what they think about the effect of education on children's creativity; whether it has a positive or a negative effect.

The Description of the Research

As *Sarsani* (2006) points out exploratory interviews can provide rich qualitative data and the possibility of gaining deeper understanding of a topic, but if we would like to analyze qualitative data from a big sample it is very time consuming. Also arranging time and place and making the interviews require a lot of time. I created a list of questions which consists of open-ended questions thus allowing teachers to give longer answers. In the majority of cases I managed to arrange personal interviews with the participants. This way it was easier for them to express their thoughts without the difficulty of having to edit texts in writing. Also, the interviews were in Hungarian, on the mother tongue of the participants, which enabled them to tell their thoughts more freely. The questions were handed to teachers in person or were sent to participants' e-mail addresses in advance, because there were some that required recalling memories from their previous practice. In some cases I could not arrange time for the interview due to my and participants' busy work schedule. In these cases I sent the questions to attendants' e-mail addresses and they sent me back their answers. These times I assured them to turn to me with their questions if they have any, for example about interpreting some questions. Reading through the answers there was no difference in quality between the spoken and the written interviews whatsoever. Also, to teachers who I managed to have personal interviews with, I sent back their answers via email, so they could check if I had put down their answers correctly and they could also make comments or supplements.

These interviews were made with fourteen (14) persons, including five (5) would-be teachers, five (5) practicing English teachers and four (4) university lecturers and included nine (9) questions. While designing the questions I tried to concentrate on the main points that the theoretical part covers, but I also added some that I was interested in. Questions were written in a Word document and were given to teachers before the interview, which enabled participants to recall their previous teaching experience. It was important for me to hear and see all teachers' own and individual answers, that is why I decided on personal interviews. Teachers were asked to think about their answers carefully and I also assured them that if they have questions they could always turn to me for information, even after the interview. During the interview I made notes and I also used a dictaphone in order to be able to type in teachers' answers later. After typing them in my computer the answers were sent back to teachers' e-mail addresses so they could check them and add some more thoughts if they required. The

list of questions can be seen in the *Appendix*. In the results of the research I will use imaginary names for teachers, because the interviews are anonymous.

The Results of the Research

The first two questions connected to the notion of creativity itself. First teachers had to find a metaphor for creativity. The participants provided a wide variety of answers including different words and expressions. The majority of teachers, six (6) of them created a metaphor connected to nature, these are their choices: *a spider web*, *a river*, *a butterfly* (two persons chose this metaphor), *a rainbow* and *the sun*. Three (3) participants thought of an object, these were the following: *a cardboard box (for children)*, *a painting* and *a perpetuum mobile*. Three (3) teachers connected creativity with food, these were their ideas: *cooking*, *sweet and sour sauce* and *a complex and flavourful salad*. Two (2) teachers had more abstract and complex expressions, though they could not really find a real metaphor: *high-level knowledge + hard work + luck* and *the art of revival and ingenuity*. Here I only provide the list of words given; the explanations for them can be read in the *Appendix*. These mainly connected the following ideas to creativity: colourfulness, originality, novelty, ingenuity and thinking.

The second question asked teachers to define creativity with their own words. Every teacher had ideas about creativity and they gave quite different explanations. Four (4) out of the fourteen (14) participants answered that creativity is a skill and a fifth (5th) one considered it a quality. I would highlight Kate's answer, which was an elaborate explanation: "*Creativity is a skill that helps organize and apply certain elements of knowledge, ideas and pieces of information in a way that it is different from the habitual, so it is original.*" Seven (7) teachers connected the notion of creativity to problem-solving, and one of them, Cheryl emphasized that this problem-solving should be amusing, novel. Another one among them, Ann found it important to assess a certain situation and finding the best solution to it with a novel approach. Rachel pointed out that creativity is a process. Eight (8) out of the fourteen (14) connected the notion of creativity to originality or novelty. Ann also mentioned that creativity involves completing a task in a way that we do not use certain schemes. Contrarily to what I expected, only one (1) teacher connected creativity with arts activities, this was Susan, who considers creativity a way of thinking and adds that arts activities can be connected to it, that can be original, ingenious. Only one (1) participant, Denise included the notion of resourcefulness, she said being creative means being full of ideas. Finally I would like to highlight two very distinct answers. Mary claimed that "*creativity is a conception, a realization and a product*",

which is a different approach from the others. Sarah emphasized that creativity needs other supportive elements: *“Creativity does not exist in itself. It is very rare that somebody is born to be creative. These things are necessary: high-level knowledge, hard work, luck and circumstances.”* To summarize teachers’ definitions according to my literature review, the following elements were emphasized by them the most: *skills, problem-solving, a way of thinking, originality and fluency*. The answers given by participants can also be seen in the *Appendix*.

The following few questions were about developing creativity. All the fourteen (14) teachers said that creativity can be developed. Although, a few of them added that it is only possible to some degree. Nancy added that it is rather about bringing back the creativity that children once had. Kate pointed out that developing creativity is essential in nowadays’ knowledge society, because it is important for succeeding and it is also important in our social relations. She added that as technology is very developed nowadays, factual knowledge is no longer enough. The participants also listed some ideas how to develop creativity. Here are some of their ideas in key words:

- giving a context
- motivation
- good atmosphere
- doing tasks that have more possible solutions
- teaching children what tools and sources are available in a certain situation
- showing children that there can be many solutions to a certain problem
- project work
- group work
- Arts and Crafts activities
- setting an example
- giving themes, basic ideas
- asking questions that make us think
- dramatization
- studying: The more somebody studies the bigger his or her skills and willingness to be creative will be.
- letting children explore things
- writing a poem

- making a poster
- giving problem-solving tasks
- games

As we can see, teachers mentioned some methods that I have also included in previous sections of my essay, such as giving a context, motivation, good atmosphere, project work, dramatization or writing a poem. Two (2) of the teachers emphasized the importance of having basic knowledge in order to be able to be creative and another two (2) mentioned the role of the family in the development of children's creativity. Teachers were also asked which school subject they consider suitable for developing children's creativity. Ten (10) out of the fourteen (14) participants said all of them. However, Kate pointed out that some subjects are essentially for developing creativity; these are Literature, Music, Visual Arts and Drama. The other two (2) teachers mainly thought of the so-called skill subjects: Visual Arts, Music and PE. Among these two teachers Jane also mentioned Math and Jennifer added Literature. Sarah emphasising skill subjects also added that emotion and novelty can appear in these cases principally. I also asked participants if they consider English as a subject that can develop students' creativity. Thirteen (13) of them thought they do, and one (1), Sarah pointed out that it is not more suitable than any other subjects, because the mother tongue can also eliminate creativity. Four (4) teachers from the thirteen (13) added that English is most suitable for developing creativity. Two (2) teachers mentioned that it is because of the complexity of this subject. Emma also said that learning a language develops cognitive skills and affects the whole brain. Victoria added that language has a content that can be anything, creative or not creative. She also mentioned the importance of having basic knowledge.

A question was raised about teachers' previous experience. I wanted to know if they had ever seen or taught an English lesson where creativity development appeared in some way. Here are some of the examples:

- drawing different things made out of a circle
- writing a poem or tale with a given structure
- rewriting songs or jazz chants
- reading in different moods, modes
- reading and writing a poem with the help of some given words
- making up an imaginary animal, drawing it and make a description of it

- A warmer: Children stand in a circle and are given a tool. The teacher says: “*It is a gadget. Or not? It is a microphone.*” Children pass the object round, and everyone names the object differently saying what it is used for.

It was interesting to hear that some of these ideas were also mentioned in my essay in session “*Developing Creativity in English Lessons*”, for example reading in different ways, writing a poem from given words or writing a poem or tale with a given structure. Also, Kate, without knowing it is *Torrance’s* way of measuring creativity, mentioned drawing things made out of a circle.

Another question was asked about linguistic creativity, because I was curious if they knew what it is. Teachers did not come up with expressions that were like in my essay, but they had their own ideas. The majority of them connected linguistic creativity with adapting to different or unknown situations using a language. Otherwise there were a wide variety of different answers, that can be read in the *Appendix*. What is common is that more teachers emphasized the importance of secure language knowledge in terms of being creative in a language.

I also inquired about the role of schools in the development of children’s creativity. I asked participants if they agree with *Robinson’s* statement (URL5): “*We are educating people out of their creative capacities.*” There were seven (7) teachers who agreed entirely and six (6) of them who accepted this statement partly. Only one teacher disagreed completely pointing out that the more knowledge we have the bigger our chance to be creative is. Participants mentioned different ideas to support their opinion. Among the things that can have a negative effect on children’s creativity they provided several things: not asking thought-provoking questions, drawing children from doing what they are really interested in, teaching according to schemes, straining lexical knowledge, not letting children explore things, not giving enough time to think freely and having a lot of children in a class that makes it hard to have real conversations. A teacher also mentioned the negative effects of centralization.

The ninth question was about adding anything to the topic that participants intended to. Susan for example expressed a critique about creativity telling me that it is hard to talk about it as there is no homogenous definition of it. Jennifer, who is a practicing English teacher, suggested that it is sad that we cannot develop creativity and even on Visual Arts lessons

teachers frequently use templates. It was interesting to hear that two (2) teachers mentioned Waldorf schools during the interview. Ann, a university professor pointed out that in these schools there is no continuous evaluation with grades, so children can emerge. Mary, a practicing English teacher told me that in Waldorf schools teachers are more likely to accept if a child thinks differently from others and she pointed out that it is beneficial that children have a lot more arts activities there.

As I could see, there was no difference between the three groups asked, only in this last question. Nancy and Heather, both would-be English teachers found it important to develop creativity. Nancy pointed out that there is not enough time for original things and it is a constraint that teachers have to use textbooks and that they have to follow the curriculum precisely. Heather told me that we should change our attitude to be able to develop creativity and instead of lexical knowledge we should encourage practical knowledge. She also argued that teachers would need special trainings where they could learn how to develop the creativity of different age groups. Contrarily, two university professors had a different attitude towards creativity. Jane pointed out that creativity is only a part of learning, but non-creative tasks are also very important, and it is worth talking about the other side as well. Sarah mentioned that it is a mistake if we think we can be creative without knowledge, because informative knowledge is important and we should also take care of our values besides trying to be creative. These perspectives of the two groups do not contradict each other, but they may tell us some differences about the way of thinking of these different age groups.

Document analysis

Hypotheses

In this part of my research I analyzed the current Hungarian National Curriculum (NAT) in terms of creativity. My supposition had been that this document does not pay enough attention to creativity, and that it is not emphasized in any part of the curriculum. I was also interested in finding out if teaching goals include developing children's creativity, and another important question of mine was in which content areas creativity is emphasized or mentioned. I also wanted to know if the official document even mentions the word „*creativity*”. My assumption was that maybe it is not mentioned at all.

The Description of the Research

The Hungarian National Curriculum can be accessed through the Internet, so I only needed to search for it and read it through thoroughly. When I found the word „*creativity*” or “*creative*” I made notes about where to find it in the text and I also reread the part where I found it, as I was also interested in which context it appears. After collecting all the parts where I could find something about creativity and the context of it, I summarized the times it was mentioned and the context. From this and I came to some conclusions.

The Results of the Research

Contrarily to what I expected, the document mentions creativity at the beginning, under the title of *Key Competences* among other important general competences, that can be useful at any areas, such as critical thinking, initiative, problem-solving or co-operation, just to mention a few. “*Key competences in the shape of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to each context are fundamental for each individual in a knowledge-based society. They provide added value for the labour market, social cohesion and active citizenship by offering flexibility and adaptability, satisfaction and motivation*” (URL 19). The NAT also mentions creativity among general abilities like intelligence or elements of the cognitive system in its glossary.

There are nine separate key competences in the NAT. Among these creativity also appears in the following ones: *digital competence, initiative and enterprising competence, social and civic competence, aesthetic and artistic consciousness and expressiveness*. Besides key competences the Hungarian National Curriculum also places emphasis on certain developmental areas. Among them is “*upbringing for citizenship and democracy*”, in which creativity also appears. In this case creativity is not a developmental goal, but a tool or a useful feature for these competences.

The following content areas are the ones that include creativity: Hungarian Language and Literature, Physical Education, Drama and Dance, Visual Arts, Music, Mathematics and Motion Picture and Media. Creativity was more frequently mentioned under Hungarian Language and Literature, but only if we concentrate on the use of the word. It is interesting, and also surprising, that other areas, such as Foreign Languages do not include creativity.

In the “*Hungarian Language and Literature*” section creativity appears also as a developmental task and in connection with language and creativity; this refers to the use of the latter in language. The Mathematics area also includes creativity among the developmental tasks together with divergent thinking. The Music part includes creativity in the introduction saying that at the centre of the Kodály system, which is the basis of Hungarian music education, is the upbringing of open-minded and creative persons among other important features. The Music area also mentions creativity as a developmental task; in this subject it is essential in improvisation. The Drama and Dance section clearly states that the goals of this area are cognition through experience, and the development of communication, co-operation and creativity. Within the developmental tasks this section also contains creativity and mentions creative games and activities. The Visual Arts part contains in its introduction that one of its goals is to develop aptitudes and skills that contribute to the development of creativity. A separate point within the developmental tasks is creativity, and within it we can find problem-solving skills as well. Another area, which is Motion Picture and Media also includes creativity within its developmental goals, for example a goal mentioned is to participate in online communication in a creative way. Physical Education undertakes an important role in the development of problem-solving and critical thinking, and creativity as well. This section also includes that pupils have to be taught and play games that are built upon creativity and co-operation.

To sum up: After analyzing the NAT I came to the conclusion that it emphasizes creativity more than I had thought, and it is really positive that it appears among key competences. What I found interesting was that Music, Drama and Dance, Visual Arts and Physical Education put the most emphasis on creativity and the development of it. In Hungary these subjects are often called “skill subjects” in common, ordinary language and these are those that *Robinson* mentions as the ones considered less important in the hierarchy of subjects. Within the key competences digital competence emphasizes creativity to the greatest extent. It is also surprising that areas such as Foreign Language or Human and Nature do not include creativity within their developmental goals or tasks.

Conclusion

As we could see experts have different views, ideas about creativity but they also mention some common characteristics. Psychologists such as Szabó (1994) or de Bono (URL3) suggest that creativity does not only mean being original and creating something new, but they also state that the idea created must have value and must be applicable. They, like Guilford (1986), also connect creativity with divergent and problem-solving thinking and so do some pedagogues, like Soósné Faragó (2003). The latter also says that creativity is a part of intelligence. Réthy and Vámos (2006) make a connection between creativity and intelligence saying that creativity is the plus which makes a talented person. Creativity is also studied by linguists' point of view. Gyöngyössi (1985) mentions Chomsky when she tells us that linguistic creativity is an ability to create new messages combining the elements of language. From a cognitive perspective "*linguistic creativity is the activity of making new meaning by a speaker and the re-creation and re-interpretation of meanings by a receiver*" (URL 26). Both linguists and language educators regard creativity very important. Szerencsi (2010) cites Maybin and Swann (2007) pointing out that language creativity is an essential and pervasive part of everyday life. Making reference to Erdei (1980) Kovács (1985) also emphasizes the importance of developing creativity if the aim of language teaching is improving speaking skills. Therefore experts regard creativity extremely important, as it can help many areas of our lives. However, psychologists and educators think that schools have a bad effect on children's creativity, or they think it has not got an effect on it at all. For example Robinson (URL 5) tells us that schools stigmatize mistakes, which makes children afraid of mistakes, therefore their creativity is hindered. He also mentions the negative distinction of some subjects, such as Drama, Dance, Music or Physical Education and says that usually Mathematics and Languages are emphasized. He suggests that creativity can have many sides like intelligence, referring to Gardner (1983). Educational psychologist Kim (URL16) conducted research among 300 000 American children and adults and found out that creativity has declined over the last few decades. Kim mentions the way of upbringing and education among the main reasons. She suggests that the latter is lack of creativity development and often labels creative children as behaviour problems. Whereas Csíkszentmihályi (2008) alleges that schools have extremely small effect on children's creativity, based upon his interviews with successful and well-known creative persons, like Nobel Prize winners, artists, doctors or writers.

Although the importance of creativity was recognized in ancient times, *Mező* (2001) tells us that it was the Sputnik crises which really lead to do considerable research in the topic. Developing creativity also got into focus over the past few decades because of the above mentioned results and opinions. The majority of the experts think that creativity can be developed, at least to some extent. Different approaches were conceived for developing creativity. Among these *Lin* (2003) emphasizes both the teacher's side and the student's side pointing out that *creative pedagogy* consists of *creative teaching*, *teaching for creativity* and *creative learning*. *Mező* on his part, recommends us shorter and longer time methods for developing creativity which were presented in this essay. Among these there are simple thinking techniques, specific longer-term programs and games. This essay also included some teaching methods to develop creativity, such as the inquiry-discovery teaching method, the co-operative teaching method and the project method. Experts also have general recommendations for teachers, like encouraging children's unusual ideas or teach in nonconventional ways, some of these suggestions were also listed previously. A separate section was dedicated to show some ideas how to develop creativity in English lessons. This part of my essay also includes activities and more general recommendations for language teachers.

The essay also included research conducted on creativity among would-be English teachers, practicing English teachers and university lecturers teaching methodology to would-be teachers. Results showed that they have many ideas about what creativity is, including language creativity as well. All of them thought that creativity can be developed and the majority of them argued that all subjects can help develop it as well as English. Though, some of them emphasized the role of the so-called skill subjects such as Arts and Crafts, Music, PE and Drama. It turned out that they also practice ways of developing creativity on their lessons including some that I have also mentioned in my essay. However, they mainly think that schools have a negative effect on children's creativity similarly to *Robinson* (URL5).

The research conducted on creativity by analyzing the Hungarian National Curriculum in terms of creativity, contrary to what I had thought, showed that it includes creativity among its key competences. Creativity also appears in it as developmental task and developmental goal. The content areas that contain and emphasize creativity and the development of it are Music, Drama and Dance, Visual Arts and Physical Education. It is interesting that the research previously mentioned also showed that some teachers mainly regard these subjects as

developmental in terms of creativity. There are areas in the curriculum where creativity does not appear at all, like in Foreign Languages, though the teachers asked almost all said that English is a suitable subject to develop children's creativity, and some of them argued that it is so to a great extent. It turned out that teachers also practice ways of developing creativity in English lessons though the curriculum does not require it so.

Analyzing the research conducted and the literature reviewed I came to the conclusion that experts now can offer a lot of ways of developing creativity in schools including English lessons. What is more, teachers nowadays, perhaps not conscientiously, practice some ways of developing it in their lessons. Experts also say that developing creativity is extremely important when teaching a foreign language, so I came to a conclusion that the Foreign Languages part of the curriculum should put more emphasis on it as well. I also realized that Visual Arts, Music, Physical Education and Drama and Dance are the subjects in the curriculum that place emphasis on the development of children's creativity, so I think we should change our attitude towards these subjects and take them more seriously, as *Robinson* (URL5) suggests. I could also see that adding up teachers ideas about how to develop creativity there were quite a lot of them, but individually they only listed a few. Therefore, it would be great if teachers could somehow share these ideas with each other on conferences or on refresher courses. I also think teachers' training should emphasize the development of creativity more, and would-be teachers and practicing teachers as well should study methods of developing it, thus schools could have a more positive effect on children's creativity.