FEATURES OF DIVERGENT THINKING IN ELT

Tulegenova B.A.,Togusbayeva M.S., Abdykarimova C.A., Kalikulova M.O.

South Kazakhstan State University of M. Auezov, Kazakhstan, Shymkent

Teachers are often searching for activities to make their classroom more interactive. Language teachers in particular are also looking for activities that promote target language use: what students are learning is less important than how they are learning it and what they do with it.Psychologists have found that a high IQ alone does not guarantee creativity. Instead, personality traits that promote divergent thinking are more important. Divergent thinking is found among people with personalities which have traits such as nonconformity, curiosity, willingness to take risks, and persistence.Divergent thinking is a thought process or method used to generate creative ideas by exploring many possible solutions. It is often used in conjunction with convergent thinking, which follows a particular set of logical steps to arrive at one solution, which in some cases is a "correct" solution. Divergent thinking typically occurs in a spontaneous, free-flowing manner, such that many ideas are generated in an emergent cognitive fashion. Many possible solutions are explored in a short amount of time, and unexpected connections are drawn. After the process of divergent thinking has been completed, ideas and information are organized and structured using convergent thinking. Divergent thinking is related to creativity and involves a broad search for solutions to problems that have no single correct answers. It is thinking outwards or out-of-box thinking. In the process of divergent thinking, the individual must find several combinations of elements that might provide possible answers. As a concept it was developed by J.P. Guilford, a psychologist, in the 1950s. Other experts speak of six-stage or nine-stage processes used by divergent thinkers as part of the creative problem-solving process. The six-stage process includes finding the objectives, facts, problems, ideas, solutions and acceptance. Boosting students' divergent thinking is of great importance today. We teachers must regularly apply tools that stimulate divergent thinking into our classroom practice. This way we not only develop students' higher order thinking skills but also make learning meaningful and stimulating. Techniques stimulating divergent thinking are as follows:

1.Brainstorming: It is a technique which involves generating a list of ideas in a creative, unstructured manner. The goal of brainstorming is to generate as many ideas as possible in a short period of time. The key tool in brainstorming is "piggybacking," or using one idea to stimulate other ideas.

2.Keeping a journal: Journals are an effective way to record ideas that one thinks of spontaneously. By carrying a journal, students can create a collection of thoughts on various subjects and use them later when developing and organizing materials in the prewriting stage. It is an exciting tool used in enhancing students essay writing skills.

3.Free writing: This technique implies choosing a particular idea and writing non-stop about it for a short period of time. This can help generate a variety of thoughts about a topic in a short period of time, which can later be restructured or organized following some pattern of arrangement.Free writing can also be used – asking someone to just write anything that comes to mind about the subject, but in a more structured approach, almost like a stream of consciousness.

4.Mind mapping. Mind mapping is another highly effective tool that though is quite similar to brainstorming; it divides the ideas in sets of relations regarding the main subject.

5. Brain writing. In this technique students don't have to speak to each other, at least initially. Ideas are written down and shared later. This encourages all voices to be heard and prevents people from forgetting their ideas as they wait for an opportunity to speak. Building on ideas occurs after ideas are shared.

We all know that original, creative ideas come from combining existing concepts in a new way. With divergent thinking, we produce the pool of ideas. Arranging them in an innovative way is the next step that, even though it requires some analytical thinking, also needs creativity to achieve the best result. As John Cleese once said when you are being creative, nothing is wrong.

Literature

1 From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

2Author Unknown.Strategies of Divergent Thinking.University of Washington. Retrieved August 6, 2009