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TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES EFFICIENTLY: THE ROLE OF CREATIVE WRITING

The article deals with the role and possibilities of use of creative writing in efficient teaching of foreign languages at higher educational institutions. The article considers how creative writing can support foreign language learning by students and how creative writing promotes language development at all levels: vocabulary, grammar, phonemics, discourse. The concepts of «creativity» and «creative writing» have been considered and the characteristics of creative writing texts have been outlined; the ways and forms of creative writing for the use at foreign language classes have been stated. Creative writing is also stated as an excellent method to develop writing skills, encourage students to write, develop vocabulary, grammar, imagination. Creativity has recently won great popularity in numerous contexts, showing both positive («creative writing») and negative («creative accounting») connotations. Completing creative tasks, students have an opportunity to express and assert themselves through the means of a foreign language, get satisfaction from the process of producing a written and spoken expression in addition to the fact of getting a finished product. Creative writing has been defined as a form of writing that expresses feelings, thoughts or ideas in an imaginative way which provides students with new ways to play with the language which enhances their writing skills and helps them to improve all their language skills. It has been said that the benefits from the use of creative writing when teaching and learning foreign language stretch beyond formal language acquisition into more personal, socio-cultural, and psychological domains that lead to self-empowerment.

Keywords: *creativity; creative writing; development; efficient teaching; teaching a foreign language; written communication.*

Introduction. Teaching a foreign language is not purely a creative process, but neither it is a simple set of repeated actions. The process of teaching a foreign language is largely based on a teacher's knowledge, professional understanding, technical expertise and personal qualities. Creative writing promotes language development at all levels: vocabulary, grammar, phonemics, discourse. In order to facilitate creative learning processes, foreign language teachers should look for possibilities to go beyond the limitations standardizing curricula, textbooks and forms of control – they need to search for the ways to encourage and support each student's individual development. Today written communication is becoming one of the most relevant means of communication again, and therefore, great attention should be paid to development of writing skills and abilities in a foreign language. Without any doubt, students should learn how to write their biography, personal and business letters, reviews of articles they read, fill out questionnaires, forms, etc. However, such types of written works are completed according to certain standards or samples and are a purposeful, didactically oriented productive activity, the result of which is a «text-product» intended for a certain addressee (Kinakh, Blyzniuk, 2009, p. 28).

The importance and relevance of creative writing tasks for efficient teaching of foreign languages has been studied by Ukrainian and foreign researchers, in particular by L. Kinakh, L. Blyzniuk (2009), N. Akther (2014), L. Herrera (2016), A. Amjad (2019), J. Kim (2022), F. Cornillie, J. Buendgens-Kosten, S. Sauro, & J. Van der Veken (2021), H. Prystai (2021), A. Maley (2018), Z. Dornyei (2001), A. I. Bernal-Vargas (2018), S. Sauro, B. Sundmark (2016), S. Lee (2019), Chun-Chun Yeh (2017), L. Piasecka (2018), S. Tok, A. Kandemir (2014), W. Wachtmeister, Y. Efverlund (2021) and others.

The purpose of the article is to study the possibilities of application of creative writing in learning and teaching a foreign language at higher educational establishments.

Research results. The task of a student learning a foreign language is to correctly and competently perform written works in a foreign language – to write them without spelling, lexical, grammatical mistakes or to reduce their number to a minimum, because, as work experience shows, such mistakes are inevitable in productive forms writing. At the same time, students' creative approach to performing such tasks is almost non-existent (Kinakh, Blyzniuk, 2009, p. 28). However, students write compositions, essays, stories, poems in a foreign language absolutely creatively, «on their own». Such works are varieties of creative writing. Completing creative tasks, students have an opportunity to express and assert themselves through the means of a foreign language, they can get satisfaction from the process of producing a written and spoken expression in addition to the fact of getting a finished product (Kinakh, Blyzniuk, 2009, p. 28).

In this regard, teachers of foreign languages must implement various approaches when structuring creative writing lessons to help their students in reaching the knowledge requirements foreseen by a foreign language syllabus. At the same time, creative writing is an excellent method to develop writing skills and encourage students to write. Creative writing develops vocabulary, grammar, imagination (Rehman, 2022, p. 4). Faced with the question of the main competences in a foreign language, a student must acquire and develop his writing skills. He must know how to use them jointly, and this will allow him to see the progress and promote, possibly, his literary formation (Bernal-Vargas, 2018, p. 489).

In this regard, interesting opinion is expressed by Piasecka, L, a Polish researcher, who notes that «the word *creativity* has recently won great popularity in numerous contexts, showing both positive («creative writing») and negative («creative accounting») connotations» (Piasecka, L, 2018). The researcher also admits «a distinction between *exceptional* creativity, manifesting itself in important works that are significant for a given society, and *everyday* creativity, which can be observed in everyday life activities that involve a degree of originality» (Piasecka, 2018). The author characterizes a foreign language classroom as a «nest of creativity», as far as learning a new language requires from students to create statements, they may not be confident about, yet they take the risk of producing them. In his regard teachers may introduce many creative tasks and activities that are motivating, involving and rewarding. Such tasks and activities give learners a sense of joy, excitement, and fulfilment (Piasecka, 2018).

Thus, what is creative writing and how can it be effectively used in teaching foreign languages? On the one hand, creative writing can be defined as any type of writing outside of the scheme used for everyday communicative use (Tok, & Kandemir, 2014). On the other hand, N. Akther (2014) defines creative writing as «a form of writing that expresses feelings, thoughts or ideas in an imaginative way». The researcher also claims that creative writing provides students with new ways to play with the language which enhances their writing skills and helps them to improve all their language skills (Akther, 2014).

At the same time L. Herrera (2016) admits that creative writing overflows the limits of professional, journalistic, academic and technical writing. Here creativity prevails over the informative purpose of non-literary, non-creative writing (Herrera, 2016, p. 23). It is absolutely clear that creative writing provides a chance to maximally activate students' imagination and fantasy to create something absolutely new or to get a different view of the things they already know. Doing this, students develop their creative thinking, look for their own solutions to problems and learn how to change the way of solving problems where necessary. They enjoy the feeling of novelty and they are ready to change their views, because stereotypes and

strictness of thought do not contribute to progress and creativity. A teacher encourages playing with a language and looking for one's own, original style (Kinakh, Blyzniuk, 2009, p. 29). Formation of students' creative writing skills at foreign language classes involves two forms of training: collective and individual. Collaborative learning allows students to work as a team to create a text, share ideas and analyze each other's mistakes in a coordinated manner. Mutual correction contributes to the ability to criticize reasonably and, at the same time, to perceive criticism properly. In addition, in team learning students develop mutual respect, responsibility and organization of their own activities (Prystai, 2021, p. 106).

In this regard it is necessary to stress that the benefits from the use of creative writing when teaching and learning foreign language stretch beyond formal language acquisition into more personal, socio-cultural, and psychological domains that lead to self-empowerment (Wachtmeister, Eferlund, 2021, p. 2).

A. Alyouf (2019), a researcher from Jordan, admits that one of the problems encountered by students when learning a foreign language is the acquisition of an appropriate number of foreign words, terms and expressions. They are necessary for various linguistic interactions, such as listening, comprehension, having a good conversation, reading an article or writing about different things (Alyouf, 2019, p. 65). The researcher also states that teaching of poetry as a creative writing form is quite useful because it becomes a rich source of language that nourishes a student's memory. Still, this activity should be regulated in order to achieve the maximum benefit (Alyouf, 2019, p. 65–66).

Creative writing combines cognitive and affective modes of thinking, and one of the main characteristic features of writing creative texts is a playful interaction with a language, stretching and testing its rules to the limit – in a guilt-free atmosphere, where risk is encouraged (Malley, 2018, p. 1). Creative writing promotes the development of language at all levels: vocabulary, grammar, phonology and discourse. Completing creative writing tasks, students have to deal with the language in an interesting and challenging way, trying to express personal meanings in a unique way. Doing this, they engage with the language at a deeper level of processing than with most standard texts. The gains in grammatical accuracy, appropriacy and originality of lexical choice, sensitivity to rhyme, rhythm, stress, intonation, text structure are really noticeable (Maley, 2018, p. 2). A key characteristic of creative writing is a willingness to play with the language and it has a very important outcome – a dramatic increase in self-confidence and self-esteem which creative writing develops in students, because when doing creative writing tasks they also discover things about the language and about themselves, promoting personal and linguistic growth. In turn, these gains are reflected in a corresponding growth of positive motivation (Maley, 2018, p. 2).

F. Cornillie, J. Buendgens-Kosten, S. Sauro, & J. Van der Veken admit the efficiency of digital space storytelling practices. They stress the importance of learning through doing, bricolage, teamwork, and playfulness. As key examples they mention fanfiction – a form of creative writing that transforms popular media in some way, and interactive fiction – a form of nonlinear narrative that verge on the world of gaming (Cornillie, et al., 2021).

At the same time, Sh. Sauro and B. Sundmark (2016) from Sweden suggest the use of fan fiction as a pedagogical tool in a technology-enhanced university foreign language class. The authors suggest using a task-based fan fiction project, modeled on blog-based role-play storytelling found in online media. Students are organized into groups, in which each member is responsible for voicing a single character from some literary work in a blog-based collaborative role-play of a missing moment from the story. The authors' state that carefully sequenced collaborative fan fiction could facilitate analysis of a literary text, learners' use of creative writing techniques, and language development, particularly at the level of lexis (Sauro, Sundmark, 2016).

The Korean researcher Kim in the work with students suggests using illustrative texts as mentor texts to create, for example, electronic texts and to reshape writing in electronic texts and power point presentations. Due to this, students gain more opportunities to practice and learn a foreign language in an authentic manner (Kim, 2022, p. 11).

Fan Dai, Wei Zheng (2019) from China consider «creative writing in a foreign language as one type of translation, more specifically, 'self-translation,' in which the original text is usually not written, but exists liminally in the mind of the author».

S. Lee (2019) from the Republic of Korea suggests the use of a digital game to promote students' creativity at foreign language classes as a means for stimulating students' creativity and motivation. A digital game and a creative writing project can be applied by foreign language teachers to provide an authentic learning opportunity through which students can develop their creativity, use the target language in a meaningful way, and enjoy learning.

Creative writing in a second or a foreign language context, in particular, writing of poetry or stories, can be used to enrich students' learning and writing experience. Autonomous, free-choice and unstructured writing assignments stimulate students' thinking and «offer an opportunity for their imagination to run wild» (Chun-Chun Yeh, 2017).

Z. Dornyei (2001) from Great Britain suggested the following conditions for promoting motivation to creative writing: making learning more stimulating and enjoyable by breaking the monotony of classroom events, by increasing the attractiveness of tasks; presenting and administering tasks in a motivating way; providing students with regular experiences of success; building

students' confidence by providing regular encouragement; increasing their motivation by promoting cooperation among them, their autonomy; increasing students' satisfaction offering them rewards in a motivational manner (Dornyei, 2001, p. 138–144).

Conclusions. Creative writing has been characterized as an excellent method to develop writing skills, encourage students to write, develop vocabulary, grammar, imagination. Creativity has won great popularity in numerous contexts, showing both positive and negative connotations. There is a distinction between exceptional creativity, manifesting itself in important undertakings that are significant for a given society, and everyday creativity, which can be observed in everyday life activities that involve a degree of originality.

Completing creative tasks, students have an opportunity to express and assert themselves through the means of a foreign language, get satisfaction from the process of producing a written and spoken expression in addition to the fact of getting a finished product. Therefore, application of elements of creative writing at foreign language classes promotes language development at all levels: grammar, vocabulary, phonemics and speaking. Formation and development of abilities and skills of creative thinking are carried out through two complementary forms of learning: collective and independent. Further research will be dedicated to the issue of creative writing tasks and to creation of favorable conditions and possibilities which would encourage students to write more efficiently and creatively in a foreign language.

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ЕФЕКТИВНЕ НАВЧАННЯ ІНОЗЕМНИМ МОВАМ: РОЛЬ КРЕАТИВНОГО ПИСЬМА

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У статті розглянуто роль та можливості використання креативного письма задля ефективного викладання іноземних мов у закладах вищої освіти; досліджено, як креативне письмо може сприяти вивченню іноземної мови студентами та сприяти розвитку мови на всіх рівнях: лексики, граматики, фонеміки, дискурсу. Розглянуто поняття креативності та креативного письма, викладено способи та форми креативного письма задля їх використання на заняттях з іноземної мови. У статті визнається необхідність виходу за рамки обмежень, які стандартизують освітні програми, підручники і форми контролю, та пошуку шляхів стимулювання та підтримки індивідуального розвитку кожного студента. Наголошено на важливості та актуальності писемного спілкування на сьогоденній день, а отже, на важливості розвитку в студентів навичок письмового висловлювання іноземною мовою. При цьому зауважено те, що, виконуючи творчі завдання, студенти мають можливість висловитися та самоствердитися засобами іноземної мови, отримати задоволення від процесу створення письмового та усного висловлювання та отримання готового продукту. Креативне письмо також означено як дієвий метод розвитку письмових навичок, заохочення студентів до письма, розвитку їхнього словникового запасу, граматичних навичок, уяви. У статті зауважено, що останнім часом креативність набула великої популярності в багатьох контекстах, демонструючи як позитивні (креативне письмо), так і негативні (креативний бухоблік) конотації. Проте існує різниця між винятковою креативністю, яка проявляється у важливих роботах, які мають велике значення для даного суспільства, і повсякденною креативністю, яку можна спостерігати в повсякденній життєдіяльності та яка передбачає певний ступінь оригінальності. Наголошено на тому, що заняття з іноземної мови можна охарактеризувати як «гніздо творчості», оскільки вивчення нової мови вимагає від студентів створення висловлювань, у яких вони можуть бути не впевнені, проте вони мають ризикувати їх продукувати, і завдання викладача тут полягає у забезпеченні творчих завдань і заходів, які мотивують, залучають до творчого процесу, винагороджують і дають студентам відчуття радості, хвилювання та задоволення. Креативне письмо в статті означено як форма письма, яка виражає почуття, думки чи ідеї в образний спосіб, який надає студентам нові можливості гри з мовою, покращує їхні письмові навички та виходить за межі професійного, журналістського, академічного та технічного письма, а також за межі формального опанування мови й охоплює більш особистісні, соціально-культурні та психологічні сфери, що сприяє саморозвитку.

Ключові слова: ефективне навчання; креативність; креативне письмо; навчання іноземній мові; письмове спілкування; розвиток.