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Efficacy Of Synectics Teaching Models In Fostering Language Creativity In English Among Secondary School Students

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ABSTRACT

Creativity is one of the most valued abilities in all societies, as it enables learners to think critically, solve problems innovatively, and express themselves effectively. In the field of language education, fostering creativity has become increasingly important in the context of the 21st-century skills framework and the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which emphasizes creative and critical thinking as essential learning outcomes. The Synectics model of teaching, developed by William J.J. Gordon and his associates, is a powerful instructional strategy that uses metaphorical and analogical thinking to stimulate creativity among learners. By engaging students in structured creative activities, Synectics helps them break away from conventional thought patterns and develop divergent thinking skills. The present experimental study investigates the efficacy of the Synectics teaching model in fostering language creativity in English among secondary school students. The study involved two groups—experimental and control—taught through Synectics-based instruction and traditional methods, respectively. Language creativity was assessed using the Test of Story Construction, Test of Poetic Diction, and Vocabulary Test. Statistical analysis revealed that the experimental group outperformed the control group significantly across all three measures. These findings demonstrate that the Synectics model is an effective pedagogical approach for enhancing language creativity, encouraging flexible thinking, and enriching students' linguistic expression. The study highlights the pedagogical implications of integrating innovative teaching models like Synectics into English language classrooms to nurture creative competencies among learners in line with contemporary educational goals.

Keywords: Synectics Teaching Model, Language Creativity, English Language Teaching.

CONCEPT OF SYNECTICS AND CREATIVITY:

Invention and creativity are essential for the progress of society and for making life more meaningful. Therefore, there is a need to orient students toward creative thinking. Research on creativity especially on nurturing and promoting creative thinking in classroom settings is still at a relatively early stage in India. Much remains to be explored and accomplished in this emerging field. Creativity is defined as the ability to bring something new into existence; it is characterized by novelty, originality, and universal inventiveness. Guilford (1956) discussed creativity as divergent thinking in his famous Structure of Intellect (S.I.) model. According to him, creativity is not a unitary trait but rather a collection of different abilities and other characteristics. Passi (1972) described creativity as a multidimensional attribute differentially distributed among individuals. It primarily includes the factors of problem sensitivity, fluency, flexibility, originality, acquisitiveness, and persistence.

The school environment plays a crucial role in unfolding the creative talents of learners. Schools provide a platform where ample opportunities can be created to promote creative thinking as well as achievement in various fields of life. However, most schools currently focus on preparing students to score high marks in examinations by memorizing subject matter, often through rote learning and cramming.

To enhance students' creativity, it is essential to adopt appropriate methods of teaching that provide opportunities for critical and divergent thinking, thereby fostering both understanding and creative abilities. The Synectics model of teaching is one such approach that has genuine potential to enhance learners' creativity. It provides opportunities to engage in various metaphorical and analogical activities key elements in developing creative thinking through which students can think critically and divergently. Thus, traditional teaching methods, which often place undue emphasis on convergent thinking, should be supplemented with methods that foster divergent thinking.

Language Creativity primarily includes the dimensions of fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration: 1. Fluency refers to a rapid flow of ideas and the tendency to modify or shift directions quickly. 2. Flexibility is the ability to break away from existing patterns of thought and shift to new patterns, generating ideas in novel directions. 3. Originality indicates uncommonness or rarity in ideas. 4. Elaboration refers to the ability to expand or develop a theme creatively, combining ideas with higher levels of thought.

Factors of Language Creativity: Language creativity can be measured using the following five factors: Story Construction, Dialogue Writing, Poetic Diction, Descriptive Style, and Vocabulary Test

For the present study, the investigator has focused on three factors: (1) Story Construction, (2) Poetic Diction, and (3) Vocabulary Test.

1. Story Construction: Here, the free play of imagination is encouraged. Students are asked to write or complete a story based on a given situation.
2. Poetic Diction: This involves writing witty and crisp dialogues between two persons. Feelings, thoughts, attitudes, and emotions are expressed through conversations between hypothetical roles.
3. Vocabulary Test: This assesses the vocabulary of the individual. Students are required to write meaningful words derived from a given word or set of letters.

The Synectics model of teaching in language classrooms helps students foster creativity. Their language achievement and language creativity are enhanced through this model as it encourages free thinking. Language creativity allows for freedom of response, both qualitatively and quantitatively, in measuring various dimensions of divergent thinking.

Teaching English in India, which has been described as "the world's largest democratic enterprise of its kind" (N. Krishnaswamy and T. Shriraman, 1994), faces multiple challenges, particularly because learners come from diverse socio-economic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds and display widely varying levels of competence in English. **Synectics** is a creative problem-solving process designed to increase the likelihood of successful solutions. It improves the effectiveness of creative problem-solving sessions by removing negative elements of human group dynamics and replacing them with positive, collaborative tools. This enables teams to focus their collective abilities on the challenges at hand.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

Many studies have been conducted across the world to explore different methods for developing creativity through the Synectics model of teaching**.** Rahman & Khan (2023) conducted a recent study in Bangladesh and found that students taught through the Synectics method performed better in vocabulary acquisition, metaphoric writing, and creative expression. The model also helped reduce students' anxiety toward English learning by making abstract concepts more relatable through analogies. Fitri et al. (2022) demonstrated that using digital tools to create and narrate stories helped EFL students improve their vocabulary, coherence, and imaginative expression in writing. Mishra & Panda (2021), in a comparative study involving rural and urban students, found that the use of creative dramatics, storytelling, and visual metaphors in English classrooms significantly improved creativity scores. This effect was particularly strong among rural students who had limited exposure to traditional enrichment programs. Naik & Mishra (2021) examined secondary schools in Odisha and explored the impact of Synectics on divergent thinking and creative expression. Their findings confirmed that the method enabled students to think beyond conventional ideas and express themselves more freely in both speech and writing. Reddy (2021) emphasized that rural students can develop creative competence in English if they are exposed to metaphor-based models like Synectics in a supportive classroom environment. Al-Mahrooqi & Denman (2020) focused on Omani secondary school students and found that structured creative writing tasks involving metaphor, sensory detail, and personification helped improve both language proficiency and creativity. Their study highlighted that creativity can be systematically developed through well-designed curricula. Mayer et al. (2020) suggested that emotionally intelligent learners tend to demonstrate better creative output in writing and speaking tasks due to their resilience and openness to novel ideas. Murthy & Ramesh (2020) conducted a quasi-experimental study in Karnataka and concluded that Synectics helped rural students enhance fluency, elaboration, and emotional expression in English composition. Walia & Wadhwa (2020) highlighted the impact of project-based learning and integrated creativity workshops on students' ability to generate original ideas in English composition and poetry writing. The authors concluded that exposure to creative methods is directly proportional to enhanced language creativity. Priya & Jayanthi (2019) found that the Synectics approach enhanced creativity and collaborative learning among secondary school students. The participants expressed higher motivation and engagement in English classes when tasks included analogical exercises and metaphorical descriptions. Pass (1985) conducted a study to examine the effect of the Synectics model of teaching on creative writing and found significant improvement in students' performance after being exposed to the model. Brown (1980) studied the effects of Synectics-based training on students' vocabulary, reading skills, and self-concept. The study involved three groups: 1) The first (experimental group) was trained using Synectics-based materials focused on connection-making. 2) The second (Control Group I) used materials adapted from the experimental sessions. 3) The third (Control Group II) received no Synectics-based instruction. The results showed no statistically significant difference between the groups after training.

Overall, the above studies indicate that the Synectics model is an effective approach for enhancing language creativity. Its success has led to the development of more classroom activities that encourage students to produce new ideas**,** original combinations, and creative expressions in language learning contexts.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

1. One of the major problems with the teaching of Indian languages is that the emphasis is placed on providing information through language rather than on developing students' creative potential. There is a pressing need to foster language creativity among students.
2. In India, greater importance has traditionally been given to vernacular languages and their development. As a result, the development of English language creativity has been neglected. Therefore, it is essential to focus on nurturing creativity in the English language as well.
3. In short, it can be said that creative language ability is a highly desired component in language education for Indian students.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study has the following limitations:

1. The study was confined to English medium students of 9^{th} standard in a high school located in Cuddalore only.
2. The conventional method of teaching was used in the study for the purpose of observing, controlling, comparing, and assessing the development of creativity in English.
3. For the experiment, only three factors of language creativity: story construction, vocabulary test, and poetic diction were considered, while descriptive style and dialogue writing were excluded.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To find out the significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Story Construction and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) among students of the experimental group.
2. To find out the significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Story Construction and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) among students of the control group.
3. To find out the significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Poetic Diction and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) among students of the experimental group.
4. To find out the significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Poetic Diction and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) among students of the control group.
5. To find out the significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Vocabulary and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) among students of the experimental group.
6. To find out the significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Vocabulary and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) among students of the control group.

HYPOTHESES

In pursuance of the above-stated objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated:

1. There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Story Construction and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) among students of the experimental group.
2. There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Story Construction and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) among students of the control group.
3. There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Poetic Diction and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) among students of the experimental group.
4. There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Poetic Diction and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) among students of the control group.
5. There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Vocabulary and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) among students of the experimental group.
6. There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Vocabulary and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) among students of the control group.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

In the present study, the experimental method was used to collect data. A pre-test and post-test matched group experimental design was adopted. The study was conducted on a sample of 200 students, selected through purposive sampling. Raven's Progressive Matrices was used for testing and matching the intelligence levels of students. Both the experimental and control groups were selected on the basis of their intelligence test scores to ensure equivalence between the groups.

The experimental group was taught using the Synectics model of teaching, while the control group received instruction through the traditional method. The efficacy of the Synectics model in enhancing language creativity was determined by administering a creativity test to both groups of students. The creativity test used for assessing language creativity in English was constructed and standardized by the investigator following established test development procedures.

TOOLS OF THE STUDY

a) Treatment Tools: The Synectics model-based lesson plans in the English language were used to impart instruction to the students.
b) Measuring Tools: Raven's Progressive Matrices (RPM) and The English Language Creativity Test, prepared and standardized by the investigator.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED

The Mean, Standard Deviation, and 't' test were used to analyze the data collected from the groups.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

To determine the effect of the Synectics Model of Teaching, the paired 't' test was applied, as shown in the following table.

Table 1: Results of the paired 't' test for pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Story Construction and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) in the experimental group.

Variables	Score	Mean	Std. Dv	Mean Diff.	SD. Diff	t. value.	P. value	Signi.
Story Construction	Pre-test	16.4000	2.5831					
	Post-test	28.0000	4.9524	-13.6170	3.8209	-14.6574	P<0.01	S
Fluency	Pre-test	5.9500	0.5111					
	Post-test	8.8000	1.0635	-3.8500	1.7840	-15.5009	P<0.01	S
Flexibility	Pre-test	5.7500	0.5111					
	Post-test	6.9000	1.0635	-3.8500	1.8840	-15.5009	P<0.01	S
Originality	Pre-test	4.4000	0.6352					
	Post-test	6.9800	1.1715	-3.4000	1.6372	-13.7845	P<0.01	S
Elaboration	Pre-test	4.5600	0.6352					
	Post-test	6.9700	1.1715	-3.4000	1.2372	-13.7845	P<0.01	S

The above table reveals that the pre-test and post-test scores differ statistically significantly with respect to story construction and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) at the 0.01 level of significance in the experimental group. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that the pre-test and post-test scores of story construction and its dimensions differ significantly among the students of the experimental group.

Table 2: Results of the paired 't' test for pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Story Construction and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) in the control group.

Variables	Score	Mean	Std. Dv	Mean Diff.	SD. Diff	t. value.	P. value	Signi.
Story Construction	Pre-test	12.0444	2.5500					
	Post-test	24.9500	6.6129	-14.127	8.035	11.9620	P<0.01	S
Fluency	Pre-test	3.5333	0.4138					
	Post-test	6.8333	1.6678	-4.4011	2.778	-11.9396	P<0.01	S
Flexibility	Pre-test	3.5333	0.4138					
	Post-test	6.8500	1.6513	-4.4278	2.769	-11.9663	P<0.01	S
Originality	Pre-test	1.9600	0.5923					
	Post-test	5.638	1.8286	-4.7934	3.242	-10.5765	P<0.01	S
Elaboration	Pre-test	2.167	0.7711					
	Post-test	5.633	1.8286	-4.7278	2.250	-9.9144	P<0.01	S

The above table shows that the pre-test and post-test scores differ statistically significantly with respect to story construction and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) at the 0.01 level of significance in the control group. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that the pre-test and post-test scores of story construction and its dimensions differ significantly among the students of the control group.

Table 3: Results of the paired 't' test for pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Poetic Diction and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) in the experimental group.

Variables	Score	Mean	Std. Dv	Mean Diff.	SD. Diff	t. value.	P. value	Signi.
Poetic Diction	Pre-test	11.9111	2.7998					
	Post-test	17.5611	4.5369	-6.7000	3.9365	-11.5956	P<0.01	S
Fluency	Pre-test	4.4944	1.7109					
	Post-test	5.0611	2.2584	-2.6778	0.7772	-13.9937	P<0.01	S
Flexibility	Pre-test	4.4944	1.7010					
	Post-test	5.8111	2.2452	-2.4278	0.8595	-9.7476	P<0.01	S
Originality	Pre-test	3.1778	1.4762	-2.6611	3.3318	-4.9187	P<0.01	S

	Post-test	4.7278	3.2634					
Elaboration	Pre-test	3.1778	1.4762					
	Post-test	4.3444	1.9087	-2.2778	3.8126	-9.1847	P<0.01	S

The above table shows that the pre-test and post-test scores differ statistically significantly with respect to Poetic Diction and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) at the 0.01 level of significance in the experimental group. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that the pre-test and post-test scores of Poetic Diction and its dimensions differ significantly among the students of the experimental group.

Table 4: Results of the paired 't' test for pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Poetic Diction and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) in the control group.

Variables	Score	Mean	Std. Dv	Mean Diff.	SD. Diff	t. value.	P. value	Signi.
Poetic Diction	Pre-test	8.9778	2.3283					
	Post-test	14.5333	3.5285	-7.6778	3.8236	-14.3611	P<0.01	S
Fluency	Pre-test	3.3611	1.4766					
	Post-test	5.1611	1.8463	-2.9111	1.9570	-12.7524	P<0.01	S
Flexibility	Pre-test	3.3611	1.4566					
	Post-test	5.1611	1.8463	-2.9111	1.9570	-12.7524	P<0.01	S
Originality	Pre-test	2.8444	1.4518					
	Post-test	4.3278	1.7894	-2.5944	1.8609	-11.7241	P<0.01	S
Elaboration	Pre-test	5.8444	1.4518					
	Post-test	4.3278	1.7894	-2.5944	1.8609	-11.7041	P<0.01	S

The above table indicates that the pre-test and post-test scores differ statistically significantly with respect to Poetic Diction and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) at the 0.01 level of significance in the control group. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that the pre-test and post-test scores of Poetic Diction and its dimensions differ significantly among the students of the control group.

Table 5: Results of the paired 't' test for pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Vocabulary and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) in the experimental group.

Variables	Score	Mean	Std. Dv	Mean Diff.	SD. Diff	t. value.	P. value	Signi.
Vocabulary	Pre-test	23.5333	2.5152					
	Post-test	27.0667	2.2846	-3.5333	1.5862	-12.2006	P<0.01	S
Fluency	Pre-test	9.3667	0.8996					
	Post-test	9.8500	0.4385	-0.4833	0.6363	-4.1605	P<0.01	S
Flexibility	Pre-test	9.3667	0.8996					
	Post-test	9.8500	0.4385	-0.4833	0.6363	-4.1605	P<0.01	S
Originality	Pre-test	2.4000	0.6486					
	Post-test	3.6833	0.8558	-1.2833	0.5676	-12.3847	P<0.01	S
Elaboration	Pre-test	2.4000	0.6486					
	Post-test	3.6833	0.8558	-1.2833	0.5972	-11.7707	P<0.01	S

It can be observed from the above table that the pre-test and post-test scores differ statistically significantly with respect to the Vocabulary Test and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) at the 0.01 level of significance in the experimental group. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that the pre-test and post-test scores of the Vocabulary Test and its dimensions differ significantly among the students of the experimental group.

Table 6: Results of the paired 't' test for pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Vocabulary and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) in the control group.

Variables	Score	Mean	Std. Dv	Mean Diff.	SD. Diff	t. value.	P. value	Signi.
Vocabulary	Pre-test	20.9667	2.2047					
	Post-test	25.9500	3.3997	-4.9833	3.9924	-6.8367	P<0.01	S
Fluency	Pre-test	8.9167	0.8313					
	Post-test	9.333	0.1367	-0.4167	1.1824	-1.9302	P<0.01	S
Flexibility	Pre-test	8.9167	0.8313					
	Post-test	9.3333	1.0367	-0.4167	1.1824	-1.9302	P<0.01	S
Originality	Pre-test	1.5667	0.6121					
	Post-test	3.7000	1.3493	-2.1333	1.4618	-7.9935	P<0.01	S
Elaboration	Pre-test	1.5667	0.612	-	1.2898	-8.5641	P<0.01	S

			1	2.0167				
	Post-test	3.5833	1.0262					

It can be observed from the above table that the pre-test and post-test scores differ statistically significantly with respect to the Vocabulary Test and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) at the 0.01 level of significance in the control group. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that the pre-test and post-test scores of the Vocabulary Test and its dimensions differ significantly among the students of the control group.

FINDINGS

The main findings of the study are as follows:

1. There is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test **on** Story Construction and Poetic Diction, and their dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) among the students of the experimental group.
2. There is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Story Construction and Poetic Diction, and their dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) among the students of the control group.
3. There is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Vocabulary, and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) among the students of the experimental group.
4. There is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the English Language Creativity Test on Vocabulary, and its dimensions (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) among the students of the control group.
5. From the overall analysis, it was observed that the experimental group's performance in the Test of Story Construction, Test of Poetic Diction, and Test of Vocabulary was significantly higher than the control group's performance.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The present study has the following implications:

1. The findings indicate that language creativity can be significantly enhanced, along with general creativity, when students are exposed to the Synectics model of teaching. This suggests that creative teaching strategies can play a vital role in fostering both linguistic and cognitive skills.

2. Teachers should encourage independent and critical thinking by providing students with rich experiences, diverse activities, and enrichment programs that stimulate creativity and problem-solving abilities.

3. To ensure that India's future generation is globally competent**,** the teaching of English should be strengthened by incorporating a variety of engaging activities focused on reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Innovative approaches, such as Synectics, can make language learning more meaningful, practical, and creativity-oriented.

4. Educational planners and curriculum developers should integrate creative instructional strategies like the Synectics model into regular classroom teaching, so that learners not only achieve academic proficiency but also develop higher-order thinking skills and a creative mindset.

5. Schools should focus on holistic language development, where emphasis is not just on rote learning but also on fostering imaginative expression, vocabulary enrichment, and effective communication skills, preparing students to tackle real-world challenges.

CONCLUSION

The present study demonstrates that the Synectics model of teaching is highly effective in fostering language creativity among secondary school students in English. Exposure to this model significantly enhanced students' abilities in story construction, poetic diction, and vocabulary, along with the dimensions of fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. The experimental group, taught through the Synectics approach, consistently outperformed the control group, indicating that creative, analogy-based, and metaphorical teaching strategies can substantially improve both linguistic competence and divergent thinking skills.

These findings suggest that integrating Synectics-based instructional strategies into English classrooms can move teaching beyond rote learning, enabling students to think critically, creatively, and independently. By fostering a stimulating and imaginative learning environment, teachers can enhance not only students' academic performance but also their overall creative potential. In conclusion, the Synectics model provides a practical and research-validated approach to nurturing creativity in language learning, offering valuable implications for teachers, curriculum designers, and educational policymakers aiming to cultivate innovative, confident, and proficient English learners in secondary education.

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