

<https://doi.org/10.28925/1609-8595.2022.1.9>

**UDC 378.016:81'243]:159.954**

**Alla Durdas**

ORCID iD 0000-0001-6456-6108

Doctor of Philosophy,  
Senior Lecturer of the Modern European Languages Department,  
State University of Trade and Economics,  
19 Kioto Str., 02000 Kyiv, Ukraine,  
a.durdas@knu.edu.ua

**Tetiana Harbuza**

ORCID iD 0000-0002-2346-5156

PhD in Pedagogy,  
Associate Professor of the Modern European Languages Department,  
State University of Trade and Economics,  
19 Kioto Str., 02000 Kyiv, Ukraine,  
t.garbuza@knu.edu.ua

**Yuliia Radchenko**

ORCID iD 0000-0002-6534-4360

Senior Lecturer of the Modern European Languages Department,  
State University of Trade and Economics,  
19 Kioto Str., 02000 Kyiv, Ukraine,  
y.radchenko@knu.edu.ua

**Oksana Ternova**

ORCID iD 0000-0002-6210-4054

Senior Lecturer of the Modern European Languages Department,  
State University of Trade and Economics,  
19 Kioto Str., 02000 Kyiv, Ukraine,  
o.ternova@knu.edu.ua

**Poidyn Marharyta**

ORCID iD 0000-0001-5398-4769

Lecturer of the Modern European Languages Department,  
State University of Trade and Economics,  
19 Kioto Str., 02000 Kyiv, Ukraine,

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## **DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS' CREATIVITY AT FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES: SCIENTIFIC DISCOURSE**

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*The article deals with the concepts of creativity and the importance of its development in students at foreign language classes. It has been revealed that the development of students' creativity is conditioned by the need to implement complex, non-standard tasks and to resolve situations in the process of professional international communication and the need to establish a deeper mutual understanding. Language acquisition is formulated in the article as an extremely complex and creative process, which is influenced by social and cultural environment inside and outside the language context, the structure of native and foreign languages, the duration of communication in a foreign language, the regularity of using languages, individual characteristics and experience, as well as methods of teaching and learning. The article reveals the researchers' vision of creativity: as a universal ability to be creative; personality traits; an individual's ability to go beyond the given situation, to create original value; the process of manifestation of one's own individuality; an obligatory teacher's characteristic. The article indicates the multidimensional nature of creativity, emphasizing that the basis for creativity can be knowledge both in technical and non-technical fields. The article reveals the need to*

*generate a creative atmosphere in the audience, which implies a high level of initiative, activity and diligence, as well as encouraging students to independent search, discover, experiment, acquire knowledge and skills, express their own opinions and conflicting opinions; creation of space for discussion, advocacy of ideas, as well as for the development of tolerance and recognition.*

**Key words:** *creativity; development; foreign language; foreign language classes; student creativity.*

**Introduction.** The main purpose of teaching a foreign language for professional purpose at a higher educational institution is the formation of students' communicative competence for professional purposes. The scientific and technological revolution has raised the question of society's readiness to innovations. Classical educational methods cannot fully meet the needs of society in the education of competitive professionals with a high level of academic, social and information skills. The use of information and communication technologies is a priority of modern education. The specifics of language learning require a reasonable combination of classical methods, information and communication technologies and interactive forms of work. The use of innovative methods at foreign language lessons increases the level of students' motivation. The vector of modern policy and strategy of Ukraine is aimed at further development of the national education system by its adaptation to the conditions of socially-oriented economy, transformation and integration into the European and world community (Hryshkova, 2015, p. 5).

**The purpose of the article** is to analyze the concept of «creativity», to explore the views of Ukrainian and foreign researchers on the phenomenon of creativity and its development in students at foreign language classes.

**The statement of the problem.** Modern trends in language education in Ukraine are conditioned by the process of unification of Europe, its spread to the east, accompanied by the formation of a common educational and scientific space and the need to develop common criteria and standards across the continent. Language education in Ukraine is being reformed taking into account the main achievements of the European countries in this field. The ideas of the Council of Europe concerning language policy are increasingly being implemented in Ukraine:

- the number of languages studied is increasing;
- the number of people who speak at least one foreign language is growing;
- the study of several foreign languages at secondary schools has been initiated;
- the attitude to the study of foreign languages at higher educational institutions of non-philological profile is radically changing (Hryshkova, 2015, p. 6–7).

In view of this, the importance of the science of methodology is growing, due to the constantly

changing social conditions, concepts of improving education, theory and practice of teaching foreign languages at higher educational institutions of non-philological profile (Hryshkova, 2015, p. 6–7).

At the same time, in the process of developing economic, political and cultural relations between Ukraine and the EU countries, favorable conditions arise for organizing joint scientific research, deepening international cooperation, student exchange and providing joint ventures with highly qualified specialists. In this regard, today the social order puts forward new requirements to educational process at higher education institutions, the purpose of which is formation and development of a creative, socially adapted personality, ready for productive activity in an ambiguous economic society, fluent in a foreign language or languages, capable of finding solutions in non-standard situations and interact with native speakers of different languages (Aristova, 2015, p. 6).

Moreover, the importance of creativity has also been recognized on the strategic political level in the EU; the year 2009 was announced as the European Year of Creativity and Innovation, and Member States were encouraged to promote creativity «as a key factor for the development of personal, occupational, entrepreneurial and social competences and the knows-being of all individuals in society» (Dulksnienė, Mačianskienė, 2020, p. 68).

**The specifics of foreign languages studying by students at nonlinguistic higher educational institutions.** The results of the research show that the study of a foreign language at modern higher education institutions in Ukraine has its own specifics.

*The first feature* is insufficient number of credits allocated by the curriculum for the study of this discipline at non-profile higher education institutions. However, future professionals must be fluent in a foreign language to the extent which would help them to use a variety of sources of information for professional use, negotiate, prepare presentations, correspond, participate in discussions and interviews, conclude agreements, process correspondence and discuss contracts.

*The second feature* is that teaching of a foreign language begins in an audience with different levels of training, which does not always meet European standards for English language proficiency for specialization (Zhukovska, 2007).

*The third feature* is the content of educational material, which does not take into account previous experience of students, their learning needs and final results, and therefore cannot always be used for different specialties and specializations (Aristova, 2015, p. 7). In this regard, one of the main tasks of a teacher at a modern higher educational institution of Ukraine is to provide students with a high level of motivation to learn a foreign language and develop their creativity, which, in turn, requires an approach that is based on modern teaching technologies and ensures effective mastery of a foreign language by students and the development of their independence, initiative and creativity.

To solve this problem, it is necessary to introduce modern learning technologies that allow further improvement of the process of education and upbringing, ensure the availability and effectiveness of education, and prepare students for life in the information society (Aristova, 2015, p. 29).

In this regard, German researchers H. Böttger and D. Költzsch (2019) express a complex opinion about learning a language. According to them, «Language acquisition is a highly complex and also a creative process. It is affected by social and cultural environment inside and outside the language contexts, by the structure of the native and target languages, by the length of exposure to the target languages, by the regular use of the languages, personal characteristics and experiences, and also the type or method of instruction» (p. 9).

The requirements to a modern non-philological specialist in foreign language proficiency are extremely high, however, they are justified by the demands of a modern labor market. However, in practice it turns out that students who entered entering nonlinguistic faculties are not only unready to communicate in a foreign language, but also do not have the necessary lexical minimum, do not know the elementary rules of grammar. The experience shows that till now there are school graduates who at the moment of entering a higher educational institution practically do not have a spoken level of English. Therefore, teachers face an important task – to arouse interest in a foreign language among students, in particular, by developing their creative abilities.

**The concept of creativity and its place in studying and teaching foreign languages.** There are different approaches to the interpretation of the concept of «creativity» and its place in the structure of personality, the level of awareness of the manifestations of creativity, as well as the sources and conditions of development are determined differently. In general, it is possible to identify a number of common views of scientists on the analyzed phenomenon. In particular, researchers consider creativity as:

- general ability to be creative;
- personality trait;
- the ability of the individual to go beyond the given situation, to create original values;
- the process of manifestation of one's own individuality;
- obligatory description of the representative of the pedagogical profession (Pavlenko, 2016, p. 2–3).

The Slovakian researchers V. Hagara, E. Ružinská, P. Jakúbek and M. Paľun (2015) state that «... creativity is an essential part of every human being, whether we want it or not, every person is creative, whether in a positive or negative way... Creativity is a human characteristic that manifests itself in many fields and contexts, from art, design and craft works to scientific breakthroughs and entrepreneurship, including social entrepreneurship» (p. 7). They point to a multidimensional character of creativity implying that a knowledge in a wide range of technical and non-technical areas can be the basis for creativity» (Hagara et al., 2015, p. 7).

Let us note that «creativity» as a term was used for the first time by the psychologist D. Simpson in 1922. According to the scientist, «creativity» is the ability of a person to abandon stereotypical ways of thinking, the ability to destroy the generally accepted, everyday order of the origin of ideas in the process of thinking (Pavlenko, 2016, c. 3). Despite a long use of the term, creativity as a separate concept was singled out only in the 50s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century thanks to J. Guilford. In 1950, it was J. Guilford, who suggested that psychologists focus their attention on the study of creativity. Several laboratories and institutes were created, journals and monographs began to appear, however, according to R. Sternberg, only 0.5% of the articles (from 1975 to 1995) were related to the problem of creativity. One of the reasons for such an attitude to the problem of creativity on the part of experimental psychologists was the ambiguity in the definition of the concept and the lack of methods for diagnosing it (Pavlenko, 2016, c. 3).

According to H. Böttger and D. Költzsch (2019), «... creativity has to do with the imagination of what will happen in the near future. Even five-year-olds invent imaginary friends, teenagers can imagine being in love, and adults plan career advancement, home purchase, or a trip around the world...» (p. 8). The researchers admit that people have this type of imagination and always use it in their everyday life. Nevertheless, it is limited because things which are far from people's temporal or spatial reality are often difficult for them to imagine (Böttger, Költzsch, 2019, p. 9). The researchers stress that it seems to be the same for foreign language mastery in non-instructional contexts or institutionalized language-learning settings, where concentration

is a necessary mental propensity to process foreign language material and to know, how and why to say, what to say and to whom. «In any foreign language, far more words and structures that have been learned implicitly build up a non-testable balance of linguistic, pragmatic and communicative competence» (Böttger, Költzsch, 2019, p. 9).

B. Birdsell, a Japanese researcher suggests an interesting vision of creativity. He states that, «the word creativity carries with it a weight that divulges stories of the birth of life, to the whispering of the nine muses, to the lone-mad artist with his chisel and brush, so one must use it nowadays with caution. It has traveled across time, transforming from divine inspiration to an «ah-ha» moment of figuring out that this paperclip on my desk could be reshaped into a business card holder» (Birdsell, 2013, p. 888). The researcher notes that «the internet boom generation gave it an idiom, *to think outside the box*, which quickly became a cliché after the second boom went bust» (Birdsell, 2013, p. 888).

In the framework of our research, it is necessary to say that motivation and a sense of innovation make up a fundamental quality supporting an individual's creative capacity. It is true that creativity takes up a substantial share of the curriculum at primary and secondary school, but its share is drastically reduced during further education. Thus, it is very important for an education system to find a way to keep the spark of creativity in the children and youth, to support their talents, to encourage them to find new ways of solving problems in different spheres (Hagara et al., 2015, p. 8).

The researcher from the Philippines, E. Sarmago, states that creativity is a very broad term and the broadness of this term includes certain cautions and scope that are beyond the domain of education (Sarmago, n.d.). According to the researcher, «to be creative is to be innovative» (Sarmago, n.d.). He believes that every language teacher desires creativity, and «the need for the classroom facilitators to be creative is a must for the success of this job» (Sarmago, n.d.). He also admits that creativity needs appropriate time and space for the language teachers to improve their skills and «a foreign language classroom is a perfect venue for the teacher's creativity to flourish» (Sarmago, n.d.).

At the same time, creativity is believed to be a characteristic of qualified teachers of English as a foreign language, and teachers' ability to be creative at work can be improved. Teaching methods, content knowledge, knowledge of creative learning environments, teachers' autonomy, creativity-related traits and reflectivity are important factors in development of teachers' creativity (Meihami, 2022).

For teachers of foreign languages, it is important

to create a new creative role is important. M. Jurčová (2009) from Slovakia defines a creative role as a creative task which is new and unknown. It contains elements of ambiguity, uncertainty, surprise, in which not all the conditions are provided. Such task requires from the investigator the following elements: a creative process, experimentation, search, resourcefulness, discovery, exploration, inventiveness, ingenuity, etc.

The Spanish researcher J. Belda-Medina (2022) who studies the issues of promoting creativity and critical thinking through digital storytelling, says that storytelling is a vital element in language learning and acquisition but it has changed over time – from early oral tradition to modern digital literacy. The researcher states that «although digital storytelling has become an important tool in language development inclusive and diverse stories are still underrepresented». Thus, he confirms the importance of storytelling in enhancing development of students' creativity at foreign language classes.

In the framework of our research it is important to say about small-group activities. Such activities involve problem-solving and allow students to practice creative thinking and foreign language skills at the same time. «Creative problem-solving activities are built around problems that are clearly defined, admit many possible solutions, and entail a situation in which reality is slightly skewed» (Sadow, 1983). Doing work in small groups, students practice a role-play by becoming «experts» in the suggested area. The teacher prepares the activity in advance, tells the class the problem, checks comprehension, encourages questions that will help the students structure their discussion, divides the group of participants and withdraws from the scene. When sufficient time has passed, the discussion is stopped and «recording secretaries» read their reports (Sadow, 1983).

In this regard, it is vital to make a creative atmosphere in the classroom which implies a high degree of initiative, activity and diligence; to encourage students to make a separate search, discovery, experimentation and acquisition of knowledge and skills. A creative atmosphere also means an opportunity to express one's thoughts and contradictory opinions; the availability of the space for debate, defending ideas, tolerance and recognition. It is essential to support in students a high motivation to explore, to raise and solve problems, both practical (environmental) as well as theoretical. The high degree of democracy between teacher and student is important: teacher takes the role of stimulator and facilitator. At the same time, the role of discipline is very significant too. It is based on joint work, rules of finding answers, solving problems, etc. All in all, teacher through creative

teaching encourages, praises and supports students (Hagara et al., 2015, p. 27).

H. Böttger and D. Költzsch (2019) stress that «sometimes creative language production and performances, unbelievable even for the foreign language learners themselves, occur when concentration fades out and positive psychological conditions like, e.g. non-restriction or lacking time pressure lead to fluency and creative language use» (p. 9). In this regard creative questions can be useful. They are aimed at development of higher mental functions, they ought to be provocative, open-ended, requiring evaluation. At the same time, it is important to remember that each learning requires certain environmental conditions – creative atmosphere or climate, where creative climate is considered a more stable characteristic (Hagara et al., 2015, p. 26). A creative climate means «creating such working environment in which new thoughts, ideas, freedom of expression and an escape from the everyday routine is preferred» (Hagara et al., 2015, p. 5). Due to the researchers, this «leads to a good social climate, psychological well-being and results into various innovative, prosperous ideas, forms of teaching and learning, as well as in the growth of the quality and skills of a teacher and student» (Hagara et al., 2015, p. 5).

H. Böttger and D. Költzsch (2019) also say about the necessity of certain preconditions while learning a language. They admit that «creating growth in language competences and developing creative skills in foreign languages as well as in the mother tongue requires specific preconditions. In many cases, it is associated with communicative interaction, playing, fantasy, collaboration or experimentation» (p. 9).

M. Zelina (2015), a researcher from Slovakia, suggests the existence of some horizons of a creative personality. According to him, the *first horizon* deals with the source of a personality's creative activity. A creative personality is characterized by internal motivation; he or she considers himself or herself to be a producer of behavior; here motivation for performance and achievement prevails. *The second horizon* in terms of creativity is a style of his or her own regulatory activities. A heuristic style of the regulation of activities, solving problems in a creative way is typical for the creative personality. The *third*

is the time horizon. The creative personality is more focused on the future, his or her future plans. Such personality has high aspirations (Hagara et al., p. 18). M. Zelina also claims that a creative personality has creative self-regulation providing for autonomy, independence, self-regulation and creativity (Hagara et al., 2015, p. 18).

Summing up, we would like to note that applying creative methods in teaching foreign languages, it is possible to achieve not only a high level of students' education, but help them to be prepared for changes in life, to be able to use their creative thinking in team work, gain organizational and leadership skills, motivate not only themselves, but other people too, to communicate and listen, not to be afraid of expressing their opinions and at the same time to be able to accept other people's opinions.

**Conclusions.** Based on the carried-out research, it is possible to conclude that development of students' creativity is conditioned by the necessity to implement complex, non-standard tasks and situations in the process of professional international communication and the need for deeper mutual understanding which is a new requirement to the educational process at higher education institutions. Language acquisition is not only highly complex but also a creative process. It is affected by social and cultural environment inside and outside the language contexts, by the structure of the native and target languages, by the duration of exposure to the target languages, by the regular use of the languages, personal characteristics and experiences, methods of teaching. At foreign language classes it is essential to make a creative atmosphere in the classroom which implies a high degree of initiative, activity and diligence. It is necessary to encourage students to make a separate search, discovery, experimentation and acquisition of knowledge and skills, and, at the same time, to provide a creative atmosphere: an opportunity to express one's thoughts and contradictory opinions; the space for debate, defense of one's ideas and expressing tolerance and recognition. Today in Ukraine the issue of creativity and its development at classes of foreign languages at higher educational institutions has not been researched enough and it will be the subject of our further investigation.

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Received 1.04.2022  
Accepted 28.04.2022

## РОЗВИТОК КРЕАТИВНОСТІ СТУДЕНТІВ НА ЗАНЯТТЯХ З ІНОЗЕМНОЇ МОВИ: НАУКОВИЙ ДИСКУРС

Дурдас Алла, доктор філософії,  
старший викладач кафедри сучасних європейських мов,  
Державний торговельно-економічний університет,  
вул. Кіото, 19, 02000 Київ, Україна, a.durdas@knu.edu.ua

Гарбуза Тетяна, кандидат педагогічних наук,  
доцент кафедри сучасних європейських мов,  
Державний торговельно-економічний університет,  
вул. Кіото, 19, 02000 Київ, Україна, t.garbuza@knu.edu.ua

Радченко Юлія, старший викладач кафедри сучасних європейських мов,  
Державний торговельно-економічний університет,  
вул. Кіото, 19, 02000 Київ, Україна, y.radchenko@knu.edu.ua

Тернова Оксана, старший викладач кафедри сучасних європейських мов,  
Державний торговельно-економічний університет,  
вул. Кіото, 19, 02000 Київ, Україна, o.ternova@knu.edu.ua

Пойдин Маргарита, викладач кафедри сучасних європейських мов,  
Державний торговельно-економічний університет,  
вул. Кіото, 19, 02000 Київ, Україна, m.poidyn@knu.edu.ua

*У статті розглянуто поняття креативності та важливість її розвитку д студентів на заняттях з іноземної мови. Зазначено, що вектор сучасної політики та стратегії України спрямований на подальший розвиток національної системи освіти шляхом її адаптації до умов соціально-орієнтованої економіки, трансформації та інтеграції в європейське та світове співтовариство. Виявлено, що розвиток креативності студентів зумовлений необхідністю реалізації складних, нестандартних завдань і ситуацій у процесі професійного міжнародного спілкування та потребою налагодження глибокого взаєморозуміння. Забезпечення високого рівня мотивації до вивчення іноземної мови в студентів та розвитку їхньої креативності охарактеризовано як одне з основних завдань викладача сучасного закладу вищої освіти України, що, у свою чергу, потребує підходу, який базується на сучасних технологіях навчання та забезпечує ефективне оволодіння студентами іноземною мовою і розвиток у них самостійності, ініціативності та креативності. Констатовано необхідність впровадження сучасних технологій навчання, які допомагають удосконалити освітній процес. Стаття розкриває бачення дослідниками креативності як: загальної здатності до творчості; риси особистості; здатності особистості вийти за межі заданої ситуації, створити оригінальні цінності; процесу прояву власної індивідуальності; обов'язкової характеристики педагога. У статті зазначено багатовимірний характер креативності, який передбачає, що основою для креативності можуть бути знання в широкому ряді технічних і нетехнічних галузей. Креативність також визначено як здатність людини відмовлятися від стереотипних способів мислення, змінювати загальноприйнятий, буденний спосіб мислення: відзначено інноваційний характер креативності. У статті розкривається необхідність створення в аудиторії творчої атмосфери, що передбачає високий рівень ініціативності, активності та працьовитості; заохочення студентів до самостійного пошуку, відкриття, експериментування, набуття знань і умінь, висловлення власних думок та суперечливих думок; створення простору для дебатів, відстоювання ідей, а також для розвитку толерантності та визнання.*

**Ключові слова:** заняття з іноземної мови; іноземна мова; креативність; креативність студентів; розвиток.