**Creativity in Higher Education**

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**Problem Introduction**

In spite of the country we live in and the field in which we are studying or working, there is fascinating role of creativity in our life that makes it worth living…

The idea of this presentation is to reveal the role of creativity in higher education in the modern world. To start revealing it, I think it is valuable to mention that the world we are living in today is not the same as it was yesterday. We live in the age of global changes that happen in social, political, cultural, spheres and more. We are moving into the digital age where changing technologies change the way we think and the methods we use for educating people.

When students graduate from the university, most of them face the problem of finding a really good job. Organizations today are changing their requirements from knowledge based to some additional qualities the employees should obtain.

Employers are looking for flexible, highly competitive employees who are able to go beyond narrow task requirements and who approach work proactively by showing personal initiative. (Deanne N., Den Hartog, Frank D. Belschak, 2007).

So, there can be a huge gap between the requirements of the organizations and the real situation of the potential employees. For example, "to be viable in the engineering profession, students need to develop skills that will allow them to go beyond "training" (Gibney, K.). Do we teach them how to do it?

Deanne N. Den Hartog, Frank D. Belschak (2007) mention this is the only one way for organizations to become more innovative and competitive - it is to capitalize on their employees' ability to innovate… «Work has become more knowledge-based and less rigidly defined. In this context, employees can help to improve business performance through their ability to generate ideas and use these as building blocks for new and better products, services and work processes» (Deanne N. Den Hartog, Frank D. Belschak, 2007). In today's hypercompetitive environment the organization that cannot innovate cannot expect to survive for long (D.Leonard & W.Swap, 2010). This situation is typical for all the fields of professional activities including education.

Thus the main purpose of higher education today should include not only the process of learning the essential professional knowledge in the specific field but also should help the person to find the key to understanding how he can use the resources of his own to make his professional and personal life worth living, to be able to change according to the rapid changes of the world or to become the initiator of the changes himself.

We think that creativity development is the essential part of the educational process that can help to change the way we teach and learn.

### Definition of creativity and creative potential

There are a lot of approaches to defining of the word «creativity» in Russian and foreign psychology. It needs additional space to reveal the diversity of all the points of view related to creativity but there are also some general ideas that are worth mentioning in this presentation.

Many authors who are interested in the creativity development express the idea that creativity is the process of experimenting with a new result. For example, Lubart defines creativity as "the capacity to produce novel, original work that fits within contextual constraints. This work must be novel in the sense that it goes beyond a replication or copy of that which exists" (Lubart).

D. Leonard and W. Swap in their book «Fostering creativity» (2010) mention that creativity is a process of developing and expressing novel ideas that are likely to be useful. They also say that "creativity is not a talent and it can be defined as goal-oriented process that required the organization of collaborative approach to maximize everyone's distinctive gifts, experiences and expertise".

We consider it valuable to say about the approaches that also reveal the multidimensional character of creativity. For example, Gelade, taking into consideration that creativity is multidimensional ability, says that it is influenced by various factors of specific social environment such as culture or language (Gelade, 2002). Csikszentmihalyi thinks that creativity can be viewed as a form of cultural and social phenomenon rather than a form of mental process (1999). Lee and Kim mention that culture can affect both, the level of creativity and how creativity is evaluated. Creative behaviors and skills can be affected within the realm of an individual's circumstance (Lee & Kim, 2010).

There are very interesting results about the influence of culture to person' creativity that were received in the researches conducted by two groups of scientists - Ogawa, Kuehn-Ebert & DeVito and Saeki, Fan & Van Dusen. They found out the cross-cultural difference between the American and Asian students and came to conclusion that there are different creative performances or preferences that exist between different cultures and language groups. For example, "in measures of creativity, American students show superiority in flexibility (ability to shift categories of ideas), whereas Asian students show superiority in elaboration (ability to add details to ideas)". (Ogawa, Kuehn-Ebert & DeVito (1991) and Saeki, Fan& Van Dusen (2001). The other results received in their researches demonstrated the different perception in the manner of creativity between Eastern and Western cultures. You can read more about this research in the original work of the authors. See the reference list.

Talking about the cultural differences, Lubart supports the idea that there is difference in the views of the creativity in Eastern and Western cultures. In the Eastern view, creativity seems to involve

finding a way to reinterpret traditional ideas, whereas creativity from the Western perspective seems to involve a break with tradition altogether (Lubart).

Kirton M. mentions that creativity can be viewed as a continuum of styles, ranging from adaptive preferences for decision-making and problem solving to innovative preferences. He points out to the difference between two types: adaptors and innovators and their approach to change: adaptors are those who try to do things better, whereas innovators are those who seek to do things differently. Adaptors create original ideas, which are more likely to fit the existing paradigm. Innovators endeavor to create original ideas, which are more likely to challenge an existing paradigm (Kirton, 1999).

Comparing innovation and creativity, D. Leonard and W. Swap also mention that innovation can be viewed as the final stage of creativity and it is "the embodiment, combination, and/or synthesis of knowledge in original, relevant, valued new products, processes, or services" (D. Leonard and W. Swap, 2010)

It is also important to reveal the position of Russian psychologists and linguists to creativity definition. N. Shvedova gives the following definition: creativity is the person's inner possibility (Shvedova, 2006). Davydova thinks that creativity and creative potential can be viewed as the potential that we can see tomorrow (in perspective). «There are two ways the personality is developing - the actual and potential… Potential is considered to be very important source of meaning formation and time perspective" (Davydova, 2006).

The psychologists (Vishnyakova N., Kravshuk P., Ponomarev Y., Stepanov S., Davydova I.) consider that there is connection between actual and potential spheres of the personality development. The development process is based on the gap between the potential and actual. "Potential can become real only when the person is activit" (Davydova, 2006).

Creative potential of the person plays the key and integral role (Vishnyakova N., Kravchuk P., Ponomarev Y., etc.). Vishnyakova N. also mentions that creativity is a complicated, multidimensional psychological formation. It includes the creative components and value-semantic spheres in its structure.  She also explains that creative potential of the person consists of the following parts, "I am Ideal " and "I am Real", the more developed "I am Ideal" is, the more possibilities for the development the person has. The changes that happen with "I am Ideal" positively influence the development of creative and motivational components (Vishnyakova)

Talking about the influence of the creativity and creative potential development to the personal and professional development, the scientists (Davydov V., Markov V., Ponomarev Y., Ovchinnikov V., etc.) found out that it is typical for people who have high creative potential to have developed imagination, strong intuition, the desire to self-expression, non-standard and productive way of thinking, innovativeness, abilities to mobilize their resources during the activity. There are also

some typical qualities of people who have high creative potential, such as singularity, imagination, intuition, creative thinking, humor, empathy, curiosity, creative attitude to professional activity (Vishnyakova N.,p.25). Creative potential helps people to cope with life problem situations in a more constructive way and prevents self-destruction.

So, it helps us to make a conclusion about the high value of creativity development for the development of modern person who is able to live and to work in this world more successfully. There is a considerable amount of scientific papers and talks have been offered by scientists who work in education field. They truly believe that creativity development is the essential aim of modern education process. I would like to cite the words of world famous author, speaker, and international advisor on education - Sir Ken Robbinson "Do schools kill creativity?" - «Creativity is as important in education as literacy and we should treat it with the same status» (Ken Robinson, 2006).

**Art therapy techniques in the university classrooms**

There are a lot of ways to develop creativity. The analysis made in this field shows the diversity of the methods used by different authors. Some educators prefer physical exercises to stimulate creative thinking; others use discussions, problem tasks, role-plays, music, open-ended projects, etc. Ricciardelli (1992) shows that learning foreign languages makes students more creative too, he made the research with bilinguals, where he showed that bilingual individuals tend to be more creative than monolingual individuals.

The idea of introduction of art therapy techniques into university classrooms corresponds with the ideas of the art therapy in general. I think that one of the advantages of art therapy is that it can be applied not only to people who seek psychological help in difficult situations but to those who seek personal and professional growth as well. It corresponds with the ideas of new education of 21$^{st}$ century discussed in the book written by Russel L.Ackoff, Daniel Greenberg (2008), education that encourages and supports the development of creative potential of children, encouraging them to grow up as initiators, creative, open to innovations and curious adults. The uniqueness of art therapy is in the choice that it gives to the person to increase internal self control, self revelation, and self development.

I think that art therapy methods such as individual drawing, group drawing, creatingsculpte, collage, etc. have a lot of advantages that can be used in the classrooms as well.

*Some of the advantages of art therapy in the university classroom:*

- it reduces stress and tension the students may feel; *(in this case the creative work should not be evaluated)*
- it helps to investigate personal resources and wishes;
- it increases the level of reflection by analyzing the results received during the work;

- it helps to experiment in safe environment to learn what they can do better;
- to learn to think outside established patterns;
- to consider creativity as the value of their personal and professional development.

These mentioned advantages are of a great value to support the person to develop in a creative way. The methods also help to overcome the boundaries that don't allow students to develop creatively, such as: negative attitude to personal potential that could be socially influenced; high anxiety, high psychological tension, low self –control.

Art therapy in the classroom should be based on the principles of a humanistic approach, as it is directed to encouragement of self-actualization through creative expression and searching for self-transcend life goals. The humanistic approach of art therapy has great resources that can be used in classrooms.

Art therapy allows one to follow one of the main principles of modern education, i.e., to make it an active and engaging process. As the students become more active and responsible for their work, they can be more involved in the process and have more chances to express their personality. The skills that can be learned during these exercises will allow students to feel more comfortable with applying them into real personal and professional life.

My experience of teaching shows that students like to be involved into creative process but some of them may face several difficulties on this way. The orientation to search for the right answer doesn't allow them to express their ideas in a free way, the fear to be worse than anybody else in the room is not helpful too, the fear not to find the right answer looks frightening, some of the students face difficulties to start doing anything, saying that they don't have any idea about it. Some of them don't feel comfortable to know that they should be more active than during the lecture.

That is why it can't be just an art class, but it requires some therapeutic skill from the teacher to apply it to the teaching process as well.  There are also some additional possibilities of art therapy that I would like to mention.

- to organize individual and group work that helps to learn social skills (allows not only to create but to learn to work in the team, to express ideas as individually as well as in group, to develop communicative skills, presentation skills, to learn the ethics of communication, etc.).
- to learn the value of group creativity as the rich exchange process of presenting and learning;
- to experiment with different thinking styles;
- to provide supplies, tools and techniques to enhance idea generation
- to enrich the creative process by diversity of participants, supplies and exercises.

**Conclusion:**

So I strongly believe that the teachers and students all around the world can implement these factors to real teaching and learning that will help them to make it valuable. In conclusion I would like to cite Ken Robinson's words about the value of learning and the value of making mistakes for the successful learning. "The kids are not afraid of being wrong, if you are not prepared to be wrong you will never come out with anything original…"

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