Journal of Gifted Education and Creativity
10(2), 127-130, June 2023
e-ISSN: 2149- 1410
jgedc.org dergipark.org.tr/jgedc

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Research Article

An interview with Todd Lubart : creativity and contemporary concerns

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Article Info

Received: 8 August 2022
Accepted: 28 June 2023
Online: 30 June 2023

Keywords
Todd Lubart
Creativity
Interview with Todd Lubart

Abstract

Todd Lubart is an important scientist known worldwide for his work on creativity. We asked him questions on important issues related to creativity and he answered sincerely. We would like to state that this interview contains important codes for researchers and practitioners study on the field of creativity.

To cite this article:

Shaughnessy, M.F., & Phelps, C. (2023). An interview with Todd Lubart : Creativity and contemporary concerns. *Journal of Gifted Education and Creativity, 10*(2), 143-146.

Michael Shaughnessy and Connie Phelps: Dr. Lubart, what is your current definition of creativity?

Todd Lubart: Creativity can be conceived as an ability to produce content (ideas, work, etc) that is both original (for the producer and more generally for a wider audience) , and valuable (meaningful, responding to a need, adding something to what already is available). This basic definition can cover creativity at the intrapsychic level, little c level in contexts with family or friends, professional level, and eminent level (which is an extension usually if the professional domain creativity).

Michael Shaughnessy and Connie Phelps: What advantages or benefits does EPoC testing offer as an assessment instrument?

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Todd Lubart: EPoC , the Evaluation of Potential Creativity, allows two main processes (divergent-exploratory thinking and convergent-integrative thinking) to be assessed in a set of productive domains. Currently, we have the graphic-artistic, verbal-literary, social, scientific, mathematical; musical, and body-movement domains available or being finalized. Thus, there is the possibility to assess the two main thinking modes , by domain. The structure of the test involves two measurement points for each domain, to get a stable assessment. Finally, there is a form A and form B, to allow for pre - and post-test studies, or developmental studies. Our studies indicate that the task factor structure is stable across several different samples from various countries. The battery can be used as a research tool, and also as a detection tool to identify the creative gifted, provided that there are norms available in a given context, usually by country., and a diagnostic tool to provide information on students' ability profiles, for educational exercises and indic=vidualized pedadgogical approaches.

Michael Shaughnessy and Connie Phelps: What qualifications or training do test administrators need?
Todd Lubart: EPoC administrators need to be professionals in the education, psychology or affiliated research domains. There is no specific training required, as all the details are provided in the manual.

Michael Shaughnessy and Connie Phelps: What time commitment does test administration require?
Todd Lubart: To assess one domain (such as graphic-artistic, form A) , a child will be engaged in testing for approximately 25 minutes during two sessions, spaced about one week apart. This Is the maximum testing time, if the child uses the full time allowed for each task. Each domain has a similar format. In order to test together the graphic and verbal domains, considered the base domains, the child will be seen twice (50 minutes each time), with one week apart.

Michael Shaughnessy and Connie Phelps: What ages are appropriate for EPoC?
Todd Lubart: Children from 5 years old to young adults (high school, or university, such as 18 years old).

Michael Shaughnessy and Connie Phelps: What are some of the problems associated with a) measuring it and b) assessing who has creative potential?
Todd Lubart: Measuring creativity has often been seen as problematic because there was a confusion between creative performance (real-world achievement) and creative potential. EPoC focuses on potential to be creative. Also, there is debate on whether creativity is a general , or set of more domain specific abilities. EPoC provides measurement by domain. There is no general creativity score. Finally, there is an inherent complexity to measure creativity with a standard scoring system, as the task is open-ended and therefore limitless new answers can be proposed. In EPoC , we measure the number of ideas (fluency) in the divergent-exploratory tasks, as a proxy for the capacity to think originally in the divergent mode. For the convergent-integrative mode, the creative synthesis tasks, EPoC provides judges with prototype exemplars that get 1 to 7 on the scoring system, and judges need to see which exemplar is similar in kind to the answer produced by the testee.

Michael Shaughnessy and Connie Phelps: What is the difference between divergent exploratory thinking and convergent integrative thinking?
Todd Lubart: Divergent-exploratory thinking is the process that leads to many different ideas, it involves an expansive mode of generative cognition. Convergent-integrative thinking is the new synthesis, involving the capacity to bring elements together in new way, leading a single response. The creative process involves both processes that combine in a dynamic way.

Michael Shaughnessy and Connie Phelps: Who developed the EPOC- Evaluation of Potential Creativity and where was it developed?
Todd Lubart: It was developed in France, based on twenty years of basic research with children and adolescents. The authors are: Todd Lubart (Professor of Psychology, Université Paris Cité, France), Maud Besançon (Professor of psychology, Université Rennes 2, France), and Baptiste Barbout, (Professor of Psychology, University Catholique de Louvain, Belgium). During test development, all the co-authors were in our Parisian lab.

Michael Shaughnessy and Connie Phelps: We understand that there are 4 main domains- what are they and how were they chosen?

Todd Lubart: In fact, there are in total 7 domains: graphic-artistic, verbal-literary, social problem solving, mathematics, scientific, music, body-movement. These domains map onto major fields of creative endeavor in the larger society, and relate to professional domains. Of course, the graphic and verbal domains are the most often measured, considered as the "base " domains.

Michael Shaughnessy and Connie Phelps: After identified, how can teachers best enhance and develop the potential of students?

Todd Lubart: The EPoC test allows a student to be situated compared to other students, and to have a personal profile of strengths and weaknesses, related to : divergent-exploratory thinking, and convergent-integrative thinking, by productive domain (graphic, verbal, social, etc). This initial information can allow teachers to propose useful training activities to the students, activities to reinforce skills in divergent or integrative processing , and by domain. Also, as a diagnostic tool, teachers and students can measure their progress on creative thinking.

Michael Shaughnessy and Connie Phelps: We understand that there are 2 forms- tell us about them. There are 2 forms, form A and B. they are essentially identical, for example, each form has graphic divergent-exploratory and convergent-integrative. The only difference is that the stimuli are specific. For example, in one task a banana shape is used, in another task, it is a carrot shape. In a literary creation task, there are three characters to include. The details concerning each character are different in Form A and B.

Michael Shaughnessy and Connie Phelps: Is there ongoing research on this test?

Todd Lubart: Yes, several studies have used EPoC as a pre - and post- test measure to see if a school program impacted children or adolescents' creativity. This is illustrated by an OECD study in more than 10 countries (Vincent-Lancrin et al,).

Also, we have several studies using EPoC that show how it relates to the WISC, and examines the factor structure of the battery in various cultural - language groups. Finally, we are continuing to finalize the development of musical, scientific, and body-movement test domains.

Michael Shaughnessy and Connie Phelps: What have we neglected to ask?

Todd Lubart: PoC is currently being developed in several countries, with translated versions in progress in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Slovenian, German, Turkish, Croatian, Russian, Chinese and others. There are also norms being collected for these versions.

Michael Shaughnessy and Connie Phelps: Where can one find more information on this test?

Todd Lubart: The battery is available at : www.hogrefe.fr

It is possible to contact me at : todd.lubart@parisdescartes.fr

There are publications about the test, available mostly in English and French.

Michael Shaughnessy and Connie Phelps: Thanks

Autobiography of Todd Lubart

Todd Lubart is Professor of Psychology at the Université Paris Descartes, and former Member of the Institut Universiatire de France. Affilation: Université Paris Descartes, France and Laboratoire Adaptations Travail-Individu (LATI) He received his PhD from Yale University and was an invited professor at the Paris School of Management (ESCP). His research focuses on creativity, its identification and development within the multivariate, investment approach, creative potential and creative giftedness, the creative process and the effect of context on creative work. He is Director of the scientific laboratory “LATI” (Laboratoire Adaptations Travail-Individu); Todd Lubart has been in charge of several research grants on creativity (such as a study of creative giftedness) and has organized international scientific congresses on

creativity. He is author or co-author of approximately 100 scientific reports (journal papers, book chapters) on creativity, including Defying the crowd : Cultivating creativity in a culture of conformity (NY: Free Press, 1995), Psychologie de la créativité (The psychology of creativity, Paris: Colin, 2003),Enfants Exceptionnels, Rosny: Bréal) (Exceptional Children). Finally, Todd Lubart, with Maud Besançon, and Baptiste Barbot is author of EPoC (Paris:Hogrefe), a new measure of creative potential in children (Web 1).

Biodata of Author

Prof.Dr. **Michael F. Shaughnessy** is currently Professor of Educational Studies at Eastern New Mexico University in Portales, New Mexico USA. He has served as Editor in Chief of Gifted Education International and can be reached electronically at Michael.Shaughnessy@enmu.edu. His orcid i.d. is 0000 0002 1877 1319. His current research interests include talent development and intellectual assessment as well as the role of personality in giftedness, talent and creativity.

Prof. Dr. **Connie Phelps** directs the Gifted, Talented, and Creative Special Education program, teaches gifted program courses, and supervises PK-12 gifted practica experiences. Prior to her appointment as assistant professor in 2004, she taught middle school language arts and social science classes for diverse gifted learners, provided high school gifted consultation services, and delivered staff development for elementary school staff in USD 259 Wichita Public Schools. She received her MS in Special Education-Gifted, Talented, and Creative from Emporia State University, MEd from East Texas State University, and EdD from the University of Arkansas. Phelps's contributions in the field of gifted education include serving in the Kansas Association for Gifted, Talented and Creative Board of Directors; being the National Association for Gifted Children Professional Development Network Chair; being selected as a World Council for Gifted and Talented Children USA alternate delegate, and Future Problem-Solving Program International Board of Advisors. She leads site team accreditation visits for the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation. S

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