

SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL CREATIVE TASKS FOR STUDYING POETRY

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ABSTRACT

The present study endeavors to analyze the challenges encountered by readers when interpreting poetry, and the development of their creative potential. Voluminous decoding of poetry texts is possible in the learning process if creative process is offered, which in turn enables to look for new ways of reading and explore comprehension labyrinths. Literature studies at secondary school require the development of creative task taxonomy, which would assist the reader – student to explore their creative potential and develop it deliberately. Creativity is beneficial in any area and can enrich every aspect of one's life. It is not an inherent gift but a mastered ability to see the world, interact with it and respond accordingly. The main components of creativity can be categorised in two groups: cognitive (divergent thinking, general knowledge and thinking skills) and personality (focusing on the task and determination to complete it, motivation, tolerance towards the unknown) components. The prerequisites for creativity are connected with the educator's attitude and expectations, as well as the ability to create a suitable environment, situations, learning tasks, because without them neither creative thinking nor action can be manifested. The educator is the initiator as well as the facilitator of the creative process, thinking and action. Based on the study of poetry of A. Čaks at secondary school, the article introduces the requirements and criteria for the development of creative tasks.

The aim of the research is, based on the study of A. Čaks' poetry in secondary school, to identify the conditions and criteria for developing creative tasks. The study was conducted using qualitative content analysis of students' works and a case study as the research methods. The results of the case study indicate that when the teacher creates an appropriate environment and atmosphere, students are offered various creative tasks, and students can choose them according to their abilities, students willingly engage in the performance of various creative tasks. The developed methodological framework for introducing A. Čaks' poetry is original and unprecedented in the history of literature methodology. The developed methodology can be used for the study of the personality and creative work of a specific poet (A. Čaks) as well as adapted and adjusted for the study of other writers. The ideas can be used by both practising and future literature teachers. The developed methodological framework and its results have been presented to prospective educators in the course "Methods of Teaching Latvian Literature," educators in various continuing education courses, and at the scientific conference of the University of Latvia. Educators have highly appreciated the developed materials.

Keywords: *creative potential, study of poetry at secondary school, creative thinking, creative tasks*

The strongest are those who seek the new.

B. Björnsson (1832–1910, Norwegian writer)

Introduction

The ever-changing world requires that people have well-developed creative thinking skills in order to be able to deal with any non-standard situation, suggesting that attitudes towards creativity are changing with the evolution of humanity. In the 21st century, intellectual abilities alone are not enough for people to adapt successfully to the social environment and experience personal growth, which is why theories on the development of creativity and the problems associated with it have been studied more intensively over the last decades. In education, the development of a child's potential for creativity has also become an issue, especially in the humanities. In every period of child development, special attention is paid to how thinking develops, but from adolescence onwards, the development of creative thinking needs a great deal of attention provided that at this point the child encounters the challenges of self-determination. Awareness and development of the potential for creativity is a condition for the development of a mentally healthy personality. Among the many components of creativity, in this article the authors will focus on the characterisation of the capacity for creative thinking, which can be developed in all children if the teacher has pedagogical creativity.

The aim of the research was to determine how students discover their creative activities in literature and what criteria guide their creative endeavors.

The following research methods were applied: literature analysis, content analysis of students' works, self-experience analysis, a case study. Questionnaire for students was used as the data collection method.

Developing the Potential for Creativity

In the society, the situations can still be faced in which the concept of creativity is used to describe the professional activities of some adults – in a certain professional field, they have excelled thanks to their innovative inventions, such as Picasso's art, Mozart's music, Goethe's literary works, etc. There are countless definitions of creativity, most of which have in common the originality of the idea and the usefulness of the result. Creativity is a complex theoretical construct, it is not transparent in the actual genesis of a new product, it is multidimensional, because creative activity can take place at almost any moment, and it can involve activities ranging from the smallest to large-scale projects. When thinking about a child's creativity, it is most accurate to use the term 'creativity potential' to refer to the set of characteristics of an individual that determine to some extent the individual's propensity to generate new ideas, inventions, art objects, insights or products (Sternberg, Lubart, 1999). The dualism of creativity – potential and actual. The potential for creativity is characterised by an individual's predispositions, which are expressed as a readiness to discover one's creative thinking abilities, to gain real experience in conditions that allow for the expression of creative activity.

Education experts believe that creativity is not sufficiently promoted in the learning process and that such problems cannot be solved in the absence of a common definition of creativity in curricula, which makes it difficult to find solutions to a number of problems in practice, such as how it should be “treated” in the learning process; how not to overload the curriculum so as not to reduce the opportunities for innovative learning (Ferrari, Cachia, & Punie, 2009). The creative thinking definition posed in the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (OECD PISA) 2021 for 15 year olds states that it is the competence to engage productively in the generation, evaluation and development of ideas, resulting in original and effective solutions, both in gaining knowledge and in powerful imaginative expressions. Although creativity is still considered a new construct in education, creative thinking involves the ability to generate unusual ideas, to quickly break away from traditional patterns of thinking and to solve problem situations. A consistent definition of creativity, methodological ideas for the teacher – conditions for a successful search for solutions to develop a child’s creative potential. Therefore, any dialogue between stakeholders in the field of education is crucial, in which a common understanding of the promotion of creativity in education can be discussed and found.

Creativity as the research object has three versions – as a creative person (looking for answers whether there are certain personal characteristics of creative persons), as a creative thinking process (what processes are involved in creative activity and thinking), as a product (what output can be viewed as creative). Creativity research also seeks to explore the environmental conditions that influence creative processes and creative people and in what ways.

If a teaching process is innovative and the teacher is able to find new methods, content and tasks that include opportunities for students to develop their creative thinking skills, the child can discover his or her potential for creativity and the possibilities the world has to offer. Every child is born with the capacity to think creatively, so society and education must nurture this fragile capacity provided that the key to future innovation lies in nurturing and developing children’s creative thinking skills. Creativity in education is becoming a major challenge; this is an important pedagogical concept for the future.

As researchers have pointed out, learning often tends to favour standardisation over uniqueness (Beghetto, 2007b), thus encouraging reproduction rather than creative thinking. Research also provides information about contradictions in teachers’ conceptions of creativity. It is believed that if teachers are aware of the value of creativity, they themselves feel more strongly the need to be creative and are thus able to foster children’s creative potential (Fasko, 2001 & Beghetto 2007a). Children can gain experience in creative thinking if they engage in it consciously and purposefully, as the potential for creativity develops over a sufficiently long period of time. Creativity is not a single ability, but a complex of intellect and personality traits, and a person’s general life position. Creativity is not reducible to a single psychological quality or innate creative ability, or to one particular type of activity. Its training in one type of activity leads to its stronger expression in other ways.

Learning activities can incorporate the development of creative thinking skills, as long as the child engages in new and personally meaningful learning tasks. Teachers and parents make sure that the child can demonstrate flexibility of thinking and novelty of ideas frequently enough. Children ‘invent’ something new often when they encounter, in the words of the Swiss psychologist and philosopher Jean Piaget (2002), that ‘to understand is to invent’: they find new and different ways of making new connections between existing and new knowledge, thus gaining a fuller understanding of the study content.

In the field of education, creativity is not a simple, homogeneous trait, but a construct that includes personality and cognitive components. There have been many attempts to ‘develop integrative models’, e.g. Mumford (2003, 107), but the most holistic view of creativity is provided by Urban’s Components Model of Creativity (Urban, 1996, 2004, 2012, 2014). Creative education must be responsibly grounded in a theory that allows a true appreciation of the complexity of the individual. Urban’s model of the components of creativity includes both cognitive and personality components. The cognitive components are: divergent thinking and action; general knowledge and thinking skills; domain-specific knowledge and skills. Personality components include task focus and commitment; motivation and motives; openness and tolerance of ambiguity.

Divergent thinking and acting is a component that has been commonly associated with creativity since Guilford’s (1950) theory of the characteristics of thinking: sensitivity to problems, fluency, flexibility, originality, restructuring and elaboration. The starting point and precondition for the creative thinking process is sensitivity to problems and the ability to see them. For most children, questions are natural; the ability to question is closely linked to the child’s natural curiosity, the urge to explore and to know. Divergent thinking depends on perception and general, deep knowledge and reasoning abilities. Quick perception and processing of information, well-developed memory are prerequisites for fluid, flexible and associative thinking. Redefinitions, reconstructions of problems must be analysed and evaluated for their usefulness. Analysis, reasoning and logical thinking are necessary to gather and prepare information at the beginning of the creativity process, which is completed at the end with an evaluation, in order to start developing the creative idea. Divergent thinking alone will not lead to excellence in the development of an idea or product; specific knowledge and skills in a particular area are required.

In recent years, there has been an increasing focus on specific knowledge as a prerequisite for generating creative ideas and products, especially when the aim is to produce outstanding, original results. Both psychologists and educators seek answers to questions about the development of creativity in students (Vessey & Mumford, 2012; Haager & Baudson, 2019).

Amabile (1983) consider domain-specific skills to be the foundation of creative thinking, noting that in many fields it even requires many years of preparation. If knowledge of the task is lacking, reliable and original insights cannot be obtained. The acquisition of the necessary comprehensive and detailed specific knowledge and skills is not possible without focus and perseverance, a commitment to the task. It is necessary to be able to

keep the problem in focus for a long period of time with varying intensity. Motivation is needed to be able to acquire, analyse and evaluate information. Amabile (1996) points out that intrinsic motivation is important and is formed from the individual's response to the essential features of the task. External factors such as expectations of evaluation or reward, or lack of choice about one's involvement in the task, can have a negative impact. Every child has an innate need for novelty, curiosity, exploration and knowledge, but frequently this is inadvertently suppressed by the parental or educational environment.

Another component of the dialectical relationship related to task implementation focus is openness and tolerance of ambiguity – the ability to step back, to change the way one thinks, to delay too quick solutions or to control one's dominant way of thinking. Autonomy of thought at certain times, willingness to seek distant associations and tolerance of the uncertain are crucial.

K. K. Urban's creativity components model consists of six interrelated components, which are described in three dimensions: the individual; the group or immediate environmental context; the societal or historical or global dimension, demonstrating that the environment can influence both the creativity process and the creative product. The individual dimension describes the individual, subjective aspect of creativity, how the components of creativity manifest themselves in a given environment and situation in relation to given materials and opportunities for expression. Creativity is an indicator of the quality of life of an individual and it is meaningful for the individual. The dimension of the group or immediate environment describes the interaction of the family, peer, school and education system environments with the six components of creativity. This environment is a context that describes how the creative process and personality can be activated and facilitated, how individual creativity is expressed and how it can be used for the benefit of a social group and influence elements of that environment. The societal, historical, global dimension describes the general, cultural and historical context in which creativity may be valued as important and supported according to existing values in a given time and environment, or, conversely, seen as unimportant and discouraged.

Challenges for the Reader in Interpreting Literary Works

Reading a literary work requires the reader to “study” the text precisely, slowly and carefully. Especially a reader of poetry must invest time and patience in every sentence and combination of words. It is also possible to read the same passage, the same text, over and over again. Reading literary works in the study process must be immune to the tendency to speed up reading and to reading as much as possible. It is intellectual reading that asks questions and moves forward with cognitive interest. Informed reading is oriented towards cognition, not entertainment.

The reading process depends on the genre of the literary work: poetry is the most deliberately read, because its language is multi-layered, even if the text is not large. Conscious reading is also necessary in drama texts, which seem more difficult to understand because of their dialogue. Long prose texts are the most difficult to read, especially if

the novel or story is not exciting. The more unfamiliar a text is to the reader, the more it is necessary to read it slowly, step by step, gaining an understanding of the text and of oneself as a reader (Skalberga, 2012).

Counscious reading requires methodological techniques that facilitate it. Such reading is closely linked to other types of activity, such as writing, commenting, filming, performing. In the methodological concept of deliberate reading, it is essential to maintain both a focus on the text and on the reader's interests (Paefgen, 2003). For the teacher, the primary concern is not the literary work, but the pupil's perception and comprehension of the problems and his or her response to the literary interpretations of the world. If the pupil has limited (specialist) knowledge, then this is taken seriously, and sometimes the pupil's perceptual problems have to remain at the centre of the teaching process. It is essential to motivate the pupil to read literary works and to organise the learning process so that there are as many such activities as possible. Oral, written, scenic, musical, drawing activities are mostly planned for individual creative thinking and representation of subjective understanding. The teacher should be familiar with a wide range of methods so that pupils have many and varied opportunities to demonstrate both their primary, spontaneous understanding of the text and to articulate their understanding of the text in its historical context. Literary forms of writing or other forms of creative tasks are preferred, which enable pupils to respond more freely and creatively to what they have read.

Günter Waldmann (1926–2020), a German educator, linguist and philosopher, developed a five-stage model for understanding literary texts. The main aim of his research was to understand the ways in which literary texts are understood. Using ideas from structural, post-structural, radical-constructivist, reception aesthetics, and semiotics, he gained insights into the processes that must take place in the reader if they are to understand a literary work (Table 1).

Table 1 A Model for Understanding Literary Texts (after Günter Waldmann)

Preparatory stage	Preparing to take on the role of a reader	How to introduce aesthetic reading?
1. Reading comprehension (linking to current awareness)	Reading and perception of a literary work depends on the reader's thinking skills, reading motivation, the type of literary work	How to make perception easier or more difficult, so as to create barriers to superficial reading?
2. Subjective understanding of a literary work	Subjective perception (individual) using imagination	How to develop an imagination that supports reading comprehension?
3. Literary work as a text	Literary features of a text (transforming the understanding of a literary work)	How to help perceive and explore poetic textual structures?
4. The literary work in its historical context	Integrating a literary work into a general context	How to formulate understanding of a literary work using knowledge of cultural, socio-historical influences?

G. Waldman has developed a model that reflects a learning process centred on the pupil's understanding of a literary work, which must be designed in such a way that all the stages of understanding are implemented; it happens gradually – ideally in stages. Approaches to understanding a literary work are found which reveal how to help the reader to acquire the necessary experience and help creative thinking to develop. The preparatory stage includes tasks that allow the reader to tune in to the text; even for complex texts, this can be achieved through playful, productive texts or literary games.

Reading and understanding literary texts is the first stage, where you need to find a way to slow, careful reading (delaying reading so as not to interfere with comprehension, but to enhance it), for example, you can “dissassemble” a poetic text and then reconstruct it in order to go deeper and understand the original version. The second stage involves the subjective concretisation of the text read, which is impossible without an awareness of one's own life experience, and the subjective ‘appropriation’ of what one has read in one's imagination. To develop the imagination, the types of tasks can be those related to the concretisation of a literary work in visual ways or creative writing about actions, characters, place, time (clarify, continue, invent, narrate). Imagination is the basis for visual-imaginative thinking and allows one to navigate situations where problem-solving is needed.

To understand a literary work, it is necessary to understand its specific form, structures, features – to identify their meaning, including external and internal intertextuality (see in relation to other literary texts). This can be achieved through tasks that invite to intervene in the text and change it (plot, characters, form of language) by altering, shortening, adding to, destroying it in order to feel the original effect and meaning of the text.

The study of a literary work outside the text is the final stage that helps to understand its meaning and to ascertain the overall understanding by relating it to one's individual and social experience and to the knowledge acquired about culture, history, society and the relationship between the literary work. This stage is labour-intensive, but the outcome should not be purely analytical; a variety of creative projects, parodies, even films can be developed if students have the skills (Skalberga 2012).

Methodology and Results

The following methods are used in the research: literature analysis, content analysis of students' works, self-experience analysis, a case study. Questionnaire for students was used as the data collection method.

The scientific and methodological literature was analyzed. A student survey (conducted via WhatsApp chat) was carried out to determine what they understand by creative tasks. The responses of the students, summarized in Table 2, align with the findings in the scientific literature regarding creative tasks and criteria for creativity. In this section, the creative works developed by students were analyzed.

The study is based on Big Idea 3 of the competency-based curriculum for cultural awareness and self-expression in the arts: the creative process, inspired by the cultural

context and societal needs, broadens cultural experiences, generates new ideas and innovations (Cabinet Office, 2019 <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/309597>). Creative activity can manifest itself in any area of life and culture, as well as in the field of education, through the interpretation and structuring of new information and knowledge, analyzing situations from various perspectives, problem-solving, project planning, essay writing, creating advertising slogans, crosswords, products, devices, designs, or artwork, inventing suitable methods or techniques for a task, games, and experiments. (Briška, Kalēja-Gasparoviča, 2020, 15). According to it, students carry out a creative collaborative project or artistic new work in their chosen art form to create new artistic value that grounds personal attitudes in aesthetic and ethical categories, construct solutions to their ideas in practical action, present the result and progress of the creative process, and reflect on their performance (Cabinet Office, 2019 Outcome 3.1; <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/309597>).

The aim of the research was to find out how students discover their creativity in literature, what are the criteria of students' creativity. The research was conducted in Riga XX Secondary School in 2 stages (October 2021, October 2022). Forty-eight 11a (two humanities classes) and 30 11b (general education class) students aged 16–17 participated in the study. Before the teacher designed the creative tasks, it was established (via whatsapp chat) what the pupils thought were the criteria for creative work, according to their previous experience. The most important answers are summarised in Table 2. The purpose of the study and the nature of respondents' participation were explained. The participants' privacy was protected and their responses remained confidential. This involves collecting anonymous data, using coding systems, and storing data securely. Participants should be assured that their individual responses will not be disclosed without their consent. No personally identifiable information was collected.

As shown in the table, students believe that creative work is based on knowledge acquired through learning. Only when a topic has been thoroughly explored does a student have the opportunity to show his or her interpretation, to create an original, unique piece of work, to discover his or her talent. The data from the survey and the pupils' answers are in line with the theoretical literature on fostering creativity.

In accordance with one of the principles of the arrangement of the content of the teaching of literary methodology, namely the principle of topicality (the study of works of fiction corresponds with relevant events in the nature, people and especially the nation) and the idea expressed in the history of the development of literary methodology that a writer's work should be studied when his memorial day is celebrated (Stikute, 2011). On teaching works of literature, a conversation about the writer is thematically planned for October, when the poet A. Čaks (A. Čaks) has his birthday (October, 27th). October is the month of A. Čaks (A. Čaks), and the Museum organises various events during this month: a scientific conference and readings, the celebration of the poet's birthday. That is why, before completing their assignments and creative work, a study excursion to the Čaks (Čaks) Museum was organized, where they got to know the personality of the writer, the environment in which the poet lived and worked, and listened to a narration by the museum guide. Before learning about the poet's personality and

Table 2 Students' answers – criteria for creative work

A creative task	A creative work
A task in which the main goal is to express oneself creatively and to develop and express one's personality in an artistic way.	Creative work requires you to stop and concentrate on your thoughts and knowledge on a given topic and represent it in a way that communicates what you want to say about the topic in a creative way.
A task that requires more than a basic knowledge of the subject. It requires creativity, which requires more than just understanding and summarising information.	A work that gives you the opportunity to show your originality and interpretation. A freer style. There are no limits to how the work can be done.
A way of expression that is not based on learning, but on understanding and feeling in order to improve the work.	Work that allows people to express themselves creatively and freely on a particular topic.
A task that requires to pose one's own interpretation of known information, to create original content, to reveal one's own thoughts.	A work that takes time and personal contribution, that is creative, that is born out of people's individual views and their own artistic vision, which is very different for everyone. That's what makes creative work special. They will never be the same.
A task that allows you to express yourself without being confined to certain boundaries.	A work where you can express your knowledge in an unconventional way and create new ideas.
Work that asks you to look at a topic or problem from different perspectives, and then come up with an original solution or innovation.	A work that involves free thinking and allows people to express themselves and showcase their talents.
Creative work is an opportunity given to us to express ourselves within a certain theme, reflecting our perception and knowledge of that theme.	A work that involves free thinking and allows people to express themselves and showcase their talents. Work that requires you to look at a topic or problem from different perspectives and then come up with an original solution or creativity.
A task in which the student reflects his/her knowledge in a creative way (drawing, posters, infographics, etc.).	Creative work is an opportunity given to us to express ourselves within a certain theme, reflecting our perception and knowledge of that theme.
A task that allows you to express your artistic abilities and demonstrate your knowledge of the subject.	Creative work – a specific task, the outcome of which is unique for each person performing it.

work, pupils were given tasks (feedback) to complete during their visit to the museum and in their literature lessons. Students were instructed to divide into groups of 4, they could work in pairs and, if they wished, individually. The pupils were familiarised with the tasks to be carried out in the process of learning about the personality and poetry of A. Čaks (A. Čaks).

1. Read the poetry of A. Čaks (A. Čaks) and look for lines that reveal a particular poetic image or motive. Students were offered both poetic motives and poetic images, but they could also choose their own. The number of poems to be read and analysed was set. The group had to come up with a "chakic" title according to the theme of the poem.

2. Since images such as signs, posters, advertisements, etc. often appear in the poetry of A. Chaks (A. Čaks), in order to make a connection with the poetry of A. Čaks – what was heard, seen, experienced in the museum – after visiting the museum, one had to create his own museum announcement, advertisement, sign, poster, etc.
3. Produce a creative work (video, film, collage, poster, presentation, drawing, cartoon, sketch, infographic, poetry performance, etc.) that reveals the chosen poetic image or poetic motive, so as to convince the teacher and classmates that poetry has been read, studied, explored. The main “tool” for all the works was the poetry of A. Chaks (A. Čaks).
4. Write a “Dedication to Riga” using lines from poetry by A. Chaks (A. Čaks) (dedication, song, self-composed poem, dance, etc.).

After the visit to the museum, literature lessons were spent reading, analysing and studying the poetry of A. Chaks (A. Čaks), getting to know the poetic images and means of artistic expression in it. Since the subject of literature belongs to the field of cultural awareness and self-expression in art, the teacher should observe the inter-subject links when planning lessons. Therefore, during the lessons the pupils had the opportunity to enjoy and feel the songs with words by A. Chaks (A. Čaks) performed by various musicians and actors (Uldis Stabulnieks, Viktors Lapčenoks, Imants Skrastiņš, Niks Matvejevs, etc.), as well as to listen to A. Chaks’ poetry performed by actors (Mārtiņš Vilsons, Artis Robežnieks, Vilis Daudziņš, etc.). If students have acquired sufficient knowledge about the writer and his work, have the support of their classmates and teacher, have a stimulating environment, and are not given precise instructions on what the outcome should be, then they have the opportunity to express themselves creatively. The pupils’ revealed that the outcome is unique for each pupil.

The tasks were refined and expanded at each successive stage according to the age, class and environment of the pupils and their interests.

The analysis of the study process revealed that students were able to work together in groups of four, thus improving and developing their cooperation skills. In line with the requirements, the pupils had come up with interesting group names that emphasised their knowledge of the poetic characters (‘Kiosks’, ‘Nomales’ wives’, ‘Moon kiosk’) [“(Kioskiši”, “Nomales sievas”, “Mēness kiosks”)], and special colours in poetry (“The Yellow Young Ladies”, “The Yellow Tram”) [“(Dzeltēnās jaunkundzes”, “Dzeltēnais tramvajs”)], and the themes of poetry (“The Taste of Riga”, “The Mindless Lovers”) [“(Rīgas garša”, “Bezprātīgie milētāji”)], as well as about the poet himself and some important events in his life (“The Mounts”, “A. Chaks’ Girls”, “Dear Leontine”) [“(Paugurēni”, “A. Čaka meitenes”, “Mīļā Leontīne”)].

The creative works developed by the students were varied and diverse: the board game “Get to know Alexander Chaks!” (see Figure 1, Figure 2), videoskits on various poetic motives, the film “Dinner with Alexander Chaks” (pupils took on the roles of the poet and his friends). “Chaks’ City Outskirts”, poetry composition “A Walk Along A. Chaks’ street” with elements of theatre game (students dressed up appropriately and took on the poetry characters, found appropriate visual design and A. Chak’s poetry, found

the appropriate background music), presentations on different poetic motives, collages, interpretation of individual poems, a Twitter account for A. Chak and even a Minecraft game “Explore the A. Chaks Museum!”. For the “Dedication to Riga” assignment, students composed their own poems, created poems they found in Chaks’ poetry, and selected and collaged their favourite lines of poetry.

Students’ works were analyzed based on the following criteria: innovation, originality, unconventional solutions, willingness to experiment, creativity, creative intuition, rich imagination, inspiration, and adaptability. (Bebre, 1997).

The students’ works and their analysis revealed that they were engaged with the process, the work and the result gave them pleasure, satisfaction and pride. The insight of the writer, educator and literary methodologist Ernest Aistars (1899–1998) was fully confirmed: “Work without interest is torture rather than learning.” (Stikute, 2011, p. 53.) Ideas were not repeated and the works were original, interesting, artistic. Some groups involved their classmates in the work, asking them to guess the motives of the poems read by A. Chak, to group the poems by characters, to look for poetic images in the collage.

Discussion

The research was inspired by daily work with students in a secondary school. It is widely acknowledged that a teacher has to self-analyse his/her work from time to time and write a self-assessment. This is required by the Cabinet Regulations, the Skola2030 project and the requirements of the particular educational institution. The pedagogical heritage of literary methodology states that a teacher’s work is evidenced by the work produced by his/her pupils, so it is useful for a teacher to receive feedback from pupils from time to time on their collaborative work. In the daily teaching process, it is crucial for the literature teacher that the pupils enjoy their work and have the opportunity to express themselves intellectually, emotionally and creatively in a variety of ways. This has been emphasised in his research by Jānis Rudzītis, who points out that we learn a work of art as a specially created aesthetic value, and its reception creates pleasure. In this process, the creative energy of the perceiver, the joy of being able to appreciate the creative potential of the artist, of mastering and co-creating a work of art, of one’s own spiritual activity, should be particularly emphasised. That is why a work of art can neither be taught nor learnt. Pupils, in collaboration with the teacher, can learn it, get to know it (Rudzītis, 2000, 48, 49). Literature learning is seen as a psychic process and outcome, and often the process itself is more important than the results to be obtained and evaluated.

The experience of creativity and attitudes (evaluative activity) is of particular importance in the full acquisition (perception, analysis and interpretation) of a work of fiction as a work of art, the formation of which is impossible without the reader’s involvement in a dialogue with the work and its author. Fostering pupils’ creativity is undoubtedly one of the tasks of the literature syllabus. Researchers in creativity theories acknowledge that the expression of creativity is facilitated by the environment, a motivating atmosphere,

the teacher's ability to offer pupils a variety of varied tasks, unprecedented situations and choices, and finding one's own way in doing them. The teacher can use a variety of pedagogical tools in the framework of lessons to stimulate pupils' cognitive, creative, emotional and value-oriented activities. A pupil may have all the inner resources to think creatively, but without a supportive environment, creativity may not come out. The teacher's role is to help pupils become aware of their inner resources in order to facilitate their self-actualisation. One of the teacher's tasks is therefore to create a stimulating and supportive environment in the classroom. Teachers must also be imaginative and creative in order to unleash and develop creativity in their pupils.

A creative personality is an asset for our society and can be built by unlocking and developing creativity. Creating a stimulating learning atmosphere in the classroom is what humanistic pedagogy and psychology have called 'facilitation', or activation and communication between the participants in the process. The knowledge and ways of doing that are acquired, applied by example and in new situations (exercises, learning tasks), develop skills and abilities, including the experience of creativity, mainly by developing the intellectual senses. Such learning experiences are necessary but not sufficient. By diversifying and integrating these pedagogical stimuli, pupils engage in co-creation. It is a personal, individual, engaged process, and at the same time a reader's self-discovery. The creative activity is manifested in the ability of each individual to experience and understand a work of verbal art in a different way, to present his/her own opinion, to justify it, to defend it, and at the same time to be tolerant towards the thoughts of others.

Knowledge and skills are necessary for the mastery of the content of the subject of literature; but learning can take place if pupils know and are capable of, but the truths they understand do not become an asset to their personality; such learning is pragmatic and does little for the artistic education of pupils.

Conclusions

In order for students to engage in various creative tasks and develop their creative abilities, several factors are crucial: a knowledge base, a supportive environment, a motivating atmosphere, and the teacher's personality. Students can be offered creative tasks once they have accumulated sufficient knowledge about the writer, their personality, poetic motifs, and specifics. Therefore, before students were assigned creative tasks, an excursion to A. Čaks' museum was organized, and during literature classes, poetry, various motifs, poetic characters, and poetic language were introduced and analyzed. Only then were creative tasks presented, allowing students to independently explore, evaluate, and responsibly use others' ideas, as well as propose their own, to inspire others to use the acquired knowledge effectively and skillfully, in new, unprecedented situations, experiment, interpret, create, implement their ideas, and come up with new solutions so that the ideas developed by students could inspire others.

In secondary education at all levels (basic, optimal, and advanced), it is important to offer students the content of literature studies in a way that allows them, using their

acquired knowledge and skills about the writer and the specific literary work, to creatively, interestingly, diversely, and according to their abilities and interests, turn the process of literature acquaintance into joy and adventure, rather than causing dislike. Only by systematically and purposefully developing creativity can students gain experience and strengthen their abilities to use it independently in various learning areas, including complex and unpredictable situations.

The conducted study indicates that if a teacher creates an appropriate environment and atmosphere, offers students various and diverse creative tasks, and allows students to choose tasks according to their abilities, students willingly engage in the performance of various creative tasks. In the process of literature education, the teacher's personality and the ability to think creatively are of great importance. Only under the influence of a creative teacher can students fully develop their creativity in various fields of activity and expression. Therefore, for a literature teacher, as a subject that deals with the art of words, it is advisable to avoid conventional situations and strive to find unprecedented ones that can be created both in imagination and in reality. The teacher's task is to help students recognize their inner resources to promote their self-realization.

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