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Strategies for Developing Creative Thinking Skills in Training Teachers of The Digital Generation

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Abstract: This article explores strategies for developing creative thinking skills in the preparation of digital generation teachers. It analyzes the issues of forming creative thinking skills of future teachers in the context of the transformation of the modern education system, the main components of creative thinking and ways to develop them, and the possibilities of using digital technologies. The article covers the creation of a creative environment in pedagogical higher education institutions, innovative teaching methods, interactive approaches, and their practical effectiveness.

Keywords: Creative thinking, digital generation, pedagogical education, innovative methods, originality, adaptability, fluency, elaboration, creative educational environment, educational transformation.

Introduction: In today's world, with the rapid development of digitalization, globalization, and information technologies, the education system is undergoing profound changes. Digital technologies are penetrating all spheres of life, including the education sector. Under such conditions, the system for training teaching staff must also transform and adapt to modern demands. Teachers of the digital generation must not only have deep knowledge of their subject but also be able to operate effectively in a digital environment, apply innovative approaches, and, most importantly, possess creative thinking skills.

According to the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-5847 dated October 8, 2019, "On Approval of the Concept for the Development of the Higher Education System of the Republic of Uzbekistan

until 2030," tasks such as "...gradual transition of the educational process in higher education institutions to a credit-module system; ensuring strong integration of modern information and communication technologies and educational technologies; individualization based on digital technologies" have been set [1]. This further highlights the importance of developing creative thinking skills in future teachers.

Creative thinking is the ability of an individual to generate unconventional ideas, think outside the box, analyze problems from different perspectives, and propose original solutions. For teachers of the digital generation, this skill is particularly crucial, as they must be ready to work in a rapidly changing digital environment and educate students accordingly. As Guilford emphasized, "Creativity is divergent thinking, i.e., the ability to offer multiple solutions to a single problem" [2]

The modern educational paradigm demands that a teacher be more of a facilitator of the learning process rather than just a transmitter of knowledge. This underscores the need to pay special attention to the development of creative thinking skills in future teachers. As Torrance stated, "Creativity can be taught; it requires the creation of special conditions for its development" [3]. From this perspective, developing and implementing strategies for fostering creative thinking skills in the preparation of teachers of the digital generation in pedagogical higher education institutions is of paramount importance.

This article examines strategies for developing creative thinking skills in training teachers of the digital generation, the main components of creative thinking, methods for their development, and opportunities for applying them in the modern pedagogical education system.

METHODOLOGY

The concept of creative thinking is interpreted differently by various scholars. Amabile notes that "Creativity is the ability to generate new and useful ideas" [4]. Robinson defines creativity as "the process of producing valuable ideas" [5]. De Bono views creativity as "lateral thinking," that is, the ability to approach problems from different perspectives, as opposed to traditional or vertical thinking [6].

In a pedagogical context, creative thinking holds

particular significance, as modern teachers are expected to adapt quickly to changing circumstances, develop new pedagogical approaches, and organize the educational process taking into account students' individual characteristics. Sternberg and Lubart emphasized that "A creative teacher is capable of fostering creativity in students as well" [7]. From this standpoint, developing creative thinking skills in future teachers is crucial not only for their professional activities but also for enhancing the creative potential of future generations.

Creative thinking plays an essential role in the following areas of professional activity for future teachers [8]: Designing innovative lesson plans; Critically analyzing and improving educational materials; Applying differentiated approaches considering students' individual characteristics; Solving pedagogical problems in unconventional ways; Integrating modern technologies into the educational process; Developing students' creative thinking skills.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Teachers of the digital generation are those who were born, raised, and educated during the era of digital technologies and are prepared to teach students of this era. They possess the following characteristics:

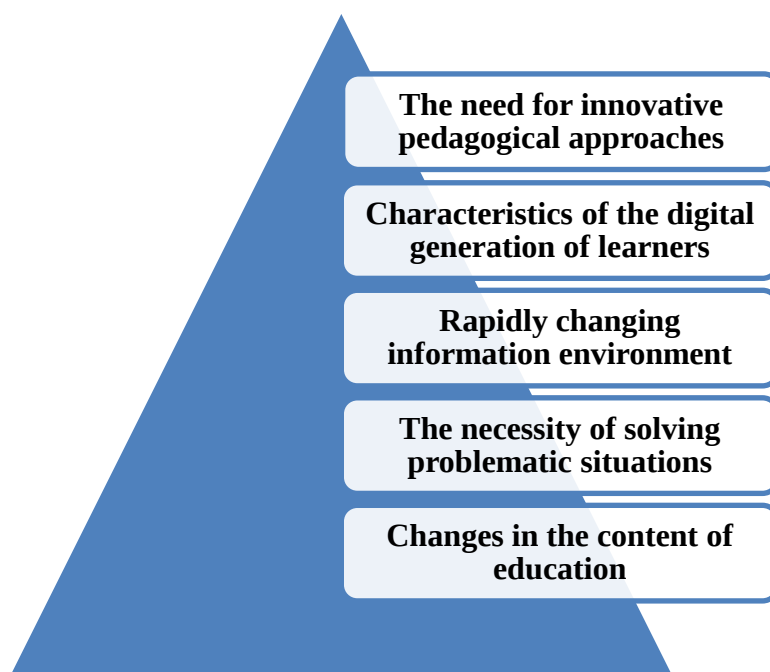
Digital competence – the ability to effectively use modern information and communication technologies, create digital content, and operate in a digital learning environment;

Adaptability – the ability to adjust to rapidly changing technological environments and to master new software and devices;

Visual thinking – the ability to present information visually, effectively utilizing infographics, videos, and other visual tools [9].

These characteristics distinguish teachers of the digital generation from traditional educators and should be considered when fostering creative thinking in them.

The transformation of the modern educational paradigm, the rapid development of digital technologies, and the new demands of the labor market make it necessary to develop creative thinking skills in future teachers. The following reasons can be identified for this [10]:



The Necessity of Innovative Pedagogical Approaches. Traditional teaching methods no longer fully meet the needs of modern learners; therefore, new, innovative approaches are essential.

Characteristics of Digital Generation Learners. Representatives of Generation Z and Generation Alpha possess unique characteristics, and working effectively with them requires creative approaches from educators.

Rapidly Changing Information Environment. The volume and speed of information are increasing, which requires teachers to continuously update their knowledge and develop skills for effectively acquiring new information through creative thinking.

The Need to Solve Problematic Situations. In pedagogical practice, problematic situations regularly arise, and their effective resolution calls for creative solutions [11].

Changes in the Content of Education. The focus is shifting from knowledge transmission to the formation of competencies, which in turn demands creative approaches from educators.

To develop creative thinking, it is crucial to first create a creative educational environment. Such an environment should possess the following key characteristics:

Openness and trust – Students must feel free to express their thoughts. In such a psychologically safe atmosphere, they are encouraged to propose innovative ideas without fear of mistakes.

Collaboration and communication – These enhance the exchange of ideas and constructive relationships among students. Group discussions and collaborative

projects play an important role in this process.

Support for critical and creative thinking – Learners are encouraged to analyze traditional approaches, seek alternative ideas, and propose unconventional solutions.

Availability of digital resources and technologies – These are integral to the modern learning environment, allowing students to work with innovative tools and implement new ideas.

Individualization and differentiation – This approach considers each student's unique creative potential. It allows for the development of creative thinking skills based on individual abilities and interests [12].

Conclusion. In conclusion, strategies for developing creative thinking skills in preparing teachers of the digital generation are of great importance. Creative thinking occupies a central place in the system of professional competencies of a modern educator. In today's digital world, a teacher must possess not only digital competencies but also highly developed creative thinking abilities. To effectively foster creative thinking in pedagogical higher education institutions, the following strategies are of particular importance:

Creating a creative learning environment,

Broad implementation of innovative teaching methods,
Effective use of digital technologies,

Purposeful and systematic development of creative thinking components.

The integrated application of these strategies makes it possible to prepare modern, creative, and competent teachers ready to educate the digital generation.

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