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## THE CONCEPT OF CREATIVITY: TOWARDS AN INTERGRATIVE VISION OF CREATIVITY IN THE PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL APPLICATION

### 1. THE CONCEPT OF CREATIVITY

Creativity is a positive word in a society that constantly aspires to innovation and progress<sup>1</sup>. Conveying an image of dynamism, the concept of creativity arouses an ever-growing interest. As J. Piirto<sup>2</sup> (2007) stated, the term was used in over 16,500 references to titles of scholarly books and articles by late 2003. This result will multiply many times if the same inquiry is updated in 2015. Many topics referred to creativity in business, creativity in psychology, creativity for parents, creativity and spirituality, creativity and teaching, creativity and aging, creativity and the arts, creativity and the sciences, creativity and mathematics, creativity and problem finding, creativity and problem solving.

Actually, *what is creativity?* Exploring the review of literature, we realize that this question, very simple in formulation and in appearance, is very difficult to answer. Nevertheless, it represents the obliged gate we have to cross before going any further in our study of the concept of creativity. Concepts are important in research and theory. Clear conceptual understanding leads to well-designed research with clear operational definitions of variables and well-developed theories with clear theoretical definitions of concepts<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> See DGEC (Directorate-General for Education and Culture), *The impact of culture on creativity. A Study prepared for the European Commission. European Affairs*, 2009, <[http://www.acpcultures.eu/\\_upload/ocr\\_document/CE-KEA\\_CultureCreativity\\_CreativityIndex\\_2009.pdf](http://www.acpcultures.eu/_upload/ocr_document/CE-KEA_CultureCreativity_CreativityIndex_2009.pdf)>, (access: 21.10.2015).

<sup>2</sup> See J. Piirto, *Creativity*, in: *The Praeger Handbook of Education and Psychology*, eds. J. L. Kincheloe, R. A. Horn, Greenwood Press, Santa Barbara 2007, p. 310-320.

<sup>3</sup> See E. Pedersen, K. Burton, *A Concept Analysis of Creativity: Uses of Creativity in Selected Design Journals*, *Journal of Interior Design* 15(2009)35(1), p. 15-32.

### 1.1. Etymological and semantic aspects

The noun *creativity* is not only a relatively new and fashionable but also confusing, even misunderstood term, which appeared for the first time in printed form in 1875<sup>4</sup>. “Creativity” derives from the Latin *creatus* (past participle of *creare*), which means, “to make, produce”<sup>5</sup>. A. Aleinikov<sup>6</sup> evokes also the possibility to consider creativity as deriving from the Greek word ‘κραινειν’ (*krainen*) meaning, “to fulfill”.

According to W. Niu and R. Sternberg<sup>7</sup>, the word “creativity” the nominal form of the English word, “to create,” meaning “to bring something new into being” derived from the hypothesized Indo-European root, *ker, kere* (to know), via the Latin, *creare* (to make or grow). J. Piirto<sup>8</sup> also mentioned the root *kere* but that according to him comes from the Old French base, and the Latin *crescere*, and *creber*. So P. Kampylis<sup>9</sup> is right when he mentioned that the word *creativity* is related to *crescere*, which means *to arise, to grow*. Other words with these same roots are *cereal, crescent, creature, concrete, crescendo, decrease, increase, and recruit*. J. Piirto<sup>10</sup> stated that “Creativity” is a relatively new noun since the word does not appear in the 1971 Oxford English Dictionary. The semantic content rather emerges from the various ways and multiple contexts in which the term has been used and evoked throughout history. Its modern meaning as an act of human creation did not emerge until after the Enlightenment<sup>11</sup>.

### 1.2. Definitional attempts

The definition of *creativity* seems to depend on the worldview and the corresponding nature of the theory to which the proponent subscribes. Researchers state that various books and articles contain more than 1000 definitions of *creativity*. On the one hand, such a variety shows the complexity of the phenomenon and, on the other hand, it helps more or less adequately to explain it. Definitions and

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<sup>4</sup> See P. Kampylis, J. Valtanen, *Redefining Creativity — Analyzing Definitions, Collocations, and Consequences*, *The Journal of Creative Behavior* 44(2010)3, p. 191-214.

<sup>5</sup> See A. Aleinikov, *Human creativity*, in: *Encyclopedia of Creativity*, vol. 1, eds. M. Runco, S. Pritzker, Academic Press, San Diego 1999, p.837-844; P. G. Kampylis, J. Valtanen, *Redefining Creativity...*, p. 191-192.

<sup>6</sup> See A. Aleinikov, *Human creativity...*

<sup>7</sup> See W. Niu, R. Sternberg, *The Philosophical Roots of Western and Eastern Conceptions of Creativity*, *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology* 26(2006), p. 18-38.

<sup>8</sup> See J. Piirto, *Creativity...*, p. 310-320.

<sup>9</sup> See P. Kampylis, *Fostering Creative Thinking. The Role of Primary Teachers*, Jyväskylä University Printing House, Jyväskylä 2010.

<sup>10</sup> See J. Piirto, *Creativity...*, p. 319.

<sup>11</sup> See M. Runco, R. Albert, *Creativity research: a historical view*, in: *The Cambridge handbook of creativity*, eds. J. C. Kaufman, R. J. Sternberg, Cambridge University Press, New York 2010, p. 3-19.

theories of creativity are always increasing<sup>12</sup>, however as a psychological concept, creativity has resisted unequivocal definition or clear operationalization<sup>13</sup>.

The *Dictionary of Developmental and Educational Psychology* in 1986 defined creativity as “man’s capacity to produce new ideas, insights, inventions or artistic objects, which are accepted of being of social, spiritual, aesthetic, scientific, or technological value”<sup>14</sup>.

A. Aleinikov<sup>15</sup> (1999) referring to humane creativity stated that it is individual social self-actualizing expansion through production of newness in the domain of humanity. Humane creativity includes any creative activity that promotes humane values and goals, humane communication and means, and humane products and processes. In other words, Creativity is an individual, social self-actualizing expansion realized through producing newness: the society teaches individuals through parents and school; it explains reality, gives instruments, and incorporates goals. Then, the individual moves where nobody yet has reached, thus expanding oneself and society to the new space.

Summarizing the contemporary definitions of creativity, P. Kolp<sup>16</sup> suggested 3 main lines:

- a) *Act to create something new* (cognitive orientation).
- b) *Ability to find original solutions* (psychological orientation).
- c) *Willingness to change or transform the world* (conative orientation).

It is possible to continue quoting endlessly authors who have tried to define the concept of creativity. For now, for the sake of a global and synthetic panoramic, let’s adopt P. Kampylis and J. Valtanen’s table<sup>17</sup>. As we can notice, it is a nice collection of creativity definitions by different authors: in fact, P. Kampylis and J. Valtanen reviewed<sup>18</sup> 42 explicit definitions (see table 1 below). The interesting in this is the change put in those definitions as years are going on. Like that, it is possible to view in a chronological course how psychologists define the concept of creativity.

<sup>12</sup> See A. Aleinikov, *Human creativity...*

<sup>13</sup> See H. Parkhurst, *Confusion, lack of consensus, and the definition of creativity as a construct*, *The Journal of Creative Behavior* 33(1999)1, p. 1-21; M. Runco, *Creativity*, *Annual Review of Psychology* 55(2004), p. 657-687; M. Batey, A. Furnham, *Creativity, Intelligence, and Personality: A critical review of the Scattered Literature*, *Genetic, Social, and General Psychology Monographs* 132(2006)4, p. 355-429.

<sup>14</sup> See J. Piirto, *Creativity...*, p. 310.

<sup>15</sup> See A. Aleinikov, *Human creativity...*

<sup>16</sup> See P. Kolp, *La créativité considérée d’un point de vue historique (évolution de ses formes dans le temps et jusqu’à présent) et considérée d’un point de vue actuel*, Académie des Beaux-Arts Braine-l’Alleud, Belgique 2009.

<sup>17</sup> See P. Kampylis, J. Valtanen, *Redefining Creativity...*, p. 191-214.

<sup>18</sup> See *ibidem*, p. 196-197.

Table 1: Forty-two explicit definitions of the term creativity.

	Author(s)	Years	Definitions
1	Guilford	1950	"[...] refers to the abilities that are most characteristic of creative people. Creative abilities determine whether the individual has the power to exhibit creative behavior to a noteworthy degree." (p. 444).
2	Stein	1953	"[...] is that process which results in a novel work that is accepted as tenable or useful or satisfying by a group at some point in time" (p. 311).
3	Rogers	1954	"[...] is the emergence in action of a novel relational product, growing out of the uniqueness of the individual on the one hand, and the materials, events, people, or circumstances of his life on the other." (p. 250).
4	Rhodes	1961	"[...] is a noun naming the phenomenon in which a person communicates a new concept (which is the product). Mental activity (or mental process) is implicit in the definition, and of course no one could conceive of a person living or operating in a vacuum, so the term press is also implicit" (p. 305).
5	Mednick	1962	"[...] is the forming of associative elements into new combinations which either meet specified requirements or are in some way useful. The more mutually remote the elements of the new combination, the more creative the process or solution." (p. 221).
6	Bruner	1962	"[...] is an act that produces effective surprise." (p. 18).
7	Koestler	1964	"The creative act is not an act of creation in the sense of the Old Testament. It does not create something out of nothing: it uncovers, selects, re-shuffles, combines and synthesizes already existing facts, ideas, faculties and skills." (p. 120).
8	Torrance	1966	"[...] a process of becoming sensitive to problems, deficiencies, gaps in knowledge, missing elements, disharmonies, and so on; identifying the difficult; searching for solutions, making guesses or formulating hypotheses about the deficiencies, testing and retesting these hypotheses and possibly modifying and retesting them, and finally communicating the results." (p. 8)
9	May	1975	"[...] the process of bringing something new into being." (p. 39).
10	Welsch	1980	"[...] the process of generating unique products by transformation of existing products. These products, tangible and intangible, must be unique only to the creator, and must meet the criteria of purpose and value established by the creator." (p. 97).
11	Amabile	1983	"[...] creativity can be regarded as the quality of products or responses judged to be creative by appropriate observers, and it can also be regarded as the process by which something so judged is produced" (p. 31).
12	Mumford & Gustafson	1988	"[...] creativity appears to be best conceptualized as a syndrome involving a number of elements: (a) the processes underlying the individual's capacity to generate new ideas or understandings, (b) the characteristics of the individual facilitating process operation, (c) the characteristics of the individual facilitating the translation of these ideas into action, (d) the attributes of the situation conditioning the individual's willingness to engage in creative behavior, and (e) the attributes of the situation influencing evaluation of the individual's productive efforts." (p. 28).
13	Vernon	1989	"[...] a person's capacity to produce new or original ideas, insights, restructurings, inventions, or artistic objects, which are accepted by experts as being of scientific, aesthetic, social or technological value." (p. 94).
14	Boone & Hollingsworth	1990	"[...] any form of action that leads to results that are novel, useful, and predictable." (p. 3).

	Author(s)	Years	Definitions
15	Ochse	1990	"[...] <i>creativity involves bringing something into being that is original (new, unusual, novel, unexpected) and also valuable (useful, good, adaptive, appropriate).</i> " (p. 2).
16	Mumford, Mobley, Reiter-Palmon, Uhlman, & Doares	1991	"[...] <i>does not represent a unitary psychological attribute, but rather an outcome of a dynamic interplay of certain individual and situational variables.</i> " (p. 91).
17	Csikszentmihalyi	1996	"[...] <i>any act, idea or product that changes an existing domain, or that transforms an existing domain into a new one.</i> " (p. 28).
18	Herrmann	1996	" <i>Among other things, it is an ability to challenge assumptions, recognize patterns, see in new ways, make connections, take risks, and seize upon a chance.</i> " (p. 245).
19	NACCCE	1999	"[...] <i>an imaginative activity fashioned so as to produce outcomes that are original and of value.</i> " (p. 29).
20	Parkhurst	1999	"[...] <i>is the ability or quality displayed when solving hitherto unsolved problems, when developing novel solutions to problems others have solved differently, or when developing original and novel (at least to the originator) products.</i> " (p. 18).
21	Candy & Edmonds	1999	"[...] <i>a set of activities that give rise to an outcome or product that is recognized to be innovative as judged by an external standard.</i> " (p. 4).
22	Seltzer & Bentley	1999	"[...] <i>is not an individual characteristic or innate talent. Creativity is the application of knowledge and skills in new ways to achieve a valued goal.</i> " (p. viii).
23	Eisenberger, Haskins & Gambleton	1999	"[...] <i>involves the generation of novel behavior that meets a standard of quality or utility.</i> " (p. 308).
24	Sternberg & Lubart	1999	"[...] <i>the ability to produce work that is both novel (i.e. original, unexpected) and appropriate (i.e. useful, adaptive concerning task constraints).</i> " (p. 3).
25	Corsini	1999	" <i>Ability to apply original ideas to the solution of problems; the development of theories, techniques or devices; or the production of novel forms of art, literature, philosophy or science.</i> " (p. 234).
26	Csikszentmihalyi	1999	"[...] <i>a phenomenon that is constructed through an interaction between producers and audience. Creativity is not the product of single individuals, but of social systems making judgments about individuals' products.</i> " (p. 314).
27	Aleinikov	1999	"[...] <i>the ability or the process of producing something new and useful.</i> " (p. 840).
28	Cropley & Urban	2000	"[...] <i>the production of relevant and effective novel ideas.</i> " (p. 486).
29	Boden	2001	"[...] <i>is the ability to come up with new ideas that are surprising yet intelligible, and also valuable in some way.</i> " (p. 95).
30	Van Hook & Tegano	2002	"[...] <i>the interpersonal and intrapersonal process by means of which original, high quality, and genuinely significant products are developed.</i> " (p. 3).
31	Feist & Barron	2003	"[...] <i>is a specific capacity to not only solve problems but to solve them originally and adaptively.</i> " (p. 63).

	Author(s)	Years	Definitions
32	Carayiannis & Gonzalez	2003	"[...] the ability to perceive new connections among objects and concepts – in effect, reordering reality by using a novel framework for organizing perceptions." (p. 588).
33	Mumford	2003	"[...] involves the production of novel, useful products." (p. 110).
34	Ward & Saunders	2003	"[...] is the result of the convergence of basic cognitive processes, core domain knowledge, and environmental, personal, and motivational factors which allow an individual to produce an object or behavior that is considered both novel and appropriate in a particular context." (p. 862).
35	Plucker, Beghetto & Dow	2004	"[...] the interaction among aptitude, process, and environment by which an individual or group produces a perceptible product that is both novel and useful as defined within a social context." (p. 90).
36	Boden	2004	"[...] the ability to come up with ideas or artifacts that are new, surprising and valuable." (p. 1).
37	Pope	2005	"[...] is extra/ordinary, original and fitting, fulfilling, in(ter)ventive, cooperative, un/conscious, female, re . . . creation." (p. 52).
38	Sawyer	2006	"[...] the emergence of something novel and appropriate, from a person, a group, or a society." (p. 33).
39	Runco	2007	"[...] a reflection of cognition, meta-cognition, attitude, motivation, affect, disposition, and temperament." (p. 320).
40	Barnes & Shirley	2007	"[...] the act of putting two or more ideas, materials or activities together in what feels (to the creators) like an original, surprising and valued way." (p. 164).
		2008 <sup>19</sup>	
41	Ferrari, Cachia, & Punie	2009	"[...] is skill for everyone; ability to make new connections; capacity to generate new ideas; divergent thinking; ability to get out of the rails; capacity to produce original and valuable outcomes. (p. 14).
42	Kampylis, Berki & Saariluoma	2009	"[...] the activity (both mental and physical) that occurs in a specific time-space, social and cultural framework and leads to tangible or intangible outcomes that are original, useful, ethical and desirable, at least to the creator(s)". (p. 18).

Source: Kampylis & Valtanen, 2010, 199-203.

As it can be noted, P. Kampylis and J. Valtanen's table is limited to 2009. But what about the recent period from 2009 to 2014? We'll complete those lacking creativity definitions updating the information in the table 2 below.

<sup>19</sup> In P. Kampylis and J. Valtanen's table, there is no reported definition in 2008. But in that 2008, Pontifical Salesian University edited *Dizionario di Scienze dell'Educazione* (2008) containing a creativity definition by K. Polacek. We are interested to mention here that definition: "Creativity is the rare capacity of some individuals to discover relationships between ideas, things and situations and to produce new ideas, to have insights and to conclude the mental process with a valid and useful product in scientific, aesthetic, social and technical in the field of a given culture; the product then exerts a certain influence on the lives of other enriching it or producing positive change in it. In creativity, there are three different aspects: the person, the process and the product" (K. Polacek, *Creatività*, in: *Dizionario di Scienze dell'Educazione*, eds. J. M. Prellezco, C. Nani, G. Malizia, LAS, Roma 2008, p. 277).

Table 2: Some creativity definitions, updated from 2009 to 2014.

	Author(s)	Year	Definitions
1	Glăveanu	2010	"As Cultural Participation, [...] creativity is a socio-cultural-psychological process. [...] Creativity is never a solitary affair. The "audience" is always there, helping, in explicit or more implicit ways, the externalization process, the socialization of the creative product, the internalization of new creations. It is social interaction that turns the wheels of creativity, and, along with it, of cultural change and transformation" (p.14).
2	Zeng, Proctor & Salendy	2011	"Creativity is broadly defined as the goal-oriented individual/team cognitive process that results in a product (idea, solution, service, etc.) that, being judged as novel and appropriate, evokes people's intention to purchase, adopt, use, and appreciate it" (p. 25).
3	Simonton	2012	"We can now define creativity as $C = NUS$ (or $N \times U \times S$ ), where $N$ , $U$ , and $S$ indicate Novelty, Utility, and Surprise, respectively. Under this formulation, a maximally creative idea, where $C=1$ , occurs when all three attributes are maximized, that is, $N=U=S=1$ . However, an idea lacks any creativity if one or more of the three attributes are zero. [...] An idea is only creative if it can be credited with novelty, utility, and surprise" (p. 98-99).
4	Piffer	2012	"I regard a person's creativity as the total sum of the creativity of the products that he/she has generated. Thus, I argue that the definition of creativity corresponds to that of creative achievement. I assume that a product's creativity is a continuous rather than a categorical variable (a product is not simply either creative or not but it can be more or less creative than another product). Thus, a product's creativity depends on the degree to which it is useful/appropriate, influential and novel" (p. 259).
5	Kharkurin	2014	See the 4.in1 Model of creativity.

Source: Authors of the article.

In sum, the literature review of creativity is full of creativity definitions. But the problem is that creativity is one of those subjects for which consensus definition in the developed field of research is not taken for granted. For instance, one variable that affects much creativity definition is the cultural context and according to W. Niu and R. J. Sternberg<sup>20</sup>, the influence of culture on people's conceptions of creativity has been one of the most exciting topics in the recent literature on creativity. It has attracted the interest of many psychologists<sup>21</sup>. With respect to individualism and collectivism or with respect to an independent and interdependent perspective, literature distinguishes between the West and the East<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> See W. Niu, R. J. Sternberg, *The Philosophical Roots...*, p. 18-38.

<sup>21</sup> See T. Lubart, *Creativity across cultures*, in: *Handbook of Creativity*, ed. R. Sternberg, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1999, p. 339-350; W. Niu, R. Sternberg, *Contemporary studies on the concept of creativity: The East and the West*, *The Journal of Creative Behavior* 36(2002)4, p. 269-288; E. Rudowicz, A. Hui, *Hong Kong Chinese people's view of creativity*, *Gifted Education International* 13(1998)2, p. 159-174; E. Rudowicz, X. D. Yue, *Concepts of creativity: Similarities and differences among mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwanese Chinese*, *The Journal of Creative Behavior* 34(2000)3, p. 175-192.

<sup>22</sup> See A. Kharkurin, *Creativity.4in1: Four-Criterion Construct of Creativity*, *Creativity Research Journal* 26(2014)3, p. 338-352.

### 1.3. Western or Eastern creativity?

The same act can deeply change meaning according to the context where it has been made. In a similar logic, creativity varies across cultures. Actually, a review of contemporary research has shown that people from the East and West hold similar, yet not identical conceptions of creativity<sup>23</sup>.

From a Western perspective, creativity can be defined as the ability to produce work that is novel and appropriate<sup>24</sup>:

a) novel work is original, not predicted, and distinct from previous work,

b) appropriate work satisfies the problem constraints, is useful, or fulfills a need.

Creativity occurs in virtually any domain, including the visual arts, literature, music, business science, education, and everyday life<sup>25</sup>. An important feature of Western creativity seems to be its relationship to an observable product. This product can be assessed by an appropriate group of either peers or experts. T. Amabile<sup>26</sup> proposes that the creativity of a product is, to a large extent, a social judgment.

The Eastern conception of creativity seems less focused on innovative products<sup>27</sup>. Instead, creativity involves a state of personal fulfillment, a connection to a primordial realm, or the expression of an inner essence or ultimate reality. Creativity is related to meditation because it helps one to see the true nature of the self, an object, or an event<sup>28</sup>. The Eastern conceptualization is similar to humanistic psychology's conception of creativity as part of self-actualization. In the Eastern view, creativity seems to involve the reinterpretation of traditional ideas - finding a new point of view - whereas in the Western approach, creativity involves a break with tradition. Culture encourages creativity in some situations and for some topics but discourages it for others. For the Ashanti, an African group, creativity is encouraged in carving of secular objects but discouraged for objects depicting religious motifs. Creativity may be stimulated or hindered by cultural features such as worldview and the value placed on conformity or tradition<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> See W. Niu, R. Sternberg, *The Philosophical Roots...*

<sup>24</sup> See F. Barron, *Putting creativity to work*, in: *The Nature of Creativity: Contemporary Psychological Perspectives*, ed. R. Sternberg, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1988, p. 76-98; T. Lubart, *Creativity*, in: *Thinking and problem solving*, ed. R. Sternberg, Academic Press, San Diego 1994, p. 290-332; idem, *Creativity across cultures*; idem, *La psychologie de la créativité*, Armand Colin, Paris 2003; D. MacKinnon, *The nature and nurture of creative talent*, *American Psychologist* 17(1962)7, p. 484-495; R. Ochse, *Before the gates of excellence: the determinants of creative genius*, Cambridge University Press, New York 1990; M. Stein, *Creativity and culture*, *Journal of Psychology* 36(1953), p. 311- 322.

<sup>25</sup> See T. Lubart, *Creativity across cultures...*

<sup>26</sup> See T. Amabile, *The social psychology of creativity*, Springer-Verlag, New York 1983.

<sup>27</sup> See T. Lubart, *Creativity across cultures...*

<sup>28</sup> See A. Onda, *Zen and creativity*, *Psychologia* 5(1962), p. 13-20.

<sup>29</sup> See T. Lubart, *Creativity across cultures...*

According to K. M. Raina<sup>30</sup>, what characterizes the East is the subjectifying attitude, the West, the objectifying one. Creativity in the Occident would be more product-centered, whereas in the Orient, with a process-centered creativity, the person's aim is to be fully awake and alive, the ultimate goal being personal enlightenment. M. Batey and A. Furnham<sup>31</sup> also make the same observation stating that the perception of creativity as the original product of an individual is a predominantly Western one; Eastern cultures have tended to view creativity as a process of understanding and enlightenment.

Given the different Western and Eastern views of creativity, the question of their origin can be raised and to better understand this, W. Niu and R. Sternberg<sup>32</sup> compare two philosophical traditions representing the 'roots of thought' in the West and East. The results of their inquiring are synthesized below (see table 3).

Table 3: People's conceptions of Creativity across Times and Cultures.

	Western culture		Chinese culture	
	<i>Ancient</i>	<i>Modern</i>	<i>Ancient</i>	<i>Modern</i>
Genesis	God/gods/individual	Individual	Nature/individual	Individual
Defining features of creativity	Novelty	Novelty	-	Novelty
	Moral goodness	-	Moral goodness	Moral goodness
	Everlasting renovation	Usefulness	Everlasting renovation	Usefulness

Source: Niu and Sternberg, 2006, p. 19.

In general, Easterners are more likely to view creativity as having *social* and *moral* values, and as making a connection between the new and the old. Their Western counterparts focus more on some special *individual* characteristics in understanding the concept of creativity<sup>33</sup>.

In sum, creativity does not occur in a vacuum, it is context dependent. The Western definition of creativity as a product-oriented, originality-based phenomenon can be compared with an Eastern view of creativity as a phenomenon of expressing an inner truth in a new way or of self-growth. Culture acts in a second fashion by channeling creativity. Finally, culture provides a set of facilitating and inhibiting conditions for creativity that influence the general level of creative activity<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> See K. M. Raina, *Cross-cultural differences*, in: *Encyclopedia of Creativity*, vol. I, eds. M. Runco, S. Pritzker, Academic Press, San Diego 1999, p. 453-469.

<sup>31</sup> See M. Batey, A. Furnham, *Creativity, Intelligence, and Personality...*

<sup>32</sup> See W. Niu, R. Sternberg, *The Philosophical Roots...*

<sup>33</sup> See W. Niu, R. Sternberg, *Contemporary studies on the concept of creativity: The East and the West*, *The Journal of Creative Behavior* 36(2002)4, p. 269-288.

<sup>34</sup> See T. Lubart, *Creativity across cultures...*

Definitely, this cross-cultural consideration to some extent shows how it is difficult to reach a consensus about creativity definition. Actually, from all the definitional attempts, what can we keep before going any further?

## 2. TOWARDS A RELATIVE CONSENSUS ON THE DEFINITION OF CREATIVITY

As far as creativity definition is concerned, it is the Western perspective that has dominated creativity research and academic psychological literature<sup>35</sup>. The best example of this is Kampylis and Valtanen's table 1 that we earlier reported in this article.

But the problem is that even inside the dominant Western perspective, creativity definition has not gained a real consensus yet. What is surer is that some elements are most frequent in many definitions and permit to speak in terms of "most widely accepted definition".

Everyone agrees that creativity is the discovery or invention of something new. In 1999, A. Aleinikov stated that among all the definitions, philosophical and psychological, simple and extravagant, the most frequent used definition describes creativity as the ability or the process of producing something new and useful<sup>36</sup>. This new-and-useful definition of creativity appears to have gained wide acceptance<sup>37</sup>.

Eleven years later, i-e in 2010, P. Kampylis<sup>38</sup> argued that the ethical dimensions of creativity should be explicitly stated in its definitions. For this reason, he suggests a new definition that can be applied specifically in the context of education: "Creativity is the general term we use to describe an individual's attitude to, ability for, and style (s) of creative thinking that leads to a structured and intentional activity, mental and/or physical. This activity may be personal and/or collective, occurs in a specific space-time, political, economic, social, and cultural context, and interacts with it. The creative activity aims at realizing the creative potential of the creator(s) and leads to tangible or intangible product(s) that is (are) original, useful, and desirable at least for the creator(s). The creative product(s) should be used for ethical and constructive purposes"<sup>39</sup>. This is creativity in the educative context, but in the general, more and more authors agree about the key elements or criteria of creativity definition.

<sup>35</sup> See M. Batey, A. Furnham, *Creativity, Intelligence, and Personality...*

<sup>36</sup> See A. Aleinikov, *Human creativity...*

<sup>37</sup> See T. Lubart, *Creativity...*; R. Ochse, *Before the gates...*; R. Sternberg, *A three-facet model of creativity*, in: *The nature of creativity. Contemporary Psychological Perspectives*, ed. R. Sternberg, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1988, p. 125-147; R. Sternberg, T. Lubart, *An investment theory of creativity and its development*, *Human Development* 34(1991)1, p. 1-31; R. Sternberg, T. Lubart, *Defying the crowd: Cultivating creativity in a culture of conformity*, Free Press, New York 1995; R. Sternberg, T. Lubart, *Investing in creativity*, *American Psychologist* 51(1996)7, p. 677-688; D. Mumford, *Where have we been, where are we going? Taking stock in creativity research*, *Creativity Research Journal* 15(2003)2-3, p. 107-120; M. Runco, *Creativity*, *Annual Review of Psychology* 55(2004), p. 657-687.

<sup>38</sup> See P. Kampylis, *Fostering Creative Thinking...*

<sup>39</sup> See *ibidem*, p. 92-93.

To underline the agreement among authors, V. P. Glăveanu<sup>40</sup> also stated that due to its complexity, creativity has been approached differently, either as achievement, as ability or as disposition or attitude, but very fruitful definitions for scientific investigation are those that focus on the *creative product* and, in this regard, there is quite a general consensus among specialists that something is creative when it is both new and useful, appropriate or meaningful<sup>41</sup>.

Based on J. Plucker, R. Beghetto, G. Dow<sup>42</sup> and D. K. Simonton<sup>43</sup>, M. Makel and J. Plucker<sup>44</sup> precise that the vast majority of such definitions and conceptualizations include novelty, originality, or uniqueness as one criterion, with usefulness or utility included as a second criterion.

Without a clear definition, creativity becomes a hollow construct, one that can easily be filled with an array of myths, co-opted to represent any number of divergent processes, and further confuse what is (and is not) known about the construct<sup>45</sup>. Drawing on the articles that did explicitly define creativity, as well as those that provided enough contextual information from which a definition could be inferred, we were able to identify several reoccurring, constituent elements that could serve as a basis for generating a synthesized definition of creativity. Our proposed definition is: Creativity is the interaction among *aptitude, process, and environment* by which an individual or group produces a *perceptible product* that is both *novel and useful* as defined within a *social context*<sup>46</sup>.

According to P. Kamyplis and J. Valtanen<sup>47</sup>, creativity researchers and theorists have approached what could be termed an agreement, since the majority of their definitions intersect at the following key components:

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<sup>40</sup> See V. P. Glăveanu, *Principles for a cultural psychology of creativity*, *Culture & Psychology* 16(2010)2, p. 147-163; idem, *Creativity in context: The ecology of creativity evaluations and practices in an artistic craft*, *Psychological Studies* 55(2010), p. 339-350; idem, *Paradigms in the study of creativity: Introducing the perspective of cultural psychology*, *New Ideas in Psychology* 28(2010), p. 79-93; idem, *Creativity as cultural participation*, *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 41(2011)1, p. 48-67; idem, *Habitual Creativity: Revising Habit, Reconceptualizing Creativity*, *Review of General Psychology* 16(2012)1, p. 78-92.

<sup>41</sup> See M. Stein, *Creativity and culture*, *Journal of Psychology* 36(1953), p. 311-322; R. Richards, *Everyday Creativity*, in: *Encyclopedia of Creativity*, vol. I, eds. M. A. Runco, S. R. Pritzker, Academic Press San Diego 1999, p. 683-687.

<sup>42</sup> See J. Plucker, R. Beghetto, G. Dow, *Why isn't creativity more important to educational psychologists? Potentials, pitfalls, and future directions in creativity research*, *Educational Psychologist* 39(2004)2, p. 83-96.

<sup>43</sup> See D. K. Simonton, *Creativity, problem solving, and solution set sightedness: Radically reformulating BVSR*, *The Journal of Creative Behavior* 46(2012)1, p. 48-65; idem, *Taking the US Patent Office criteria seriously: A quantitative three-criterion creativity definition and its implications*, *Creativity Research Journal* 24(2012)2-3, p. 97-106; idem, *Teaching Creativity Current Findings, Trends, and Controversies in the Psychology of Creativity*, *Teaching of Psychology* 39(2012)3, p. 217-222.

<sup>44</sup> See M. Makel, J. Plucker, *Response: Creativity Is More Than Novelty: Reconsidering Replication as a Creativity Act*, *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts* 8(2014)1, p. 27-29.

<sup>45</sup> See J. Plucker, R. Beghetto, G. Dow, *Why isn't creativity...*

<sup>46</sup> See ibidem, p. 90.

<sup>47</sup> See P. Kamyplis, J. Valtanen, *Redefining Creativity...*, p. 191-214.

- a) creativity is a key ability of *individual(s)*;
- b) creativity presumes an *intentional activity* (process);
- c) the creative process occurs *in a specific context* (environment);
- d) the creative process entails the generation of *product(s)* (tangible or intangible).

Creative product(s) must be *novel* (original, *unconventional*) and *appropriate* (valuable, useful) to some extent, *at least* for the creative individual(s). These key components are commonly referred to the literature as the 4 Ps of *creativity: person, process, press, and product*<sup>48</sup>.

### 3. BEYOND WESTERN AND EASTERN POLARIZATION, AN INTEGRATIVE VISION OF CREATIVITY

Differences are not deficits, but rather richness that must be complemented. In this perspective, the best definition of creativity must attempt to integrate different cultural criteria and offer a unified vision of the concept. This attempt is possible because despite cultural differences, it is interesting that creativity is generally viewed as a positive construct (Chu, 1970; Joncich, 1964; Lubart, 1999). Evidence of this positive view of creativity in the West can be found in the desire of schools to promote creativity and in the large number of creativity self-help books in the popular press<sup>49</sup> (Adams, 1986). In non-Western settings, gods of originality receive worship and creative individuals are honoured and praised<sup>50</sup>.

In search for similitude, A. J. Starko<sup>51</sup> also stated that criteria for judging African ceremonial masks are very different from those for evaluating Italian *Commedia dell'arte* masks, nonetheless, the creative efforts in each case are eventually considered to meet some standard and be accepted by some audience.

For T. Lubart<sup>52</sup>, beyond the divergences, descriptions of the creative process exist for both the Western and Eastern views of creativity. The most widely cited Western description of the creative process involves four stages: *preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification*. Evidence for an alternative process model congruent with the Eastern definition of creativity comes, in part, from R. Maduro's<sup>53</sup> study of Indian painters who describe a four-stage model based on the

<sup>48</sup> See R. Richards, *Everyday Creativity...*

<sup>49</sup> See H. Walberg, *Creativity in learning*, in: *The nature of creativity. Psychological Perspectives*, ed. R. J. Sternberg, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1988, p. 340-361.

<sup>50</sup> For example, in the Benin culture, the deity *Olokun*, god of inspiration and idealism, is revered (P. Ben-Amos, *Artistic creativity in Benin Kingdom*, *African Arts* 19(1986)3, p. 60-63). *Olokun* can influence artists through dreams and enhance their originality. Similarly, the *Hindu* god *Vishvakarma*, spirit of the creative process, was described with great significance and stature by Indian artists (R. Maduro, *Artistic creativity in a Brahmin painter community*, Center for South and Southeast Asia Studies, California 1976).

<sup>51</sup> See A. J. Starko, *Creativity in the classroom: schools of curious delight*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Mahwah 2005.

<sup>52</sup> See T. Lubart, *Creativity across cultures...*

<sup>53</sup> R. Maduro, *Artistic creativity...*

Yoga Sutras. The first stage is preparatory<sup>54</sup>. Follow the achievement of an internal identification with the subject matter of the painting (second stage), the insight similar to illumination (third stage) and the social communication of personal realizations and is similar to the verification stage of the Western model (fourth stage). In contrast to the Western process description, emotional, personal, and intra-psychic elements are emphasized in the Eastern creative process<sup>55</sup>.

According to A. Goswami<sup>56</sup>, the culture in the West is highly polarized in valuing outer creativity, whereas Eastern culture still values inner creativity over outer, however an emphasis on both inner and outer creativity helps us to actualize our creative potential in both arenas as never before. So for A. Goswami<sup>57</sup>, no polarization is necessary because both inner and outer activities are aspects of the play of consciousness to see itself, and both are important in this play. When we do not value inner creativity, outer creative actions are often destructive without ethics to guide them. When we do not value outer creativity, the material structure of societies suffers. Likewise, we can look forward to the time when people of inner creative wisdom will engage in outer creativity, science, arts, music, and so forth. Music, art, and science, dedicated toward the whole and flowing from the inspiration of wholeness and not just from social accomplishment orientation, will reach unprecedented levels of greatness. We can summarize those features in the table 4 below.

Table 4: Creativity in Western and Eastern conceptions.

Western conception	Eastern and other conceptions
a) create something <i>new and useful</i>	a) express <i>an inner essence</i>
b) find <i>original solutions</i> to problems	b) find <i>a new point in the tradition</i>
c) transform or <i>change the world</i>	c) <i>fulfill or enlight the self (self-actualisation)</i>
d) <i>break with</i> the tradition	d) <i>re-interpretation</i> of the tradition
e) <i>Product centered</i>	e) <i>Process/subject centered</i>
f) <i>Individual</i> orientation	f) <i>Ecological</i> orientation

Source: Authors of the article.

<sup>54</sup> “The artist attempts to contact by self-will and ceaseless effort the subjective region of his mind [...] The artist removes himself symbolically from the normal world by burning incense [...] to deities [and] [...] prays for inspiration from *Vishvakarma* [the patron of creativity]” (R. Maduro, *Artistic creativity...*, p. 143).

<sup>55</sup> See T. Lubart, *Creativity across cultures...*

<sup>56</sup> See A. Goswami, *Quantum theory of creativity*, in: *Encyclopedia of Creativity*, vol. II, eds. M. Runco, S. R. Pritzker, Academic Press, San Diego 1999, p. 491-499.

<sup>57</sup> See *ibidem*, p. 499.

In our personal point of view, these two types of conceptions need to be integrated and one of the best attempts responding to this integration, offering at the moment a consensus in creativity definition, is Kharkhurin's *Creativity.4in1 model*<sup>58</sup>.

Actually in this model creativity is defined as a 4-criterion construct, which includes attributes of novelty, utility, aesthetics, and authenticity. Kharkhurin<sup>59</sup> explained each of these four attributes:

1) *Novelty* attribute stipulates that a creative work brings something new into being, which presents a new conceptual framework and/or modifies or violates an existing one.

2) *Utility* attribute stipulates that a creative work is what a producer or a recipient considers creative, what represents an important landmark in spiritual, cultural, social, and/or political environment, and what addresses moral issues.

3) *Aesthetics attribute* stipulates that a creative work presents the fundamental truth of nature, which is reflected in a perfect order, efficiently presents the essence of the phenomenal reality, and is satisfactorily complex, expressing both tension and intrinsic contradiction.

4) *Authenticity* attribute stipulates that a creative work expresses an individual's inner self and relates one's own values and believes to the world.

In sum, from the two traditional criteria of creativity (*novel and appropriate*) largely used in the literature of 19th and early 20th century<sup>60</sup>, creativity definition will move to 3 criteria: *novelty, usefulness* and *nonobviousness*<sup>61</sup>, or *novel, valuable* and *surprising* (Boden, (2004) quoting Bruner, 1962) or *novelty, utility and impact*<sup>62</sup> or *novel, appropriate, and of high quality*<sup>63</sup>.

On the one hand, A. Kharkhurin<sup>64</sup> agrees for moving from the 2 criteria definition because reducing creativity to the 2 features of novelty and utility seems to devalue the rich constellation of meanings to which this construct refers, on the other hand, he remained unsatisfied with the 3 criteria features because they share one common epistemological orientation, that is they focus on *novelty* and the *pragmatic aspects of problem solving*, which appears to reflect a Western concept of creativity. In contrast, Eastern features as *inner growth, personal fulfillment*, and aesthetic aspects of creative problem solving<sup>65</sup> seem absent. So A. Karkhurin<sup>66</sup> attempts to account for different cultural perspectives and provides a theoretical framework combining both Western and Eastern orientations. For him, criteria of *novelty* and *utility* pervasive in the Western

<sup>58</sup> See A. Kharkhurin, *Creativity.4in1...*

<sup>59</sup> See *ibidem*.

<sup>60</sup> See M. Runco, G. J. Jaeger, *Comments and corrections: The standard definition of creativity*, *Creativity Research Journal* 24(2012)1, p. 92-96.

<sup>61</sup> See D. K. Simonton, *Creativity, problem solving...*; *idem*, *Taking the US Patent Office...*; *idem*, *Teaching Creativity...*

<sup>62</sup> D. Piffer, *Can creativity be measured? An attempt to clarify the notion of creativity and general directions for future research*, *Thinking Skills and Creativity* 7(2012)3, p. 258-264.

<sup>63</sup> See R. Sternberg, T. Lubart, *Defying the crowd...*, p. 6.

<sup>64</sup> See A. Kharkhurin, *Creativity.4in1...*

<sup>65</sup> See T. Lubart, *Creativity across cultures...*; K. M. Raina, *Cross-cultural differences...*

<sup>66</sup> See A. Kharkhurin, *Creativity.4in1...*

tradition should be complimented with criteria of *aesthetics* and *authenticity* typical for the Eastern perspective. Together, these four criteria construct a generic four-dimensional space, in which creative works from different domains and cultural perspectives can be assessed and compared. To recapitulate, we have the table 5 below.

Table 5: Four-dimensional matrix for evaluation of creative work.

Criterion	Conditions
Novelty	1) Creative work is new. 2) Creative work modifies existing paradigm. 3) Creative work rejects existing paradigm.
Utility	1) Creative work is perceived as such by a producer. 2) Creative work is perceived as such by a recipient. 3) Creative work represents an important landmark in spiritual, cultural, social, and/or political environment. 4) Creative work influences worldviews by addressing moral issues.
Aesthetics	1) Creative work presents the fundamental truth of nature. 2) Creative work strives to arrange expressive elements in a perfect order. 3) Creative work expresses the essence of the phenomenal reality in efficient manner. 4) Creative work is satisfactorily complex expressing both tension and intrinsic contradiction.
Authenticity	1) Creative work expresses a creative person's inner self.

Source: Kharkhurin, 2014, p. 347.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The understanding of the concept of creativity has immersed us in the vast “ocean” of creativity definitions. As a long and very challenging journey, the course has led us with A. Kharkhurin<sup>67</sup> to define creativity in base of four criteria:

1) *Novelty*: creative product is new, modifies existing paradigm or rejects existing paradigm.

2) *Utility*: creative product is perceived useful by the producer and the recipient; it represents an important landmark in spiritual, cultural, social, and political environment; it also influences worldviews by addressing moral issues.

3) *Aesthetics*: creative product presents the fundamental truth of nature, strives to arrange expressive elements in a perfect order, expresses the essence of the phenomenal reality in efficient manner, is satisfactorily complex expressing both tension and intrinsic contradiction.

4) *Authenticity*: creative product expresses a creative person's inner self.

Aware that this definition cannot exhaust all what can be known about the concept, we also tried to bring some more precision studying some attributes, collocations and related terms/concepts of creativity. Anyway, definitions of creativity are often misleading; they say too much and too little. They may, however, provide a point of departure for more extended and systematic investigation.

<sup>67</sup> See *ibidem*.

What makes this integrative vision interesting for a psychoeducational application is a real combination of what is useful with what constitutes human values.

#### THE CONCEPT OF CREATIVITY. TOWARDS A INTEGRATIVE VISION OF CREATIVITY IN THE PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL APPLICATION

##### Summary

Although it is a positive word, always attracting and increasing attention, creativity is a concept that defies definition. As a psychological concept, creativity has resisted unequivocal definition or clear operationalization. Nevertheless, after viewing its etymological and semantic aspects, we focus on some attempts of definitions. As “man’s capacity to produce new ideas, insights, inventions or artistic objects, or the act to create something new, to find original solutions, and the willingness to change or transform the world. Creativity has generated numerous definitions with the problem of the lack of consensus among creativity researchers. This seems more complicated when we focus on creativity in cultural context (be the Western or the Eastern one). However, since differences are not deficits, but rather richness that must be complemented, our proposal is to integrate different cultural criteria and offer a unified vision of the concept, which we illustrate referring to Kharkurin’s Creativity.4in1 model based on the criteria of Novelty, Utility, Aesthetics and Authenticity. This integrative vision is not yet the last possible attempt, so the call for deeper research and better model is still active.

**Keywords:** Creativity, Definition, Conception, Culture, Self-actualisation

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#### KONCEPCJA KREATYWNOŚCI. W KIERUNKU INTEGRALNEJ WIZJI KREATYWNOŚCI W APLIKACJI PSYCHOWYCHOWAWCZEJ

##### Abstrakt

Kreatywność jest pojęciem, które wymyka się łatwemu zdefiniowaniu, choć od zawsze jest przedmiotem dużego zainteresowania. Ta problematyka jest dostrzegalna w koncepcjach psychologicznych, w których nie ma jednoznacznej definicji teoretycznej czy aplikacyjnej na temat koncepcji kreatywności. Niemniej jednak, po dokonaniu analizy etymologicznej i semantycznej niektórych aspektów, można podjąć się próby zdefiniowania jej jako zdolności człowieka do realizowania nowych pomysłów, spostrzeżeń, wynalazków, przedmiotów artystycznych lub aktów, w celu stworzenia coś nowego, znalezienia oryginalnego rozwiązania, gotowości do zmiany lub przemiany świata. Pojęcie kreatywność dostarcza licznych problemów koncepcyjnych, a to powoduje brak konsensusu wśród badaczy tego zagadnienia. Problem ten wydaje się najbardziej skomplikowany, gdy skupia się uwagę na kreatywności w kontekście kulturowym (zarówno kultury Zachodu, jak i Wschodu). Ponieważ istniejące różnice są źródłem bogactwa, a nie deficytu, Autorzy artykułu przedstawiają własną propozycję integracji różnych

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kryteriów kulturowych oraz w miarę jednolitą wizję koncepcji kreatywności, którą zawiera, ich zdaniem, model A. Kharkhorina – Creativity.4in1, w oparciu o kryteria: Nowości, Użyteczności, Estetyki i Autentyczności. Ta integracyjna wizja nie jest jeszcze ostatnią możliwą próbą, zaprasza ona zatem do głębszego badania i ulepszania zaproponowanego modelu.

**Słowa kluczowe:** kreatywność, definicja, koncepcja, kultura, samo-aktualizacja