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THE ROLE OF CREATIVE THINKING IN CLASSROOM ENGAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

This study highlights the role of creative thinking in classroom engagement. To achieve the objectives of this study, the researcher used the descriptive and analytic method for data analysis by designing questionnaire which addressed to ELT teachers (31 Sudanese university English language teachers selected randomly). This study tries to answer these questions: To what extent creative thinking improves classroom engagement? And how do students' curiosity, and open ended questions help classroom engagement? Then, the data analyzed and discussed and it comes up with following findings: - Creative thinking improves classroom engagement. Creative thinking develops when develops when students are able to analyze the information they've learned make new connections with that information, Creative thinking develops when students come up with new ideas and evaluate their choices, Students' curiosity and open- ended questions help classroom engagement, and open- ended questions are likely to engage students in classroom.

Key words: creative thinking. Classroom. Engagement. Open-ended questions. Curiosity

Introduction

Creative thinking is a responsibility of all skills for life, learning and work, and a higher order thinking skill. However without a clear understanding of what creative thinking is it can be difficult to recognize it and develop it.

Sometimes people assume creative thinking is only about the expressive arts and whilst the permission to be creative has always sat well within these subjects, creative thinking can be developed across all subjects and sectors and at any stage, and all educators are responsible for developing these skills in their learners, whether it be in the languages or sciences, outdoor learning or in the classroom.

Research also shows us that different subjects define creative thinking very differently, and that men and women typically hold different definitions to each other. Here in Sudan we have a working definition of creative thinking that allows us to identify and apply creative thinking within almost any context. This shared language allows all practitioners to identify where they are already developing creative thinking and where opportunities might exist.

Creative thinking is often an idea of as a character trait rather than a characteristic or an intelligence. It can be associated with activities that represent the arts, like music and painting. The researcher considered

creativity an intelligence. In surveys that calculate dominant intelligences for the way people learn, the creative intelligence is associated with questions involving the creation of something new, or finding new ways to do things. Google states creative thinking as "the use of the imagination or original ideas, especially in the production of an artistic work". Synonyms include inventiveness, imagination, innovation, and originality.

Webster's dictionary defines creative thinking as "the ability to make new things or think of new ideas"

The researcher thinks "creative thinking is classified as one central skill to preparing students for life in the 21st century". In order to succeed in preparing students for the future, it is imperative that students get experience with creativity.

What does creative thinking look like in the classroom? The researcher points out to an answer to this question by examining teacher and students' understanding of creative thinking in the classroom environment

Referring to the researcher's assumptions, teachers' contributions to the development of creative thinking involve "not imposing too many assignments and rules on students, giving students choices, providing students opportunities to become aware of their creativity, accepting students as they are, and boosting students' self-confidence". When teachers are asked what they actually implement in the classroom to foster creativity, teachers mentioned things like, "creative writing, open-ended activities, drawing… allowing students to choose what they want to do, developing arts centers, giving students flexible directions, brainstorming ideas, and giving options to students". While choices and artistic activities are great ways to give students different learning opportunities, are these modes of "creative thinking" actually preparing them for the competitive world they are growing up in?, and give room to students to be involve with class and lecture.

The statement of the problem

Beside the effect of readiness to study, the researcher has noticed that there is a problem within students' engagement encounters the passive side of the academic achievement and behavioral outcomes, such as escape, suspension, and lack of motivation. On the other hand, some teachers lack of creativity, and sense of humor. Moreover, they are not supportive, encouraging, and respectful of student ideas in the class. Above all, teachers do not encourage, motivate students to engage in learning including investigative activities to find solutions to students socioscientific issue problems, which supply both motivation and ownership of learning to the students.

Significance of the Study

Using creative thinking in classroom creates a joyful and motivating place where students feel empowered to learn, where all ideas are welcomed, and where learning is deep and meaningful. Students who are permitted to be creative are better learners, and they are more aware of their own learning styles. Creative thinking is a lifelong skill that our students will take with them into their adult lives to solve problems and help build a better world. The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of creative thinking as a way to increase university students' engagement, and student success. It is designed to determine if an English language lecture is taught by using students' and teachers' creativity thinking , is better comprehended than a lecture taught using lesson styles the instructor uses according to what he or she thinks will be most successful.

Questions of the study

1- To what extent creative thinking improves classroom engagement?

2- How do students' curiosity, and open ended questions help classroom engagement?

Hypotheses of the study

1- Creative thinking improves classroom engagement

2- Students' curiosity and open-ended questions help classroom engagement

Objective of the study

The aims of this study is to:-

- develop language and its required understanding of creative thinking as a higher-order-thinking in classroom engagement
- understand what creative thinking and why it's important in classroom engagement.
- explore the role of creative thinking classroom engaged .

Methodology of the study

In this study, descriptive and analytical method will be adopted. The questionnaire will be administrated to English language teachers.

Analysis of questionnaire:

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.828	23

* Cronbach's Alpha value explain the reliability of Questioner items, the ability to be relied on or depended , on Rang (0 to 1).

* (0.838) high reliability

The first hypothesis

"Creative thinking improves classroom engagement"

Statement No#1 "**Creative thinking develops when students are able to analyze the information they've learned, make new connections with that information**.

Table 1.1: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Neutral	1	3.2	3.2	6.5
	Agree	12	38.7	38.7	45.2
	Strongly Agree	17	54.8	54.8	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#1 figure (1) shows that (31) teachers (54.8%) strongly agree **Creative thinking develops when students are able to analyze the information they've learned, make new connections with that information**, there also (12) teachers (38.7%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement # 2 Creative thinking develops when come up with new ideas, and evaluate their choices

Table 1.2: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Neutral	1	3.2	3.2	6.5
	Agree	14	45.2	45.2	51.6
	Strongly Agree	15	48.4	48.4	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#2 figure (2) shows that (15) teachers (48.4%) strongly agree **Creative thinking develops when come up with new ideas, and evaluate their choices**, there also (14) teachers (45.2%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement #3 Students need freedom to offer ideas and express themselves without judgment in a creative classroom-

Table 1.3: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Neutral	3	9.7	9.7	12.9
	Agree	15	48.4	48.4	61.3
	Strongly Agree	12	38.7	38.7	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#3 figure (3) shows that (12) teachers (38.7%) strongly agree **Creative thinking develops when come up with new ideas, and evaluate their choices**, there also (15) teachers (48.4%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement # 4 Creative thinking requires the courage to make mistakes. Sir Ken Robinson points out that, "If you're not prepared to be wrong, you'll never come up with anything original

Table 1.4: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Neutral	13	41.9	41.9	45.2
	Agree	5	16.1	16.1	61.3
	Strongly Agree	12	38.7	38.7	100
	Total	31	100	100	

Statement#4 figure (4) shows that (12) teachers (38.7%) strongly agree **Creative thinking requires the courage to make mistakes. Sir Ken Robinson points out that, "If you're not prepared to be wrong, you'll never come up with anything original**, there also (5) teachers (16.1%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement #5 As a creative thinker, students need to be curious, optimistic, and imaginative

Table 1.5: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Neutral	4	12.9	12.9	16.1
	Agree	14	45.2	45.2	61.3
	Strongly Agree	12	38.7	38.7	100
	Total	31	100	100	

Statement#5 figure (5) shows that (12) teachers (38.7%) strongly agree **as a creative thinker, students need to be curious, optimistic, and imaginative**, there also (14) teachers (45.2%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement # 6 When students see problems and challenges as interesting opportunities, this is an indication to classroom engagement-

Table 1.6: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Disagree	4	12.9	12.9	16.1
	Neutral	6	19.4	19.4	35.5
	Agree	10	32.3	32.3	67.7
	Strongly Agree	10	32.3	32.3	100
	Total	31	100	100	

Statement#6 figure (6) shows that (10) teachers (32.3%) strongly agree **When students see problems and challenges as interesting opportunities, this is an indication to classroom engagement**, there also (10) teachers (32.2%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement #7 Creative thinking helps students' openness and pop ideas into their minds

Table 1.7: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Neutral	3	9.7	9.7	12.9
	Agree	12	38.7	38.7	51.6
	Strongly Agree	15	48.4	48.4	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#7 figure (7) shows that (12) teachers (38.7%) strongly agree **Creative thinking helps students' openness and pop ideas into their minds**

, there also (15) teachers (48.4%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement #8 Classroom engagement is highly developed and expanded by students' openness and interest

Table 1.8: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	6.5	6.5	6.5
	Neutral	5	16.1	16.1	22.6
	Agree	17	54.8	54.8	77.4
	Strongly Agree	7	22.6	22.6	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#8figure (8) shows that (7) teachers (22.6%) strongly agree **Classroom engagement is highly developed and expanded by students' openness and interest**, there also (17) teachers (54.8%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement # Students' brainstorming with many ideas as possible, and without the fear of being judged or being wrong lead to a highly engaged classroom

Table 1.9: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Neutral	5	16.1	16.1	19.4
	Agree	11	35.5	35.5	54.8
	Strongly Agree	14	45.2	45.2	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#9 figure (9) shows that (14) teachers (45.2%) strongly agree **Students' brainstorming with many ideas as possible, and without the fear of being judged or being wrong lead to a highly engaged classroom**, there also (11) teachers (35.5%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement #10 Students demonstrate creativity not only individually, but also with partners and in small groups-

Table 1.10: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Neutral	9	29.0	29.0	32.3

	Agree	12	38.7	38.7	71.0
	Strongly Agree	9	29.0	29.0	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#10 figure (10) shows that (9) teachers (29.0%) strongly agree **Students demonstrate creativity not only individually, but also with partners and in small groups**, there also (12) teachers (38.7%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement #11 Students' voice and words are highly encouraged to convey their ideas

Table 1.11: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Disagree	3	9.7	9.7	12.9
	Neutral	3	9.7	9.7	22.6
	Agree	13	41.9	41.9	64.5
	Strongly Agree	11	35.5	35.5	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#11 figure (11) shows that (11) teachers (35.5%) strongly agree **Students' voice and words are highly encouraged to convey their idea**, there also (13) teachers (41.9%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement #12 Students should have more fun in learning

Table 1.12: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Disagree	3	9.7	9.7	12.9
	Neutral	8	25.8	25.8	38.7
	Agree	6	19.4	19.4	58.1
	Strongly Agree	13	41.9	41.9	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#12 figure (12) shows that (13) teachers (41.9%) strongly agree **Students should have more fun in learning**, there also (6) teachers (19.4%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement #13 doing physical activities to stimulate the creative area of students' brain and think differently is a best way for students' involvement

Table 1.13: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Disagree	2	6.5	6.5	9.7
	Neutral	6	19.4	19.4	29.0
	Agree	12	38.7	38.7	67.7
	Strongly Agree	10	32.3	32.3	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#13 figure (13) shows that (10) teachers (32.3%) strongly agree **doing physical activities to stimulate the creative area of students' brain and think differently is a best way for students' involvement**, there also (12) teachers (38.7%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

The second hypothesis "Students' curiosity and open-ended questions help classroom engagement"

Statement #14

Open-ended questions allow students to find more than what they imagine & anticipate

Table 1.14: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Disagree	2	6.5	6.5	9.7
	Neutral	4	12.9	12.9	22.6
	Agree	12	38.7	38.7	61.3
	Strongly Agree	12	38.7	38.7	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#14 figure (14) shows that (12) teachers (38.7%) strongly agree **Open-ended questions allow students to find more than what they imagine & anticipate**, there also (12) teachers (38.7%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement #2 Open-ended questions allow students to give free form answers –

Table 1.15: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Neutral	6	19.4	19.4	22.6
	Agree	8	25.8	25.8	48.4
	Strongly Agree	16	51.6	51.6	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#15 figure (15) shows that (16) teachers (51.6%) strongly agree **Open-ended questions allow students to give free form answers**, there also (8) teachers (25.8%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement # 3 Open-ended questions are likely to engage students in classroom –

Table 1.16: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Neutral	5	16.1	16.1	19.4
	Agree	13	41.9	41.9	61.3
	Strongly Agree	12	38.7	38.7	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#16 figure (16) shows that (12) teachers (38.7%) strongly agree **Open-ended questions are likely to engage students in classroom,** there also (13) teachers (41.9%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement #4 Open-ended questions are believed to be useful for developing students' creative thinking

Table 1.17: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	2	6.5	6.5	6.5
	Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	9.7
	Neutral	7	22.6	22.6	32.3
	Agree	10	32.3	32.3	64.5
	Strongly Agree	11	35.5	35.5	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#17 figure (17) shows that (11) teachers (35.5%) strongly agree **Open-ended questions are believed to be useful for developing students' creative thinking**, there also (10) teachers (32.3%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement # 5 Open-ended questions are effective ways to challenge students and learn more about how they think-

Table 1.18: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Neutral	6	19.4	19.4	22.6
	Agree	11	35.5	35.5	58.1
	Strongly Agree	13	41.9	41.9	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#18 figure (18) shows that (11) teachers (35.5%) strongly agree **Open-ended questions are believed to be useful for developing students' creative thinking**, there also (13) teachers (41.9%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement #6 To boost students' curiosity, connect what students don't know with what they do

Table 1.19: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	6.5	6.5	6.5
	Neutral	4	12.9	12.9	19.4
	Agree	16	51.6	51.6	71.0
	Strongly Agree	9	29.0	29.0	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#19 figure (19) shows that (9) teachers (29.0%) strongly agree **To boost students' curiosity, connect what students don't know with what they do**, there also (16) teachers (52.6%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement #7 Curiosity helps students to activate familiar schema to make sense of new ideas

Table 1.20: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Disagree	2	6.5	6.5	9.7
	Neutral	7	22.6	22.6	32.3
	Agree	12	38.7	38.7	71.0
	Strongly Agree	9	29.0	29.0	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#20 figure (20) shows that (9) teachers (29.0%) strongly agree **Curiosity helps students to activate familiar schema to make sense of new ideas**, there also (12) teachers (38.7%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement # 8 Focusing on questions, not answers is an excellent indicator for curiosity

Table 1.21: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	3	9.7	9.7	9.7
	Disagree	2	6.5	6.5	16.1
	Neutral	8	25.8	25.8	41.9
	Agree	9	29.0	29.0	71.0
	Strongly Agree	9	29.0	29.0	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#21 figure (21) shows that (9) teachers (29.0%) strongly agree **Focusing on questions, not answers is an excellent indicator for curiosity**, there also (9) teachers (29.0%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement #9 Create a unit–entry lesson and give points for questions increase students' curiosity

Table 1.22: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Disagree	1	3.2	3.2	6.5
	Neutral	5	16.1	16.1	22.6
	Agree	16	51.6	51.6	74.2
	Strongly Agree	8	25.8	25.8	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#22 figure (22) shows that (8) teachers (25.8%) strongly agree **Create a unit–entry lesson and give points for questions increase students' curiosity**, there also (16) teachers (51.6%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Statement #21 It's difficult to be curious if the learning is passive and the student doesn't have any interest-

Table 1.23: The frequency distribution for respondents' answer about statement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	2	6.5	6.5	6.5
	Disagree	4	12.9	12.9	19.4
	Neutral	7	22.6	22.6	41.9
	Agree	10	32.3	32.3	74.2
	Strongly Agree	8	25.8	25.8	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Statement#23 figure (23) shows that (8) teachers (25.8%) strongly agree **It's difficult to be curious if the learning is passive and the student doesn't have any interest**, there also (10) teachers (25.8%) agree on that. This analysis shows the majority of teachers (strongly agree) this indicates that, teachers agree with this statement.

Conclusions

The study tended to investigate the role of creative thinking in classroom engagement. To achieve the objectives of this study , a questionnaire is conducted with 31 EFL to know the role of creative thinking in classroom engagement, then the data analyzed and discussed and it comes up with following findings:-

- Creative thinking improves classroom engagement.
- Creative thinking develops when develops when students are able to analyze the information they've learned make new connections with that information.
- Creative thinking develops when students come up with new ideas and evaluate their choices.
- Students' curiosity and open- ended questions help classroom engagement.
- Open- ended questions are likely to engage students in classroom.

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