



WAYS OF USING SCAMPER TECHNOLOGY DURING FOREIGN LANGUAGE LESSONS

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ABSTRACT

This article primarily defines SCAMPER technology, identifies its strengths and weaknesses and promotes the ways of implementing this technology in the process of conducting foreign language lessons. In addition, this paper identifies the procedural part of the method as well as makes conclusions whether the implementation should be performed or not.

KEYWORDS: - SCAMPER technology, method, ESL learning, English language, language teaching, methodology, lesson planning, procedure

INTRODUCTION

The world has developed into a giant system that is interconnected with the help of the Internet. Due to the fact that globalization is reaching its peak, it is vivid that English language in particular is believed to be the dominant medium of communication. Therefore, the need for English speakers has become immensely large. Moreover, learning the foreign language, especially English, is not an easy task to reach: it requires great comprehension skills and the acquirement of 4 basic language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking. Thus, the need for a quick acquisition of those language means leads to countless problems and questions appearing in front of all teachers and scholars around the world.

In the process of English language teaching and learning, it is vital to come up with modern and effective methods to make students engaged in the procedure and become interested in the subject. As a result of continuous methodological work of researchers and teachers around the world, a number of teaching strategies is increasing rapidly. These methods have been greatly developed to enhance the concepts that are being taught by showing the path for students' creativity and critical thinking.

THE MAIN FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Among these newly formed strategies, the one that is being studied in this research is SCAMPER technology. SCAMPER technology is a method for solving problems in the form of a list of actions, as well as modifications. It was developed by Bob



Eberle in 1997, based on a larger checklist by Alex Osborne. Before that, in 1970 Frank introduced a number of strategies that could enhance student imagination and creativity. Among these mentioned techniques was SCAMPER technique that was not developed into its current name, but had the same concept and rules. Bob Eberle is known for mixing all these previous concepts and creating one standard technology that is being extensively used in modern methodology. SCAMPER strategy is based on the notion that everything new is a modification of something that already exists. It is considered a creative problem-solving technique or strategy which allows users to break free from rigid and limited thinking patterns and operate in various ways (Moreno, Hernández, Yang, & Wood, 2014). Moreover, Serrat (2009) defined it as creative procedures pended in brain storming activities to renew and form stimuli for limitless chances for creative thinking.

The abbreviated word written only with big letters does have a hidden meaning behind it. SCAMPER stands for the following words that make up the whole purpose of using this technology in English language lessons:

- S – substitute. This part of the procedure involves students trying to figure out what is important and what is not while searching for answers. Most of the researchers named it trial-and-error method because of its “not vivid nature”. In addition, the concepts and people asked in the problem can be interchanged by other objects or people in order to reach a new idea. In the process of replacing, the student should analyze beforehand what can be changed and what concept should he/she focus on;
- C – combine. Combining is the process of mixing the previous ideas and background

knowledge with the data gathered during the brainstorming and the first part of SCAMPER technology – substitution. It also provides the endless possibilities of new production that may completely differ from the one mentioned and brainstormed in the stage of substitution;

- A – adapt. Adaptation includes a number of thinking processes that lead to analysis of the methods and questions other students and, generally, people ask. Becoming aware of the techniques other students use may form a strong critical thinking basis for the student. As an example of adapting the concept we may give the case when student starts thinking that the idea or term cannot be implied in certain conditions that are related to the subject and has to adapt that idea to the issue given by the teacher;
- M – modify. Modification part of the method is also named as magnify or minify. After adaptation of other students’ views and techniques, students usually tend to change the way they used to solve the problems and tasks. This very activity of changing and altering the opinions occur in modifying part of SCAMPER technology. By this technique, the learners can make their observations even greater, more distinctive, detailed and clear;
- P – put to use. On this stage of SCAMPER method, we can see that the information is yet to be put into practice. Before actually working out the concepts and finding answers, the students should put the information to use – the target ways of usage are considered instead of the ways that were originally planned to. The purpose of the object and concept is mostly questioned in this stage after taking into consideration a number of conditions.



- E – eliminate. This stage contains omitting the parts of the whole analysis that are of no interest to the student’s final remark. Moreover, rather than omitting the whole parts of the brainstorming, the learner may remove the particular quality that is related to the subject in order to make the result more detailed;
- R – reverse. During the usage of reverse technique, the students should try to face the challenge with the help of contrary meaning and concepts. In this part, rearranging the items in any kind of sequence, including sentence structure may be useful to understand various concepts at the same time.

SCAMPER strategy offers a systematic and practical way to stimulate divergent thinking, imagination, originality, and intuition while scaffolding students, creative thinking for independent use or other tasks and assignments. (Glenn, 1997). It is considered to work as a framework for creative questioning that can be applied in any English language level classes and for any types of students. The method is often used for the development of new products and consists in consistently answering the questions of modifications to your problem. It includes dozens of questions and hundreds of association words. The approach is based on the creation of connections and ideas that are not on the surface, but which have the potential for development and improvement.

Therefore, “substitute” stage means that the analysis of the given task is given by substitution, replication, and change. In addition, the questions “How can I substitute?” ,”What can I substitute?”, “Is this possible?” are considered to be helpful to find the answers to the questions thinking out of the box.

“Combine” stage of the technology includes the terms combination, unification, connection,

creation and combination as its distinctive features. The questions that can be implemented in this part are the following: “What can be?”, “Is it possible?”, “How?”, “Which of them?”

Adaptation stage is identified by the following concepts and terms:

- adaptation, transformation, options, installation, processing, evaluation, verification, modernization, compliance, borrowing, copying, linking, adapting, adjusting, adding;
- new elements, functions, analogues, copies, similar elements, ideas, different context, other areas of application, ready-made solutions;
- questions: “What is it?”, “What can be learned/”, “What and from whom?”, “Is it possible?”, “Does it exist?”, “What else?”.
- Modification stage is presented by the following definitions and questions:
- modification, increase, emphasis, value, intensity, enhancement, addition, application, expansion, addition;
- size, shape, mass, composition, color, resistance, efficiency, parameter, value, idea, concept, function;
- - questions: “What?”, “What and how?”, “What words are too vague?”, “Did I use a wide range of vocabulary or should I replace the sentence with synonyms?”

Put to use, or in other words, put to other uses stage contains the following elements:

- apply it differently, for something else, modify, process, take advantage of, benefit, disassemble, expand, rearrange, make it more convenient, more accessible;
- things, ideas, events, people, parameters, entities, objects, functions, connections,



time;

- - questions: “How else?”, “How can?”, “What to put instead of this? “Can I use this grammatical structure in other cases too or not?”
- Eliminating technique’s primary elements and verbs related to the concept:
- remove, eliminate, simplify, minimize, erase, reduce, remove, clean up, simulate, eliminate, restrict, suppress, get rid of, ignore, cancel, exclude;
- problem, context, condition, rules, boundaries, dimensions, elements, parameters, situations, part;
- questions: “Is it necessary?”, “Can the rules be omitted?”, “Should I split into various parts?”, “What feature can I save and which to omit?”.
- And the last technique of SCAMPER method named reverse stage – can be abstractly explained by the following terms:
- swap, flip, apply differently, delete, remake, rotate, replace, rearrange, change, return, move, interrupt;
- order, concept, cause, effect, parts, elements, purpose, sides, poles;
- questions: “Can this be replaced?”, “What will happen if this is rearranged?”, “What other arrangements might be better?”.

After identifying the definition of SCAMPER technology and its substitutes, this article deals with the ways how to implement this technique in ESL classrooms. Since this method is known for its simplicity and ease of use, teachers may find it very convenient for English language learners. Moreover, a number of research work showed that the effectiveness of SCAMPER technology lies in development of students’

abilities to discover solutions in different conditions and educational institutions. Before moving onto the examples of integrating SCAMPER method in the class, it is important to point out technology’s objectives to students. Some of the objectives are:

1. Development of willingness to take risks and trying out a lot of times before coming up with an answer.
2. Motivation of student’s curiosity on English language and the stimulation of student’s cognitive abilities and critical thinking.
3. Development of student’s imagination, expanding the outlook.
4. Building student’s positive attitude towards thinking and making mistakes in the process of working out a solution.
5. Asking questions skill development among students.

In the process of teaching SCAMPER technology, two main directions are identified. The first direction is made of four steps: identifying the target problem, reconstructing the problem, presenting solutions and ideas and finally evaluating them according to criteria or knowledge (Serrat 2009). In the first phase, the teacher is expected to present the task or problem to the students with the help of various demonstrative tools: audio, visual aids, videos. The tools mentioned before are used in order to make student understanding as effective as possible. The second phase is performed by making changes in the problem to make it resolvable. The third phase is believed to be one of the most crucial one since it contains the step of instructor handing the SCAMPER technology skeleton with questions written besides each stage.

The students, with the help of these questions, are then given time to solve the issue. Students



are free to use any strategy and technique they prefer – the result is the only thing that matters in this process. Last but not the least, the fourth phase of the whole procedure involves evaluating students’ solutions in accordance to teacher’s individual criteria. The criteria may consist of originality of solution, its applicability and definitely social acceptance of the presented solution.

Most prominently this strategy may be used as the warm-up activity for writing classes of

English language as well as in reading and speaking classes. For instance, if the students are given a task of reading a novel “Three Little Pigs” and given the questions to answer about the novel and what could they change if they were an author, a large number of creative ideas may come up even from shy students who could not show their uniqueness in the class before. In addition, this task enlarges student’s vocabulary range by eliminating and rearranging the story to their own “flavour”.

The example of filled SCAMPER table is given in the Figure 1.

Name: Elementary Example
 Topic: Three Little Pigs

SCAMPER Strategy



S Substitute	C Combine	A Adapt	M Modify	P Paraphrase	E Eliminate	R Rearrange
I could substitute a witch for the big, bad wolf.	I could combine the problems the three pigs have with the problems Little Red Riding Hood has with the wolf from her story.	This story could be adapted for older readers by adding more problems. The problems could be similar to teenager problems.	I could modify the setting so it is moved out of the country and into a city.	I could paraphrase the quote, “I’m gonna huff, and puff, and blow your house down,” to, “I’m going to breathe hard and make your house fall.”	I could eliminate the “big, bad” from the wolf’s characteristics.	I could rearrange the story so the wolf goes to the brick house first.



Fig. 1

Another example of the usage of SCAMPER technology in the ESL classroom is its integration in the lesson of creative writing. Creative writing is known for its requirement of elaboration, fluency, originality and flexibility. All of the mentioned features can be reached by the help of SCAMPER method. According to the study conducted by Al-Shimaa Mokhtar Sayed (2020), the students who were involved in using this technique during creative writing lessons showed better performance and a better general understanding of writing concepts than those who did not. Moreover, the students' overall creative writing skills were seen to be established well since their essays and writings showed a high level of flexibility, originality and fluency. It was resulted by the help of thinking outside of the box and generating new creative ideas by SCAMPER table. This proves that SCAMPER strategy is highly recommended even for senior year university students.

In this strategy, learner's role is not considered to be the traditional one. By traditional learning principle we understand the process of the lesson when the teacher controls every aspect of the lesson; the student therefore is given the task that should be filled according to tables or steps to follow. While mentioning about student's role with implementation of SCAMPER technology, we can identify that according to Hussein (2017), student does not only listen to the teacher and answers the questions, but also works as knowledge seeker by substituting, combining, eliminating, adapting the information to create completely new and fresh ideas. Teacher's role in the process of applying SCAMPER strategy is tremendously vast. There is a big amount of functions that teacher performs during the class:

1. The instructor is believed to be the one who specifies the objectives for students to

achieve;

2. The teacher acts as a guide for students to follow SCAMPER technology and answer the questions given by him/her;
3. The instructor chooses the concepts to discuss and encourages them to enhance their critical thinking to the most during the process of finding the solution;
4. The tutor helps the students while they are organizing the task and answer all the questions that appear among students;
5. The teacher collects all students' ideas, and gives a critical feedback to their answers;
6. The pedagogue arranges the time in accordance to his/her lesson plan and tries to fill every minute of the class with activities that reinforce students' knowledge;
7. He/she provides the comfortable atmosphere for students to build self-confidence and assurance that their opinions and ideas are taken into account as well;

Moving onto the next part, advantages and possible weaknesses of SCAMPER strategy should be pointed out. The possible benefits of using this method in English language lessons are:

1. Encouragement of student creativity. The prominent use of this technique is to have an influence on young generation not to fear their thoughts and imagination, but rather look at these cognitive processes with an optimistic mindset and try to take advantage from different ideas;
2. Encouragement to create more ideas. New ideas may be created by analyzing the existing ones and teacher playing the role of facilitator in the process of conducting a



lesson.

On the other hand, SCAMPER technology also has some possible disadvantages, including the requirement of the particular atmosphere that encourages this very idea-generating class.

CONCLUSION

Summing up, we may conclude that in overall methodology, SCAMPER strategy is generally considered to be very effective due to its encouraging ability to make the students engaged in the classroom and take the initiative in the process of acquiring the foreign language, in our case English language. SCAMPER technology is identified by its seven primary stages that involve critical thinking by answering the standard questions on the problem. Therefore, those questions are believed to enhance students' imagination and thought processes that eventually lead to possible solutions and very creative ideas. As an example, we can give implementation of SCAMPER technology in writing lessons in order to students identify the problems on their own and possible solutions to write essays on particular topics. SCAMPER strategy is proven to be effective for all language level learners as well as for any type of English language lessons. Furthermore, there is a clear phase-by-phase order of actions to successfully perform this strategy during the ESL lessons.

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