

# Creativity can be nurtured and developed education essay



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A creative process could be defined as “ an unexpected combination of elements which provides a surprising solution to a problem.” (Bilton, 2007)

With the development of modern society, especially the emergence of the knowledge economy, poses a new requirement to education. It requires the education, especially the elementary education, to focus on the creativity of students. However, there is a great contradiction between the requirement of the time and the reality, which makes the task more and more essential and urgent to develop creativity.

On the task of nurturing creativity, there are diverging points. Some hold on that elementary education could not develop creativity for students, neither is it necessary. Others opposed that the development of creativity is a kind of training to the thinking skill of the students. Both of them might be the wrong cognition after wrong understanding of creativity. In addition, the creativity of students in elementary educational stage is the creativity in the sense of individual, and the importance of the development of creativity should be attached on the creativity of the whole. Meanwhile, creativity is a complex capability which consists of knowledge skills, thinking, as well as personality, and they interact with each other. (Sternberg, 1999) The development of creativity in elementary stage while is a process from low to high is helpful for the development of higher standard creativity of students in future. Thus, not only that elementary education could develop the creativity for students, but also that should it attach more importance to the development of students' creativity. The responsibilities in creativity development that the elementary education should assume are making students master knowledge skills which are necessary for creating as much

as possible, forming the characteristics which are beneficial for creating, and developing personalities which are helpful for creating.

## **1. 2 Essay structure**

This essay is going to discuss that creativity can be nurtured and developed in three following aspects. Firstly, it will generally discuss whether the factor of elementary education could take the responsibility of creative cultivation. Secondly, whether subject curriculum is the necessity in developing creativity will be debated. Next, it will prove that study evaluation is also an important indicator for creative abilities. At last, this essay will end up with a conclusion.

## **2. Elementary education**

### **2. 1 Suspicions of elementary education**

There are differences of understanding that elementary education can cultivate creativity for students. There is a view that: creativity is not a training of specific skills so that creative abilities are impossible to foster. (Downing, 1997) This cognition mainly came from the practice of creative capacity building in elementary education. The practice through thinking trainings to cultivate students' creativity is subject to a number of queries by Downing. He opposed that it would simplify the development of creativity. It is also found in practice that due to the learning of creative thinking techniques are often highly situated. In fact, setting up to foster innovative thinking is lack of ecological validity, which is difficult to reconcile with real life. Furthermore Weisberg (1997) pointed out: some creative thinking training can indeed improve test scores of individuals in specific tasks. But

few studies have shown that such these trainings of nurturing creativity are persistent or stable and they can be extended beyond the specific test. It is recognized that creative capacity is not skill training in fixed steps so that creativity absolutely cannot be nurtured in this way. Consequently, elementary education is questioned that it cannot cultivate creative ability.

There is another view that elementary education lays on the foundation education to future creativities for students. Therefore, the task of higher education is building and shaping creativity so that the stage of elementary education does not need to cultivate creativity for students. (Craft, 2002)

The formation of this view, which has two potential logics, is still related to both understanding of students' creative ability and the right understanding of the innovative capacity development. On one hand, students will naturally develop their creativity if they have the foundation knowledge and skills. The basic education is mainly for students to construct a good foundation of knowledge and skills, which are primarily based on the results of human knowledge and cultural heritage. Moreover, students would naturally start developing their creativity after they obtain these knowledge and skills. As a result, elementary education does not need to emphasize the development of creative capacity. On the other hand, there is no significance of individual creativity for students that it is not too late to foster creativity when they finish their elementary education. What students create mainly based on the re-discovery of yielded or former research results. Creativity in students has less social significance so that elementary education would not emphasize the cultivation of creativity as long as they master a solid foundation of

various knowledge and skills. As a result, creativity cannot be cultivated in elementary education.

## **2. 2 Arguments of Suspicion**

In fact, most creativity of students belongs to individual senses of creativity while there are a small number of students who could carry out significant creativities to the whole society. But it will promote creative capability of the social significance. From learned knowledge, creative thinking and personality characteristics, which are conducive to foster creativity in elementary education, students would get innovative knowledge and skills which will become useful basis for the development of creativity in a high level. (Meador, 1997) At the same time, from the acquisition of knowledge and skills students will be inevitably accompanied by a certain quality of thinking as well as the formation of personality characteristics in educational and teaching activities. On the contrary, rigid and systematic ways of thinking as well as blind obedience or conformity to authority of personality characteristics are not conducive to the development of innovative ability for students. Therefore, creative ability of students in the stage of elementary education is a foundation in high level of creativity development. At the same time, researches of psychology, philosophy and pedagogy also show that there is a crucial period to nurture creative capability. Only seizing that period to train students will better promote their creativity and creative capacity development. Moreover, Eysenck and Keane (2000) noted that “learning ability is not an infinite and squander resource for children. If students’ curiosity as well as their innate senses of questioning have not been awakened or protected but rather severely repressed and obstructed,

they would eventually lose out and disappear. Furthermore, the intellectual flexibility, spirit of adventure and self-confidence are very necessary and valuable qualities to explore new things. If they were abused or non-used in a long time, the above qualities will lose their original roles. Although there is less creative capability which could own social significance in the lower phase of education, elementary education can still provide good conditions for the development of future innovative abilities in an advanced stage. As a result, it cannot be negated the importance of creativity and creative capacity-building in stage of elementary education let alone as specific tasks in a higher education.

### **3. Subject curriculum**

#### **3.1 Criticism of Subject curriculum**

However, it is accompanied by obstacles that subject curriculum will inevitably hinder and even stifle creative capability of students. Subject knowledge omitted many areas of exploration while knowledge-oriented presentation is simple. Therefore knowledge of subject curriculum is simplicity of logical links in concepts, facts and principles. It is also believed that the teaching of subject curriculum deviate from experiences of students, which may inevitably lead students to study without motivation. (Ansobel, 2002) Acceptance of learning refers to a phenomenon that main contents which students learned were found by themselves. During the period of learning, which is mainly a process of assimilation of knowledge, how much of the main content is presented to students in a shaped form. Study found the opposite. On the contrary, learning discovery is that the main content in study process is not given but they determined by their own before they

internalized the knowledge and skills. The difference between the two learning styles is whether there is a substantive link between the old and new knowledge. In Ausubel's opinion, a meaningful learning process has three conditions: In the first place, students have meaningful learning mindsets in actively psychological preparations for the establishment of substantive combination of the new knowledge with their own cognitive structure of former knowledge. In the second place, there is an appropriate basis for students to assimilate new knowledge in their cognitive structures. Finally, learned new knowledge itself has a logical meaning while there is a clear connection with the relevant knowledge and their cognitive structures in order to be assimilated in appropriate conditions. In other words, as long as students are in active learning states, besides there is an organic link between the acquisition of new knowledge and established experience of old knowledge, it is a meaningful learning. In contrast, rote acceptance of learning is a situation that students are forced to internalize relevant knowledge without the corresponding experience in subject curriculum teaching. Consequently subject curriculum may lead students rottenly accepting study. Moreover, during learning activities the way of thinking could be relatively passive and rigid so that students might be subject to distortions in the development of personality. As a result, subject teaching activities are not conducive to the development of creative ability for students.

### **3. 2 Approvals of subject curriculum**

Despite there is a phenomenon that students' knowledge divorced from their experience in the teaching of subject curriculum so that students accepted

rote study. However, this is not a pedagogical necessity to hinder the development of creativity. Students who engage in the combination of experience and academic knowledge would be in meaningful learning that discovery can be carried out. The development of students' creative capacity is based on certain knowledge and skills in the stage of elementary education. They are comprehensive so that a certain amount and wide range of knowledge and skills can form a reasonable knowledge structure.

Moreover, mastery of knowledge and skills implies that there must be a logical link which is able to achieve a structure, especially an aspect of connected network within knowledge and skill mastery. The characteristic of subject curriculum determined that curriculum study would help students to master and systematically form a comprehensive and structured knowledge and skills in a short period. In Kliebard's (2004) research, the development of American society required obvious demands of people's innovative ability in the early 20th century. Therefore most American schools canceled the subject curriculum in teaching activities because the application of knowledge and skills cannot solve real problems and new issues in actual works and life, which is not useful for cultivating students' creativity.

According to ideas of Rousseau's natural thinking in principles of education, they claimed that the development of creativity should be focus on students' interests and needs. Therefore, subject curriculum was replaced by activity curriculum which was divided into nature, Labor and sociality three aspects.

However, the education of canceling or seriously neglecting subject curriculum revealed handicaps soon. It was found that activity curriculum easily resulted in one-sided interests and needs for students. Furthermore,

the lack of rigorous teaching and learning activities in school education programs may make students not grasp systematically knowledge and skills. In this regard, Klein (1991) pointed out those factors such as: progressive education movement of overlooking traditional curriculum reflected on various embarrassing situations of American education. For instance, academic standards of elementary education were fallen behind other countries. A growing number of college students are inadequate in basic knowledge. In fact some of them were unable to read. Undue emphasis on activity curriculum had been widely criticized. In 1957 the first satellite was successfully launched in the Soviet Union, which has greatly shocked the United States.

From the above historical review it can be seen that cancellation or neglect of the subject curriculum is not conducive to systematically master a variety of cultural and scientific knowledge for students, which is an important foundation of solving problems and creativity cultivating. Meanwhile, subject curriculum is the key to academic creativity and personnel training. Why United States emphasis on strengthening the subject curriculum, especially in science, mathematics and foreign language, is to train and develop creative people in high-level scientific and technological areas. Therefore, the cultivation of creative ability cannot neglect subject curriculum teaching, which is an essential component of nurturing creativity.

## **4. Study evaluation**

### **4.1 negative factors of academic evaluation**

Examination is an academic and summative evaluation, which is just an identification and selection of concerned students. Besides, this evaluation is aimed at selecting appropriate education for students, thus it may prematurely differentiate grades of students' creativity. (Eikleberry, 1999) As a result, academic evaluation will hinder the future development of creative ability. For example, the development of creativity is also required to focus on the evaluation of students which an important component of academic achievement. It is a process that appropriate and effective methods are applied to judge the value of the study level for students. In other words, it is designed to measure or diagnose whether students have achieved the educational objectives and goals. Examination is one test to evaluate academic achievement. According to Sriraman's (2008) research, the outcome of each question is objective. Therefore, the examination is also characterized by only a certain set of evaluation criteria, which is able to smoothly ensure progress of tests in order to reach the achievement of the test's purpose. Like  $3+5=8$ ,  $8-2=6$ . However, only one model answer would hinder creative ability of students because not every student is good at the mastery of math knowledge. Students have to correctly answer questions in only one way of expression in vast majority of the questions in the evaluation. Consequently, examinations necessarily constrain students' thinking. In that case, rigid minds are unable to promote the cultivation of creativity so that creative capacities of students would be limited.

## **4. 2 Benefits of academic assessment**

A single evaluation of academic achievement is not beneficial to the cultivation of creativity for students. A new method is authentic assessment, which is defined as a proper evaluation of performances and manifestations during the learning activities (Villa and Thousand, 2005) There are three factors to reasonable evaluation in the combination of academic and authentic assessment. Firstly, from records and data collection of students' personality characteristics which are reflected in the process of learning activities, there could be an obvious evaluation that students are in positive statement or they complete assignments on time. Secondly, to the mastery of sophisticated skills which are generally integrated multi-disciplinary in the use of complex situations, authentic assessment could affirm advantages of the students in study process. Besides, problems which came across can be timely fed back to students, which may overcome existing difficulties and improve creative skills. Finally, it can access a mastery and understanding of comprehensive knowledge in addressing real-life problems in the community for students. Through the evaluation of academic achievement which is difficult to measure investigation, their creative abilities and performance will reasonably evaluated.

It can be shown that a reasonable evaluation has its own advantages which can identify different personality and characteristics for different students, including creative abilities in various aspects of knowledge learning.

Students could also find their insufficiencies through an objective evaluation so that the result could more or less motivate their interests, which is a significant indicator for developing creativity. Meanwhile, creativity located

in the intersection of individual, discipline, and field. (Gardner, 1993) At the same time, the evaluation knowledge, skills and personality is a significant expression to the cultivation of innovative capability, which would recover the inefficiency of a single evaluation in academic achievement and promote the development of creativity.

## 5. Conclusion

To sum up, the essay just from a starting point does a research of the creativity development of students in the elementary educational stage. Creativity development should focus on teaching contents, teaching methods, and teaching assessment in the school teaching activities, which is decided by the main tasks of elementary education. Nevertheless, there are different views on these factors. For one thing, it is generally believed that what are helpful for creativity development are activity curriculum, discovery study and authentic assessment. Subject curriculum and study achievement assessment in the old days not only are harmful for development of creativity, but also do block the way for students to create and discover new things. For another, it is also considered that it would be in a difficulty for the totally negating subject curriculum and study achievement assessment.

Moreover, this essay takes the divergence of the cognition as the key points, basing on the research of teaching practice and summarization of the practical experience, to express and settle the personal view points by analyzing and clarifying some cognition. It perhaps clearly points on the teaching contents that subject curriculum is necessary for creativity developing rather than that it will baffle students on creativity development.

However, single subject curriculum can create the phenomenon of “ high <https://assignbuster.com/creativity-can-be-nurtured-and-developed-education-essay/>

marks, low ability". On school teaching, it should arrange activity curriculum because these two curriculums joined with each other would be an advantage complementary on creativity development. For teaching method, elementary education does not necessarily baffle students on creativity development. Consequently, the teaching of subject curriculum is mainly objective and useful, but single subject curriculum is not helpful for students' creativity development. In addition, creative development needs discovery study while mechanic discovery study is not helpful for creativity development. On teaching assessment, study achievement assessment is necessary for creativity development. On the contrary, unscientific study achievement assessment is handfull for creativity development. At last, creativity can be developed and nurtured within the responsibility of elementary education while creativity development should combine subject curriculum and activity curriculum as well as achievement assessment and authentic assessment in a comprehensive and objective method.