

# The Formation of Students' Creative Independence at the English Language Classes

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The article is devoted to the formation of students' creative independence. The aim of the article is to identify and test pedagogical conditions of formation students' creative independence studying the English language. The leading methods are analyses of scientific works and practice, empirical and experimental data, method of involved observation, modeling and experimental method. The experimental method aimed to identify formation of students' creative independence at the English language class. The experimental work has shown the effective process of formation students' creative independence in the experimental groups compared with traditional learning in the control groups. The authors has developed a didactic model and defined pedagogical conditions of formation students' creative independence in the teaching process.

*Keywords:* creativity, independence, creative independence, personality, the formation stages and levels, experiment

## INTRODUCTION

### The relevance of the study

A person who has an experience of creative self activity is always on a higher level in comparison with those who use standard methods. Moreover, a specialist, who has a definite intellectual level and the ability to raise it creatively, can rationally perceive, develop and introduce progressive technologies, he can be a stimulus to progress. Therefore, the society which consists of personalities, who have high creative potential, can provide decent living conditions. This explains an increased focus of pedagogical sciences on the process of the formation of personality's creative independence.

Independence is defined in pedagogics as one of the personality's characteristics. This characteristic is defined by two factors. The first factor includes basic skills which the personality has. The second - the personality's attitude to the process of

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activity, it's result and the condition of realization.

The classification of the independence's levels is connected with the division of the activity into reproductive and productive – creative. In the first case we mean independence in reproductive activity. In the second case the changes are made in the activity itself (the purpose of it is not in getting the final product, but in finding new ways). Such independence is defined as creative. As research shows creativity is the highest level of independence and activity of the person. "Creativity can be defined as production of an idea or product that is innovative and meaningful. Creativity is about ways we can reach beyond ourselves in our conventional lives, realities, and consciousness, to access deeper ways of knowing, and even profound spiritual realizations. There is a vital role for creativity studies in making the most of our self-awareness, and furthering our human possibility" (Lafferty, 2004). Today such features of personality as creativity and independence are totally examined by psychologists and didacticians. Researches cover different factors of creative independence, which enable to develop one kind of feature or another.

The process of studying a foreign language enables to develop creative independence because this subject gives the possibility to use creative tasks and exercises which expect from students their individual work and to use language material for expressing thoughts in dialogues and monologues. Thus in didactics, scholars try to clear up the essence of creativity and independence, analyze their structure, try to find the methods of the developing creative skills in which they use special creative tasks, individual work, texts, homework, etc. However the question of transferring individual activity into creative activity is not studied enough. That is why the aim of our work is to give a special mention to creative independence, which helps to make a transfer from independence to creativity; to find complex approach in solving the problem of development and formation of creative independence.

A foreign language, as one of the sources of communication and cognition of the world around, takes a special place in the system of modern education thanks to its social, informative and developing functions.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **Methods of study**

Data was collected by the following groups of research methods: comparative analysis, comparison, testing, questionnaires, included observation, modeling method, experimental work.

### **The experimental base of the study**

Theoretical and methodological basis of formation students' creative independence makes it possible to construct a model and define pedagogical conditions of formation of students' creative independence in the teaching process.

At the initial stage of experimental work, the following tasks were set: to determine the structure of the didactic activity of the teacher on formation of students' creative independence, allocate didactic conditions of the implementation of the educational process.

At the first stage the educational targets and tasks as results of educational activity of students were carried out and tasks of teacher's didactic activity were defined in accordance with them.

At the second stage the teacher studied specific features of students' educational activity (level of creative potential, real initial opportunities, initial cognitive activity, motivation of students to learning foreign language, etc.).

Experimental work included realization of didactic model on formation of student's creative independence in the course of teaching foreign languages. At the initial stage a definite target was defined: to form creative independence of students.

According to the target, tasks of formation students' creative independence were defined:

- ☒ formation of students' creative thinking,
- ☒ transferring the system of scientific and informative knowledge,
- ☒ mastering experience of creative activity.

At the following stage we revealed pedagogical conditions of formation of creative independence.

Taking into account the revealed conditions of training we determined the contents, forms, methods, working methods with groups and tutorials by formation of students' creative independence.

The teacher diagnosed level of formation students' creative independence and motivation activity of students in the course of teaching foreign languages, planned lessons taking into account compliance of structure to problems of formation of students' creative independence, corrected level of formation.

Various forms of teacher's activity were used in practical realization of the model: collective formation of students' creative independence, performance of creative educational and informative tasks by students, performance of creative individual educational tasks, writing of compositions, essay, and use of games in teaching.

According to forms, methods on formation of creative independence were chosen: a method of the problem arguing statement, heuristic conversation, heuristic immersion, performance of independent creative tasks, a method of projects, brainstorming, etc.

The student's work consisted of perception and assimilation of knowledge, performance of special tasks, working off ways and methods of learning cognitive activity in formation of creative independence during foreign language classes.

Within realization of didactic model the following forms of student's work were used: frontal, collective work on performance of creative cognitive tasks; performance of creative group, individual cognitive tasks; creation of language situations of creative character.

In the organization of educational activity we applied methods of independent work of students on performance of cognitive tasks, performance of creative tasks and exercises on formation of creative independence.

The following criteria were used to determine the formation of students' creative independence in the process of studying:

-the ability of creative independent activity at four levels including such elements as knowledge (systematicity, awareness, effectiveness);

-ability of creative independent work;

-ways of creative independent activity as ability to extrapolate the gained knowledge, ability to analyze qualities which appeared as a result of formation the experience of creative independent work: operating by the acquired knowledge and transferring them in new language situations, creation of essentially new approach to a solution.

The procedure expression of creative independence is a transfer. We suppose that it is the ability to use the acquired knowledge, skills, and also ways of solving new tasks. One of the main indicators of achievement by students a certain level of creative independence is the ability to carry out the transfer of this or that degree of complexity - from the elementary transfer to difficult transfer of the formed skills and abilities under new conditions.

Development of creative independence undergoes three levels:

- ☒ the copying;

☒ the reproductive and creative;

☒ the constructive and creative.

Being guided by the considered theories of these concepts and their analysis, we have come to their own understanding. Within research the copying level of creative independence represents ability to analyze, understand and acquire a model of typical action and to seize its elementary transfer on the decision of similar tasks i.e. to do the following tasks according to the samples.

Reproductive and creative level is characterized by ability to transform, expand a speech sample, to choose one of the acquired sample and apply it solving a similar task, i.e. to carry out the complicated transfer in similar conditions.

Constructive and creative level means creative ability to use the created skills and abilities and on the basis of their improvement to carry out difficult transfer on the solution of new tasks.

### **Experimental stage**

The object of the given study was the process of formation students' creative independence during the experiment. The subject was the proof of the effectiveness of pedagogical conditions on the formation of students' creative independence in the course of training a foreign language. The experiment consisted of three main phases: diagnostic, formative and final. Based on the target of the pedagogical experiment, its goals were defined.

**At the first diagnostic stage** – the following goals were pointed out: 1) to estimate the level of creative potential of students; 2) to carry out diagnostics of an initial condition of cognitive activity of students.

**At the second formative stage** – the process of formation students' creative independence was organized in experimental groups. Formation of students' creative independence was carried out by a traditional method in the control groups. During the experiment we realized pedagogical conditions and didactic model. It allowed us to reveal their efficiency and to include necessary amendments.

**At the third stage** of an experimental research, we carried out a test to know the levels of formation students' creative independence in experimental and control groups. The comparative analysis was taken to describe the results in order to distinguish the efficiency of formation students' creative independence.

Experimental work was carried out on the basis of KFU with the first and second year students. Groups were selected on the condition that there were not significant differences in the level of their creative potential, informative activity between students of the control and experimental groups.

To define, the level of students' creative potential in control and experimental groups we used the questionnaire on determination of level's creative potential of the personality. The revealed level of creative potential of students proves that this level of students in control groups practically coincides with the level of creative capacity in experimental groups. On average researches showed that most of students have level slightly above an average.

Cognitive activity of students is revealed by means of «Diagnostics of an initial condition of cognitive activity of students". According to the results, most of respondents have the main problem - inability to work independently. In our research we consider independent work as one of the conditions of development of creative independence and as a type of individual cognitive activity.

We consider creative independence abilities as the readiness acquired by pupils to perform creative independent activity on the basis of the acquired knowledge and experience in common with specific style of activity. Relying on definition of abilities of creative independent work (dependence on a type of creativity, on knowledge, on personality of the pupil, etc.), we pointed out four levels of formed abilities of

creative independent work. Each level is characterized by the following features (knowledge of the theory, ability to analyze, application of the theory in practice) at the different qualitative level:

- the First level which is characterized through ignorance of the theory, inability to analyze, inability to put the theory into practice, etc. Weak students belong to this level.

- the Second level is characterized by a lack of theory knowledge, possession of the first type of the analysis, application of the theory in practice in tasks of medium difficulty.

- the Third level is knowledge of the theory, possession of the first and second type of the analysis, application of the theory in practice. Development of abilities of creative independent work happens in creative independent activity with the insignificant help of the teacher in solving difficult questions.

- the Fourth level of formation abilities of creative independent work assumes that students put a problem and solve it.

And, at last, we estimated the achieved results of students' and teacher's activities with the purpose of planning an individual educational task of students and correcting the teacher's activity.

At the forming experiment stage, for the purpose of formation students' creative independence, we developed own course including the contents, forms, methods on formation of students' creative independence by means of a foreign language. In foreign language classes students were involved in cognitive activity on performance of the differentiated actions: to find the corresponding equivalents on the basis of creative tasks, to find synonyms and antonyms, to translate from one language into another, to complete sentences, to express the opinion on a certain subject, etc. Learning foreign language leads to activation of various intellectual processes. Foreign language skills assume keeping in memory several thousand words in the passive dictionary.

Studying grammatical constructions develops logical thinking, mental capacities; phonetic tasks develop articulation basis, etc. Learning foreign language, as well as studying other sciences, is a training of intelligence and creative independence. The methodic recommendations about formation of creative independence developed by us on material of English included test tasks, speech situations, creative tasks for knowledge of lexical, grammatical material.

Also we suggested such procedures as the analysis, heuristic methods, vision of structure of object, alternative decisions and its course, creation of essentially new way of solving the problem, use of elements of game activity, etc. Question-answer work served as a form of control.

At the stage of formation students' skills tests were carried out, done works were analyzed. We estimated the level of formation of creative independence by results of performance of creative tasks (making up dialogues, writing of compositions, letters, the translation of texts, verses, etc.).

## **RESULTS**

During the experiment a series of control tests was carried out. It revealed the efficiency of pedagogical conditions and the approved didactic model on formation of students' creative independence by means of a foreign language.

The comparative analysis of results disclosed quantitative increase in values of criteria of formation students' creative independence of experimental groups in relation to control groups. Correlations of results show the efficiency of processes of formation students' creative independence in experimental groups in comparison with traditional teaching in control groups. Statistical analysis and data *processing* of

results of experimental work with a method of comparison of two selective average values  $t$  - criterion Student showed that observed distinctions are statistically significant that confirms validity of the research hypothesis. Results of the analysis of the experimental work are reflected in the histograms below.

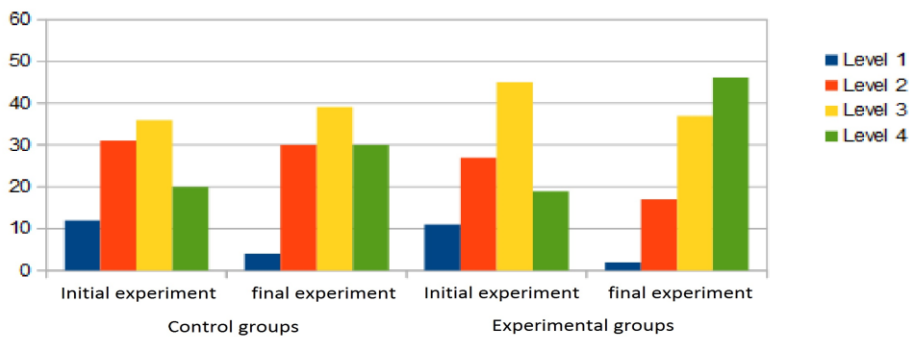


Figure 1. Qualitative evaluation

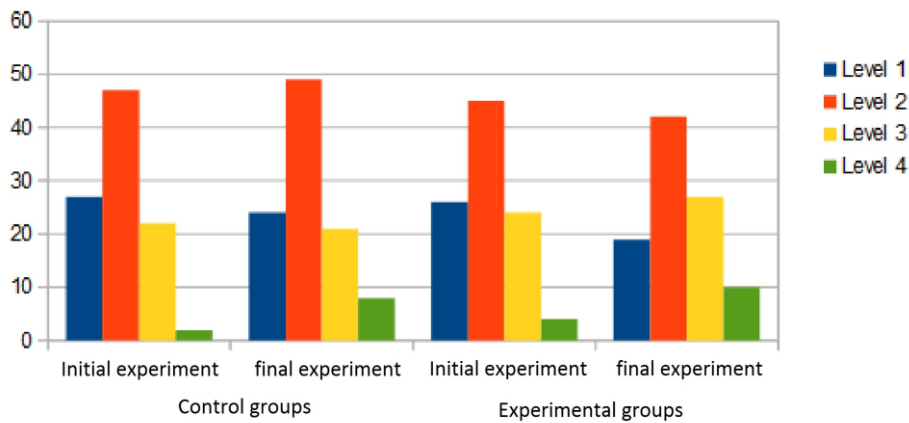


Figure 2. The formation of creative skills

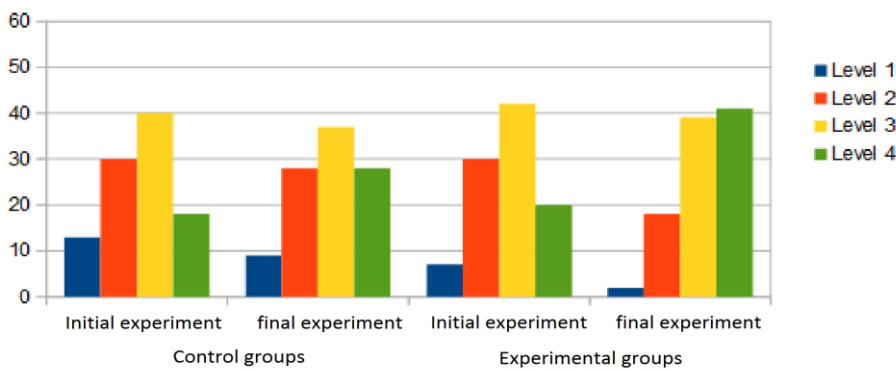


Figure 3. The formation of creative individual work experience

## DISCUSSION

An important contribution into the development of pedagogics of creativity was given by many scholars. Works of V. Shubinskiy (1988) are devoted to the creative process. Criteria of the creative activity are developed by I. Lerner (1981). The peculiarities of the creative activity are studied by I. Kaloshina (1983), M. Makhmutov (1977); creative thinking – Z. Kalmikova (1981), V. Krutetskiy (1976).

Characteristics of creative personality are given in the works of V. Andreev (2000), N. Obukhova (1990); creative abilities – V. Krutetskiy (1976), V. Molyako (1995).

A special attention in our research was given to studying the basic works of foreign researches: F. Barron (1969), S. Rathert (2012), L. Hoffman (1979). The analysis of foreign experience concerning the development of students' creative independence in high school showed that there are two approaches: deep individualization of training and studying the influence of group on to the effectiveness of creative activity. Studying foreign experience of students' creative independence allows to advance our system of education.

The questions of the creative activity experience were developed by M. Garunov (1973), I. Lerner (1981). Creative character of individual activity was analyzed by V. Drozina (1997), Kalayci and Humiston (2015), P. Pidkasistiy (1980).

The essential contribution into the development of cognitive independence was given by the Kazan didacticians: V. Andreev (2000), A. Kirsanov (1982) and others. They consistently study the problems of classification individual work and the development of cognitive independence of pupils and students.

The essential contribution into the development of the theory and methods of foreign languages was given by Ye. Passov (1989) etc.; in nonlinguistic higher educational institutions.

At the same time, as the review of the studying of our problem says, up to now, there are no researches about the development of students' creative independence in linguistic higher educational institutions at the foreign languages classes. However, available researches constitute a serious scientific basis.

## **CONCLUSION**

According to the results of our research we can make the following conclusion:

1. the development of creative independence in native and foreign pedagogics is an important qualitative characteristic of a person which is a unique phenomenon. It differs with individual selection of features and it's own variant of development.

2. a foreign language is an important means of the development of creative independence with the use of contents, forms and methods which have definite creative potential.

3. the effectiveness of the development of creative independence increases thanks to the following pedagogical conditions:

- the process of involving the student into creative activity of the course "Foreign language" includes such phases as: individual transferring of skills into a new situation, an ability to see a new problem in a familiar situation, a new function of an object, its structure, methods of its solving, finding new ways of solving which differ from those known to a subject.

- structuring the content of the course "Foreign language" in class activity and in extra-curricular activity is realized in accordance with the peculiarities of gradual (step-by-step) development of creative independent cognitive activity.

- organization of students' cognitive work is provided with the help of intentionally established problem tasks, linguistic situations which help to realize creative activity on acquisition ways of individual accumulation new knowledge and getting the experience of performing creative procedures (analysis, synthesis, heuristic talk, associative mechanisms).

4. The model developed and tried out in experiment helped to increase the effectiveness of the development of students' creative independence in linguistic higher educational institutions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Research materials and results may be used by teachers of foreign languages to involve students in creative independent cognitive activity. The given materials help to enrich courses of didactics, pedagogics and faculties of advanced training and staff retraining.

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