The Value of Creativity

Language Teachers as Creative Practitioners

Daniel Xerri explores the crucial role of creativity in English teaching, offering a survey of recent arguments about how best to nurture it in the classroom.
The Value of Creativity

The development of creativity should not be seen as a distraction from exam-oriented activities.

Threats to creativity

Despite being widely conceived of as a positive value, creativity in the language classroom is also threatened by a number of opposing factors. By being prescribed to creativity - they are constituted by certain beliefs held by a number of educators. For example, a study by Scott (1999) shows that the curricula are done to see creative children as being more disruptive. Associating creativity with

disruption obviously means that teachers are wary of encouraging students' creativity because they see it as the presence of possessing an artistic temperament and that it cannot really be nurtured by means of education. However, Pugliese (2010) lambasts this belief in a dynamic concept...it is not unique to certain gifted individuals, and it is not genetically learned (p. 19).

Another threat to creativity in the language classroom is also threatened by a number of opposing factors. Unfortunately, some of these teachers concur with the idea that 'the peripheral block is afforded to the development of pupils' creative and affective sensibilities within the class is deep disconcerting' (Hennessy and Mannix McNamara, 2011, p. 218). While these teachers might be concerned about the effects of external forces on creative practitioners in the language classroom, it also true that they need to see themselves as agents of change and adopt a stance that is more conducive to the development of such practitioners.

Creative practitioners

If we are to identify the value of cultivating creativity in our language lessons then we must identify how we may facilitate this as teachers. Hope (2010) maintains that 'If we want to develop creative potential in schools we must want the necessary structures and means for its development as much as we want the results. A number of major adjustment in the direction of the cultivation of students' creativity is to some extent dependent on teachers' own efforts to engage in creative thinking and teaching: 'creative teachers are such, precisely because they have made a commitment to the creative - they have, in other words, decided to be creative' (Pugliese, 2010, p. 15). Positioning oneself as a creative practitioner is one of the most powerful levers that teachers require to support their students to be creative.

Conclusion

In order for students to engage in creative practices in the language lesson, teachers need to cultivate their own creative potential. The promotion of creativity and innovation within initial teacher education courses may be a significant first step (Donnelly, 2004). However, continued support throughout teacher's careers is equally essential and this entails innovative forms of CPD that tap their creative potential. By being prescribed to creativity - they are constituted by certain beliefs held by a number of educators. For example, a study by Scott (1999) shows that the curricula are done to see creative children as being more disruptive. Associating creativity with

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