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UNBOXING THE IDEA OF “THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX”: ON THE ROLE OF CREATIVITY IN TRANSLATION TRAINING

Abstract: Creativity and innovation involve finding new ways of thinking and organizing ideas. A creative individual is someone who can identify problems and come up with effective solutions. Creative thinking helps adapt to changes in today’s fast-evolving world and it should be applied across all areas of life, including education. By fostering creative thinking, teachers can better prepare students for jobs that currently exist but may be transformed by automation in the future. This is not only relevant for fields like translation, but also areas such as medicine and law, where automation is becoming more prevalent. While certain tasks can be automated, the nature of creativity remains irreplicable. Therefore, those who can creatively develop methods of automating processes will be highly sought after, as will those whose creative abilities enable them to thrive in professions that have not yet emerged. The aim of this paper is to delve deeper into the concept of creativity and its key elements, explore ways it can be stimulated, outline strategies for incorporating creativity-focused tasks in the translation classroom, as well as provide methods for encouraging creative thinking among translation students.

Key words: creativity, translation classroom, translation teaching, translator training.

1. Creativity matters

Creativity is a multifaceted concept with varying definitions depending on the perspective. For instance, Adair (2007, p. 8) describes it as “the faculty of mind and spirit that enables us to bring into existence, ostensibly out of nothing, something of use, order, beauty or significance”. An interesting perspective on creativity is offered by Gruber and Davis (1988), who challenge the myth of sudden inspiration, viewing creativity as a gradual process of reflection and discovery. Some scholars see creativity as a universal human trait, not limited to great works or discoveries but expressed in behaviours, performances, ideas (Taylor, 1988, p. 104), or

products like scientific theories and advertising (Perkins, 1988, p. 378). Lucas (2016, p. 279) defines creativity as a multi-dimensional quality found across life domains, emerging from creative thinking – a social process often triggered by challenges. This aligns with Cox’s (2015, p. 21) definition of creativity as an act of generating ideas, and with Lucas’s (2017)¹ distinction between creative thinking and creative activity, which results in original, purposeful outcomes.

Another view links creativity closely to problem-solving, which involves applying specific techniques to achieve a goal. This process draws on both new strategies and past experiences (Landau, 1976, pp. 25, 76). Problem-solving, like decision-making, requires three essential skills: analysis (breaking down complex problems into smaller components), synthesis (combining these components into a larger whole), and evaluation (assessing them in terms of values and norms) (Szabó, 2002, p. 14). Research also connects creativity to frustration tolerance. Kakas (1987, p. 79) notes that creative individuals have personality traits that help them manage frustration in challenging situations, while less creative people may become blocked or emotionally overwhelmed when faced with challenges.

The Centre for Real-World Learning proposes a five-dimensional model of creative thinking (Lucas, 2016, pp. 281–282), identifying five core habits:

1. **Inquisition.** Exploring and asking interesting questions.
 - wondering and questioning – posing questions that foster new ideas;
 - exploring and investigating – seeking out additional questions to deepen understanding;
 - challenging assumptions – being skeptical and not accepting things at face value without thorough examination.
2. **Imagination.** Generating creative solutions.
 - playing with possibilities – experimenting with ideas, testing and refining them in the process;
 - making connections – synthesizing information and linking disparate ideas;
 - using intuition – trusting intuition to form new connections between concepts.
3. **Persistence.** Creative people are not easily discouraged.
 - sticking with difficulty – persevering through challenges, practicing patience, pushing beyond the familiar, and developing new ideas in the process;
 - daring to be different – having the confidence to take sensible risks and embrace unique approaches;
 - tolerating uncertainty – being comfortable with a certain level of uncertainty and ambiguity.
4. **Collaboration.** Recognizing that addressing complex challenges of the modern world often requires teamwork, and valuing the social aspects of the creative process.
 - sharing the product – creative output, whether an idea or a tangible product, needs to be shared to have an impact on others;

¹ <https://www.sec-ed.co.uk/content/best-practice/teaching-creative-thinking-advice-and-examples/>, accessed 2 May 2025.

- giving and receiving feedback – offering feedback to others and receiving constructive criticism, using it as a tool to enhance one’s work;
 - cooperating appropriately – collaborating effectively, respecting and valuing other people’s ideas and contributions.
5. **Discipline.** Creativity requires knowledge and the ability to develop expertise.
- developing techniques – consistently honing one’s skills;
 - reflecting critically – critically assessing ideas, evaluating their feasibility and making necessary decisions;
 - crafting and improving – paying attention to detail and willingly correcting mistakes.

When creativity is fostered in areas like education or business, it enhances innovation, productivity, and overall well-being. As the model suggests, creative individuals are capable of inventing, innovating, educating, problem-solving, inquiring and exploring.

2. Can creativity be taught?

Barras (2014)² highlights an increasing emphasis on fostering creativity in both schools and institutes of higher education. While creativity may stem from innate abilities, research shows it can also be developed through intentional strategies and structured practice. Thus, it is increasingly viewed not just as a natural gift, but as a skill that can be learned, taught, developed, and practiced. However, Polish schools often do little to cultivate students’ creativity. Students are frequently hesitant to think outside the box, likely due to the dominance of standardized tests that encourage conformity rather than original thinking. Closed-ended questions limit imaginative responses, and creative answers that differ from the norm are often marked wrong, stifling students’ early enthusiasm (Barras, *ibidem*).

Barras (*ibidem*) refers to the research which suggests that certain conditions, like a relaxed mental state, can foster creativity. This is linked to “divergent thinking,” which involves generating multiple solutions to open-ended problems. In contrast, schools often prioritize “convergent thinking,” focusing on single-answer problems. However, this does not mean that teachers should discard textbooks. As Barras (*ibidem*) points out, students must have a solid understanding of the material they are studying. Still, educators should embrace students’ imagination and provide opportunities to cultivate creativity.

Lucas (2017)³ observes that schools which successfully teach students to be creative thinkers, capable of solving various problems, typically follow a four-stage process:

² <http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20140314-learn-to-be-creative>, accessed 2 May 2025.

³ <https://www.sec-ed.co.uk/content/best-practice/teaching-creative-thinking-advice-and-examples/>, accessed 7 May 2025.

Stage 1: Develop a deep understanding of creative thinking. Teachers should structure their classes around key concepts such as questioning, challenging assumptions, tolerating uncertainty, taking risks, daring to be different, reflecting critically.

Stage 2: Establish a supportive classroom environment and implement two key strategies: “split-screen “and “visible thinking”. Split-screen teaching focuses both on content and creative habits. It aligns with inquiry-based learning, promoting skills like curiosity and multi-perspective thinking (Murdoch, 2013).⁴ An example of split-screen teaching might be a situation in which while learning about climate change (content), students are also asked to analyze cause and effect and generate alternative solutions (thinking). This dual focus deepens understanding and nurtures creativity in problem-solving. Visible thinking is a framework using routines – structured tools or prompts (e.g., “Circle of Viewpoints”, “Options Explosion”⁵) – simple, repeatable practices that guide students in different types of thought processes. For example, when analyzing a historical event, students might use the routine “See–Think–Wonder” to first observe a photo, then interpret its meaning, and finally generate creative questions or alternate perspectives. Many of the routines within the “visible thinking” approach can be effectively applied in the translation classroom.

Stage 3: Select teaching methods most conducive to fostering creative thinking. Lucas (2017)⁶ recommends:

- Problem-based learning: real-world problems foster practical thinking;
- Classroom learning communities: students co-construct knowledge and contribute to and advance each other’s understanding;
- Playful experimentation: relaxed exploration encourages generation of new ideas;
- Growth mindset: practice strengthens intelligence and creativity;
- Deliberate practice: repetition and refinement enhance skill.

Stage 4: Enhance student involvement and commitment to developing their creative abilities. Creativity is a way of engaging with the world, not just a talent. As Judkins notices: “Creativity isn’t a switch that’s flicked on or off, it’s a way of seeing, engaging and responding to the world around you”.⁷ Adair (2007,

⁴ <https://justwonderingblog.com/2013/05/02/inquiring-into-the-how/>, accessed 3 May 2025.

⁵ Detailed descriptions of all the routines of the “visible thinking” approach can be found at: <https://www.edutopia.org/article/visible-thinking-strategies-student-engagement/>.

⁶ <https://www.sec-ed.co.uk/content/best-practice/teaching-creative-thinking-advice-and-examples/>, accessed 4 May 2025.

⁷ Judkins, R. *The Art of Creative Thinking*: <https://www.leapessence.com/art-creative-thinking-89-ways-see-things-differently-rod-judkins-book-summary-pdf/>, accessed 4 May 2025.

p. 7) adds that creativity often involves combining existing ideas in novel ways, creating value from the unexpected:

“You do not have to conjure up new ideas from the air. Your task as a creative thinker is to combine ideas or elements that already exist. If the result is an unlikely but valuable combination of ideas or things that hitherto were not thought to be linked, then you will be seen as a creative thinker. You will have added value to the synthesis, for a whole is more than the sum of its parts” (ibidem).

Ultimately, schools must move beyond the false choice between teaching facts and fostering creative thinking. Instead, they should recognize that a thoughtfully planned blend of both approaches is the one that will most benefit both students and educators.

3. Translation classroom: encouraging out-of-the-box thinking

The idea of integrating creativity into classrooms is not a new one. In fact, a 2012 U.S. study among college-educated professionals, “Creativity and Education: Why It Matters”, highlighted that creative thinking should receive more attention when designing education curricula. The study found a growing consensus that creativity is not just a personality trait, but a skill that can be developed. Researchers surveyed 1,000 full-time workers aged 25 and older, with at least a four-year college degree, and discovered that 85% of participants agreed that creative thinking is essential for problem-solving in their professional lives. Additionally, 68% believed that creativity is a skill that can be learnt. Furthermore, 91% stated that academic subjects alone are insufficient to prepare students for success in both school and life, and 82% expressed regret over not having had more opportunities to develop creative thinking during their education.⁸

This research emphasizes the increasing need for creative thinking to be integrated into higher education in Poland, where, arguably, the traditional education system fails to promote creativity in the classroom, focusing primarily on teaching the correct answers. Classes and tests are full of closed-ended questions that leave little space for imagination and students are typically rewarded for reproducing standard solutions and established methods, rather than being encouraged to think creatively and innovatively. They are generally expected to present someone else’s ideas without a critical analysis (Żylińska, 2013, p. 9). Those who are particularly creative often struggle to adapt to the rigid expectations of this education system. Ironically, their talents and innovative thinking can even be obstacles, as tests based on formulas and rote learning favour students who provide the most conventional and predictable answers (Żylińska, 2013, p. 64).

⁸ The results of the research can be found at: <https://www.adobe.com/aboutadobe/pressroom/pressreleases/201211/110712AdobeEducationCreativityStudy.html>, accessed 6 May 2025.

Rather than nurturing individual talents and fostering an environment for their growth, the traditional education system tends to suppress them, discouraging students from showcasing their uniqueness. This clearly calls for a new approach – one that would integrate creativity into educational standards.

Clifford (2012)⁹ outlines 30 different approaches that teachers can apply to encourage creative thinking in their classrooms, irrespective of the subject they teach. Many of them, for instance those listed below, are also applicable to teaching translation:

1. **Treat creativity as part of the learning process.** Create a classroom environment that values creativity and make it clear to students creative thinking is encouraged, as well as invite them to think of innovative solutions to problems.
2. **View creativity as a skill.** Creativity is not an innate trait but a skill that can be developed. It can be broken down into smaller, teachable components. Psychologists often categorize creativity into two types: Big C, which drives world-changing ideas, and Little C, which addresses everyday problem-solving. Both types can be incorporated into the classroom.
3. **Incorporate emotions.** Research has shown that creativity is most effectively nurtured when it engages the learner’s emotions. One way to do this is by having students create solutions that can assist others in need, allowing them to interact with and positively contribute to their environment.
4. **Consider how classroom activities require both convergent and divergent thinking.** Standardized tests generally assess convergent thinking, which involves logical reasoning and finding a single correct answer. Divergent thinking, however, encourages students to approach problems in multiple ways and make associations. Classroom activities and assignments should therefore offer opportunities to develop both types of thinking.
5. **Foster a friendly and supportive atmosphere.** As Clifford (ibidem) states, “creativity flourishes in a ‘congenial environment,’” meaning that for creativity to flourish, individuals need to be in a socially supportive setting.
6. **Monitor discussions.** Educators can promote creativity by validating students’ creative thinking. This might be done, for instance, by engaging with students who ask questions beyond the class topic and taking time to explore these enquiries, encouraging out-of-the-box thinking.
7. **Encourage freedom of expression.** Students should feel comfortable freely expressing and sharing their ideas in the classroom.
8. **Allow mistakes.** Research shows that allowing mistakes boosts students’ confidence and problem-solving abilities. Mistakes can become valuable

⁹ <https://www.opencolleges.edu.au/informed/features/30-things-you-can-do-to-promote-creativity-in-your-classroom/>, accessed 6 May 2025.

learning tools and contribute to the discovery process, helping students learn important lessons.¹⁰ As Sir Ken Robinson stated: “If you’re not prepared to be wrong, you’ll never come up with anything original.”¹¹

9. **Encourage students to ask questions.** Create an environment where students feel encouraged to ask questions. Since some may hesitate out of fear that their questions may seem foolish, emphasize that there are no “stupid” questions. Be open to answering or, at least, discussing these questions with the class. Structure your classes to foster curiosity and exploration.
10. **Recognize that creativity boosts confidence.** A key goal of effective teaching is to help students take ownership of their own learning. This might be achieved, for instance, by letting them design a project where they can utilize their creative abilities and collaborate with others. This empowers students to take responsibility for their own learning process.
11. **Encourage curiosity.** Try to see the world from your students’ perspective. Think of what matters to them, what interests and motivates them. Draw inspiration from their lives and identify what sparks their curiosity. As William Arthur Ward said, “curiosity is the wick in the candle of learning.”¹²
12. **Make classes multidisciplinary.** Whenever possible, create lessons that encourage students to apply knowledge from various fields. In translation classes, this can be achieved by using texts on diverse topics and from diverse subject fields, allowing students to connect concepts across disciplines.
13. **Consider multiple intelligences.** Creativity engages different areas of the brain, and there are various types of intelligences, as outlined by Howard Gardner.¹³ Allow students to utilize their individual strengths when tackling problems, as this can lead to surprising and innovative outcomes.
14. **Understand that creativity is crucial for students’ future success.** Since the job market is constantly evolving, it is likely that in the future students will work in jobs that do not yet exist. To prepare them for this, encourage them to be creative and innovative when faced with challenges.

The present-day education system must acknowledge that the traditional methods of teaching, where educators deliver information for students to memorize and later recall during tests, are no longer sufficient for preparing young people for their future.

¹⁰ Some interesting ideas of how to turn mistakes to our advantage can be found at: <https://www.opencolleges.edu.au/informed/features/the-value-of-mistakes-should-it-matter-how-long-a-student-take-to-learn/>.

¹¹ Quotation from Ken Robinson’s TED Talk: “How Schools Kill Creativity”, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iG9CE55wbtY>.

¹² <https://www.brainyquote.com/topics/curiosity>.

¹³ Descriptions of the seven distinct intelligences identified by Gardner can be found in the book “Multiple Intelligences” (2006, Perseus-Basic Books). Brief descriptions available at: <http://www.tecweb.org/styles/gardner.html>.

The rapid changes in society and technological advancements require new approaches to education that foster creativity and problem-solving skills. The challenge facing public education today is to integrate more creative learning at all levels.

4. Fostering creativity in translation classroom

In recent years, creativity has become an increasingly important focus in translator education. As the discipline moves away from rigid frameworks of equivalence and fidelity, educators are beginning to acknowledge translation as a creative activity. Encouraging creative thinking is vital for preparing students to meet the challenges of real-world translation, especially when tasks involve cultural sensitivity, stylistic flexibility, or multimodal content. Below are certain teaching approaches that develop students' creative abilities alongside their linguistic and technical competencies.

1. Open-ended, genre-varied translation tasks

Rather than resorting to conventional translation tasks that stress direct equivalence, a more creative alternative involves using open-ended tasks from diverse genres, e.g. poetry, advertising, children's literature, etc., which naturally require imaginative solutions. Kussmaul (2000, p. 35) observes that such texts "require the translator to make interpretative decisions and to exercise aesthetic judgment," thus enhancing students' creative thinking. Letting students select from various texts or versions further boosts their involvement in the creative process.

2. Transcreation

Incorporating transcreation – a blend of translation, creative writing, and cultural adaptation – can sharpen students' creative and cross-cultural skills. Especially relevant in marketing contexts, this approach shifts the focus from literal meaning to emotional or persuasive impact. Pedersen (2014, p. 36) asserts that transcreation fosters "creative autonomy and cultural awareness". Activities might include adapting slogans, brand names or web content to different cultural markets, helping students to balance fidelity and communicative impact.

3. Constraints may fuel creativity

Interestingly, constraints such as word count, rhyme, or stylistic imitation can actually boost creativity by pushing students to find inventive solutions. Drawing from literary translation, Boase-Beier (2006, p. 51) notes that these limitations activate problem-solving and innovation. For instance, translating a poem while preserving both meter and meaning can generate rich classroom dialogue about creative trade-offs.

4. Collaborative translation

Group projects, peer feedback, and role-based teamwork allow students to explain, challenge, and refine their creative choices. Kiraly (2000, p. 110) emphasizes that collaborative environments help creativity emerge through dialogue and reflection rather than individual inspiration. Digital platforms like Google Docs or Trados Live allow students to co-translate in real time or asynchronously, fostering shared responsibility and deeper learning.

5. Multimodal and intersemiotic translation

Tasks involving multimodal translation – such as subtitling, audio description, or visual storytelling – broaden students’ understanding of what translation entails. These tasks require the integration of verbal, visual, and auditory elements. O’Sullivan (2013, p. 25) argues that such tasks push students to engage in complex creative problem-solving across modes of communication. Assignments like writing subtitles for silent films or adapting comic strips invite both creative experimentation and critical analysis.

6. Creativity journals

Asking students to keep creativity journals or reflection logs helps them become more conscious of their decision-making during translation. These reflections allow students to assess their choices and consider alternative strategies. According to Robinson (2003, p. 106), reflection “moves creativity from being an unconscious or random act to a structured, analyzable process”. Teachers can support this with rewarding risk-taking, originality, and justified departures from literal meaning.

7. Gamification and creative challenges

Integrating game-like elements – such as timed translation sprints, text-based puzzles, or “translation duels” – can make learning more engaging while fostering creative spontaneity. Malmkjær (2004, p. 42) notes that games “can reduce anxiety and foster linguistic creativity, especially in early-stage learners”. For instance, “bad translation” games, where students intentionally mistranslate texts for humorous effect, spark discussions on meaning and interpretation.

5. Creativity in translation classroom: humour and the art of punning

As already implied, translation classes in the 21st century, whether held in traditional settings or online, should aim to be not just informative – providing students with the necessary knowledge and skills to succeed in the translation market – but also engaging, memorable, and designed to spark students’ creativity.

One way to encourage creativity in the translation classroom is by incorporating humour. Research in neuroscience has shown that humour stimulates the brain’s dopamine reward system, which plays a vital role in both motivation towards goals

and long-term memory, as demonstrated by cognitive studies (Mobbs et al., 2003; Shohamy and Adcock, 2010). Furthermore, educational research indicates that humour, when used appropriately, can be a powerful tool for enhancing information retention in students of all ages (Banas et al., 2011).

Thus, the advantages of including humour in translation activities are significant, as it can boost memorization, improve information retention, stimulate creativity, and help develop a positive classroom environment. In light of this, below is one idea for a humour-using translation task that might be implemented in translation classroom. It requires students to creatively translate pun-containing slogans and it can be easily adapted for different student age groups and skill levels. The translations were produced by 2nd year students enrolled in the BA programme in English Philology at the University of Rzeszów.

Table 1. Examples of students' creative translations of puns.

Original pun-containing text	Students' creative translations	Comments on the translations
Cutting (h)edge <i>[an advert of a highly advanced machine for cutting hedges]</i>	– Najwyższa pora przyciąć krzaczora – Wykosimy konkurencję	The original pun plays on the expression “cutting edge” (modern and advanced) and “cutting” as in trimming hedges. In the Polish version, the phrase “Najwyższa pora przyciąć krzaczora” (It’s high time to trim the bush) cleverly shifts the “cutting” aspect to a playful image of trimming bushes, while the rhyme and the augmentative form of “bush” add to the humour of the phrase. “Wykosimy konkurencję” alludes to a competitive edge, meaning “we’ll mow down the competition”, which still ties in with the concept of cutting, while applying a well-known Polish idiom.
When in Rome...have a burger <i>[a heading of an article about fast food industry invading Italy]</i>	– Przybyłem, zobaczyłem, na burgera się skusiłem – Wszystkie drogi prowadzą do... Burger Kinga	The first translation plays on the famous “Veni, vidi, vici” (I came, I saw, I conquered) phrase by replacing “conquered” with “had a burger”, effectively subverting the solemn tone of the original quote with a humorous take. The second translation, “Wszystkie drogi prowadzą do... Burger Kinga” (All roads lead to... Burger King), is a play on the popular saying “All roads lead to Rome”, skilfully adapted to the context of fast food.
Oil’s well that ends well <i>[a heading of an article about oil fields in Kazakhstan]</i>	– Kto pod kim dołki kopie, ten zarabia na ropie – Kazahstan ropą płynący – Kazahstan postawił (k)ropę nad i	The first translation uses the Polish idiom “kopać pod kimś dołki” (literally: digging pits under someone) meaning conspiring against someone, and merges it with the idea of oil drilling, thus creating an inventive mix. The second, “Kazahstan ropą płynący” (Kazakhstan flowing with oil), cleverly alludes to the expression “a land flowing with milk and honey”, at the same time reflecting Kazakhstan’s oil-rich landscape. The last translation, “Kazahstan postawił (k)ropę nad i”, humorously integrates the idea of “dotting the i’s” into oil drilling. The clever inclusion of the word “kropa” (augmentative form of “dot”) and “ropa” (“oil”) showcases the inventive manipulation of language.

<p>For a few pounds you can lose a few [advertisement for a slimming course]</p>	<p>– Za piątaka zrobisz sobie sześciopaka – Odchudzimy Ciebie, a nie Twój portfel</p>	<p>The first translation transforms the concept of weight loss into a clever play on words, where “piątaka” (five zlotys) suggests a minimal investment for a toned “sześciopak” (six-pack abs). The second translation, which literally means “we’ll slim you down and not your wallet”, plays on the idea of losing weight at an affordable price, which is an amusing twist on the original.</p>
<p>We’ll give you sound advice [hi-fi shop advertisement]</p>	<p>– Doradzimy ci śpiewająco – Będziesz nam dźwięczny</p>	<p>Both translations creatively use wordplay related to sound. “Doradzimy ci śpiewająco” (We’ll advise you melodiously) incorporates “singing” into the idea of giving good advice. “Będziesz nam dźwięczny” uses the word which means “melodious” but at the same time produces immediate associations with the word “wdzięczny” meaning “grateful”, thus creating an innovative pun.</p>
<p>Marriage isn’t a word, but a sentence [a joke]</p>	<p>– Małżeństwo to nie sakrament, ale pokuta – Małżeństwo to nie zawiasy, ale dożywocie</p>	<p>These translations stand out by blending humour and dark irony. The first one uses “pokuta” (penance) as a play on the concept of “punishment” in marriage, while the second one, “Małżeństwo to nie zawiasy, ale dożywocie” (Marriage is not parole, but life imprisonment), uses a legal metaphor to convey the humorous (and grim) idea of the lifetime commitment in marriage.</p>
<p>We’ll give you food for thought [restaurant advertisement]</p>	<p>– Strawa dla brzucha i ducha – Nakarmimy ciało i umysł</p>	<p>These translations playfully merge the concept of nourishment for both the body and mind. “Strawa dla brzucha i ducha” (Food for the stomach and soul) creatively keeps the connection between physical and intellectual nourishment intact, while “Nakarmimy ciało i umysł” (We will feed your body and mind) cleverly emphasizes the dual focus of the advertisement.</p>
<p>B(r)ea(s)t cancer [cancer awareness campaign]</p>	<p>– Pier(w) si w walce z rakiem</p>	<p>This translation shows creativity by transforming the English pun into a Polish wordplay using the words “pierwsi” (the first) and “piersi” (breasts), expressing the idea of being first in the fight against breast cancer. The clever use of “w” in “pier(w)si” skilfully mimics the original structure while focusing on the battle against cancer.</p>
<p>Becoming a vegan is a huge missed steak [an Internet meme]</p>	<p>– Weganizm to stek bzdur – Chcesz być wegańską divą? Porzuć wszelkie mięswo.</p>	<p>The first translation, “Weganizm to stek bzdur” (literally: Veganism is a steak of nonsense), uses a well-known Polish idiom meaning “a load of nonsense”, thus expressing critique of veganism as a concept. The second translation (literally: Do you want to be a vegan diva? Give up all the meat) humorously comments on the vegan trend with a playful call to abandon meat, and it incorporates the rhyme and the augmentative form of the word “meat”, adding to the overall humour of the phrase. However, although certainly creative, it fails to capture the criticism of veganism present in the original.</p>
<p>Buy our pizza – we knead the dough [advertisement of a pizza place]</p>	<p>– Ciast-to pieniądz – Apetyt rośnie w miarę pieczenia</p>	<p>These adaptations play on the word “dough” as both a literal ingredient for pizza and a metaphor for money. “Ciast-to pieniądz” (Dough is money) cleverly alludes to the phrase “czas to pieniądz” (“time is money”) and ties the idea of making pizza dough to the concept of</p>

		making money, while “Apetyt rośnie w miarę pieczenia” (The appetite rises with baking) alludes to the idiom “the appetite comes with eating” and it focuses on the rising anticipation, further enhancing the pun.
Our products suck <i>[Hoover advertisement]</i>	– Pora na sprzątanie – włącz ssanie – Nasze produkty wciągają	These translations use wordplay around the vacuum cleaner’s function (“suck”) while keeping it humorous. “Pora na sprzątanie – włącz ssanie” (Time to clean – turn on the suction) directly references the vacuuming action while using the rhyme, whereas “Nasze produkty wciągają” (Our products suck you in) plays with the dual meaning of “suck” – both as suction and as something engaging or attractive.

The above translations can be considered creative since they not only retain the humour and essence of the original puns but also adapt them to the nuances of the Polish language and culture. The students have successfully handled wordplay, idiomatic expressions, and cultural references to produce catchy, relevant, and amusing translations that work within the Polish linguistic framework. Prior to introducing this type of activity, it is important to clearly communicate to students the need to use their creativity, suggest different solutions, consider various perspectives, and think outside the box. Translation instructors need to help students understand that translation does not have a single correct answer, nor is it a task with a fixed solution that they must “match.” On the contrary, students should recognize that translation often offers multiple possible solutions, and educators should be open to accepting various versions.

A particular advantage of such creativity-boosting activities is that there is no “answer key” and multiple versions are acceptable. By offering translation trainees the chance to work with texts that involve wordplay and humour, educators can encourage them to view translation challenges not just as problems to solve, but as interesting sources of entertainment and valuable creativity boosters.

6. Conclusion

As already stated, translation can be considered a creative activity. It might be viewed as “recreation” (Kussmaul, 1995) because, rather than rendering the source text into the target language in an automatic, mechanical way, it entails that the translator creates a text that would be equivalent to the source one, but would also differ from it in many respects and involve new elements, non-existent in the original text. Hence, creativity here is linked to this new nature of the final product (Kussmaul, 1995, p. 121).

In the area of education in general, and translator training in particular, teachers can be considered the “idea people”. Their main responsibility is to prepare students for life beyond the educational institution. In an era of rapid technological

development and uncertainty about the future, one way to ensure students' success is by nurturing their out-of-the-box thinking. This will help them not only survive but thrive in a world of constant change. At the same time, it is essential that teachers recognize the immense creative potential within every individual. As Adair (2007, p. 80) insightfully claims:

“We have all been given minds capable of creative thinking and there is no going back on that. So we are more than halfway there. We just have to believe that there are words and music in the air, so to speak, if we tune in our instruments to the right wavelengths. They will come in their own time and place. Our task is to be ready for them. For inspiration, like chance, favours the prepared mind”.

Therefore, creativity in translation teaching should not be viewed as a luxury or merely an add-on, but as a central pedagogical goal. The tasks and activities discussed in this paper demonstrate that creativity can be taught, fostered, and assessed in structured and meaningful ways. These methods not only prepare students for the multifaceted realities of professional translation but also empower them to become reflective, flexible, and autonomous translators. As translation increasingly intersects with digital media, marketing, and global communication, the value of creativity in translator education is likely to grow.

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