

## **An Investigation on Relationship between Iranian EFL Teachers' Creativity and Classroom Management strategies and Learners' Improvement**

**Abolghasem Mirzaee\*, Mohammad Rahimi**

Department of English, Lamerd branch, Islamic Azad University, Lamerd, Iran

\*Email: [fadak917@yahoo.com](mailto:fadak917@yahoo.com)

Received for publication: 20 May 2017.

Accepted for publication: 01 August 2017.

### **Abstract**

The present study was carried out in an attempt to investigate the relationship among EFL teachers' creativity, classroom management strategies, and learners' improvement. To achieve the objective of the research, a group of 60 male and female learners, between the ages of 15 and 19 from a language school in Lamerd city were selected. To obtain the required data, the following questionnaires were utilized: English Language Teaching Creativity Quotient (ELTCQ) Questionnaire, Classroom management questionnaire, and Final exam. The results of correlation analyses revealed that there was no significant relationship between EFL teachers' creativity and classroom management strategies. Moreover, a positive medium relationship between EFL teacher's classroom management and their EFL learners' improvement was observed. In addition, a positive significant correlation was revealed between classroom management strategies and EFL learners' improvement. This study also demonstrated that classroom management strategies were better predictors about EFL learners' improvement compared with creativity.

**Key words:** Teaching profession, creativity, classroom management.

### **Introduction**

English language has played a significantly key role as an international language in order to make communication among people around the world in the recent century. In order to achieve to the high purpose, many researchers have investigated in various English language fields, such as not only speaking, listening, writing, reading improvement but also in teaching and teachers' creativity and effects of teachers' creativity on EFL learners' language development and classroom management. Today most people talk about creativity in different domains and working environments. Most managers or even presidents of countries ask employees to create a novelty to improve their high goals. Obviously, category of creativity is transformed to a high and valuable purpose in educational system. Each person involved within the field of education has encountered the term creativity in many cases often integrating it with course teaching and learning and more specifically with teachers' classroom management. Thus, at the very beginning it seems essential to know what the term "creativity" means and what are its real and deep nature and impacts. To understand the concept of creativity, definition of creativity is presented here by Craft. Craft (2002) describes that creativity is consists of a process of creating something new into being. He goes on that creativity needs interest and commitment. It tries to bring to our awareness what was before hidden or ignored. It means, there are a lot of helpful points to improve which people pass unwillingly.

Most Iranian teachers are always seeking new remedies to convey English knowledge and manage their classrooms. Honestly, some teachers irritate because of lack of creativity and new strategies to have successful English classes. They are aware of swift progress in technology which

results in informed and knowledgeable learners. Nowadays learners are interested in English learning through modern and attractive strategies. All these needs are involved with teachers' management and their creativity that most teachers are not capable to bear and perform them. Some Iranian teachers are sensitive and embracing about their lack of sufficient creativity and intend to receive how they can be creative to improve their learners and classroom management. Creativity among teachers is widely regarded as one of the most powerful factors for the improvement of the teaching profession at schools. The importance of lack of creativity as a problem is presented by several scholars through their works. Robinson (2000) declares the necessity of creativity all around the world. He believes that "in a world dominated by technological innovations, creativity is a critical component; human skills and people's powers of creativity and imagination are key resources in a knowledge" (as cited in Grainger, Teresa and Barnes, Jonathan; 2006, p. 2). The other research carried out in teaching context, with tutors teaching music, geography and English, illustrates that creative teaching is a complex artistic job in learning (Grainger, Barnes, & Scoffham, 2004). The research indicates the importance of being creative in teaching.

However, there have been carried out a huge number of studies regarding teachers' creativity, but a few about how it is actually done and performed in English classrooms. Since teaching is one of the most important part of language learning process and it plays a key role in learners' improvement, this study attempts to understand how various creative strategies that are applied in language teaching are effective on EFL learners' improvement and classrooms management. This study also attempts to identify which innovative strategies of the teachers are more effective on language learning and also to identify how to control their classes. The results of the study are intended to create beneficial information for teachers, administrators, and students by encouraging them to be sensitive to creativity elements and also to raise their awareness of the importance of being more thoughtful and more careful on their around.

The first dominant objective of this research is generally to explore and investigate the relation between teachers' creativity on teaching profession and learning improvement process in order to find its advantages and disadvantages. The other objective of the research is, to get the most effective parts in teaching based on learners' needs, and also whether the teachers are successful in achieving their purposes while they are presenting and providing innovative environment in their classrooms according to modern teaching methods. A third major objective is to ask only a couple of teachers to apply their creativity in classroom. They will be asked to create a special and interesting strategy (such as using song, music, computer games, plays, stories and so on) to improve learners' language knowledge. The applied strategies depend on teachers' creativity, feeling, experience, knowledge, their learners' characteristics (gender, age, feelings, and so on), and teaching environment. Therefore, the present research intends to find out the benefits of creativeness and interrelation between the degree of instruction and how much knowledge can teachers enhance to their instruction profession, and if the creativity is helpful for learners or not.

### **Research questions**

The present research intends to answer the following questions:

RQ1: Is there any relationship between EFL teachers' creativity and classroom management strategies?

RQ2: Is there any relationship between EFL teachers' creativity and Iranian EFL learners' improvement?

RQ3: Is there any relationship between EFL teachers' classroom management strategies and EFL learners' improvement?

RQ4: Is there any relationship between predictability of creativity and classroom management strategies about their EFL learners' improvement?

### **Research hypotheses**

The following hypotheses are presented in the present research:

RH1: There is a relationship between EFL teachers' creativity and classroom management strategies.

RH2: There is a relationship between EFL teachers' creativity and Iranian EFL learners' improvement.

RH3: There is a relationship between EFL teachers' classroom management strategies and EFL learners' improvement.

RH4: There is a relationship between predictability of creativity and classroom management strategies about their EFL learners' improvement.

### **Review of literature**

#### ***What is creativity?***

As it was mentioned in chapter one, creativity is generating something new and useful in all working and educational fields. Creativity has been widely defined by scholars or even usual people. Blunkett and Stubbs (1999) identified that:

"Creativity has recently been granted official recognition as one of the overarching aims of the curriculum in English schools. The curriculum should enable pupils to think creatively and critically, to solve problems and to make a difference for the better. It should give them the opportunity to become creative, innovative, enterprising and capable of leadership to equip them for their future lives as workers and citizens" (Blunkett & Stubbs, 1999, p.11).

According to Brian Birdsell's work (2013), the term creativity was defined as a strategy which conveys with it a weight that reveals stories of the birth of life, therefore everyone must apply it nowadays with caution. Brian Birdsell believes that "creativity has passed across time, transforming from divine inspiration to an 'ah-ha' moment of finding out that this paperclip on my desk could be reshaped into a business card holder" (p. 888). He continues that when one term possesses so much meaning along with it, so much background knowledge, peppered of images, myths that for a long time researchers rather preferred not to make their hands dirty with it. Therefore, through the extraordinary creativity strategy, people are able to find out solutions for their problems. It is an ability which is appeared naturally or environmentally. Some people are born with creativity it means they possess genetic creativity. Others achieve creativity through environment such as family, friends, teachers, and even working environment. Some creative people have to be creative because of their working condition to improve quality of works' results in their specific professions.

#### ***Creativity in language teaching***

Investigating on the identity and influence of creativity has been a concentration in almost every discipline and area in recent years' research. Creativity is discussed in everywhere today, driven by the necessity for companies and organizations to be more competitive and by the movement towards learned-based rather than test-driven teaching in schools. Education ministers have encouraged in different parts of the world schools to concentrate more on creativity in the curriculum across all subject areas. For example a recent research in the new Economy (UK, 2008) found out that Britain's economic future and social cohesion depended on fostering a national strategy for creative and cultural education. Creative teaching is said to increase levels of motivation and self-esteem on the part of learners and to prepare them with the flexible skills they need for the

future. Fostering the capacity to be creative is broadly believed to have the potential to reinforce lives and contribute to a better society.

Creativity plays a bold role in all fields especially in language teaching. Teachers must be aware of its supernatural power. They can apply in their classroom to increase their learners' improvements. English language teaching has attracted a wide attendance because it is one the most popular international language all over the world. Many researchers surveyed creativity in various language teaching areas. Creativity has also been linked to levels of attainment in second language learning. For example, Maley's (1997) work has placed a concentration on creativity through the applying of texts drawn from a large amount of different literary and non-literary resources that can be applied to exploit creative thinking and develop the extraordinary ability to cause creative connections. A wide variety of the language tasks favored by contemporary language teaching methods are convinced to inbreed creativity in learners essentially those including learner-centered, communication-based, and open-ended factors, and therefore are ideally placed to developing creative thinking and behavior on some of learners.

#### ***How can teachers be creative?***

Being creative in teaching is a predominant issue, even when it's difficult to adapt it in with everything else teachers need to do, since creative teaching is a genuine, passionate teaching method. Creativity is at the center of real and pure learning. Teachers can teach objectives, but if they are not capable to engage the learners' creative processes, then the genuine learning is likely not to be there. Creative interaction derives from the heart, therefore learners should be engaged to communicate something that is meaningful to them, that is valuable and keeps a personal significance, will motivate a deeper way of learning. Horng, Hong, Chan Lin, Chang and Chu (2005) worked widely on creative teaching in their study. They conduct the finding of the research aimed at finding the factors that influence creative teaching. Their results revealed that these are namely:

"(a) personality traits: persistence, willingness to develop, acceptance of new experiences, self-confidence, sense of humor, curiosity, depth of ideas, imagination, etc.; (b) family factors: open and tolerant ways of teaching children, creative performance of parents, etc.; (c) experiences of growth and education: self-created games and stories, brainstorming between classmates, etc.; (d) beliefs in teaching, hard work, motivation and (e) the administrative side of school organization." Those, in fact, correspond to those characteristics that are used when describing "a good teacher" (p. 352).

The prior experience of teaching with creativity is highly important, experiencing creative attitude seem to be a beneficial background to be a creative teacher. In other words, it can be mentioned that the creative environment, family, teachers, friends foster to certain extend the creativity of a person. Torrance et al. (1990, In: Baker, Rudd, Pomeroy, 2001) reckoned the following creative features:

"fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration, abstractness of the title, resistance to closure, emotional expressiveness, articulateness, movement or action, expressiveness, synthesis or combination, unusual visualization, internal visualization, extending or breaking the boundaries, humor, richness of imagery, colorfulness of imagery, and fantasy" (p. 2).

Most teachers claim that creativity is an extremely important part of their task, not only because it contributes their students to learn, but also because it is helpful to foster other learners' abilities. Seeking ways to be creative in their work aids them to improve as teachers, and as people. Chaz Pugliese's (2010) in his book *"Being Creative"* uses the following connection which the research has applied here to indicate how when a teacher acts creatively, they foster, they recognize

ways to involve their students, therefore student motivation increases, which in turn feeds into developing teacher motivation.

### ***Classroom management***

A teacher does different things to organize students, space, time, and materials so that student learning can happen (Wong & Wong, 1990). A set of strategies and skills that let a teacher to manage students effectively in order to create a positive learning environment for all students (Sternberg & Williams, 2002). Here, classroom management will be explained more precisely.

According to Evertson and Weinstein (2006) classroom management is defined as actions which teachers apply to create a supportive environment for the academic and social-emotional learning of students. They classify them based on five types of actions. In order to achieve a high quality of classroom management, teachers must "a) develop caring, supportive relationships with and among students and b) organize and implement instruction in ways that optimize students' access to learning" (p. 133). The significance of developing favorable relationships between teacher and students is also investigated by Marzano et al. (2003). Furthermore, Evertson and Weinstein (2006) point out that c) teachers should stimulate students' engagement in academic tasks, which can be done by using group management methods (e.g., by establishing rules and classroom procedures, see Marzano et al., 2003). Teachers must d) promote the development of students' social skills and self-regulation. Marzano et al. (2003) consider this as making students responsible for their behavior. Additionally, Evertson and Weinstein (2006) believe that e) teachers should be able to apply appropriate creativity to contribute students with behavior problems. The last two actions proposed by Evertson and Weinstein (2006) express that effective classroom management improves student behavior. Hence, classroom management is an ongoing interaction between teachers and their students.

### ***How teachers can manage their classroom?***

Most English teachers are able to manage and control their classes. Their management strategies are different. They must know how arrange class that how students are placed in suitable place. In addition, they must be aware how to communicate with students and how deliver the lessons and also they must be able to recognize students' weaknesses and strengths. To have the abilities, creativity can be an effective factor. A creative teacher can generate something beneficial and new and perform his/her ideas appropriately in classroom. They can apply some helpful tools such as; videos, mobiles, cameras, educational software, music, games to improve learners' language proficiency. Therefore, classroom management is a significant factor in English teaching and learning.

Some classroom management strategies recommended by Christopher Dunber (2004) which presenting here. He offered English teachers to have a successful class through holding and communicating high behavioral expectations. Clear principles and procedures must be established, and a powerful teacher must be able to clarify to students the results of misbehavior. He points the view that when a teacher perform some principles, he/she must implement classroom principles swiftly, steadily, and equitably from the very first day of school. Hence, Dunber (2004, p. 5) in his book points out to key strategies which here are presented briefly as following:

"a) Work to instill a sense of self-discipline in students; devote time to teaching self-monitoring skills. b) Maintain a brisk instructional pace and make smooth transitions between activities. c) Monitor classroom activities; give students feedback and reinforcement regarding their behavior. Create opportunities for students (particularly those with behavioral problems) to experience success in their learning and social behavior. e) Identify students who seem to lack a sense of personal efficacy and work to help them achieve an internal locus of control. f) Make use of

cooperative learning groups, as appropriate. g) Make use of humor, when suitable, to stimulate student interest or reduce classroom tensions."

So if teachers apply the strategies, not only they can manage classrooms successfully but also they will control their classes creatively.

### ***Studies related to teachers' creativity and classroom management***

The significance of creativity for education and society has always been concerned from many sources. Almost 10 years ago, the OECD realized creativity as the core of the knowledge society (OECD, 2000 as cited Cachia & Ferrari, 2010). Florida (2002) holds the view that creativity is viewed as a resource for economic progress and a means for social regeneration. Academics and educationists, from Vygotsky (2004) to Sawyer (2006), Amabile (1989) and Robinson (2001) point for the enormous benefits of creativity for learning. In Europe, creativity is considered as the core of the knowledge triangle: education research innovation (European Council, 2009, as cited in Cachia & Ferrari, 2010, p.16).

Cachia & Ferrari, 2010 declare that the year 2009 has been the European Year of Creativity and Innovation. This indicates the importance of creativity. Based on Barroso, "creativity can ensure long and sustainable economic growth and provide new answers to the current economic crises" (Villalba, 2009 as cited in Cachia & Ferrari, 2010, p.16).

Creativity in the classroom consists of innovative teaching, high motivation, the ability to communicate and listen and the ability to interest and inspire (Ferrari, Cachia, 2010, p.17). According to Runco's study, causing a creative condition in the classroom will completely improve language learning and teaching. Creative teachers establish a beneficial consistency, provoke curiosity, recognize the characteristics of creative students, and enhance self-confidence, risk-taking and autonomy (Runco, 2004).

Landry(2000), Tepper (2005), Shaughnessy (1991) worked on creativity in education and found that creativity can be increased in an environment in which team work, self-motivation, independence, sociocultural diversity, and risk-taking culture that tolerates and even encourages failure are encouraged. In creating this type of environment, Torrance and Myers recommended that "teachers accept and encourage creative thinking, tolerate dissent, encourage students to trust their own judgments, emphasize that everyone is capable of creativity, and serve as a stimulus for creative thinking through brainstorming and modeling" (Torrance & Myers, 1970, as cited in Amini Naghadeh, Kasraey, Maghdour, Eyyezi, 2014, pp.537-8).

As a whole, creativity in education environment depends on several factors such as; evaluation, culture, curriculum, personal abilities, teaching and learning format, national policies, teachers, technology, and tools (Marrapodi, 2003; Ferrari, Cachia, & Punie, 2009; and Morris, 2006). As it was mentioned, different researchers conclude that creativity has a key role and main core in teaching and learning. Most scientists applied creativity in different environments to develop their goals. To my own experience, as a teacher, I have gotten experience of the importance and profits of creativity in my classroom.

Classroom management refers to how things are generally carried out in the classroom, whereas classroom discipline is the specific management of student behavior. Dr. Marvin Marshall explains, "Classroom management deals with how things are done; discipline deals with how people behave. Classroom management has to be implemented with procedures, routines, and structure; discipline is about impulse management and self-control. Classroom management is the teacher's responsibility; discipline is the student's responsibility" (Marshall, 2003, para. 7 as cited in Jim Walters & Shelly Fiei, 2007, p. 13).

As a whole, creativity in education environment depends on several factors such as; evaluation, culture, curriculum, personal abilities, teaching and learning format, national policies,

teachers, technology, and tools (Marrapodi, 2003; Ferrari, Cachia, & Punie, 2009; and Morris, 2006). As it was mentioned, different researchers conclude that creativity has a key role and main core in teaching and learning. Most scientists applied creativity in different environments to develop their goals. To my own experience, as a teacher, I have gotten experience of the importance and profits of creativity in my classroom.

## **Methodology**

### ***Participants***

The total number of participants in this study was 60 EFL learners including both males and females between 15 to 19 ages. All participants in our sample were Iranian English learners at intermediate level and were selected from a language school in Lamerd city. Persian was their first language and English was a foreign language for them.

### ***Instruments***

There were five instruments, which were used in this study:

*Nelson placement test*: containing 50 intermediate questions as a pretest was given to the total participants. The placement test measured an examinee ability in English. It presents the information you need to figure out about a learners' language proficiency.

*English Language Teaching Creativity Quotient (ELTCQ) Questionnaire*: developed by Albert P'Rayan which consists of 30 items in a 3-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree", "agree to a certain extent" "disagree". To obtain the level of the teacher's creativity, all the scores were added up for all 30 questions. A score of 120 – 150 suggests that the participant possesses a high potential level for creativity. Scores which were within 100 - 120 shows that the participant possesses above-average potential of creativity. A score of 75 – 100 shows average potential. Finally, a score that is below 75 suggests that the participant has a lower level of creativity.

*Classroom management questionnaire*: it included scales referring to classroom management variables and their dimensions, that is, actions related to: organizing, teaching management, teacher–student relationship and teacher sanction/reward strategies. The questionnaire was to seek the subjects' attitudes about their teachers' behaviors and investigate the extent to which the given management strategies were applied by their EFL teachers. The questionnaire was composed of four subsections that address components of classroom management: organization (8 items), teaching management (11 items), teacher–student relationship (10 items), and teacher punish–reward strategies (8 items). Respondents indicated on a five-point, Likert scale (from much to never) to show how well each item describes their beliefs concerning their teachers' classroom management strategies. The process was not timed; however, participants normally completed it in approximately 10 minutes. High scores indicated a well-managed classroom and thus more assertiveness in teachers' behavior, while low scores indicated a less well-managed classroom and thus less assertiveness in teachers' manners.

### ***Procedure***

In order to conduct this study, the following sequence was followed and the following tests were administered to the participants. As the first step, an ELTCQ Questionnaire was distributed to the teacher. It included 30 items in a 3-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree", "agree to a certain extent" "disagree". The questionnaire took nearly 30 minutes to complete.

In the next stage, classroom management questionnaire was administered among the EFL learners to seek the subjects' attitudes about their teachers' behaviors and investigate the extent to which the given management strategies were applied by their EFL teachers, and for the next step, final exam was administered. After the completion of the data collection phase, the data analysis process was carried out.

### ***Design***

The design of this study is descriptive as the researchers did not manipulate the variables and no treatment was given to the participants (Best & Kahn, as cited in Zaker, 2013). In fact, the degree of relationship among the variables is the major concern here. In this study, EFL teacher's creativity and classroom management strategies were considered as the predictor variables and learner's improvement was considered as the predicted variable. Furthermore, age and gender were categorized as intervening variables.

### ***Data Analysis***

Firstly, the normality of the distribution of the three sets of scores obtained from the three questionnaires was checked as the first assumption for the parametric Pearson correlation, and it was revealed that all the distributions turned out to be normal by virtue of the sig values on Kolmogorov-Smirnov which came to be larger than .05 critical level. Therefore, the first assumption for a parametric correlation analysis was met.

The second assumption, linearity of the relations, was visually checked for each pair of variables and it was observed that the points did not form a curvilinear or any non-linear shape. Also, by a visual inspection, homoscedasticity was virtually verified due to the fact that the points scattered almost equally across the plot. The shape of the distribution was not curvilinear, but rather the points were scattered around a straight line. Besides, by virtue of the fact that the distribution was almost equal from the bottom left to the top right, homoscedasticity was claimed to be met.

The relationship between learners' improvement and classroom management strategies turned out to be linear. Furthermore, the equality of this distribution across the plot was virtually observed, hence homoscedasticity.

### **Results**

#### ***Testing research hypotheses***

To test the research hypotheses, the researchers correlated the variables two by two. With all the assumptions of parametric Pearson correlation being met, the following table can legitimately be drawn upon to test the hypotheses.

**Table 1. Correlation between EFL teacher's creativity, classroom management strategies, and learners' improvement**

		EFL teacher's creativity	Classroom management strategies	Learners' final exam
EFL teacher's creativity	Pearson Correlation	1	.170	.188*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.063	.040
	N	60	60	60
Classroom management strategies	Pearson Correlation	.170	1	.330**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.063		.000
	N	60	60	60
Learners' final exam	Pearson Correlation	.188*	.330**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.040	.000	
	N	60	60	60

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

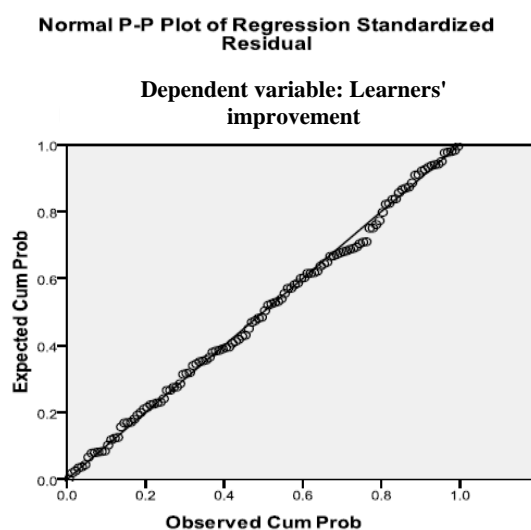


As depicted in the above table, the relationship between creativity and classroom management strategies turned out to be non-significant ( $r=.17$ ,  $p=.063$ ). Hence, the first hypothesis fails to be rejected.

Also shown in the table, the correlation between creativity and learners' improvement came to be significant ( $r=.33$ ,  $p=.000$ ) and positive. Therefore, the second hypothesis is rejected. The strength of the correlation is medium (.33) according to Cohen (1988), and the coefficient of determination (.108, the R squared value) suggests that the two variables share only 10.8 percent of their variance.

Likewise, the correlation between classroom management strategies and learners' improvement turned out to be significant ( $r=.180$ ,  $p=.04$ ) and positive. As a result, the third hypothesis is also rejected. The strength of the relationship, however, is small (.180) according to Cohen (1988), and the two variables have only 3.24 percent of variance in common given the R squared value, which is a weak coefficient of determination.

To test the fourth hypothesis, a multiple regression was needed but firstly the assumptions had to be checked. The assumption of multicollinearity which refers to the relationship between the two independent variables is met by virtue of the correlation coefficient between creativity and classroom management strategies which is much less than 0.9, as reported in Table 1 above. The assumption of normality, that residuals should be normally distributed about the predicted DV scores, was checked visually through the Normal P-P plot below:



**Figure 1. P-P plot representing the distribution of the residuals about the DV**

As depicted in the above plot, all of the points in the figure are on an almost straight diagonal line which goes from bottom left to top right. This point suggests that there is no serious deviation from normality. Homoscedasticity condition was also checked. It illustrates that the residuals are roughly distributed with most of the values clustered in the center. Hence homoscedasticity is met.

The assumption of outliers was checked through Table 2.

Since there are two independent variables in this study, the critical value for Mahal. Distance should be 13.82. As depicted in Table 2, the maximum value of 14.06 slightly exceeds the critical value which signifies the presence of an outlier. Observing and sorting the cases by SPSS program, the researchers found only one case exceeding the critical value that was 14.06. Given the large sample size, the researchers considered it not unusual for an outlier to appear which is slightly

outside the critical value. The Cook's Distance values do not exceed 1, indicating that there was no case exceeding the standardized residual value (-.3 to .3).

**Table 2 . Residuals statistics**

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	143.8084	190.4649	173.4417	8.19397	60
Std. Predicted Value	-3.616	2.078	.000	1.000	60
Standard Error of Predicted Value	1.995	7.711	3.284	.984	60
Adjusted Predicted Value	146.8225	191.3223	173.4780	8.21059	60
Residual	-61.83928	55.78482	.00000	21.4949 $\beta$	60
Std. Residual	-2.853	2.573	.000	.992	60
Stud. Residual	-2.941	2.678	.000	1.006	60
Deleted Residual	-65.74403	60.41687	-.03630	22.14953	60
Stud. Deleted Residual	-3.043	2.752	.000	1.016	60
Mahal. Distance	.016	14.065	1.983	1.958	60
Cook's Distance	.000	.199	.010	.026	60
Centered Leverage Value	.000	.118	.017	.016	60

a. Dependent Variable: learners' improvement

With all the assumptions met, the researchers safely used the regression analyses to test the hypothesis.

**Table 3. Model summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.356 <sup>a</sup>	.127	.112	21.67786

a. Predictors: (Constant), Creativity, classroom management strategies

b. Dependent Variable: learners' improvement

Displayed in Table 3, the R Square value (.356) indicates that 35.6 percent of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the model (the two independent variables). The following table shows the significance of the model.

**Table 4. Significance of the model ANOVA<sup>b</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7989.804	2	3994.902	8.501	.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	54981.788	57	469.930		
	Total	62971.592	59			

a. Predictors: (Constant Creativity, classroom management strategies

b. Dependent Variable: learners' improvement

As Table 4 shows, the model is significant ( $F=8.5$ ,  $p=.000<.05$ ). The following table shows which of the independent variables contributed to the prediction of the dependent variable.

**Table 5. The prediction table coefficients<sup>A</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations			Collinearity Statistics		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF	
1	(Constant)	42.909	59.598		.720	.473	-75.121	160.938						
	Creativity	.339	.218	.136	1.551	.124	-.094	.771	.188	.142	.134	.971	1.030	
	Classroom management	.584	.167	.307	3.501	.001	.254	.914	.330	.308	.302	.971	1.030	

Given the Beta values under Standardized coefficients, it was concluded that creativity does not significantly predict LS ( $B=.136$ ,  $p=.124>.05$ ), while classroom management strategies significantly predicts the dependent variable learners' improvement ( $B=.307$ ,  $p=.001<.05$ ). Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is confirmed, implying that there was a significant difference in the predictability of teacher's creativity and classroom management strategies about the learners' improvement in final exam. And, by virtue of the weak correlation (though significant) between creativity and learners' improvement (.188), the non-significant predictability of the former about the latter is justified.

Generally, the analyses of data yielded that there was no significant relationship between the EFL teacher's creativity and classroom management strategies, but both variables significantly correlated with EFL learners' improvement, and, on the basis of the analyses, the strength of the correlation between classroom management strategies and learners' improvement was medium while it was small in the case of creativity and learners' improvement.

Another finding proved that when it comes to the predictability of the predictor variables, there was a significant difference in the predictability of creativity and classroom management strategies about the learners' improvement which was assumed as predicted variable and creativity was the better predictor of learners' improvement.

### **Discussion**

Overall, the findings of data reflected that there was no significant relationship between the EFL teacher's creativity and classroom management strategies, but both variables significantly correlated with EFL learners' improvement, and, on the basis of the analyses, the strength of the correlation between classroom management strategies and learners' improvement was medium while it was small in the case of creativity and learners' improvement.

Another results confirmed that when it comes to the predictability of the predictor variables, there was a significant difference in the predictability of creativity and classroom management strategies about the learners' improvement which was assumed as predicted variable and creativity was the better predictor of learners' improvement.

Observing no significant relationship between creativity and classroom management strategies among EFL learners is supported by some studies conducted to analyze the relationship between creativity and classroom management strategies in the literature. Hashemi (2009) in her study analyzed the relationship between strategies and creativity and the obtained results indicated that there was no significant relationship between strategies and creativity among the students of different majors.

Regarding the outcomes of the scores obtained from creativity and learners' achievement and consequently rejection of the second hypothesis of the study and in accordance with Ehrman & Oxford (1995) claims, in educational context, those second language learners who are considered more successful select and mix some creativities which are appropriate for every specific language task based in line with their own learning style preferences. On the other hand, Abraham and Vann (1987) and Vann and Abraham (1990) argue that those second language learners who are not very successful employ different types of creativities desperately and randomly and do not consider the relevance of an employed creativity to the learning task.

Since in the present study no cause and effect relationship was implied, it can be inferred that teachers with higher levels of creativity use strategies more extensively and thus are better teachers of English. It seems that those teachers who are more creative are more successful in finding and adapting strategies while teaching English. Results obtained from testing the third null hypothesis of the current research were in line with the findings of previous studies. The studies empirically support the positive relationship between classroom management strategies and learners' improvement (Aghasafari, 2006). In his study of classroom management strategies and learners' improvement, Aghasafari (as cited in Rastegar & Karami, 2013) found a considerable relationship between classroom management strategies and learners' improvement.

Based on the analysis of the data, it was concluded that there was a significant difference in the predictability of creativity and classroom management strategies about the learners' improvement. By virtue of the weak correlation (though significant) between classroom management strategies and learners' improvement, the non-significant predictability of the former

about the latter is justified between creativity and classroom management strategies, classroom management strategy was a better predictor of improvement among EFL learners in this study as the correlation between learners' improvement and classroom management.

### **Conclusion**

In the present research, it is not claimed, by any means, that the format of the developed critical thinking as a creative strategy was the ideal one, or that learning of next generation will be of the type presented here. This attempt, rather, was a beginning attempt to distance a bit from traditional language learning strategies that has dominated our learning and teaching world for now more than a few of decades.

It is believed that after so many years of being learned by traditional methods of language learning, it takes time for the students to get used to new methods of language improving like interesting teaching and learning models. As the results of this research show, interaction was found between creativity and language learning indicating that after being taught via teacher's creativity and learning process, the students had little problem in answering the items of the language learning format. Therefore, the finding rejected the first null hypothesis, because creativity was highly effective on language learning improvement.

As clearly illustrated, creativity was not broadly effective on classroom management. This may reject Wubbels who claims that effective classroom management strategies support and facilitate effective teaching and learning. Effective classroom management is generally based on the principle of establishing a positive classroom environment encompassing effective teacher-student relationships (Wubbels, Brekelmans, Van Tartwijk, & Admiraal, 1999).

This finding would mean that teachers and instructors should continue to try new methods of language improvement instead of confining themselves to traditional methods of learning as the only ways of improving their students' language learning. As Lwois (1999) suggests there is nothing written in stone that says traditional methods must be used from grade school through university.

### **Pedagogical implications**

An important implication of the results of the present research is that since using creativity as a teaching strategy makes class varied for students, they are enjoyed learning through creativity and acquiring new language knowledge in the process.

Before trying to improve classroom management and increasing their knowledge via creativity strategy, maybe teachers should focus on more preliminary factors that is said to have noticeable influence on language improvement. Although we cannot claim that factors such as good classroom management has the final say, but their vital role in language proficiency and learning improvement cannot be ignored. Apart from the above mentioned factors, factors such as creating an interest and happy environment in what is learned and spoken are two elements that should not be forsaken by teachers. Finding of previous studies add weight to the premise which claims that the knowledge of interest, and background knowledge can have crucial roles in language acquisition. Therefore, teachers should consider these factors while they are teaching, testing, and providing teaching materials for language learning classes and after providing these factors, teachers can expect a high language proficiency from the students that will lead to a high four skills proficiency. In order to improve students' language knowledge, teachers themselves should be familiar with a vast amount of profitable strategies which cause students to acquire language knowledge. They should know that learning strategies are not be limited to one or two courses. It should be focused on at all ages and subjects.

### Reference

- Amabile, T. M. (1989). *Growing Up Creative*. New York: Crown Publishing Group, Inc.
- Amini. N. SH; Kasraey, SH;Maghdour, H; Eyvezi, M. (2014). The Relationship Between Creativity and Iranian EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension. *International Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Research*. 3(6), pp. 586-593.
- Berkeley, CA: McCutchan. Amabile, T. M. (1989). *Growing Up Creative*. New York: Crown Publishing Group, Inc.
- Birdsell, B. (2013). Motivation and Creativity in a Foreign Language Classroom. 4(5), pp. 123-125.
- Blunkett, L. Stubbs, M.(1999). *Third International Conference on Teaching and Language Corpora*, Peter Lang.
- Carroll, M., Goldman, S., Britos, L., Koh, J., Royalty, A., & Hornstein, M. (2010). Destination, Imagination and the Fires Within:Design Thinking in a Middle School Classroom. *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, 29(1),37-53
- Craft, A. (2002). *Creativity and Early Years Education*. London: Continuum.
- Cremion, T., Barnes, J., & Scoffham, S. (2009). *Creative teaching for tomorrow: Fostering a creative state of mind*. Kent: Future Creative CIC
- Dunber, K. (2004). How scientists really reason: Scientific reasoning in real-world laboratories. In R. J. Sternberg & J. E. Davidson (Eds.), *The nature of insight* (pp. 5-6). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Evertson C. M., & Weinstein, C. (2006). Classroom management as a field of inquiry. In C. M. Evertson & C. Weinstein (Eds.), *Handbook of Classroom Management: Research, practice, and contemporary issues* (pp. 3-15). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Ferrari A, Cachia R, & Punie Y. (2009). *Innovation and creativity in education and training in the EU member states: Fostering creative learning and supporting innovative teaching*. Retrieved October 22, 2010, from <http://ipts.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>
- Ferrari A, Cachia R, & Punie Y. (2009). *Innovation and creativity in education and training in the EU member states: Fostering creative learning and supporting innovative teaching*. Retrieved October 22, 2010, from <http://ipts.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>
- Florida, R. L. (2002). *The rise of the creative class: and how it's transforming work, leisure, community and everyday life* New York: Basic Books.
- Grainger, T. Tresa, K. and Jonathan, A. (2006) *Creativity and Writing : Developing Voice and Verve in the classroom* London :Routledge
- Halpern, D. F. (1993). *Assessing the effectiveness of critical thinking instruction*. *Journal of General Education*, 42 (4), 238-254.
- Landry, C. (2000). *The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban*. National UK Press
- Maley, A. (1997). Creativity with a small 'c'. *The Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning and Teaching*, 4. Retrieved from <http://www.njcu.edu/cill/journalindex.html>
- Marrapodi J. (2003). *Critical thinking and creativity: An overview and comparison of the theories*. MA thesis. Retrieved from <http://gradworks.umi.com/3315179>
- Marzano, R. J. (2003). *What works in schools. Translating research into action*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).
- Obinson, K (2000). TED talks: Schools kill creativity. Available at:[http://www.ted.com/talks/ken\\_robinson\\_says\\_schools\\_kill\\_creativity.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity.html)
- Pugliese, C. (2010) *Being Creative: The Challenge of Change in the Classroom*. (DELTA). New York: Riverhead. obinson, K (2000). TED talks: *Schools kill creativity*. Available at:[http://www.ted.com/talks/ken\\_robinson\\_says\\_schools\\_kill\\_creativity.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity.html)

- Runco, MA, (2004). Creativity. Retrieved, march 3 ,2010, from arjournals.annualreviews.org
- Shaughnessy, M. F, (1991). The supportive educational environment for Creativity www.itari.in/categories/Creativity/17. a157568
- Sternberg, R.J. (2002). *Teaching Problem-solving as a Way of Life*. In A.L. Costa (Ed.), *Developing minds: A resource book for teaching thinking*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Tepper, K, (2005).The school: a place for children’s creativity? Paper presented at the European Council for High Ability Conference, Vienna, Austria, Oct 1996
- Torrance EP, & Myers RE, (1970). *Creative learning and teaching*. NYC: Dodd. Retrieved October 26, 2011, from www.itari.in/categories/Creativity/17.pdf
- Torrance, E. P. (1990). The Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking Norms—Technical Manual Figural (Streamlined) Forms A & B. Bensenville, IL: Scholastic Testing Service Creative and Critical Thinking in Singapore Schools (PDF Download Available). Available /271446265\_Creative\_and\_Critical\_Thinking\_i n\_Singapore\_Schools [accessed Jul 14, 2017].
- Villalba, E. (Ed.). (2009). *Measuring Creativity*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (2004). Imagination and creativity in childhood. *Journal of Russian and East European Psychology*, 42(1), 7-97.
- Waters, T., Marzano, R.J., & Shelly, B. (2007). *Balanced Leadership: What 30 years of research tells us about the effect of leadership on student achievement*. Denver,
- Wong, H. K. & Wong, R. T. (2005). *The first days of school: How to be an effective teacher*. Mountainview, CA: Harry K. Wong Publications.
- Wubbels, T., Brekelmans, M., Van Tartwijk, J., & Admiraal, W. (1999). Interpersonal relationships between teachers and students in the classroom. In H.C. Waxman & H.J. Walberg (Eds.), *New directions for teaching practice and research* (pp. 151-170).
- Wubbels, T., Brekelmans, M., Van Tartwijk, J., & Admiraal, W. (1999). Interpersonal relationships between teachers and students in the classroom. In H.C. Waxman & H.J. Walberg (Eds.), *New directions for teaching practice and research* (pp. 151-170).