

Pedagogy for Promoting Creative Writing among Tertiary-Level Learners *“Treat your words nicely and they will take your far”*

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Introduction

According to Jayapriya Durga and K. Sunganthi, “Learners at the tertiary level are expected to fulfil the needs of the course and excel in independent learning. However, some students aspire and find it difficult to make their learning independently”(35). Creative writing is a process of inventing or rather appealingly presenting your thoughts. The writer thinks critically and reshapes something known into something different and original. In the words of Achilov “A certain amount of creativity is required to prompt critical thought. Creativity and critical thinking together are aspects of “good” and purposeful thinking. Therefore, critical thinking and creativity can be considered as two sides of the same coin”(22)

In the present paper, efforts have been made to develop creative writing among ESL learners. The facilitator aims to expand the horizon and thinking of the learning, and not to make them mere bookworms. Learner Autonomy gives them an opportunity an insight to think beyond the given boundary and in this exercise the facilitator is trying to do the same.

Literature Review

Brown’s *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (2000) provides foundational insights into the role of creative exercises in language learning, particularly for ESL students. Brown suggests that integrating critical thinking and re-imaginative tasks into language instruction not only engages learners but also enhances cognitive

flexibility. This aligns with the present pedagogy, where students are encouraged to transform familiar words into novel expressions, fostering a deeper engagement with language as they progress from understanding to creating. Brown's work underlines the psychological and linguistic benefits of moving beyond rote learning, as creativity can empower students to utilize language in personal and meaningful ways.

Nation (2001), in *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language*, underscores the importance of vocabulary building in achieving language proficiency. Nation's research emphasizes that varied and well-integrated vocabulary skills enable learners to navigate complex language tasks, such as creative writing, more confidently. By focusing on exercises that expand learners' lexical resources, as in the present pedagogy's focus on adjectives and adverbs, educators can enhance students' expressiveness and ease in composition. Nation also highlights the cognitive processes involved in vocabulary acquisition, supporting the pedagogical use of word lists and lexical exercises to make learners more versatile in their use of English.

Carter's *Language and Creativity: The Art of Common Talk* (2004) examines the role of creativity in everyday language use and argues for its integration into language pedagogy. Carter's research suggests that engaging students in lexical creativity – where words are used in imaginative, unexpected ways – can deepen their language skills. By encouraging students to craft sentences or short compositions using selected adjectives and adverbs, as seen in the reviewed pedagogy, learners transition from passive vocabulary recall to active language manipulation. This lexical play enhances their ability to communicate nuanced meanings and builds their confidence in using English creatively.

Ferris and Hedgcock's *Teaching ESL Composition: Purpose, Process, and Practice* (2005) explores the benefits of peer review and collaborative feedback in language learning. They argue that peer feedback allows learners to gain multiple perspectives, enhancing their writing abilities and boosting their self-confidence. In the reviewed pedagogy, students present their compositions to peers, which aligns with Ferris and Hedgcock's findings on the value of interaction in building

language confidence. Such peer activities can be especially beneficial in ESL contexts, where learners may feel hesitant about their language skills. Constructive feedback from peers fosters a supportive environment, making creative language use a shared, rather than isolating, experience.

Krashen's *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition* (1982) introduces the concept of the "affective filter" in language acquisition, which posits that lower anxiety and higher motivation facilitate language learning. Krashen's theories highlight the importance of self-expression and confidence in successful language acquisition, especially for ESL learners who may initially be apprehensive about creative tasks. By creating a space for learners to explore language in a non-judgmental, expressive way, as the reviewed pedagogy does, students can lower their affective filters, fostering a more positive relationship with the language. The creative exercises in this pedagogy directly address Krashen's ideas, helping students to use language as a tool for self-expression rather than as a barrier.

Richards and Schmidt's *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* (2010) discusses the significance of lexical choices in language learning, particularly how the use of descriptors like adjectives and adverbs enriches written expression. Their work highlights the cognitive processes involved in selecting words that match the intended meaning, an essential skill in creative writing. By guiding students to use adjectives and adverbs in crafting creative compositions, the reviewed pedagogy encourages lexical precision and creativity. This approach aligns with Richards and Schmidt's insights, showing that creative manipulation of vocabulary not only aids linguistic development but also fosters an appreciation of the expressive potential of language.

When applied to the core ground of Pedagogy here the teacher is not there to teach any prescribed syllabus outline. He is there as a catalyst to cause the alchemy of creative reflexivity. His job as a facilitator is to successfully effect the transition from simple lexical items, especially adverbs and adjectives to short creative compositions of their own.

Methodology and Classroom Experiment

In the present paper, facilitator exercise a pedagogy where the learners come out from their cocoon thinking and use the words creatively. In this activity the focus of the study was to enhance and engage the learners creative writing ability through critical thinking and also motivated learners autonomy in the learning process. The 3C's Creative, Critical thinking and Collaborative skills were taken for the study to improve the learners' autonomy in their learning process.

Words play a dynamic role if we give them enough space to be creative and use words to easily give birth to new forms of language learning. Moreover, words have the potential to floating, give meaning, and substantiate the ideas convinced by learners' minds. It not only helps in building up vocabulary but also provides instant material to read and analyze the words with altogether a new perspective.

Here the purpose of the paper is two-fold: multifold.

1. To make the learners explore his/her vocabulary resources (adjectives & adverbs) frequently used by them in their context.
2. To give his/her some measure of confidence in his linguistic ability.
3. To draw him out of his set grouse of looking at language and words in particular, which would help the learner use the words creatively and not a mere demonstration of his ability to construct a statement. The focus is on an exploration of the connotative words of lexical items.
4. To explore, create and innovate.
5. To engage them in the creative process and to make them more competent as creative users of language resources.
6. To use English as a tool of communication and thread of expression through creative writing exercises.

Following are the stages put in the form of a classroom exercise used as a pedagogy of creative writing conducted in a class comprised of 20 students of II years undergraduate. Where, in the class of 60 minutes, the first 10 minutes are given to the students to come up with their list of

words, and the rest 50 are engaged in choosing, farming, and sharing of composition during the session, ending with giving a boost to the creative urge of the learners by the facilitators.

1. In the First stage, of all the facilitators will ask the students to write some words. The numbers can be three to five. Learners should be specified to write adverbs, adjectives avoiding nouns, and verbs.
2. Second, stage of class them in tradition. The teacher makes the list of words and displays the list of words of adjectives and adverbs thus collected from the learners on the blackboard while maintaining their secret by not telling the learners which words belong to whom.

List of Adjectives			
Soul	Charming	Gigantic	Fate
Enchanting	Luck	Helpless	Narrow
Smart	Beautiful	Soft	Happy
Space	Destiny	Faithful	Heart
Innocence	Hollow	Clever	Swift
Fresh	Incredible	Doubtful	Proud
Insatiable	Sequences	Light	Hate
Strong	Tender	Glamorous	Melodic
Handsome	Fragile	Love	Precious

List of Adverbs			
Successfully	Amicably	Dauntlessly	Profoundly
Early	Equal	Eternally	Anhwhere
Gaily	Enough	Carelessly	Leisurely
Loyalty	Less	Briskly	Densely
Covertly	Calmly	Jauntily	Fairly
Nearly	Lovely	Densely	Gladly
Affectionately	Grimly	Genuinely	Loudly
Roughly	Eternally	Enjoyable	Dreamily
Scholarly	Bravely	Briskly	Gradually

3. Having a pedagogy intervention the facilitator identifies ten adjectives and ten adverbs from the list displayed on the board and asks the learners to use any three of five adjectives and three of five adverbs

to create their compositions. This pedagogy is the one where the facilitator encourages the learners to use their creative urges rather than using words as mere mechanisms.

'List of chosen words by the facilitator'

List of Adjectives			
Soul	Charming	Gigantic	Fate
Enchanting	Luck	Helpless	Narrow
Smart	Beautiful	Soft	Happy
Space	Destiny	Faithful	Heart
Innocence	Hollow	Clever	Swift
Fresh	Incredible	Doubtful	Proud
Insatiable	Sequences	Light	Hate
Strong	Tender	Glamorous	Melodic
Handsome	Fragile	Love	Precious

List of Adverbs			
Early	Equally	Eternally	Anywhere
Successfully	Amicably	Dauntlessly	Proud fully
Anxiously	Boldly	Cheerfully	Coldly
Gaily	Enough	Carelessly	Leisurely
Loyalty	Less	Deeply	Finally
Covertly	Calmly	Jauntily	Fairly
Nearly	Lovely	Densely	Gladly
Affectionately	Grimly	Genuinely	Loudly
Roughly	Simply	Enjoyable	Dreamily
Scholarly	Bravely	Briskly	Gradually

4. In this way in this stage readymade ideas and matters are available to learners and they are active in this process. Here the ideas are in half-backed condition. The learners have to give them some readable shape by using their linguistic abilities in creating a composition of their own is about 30-80 words. This is an interesting stage where they have to give their creative urges a tempo to meet with the given end. The result can be a couplet or stanza.

Samples of the Outcome

Example: -

- A strong mind is innocent too,
That gives space to every small thing
Which is full of charm.
 - I wish to have the charm
To use the mind without a qualm
And be given the space
Keep my innocence but
The charm and innocence of the child.
 - Strong is the mind
Who can find
The distance and space that grind
The charm and innocence of the child.
 - The strong mind
Finds it difficult
To give space to innocence
The charm of innocence is stronger than the mind.
 - Your innocence beautifies my space
I always grab in your charm
That swings my strong mind.
 - Your innocence is that charm
That makes my mind strong and gives me
Space even engulfs the wrong.
5. The fifth stage prepares the learners to read out their creative compositions in front of other learners. This phase is very important for learners as they need encouragement from others, especially from their peer group.

This exercise can be used to develop the sensitivity of the learners. This is an exercise where the learners will learn the art of appreciation by giving their reactions, collecting responses, and asking queries in the form of decisions. The facilitator has to observe their comments and conclude each composition with his/her precise and concrete observations. This will help to understand their strong coming to a writer. By performing these exercises there are so many advantages one can find in the learners.

With this confidence, students will develop themselves. This is the best way to make them confident in the second language learning and composition. As the composition is a distance of many learners all learners are part of a creative activity and have different creative performances. The facilitator is making them use words creatively.

Also to improve their prose listening, this is one of the exercises where learners increase their capacity and potential to listen. It is the way to be active listeners and attentive learners.

There is one question that arises how their imagination can be polished by adding creativity? One of the ways where the facilitator polishes and adds shine to learners' imagination is by making them use these tools in their hands. This exercise will not only help the learners to make their words their own but also make them feel confident about handling a second language.

These activities have developed the following in the learners.

- It removes their fear of using the second language. They became confident in using the words creatively.
- It will help them understand that they have a 'creative spark' in them.
- Learn the art of appreciation which is very important.
- Learn composition skills.
- Learn to share their creations.

As beauty lies in the beholder's eye, creativity lies in the beholder's mind. So, polishing the mind of the learner through creative exercise could be one of the good and successful exercises during the class. This pedagogy helps the student with his self-assessment of the progress they make in their course of study.

By conducting such creative classroom exercises facilitator can be a source of great help to hone communication skills in learners. (In English)

Conclusion

According to Jayapriya, "Learners learning patterns were helpful for their life long learning management" (45). The literature supports the pedagogical approach used in this study by validating the role of vocabulary building, lexical creativity, peer feedback, and self-expression in enhancing ESL learners' language proficiency. By drawing on these insights, this pedagogy encourages students to explore the English language in a creative and expressive way, ultimately boosting their confidence and skill in creative writing. This literature review establishes a strong theoretical foundation for the methods applied, affirming that creative writing exercises can be instrumental in developing both language competence and enthusiasm among ESL learners.

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