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## **Developing Students' Problem-Solving Skills Through the Development of a Creative Learning Environment in Primary Education (On the Example of Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy Lessons)**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This article investigates the development of students' problem-solving skills through the formation and improvement of a creative learning environment in primary education, particularly in Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy lessons. The study analyzes theoretical foundations, pedagogical conditions, and methodological approaches that contribute to the development of cognitive independence, creativity, and analytical thinking among primary school learners. The research highlights that a creatively organized learning environment significantly enhances students' motivation, engagement, and ability to independently solve educational problems. The article also emphasizes that interactive and student-centered teaching methods, such as problem-based learning, storytelling, group collaboration, and creative writing tasks, play a crucial role in developing 21st-century competencies. The findings indicate that integrating creativity-oriented strategies into language education improves both academic performance and cognitive development of students.

### **KEYWORDS**

Creative learning environment, problem-solving skills, primary education, Mother Tongue, Reading Literacy, cognitive development, pedagogy.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the modern education system, the development of students' competencies has become a central priority. Among these competencies, problem-solving skills are considered one of the most important, especially in

primary education, where the foundation of cognitive development is established. The ability of students to analyze information, identify problems, and find

appropriate solutions is essential for their academic success and future professional life.

In Uzbekistan, ongoing educational reforms emphasize competency-based learning and the development of creative thinking in school education. Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy lessons are considered key subjects in shaping students' intellectual abilities, communication skills, and creative thinking. However, in many educational settings, traditional teaching methods are still widely used, which limits students' opportunities for independent thinking and active problem-solving.

Therefore, the development of a creative learning environment in primary education is not only relevant but also necessary for improving the quality of education.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Modern pedagogical research confirms that creativity and problem-solving skills are closely interconnected cognitive processes. According to constructivist learning theories developed by Piaget and Vygotsky, learners actively construct knowledge through interaction with their environment rather than passively receiving information.

E. Paul Torrance defines creativity as the ability to generate original and useful ideas. In educational contexts, a creative learning environment encourages students to explore multiple solutions, think critically, and engage actively in the learning process.

Recent studies in primary education indicate that methods such as problem-based learning, interactive storytelling, collaborative learning, and inquiry-based instruction significantly improve students' cognitive abilities, literacy skills, and motivation.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research is based on theoretical analysis, pedagogical observation, and qualitative interpretation. The study focuses on classroom practices in Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy lessons and examines how creative teaching methods influence students' problem-solving abilities.

The research includes analysis of:

- Student participation in creative tasks
- Teacher instructional strategies
- Classroom interaction patterns
- Learning outcomes in literacy lessons

The collected data were analyzed to determine the effectiveness of creative learning environments in developing students' cognitive and problem-solving skills.

## **Creative Learning Environment in Primary Education**

A creative learning environment refers to a pedagogical setting that encourages students to think independently, explore ideas freely, and engage actively in the learning process. It is characterized by flexibility, openness, emotional support, and student-centered teaching.

In such an environment, students are not passive recipients of knowledge but active participants in constructing their understanding. Creativity in this context is not limited to artistic expression but includes critical thinking, reasoning, decision-making, and problem-solving abilities.

## **Problem-Solving Skills in Primary Education**

Problem-solving skills involve a set of cognitive processes that enable students to identify problems, analyze information, generate possible solutions, evaluate alternatives, and select the most effective solution.

In Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy lessons, these skills are developed through reading comprehension tasks, text analysis, interpretation of literary works, and creative writing activities. These activities require students to think critically and express their ideas independently.

### **Pedagogical Conditions for Developing Problem-Solving Skills**

The development of problem-solving skills in a creative learning environment depends on several important pedagogical conditions:

Firstly, student-centered learning must be implemented, where the teacher acts as a facilitator rather than the sole source of knowledge.

Secondly, interactive teaching methods such as group work, discussions, role-playing, and brainstorming should be widely used.

Thirdly, problem-based tasks should be integrated into lessons, allowing students to apply their knowledge in real-life situations.

Fourthly, a supportive classroom atmosphere must be created where students feel safe to express their ideas without fear of making mistakes.

Finally, the use of storytelling and narratives plays an important role in developing imagination and analytical thinking.

### **Methods of Developing Problem-Solving Skills**

One of the most effective methods is problem-based learning, where students are given real or fictional problems and asked to find solutions independently or collaboratively.

Interactive reading activities are also important. Students analyze texts by answering questions such as what the problem in the story is and how it could be solved differently.

Creative writing tasks encourage students to continue stories, create alternative endings, and write from different perspectives, which develops imagination and critical thinking.

Group collaboration allows students to share ideas, compare solutions, and develop communication skills.

Game-based learning increases motivation and helps students engage more actively in the learning process.

### **Role of Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy Lessons**

Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy lessons play a fundamental role in cognitive and intellectual development. These subjects develop language proficiency, reading comprehension, analytical thinking, and creative expression.

Through texts and literary works, students are exposed to various situations that require interpretation and problem-solving. Therefore, these lessons provide an ideal environment for developing creativity and cognitive skills simultaneously.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The analysis shows that students who are taught in a creative learning environment demonstrate higher levels of engagement, motivation, and independent thinking. They are more capable of expressing their ideas clearly and solving educational tasks effectively.

Teachers also observe that creative teaching methods increase student participation and reduce passive learning behavior.

However, certain challenges remain, including insufficient teacher training in creative pedagogy, lack of instructional resources, and limited time for implementing interactive methods.

## CONCLUSION

The development of a creative learning environment in primary education plays a crucial role in shaping students' problem-solving skills. Mother Tongue and Reading Literacy lessons provide an effective platform for integrating creativity, critical thinking, and independent learning.

The study concludes that the use of interactive, problem-based, and student-centered teaching methods significantly enhances students' cognitive development and prepares them for future educational challenges.

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