

---

## A HOLISTIC UNDERSTANDING OF CREATIVITY DEVELOPMENT IN HUMAN LIFE CYCLES

*Mikelsone I., Grava J.  
Liepaja University, Liepaja, Latvia*

Creativity as an important aspect of personal development forms the basis of human behaviour, ensures success and stimulates change. An individual can learn, develop and improve this ability during the whole life by acquiring knowledge, skills and experience appropriate to his or her interests, needs and necessity. Since the basis for this ability is developed during childhood and it justifies the human competence of "being creative" [2], it is important to find the most successful solutions for creativity development at pre-school. Aim of the article is to describe the creativity development stages in human life cycles and to describe recommendations for the development of creativity in childhood (at the pre-conventional stage of creativity).

**Materials and methods.** Theoretical framework of the article is composed of characteristics of creativity development stages in the human life cycles (*Ferrando, M., Ferandiz C.*) and data collection of focus group interviews and expert interview in the form of recommendations.

**Results and their discussion.** The acquired results reflect the views of teachers, their awareness, attitudes, activity and experience in the development of creativity in preschool; reveal the factors that influence the development of creativity in support of recommendations for targeted future development of creativity at the pre-conventional stage of development.

**Conclusion.** The article emphasizes creativity development stages in human life cycles and describes the recommendations for the development of children's creativity at the pre-conventional stage of development.

**Key words.** Creativity, creativity development, creativity stages: pre-conventional, conventional, post-conventional.

## РАЗВИТИЕ КРЕАТИВНОСТИ В ХОЛИСТИЧЕСКОМ ПОНИМАНИИ ЖИЗНЕННЫХ ЦИКЛОВ ЧЕЛОВЕКА

*Микелсоне И., Грава Я.  
Лиенайский университет, г. Лиеная, Латвия*

Творчество как значимый аспект развития личности формирует основы поведения человека, обеспечивает успех и способствует изменениям. Эту способность человек приобретает, развивает и совершенствует в течение всей жизни, усваивая знания, навыки и опыт, соответствующие своим интересам, нуждам и потребностям. Так как основы этих способностей формируются в детстве и они обосновывают компетенцию человека «быть творческим» [2], то по существу найдено удачное решение для развития творческих способностей в дошкольном возрасте. Цель статьи: охарактеризовать развитие стадий креативности жизненных циклов человека и описать рекомендации развития креативности в детстве (креативность на преконвенциональной стадии).

**Материал и методы.** Теоретическую базу статьи составляет характеристика стадий креативности жизненных циклов человека (*Ferrando, M., Ferandiz, C.*) и интервью фокус-группы, а также обобщённые данные интервью с экспертами в виде рекомендаций.

**Результаты и их рассмотрение.** Полученные результаты отражают взгляды, понимание, отношение, деятельность и опыт педагогов в развитие креативности в дошкольном возрасте, открывают факторы, влияющие на развитие творчества, и которые обосновывают рекомендации целенаправленного содержания по дальнейшему развитию творчества на преконвенциональной стадии развития.

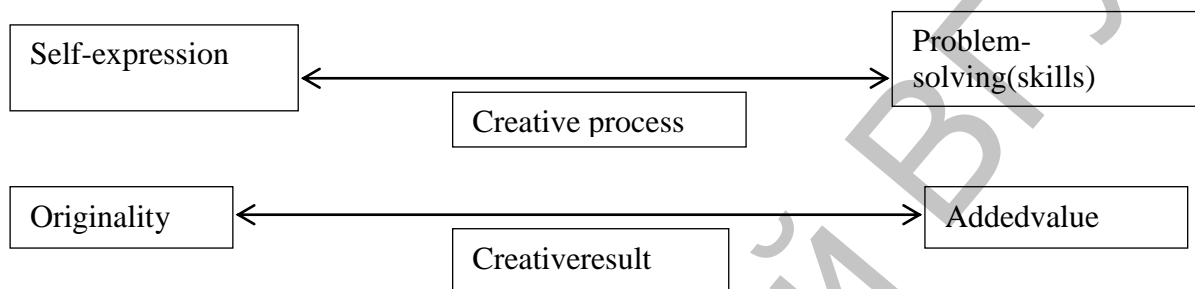
**Заключение.** В статье делается акцент на стадиях развития креативности в циклах жизни человека и описаны рекомендации для развития творчества детей на преконвенциональной стадии развития.

**Ключевые слова.** Творчество, развитие творчества, стадии творчества: преконвенциональная, конвенциональная, постконвенциональная.

---

The more complex the world becomes, the more creative we have to become in order to overcome its challenges. A holistic understanding emphasizes the fact that one area of activity cannot rule out another, they are all interconnected in a complex and nuanced way. Similarly, it also takes place in human development where something learned in childhood continues to develop and grow during adult period and development of creativity is one of those areas which reveals most vividly that the development of creativity in childhood forms the basis of the competence "being creative" in an adult.

**Theoretic background of the problem.** Creativity is expressed in two components: creative process and creative outcome / product. Creative process is revealed by: problem-solving skills and self-expression. Creative results / products are characterized by: originality and added value.



At different stages of human life characteristic features of the creative outcome and the creative process, i.e. originality or the added value and self-expression or problem-solving can dominate unevenly. So, in childhood, while analysing the creative outcome child's subjective originality is being seen and focussed more but the important added value contributing to the innovation is expected less. On the other hand, adult's creative result is judged by value provided for the task, spaciousness of the context.

Looking at the creative process, we can see that in childhood self-expression is a more explicit part of the process. Adults emotionally refer to a child's self-revelation in the creative process, to his or her delight. Also, the children will thrill at their first discoveries or things that they do for the first time in their subjective experience. In turn, it is expected from adults in the creative process that they offer, reveal problem-solving ways, and show new ways to arrive at a result.

Human creativity development can be relatively divided into three stages [1]:

**Pre-conventional stage** (from birth to 6 years of age) which is characterised by spontaneity and emotionality which may cause aesthetic creation of a product and emotional attitude towards this activity and its result. This stage is dominated by immediate concrete perception of the environment; child's creative activities are affected by the immediate (current) perception. The result is run by the intention and that does not generate an innovative added value. One can say that the product is situational, more determined by external events and incentive states and cause an emotional response.

**Conventional stage** (6-8 to 10-12 years of age) is characterised by conventional (ordinary, traditional) generation of an innovation which includes operational (system-based) thinking. Thinking is getting more concerned with the rules, development of critical and evaluative skills. Thus, the result is related to the creation of "artificial" innovation and is aligned with external standards, which essentially is not always effective.

**Post conventional stage** (~12 years of age and is being enriched and developed throughout all adult life) – innovation includes formal operational thinking, which turns into an ever increasing cognitive development. Operation with systems takes place that enriches individual's previous experience with the elements of the external world. The most important element at this stage is individuality. Despite the external restrictions and standard values, an individual is able to innovate.

---

Creativity can be observed in all life cycles. However, its expression in adult activities largely depends on the development of creativity in childhood. It is therefore important for preschool children to provide such a learning environment that encourages development of the base of "being creative".

**Materials and the method of research.** The aim of focus group interviews was to clarify the critical factors in the development of creativity in preschool, which successively affect further development of creativity in later stages of life. Focus group interview was used to obtain information about teachers' views, attitudes, needs and ratings about the nature of creativity, its development in childhood and its continuous impact on creativity in later stages of life. Focus group interviews identified interview participants' perception, understanding and attitude towards the research issue in order to determine the factors influencing creativity that should be respected while working out recommendations for the development of creativity in children. Two representatives from the project Creativity in Pre- School Education (CREANET)" (LLP 510473-LLP-1-2010-1-IT-COMENIUS-CNW), two lecturers from the ESF project „Further Education for General Education Teachers" (No. 2010/0062/1DP/1.2.1.2.3/09/IPIA/VIAA/003) programme „Teachers' competence development in working with talented and gifted children" , three teachers from a preschool education institution took part in the focus group interview. Expert interview was taken from the professor in preschool pedagogy of Liepaja University. Expert interview was aimed at collecting in-depth information about creativity enabling cross-referencing and a more complete and in-depth view of the development stages of creativity and creativity development at the pre-conventional stage.

**Results and their discussion.** Focus group interviews and the expert interview allowed for determining of some factors influencing creativity at the pre-conventional development stage: 1)the creative process and the result are not guided by intentions, 2)the idea is not independent, it is affected by the situation not by deliberate volitional exertion, 3)there is little knowledge and experience, so the results are often obtained as a result of accidental change of activity, rather than guided by a deliberate intent, 4)child's curiosity as the need drives its research behaviour that allows it to find new incentives (important for the development of creativity).

**Recommendations for the development of children's creativity at the pre-conventional stage.**

Fixed factors influencing creativity enable us to describe the recommendations for fostering creativity development at the pre-conventional stage with the aim to encourage its further gradual progress to conventional and post-conventional stage.

1. At the pre-conventional stage the creative process and the result are not guided by intentions, it is therefore essential to ensure and encourage diverse interactions with other people (learning social experience) that contribute to the autonomy of intentions (intentionality) and ideas. In communication, the child begins to realize that he or she has the will, which can be used. He or she feels able to control own actions, intentions and own imagination, which is particularly important in later stages of the creativity development.

2. Child's creativity is affected by the immediate, current perception which is justified by the child's little experience and knowledge and thinking peculiarities. Therefore, at the pre-conventional stage it is important to base new knowledge and learning experience on the children's curiosity, research and interests. Curiosity, which can be observed even in very young children when they discover new items, new people or new concepts, can be satisfied with exploratory activities. Discovering these new incentives, the child demonstrates new behaviour. On the other hand, child's interests evolve from the use of the obtained information. It can be said that curiosity is the need but research is the behaviour. It is therefore essential to satisfy the child's curiosity and encourage exploratory behaviour that enriches child's experience by shaping new elements for creativity development.

---

3. One exploratory behaviour generates another exploratory behaviour, and by encouraging children to other types of exploratory behaviour, a positive guidance for the development of creativity is formed. At the pre-conventional stage exploratory behaviour can encourage children to learn from each other. However, if the research is hampered, the child can get the experience of conflict, and he or she may have less desire to interact with peers, adults and others. Consequently, acquisition of new knowledge and new experience is limited, which is an important factor in the development of creativity. When research is stifled, children lose the motivation to act and learn. Their work becomes less creative. Children answer less to teachers' questions or demonstrate no incentive, or obtain information only because of external factors (the need for evaluation, fear of reproach).

4. Since children are characterized by immediate perception of specific environment it is important to promote and encourage children to use their already accumulated experience, gradually developing an understanding of the causes and consequences and skills to find solutions to the problem by meaningful activities.

5. Development of volitional exertion as an important component of creativity is encouraged by the process of learning children's interpersonal relations, rules and interaction with other people and the environment of objects. The need for recognition as a proof of child's abilities and encouragement for further action is formed during the process of learning mutual relationships.

6. At the pre-conventional stage child's emotions are spontaneous, situational and unstable. Therefore, significant attention has to be paid to children's emotional development, allowing them to get the depth and endurance, which later will form the ability to make choices and to justify own intentions. One of the key emotional development directions at the pre-conventional stage is related to child's intellectual development ("reasonableness"). The child begins to learn the world around, to get acquainted with consequences of his or her actions, to understand what is good and what is bad. "Reasonableness" moves over to the sphere of feelings related to children's behaviour, including creative behaviour.

7. At the pre-conventional stage it is important to start developing the perspective of time, which means developing a sense of the future (predictive ability). A real-time awareness is when the child understands that six months vary in value, compared to 6 years. For example, a child who says, "I want to be a master of the ship, and I can control it now" has only the sense of the present. Children's feelings about future events depend on how the adults describe these events. Therefore at the pre-conventional stage it is important to explain the content of a particular work, its tasks and sequence.

**Conclusion.** Everyone has creativity. Topicality is observed in the problems of creativity development in childhood. Creativity education should cover everyone, not just a few chosen ones. Something learned in childhood continues to develop and grow during adult period and development of creativity is one of those areas which reveals most vividly that the development of creativity in childhood forms the basis of the competence "being creative" in an adult. A holistic vision reveals human nature in accordance with the world and an individual in it and shows that complex systems have the features that characterize the individuality of the person as a whole and how these features are adapted to larger systems, which they are a part of. Comparing the creative process and creative results of different life cycles, the quantitative difference is caused by the previous experience and knowledge, while the qualitative differences are determined by the fact that a child's mind works differently from an adult human brain, i.e. sensomotor and pre-operational thinking phase is characteristic to a child, while adults use operational thinking, metaphors.

*This work was partly funded by European Social Fund, project  
„Development of Doctoral Studies at Liepaja University”, grant  
No. 2009/0127/1DP/1.1.2.1.2./09/IPIA/VIAA/018*



---

---

### References

1. Ferrando, M., Ferandiz, C. Creativity in Children vs Creativity in Adults. 2nd CREANET Conference Network on Creativity in Pre – School Education, 23-25 May, 2012. Available: <http://www.creativityinpreschool.eu/creanet/docs/2nd%20conference%20Klaipeda/Presentazioni%20Klaipeda/Creativity%20in%20Children%20vs%20Creativity%20in%20Adults.pdf> (Looked up on: 08.07.2014.)
2. Miķelsone, I. Contradictions of creativity competence development in the context of lifelong learning/ Current trends in the concepts and strategies of lifelong learning. Materials of the International Forum „Concepts and Strategies of Long-Life Education: International Context” II, ed. by S.V. Zholovan. - St. Petersburg, APPO, 2012. - pp. 45- 49.