

From Theory to Practice: The Cultivation Path of Creativity in Gifted Education

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Abstract: Nowadays, creativity is becoming increasingly important in the field of education and is regarded as an important part of stimulating students' potential. Generally speaking, students need more than just standard teaching guidance, and talented students often require targeted guidance. Creativity has been studied from different theoretical perspectives at the present stage, and each theory provides unique insights into how to cultivate creativity and apply it in the educational environment. This article will discuss three theories of creativity, namely cognitive theory, humanistic theory, and sociocultural theory, and their influences on the classroom practice of gifted education.

Keywords: Theory; Practice; Gifted education; Creativity; Cultivation path

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1. Introduction

As an IELTS teaching assistant, the author is very interested in how to apply these theories to classroom practice, especially how to better support gifted students. The ages of my class range from 16 to 25, and they all have different language proficiency levels. The author can't just teach the talented students. Each student's level is quite different, so the author needs to differentiate the teaching to provide more gifted students with the opportunity to express their creativity. Therefore, this article will explore how to effectively apply these creativity theories to teaching practice to create a rich learning environment, promote the creativity and learning outcomes of gifted students, and meet the needs of various abilities at the same time.

2. Cognitive theory and its practical effects

The cognitive theory of creativity studies how our brain helps us come up with new ideas and solve problems. It indicates that creativity emerges when people create unique ideas and solutions. This concept of creativity is related to curiosity and emphasizes the importance of attention, memory and argument. By observing how these internal processes work, the cognitive theory helps us understand how to promote creativity in training, especially

for proficient learners.

Cognitive theory holds that creativity is usually influenced by certain ways of thinking and follows specific methods. For example, as Casakin and Kreidler state, being creative in design is not merely having crazy ideas. It is a step-by-step process that requires proposing and adjusting what we already know. From their review, they found that the qualities of different ways of thinking are related to creativity, which jointly contribute to generating new ideas. For instance, switching between different types of thinking can help students be more artistic. Baer says that creativity is different for everyone. He explains that creativity can vary according to an individual's knowledge field and experience. For example, a student may have a great artistic talent when learning languages but lack imagination when studying technology. For teachers, it is important to understand that encouraging creativity in one subject does not mean it can be easily transferred to other subjects. However, in the classroom, teachers may use different techniques for different topics, encourage creativity in different areas, and support students to fully exert their potential. Another important cognitive theory is the 4E theory on how we think, mentioned by Van Der Schyff and others, referring to different viewpoints on how we think and understand: embodied cognition, embedded cognition, enacted cognition, and extended cognition. 4E cognition changes the common notion that creativity only occurs in the brain. Instead, it indicates that creativity occurs throughout the body. It emphasizes the importance of the connections between people, their devices, the society around them, and their friends in helping creativity grow. Using this perspective in the classroom can enhance children's creativity by creating more exciting learning and inspire them to engage with the surrounding environment in new ways.

The cognitive theory of creativity provides some useful suggestions for improving creativity in the classroom ^[1,2]. Firstly, the research of Casakin & Kreidler shows that teachers can create activities for divergent thinking and convergent thinking. The view put forward by Bell in 2012 suggests that teachers may produce several programs based on different themes to encourage creativity ^[3]. Creative writing tasks can be part of IELTS learning. They help students learn vocabulary, grammar, and ideas in a way different from the regular learning of different subjects. Teachers can change their teaching methods to help students achieve good grades in different subjects. This means that you can better support the specific learning needs of each field. In 2018, it was suggested that typical school facilities could be changed, and some courses that encourage children to be more creative could be added ^[4,5]. In IELTS schools, students may be encouraged to participate in classroom discussions, work, and complete role-playing activities. This helps stimulate their innovative thinking and makes them more involved in the school by making learning more interesting and increasing their knowledge. Cognitive theory indicates that providing individuals with the correct way of thinking is crucial for helping them become more creative. Teachers can help students think about their ideas by having them reflect on how they learn. For example, after students complete their creative writing assignments, they are asked to talk about what they wrote and how they did it. Reflecting on their creativity can help children understand how they develop skills, which can make it easier for them to solve problems. Finally, managing the classroom in multiple ways is very important for training cognitive theory. Since learners think and learn in different ways, teachers do provide various courses to meet these needs ^[6]. Teachers can assign more difficult homework and challenging tasks to intelligent students to help them become more creative. Some students find thinking challenging, and you will help them improve their artistic and problem-solving abilities. By understanding these individual variations, teachers can create a more loving field where all individuals can increase their creativity.

3. Humanistic theory and its practical effects

The humanistic creation theory emphasizes self-actualization. The importance of an environment for personal growth and the cultivation of personal potential. This theory is based on the research results of psychologists such as Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, and holds that creativity is an inherent quality of everyone and can be cultivated through a supportive, relaxed, and freely exploring environment ^[7-9]. In the context of education, the humanistic theory supports the need to cultivate creativity by giving priority to students' emotions and growth, rather than merely focusing on performance results. The following text will explore the humanistic theory and its influence on classroom practice.

The core idea of humanistic theory is that creativity is related to an individual's self-realization and emotional health. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, creativity is most likely to be achieved only when an individual's basic needs are met, enabling people to focus on self-emotional expression and higher-level needs. This indicates that students need to receive full attention and respect in the educational environment. Only when they feel safe can they better exert their creativity ^[10]. Educators play an important role in creating such a safe environment so that students will not be afraid of failure and mistakes, and they can better take creative risks. Humanistic theory also emphasizes the importance of intrinsic motivation in cultivating creativity. Sawyer said that when students are motivated by their own curiosity, interest in the subject, and the motivation to do better in a certain aspect, they are more likely to think creatively. This is completely different from the motivation derived from grades and benefits, which makes students focus on extracurricular activities and thereby reduces creativity. Sawyer emphasizes that training should focus on the individual concerns and aspirations of each student. This technique can promote their interests and innovative thinking, rather than merely measuring them with conventional tests. Hoffman, Richards, and Pritzker studied how humanistic psychology has changed over time and its relationship with creativity, indicating that creativity is an important component of human development. They believe that creativity is not just about thinking difficultly; it is also related to emotions.

The humanistic theory of creativity provides some inspiration for classroom practice and is conducive to creating an environment that nurtures students' creativity. According to Maslow's theory of self-actualization, teachers should create a safe and inclusive classroom atmosphere to meet students' emotional and psychological needs, so that students can be fully respected and valued and freely express their views without criticism. In IELTS reading classes, by providing positive support, encouraging open discussions, and allowing students to express their ideas, students are more likely to take innovative risks when they feel safe. According to Sawyer, teachers can encourage intrinsic motivation by giving students a certain degree of autonomy ^[11]. In IELTS classes, teachers can offer students different assignments and project options, allowing them to freely choose the assignment topics they are interested in. In writing classes, students can freely choose the thesis topics they want to write about. This can not only effectively increase students' participation but also enable students to combine the assignments with their own experiences and stimulate creative thinking. The humanistic theory is a method that helps people develop and improve over time. Teachers should not rely only on quick results. They should also view cultivating students' creativity as a long-term process, including understanding, trying new things, and reflecting on their experiences. Individuals can reflect on their innovative ideas by writing them down in a book and expressing them in school activities. The humanistic theory of creativity helps teachers understand how to assist individuals' emotional well-being, inner desires, and connections. This approach provides useful suggestions for teachers, enabling the classroom to encourage creativity, help individuals think innovatively, and promote personal achievements.

4. Sociocultural theory and its practical implications

The sociocultural theory holds that communicating with others, understanding our way of life, and getting things done are important for cultivating creativity. The social concept holds that creativity is something that occurs in a group, not just in people's minds. Glavanu proposed a method of incorporating creativity into social, physical, and psychological aspects. He said that creativity not only occurs in a person's brain but is also influenced by the tools, people, and technologies they use. Leikin and Pitta-Pantazi proposed that the social concept can be used in mathematics teaching. They believe that being creative in mathematics often means solving problems together. Creativity is closely linked to the social atmosphere, and universities need to have social and community elements when cultivating creativity^[12,13].

The sociocultural theory has some important suggestions that can help promote creativity in the classroom. As Fasko said, creativity usually emerges through conversation and the sharing of ideas. In the classroom, teachers can allow individuals to talk at gatherings and solve problems together. For example, in IELTS courses, students can discuss solutions for oral work in two or more organizations. In this way, they can get more suggestions from their peers. Furthermore, Glumveanu believes that the environment and culture surrounding creativity are important, meaning that educators can provide students with valuable resources such as educational software and multimedia platforms. Individuals can use brain-tracking tools to manage their suggestions for writing tasks or use multimedia platforms to collect data for oral assessment. Teachers can offer students unique ways to effectively integrate into the traditions and real world around them.

Another perspective of sociocultural theory is that we appreciate the different cultures of individuals^[14]. Creativity stems from an individual's social experiences and activities, but teachers should take into account the different ethnic backgrounds of children. Leikin and Pitta-Pantazi point out that mathematical creativity can change according to women's lifestyles and unique ways of solving problems, and it is impressive. Teachers can encourage creativity by creating a learning area that includes different countries^[15]. In addition, the concept of the "zone of proximal development" holds that teachers should give students the right support to help them grow creatively. This means providing guidance and feedback to help students understand better, which is worthy of our in-depth exploration and practice.

5. Conclusion and suggestions

Creativity is a multifaceted issue that can be analyzed from numerous perspectives. The cognitive theory, humanistic theory, and sociocultural theory each provide distinct ways of understanding how creativity develops and expresses itself.

- (1) Cognitive theory holds that creativity is a way of thinking that helps us solve problems and come up with unique ideas. Cognitive theory in teaching refers to that teachers raise open-ended questions in the classroom to help students think in multiple ways and promote independent thinking, autonomous exploration and cooperative learning.
- (2) The concept of liberalism emphasizes the emotional aspect of creativity, mainly focusing on maximizing our own potential, growing as human beings, and obtaining motivation from within. The principle of liberalism holds that teachers should create a safe place where students feel comfortable when trying new things, even if they may fail. Educators should help students express themselves, think about their own ideas, and cultivate their own beliefs.
- (3) Sociocultural theory indicates that creativity is influenced by social relationships, ethnic backgrounds

and typical activities. It emerges through specific social contexts and the use of resources and images. Teachers can help students effectively believe by encouraging them to cooperate in groups and giving each person different feedback.

It can be seen that creativity is a complex issue and can be viewed from many aspects. Cognitive theory, humanistic theory and sociocultural theory all provide different ways to understand how creativity develops and is expressed. Cognitive theory focuses on how we think and solve problems, humanistic theory focuses on personal growth and thoughts, and sociocultural theory focuses on the cultural background and how society influences creativity. Educators can utilize these ideas to create school options, help students express themselves freely and promote classroom discussions.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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