The Routledge Handbook
of Language and Creativity

Edited by Rodney H. Jones

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The Routledge Handbook of Language and Creativity provides an introduction to and survey of a wide range of perspectives on the relationship between language and creativity. Defining this complex and multifaceted field, this book introduces a conceptual framework through which the various definitions of language and creativity can be explored.

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The Routledge Handbook of Language and Creativity

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Foreword

This book underlines the remarkable extent and variety of current research into the domain of language and creativity. It does so in a series of chapters containing key questions, key data, key exemplifications of research methodologies, and key questions for the development of future research. The whole book illustrates powerfully the central importance of creativity research in interdisciplinary contexts across the humanities, social sciences, and sciences.

In the past century, and stretching back even further in time, the topic of creativity has tended to be seen and investigated as a matter of mind and cognition; to explore and explain creativity was to begin to try to unravel the minds of exceptional individuals, to utilise mainly psychological research methods in pursuit of this, and to see individual creative outputs as exemplars of an essentialist and universal cognitive capacity. There is no denying the continuing value of this research, while it is likewise perverse to deny that there is no such thing as individual genius, or that there are no creative outputs that do not have an enduring value and transformative resonance within particular cultural contexts and particular value systems. This century is, however, witnessing an opening up of the topic of creativity to different research traditions, which in turn are playing a part in reconceptualising language and creativity, and in repositioning it in more interdisciplinary frameworks.

Central to this shift from psychological and more mentalistic approaches to creativity is the notion of discourse and of language as social discourse. Put simply, this focus means that creative language is not seen as separate from the social conditions of its production, from the people who use it, or from the technologies used to produce it (Jones, 2012). Creativity used to be seen as something to unlock from private minds; it is now seen as something that is co-constructed in interaction and dialogue, as operating in groups as well as in individuals, as involving the receiver as well as the producer of creative entities, and as occupying a place not simply in artistic, aesthetic, or literary realms, but in a wide variety of different forms of communication.

Such an orientation allows creativity to be seen as an everyday phenomenon manifested in a range of quotidian activities in spoken, written, and multimodal forms; it also provides, within the institution of 'literature' and its culturally constructed definitions, a more inclusive framework for creative writing, offering a template for discussions of creativity in language learning and teaching that do not simply locate the sources of creativity in individual cognition or limit creative writing only to conventional genres.

The word 'creative' does not now only collocate with 'writing', or 'literature', or 'art', or 'poetic'; it collocates – as richly illustrated in chapters of this volume – with an astonishing variety of words and concepts such as 'silence', 'business', 'professional', 'media practices', 'classroom learning', 'Internet', 'public relations', 'architecture', 'digital',

'scientific', 'personal relationships', 'improvisation', 'computational', 'humour', 'industries', and 'play'. And in the conjunction of creativity with language play, creativity is not only allied with a post-romantic preoccupation with serious production, but is also properly consonant in both a literal and metaphoric sense with re-creation.

The twenty-first-century theoretical and practical positioning of creativity and linguistic creativity research in relation to social contexts of use, and to discourses of production and reception, raises significant questions. We are asking not simply: what is creativity? We are asking: how is creativity appreciated and valued? Are we talking only of high-quality extraordinary creative outputs, or can we adopt a more democratic stance to more ordinary creative outputs? And who makes the valuation anyway and with what criteria? Are the values only aesthetic or social, or political, or shared collective and community values? Can definitions of 'creativity' be the sole province of creative individuals, or do definitions need to include all of the co-participants in creative outputs and receptions? How far can we define creative language only in relation to its sociopoetic functions, and how should we and how can we, in the light of substantial research in sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and socio-cultural discourse analysis, embrace the ways in which *all* kinds of language can function to perform creative acts? Here, we are seeing creativity not only as 'language', but also as what people *do* with language and the creative social actions that they take with it to solve a problem, to re-accent a relationship, to produce a new kind of critical and subversive blog, to use colour, or photographs, or a moving image to enhance a job application, to develop a business strategy that challenges existing practice, to co-create with a team of fellow carers new ways of restructuring interactions with patients in a care home, in which previously more predictable or routine actions obtained, or to generate laughter and humour by surprising word play or a picture in digital media such as Twitter or Instagram (to offer but a few random examples).

Sometimes, creative actions such as these are bold and innovative, and involve overt individual displays; sometimes, they involve more incremental and glacial shifts in collective behaviours. To discount this more covert action as uncreative is to narrow and limit definitions of creativity, or to isolate it within only a single exclusive and possibly elitist sphere. The aesthetic and the social are not dissolvable in this way. As the Czech textual theorist Jan Mukařovský (1970 [1936]: 16) puts it, 'the attitude which the individual takes toward reality and to the reality depicted by the artistic object . . . is determined by the social relationships in which the individual is involved'. In other words, value is context – and it is culture-specific, and cannot simply be a universal or timeless or essentialist quality. The ways in which we see creativity are constantly being reshaped, sometimes rapidly and sometimes more imperceptibly, by new cultural, societal, and technological forces, and this is even more the case in an age of ever-more-ubiquitous digital media practices.

This volume illustrates the best of the many approaches to creativity described in the preceding paragraphs (as well as others not mentioned or mentioned only indirectly). Creativity and the challenges inherent to better understanding its importance are defining features of our times. *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Creativity* embraces creative writing, literary stylistic approaches, conventional analysis of literary tropes, creativity in everyday discourses, creativity and cognition, computational creativity, multilingual creativity, creativity in language learning and teaching, creative Internet use, translation and creative language use, and creativity within and across different modes and media. And it embraces, of course, numerous other investigative and methodological foci, including substantial empirical data to provide the basis for yet richer theory and description.

The volume supplies summaries and synopses, analogies and arguments, contrasts and comparisons; it provides templates for research; it produces interdisciplinary perspectives; it points to histories and futures. It constitutes a resource for creativity studies that will inspire, impact, challenge, and endure for many years.

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Acknowledgements

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Abbreviations

AAWP	Australasian Association of Writing Programs
AHRC	Arts and Humanities Research Council (United Kingdom)
AI	artificial intelligence
AMV	anime music video
API	application programming interface
ARC	Australian Research Council
ASD	attention-seeking device
AWP	Association of Writers and Writing Programs (United States)
BNC	British National Corpus
CANCODE	Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English
CC	computational creativity
CCWWP	Canadian Creative Writers and Writing Programs
CIT	conceptual integration theory
CLT	communicative language teaching
CMC	computer-mediated communication
CMT	conceptual metaphor theory
CVC	consonant-vowel-consonant
EACWP	European Association of Creative Writing Programmes
EAP	English for academic purposes
EEG	electroencephalography
EFL	English as a foreign language
ELF	English as a lingua franca
ELO	Electronic Literature Organization
ESP	English for specific purposes
FYW	first-year writing
GOFAI	good old-fashioned AI
HAHAcronym	Humorous Agent for Humorous Acronyms
IPA	International Phonetic Alphabet
IWD	interactive written discourse
JAPE	Joke Analysis and Production Engine
LCC	Language Creation Conference
LIBJOG	LightBulb Joke Generator
LLR	log likelihood ratio
MFA	Master of Fine Arts degree
MIP	metaphor identification procedure
MIPVU	metaphor identification procedure Vrije Universiteit

NAWE	National Association of Writers in Education (United Kingdom)
RED	Reading Experience Database
SCE	Singaporean colloquial English
SFL	systemic functional linguistics
SMS	Short Message Service
STANDUP	System to Augment Non-speakers' Dialog Using Puns
TAP	think-aloud protocol
TTCT	Torrance Tests for Creative Thinking
WAC	writing across the curriculum
WID	writing in the disciplines
ZBB	Zompist Bulletin Board

Part I

Dimensions of language and creativity

1

Everyday language creativity

Janet Maybin

Introduction and definitions

In the context of a wider preoccupation with creativity in everyday social life, there has been increased interest among linguistic and discourse scholars in everyday language creativity, for example playful and humorous discourse, wit and irony, and artful performance, both online and off. There is, however, no clear-cut agreement about exactly what counts as creativity in this context. Some researchers focus primarily on formal poetic techniques; some take more multimodal or dynamic approaches; others are most interested in the interactional functions of language creativity and its potential for social critique (see Jones, Chapter 3; Sawyer, Chapter 4). In this chapter, I trace the emergence of a number of distinctive traditions of work that conceptualise and define everyday language creativity in different ways. I start with early twentieth-century Russian formalist ideas about poetics, which were incorporated in two subsequent streams of work in the second half of the twentieth century: first, in work on performance and critique, mainly within linguistic anthropology; and secondly, in more recent, interactionally focused studies in linguistics. Both of these streams of work have addressed sociocultural factors, with some researchers drawing on the Bakhtinian sociohistorical approaches that emerged around the 1930s in Russia and which were disseminated in the West from the 1960s. More recently, the post-structuralist turn in language studies has stimulated interest in more fleeting traces of creativity and their sociocultural consequences, and in creative links across languages, media, and cultural traditions, especially in multilingual and online contexts.

In one sense, a trajectory can be traced from the formalist focus on individual texts, through more contextualised studies of language creativity in performance and situated interaction, to current interests in its processual, emergent, and intertextual manifestations. However, all of these approaches continue, in many ways, to underpin contemporary work, and researchers often draw on a combination of these ideas, according to their interest. For the formalists, language creativity is associated with novel, striking linguistic techniques that draw attention to language itself as a form and a medium (Jakobson, 1960). Within linguistic anthropology, poetic verbal performance is also seen as foregrounded and reflexive, but performances emerge through the interaction between performer and audience, and are evaluated emically in relation to local values. Interactional linguistic approaches to language creativity have also expanded formalist definitions to embrace its sociocultural effects, for example how creative uses of language foster intimacy, negotiate identity, or convey social

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critique. Within more recent post-structuralist work, novelty and surprise are still important criteria, but here they are located not so much within the boundaries of individual texts as in processes of intertextuality, recontextualisation, and translation.

Formalist and sociohistorical roots

This section will briefly review two very different approaches, which have both provided key reference points for work on everyday language creativity. First, the Russian formalists and the Prague school of linguistics in the early twentieth century laid the foundations for the linguistic analysis of language creativity. Secondly, while not explicitly framed as a discussion of creativity, the Bakhtinian sociohistorical approach to language, which emerged in Russia around the same time, has also provided foundational ideas and concepts.

It is perhaps not surprising that the formalists, who set out a powerful and enduring agenda for literary studies and stylistics in Europe and North America, should also provide a starting point for work on vernacular language creativity. Ironically, they themselves had little interest in everyday language, other than as a contrastive foil against which they identified the special devices that they saw as producing literary language. Their initial interest was in the process of 'defamiliarisation', whereby writers make objects unfamiliar or 'strange' through the artful use of comparison, imagery, repeated rhymes and rhythms, and the manipulation of story into plot. Shklovsky (1917) argued that these artistic devices interrupt and block the audience's usual assumptions, surprising them into more challenging and lengthy acts of perception, which produce a new, fresh perspective on the subject matter. Ideas about defamiliarisation are echoed in the Prague schools of linguistics' discussion of 'foregrounding', or the precise ways in which words or phrases are made to stand out through an intentional aesthetic distortion of sounds, rhythm, and rhyme (Mukařovský, 1932). Jakobson, a central member of both the Russian formalist and Prague school who later brought their ideas to the United States, developed work on defamiliarisation and foregrounding further in his analysis of parallelism and deviation, again focusing on the creative manipulation of text. *Parallelism* (unexpected regularity) is based on the principle of equivalence at various linguistic levels, and can involve word repetition, alliteration and rhyme, or parallel grammatical structures. *Deviation* (unexpected irregularity) involves some aspect of language diverging from what is expected, for instance unconventional punctuation, metaphor, or genre mixing.

The formalists acknowledged that defamiliarisation and foregrounding can occur outside literature. For example, Shklovsky (1917) stated that defamiliarisation could be found in riddles and nonsense language, and indeed wherever there was language form. This point is more fully theorised in Jakobson's (1960) functional theory of language use. Jakobson identified six language functions, including the *poetic function*, which he suggests is potentially present in all language use, but dominant in poetry, in which the signifier – language itself – is foregrounded through the sound and shape of words, syntactic patterning, or striking semantic connections. The poetic function can also be obvious in other contexts. For example, Jakobson discusses the use of rhyme and alliteration in the political slogan 'I like Ike', but on these occasions there is always some other, more important, language function foregrounded and the poetic function remains secondary. The other five functions of communication include the *emotive function* expressing the addressor's attitude towards what he or she is speaking about (foregrounded in the 'I like Ike' example), and the *conative function* orientated towards the addressee, expressed in the vocative or imperative forms.

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The *referential function* orients towards the subject matter and context; the *metalingual function* focuses on the code (for example questioning the meaning of a word); the *phatic function* establishes or prolongs communication. Jakobson's argument that all language, including literature, is amenable to linguistic analysis and that the poetic function is always potentially available could be seen as opening the door for the study of vernacular language creativity. Moreover, as Pratt (1977) points out, the six functions themselves are not purely linguistic: the referential and emotive functions carry additional information, respectively, about the context and about the inner state of the addressor. Thus, although Jakobson himself did not develop this point, his functional model also seems to suggest a need for a more contextually sensitive approach.

In contrast to the mainly textual focus of formalist accounts, the work of Jakobson's Russian contemporary Bakhtin provides a much more sociohistorical theorisation of the inherently responsive and many-voiced nature of language use. Bakhtin, who both reacted against and was influenced by formalism and Marxism, argued that the aesthetics of language must have a social dimension. In the same way as an utterance is always co-authored by a speaker and listener, so a text or event becomes an aesthetic object through its contemplation as such by an author and a spectator, and is thus always essentially co-created (Bakhtin, 1923). Linguists seeking to develop more dynamic and sociohistorically grounded accounts of language creativity have drawn on Bakhtin's view of language as a tumultuous, conflicted phenomenon, whereby opposing centrifugal and centripetal forces continually open up possibilities for change (Bakhtin, 1935). Creativity emerges here not so much through linguistic deviation and parallelism, but through the exploitation of the heteroglossic dynamics of language use (see Jones, Chapter 3). Thus, for instance, speakers and writers may manipulate the intertextual connotations of particular words or phrases, or recontextualise voices from one context to another, or animate a struggle between an authoritative narrator and the viewpoint of a character. Significantly, this Bakhtinian conception of language creativity necessarily takes the researcher beyond an analysis of the immediate spoken or written text to pursue a more sociohistorical understanding of indexical associations and intertextual connections of voices, genres, and languages.

Bakhtin's (1935) insistence on the deep-reaching formal and semantic effects of intrinsic responsive and addressive impulses within the utterance is particularly relevant to what might be termed 'dialogic creativity' (see Sawyer, Chapter 4). For Bakhtin, meaning is not transmitted through language, but dialogically created between speaker and listener. Speakers may be creative in the manner in which they respond to a previous speaker, existing texts, or a prevailing genre, and they also display creativity in the ways in which they anticipate and pre-empt the response of an actual or implied audience. Dialogic relations are also evident between a speaker and the other voices that they may report or appropriate in creative ways, for example through what Bakhtin calls 'stylisation' whereby a voice is reproduced almost as if it were the speaker's own, but with a 'slight shadow of objectivation' that signals the presence of another voice (Bakhtin, 1984 [1929]: 189), or through more distinct separation of a reported voice in irony or parody. Between the two poles of explicit separation and complete appropriation, Bakhtin (1935) suggests there are a number of hybrid forms in which speakers signal evaluative accent (that is, stance or perspective) through various kinds of double voicing.

Bakhtinian ideas have influenced strands of work on creativity in the West since the 1970s and are particularly influential in more recent post-structuralist work discussed below. Before considering recent studies, however, I will examine two streams of work that emerged in the

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second half of the twentieth century: first, the study of vernacular verbal performance; and secondly, research on the functions of creativity in everyday conversation.

Performance and critique

Reacting against the structuralist linguistics that had dominated the first half of the twentieth century, a movement emerged in the 1960s and 1970s led by anthropologists and linguists who wanted to develop a broader, multidisciplinary approach to the study of language in society. This approach involved a shift in attention from the linguistic system to the study of language in use, situated in 'the flux and pattern of communicative events' (Hymes, 1977: 5). In this section, I focus on work by Hymes and other anthropologists on verbal performance, also referring to Goffman's dramaturgical analysis of everyday interaction and Labov's linguistic account of conversational narrative. While these scholars were not focusing directly on creativity as a phenomenon, their work on performance and narrative has been foundational for researchers looking at creativity in everyday language.

Goffman (1959, 1967), who was primarily a sociologist, uses 'performance' as a dramatic metaphor for people's presentation of themselves in a particular light to others, and to themselves, in the course of everyday social routines. His notions of 'framing', 'face', and 'frontstage and backstage behaviour' all involve speaker creativity. In terms of *framing*, Goffman argued that people tacitly agree (or may, on occasion, misunderstand) what is going on in a particular interaction, for instance, whether it constitutes a declaration of love, an argument, or an apology. Speakers may then strategically transform one frame into another, for example reframing an insult as a joke. *Face* refers to speakers' images of themselves and others as, for example, knowledgeable, clever, brave, or competent, and is projected by means of the way in which they take up a particular position, or 'line', in an ongoing interaction. People experience strong feelings connected with face and may be creative in defending their self-image or those of other people, for example through the use of indirectness or ambiguity, hedging claims, joking to neutralise an offensive remark, or ridiculing themselves to repair a social gaffe. Shifting his attention from individuals to groups, Goffman extended his dramatic metaphor in studies of the contrast between carefully managed collaborative *frontstage behaviour* by professional teams, for example in a hotel or hospital, and their *backstage behaviour* when the team relaxed, talked 'off record', and prepared the frontstage show.

Within anthropology, the notion of performance was more linguistically theorised as a particular kind of creative language event. For anthropologists, the aesthetics of verbal performances are contextually anchored, indexing local traditions of poetics and narrative, and so have to be researched within their cultural context. In Bauman's (1987: 8) definition of performance, there is an echo of Jakobson's poetic function, but also more emphasis on the evaluative role of the audience:

> In this sense of performance, the act of speaking is put on display, objectified, lifted out to a degree from its contextual surroundings, and opened up to scrutiny by an audience. Performance thus calls forth special attention to and heightened awareness of the act of speaking and gives licence to the audience to regard it and the performer with special intensity. Performance makes one communicatively accountable; it assigns to the audience the responsibility of evaluating the relative skill and effectiveness of the performer's accomplishment.

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Ethnographic work on verbal performance during the 1960s–1980s included Hymes' (1975, 1981) ethnopoetic research into Native American folktales, through which he hoped to make audible the voices and culture of disempowered people, and also studies by linguists and anthropologists of African American displays of oral virtuosity, such as sounding, signifying, and ritual insults (for example Abrahams, 1974; Kochman, 1973; Labov, 1972).

Emerging in the context of everyday language, oral performances mobilise culturally contingent interpretative frames (in Goffman's sense), within which they are understood and evaluated. These frames signal a particular genre (for example a 'shaggy dog story') and they also operate to set up the event *as* a performance, 'keyed' in conventional ways by specific features: figurative language; a special code (for example an archaic language); formal features, such as parallelism; special prosodic patterns and paralinguistic qualities; assertions; forumulae such as 'once upon a time . . . '; appeals to tradition; and disclaimers such as 'I'm not good at telling jokes, but . . . ' (Bauman, 1975). Paralleling Jakobson's description of the poetic function, Bauman (1992) argues that the potential for performance is always present within communication and that it may be more or less salient among the different functions of a communicative act, depending on how far the performer takes on responsibility for a verbal display. Particularly significant for research on everyday creativity is Hymes' (1975) notion of 'breakthrough into performance', which he describes as the moment when a speaker switches from ordinary everyday language into a more stylised, personally committed, and emotionally immersed genre. These switches may be brief, ranging through jokes or anecdotes to a 'fleeting breakthrough', as when a child shows off an esoteric word in talk with peers (Bauman, 1992: 44).

For Bauman and Briggs (1990), culture not only provides resources and reference points for performers, but also is itself emergent *through* performance. Performances, and their indexical links with other past speech events, draw attention to speech as social action: 'performances move the use of heterogeneous stylistic resources, context-sensitive meanings and conflicting ideologies into a reflexive arena where they can be examined critically' by performers, the audience, and the researcher (Bauman & Briggs, 1990: 60). Thus performances distil and highlight cultural practices and values, at the same time reflexively and critically driving the emergence of new knowledge and perspectives. Briggs and Bauman (1992) focus particularly on the intertextual aspects of performances and the dynamic process of entextualisation (identification of a stretch of discourse as an extractable text), transposition, and recontextualisation in a new setting. Such processes raise questions about the sociopolitical dynamics of creative language use, for example about people's differential access to texts and the different kinds of legitimacy to use or reuse them, how individuals gain these rights to particular modes of verbal display and to their transformation, and the social value attached to the texts themselves. Thus researchers working on verbal performance have addressed the possibilities it opens up for social critique: by the performer, in the context of the intensity and heightened awareness associated with such language events; by the audience, which evaluates the performance; and by the researcher, who is interested in sociopolitical dynamics. Thus, for example, Alim (2004) argues that hip hop's synergistic combination of speech, music, and art (closely linked to the African American oral tradition) serves to bind community, and reverses standard definitions of correctness and appropriateness to express resistance towards dominant culture (see also Morgan, 2009).

In addition to this substantial stream of work on verbal performance, the shift to functional approaches also produced seminal research in conversational narrative (Labov, 1972; Labov & Waletzky, 1967). Creativity here is involved both in turning an experience into a story and in utilising what Labov calls 'evaluative devices' to ensure that the story achieves

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maximum impact. Labov suggested that conversational narratives fulfil both a referential function through their temporally sequenced framework of abstract, orientation, complication, resolution, and coda, and an evaluative function, conveying a particular point. Through the evaluative function, the narrator presents a particular perspective, which is then also evaluated by the audience response. For example, when Labov asked adolescent African Americans to tell him about a dangerous situation that they had experienced, they portrayed the danger as impressively as possible, highlighting their own courage. The narrator achieves these evaluative effects by adding an explanation or additional description to stress a particular point (external evaluation), putting evaluative comments into the mouths of characters within the narrative (embedded evaluation), or using a variety of comparisons and intensifiers (gestures, sound effects, quantifiers, repetition), which provide emphasis and build up suspense within the story. As Labov (1972: 371) puts it: 'Evaluative devices say to us: this was terrifying, dangerous, wild, crazy; or amusing, hilarious and wonderful; more generally that it was strange, uncommon or unusual – that is, worth reporting.'

Interactional approaches

Towards the end of the twentieth century, a stream of work by linguists emerged that examines uses of literary-like language in everyday conversation, focusing on its interactional and cognitive effects. Tannen (1989) provides an early argument that techniques traditionally thought of as quintessentially literary are, in fact, ubiquitous in conversation (although see also Pratt, 1977, who challenged the distinction between poetic and everyday language, and Gates, 1988, on connections between the African American literary tradition and vernacular practices of signifying). Tannen (1989) focuses on conversational patterns of repetition, reported dialogue, and imagery, arguing that these contain the seeds of the more fully developed techniques found within poetry and literature. For instance, she draws on Bakhtin (1935) to argue that 'reported dialogue' is never simply repeated, but is essentially recreated by the new speaker, to put across a particular point, just as playwrights, filmmakers, and novelists create dialogue for their characters. For Tannen, the function of this vernacular creativity is to create various kinds of involvement. At the level of the music of language, repetitions of sounds, words, and phrases across conversational turns draw speakers into a rhythmic ensemble. At the same time, imagery and reported speech provide evocative detail that invokes scenarios and emotions, and draws speaker and listener together into meaning-making. She argues that this mutual involvement produces an aesthetic experience of coherence for speakers and listeners: an emotional sense of connectedness (through sharing the same world of discourse), and intellectual and emotional insights. Sawyer (2001; see also Chapter 4) also integrates interaction, affect, and aesthetics in his view of everyday conversation as collaboratively improvised (like theatre or jazz music) and potentially producing a peak experience pleasure, or 'flow', when skills and challenges are perfectly balanced (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

Tannen's ideas about the connections between vernacular and literary creativity are developed more fully by Carter (2004) in his argument that literary language can best be viewed as a series of clines, stretching from everyday usage and fleeting performance through to canonical literature. Carter builds on research by Crystal (1998) and Cook (2000), who suggested that popular verbal play such as jokes, riddles, or punning helps to establish rapport (Crystal, 1998), or can be used to create solidarity or antagonism, and to subvert the social order (Cook, 2000). Carter (2004), in his analysis of the Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English (CANCODE) comprising around 5 million words of

spoken interaction, found copious examples of repetition, wordplay, metaphor, idiom, and hyperbole. He suggests that such creativity falls into two categories: first, 'pattern-reforming', whereby people play with language in puns and invented words, and use metaphor and metonymy (the replacement of a word or phrase by another closely associated with it) to reshape ways of seeing; and secondly, language creativity can be 'pattern-reinforcing', for example in various forms of repetition and converging. While *pattern-reforming* echoes formalist foregrounding techniques, *pattern-reinforcing* may be more covert, emerging across related conversational turns in which speakers use each other's words and parallel syntactic structures, generally to signal affective convergence and a common viewpoint (cf. Tannen, 1989). Carter (2004) argues that both of these forms of creativity, which often occur together, facilitate rapport and are associated with more informal interactions between equals.

A number of other studies have focused on the effects of verbal creativity in everyday interaction to enhance solidarity and social identity. Norrick (2000) reports that repeated family stories serve to foster rapport and to confirm shared values. Maybin (2006) suggests that older children's heteroglossic conversational narratives explore and confirm age-appropriate practices and perspectives, and Mendoza-Denton (2008) reports how language games, ritual insults, and storytelling, together with the circulation of poetry notebooks, photos, and drawings, create shared memory in a Latina girls' gang, thus consolidating group identity. Drawing on a corpus of workplace talk, Holmes (2007) examines how the use of humour can foster workplace relationships, and can facilitate collaborative creative responses to challenges and problems. Holmes' reference to the enhancement of cognitive activity (in group problem solving) echoes the argument of Crystal (1998) and Cook (2000) for the potential of verbal play to enhance learning in educational contexts. Studies of second language acquisition have also pointed to the importance of verbal play in drawing attention to linguistic form and as a necessary part of advanced language proficiency (for example Bell, 2005; Cekaite & Aronsson, 2005; Lantolf, 1997; Tarone, 2000).

Consideration of the cognitive effects of language creativity has been influenced by Cook's (1994) argument that its 'schema refreshing' potential provokes creative speculation and encourages people to break out of established ways of thinking. Indeed, Cook (2000: 47) asserts that the most important evolutionary function of language may be 'the creation of imaginative worlds: whether lies, games, fictions or fantasies'. Cognitive functions of vernacular language creativity have been studied in particular through the examination of metaphor (see Hidalgo-Downing, Chapter 6). Linguists have drawn on Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) influential argument that fundamental ways of thinking are reflected in idioms and habitual systems of metaphorical expression that map one conceptual domain onto another. For example, happiness, health, and control are associated with an upwards trajectory, and their converse with a movement downwards (for example sinking spirits, peak of health, fall from power). The tension between what they call the *Topic* (what the metaphor is about) and the *Vehicle* (the incongruent word or phrase used to refer to it) in less conventional mappings surprises the audience into a fresh, but cognitively patterned, perception. Cameron (2006) suggests that the use of metaphor draws both on a cognitive capacity for mapping similarities between different entities, and on an affective capacity for enjoyment in play with language and ideas. It is particularly useful, she argues, in tackling communication problems such as in mediating technical explanations for students or medical patients, or in managing highly sensitive communication, for example supporting the development of empathy in reconciliation talk between perpetrators and victims (Cameron, 2011). While cognitive approaches tend to focus, as the term suggests, on cerebral activity, Semino (2011) brings together cognitive work on metaphor with sociocultural approaches

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to language creativity in her argument that the value, or 'success', of a particular creative use of metaphor can be discussed only in relation to its appropriateness in a specific text, genre, and communicative context.

Current and emerging research

The post-structuralist turn from structure to practice and, in studies of language creativity, from creative products to creative processes is evident in some of the more recent research discussed above, for example the work on intertextual processes of entextualisation, transposition, and recontextualisation (Bauman & Briggs, 1990). This shift is extended in current work on the creative connections that are made between and across texts, genres, languages, and different media. Researchers have also more recently turned their attention to microlevel, fleeting instances of creativity, which are nevertheless seen as highly socially and culturally significant. In this section, I consider a number of examples of current work on 'crossing', translanguaging, and cross-cultural flows, and on the significance of offline and online micro-level creative processes.

Rampton (1995, 2006) is one of a number of sociolinguistic researchers who focus on speakers' styling of the self and others in everyday life through style-shifting, code-switching, and crossing (see also Coupland, 2007; Eckert, 2000). In one study, Rampton (1995) analysed recordings of teenagers of Indian, Pakistani, and Anglo descent, arguing that their language crossing – that is, strategic, exaggerated use of each other's accents and idioms – served to challenge dominant notions of ethnicity. In a more recent study on the changing dynamics of classroom language, Rampton (2006) draws on Bakhtin's work on voicing, Goffman's work on interaction rituals, and Bauman's conception of performance to examine teenagers' manipulation of imagery invoked by hyperstylised performances of English Cockney and posh accents. These fleeting performances are used by students to negotiate the reception of a personal story, keep down powerful girls, and juggle between school and peer values. 'Cockney' indexed solidarity, vigour, and passion, and 'posh' was associated with social distance, superiority, and constraint. Through such language practices, argues Rampton, ethnic and class divisions are symbolically recreated at a local level. His study of the interactive dynamics between students, and between the teenage students and the teacher, also includes the examination of teenage students' mini-performances of extracts from popular culture. He argues that their recycling and reperformance of lines from songs or television, in which the aesthetics of sound play are foregrounded, play an important role in the pupil-initiated comments and exuberance that are subverting the traditional teacher domination of talk in class.

This focus on fleeting, fragmentary performance is echoed in recent work in narrative studies, in which the post-structuralist shift has opened up analysis to include more emergent, incomplete, and sometimes ill-formed conversational stories. In her study of talk among a group of Greek teenage female friends, Georgakopoulou (2007) uses the term 'small stories' to describe brief, fragmented narratives about projected events, breaking-news stories told at the same time as the events themselves were unfolding, and 'references' – that is, one-liners or quotations that index stories already shared within the group. These three subgenres of small stories frequently co-occur in talk, and Georgakopoulou argues that although this kind of almost hidden meaning-making could easily escape the researcher's notice, the narrative fragments are actually highly significant in enabling the young women to confirm legitimate particular versions of past events, to strategically manage the present, and to imagine the future. The interactive performance of these small stories also

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confirmed group intimacy, and constructed gendered and friendship identities, through the teenagers' habitual representations of themselves and each other within the stories and in talk around them.

Small stories have been particularly associated with the explosion of social media (for example see Page, 2013). Platforms such as Facebook and Twitter offer users opportunities to post brief narratives and to comment on their lives on a minute-to-minute basis. Users now have access to multimodal resources that previously would have been available only to professionals, and storytelling often involves embedding and hybridising old and new media. Stories in this context can be updated, re-embedded on different platforms, and evaluated by unforeseen audiences through processes of 'like', 'share', and 'follow'. The unparalleled possibilities for processes of connection and convergence between individuals, institutions, platforms, and genres (Jenkins, 2006) also facilitate creative indexicality, recontextualisation, and reconfiguration in social media language use more generally. For instance, hyperlinks and hashtags can express generic and identity commitments and alignments with other writers, while text, images, and video can be reconfigured and recycled for striking, humorous, or thought-provoking effects.

It could be argued that computer-mediated communication (CMC) and social media are now key sites for everyday language creativity, especially among young people (see Goddard, Chapter 23). There are clearly rich possibilities for multimodal creativity, for example through configuring and reconfiguring relationships between words, images, sound, and movement in original and recycled texts. The opportunities for ordinary individuals to sample and remix commercial media (see Knobel & Lankshear, Chapter 25) also provide opportunities for critical activity: globally dominant resources may, for example, be subversively appropriated and reinterpreted in grass-roots activity (Androutsopoulos, 2010). However, Androutsopoulos (2014) argues that much of the creativity in social media is still carried through verbal language. He suggests that people frequently employ poetic tactics to gain attention, for example through unusual language use, or the combination of different elements and registers of language in unusual ways, in performances that are often playful and strongly oriented towards potential evaluation by audiences who will read and comment on the posts. The semiotic materials used in online creativity, and their links, also carry strong messages about the performer's aesthetic taste, social values, and politics. In this sense, online creativity is part of a 'networked' identity, intricately linked to and dependent on individuals and groups in online networks, as well as on networked resources (Tagg, forthcoming).

Ideas about creative connectivity across texts and sites are extended in current work on transcultural flows and translanguaging. Pennycook (2006) analyses how flows of hip-hop music and lyrics across space and time are combined with their 'fixing' in location, tradition, and cultural expression. The meanings of performances emerge through particular configurations of fluidity and fixity, as performers recycle and transform activity and material from elsewhere. In parallel with these ideas about transcultural practice, and following Rampton's notion of language crossing, researchers have also been examining language behaviour in which speakers draw on and bring together structures and features from across different languages. Jorgensen (2008), for example, found that such 'polylanguaging' among Danish/Turkish/English-speaking teenagers involves verbal play, including the recycling of media fragments, and Wei (2011) describes interactively constructed 'translanguaging spaces' in which Chinese/English multilingual students draw from across their multilingual sociocultural resources to construct and modify sociocultural identities and values. Wei (2011: 1223) argues that such moments of translanguaging are both creative and critical: speakers make

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creative choices to follow or flout the rules and norms of language and other behaviour, and, in the process, are 'pushing and breaking the boundaries between the old and the new, the conventional and the original, and the acceptable and the challenging'. This creativity involves translingual punning and stylised crossings into local Chinese dialects, and is closely linked with criticality, defined by Wei (2011: 1223) as 'the ability to use available evidence appropriately, systematically and insightfully to inform considered views of cultural, social and linguistic phenomena, to question and problematize received wisdom, and to express views adequately through reasoned responses to situations'.

Critical issues and topics

In this section, I briefly discuss the continuing lack of agreement over how to define 'creativity', the affordances of different kinds of data for conceptualising its various dimensions, and the lack of attention to affect in work so far.

While everyday language creativity is now an established area of ongoing linguistic research, there is a continuing lack of clear agreement about the precise definition and scope of creativity itself. The starting point for analysis is often some striking reflexive manipulation of language form, but, depending on a researcher's approach and area of interest, discussions of creativity can also include its intertextual connotations, its interactional affects, its cognitive functions, its connections with identity, or its propensity for social critique. Thus creativity may be located at the level of textual poetics, or in relationships across texts, or in the purposes and effects of language use. Indeed, many researchers whose work I refer to do not use the term 'creativity' at all, focusing rather on performance (Bauman, 1992; Hymes, 1975), narrative (Georgakopoulou, 2007; Labov, 1972), style (Coupland, 2007; Eckert, 2000; Rampton, 2006), translanguaging (Wei, 2011), and so on. The terms used by researchers signal their commitment to different disciplinary traditions and different definitions of creativity. Thus references to 'literariness', 'poetics', and 'language play' often signal a focus on text, while 'performance' and 'ritual' suggest more situated approaches, with 'performance' often indexing the linguistic anthropological tradition and 'ritual', Goffman's dramaturgical approach.

A number of researchers have presented various ways of mapping the different approaches. Carter (2004) suggests that there are three possible models underpinning the identification of what he terms 'literariness' in everyday language: an *inherency* model (represented in formalism); a *sociocultural* model, in which literariness is seen, as the term suggests, as socially and culturally determined (represented in anthropological work on performance and some interactional approaches); and a more recent *cognitive* model, in which literary language is related to mental processes, as in Cook's (1994) notion of schema refreshment and Cameron's (2006, 2011) work on metaphor. Alternatively, Maybin and Swann (2007) place a greater emphasis on the association of creativity with criticality in their development of an integrated analytical framework to address textual, contextual, and critical dimensions of everyday language creativity in empirical data. Jones (2010), however, argues that neither Carter's set of theoretical models nor Maybin and Swann's analytic framework attend sufficiently to how people use language creatively, along with other modes, to accomplish material goals and stimulate social change. Overall, there are continuing tensions in the field between the use of textual form as a key reference point, interest in the less easily empirically identifiable sociocultural dynamics with which it is associated, and speculations about its cognitive functions.

Within the various different approaches, a range of language data are used with different affordances for analysis and theory building. For instance, the formalists' reference point is

written literature, and their definition of creativity is textually oriented, with assumptions about the effects of literary devices on the reader. Crystal (1998) and Cook (2000) draw on publically available texts to discuss language play, and although they comment on its pragmatic functions, they do not use empirical data to look at its effects in actual conversations. Carter (2004) and Holmes (2007) use empirical corpora of spoken language, which enable them to study how creativity emerges in naturally occurring language and to look across large amounts of data for patterns of usage between speakers and contexts. The notion of context in corpus work, however, is necessarily limited and can be rather static, although attention to the interactional functions of creativity also suggests a more dynamic model, in which it is both contextualised and contextualising (Maybin & Swann, 2007). More processual and culturally sensitive notions of contextualisation underpin work by Bauman and Briggs (1990), who analyse live performances in relation to their interactional dynamics and sociocultural effects. These approaches are associated with different degrees of theorisation of textual detail, interactivity, contextualisation, intertextuality, and so on. Characteristics of research participants also influence directions for theorisation: ethnographic researchers such as Georgakopoulou (2007) and Mendoza-Denton (2008), who focus on teenagers and young adults, often comment on the connections between creative practices and identity, a particularly salient issue for this age group.

While there has been extensive work on poetics, and some interest in the association of creativity with criticality, there has been scant treatment of the role of affect, which tends to be addressed tangentially rather than in any depth. It is hinted at in references to the functions of everyday language creativity in creating rapport and a sense of group identity (for example Carter, 2004; Mendoza-Denton, 2008), and in the sense of connectedness and emotional insights produced through 'involvement' (Tannen, 1989). There is very clearly a sense of participants' enjoyment of language play and performance in a lot of the data: Carter (2004) searched for 'laughter' in his corpus to find instances of language creativity, and Labov (1972) estimated the success of the ritual insults he studied by the amount of laughter that they generated in the audience. The idea of a peak pleasure 'flow', which Sawyer (2001) argues is produced through creative conversational improvisation, has also been used to characterise hip-hop performers' experience of personal artistry, complete immersion in performance, and intense sense of community with their audience (Morgan, 2009). In recognition of the importance of affect in creative activity, some researchers are starting to replace 'creativity' with the term 'aesthetics', which, while traditionally associated with the appreciation of beauty, is etymologically rooted primarily in feeling (its opposite being 'anaesthetic', or non-feeling). For instance, Pratt (2014) suggests that aesthetics should encompass the evocation of powerful feeling alongside 'the display of skill and virtuosity with a medium', and 'the estrangement or defamiliarization of the world'.

Future directions

Two prominent areas of currently emerging work seem set to continue developing in the future. First, there is burgeoning interest in creative language use in social media sites, where humour and play are particularly prevalent, often used as part of the delicate interactional work to manage participants' face (Goffman, 1967). In addition to research on sites such as Facebook and Twitter, recent studies have also addressed creativity in text messaging, examining its cohesive and evaluative functions (Tagg, 2013), and elements of verbal display whereby global texting features are recontextualised through local multilingual practices (Deumert & Lexander, 2013).

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Secondly, in the context of research on everyday language practices in multilingual contexts, models of language use have shifted from those stressing the combination of separate languages (such as in the notion of code-switching and the term 'bilingual') to a more heteroglossic conception of people's strategic deployment of language resources from across their repertoire (Bailey, 2007; Blackledge & Cress, 2014). As Wei (2011) points out, by its very nature multilingualism is a rich source of creativity and criticality, entailing conflict and change across historical and current contexts, practices and ideologies, and there would seem to be rich opportunities for examining the performativity, skill, and artfulness involved in creating value and status in the 'languaging' practices of multilingual speakers.

There is also scope for continuing to refine conceptions of language creativity, and its effects, in the context of the shift away from ideas of creativity as novelty or originality, towards processual accounts of intertextuality and improvisation. Hallam and Ingold (2007) argue that definitions associating creativity with innovation imply a backwards-looking, post hoc definition of creativity as product. They point out that people are constantly having to improvise as part of their ongoing engagement in social and cultural processes, and that creativity should therefore be seen as a generative, future-oriented, socially embedded, and culturally contingent process. This process, they suggest, recalls medieval understandings of wonder and novelty as combining and fusing disparate elements, processual and unfinished. These suggestions echo work on demotic creativity within applied linguistics, which is used to challenge conceptions of timeless artefacts and exceptional individuals, invoking instead a more democratic, contextualised conception of creativity and associated constructs such as literariness, art, and aesthetics (Swann, Pope, & Carter, 2011). Within this climate of interest in widespread, processual creative practices, future research may further challenge the traditional binaries of performer and audience, and of creator and critic, reconceptualising these as dynamically interdependent. Research in social media creativity, in particular, is recasting reception as reproduction, reading as rewriting, and redefining notions of audience and context.

Related topics

creativity and dialogue; creativity and discourse analysis; creativity and Internet communication; humour and language play; language, creativity, and remix culture

Further reading

Carter, R. (2004) *Language and Creativity: The Art of Common Talk*, London: Routledge.

Carter provides detailed examples of wordplay and other forms of 'literary language' from his corpus data, arguing for the importance of their situated interactional function and for a series of clines linking vernacular creativity with canonical literature.

Jones, R. H. (ed.) (2012) *Discourse and Creativity*, Harlow: Pearson Education.

This edited collection of work explores how different approaches to discourse analysis conceptualise the concept of creativity in a range of diverse domains, including everyday vernacular activity.

Maybin, J., and Swann, J. (eds) (2006) *The Art of English: Everyday Creativity*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

This undergraduate textbook provides a collection of teaching chapters and short readings on everyday creativity in wordplay, narrative, children's activity, performativity and style, and online and offline literacies.

Swann, J., Pope, R., and Carter, R. (eds) (2011) *Creativity, Language, Literature: The State of the Art*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Extending work on the relationship between everyday and literary creativity, this edited collection brings together chapters by creative practitioners and academic researchers working across disciplines, to explore ideas about creativity, language, and literature.

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2

Language, creativity, and cognition

Andreas Langlotz

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Introduction: Approaching the language–creativity–cognition nexus

The creative potential of human minds is directly reflected in language structure and use. However, any serious answer to the question, 'What is the relationship between language, creativity, and cognition?', will have to start with the disclaimer, 'Well, it depends.' More specifically, any cognitive model of language-based creativity fundamentally depends on (a) the place and status attributed to language within the cognitive architecture, (b) the linguistic phenomena that are regarded as being creative, and (c) how the working principles of the human mind are theorised. Indeed, for all three components of the language–creativity–cognition nexus, alternative approaches with corresponding objects of analysis, theories, and research methods can be found. Hence, to organise this overview of the relationship between language, creativity, and cognition, this chapter first addresses the cognitive character of creativity and illustrates the diverse nature of linguistic creativity on the basis of one example of creative 'language' use: an advertising poster by the charity Crossroads. This piece of data will then serve as a case study to illustrate how different cognitive approaches to language-based creativity would approach it.

For this discussion, the development of cognitive science from the 1960s until the present – with corresponding approaches to language – is taken as a baseline. On the basis of a general definition of cognition, three central theoretical paradigms in cognitive science are introduced. Starting from the paradigm of cognitivism, the chapter then discusses the computational views of linguistic creativity (see also Veale, Chapter 22) proposed by generativism and relevance theory. This will be followed by the cognitive-linguistic frameworks of conceptual metaphor and metonymy, as well as blending theory (see also Hidalgo-Downing, Chapter 6), which both embrace the framework of embodied cognition. Finally, current approaches to linguistic creativity will be discussed in order to show how they may include broader multimodal perspectives, as well as enactive and more socially distributed and mediated views of cognition (see also Jones, Chapter 3; Sawyer, Chapter 4). To complete this survey, the chapter will finally address some recommendations for practice and future research.

Linguistic creativity illustrated

Creative products mirror playful human intelligence. The concept of creativity therefore triggers fundamental associations with cognition. It points to the intelligent cognitive

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capacities that make it possible for human beings to shape new, original, unprecedented, or unconventional products that depart from familiar, established, predefined, and fully predictable outcomes. In accordance with this definition, one can propose two complementary ways in which creative cognition can be linked to language. First, the notion of linguistic creativity can be related to the original linguistic patterns that emerge when human creativity is applied to linguistic structures as such. Thus, in a broad sense, the fundamental human capacity to create regular, but new, linguistic patterns, such as new words, sentences, or texts, can be regarded as reflecting language-based creativity. Secondly, linguistic creativity can also be associated with more unconventional communicative products that are creatively produced through language. In line with these complementary perspectives, linguistic creativity includes a wide range of phenomena. Beyond the general productivity of language, it involves figurative language (metaphor, metonymy, etc.), literary genres (for example poetry, narrative, and drama), puns, wordplay, and verbal humour (including irony and sarcasm), and the creative interaction of language with other communicative modes, such as gesture or imagery (as in advertising, comics, film, and theatre).

To illustrate the linguistic products of creative cognition, we can turn to an advertising poster (see Figure 2.1), which stems from a campaign intended to help the homeless in New York City. It was commissioned by Crossroads Community Services – an organisation that provides meals, safe shelter, and groceries to people in need (http://www.crossroadsnyc.org/).
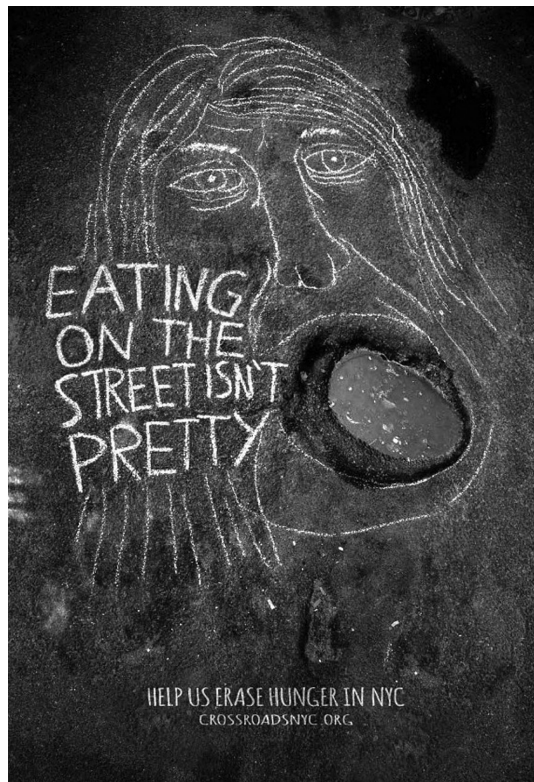

Figure 2.1 'Eating on the Street Isn't Pretty'

Source: © Saatchi & Saatchi Health Communications (reproduced with permission)

The poster contains two central linguistic elements: the statement EATING ON THE STREET ISN'T PRETTY and the appeal HELP US ERASE HUNGER IN NYC. The first expression is written in chalk and integrated into a piece of street art: the chalk drawing of a person's face. The face contains some features stereotypically associated with homeless people, such as long hair, bags beneath the eyes, wrinkled skin, and a weary gaze. The image itself is drawn around a big hole in the pavement, which contains an ugly puddle of dirty water. Within the depiction of the face, the puddle constitutes the wide open mouth of the homeless person. The slogan EATING ON THE STREET ISN'T PRETTY is written right next to this feature, which creates the impression that the words are emerging from the protagonist's mouth. The appeal HELP US ERASE HUNGER IN NYC is written at the bottom of the poster and is accompanied by the charity's web address.

This poster is remarkably creative in several ways. First, the central slogan constitutes an original and unique linguistic contribution that reflects the productivity of language. When subjecting the whole string to a search engine, the retrieved links point directly to this special advertising campaign; hence the sentence is 'novel' and 'unique' (see Coulthard, 2004: 441). But beyond this basic level of productivity, the slogan also constitutes an interesting pun that exploits the inherent polysemy of the prepositional phrase ON THE STREET. The first level of linguistic creativity involved here thus reflects punning on the basis of lexical ambiguity. The first and 'salient reading' (Giora, 1997) takes STREET as a general location, with EATING ON THE STREET relating to the 'conceptual frame' of STREET FOOD. The second reading, however, treats STREET only as the concrete surface on which we walk. In line with this reading, EATING ON THE STREET implies the image of eating food that was thrown on, or can be found in, the street. Obviously, this second reading establishes an allusion to the fate of the homeless and forces the recipient to shift to this contrary conceptual frame (Coulson, 2000).

The slogan can be further interpreted as a meta-communicative comment on the depicted piece of street art itself: 'What you see here is not pretty!' Indeed, the direct physical association of a person's mouth (and its contents) with the stench of the gutter and dirty water is highly unappetising. The same can be said for the rather 'unpretty' drawing in general, which is roughly sketched on the asphalt to illustrate the used and rugged face of a person who suffers from existing on the street. In line with this link between the slogan and the image, the entire depiction can be read as a complex figurative implementation of the slogan, which binds the meaning of the message to the aesthetics of its form. Along these lines, the slogan and the image constitute a thought-provoking counter-position to the fashionable trend towards eating street food, which mirrors a young, free, and independent lifestyle, or the scenario of professionals eating out in the street for lunch. This apparent attractiveness of street food is countered by the much less luxurious lifestyle of the homeless, who are literally forced to eat *on the street*, rather than only *in the street*.

The actual message of the poster HELP US ERASE HUNGER IN NYC → IN ORDER TO RELIEVE THE HOMELESS FROM THEIR INHUMANE CONDITIONS OF LIFE is also triggered in highly creative ways. Since the image is drawn in chalk, it can be washed away easily or cleaned by a gush of rain or clean water. By analogy, supportive action taken by the target audience would help to erase the dismal living conditions and the unhealthy eating practices of the homeless. Like the lines of chalk washed away from the pavement, a donation to the charity would metaphorically wash away the extent of poverty from the street. At the same time, it would also cleanse the dirty puddle – that is, the contents in the mouths of the homeless. In terms of figurative analogy, support would thus guarantee a more hygienic, and consequentially healthier, diet. With regard to the depicted enunciation, it would also make it unnecessary for the homeless to utter their outcry EATING ON THE STREET ISN'T PRETTY. The metaphorical

'rain of the donation' would wash away the statement written in chalk. This multimodal creativity of the poster points to a further level of linguistic creativity: the creative interaction of language with other communicative modes.

As this preliminary analysis of the Crossroads advertising poster illustrates, creative patterns of language and creativity that are managed through language use can manifest themselves in a variety of different ways. Both the production and comprehension of the poster depend on creative and highly intelligent cognitive capacities. The following sections will outline how the most important cognitive models of linguistic creativity, as they emerge in the central paradigms of cognitive science, would conceive of the cognitive capacities underlying the poster.

What is *cognition*? Alternative approaches to theorising the mind

For centuries, philosophers and psychologists, and – more recently – linguists, computational scientists, and neuroscientists, have proposed alternative models of what the mind is and how it works (Waskan, 2006: ch. 1). As a result, alternative theories of the human mental capacity and its relationship to the human world of experience exist. In general, theories of cognition attempt to articulate the nature, as well as the connections between the systemic components, of the mind, as illustrated in Figure 2.2.

The mind (**1**) is part of an individual cogniser, who interacts with the world of experience by means of his or her bodily capacities (**2**). The world of experience involves both the physical properties of the world (**3**) and the cogniser's social environment (**4**). The connection between mind and body (**A**) works as a minimal interface between the world and the mind; the human cogniser needs perceptual and sensory abilities (vision, hearing, smell, taste, and touch) to connect to the world, as well as motor skills (hand and body movements, and articulation) to act upon it. The link between the world of experience and the cognising individual (**B**) is thus defined by the stimuli that provide the input to human perception, on the one hand, and by the human cogniser's manipulation of the physical and social worlds through his or her actions, on the other.
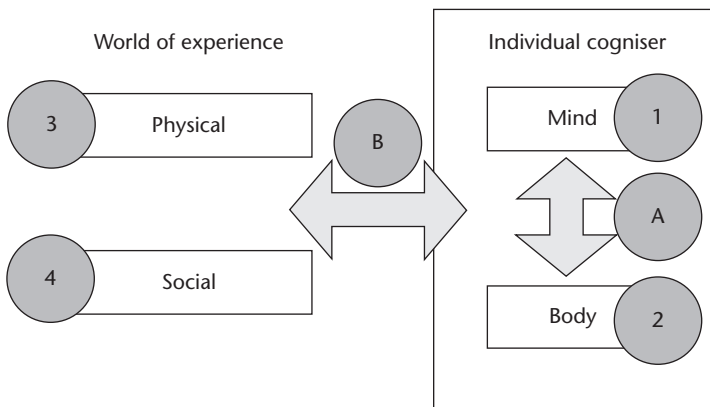
Figure 2.2 The mind and its relationships with the body and the world of experience

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Along this minimal system of components and connections, one can define 'cognition' as subsuming the mental representations and cognitive processes that allow humans (and some other animals) to perceive the world, learn about it, memorise experiences, and think and speak about those experiences in order to solve problems and to act upon their physical and social environments in an effective and efficient fashion. In the history of cognitive science, alternative theories for accounting for these capacities have been proposed (see, for example, Bechtel, Abrahamsen, & Graham, 1998; Friedenberg & Silverman, 2011), at which we will look now.

Cognitivism

Emerging in the 1960s and inspired by the rise of computers, *cognitivism* conceptualises cognition in computational terms. Following the MIND IS A COMPUTER metaphor (Newell & Simon, 1976; Pylyshyn, 1984), this approach conceives knowledge as the symbolic representation of the world of experience in terms of a language of thought, or 'mentalese' (Fodor, 1975). Mentalese can be regarded as the programming language of the human mind. It 'consists of a system of syntactically structured symbols-in-the-head (mind/brain) which undergo processing that is sensitive to that structure' (Bechtel, Abrahamsen, & Graham, 1998: 64). In line with this language-of-thought hypothesis, cognitive processing (thinking, planning, memorising, etc.) is also modelled in highly computational terms: mental algorithms are run over symbolic representations in order to produce new syntactic relationships between the symbolically represented concepts (see, for example, Marr, 1982). Through such computation, it becomes possible for a human cogniser to think about the world and to solve complex problems mentally rather than physically – that is, by computing mental representations of the world of experience, rather than by manipulating the world in itself.

A second important idea underlying cognitivism is the 'modularity-of-mind' hypothesis (Fodor, 1983). Again, following the MIND IS A COMPUTER metaphor, the architecture of cognition is constituted by specialised modules, with each serving different cognitive functions (such as vision, language, encyclopaedic knowledge, motor skills, etc.). Similar to the different programs that are run on a computer, each of these modules is seen to work in relative autonomy from the others. Together with the language-of-thought conception, this has important consequences for the cognitivist view of the mind. First (with reference to Figure 2.2), the relationships between the mind and the body (**A**), and the mind and the world of experience (**B**), are highly restricted. The world (**3** and **4**) functions only as a source of input that is necessary for establishing symbolic representations. And the body (**2**) – like the mouse, keyboard, and monitor of a computer – works only as an input–output device. The body serves to transfer the perceptual input to the cognitive modules and to implement the results of thought processes in the form of motor actions. Cognitivism thus places its central focus on modelling the autonomous, encapsulated character of the mind (**1**), whereas the body (**2**), the physical world (**3**), and the social world (**4**), as well as the relationship between the mind and the body (**A**) and the relationship between the self and the world (**B**), are given a marginal status.

Embodied cognition

As its name indicates, *embodied cognition* stresses the relationship between the mind and the body (**A**) when accounting for cognitive capacities. Unlike cognitivism, from which

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it emancipates itself (see Varela, Thompson, & Rosch, 1991), this approach attributes to human bodily interactions with the world of experience (**B**) a central role for the constitution of mental representations and processes. Inspired by Jean Piaget's (1954) foundational idea of the 'sensorimotor stage' in cognitive development, embodied cognition assumes that – in the form of mental schemata – conceptual representations and categories are fundamentally shaped by, and derived from, our bodily experiences with the physical properties of the world (Gibbs, 2006). For instance, humans can derive a complex, yet fundamental, 'container' schema by repeated interactions with a variety of concrete container-like objects encountered in the physical world (Johnson, 1987). Thus, rather than working as a mere input device, the body works as an active shaper of ideas itself. In line with the idea of *constructivism* (von Glasersfeld, 1984), the world of experience emerges in the form of a cogniser's active and creative constructive efforts when engaging with it. As a result, the world of experience is not attributed an objective reality to be represented mentally in a symbolic format, but its structure, as perceived and understood by the cogniser, is the emergent outcome of the system of reciprocal codetermination between the world and the human's bodily and mental apparatus (Varela, Thompson, & Rosch, 1991: 150). Similarly, advocates of *situated cognition* claim mental representations to be fundamentally rooted in sensory and motor abilities, and to be fundamentally grounded in situated interactions with the world of experience (Barsalou, 2003, 2005).

In recent frameworks of embodied cognition – subsumed under the notion of *enactivism* – the body is also attributed a vital role in cognitive processes such as problem solving or vision (Clark, 1997, 2008; Noë, 2004). For example, seeing implies moving the body towards an object, as well as grasping and turning it in support of the internal dimension of visual perception (Noë, 2009: ch. 6). The cognitive agent enacts the process of seeing by extending it into the domain of bodily action. Vision thus results as a form of 'extended cognition' (Clark, 2008: ch. 1) that transcends the mind and body boundary. In short, and with reference to Figure 2.2, the embodied view of cognition comprises a number of cognate approaches within cognitive science that highlight the role of the body (**2**) for the mind (**1**), and which advocate a highly dynamic and reciprocal view of the relationships between the mind and the body (**A**) and between the self and the world (**B**).

Starting from the early 1980s, these approaches have developed holistic conceptions of cognition that conceive cognitive abilities as being fundamentally rooted in general perceptual and sensorimotor capacities. Radically embodied views of cognition also provide the conceptual foundations for contemporary robotics (Pfeifer & Bongard, 2007). But while bringing the body and the environment back into cognitive theory, the social world of experience is still strikingly absent in this paradigm.

Social constructivism, and socially distributed and mediated cognition

Social constructivism is compatible, and overlaps, with a number of ideas advocated by embodied cognition. However, unlike the latter, it attributes to the social environment (**4**) a highly important role in the construction of mental representations and cognitive processing. In his social theory of learning, Lev Vygotsky proposed that caretakers and instructors often create a learning environment that is adapted to the child's level of cognitive abilities and which 'scaffolds' their learning processes (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978). These ideas on the socially mediated nature of cognition have also become prominent in more recent Western approaches to 'socially distributed' and 'mediated' cognition (Hutchins, 1995). According

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to this conception, modern human agents are often embedded in highly complex, and socio-culturally and technically constructed, worlds of experience when working and acting in their everyday professional and private lives. In these contexts, they can use cognitive tools and media, such as books, calculators, screens, computers, etc., to manipulate a problem domain. And when searching for a problem solution, human cognisers can substantially lower their processing load by relying on the positive interdependence with a cooperative partner:

> What is of particular interest about this new line of research is that cognitive functions, previously conceived as formal or technical functions of abstract but machinelike individual minds, were reconceptualised as 'inter-mental' functions, that is, as socially shared, tool-saturated practices, which are only secondarily interiorized by individuals, within contexts of interactional participation.
>
> *(Streeck & Mehus, 2005: 389)*

The human ability to connect to and incorporate the social environment into thinking and socially distributed problem-solving processes has inspired researchers of human *social and cultural cognition* to locate the specifically human cognitive capacities within their cultural intelligence of coordinating mental states with others (Tomasello, 1999, 2014).

In summary, and with reference to Figure 2.2, the social-constructivist views place a very strong emphasis on the social world (**4**). They are interested in how the social environment channels the relationship between the self and the world (**B**), and how it helps an individual to reduce the processing load in the mind (**1**). The body (**2**) is important as well, but rather than seeing cognitive structures as being the result of embodied interaction, the human agent is literally embodied in his or her socioculturally constructed worlds of experience.

The subsequent sections scrutinise how these alternative models of cognition are allied with the different views of language and how this affects the analysis of linguistic creativity.

Computing creative linguistic outcomes: Generative linguistics and relevance theory

Generativism and the creative power of the linguistic mind

From the late 1950s to the present, *generative linguistics* has advocated a fundamentally cognitivist view of language. It is well known that Noam Chomsky's (1959) devastating critique of Skinner's *Verbal Behavior* (1957) constitutes the intellectual landmark for an incisive turn in cognitive science: the transition from behaviourism to cognitivism (Bechtel, Abrahamsen, & Graham, 1998: 41). This transition also constitutes a decisive step for the cognitive perspective on linguistic creativity. Centrally, Chomsky (1975: 61) showed that behaviourism cannot explain why and how the finite cognitive systems of humans – especially those of language-learning children – can produce novel, previously unheard utterances without merely imitating the input that they receive from others. Chomsky's own answer to this explanatory challenge is inspired by Cartesian rationalist philosophy. According to Descartes (1960 [1637]: 47), the creative intellectual capacities of (linguistic) cognisers are not grounded in their experience, but rooted in the internal mechanics of rational reasoning and the autonomy of their minds, which make it possible for them to 'operate in all sorts of situations'. By analogy, Chomsky claimed that any theory of the linguistic capacities that make it possible for us to learn a language and use it productively

must also model the internal mechanics of 'linguistic reasoning'. In simple terms, Descartes' (1960 [1637]: 32) 'I think, therefore I am' (*cogito, ergo sum*) translates into a Chomskyan, 'I possess grammar, therefore I am a linguistic being.' Generative theory therefore places linguistic creativity on centre stage: 'An essential property of language is that it provides the means for expressing indefinitely many thoughts and for reacting appropriately in an indefinite range of new situations' (Chomsky, 1965: 6). Our sheer ability to produce a virtually infinite number of linguistic patterns by means of finite cognitive capacities forces us to investigate the 'creative and coherent ordinary use of language' as a 'central problem of Cartesian science' (Chomsky, 2005).

The combination of cognitivist and Cartesian foundations in Chomsky's theory leads to the characteristic assumptions of generative linguistics. First, in line with Descartes' introspective reduction of human existence to the indubitable and innate presence of reason, Chomsky postulates the innateness of the human 'language faculty' in the narrow sense (Fitch, Hauser, & Chomsky, 2005). Moreover, by analogy with Descartes' deductive approach to reasoning in logical terms, the aim of Chomskyan linguistics is to explain the working principles of grammar as a theory of the 'mathematics of language', possessed by an idealised speaker/hearer (Chomsky, 1965, 1999). To model the computational capacity underlying grammar, Chomsky further adopts a strictly modular conception of the mind that is in line with the cognitivist view of mental architecture. The language faculty is an independent module of the mind that functions according to isolated cognitive principles, which are not shared by other modules such as vision, motor skills, or encyclopaedic and pragmatic knowledge, etc. Grammar itself is also modular, consisting of syntax (that is, the set of grammatical operations) and the lexicon (that is, the idiosyncratic content over which syntactic rules can make linguistic computations).

The assumptions of cognitive modularity and the isolated exclusiveness of linguistic computations have a direct effect on the view of linguistic creativity in this cognitivist framework. On the one hand, as we have seen, Chomsky assumes language to be an inherently and fundamentally creative cognitive capacity. On the other hand, the conceptual isolation of grammar as a mental module, with its exclusive working principles, prevents generative theory from including any other phenomena of creative language use that go beyond the creativity of the 'coherent ordinary use of language'. This said, it is important to emphasise that Chomsky (2007) does not ignore other aspects of language-based creativity (D'Agostino, 1984); he simply does not treat them as belonging to the language faculty in the narrow sense. With regard to the Crossroads advertising poster (see Figure 2.1), generative linguists would therefore not be interested in its creative content beyond the attested productivity and originality of the sentences EATING ON THE STREET ISN'T PRETTY and HELP US ERASE HUNGER IN NYC.

Applications of generative theory

It is not surprising that generative theory has not been broadly applied to the treatment of linguistic creativity beyond the study of linguistic productivity. Interestingly, however, the generative notion of competence has been applied to the creative linguistic phenomenon of humour. To develop their general theory of verbal humour, Attardo and Raskin (1991), and Attardo (1994), argue for a generative account of humour competence that enables language users to tell jokes from non-jokes. Similar to making grammaticality judgements, this competence is conceived as a set of humour-related knowledge resources that language users have to apply in order to recognise jokes.

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Relevance theory and the computation of poetic effects

The cognitivist epistemology is also embraced by *relevance theory*, as proposed by Sperber and Wilson (1995). As a cognitive-pragmatic approach to meaning-construction, relevance theory is centrally interested in modelling the hearers' 'metapsychological abilities' that allow them to infer the informative intentions underlying acts of communication, including creative forms of communication, such as the Crossroads advertising poster (Sperber & Wilson, 2002: 3). In line with the spirit of cognitivism, the theory assumes two cognitive modules to contribute to utterance comprehension (Sperber & Wilson, 2002; Wilson & Sperber, 2004). The first module is responsible for purely linguistic decoding processes and corresponds to the semantic component in generative theory. The basic semantic meaning, or 'logical form', of a sentence is computed compositionally (Chomsky, 1995: 222; Sperber & Wilson, 1995: 9–10). But this language module is not sufficient to derive the context-specific communicative meaning of an utterance. This meaning is therefore inferred through computation in a distinct cognitive module: a mind-reading module that works as an utterance comprehension submodule (Sperber & Wilson, 2002: 5) and is driven by the cognitive principle of relevance.

The cognitive principle of relevance is a measure of cognitive economy, which entails that cognisers always attempt to optimise the amount of information pressed out of a stimulus. An input is optimally relevant if a maximum of cognitive effects can be generated by means of the least cognitive processing effort possible (Sperber & Wilson, 1995: 132–41). To increase these potential cognitive effects for a stimulus, the interpreting cogniser must actively search his or her encyclopaedic knowledge of his or her momentary perceptual representations for mental contexts against which the input becomes optimally relevant. Driven by the cognitive principle of relevance, the mind-reading module automatically causes the interpreter to activate only those contexts that allow him or her to maximise the potential insights into the intended message. With regard to interpreting the Crossroads poster, one can thus assume that receivers actively recruit knowledge about homeless people, their conditions of living, and their stereotypical eating habits, etc., as well as a perceptual representation of the chalk drawing, to work as mental contexts against which they interpret the expression EATING ON THE STREET ISN'T PRETTY. On the basis of evoking these chunks of knowledge, they can make inferences about the poster producers' informative intentions, such as those outlined earlier, when we analysed the poster.

The idea of active inferencing based on the cognitive principle of relevance does not explain the poster's communicative creativity from the perspective of the message producers. To deal with this aspect, relevance theory regards communication as an *ostensive* act of choosing communicative stimuli in order to manipulate the cognitive representations – the *cognitive environment* – activated by the interpreting receiver (Sperber & Wilson, 1995: 39). The ostensive act follows a *communicative principle of relevance*, according to which the speakers choose the most relevant communicative stimuli to implement their communicative intentions (Sperber & Wilson, 1995: 46–64); these stimuli are those most relevant to the hearer's processing efforts needed to generate the intended communicative effects. Accordingly, the creative achievement by the designers of the Crossroads poster was to arrange the ostensive stimuli (the drawing, the puddle, the slogan, and the appeal) in such a way as to cause the recipients to activate those chunks of encyclopaedic knowledge that bring the dismal situation of the homeless and the suggested solution to their problems to the front of attention.

The combination of the speaker's ostension with the recipients' inference results in the model of *ostensive-inferential communication* (Sperber & Wilson, 1995: 50). The producers'

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creative ostensive acts have to strike an optimal balance between rendering parts of the message explicit in order to guarantee the recipients' comprehension and, at the same time, stimulating those relevance-based inferential processes that allow the recipients to compute the poster's novel implicit message against the background of the semantic inputs given by the slogan, the appeal, and the image. With regard to linguistic creativity, the distinction between 'strong' and 'weak' communication is of central importance:

> A speaker who constrains the interpretation of his [or her] utterance so that the hearer takes very little responsibility in the choice of . . . effects is said . . . to be engaging in *strong communication*. The greater the responsibility the hearer has in the selection of contextual assumptions and effects, the *weaker* the communication.
>
> *(Blakemore, 1992: 157, emphasis original)*

Creative products such as the Crossroads advertising poster primarily constitute cases of weak communication, because the actual message is not stated, but has to be actively computed by the receiver. Shifting activity on the side of the receivers is a powerful advertising strategy, because it forces the readership to engage actively with the poster on a cognitive level. This is the basis for stimulating cognitive, as well as affective, processes that convince the recipient to donate to the charity.

Applications and criticism of relevance theory

Unlike generativism, relevance theory has been applied to a great number of phenomena of linguistic creativity – most importantly, metaphor and irony (see, for example, Vega Moreno, 2007; Wilson & Carston, 2006; Wilson & Sperber, 2012: chs 5 and 6). The computational process of generating the meaning of a creative message follows a complex multistep incremental procedure: first, the recipient has to derive the propositional content in the linguistic module; the output of this semantic process then has to be further processed in the inferential module in order to generate a more contextually embedded utterance meaning, its *explicature*, and to derive its *implicatures* (Carston, 2002: ch. 2). With regard to the Crossroads poster, linguistic creativity also works on these two levels. First, as we have seen, the polysemy of the phrase EATING ON THE STREET can be disambiguated in two ways. The poster thus instigates two explicatures for the slogan: 'consuming street food' vs 'eating from the street'. This double-take allows the STREET FOOD interpretation to be ironically echoed in the EATING FROM THE STREET reading (Wilson, 2006: 1724). Following the distinction between strong and weak communication, this creative act of double communication further generates *poetic effects* (Pilkington, 2000). Poetic effects are weakly implicated cognitive effects that create an affective bond between the producer and the receiver (Sperber & Wilson, 1995: 224). With regard to deriving the implicatures for the figurativity of the Crossroads poster, the feeling of disgust that we experience when identifying the face's mouth with a dirty puddle, as well as the implied meaning of washing away this misfortune by donating money to the charity, constitute such poetic effects that carry the message of the advertisement. The extra processing cost that the recipients have to invest into deriving the advertising message is thus rewarded by the great amount of insights that can be gained from it: '. . . the wider the range of potential implicatures and the greater the hearer's responsibility for constructing them, the more poetic the effect, the more creative the metaphor' (Sperber & Wilson, 1995: 236). Along these lines, relevance theory explains why and how a cogniser can appreciate the discovery of weakly implicated messages in creative linguistic products, as opposed to the explicit statement of meanings in less creative forms of communication.

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A critical alternative to the relevance theoretical model of creativity has been proposed by Giora (2003: 176) in terms of her psycholinguistic 'optimal innovation' hypothesis. Accordingly, an optimally creative stimulus evokes a novel response, while still allowing for the activation of the more salient, conventional reading. Following this psycholinguistic account, the Crossroads poster is optimally innovative, because it allows the recipient to activate both the novel homeless-related and the more salient street-food-related meanings of EATING ON THE STREET in combination with the image. The receivers' ability to see the difference between the salient and the new meaning then unfolds the advertising poster's creative potential.

Figurative concepts, blended conceptualisations, and the creative power of embodied cognition

At the beginning of the 1980s the generative programme and the cognitivist epistemology became challenged from within cognitive science by an alternative theory of language that is today known as *cognitive linguistics*. Emancipating themselves from the modularity-of-mind, as well as the autonomy-of-language, hypotheses, cognitive linguists have embraced the central tenets of embodied cognition, and regard language as being grounded in general cognitive capacities such as perception, conceptualisation, and categorisation (see, for example, Croft & Cruse, 2004; Evans & Green, 2006; Geeraerts & Cuykens, 2007). This is of particular importance with regard to linguistic creativity.

Conceptual metaphor and metonymy

Rather than conceiving cognisers as passive representers of the external world of experience, cognitive linguists claim that they possess highly creative minds that actively construct conceptualisations of the world of experience. Most centrally, this insight has been driven by *conceptual metaphor* and *conceptual metonymy* theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; see also Dancygier & Sweetser, 2014; Hidalgo-Downing, Chapter 6). Analysing expressions such as 'He tries hard to defend his argument, nevertheless he can be attacked fairly easily', 'Don't give in to this criticism', or 'I have to surrender to her overwhelming evidence', Lakoff and Johnson (1980) discovered that conceptual structures can be fundamentally figurative. For instance, all the former expressions incorporate the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR, with notions from the concrete conceptual *source domain* of WAR being mapped onto the more abstract *target domain* of ARGUMENT. Conceptual metaphor theory thus established a new perspective on metaphor, which attributes to it the status of a central cognitive mechanism for conceptualisation and categorisation, rather than merely seeing it as literary or rhetorical decorum (Lakoff, 1987; Lakoff & Turner, 1989). In the light of conceptual metaphor, human cognition is revealed as being fundamentally creative, because much of the representation of the world of experience works through metaphorical concepts (Gibbs, 1994; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). Many basic conceptual metaphors are directly connected to the sensorimotor interactions of an embodied cogniser within his or her physical world of experience. For instance, the metaphors GOOD IS UP and BAD IS DOWN are linked to various embodied experiences such as body posture, facial expressions (laughing vs sad mouth), or social hierarchies (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980: 14).

Apart from conceptual metaphors, conceptual metonymies have also attracted a great deal of cognitive linguistic attention. Unlike the former, conceptual metonymies are based on conceptual contiguity relationships, such as PART–WHOLE structures, within the same

domain of encyclopaedic knowledge (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980: 35–9; see also Barcelona, 2000). For instance, in the conceptual metonymy CONTAINER FOR CONTENT, as reflected in 'He drank five bottles', the container concept is used as a reference point to provide conceptual access to the actual liquid that was drunk (Langacker, 1993: 29–35). Conceptual metonymies are often combined with conceptual metaphors to yield highly creative and complex patterns of conceptual figuration (Goossens, 1990).

To illustrate the strengths of this cognitive-linguistic framework with regard to explaining linguistic creativity, the Crossroads advertising poster can again serve as a playground. According to conceptual metaphor and metonymy theory, cognisers can appreciate the creative communicative impact of the poster because they are able to activate the pre-established figurative concepts in their minds that they have obtained from their embodied interaction with the world of experience. First, the phrase EATING ON THE STREET is likely to activate the conceptual metaphor BAD IS DOWN. This figurative concept has the power of guiding the cogniser towards the negative implications of the slogan. The social-critical dimension of this metaphorical concept is engendered by the cunning perspective from which the photograph is taken. The shot forces onlookers to gaze down on the drawing on the street and causes them to enact through their perceptual stance the low social status that is generally attributed to the homeless. To creatively conceptualise the unacceptable living conditions of the homeless, this metaphor is combined with the metonymies FORM FOR CONTENT and PICTURE FOR DEPICTED. These figurative concepts allow the readers to establish a connection between the phrase IS NOT PRETTY and the crude aesthetic of the piece of street art, on the one hand, and between the drawing and the poor living conditions of homeless people, on the other. The central metonymy for the poster, PART FOR WHOLE, is encapsulated in the ingenious use of the hole in the street and the puddle of dirty water. The puddle not only stands out as the most salient PART in the WHOLE face of the homeless person, but it also constitutes the central PART that the campaign is all about. The mouth metonymically stands for the WHOLE aspect of EATING. Moreover, the dirty content of the puddle is the PART of the homeless person's to eating habits that stands for the WHOLE problem of UNHEALTHY FOOD that they may find on the street.

The appeal HELP US ERASE HUNGER IN NYC can also be connected to the conceptual metaphors PROBLEMS ARE UNPLEASANT FORCES and GETTING RID OF PROBLEMS IS OPPOSING THOSE FORCES (Langlotz, 2006: 158). These metaphors are creatively combined with the concept of MONEY IS A LIQUID (O'Connor, 1998), which is implied in economic terms such as 'cash flow', 'liquidity', or 'dried-out markets'. Relative to these patterns, erasing the social problem of hunger can be conceptualised in terms of the 'gush of donation', which is figuratively poured over the image to wash away the homeless person's bad condition. Again, the figurative 'logic' of the implied metaphorical and metonymic patterns allows the receiver to conceptualise the appeal's implied message. By washing away the ugly drawing, the financial support will also wash clean the content of the puddle – the content of the homeless person's mouth, metonymically speaking. Thus the water of donation will improve the diet of the victims and make their lives cleaner.

Applications and criticism of conceptual metaphor and conceptual metonymy theory

This reading of the Crossroads poster in terms of conceptual metaphor and conceptual metonymy theory provides only one of the great many different phenomena of linguistic creativity to which these frameworks have been applied. Among other issues, researchers

have analysed creative compounding (Benczes, 2006), phraseology and idiomatic creativity (for example Gibbs & O'Brien, 1990; Langlotz, 2006), metaphorical creativity in discourse (for example Semino, 2008), advertising (for example Lundmark, 2005), and humour (for example Veale, Feyaerts, & Brône, 2006).

Despite its wide application, the conceptual metaphor approach to figurative creativity has been controversial. For instance, the psycholinguist Glucksberg and his colleagues (see Glucksberg, 2008; Glucksberg & McGlone, 1999) have questioned the retrieval of stable metaphorical mappings from the conceptual system and instead propose flexible processes of *attributive categorisation* in figurative-language comprehension (Glucksberg, 2001). According to this model, a cogniser would have to actively and unconventionally attribute the presented face and the slogan EATING ON THE STREET to a superordinate category, for example EATING LIKE THE HOMELESS. This creative attribution of a category departs from the more normal attribution to the category STREET FOOD. In this way, the receiver could handle the double reference of the expression (Glucksberg, 2001: 46).

Blending theory

Within the field of cognitive linguistics, *blending, or conceptual integration, theory* emerged in the 1990s as a general cognitive theory of creativity (Fauconnier, 1997; Fauconnier & Turner, 1998). Blending theory is also rooted within the general epistemological postulates of embodied cognition. However, unlike conceptual metaphor theory, which is interested in stable patterns of conceptual figurativity, blending theory models the situated conceptualisation processes that human cognisers perform in creative mental processing. This approach to online meaning generation is thus also compatible with the framework of situated cognition (Coulson, 2000).

To analyse the complex mental processes that are involved in producing and comprehending creative conceptualisations and linguistic outcomes, blending theory makes use of the central notion of 'mental space' (Fauconnier, 1997: 11). Mental spaces are defined as momentary conceptual packages that are evoked in short-term memory within situated conceptualisation processes (Fauconnier, 1994: ch. 1). Conceptual integration and blending processes always consist in the activation of a minimum of four mental spaces: two input spaces, a generic space, and a blended space, or 'blend' (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002: 46). Importantly, the association between the four mental spaces is dynamic, rather than static. Central to the evocation of new creative insights through blending processes is the interaction between chunks of information that are selected from the two input spaces and selectively mapped into the blend. Through this interaction, novel and unprecedented mental structures can be creatively constructed.

The creative arrangement of the Crossroads poster also forces the interpreter to integrate conceptual implications from various sources. Most centrally, the face of the homeless protagonist constitutes a blend: the recipient has to integrate the hole plus dirty puddle with the chalk drawing in order to see the complete depiction of the face. First, the generic space with the schematic representation of ROUND FORM allows the cogniser to associate the puddle with the mouth. On the basis of this association, the blend can then inherit its basic facial structure from the drawing (input 1), while the physical properties of the mouth and its contents stem from the puddle hole (input 2) (see Fauconnier & Turner, 2002: 131). Through this integration, a new conceptual structure emerges. In the blended space of the integrated face, the cogniser can actively exploit the creative potential of the links between inputs 1 and 2 through the conceptualisation process of 'running the blend' (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002: 48). The

mentally blended conceptualisation of a mouth full of stale and stinking water is immediately unappealing and highly unappetising. Along these lines, the poster's creative arrangement forces the cogniser to mentally integrate two concepts that are not conventionally categorised as belonging together. Interestingly, the implied message of the appeal HELP US ERASE HUNGER also applies directly to the components of this blended conceptualisation. More specifically, the appeal invites one to overcome the conceptual implications of the blend by symbolically erasing the two input spaces. As a result, the idea of erasing hunger becomes associated with erasing the dismal vision that is carried by the blended conceptualisation. Thus, by cleansing the dirty puddle in input 2, the conceptual impact of UNHEALTHY (STREET) FOOD is erased from the blended conceptualisation. Moreover, by mentally erasing the chalk drawing (input 1), the fate of homeless people in being bound to their existence on the street is effaced from the blended integration network that is evoked by the poster. Having deleted both input 1 and input 2 from the conceptual network, the *emergent meaning* in the blend – the unacceptable living conditions of the homeless – can be erased as well.

Applications and criticism of blending theory

The creative linguistic phenomena covered by blending theory are vast, and range from semantic composition and lexical compounding, to the highly complex sense-making processes involved in analogical reasoning (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002; Turner, 2014), humour (Coulson, 2000, 2005), or literature (Dancygier, 2012; Oakley, 1998; Turner, 1996). Blending theory has also been applied well beyond language to cover different forms of art and music (see Sambre, 2013; Turner, 2006). A great many other publications can be found on the Blending and Conceptual Integration website (http://markturner.org/blending.html).

   Despite its wide-ranging success and broad application to a welter of creative phenomena, blending theory does have its critics (see, for example, Gibbs, 2000). The central problems and some counter-arguments are addressed in Coulson and Oakley (2000). Most importantly, the descriptive power of blending theory is bound to the risk of accounting for too much and explaining too little. Moreover, since blending theory is not based on strict theoretical premises and criteria, it is hardly testable and falsifiable. And, finally, blending analyses tend to provide post hoc interpretations of singular creative phenomena, rather than systemic analyses of coherently collected corpora of data.

Expanding the creative mind: Cognitive poetics, and multimodal, enacted, and socially distributed creativity

While the early cognitivist approach to creativity provided by generativism was based on a highly reductionist and completely internalised view of the human mind, current approaches are characterised by expansion of the presented frameworks into literary analysis, into communicative modes other than language, and into enactionist views of embodied creativity, as well as socially distributed accounts of joint creative achievement.

Cognitive poetics

The first notable expansion within the analysis of linguistic creativity and cognition emerged in the late 1990s with the advent of *cognitive poetics* (see Stockwell, Chapter 13). This approach has its origins within cognitive linguistics as a subfield specialising in applying

relevant heuristics – including metaphor, metonymy, and blending – to literary criticism (see, for example, Freeman, 2013; Stockwell, 2002; Tsur, 2008). Some cognitive-linguistic roots for cognitive poetics can already be found in Lakoff and Turner's (1989) approach to poetic metaphors. Recently, however, the application of the whole range of cognitive-linguistic research tools has been expanded to phenomena such as literary stylistics and genres (Semino & Culpeper, 2002), rhetorical figures, tropes, and imagery (Brandt, 2004), reader reception (Stockwell, 2009), and narrative organisation (Dancygier, 2012). A recent overview and critical account of this field is offered by Brône and Vandaele (2009).

Multimodal creativity

Since it regards language as being structured by general conceptual mechanisms, cognitive linguistics has always been theoretically open to integrating linguistic analyses with other semiotic modalities (see, for example, Langacker, 2008). Indeed, the very fact that metaphor, metonymy, and blending are usually modified by the adjective 'conceptual' highlights that they are conceived of as general creative mechanisms, which transcend linguistic patterns of creativity. Nevertheless, cognitive-linguistic explorations into creativity were predominantly focused on language for a long time. Gesture research was one of the first areas to extend metaphor theory into the domain of non-verbal communication. In this strand of cognitive linguistics, it is shown that gestures frequently enact conceptual metaphors (Cienki & Müller, 2008). Moreover, gestures can also be produced creatively – that is, through formal aspects such as greater dynamicity, the use of a more extensive gesture space, or in creative combination with body posture or facial expressions (Cienki & Mittelberg, 2013: 234–41).

Compatible with gesture research is the analysis of conceptual metaphor and metonymy in pictorial representations (Forceville, 1996, 2012) and multimodal forms of communication, such as comic strips (Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009). Like gesture research, this field of cognitive linguistics has shown that the central cognitive-linguistic mechanisms of meaning construal apply across different communicative modes. For instance, this is demonstrated in Eerden's (2009) analysis of the consistent use of ANGER metaphors in *Asterix* comics and animated films. It is revealed that while the metaphorical concepts are relatively stable, their implementation may vary in accordance with the specific affordances of the communicative modes.

Pictorial metaphor and *multimodal creativity* are also of great relevance for the analysis of the Crossroads advertising poster (Figure 2.1). As has been shown earlier, the chalk drawing of the weary face, in combination with the puddle hole, carry central parts of the poster's figurative meaning. Moreover, the slogan EATING IN THE STREET ISN'T PRETTY not only constitutes an element of linguistic creativity, but also, like a speech bubble in a comic strip (see Forceville, 2013), is visually integrated into the depiction of the homeless person and thus achieves the more dynamic reading of constituting an outcry. The multimodal arrangement of the poster is fully compatible with the epistemological stance of mediated cognition, according to which cognitive processes cannot be conceived as purely internalised mental achievements – as claimed in the traditional view advocated in cognitivism and still predominant in early cognitive linguistics. Instead, creative processes become distributed over alternative media that represent and scaffold the creative process outside, rather than inside, the mind (Williams, 2008, 2013). In this vein, the poster can be said to visually represent the input spaces (drawing and puddle hole) and the blended space

(face with puddle mouth) of the creative blending process, rather than to treat them as internalised mental structures. This externalisation of the creative process works similarly with gestures, which externalise metaphorical conceptualisations to make them directly accessible to the embodied mind of the creative cogniser.

Enacted creativity

Gesture research and multimodal cognitive linguistics stress the importance of media other than language for creative conceptualisation. For human cognisers, the body is the central medium for interacting with the world of experience. Very recent research into embodied cognition from an enactionist perspective reveals that 'the body is an ever-present part of the context in which we use our minds, and therefore has pervasive influences on the neurocognitive activity that constitutes our thoughts' (Casasanto, 2014: 115). The same must be true for processes of creative achievement. What is striking about the Crossroads advertising poster in this respect is that the call for action in the appeal HELP US ERASE HUNGER IN NYC contains a hidden request for enacting the literal action of erasing hunger via figuratively erasing the chalk drawing of the homeless person's weary face. The poster thus invites the target audience to perform a mental simulation (Barsalou, 2005) of the bodily action of effacing the image as a symbolic stand-in for the concept of ERASING HUNGER. The poster ingeniously activates the enactive engine of a fully embodied cogniser. Similar facets of enacted creativity are implied in the perspective from which the chalk drawing is photographed: this perspective enacts the conceptual metaphor BAD IS DOWN through the visual stance that the recipient is forced to take. This reading of the poster is fully compatible with recent research by Sweetser (2014), who shows how viewpoint connects language and gestures with the bodily enaction of creative processes.

Socially distributed creativity

While the Crossroads advertising poster has proven to be useful for illustrating a number of cognitive approaches to linguistic creativity, it seems inadequate with regard to social constructivist models of cognition. Apart from the physical world depicted on the poster, the social world of the producer and the receiver is strikingly absent. However, although the social agents are not part of the poster's stimulus world, the cunning arrangement of the verbal and pictorial modes in the poster instigates a socially distributed process of joint creative achievement. In Vygotskyan terms, the poster works as a scaffolding that mediates the creative process shared by the designers and the recipients. Put simply, the producer provides the chalk drawing and the puddle as central stimuli, while the recipient is invited to erase them through the mental simulation of the physical action of effacing the drawing. This joint responsibility for the derivation of the advertising message and the implied problem solution carries further creative potential on the communicative meta-level: it makes clear that the situation of the homeless can be improved only through joint efforts. In Clark's (1996) terms, the poster therefore implements a form of joint activity in which both the producer and the receiver share the task of developing and realising the creative message. This stance is compatible with very recent research in cognitive linguistics, which has highlighted the social-cognitive dimensions of linguistic creativity by expanding cognitive-linguistic concepts into the domains of discourse analysis and interactional sociolinguistics (Jones, Chapter 3; Langlotz, 2010, 2013; Zima, 2013).

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Recommendations for practice and possible directions for future research

This chapter has taken one product of creative cognition as an illustrative basis on which to present historical landmarks in modelling linguistic creativity from a cognitive perspective. While the organisation of the chapter suggests scientific progression from the early 1960s to the present, I have avoided postulating the superiority of one approach over the other. Instead, it should have become evident from the discussion of the Crossroads advertising poster (Figure 2.1) through the lens of the different frameworks that each of them starts from its own specific view of cognition and corresponding research interests. Consequentially, each theory scrutinises linguistic creativity in its own specific ways. As Gibbs and Colston (2012) have shown in their recent work, it seems rather unlikely that a unitary approach can handle the complexities underlying figurative language. The same is certainly true for linguistic creativity in general. Given the multitude of phenomena that are subsumed under the notion of linguistic creativity and given the sheer complexity of creativity in its own right, it is therefore vital for practitioners to define their objects of analysis very clearly and to embark on an approach that is compatible with the chosen research focus. With regard to future research on language, creativity, and cognition, it seems evident that despite the existence of the different models presented in this chapter, the mysteries of linguistic creativity remain far from being fully uncovered. Future research should therefore continue with the trends of expansion addressed in the previous section. Moreover, it should attempt more decidedly to explore potential convergences and points of compatibility between the presented frameworks. This desideratum should not only apply to different research strands within cognitive linguists, for which many synergies have been addressed already, but also invite more exchange between cognitive linguistics, relevance theory, and generative frameworks of linguistic creativity and productivity (see, for example, Wilson, 2011).

Related topics

cognitive stylistics; computational approaches to language and creativity; lexical creativity; metaphor and metonomy; multilingual creative cognition

Further reading

Bechtel, W., and Graham, G. (eds) (1998) *A Companion to Cognitive Science*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

   This is a good overview of the history and the different subfields of cognitive science through to the end of the twentieth century.

Borkent, M., Dancygier, B., and Linnell, J. (eds) (2014) *Language and the Creative Mind*, Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications.

   The papers in this collection consider a number of issues relevant to language, creativity, and cognition, including the interplay of language and other communicative modes.

Dancygier, B., and Sweetser, E. (2014) *Figurative Language*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

   The work offers an up-to-date introduction to figurativity from a cognitive-linguistic perspective.

Veale, T., Feyaerts, K., and Forceville, C. (eds) (2013) *Creativity and the Agile Mind: A Multidisciplinary Study of a Multifaceted Phenomenon*, Berlin: De Gruyter.

   This collection focuses on the different cognitive processes of producers and consumers of creativity from a multidisciplinary perspective.

Wilson, D., and Sperber, D. (2012) *Meaning and Relevance*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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Creativity and discourse analysis

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Introduction

What is discourse analysis?

The word 'discourse' has different meanings for different people. As Sara Mills (2004: 1) points out, the word 'is used widely in analysing literary and non-literary texts and it is often employed to signal a certain theoretical sophistication in ways which are vague and sometimes obfuscatory'. In many disciplines in the social sciences and humanities, the term signals a broad set of ideas about the way in which texts and interactions construct social realities and power structures – ideas that are usually traced back to Foucault (1972). For linguists, discourse is usually more closely associated with concrete linguistic features of texts and interactions, but linguists do not always agree about what aspects of texts and interactions count as 'discourse'.

Within linguistics, it is usually said that the term 'discourse' can refer to three different aspects of language: (a) the level of language above the sentence; (b) the way in which we actually use language to get things done in the world; and (c) the role that language has in constituting and reinforcing ideologies and relationships of power within societies, closer to the meaning given to the term by Foucault and his followers (see Jones, 2012c; Schiffrin, 1994).

Different 'schools' of discourse analysis tend to focus more on one or another of these three aspects of discourse: text analysts, systemic functional linguists (see, for example, Halliday & Hasan, 1976), and discourse analysts working in the tradition of the 'Birmingham school' (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975) tend to be more interested in the first aspect – that is, the internal organisation (cohesion and coherence) of texts and interactions. The second aspect, 'language in use', is more associated with approaches such as pragmatics, conversation analysis, and interactional sociolinguistics (see, for example, Brown & Yule, 1983; Gumperz, 1982; Mey, 2001; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). And the third aspect, the social and ideological dimensions of language, is more associated with critical discourse analysis (see, for example, Fairclough, 1992), as well as feminist approaches to discourse (see, for example, Mills, 1995). But the truth is that all discourse analysts, to one degree or another, focus on all three of these aspects of language. In fact, one could argue that the aim of discourse analysis is to elucidate the relationship among the three: to reveal how the concrete features of situated texts affect the kinds of actions and interactions that can be performed with them, and ultimately the kinds

of relationships, identities, and societies that can be created. Put simply, discourse analysis is about understanding how we create our social worlds through texts. As Carter and Simpson (1989: 14) put it, discourse analysis 'should . . . be concerned not simply with the micro-contexts of the effects of words across sentences or conversational turns but also with the macro-contexts of larger social patterns'.

It follows, then, that a discourse analytical approach to creativity focuses not only on the formal aspects of 'creative language', but also on the way in which language is used in situated social contexts to create new kinds of social identities and social practices, and to challenge existing social structures and relationships of power (Jones, 2012a). This focus distinguishes a discourse analytical approach to creativity from many of the other linguistic approaches to creativity represented in this book – approaches that focus on lexical or grammatical creativity (see, for example, Munat, Chapter 5), on figures of speech such as metaphors and puns (see, for example, Hidalgo-Downing, Chapter 6; Bell, Chapter 7), and also on underlying systemic or cognitive mechanisms that result in the generation of creative linguistic forms (see, for example, Langlotz, Chapter 2). A discourse analytical approach is less concerned with creative language per se and more concerned with the way in which linguistic resources are used to engage in creative actions – actions that somehow reconfigure or reshape social relationships. There may be nothing intrinsically 'creative' about an utterance or a text that comes under the scrutiny of such an approach – namely, there may be no 'language play', no metaphors, or puns, or other rhetorical devices normally associated with creative language, and it may not even be intrinsically original or inventive. In fact, it is sometimes through saying the most prosaic or formulaic things, or not saying anything at all, that people are most 'creative' in their use of language. Discourse analysts are interested in how people deploy linguistic resources in particular contexts in ways that allow them to mean more than they say, how they strategically appropriate and mix different styles and genres in order to communicate 'what they are doing' and 'who they are being', and how they operate within the constraints that their societies impose on what is 'sayable' and 'doable', and sometimes manage to challenge and alter those constraints.

'Discourse', then, is not simply language; rather, it refers to the complex ways in which people use language and other semiotic systems to take actions, assume identities, maintain relationships, and advance or contest ideologies. As Widdowson (2004: 169) argues, language is only 'the overt linguistic trace of a discourse process [which is] available for analysis'. 'Discourse' on the other hand, is a 'pragmatic process . . . whereby the resources of the language code are used to engage with the context of beliefs, values, assumptions that constitute the user's social and individual reality' (Widdowson, 2004: 14).

Discourse analytical approaches to language and creativity have been applied to a wide range of linguistic behaviour, including literary texts, business and professional communication, political discourse, and everyday conversation. There is often, in discussions of creativity, a distinction between approaches that concentrate on what has been called '"big C" Creativity' – the kind of creativity that is found in great works of literature and 'world-changing' scientific discoveries – and '"small c" creativity – the creativity of everyday life that allows us to solve the many vexing problems that our environments, other people, or our own minds constantly present to us. Boden (2003) refers to these two 'types' of creativity as '*h* creativity' (historical) and '*p* creativity' (personal). Although a discourse analytical approach to creativity is not prepared to erase the distinction between the kind of creativity involved in writing a great sonnet or symphony and that involved in making a clever quip at a cocktail party or getting your boss to give you a raise, it is particularly

interested in understanding how and when these two types of creativity interact, how the consequences of '"big C" Creativity' can affect how people communicate and 'get by' in everyday life, and how people's creative responses to the moment-by-moment challenges of everyday life can result in broader 'historical' changes to the social order.

Critical issues and topics

While there are many issues of concern to discourse analysts interested in creativity, the main issues that distinguish a discourse analytical approach from other linguistic approaches to creativity are a preoccupation with: (a) *context* – the situatedness of language; (b) *dialogue and intertextuality* – the way in which the language always exists within a web of discourse; and (c) *social action* – the way in which people use language to do things and to participate in the larger social practices that constitute various ways of 'being in the world' (Wittgenstein, 1973).

Context

It is often said that discourse analysts are interested in the study of 'language in context'. This is one of the things that sets it apart from approaches such as that of Chomsky (1965), which view language primarily as a system. When Chomsky speaks of 'linguistic creativity', he is mainly referring to the ability of the linguistic system to generate an infinite number of unique utterances, regardless of the circumstances in which actual people might actually employ such utterances. For discourse analysts, whether or not an utterance should be considered 'creative' has less to do with the 'uniqueness' of the utterance and more to do with the way in which the utterance interacts with the context in which it appears. Language use is always *situated* within some time, some place, and some set of social relationships, and it always takes at least part of its meaning from the way in which it 'fits in' with these various contextual factors. What this means is that a large part of linguistic creativity is not only 'saying the right thing', but also 'saying the right thing at the right time to the right person', responding inventively and appropriately to 'the potentials and limitations of different social contexts' (Tusting & Papen, 2008: 6).

It is important to note that, in this discussion, I'm mostly using the word 'utterance' rather than 'sentence' or 'text'. This distinction comes from Bakhtin (1984), who distinguishes between *sentences* – abstract chunks of language that serve as the units of analysis in structuralist linguistics – and *utterances* – specific, unrepeatable acts of speaking tied to specific people and specific situations. It is in the ways in which language is tied to these people and situations – in the very *unrepeatability* of utterances – that discourse analysts locate linguistic creativity. Strictly speaking, 'there is no . . . way of being creative', argues Widdowson (2008: 503), 'by focusing on the message form.' Creativity is a function of how the message form interacts with the context in which it appears.

Although 'context' can be said to be a preoccupation of all discourse analysts, different schools of discourse analysis differ regarding the scope and scale of context that ought to be considered. For conversation analysts, for example, context is strictly limited to the local sequence of turns in talk, as well as those aspects of the social situation towards which speakers explicitly orient themselves. Context is created moment by moment, as each speaker's contribution is both afforded and constrained by the utterance that has come

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before *and* creates both opportunities and constraints for the utterances that can follow. Conversation analysis is the approach to discourse probably least associated with creativity (although, as I will discuss below, it has been used extensively in the study of dialogue in literary texts). A closer examination of this understanding of context, however, sheds considerable light on the micro-level creative processes that accompany every turn at talk, on the incremental, moment-by-moment ways in which we create our social realities, and on the way in which creativity is always a matter of working within constraints.

At the other extreme are approaches to discourse influenced by anthropology, such as Hymes' (1974) 'ethnography of speaking', which take a much wider view of context, exploring how utterances are enabled and constrained by the speech events, speech situations, and broader sets of cultural conventions in which they occur. For those taking this approach, the creative potential of context does not stop at the borders of individual conversations, but extends out into the rich fabric of culture, all of the resources that it provides, and the myriad occasions that it affords for people to come together and interact. Many scholars working in this tradition have examined the contexts of verbal performance, such as the occasions for the sharing of myths and stories (see, for example, Darnell, 1989; Hanks, 1996; Hymes, 1981), focusing not only on the conventions that govern such occasions, but also on the opportunities that they afford for creative modification and adaptation of traditional forms, and on the creative potential of *re*contextualisation – the way in which performances are transformed when they are transferred from one context to another (Bauman & Briggs, 1990; see also Maybin, Chapter 1). The most important thing about this approach to discourse is that it views all speakers as, in some sense, performers who constantly exercise their creativity in the ways in which they 'adapt speech to the situation and the situation to speech' (Duranti, 2009: 21).

Another approach that takes a wide view of context is critical discourse analysis, but the concern here is more with the ideological nature of context – the ways in which context and the opportunities for creativity it affords reflect the power relations within societies. Rather than conversations or cultures, context is seen in terms of 'orders of discourse' (Foucault, 1972) or, to use Gee's (2011) term, '"capital D" Discourses' – the ways of thinking, talking, acting, and *knowing* that societies make available in different domains and for different social actors. Just as, for conversation analysts, creativity is a matter of working within the constraints of conversational structures, so, for critical discourse analysts, creativity is a matter of working within societal structures, adapting to and sometimes contesting dominant ideologies, and finding the fault lines and the cracks in the edifices of power. As Fairclough (1992: 91) puts it: '[S]ubjects are ideologically positioned, but they are also capable of acting creatively to make their own connections between the diverse practices and ideologies to which they are exposed, and to restructure positioning practices and structures.'

In between these extremes – context as the micro-organisation of conversations, and context as the macro-organisation of cultures and societies – are approaches such as pragmatics and interactional sociolinguistics, which in many ways provide some of the most interesting ways of looking at the relationship between context and linguistic creativity. Such approaches emphasise the fact that language is not only situated, but also *situating* – that people have access to all sorts of ways of using language to create situations and to dynamically negotiate aspects of context as they go along, shifting and changing contexts, and even 'laminating' one context upon another. In pragmatics, while context is seen as disambiguating the meaning of language, language can also be seen to disambiguate (or sometimes 'ambiguate') context, allowing speakers to hint at, or strategically distance themselves from, the various definitions of the situation available around a particular speech act. Interactional

sociolinguists, drawing on the work of Goffman (1974), call the process by which people create situations when they talk 'framing'. While physical contexts (such as classrooms and hospitals), and cultural and social contexts, with their conventions and power structures, are often fairly rigid, imposing all sorts of constraints on what we can say and do, interactional frames are more flexible, allowing us to 'cue' (Gumperz, 1982) and 'key' (Goffman, 1974) different versions of what is going on, and to position ourselves in various ways within these different contexts (Sawyer, 2001; see also Sawyer, Chapter 4).

More recent approaches to discourse, such as mediated discourse analysis (Norris & Jones, 2005; Scollon, 2001), take the flexible and multifaceted dimensions of context even further, exploring how every situation actually entails multiple contexts occurring both on multiple timescales *and* in the histories of texts and other cultural tools that circulate through moments of social interaction. In other words, social interactions occur at the *nexus* of multiple overlapping and interested contexts spread across time and space. From this perspective, not only are utterances always unique and unrepeatable, but so too are contexts, and every new configuration of contexts, with its unique mixture of people, tools, and texts, brings with it unique affordances for creative action.

Dialogue

To say that language is always dialogic is, in the simplest sense, to assert that all utterances are not only situated, but also somehow connected to previous utterances: that all utterances are always in some way parts of 'conversations'. As Macdonnell (1986: 1) puts it: 'dialogue is the primary condition of discourse; all speech and writing is social'. While this point may seem obvious, it has far-reaching implications for the study of linguistic creativity. It points towards not only the fact that every utterance is in some way enabled and constrained by the utterance preceding it (as discussed above), but also the facts that all utterances are connected to other utterances in a complex web of discourse and that they respond not only to utterances in their immediate proximity, but also to utterances, conversations, and people that may be far removed from the time and place of speaking or writing. While the focus of creativity in the above discussion on context was on the way in which speakers and writers manage the relationship between text and context, here it is on the way in which speakers and writers manage the relationship between texts and other texts.

This more expansive understanding of dialogue also has its roots in the work of Bakhtin – especially in his early work on the novels of Dostoevsky (Bakhtin, 1984). For Bakhtin, the real source of linguistic creativity is not the fact that language allows us to say new things in new ways, but the fact that we must always do so in collaboration with others. All utterances are 'co-created' – the 'joint property of speaker and listener' (Morson, 2009: 14). Bakhtin (1986: 167) called this property of language 'addressivity' (*obrashchennost*), and insisted that it is this feature, not the generative power of rules, that makes language (and, by extension, thought and action) capable of genuine 'unexpectedness . . . "surprisingness," absolute innovation, miracle, and so forth'.

What this means, first of all, is that language in use is always, to some degree, unpredictable and contingent – a quality that is aptly captured by Erickson (1986: 316) when he likens having a conversation to 'climbing a tree that climbs back'. One of the key aspects of creativity in language use is that, despite the constraints we impose on one another's conversational contributions and despite the wealth of conversational routines in most languages, we can never be sure how others will respond to what we say and, in fact, there is a sense in which less predictable responses are more highly valued. Leech (1983: 146) suggests

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that underlying all communication is what he calls the 'interest principle': the principle 'by which conversation which is interesting, in the sense of having unpredictability or news value, is preferred to conversation which is boring and predictable'.

Another thing that it means is that every utterance in some way anticipates a certain kind of audience – that, through our utterances, we create not only conversations, but also social relationships and social identities. Bakhtin (1984) gives a number of examples from the novels of Dostoevsky in which utterances are styled and shaped for specific hearers, but it is also not hard to find ample evidence of this in our everyday conversations. Not only do we shape our utterances to particular audiences, but we also shape audiences with our utterances. While many aspects of social identity are fairly fixed, most are co-constructed to some degree as we interact: we actively position others in various 'storylines' (Davies & Harré, 1990), and negotiate power and social distance (Brown & Levinson, 1987), when we speak with them.

Perhaps the most important aspect of dialogism is that it helps us to see not only how speakers and listeners in particular conversations are connected to each other, but also how conversations are connected to other conversations. When we speak, says Bakhtin, we do not address only our immediate interlocutors, but we also, to varying degrees, address 'third parties' comprising those who have already spoken on the topic at hand in previous conversations. Whenever we speak, we always take a stand in relation to texts and utterances from the past.

More than that: we inevitably construct our utterances by appropriating and mixing these voices from the past. All utterances are not only dialogic (responding to other utterances), but also heteroglossic, containing the traces of other people's words and the contexts in, and purposes for which those words were used. In a sense, then, all texts and conversations involve 'remixing' (Knobel & Lankshear, Chapter 25). We do not only remix words; we also appropriate styles (what Bakhtin calls 'social languages') and genres associated with different social practices and institutions, and, when we do so, we invoke and position ourselves in relation not only to specific conversations in the past, but also to larger societal debates – what Gee (2011) calls '"capital C" Conversations'.

From this perspective, linguistic creativity is less about saying something 'new' and more about being able to appropriate and assemble the voices of others, to mix them in strategic ways, and to adapt them to particular circumstances and particular goals. Creativity is a matter of 'populat(ing)' the words of others with our own 'intentions' – of speaking the words of others with our own 'accents' (Bakhtin, 1981: 293).

Discourse analysts representing a range of different approaches have extensively explored the phenomena of dialogism and heteroglossia, usually under the labels of 'intertextuality' and 'interdiscursivity'. Interactional sociolinguists, for example, have analysed the ways in which people appropriate and enact the voices of others, especially in oral storytelling. Mediated discourse analysts have examined how people strategically appropriate voices as a way of claiming and imputing social identities and membership in communities (Scollon, 1998). Linguistic anthropologists have shown how people appropriate and mix the conventions of different genres to fit new cultural situations (Briggs & Bauman, 1992). And critical discourse analysts have documented how text producers and text consumers adopt and adapt elements from multiple '"big D" Discourses' to reproduce or challenge ideologies (Fairclough, 1992).

When seen through the wider lens of '"capital C" Conversations', the political and ethical dimensions of such acts of linguistic creativity become clear. The ways in which we use language in conversations to strategically position ourselves in relation to our immediate

interlocutors has consequences for broader social debates and struggles. Every time we engage in '"small c" conversations', we are also contributing to the broader '"capital C" Conversations' of our societies. In other words, every conversation represents an opportunity either to reproduce existing social orders or to contribute to social change. This underlying ethical dimension of dialogue is also present in Bakhtin's original formulation: it is through the addressivity of language in use that people become truly 'present' and 'responsible' for each other. In dialogue, as Bakhtin (1993: 40) puts it, there is 'no alibi'.

Action

As I argued at the beginning of this chapter, what distinguishes a discourse analytical approach to language and creativity is its focus not so much on creative language, but on the creative actions that we use language to take, how we, as Austin (1976) famously put it, 'do things with words'. Austin's theory has at its heart a view of language as creative action – a view that sees creativity not only in language's ability to 'call attention to itself' (the chief function that Jackobson assigned to 'poetic' language), but in its ability to actually shape and transform reality. When we speak, we not only make meanings; we also take actions.

The power of words to alter the physical and social world is most dramatically captured in Austin's notion of 'performatives': utterances such as 'you're under arrest' or 'I now pronounce you husband and wife', which, just by being uttered, fundamentally alter the social situations in which they are uttered. Austin's most important contribution, however, was his realisation that *all* utterances have a performative dimension – that they always 'do' something.

The creative potential of this performative dimension of language is perhaps most apparent in what Searle (1969) refers to as 'indirect speech acts': utterances that allow us to do things without even saying that we are doing them. This ability changes our scope for creative action, allowing us to strategically modulate our relationship to our actions. Indirect speech acts allow us to 'laminate' different communicative goals onto a single utterance, to create 'plausible deniability' for our actions, and to hint at actions we do not wish to take directly as a way in which to 'test the waters' when we are uncertain how the other person will react. The fact that so much of what we do with words is governed by processes of implicature and inference opens up considerable space for creativity (see, for example, Sawyer, 2001).

This reorientation from a focus on linguistic forms to a focus on language as a tool for action is, of course, also central to most other theories of discourse analysis, including: conversation analysis, in which conversations are seen as a matter of 'joint action' (Clark, 1996); interactional sociolinguistics, which explores the negotiative processes by which people strategise their actions in conversations; mediated discourse analysis, which sees utterances and texts as 'meditational means' for the accomplishment of concrete social actions; and critical discourse analysis, which is centrally concerned with the role of discourse in political action. All of these approaches support a perspective that locates creativity not in language itself, but in the actions that we are able to take with language.

A focus on action is inseparable from the issues of context and dialogue discussed earlier. Whenever we act, we always act in and on some context (and, in so doing, potentially alter that context), and we always act with others (and, in so doing, potentially alter ourselves and those other people). The scope of our action is both enabled and constrained by contexts and dialogues. Creativity comes into play when we are able to use language and other semiotic means to open up space in situated conversations for actions and identities that were not previously possible.

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Also, as with context and dialogue, a focus on action helps us to make a connection between the 'small c' acts of creativity in which people engage in everyday conversation, and the broader domains of society and culture. For when we 'do things with words', we are not only doing actions; we are also participating in recognisable social practices and enacting recognisable social identities. This is the rather broader sense of performativity invoked by Judith Butler (1990) in her argument that seemingly stable social categories such as gender are essentially performative. In this sense of the word, the performative nature of language can be understood as the way in which it allows us to be 'certain kinds of people' and engage in 'certain kinds of activities' through an ongoing series of cultural performances.

Despite the power of social conventions to constrain cultural performances, just as performativity in Austin's more limited sense of the word holds within it the potential for creative action, so does Butler's more expansive usage. In an essay entitled 'Performativity's social magic', Butler (1999) argues that performativity has the potential to create opportunities for dominant notions of context and identity to be expropriated and transformed by less powerful social actors. What kinds of new possibilities for social actions and social identities are opened up, she asks, 'when those who have been denied the social power to claim "freedom" or "democracy" appropriate those terms from the dominant discourse and rework or resignify' them (Butler, 1999: 123)? What, she asks, 'is the performative power of appropriating the very terms by which one has been abused . . . ?' (Butler, 1999: 123).

What Butler is talking about here is the fact that, as much as '"big D" Discourses' constrain social actions, especially for those whose experiences they marginalise, they are also vulnerable to being compromised, undermined, and transformed. These transformations occur not only through great works of art, the speeches and policies of powerful politicians, and paradigm-changing scientific discoveries, but also through the incremental everyday actions of individuals as they 'do things with words', 'combin(ing) discursive conventions, codes and elements in new ways (that) cumulatively produce structural changes in the orders of discourse' (Fairclough, 1992: 97). As Jones (2010: 473) writes:

> When discourse is used creatively, it can potentially change 'orders of discourse' on two levels: first on the level of the immediate interaction by shifting the relationships of power among participants, creativity reframing the activity that is taking place, or otherwise creating possibilities for social action that did not exist at the outset of the interaction, and second, on the level of society or culture, by contesting conventional ways of seeing things and opening up possibilities for the imagining of new kinds of social identities and new kinds of social practices.

Current contributions and research

Discourse analysis and literature

While my discussion thus far has been oriented towards a view of creativity that brings us beyond what is normally considered 'creative' or 'literary' language, there are many good examples of the application of tools from discourse analysis to the analysis of literary texts. In fact, it might be argued that, since the 1980s, the field of stylistics has been undergoing a 'discursive turn', increasingly exploiting tools from conversation analysis, politeness theory, speech act theory, Gricean pragmatics, and critical discourse analysis to explore the dimensions of context, dialogue, and action in literature (Carter & Simpson, 1989; Green, 2009).

The problem with much early work in stylistics – especially that influenced by the Russian formalists – is that it regarded literary works as creative objects in and of themselves, locating creativity in structural elements of texts (primarily phonological, lexical, and grammatical features). As Fowler (1984: 83) argues, the consequences of this perspective were to minimise the 'communicative and interpersonal – in a word, pragmatic – functions of the text . . . which give the richest significance for critical studies'.

More recent studies that have explored what Fowler (1984) calls the 'pragmatic functions of the text' can be divided into three kinds: those that focus on issues of context, dialogue, and action within the fictional worlds of texts; those that focus more on the interaction between texts and readers; and those that take a more Foucaultian view of discourse, exploring the social and ideological dimensions of literary texts.

Notable studies in the first category include Magnusson's (1999) use of politeness theory and conversation analysis to analyse the dialogue between characters in Shakespeare's plays, and Person's (1999) application of ideas from interactional sociolinguistics to examine the way in which conversational structures are represented in literary dialogue. Other good examples of this approach are the applications of speech act theory to the understanding of dramatic dialogue by scholars such as Nash (2008) and Short (2008).

Studies in the second category usually come closer to focusing on the concerns that I have been outlining as central to a discourse analytical approach to creativity. Perhaps the most notable among these is Black's (2005) formulation of what she calls 'pragmatic stylistics'. Using a range of theories from pragmatics, including politeness theory, Gricean pragmatics, and relevance theory, Black explores how the contexts that authors create for their characters affect the ways in which we interpret characters' actions, how authors strategically weave together multiple 'voices' and represent discourse in both direct and indirect ways, and the ways in which metaphor and symbolism work through the mechanisms of implicature and inference.

Also notable is the work of Jacob Mey (1999, 2001, 2009a), who also examines literary texts as active (specifically Gricean) collaborations between reader and author. In his book *When Voices Clash: A Study in Literary Pragmatics*, Mey (1999) addresses many of the key issues discussed above specifically as they relate to literary reading. The book is primarily about the ways in which authors appropriate and mix different 'voices', and the pragmatic effects (and challenges) that this entails. Negotiations among these different voices take place against the backdrop of what has been referred to as '"capital C" Conversations': the voices of the society that, like 'invisible partner(s) in all our conversations', are 'mumbling behind our backs, while we seemingly are speaking like "free linguistic agents", unobserved and unmonitored' (Mey, 1999: 7).

Finally, there are those studies that focus on the status of the literary text within broader 'orders of discourse' and the role of literary creativity in helping to create social change. Of course, literary theorists and postmodern critics have long taken inspiration from the work of Foucault, but have mostly not addressed the specifically linguistic dimensions of 'orders of discourse'. More linguistically oriented discourse analysts who have turned their attention to the social and ideological aspects of literature include Fowler (1981), who, drawing on the work of Halliday (1978), traces the ways in which an author's choice of register reflects the social and economic relations in the society in which he or she writes. Other work of this type has been heavily influenced by Fairclough's (1992) critical discourse analysis, such as Birch's (1989) analysis of reading as a political practice and Mills' (1995) feminist stylistics.

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Discourse analysis and everyday creativity

As discussed above, a central concern of a discourse analytical approach to creativity is the examination of how people use language in their everyday lives to engage in creative actions – especially actions that contribute in some way to the transformation of social orders. I use the term 'everyday creativity' to distinguish this kind of work from discourse analytical approaches to literary works of art. I do not intend, however, to limit the term to 'everyday casual conversation', but also wish to include more specialised uses of language associated with business and professional discourse, medical discourse, and political discourse.

There are so many studies that touch on the creative aspects of language in use from the various schools of discourse analysis that an exhaustive account would be impossible. Instead, I will mention a few studies that I believe exemplify different perspectives on creativity in discourse studies.

First, no account of discourse analytical approaches to creativity would be complete without a mention of the considerable work on conversational narrative carried out using a range of discourse analytical tools. What sets this work apart from much of the work done on literary narrative (see MacRae, Chapter 15) and on the structure of narrative from a sociolinguistic perspective (see, for example, Labov & Waletzky, 1967) is its attention to the situated, collaborative, and occasioned nature of oral stories – in other words, to the relationship between the way in which people tell stories and the *contexts* in which they are told, the *dialogues* of which they are part, and the *actions* that they are used to take.

Among the concerns of discourse analysts working in narrative is the way in which people use them to construct and contest social identities, and to 'align' themselves with their listeners (see, for example, Bamberg, 1997; Schiffrin, 1997), the ways in which tellers and listeners work together to 'co-author' stories (see, for example, Goodwin, 1984; Schieffelin, 1986), and the ways in which stories are creativity embedded within larger interactive processes (see, for example, Goodwin, 1982; Ochs, Smith, & Taylor, 1989).

One notable example is Norrick's (2000) work on narratives in conversation, in which he highlights the diffuse, co-constructed, and heteroglossic nature of everyday storytelling, as well as the pragmatic functions that narratives serve in ongoing conversational interactions.

Anthropologically inspired approaches to narrative have focused more on its performative aspects – that is, on the ways in which narratives construct cultural occasions and cultural identities based on shared understandings of how, when, where, and to whom different types of stories are most appropriately told, what sorts of people are entitled to tell them, and what sorts of people are entitled to hear them (Bauman, 1986; Shuman, 1986). One focus of this research has been on how stories are strategically entextualised and recontextualised into different situations (Bauman & Briggs, 1990, Maybin, Chapter 1). Another has been on how storytellers strategically appropriate and mix different narrative genres in order to challenge existing power structures. Briggs and Bauman (1992) refer to this phenomenon as 'generic intertextuality'. They argue that, by appropriating and combining elements of canonical genres, people in less powerful positions in societies can find creative ways in which to claim 'textual authority' by linking their experiences with traditional narratives. This kind of creativity is illustrated, for example, in Jones' (2015) analysis of the ways in which gay and lesbian people claim cultural legitimacy by mixing the canonical genres of the exemplum, the testimony, and the confession in stories of anti-gay bullying, and in Shuman's (1993) account of the ways in which women strategically contest gender boundaries through the strategic mixing of genres traditionally reserved for men with those traditionally associated with women.

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Yet another area in which discourse analysis has been able to shed light on creativity in everyday interactions has been in studies that examine how people strategically negotiate 'what's going on' in interactions. As I mentioned earlier, the contexts in which we interact are not fixed; participants often have quite a lot of 'wiggle room' with which to frame and reframe situations and to strategically position themselves within them.

Most of the work on framing in interaction has been done within the paradigm of inter-actional sociolinguistics. Perhaps the most well-known study is that of Tannen and Wallat (1987), who analysed how a paediatrician uses various contextualisation cues, such as subtle shifts in tone and register, to dynamically manage the different activities involved in examining an 8-year-old child with cerebral palsy, framing the examination as a 'game' for the child, as a 'consultation' for the mother, and as a 'lesson' for medical residents, who will later watch it on videotape. In another article entitled 'Talking the dog', Tannen (2004) shows how family members often use the frame of 'talking to the dog' to actually talk to other family members when they feel uncomfortable saying things to them directly, and, using data from the same study on family communication, Gordon (2008) shows how parents strategically frame and reframe utterances as 'parenting' and 'play' in their interactions with their children. Such studies highlight the fact that a discourse analytical approach to creativity sometimes requires attention not only to the words that people say, but also to the sometimes subtle interactional cues that they use to signal, reinforce, or challenge the mutually constituted definition of the situation.

Another approach to discourse that focuses on the creative ways in which people manage identities and activities in interactions is positioning theory. Developed by psychologist Rom Harré and his colleagues (Davies & Harré, 1990), positioning theory explores the discursive processes through which people negotiate their own and others' identities in interaction by portraying themselves as 'characters' in jointly produced 'storylines' – storylines that involve broader cultural values and 'moral orders'. Because interaction typically involves multiple storylines, participants usually have available to them multiple positions that they can strategically adopt, contest, and play off against one another. This potential for strategic action is particularly relevant in interactions in which individuals with relatively less power attempt to resist, subvert, or adapt to a relatively powerless positioning in one storyline by adopting a more powerful one in another. Preece (2009), for example, has shown how so-called remedial students in universities strategically coun-ter institutional positionings by adopting powerful positions within alternate storylines associated with peer groups, their families, or their communities.

Genre analysis (Bhatia, 1993; Swales, 1990) is another approach to discourse that has made a contribution to understanding the ways in which people use language creativity, especially in academic, corporate, and professional communication (see Bhatia, Chapter 9). A key difference between most literary approaches to genre and discourse analytical approaches is that the latter focus less on genre as a matter of formal conventions and more on genre as a matter of social action (Miller, 1984). Genres are tools that enable users to accom-plish private intentions within the frameworks of socially recognised purposes by *bending* and *blending* various expectations about the style and structure of texts held by the discourse communities to which they belong (Bhatia, 1993, 1997, 2012; see also Bhatia, Chapter 9). In fact, the ability to use genres inventively, rather than slavishly follow 'templates', is one of the best indicators of expert membership in a community.

I have already asserted that the key to understanding a discourse analytical approach to linguistic creativity lies in understanding not only how people can creatively alter linguistic forms, but also how they can use language to creatively change the world – and no other

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approach to discourse captures this more activist approach to creativity better than critical discourse analysis. As much as critical discourse analysts are concerned with the ways in which 'orders of discourse' exert power over individuals, they are also interested in the creative ways in which people exercise 'resistance' – how, by producing new meanings, new practices, and new ways of organising their relationships through discourse, people can function as agents for social and cultural change (see, for example, Blommaert, 2005; Fairclough, 1992). Discursive means for resistance available to the less powerful include strategies such as creatively appropriating the voices and genres of the powerful, and using silence, euphemism, satire, irony, and what Halliday (1976) refers to as 'anti-languages' (Flowerdew, 2008). Examples can be seen in Jones' (2007) study of the strategies that gay men in China use to claim cultural legitimacy, Canagarajah's (1999) study of resistant discourse practices of students and teachers in Sri Lanka, and Lamb's (2013) examination of the ways in which immigrant organisations have affected debates about immigration control in the United Kingdom.

Finally, mediated discourse analysis (Norris & Jones, 2005; Scollon, 2001) provides yet another perspective on discourse and creativity: one that focuses on how social actors creatively mix discourse with other cultural tools (both semiotic and technological) in performing social actions and negotiating social identities along historical cycles of discourse and action – that is, what Scollon (2008) calls 'discourse itineraries'. Mediated discourse analysis shares with approaches to 'distributed cognition' (see Langlotz, Chapter 2) the view that creativity is less a matter of the individual, and more a matter of the individual acting together with other people and with various 'cultural tools'. Creativity is, as Lave (1988: 18) puts it, 'stretched across mind, body, activity and setting'. A good example of this approach is Jones' (2012b) ethnographic study of urban skateboarders in Hong Kong, which documents how skateboarders make use of various discursive and physical tools (skateboards, fashion, and digital video cameras) to cognitively scaffold their learning and construct identities as members of unique 'crews'. Another example is the study by Jones and his colleagues (2012) of writing in public relations firms, showing how seemingly 'uncreative' processes, such as the use of templates and 'boilerplate' text, actually facilitate creative collaboration and the socialisation of new employees into the creative practices of the firm.

The ethnographic approach to research advocated by mediated discourse analysis and many of the other approaches mentioned here highlights the importance of a discourse analytical approach to creativity to go beyond the analysis of isolated texts and to seek to understand the ways in which texts often cycle through multiple contexts in complex 'itineraries', involving complex webs of intertextuality and interdiscursivity.

Future directions

In the coming years, discourse analytical approaches to language and creativity will need to confront two interrelated phenomena: (a) the fact that an increasing amount of human communication is mediated through digital technologies (for an overview, see Jones & Hafner, 2012); and (b) the increasingly multimodal character of communication, which has led to what might be considered a 'multimodal turn' in contemporary approaches to discourse (see, for example, Jewitt, 2009; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001).

According to Mey (2009b: 12), 'the use of the computer in creative contexts represents a true breakthrough in the relationship of humans to their work, especially as regards their ways of creative production and reproduction'. Digital technology has put into the hands of

ordinary people a range of discursive tools formerly available only to professionals, such as the ability to create sophisticated multimodal web pages and digital videos. It has also introduced new genres that challenge users' creative capacities, such as tweets (Tagg, 2012) and the 'small stories' that individuals collaboratively compose on social networking sites (Page, 2010). Part of the creative potential of digital technologies also lies in the way in which they can facilitate creative intertextuality and 'remixing' (see Knobel & Lankshear, Chapter 25). In some circumstances, these technologies have introduced opportunities for users to transform power relations in their everyday lives and to increase possibilities for agentive action, from the ways in which young people use digital technologies to manage their social lives and escape the surveillance of parents and other authorities (boyd, 2014; Jones, 2008), to the ways in which digital video and social media have been used in the context of social activism and protest movements (see, for example, van de Donk et al., 2004). At the same time, some have argued that digital technologies can also limit people's access to creative action by constraining the range of discursive choices that they can make by means of such things as dropdown menus, design templates, and default settings (van Leeuwen, 2012).

Related to the challenges introduced to discourse analysis by new technologies are those introduced by the increasing recognition that accounts of discursive behaviour that focus solely on linguistic means inevitably give an incomplete picture. All communication is, to some degree, multimodal and an important part of understanding how people use language creatively is understanding how they mix it with other modes. Kress (2003) argues that all communication is essentially a form of 'design', in which people strategically play off against each other the affordances and constraints of written and spoken language, images and video, gesture, music, and other modes. As meanings move across modes, and as modes interact with one another, texts and contexts are transformed, and new possibilities for human action and dialogue are created (Jaworski, Chapter 20; Kress, 2010).

Thus far, most of the work in multimodal discourse analysis has focused on the structure and meaning of multimodal texts, and much progress has been made in understanding the affordances and constraints of different modes and the ways in which these modes interact. In the future, however, more attention will need to be paid to the ways in which multimodal and multimedia texts are 'emplaced' (Scollon & Scollon, 2003) in physical and social contexts, how they get recontextualised as they travel through networks and across platforms, the kinds of '"capital C" conversations' that they support and constrain, and the new kinds of social practices and social identities that they make possible.

Related topics

creativity and dialogue; creativity and interdiscursive performance in professional communication; creativity and technology; discourses of creativity; everyday language creativity; language, creativity, and remix culture; literary narrative; literary stylistics and creativity

Further reading

Carter, R., and Simpson, P. (eds) (1989) *Language, Discourse and Literature: An Introductory Reader in Discourse Stylistics*, London: Routledge.

This edited collection presents many good examples of discourse analytical approaches to literary creativity.

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Gee, J. (2011) *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*, 2nd edn, London: Routledge.

This is an excellent introduction to discourse analysis that highlights many of the principles discussed in this chapter.

Jones, R. H. (2010) 'Creativity and discourse', *World Englishes*, 29(4): 467–80.

This article elaborates on some of the principles of a discourse analytical approach to creativity introduced in this chapter.

Jones, R. H. (ed.) (2012) *Discourse and Creativity*, Harlow: Pearson Education.

This edited collection includes examples of discourse analytical approaches to creativity in many different domains, including literature, professional communication, art and music, and digital communication.

Maybin, J., and Swann, J. (2007) 'Everyday creativity in language: Textuality, contextuality and critique', *Applied Linguistics*, 28(4): 497–517.

This article makes a good case for focusing on the contextual and critical dimensions of creative language.

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4

Creativity and dialogue

The improvisational nature of conversational interaction

Keith Sawyer

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Introduction

The defining feature of conversation is that it is collectively improvised. For this reason, a productive way in which to study conversation is to study the most extreme form of creatively improvised linguistic interaction: the improvised dialogues performed on stage by improvisational theatre groups. In this chapter, I argue that the study of these dialogues has much to teach us about conversation more generally. I present two examples of staged improvised dialogues and I identify the key features of these dialogues that make them uniquely improvisational. I then present a theoretical framework, *collaborative emergence*, which allows us to apply these insights to everyday conversational interaction.

Improvisation has been one of the most influential developments in contemporary theatre. Beginning in the 1950s, a group of Chicago actors began to perform improvisations on stage, in front of paying audiences. They were influenced by Stanislavsky, but even more so by the improvisations of the medieval Italian *commedia dell'arte* and by the free flow of children's dramatic play. In Chicago 'improv', the audience is exposed to the collaborative creative process of an ensemble of actors; neither the actors nor the audience knows how the performance will emerge.

The brief transcript in Example 1 demonstrates how two improv actors create a scene through improvisation.

Example 1 The beginning of a two-minute scene at the Improv Institute

1 (Andrew steps to stage centre, pulls up a chair and sits down, miming the action of driving by holding an imaginary steering wheel)
2 (Ben steps to stage centre, stands next to Andrew, fishes in pocket for something)
3 **Andrew** On or off?
4 **Ben** I'm getting on, sir. (Continues fishing in his pocket)
5 **Andrew** In or out?
6 **Ben** I'm getting in! I'm getting in!
7 **Andrew** Did I see you tryin' to get in the back door a couple of stops back?
8 **Ben** Uh . . .

Source: Sawyer (2003b)

The first actor to jump to stage front and start the scene can do almost anything. Nothing has been decided – no plot, no characters, no events. But only a few seconds into the scene, the actors quickly establish a basic *dramatic frame*. Once this happens, the actors have to work within that frame.

By the end of this exchange, Andrew and Ben have developed a reasonably complex drama. They know that Andrew is a bus driver and that Ben is a potential passenger. Andrew is getting a little impatient and Ben may be a little shifty, perhaps trying to sneak on. A transcript of the dialogue can be misleading, because it makes it all seem straightforward. But it's important to emphasise how unpredictable these eight turns were – how this tiny bit of dialogue could have gone in 100 other directions. For example, at turn 2, Ben had a range of creative options available to him: had he pulled up a second chair and sat down next to the 'driver', he would have become a passenger in a car. At turn 3, Andrew had an equal range of options: he could have addressed Ben as his friend, and Ben's hand in his pocket could have been searching for theatre tickets – 'Don't tell me you forgot the tickets *again*!' For a zanier example, at turn 2, Ben could have addressed Andrew as Captain Kirk of *Star Trek*, creating a parody. Each turn presents a range of creative options for Andrew or Ben, and because each turn provides its own numerous possibilities, a combinatorial explosion quickly results in hundreds of other performances that could have emerged.

Yet this creativity is not unlimited: although they start the scene with no idea what will happen, a few seconds into the scene the actors are constrained by the scenario that has collaboratively emerged. From then on, their creativity must be consistent with what has come before. In improvisational encounters, participants must balance the need to contribute creatively with the need to maintain coherence with the current state of the dramatic frame.

The study of improvised dialogues can contribute to our understanding of two processes that are present in all conversational interaction. The first is the process whereby participants in a conversation collaborate to create their interactional context, or the 'frame' – and I refer to this process as *collaborative emergence*. I argue that the frame should be treated as a higher level of analysis that emerges from dialogue, and I argue that we must consider the frame to be analytically distinct from any participating individual and distinct from any single turn of dialogue. The second interactional process is that whereby participants are constrained and enabled by the interactional frame that emerges from their dialogue. I refer to this process as *downward causation*, because it is a causal relation between the frame, a higher level of analysis, and individual discursive action.

My theory of collaborative emergence is based on sociological and philosophical treatments of emergence, reductionism, and holism – bodies of literature on which conversation research rarely draws (Sawyer, 2005). The theory makes clear the broad relevance of these studies to research in conversation analysis, linguistic anthropology, and the psychology and sociology of creativity.

Improvised dialogues and everyday conversation

Researchers have demonstrated that, in everyday conversation, participants collaborate to negotiate the properties of the frame. Improvised dialogues provide a window onto this collaborative negotiation: because there is no frame at the beginning of an improvised scene, we can observe the emergence of the entire frame. Using improvised dialogue, actors create a temporary social reality in minutes, or even seconds. They collaborate to create roles, characters, relationships, emotions, events, and a dramatic trajectory for the scene.

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Conversation is more like improvised dialogue when it is negotiated, flexible, collaborative, and in play, in unstructured encounters such as everyday conversation, small-group collaborations, brainstorming sessions, and discussion seminars (Sawyer, 2001). Conversation is less like improvised dialogue when more features of the interaction are pre-specified and intersubjectively shared. Unlike theatre improvisations, in most conversations we know where we are – a bar or restaurant, an office, the supermarket; we know who we are talking to, and what sort of relationship we have with that person – good friend, acquaintance, co-worker; and we know what sorts of utterances and topics will be appropriate. But, in recent decades, conversation researchers have demonstrated that even these basic features of the context are open to negotiation (see the studies collected in Duranti & Goodwin, 1992; Tannen, 1993). Even in familiar situations among intimates, there are still many things that need to be negotiated: what we will talk about, when turn-taking will occur, and who has speaking rights. Participants negotiate the definition of the frame and attempt to influence others' interpretations of what is going on. This negotiation is usually implicit and we are often not consciously aware of it. My study of improvised dialogue continues this tradition in conversation research.

The study of everyday talk often requires an understanding of the personalities and past histories of participants, and this can be difficult to capture without lengthy interviews or longitudinal analysis. These methodological difficulties partly explain why almost no conversation analytic studies have incorporated studies of the participating individuals. Yet, without considering such factors, it is hard to know to what degree an observed conversational regularity can be explained in terms of traits or preferences of participating individuals. This is why Erving Goffman, who was keenly interested in the creative strategic moves made by speakers, focused his career on encounters between strangers in public places: these are exactly those situations in which a minimum of the frame is known in advance, and speakers have to be creatively strategic in negotiating and defining the basic properties of the frame. Improvised dialogues have these same features: each performance begins with new characters; and those characters' histories and personalities are completely constructed during the performance itself.

In contrast to this focus on creativity, some theories of conversation focus on situational constraints that help speakers to disambiguate others' messages and maintain coherence. Discourse analytic studies of coherence focus on the background knowledge shared by speakers, including scripts, frames, event schemata, and adjacency pairs (Brown & Yule, 1983). Many sociological theories of situated practice argue that individuals use ritualised or routinised interaction patterns as a way of reducing anxiety and stress (for example Collins, 1981). Such theories focus on the structured aspects of conversation and neglect its improvisational aspects (see Sawyer, 2001). As a result, these theories have difficulty accounting for the most improvisational conversations, when individuals co-create their context.

For these theoretical reasons, the study of improvisational theatre dialogues is ultimately a study of how conversation works. Studying both requires addressing the same foundational questions: how do people use language to collaboratively create a conversational frame? What are the interactional mechanisms that participants use to do this? How do these mechanisms change in different contexts?

Individual creativity and collaboration

Psychologists who study creativity have largely focused on the individual creator and the psychological processes of creativity – but many creative activities occur in groups (Sawyer, 2003a, 2007). Modern examples include large teams in scientific research

laboratories, in which arena a single journal article may have more than 100 authors, and the production of a film, the credits of which may list more than 100 professionals. Theatre and musical performance are perhaps the most group-oriented of all creative forms. Many musical traditions are ensemble forms, including the chamber groups and orchestras of the European tradition, and almost all theatre is ensemble-based.

An improvisational group performance is a collaborative creation and the performance is collaboratively emergent (Sawyer, 2003a). Like many emergent phenomena, it is difficult – perhaps even impossible – to analyse using reductionist methods. For example, we cannot study the collaborative creation of the dramatic frame by focusing on the psychology of individual performers, or the creativity that they display in isolated turns of dialogue; instead, we need a theoretical framework and a methodology that allows us to study group interaction and collaborative creativity. Although some psychologists have acknowledged the role played by collaboration (for example John-Steiner, 2000), their empirical studies have been largely qualitative and descriptive, owing to the lack of a methodology with which to study sociocultural practice in specific instances of collaboration. I believe that we can study collaborative verbal creativity by using methodologies developed for the analysis of verbal performance, thus providing a new set of tools to creativity researchers.

In most European performance genres, the performers follow an outline that has been created by someone else: musicians perform from a score that was written by a composer; or actors memorise lines from a script that was written by a playwright. As a result, we often think that the creativity in these domains originates with the solitary creator of the score or the script. Also in European performance, each performance is managed by a single autocratic individual: the theatre director or the musical conductor. Thus it is relatively easy to analyse those genres of performance by focusing on the creative individual, and when psychologists study performance creativity, they usually focus on these European genres.

However, apart from European performance traditions, most of the world's performance genres are improvisational. Most of them do not have a tradition of notation – that is, they are oral cultures – and most of them do not have individuals equivalent to a 'composer' or 'playwright'; rather, the creativity rests with the performers. In this situation, the creativity of the performance itself plays as large a role as the creativity that led to the structures that pre-exist the performance: the tradition or genre, or the song that is being performed. And, in oral cultures, genres and songs themselves are collectively created, emerging over historical time.

The psychology of creativity, if limited to the study of individual cognitive processes, cannot explain collaborative emergence. The dramatic frame must be treated as a distinct level of analysis, irreducible to participants' mental representations or orientations towards it. Perhaps psychologists have not attempted to study improvisational performance because the emergent processes of improvised, unscripted, undirected performance are hard to explain using the reductionist individualist methods of psychology.

If the emergent frame is an independent, irreducible level of analysis, there are several implications for how we study the creativity of individual participants: where does the speaker's creativity come into the picture? What role does individual creativity play, and what are the constraints on individual creativity? What is the balance between individual creativity and group collaborative processes?

Frame and context in conversation

An improvised dialogue is created by the collaborative efforts of the entire group. No single speaker creates the performance; it emerges from the give and take of conversation.

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Improvised dialogue results in the creation of a *dramatic frame*, which includes all aspects of the performance: the characters enacted by each actor; the motives of those characters; the relationships among those characters; the joint activity in which they are engaged; the location of the action; the time period and genre; the overall plot; and the relation of the current joint activity to that plot. The dramatic frame is constructed turn by turn: one actor proposes a new development for the frame, then other actors respond by modifying or embellishing that proposal. Each new proposal for a development in the frame is the creative inspiration of one actor, but that proposal does not become a part of the drama until it is evaluated by the other actors. In the subsequent flow of dialogue, the group collaborates to determine whether to accept the proposal, how to weave that proposal into the drama that has already been established, and then how to further elaborate on it.

I call this process *collaborative emergence* because the dramatic frame emerges from the collaborative creative activity of the ensemble (Sawyer, 2003a). To demonstrate some important characteristics of collaborative emergence, I refer to an example of dialogue taken from a 1993 performance by Off-Off Campus, a Chicago theatre group (Example 2). This is the first few seconds of dialogue from a scene that the actors knew would last about five minutes. The audience was asked to suggest a proverb, and the suggestion given was 'Don't look a gift horse in the mouth'.

Example 2 The first few seconds from a five-minute scene by Off-Off Campus

1	(Lights up. Dave is at stage right, Ellen at stage left. Dave begins gesturing to his right, talking to himself.)
2	**Dave** All the little glass figurines in my menagerie . . . The store of my dreams. Hundreds of thousands everywhere! (Turns around to admire)
3	(Ellen slowly walks toward Dave)
4	**Dave** (Turns and notices Ellen) Yes, can I help you?
5	**Ellen** Um, I'm looking for uh, uh, a present? (Ellen is looking down like a child, with her fingers in her mouth.)
6	**Dave** A gift?
7	**Ellen** Yeah.
8	**Dave** I have a little donkey? (Dave mimes the action of handing Ellen a donkey from the shelf.)
9	**Ellen** Ah, that's – I was looking for something a little bit bigger . . .
10	**Dave** Oh. (Returns item to shelf.)
11	**Ellen** It's for my Dad.

Source: Sawyer (2003b)

By turn 11, elements of the frame are starting to emerge. We know that Dave is a storekeeper and Ellen is a young girl. We know that Ellen is buying a present for her dad and, because she is so young, probably needs help from the storekeeper. These dramatic elements have emerged from the creative contributions of both actors. Although the incremental contributions to the frame of each turn can be identified, none of these turns fully determines the subsequent dialogue, and the emergent dramatic frame is not chosen, intended, or imposed by either of the actors.

The emergence of the frame cannot be reduced to actors' intentions in individual turns, because in many cases an actor cannot know the meaning of his or her own turn until the other actors have responded. In turn 3, when Ellen walks toward Dave, her action has many potential meanings, for example she could be a co-worker, arriving late to work. Her action does not carry the meaning 'a customer entering the store' until after Dave's query in turn

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4. In improvised dialogues, many actions do not receive their full meaning until after the act has occurred; the complete meaning of a turn is dependent on the flow of the subsequent dialogue. This sort of retrospective interpretation is quite common in improvised dialogue, and it is one reason why the dramatic frame is analytically irreducible to the intentions or actions of participants in individual turns of dialogue.

In improv, as in everyday conversation, speakers know that their turns of dialogue must be consistent with the emerging frame. After turn 5, because Ellen is now a young child and a customer, she cannot suddenly begin to act as a co-worker; likewise, she cannot act as if she had a prior relationship with Dave, because his query in turn 4 makes it clear that they have not met before. As the dialogue continues beyond turn 11, we learn that Ellen is buying her dad a present because he has not been feeling well; in fact, he has been exhibiting psychotic behaviours. A third actor then enters the scene, enacting the character of Ellen's psychotic dad, and his condition is cured through some clever actions by the storekeeper. As the dialogue proceeds and the dramatic frame progressively emerges, each actor is increasingly constrained by the requirement to maintain coherence with the emergent frame.

This preliminary description of collaborative emergence shares many similarities with several long-established theories about conversation. It is a commonplace among scholars of conversation that individuals work together to co-construct their social reality through interaction. Statements to this effect are found in symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology, social constructionism, conversation analysis, and sociocultural psychology. Each of these traditions has noted that speakers co-construct the interactional frame and that the frame, in turn, constrains the future actions of individuals.

In improvised dialogues, the frame emerges from collective action, and then constrains and enables collective action. These two processes are always simultaneous and inseparable. They are not distinct stages of a sequential process – emergence in one turn, and then constraint in the next; rather, each turn contributes to a continuing process of collaborative emergence, at the same time as it is constrained by the shared emergent frame operative at the moment that turn was spoken. The emergent frame is a dynamic structure: it changes with every turn, so that no actor faces the same frame constraints twice. Until the stage goes black and the performance is over, no one can stop the performance at any one point and identify with certainty what the frame's structure is. It is always subject to continuing negotiation, and because of its irreducible ambiguity, there will always be intersubjectivity issues, with different participants having different interpretations of the frame's constraints and affordances.

I have studied collaborative emergence in improvised dialogue by combining two distinct strands of research (Sawyer, 2003b). The first is the close empirical focus on conversation that is found in fields such as conversation analysis and the ethnography of speaking. These approaches are distinguished by rigorous methodological analyses of the turn-by-turn mechanics of conversational interaction (Duranti & Goodwin, 1992). These researchers have argued that talk cannot be understood as a static transcript, but must be viewed as fundamentally in play during interaction. Several studies in the ethnography of speaking have emphasised the inherently creative nature of verbal performance (Bauman & Briggs, 1990; Bauman & Sherzer, 1989). As Bauman and Sherzer (1989: xviii–xix) noted:

Performance here is seen as a creative and emergent accomplishment . . . the deepest problem in the social disciplines [is to understand] the dynamic interplay between the social, conventional, ready-made in social life and the individual, creative, and emergent qualities of human existence.

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My research draws from these traditions in its close empirical focus on improvised dialogues. However, these disciplines have not sufficiently theorised the shared collective nature of the interactional frame. To address this gap, I have expanded on these empirical traditions by explicitly theorising the interactional frame as a collective social phenomenon. Drawing on theories of sociological emergentism (Sawyer, 2005), I argue that the shared interactional frame is analytically irreducible to the actions, intentions, or mental states of participating individuals. Although the frame is created by participating individuals through their collective action, it is analytically independent of those individuals and it has causal power over those individuals. Drawing on arguments from sociological emergentism, I argue that the causal power of the frame cannot be explained in terms of individuals' representations of it, their demonstrated orientations to it, or their subjective interpretations of it.

This position is a version of what sociological theorists refer to as *methodological collectivism*: the position that although only individuals exist, there may be analytically irreducible phenomena that emerge from collective action. Although such a collectivist theory is novel in conversational research, arguments for analytic irreducibility have been accepted in a broad range of scientific fields, because irreducibility is a common feature of emergent phenomena. In extending the study of conversation in this way, I have been influenced by two strands of theoretical work in sociology: the study of how macrosocial structures emerge from individual action (Sawyer, 2005); and the analysis of the role of interaction in the relationship between individual action and social structures (Collins, 1981; Knorr-Cetina & Cicourel, 1981).

This approach rejects both methodologically individualist and interpretivist approaches to the study of conversation. Methodological individualism is the stance that all properties of group behaviour can be reduced to, and ultimately derived from, properties of individuals. The reductionist thrust of methodological individualism is implicit in many disciplines that study conversational interaction. For example, among cognitive psychologists who study conversation, the emergent frame is assumed to be reducible to a participant's internal representations of it, as in Schank and Abelson's (1977) 'script' model and in 'event schemata' theories more generally. This psychologistic concept of the frame differs from conversation analytic usage, which associates the frame with the emergent, negotiated context, rather than with any mental representation of it.

The theory of collaborative emergence rejects methodological individualism. I argue that, in improvised dialogues such as that in Example 2, the emergent frame cannot be reduced to an analysis either of individuals' representations of it, or of individual turns' contributions to it. I present a theory of conversational interaction that shows why these emergent frames must be treated as analytically irreducible wholes. As a result of collaborative emergence, the study of improvisational dialogues cannot be methodologically individualist: they cannot be fully explained by analysing the actions or mental states of the participant individuals, and then by analysing the interactions of these individuals, working 'upwards' to an explanation of the emergent interactional frame. This sort of analysis can partially explain the collaborative emergence of interactional frames, but cannot adequately represent the analytic independence of the emergent frame, and the ways in which it takes on 'a life of its own' and causally constrains and enables participants.

Conversation researchers generally reject methodological individualism in their focus on the interaction order as a distinct level of analysis. At the same time, most conversation analysts believe that the emergent frame can be explained only in terms of the strategic actions taken by individuals and the demonstrated interpretations held by individuals in successive turns of an encounter (see Sawyer, 2003b). This stance is a variant of what

I refer to generally as *interpretivism*. By 'interpretivism', I refer to a broad group of theories that have in common the belief that social reality can be studied only in terms of individuals' interpretations of it. This broad definition of interpretivism encompasses many scholars who reject positivism and objectivism, including phenomenological and subjectivist social scientists. Interpretivists believe that macrostructural forces never constrain individuals; rather, they are mediated by those individuals' interpretations of them (for example Giddens, 1984).

I argue for the analytic irreducibility of the interactional frame (thus rejecting methodological individualism), and I argue that emergent frames can have causal power over individual actions and that these causal relations can be objectively studied (thus rejecting interpretivism). I base my emergentist approach to the interactional frame on a sociological theory of emergence and *non-reductive individualism* (Sawyer, 2005). This theory holds that groups are nothing more than their component individuals, but also that properties of groups may not be explainable in terms of those individuals.

The collaborative emergence of the frame

Theories of emergence appeared throughout the twentieth century, and have been influential in a wide range of disciplines including philosophy, evolutionary biology, psychology, and sociology (Sawyer, 2005). Emergentists begin with the observation that, in some systems, complex and differentiated *higher level* structures emerge from the organisation and interaction of simpler, *lower level* component parts. Emergentism holds that, in these complex systems, nothing exists except the component parts and their interactions. However, emergentists also maintain that some emergent higher level properties of these systems cannot be studied with reductionist methods.

In sociology, emergentism is a position concerning the relation between the individual and the collective (Sawyer, 2005), and is part of a long-standing interest in the *micro–macro link* – that is, the relationship between individual phenomena, such as individuals' actions, interpretations of social phenomena, and subjective meanings attributed to social phenomena (the Weberian tradition) – and macrosocial phenomena, such as institutions, social classes, and economies (the Durkheimian tradition). Sociological emergentism accepts that the only real entities in a collective are the participating individuals. However, sociological emergentism rejects methodological individualism in arguing that some collectives are complex dynamical systems that cannot be reduced to an analysis of the component individuals and their interactions. If so, sociology may, of necessity, be a science of laws in which the elementary terms refer to properties of collectives.

Drawing on emergence arguments, many sociological theorists (reviewed in Sawyer, 2005) argue for the analytic irreducibility of the social to the individual. These arguments provide the philosophical grounding for the theory of collaborative emergence: an application of emergence theory to conversation research.

Symbolic interaction has become central to a wide range of theories of the micro–macro link, including Bourdieu's (1977) notion of *habitus*, Giddens' (1984) theory of *situated social practice*, and Collins' (1981) theory of *interaction ritual chains*. These theorists have taken different positions on the relationship between micro-interaction and macrosocial structure; what unifies these theorists is that, unlike classic micro–macro synthesists such as Weber or Parsons, they give symbolic interaction a prominent role. In my focus on the collaborative emergence of frames from improvised dialogues, I am continuing this recent sociological tradition.

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I argue that studies of conversational dialogue must be emergentist, because they must hypothesise an analytically distinct entity that emerges from collective action and then has causal power over individual action. However, there are some subtle differences from prior forms of sociological emergentism. First, I focus on the micro-interactional mechanisms whereby the shared social phenomenon emerges, whereas much of macrosociology is more sociologically realist, in proceeding as if macrosocial forces already exist, rather than theorising and examining empirically how they come to exist.

Secondly, macrosociology studies the causal force associated with emergents that preceded the beginning of the encounter. For example, in much of sociolinguistics, the independent variables are macrosocially derived properties such as class, race, gender, institutional location, and network position. Instead, here I study causal forces that originate in an emergent that was created by the participants. Thus I avoid many potential individualist and interpretivist counter-arguments to these macrosociological approaches, such as the most widespread sociological account of how macrosocial factors exert causal force in encounters: The causal force is mediated by the orientations that participants have internalised toward such situations in prior encounters.

Conversational dialogue is more likely to manifest collaborative emergence when it has the following characteristics: (a) unpredictability; (b) processual intersubjectivity; (c) social causation; and (d) use of implicit metapragmatic communicative strategies. Conversations with these properties will be the most like improvised staged dialogues and the least likely to submit to reductionist individualist methods of analysis. In the following four subsections, I discuss each of these characteristics in turn.

Unpredictability

In the improv theatre transcript presented in Example 2, no actor knows what is going to happen next. At each point in the improvisation, an actor can choose from a wide range of moves to propel the dramatic frame forward. Actors cannot know how their turns will be interpreted by the others; each turn gains its final meaning only from the ensuing flow of discourse. Thus the actor's intention does not fully constrain the eventual dramatic meaning of the turn; each turn of dialogue, although spoken by a single actor, eventually takes on a dramatic meaning that is determined by a collaborative, emergent process.

Linguistic interactions range across a spectrum from relatively unpredictable to relatively predictable (Sawyer, 1996). Predictable interactions are those in which the turns of dialogue are highly constrained by the conventions of a genre or a situation. The highly ritualised initial turns of a courtroom proceeding are almost completely scripted. Slightly less predictable, although still heavily ritualised, are the opening sequences at the beginning of a phone conversation. Improvisational theatre dialogues represent the extreme of unpredictable, relatively unscripted conversation.

This unpredictability and contingency results in dialogue that, at each turn, has a combinatorial complexity: a large number of next turns are possible, and each one of those turns could result in the subsequent flow of the dialogue going in a radically different direction. In each turn, the speaker can choose from a wide range of actions that are consistent with the frame that has emerged up to that point; a speaker's action cannot be predicted by the other actors on stage, because there are so many potential creative acts and the range of potential frames that might emerge multiplies from turn to turn. This results in expanding combinatorics like those in a chess game: if one has ten potential moves and one's opponent then has ten potential responses to each of those ten moves, to look only two turns into the future, one

must consider 100 different scenarios. No chess player is smart enough to foresee all of the possibilities more than a few turns ahead, given the rapidly expanding combinatorics. Such moment-to-moment combinatorics often results in analytically irreducible phenomena, as demonstrated by studies of complex dynamical systems.

Complexity theory has long noted that sensitivity to initial conditions is likely to lead to unpredictable and analytically irreducible system behaviour. The system's behaviour follows general laws, but because the effect of a small change in initial conditions is so large, predictability from the laws is computationally impossible. Because of the high degree of contingency and unpredictability in improvised theatre dialogues, it is impossible to predict how the dialogue will continue. The contingency and combinatorial complexity of improvised dialogue makes it likely to be an irreducible, emergent phenomenon.

Processual intersubjectivity

A second factor that contributes to the emergent irreducibility of dialogue is that it is often impossible to determine the meaning of a turn at the moment that the turn occurs. As we saw in Example 2, turn 2, Ellen's entry into the store has several potential meanings, and these ambiguities are not resolved until the subsequent turn of dialogue. Before turn 3 attributes a meaning to turn 2, each of the two actors may have had a completely different interpretation of what turn 2 actually meant; it is not until turn 3 that these conflicting potential interpretations are resolved and the actors both share an understanding of turn 2's meaning.

This example shows that intersubjectivity is problematic in improvisational encounters. In psychology and in sociology alike, intersubjectivity is defined as a state of overlapping, isomorphic mental representations: two or more people are said to 'have intersubjectivity' when their mental representations of the situation are in agreement. This view is implicitly reductionist, because intersubjectivity is reduced to individual subjectivities and their additive relations. In other words, intersubjectivity – and hence all collective activity – is regarded as a simple sum of individual mental states. In this view, there can be no novelty or emergence, because the reproductive aspects of interaction are stressed: in interaction, I recreate something within your mental state, and you recreate something within mine.

The psychological account of intersubjectivity is inadequate to describe improvised dialogues, because the dependence of each turn on the subsequent flow of dialogue results in a situation in which it is impossible for participants to have identical mental representations of what is going on. However, although each actor may have a rather different interpretation of what is going on and where the scene might be going, they are nonetheless able to collectively create a coherent dramatic frame. The key question about intersubjectivity in improvisational performance is not how agents come to share identical representations, but rather how a coherent interaction can proceed even when they do not.

This inadequate concept of intersubjectivity is implicit in individualist analyses of discourse, because they begin with a focus on each participant's internal mental model of the frame and then work 'upwards' to show how the frame is aggregatively composed of the participants' models. However, in interactions that manifest collaborative emergence, the emergent frame cannot be fully explained in this bottom-up fashion. Of course, a version of the emergent interactional frame is internalised by each actor, resulting in a mental version of the frame. Yet the internalisation process is not deterministic and can result in each actor having a slightly different representation. These mental representations could conceivably be studied using the methodologies of cognitive psychology, although specific techniques for accessing these mental models are hard to envision,

because the models are constantly changing during the improvisation. However, even if one could develop a psychological method to study these individual frame representations, the analysis would have to take another significant step, to consider the social interactions among actors, and how the combinations and negotiations of their different representations resulted in the emergence of the final performance.

Because of the ambiguity of the frame and the problem of intersubjectivity, improvising stage actors try not to construct an overly elaborate internal representation of the interactional frame, because if their internal representation of the frame contains more detail than has actually been intersubjectively agreed to, chances are high that another actor will perform an action that is incompatible with that extrapolated version of the frame. Actors are taught not to maintain an overly detailed representation of the frame, and improv teachers use the admonition 'Don't write the script in your head' in instructing actors not to do this.

When all actors are following this rule effectively, the emergent interactional frame is analytically prior to actors' mental representations, because it precedes any one actor's internalisation of it. The creativity does not originate in one actor's head, then becoming externalised and imposed on the other actors; rather, the creativity is found in the collaborative emergent process that results in an interactional frame, which is then internalised by the actors. Improvisational creativity occurs on the collaborative, social plane, rather than in individuals' heads. This observation has several implications for psychologists that study creativity (Sawyer, 2003a).

Intersubjectivity and unpredictability result in collaboratively emergent phenomena that cannot be reduced to an analysis of the component individuals. This is not a claim that individualistic analysis cannot contribute useful insights into the analysis of group interaction; it is, however, a claim that such analysis is, in principle, not capable of a complete description of the social phenomenon of collaborative emergence. Even after the individualistic or psychologistic analysis were complete, analyses of emergent interactional processes would nonetheless remain essential to a complete understanding of the performance.

Social causation

Sociological critiques of methodological individualism have often argued that individual-level descriptions are incomplete because they do not account for *social causation*, when an emergent social property begins to have cause relations with the individual level, exerting constraints either on individual actors or on their patterns of interaction. Although individualist accounts are often successful at describing how bottom-up processes lead to emergent macro-structure (a strength of conversation analysis), they rarely address the 'top-down' processes of social causation.

In some cases, the analyst can identify regularities in the ways in which individual turns are constrained or enabled by the emergent frame. These regularities are a form of social causation. Interactions are more likely to be collaboratively emergent when the analyst can identify causal relations between the emergent frame and individuals' actions, because these causal relations are particularly difficult to reduce to explanation at the individual level of analysis.

An individualist account of Example 2 would have to analyse each turn in terms of the causal influence of the prior turn of dialogue, combined with the intentions and mental models held by the speaker, without any appeal to an analytically distinct social level of analysis. In turn 1, we could suggest that Dave defined the location (a store) and his role

(storekeeper). This action placed constraints on the possible actions that Ellen could take in turn 2. Continuing with this hypothetical individualist account, in turn 2, we could propose that Ellen internalised Dave's proposals, and then chose to elaborate them by proposing an activity, walking into the store, which could be interpreted in a range of ways, for example either as a customer shopping or as an employee arriving to work. Her proposal then exerts causal force by limiting Dave's creative options in turn 3. To the extent that such turn-by-turn causal accounts are plausible and complete, the interaction is less likely to be collaboratively emergent. In dialogues that manifest collaborative emergence, it becomes increasingly difficult to account for individuals' actions without making explicit reference to the independent causal force exerted by the emergent interactional frame.

Once properties of the dramatic scene are established, they become collective emergents, and thus constrain all of the actors. Dave's turn 1 establishes the location as a 'store' and this act constrains Ellen's action in turn 2. The question is whether the constraint on each turn can be analysed as a combination of the prior turn and the internal mental state of its speaker, or whether the constraint on a turn is better considered to originate in the interactional frame itself as an emergent social product. If the latter, then the frame is analytically distinct from individuals' orientations towards it as displayed in individual turns. Psychologists, conversation analysts, and many others take the former approach. Although, for some types of interaction, such an approach is methodologically warranted, in drawing on sociological emergentism I argue that, for improvised dialogues, the analyst is often required to take the latter approach.

All improvisation occurs in the presence of some pre-existing structure (Sawyer, 1996). In Example 2, throughout the five-minute performance, there is an ever-changing emergent frame – a shared understanding of what has been established and what is going on – and the actors' future creativity has to proceed within that frame. In conversations that manifest collaborative emergence, the emergent interactional frame must analytically be considered to have its own causal force, which is both enabling and constraining. It is ever-changing, created in a bottom-up fashion from the actions of individual actors, yet once created it constrains and influences the later actions of those individuals, in a top-down fashion.

Metapragmatics in improvised dialogue

Several complexity researchers have suggested that at least two variables contribute to emergence: the number of entities in the system; and the complexity of the communication among the entities. Computer simulations of complex systems have typically contained a large number of entities, combined with rather simple communication rules; this is the case in both connectionism and in artificial life. Nonetheless, these researchers acknowledge that emergence is a function of both the number of entities and the complexity of the rules of communication. As such, emergence could be found in systems with a small number of entities, if the communication were sufficiently complex. This is the situation that is found in improvisational group dialogue.

I argue that, in addition, collaborative emergence results from the *metapragmatic function* of dialogue (Sawyer, 2003b). In an improv performance, the emergent is a constantly changing interactional frame, which emerges from individual actors' turns and then constrains the future actions of those actors. Because of the demands of intersubjective interaction, there is slippage among the mental models of the actors. Consequently, for a coherent interaction to emerge, the actors have to be able to negotiate among their distinct

representations. However, actors do not step out of character to talk about how their scene will develop; this would break the dramatic illusion and lose the continuity of the scene. Instead, actors have to negotiate their intersubjectivity while enacting the ongoing scene. Thus every actor's turn of dialogue both enacts a character within the frame and, at the same time, negotiates this intersubjectivity implicitly, by proposing an additional elaboration or transformation of that frame. This latter communicative function is *implicitly metapragmatic* in that its indirect pragmatic effect is to further define the nature of the ongoing interaction itself. Improv communications – like all human discourse – thus have effects on two levels: an enacted, or denotational, level; and a metapragmatic, or negotiatory, pragmatic level (Sawyer, 2003b). Collaborative emergence is more likely to be found in interactions that use implicit metapragmatics.

Conclusion

Linguistic anthropologists have long known that language use is fundamentally creative. Many cultures have developed complex improvisational verbal forms, requiring significant creative skill, which are used in ritual, negotiation, gossip, greeting rituals, and conversation (Sawyer, 1996). Oral cultures have always depended on improvisation, because in the absence of a written text even the most structured and ritualised performances vary from one performance to the next.

In all collective language use, dramatic frames emerge from improvised dialogues, and then those emergent frames exert downward causal force on the participants, both constraining and enabling what actions they can take next. By examining these two processes, I demonstrate how emergent frames can be said to constrain individual action even though they are nothing more than the actions of participants. My theory of this dialectic draws on sociological theories of emergence, which generally hold that properties of complex systems may be irreducible to properties of their components. Similarly, the theory of collaborative emergence holds that the interactional frame emerges from individual turns and their combinations, but that it is nonetheless analytically irreducible to those turns. Frames cannot be fully explained in terms of intentions and mental models of participants: neither through the methodological individualism of contemporary psychology, nor through the interpretivist focus on participants' subjective interpretations of, and demonstrated orientations to, that frame.

These arguments have complex implications for the study of individual creativity. In improvised dialogues, the creativity of individuals is secondary to the collective creativity of the group. The emergent frame emerges, and then participants internalise it; it does not first exist in participants' heads, to be externalised. Group creativity is primarily social and collective, and is irreducible to psychological conceptions of individual creativity. As such, its scientific study requires explanations at the collective, group level of analysis.

Improvised dialogues provide a unique window on to conversation. They allow the researcher to focus on the creative, interactional mechanisms from which frames collaboratively emerge. To the extent that speakers in everyday conversation are free to create their own frames, the same interactional processes will be found. In both conversation and in improvised dialogues, participants must balance the need to creatively contribute with the need to maintain coherence with the current state of the interactional frame. For these reasons, improvisation is more than an intriguing performance genre; the study of improvised dialogues can also contribute to the general theory of situated social action.

Related topics

creativity and discourse analysis; discourses of creativity; everyday language creativity

Further reading

Bauman, R., and Sherzer, J. (eds) (1974) *Explorations in the Ethnography of Speaking*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

This book contains chapters by linguistic anthropologists who have each studied a particularly interesting genre of verbal performance.

Duranti, A., and Goodwin, C. (eds) (1992) *Rethinking Context: Language as an Interactive Phenomenon*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

This book contains chapters by sociologists who study the micro-interactional flow of socially situated encounters.

Sawyer, R. K. (2003) *Improvised Dialogues: Emergence and Creativity in Conversation*, Westport, CT: Ablex.

This research monograph is an extended empirical study of Chicago improvisational theatre dialogues, with a discussion of the theoretical implications for the study of situated social action.

Sawyer, R. K. (2007) *Group Genius: The Creative Power of Collaboration*, New York: Basic Books.

This is an accessible book for general readers, which builds on academic studies of collaboration and creativity to identify implications and recommendations for business leaders and team members to help their groups to be more effective.

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5

Lexical creativity

Judith Munat

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Some basic concepts

Although we may not all be as creative as the poets, each of us is a poet in his or her own right – that is, we are all capable of exploiting the language system creatively, at the level of phonology, morphology, or syntax. What is of particular interest in this chapter is the way in which speakers invent, modify, mix, and remix single morphemes, entire words, or whole expressions by applying or by violating productive and creative word-forming processes. This is the domain of lexical creativity, and will always involve the phonological and morphological levels of the language, but may well have repercussions on the syntax and semantics as well.

The English lexicon is a collection of words – or 'lexemes', if we are referring to abstract dictionary entries; we shall use 'word' here to mean any actual physical realisation of an abstract lexeme. Some of the words in our lexicon may be old (or archaic), no longer in currency; others are (commonly referred to as neologisms), and they contribute to form an ever-shifting mosaic.

Speakers of a language possess an in-built grammar that allows them to apply the rules of the system to create previously non-existing words, especially *derivatives*, such as the verb 'nation-al-ise' (from the noun base 'nation') or the adverb 'un-success-ful-ly' (from the noun 'success') and *compounds*, which are composed of two or more lexical elements (generally a head and modifier), such as 'big deal' or 'big bang'. Whether fused into one word or remaining as separate units, these constitute a single meaning unit. As in our examples, these compounds often take on totally new meanings, distinct from those of their constituent elements, and, as Katamba (1993: 72) affirms, no synchronic rules can be devised to account for the meaning of such semantically unpredictable formations.

These are some banal examples of two very productive and very frequent word-forming processes, but there exist many others that are far more erratic and less predictable, such as blending, back formation, conversion, analogical extension, clipping, initialisation, and abbreviation. These are often considered to be 'creative' processes, because they are less generalisable than derivation and compounding. But there is also the case of word manufacture, or the formation of totally new roots – monomorphemic creations composed of phonemes having no specific or recognisable associations with previously existing words. The sum of all of these word-forming techniques is what makes our lexicon so rich, so flexible, and so varied.

However, it is not as simple as it appears. Problems arise when we discover that a word-formation process rarely applies consistently 'across the board' to all of the bases that would

appear to qualify (Katamba, 1993: 73). Paradigms are erratic and not all potential words will ever be realised.

Let us now turn our attention to the finer distinctions between productivity and creativity, before focusing on the more creative aspects of word formation.

The great debate: Distinctions between productivity and creativity

There is a long-standing debate among linguists as to what distinctions are to be made between productivity and creativity, and no consensus has yet been reached on the definition of either. Let us start, nonetheless, with Bauer's (1983) definition of 'productivity' as the formation of new coinages by the application of the rules of the grammar. The outputs of productivity are thus predictable and analysable, meaning that they can be decomposed into their constituent morphemes. Such is the case with many compounds and most derivatives. Being regularly formed, they are grammatically transparent. However, not all compounds are semantically transparent: they present varying degrees of semantic and grammatical opacity, partly depending on the relationship between head and modifier, and on whether the sense is literal or figurative. Bauer (1983: 63) cites the example of 'headhunter', which, he says, is initially a productive formation (meaning tribes that keep the heads of their human victims); it is perfectly transparent, whereas in its modern, metaphorical extension as one who searches for intelligent executives, it is an example of creativity. The point here is that regularly formed compounds may be as uninterpretable as certain blends, which are typically considered to be creative (or irregular) formations. As Adams (2001: 17) points out, the distinctions between irregular creative blends and productively formed compounds are not always watertight.

Definitions of creativity are even more elusive than those of productivity, and we enter a veritable labyrinth of contrasting views when trying to sort them out. Bauer (1983: 63) initially viewed creativity as the 'native speaker's ability to extend the language system in a motivated, but unpredictable (non-rule-governed or irregular) way'. These unpredictable coinages are formed by processes outside regular word formation. Later, however, Bauer (2001: 64) admitted that these differences are more a question of degree than of kind, and that productivity and creativity should be seen as hyponyms of innovation.

In a more complete discussion of the various positions in this debate, Konieczna (2012) distinguishes between *productive morphological processes* (predominantly compounding and derivation) and *creative morphological processes* which she identifies as blending, analogical extension, internal modification, clipping, initialisation, and abbreviation, all less predictable and generalisable than productive word-forming processes. In her study (of a corpus of politically correct terminology), she finds that creative morphological processes are more persistently relied on than productive ones, and she emphasises that there is *a high frequency of compounding and suffixation* among the creatively formed words (Konieczna, 2012: 15). The prevalence of morphological creativity with respect to productivity, she states, should be attributed to the fact that the creative outputs are 'more playful' and 'tend to be more catchy', by which she means attention-drawing. This is but another confirmation that productivity and creativity often function in much the same way, although the effects produced may be quite different.

Many scholars make desperate attempts to draw a productivity–creativity divide. Schröder and Mühleisen (2010), in their investigation of new ways in which to measure productivity, conclude with a series of considerations on creativity in word formation, which they call

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'expressivity'. They cite, among others, Lieber (1992, in Schröder & Mühleisen, 2010) who affirms that those words that 'draw attention to themselves . . . are formed according to an unproductive pattern' and are therefore excluded from a theory of word formation. The authors immediately rebut this statement by citing Lehrer (1996: 64, in Schröder & Mühleisen, 2010), who says that 'creative neologisms' can tell us a great deal about word formation, because they are 'extremely productive'. Granted, Lehrer may be using 'productive' here to mean frequent or prolific, and perhaps Lieber's reference to 'words that draw attention to themselves' is not very precise descriptive terminology, but we can nonetheless glimpse a possible divergence. Schröder and Mühleisen also report Zwicky and Pullum's (1987: 335) claim that rules of expressive morphology (referring to a 'playful, poetic or ostentatious effect') are not subject to the same rules as plain morphology. These playful words are presumably the 'imaginative ingenious neologisms' represented by individual creativity in Bolozky's (1999: 4, cited in Schröder & Mühleisen, 2010) terms. What emerges from these various contrasting viewpoints is that creative words belong to expressive morphology and have a playful or poetic intention. Given that they are imaginative or ingenious 'neologisms', they are not subject to the word-forming rules of 'plain' or productive morphology. A central distinction made by Schröder and Mühleisen between these two types of word is that productively derived forms are, by definition, transparent, whereas this does not apply to creative neologisms. As we shall see later in the chapter, this is not always the case.

In his chapter on novel word crafting, Miller (2014: 83) also distinguishes between word formation and word creation (by which he means the creation of new roots, which is a rather reductive view of lexical creativity). But he then states that the creation of novel words by various means (including compounding, borrowing, and blending) and 'the use of everyday language in unusual ways' are both significant aspects of verbal art (Miller, 2014: 100). Although he is here referring specifically to poetic language, for our purposes the statement can be extended to lexical creativity in general. Creative word formation does, in fact, go well beyond the creation of new roots and is not always distinguishable from productive word formation. There is, as we have seen, almost no agreement among scholars as to precisely which processes should be considered productive and which creative. Our position here is that they are to be located at two different points on a cline and can best be defined by their prototypical features.

Word-forming processes such as shortening or blending are considered by Ronneberger-Sibold (2008) to be creative techniques, distinct from 'regular' word formation that exploits grammatical rules. She justifies her position by stating that even though clipping and blending techniques are becoming ever more frequent in morphological change, the nature of such creations has not yet been thoroughly understood nor convincingly described. She therefore places them in the domain of speaker performance rather than speaker competence. They are intentional choices no less than other types of lexical creativity, but she considers them to be a subtype of extragrammatical morphology (see Dressler, 2000). The justification for this analysis is that, in many shortenings and blends, the application of word-formation rules to linguistic input does not enable a predictable output – that is, the identification of the constituent elements is not always possible. Consequently, these words display reduced transparency with respect to products of regular word formation and present difficulties in interpretation. As has been pointed out earlier, even canonical productive processes such as compounding can present difficulties of analysability and interpretation.

Although productively formed words are often placed in opposition to creative lexical inventions, Bagasheva and Stamenov (2013: 71) object that lexical inventiveness covers all patterns, and all instances of form and meaning modification, that result in the appearance of a new lexical item. This view broadens the outlook on the various types of word-formation patterns, but still leaves us in the dark as to exactly where lexical creativity is to be sought. As Zawada (2006) states, there is no consensus as to the precise nature of this creativity.

In the absence of a generally accepted definition, we shall, for the present, take the position that creative lexical inventions are those new words produced intentionally by speakers, generally formed analogically on the models of other words in the lexicon. These may be productively formed, serving an impelling communicative need of the moment and never intended to fill any real or permanent naming need in the wider community of speakers. This automatically excludes all slips of the tongue, malapropisms, spoonerisms, and speaker errors. However, this creative output may also be intentionally deviant with respect to the rules, thus grammatically opaque (or unanalysable into component elements). Finally, like regularly formed words, the semantic content of creative lexical items may not be recoverable without the support of context to aid in decoding.

Creation or re-creation?

According to Pope (2005: xv), linguistic creativity means creation from something; it is an ongoing process in which the writer or speaker draws from a finite number of existing items in order to create an infinite number of fresh or imaginative solutions. These previously existing items, whether phonemes, morphemes, lexemes, or phrasal units, are manipulated, combined, or recombined, to form new creations. In the process, new conceptual structures may emerge as unexpected associations are formed between previously distinct concepts (Lamb, 1998: 205). The term 'interlexicality' (Munat, 2010: 147) has been used to indicate that the connotations and habitual contexts of use associated with a given morpheme or lexical element incorporated in a new word or expression will become part of the meaning of that word or expression.

To summarise, the major word-forming processes in English exploited by speakers for the construction of new words are compounding, derivation, clipping, blending, back formation, calqueing, borrowing, and conversion. We have seen that there is great divergence among linguists as to which of these are productive and which creative patterns, because they all serve to modify and expand our lexicon. In his book *English Lexicogenesis*, Miller (2014: 100) offers a taxonomy of the various types of rule-governed formation, and then attributes to analogy a central role in lexical diffusion, stating that this is the means by which 'all word creation originates and spreads'. Veale (2007: 194) also affirms that analogy is a powerful force, especially in the creation of compound terms, concluding that 'analogy has a central role in the mechanism of linguistic creativity' (Veale, 2007: 209). Hickey (2006: 156) seems to have a more restrictive view of analogy when he states that all analogical formations are transparent (we will see that this is not the case) and that they are 'synchronically derived by a productive process of compounding', but some of his examples belie this statement. Are 'buppie', 'chapess', and 'outro' really transparent even though they may have been formed analogically on the basis of 'yuppie', 'chap' and 'intro'?

The role of analogy in word formation is a 'vexed question', according to Hohenhaus (2007: 27). It remains to be established whether analogy is a useful umbrella term for

all types of word creation (as Miller claims) or simply a principal force in compounding (Veale's position), or, more restrictively, one type of word creation (as Hickey seems to maintain), albeit of central importance.

Much of our linguistic output is marked by original, non-canonical, even ungrammatical or deviant expressions, which may be single lexemes or longer phrasal units, idioms, metaphors, etc. But all of these are not 'creative' in the same way or to the same degree. The locus of lexical creativity can be identified as residing in the words or lexicalised expressions that a speaker intentionally invents, often by combining or recombining existing elements of the language, when seeking to express his or her thoughts in a manner that will have a striking or lasting effect on the listener. This may occur when no existing word is found in the speaker's mental lexicon to satisfy his or her immediate communicative needs, or, quite simply, when the intention is that of humorous wordplay. Creativity is thus unpredictable, and triggered by a specific communicative need in a given context and in a particular moment in time. The products of such creativity may be formed by various word-forming processes, including compounding and derivation, although they may present anomalies with respect to other productively generated words. Perhaps Moon (2008: 133) makes a useful terminological distinction when she speaks of 'systematic creativity', which she defines as those 'cases where individual words, phrases, and affixes are regularly used in creative ways to produce variations of meaning, including connotation and pragmatic effect'. If this means that creative word formation exploits the same morphological and lexical resources as other word-forming processes, and then shuffles them around in a playful fashion to invent new lexical solutions, this is in total accord with the view expressed in this chapter.

In the following sections, we shall be looking at a variety of examples that are intended to illustrate some of the many possible creative solutions found by speakers to meet their particular communicative needs. We must bear in mind, however, that a creative lexical item and the creative invention of lexis are distinct concepts. In the first case, the focus is on the word as output, or *product*, of the creative process, while the *process* is illuminated by the speaker's performance strategies in coining a newly created word or expression.

Lexical creativity in written texts

Most frequently, lexical creativity has been studied in the domain of the written word, given the accessibility of printed texts, including literature, advertising or news articles, scripted dialogues or electronic communication, to mention only a few that are readily available and offer abundant examples of creative wordplay, and other clever or catchy solutions serving the author's specific communicative goal.

The majority of newly formed complex (multi-morphemic) words are based on productive word-forming rules and charged with meanings incorporated in or associated with the component morphemes. In a study conducted on lexical creations in science fiction and in children's literature (Munat, 2007a), it was found that the majority of novel creations are analysable on the basis of productive rules, even when grammatically or semantically opaque. Blending, compounding, neoclassical compounds (especially in science fiction), or polyword complex nominals and derivations are the principal processes documented in the corpus, along with (far fewer) examples of clippings, neosemes, borrowings, or meaning extension by metaphor and metonymy. Many of the derivatives are deviant, in that they contain a non-existent root or present an invented pseudo affix, but even when opaque in meaning, their component elements can generally be analysed grammatically.

These words are thus formed by productive processes even though deviant in some way and uninterpretable without the aid of definitions or contextual clues. In science fiction texts, the principal function of invented words is that of naming things that are part of the futuristic text world, thus creating the illusion of their actual existence – a case of hypostatisation (see Hohenhaus, 2007: 22) – or serving to name new concepts. A great many of these are compounds (or complex nominals), such as 'hypno-ligation', 'projecto stylus', 'thermal resist boron', or 'fuseodollars', although some clearly bear derivational affixes, such as 'liga–tion' or 'therm–al'. The word-forming process is regular, but the outputs are anomalous, because not all of the component elements are identifiable and many are newly created.

It is often claimed that the only truly creative words are simplexes: monomorphemic roots that are cases of word manufacture. As single morphemes, they cannot be further decomposed. Such invented simplexes, at least in theory, carry no previous semantic content in that they have never appeared as components of other (complex) words, although some may bear phonological resemblance to existing words.

Examples of novel simplex words in the science fiction data are rare compared to polymorphemic words. We find, for example, 'simps', 'biots', 'kroclion', and 'bitek', all of which respect the phonological constraints of English, but two of which carry the plural inflectional morpheme. It is not immediately clear whether *bitek* is a newly manufactured root or whether it can be analysed as *bi + tek*. And is *kroclion* a simplex or a derivative composed of *krocl + ion*? In other words, they are grammatically unanalysable. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to examine the context in which these words appear, but this would give little insight as to their morphological structure. This simply serves to illustrate that the structure of creatively formed words may respect the grammar just as productively formed words do, but they are ultimately unanalysable because their constituent elements are not familiar.

The creative words examined in children's literature are another matter entirely: there are numerous simplexes – products of word manufacture – some of which break the phonological constraints of English, such as 'thneed', 'thwerll', or 'zitzkis', being almost unpronounceable. These are instances of strong creativity in Zawada's (2006) terms in that they represent totally new, albeit ungrammatical, words. The majority of nonce words in the children's corpus, however, appear to be phonologically motivated, exploiting rhyme, assonance, consonance, onomatopoeia, or sound symbolism, presumably with the juvenile audience in mind. These are quite different from the high-sounding, pseudo-scientific, or neoclassical compounds in science fiction. We have compounds and derivatives such as 'zooglobble', 'memmily', 'winksquiffler', 'smogulous', 'gruvvulous', 'gorble snop', and 'fizzwiggler', which are analysable, but semantically opaque. Again, at least one of the morphemes in each of these complex words is invented, so the resulting word is uninterpretable. Many of the nonsense words sound vaguely similar to existing lexemes ('frumpkin pie', 'cannybull', 'scrotty', 'strawbunkles and cream'), allowing the young reader to guess their meaning on the basis of sound associations. This preference in children's literature for novel words based on phonological play has also been noted by Elsen (2010: 139). In analysing her corpus of 500 neologisms from children's books, she noted that 'there is a continuum from sound shape to recurring groups of sounds to morphemes'. She draws the conclusion that the traditionally grammatical view of morphology is obviously inadequate to capture these phenomena, and that there is no clear-cut borderline between categories and between linguistic levels.

Even transparent or analysable novel words are rarely destined for repetition in other communicative contexts because they have been created with a specific audience in mind

and for a specific context of use. Thus they are unlikely candidates for a permanent place in the lexicon, bearing little referential validity in the world at large. Such words are variously referred to as 'ad hoc', 'once-off' (or 'one-off'), 'occasional', or 'nonce' words. In strictly linguistic terminology, they are termed *hapax logomena*, defined by Plag (2003: 54) as words that occur only once in a given corpus. These may be newly coined neologisms appearing for the first time, or a rarely used word of the lexicon, or even 'a weird ad-hoc invention by an imaginative speaker'. Even when productively formed, as we have seen, they often violate the system, exploiting the rules in original ways. Only rarely does it happen that words coined for such restricted contexts later reappear as entries in the lexicon, although this has happened with several coinages in science fiction, such as 'android' or 'psychohistory'. These occasional words, according to Smirnova, Sadykova, and Davletbaeva (2014), represent a divergence from the language norms. They differ from normal productively formed words in that they are monosemantic in structure and are created in intentional violation of the language norms. She also specifies that they are irreproducible, because they 'belong' to their author and to the communicative context for which they were originally coined.

In looking at these examples of lexical creativity in written texts, we have seen that the types of novel words differ considerably, depending on the textual genre and the intended audience. A closer look at different textual varieties such as advertising, newspaper articles, electronic communication, or scripted dialogue (see Hohenhaus, 2007; Kuiper, 2007; Lehrer, 2007; Lopez-Rúa, 2007; Renouf, 2007) confirms that each of these discourse varieties spawns different types of lexical creation, thus allowing a reasoned guess as to the motivations underlying different typologies of invented words.

Lexical creativity in speech

Presumably, spontaneous spoken interaction will provide yet different types of nonce words. It is, however, more difficult to 'capture' such fleeting occurrences of invented words. Carter (2004: 6) affirms that 'creativity is a pervasive feature of spoken language exchanges . . . and a property actively possessed by all speakers and listeners'. This is confirmation, if any were needed, that linguistic creativity is not the exclusive domain of a few gifted individuals and is by no means limited to written texts.

While existing computer corpora offer samples of spoken interaction for analysis, these are not ideal sources for research on novel word formation, given that they provide little in the way of contextual background; moreover, the recorded dialogue will necessarily have been interpreted to some degree in the course of transcription, and the 'presence' of recording equipment, whether audio or video, will invade the intimacy of the interaction and condition the speakers' language.

The corpus that I have examined is, instead, a published volume of 'private' words created by speakers in Britain – words that were invented for restricted use in intimate family circles. These were published in a collection entitled *Kitchen Table Lingo* (Lucas, Fennell, & Brooks, 2008), a non-academic volume compiled on the basis of voluntary contributions. These words would normally have remained hidden in the family closet but for the enterprising decision on the part of the authors to publish the results of their survey (see http://www.englishproject.org). In the preface to the volume, the authors state that these words were 'invented to meet a new need' or 'coined just for fun' (Lucas, Fennell, & Brooks, 2008: xiii). The conditions for inclusion in the corpus were that: they do not appear in any dictionary; they are guaranteed to be in use by three or more speakers; and they have been

around for no less than a month. All brand names were excluded. In some cases, the story of how the word came to be is provided; others have only a brief definition, or an utterance in which the word is typically used. Descriptions of context are therefore limited.

This collection provides some interesting insights into the lexical inventions that unsophisticated speakers (that is, not linguists or teachers of English) create in private contexts: words never intended to go beyond the family walls, or the circle of friends, by whom and for whom they were originally created. These would be largely incomprehensible to the outsider without backup information, as a result of the lack of shared context, but these words provide evidence that: (a) the average native speaker possesses an inherent knowledge of the language system and the ability to manipulate the rules in order to produce never-before-heard words and expressions; and (b) the interlocutor is able to interpret the words simply on the basis of shared contextual knowledge.

Clearly, the functions of these private words – essentially that of bonding among group members – are markedly different from those of the more literate words invented for written texts and destined for an unknown audience. The most curious feature of the entire corpus is the surprisingly large number of words serving to name a remote control, including:

> bimmer, blapper, blitter, blooper-dooper, boggler, bomper, bumper, buttonbox, butts, cajunka, channel changer, channel-panel, clicker, clicky, commander, conch, coofer, dibber, dibbler, digotrondit, dobar, dobbery, doflicka, donker, dooty, flicker, flipper-dopper, flugel, funnging-dong, gum gum, hoofer-doofer, kadumpher, mando, melly, mutilator, norm, oofahdoofa, phaser, pilot, plinger, plinker, plinky, podger, pokery, potiater, presser, pringer, rees-mogg, remy, splonker, spurgler squirter, telly box, tinky-toot, turner-upper, twanger, twidger, wanger, widger, wiz-wiz, woojit, zapper

And this, the authors state, is only a small selection of those that were sent in! As we can see, some of these are formed of a nonsense morpheme of purely phonological effect, but the majority are productively formed derivatives – for example *base* + *–er* affix, serving to create agentive nouns (that is, formed from verbal bases such as 'command', 'zap', 'press', 'turn up', 'flick', 'click') – thus perfectly law-abiding, even when the base is an invented word. Others are existing lexemes that have been assigned new meanings, such as 'mutilator' or 'pilot', neosemes similar to those appearing in science fiction texts, such as 'wheel' or 'jalopy' in Philip K. Dick's fiction, which do not mean what we might think, while still others are fully transparent compounds such as 'telly box', 'buttonbox' (playing on alliteration), 'channel changer' (again exploiting alliteration), or 'channel-panel' (presumably motivated by rhyme). A great many of these creative spoken words have obscure morphological origins, but we must also bear in mind that they were probably never written down until they were sent in for the survey, so the spellings are to be considered as approximations of the phonological structure. They do, nonetheless, bear witness to the infinite variety of linguistic invention – and to the centrality of television within domestic walls: the new family hearth.

The second observation regards the large number of words in the overall corpus that are phonologically motivated, confirming what was noted earlier in relation to children's literature. This might suggest that many of these playful words originate from children's early speech – words that were then adopted by family members and passed along to the next generation – but as Hickey (2006: 162) has noted in his exhaustive taxonomy of productive word-forming patterns in present-day English, 'alliteration [as in 'gas guzzler', 'mattress money', 'road rage'] and rhyme [as in 'pooper-scooper', 'dream team', 'pub grub'] are

common . . . and indeed extend to nonce formations'. As with all nonce creations, Hickey (2006: 162) reminds us, 'the essential requirement is that they be readily interpretable to hearers'. Naturally, the 'hearers' in this case are members of a restricted circle sharing the same context. What we see here, once again, is that productive processes and creatively formed words are bedfellows. These creations are largely based on canonical patterns, all of them intentional coinages that rely on contextual clues for disambiguation.

In so far as kitchen table lingo, the most significant observation is that made by David Crystal in closing the volume, 'The words in this book may be new, but the processes of word formation that they use are not' (Lucas, Fennell, & Brooks, 2008: 208) – that is, creative and productively formed words have a close family resemblance: that of siblings, if not of identical twins.

Functions of lexical creativity

Why expend the energy to invent a word rather than draw on the available lexicon? After our look at some of the patterns and products of lexical creativity in speech and writing, let us briefly consider the benefit of a nonce word employed in lieu of an available lexeme. We have mentioned in passing that a speaker may wish to have a striking effect on a listener by using an unusual ad hoc word, or the intention may be simply to evoke humour. But the functions of novel words in discourse go far beyond these.

Word creation, in fact, serves a wide variety of functions, the most obvious being that of naming. As seen in our earlier examples from science fiction, strange names are invented for things that do not exist in the real world to create the illusion of reality (that is, hypostatisation), but another important function of nonce formations is that of attention-seeking devices (ASDs) (see Lipka, 2000). This is especially true in the media and in advertising, but also in literary texts, in which stylistic form is foregrounded or highlighted, drawing the reader's attention to the way in which language is used. This effect may be achieved by an invented word, as in science fiction and children's literature, but it may also result from a semantically quirky compound or the clever manipulation of a frozen multiword expression.

As Hohenhaus (2007) has illustrated, nonce words serve a variety of different meta-communicative and textual functions. Deviant derivations such as 'factoid' or 'sizeness', for example – the first analogically formed on the model of humanoid (but of uncertain meaning), the second an anomalous derivation (the –*ness* affix normally attaches to adjectives, not nouns) – may contribute to creating the idiolect of a fictional character. The invention of bizarre or nonsensical complex nominals such as 'suitcase sauce' or 'starling inspector' produces a purely ludicrous effect; 'coolometer', an analogically formed nonce word suggesting that the metaphorical 'coolness' of a parent can be objectively measured, stands out for its semantic oddity, but contributes to characterisation. Other irregular products of regular word-forming rules, as Hohenhaus (2007) argues, may serve as deictics, cohesive devices, episodic compounds, or ASDs.

The function of any novel lexical creation is determined in large part by the speaker's communicative goal and the discourse that is being constructed. The context in which the discourse takes place is also a conditioning factor. In synthesis, the creation of novel words serves both private and societal functions, textual and discourse functions, and, cutting across all of these categories, it may quite simply be a means of engaging in ludic wordplay.

The ludic effects of novel word creation

Humour, or what we shall call 'ludicity', is often coterminous with lexical creativity. Bagasheva and Stamenov (2013: 80) even claim that a lexical item is, by default, ludic on its initial launching in a communicative exchange. In their view, ludicity is a property of all new word formations. It is an important meta-communicative strategy and the degree of ludicity is directly dependent on the communicative goal and context, not on the type of word formation or on the playful modification of the rules. The examples of ludic nonce words presented in their study are modelled on different word-forming processes, such as compounding, blending, derivation, and back formation; thus we have 'vacation elbow', 'waxident', 'rubbage', and 'shevelled' as proof that ludicity is not limited to any one particular type of word-forming pattern.

Ludic wordplay, as seen in some of our earlier examples, may depend on incongruous phonological shape or on cryptic semantic content, but the abundance of novel blends presented in Lehrer's (2007) study that display evident humorous intent would seem to suggest that blending is particularly rich in the inherent ludicity of which Bagasheva and Stamenov (2013) speak. Lehrer's data, drawn largely from brand names and advertising, offers examples of creative naming units such as 'Successories' (self-improvement products), 'Avant-Card' (a card shop), 'Frutopia', 'Count Chocula', and 'Nutrageous' (all product names). These are quite easily decomposable into their component constituents: *success* + (access)*ories*; *Fruit* + (cornuc)*opia*; 'Avant card' formed by analogy with 'avant-garde'; (Count) *choc*(olate) + (Drac)*ula*; and *Nut* + (out)*rageous*. Despite the reservations expressed by many linguists regarding the dubious morphological status of blending as a 'regular' word-forming process, it evidently produces a considerable number of transparent coinages.

Renouf's (2007) corpus study of the British broadsheets offers further examples of humorous wordplay, largely based on multilexemic phrasal units, such as the plethora of expressions formed by analogy with 'weapons of mass destruction' immediately after its first appearance in the press on 20 February 2003, among which 'weapons of mass distraction', '– of mass deception', and '– of mass entertainment' were soon followed by 'weapons of mass consumption', '– of mass hysteria', '– of mass media', '– of moose destruction' (!), and even '– of math instruction'. And this is but a small sampling.

Chovanec (2011: 88) considers these to be 'instances of echoic allusion', in which the newly created phrase acts as a cue to the recognition of the (absent) original. In this way, allusion serves as an intentional strategy to encourage the listener or reader to seek additional meanings from the juxtaposition of the newly created and the original texts. In Chovanec's (2011: 89) view, the use of these creative variants allows the speaker to express an evaluative stance or personal attitude in addition to irony or mockery – what he refers to as 'subversive wordplay' – in expressing 'disagreement or opposition to the official policies and establishment'.

Many of these novel phrasal expressions are formed on phonological principles of alliteration, rhyme, consonance, or morphological repetition of an affix, as well as semantic substitutions of similarity or contrast. There can be little doubt as to the underlying humorous intention. Renouf (2007: 70), in fact, affirms that their purpose is that 'of achieving humour and irony'.

Of the many examples cited by Benczes (2010) in her study of metaphorical and metonymic compounds with humorous intentions, the following will suffice to make our point: 'knee-mail' (playing on the rhyme with email), to indicate a message sent to God while

kneeling; and the humorous intention behind 'muffin top', a creative figurative compound to indicate the roll of flesh bursting out at the waist of low-slung jeans. We might also add the recently heard 'Pulp Fashion' as a humorous pun playing on the film title *Pulp Fiction* and calling to mind numerous associations. But the decoding of such creatively formed complex nominals of this sort often requires the aid of contextual backup, as we will see shortly.

Although I agree with Langlotz (2006: 195) that wordplay is a vague term with no clear-cut definition, it is nonetheless descriptive of a great many lexical creations coined by speakers in a variety of communicative situations.

Semantic shift and creative manipulation of the phrasal lexicon

Until now we have largely focused on creativity in single words or compounds, but there is a vast area of research on creativity in fixed or frozen multiword strings, such as idioms, metaphors, proverbs, etc., generally referred to as 'phraseological expressions'. Kuiper (2007) instead uses the term 'phrasal lexicon', while van Lancker Sidtis and colleagues (2012: 88) have proposed the term 'formulemes', by which they mean formulaic expressions that have stereotyped form, conventionalised meanings, and a close connection with social variables. These properties are part of speaker competence, and the listener, in order to understand creative variations of formulemes, must be familiar with the base form – what Kuiper (2007: 96) calls the 'accessibility condition'. Without this knowledge, the play on words created by intentional deformation of the original expression would be totally lost. Some formulemes or phrasal expressions allow a certain degree of creative manipulation, but there is an intermediate type that van Lancker Sidtis and colleagues (2012) call the 'linguistic schema'. These also have a canonical base form, but there is an open slot to be filled by free lexical choice, for example 'He is a walking (noun)' or 'I wouldn't be caught dead (subordinate clause)'. They carry meaning regardless of how the slots are filled (van Lancker Sidtis et al., 2012: 93), but the speaker has considerable freedom of choice in completing the utterance. For example, we may say 'He is a walking zombie' or 'She is a walking Barbie doll'. Or we can say 'I wouldn't be caught dead speaking to that crook' or 'I wouldn't be caught dead taking the bus to the theatre'. Clearly, these schemata call for a fill-in with a negative connotation, which is part of their built-in meaning. Schemata display characteristic or stereotypical language along with the flexibility of a novel phrase, thus allowing the speaker considerable freedom in making creative associations, whereas formulemes are complete (that is, they feature no empty slots) – at least until a creative speaker comes along and invents a playful variant.

Creative manipulations of phrasal expressions may involve recombination of the words in the string, substitution of lexemes, or the addition or deletion of words. Some also permit grammatical transformations, such as passivisation or conversion (see Kuiper, 2007: 98). These manipulations generally introduce a significant semantic change in the original expression, but certain idiomatic (lexicalised) expressions such as 'That's the way the cookie crumbles' do not allow substitution of the main vehicle, because this would literalise the idiom, thus causing the loss of its original connotational or metaphorical content: 'That's the way the plaster crumbles' does not carry the same metaphorical meaning. But if we say 'That's the way the cookie splits', the metaphorical content is not lost, because it evokes the vehicle of the original idiom. Consider, for example, the metaphorical noun phrase 'rose-coloured glasses', which expresses the concept that a person views the world in a positive light; a semantic literalisation such as 'pink-tinted contact lenses' would no

longer carry the same metaphorical sense, because it would not allow the hearer to access the original expression.

In Kuiper's (2007) corpus of Cathy Wilcox cartoons, there are many examples of creative phonological deformation ('A ruminant with a view') or creative phoneme inversion (as in 'the ship is slowing'). In other examples cited by Miller (2014), such as 'hate of arts' (for 'eight of hearts'), or *The Shaming of the True* for *The Taming of the Shrew*, the phonological inversion results in new rhyming expressions, with totally different semantic content, but the accessibility of the original expression stored in the mental lexicon allows the listener enjoyment as he or she recognises the clever phonological play involved in the pun. These examples take us well beyond the creation of a single lexeme, but the variations of fixed expressions are unquestionably cases of phono/morphological creativity. Once again, it must be emphasised that creative deformations of this type can be appreciated only by a listener who is familiar with the base expression.

Speakers continually invent new figurative expressions, which draw on all semantic areas. Hickey (2006: 165) comments on the present-day figurative use of sports terminology, which he says seems to have substituted former military metaphors. Such well-worn expressions as 'global player', 'a level playing field', or 'move the goalposts' are but a few examples of current sports metaphors in English, but speakers are constantly inventing others based on the conceptual metaphors by which we live (see Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). (For a full discussion of creativity in metaphor and metonomy, see Hidalgo-Downing, Chapter 6.)

We have already encountered examples of semantic shift in our survey of invented words: so-called neosemes, which actually involve no invention at all, but the attribution of new semantic content to old words. Neosemes occur with a certain frequency in science fiction. Likewise, in the kitchen table lingo, we encountered old words with new meanings, such as 'mutilator' and 'pilot'. Familiar words with new meanings can create a certain disorientation or estrangement on the part of the reader, at least until sufficient contextual clues are provided to allow decoding. Clearly, when a neoseme is employed in direct personal interactions, comprehension is facilitated by gestures and shared context.

Semantic shift of this nature regularly occurs in our lexicon as 'old' words are given new life when they are recycled to fulfil new naming needs. Such is the case of 'cookies': originally meaning sweet biscuits, but now well known in computerspeak as files that may be added to your computer when you visit a website. And what of 'hardware', 'mouse', and 'Windows', all metaphorical extensions of everyday words that have been recycled in the domain of computer technology? Another example encountered in the kitchen table lingo corpus is 'kebab', a foreign loan word widely known as a type of skewered meat, which in a private world has come to signify the speed of an Internet connection. These few examples of semantic creativity in the reutilisation of familiar words are evidence of the vitality of our English lexicon.

Concluding reflections

Ultimately, lexical creativity resides in a speaker's ability (that is, linguistic competence) to exploit the system in novel ways by combining and recombining, substituting and modifying phonological, morphological, lexical and phrasal elements of the language, in the effort to create a novel word or expression to amuse or to communicate thoughts in an original and effective manner (a factor of speaker performance). This often involves the stretching or deformation of grammatical rules and will be an intentional strategy resulting in an unpredictable output. Some of these 'creations' may remain in currency for a period of time,

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lending greater expressive force to our language. Others will vanish immediately after their first appearance, lost to our lexical patrimony (unless some enterprising linguist happens along to preserve them).

Carter's (2011: 337) insistence that 'creativity is not . . . the exclusive preserve of the individual genius or the pathological outsider', but can be found in 'ordinary, demotic, common language' is as true for lexical invention as it is for all types of linguistic creativity. To reiterate what was stated at the beginning of this chapter, creativity is a matter of degree, not of kind. The literary genius employs the same strategies that we can witness in everyday speech and writing. Creativity is a faculty possessed by each and every human being. Nor is it a question of high and low creativity – in Cook's (2011) words, 'ordinary' and 'extraordinary' creativity. As Carter (2004) affirms, on the basis of his research on the Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English (CANCODE), creativity is pervasive in all human verbal interaction; the literary genius simply has greater ingenuity in manifesting this creativity. Maybin and Swann (2006: 1, cited in Moon, 2008: 132) also assert that language creativity includes both textual artistry and the construction of identity in managing relationships.

Ricoeur (2000: 340–4) also affirms that human language is inventive *despite the objective limits and codes that govern it*. He speaks of the mediating role of imagination, which constantly strains and stretches the laws and codes of language. Human ingenuity works within these codes, either subverting them or applying them in original ways. Beyond all of our reflections on language creativity and our many examples of creative lexical inventions, there remains a vast ocean of theoretically possible ad hoc words as yet unexploited, and speakers will never exhaust this wealth of possibilities.

At the outset, it was my intention to draw the limits of speaker creativity. After having attempted to identify the prototypical characteristics of creativity, the word-forming processes that animate it, the contexts in which it is most likely to surface, and the functions that it serves, it has not been possible to trace a distinct line between creatively formed words and productive processes. As we have seen, the same rules may inform productively formed and creative words. Nor is the entry of a word in the official lexicon any indicator of its origins (as creative or productively formed), because rule-breaking renegades may gain officialdom even though they are not formed on the basis of 'regular' processes. Whether they stick around or are destined for an early demise will depend solely on their utility as a naming unit for some part of the wider language community and, possibly, also on their ludic or expressive quality, but not on their rule-abiding behaviour. Many of these will have violated the semantics or the grammar (or both) as the output of maverick wordplay. Whether they remain on our tongues for decades or are fly-by-night visitors cannot be the measure of their creativity.

Langlotz (2006: 6) defines creativity as 'ingenious, artful or playful activities that are unconventional in the very broad sense of not being subject to everyday routine'. This type of creativity, he states, is 'linked with intelligent human behaviour . . . and involves the ability to develop or invent new and original ideas or products [that is, words] that have not been encountered before'. Although Langlotz is concerned specifically with idioms, typically thought to be fixed or frozen, his words apply equally to other types of lexical invention. In this view, variability and creativity are inextricably bound, and the elastic bounds of the system are the true wealth of the English lexicon.

Drawing our conclusions on the basis of the novel words and word-forming processes that we have examined seems far more fruitful than engaging in interminable theoretical discussions as to the precise nature of lexical creativity, and it allows us to outline the

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range and breadth of the word-forming processes involved. In synthesis, lexical creativity is inspired by the communicative context; it is the product of speaker competence and the result of performance strategies; it is triggered by a desire to amuse or draw attention to the message. Even though it represents the intentions of an individual speaker, this creative ability, inherent in all competent speakers, is what permits the continual enrichment of our lexicon.

Related topics

humour and language play; language, creativity, and cognition; metaphor and metonymy; stylistics

Further reading

Miller, D. G. (2014) *English Lexicogenesis*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

An in-depth historical overview of English word formation types, combining theoretical perspectives with concrete examples.

Munat, J. (ed.) (2007) *Lexical Creativity, Texts and Contexts*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Provides a wide panorama of various types of lexical creativity, examined in specific contexts and discourse varieties, with abundant empirical data.

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6

Metaphor and metonymy

Laura Hidalgo-Downing

Introduction: Defining and illustrating creativity, metaphor, and metonymy

The power of metaphor and metonymy as resources for the creation of novel linguistic and other semiotic meanings is well known and goes back in time to Aristotle (see, for example, Cockroft et al., 2014). However, the complexities involved in the creative potential of metaphor and metonymy in actual language use have received the attention of scholars as a widespread phenomenon only during the last decades. Thus metaphor and metonymy are presently in the limelight of linguistic enquiry not only as prototypical enablers of creative thought and language use, but also because of the pervasiveness of these phenomena in language itself. As is discussed in the sections that follow, one of the hot issues in current scholarly debates is precisely the question of the alleged distinction between literal and figurative forms of language (see, for example, Glucksberg & Keysar, 1993 [1979]; Searle, 1991 [1977]). The amount of scholarly research produced in the last two decades bears witness to the interest that these phenomena are drawing not only within the discipline of linguistics, but also in other related fields, such as psychology, artificial intelligence (for example Barnden, 2010), anthropology and sociology, critical discourse analysis, and language teaching and learning, among others. Indeed, current approaches to the study of metaphor and metonymy show a tendency to interdiciplinarity and fertilisation across disciplines, which has enormous potential for the development of further research in the field. This fascinating situation has its disadvantages, however, in that interdisciplinary studies, although enriching, bring about complexities and questions regarding theoretical standpoints and methodological issues that were not at stake years ago.

Key concepts

Let us start by defining briefly the key concepts approached in the present chapter: creativity; metaphor; and metonymy.

Creativity

Creativity is a slippery concept, which has undergone various revisions and reformulations over the history of human thought. Within the field of linguistics, there has been a shift

from the Romantic prototype of creativity as being associated with the innate talent of an individual, such as the gifted artist or scientist, towards a view of creativity as a quality innate to all human beings, which can be manifested in all types of discourse (for example Carter, 2004; Gibbs, 1999; Jones, 2010, 2012; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Maybin & Swann, 2006; Swann, Pope, & Carter, 2001). Thus creativity is currently considered as much a feature of everyday language use and social practices as a feature of significant works of art, scientific discoveries, or world-changing theories. This distinction has been referred to as '"small c" creativity' (everyday creativity) and '"big C" Creativity' (world-changing creativity) (Cameron, 2011; Jones, 2012). For the purposes of the present discussion, I find the following definition of creativity particularly enlightening:

> the ability to produce work that is both novel (i.e. original, unexpected) and appropriate (i.e. adaptive concerning task constraint).
>
> *(Sternberg, 1999: 1)*

According to Sternberg's (1999) definition, creativity involves novelty and appropriateness. These two concepts are crucial for the understanding of the creative and metaphorical-metonymic processes, since *novelty*, understood as original and unexpected, and *appropriateness*, understood as adaptive concerning a specific task, point to the contextual nature of metaphoric and metonymic creative acts, and to the fact that such acts receive the 'value' of being creative by specific social communities.

A further interesting concept in the understanding of metaphorical and metonymic creativity is the notion of 'incongruity'. Thus this term has been used by numerous scholars to define the process by which individuals attempt to find a creative solution to an apparently 'incongruous' situation and to the way in which the two domains are related in terms of an 'incongruity' between spaces, which requires a 'congruous' solution (for example Forceville, 2012; Kövecses, 2005). Within this line, humour in particular has been analysed extensively in terms of incongruity theory (Attardo, 2001; Hidalgo-Downing, 2000). Following this line of thought, Norrick (1986: 226, quoting Koester, 1964) argues that humour as a form of creativity is characterised by what he defines as 'bissociation' – namely:

> The perceiving of a situation or idea L, in two self-consistent but habitually incompatible frames of reference M1 and M2. The event, L, in which the two intersect, is made to vibrate simultaneously in two different wavelengths, as it were. While this situation lasts, L is not merely linked to one associative context, but bisociated in two (Koester, 1964: 35).

(See also Hidalgo-Downing, 2000; Forceville, 2012.) This concept of *bisociation* is extremely relevant for the understanding of the creative process, in particular when such a process involves the interaction of two (or more) domains or scenarios, such as metaphor, metonymy, humour, irony, opposition, and contradiction, among others. At this point, the concept of 'cognitive synergy' used by the psychologist Apter (1989) completes this view of creativity as a complex, dynamic, and unstable process. In his theory of psychological reversals, Apter puts forward the idea that human personality is not a stable entity as assumed traditionally, but rather inconsistent regarding crucial aspects of experience that characterise phenomena such as art and humour (that is, creative acts). By 'cognitive synergy', Apter refers to situations in which two incompatible meanings coexist:

> Situations arise . . . in which an entity may be said to have opposite characteristics . . .
> The idea is that the opposite characteristics may coexist in the sense that one is aware
> of both in consciousness, in relation to a given identity, and that these opposites both
> contribute something to the full meaning of the identity, or contribute alternative mean-
> ings to the identity.
>
> *(Apter, 1989: 141)*

Thus the term 'synergy' is used in various disciplines, such as medicine, to refer to the
combined and often unpredictable effect that may arise when mixing or combining two sub-
stances, entities, concepts, etc., such as the simultaneous intake of medicines and alcohol.
According to Apter (1989: 141), cognitive synergies involving two domains, concepts, etc.,
'work together to produce an effect they could not produce separately'. This view can be
applied to phenomena such as metaphor, metonymy, humour, irony, and opposition, as
suggested above, in the sense that the relationship between the two domains or frames of
reference need not be a stable one with one single solution.

So far, an outline of creativity has been provided as the production of something that
is novel and contextually adaptive – which undergoes constant re-contextualisation – and
which involves the perception of two or more incongruous domains in an unstable relation-
ship that requires a higher-level resolution and receives 'social value'. More specifically, it
has been pointed out that, in current scholarly research, a distinction is made between 'eve-
ryday creativity' and 'world-changing', or artistic, scientific, etc., creativity. Having said
this, I now turn to the definitions of metaphor and metonymy, and how these phenomena
relate to the creative process outlined so far.

Metaphor and metonymy

The concepts of metaphor and metonymy are here defined jointly because of the close
relationship that both phenomena tend to display, especially in actual language use.
While metaphor has been the centre of attention of scholars for decades, metonymy and
related phenomena, such as synechdoche, have received adequate attention only over the
last few years (for example Benczes, Barcelona, & Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2011; Ruiz
de Mendoza Ibáñez & Díez Velasco, 2002; Steen, 2005). As is argued throughout the
present chapter, the nature of metonymy as enabler of metaphor is crucial for the crea-
tive process to take place (see, for example, Hidalgo-Downing & Kraljevic Mujic, 2011;
Urios-Aparisi, 2009).

METAPHOR

Semino (2008: 1, 2011: 1) defines *metaphor* as 'the phenomenon whereby we talk and,
potentially, think, about something in terms of another'. We can observe this process in
example (1), which is a notice hanging on the door of the office of a colleague and friend
from the University of Hawaii at Manoa:

Monlolingualism can be cured. (1)

In the first place, this example illustrates what has been defined as 'everyday creativity':
the use of metaphorical expressions that make use of already existing or familiar scenarios

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(which are adaptive and appropriate for the context – in this case, the familiar concept of illness) and at the same time give rise to a new way of seeing, thinking, or talking about a particular phenomenon (monolingualism). In terms of conceptual metaphor theory (CMT), an underlying conceptual metaphor can be identified in example (1), which is activated by the word 'cured': MONOLINGUALISM IS AN ILLNESS. Thus, in terms of CMT, the properties of a source domain, ILLNESS, are mapped onto a target domain, MONOLINGUALISM (see Figure 6.1).

As pointed out by metaphor scholars (including Cameron, 2011; Cameron & Low, 1999; Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009; Gibbs, 1994, 2008; Koller, 2004; Kövecses, 2002, 2005; Johnson, 1987; Lakoff, 1993; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff & Turner, 1989; Lakoff, Espensen, & Schwartz, 1991; Musolff & Zinken, 2009; Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez & Pérez Hernández, 2011; Semino, 2008; Turner, 2014), the mapping of properties from source to target domain is carried out as a whole structure, but is partial, so that only certain features of the source are mapped onto the target. This is known as the process of 'highlighting and hiding' specific features in metaphorical and metonymic processes, in such a way that a particular perspective is provided on the target domain. This process of highlighting and hiding may have ideological motivations and implications, as we will see below. In example (1), the fact of being monolingual is represented as an illness and not as a skill or another positive property, and it thus implies that there is something negative about monolingualism. The attributes of the concept ILLNESS that are mapped onto the target involve assumptions – typically evaluative – such as:

- monolingualism is bad (*illness as negatively evaluated*);
- monolingualism restricts your possibilities of moving around the world (*illness as impeding*);
- monolingualism indicates that your mind/body is not functioning adequately (*illness as restricting bodily and brain adequate functions*); and/or
- monolingualism indicates the person affected lacks something (*a medicine*).

This perspective on monolingualism highlights the phenomenon as a restriction and impediment on what are considered to be 'normal' bodily and mental functions, and as needing a 'cure' – in this case, the learning of further languages. The notice is slightly humorous, because it plays with the incongruity of being able to speak one language as an illness, and the implied cure as bilingualism or multilingualism – skills that are more complex than monolingualism. The metaphor is contextually driven, since it appears in the sociocultural context of a world that tends towards globalisation, accompanied by multiculturality and multilingualism. More specifically, it appears on the door of a university teacher of Latin languages and literatures, thus bringing to the reader's attention (students and other scholars)
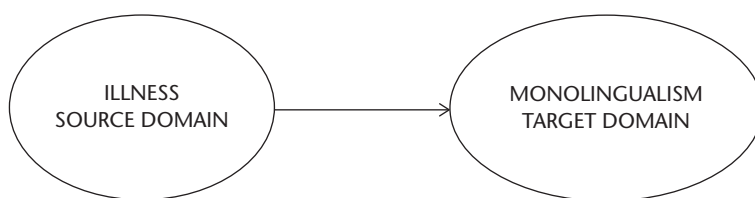
Figure 6.1 Mapping of source domain onto target domain in CMT

the fact that linguistic and cultural hybridity such as that of the Latin countries is something to be valued, contrary to what has been historically the case.

METONYMY

While, in CMT, metaphor involves the mapping of features across two different domains, *metonymy* is described as a process in which the mapping occurs within the same domain (for example Barcelona, 2002; Benczes, Barcelona, & Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2011; Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez & Díez Velasco, 2002; Steen, 2005). According to Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez and Díez Velasco (2002: 493), while, in metaphor, a schematic structure belonging to a source domain is mapped onto a different schematic structure, the target, 'metonymy is used primarily for reference: we refer to an entity by means of another entity'. The high-lighting function pointed out with regard to metaphor is even more prominent in metonymy, as argued by Barcelona (2002: 226, emphasis original): 'The metonymic source projects its conceptual structure onto that of the target, not by means of a systematic matching of counterparts, but by conceptually *foregrounding* the source and *backgrounding* the target.'

Thus, in the metaphor identified in MONOLINGUALISM CAN BE CURED, a correspondence or structural matching between counterparts can be identified:

- monolingualism is an illness;
- monolingual people are ill people;
- the cure to an illness is a medicine;
- the cure to monolingualism is bilingualism or multilingualism;
- illness is restrictive of bodily and mental functions; and
- monolingualism is restrictive of bodily and mental functions, etc.

The main difference between metaphor and metonymy, according to numerous scholars, concerns 'the domain-internal or domain-external nature of the mapping' (Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez & Díez Velasco, 2002: 496). Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez and Díez Velasco (2002) distinguish between two main types of metonymy: one in which a main, or matrix, domain stands for one of its subdomains ('I don't like Shakespeare', meaning, for example 'I don't like *Hamlet*'); the other, one in which one of the subdomains stands for the main or matrix domain ('the head of the department', where 'head' stands for the whole person or even the department itself). The authors name the first type of metonymy 'target-in-source metonymy' and the latter, 'source-in-target metonymy' (Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez & Díez Velasco, 2002: 496). It is also interesting to point out that metonymies often appear in connected chains in discourse and motivate metaphors, especially ontological metaphors. The difference between the two types of metonymy is represented in Figures 6.2 and 6.3, which Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez and Díez Velasco describe as processes of reduction and expansion, respectively.

Example (2) illustrates the interaction of metaphor and metonymy in actual discourse use. The example is taken from graffiti in the female bathrooms of the Universidad Complutense, Madrid, Spain:

Podrán cortar (They can cut)
todas las flores (all the flowers)
pero nunca podrán parar la primavera. (but they will never stop the spring.)
Wold Revolution! [*sic*] (World Revolution!)   (2)

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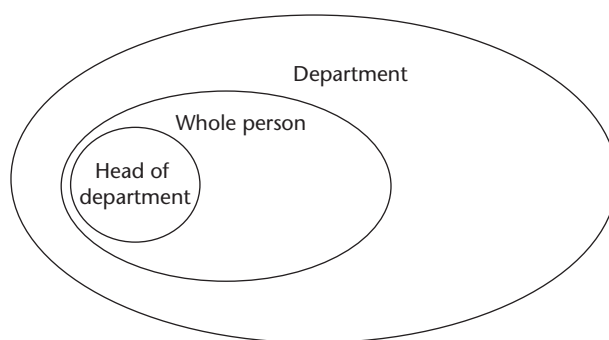
Figure 6.2 Metonymy of 'domain expansion', or 'target-in-source metonymy'
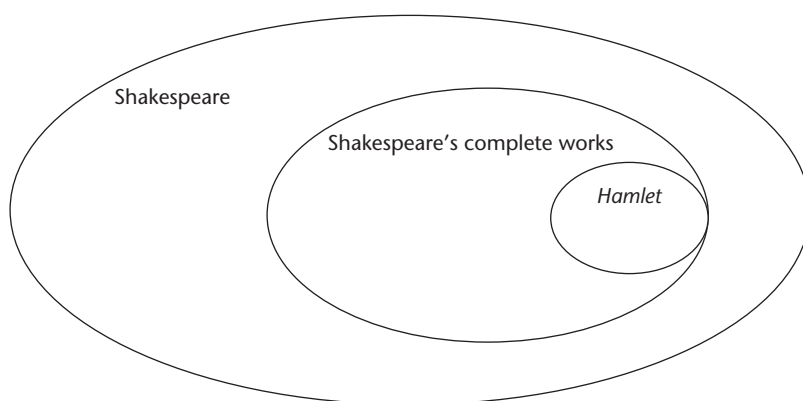
Figure 6.3 Metonymy of 'domain restriction', or 'source-in-target metonymy'

We can first identify the metonymic relation between 'flowers' and 'spring' of the type that we have defined as target-in-source, or expanding, metonymy, in which FLOWERS stand for SPRING (entities stand for a related event). Furthermore, the metonymy enables conceptual metaphors such as SPRING IS WORLD REVOLUTION (triggered by the linguistic expressions '[T] hey will never stop spring/Wo[r]ld revolution!'), FLOWERS ARE PROTESTERS, and CUTTING IS SILENCING OR KILLING, followed as a consequence by the metaphor CUTTING FLOWERS IS KILLING OR SILENCING PROTESTERS, triggered by the linguistic expressions 'They can cut/all the flowers'. As mentioned above, both the metonymy and the metaphors are contextually motivated by the current sociohistorical situation of economic crisis and social protest. Thus the word 'spring' resonates with its previous uses in the media and in everyday language to refer to the Arab Spring as a social movement of protest, or the 15-M Spanish movement of protest, which had the sun (again metaphorically and metonymically associated with spring) as its symbol and which protesters gather in the 'Puerta del Sol' (Sun Gate) in Madrid, or numerous slogans making reference to social protest as spring. The resonance of spring as revolution goes even further back in history to the 'Carnation Revolution' in Portugal in April 1975 and the 'Prague Spring' of 1968, thus showing that the metaphoric and metonymic associations between the source domain SPRING and the target domains SOCIAL PROTEST and REVOLUTION in metaphor, and other domains such as FLOWERS in metonymy, are recurrent in recent history

and have been recontextualised and reused in various ways in order to produce new meanings by adapting already existing metaphors in order to conceptualise and understand new situations. A well-known example is graffiti artist Banksy's image of a protester throwing a bunch of flowers instead of a weapon, as illustrated in Figure 6.4.

As in the previous examples on the metaphoric and metonymic relation between flowers, spring and revolution, Banksy's graffiti recontextualises this concept, adapting it to social street protest, resonating with the images of numerous real photos of protesters throwing stones or weapons at the police or other authorities. The image activates a reversal of the concept of social protest, from violence to peace. This example is also interesting because it illustrates the activation of an implicit shared narrative activated by a metaphorical frame. Metaphorical frames may be verbal or visual; in this case, even if the example is a visual image, it is significant that the verbal narrative is activated in the viewer's mind, providing a coherent solution to the apparently incongruous image. This example provides a revision of the concept of linguistic creativity as crossing the strict boundaries of the written or pronounced word.

The paradoxical and collaborative nature of metaphor and metonymy in real discourse

Numerous scholars have pointed out what seems to be the 'paradoxical' nature of metaphor and metonymy, which are both pervasive in the understanding of everyday experiences, and

Figure 6.4 Banksy graffiti

Source: The freedom to reproduce the image is gratefully acknowledged.

are also the tools for the creation of new ideas, language, and ideologies. Thus cognitive linguists (including, among others, Gibbs, 1994, 2008; Kövecses, 2002, 2005, 2010; Lakoff, 1993; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, Espensen, & Schwartz, 1991) have pointed towards the pervasiveness of metaphorical thought as a feature of human experience. As argued by Gibbs (1994: 1): 'Metaphor, metonymy, irony and other tropes are not linguistic distortions of literal mental thought but constitute basic schemes by which people conceptualize their experience and the external world.' This is illustrated in example (3), which is from an email written by a friend from whom I had not heard for a long time:

> *Hola del pasado lejano*. (Hi from the distant/far away past) (3)

This example illustrates the typical conventional conceptual metaphor TIME IS SPACE, by means of which we understand a complex abstract concept such as TIME in terms of a more basic concrete concept such as SPACE. Thus time is understood as something that is perceived as far away or close to the speakers. Once my friend and I met, and had caught up on what had happened over the past twenty years, my friend's emails' subject heading changed to:

> *Hola del presente continuo*. (Hi from the continuous present) (4)

The second metaphor in example (4) is a playful extension and recontextualisation of the meaning of TIME used in previous emails by changing 'past' for 'present' and 'distant/ far away' for 'continuous'. Additionally, 'continuous' not only makes reference to the fact that the concept of time is now ongoing and dynamic, but also makes a subtle reference to my own profession as a teacher of English and to a feature of the English tense system. This example shows that metaphor is a dynamic process that changes motivated by contextual cues.

Turning to example (2), the graffiti in the female toilets, the initial inscription was typically further expanded by the writings of other students who visited the bathrooms. The following are some of the notes added to the initial graffiti.

> An 'r' is added to the word *Wold*, together with the expression *idota*! (idiot!) (5)

As example (5) illustrates, the original graffiti is 'corrected' by a further participant. It is later expanded on humorously by another student, who uses the WINTER metaphor to playfully oppose or question the idea of world revolution:

> *Con lo que mola el invierno*! (But winter is so cool!) (6)

Examples (5) and (6) illustrate the collaborative nature of discourse in general, metaphorical creativity in particular, and the nature of graffiti as an interactive genre (see Carrington & Dowdall, Chapter 26). Thus, while the original graffiti enhances the power of SPRING as a source of social change and revolution, the writer in example (6) downplays the importance given to this phenomenon by praising winter. The result is an ambiguous and unstable relation between the concepts SPRING and WINTER, since it remains unclear whether the second writer is being ironic about the initial enhancement of spring as revolution, is just not interested in the social protest movement, or simply literally likes winter. In any case, the use of the term 'winter' is an example of everyday creativity in the sense that the writer uses a previous conceptual metaphor, SPRING, in order to deconstruct it by means of reversal and opposition.

A further example of recontextalisation can be observed in example (7), taken from a poster at the stand of the political party *Izquierda Unida* during the festivities of Las Rozas, a suburb of Madrid, in September 2014:

> *No hay planeta B*. (There is no planet B.) (7)

This example plays with the already existing metaphor PLAN B IS ALTERNATIVE ACTION and recontextualises it in the light of ecological considerations, thus activating two metaphors – PLAN B IS NO ALTERNATIVE ACTION and PLANET B IS NOT A SOLUTION FOR ECOLOGICAL PROBLEMS – thus suggesting that it is becoming too late to control the social crisis ('plan B') and additionally that there is no other place to which humanity can turn if we destroy our natural resources ('planet B').

These observations lead to a last important point to be mentioned in this section – namely, the performative nature of metaphor and metonymy as instigators of social action and change, as the above examples have shown. As argued by Jones (2012: 7), making reference to Fairclough, creativity involves:

> complex chains of action . . . which [Fairclough] describes as the sociocognitive processes by which the producers of texts draw upon and transform past conventions and prior texts to create new meanings, and the consumers of texts appropriate and adapt these meanings based on their past understandings and experiences and their present circumstances. And so again, the tension between the old and the new, the borrowed and the original, the conventional and the subversive arises at the centre of a discourse analytical approach to creativity.

The examples discussed so far illustrate what are known as 'conventional' (TIME IS SPACE), and 'recontextualised' (SPRING IS REVOLUTION) metaphors. A few words need to be said about novel metaphors and how they become conventionalised.

A good example is the SPRING metaphor for social protest and revolution. This metaphor was created some time in the past, when it was novel, and has now become conventionalised and extended worldwide to refer to a specific historical form of social movement.

A similar kind of phenomenon is found in the metaphors that are used to name scientific discoveries and technological inventions (for example Nerlich, Elliott, & Larson, 2009). Thus a current example of metaphor in biogenetics is illustrated in example (8):

> Apoptosis or programmed cell death is the process by which cells commit suicide for the benefit of the organism as a whole (personal communication). (8)

This definition involves three different metaphors to describe the same phenomenon: APOPTOSIS, PROGRAMMED CELL DEATH, and SUICIDE. The first term, APOPTOSIS, is an opaque metaphor, used by professionals in the field of study and deriving from the Greek, meaning 'the dropping of leaves in Autumn, or of petals from a flower'. In this metaphor, the cell is talked about in terms of a plant; it thus gives rise to the conceptual metaphor A CELL IS A PLANT.

The second linguistic expression, PROGRAMMED CELL DEATH, is also a technical term used by experts and foregrounds a different metaphor, THE BODY IS A MACHINE, by which certain processes such as that described above are part of a complex mechanism.

Finally, the term SUICIDE is a non-expert term used to make accessible the novel complex scientific concept to a broader audience by means of the personification A CELL IS A PERSON WHO COMMITS SUICIDE.

This distinction between expert metaphors and metaphors addressed to a more general audience has been designated, respectively, 'theory-constitutive' and 'pedagogical' metaphors (Boyd, 1993 [1979]). The coexistence of different metaphors to describe the same phenomenon has been pointed out by numerous scholars (such as Low, 2005), and provides the means for speakers to understand a phenomenon from complementary perspectives and different domains of experience. Finally, although the three scientific metaphors were novel when they first appeared in 1977, they have now become conventionalised, as have numerous scientific metaphorical expressions such as 'black hole', 'cosmic soup', 'big bang', etc.

Historical perspectives

Metaphor and metonymy have been at the centre of the Western tradition of the study of poetics, literariness, and rhetoric since the times of Aristotle (see Cockroft et al., 2014). Aristole's view of metaphor as an implicit comparison has had a great influence in the definition and understanding of metaphor well into the twentieth century. Furthermore, metaphor and metonymy have, for centuries, been approached as poetic resources used by writers and rhetoricians to embellish speech. Understood in this sense, both metaphor and metonymy have been conceived of as exceptional, or even 'deviant', uses of language and prototypical instances of the individual creative mind (see Ortony, 1993 [1979]: 3). This view has, in a way, persisted in initial approaches to the study of linguistics throughout the twentieth century, during which phenomena such as metaphor, contradiction, or irony have been interpreted as anomalies of semantic meaning and exceptions in the management of pragmatic meaning – namely, the 'flouting' of maxims (Grice, 1977 [1975]) or the utterance of indirect speech acts (Searle, 1977 [1975]) – thus implying that insincerity or failure to tell the truth is involved in these phenomena.

Thus, example (1), MONOLINGUALISM CAN BE CURED, would be analysed as follows from the perspective of traditional semantic and pragmatic approaches:

- In terms of Grice's (1977 [1975]) notion of the cooperative principle and its articulation in four maxims (quantity, 'tell as much information as is sufficient for the present exchange'; quality, 'tell the truth'; relevance, 'be relevant'; manner, 'avoid obscurity and ambiguity'), example (1) flouts (that is, does not fulfil all of, but creates additional pragmatic meaning to) the maxim of quality – that is, is not strictly speaking true. However, the speaker compensates for the fact of not respecting the maxim of truth by creating an additional pragmatic 'implicature', which can be spelled out as: 'Monolingualism is not strictly speaking an illness but in a way can be understood as some kind of impairment.'
- In terms of Searle's (1977 [1975]) distinction between direct and indirect speech acts, example (1) would be an example of an indirect speech act, in the sense that the literal meaning cannot be taken as true and is consequently infelicitous from the point of view of the sincerity conditions required for a successful speech act. It can, however, also be interpreted as an utterance or speech act 'that stands for another'. In other words, as in Grice's theory, the utterance MONOLINGUALISM CAN BE CURED stands for another, such as the proposition outlined above (Grice's implicature).

These attempts to account for the properties of metaphor and metonymy as flouting of some pragmatic principle have been further studied from the perspective of relevance theory (for example Pilkington, 2000; Sperber & Wilson, 1995 [1986]). From the perspective of this theory, speakers search for an 'optimal' relevant interpretation by means of a complex cognitive procedure of interpretation of implicatures and explicatures. In the case of metaphor, the cognitive process would lead the speaker/reader to interpret the utterance as metaphoric because it would be the 'optimal' solution.

At the moment in which these theories were developed, they certainly offered a way of analysing metaphor and metonymy as instances of language use that may not necessarily be limited to poetic language or literary language. However, it is still assumed that only one interpretation is possible (either metaphoric or not; either the maxims are being followed or not; the speech act is either direct or indirect; there is only one optimal relevant interpretation of an utterance). This approach fails to account for the interpretations that have been outlined above – that is, metaphoric and metonymic uses as potentially unstable creative acts that may, or indeed usually, lend themselves to accept more than one interpretation. This view certainly poses problems to centuries of linguistic theory based on Cartesian and Aristotelian assumptions about the 'logical' nature of language, and of its semantics and structure.

Present-day approaches to metaphor and metonymy derive from the work of scholars such as Richards (1936), who introduced the terms 'tenor', 'vehicle', and 'ground' to refer to the elements involved in the metaphorical construct, but also pointed to the 'tension' present in metaphor (Ortony, 1993 [1979]: 7; also see Charteris-Black, 2004). A second crucial influence has been the work of Black (1993 [1979]), who stressed the important fact that metaphor creates similarities that give rise to 'new' ways of perceiving the world. This view is also developed by other scholars such as Reddy (1993 [1979]) and Goatly (2007), among others. Further influence has derived from Glucksberg and Keysar's (1993 [1979]: 401) view of metaphors as assertions of categorisation.

The work of these scholars leads to the questioning of the 'uniqueness' view of metaphor as a creative linguistic resource and as a semantic-pragmatic anomaly, and is fully developed as CMT. Conceptual metaphor theory, influenced by the writings of scholars such as Reddy (1993 [1979]) and Black (1993 [1979]), proposes an approach to metaphor and metonymy as pervasive in human thought and as phenomena that are found in everyday language, not only in literature. As pointed out at the outset of this chapter, metaphor and metonymy are understood as processes of conceptual mappings between a source (what Reddy calls the 'vehicle') and a target (what Reddy calls 'tenor') domain. While metaphor involves cross-domain mapping (SPRING IS REVOLUTION), metonymy involves within-domain mapping (FLOWERS STAND FOR SPRING). Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Lakoff and Turner (1989), and Kövecses (2002), among others, distinguish between ontological metaphors, structural metaphors, and orientational metaphors.

Orientational metaphors are perhaps the most basic types of metaphor, since they are based on what Lakoff and Johnson (1980) call 'image schemas': the more basic cognitive structures that we use to interpret our basic spatial and embodied experience (UP–DOWN, IN–OUT, CENTRE–PERIPHERY, PATH, MOVEMENT, etc.). Orientational metaphors such as UP–DOWN are typical of discourse such as economics:

Prices have increased/gone up a lot over the last years.   (9)

Sales of this product have plunged.   (10)

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These image schemas and orientational metaphors in turn activate more complex ontological and structural metaphors. Thus an *ontological metaphor* involves the personification or objectification of an entity, so in example (9) we find the ontological metaphor PRICE IS AN OBJECT – that is, a more abstract concept such as PRICE (the target) is understood in terms of a physical concrete entity (AN OBJECT THAT CAN MOVE UP AND DOWN).

A further prototypical example of this kind is the LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor, which is based on the PATH image schema:

> I am not sure what direction to take at this point in life. (11)

In example (8) of the scientific metaphors of apoptosis offered earlier in this chapter, we saw complementary examples of ontological metaphors to describe this phenomenon:

- PROGRAMMED CELL DEATH based on THE BODY IS A MACHINE ontological metaphor in which an animated entity (THE BODY) is understood as an object (MACHINE); and
- cell SUICIDE, based on the ontological metaphor THE CELL IS A PERSON WHO COMMITS SUICIDE, which personifies an entity invisible to the naked eye.

Structural metaphors create complex networks of meaning that allow speakers to understand complex experiential domains. For example, the concepts of emotions can be explained in terms of metaphors that refer to the physical embodied and sensorimotor sensations associated to those feelings, as in:

> Our relationship is at a crossroads. (LOVE IS A JOURNEY)
> He burst out in anger. (ANGER IS A HEATED LIQUID)
> She jumped with joy. (JOY IS JUMPING)

In LOVE IS A JOURNEY, for example, the target domain LOVE is interpreted in terms of JOURNEY: lovers are travellers; a love relationship is a journey; obstacles in a journey are problems in a relationship; the end of a journey is the end of a relationship, etc.

Similarly, abstract concepts such as time can be interpreted by means of various metaphors that draw from more basic domains of experiences or source domains:

> Hi from the far away past. (TIME IS SPACE)
> I haven't got time for this. (TIME IS AN OBJECT)
> You're wasting my time – please be concise. (TIME IS A VALUABLE OBJECT)
> As time goes by, life seems to go faster. (TIME IS A MOVING OBJECT)

Each source highlights a different perspective on the target, allowing different complementary understandings of the complex TIME concept.

Conceptual metaphor theory draws a distinction between novel and conventional metaphors, and in its initial stages pays particular attention to conventional metaphors such as those illustrated above. These metaphors enable us to make sense of, and interpret, an utterance coherently and, as argued by Kövecses (2005), are 'culturally congruent', in the sense that our sociocultural background enables us to interpret the relation between source and target domains as congruous or meaningful in spite of their being apparently incongruous. Many of those metaphors that are deeply entrenched in various cultures are

also known as 'primary metaphors' (Grady, 2005), such as PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS, and underlie more complex structural metaphors (LIFE IS A JOURNEY). Novel metaphors, on the other hand, are concepts that are used to name new phenomena in our experience, such as scientific discoveries, everyday or artistic inventiveness, and innovation. In the last years, particular attention has been paid to the fact that novel metaphors do not arise 'from scratch', but rather make use of old or familiar experiential domains or scenarios in order to provide a 'twist' that gives rise to the new meaning in a new context. Kövecses (2010) argues that this process of metaphorical creativity may be related to an expansion or elaboration of the source or the target domains. A further distinction is drawn between universal and contextual metaphors. Thus Kövecses (2010) argues that while universal metaphors are based on embodiment, contextually triggered metaphors vary depending on various factors such as the topic of discourse, the situation, or the sociocultural context.

With regard to metonymy, although this process has received more detailed attention from scholars only in recent years, it is worth pointing out that the same view of conceptual metaphor is applied to this phenomenon – that is, as pervasive in language and part of our everyday language, as well as of more innovative uses. What is more interesting in recent research is the attempt to study the mechanisms by which metonymies and metaphors occur in clusters, and by mixing and combining different sources, thus giving rise to complex processes in which metonymic chains activate ontological and structural metaphors.

A further contribution of cognitive scholars that has been very influential in the understanding of metaphorical creativity is 'blending theory', or 'conceptual integration theory' (CIT) (see Fauconnier & Turner, 2002; Turner, 2014). According to these scholars, metaphorical creativity can be better understood by means of a four-domain model, comprising a general space, an input space, an output space, and the blend. What is crucial in this view of metaphorical creativity is that the content of the blend – the innovative metaphor – is not a direct result of the mapping of properties from an input to an output space, but rather consists of emergent content.

This idea of emergent content is taken up in recent discourse approaches to metaphor, which emphasise the recontextualising and collaborative nature of 'innovative metaphors'. This trend in metaphor and metonymy studies, although obviously derived from CMT, pays greater attention to the influence of the actual contexts in which metaphors are used and has received the name of 'the discourse turn' in metaphor studies (see, among others, Cameron & Deignan, 2006; Cameron & Gibbs, 2008; Cameron & Low, 1999; Carter, 2004; Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009; Gibbs, 2008; Hidalgo-Downing & Kraljevic Mujic, 2013, Jones, 2012; Maybin & Swann, 2006; Pennycook, 2007; Semino, 2008; Semino, Deignan, & Littlemore, 2013). At present, the situation shows a panorama in which CMT, CIT, and discourse-based studies are being applied to a variety of discourses, and to language as social and cultural practices, thus providing a complex perspective on the way in which metaphor and metonymy, as linguistic and conceptual phenomena, are understood in sociocultural contexts. The combination of these scholarly trends has given interesting results, for example in critical discourse analysis (see, for example, Charteris-Black, 2005; Koller, 2004), in which both CMT/CIT and discourse analysis complement each other.

Indeed, Jones (2012) proposes the question of whether we may be facing a new change of paradigm – namely, the view of metaphorical and metonymic creativity as performative and collaborative endeavours, rather than as products produced by 'gifted individuals'. That is a view of metaphoric and metonymic creativity as a collective, ongoing phenomenon that is constantly updated and revised, as outlined earlier in this chapter.

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Critical issues and topics

Having given an introductory overview of the phenomena of metaphor and metonymy as prototypical resources for everyday and innovative linguistic creativity, I turn to some of the critical issues that are at stake in current research and which pose challenging questions for further research. One of the crucial issues involved in the theoretical interpretation of metaphor and metonymy is to what extent they are primarily conceptual entities (ways of thinking) or contextually driven uses of language (ways of using language and talking about things). While traditional CMT has emphasised the conceptual dimension of metaphoric and metonymic creativity as cognitive tools for the conceptualisation of human experience, recent discourse studies have emphasised the discourse-pragmatic roles of metaphor and metonymy as resources for revealing taken-for-granted ideologies and persuasive goals (Charteris-Black, 2004; Koller, 2004), the joint construction of discursive and social practices (Cameron & Low, 1999; Jones, 2012), and the tendency for metaphor and metonymy to make use of non-verbal, as well as linguistic, resources in current uses of discourse, which are so strongly influenced by multi-semiotic modes of communication (see Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

A second critical issue is the relationship, and even distinction, between metaphor and metonymy, a problem that has led scholars such as Goossens (1999) to adopt the term 'metaphtonymy' to refer to a broad set of combinatory relations into which metaphor and metonymy may enter. In the present overview, the traditional distinction between cross-domain mapping and within-domain mapping is maintained.

A third critical issue is the difference between novel and conventional metaphors and metonymies. While the capacity for novelty of metaphor in particular has always been at the centre of scholarly research, the interest in the pervasiveness of conventional metaphors and metonymies necessarily raises the question of to what degree there is a difference between the two types. As pointed out by Carter (2004), it may be argued that metaphoric and metonymic creativity, like any other forms of creativity, are a question of degree or clines – that is, there is no point in trying to establish a black-and-white distinction between innovative and conventional metaphors. One of the reasons for this has already been mentioned: the fact that novel metaphors, such as scientific metaphors, often become conventionalised when appropriated by a discourse community.

A fourth critical issue of debate is the assumed deliberateness of metaphor and metonymy. This issue has been discussed in various forums (see Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez & Díez Velasco, 2002; Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez & Pérez Hernández, 2011; Steen, 2005), and the answer seems to require a contextual interpretation of the actual use of metaphor and metonymy as creative acts.

A fifth hot issue is to what extent the features of universality/embodiment and variation/ contextual adaptation mutually exclude or complement each other. While some scholars tend to focus on the distinction between these two types of metaphor (for example Kövecses, 2010), others claim the possibility of their co-occurrence and combination by means of the activation of sensorimotor experience in both types of metaphor (for example Gibbs, Okonski, & Hatfield, 2013).

Finally, the question remains whether metaphoric and metonymic creativity should be viewed as products or processes, and, similarly, whether there is one interpretation to a creative product or process, or whether ambiguity and instability are at the basis of the creative act, as suggested at the outset of this chapter. We might, for example, consider Forceville's (2013) notion of a film as offering, not imposing an interpretation, and Gibbons' (2013) description of multimodal literature as engaging the reader in an interactive process.

Illustration

I now turn to the analysis of an advertisement, applying the view of metaphorical and metonymic creativity outlined in this chapter.

The Sky advertisement

Figure 6.5, an advertisement for the British Sky television channel, is an example of metaphoric and metonymic creativity.

The Sky advertisement shows a mouth, open, displaying bright white teeth, as though laughing, which stands on two small legs and feet. It demonstrates an interesting combination of metonymy, opposition, humour, and metaphor as resources for creativity and attention-grabbing devices. What first draws the reader's attention is the image of the open mouth, with white teeth, standing on small legs and laughing. This image can be said to activate the pictorial metonymy, THE SMILING MOUTH STANDS FOR THE SMILING PERSON, and the ambiguous conceptual metonymy, THE SMILING MOUTH STANDS FOR THE SENDER/THE RECEIVER. The text that

Figure 6.5 Advertisement for Sky

follows disambiguates the metonymy by means of a denial of the image: 'Don't laugh. Comedy's a serious matter for us.' This implies that the preceding pictorial metonymy is meant to be addressed to the receiver. What is relevant is that, once more, negation, opposition, and reversal are used to manipulate metonymic meanings and introduce the following discourse, which contains several further metonymies and metaphors.

British writers and comedians are described as 'exercising their funny bones', an expression that activates the metonymy or synecdoche FUNNY BONES STAND FOR COMEDIAN (part-for-whole) and the metaphor A COMEDIAN IS A PERSON DOING EXERCISE. A further metonymy is found in 'late-night laughs', which can be spelled out as THE LAUGH STANDS FOR THE PERSON LAUGHING (product-for-producer), and a metaphor and a further metonymy in 'comedians . . . .are bringing joy to over ten million Sky homes up and down the country'. Thus the emotion of joy is represented as an object that can be taken to places – to homes: JOY IS AN OBJECT and 'Sky homes' activates the metonymy THE HOME STANDS FOR THE PERSONS WHO INHABIT IT. Finally, the country is represented in terms of the UP–DOWN image schema and the orientational conventional metaphor NORTH IS UP AND SOUTH IS DOWN.

The advertisement can be said to make a creative use of metaphor and metonymy, because even if the metaphors and metonymies are not particularly innovative, but rather conventional, they produce the intended humorous effect that the advertising company wishes to create, triggered by words related to humour such as 'funny', 'laughs', and 'comedy' in addition to the visual image of the laughing mouth.

Main research methods

Identifying metaphor and metonymy in discourse, especially when the amount of data is large, is no simple process (see, for example, Gibbs, 1999; Low & Cameron, 2002; Steen, 2007). In the origins of CMT, metaphors were identified as conceptual constructs activated by linguistic expressions, as shown in examples (1)–(11), but these initial studies focused on the analysis of semantic domains, such as emotions, or abstract and complex concepts, analysing decontextualised uses of metaphor and metonymy. Although this procedure served the purpose of raising the awareness of the pervasiveness of metaphor and metonymy as conceptual tools, further methodologies have been developed to allow the analysis of long stretches of real discourse. Discourse analysts working on metaphor theory have contributed two crucial methodological tools for the identification of metaphors in discourse: the Pragglejaz Group's (2007) metaphor identification procedure (MIP) and the version modified at VU University Amsterdam (MIPVU) (see also Steen et al., 2011); and corpus-based approaches to the identification of metaphorical and metonymic expressions (Berber Sardinha, 2011; Charteris-Black, 2004; Deignan, 2005; Veale, Donoghue, & Keane, 2000).

With regard to the first methodological approach, it is defined by Steen and colleagues (2011: 45) as follows:

> It is based on the idea that metaphor in language exhibits indirect meaning, producing local semantic incongruity, which needs to be connected to the encompassing frame of a text, paragraph, sentence, clause or even phrase by some form of (non-literal) comparison.

This model is based on a five-step identification procedure, developed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007: 3) and summarised as follows.

1. Read the entire text-discourse to establish a general understanding of the meaning.
2. Determine the lexical units in the text-discourse
3. (a) For each lexical unit in the text, establish its meaning in context – that is, how it applies to an entity, relation, or attribute in the situation evoked by the text (contextual meaning). Take into account what comes before and after the lexical unit.

   (b) For each lexical unit, determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than that given. For our purposes, basic meanings tend to be:

   o more concrete – that is, what they evoke is easier to imagine, see, hear, feel, smell, and taste;
   o related to bodily action;
   o more precise (as opposed to vague); and
   o historically older.

   Basic meanings are not necessarily the most frequent meanings of the lexical unit.

   (c) If the lexical unit has a more basic current–contemporary meaning in other contexts than that given, decide whether the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning, but can be understood in comparison with it.
4. If it can, mark the lexical unit as metaphorical.

With regard to the second approach, it is based on corpus tools and, in some cases, more complex computational methods. However, scholars in general point towards the need to consider the qualitative dimension of metaphor identification in addition to the quantitative information provided by the search of metaphorical keywords. In other words, corpus tools and computational methods, and the qualitative identification of metaphorical meanings, need to complement each other, because quantification provides further information regarding tendencies, frequencies, and underlying semantic prosodies in texts once the metaphorical meaning is determined by qualitative means. A good example is the corpus methodology followed by some scholars such as Charteris-Black (2004: 35), who identifies two stages in the identification of metaphors in a corpus of data. It is interesting to note that these two stages are qualitative and that, as in the Pragglejaz Group (2007) methodology, they involve a decision on how to identify 'metaphor candidates' (Charteris-Black, 2004: 35) in a sample of data. Thus Charteris-Black (2004: 35) proposes: first, a search of metaphorical candidates related to the topic under study (which are to be considered as potential metaphorical keywords); and secondly, that the metaphorical keywords then be searched in the corpus and examined in their context of use in order to confirm whether 'each use of a keyword is metaphoric or literal'. In other words, conclusions on the role of metaphorical expressions in particular texts may be obtained by combining quantitative and qualitative methods.

Recommendations for practice

When considering recommendations for practice in the research and teaching/learning of metaphor and metonymy as creative processes, several points may be highlighted including, first, the need to develop an awareness of the various theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of metaphor and metonymy as creative processes. This will allow the researcher/learner/teacher to make use of a solid background from which he or she can select a specific orientation. Secondly, it is important to develop an awareness of the need

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to consider metaphorical and metonymic creativity as intrinsically linked and contextually motivated, thus paying specific attention to factors such as genre and register, and the age, social status, and social, cultural, and historical background of the participants, among others.

Future directions

Within the possible ideas for future directions, the following paths seem to be particularly interesting options for further research. First, what is the relation between metaphor and metonymy and other cognitive and discourse processes, such as image schemas, narrative, humour, and opposition? How do these articulate the creative process? The relationship between some of these features has been pointed out by several scholars (see, for example, Forceville & Renckens, 2013, for the relationship between image schemas, narrative, and metaphor and metonymy; Giora, 2006, Hidalgo-Downing, Kraljevic Mujic, & Núñez-Perucha, 2013, and Stubbs, 2005, for the relation between metaphor and opposition; El-Refaie, 2009, and Hidalgo-Downing & Kraljevic Mujic, 2013, for the relationship between humour and metaphor). Indeed, the present chapter has proposed that these phenomena share the characteristics of being bisociative, synergetic, unstable creative processes, as described earlier in the chapter, and need further research from this perspective.

A further area of interest is the performative dimension of metaphoric and metonymic creativity, and the consequent relationship between the verbal mode and other modes of communication in the creative process. This has been illustrated by means of the analysis of various linguistic instances of metaphoric and metonymic creativity, which have been modified and expanded, as in graffiti. The discussion carried out in the present chapter has also raised the question of metaphorical and metonymic creativity as collaborative and collective endeavours, not as isolated acts of creation, especially within the domain of new hybrid genres such as advertising, emails, and graffiti.

The importance of metaphor and metonymy as creating, reinforcing, or challenging ideologies has already been mentioned, but certainly deserves further study, especially in the light of cross-cultural and intercultural studies (see, for example, McArthur et al., 2012).

Further studies need to be carried out on how metaphor and metonymy are interpreted and received by different audiences, as Forceville and Renckens (2013) and Gibbons (2013) suggest, and has been observed in the discussion of the process of interpretation of the Sky advertisement (Figure 6.5).

Finally, further attention needs to be paid to the discursive nature of metaphor and metonymy, and further explorations are needed into the way in which processes of mixing and combining metaphors, chained metonymies, and extended metaphor contribute to the understanding of discourse. Diachronic and longitudinal studies will also shed light on the ways in which metaphor and metonymy both give shape to, and reflect, social and cultural change and variation (see Frank, 2009; Hidalgo-Downing, Kraljevic Mujic, & Núñez-Perucha, 2013; Musolff & Zinken, 2009).

Related topics

cognitive stylistics; everyday language creativity; language, creativity, and cognition; literature and multimodality

Further reading

Allan, K. (2008) *Metaphor and Metonymy: A Diachronic Approach*, Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.

This volume offers an interesting overview of the cognitive and sociocultural motivations of metaphors and metonymies from a diachronic perspective. It draws from data from the *Historical Thesaurus of English*, and explores three of the main concepts used to conceptualise human intelligence, the senses, density, and animals.

Brown, T. L. (2003) *Making Truth: Metaphor in Science*, Indianapolis, IN: University of Indiana Press.

This fascinating study provides insights into the way in which scientific ideas and discoveries are conceptualised and communicated by means of metaphor and metonymy. It addresses the debate on the issue of 'scientific reality', and the human attempt to understand, conceptualise, and communicate concepts and experiences, mainly by means of metaphoric language.

Herrera-Soler, H., and White, M. (eds) (2012) *Metaphor and Mills: Figurative Language in Business and Economics*, Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

This volume provides the first complete overview of metaphor in the discourse of economics, from a diachronic and cross-cultural perspective. It shows that metaphors are theory constitutive in the discourse of economics, and thus perform crucial roles in which concepts are created and communicated.

Picken, J. D. (2007) *Literature, Metaphor, and the Foreign Language Learner*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

This volume provides a very useful overview of the role that figurative language plays in language teaching, paying specific attention to the understanding, interpretation, evaluation, and incorporation of metaphor into the curriculum and teaching/learning materials.

Pope, R. (2005) *Creativity: Theory, History, Practice*, London/New York: Routledge.

This is invaluable reading for scholars interested in creativity, and its relationship to metaphor and metonymy. A comprehensive and innovative approach is provided, drawing from diverse sources ranging from literature to scientific concepts.

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7

Humour and language play

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Introduction and definitions

An intuitive link exists between language play, or humour, and linguistic creativity. When we think of people who make us laugh, it is often because they create something new (a quip) by making unexpected, but clever, links between disparate, seemingly incongruous ideas. Thus it seems that humour and language play are inherently creative, drawing as they do on originality and incongruity, which are also hallmarks of creativity. Furthermore, appreciation of humour has been likened to discovery, as the hearer unravels the meaning of a humorous utterance. The notion of play is also often linked with creativity, particularly in children's development, but sometimes in discussions of adult creative behaviour as well. Research has confirmed our intuitive association of these concepts and practices; however, as will be discussed below, the precise nature of the connection remains unclear. Prior to beginning a review of the literature that examines humour, language play, and creativity, some delineation of humour and language play is necessary, as well as a brief consideration of the extent to which they might be considered creative.

Although humour and language play can be synonymous, this is by no means always the case. Both share non-seriousness as a defining characteristic, even in cases in which a serious message may be couched in play. However, the ostensible goal of humour is to elicit a feeling of mirth among the interlocutors – something that is possible, but not necessary for language play. Language play is thus the broader category, because it encompasses not only humorous utterances, but also those non-serious utterances that manipulate linguistic patterns at all levels of language (that is, phonology, morpho-syntax, semantics, and pragmatics). Furthermore, current understandings of humour see it as a matter of juxtaposing incongruities and then (at least partially) resolving them, with the result being a feeling of mirth (for example Attardo & Raskin, 1991; Oring, 2003; Suls, 1972). Language play, on the other hand, does not necessarily involve incongruities and their resolution, but might instead draw on and create linguistic patterns using, for instance, repetition, rhyming, and alliteration (for example Carter, 2004; Cook, 2000). Finally, although the issue will not be addressed here owing to space limitations, it is worth noting that there is some argument as to whether humour, in particular, is a specific type of creativity, or whether it should be conceived of as something wholly separate (O'Quin & Derks, 2011).

Although creativity is generally recognised as existing on a continuum, verbal humour, the focus of the chapter, is often simply assumed to involve creative uses of language. Yet it seems clear that not all humour is equally creative. Some attempts to amuse merely recycle

worn-out phrases that have typically been used in the past, changing them only slightly, or perhaps not at all. For instance, one conventionally creative way in which to construct humour is to wilfully misinterpret the pragmatic force of a conventional expression as literal. Thus a would-be joker might answer the question, 'Can I use your phone?', with 'I don't know – can you?' This is minimally creative, and in fact can be seen as a formulaic joking response to such questions. As such, it is unlikely to elicit much laughter, but a slight altera-tion that makes the joke specific to the situation might receive a few chuckles: 'Probably not with your arms full of groceries like that!' Again, however, this response involves a minor change to the original formulaic response and cannot therefore be seen as highly original. At the other end of the creativity spectrum, we find humour that meets with quizzical looks, or perhaps even passes unrecognised as an attempt at humour because it is overly novel. Some of Andy Kaufman's performances, for instance, were not initially seen as humorous by many and were only widely recognised in this way as the broader culture caught up to his innovative style of humour. One example would be his foray into professional wrestling, first exclusively against women, and later against Jerry Lawler, a popular wrestler at the time. Although these bouts were staged, this was not apparent to most audience members at the time, and Kaufman's outrageous and insulting behaviour towards his opponents and their fans upset many. It was only in later years and after the ruse was exposed that many came to appreciate his audacity as an innovative form of comedic entertainment. It appears, then, that humour may mark certain social, cognitive, and linguistic limits of creativity. Humour that is highly appreciated by its audience will likely be that which combines appropriate amounts of conventionality and originality to create something novel, yet recognisable to hearers.

In this chapter, I begin with a historical review of the mainly psychological research that has focused on teasing apart the links between humour and creativity. I then look at ques-tions that persist about this relationship, despite the consistent evidence for it. The review then turns from psychological to linguistic contributions, examining current research on the relationship between humour and creativity from a cognitive and social perspective, respectively. Based on the research, recommendations for practice in workplaces, and in second and foreign language classrooms, are proposed. Finally, I suggest directions for future research.

In what follows, I focus mainly on humour production, rather than reception, because the research for the latter is considerably less (see, however, reviews in Martin, 2007, and O'Quin & Derks, 2011). In addition, although some of the work discussed here involves children as participants, owing to space considerations I have excluded any systematic examination of the large body of research that has examined children's uses of humour, language play, and creativity from a developmental perspective (but interested readers may consult Bariaud, 1989; Bergen, 2006; Burriss & Tsao, 2002; Crystal, 1996; Martin, 2007: 229–41; Semrud-Clikeman & Glass, 2010).

Historical perspectives

In his seminal work on creativity, Arthur Koestler (1964) examined humour, art, and scien-tific discovery, and saw each of these creative processes as 'bisociative'. He coined this term to describe a type of thinking that essentially brings together typically incongruous elements to construct something new. Such thought processes, for Koestler (1964: 36), were emotional and potentially turbulent, and he described bisociation as 'a double-minded, transitory state of unstable equilibrium where the balance of both emotion and thought is disturbed'. As

reported by Ferris (1972), Koestler published an initial discussion of these ideas in a 1949 book; building on that scholarship, Ferris lays claim to having been the first to empirically verify a link between humour and creativity in his 1957 dissertation. Although those early works were built on a number of understandings of humour and laughter that are no longer widely accepted, Koestler's (1964) work, in particular, was seminal in linking creativity and humour. Since that time, a steady stream of empirical research has reliably established a link between the two.

These studies have often engaged participants in creating captions for cartoons, which are then rated for funniness. Creativity has been assessed using psychometric testing, and correlations between the two measures (funniness and creativity) have been established (Brodzinsky & Rubien, 1976; Treadwell, 1970; Ziv, 1980). Similarly, Jur ová (1998) found a positive relationship between humour and creativity, looking as well at the use of humour to solve conflicts by rating the funniness of captions that participants wrote for drawings depicting conflicts. More recently, psychometric tests alone have linked sense of humour and creativity (Ková , 1999). Furthermore, in a series of studies, Ziv (1976, 1983, 1989) found that when a humorous stimulus (such as a cartoon, film, or audio recording) was provided prior to taking a test of creativity, the adolescent participants performed significantly better than those who did not receive such a stimulus. Ziv (1983) also found that simply instructing the participants to provide as many funny answers as possible on the creativity test significantly raised their scores. Humour has also been operationalised in children through peer nominations of funny students (Hauck & Thomas, 1972; Ziv, 1980), or more elaborately by supplementing peer nominations with observations by teachers and trained observers, and teacher ratings of student humour (Fabrizi & Pollio, 1987). These types of humour rating were also found to correlate with scores on tests of creativity (although it should be noted that Fabrizi and Pollio established a correlation only for the eleventh-graders whom they studied, and not the seventh-graders). Using a psychometric test to measure sense of humour and a drawing completion test to assess creativity, Humke and Schaefer (1996) established a correlation between humour and non-verbal creativity in adults. A similar result was found by Trevlas, Matsouka, and Zachopoulou (2003), who used tests of playfulness and movement, respectively, to compare preschool children's playfulness, of which humour was one component, against their motor creativity.

While these studies examined humour production in relation to creativity, a smaller body of work has focused on whether the ability to comprehend humour is linked to creativity, with mixed results. Rouff (1975), for example, found a strong positive correlation between a measure of creativity and humour comprehension for adults, as measured by scores on a task requiring participants to explain cartoons. On the other hand, using psychometric tests to assess both humour and creativity in eighth-graders, Couturier, Mansfield, and Gallagher (1981) found that one measure of creativity correlated positively with one of the measures of humour, but not the other. Furthermore, a non-verbal test of creativity showed a negative relationship with both humour tests, which the authors suggest is the result of that measure not tapping into an individual's ability to construct new ideas quickly and coherently (that is, ideational fluency), a factor that they note is thought to relate to humour comprehension. The differences between the studies emphasising humour production and those examining comprehension is not surprising, because the relationship between the two is not necessarily symmetrical (Kozbelt & Nishioka, 2010; Moran et al., 2014). Having established that there is indeed a relationship between humour and creativity, we turn now to additional issues that complicate our understanding of that relationship.

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Critical issues and topics

In social science research, definitions and parameters of phenomena under investigation can vary considerably, and the study of humour or language play and creativity is no different (Murdock & Ganim, 1993). Further complicating the issue is the potential for humour and creativity to be seen as overlapping constructs (O'Quin & Derks, 2011), or for other variables to link or intervene between the two. In this latter case, intelligence is most often investigated as the construct, and findings when the link between the three constructs is investigated are somewhat conflicting (Galloway, 1994). These issues can make it difficult to establish whether a given result is broadly applicable. However, a recent meta-analysis of research results on the link between creativity and humour confirms the persistence of the results discussed above and finds a modest positive correlation between the two, even when differences in methods of measurement are taken into account (O'Quin & Derks, 2011: 632). Although this finding is consistent, a number of issues, in addition to the aforementioned definitional problems, still prevent a full understanding of the precise relationship between the two constructs. These issues include directionality, the type of humour, and outcomes.

One important question is whether, and to what extent, humour and language play induce creative behaviour, or whether the relationship works in the opposite direction, with creativity resulting in an increase in humour and language play. In fact, as the studies reviewed so far indicate, humour does seem to increase creativity, but research has also confirmed that the ability to construct humour relates strongly to creativity (Feingold & Mazzella, 1991). Even setting aside the issue of directionality, questions remain as to whether humour or playfulness most accurately describes the construct relating to creativity. Fredrickson (1998, 2001) reviewed a considerable body of evidence demonstrating that a more general factor, positive emotions, increases creativity by broadening thought patterns. Similarly, Isen (2003) found that positive affect increases creative problem-solving skills in a variety of contexts, including studies outside of controlled laboratories. In other words, any method of evoking positive emotions seems likely to result in greater creativity, and humour can simply be one way of doing that.

Although positive affect does indeed seem to increase creative, divergent thought processes, there is no guarantee that humour and language play will create positive emotions. Humour is not a unitary construct and there are many different types of humour serving many different functions. Outside of laboratory conditions, humour and language play are not always affiliative and may frequently be aggressive. Aggressive verbal play can range from teasing, used as a mild social corrective, to the bullying taunts of children or the cruel pranks of adults, 'playful' only to those who are not the target. Aggressive humour and language play are unlikely to encourage creative thought patterns. In fact, Janes and Olson (2000) demonstrated that merely seeing another person being teased can result in greater conformity in the behaviour of the observer. Thus it seems likely that only positive, affiliative humour and language play will encourage divergent thinking, while negative and exclusionary humour and play will create convergent thought (see also Lang & Lee, 2010).

Further complicating the issue of how different types of humour may relate to creativity is the work of Willibald Ruch and his colleagues (Hehl & Ruch, 1985, 1990; Ruch & Hehl, 1998; Ruch & Köhler, 1998), which has demonstrated that appreciation of different types of humour correlates with different personality types and traits. Of particular interest here is the distinction between nonsense humour and incongruity resolution humour. *Nonsense humour* is, essentially, absurd. Incongruity is present, but is either not resolved to create a

coherent whole, or is only partially resolved. *Incongruity resolution humour*, on the other hand, satisfies this requirement, because the two incompatible elements are brought together to make some sort of sense, if only within the joke – that is, the incongruity is fully resolved. While not singled out for analysis, as in some other studies, creativity is one aspect of a bundle of qualities referred to as 'openness to experience, culture, or intellect' in the five-factor personality model. Individuals possessing this trait tend to appreciate nonsense humour to a greater extent than those who do not score highly on this trait. They also tend to score more highly on scales of liberalism, sensation seeking, and tolerance of ambiguity. On the other hand, individuals preferring incongruity resolution humour tend to have low scores in these traits, but higher in their counterparts. Thus, if the goal is to identify creative individuals, a test of humour appreciation may provide an indication: those who enjoy nonsense humour will be more prone to creativity.

Much of the research has considered creative thinking in relation to language play and humour, as well as intelligence. Given the strong links among these three constructs, we might expect individuals who exhibit these traits to engage in the types of intense, thoughtful behaviour that often results in creative insights. However, Wycoff and Pryor (2003: 39) suggest that 'those who tend toward expressing smiles or laughs frequently may not be the same individuals who engage in and enjoy effortful thinking'; rather, a humorous outlook may be more a feature of one's personality. Furthermore, as Ziv (1980, 1989) points out, creative thought alone is not necessarily an adequate way in which to assess creativity, asserting that action and outcomes must also be considered. As Ziv (1980: 162) explains, 'creative behaviour involves the transformation of an idea – generally arrived at using divergent thinking – into a product which has a certain social value'. Does humour also spur creative action? On this topic, little work has been done. Ziv's (1980, 1989) research suggests that creative thinking, but not behaviour, is aided by humour; however, this would seem to be an area in which further investigation is merited – particularly that which would take into account factors such as group vs individual effort, social factors, and the precise nature of the task.

The work discussed thus far has its home largely in cognitive and experimental psychology, the historically dominant discipline for inquiry into both humour and creativity. As such, the research discussed up to this point has focused largely on humour and creativity as personality traits, the components of each, and the extent to which they are interrelated or influence each other. In the following section, I consider what linguistics is adding to the insights from psychology.

Current contributions and research

Despite arriving a bit late to the party, linguists have made important contributions to our understanding of humour, including the development of linguistic theories of humour (for example Attardo, 1994; Dynel, 2008), and detailed descriptions of humorous and playful linguistic practices and their negotiation in interaction (for example Chiaro & Norrick, 2009; Norrick, 1993). Because of this work, we now have a better understanding of the linguistic mechanisms of humorous incongruity, the structure and social functions of conversational humour, and the ways in which humour is supported or rejected in discourse. However, in terms of the intersection of creativity and humorous or playful uses of language specifically, there are presently strands of research rooted in cognitive and social perspectives on language and interaction that are pushing the boundaries of inquiry and demonstrating how the study of playful linguistic creativity can contribute to our

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understanding of fundamental questions in linguistics, including the nature of language, language knowledge, and interaction. Although linguistic study moves steadily toward a conceptualisation of language as simultaneously and inextricably social and cognitive (for example Langacker, 1997; Tomasello, 2009; Tomasello et al., 2005), most scholars continue to emphasise one end of the spectrum or another in their analyses. Thus I begin below by discussing recent contributions to the study of humour and linguistic creativity by cognitive linguists, then turn to recent work from sociolinguistics.

Cognitive linguistics

Cognitive linguistic theorists (see Langlotz, Chapter 2) seek to understand how language is internally represented and processed, and they do so by examining actual instances of language use, taking into account the social context and the goals of language users as they seek to create meaning. As a usage-based approach, cognitive linguistic theory is particularly adept at delineating the relationship between formulaic or conventional and creative language uses, and defining the cognitive mechanisms used to construct humour, in particular. Furthermore, these scholars see the study of non-serious language use as a way of advancing (cognitive) linguistic theory in general.

Bergen and Binsted (2004) represent one of the first examples of this sort of research. They examined scalar humour, in which some entity is described using some form of the structure 'so *X* that *Y*', as in 'The reception to my talk was so cold that I saw students huddling together for warmth' (Bergen & Binsted, 2004: 7). Their analysis indicated that the cognitive mechanisms used to create this type of humour are the same as those used in serious discourse, but that the incongruity created between the typical (serious) use of a particular construction expected by the hearer and the actual, unusual realisation, as well as the resulting imagery (a phenomenon explored in greater depth in Bergen & Binsted, 2015), created the humour. Thus speakers exploited a regularly occurring construction creatively. In addition to the important assertion that humour relies on general-purpose cognitive mechanisms, they suggest that the study of humorous language serves as evidence of cognitive representations of language (Bergen & Binsted, 2004: 12), in much the same way as speech errors have been used as evidence of linguistic knowledge (for example Fromkin, 1973).

Bergen and Binsted (2004, 2015) call for an examination of language use that involves creative and playful manipulations across the full range of linguistic practices, and this call is echoed by Feyaerts (2006). He too finds that the same general cognitive mechanisms used to construct conventional, serious texts are called upon for humour. He focuses specifically on the figure-ground reversals (see also Veale, 2008) found in formulaic sequences used in both witty headlines and in the conversational practice of 'trumping', in which the hearer exploits some ambiguity in the speaker's utterance in order to express disagreement. His examination focuses on the semantics of conventional phrases and, like Bergen and Binsted (2004, 2015), shows how the creative manipulations of them provide evidence for a generalised set of cognitive mechanisms to explain both humorous and serious language use and understanding.

The interplay between formulaic or merely typical constructions and their creative instantiations is examined in relation to literary texts by Antonopoulou and Nikiforidou (2009; see also Brône & Oben, 2013) to further specify the ways in which semi-productive and semi-idiomatic constructions can be exploited for humour. For instance, they demonstrate that treating a count noun as a mass noun contributes to a humorous interpretation, with repeated constructions of this sort creating humorous coherence within a text. They focus

on a passage from Martin Amis's *Dead Babies*, in which an obese family struggles to fit into a car. Normally countable body parts are presented as mass nouns, for example 'arse all over the gear-lever', 'a bit of arm', and 'some of my leg' (Antonopoulou & Nikiforidou, 2009: 302). They note that this repetition is what creates humorous coherence within the text. More recently, they have extended their analysis in an attempt to describe events larger than the clause (Antonopoulou & Nikiforidou, 2011).

Working at the intersection of cognitive and computational linguistics, Tony Veale, along with his colleagues, is developing an extensive body of research related to humour, creativity, and cognition. I focus here specifically on his work with humorous and ironic similes, which highlights the risky nature of humorous language use and identifies the strategies that speakers use to reduce the chance of miscommunication. As such, it also explores the boundaries of linguistic creativity. Similes exist on a continuum from almost completely formulaic (for example 'as cute as a button') to so creative as to require explanation (for example Jerry Seinfeld's description of comedian George Carlin as being 'like a train hobo with a chicken bone', cited in Veale & Hao, 2009: 1376). Achieving the appropriate degree of creativity is particularly crucial in the case of humour, where too little creativity will result in a bland, unamusing simile, while an overly novel simile will require explanation, likely ruining any humorous effects. In their analyses of thousands of similes harvested from the Internet, Veale and Hao (2009; Veale, 2013) demonstrate how the use of 'about' in similes (for example 'about as enjoyable as a funeral') acts as a signal of playful or humorous intent, indicating to the audience that a comparison is likely facetious. Although many of the similes incorporating 'about' were indeed ironic, Hao and Veale (2010: 646) describe it and other markers as 'no more than heuristic clues', and emphasise the need to examine the conceptual basis of similes to determine whether they are not merely playful, but specifically ironic. They suggest that a strong clue to the presence of irony is likely to be that a simile has been constructed using a descriptor and an entity with incompatible or contradictory qualities (as in 'exciting' and 'funeral'), and that this is particularly likely to be the case when either of the two parts already has a strong record of use for non-ironic similes. This finding demonstrates again the interplay between formulaic or collocational sequences and more creative constructions (for a review of computational creativity, see Veale, Chapter 22).

Finally, although not working from a cognitive linguistic perspective, Ronneberger-Sibold's (2006) work on lexical blends is also worth mentioning here, because, like the previous authors, she suggests that the study of playful and creative language use can contribute to linguistic theory, specifically by providing evidence for linguistic competence, as noted by Bergen and Binsted (2004) as well. Lexical blends are considered part of extra-grammatical morphology because the constructions do not follow rules of morphology, and Ronneberger-Sibold (2006) demonstrates how their degree of transparency is deliberately – if intuitively – manipulated by language users. As evidence, she points to the differences in her corpus of 612 blends between the more transparent literary blends and less transparent blends created as brand names. She argues that the construction of literary blends, most of which were satirical, must be somewhat apparent in order for the readers to grasp the satire. Brand names, on the other hand, can be less transparent, because their function of product identification can be fulfilled even if language users are unable to parse the blend. These regularities provide evidence of an extragrammatical competence that allows users to intuitively construct blends along a continuum of transparency.

From a cognitive linguistic perspective, then, the study of humorous creativity offers not only a way in which to better understand the mechanisms of humour, but also a way

in which to advance semantic theory. Complementing the perspectives discussed here are those from scholars in sociolinguistics.

Sociolinguistics

Although language play and humour have long been appreciated in child language research and studied from the perspective of development, as noted above, it is only more recently that applied linguists and sociolinguists have begun to embrace those practices that deviate from the norms associated with transactional speech, and which question the boundaries of what is considered typical, normal, and often even acceptable or appropriate speech. In particular, discussions of multilingualism, linguistic diversity, and globalisation are increasingly identifying language play as central to the linguistic practices of multilingual societies and individuals. This recognition shows up in a variety of different works and goes by a number of different names. What these perspectives share, however, is a commitment to examining linguistic and social diversity, including issues of identity. Increasingly, scholars refer not only to the ways in which individuals deploy their linguistic resources, but also to how they play with them. Furthermore, they often note how resources are used for purely ludic ends, as well as for identity construction, critique, and resistance.

In work grounded in language ecology, for instance, Kramsch (2008: 402, emphasis added) defines symbolic competence as 'the ability to manipulate the conventional categories and societal norms of truthfulness, legitimacy, *seriousness*, and originality, and the ability to reframe human thought and action'. Her concerns lie with foreign language learners, and the authenticity and legitimacy of language use in a globalised world. She sees second language use as potentially liberating, because it allows for 'play, irony, distance, and the integration of language use into a freer realm of subjective perceptions and meanings – the realm of the trickster' (Kramsch, 2009: 43). Playful linguistic creativity is also highlighted when multilingual practices are conceived of as 'metrolingualism' – a term that Otsuji and Pennycook (2010: 244, emphasis added) explain 'describes the ways in which people of different and mixed backgrounds use, *play with* and negotiate identities through language', adding that 'the focus here is not on elite game playing but the ludic possibilities in the everyday'. Makoni and Pennycook (2012: 449) extend these definitions and also call for an emphasis on creativity more generally, noting that 'variability in the use of and facility in the use of multilingualism as play compels us to reintroduce the idea of individual creativity within multilingualism'. Similarly, scholarship that sees multilingual practice and linguistic diversity through the lens of the Bakhtinian notion of heteroglossia often emphasises, examines, and describes such (potentially) playful and often humorous language practices as revoicing, parody, stylisation, irony, and crossing (for example Blackledge & Creese, 2014; Blackledge, Creese, & Takhi, 2014; Blommaert & Rampton, 2011; Rymes, 2014).

Sociolinguistic investigations that centre on diverse, playful, and humorous language use can contribute to a reconceptualisation of language and linguistic diversity, an understanding of the sociocultural and political significance of such creative practices, and greater insight into the processes of language change. Creative language use demonstrates evolving norms and values through the changes that take place to linguistic norms that are used in new, playful ways. As Blommaert and Rampton (2011: 7) explain, we can observe 'the emergence of structure out of agency'. Much of Rampton's own work has illustrated these processes and their social consequences (for example Rampton 1995, 1999, 2002, 2009). Sharma's (2012) inquiry into the use of language on Facebook by

Nepalese college students provides a multimodal example of language users adopting a diverse set of linguistic and other semiotic resources to construct bilingual identities, often through humour. Her participants' playful use and mixing of English and Nepalese in their online interactions is complex, and suggests an appropriation of English to construct both global and local identities. Jaspers (2005) examines how Moroccan teenaged boys in Belgium 'do ridiculous': a set of linguistic practices used to induce the teachers to digress, to lead outsiders to form inaccurate impressions of the boys, and to generally relieve the boys' boredom. Switching among and playing with different varieties of Dutch formed an important part of 'doing ridiculous' and allowed the boys to demonstrate their competence in this language, thus challenging racist stereotypes about themselves.

While the aforementioned works tend to celebrate language play and see its use as liberatory, it is important to recognise that humour and play can also be powerful agents of normativity. Bennett (2012), for instance, examines stylisations of 'chavspeak', a term used to designate the imagined speech of a particular type of working class individual (the 'chav') in the United Kingdom. While humorous portrayals of stereotypes, such as those that he examines, are often dismissed as trivial and having little or no social consequence, he argues to the contrary: that the humorous depictions reinforce existing ideologies that marginalise members of the working class. Furthermore, the use of 'non-standard' features of English reinforces linguistic ideologies of correct and incorrect speech. Research into such contentious uses of humour helps us to identify the socially constructed boundaries of linguistic creativity.

Recommendations for practice

Workplaces and classrooms tend to be goal-oriented sites that also often (purport to) appreciate creativity in their employees and students. Humour, however, can be viewed negatively, as something that takes away from serious activities of these venues, and indeed humour often does represent a diversion away from the goals at hand – and not necessarily one that is, or eventually will be, beneficial in terms of those goals. Yet, as the evidence reviewed in this chapter suggests, when students or employees are engaging in tasks that require creative thought, such as brainstorming ideas for a project or finding solutions to problems, both venues might benefit from an atmosphere that encourages humour as a way of increasing creative output.

Despite the documented relationship between humour and creativity, a study by Holmes (2007) suggests that, even in workplaces that value energetic, playful interactions, the use of humour as a driver of creativity in the service of workplace goals is rare. Holmes' study is unusual in that it examines situated language use, rather than laboratory tasks or psychometric tests. As such, she is able to demonstrate how humour in interaction can foster creativity in terms not only of addressing workplace tasks, but also of challenging existing norms and encouraging progressive organisational change. Her work demonstrates that leadership styles play an important role in the extent to which humour is valued in the workplace (see also Holmes & Marra, 2006; Holmes et al., 2003). This suggests that leadership training that helps those in charge to move from merely tolerating behaviour that they may see as off-task towards appreciating, and even celebrating, the energising and resourceful potential of such behaviour is in line. At the same time, Holmes (2007) notes that good leaders also exhibit a talent for knowing when to rein in their employees' playful tendencies. Along these lines, it is worth noting that although a specific prescription is impossible to provide, some research suggests that obtaining a greater quantity of creative, amusing responses will also improve

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the quality of responses (Derks & Hervas, 1988). Thus, in brainstorming types of activity in which creative output is at a premium, leaders may want to allow humorous contributions to continue, even when their instincts tell them that it is time to bring the interaction back into a serious key.

In contrast to workplaces, classrooms – and perhaps language classrooms in particular – can often be places in which humour occurs, whether sanctioned by the teacher or not. Here too, as with the workplace leader, the teacher's challenge is to productively harness that energy for learning. Creative play with language may be particularly important in the second language classroom in which students often grapple with questions of identity, because playful language practices may help them to explore this. Along these lines, Kramsch (2008: 404) encourages teachers to 'leave room for and, indeed, encourage stylistic variation, irony, humor, subversion'. Such spaces may not only broaden language learner repertoires, allowing learners to express themselves in subtler ways with a range of linguistic resources, but these types of interaction may also help learners to retain the meanings of new lexical items (Bell, 2012). In addition to recognising the educational potential of language play for students, its contribution to the well-being of teachers is a less explored, but noteworthy, topic (Bullough, 2012). Teaching is a profession that requires creativity, flexibility, and innovative problem solving, yet increasingly many teachers work under highly regimented conditions, particularly when standardised tests are of great importance. An infusion of humour into classrooms that work under these conditions may contribute to an opening up of the strictures imposed on teachers and may increase their well-being.

Future directions

Numerous specific questions about the nature of, and relationship among, language, humour, and creativity can be identified through this review. Here, however, I touch on two broad areas of inquiry that seem promising from an applied linguistic perspective: social aspects; and language change.

While cognitive aspects of the intersection of humour and creativity have received ample attention from psychologists, the social aspects are only starting to be explored. This will require the use of a broader range of research methods, including corpus linguistics, ethnographies, and discourse analyses. These studies must be conducted across a variety of contexts and language groups in order to provide the greatest insight (see, for example, Chang, 2003, on Chinese linguistic creativity, and Maynard, 2007, on Japanese). The rich descriptions of creative and humorous language that such research can yield will illuminate the relationship between creativity and formulaicity in the construction of humour. Failed humour, which can lend insight into the social and cognitive limits to creativity in humour, can also be studied in this way (Bell, 2015). With a greater understanding of the relationship between humour and creativity in interaction, we are likely to find additional workplace, pedagogical, and therapeutic applications.

The study of humour, language play, and creativity can also lend insight to our understanding of language, as suggested above, and, more specifically, language change. Hints of this are already seen in some of the literature on language play and creativity. For instance, Ronneberger-Sibold's (2006) work on lexical blends, discussed earlier, notes that, despite their deliberate, planned development, the structure of blends by individual innovators is the same as that which emerged in German diachronically. She suggests that a combination of individual language users' intuitions about the transparency of different types of blend, coupled with their language-using experiences, which signalled to them which forms allowed

them to be more or less comprehensible, led both the deliberate and the spontaneous blend creators to the same end point. Thus her examination of language play revealed new patterns created from the same types of knowledge and communicative pressure. Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008) articulate more clearly what was merely suggested by Larsen-Freeman (1997) regarding the possible relationship between playful language practices and change in linguistic systems. They suggest that, for example, when the innovations that teenage language users develop are repeated, broader change can result, particularly as innovations spread quickly among and across groups. Although humour and language play are creative practices that have been largely undervalued by the linguistic community, it is becoming clear that their study may have more to contribute to many areas of linguistic inquiry.

Related topics

computational approaches to language and creativity; creativity in second language learning; everyday language creativity; language, creativity, and cognition

Further reading

Cook, G. (2000) *Language Play, Language Learning*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cook's seminal work on language play provides a thorough review of the concept, as well as consideration of its significance for second language development.

Kozbelt, A. (2014) 'Creativity', in S. Attardo (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Humor Studies, vol. 1*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

This entry provides a brief, interdisciplinary review, similar to that presented in this chapter, but grounded in humour research.

Raskin, V. (2008) *The Primer of Humor Research*, New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Designed as an entry point into humour scholarship, this volume provides in-depth reviews of humour research conducted within specific disciplines.

Veale, T. (2012) *Exploding the Creativity Myth: The Computation Foundations of Linguistic Creativity*, London: Bloomsbury.

In this text, Veale provides an accessible overview of the work that he has done on cognition and creativity, with one chapter devoted specifically to humour.

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8

Constructed languages

Douglas Ball

Introduction

What is a constructed language?

Constructed languages are languages that are consciously and deliberately created by one person or a small group of people. They possess many of the known salient qualities of other human languages – most notably, that they are symbolic systems for conveying and interpreting some sort of messages. Furthermore, a great many constructed languages could feasibly be spoken, employing speech sounds found in other spoken languages. They are doubtlessly some of the most ambitious creative projects associated with language.

The circumstances surrounding the genesis of constructed languages crucially define them, yet even here constructed languages resemble other 'natural' phenomena. Constructed languages, at least in their initial stages, resemble pidgins, in that they lack native speakers. However, constructed languages and pidgins otherwise have rather different circumstances of genesis: constructed languages rarely, if ever, initially emerge out of some sort of community of speakers, but rather more usually from a single creator. The conscious and deliberate impetus underlying the creation of constructed languages aligns them somewhat with language games, such as Pig Latin, which are more conscious creations than natural languages such as English or French.

Constructed languages, furthermore, are distinguishable by what could be termed the epistemological source of their rules. While constructed languages are rule-governed systems just as other human languages are, their rules, at least initially, tend to be disseminated in a tidy (perhaps simplified) form, often from the introspections and downright whims of a single individual. This contrasts with conventional natural languages, the epistemological source of which is a bit controversial, but surely lies somewhere within the (perhaps complex) interplay between what is in the minds of speakers and how these speakers interact with one another. The exceptional epistemological source of rules in constructed languages has raised some questions in the minds of linguists as to whether constructed languages count as 'real' languages or not, since they lack this key property of natural languages. This, in turn, has probably contributed to the fact that linguistics, as a discipline, has mostly shied away from the study of constructed languages.

Constructed languages are also known by myriad other terms, including 'artificial languages', 'invented languages', 'glossopoeia', and 'model languages'. The most widespread term for this sort of language among the community of people who create them is *conlang*,

a neoclassical-esque compound/blend, derived from *con*structed and *lang*uage. This term arose in 1991 as the short name of a mailing list devoted to the discussion of such languages (see discussion later in this chapter), but came to be used for the name of the languages themselves. This neologism gives rise to the related verb *conlang* ('to create a constructed language') and a further related noun *conlanger* ('one who creates a constructed language'). Because the term 'conlang' is a little less unwieldy than the term 'constructed language', I shall use the former in the remainder of this chapter.

A rough-and-ready classification of constructed languages

Conlangs can be – and are – constructed for many different purposes; however, most conlangs have a central (or perceived central) purpose. This purpose can serve as a convenient way of classifying a given conlang. So, following in the traditions found in the conlanging community, I use *purpose* as the means of classifying conlangs. This section, then, will detail the 'received' typology of conlangs based on purpose and, in the process, briefly introduce some of the more well-known conlangs.

The most well-known purpose for a conlang is to serve as an alternative means of communication for speakers of various linguistic backgrounds. This sort of language, which ostensibly tries to undo the effect of the biblical story of the Tower of Babel, is most often known as an 'international auxiliary language', because these languages are intended to transcend international language differences. The term 'auxiliary language' is sometimes abbreviated in a manner similar to conlang to yield *auxlang*. The most famous auxlang is Esperanto, invented in the late nineteenth century by polyglot L. L. Zamenhof, a resident of what is now Poland. An example of Esperanto is given in example (1):

Help-as	se	oni	kon-as	Esperanto-n.
help-PRES	if	one	know-PRES	Esperanto-ACC

'It helps if one knows Esperanto.' (1)

(Gledhill, 2000: 91)

Gledhill (2000) offers a good, linguistic-oriented, reference grammar of Esperanto. Esperanto is in the unique position of having the most speakers of any auxlang – any conlang, in fact. However, there are a considerable number of other auxlangs other than Esperanto.

Another well-known purpose for a conlang is to accompany a work of fiction. This type of language has hitherto been termed a 'fictional language', although because of potential ambiguities, the term 'parafictional language' (that is, a language that occurs alongside fiction) is perhaps clearer. This subtype of conlang is well represented in the genres of science fiction and fantasy. Science fiction's most famous conlang is arguably Klingon, a language created by American linguist Marc Okrand for a race of aliens in the *Star Trek* franchise of television series and films (Klingon, in Okrand's conception, first appeared in 1984's *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*). An example of Klingon is given in example (2):

DI-HIv-pu'	Sutlh-taH-vIS	chaH.
1PL>3PL-attack-PFV	negotiate-CONT-while	3PL

'While they were negotiating, we attacked them.' (2)

(Okrand, 1992: 63)

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Okrand (1992) offers a quality, if brief, grammatical description of Klingon.

Fantasy's most famous conlangs are Quenya and Sindarin, two languages created by British author/philologist J. R. R. Tolkien for the Elves who dwell in his created world, Middle-Earth, which serves as the setting of a great many of his works, including *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. An example of Sindarin is provided in example (3):

Celebrimbor	o	Eregion	teith-ant	i	thiw	hin.
(proper.name)	from	(place.name)	write-PST.3SG	DET	[MUT]letter.PLP	ROX.DEM.PL

'Celebrimbor of Eregion wrote these letters.' (3)

(Salo, 2004: 206)

Salo (2004) provides a reference grammar of Sindarin (although there are some students of Tolkien's languages who view this more as a work describing 'Neo-Sindarin' – Sindarin in Salo's conception – rather than a precise description of Tolkien's work). Quenya has yet to be documented in a book-length reference work.

Apart from Quenya and Sindarin, there are many more parafictional languages in fantasy; in fact, it appears that the visibility of parafictional conlangs is on the rise (see the discussion below). In this chapter, I will limit my discussion of the role(s) that this kind of conlang can play within literary works, but greater explorations have been made in the literature: in Stockwell (2006); and, more extensively, in Cheyne (2008).

Some conlangs are created for testing hypotheses about language or, at least, for exploring the logical conclusions of particular viewpoints on language. This class of conlang is often termed an 'engineered language', or *engelang*. The most famous engelang is arguably Loglan, a language created in the 1950s by American sociologist James Cooke Brown (1960) to test whether an allegedly radically different language would change people's thought patterns. Loglan additionally employs a certain number of ideas from formal logic in its design, and thus also represents the class of engelangs that have explored ideas from logic in language.

The creation of a large number of conlangs – although few that are particularly visible – is driven by the particular aesthetic views of their creator. While it is probably the case that all conlangs have this property to a degree, conlangs that centrally have this aesthetically driven purpose are generally known as 'artistic languages', or *artlangs*. One aesthetic driving some artlangers is the creation of a language that could, quite plausibly, be found in the external world. Conlangs with this purpose could be termed 'naturalistic languages'. Other artlangers are driven by their own internal sensibilities, which might not reflect natural languages particularly closely. The resulting languages are very personal forms of expression for their creators and, in fact, may be secret. These languages are often referred to as 'personal languages'. In principle, it seems that a naturalistic language could also be a personal language, but in practice the two sets of artlangs are generally considered distinct within the conlanging community. Few 'pure' artlangs are well known outside of the conlanging community, so which should be considered most famous is a bit unclear. But one could consider all of Tolkien's languages as examples, because they appear to have begun their existence as artlangs before moving on to become parafictional languages.

As a final means of classifying conlangs, it is seen as useful to provide some information about the source of the language's vocabulary, much as it has been useful to designate which language contributed the majority of the vocabulary in a pidgin or creole. Conlangs having vocabulary not closely modelled on any known language – non-constructed or constructed – are generally termed '*a priori* languages'. Conlangs in which the vocabulary is derived from

some previously attested language are known as '*a posteriori* languages'. The lexicons of some *a posteriori* languages might be difficult to distinguish from a pidgin or creole, at least at first glance. A collection of *a posteriori* languages has been, and continues to be, created around certain historical 'what if' scenarios, giving rise to the conlanging analogue of the literary subgenre of alternative history. One such conlang is Andrew Smith's Brithenig, a fictional Celtic-influenced Romance language of Britain, imagined to exist in a world in which Romano-British culture persisted in Britannia because there was no Anglo-Saxon settlement of the British Isles.

Historical perspectives

As a result of the often secretive nature of conlanging, the history of the activity is some-what incomplete. Nevertheless, there are indications that conlanging has been pursued by some for a long time. In writing up this section's summary history, I have relied heavily on the accessibly written historical information provided in Okrent (2009).

What is considered to be the first recorded conlang was Lingua Ignota, created by Hildegard von Bingen, a twelfth-century German churchwoman and polymath. However, Lingua Ignota is more noted as a list of vocabulary items than a vocabulary plus grammar. For a thorough discussion of Hildegard's work, see Higley (2007).

In the 1600s, the number of attested conlangs increased, perhaps not incidentally given the (fairly recent) advances in book technology and in mathematical notation systems. As Okrent (2009) points out, much of the conlanging from this time until the early-to-mid twentieth century has been predicated on the view that language is imperfect and is in need of fixing. This entails that language has several 'problems': the 'problem' with which most seventeenth-century conlangers were preoccupied is how meaning is conveyed in language. This preoccupation gave rise to what could be considered the age of philosophical engelangs. Conlangs from this era, such as John Wilkins' Universal Language of 1668, sought to exhaustively categorise the world, and then rework the expression of this categorisation through a completely transparent and compositional system. That is, given a taxonomy of the world, certain symbols/sounds could be assigned to basic primitive notions (and only to them). These symbols/sounds could then be recombined in principled ways to yield all necessary concepts, expressed in a clear and unambiguous way. Wilkins' language may be the most comprehensive and well documented of the languages of this era, but similar projects were pursued by other independently famous intellectuals of the era, including philosopher René Descartes and mathematician Gottfried Leibniz. Given that the seventeenth-century engelangs were designed to be grounded in reality, which for most Enlightenment-era thinkers had one true form, these languages had the additional benefit of being universal: any human, with knowledge of how the world works generally and how the form-meaning mapping worked in a particular engelang, could express anything, which could be unambiguously interpreted by others. This circumvented another 'problem' of language: not all humans speak the same one, making communication between some individuals difficult, if not impossible.

This latter 'problem' – overcoming the barriers to cross-cultural communication – was the central focus of nineteenth-century conlangers. This era in conlanging could be seen as the age of the auxlang. Esperanto (developed in 1887) is the most well-known product of this era, but it is hardly the only one. Esperanto was anteceded, for instance, by Volapük in 1879, a language created by German priest Johann Schleyer. An example of Volapük is given in example (4):

Ven	o-lab-ob	moni,	o-giv-ob	buk-is	son-e.
when	FUT-have-1SG	money	FUT-give-1SG	book-ACC.PL	son-DAT.SG

'I shall give the son books when I have money.' (4)

(Post, 1890: 12)

Both Esperanto and Volapük were constructed on similar principles: they include elements of pre-existing languages (although the languages are exclusively European in origin) to make the language-learning process easier.

Overcoming the cross-cultural barrier was also behind the invention of Solresol in 1827 by Frenchman Jean-François Sudre. However, instead of taking words from various European languages, Solresol is grounded in the idea that music is literally the universal language. Thus the basic units of sound system of Solresol are the seven pitches of the Western diatonic scale (referred to by their names in French). An example of Solresol is given in example (5):

dore	mifala	dosifare	re	dosiresi.
1SG	desire	beer	and	pastry

'I want some beer and a pastry.' (5)

(Gajewski, 1902)

While the twentieth century saw some continuation of the age of auxlangs, several new strands of conlanging appeared. One was a return to engelanging, in light of several new ideas about the nature of language. Both Loglan in 1955, and its offspring Lojban in 1987, were part of this trend. Loglan was expressively invented to test the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis – that is, the view that the structure of a language limits, or at least affects, the worldviews or cognitive processes of its speakers – but both of these engelangs also 'borrowed' ideas or concerns from several other previous eras of conlanging: a basis in predicate logic or a mathematical system (akin to the seventeenth-century conlangs); and using various pre-existing languages as a lexical source (akin to nineteenth-century conlangs). However, Lojban did cast a considerably wider cross-linguistic net than any nineteenth-century auxlang, including the non-European Arabic, Hindi, and Chinese as part of the collection of its models. An example of Lojban is given in example (6):

ci	lo	nanmu	cu	bevri	le	pipno.
three	DISTR.ART	men	PRED.MKR	carry	DEF.ART	piano

'Each of the three men carried the piano.' (6)

(Turner & Nicholas, 2002: 45)

Furthermore, Loglan was by no means the only twentieth-century conlang to consider the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis: Suzette Hagen Elgin's (1982) Láadan was also influenced by the promise of testing the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, even while not including any other design principles found in Loglan or Lojban.

The other significant twentieth-century development is most well known from the work of J. R. R. Tolkien. A prolific conlanger, Tolkien was influenced by his philological interests (or perhaps it was the other way around), and thus devised whole sets of different historical sound changes in his languages and traced the etymologies of his words back to their

original source. Thus Tolkien seems to have pioneered the application of ideas from the academic study of language to conlanging in an era (the first three decades of the twentieth century) during which that was not so common. His conlanging work also was very much art for art's sake: his languages carried no promise of expressing thought clearly (or at least no more clearly than natural languages) and no promise of solving any sort of communication problem. These attitudes, however inexplicit, coupled with the widespread popularity that Tolkien achieved through his novels, seem to have allowed the artlang to come into its own as a conlang form – although the artlang may have been headed in that direction anyway: linguist M. A. R. Barker's collection of languages (most notably, Tsolyáni), created apparently independently of Tolkien, share many properties with Tolkien's work. Barker's languages were also art for art's sake, used natural languages as a model, and, in fact, were developed for an external source: an early role-playing game, *The Empire of the Petal Throne*. The rise of the artlang, regardless of its precise historical origins, leads directly to some of the more recent developments in conlanging, to which I now turn.

Current contributions

Constructed languages in popular culture

Over the last few decades of the twentieth century and especially in the first few years of the twenty-first century, the salience of conlangs in Western popular culture has reached its highest levels ever (even if these are not particularly high). The trend began in the early 1980s with the invention of Klingon for the *Star Trek* universe. Fan interest led to the publication of some Klingon language instruction material, as well as, ultimately, several texts in Klingon, including a translation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (Nicholas & Strader, 2000), and the formation of the Klingon Language Institute, an organisation that brings together people interested in the Klingon language, for whatever reason. One fan reportedly even tried to raise his child as a native Klingon speaker.

The use of conlangs in fictional works has increased further in the twenty-first century. This was first seen in film. The release of Peter Jackson's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy (2001–03) reawakened awareness of Tolkien's Sindarin and Quenya. These films also saw new additions to the Sindarin and Quenya corpora, as linguist David Salo provided some new lines in the Elvish languages that were not in the Tolkien original. The trend continued in the latter part of that same decade. The film *Avatar* (2009) included the language Na'vi, created by University of Southern California Professor Paul Frommer, as a language employed by the aliens central to the plot of the film. An example of Na'vi is given in example (7):

Mì	na'ring	po	terian	a krr,	tsole'a	nantangit.
in	forest	3SG	IPFV.walk	while	PFV.see	viperwolf.PAT

'When he was walking in the forest, he saw a viperwolf.' (7)

(Learn Na'vi, 2012)

The use of conlangs in fictional worlds also began to play a significant role in television shows in the first part of the 2010s, although earlier shows had included conlangs as part of their story-telling: *The Land of the Lost* (1974–76), using Pakuni, created by linguist Victoria Fromkin; and *Dark Skies* (1996–97), using Thhtmaa, created by linguist Matt Pearson. The HBO series *Game of Thrones*, which premiered in 2011, has included the languages

of Dothraki and High Valyrian, both created by David Peterson. Dothraki is spoken by a cultural group distinct from that of most of the main characters in the show. An example of Dothraki is given in example (8):

Shireak-i	gor-i		ha	yeraan
star-PL	charge-PRES.3PL		for	2SG.ALL

'Good luck' (literally 'The stars are charging for you') (8)

(Peterson, 2014: 27)

Materials for learning Dothraki have been published in Peterson (2014). High Valyrian, in contrast to Dothraki, is employed as a dead language of cultural import within the *Game of Thrones* universe.

The Syfy series *Defiance*, which premiered in 2013, has also featured languages designed by David Peterson: Castithan, Irathient, and Indojisnen. Each of these languages is spoken by extraterrestial species that are on Earth within the context of the story.

While I am aware of no systematic studies to back this up, it is very likely that the increased visibility of conlangs in television and film has inspired an increasing number of people to engage in the activity of conlanging compared with previously, when constructed languages were not nearly as visible.

Recent changes within the conlanging community

During roughly the same time as the rise of conlangs in popular culture (although perhaps starting a bit later, in the 1990s), interactions between members of the conlanging community were revolutionised. Conlanging has been (and in many ways still is) a very solitary activity: individuals have generally worked alone to create words, decide on grammatical properties, and (if they so choose) otherwise flesh out the philosophical and/or cultural underpinnings to their language. Once created, most conlangs have a speech community of or near to only one. Given the solitary nature of conlanging, it is not surprising that, until recently, most conlangers had never actually met in person, or otherwise known, any other conlangers. This changed with the rise of the Internet. The earliest established means of online conlanger interconnection was the The Conlang Mailing List, an email mailing list that started in the early 1990s. This forum gave conlangers from all sorts of disparate locations the chance to interact with each other. Discussion ranging from presenting new projects, through philosophical discussion of conlanging, to threads about specific natural or constructed languages became common on this list. The Conlang Mailing List also prompted the creation of a new conlang-related game: the Conlang Relay. A relay amounts to a game of Telephone played via conlangs, with the original message being obscured by the successive different grammars of the participant conlangs (as well as errors in translation). More than twenty relays have been conducted since the first one in 1999.

As the years have gone by, other online forums have come into being, broadly functioning in the same fashion as The Conlang Mailing List, including several bulletin boards – most notably, the Zompist Bulletin Board (ZBB) – as well as numerous groups on social media. Paradoxically enough, these electronic outlets seem actually to have led to more in-person meetings between conlangers. These outlets have provided a means for discovering who else is interested in the activity; once a subset of individuals discover that they live in close proximity to each other, it becomes much more feasible to meet in person. In this vein, an

event known as the Language Creation Conference (LCC) has emerged as the largest and most regular conlanging gathering. First held in 2006, the LCC has become a biennial event at which conlangers and other interested parties can get together to discuss intellectual issues related to conlanging, as well as to celebrate the activity. To date, it has been held in several different locales in the United States and has also been held in the Netherlands.

Critical issues and creative methodologies

Confronting conlangers at the outset of their creation is the whole of phonology (or orthography, if the language is solely to be written), morphology, lexicon, syntax, and semantics: creating all of this for a language is a significant task. How have conlangers approached it? Conlangers, of course, can – and do – choose whatever approach they want, but still creation is rarely random. Crucial to providing conlangers with a framework for their creation is the presence – acknowledged or not – of what I will call a *conceit*. A conceit could be conceived of as a statement about the intended milieu or utility of the language. In fact, the classification system mentioned in the first section ties closely with this concept of conceit: that classification system is organised by what could be considered 'conceit group'. However, a conceit for a given conlang is typically more specific than the categories in the classification system presented at the outset of this chapter might indicate. For instance, Klingon's conceit probably would not be 'a language for a fictional television/film franchise', but rather 'a language for a race of aggressive, militaristic, barbaric alien bad guys with ridged foreheads, dwelling within the *Star Trek* universe'. Conceits, however, do not exhaustively determine all aspects of a conlang's creation; rather, they can provide some parameters to make the creation process more manageable. Much of their usefulness becomes apparent when one considers some of the creation strategies employed by conlangers.

Strategies for creating languages

If conceits provide only some boundary conditions on language creation, how is the rest of it accomplished? In my experience as a conlanger, as well as an observer of fellow conlangers, it seems that most creation of grammar (that is, phonological rules, morphological rules, syntactic rules, and rules governing the interpretations of words and phrases) follows one (or more) of the following four creation strategies.

1. Use one's own intuitions or personal preferences about language structure.
2. Use structures that are modelled on one or more pre-existing languages.
3. Use structures that seem to, or are known to, be easily learnable.
4. Use structures dictated by a pre-existing theory of language or a pre-existing conception (perhaps one's own) of the language.

Let me detail these strategies to a greater extent, additionally noting where, within the conlanging world, each has been most frequently used.

The *use of one's own intuitions or preferences* is very much in keeping with the activity of inventing a language: conlangers are in control of their own languages. Furthermore, the use of intuitions is a very useful 'shortcut': the totality of any language is enormous, but because all conlangers already use at least one language, they can rely on their previous experiences with that language to reduce the enormity and therefore make creation a bit more feasible. When used in moderation, the use of one's intuitions is unproblematic, but

overreliance on one's intuitions could be dangerously self-limiting. The logical extreme of overreliance on familiar structures is known in the conlanging community as a 'relex' (short for a 'relexification'): a recreation of the conlanger's native language with different words. More seasoned language creators generally look down upon efforts that are clearly relexes, although they are harmless as pedagogical tools. (They seem to me to occupy a status similar to recopying previously written music, which could be a useful learning tool, but is certainly not music composition.) While there is nothing inherently wrong with using familiar structures in one's own conlang, it seems better to use them through deliberate choice rather than to have them appear accidentally. And, arguably, if the inclusion of a particular structure is a deliberate choice, preferences – and not mere intuitions – are being employed. By 'preferences', I refer to aspects of language structure that a given conlanger finds in some way aesthetically pleasing. The source of these aesthetic judgements remains, presently, a bit of a mystery. All conlangers (and, in fact, maybe all students of language) have particular structures that they find appealing, but the specific preferences are not necessarily uniform across conlangers. Furthermore, I strongly suspect that individuals cannot consciously articulate why they prefer particular structures. I, for one, do not know why I really like second-position clitic subject pronouns, but it is clear that I think that they are a neat linguistic structure. The source of personal preferences notwithstanding, I would surmise that the inclusion of personal favourites is a very common trait among all conlangers and is found with all sorts of conlangs, regardless of whether the inclusion is deliberate or not and of whether the conlang is a personal language or not. Yet this strategy is likely to be raised to the highest level of importance if one's conceit involves the creation of a personal language: how could a conlang be considered a personal language if it did not include a large selection of the creator's own personal favourites?

The second strategy of *modelling structures on pre-existing languages* has some functional similarity to the strategy of using one's own intuitions: by piggybacking on an actual language (or more), the conlanger can circumvent some of the obstacles to learning what a language is (which is essential for creating a new language). Given this plus and the ubiquity of models available to any conlanger, it is likely that this strategy also is used to a degree by every conlanger. However, this strategy is perhaps most prized (and employed to the greatest extent) by that class of conlangers which wants to create realistic, naturalistic conlangs. Akin to adherents to realism in visual arts, these realist conlangers seek to faithfully create (or perhaps 'recreate' would be more apt) a language truthfully, complete with all known general language properties, as well as with language-specific peculiarities. As with the visual arts, achieving a high degree of realism requires a high level of expertise. In the domain of conlangs, this expertise might include familiarity with details and inner workings of several different languages, coupled with a sense of the limits and commonalities in variation across all languages. As a practising conlanging realist myself, whenever I develop or rework a particular area of grammar, I research the known possibilities in that area within natural languages. This is not only to get ideas, but also to try to achieve an insight into the cross-linguistic commonality of various options, or try to determine other implicational relationships involving the immediate choice and other areas of the language. Overall, these research forays are to ensure that the new feature is as plausible as possible, within my language and across languages. Consequently, this kind of realism involves great depth of knowledge and attention to detail, much as a realist sculptor has to attend to each stroke of the chisel to make a piece look realistic. The level of depth involved all but ensures that only some conlangers will pursue this strategy to its greatest extents. Nevertheless, consciously or unconsciously using pre-existing languages as a model for

some portion of the language creation process is likely widespread, even if in-depth use of natural languages as models is restricted to the set of naturalistic conlangers.

The third strategy involves *using structures that seem to be, or actually are, easy to learn*. This represents a different approach from the first two strategies – but its appearance is not surprising, given that all conlangs start out as languages without first-language learners: why not include structures that might more easily allow learners (including, perhaps most importantly, the creator) to pick up the language? In spite of the potential for widespread use, this strategy seems to be most favoured by auxlangers. In fact, auxlang creators often laud their creation's (supposed) ease of learnability as a selling point in favour of adopting it. Indeed, 'supposed' reflects a key aspect of how this strategy has generally been incorporated into conlanging: learnability arguments given by the auxlangers do not go beyond mere assertion that their language is quite easy to learn (albeit that being able to prove that a language is easily learnable is, ironically enough, not easy). Furthermore, those who make these kinds of arguments do not seem to take into account the fact that ease of learning one language can be a function of the learner's native language, as well as other languages to which he or she may have been exposed. Nevertheless, there do seem to be languages that could provide apt points of comparison for auxlangers' creations: creoles and pidgins. These languages, especially the latter class, appear to have some structural simplifications that allow for ease of learning. Yet most auxlangers seem to be unaware of the similarities between their creations and pidgins/creoles; consequently, connections between auxlangs and these contact-induced languages have hitherto not been made. Moreover, as tailor-made as the strategy of using 'easy' structures might be for auxlangs, not all conceits or aesthetics are amenable to it. In fact, this strategy seems to be rather antithetical to the naturalistic realist approach, which looks to create a conlang with peculiarities rather than a conlang that (necessarily) is easy to learn.

Finally, conlangers have employed a fourth strategy: *using a pre-existing theory or conception of how language in general works* to guide their creation. Like several of the other strategies, this strategy is probably utilised to a certain extent by all conlangers: every conlang represents an answer to the question 'What is a possible language?', and so every conlang embodies particular theoretical views on how languages work. In fact, using one's intuitions about how languages work in one's own conlanging (the first strategy discussed above) is to work within one's conception of language, so, in some instances, this fourth strategy is indistinct from (some part of) the first. But when one considers how this strategy is used by a certain strand of conlangers – engelangers – differences do emerge. As noted at the outset of this chapter, engelangs, by their very nature, deal squarely with foundational ideas about the nature of language. So, to successfully create an engelang, one must be very aware of the nature of one's conceit and how that might interact with the language's design. For example, if the goal is to create 'the totally unambiguous language', the conlanger must have a good handle on what the nature of ambiguity in language is and how this issue is to be circumvented or otherwise resolved. Like realist conlanging, engelanging also requires a high level of expertise in the areas that engelang is manipulating, and for this reason may not be appealing (or useful) to particular other subclasses of conlangers.

Nevertheless, the strategy of using pre-existing notions can be useful in creating para-fictional languages too. Most (fictional) speakers of parafictional conlangs have a (quasi-)symbolic purpose within their work or, at the very least, are intended to evoke some ideas about language in general or about speakers of particular languages. Although not the same sort of conception with which engelangers work, these 'literary' preconceptions can be

employed in determining various facets of a parafictional language. Marc Okrand's Klingon illustrates the possibilities. Klingons, within their fictional universe, are supposed to be aggressive, militaristic, and barbaric, as well as other-worldly; Okrand produced a language that thoroughly fits an English speaker's stereotype of a language spoken by individuals with these properties. This is most evident in Klingon's phonetics and phonology, wherein the presence of certain sound classes and syllable structure contribute to the effect.

Given in examples (9) and (10) are two Klingon sentences, both in Klingon romanisation and in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA):

DIHIvpu'   SutlhtaHvIS   chaH.
[dɪxɪvpʰuʔ ʂutɬtʰɑxviʂ   tʃɑx]
'While they were negotiating, we attacked them.' (repeats example (2))   (9)

He   chu'   yIghoS
[xɛ   tʃuʔ   jɪɣoʂ]
'Follow a new course.'   (10)

(Okrand, 1992: 72)

The consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) syllables, tense vowels, and occasional glottal stops combine to yield a certain clipped sound that fits in with the aggressive, militaristic, and barbaric mould. The dorsal sounds (both velar and uvular, although the latter is not evident in examples (9) and (10)) also contribute to providing the 'guttural sounds' that such a language would surely have. The retroflex sounds and lateral affricates, then, add in a 'not from around here' quality also essential to Klingon. The net effects of choosing these kinds of sounds is that, first, Klingon has a distinct sound, and second, playing into these stereotypes makes the decisions about what sounds to include in a given language a less arbitrary exercise.

As this discussion has tried to indicate, a particular conceit and the strategies that a particular conlanger employs are, in principle, distinct and conlangers may find it useful to utilise any or all of the strategies. However, especially as the Klingon example shows, one function of the conceit can be to prioritise strategies. If a conlanger is trying to create a conlang that is 'a language used in between nationalities on an alien planet', gravitating towards including simpler structures might be more warranted than it is for a conlang intended for 'personal journal entries'. Thus the conceit of a language and the strategies can be seen as working together to allow the creator to realise the conlang.

Creating the lexicon

While the foregoing discussion has largely been focused on grammatical structure, there is also the lexicon – that is, the collection of items that provide the basic mappings between forms and meanings – to consider. In the creation of a conlang's lexicon, the conceit can take a more active role. While modern linguistics has gathered a wealth of data that suggest that the milieu of a given language does not strongly interact with the nature of its grammatical system, it does seem that these factors do play a larger role in the nature of the lexicon. Thus a conceit of 'nomadic horse-riders of the steppe' might preclude the language having an ordinary fixed expression for 'television'. Likewise, the conceit of 'the totally unambiguous language' might entail that a language have a very large lexicon.

Regardless of conceit, though, the lexicon of most conlangs is likely to be of a similar size to that of natural languages: quite large. The creation of the lexicon is, then, quite a daunting task of its own – one that requires some creativity to even start the process. While there is no single, easy, ready-made 'shortcut', some creative lexicon-creation aids have emerged. A basic starting point is a 'Swadesh list' (Swadesh, 1952, 1955; see also Gudschinsky, 1956). Although the 'list' actually comprises *several* lists of varying size and was originally designed to explore genetic relationships, one of the lists (and it does not matter which) can be repurposed as a tool for creating a basic set of vocabulary: conlangers could create roots for all of the items on that list (or use the list to come up with more appropriate roots to be created). This process could be repeated with other available lists, even such as those given as aids in foreign-language textbooks.

There is also a tradition, within the conlanging community, of forcing necessity to be the mother of invention, in terms of creating lexical items. Trying to create texts in a conlang is one way in which the necessary necessity has been induced. (Creating such texts also has the added benefit of acting as a testing ground for grammatical structures.) The Tower of Babel story from the Book of Genesis is one text that many conlangers have translated, in part because of the irony involved with the outcome of the story versus the addition of a new conlang to the world. But some conlangers have taken this to an even higher level, composing lots of original texts in their language. Some even go as far as writing personal journal entries in their language – the conlang providing a line of security against any would-be readers. Another way in which lexical creation has been pursued is through word-a-day invention activities. An exemplar of this practice is Lexember, whereby a word is created for each day of December. The event, which includes posting the new word to social media, also provides conlangers and conlang aficionados a space in which to celebrate language creation.

Conlanging as art?

As the discussion in this chapter indicates, the creative process involved with conlanging has some similarities with other artistic pursuits, such as creative writing, production of visual artwork, and music composition (and, in fact, many conlangers also engage in some or all of these pursuits in addition to their conlanging). This raises the question of whether or not conlanging should be considered an art. While providing anything close to a definitive answer is outside the scope of this chapter, it is interesting to note some of the interesting differences that conlanging has from these other 'tried and true' artistic pursuits.

Conlanging differs most notably from the 'tried and true' artistic pursuits in that it seems to lack an obvious, ready-made consumable product. While books, films, plays, paintings, artwork, and albums are produced to showcase (or, to the more economically minded, sell) creative writing, the visual arts, or music, respectively, it is not entirely clear what the consumable version of a conlang should be. This is undoubtedly related to the fact that creating a constructed language is an extremely open-ended project. It is not at all clear what constitutes a complete language, and in fact a particular conlanging project can go on for years without an identifiable end point. Of course, grammars, dictionaries, and teach-yourself books have been produced, suggesting that these might be considered the consumable products of conlanging, but these items themselves give rise to another impediment to the appreciation of conlanging as an art: they, in fact, require a certain amount of specialised knowledge to be

consumed – namely, what language is. Consequently, these materials do not offer an easy point of entry on a par with music, artwork, or films, which can be experienced more readily and then interpreted by the average person. So, even if conlanging is to be considered an art, it seems as though it must be regarded as a niche creative endeavour, since its consumption is not straightforward, both in terms of the kind of end product expected and the consuming public's ability to consume any such end product.

Future directions

Because the scholarly study of constructed languages is still in its infancy, many avenues of inquiry surrounding these languages are still to be explored. For linguists interested in the limits of language structure and what sorts of constraints the mind might impose on that structure, conlangs have the potential to provide some new and interesting data on the subject. While conlangs are unquestionably much more conscious creations than are natural languages, they are still languages. Furthermore, several conlangs have been created with the explicit conceit of being alien languages (Klingon and Na'vi being two well-known examples). Impressionistically, even these 'alien' languages seem to have a human language quality to them, raising the question of whether language creators can escape their own cognitive capabilities and biases in their creations. By exploring this and related questions, perhaps conlangs, too, can provide some insight into the faculty or faculties that underlie language.

For the more sociolinguistically minded, there are other numerous underexplored areas. While some demographic and social data has been collected by conlanger Sally Caves via informal surveys on The Conlang Mailing List and some ethnographic data on the conlanging community is provided by Okrent (2009), even a fundamental question of precisely who conlangs are and where they live is not very well understood. Further questions, such as whether conlanging affects how certain individuals establish their social/linguistic identity, whether it produces, or is produced with, certain language attitudes, or otherwise interacts with creation or maintenance of certain speech communities, are also presently underexplored. Some of the essays in Adams (2011) offer an introduction to understanding these questions, although more work remains to be done.

For scholars interested more squarely in creativity, constructed languages offer yet another area in which creative practice could be examined. As noted throughout this chapter, conlangs have several unique characteristics that distinguish them from other artistic endeavours; thus conlanging projects bring out some unique creative choices and processes (as well as some familiar ones). The ideas presented represent some preliminary views about understanding how the conlanging creative process works; doubtlessly, future work could add to, challenge, or refine these understandings.

Within the domain of conlangs themselves, the most intriguing area to watch in the future will be the use of parafictional languages in media. Having become more common in the last ten or fifteen years, it remains to be seen whether the conlanging trend will persist and become a staple of productions (at least in certain genres), or whether it will prove to be only a passing fad. It is conceivable that the way in which this pop culture aspect unfolds could very well influence the amount and rate of the study of conlangs academically. Furthermore, the use of conlangs seems to be restricted, at the present, to work within the science fiction or fantasy genres. Whether conlanging will ever be employed in other genres is also something to watch in the future.

However, the fact that some of the recent uses of conlangs in the media have occurred in fairly high-profile venues certainly seems to have raised awareness of conlanging activity. So even if the overall presence of conlangs in the media were to decrease, we might hope that this awareness will allow the activity of conlanging to escape permanently the obscurity within which it has historically lingered.

Related topics

everyday language creativity; lexical creativity

Further reading

Adams, M. (ed.) (2011) *From Elvish to Klingon: Exploring Invented Languages*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

This collection of papers includes discussions of several well-known conlangs, including Tolkien's languages, Esperanto, and Klingon.

Higley, S. L. (2000) 'Audience, uglossia, and CONLANG: Inventing languages on the Internet', *M/C: A Journal of Media and Culture*, 3(1). Available online at http://journal.media-culture.org.au/0003/languages.php [accessed 31 October 2014].

This article looks at the role of the Internet in creating new conlanging communities and as a means of 'publishing' a conlang.

Okrent, A. (2009) *In the Land of Invented Languages: Esperanto Rock Stars, Klingon Poets, Loglan Lovers, and the Mad Dreamers Who Tried to Build a Perfect Language*, New York: Spiegel & Grau.

This book offers one of the most in-depth explorations of conlanging to date, covering the history of conlanging, as well as the author's own experiences with the Esperanto, Klingon, and Loglan communities.

Rosenfelder, M. (2010) *The Language Construction Kit*, Chicago, IL: Yonagu Books.

A book-length version of part of the author's website, this book provides a framework and ideas for creating one's own language.

Tolkien, J. R. R. (1983 [1931]) 'A secret vice', in C. Tolkien (ed.) *The Monsters, Critics, and Other Essays*, Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, pp. 198–223.

This essay details Tolkien's personal conlanging history, as well as his thoughts on how the activity of conlanging might be approached.

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Creativity and interdiscursive performance in professional communication

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Vijay K. Bhatia

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Introduction

Jones (2012: 1) very aptly asks: 'Does creativity reside in texts . . . or does it reside in people?' He continues:

> Most studies in the humanities, in literary and art criticism, have taken an almost exclusively *product* based approach to creativity . . . While some have sought to contextualize creative works in their social or historical contexts or to glean from them evidence of the workings of the artist's mind, the starting point has nearly always been the text.
>
> *(Jones, 2012: 1)*

In professional communication, however, creativity is as much a function of the *use* of textual resources as it is of the mindset of the producers of such texts. Therefore it is crucial to investigate both text-internal, as well as text-external, resources that make any instance of professional discourse sociopragmatically successful. Textual resources include lexico-grammar, semantic, and rhetorical, as well as discoursal, many of which are often intertextually appropriated, whereas text-external resources refer to the management, manipulation, or exploitation of a number of contextual generic resources that are interdiscursively appropriated by the expert members of professional and disciplinary discourse communities. There has been substantial published work on the appropriation of text-internal resources in discourse and genre literature (see, for example, Bhatia, 1993, 1995, 1997, 2004; Fairclough, 1993, 1995; Swales, 1990, 1998); however, relatively little attention has been devoted to the creative exploitation of contextual and other text-external resources – in particular, the innovative use of sociopragmatic space (Bhatia, 2004, 2010a) available to a writer in professional contexts. The most obvious examples include not only the appropriation, management, or manipulation of interdiscursive space in corporate disclosure practices whereby the corporate communicators cleverly manipulate various forms of discourses in the same document to further their business interests, but also the participatory mechanism, as in legislative provisions, to address different stakeholders, such as legislators, members of the judiciary, and executive members of the government, who implement these provisions, and, of course, the general public, who are governed by such provisions.

I have discussed elsewhere some aspects of appropriation of such resources (both text-internal, as well as text-external) in corporate disclosure reports (Bhatia, 2008) to achieve their corporate objectives, as well as their 'private intentions', and also in international commercial arbitration contexts leading to the interdiscursive colonisation of arbitration practices by litigation practices (Bhatia, 2012). In this chapter, I would like to take the argument further by claiming that, often, this kind of appropriation is meant to achieve interdiscursive creativity in the authors' writing, which essentially helps them to give effect to relatively novel forms of generic constructs in response to not-so-conventional situational contexts. However, before considering this aspect of creativity in professional discourse, I would like to give a brief account of the nature and function of 'intertextuality' and 'interdiscursivity' in professional discourse, which, within the framework of critical genre theory, I view as interdiscursive performance (Bhatia, forthcoming).

We can begin by assuming that *intertextuality* refers to the use of prior texts transforming the past into the present (Bakhtin, 1986; Foucault, 1981; Kristeva, 1980). *Interdiscursivity*, on the other hand, refers to more innovative attempts to create various forms of hybrid and relatively novel genres by appropriating or exploiting established conventions or discoursal resources associated with other genres and professional practices. Interdiscursivity thus accounts for a variety of discursive and professional practices, often resulting in 'mixing', 'embedding', and 'bending' of generic norms in specialised contexts (Bhatia, 1995, 1997, 2004). Interdiscursivity thus can be viewed as appropriation of semiotic resources (which may include textual, semantic, sociopragmatic, and generic) across any two or more levels of discourse realisation – especially, those of genre, professional practice, and disciplinary or institutional cultures (see Bhatia, 2010a, for a detailed account). Appropriations across texts thus give rise to intertextual relations, whereas appropriations across professional genres, practices, and cultures constitute interdiscursive relations.

Creativity in professional communication

One of the most obvious professional genres in today's world displaying creativity is the advertising genre, which displays a variety of linguistic and other semiotic strategies to achieve its typical communicative objectives by appropriating text-internal, as well as text-external, resources. The sheer pervasiveness of this genre in our social life leads Featherstone (1991) to identify the world of work in terms of what he calls 'promotional culture', in which one finds most of the institutionalised genres, whether they are social, professional, or academic, incorporating at least some elements of promotion. Fairclough (1992: 207) associates some of these discursive processes with what he calls 'commodification' of institutional orders of discourse. Referring to such strategies in discourse practices, he points out that:

> There is an extensive restructuring of boundaries between orders of discourse and between discursive practices; for example, the genre of consumer advertising has been colonizing professional and public service orders of discourse on a massive scale, generating many new hybrid partly promotional genres.
>
> *(Fairclough, 1993: 141)*

One of the most interesting aspects of such restructuring of discourse boundaries is that, more often than not, such restructuring can be viewed as a key interdiscursive resource for creativity, which, I would like to claim, is primarily responsible for the versatility in genre construction in professional discourses.

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Let me give a brief account of what I consider crucial for interpreting interdiscursivity as appropriation of generic resources. As I pointed out earlier (Bhatia, 2010a), interdiscursivity refers to the appropriation of the text-external generic resources, which are primarily of three kinds, that make a particular genre possible (Bhatia, 2004):'discursive practices'; 'discursive procedures'; and different manifestations of 'professional cultures and identities', including professional, organisational, institutional, and disciplinary, as well as ethnic and national identities, to name a few.

Discursive practices, on the one hand, are essentially the outcome of specific discursive procedures; on the other hand, they are embedded in specific institutional cultures, and realise various forms of identities – professional and institutional, as well as individual. Discursive practices also include factors such as the choice of a particular genre to achieve a specific objective, and a set of appropriate and effective modes of communication associated with a specific genre. Discursive procedures are related to factors associated with the characteristics of participants who are authorised to make a valid and appropriate contribution, and include *participatory mechanisms*, which determine what kind of contribution a particular participant is allowed to make and at what stage of the genre construction process, and the other *contributing genres* that have a valid and justifiable input to the document under construction. Both of these factors, discursive practices and discursive procedures, inevitably take place within the context of typical disciplinary, institutional, and professional cultures, which validate a particular genre and establish sociocultural identities.

It is important to note here that interdiscursivity functions essentially across discursive events and is often based on shared generic or contextual characteristics across two or more discursive constructs; hence some understanding of these shared features is a necessary condition to an adequate understanding of the new construct. Although interdiscursivity has been viewed as a function of *appropriation of generic resources* across various kinds of contextual boundaries and across genres, such as professional practices, professional identities, and cultures (see, for details, Bhatia, 2004, 2010a, 2012), in addition to these forms of appropriation it is also necessary to identify at least two other forms of management of discursive resources: the management and manipulation of 'discursive space' (Bhatia, 2014); and the exploitation of available 'participant management systems' (Bhatia, 2010b) to meet professionally shared expectations and objectives, often by mixing 'private intentions' and 'shared objectives', on the one hand, and meeting and invariably exploiting the expectations of multiple audiences, on the other. It may also be pointed out that often these appropriations, whether text-internal or text-external, discursively operate simultaneously to realise the intended meaning and are often achieved through the rhetorical processes of 'recontextualisation', 'reformulation', 'reframing', or 'resemiotisation'. The full range of appropriations can be represented as in Figure 9.1.

Interdiscursivity, as discussed here, is thus an important function of how members of professional communities participating in a specific discursive act – or, more appropriately, genre – assume a variety of different roles to give expression to their discursive actions. Consider a typical doctor–patient consultation, in which different discourses are interdiscursively mixed to produce a hybrid of different discourses, consisting of the patient's narration of symptoms, the doctor's diagnostic response to symptoms leading to prescription of drugs, often including a set of instructions for the nurse, and then the pharmacist's attempt to turn prescription to medication (Jones, 2013). It may also include the doctor's advice and instructions, often incorporating reassurance about the patient's condition, all of them within the same sociopragmatic space. Thus, in addition to the role of a specialist, collaborator, and mediator, the doctor also needs to facilitate mutual
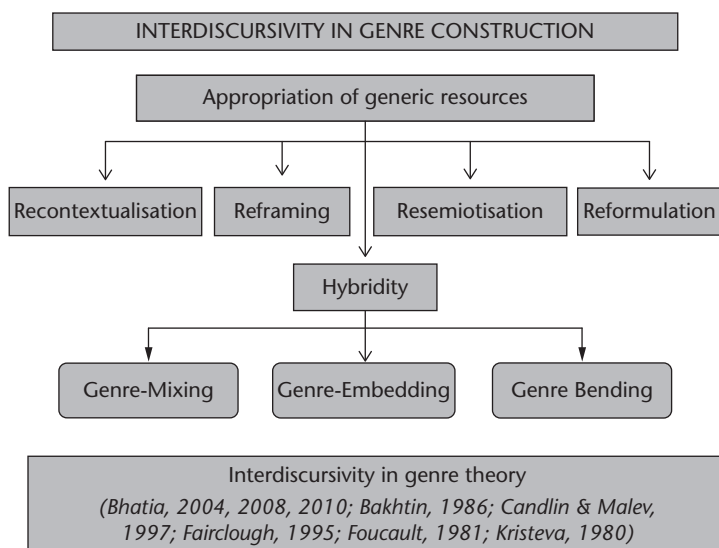
Figure 9.1 Interdiscursivity in professional genres

Source: Adapted from Bhatia (2012: 25)

understanding across different levels of specialist knowledge and understanding, convince the patient about his or her diagnostic conclusions, motivate and promote different treatment options, and reassure the patient about continued treatment. Candlin and Maley (1997), in a somewhat similar context, discuss the interdiscursive relations between bargaining, counselling, therapeutic, and legal genres in their study of mediation practice in Australia, thus claiming that interdiscursive use of different professional practices represents an attempt to incorporate strategies from related professional contexts.

Similarly, in the context of legislative drafting, a parliamentary counsel or draftsman invariably needs to manage a participation management system of a complexity that is rarely found in any other form of professional discourse (Bhatia, 2010b: 7). A draftsman not only has to satisfy the legislative assembly or council (which has the political power to make legislation as and when required), the judiciary (which has the power of ultimate authoritative interpretation), and the executive body (which is responsible for the implementation of all of the judicial decisions), but also, and more importantly, must show loyalty to the ordinary citizens of the state, who are the ultimate recipients of legislation. This creates an extremely complex and dynamic system of participation in this typical legal genre, and the parliamentary counsel must manage and manipulate this system to satisfy all of the participants.

This brief review indicates that the appropriation of intertextual and interdiscursive resources, whether linguistic or semiotic, as well as genre conventions at various levels of discursive engagement, are creatively exploited for the construction and interpretation of discursive, as well as social, professional, disciplinary, and institutional practices, and by doing so they tend to encourage interesting and creative patterns of intertextuality and interdiscursivity.

Let me give more substance to my argument by considering specific instances of interdiscursive creativity from different professional contexts.

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Interdiscursive creativity in corporate disclosure genres

In order to illustrate how interdiscursive appropriation of discoursal boundaries is exploited to achieve 'private intentions' within the context of socially shared conventions or expectations, I would like to consider the case of corporate disclosure documents. The focus will not be on what the companies disclose or do not disclose in a particular year, but more importantly on the hidden intentions and motivations as part of their professional practices, which demonstrate the creative use of the sociopragmatic space (Bhatia, 2004) generally available within the broader interpretation of the corporate annual report as a genre. I will also show how corporate writers persuade and convince their stakeholders, including minority shareholders, to accept their perceptions and projections about the future performance of the company in question.

Corporate annual reports have long been considered the pulse of corporate realities. Their main purpose is to inform the company's shareholders about its performance and health: specifically, its successes and failures, current problems, and prospects for its future development. However, corporate annual reports and other disclosure documents seem to be changing in their function from 'informing and reporting' to, increasingly, 'promoting' the companies by a strategic underplaying of corporate weaknesses, often 'bending' the norms of corporate disclosure genres. One of the interesting aspects of corporate disclosure practices is that of the corporate annual report, which is typically a combination of at least four different discourses strategically positioned within the same discursive space. Corporate annual reports creatively exploit specific lexico-syntactic, as well as sociopragmatic, resources to 'bend' the norms and conventions of 'reporting' to promote a positive image of the company, even in adverse and challenging economic circumstances. Through these annual reports, the companies often negotiate the tension between the need to underplay a relatively weak corporate performance and to project expectations of good performance, often speculating about the future outlook, especially in contexts in which uncertainties about future economic and corporate growth and performance threaten encouraging prospects in the coming years. In addition, they also need to conform to the legal requirements of disclosure of information for the benefit of corporate stakeholders.

So, essentially, the corporate players make strategic use of four different discourses within the same document:

- *accounting discourse*, which forms a major part of the annual report, duly endorsed and certified by public accountants;
- *financial discourse*, in the form of what is conventionally known as the financial review section of the report;
- *public relations discourse*, in the form of the chairman's letter to shareholders, for which public accounting firms do not take any responsibility; and
- *legal discourse*, which forms a major part of disclaimers, often necessary to comprehend the full implications of the information disclosed in the report.

Obviously, the most important section of the annual report consists of the accounting information, which essentially incorporates numbers displayed in the form of tables, graphs, and calculations of various kinds. These numbers are originally proposed by the corporation, and are then certified by public accountants to be true and honest representations of the profits and losses of the company or corporation in question. The financial discourse, on the other hand, offers a review of the company's performance based on the numbers certified by the public accountants, although not certified by them. It is written by financial managers in

the corporation, who generally offer the corporate view of the performance of the company, apparently on the basis of the information included in the accounting section, to which they often refer, albeit selectively. However, there may not always be any explicit relationship between the two forms of discourse. They are positioned in the same interdiscursive space, perhaps to give the impression that one is a true representation, or at least a reflection, of the other, rather than an authoritative interpretation of the other. This strategic appropriation or manipulation of interdiscursive space is meant to project a positive impression in the minds of various stakeholders.

The third kind of discourse, which most readers can understand, is the chairman's statement, which, in reality, is nothing more than public relations discourse, giving the predictions and projections based on the company performance in the reporting year. Once again, it can be considered at least twice removed from the reality of the accounting discourse, but is generally believed to be based on the certified numbers given elsewhere in the annual report. It is interesting to note that the accounting discourse, which is accessible only to insiders, is strategically appropriated and recontextualised to create the financial discourse, which is relatively more accessible than the former. Since the two are put together and there are frequent references to accounting information, the readers are likely to get the impression that the financial discourse must be a true interpretation of the accounting discourse. However, it is likely that any such 'resemiotisation' (Iedema, 2003) of the accounting information may not necessarily be a consistent and true representation of the statistical information, and may even lead to varying interpretations, but the reader is less likely to question if the two sections share the same discursive space. The financial review therefore is a resemiotisation of a 'convenient selection' of the accounting discourse meant for those corporate stakeholders who do not have either enough expertise or time to understand the full implications of the accounting discourse. There is an expectation that this section of financial discourse will take into account the main features of the annual report, and there is also an expectation that there will be an adequate degree of referential help available for the reader to go through relevant sections of related textual and numerical information.

Let us consider the discourse of public relations, mentioned briefly above. This discourse, of course, is a further resemiotisation of the earlier discourses, and is meant to reassure stakeholders that the performance of the company is reasonably strong and the future seems even better than the past. There are a few references to facts and figures, which form an integral part of the two earlier discourses, and most of the estimations and predictions are based on impressions and hopes of the chairman. The three discourses, which are taken from the same annual report of a public listed company, are placed in a particular order within the discursive space of the same corporate document, co-constructing the intended meaning and serving a rather typical corporate objective of informing stakeholders, as well as public monitoring authorities, about the performance of the company in the preceding year, while at the same time giving a rather positive impression of the company's performance to its shareholders in order not to precipitate an undesirable downward trend in share price movement. The three discourses also vary considerably in terms of the technicality and complexity of information, but the most interesting aspect of such reports is that it is the technically complex accounting discourse that has the maximum amount of credibility, in that it is this discourse that is certified by the public accounting firms. As the discourses become less technical, they become less credible, because they reflect only partially the realities of the certified accounting discourse as they are successively recontextualised.

The three discourses thus tend to serve two very different purposes: the accounting discourse and, to a lesser degree, the financial discourse tend to report accurately, on the

basis of figures and a recontextualised selection of these, the corporate performance in the preceding year; the chairman's letter is meant to promote a positive image of the company to its shareholders in order to sustain their confidence in future corporate performance. All of these discourses are products of very different corporate practices: one centrally located in the conventional and legally required practice of auditing corporate results; the other, an instance of marketing and public relations practice to promote the interest and image of the company. However, the three discourses are strategically placed in the same document, thus establishing an interesting interdiscursive relationship. The real motivation for placing these discourses within the boundaries of the same corporate annual report is that such interdiscursive proximity is likely to lend marketing and public relations discourse the same factual reliability, and hence credibility, that is often presupposed based on the use of numerical data in accounting discourse. The public relations discourse, on its own, is likely to be viewed by the intended audience of shareholders as a promotional effort, but when it is placed in the context of the accounting discourse, it is likely to raise the legitimate presupposition that it may be drawing its conclusions from the accounting numbers, which have been certified by a public authority and accepted by the controlling government agencies. Many of the minority shareholders, the numbers of which have increased considerably in recent years, often lack expertise, and sometimes even the linguistic skills, to fully understand the implications of the accounting or even the financial discourse in the annual report, but when they see the chairman's letter to shareholders in the same report, which is 'assumed' to be based on the accounting data, they are likely to take at least some of the predictions and speculative statements in the letter rather more seriously than otherwise.

Nevertheless, stock exchanges and other public monitoring bodies everywhere have listing rules that contain specific provisions to protect minority shareholders, ensuring that they are given sufficient information through ongoing disclosures to make informed decisions on their investments. Baker & McKenzie, in its April 2002 'Corporate Alert', cites an interesting case from Australia, *GPG (Australia Trading) Pty Ltd v GIO Australia Holdings Ltd* [2001] FCA 1761], in which a shareholder successfully sued GIO for losses for publishing a misleading or deceptive notice in relation to corporate disclosures. Corporations, for their part, guard against any possible (intended or unintended) overestimations, unsupported predictions, or speculative statements in their public relations discourses, and often include yet another form of discourse that is popularly known as the 'legal disclaimer', which essentially disclaims all that is claimed in the annual report. Every claim made in the corporate disclosure documents is systematically disclaimed through typical legal statements along the lines that:

> Words such as 'expect', 'anticipate', 'intend', 'believe', 'estimate', and variations of these words and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements, which are based on current plans, estimates, and projections, and therefore undue reliance should not be placed on them.

A good understanding of this creative manipulation or exploitation of interdiscursivity is essential to fully appreciate and understand how corporate writers creatively 'bend' generic norms and conventions to communicate modest, or weak, corporate performance without undermining investor confidence in their company. By strategically placing public relations discourse within the sociopragmatic space of the accounting discourse, the company encourages the reader to draw positive, and hopefully reliable, implications. This interdiscursive appropriation of discourses across disciplinary boundaries through various forms of recontextualisation can be summarised as in Figure 9.2.
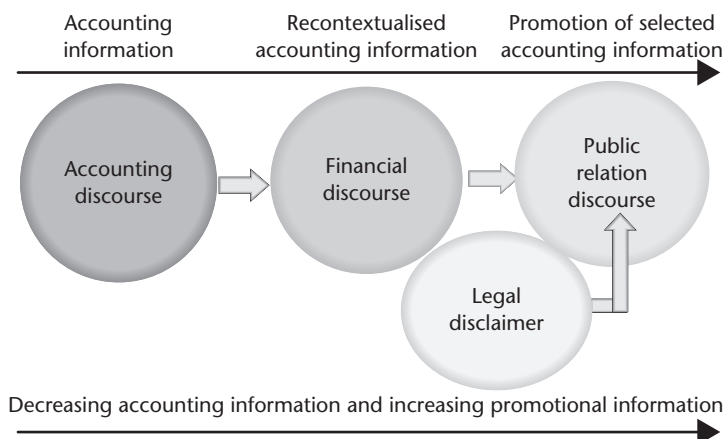
Figure 9.2 Interdiscursive appropriation in corporate annual reports

It is obvious from this discussion that, by using interdiscursivity as a resource with which to understand creativity in corporate and other professional genres and practices, what we are doing is demystifying professional intentions and motivations as part of professional practices – that is, we are attempting to investigate authors' mindsets, as evidenced by their interdiscursive appropriations.

Creativity as genre blending

I would now like to consider one more illustration of a creative manipulation of discursive space in newspaper advertising, often referred to as 'classified advertising'. It is interesting to note that newspapers, to attract advertisements, promote certain themes in the form of what might be close to an advertorial (that is, an advertisement in the form of an editorial), followed by relevant advertisements of products and services on the same page. The advertorials are often embedded in the form of expert opinions, news reports, or reviews of a specific range of products or services, which are invariably exploited to attract specifically relevant and attractive advertisements. Once again, it is the proximity within the discursive space of the newspaper of which these two genres take strategic advantage in fulfilling the 'private intentions' (Bhatia, 2004) of the two participants – that is, the newspaper and the advertising company. A typical classified page from a prominent broadsheet *South China Morning Post* is entitled 'Directory' and can be visually represented as in Figure 9.3.

Each weekday, the first page of the classified section in this newspaper contains a different advertorial relevant to a set of advertisements. The first half of the page contains the advertorial and the second half of the page displays the relevant set of advertisements. It may be that such strategic exploitation of discursive space is simply meant to provide advertisers with more privileged space in which to promote their products or services. For instance, in summer, the theme may be about hobbies and other leisure activities, which are likely to be very much in demand during the approaching holiday time. It will give an informative and almost promotional account of three such service providers, giving necessary details in brief, including the fee, as well as the contact details and the website address. This appears to be much more than a conventional advertorial, almost amounting to mini-advertisements, although focusing on not one, but several service providers at the same time. The structure

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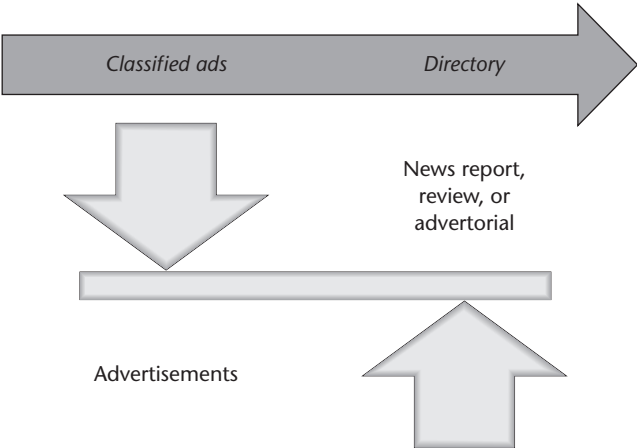
Figure 9.3 Classified directory (*South China Morning Post*)

of each of these accounts is typical of advertisements (Bhatia, 2004), including some of the crucial rhetorical moves, such as 'anticipating the needs of potential customers', 'offering of service', 'essential detailing of the service', 'endorsements', subtle indications of how to 'seek further information', and ending with 'cost and incentives'. Strange though it may seem, but perfectly justifiable in this case, the 'endorsement' is by one of the instructors of the company itself, leaving one to wonder whether it is really an advertorial or a sponsored feature. The rhetorical structures of the other two service providers included there are almost exact repetitions of this one. The first can be illustrated as in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1 Analysis of advertorial in *South China Morning Post* 'Directory'

Structural element	Example
Potential customers' needs	Most primary school students nominate arts and craft as their favourite subject. The sense of freedom and self-expression the subject provides offers a welcome respite from daily demands of school.
Offering services	During the summer holidays there is a wide variety of courses to choose from catering to children's artistic interests.
Endorsements	"Summer time is holiday season, and it's a great time for children to explore different artistic talents away from their normal school studies," says Aidan Wong, an instructor at the Pottery Workshop. "Working with clay, in particular, is a good choice for them to express themselves and create whatever they want."
Soliciting response	The Pottery Workshop (www.potteryworkshop.com.cn) in Central runs a summer holiday workshop on ceramic hand-building techniques. All works made during the course will be functional and artistic.
Details of the service	The programme involves four two-hour sessions for children aged six and above. Classes are held on Tuesday and Thursday mornings throughout July and August.
Costs and incentives	The cost is HK$1,800, including tuition, equipment and materials. However, there are additional costs for firing finished works

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It is interesting to note that the editorial or a sponsored feature – whatever we decide to view it as – is, in fact, a sequence of three mini-advertisements, all with a consistent rhetorical structure of a typical advertisement, with endorsements from specialists who sometimes represent the individual companies in question. It is a bit difficult to say if it is a paid feature, in which case it would be a subtle way of buying advertising space, with the 'voice' of the newspaper promoting the individual products: a very clever and ingenious way of exploiting discursive space in order to express what I have called 'private intentions' within the 'socially accepted communicative purposes' (Bhatia, 1995: 1). 'Advertorial', though a relatively recent form of 'mixed genre' (Bhatia, 2004), has a 'socially accepted communicative purpose' of reviewing a product or service, but in this case it incorporates 'embedded advertisements', thus quite creatively exploiting available discursive space on the top half of the newspaper page.

Creativity as popularisation of disciplinary genres

Another key area of such hybridisation is seen in the creation of popular versions of specialised discourses. Gotti (2014: 22), focusing on popularisation for the purposes of making specialised knowledge accessible to non-specialist readers for information through recontextualisation, makes an interesting point when he claims that an interdiscursively constructed popular version is characterised by its 'lack of discussion . . . of new scientific knowledge added to the discipline's conceptual base'. He attributes this to the lack of shared disciplinary knowledge on the part of lay readers, which is an important factor because the main purpose of such popularised versions is essentially informative. In his view:

> Popularization often involves not only a reformulation of specialized discourse, but also a 'recontextualization' (Calsamiglia and van Dijk 2004: 370) of scientific knowledge originally produced in specific contexts to which the lay public has limited access. This recontextualization implies a process of adaptation of popularization discourse to the appropriateness conditions of the new communicative events and to the constraints of the media employed, which have become quite varied in their nature and are often used in an integrated way.
>
> *(Gotti, 2014: 22)*

Other instances of such popularisations can be found in brochures and leaflets issued by governments for information regarding health policies and guidelines on new legislation, among many other such efforts. Popularisations are therefore by far the most prolific category in which we find large-scale appropriations of disciplinary discourses for information or entertainment purposes in public space. Examples include, among others: business and scientific reports in newspapers and magazines for lay readers; sports reports in newspapers; science fiction, both in print form, and on television and in film; travel-related television programmes; television programmes and films on law and medicine, such as hospital dramas, and detective and forensic dramas; and documentaries and dramas based on real-life events. All such forms are creatively reconceptualised (and often recontextualised, or resemiotised) hybrid formations that seem to serve a mixture of different, but related, communicative purposes.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter, I have made an attempt to explore the nature of the creative exploitation of interdiscursive sociopragmatic space, claiming that interdiscursivity is central to

our understanding of creativity in professional genres and practices. Focusing on critical interdiscursive performance in genre-based professional contexts, I have examined the interrelationship between discursive practices (constructing, interpreting, and using professional genres) and professional practices (managing professional activities, such as corporate disclosures, public relations, negotiating investor confidence, selling corporate performance, etc.) in typical corporate and other professional contexts. At a more theoretical level, I have made an attempt to underpin the importance of interdiscursivity in studies of language and creativity, highlighting the notion of tension between 'generic integrity' (Bhatia, 1993, 1995, 2004) and 'appropriation of generic resources' (Bhatia, 1997, 2004) to give expression to creative exploitations in professional contexts. The chapter has argued for a critical genre analysis of discursive and professional actions within professional cultures, by focusing on 'interdiscursivity' as interaction between discursive and professional practices in the context of specific professional, corporate, and institutional cultures.

Related topics

creativity and discourse analysis; everyday language creativity

Further reading

Bhatia, V. K. (2010a) 'Interdiscursivity in professional discourse', *Discourse and Communication*, 4(1): 32–50.

This article gives a comprehensive account of interdiscursive appropriation in professional genres.

Candlin, C. N., and Maley, Y. (1997) 'Intertextuality and interdiscursivity in the discourse of alternative dispute resolution', in B.-L. Gunnarsson, P. Linnel, and B. Nordberg (eds) *The Construction of Professional Discourse*, London: Longman, pp. 201–22.

This is a very useful account of some aspects of interdiscursivity in spoken discourse.

Fairclough, N. (1993) 'Critical discourse analysis and the marketization of public discourse: The universities', *Discourse and Society*, 4(2): 133–68.

This article gives an insightful account of discoursal hybridity in public discourses.

Gotti, M. (2014) 'Reformulation and recontextualization in popularization discourse', *Ibérica*, 27: 15–34.

This article looks at the process of discourse popularisation of disciplinary discourses.

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Discourses of creativity

Camilla Nelson

Introduction

Historians of the creative idea have traditionally taken what might be called a substantialist approach to their object of study, so that creativity has been quite commonly understood as an ideal or essential reality that exists outside and beyond the cultural and historical field. The result of this approach is that the manifold possibilities of history have been progressively reduced to a narrative about approaches to, or departures from, this fixed constant, so that the task of the historian becomes one not of theorisation, but of identifying and describing pure and unadulterated forms of the idea, or unmasking corrupt and alienated versions (Nelson, 2010). Hence, for example, even an exemplary scholar such as Raymond Williams (2001: 37), in his influential histories of the creative idea, is concerned to designate the successive historical figures who have come 'very near to' apprehending creativity for what it really is, or else depart from this extrahistorical constant in ways that Williams (1985: 84) judges to be 'confusing and at times seriously misleading'.

The effects of substantialism are particularly apparent in histories that implicitly or explicitly rely on the secularisation hypothesis as a form of explication (Blumenberg, 1985: 3–123). In these histories, creativity is framed as a secularised form of a once-religious idea, with its earliest articulations most commonly evidenced in the tradition of the divine analogy, a Western literary tradition that represented nature as God's art and saw human art as an activity that paralleled nature (for example Conrad, 2007; Dawson, 2005; Tatarkiewcz, 1980; Weiner, 2000; Williams, 1985: 84). However, although these histories broadly support the idea of creativity as a secularised form of the sacred, they seldom agree on the specific nature of the tradition that was secularised. Modern works tend to place emphasis on the advent of romanticism, drawing on M. H. Abrams' (1971) theory of a dramatic 'revolution in epistemology' at the turn of the eighteenth century that engendered a new understanding of imagination, commonly citing Coleridge's theistic vision of imagination as central to this process, for example. Others are committed to tracing a more gradual intellectual lineage that stresses romanticism as a significant turning point in a much longer narrative that stretches back to the Renaissance (as argued by Williams, 1985, 2001), to Francis Bacon (as argued by James Engell, 1981), or to the Greeks and Romans (as argued by Paul Oskar Kristeller, 1983; Milton C. Nahm, 1947, 1956; Wladislaw Tatarkiewcz, 1980). Indeed, in more recent times, inspired by the interest in creativity engendered by the creative industries phenomenon, the goal of much contemporary scholarship has been to trace the lineage – and, in this sense, the *legitimacy* – of the creative idea as far back as possible, so that a vague, although allegedly

unbroken, line appears to stretch from Tony Blair's 'Cool Britannia' right back to Genesis (for example Negus & Pickering, 2004; Pope, 2005; see also a parallel American example, Weiner, 2000). Further layers of legitimacy are often added by reference to non-Western traditions, specifically by collecting the creation myths of other cultures. Although this has obviously been done with the laudable intention of disrupting Western ideologies and belief systems, there is a serious and persistent problem in the way in which the Western tradition continues to frame and organise the analysis, resulting in a further buttressing of Western ideologies, rather than the opposite (see, for example, Pope, 2005; Weiner, 2000). It should also be noted that the religious or quasi-religious framing of the narrative excludes much attention being paid to the tradition of the rational artist, which is as old as, if not older and more venerable than, that of the inspired. It glaringly omits the craft-based traditions that dominated Western art for the 2,000 years prior to the modern era – the era in which art and craft were suddenly produced as antonyms for one another (Nelson, 2010: 54–64; Shiner, 2003). In histories with epic time spans ranging from 2,000–4,000 to as much as 40,000 years, a small handful of artists have been picked out to serve as 'heralds' or 'harbingers' for a contemporary form of the creative idea – while numerous others are either marginalised or dispensed with altogether. Indeed, some of these works on the creative idea would better be regarded not as histories, but as 'myths of origin' that have been designed to progress a variety of institutional agendas in the present.

A central problem with the religious or quasi-religious framing of the historical narrative (whether presented as a casting off of religion or a repurposing of religion to other ends) is that it *produces* a particular form of the creative idea as something mysterious, inspired, and rare. The consequence is that certain artefacts of human creativity, such as art and literature, are regularly elevated by bestowing upon them the mantel of the secularised form of the sacred. Conversely, everyday forms of creativity are constructed as debased or pale imitations of what were apparently once great, lofty, or spiritual constructs ('big "C" Creativity' as opposed to 'little "c" creativity', for example). Hence, even Raymond Williams (1985: 84) argued, in his influential study of the creative idea, that:

> difficulty arises when a word once intended, and often still intended, to embody a high and serious claim, becomes so conventional, as a description of certain types of general activity, that it is applied to practices which, in the absence of the convention, nobody would think of making such claims.

He goes on to infer that creative writing groups are therefore engaged in intrinsically debased forms of literature and that advertising 'creatives' are engaged in intrinsically debased forms of art.

Using the tools of discourse analysis, this chapter explores the possibilities inherent in studying the emergence of the concept of creativity not as an extrahistorical or substantial ideal, but in the material context of its shifting historical conditions of formation. In understanding creativity as a discursively constituted object, the chapter is concerned to draw attention to the numerous distortions involved in taking what is essentially a modern variant of the creative idea and projecting it backwards over time, constructing teleological histories. Instead, it draws attention to the myriad ways in which the creative idea has been understood – as expression, self-realisation, production, revolution, life, adaptation, and reconstruction, for example (Joas, 1996: 70–144) – as well as the ways in which the creative idea has, at various points in its history, been shaped by the ideologies of individualism, the ideas of democracy and freedom, the rise of capitalism, and indeed the foundations of the modern nation state.

Indeed, the problem is perhaps more complex than the need to understand that ideas are not substantial, extrahistorical, essential, or eternal. There is also a need to account for the elements of contingency in their historical formation. In order to better understand the history of the creative idea, the critic may therefore be forced to look beyond traditional models of the history of ideas towards a history of language and discourse. This invariably entails a willingness to examine a second order of discourse – that is, to trace the categorical ground that gives rise to a particular order of discourse in order to identify the shifts and fractures as they make way for new arrangements of thought. This is particularly useful in attempting to trace the history of an idea such as creativity, which rarely takes coherent form in the work of a single 'great philosopher', although it finds differential expressions in works of philosophy in diverse cultural and intellectual traditions from Herder to Marx, and Nietzsche to Dewey. Just as significantly, the creative idea is also to be found scattered across the language of popular culture, and these rhetorical asides, prolix flourishes, angry and enraged demands, or half-articulated yearnings, while they are seldom worked out into an enduring or even coherent system, nevertheless collectively warrant more attention.

This chapter will argue that the creative idea, as a specifically human possession, was profoundly shaped less by religious or artistic, than by natural scientific, ideas about creation. It will argue that although the creative idea has received its most characteristic – or, at least, commonest – expression in art, the origins of the idea do not in fact lie in the discourse of art. Rather, the modern Western form of the creative idea as a specifically human possession is better understood as the product of new forms of thought entering into the wider cultural field from the emergent biological and life sciences, finding differential expression in diverse social fields both within and beyond the world of art, including politics, commerce, economics, and, most significantly, education. It argues that Western developments in the discourse of creativity therefore need to be explained not purely in terms of shifts within discourses internal to art, but also in terms of developments within the natural sciences themselves.

In so doing, the chapter draws on a methodology that understands creativity not as an innate human attribute, but as a discourse (Foucault, 1984: 76–100, 1994) – that is, as the product of certain groupings of statements that are enacted in a specific cultural context or contexts, drawing their logic from a set of common-sense assumptions to produce commonly accepted forms of knowledge. It attempts to analyse how such statements gravitate towards certain categories, concepts, and themes, and to examine what has been written and said on those subjects in order to analyse how they give rise to norms, values, and conventions. It attempts to understand how flows of knowledge and discourse give rise to material institutions and practices, through which they are regulated and perpetuated. In this way, the chapter is especially concerned to draw attention to what is deeply cultural in what might be called the 'becoming biological' of the creative idea – a term that is here used to designate a process whereby an idea that evolves historically at the end of the eighteenth century is, by the outset of the twentieth century, rendered a 'natural' attribute of the human person.

Historical perspectives

The advent of mass digitisation projects across the arts and sciences has allowed scholars to examine how words and statements move across texts located in theatres of intellectual and cultural life that were previously too far apart to have attracted attention. Figure 10.1 shows

the results of a Google Ngram search, a lexical graphing tool that charts the yearly count of selected letter combinations found within the 5.2 million books digitised by Google, plotting on a chart those results for which there are more than forty appearances a year, averaged against the number of books printed. There are, of course, numerous dangers to be encountered in this kind of word searching. Not only can optical recognition tools be unreliable, but also the more significant problem is that the contents of digital archives have been preselected. In the case of Google Books, they reflect the cultural prejudices of generations of academic librarians, whose biases have traditionally favoured the educated elites. The featured search excludes vernacular writings, such as diaries and letters. It excludes ephemera, such as newspapers and pamphlets (although these can be located in other richer archives). It also excludes all of the important aspects of language that do not inhere in printed words. Nevertheless, the results of a Google Ngram search for the English words 'creative' and 'creativity' are suggestive. There is no sudden proliferation of the term in the eighteenth century; rather, the word appears to gain traction in the mid-nineteenth century, a period much derided by Romantic scholars, although French historian Jules Michelet (1860: 385) self-consciously styled it *un âge créateur* ('a creative age'). Most obviously, Figure 10.1 demonstrates a massive increase in usage in the twentieth century, giving much encouragement to the handful of scholars who have speculated that the creative idea is largely a creature of heroic modernism. At the very least, the results of the n-gram search tend to support the suspicion that the history of the creative idea was culturally overdetermined in the modern period – that this is the period in which the discourse becomes codified.

However, what an n-gram cannot show is how the logic of a word shifts. An analysis of frequency reveals nothing about the ways in which words change their meaning (the featured data does not even filter for religious usage, for example). Moreover, the patterns of usage and the fields in which they occur are obscured. It is only a closer contextual analysis that can reveal that, despite the regularity of its appearance, the word 'creative' is often used to stipulate different things. Phrases such as 'creative power', 'creative force', and 'creative energy' tended to hold sway in the nineteenth century before dissipating. Moreover,
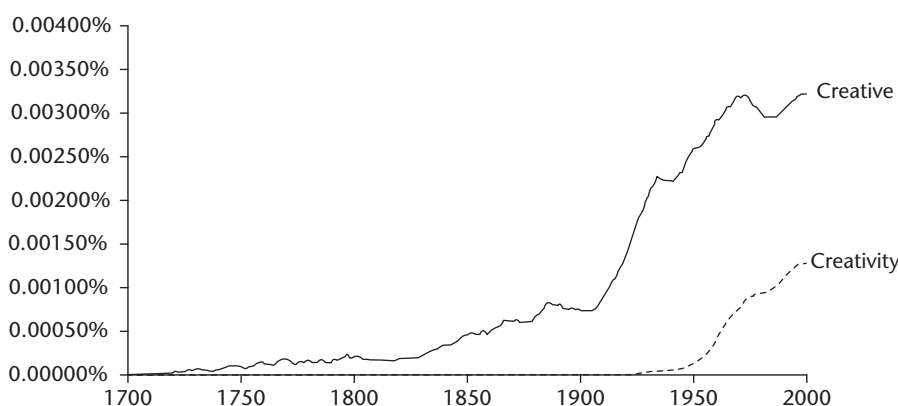
Figure 10.1 Use of the English terms 'creative' and 'creativity' between 1700 and 2000, measured by a Google Ngram

Source: http://www.google.com [accessed 10 August 2014]

these expressions are mobilised within the context of a surprisingly wide range of social activities – unexpectedly, particularly in newspaper archives, which do not appear on the featured graph, phrases such as the 'creative power of railways', the 'creative power of steam', the 'creative power of capital', and 'creative industry' are not atypical usages, for example. Indeed, in the course of the century, the word 'creative' not infrequently appeared divorced from any kind of artistic practice. Disraeli, for example, despaired that 'great' art would ever be made in Britain, despite the 'multifarious pursuits of this active and creative people' (*Art Journal*, 1862: 122). Henry Adams (1889: 124–5) penned a similar lament with respect to the 'vast creative power' of the American people, which had led to improvements in wool carding and cotton printing, but not to the production of art. Indeed, the merging of a vocabulary of creative powers with industrial imperatives was not an uncommon feature of the educational field, with authorities as far away as Australia being asked to recognise the 'true nature and place of the industrial instinct, as the creative instinct' (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 1888), although the most systematic working out of this idea is perhaps found in the growth of the kindergarten movement in the United States (Nelson, 2014). Indeed, even Matthew Arnold (1865: 4), who undoubtedly leaned towards art as his organising principle when he proclaimed that 'a free creative activity, is the true function of man', avowed that men (seldom women) 'can have [creative activity] in well doing, they may have it in learning, they may even have it in criticising'. Indeed, in one of the small handful of early English usages of the noun 'creativity', academic Charles Henry Pearson (1859: 260), in transliterating from the French, also divorces the creative idea from the idea of imagination, declaring that the English possessed 'eminently the deductive and comparative faculties, and the organ of creativity', in comparison to the French, who were 'imaginative', but not 'creative'. In short, the word 'creative', as it was used in the nineteenth century, is not consistent with the logic of high art, but with a popular scientific vocabulary of creative forces, powers, ethers, and energies that people used to describe a sense of agency in the rapidly changing world around them.

Secondly, it is noticeable that the cultural proliferation of the abstract noun 'creativity' is much later than most critics would have anticipated. Although my own research demonstrates that the word 'creativity' appears irregularly in a range of books and letters stretching back to the 1850s (the *Oxford English Dictionary* cites a coinage of 1875: Burchfield & Simpson, 1989), it is only in the mid-twentieth century that the abstract noun occurs with enough frequency to be plotted on the n-gram graph (Figure 10.1). In many ways, the word 'creativity', when it proliferates in the mid-twentieth century, appears less as an extension of the nineteenth-century term, in as much as it gains intelligibility measured against various post-Darwinian ways of thinking about natural creation (as featured in the work of John Dewey, for example), than it does in ways that are then heavily recodified via a heady mix of politics, psychology, art practice, and education, and the institutional imperatives of the American cold war context. This is one of the principal contexts in which, as historians Jamie Cohen-Cole (2009) and Michael Bycroft (2012) have cogently argued, scientists constructed a new psychological theory of creativity 'directly on top of a foundation of popular wisdom' (Cohen-Cole, 2009: 241). Indeed, according to the *Trésor de la langue francaise* ('*Treasury of the French Language*') (Imbs & Quemada, 1971–94: 444) and *Historisches Worterbuch der Philosophie* ('*Historical Dictionary of Philosophy*') (Ritter, Gründer, & Gabriel, 1971: 1195), the French and German nouns *créativité* and *Kreativität*, although they have strong roots in continental European traditions, are actually Anglo-American derivatives that were exported back to Europe via the discipline of psychology, along with a new set of cultural frameworks in the mid-twentieth century, whereby they displaced earlier European terms.

Critical issues and topics

What follows is an attempt to chart the shifts and fractures in the discourse of creativity as it emerges from a range of broadly scientific discourses in the late eighteenth century, impacts on the fields of art, education, and economics, fractures as natural scientific paradigms shift, and is dramatically reconstituted in the cold war period.

The sciences of life

The reform of the Jardin des Plantes at the height of the French Reign of Terror provides a striking example of the way in which the language of natural philosophy afforded a means of talking about creativity. It was one of a handful of institutions that bore witness to the mighty struggle between a static, hierarchical, and religiously underpinned way of seeing the world, and an idea of dynamic change. Indeed, the idyllic garden on the left bank of the Seine would soon become the setting for some of the most acrimonious scientific debates of the nineteenth century – over the nature and definition of life, over the concept and meaning of time – and the clashes of mighty figures from Lamarck to Geoffroy and Cuvier would play a dramatic part in recasting the Western apprehension of both production and creation (see, for example, Jordanova, 2002).

Lamarck's early botanical writings provide no clue that their author would subsequently provide one of the most historically enduring (albeit scientifically erroneous) challenges to the idea of fixed species in the context of a permanent and unchanging nature (Bowler, 1988). Rather, it would seem that the overwhelming problems associated with the classification of the Jardin's collections – as they swelled with the spoils of war and revolution – drew Lamarck towards an apparently inevitable conclusion that the idea of fixed species was itself inadequate. He began envisioning a new idea of nature as a state of inexhaustible flux, as constantly producing new species and organisms, one from the other, from simple to complex. He grounded his work in the ideas of Buffon, but widely extended them. According to Lamarck, diversity of habitat, actions, and modes of life were constantly influencing living beings. Incrementally, over hundreds of thousands of years, the shapes of organisms were being transformed. Limbs were extended or atrophied through use or disuse, diversifying under the effect of long-standing habits. Giraffes forced to feed on trees in arid landscapes began stretching their necks. Feet, forced to clutch branches, transformed into claws, and arms, sculpted by air, transformed into wings. Over astonishing tracts of time – that is, astonishing by eighteenth-century standards – the diversified shapes and parts of these living creatures were preserved and propagated by generation (Bowler, 1984; Gould, 2002; Greene, 1981).

It was an epic and inspiring narrative – a heroic tale of creatures thrust up against the havoc of nature, of organisms overcoming mighty and seemingly insuperable odds. It was also a story that seemed to be larger than the thing that it actually described. It conjured up a thrilling vision of a world in which nothing was fixed, in which nothing occupied its allotted fate, and everything was in a state of stretching and striving. The question seemed not only to be about whether existing species might have been transformed from earlier species, or whether life had evolved from worms or aquatic filaments, but also to embody a whole new way of understanding the world. If animals could, as Lamarck was clearly stating, transform themselves, then it must have seemed to the students, officials, and foreigners who attended his lectures that so too could man create himself and his society. In the heady days of the French Revolution, it still seemed as if adaptability and talent could triumph over privilege

and birth. Lamarck's was one of the many scientific narratives emerging in this period that struck out against the biblical account of creation. The idea of spontaneous generation and change – of a self-sufficient, self-propelling nature capable of creating and transforming itself without God or autocracy – ushered in a new understanding of the world in which change and potential for change came to be considered both natural and normal, and the creative idea as a specifically human possession became thinkable – and, indeed, familiar.

Put more cautiously, the creative idea expresses an intellectual transformation that is congruent with the emergence of a new set of biological theories that flourished from the late eighteenth century onwards. However, in surveying the diverse scientific theories of the time, including not only Lamarck, but also Erasmus Darwin, Goethe, Blumenbach, Mesmer, and many others, it also becomes clear that the emergence of the creative idea cannot be equated with any simple or straightforward shift from a static to a dynamic view of nature, because the principal theoretical constructs that made up the field of the natural sciences – including 'life', 'evolution', and 'organism', for example – were themselves undergoing a series of transformations. There were vitalist and epigenetic models of creation, dualist and non-dualist, materialist and idealist. If there were a similarity that they shared, it was that they collectively seemed to represent a struggle to insert a dynamic element within a preformist matrix of thought (that is, a struggle to escape the idea that everything that a creature, and indeed the wider world, was to become had been pre-programmed by God at creation). Natural philosophers wanted to account for the changes that were observable in the world around them, but also wanted to account for change within a structure that would continue to allow nature to be elaborated as an orderly system.

Consider Coleridge, for instance. Despite its dramatic appeal, the vision of nature as matter in motion represented a troubling vision to this increasingly conservative poet, philosopher, and theologian. For Coleridge, what was popularly coming to be called 'creative power' was not a law of nature, but a principle of religion. He readily perceived the need to understand matter as energy in dynamic flux, but he was equally outraged by the new breed of scientists (the word was coined in 1834) who were attempting to explain creation as a kind of spontaneous or self-sufficient growth. For Coleridge, Lamarckian zoology, Geoffroyan anatomy, Erasmus Darwin, and what he fatefully called 'Darwinising' were the 'diseased fruit' of the French Revolution. The idea of self-evolving or creative powers being ascribed to nature gave sanction to further diseased ideas, up to and including an atomistic and democratic vision of society in which, as Coleridge (1959: 757) wrote in a letter in 1817 to Lord Liverpool, every 'atom has an equal claim with every other atom'. In short, the 'plebification' of science in the 'lecture bazaars' of dissenters at the nascent University of London and in the medical schools, with their 'ouran Outang theology', was sowing the seeds of popular revolt (Coleridge, 1830: 68–70).

It was not a coincidence that Coleridge produced his own counter-evolutionary theory of life, fashioning an effective transcendental alternative to evolutionary materialism, which, for many years, successfully circumscribed British advances in biology within a conservative frame (Desmond, 1989, 2002). It was also not a coincidence that the forms of ideation found in these scientific works provided the philosophical framework for Coleridge's famous theory of imagination (Levere, 2002), which, since the mid-twentieth century, has been rendered central in Anglo-American histories of the creative idea (for example Engell, 1981; Williams, 2001). Coleridge's famous statement on the 'Primary Imagination' is, like his 'Theory of Life', derived from Christian Platonism and defined in strictly religious terms as the 'living Power and prime Agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM' (Coleridge, 1817: 295). According to Coleridge,

primary imagination operates as an innate 'Idea' – a mark of God's grace – that organises the flux of the world and brings coherence to otherwise chaotic sense impressions in the same way as the 'living Power' of 'Life' organises matter in biology. It is a version of the creative idea that is primarily theological and which valorises spirituality over materiality, stability over change, synthesis and unity over multiplicity, and order, hierarchy, and harmony over chaos, anarchy, and conflict. The same model was subsequently put to use in combatting the move towards religious emancipation in Coleridge's (1830) best-known work of political philosophy *On Church and State*. It also occasioned his famous parting of ways with Wordsworth, whose empirical associative theory of imagination Coleridge relates directly to the dangers of evolutionary biology. As Coleridge wrote in 1815 in the letter that signalled the end of one of the great literary friendships of the century:

> I understood that you would . . . have exploded the absurd notion of . . . Darwin, and all the countless Believers – even (strange to say) among Xtians [Christians] of Man's having progressed from an Ouran Ooutang state – so contrary to all History, to all Religion, nay, to all Possibility – to have affirmed a Fall in some sense
>
> *(Coleridge, 1959: 574–5)*

The Christian narrative of the 'fall of man' tends to govern Coleridge's version of the creative idea (man, thus fallen, is forced to seek redemption in some transcendental region). Modern forms of the creative idea tend to be governed by secular narratives of the 'ascent of man' (Bronowski's 1973 documentary of the same name being a case in point). The pivotal position that Coleridge holds in Anglo-American histories of the creative idea is perhaps better understood as a product of what Tim Milnes (1999: 321) once called the 'looking glass' effect of Romantic theory, arguing that the tangled webs of Romantic thought have perhaps proved too amenable to the need for 'modern theory's desire to see itself reflected there'. This was a process perhaps begun in the dehistoricising impulses of I. A. Richards' *Coleridge on Imagination*, in which Richards (1935: 10) attempted to separate what he called a 'relevant psychology' from what he called the 'huge ill-assorted fabric of philosophic and theological beliefs which is not, I think, a relevant part of it'. Later works systematically restyled romanticism as the 'dramatic revolution in art and ideas' that set in motion the 'modern cultural phenomena of the avant-garde' (Peckham, 1951, 1970: 25). In this respect, it is necessary to acknowledge the layered ways in which these works sought to contribute to modernism's own narrative of legitimacy – legitimating the creative idea as an evolved form of romanticism by demonstrating that, as Jonathan Culler (2001: 173) has perspicaciously argued with respect to the works of M. H. Abrams, a 'whole series of contemporary critical concepts, including those that one had thought of as anti-romantic, had in fact been formulated by Coleridge and other Romantic critics'.

The education of man

Coleridge's philosophical works provide a convenient – because familiar – illustration of the ways in which natural scientific paradigms gave shape to nascent forms of the creative idea in a range of fields. However, there is an even more compelling argument that would trace scientific forms of ideation through the field of education from the scientific interests of Herder and Goethe, through to Humboldt and Hegel, and across the Atlantic to philosophers of disparate traditions, including William Ellery Channing, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and – in an altogether different form – John Dewey (Lovlie, Mortensen, & Nordenbo, 2003;

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Siljander, Kivela, & Sutinen, 2012). It was perhaps Herder, more than any other philosopher, who gave distinctive shape to what is now called the *bildung* tradition, and this is one of the many reasons why Joas (1996: 70–144) gives Herder's work pre-eminence in his history of the creative idea. Indeed, Elias Palti (1999: 336–7) has argued that Herder's work anticipated the programme of science illustrated in novels such as *Frankenstein* by several decades. Moreover, in considering the emergence of the creative idea in the field of education, it becomes clear that the creative idea was also influential in the emergence of the modern idea of the 'self' not as 'organism', but as 'subject' (Seigel, 2005: 332–60).

Herder's work is distinctive for the way in which it constructs the creative idea in material and anthropological, rather than transcendental or spiritual, terms. For Herder, nature – that is, material reality – was the ground of physics, as well as metaphysics, of active and creative powers. Human beings, according to Herder, were not innately endowed with the 'faculty of Reason' as Kant would have it (or the 'primary imagination' as Coleridge reconceived Kant); rather, man's reason was destined to be developed – that is, cultivated, or rather self-cultivated. Hence thought is neither abstract nor universal, but is the sum of the education of man. Once again, Herder's version of the creative idea is clearly derived from a preformist scientific matrix into which he constantly struggled to insert a dynamic element, drawing largely on the work of Albrecht Haller, from whose botanical and anatomical investigations Herder derived his theory of *Kraft*, or 'creative powers' (Palti, 1999). Herder's was a system of thought in which a human organism worked out its own mode of being constituted partly from a God-given 'inner germ' and partly from the environment in which it nurtured itself. For Herder, *bildung* referred to a process of both unfolding and interaction, whereby everything existed in a state of stretching and striving to become exactly what it was – to be, in this sense, self-realised (self-realisation being a paradigm for the creative idea that retains popularity to this day).

Herder's (1772) version of the creative idea was perhaps most accessibly put forward in his *Essay on the Origins of Language*, an essay in which he argued that philosophers of language had hitherto ignored the practical workings of the human mind as it struggles to understand and make use of words. According to Herder, thought takes place within, and is structured by, language. Hence the 'reflective' consciousness, or 'circumspection', that gives rise to language also transforms the inner life of human beings. For this reason, thought is not abstract or culturally neutral, but is intimately bound up with the language in which human beings are socialised and is shaped by a particular worldview. Although Herder characteristically likened a human being to a 'plant' or a 'tree' – that is, to something that 'grows' and can be 'cultivated' in an agrarian sense – he is also constantly at pains to make it clear that human beings are not children of nature, but products of society. Indeed, this emphasis on the socially constructed nature of language gives rise to a theme that dominates the history of the creative idea well into the modern era – namely, the idea of a creative individual linked by a common language to a common culture: an idea that was guided by an apprehension of the creative functions of language as it was embodied not only in the work of poets or writers, but also in the everyday language of the ordinary people who have shaped – and continue to shape – that language.

In Herder's hands, *bildung* came to embody a dizzying array of challenges to Enlightenment rationality. Unusually for a clergyman, he argued that *bildung* could not be secured from God or from the privilege of aristocratic birth, but only through the activation of individual character. His philosophy was eventually to include the novel propositions that the genesis of 'creative' human making lay in irregularity and chance, that the struggle against needs and wants produces change, that the lack of knowledge produces innovation, and that the

wrestling with error produces improvement. Creative energy – what he called *Kraft*, meaning 'creative powers' or 'life force' – was, according to Herder, a kind of undirected explosiveness, containing productive consequences and constructive potential. Human beings are centres of power, endowed with agency and creative capacity:

> Whatever the influence of the [external] climate, every man, every animal, every plant, has its own climate. For every living being absorbs all the external influences in a manner peculiar to itself, and modifies them according to his organic powers.
>
> *(Herder, 2010 [1784–91]: 293)*

Herder's theory of artistic production was also significant for what might be called its proto-democratic aspect. In the late eighteenth century, the idea that the 'folk' possessed a culture – that the 'folk' were not a rabble or a mob, but a 'people' – had tremendous political novelty. The emergence of the idea of a people's culture also gave shape to the concept of the nation: not a nation predicated on boundaries that had been drawn upon a map in the wake of bloody wars or marriages between tyrants, but a nation conceived (in the language of the natural sciences) as a 'natural growth'. The *bildung* tradition was increasingly articulated within a dynamic in which the self was created as a complement or catalyst to the national, with varied political results. It was used in diverse ways to link the creative idea to the idea of the nation and the national culture, entangling the creative idea with the history of the modern nation state in ways which resonate to this day.

Herder's ideas were not disseminated through his own works, but more often through the reworking of his ideas in the books of others, and often in the works of those with whom he was in disagreement (Arnold, Kloocke, & Menze, 2009; Forster, 2012). Humboldt, for example, built on Herder's ideas, but was interested in offering a more radical validation of Kant's idea of human freedom by giving reflective consciousness power over the material world. Hegel also built on Herder's ideas, but understood individual freedom to be realised not through culture, but through 'the State'. Marx famously turned Hegel's work upside down, stripping it of its abstractions (spirit does not make man; man makes spirit). But, for Herder, freedom was an abstraction, and therefore a fiction. His philosophy sought not freedom, but a kind of limited spontaneity for individuals – a kind of creativity – that guaranteed to each its own particular character.

However, despite the great subtleties of Herder's philosophy, in terms of the creative idea *bildung* was circumscribed by a notion of creativity within fixed limits: the possibility of self-realisation was predicated on an idea of the individual unfolding within destiny. To allow creativity to be radical and open-ended would require a reconfiguration of the century's most deeply held beliefs. This challenge came once again from the domain of the natural sciences – this time in the guise of Charles Darwin. However, the impact of the Darwinian revolution on diverse fields of knowledge, as Bowler (1988) has argued, was somewhat delayed.

The wealth of nations

If natural scientific forms of ideation found their way into art and literature, political philosophy, and education, so too did they emerge in the field of economics, where a range of commercial imperatives were giving rise to new ideas about economic 'growth'. The work of the French physiocrats had already offered a significant challenge to the prevailing mercantilist doctrine that economic growth was impossible (the economy was a zero sum

game). This challenge was famously expanded by Adam Smith, whose articulation of the principles of the division of labour, and the concepts of productive and unproductive labour, gave currency to the belief that the wealth indeed could be 'created'. This is a territory that has been little explored. However, Mirowski (1994) has demonstrated the extent to which biological metaphors were a shaping force in the works of Francois Quesnay, Adam Smith, Alfred Marshall, Stanley Jevons, Karl Marx, and Joseph Schumpeter. Following this logic, it may be possible to read the plethora of biological metaphors that flourished in political economy as part of a wider struggle to insert a dynamic element into a 'fixist' view of nature. Consider, for example, Malthus' famous metaphor of the beggar at 'nature's feast' who has 'no claim of right to the smallest portion of food':

> At nature's mighty feast there is no vacant cover for him. She tells him to be gone, and will quickly execute her own orders, if he does not work upon the compassion of some of her guests. If these guests get up and make room for him, other intruders immediately appear . . . The order and harmony of the feast is disturbed, the plenty that before reigned is changed into scarcity; and the happiness of the guests is destroyed
>
> *(Malthus, 1803: 531)*

This was the image that helped to make Malthus, as his biographer James Bonar (1885: 1) put it, the 'best abused man in Europe'. William Hazlitt, Percy Shelley, and even Robert Southey attempted to refute Malthus' metaphor. But it was probably Marx who, in continuing the tirade against Malthus at mid-century, effectively shifted the grounds away from the ethics of distribution towards the 'Promethean' idea that man-made capital, science, and labour could substitute for natural resources indefinitely. Indeed, the idea that *L'homme est son propre Prométhée* ('humanity is its own Prometheus'), as Michelet (1893–98 [1869]: vii) wrote in a separate context, adapting Vico's phrase, was increasingly found in reports on commercial projects in the popular press, where the capacity to break through the Malthusian cycle was increasingly said to reside in the abstract, if not mystical, 'creative power' that was attached to the forces of production.

A particularly vivid example is found in the works of Andrew Ure, who not only invokes biological images to portray the industrialist as the 'life force' (Ure, 1835: 108) or 'elemental power' that has been made to 'animate millions of complex organs', but also frequently mixes his biological metaphors with images of a more mechanistic origin, so that 'self-acting' and 'automatic' machines are deemed capable of 'infusing into wood, iron and brass an intelligent agency' (Ure, 1835: 2). The insertion of mechanistic images into natural metaphors is also a feature of the popular press, in which mechanical and biological metaphors are commonly found sitting untroubled alongside each other. Machines are portrayed as 'vital' and 'self-animating', in a creative fantasy in which iron rails and telegraph wires give 'birth' to wealth and new markets; hence the popularity of expressions such as the 'creative power of machinery', the 'creative power of free trade', and the 'creative power of capital'. Indeed, one of the most celebrated creative objects of the nineteenth century was not poetry, but the railway, and the 'creative power of railways' (*Morning Post*, 1847) was repeatedly extolled in both the metropolis and its colonies, such as Australia, where the 'rise and progress' of cities was perennially attributed to the 'creative power of railways' (*South Australian Register*, 1848), which were, to quote yet another American example, a 'wonderful mechanical appliance for the elevation of a country in creative power': 'I know that the thing looks strange: but, sir, the railroad itself is a strange and wondrous thing. It is a creative power' (*Athens Post*, 1856).

The 'creative' and 'life-giving' power attributed to commerce and industry was so pronounced that it inevitably drew the ire of contemporary clerics. Thomas Chalmers (1832: 60), for example, in the year before he railed against the new evolutionary biology in the first of the Bridgewater Treatises, published a work on political economy that drew attention to what he characterised as the increasingly widespread error 'that men should have been led to imagine as if commerce had a commencing and a creative virtue'. Against this heresy, Chalmers (1832: 80) was at pains to reassert the religious dimensions of what he saw as the profoundly erroneous belief that 'there was a creative and an emanating power in capital which could overleap' the limits of nature. This metaphysical unease repeatedly registered in the economic imaginings of writers such as Dickens, Carlyle, and Zola (Conrad, 2007: 315–36). However, the most enduring attack on the new vogue for creative metaphors came from Karl Marx, who castigated the industrialists and economists for equating humanity with machinery and conferring creative 'life' upon capital. As Marx indelibly wrote, when a worker sells his labour-power as abstract labour in the form of a value, he alienates his own creative power: the worker 'impoverishes himself because the creative power of his labour establishes itself as the power of capital, as an alien power confronting him' (Marx, 2005 [1858]: 660). He continues: 'It is clear, therefore, that the worker cannot become rich in the exchange, since in exchange for his labour capacity as a fixed, available magnitude, he surrenders its creative power, like Esau his birthright for a mess of pottage' (Marx, 2005 [1858]: 307). The Marxian ideal of creative self-realisation through work has particular poignancy for being forged against the image of the spectral monster of 'creative capital, sucking its living soul out of labour' (Marx, 2005 [1858]: 660).

Darwin famously claimed that his theory of evolution was forged following a reading of Malthus – and, eventually, Darwin's work would give rise to a new form of the creative idea for a world in which human beings were no longer destined to unfold naturally in orderly or preformed ways, but to engage in acts of self-making defiance of nature's indifference.

The influence of Darwin

The immediate influence of Darwin on philosophy was, as John Dewey once argued, largely disguised. In the period between the publication of *On the Origin of Species* (1859a) and Dewey's speech at Columbia University (1910: 1–19), in which this argument was articulated, much of the philosophical grappling with evolution remained basically Lamarckian. The significant thinkers who took up the challenge posed by Darwin – including some of the great atheists of the century – tried to harmonise Darwinian concepts with the pre-Darwinian worldview that they had inherited. They continued to build their respective versions of the creative idea along teleological lines, devising theories of incremental or orderly creation that Dewey (1910: 12) derided as 'design on the instalment plan'. In philosophy, for example, Darwin's work gave impetus to a range of speculative evolutionary systems, updating older systems of thought with what might be called a scientifically legitimated form of Providence. God – or rather what we might call the crossed-out God – was variously reconceived as force, energy, and creative power. God was vitality, or living power. God was Spencer's (1923) 'Unknowable'. God was Bergson's (1907) *Élan Vital* or Whitehead's (1926) 'Principle of Concretion' (see also Whitehead, 1929). Even in Germany, where the idea of the 'struggle for existence' profoundly informed cultural thought – becoming, like Nietzsche's 'will to power', a ubiquitous cliché – philosophers baulked at the idea that such a struggle could be entirely without purpose, leading scientists such as Ernst Haeckel to recreate natural selection as the means through which a more fundamental law of progress manifested itself.

The Romantic systems of the nineteenth century had valorised change, but only change within fixed limits. In terms of the creative idea, what was revolutionary in Darwin's work did not centre on the radical disenchantment of the world, the remorseless transformation of soul into psyche, or the disappearance of God or religion; rather, the idea of experience itself was transformed. As Dewey (1917: 23) put it:

> Genuine projection of the novel, deliberate variation and invention, [were] idle fictions in [the pre-Darwinian] version of experience. If there ever was creation, it all took place at a remote period. Since then, the world has only recited lessons.

In this older version of experience, the possibilities for any genuine accretion of novelty – particularly in any ontological sense – were radically foreclosed. Variation was subordinate to unity, flux was subordinate to order, philosophy and art therefore aimed at unity and synthesis, and the operations of randomness and chance that were integral to the emergence of the new form of the creative idea were largely unthinkable. 'Change as change [was] mere flux and lapse; it insults intelligence', wrote Dewey (1910: 6–7): 'Genuinely to know [was] to grasp a permanent end that realises itself through changes, holding them thereby within the metes and bounds of fixed truth.' Against these grand, permanent, and dignified abstractions, what Darwin had offered was, as Herschel famously put it, 'the law of higgledy-pigglety' (quoted in Darwin, 1859b). In Dewey, experience is understood to be essentially creative. Situated creativity becomes *the* fundamental concept. The individual in experience is possessed of 'creative intelligence' and is the 'bearer of a creatively employed mind' (Dewey, 1917: iii). Man ceases to be a 'fallen creature', as Coleridge believed, and becomes a 'problem-solving animal' – and the way in which he or she solves problems, in and through the material world, is said to be creative.

Dewey's work represents one of the many ways in which the creative idea encountered the foundations of the emerging discipline of psychology (another being through Freud). He disposed, for example, of the concept of innate ideas, so cherished by Romantic visionaries:

> It soon becomes obvious that while there is assuredly something a priori – that is to say, native, unlearned, original – in human experience, that something is not knowledge, but is activities made possible by means of established connexions [*sic*] of neurons. This empirical fact does not solve the orthodox problem; it dissolves it. It shows that the problem was misconceived, and solution sought by both parties in the wrong direction.
> *(Dewey, 1917: 19)*

Dewey's work had a profound impact on American culture, especially in progressive education. However, Dewey's reconstruction of the creative idea was to be radically transformed in the cold war era – an age in which traditional notions of individual genius were refashioned, drawing directly on popular notions of creativity then circulating in the arts. In this respect, what needs to be addressed is a parallel history running counter to the movements outlined in this chapter: one that focuses on the discourses within modernism through which art was relentlessly envisioned as a metaphor for the creative idea, and the creative idea was eventually to be produced as a category of art.

Cold war creativity

The Progressive Education Association, which had gathered around Dewey, disbanded in 1959, imploding amidst a self-proclaimed national crisis in education. Arthur Bestor

published *Educational Wastelands* in 1953, and MGM released the *Blackboard Jungle* in 1955 to a major public outcry. Newspapers carried interviews with critics under headlines such as 'Mass Produced Mediocrity' (*Chicago Daily Tribune*, 1956a) and 'The Worship of Mediocrity' (*Chicago Daily Tribune*, 1956b). Amidst the furore, the Russians launched the Sputnik – and the education crisis spilled onto the front page. Progressive education promoted conformity and 'group-think', argued critics such as Hyman Rickover (1959: 21), better known as the man who directed the development of the atomic submarine, whereas a 'future dependent on creative brains' (Rickover, 1959: 31) required a qualitatively different kind of education that was capable of producing 'inner-directed, obstreperous, creative people; sworn enemies of routine and the status quo' (Rickover, 1959: 22). In opposition to totalitarian Russia, the United States needed to support the kind of 'freedom essential to the creative worker' (Rickover, 1959: 21).

One of the striking features of this new formation of the creative idea was that it was defined culturally and scientifically in proximity to historically specific ideas about democracy and freedom, and in opposition to ideas about conformity and authoritarianism. In the social sciences, for example, the mid-twentieth century saw the growth of publications expressing fears about conformity, such as David Reisman's (1950) classic work of sociology, *The Lonely Crowd*. For American liberals, conformity was particularly worrying, because it revealed a crucial lack of distance between American and Russian models of politics. In contrast to authoritarianism, cold war intellectuals sought to propose, and indeed implement, a positive model of American citizenship, one of the most highly valued attributes of which was creativity (Cohen-Cole, 2009).

In the wake of the Sputnik, the US government passed far-reaching legislation in the form of the National Defense Education Act of 1958, providing unprecedented funding for universities, colleges, and schools. In his presidential address to the American Psychological Association, J. P. Guildford (1950: 445) called scientific neglect of creativity 'appalling'. Bibliographic surveys indicate that there were as many studies of creativity published between 1950 and 1965 as there had been in the previous 200 years. Much of this work grew out of, or was funded by, military and defence concerns, and was spurred on by the perceived failure of educators to produce the original geniuses that the newspapers seemingly demanded.

This was the political and intellectual climate in which E. Paul Torrance (1966) studied developmental aspects of creativity and their practical application in education, focusing on fostering individualism and developing imagination among gifted and talented children. Torrance developed a series of tests based upon Guilford's divergent thinking model that were popularised not only as a diagnostic instrument, but also, more influentially, as a teaching tool. The Torrance Tests for Creative Thinking (TTCT) targeted specific traits, including fluency, flexibility, originality, and problem solving. Children were asked to find multiple uses for everyday objects, such as tin cans, to make responses to various drawings, and to predict the outcomes of a range of situations (Torrance, 1966).

Tests like the TTCT, as Sawyer (2012: 46–52*ff*) has argued, tended to privilege a singular historical understanding of creativity that valued individual creativity over group creativity, exceptionalism over everyday creativity, and Western cultural constructs over non-Western ideas. The TTCT was also predicated upon, as Baer (2011: 312) has argued, a definition of creativity as consisting in 'coming up with wild ideas'. Whether or not social scientists continue to believe, like Torrance, that the creative idea is usefully constituted by 'long lists' of 'wild and crazy ideas', or, like Baer (2011: 312), believe that such a definition of creativity is 'warped' and 'harmful', tests and teaching tools such as the

TTCT nevertheless impacted dramatically on Western educational methods in the decades during which they were in the ascendant. Ogata (2013) has recently argued not only that cold war ideas about creativity in children were a construction of mid-century scientific studies, but also that these scientific ideas were perpetuated through the manufacture of toys, picture books, television shows, architecture, and interior design. Torrance (1963: 3) himself claimed that results from creativity studies had engendered 'truly revolutionary changes in educational objectives, curriculums, instruments for assessing mental growth and educational achievement, instructional procedures, counseling and guidance procedures, supervisory and administrative practices, and even in school building planning'. This period also saw the rapid proliferation of a new word: the abstract noun, 'creativity'. With its origins in cold war psychology, it was exported across the world, where it merged with earlier European terms.

Future directions

Keith Sawyer (2012: 7) has argued that, 'to explain creativity, we first need to agree on what it is, and this turns out to be surprisingly difficult'. This chapter has attempted to demonstrate that this question cannot be answered by any simple accounting for the ways in which the idea of creativity has shifted from period to period, or culture to culture. Still less is it a matter of finding neural correlates in human consciousness for what I have argued are essentially discursive fictions. The creative idea is not something to be 'discovered' so much as it is a cultural construction or invention. Nevertheless, to draw attention to the discursive, and therefore fictional, nature of the idea is not to argue that that there is no such thing as creativity – for discourse has a weight, and a materiality, and a productive power. Rather, it points towards a need for a reflexive and culturally sensitive understanding of creativity that is capable of acknowledging the ways in which the creative idea has been shaped by – and has become a constant focus for – the cultural anxieties of our age.

Related topics

creativity and dialogue; creativity and discourse analysis; everyday language creativity

Further reading

Foucault, M. (1994) *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, New York: Vintage/Random House.

Foucault's classic argument with respect to the emergence of 'modern man' as a historical category – that is, the result of a specific series of discourses and discursive practices – remains a central and indispensible model for discourse analysis.

Joas, H. (1996) 'Metaphors of creativity', in *The Creativity of Action*, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 70–144.

Hans Joas' attempt to reconstruct a sociological theory of action according to a pragmatist conception of creativity is a less obvious choice. However, this chapter in his book draws attention to democratic, as opposed to elitist, traditions of creativity, and the analysis of the historical emergence of a range of linguistic metaphors, from Herder's expressivism through to Dewey's metaphors of adaptation, is invaluable.

Mason, J. H. (2003) *The Value of Creativity: The Origins and Emergence of a Modern Belief*, Farnham: Ashgate.

This is one of the few historical works to question whether an entity such as creativity can be said to exist prior to its articulation in language. Although this question is not resolved, the way in which Mason posits the central novelty of eighteenth-century concepts, locating them as products of wider transformations in commerce, economics, and politics, is invaluable.

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Part II

Literary creativity

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11

Literariness

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Introduction

Historical perspective

The term 'literariness' was introduced by the Russian formalist critic and theorist Roman Jakobson in 1921, in a paper in which he stated: 'The object of study in literary science is not literature but "literariness," that is, what makes a given work a *literary* work' (quoted in Eichenbaum, 1971: 8, emphasis original). In other words, Jakobson argued, what distinguishes the formal method is 'that the object of literary science, as literary science, ought to be the investigation of the specific properties of literary material, of the properties that distinguish such material from material of any other kind' (Jakobson, 1921, quoted in Eichenbaum, 1971: 7) – although the secondary features of such materials render it amenable to being employed in other disciplines, such as when we examine a literary work for the light it casts on psychological, historical, or ideological issues.

But as Erlich (1981: 198), a historian of the Russian formalist movement, puts it, the formalist commitment was to 'the frame of mind produced by that passionate search for the differentia of literature which was the starting point of Formalist theorizing'. Thus we ask: what characterises a particular literary work? What specific feature best ensures its contrast to any other work and makes it unique? Its intrinsic quality – that which constitutes its literariness – came to be called its *dominant*, the constituent that also enables us to experience its unity (Erlich, 1981: 199). In poetry, for example, this is likely to be the rhythm, since this influences in turn other components, such as phonetic or figurative materials. In Dickens's novel *Little Dorrit*, the dominant is plot, according to Shklovsky (quoted in Erlich, 1981: 246).

The term 'literariness' has been important, whether in the context of close, stylistic analysis of literature, or as a term in the disputed claim that there is no feature, or set of features, that can be shown to make literature unique. In this chapter, I will offer a brief review of some representative arguments on both sides, from which I will conclude that there is no specific set of features to which we can attribute literariness. But I will then mainly be concerned with offering a perspective drawn from theoretical and empirical studies of literary reading. I will conclude that literariness is a product of the interaction between a literary text, characterised by stylistic or narrative features, and an attentive reader, who is led to experience empathy or absorption.

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The term 'Russian formalism' refers to two groups of literary theorists: the Moscow linguistic circle, which came together in 1915; and the Society for the Study of Poetic Language, or *Opojaz*, which formed in St Petersburg in 1916. The term was actually one of opprobrium, given to it by its Marxist critics, who accused the group of denying the relevance of historical materialism. Beginning in 1924, serious criticism included Leon Trotsky's (1924) *Literature and Revolution*. Trotsky accused the groups of doing little more than counting syllables and analysing syntax, while ignoring the social significance of literature (Erlich, 1981: 102–1). The formalists – those scholars who continued to make important contributions – survived into the later 1920s. Jakobson, however, left Russia in 1920 for Czechoslovakia, where he completed a doctorate and attained a professorship at Masaryk University. He introduced formalist methods to the study of Czech poetry and helped to found the Prague linguistic circle, whose contribution to the concept of literariness will be mentioned later in the chapter.

Among other significant concepts in the early history of formalism are the distinction between practical language and poetic language made by Jakubinsky in his articles of 1916 and taken up by *Opojaz*. In practical language, the elements (syllables, morphemes, etc.) are intended for communication only; in poetic language, they have an autonomous value that contributes to poetic meaning. This distinction helped to shift the critical focus away from psychology, sociology, aesthetics, and other standard concerns of the literary critics of the time, towards linguistics as a scientific approach for elucidating the aural properties of poetry. In this move, formalism appropriated the claim of the futurist poets of the time to a 'transrational' language, seen as 'the utmost baring of autonomous value' in poetic language (Eichenbaum, 1971: 9). While not unique to poetry, it was said to be characteristic of it, although a specific poet engaged in writing poetically may be unaware at the time of the transrational implications of what he or she is writing. Thus the first major preoccupation of the formalists of *Opojaz* was the value of the sound of poetry, and here Shklovsky achieved an important shift of attention: rather than focusing on the sheer sound of poetry, which invited impressionistic interpretations (this being most evident in the poetry of contemporary symbolist poets), such as onomatopoeia or 'painting with sounds', he argued for the effects arising from the articulatory aspects of poetry. It may be, he said, 'that a large part of the pleasure poetry gives us stems from its articulatory aspect – from a special dance of the organs of speech' (quoted in Eichenbaum, 1971: 10).

An analysis of literariness

To take an example, in 'The Sick Rose' by Blake (1794: 37), the rhythm of the first line is evidently at variance with the remainder of the poem, until (perhaps) near the end in line 7:

O Rose, thou art sick.
The invisible worm,
That flies in the night
In the howling storm:
Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy:
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

The first line contains three evident stresses (*Rose / thou / sick*), and a space representing a fourth stress at the end of the line that is unvoiced. The rhythm of this line would feel disrupted if the second line were to follow immediately without the delay called for by aligning the stresses in a pattern of two-stress lines (2 + 2 in line 1). To make a musical analogy, the first line would be a bar in 3/4 time when it should be 4/4, whereas the rest of the poem exhibits bars of 2/4 time – a contrast that clearly makes line 1 feel out of place. Only in line 7 do we see an echo of this, with the possibility of three stresses (*dark / sec– / love*), which perhaps disrupts the rhythmic pattern intentionally in view of the coming dissolution of the 'Rose' – although here two stresses seem acceptable (*dark / love*), depending on where the reader wishes to place the emphasis. The literariness of the poem lies in part, then, in its rhythmic and somewhat conflicted rhyme scheme. It lies especially, I would suggest, in the missing stress at the end of line 1. The diminution of the transrational force of this suggestive absence can readily be mirrored by supplying a word or two, for example 'O Rose, thou art sick to death'; 'O Rose, thou art sick and sore'; or 'O Rose, thou art sick with loss'. This, we might say, rectifies the rhythm, but tends to trivialise the poetic force of the line.

Some critical issues

There are other aspects of the literariness of Blake's poem at which we will look below. A consideration that the formalists highlighted was the mere survival of such a poem – the fact that we are still reading it some 220 years after it was first published. We cannot appeal to its pedagogical uses, since the teaching of English literature on a wide scale did not occur until the late nineteenth century. Here, we appear to have located another constituent of literariness, one less appreciated by formalist theory. According to Shklovsky's sense of history, as we will review shortly, the automatism of everyday life is challenged by the novelty of artistic creation. The art form travels an inevitable road from birth to death, from 'being savoured and relished, to mere recognition'; the survival of art depends on its innovations – its ability to surprise (Erlich, 1981: 252). The formalists considered this to constitute the laws of literary evolution. Art, according to Shklovsky's account, was created impersonally, under the impact of the demand for novelty. This perspective has a strong resemblance to the empirical studies of artistic change by Colin Martindale (for example Martindale, 1990). Martindale's hypothesis is that each successive generation of poets must employ an increasingly novel language in order for his or her work to continue attracting attention: Keats must outdo Wordsworth; and Keats, in his turn, must be outdone by Swinburne. As Martindale has shown in a series of publications (not only on literary evolution), there is strong empirical evidence for the driving power of novelty, as he has described it, being an influence on several epochs of art history and music. On the other hand, we can also argue for the inexhaustible power of literariness, as exhibited in the great works of literature, from Homer and Dante, through Shakespeare, to Dickens and beyond, each of whom continues to be read and enjoyed by significant numbers of readers. Indeed, there is still a major market for the publishers of literary texts (including many now in digital form), which continue to make a profit. Is 'literariness' a name that we give to the permanent values of the literary work? Is it in language, characterisation, plot, theme, or other components that the uniqueness of the literary text lies – and continues to attract readers? Do we simply know literariness when we see it? Or do we require some prior educational grounding in the competencies that underlie literary reading?

One preliminary set of answers to these questions is offered by the 1917 essay 'Art as technique' by Victor Shklovsky (1917). This essay – one of the earliest contributions

to formalist theory (also known as 'Art as device') – has been influential in particular thanks to its translation into English in 1965 in a book of readings (Lemon & Reis, 1965). In this essay, we can trace the emergence of other features that contributed to the concept of literariness. As Shklovsky shows at its outset, the prevalent view that '[a]rt is thinking in images' (Shklovsky, 1965 [1917]: 5–6), promulgated by the Russian theorist Potebnya, is an inadequate basis for a literary theory or for the work of literary interpretation. It is said to make for 'economy of mental effort' (Shklovsky, 1965 [1917]: 5) in explaining the unknown in terms of the known – that is, the familiar image helps us to assimilate the unfamiliar. In particular, Shklovsky stages an argument on aesthetic cognition with the social philosopher Herbert Spencer (1882). Art, says Spencer, is the better for limiting its requirements on the attention of the reader or viewer. The ideas of the artwork must be understood with 'the least possible mental effort' (Shklovsky, 1965 [1917]: 9). In fact, Shklovsky (1965 [1917]: 12, emphasis original) points out, the situation is quite the reverse: '[A]rt exists that one may recover the sensation of life; it exists to make one feel things, to make the stone *stony*.' Too much of life, claims Shklovsky, simply passes us by in a series of habitual behaviours. In a diary entry that Shklovsky cites, Tolstoy describes cleaning a room, then being unable to remember whether he had attended to the room or not: '[I]f the whole complex lives of many people go on unconsciously, then such lives are as if they had never been' (Shklovsky, 1965 [1917]: 12). As Shklovsky (1965 [1917]: 12) puts it: 'Habitualization devours works, clothes, furniture, one's wife, and the fear of war.' We may regard art as one of the remedies for this lack of awareness. He then adds a comment that, as we will see, becomes a key principle of later empirical work on literary reading: 'The technique of art is to make objects "unfamiliar," to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged' (Shklovsky, 1965 [1917]: 12). Shklovsky draws on several works by Tolstoy to illustrate his claim: in each, there is a process of 'defamiliarisation' (in Russian, *ostraneniye*) that makes familiar ideas or objects strange. In one, Tolstoy is presenting flogging in an unusual way: '. . . to strip people who have broken the law, to hurl them to the floor, and to rap on their bottoms with switches, . . . to lash about on the naked buttocks' (Shklovsky, 1965 [1917]: 13). As Shklovsky points out, one of Tolstoy's achievements is that the familiar name for the idea (here, 'flogging') is not mentioned; it is as though we are meeting it for the first time. Another technique for defamiliarising that he mentions is the 'roughening' of poetic language promoted by Leo Jakubinsky, one of whose techniques was the repetition of identical sounds (Shklovsky, 1965 [1917]: 22). Pushkin too was known for the deliberate roughnesss of the verse in his poetry, a device that 'impeded' the reading process.

Shklovsky's essay offers not only a preliminary contribution to a theory of literariness, but also concepts with psychological significance that have been taken up and elaborated in later studies of literary response. One of these concepts, central to Shklovsky's approach, is the impedance experienced by the literary reader and the suggestion that this is brought about by unusual verbal effects, such as in the Tolstoy story, which omits the name of the object he is describing. Thus Shklovsky (1965 [1917]: 12) tells us to expect the reading process to be prolonged, to be more difficult – to expect to feel more when arresting verbal artefacts are encountered and for the state induced in us by such perceptions to seem an end in itself. This, as we will see, is a set of testable propositions: not only can they be assigned a place in a theory of literature, but they can also be confirmed empirically as measurable components of literary reading (Miall & Kuiken, 1994).

Literariness: The next phase

Following the persecution of the two formalist groups in Russia in the 1920s, important the-
oretical development shifted to the Prague linguistic circle, in which the formalists 'played
a conspicuous part' (Erlich, 1981: 156). They were indebted in particular to the influence
brought to bear by the presence of Roman Jakobson. Shklovsky had already indicated an
important theoretical component of formalism in his stress on the maximising of attention to
the language of literature, on a reading that made the stone *stony*. The concept of attention
was to be taken up some decades later in the focus on empirical studies of absorption while
reading (Green, 2004). In the 1930s, however, in his essay 'Standard language and poetic
language', it was Muka ovský (1964) who put forward the concept of *foregrounding*, the
linguistic face of the psychological phenomenon of attention (that is, defamiliarisation), and
who was to claim that foregrounding was the primary component of the language of poetry.

Reminding us of Tolstoy's experience of habituation, in which his actions had become
automatic and unconscious, Muka ovský (1964: 19) proposes that:

> Foregrounding is the opposite of automatization, that is the deautomatization of an
> act; the more an act is automatized, the less it is consciously executed; the more it is
> foregrounded, the more completely conscious does it become. Objectively speaking:
> automatization schematizes an event; foregrounding means the violation of the scheme.

As is evident, this definition distinguishes actions with which we are thoroughly familiar from
those that strike us as odd or anomalous (as the sight of flogging would do, in a culture that
had never known corporal punishment). Muka ovský (1964: 19) has yet to apply this to poetry:

> In poetic language foregrounding achieves maximum intensity to the extent of pushing
> communication into the background as the objective of expression, and of being used
> for its own sake; it is not used in the services of communication, but in order to place in
> the foreground the act of expression, the act of speech itself.

In this way, the components of the poetic text, such as rhythm, metaphor, or alliteration, draw
the attention of the reader as objects of verbal pleasure in their own right, not because of their
significance in helping to frame the meaning of the poem. The foregrounding of different
components of a poem occurs systematically, but it cannot occur within a text as a whole:
'[T]he simultaneous foregrounding of all the components of a work of poetry is unthink-
able', says Muka ovský (1964: 20). If we consider Blake's 'The Sick Rose', however, this
might seem possible, given the shortness of the poem: the rhythm, as we have already seen,
is anomalous; there is only one rhymed couplet (*joy* and des*troy*); and 'Rose' has a common
meaning, which seems deautomatised as the poem unfolds, suggesting several less usual
meanings that would be hard to identify. Does each line contain some foregrounded feature?
But another way of regarding the poem is in terms of its context, whereby it points sideways
to related passages that occur throughout Blake's two books *Songs of Innocence* (1789)
and *Songs of Experience* (1793–4). This creates a framework of issues that serves to clarify
(by foregrounding) what function this poem has in the collection as a whole, for example
by echoing questions about diseased, damaged, or thwarted sexuality that occur elsewhere
(such as in 'Ah! Sun-flower', or 'London').

The arrival of the Russian group in Prague benefited Prague scholarship as much as
the Russians benefited from their contacts in Prague, since both drew on closely similar

concepts of language and aesthetics. Their collaboration resulted in joint manifestos such as one published in 1935, which presents the claim that only poetry 'enables us to experience the act of speech in its totality and reveals to us language not as a ready-made static system but as creative energy' (Erlich, 1981: 157).

In discussion of how art can be evaluated, Muka ovský indicates that there are no rules:

> The problem in evaluating is to determine how and to what extent a given component fulfils the function proper to it in the total structure; the yardstick is given by the context of a given structure and does not apply to any other context.
>
> *(Muka ovský, quoted in Garvin, 1964: 26)*

Thus any measure that we wish to apply must be intrinsic to the work; we cannot import it from outside. There are no 'rules', as Edmund Burke (1990: 49) puts it: '[A]rt can never give the rules that make an art' (but compare Attridge, 2004: 12).

Critical debates

Opposition to literariness

This makes the theory of literature interestingly complex: what is the relation of literariness to literature? What counts as literature if the components of literariness are liable to shift their meaning from one work to another (that is, what is plot in a novel if it can be as unstable as that of *Tristram Shandy*, as noted by Shklovsky)? The standard view of literature as developed by the formalists was strongly criticised by Terry Eagleton (1983) in his book *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. Theory is essential, for, in the words of Eagleton (1983: viii), 'without some kind of theory, however unreflective and implicit, we would not know what a "literary work" was in the first place, or how we were to read it'. Thus Eagleton (1983: 3) dismisses much of the account of the formalists: he discredits the claim that literature has its own internal laws, and that '[i]t was made of words, not of objects or feelings'. According to the formalists, literature was an assembly of 'devices', which worked to 'defamiliarize' the act of reading (Eagleton, 1983: 3). Defamiliarisation, however, implies deviation from a norm. Eagleton (1983: 5) questions whether there is or ever has been such a thing: 'The idea that there is a single "normal" language, a common currency shared equally by all members of society, is an illusion.' The formalists (in their early writings, at least) 'were not out to define "literature", but "literariness" – special uses of language, which could be found in "literary" texts but also in many places outside them' (Eagleton, 1983: 5). But, he claims, '[l]iterature, in the sense of a set of works of assured and unalterable value, distinguished by certain shared inherent properties, does not exist' (Eagleton, 1983: 11). With sufficient historical time and shifts in values, even Shakespeare could come to be considered not literature.

This aphoristic comment of Eagleton's sums up the problem that he and other recent theorists have set – that is, that literariness lies not in a set of literary devices, but in how people relate themselves to a particular piece of writing: 'There is no "essence" of literature whatever' (Eagleton, 1983: 9). In overstating his case here, Eagleton indicates how we might locate an answer to the problematics of the missing 'essence'. In brief, the 'essence' is not a fabulation – it is not merely missing; rather, essence lies in the rules of growth and change created at each encounter with a literary work, at each repetition of its formal structures – and the incentive to experience its difference from any other literary work is given by

its peculiar language or waywardness of plot or characterisation. Between the most striking and original literary work and the work that is dull and unoriginal lies a continuum (compare Stankiewicz, 1961, cited in Pratt, 1977: 25), along which some works are of doubtful essence: they will be read by certain readers with interest, but disregarded by others. But at each level, to borrow Burke's (1990: 49) terms again, 'art can never give the rules that make an art' – except that additional issues come into play when the rules of a given work low on the continuum appear to be stereotyped or ungenerative.

The Russian and Czech contribution to poetics that I have outlined initiated an important debate over the question of literariness. This was a central concept for these groups of theorists, but has been dismissed as an illusion in more recent thinking, such as in the opening chapter, 'The "poetic language" fallacy', to Marie Louise Pratt's (1977) book *Toward a Speech Act Theory of Literary Discourse*. Pratt's primary focus is on the difference from ordinary language said to be evident in literary texts. This sets the text apart from and above ordinary language and society, while it conceals its underlying ideology – in which claim, she sees a reinstatement of the art for art's sake position (Pratt, 1977: xvi). According to Jakobson (1935), however, this view, which equated poetic and aesthetic functions, was discarded early in formalist history. In Jakobson's (1978 [1935]: 83) account, 'this equation is unquestionably erroneous: a poetic work is not confined to aesthetic function alone, but has in addition many other functions'. These might include a scientific account or the writing of letters (Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* has been considered poetry; Keats' *Letters* convey key statements in his poetic theory). The poetic work, adds Jakobson (1978 [1935]: 84), is one 'whose aesthetic function is its dominant'.

At the beginning of her first chapter, Pratt (1997: 3–4) raises an important issue: citing Eichenbaum on the opposition of poetic and practical language, she remarks how this promotes the idea that literary language functions differently from ordinary language (compare Stockwell, 2012: 138–9), and that this results from the visible properties of poetic language that ordinary or prosaic language lacks. But this difference has never been tested, says Pratt. No one has troubled to examine whether the various literary devices also exist outside literature: 'Examples from literature are virtually never accompanied by data from extraliterary discourse' (Pratt, 1977: 5). Even the shifting terminology devised in naming the non-literary should be cause for concern: 'That the poeticians themselves have never been able to agree on a term for designating nonliterature should have led them to doubt the existence of any such monolith' (Pratt, 1977: 6).

While it is true that non-literary language as viewed by the formalists was never established with its own range of specific functions or forms, Pratt's book appeared a decade or more ahead of the empirical studies that would help to establish the validity of the contrast in linguistic and psychological frameworks (Hanauer, 1996; Hoffstaedter, 1987; Miall & Kuiken, 1994; van Peer, 1986). Meanwhile, other difficulties with ordinary language follow. For instance, the formalist Brik (cited in Pratt, 1977: 13) claims that verse is regulated 'by the laws of rhythmic syntax, that is, a syntax in which the usual syntactic laws are complicated by rhythmic requirements'. Pratt finds Brik problematic here, since Brik is said to assume 'that rhythmic organization is alien to non-literary discourse and can thus be taken as a distinctive feature of the poetic language', and that rhythm does not arise for those concerned with syntax (Pratt, 1977: 13). Similarly in her attack on Levin's (1962) book, Pratt takes issue with his concept of form, as 'dummy structures' in ordinary language, waiting to be filled in; according to Pratt, the contrast appears to be with meaningful, poetic structures as a part of the context for the creation of poetry, unlike non-literary language. Pratt here overlooks the great variety of 'dummy structures' that occur in everyday life, from making

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a will to direct debit instructions for the bank, none of which will be found to contain much poetic language (however this is defined).

Perhaps a more important problem is that Pratt (1977: 24) imposes the binarism of the poetic/nonpoetic formula in her readings of Havranek and Muka ovský, whereas it is clear that both assume that poetic features are present in literature, but function differently from how they function in ordinary language. Pratt also objects to the collapsing of the binary distinction of poetic and ordinary language to a continuum model. This is supposed to threaten 'the belief that intrinsic textual properties constitute "literariness"' (Pratt, 1977: 26). What is missing from her argument is a recognition of the difference between incidental, random occurrences of such features in contrast to their organised role in literature. Pratt continues by noting the difficulty of assigning literariness to prose, whereas the literariness of verse is well established: this calls for clarification and Pratt (1977: 26) remarks again on 'the poetic/nonpoetic dichotomy [which] raises the problem of empirical verification that . . . the binary opposition was designed to avoid in the first place'. In contrast, she appeals to the speech act approach to literature (which we will not pursue here), which:

> . . . enables and indeed requires us to describe and define literature *in the same terms* used to describe and define all other kinds of discourse. It thus does away with the distortive and misleading concepts of 'poetic' and 'ordinary' language.
>
> *(Pratt, 1977: 88, emphasis original)*

This creates another problem, however: it may efface what is distinctive about literature before it is decided how to describe and define it – and such a move would at the same time threaten the disappearance of literariness, since any features held in common by ordinary and poetic language would be familiar, whereas any feature unique to the literary would be invisible.

The empirical dimension

Empirical investigation (rather than verification) of some of these issues is possible and has been undertaken, as I will show. In this section, I will present work completed by the book historian Jonathan Rose (2001), whose readings of nineteenth-century memoirs of British workers has revealed a rich domain of uneducated literary reading. In the following section, I outline the modern, experimental approach to the study of literary reading, and describe a specific study of foregrounding by Hakemulder (2004).

Empirical study 1: Untutored reading

An influential postmodern view of reading is that it depends on acquisition of the right literary conventions. Without these, reading could not exist. Thus, in *Reading after Theory* Valentine Cunningham (2002: 5) points to the claim of Theory that: 'Reading is always a postlapsarian business. It has always eaten of the tree of theoretical knowledge. So it is never innocence. It simply cannot exist unschooled.' But prelapsarian reading (as we might call it) is just what Rose discovered. Readers of literature of 100 or 200 years ago not only had no acquaintance with the conventions and forms of literary reading, but also had never before read a literary work when they first picked one up – and yet found themselves able to read it successfully. Cunningham's theorists (2002: 5) would dismiss this possibility as myth:

There is, of course, a common fantasy of the independent, the natural reader, of men and women quite alone with the text, making sense of it by their own unaided efforts, uncontaminated by givens and presuppositions, by prejudices and doctrines, especially not anything that might be called theory, or (especially) Theory . . . But no one ever did read *de novo*, raw, naturally; understanding never came that easily.

But, as Rose shows through historical evidence, the reality is rather different, and surprising – and it calls into question the assertions of a number of recent theorists. As Rose (2001: 4) puts it:

The failure of practical criticism, as it is actually practiced, is methodological: with some exceptions it ignores actual readers. In this terrain, critics repeatedly commit what might be called the receptive fallacy: they try to discern the messages a text transmits to an audience by examining the text rather than the audience.

Rose notes that working-class readers are said to have no interest in reading the literary classics. As Rose (2001: 4) puts it, this is a theory that 'has no visible means of support'.

I cite below an extract from one of the accounts that Rose mentions. The author, Richard Hillyer (born 1901), was the son of a cowman in a poor Northamptonshire village, Byfield, near Billington. He attended elementary school in the village until about the age of 11. Hillyer says the lessons meant nothing to him, but the teacher, Mr Wickens, had a question period on Wednesday afternoons. Hillyer asked what a 'poet laureate' was – a term that he had seen in a newspaper. The question interested Wickens:

So, for ten minutes, he let himself go on it, and education began for me. There was Ben Jonson, the butt of canary wine, birthday odes and all the rest of it. I was fascinated. My mind was being broken out of its shell. Here were wonderful things to know. Things that went beyond the small utilities of our lives, which was all that school had seemed to concern itself with until then. Knowledge of this sort could make all times, and places, your own.

(Hillyer, 1967: 29)

In addition, the children were allowed to choose from a small library of books for half an hour of reading on Friday afternoon.

Among them were a few poems of Tennyson, printed on brittle, brownish paper, with a gaudy cover. It said on the title page that he was 'Poet Laureate' and that set me wanting to read them. The coloured words flashed out and entranced my fancy. They drew pictures in the mind. Words became magical, incantations, abracadabra which called up spirits. My dormant imagination opened like a flower in the sun. Life at home was drab, and colourless, with nothing to light up the dull monotony of the unchanging days. Here in books was a limitless world that I could have for my own. It was like coming up from the bottom of the ocean and seeing the universe for the first time.

(Hillyer, 1967: 30)

Among other books that Hillyer mentions appreciating were the novels of Dickens, which he borrowed from other houses in the village. These were 'knocked about old copies that

had been picked up at a rummage sale for a penny, or thrown in with a heap of odds and ends to make a bargain for sixpence' (Hillyer, 1967: 31).

Notable in Hillyer's comments here are remarks that anticipate more recent approaches to literature: the text world theory – the delight in literary language, especially imagery and sound ('incantations'). It would be of interest to conduct a stylistic analysis of this and other extracts from these memoirs of reading, to establish what aspects of poetic language appear to occur as if naturally to these readers.

I cite one other example, that of J. R. Clynes (1869–1949), who became a union leader and Labour Cabinet minister. In his memoirs, Clynes says that his father was illiterate, but that 'he and my mother taught me the essentials of knowledge. Two sisters by their great helpfulness increased my chances. My schoolmaster taught me nothing except a fear of birching and a hatred of formal education' (Clynes, 1937: 28). He continues: 'My school days have no pleasant memories' (Clynes, 1937: 28). Clynes (1937: 29) went to work part-time at the age of 10 in a cotton factory at Oldham, while continuing to attend school. At school:

> When we had been set poetry to learn at school I had furtively read on and on, avidly anxious for more, careless of punishments earned because I refused the drudgery of repeating one passage or another until it became a mere meaningless chant.
>
> *(Clynes, 1937: 31)*

While in the factory, Clynes remembers some lines of Milton from *Paradise Lost*, previously learned 'because I loved them'. Situated amidst the machines, 'I stood there, transfixed and dazed, while the "horrid front of dreadful length and dazzling arms" (Bk I, 563–4) swept forward at me, and only just in time did I skip swiftly back out of reach' – as if, through Milton's eyes, he saw the cotton looms advancing to attack him. 'After that the machinery had a different meaning for me; dimly I perceived the ordained perfection of its sweetly-running, magnificent rhythm' (Clynes, 1937: 31) – and Clynes recites poetry to himself while working to the rhythm of the machines.

These extracts, and others like them, suggest that literariness is intrinsic to the experience of literary reading – that it is waiting to be discovered.

Empirical study 2: Foregrounding and literariness

Several different experimental designs have been used to investigate the relationship of readers with their reading. These are practical studies, not exercises in the 'receptive fallacy', as Rose (2001: 4) puts it. Typically, these experiments are designed to examine the responses of actual readers. We might believe, for instance, that a particular text feature that occurs a number of times in a short story, such as free indirect thought, influences readers' empathy for a character. If we rewrite the story to convert each such feature to regular third person, does this reduce empathy? This might be measured by obtaining readers' free responses as they think aloud while reading, or it might be captured by asking readers for their ratings of sections of the story on one or more judgements (strength of emotion felt by reader, likeableness of character, etc.). We then compare responses to the original story with responses to the altered version to measure the effect of the feature in question. In another design, variations in text features are studied without manipulation. Short sections of the text as a whole are measured for the presence of a feature, such as foregrounding. Readers then rate the effect on them of each of the story sections in turn, showing whether the feature

in question has influenced their reading. Reading can also be influenced from outside the text, as it were. After the researcher chooses a suitable text, he or she tells readers in advance that the text is taken either from a literary story or a recent story in a newspaper. Does the preliminary orientation towards its genre influence the reader? (For other examples of empirical designs, see Miall, 2006.)

These three designs can be adapted to investigate a number of empirical questions: manipulation of a text feature; within-text differences, such as foregrounding; and the framing of a reading by preliminary genre categorisation. In the next section, I present an empirical study of foregrounding based on the manipulation paradigm and discuss its implications for understanding literariness in more detail.

Literary reading has had a number of claims made for its efficacy in understanding others (that is, empathy), moral development, outgroup perception, etc. But are such effects distinctive to literature, or merely a result of the contents of the text being read? In other words, does literary quality have any systematic value in bringing about such effects? If so, how are literary qualities (that is, literariness) recognised or defined? Muka ovský was responsible for the term 'foregrounding' – that is, the bringing to our attention of important and effective features of the literary text. The literary device is said to have the effect of disrupting or prolonging perception, thus renewing our understanding of the world around us. Other explanations of the effect of literature involve instructive content, empathy of the reader, or textual features other than foregrounding. Hakemulder (2004) points out that none of these explanations involve features distinctive to literary reading and that foregrounding itself occurs frequently in non-literary contexts, although its presence there is usually unsystematic and has little influence on the reader. A metaphor in a newspaper article, for instance, may be more likely to irritate a reader rather than interest or entertain her.

The Hakemulder study

Hakemulder (2004) used the rereading paradigm employed effectively by Dixon and colleagues (1993). Dixon and his colleagues reasoned that, because literary stories are more complex than popular fiction, the literary text would improve in the aesthetic enjoyment of readers for being read more than once. In this design, then, one of two stories was presented to readers: a story by Borges and a so-called true detective story (assumed not to be literary). Depth of appreciation was measured. After a second reading, this was found to have increased in the case of the Borges, but decreased in the case of the detective story. Dixon and his colleagues surmised that this improvement was the result of Borges' use of an ambiguous narrator, who is often uncertain about the story that he is telling. In two further studies, effects on appreciation were shown to result either from narrator ambiguity or the degree of complexity of the story.

Hakemulder's (2004) study was designed to compare a literary text high in foregrounding with an otherwise similar text low in foregrounding. It was predicted that the former text would have a greater impact on depth of appreciation and that it would also have a stronger effect on perception – that is, on opinions about immigrants in Holland. Thirty-two students completed the study, reading the opening 600-word section of Rushdie's (1988) *The Satanic Verses* in Dutch translation, either in its original form, as translated, or in a shorter version, from which most of its foregrounding had been eliminated.

Participants read their assigned text twice and responded to the appreciation scale (questions included 'Is this an example of good literature?', 'Did you enjoy reading the text?', 'Would you recommend it to a friend?', 'Do you want to read on?'). They were then asked

to complete a questionnaire on their opinion of the position of immigrants in Europe. These questions corresponded to issues evident in the Rushdie text or its variant form. It was predicted that those reading the original foregrounded version would score higher on the post-reading measures when comparing second with first readings.

Results showed that, in both groups, appreciation scores were approximately the same. Neither version of the text impacted on readers' opinions about immigrants. In an earlier pilot study, significant effects had been obtained, but these were attributed to readers' reading frequency. A second study was designed to employ more experienced, trained readers: freshman literary studies students.

In this study (experiment 1), student readers were randomly assigned to three groups: two experimental (a Rushdie text high in foregrounding or low in foregrounding), and one control. The same text and manipulation were used as before. The results for appreciation showed significant interactions for the questions on 'good literature' and enjoyment. For literary quality, scores increased significantly for the readers of the original version, while a slight increase occurred for the manipulated version. Increases also occurred for interest in reading the rest of the text. Tests of perception of immigrants showed significant increases in the acceptance scale, but for intolerance only those reading the original text containing foregrounding showed an increase. These modest results, Hakemulder (2004) suggested, may be the result of the low appreciation for the Rushdie text, given its unusual and striking style. Nevertheless, the emergent features that helped to shape the second reading appeared to show enhanced moral judgements about immigrants in the context of appreciation of foregrounding – that is, both content and form influenced readers' attitudes.

Following this study, as reported so far, several points can be made about literariness – a concept that occupies an important place in this study. Given that readers had the opportunity to reread the text (whether in its original or manipulated version) and to judge its literary quality, it is illuminating that Hakemulder's hypothesis about the effects of foregrounding were confirmed. Those who read the text containing the original foregrounding showed higher appreciation after their second reading when asked if this was good literature or whether they enjoyed reading it. In the Rushdie excerpt, an unusual setting and improbable action contribute to the text's foregrounding: these demand an exercise of the reader's imagination that the appreciation ratings show to have been easier during the second reading (since what is easier to enjoy attracts higher ratings). In the literary context, this ease indicates a greater command of the rules that emerged during the second reading, which make for greater aesthetic coherence – rules specific to this experience of reading, whether occurring consciously or unconsciously. Literariness thus has an emergent aesthetic quality that drives the dynamics of literary (but not non-literary) reading. Here, we find reflected the ethical attitudes of the reader (that is, the judgements about immigrants). As we saw earlier, Shklovsky's examples of defamiliarisation (which often depended on foregrounding in stories by Tolstoy) were largely drawn from the ethical domain. In this context, literariness serves to situate us in relation to a world of moral issues, created by, but not limited to, the vision of the writer, since both reader and writer share the imaginative work of literariness.

The Rushdie text may have presented readers with difficulties because of its unusual style; hence the modest results reported by Hakemulder (2004). A second experiment (experiment 2) was designed, focusing on a shorter and more accessible text (Nabokov's poem 'The Old Bridge') – one that was more easily manipulated to decrease the presence of foregrounding. Other variables were also introduced to track readers' responses. Sixty readers from a psychology of media course participated. In addition to a control group, one group read the original poem, while a second group read a manipulated version that

reduced the foregrounding. Foregrounding in the poem was predicted to increase the reader's appreciation for Nabokov's treatment of love. The manipulated version was designed to remove all foregrounding. Participants answered both appreciation measures and perception measures – that is, questions about the perceived complexity of the poem, such as whether they understood the poem, whether it had more than one level of interpretation, whether it was ambiguous, or whether it contained unnamed implications. The study also included a questionnaire on the participant's concept of love, consisting of thirteen bipolar adjective scales (for example fragile–strong, temporal–permanent, etc.). Since experience of literary reading was considered likely to affect the outcome, readers were also asked about how much time they had spent reading during the week prior to the experiment. Participants in the experimental groups read the poem, and answered the evaluation and perceived complexity questions, then repeated the procedure by rereading the poem and answering the questions again.

Results showed that some significant shifts in predicted directions occurred. In particular, the overall appreciation scores for the Nabokov poem were markedly higher than for the Rushdie passage used in experiment 1. Emergent effects that showed significant shifts for the original, but not the manipulated, version of the poem included seeing new aspects at second reading, whether the poem was enjoyable, and whether a third reading would be richer. Results from the bipolar adjectives test produced several interpretable factors, corresponding to those that were projected: at the second level, eternal love; at a third level, that eternal love is transitory (an implication of Nabokov's poem).

Appreciation measures also showed several significant findings. On enjoyment, the high foregrounding group shifted upwards, from a first reading of 4.78 to 5.30 at second reading. The low foregrounding group, in contrast, scored lower on the second reading, at 4.37 and 3.93, respectively. Emergent effects that occurred for second readings showed higher scores for those reading the original poem. For example, for new aspects perceived at the second reading, poem readers scored 3.78 compared with 2.62 for those receiving the manipulated version. For whether readers would benefit from a third reading, mean scores were 4.37 (original version) and 3.06 (manipulated version). Emergent effects, if they were present, occurred unconsciously, since there were no reports that the text was easier to understand on a second reading, nor that its ambiguity or implicit meaning were better detected – but this is not surprising: such meanings may not occur consciously until a poem has been read a dozen times. The literariness of a given text may be difficult to experience for some readers with some texts.

Conclusion

Not any text can trigger a literary reading. Conventions may be responsible for the recognition of literary text features (see Schmidt, 1982), but the present studies show that it is more likely in many cases that text features are responsible for triggering conventions. Literary reading, then, is an interaction of text variables and reader variables (if attempting a definition of literariness, this is a place to start). The finding that reported that reading frequency, as measured in Hakemulder's (2004) experiment 2, made no contribution to depth of appreciation suggests that immediate experience of the text plays a key role. As Hakemulder (2004: 213) puts it, it is the experiencing of textual features that seems to cause emergent literary effects: features such as narrator ambiguity, free indirect discourse, or foregrounding may direct a reader's attention to the text world being created as he or she reads. This autonomy of the text is one way of regarding the experience of literariness. That readers

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are aware of such emergent effects indicates a predisposition to be moved (in complex ways) by the act of literary reading, especially when supported by states of absorption or immersion – of being 'lost in a book'. To put it another way, literariness includes recognition of foregrounding and can, at the same time, raise awareness of the phenomena of the external world – in the case of the present studies, the experience of immigrants and the transience of love. Literariness thus involves both a feeling for the textures and dynamics of the literary work, and an immersion in the ambivalence of the human predicaments that are represented in it.

Related topics

cognitive stylistics; literary narrative; literary stylistics and creativity; poetry and poetics

Further readings

Attridge, D. (2004) *The Singularity of Literature*, London: Routledge.

This is one of the most succinct and forceful statements on what is distinctive about literary texts.

Leech, G. (2008) *Language in Literature: Style and Foregrounding*, Harlow: Pearson Longman.

Leech, a prominent leader of the British stylistics school, offers a detailed and extensive account of the range of stylistic features that occur in literary texts.

Miall, D. S. (2006) *Literary Reading: Empirical and Theoretical Studies*, New York: Peter Lang.

This comprises extensive coverage of empirical studies of reading – their aims, scope, and limitations – all described from the perspective of an empirical scholar.

Stockwell, P. (2012) *Texture: A Cognitive Aesthetics of Reading*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Stockwell makes an important contribution to explaining literary reading from the perspective of cognitive poetics.

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A range of different perspectives on the contentious problem of evaluating literary works are presented in this text, edited by a noted theorist of empirical studies.

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Literary stylistics and creativity

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Geoff Hall

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Introduction

The study of creativity is arguably central to the discipline of stylistics. An important way in which to understand stylistics is as the study of a distinctive style in a work or an author, or a genre or a period. A distinct style is taken to create distinct significance (compare Wales, 2011: 'Style'; 'Stylistics'). Creativity, in turn, is generally understood now as valued and unexpected innovation, making new connections (for example Jones, 2012). Stylistics thus fundamentally begins from a textual study of what is new, different, or distinctive about language use in a text. The interest, however, is not purely linguistic, but functional, in the sense that linguistic choices are taken to represent meaningful choices. In more recent times therefore, as I shall show, stylistics has moved from a purely textual search for distinctiveness and innovation to a broader understanding of language use as discourse, with the result that notions such as 'value' and the expected or unexpected aspects of language use must necessarily involve study of the production, reception, and dissemination of texts in specific contexts without which, it is now felt, formal features cannot be fully described and understood. Who exactly notices or values these features, and why might that be? Beyond this, though, stylistics now ranges far beyond the study of classic mainstream literature: literary stylistics remains at the centre of much stylistic writing and research, and literature is prototypically understood (even when this is problematised) as 'valued literature' – texts valued, especially in modern times, for their innovatory properties. Thus literary stylistics can be claimed to be centrally concerned with the study of linguistic and discursive creativity in literary texts.

Formalist stylistics

The teaching of stylistics usually begins with the fundamental notion still of 'deviant' language, which is 'foregrounded' for readers' attention by being unusually formulated, the form drawing attention to itself as in Jakobson's (1960) celebrated model of 'poetic' communication, in which poetry is itself conceived of as prototypical 'literature'. Jakobson proposes that unusual uses of language are noticed and so perform an important role in a reader's construction of meaning from a text. An unusual use is, of course, implicitly a comparative notion: 'unusual' compared to the usual. The usual can be seen as the norms of standard language use, or even the usual ways in which a writer uses language, and in one view can be looked at statistically, as a question of comparative frequencies of occurrence of

a form from which 'significance' can be calculated (sometimes distinguished as 'deviation': Wales, 2011).

Corpus stylistics is particularly strong at identifying such relative statistical frequencies and infrequencies. Thus 'stylometry' (Hoover, 2007, on the style of Henry James, for example) identifies significant patterns of distinctive language use, preferred words, constructions, and so on, by means of computerised sweeps through complete publications of an author. One issue that such work raises is how successfully statistics and software actually capture what an individual specific reader in a specific reading event or practice may notice. Claims sometimes need to be made for subliminal frequency effects, whereby corpus stylistics seems to reveal deviance that has not actually been consciously noticed by actual readers. (See also Mahlberg, 2013, for an exemplary corpus stylistic study of characterisation in Dickens's fiction.)

A related concern, central to sociolinguistic debates, is what exactly a 'norm', or 'ordinary' or 'standard' language, might consist of when there is demonstrably so much variation in actual language use. We do feel some uses of language to be unusual, and we do notice them and may (or may not) value such unusual uses of language, but the cognitive mechanisms of how this happens are still not entirely clear. What is clear is that this is not a purely textual activity – that readers bring their own prior experiences of language use to texts newly encountered, and that these experiences vary, so that what is unusual or notable to some may not be entirely so to others in all instances, even though much overlap of experience undoubtedly exists (compare Stockwell, Chapter 13).

The notions of foregrounding and deviance are known to have originated for modern stylistics with Russian formalist writings, and then Prague school research, in the early twentieth century, with Roman Jakobson (1896–1982) a central figure for both movements (see Miall, Chapter 11, for a fuller account). The Russian formalists were identified, as the name suggests, initially by their interest in linguistic and literary form. The object of research for the group was to formulate scientifically and objectively in what ways literary texts differed from non-literary texts, as it was assumed they did at this stage. A modern variation on the investigation into literariness might be the work of Dorst (2015), again based on corpus linguistic methodology, on metaphor in fiction. Metaphor, according to this research, is actually less common in fiction than in journalism or everyday conversation, but certainly where metaphor does occur, it is more often novel, self-conscious, and/or explicitly signalled ('creative'). Creativity derives from use, rather than being a purely linguistic and textual phenomenon, although interestingly making finer distinctions regarding the kinds of metaphor identified shows that the orientation toward self-conscious use of metaphor seems to be more likely in the literary setting, in some ways confirming the more intuitive proposals of formalists, as well as what our intuition as readers of literature might already suggest to us.

'Devices' such as metaphor were shown by the formalists to be important ways in which the felt or perceived 'literariness' of a text comes into being. These are the 'deviant' uses of language already mentioned – that is, if there is alliteration or metaphor, or any other possible device, occurring at what seems to be more than a chance level of frequency, or in other particularly salient or innovatory ways for a reader, it is assumed that there is a deliberate creative effect being attempted, whereby 'creative' means original, unusual, but also deliberate and intended rather than accidental, and thus we are in the presence of a literary text. Repetition and 'parallelism' (repeated or near-repeated structures, words, or other devices) are identified as the most important ways in which to effect foregrounding ('perceptibility' is another term used by the formalists for this phenomenon). Famously, Shklovsky (1917)

argued for 'defamiliarisation' (or 'deautomatisation') as the driving force of literary creation: 'Art exists to [renew perception] . . . '. Equally dramatically, Roman Jakobson (quoted in Eagleton, 2011: 2) described literature as 'organized violence committed on ordinary speech'. Paying attention to the language of other forms, a reader is led to think and notice in refreshed and non-habitual ways.

Geoffrey Leech (1969, 2008), who developed and illustrated the deviance tradition very lucidly for later British stylistics, famously noted the unusual lexico-grammar of Dylan Thomas' 'A Grief Ago', both in itself, but also, since the device is used by Thomas elsewhere as well, as a feature of Thomas' (habitual) style. Schematically, Leech (2008) makes a useful distinction between *primary deviation* (deviation against the background of general linguistic norms), *secondary deviation* (deviation against the norms of conventional poetic regularity, as in metrical variation and run-on lines in verse), and *tertiary deviation* (deviation against norms established within a literary text).

Jakobson (1960) himself instanced as 'poetic language' a political slogan of his time, 'I like Ike', in which the utterance is clearly patterned to be noticeable and memorable. Perhaps counterintuitively, parallelism and repetitions can also be centrally creative – a point to which I return in discussing genre later in this chapter. On the stylistic significance of repetition in literature, see in particular the work of Toolan (2012; see also Toolan, Chapter 14), who has persuasively traced the emotional effects of repetition in fiction and poetry. The difference between foregrounded form and repetition in promotional discourse such as 'I like Ike', or advertising more generally, and in literature lies, for Jakobson, in the differing functions of similar devices in Dylan Thomas or Gerard Manley Hopkins and in political propaganda. In the one case, the function is clearly to sell something or someone to a defined market, while the purpose of literature is less clearly focused, but usually taken to relate to imaginative activity and pleasure in play, including language play, and more highly valued as creative rather than utilitarian. Nevertheless, linguistically and textually the two practices cannot be distinguished out of context, and an individual reader or viewer may take as much pleasure, or more, from a good jingle as from a modernist poem (whereas an overt concern with form and language, from T. S. Eliot to John Ashbery, may be viewed more negatively as 'elitist'). With this differentiation, then, of 'literature' and advertising' (for example), the idea that literariness, and hence creativity, can be purely linguistic and textual is again slipping away, as is the idea that literary creativity is a distinct kind of activity. A more modern position in stylistics, as in literary theory, is to recognise that there is a continuum, rather than a dichotomy, between literary and non-literary uses of language, and that literature, or style, is not a purely linguistic category, but rather a socioculturally mediated way of taking meaning from texts in contexts, albeit admittedly particularly from texts that tend to offer more unusual or more stimulating linguistic or formal devices (Carter, 2004; Maybin, Chapter 1). Deviance is hard to identify in many cases and not a sufficient explanation for literary meaning making or valuation, but certainly will often enter into perceptions of literariness and of the valuation of a particular text or utterance. Similarly, repetition can be valued or disvalued in different circumstances and contexts. The form itself has no essential meaning or value.

Thus Toolan (2012) investigates, in a stimulating essay, the paradox that valued literature is typically repetitive, but yet not all repetition in literature is valued. 'Formula' or 'genre' popular literature (Mills and Boon romances, for example) are not highly valued, while the writings of James Joyce or Beckett are (see also Attridge, 2004). Literature is often characterised, for Toolan (2012: 21), by 'exceptionally adept uses of repetition', with an example

given from a Seamus Heaney poem. Jakobson's parallelism, it is noted, is essentially another way of saying 'repetition', and in general the patterning for which stylistic analysts look will be variations on repetition (see also the discussion of cliché, below). Even here, I would emphasise in response to Toolan that the repetition in D. H. Lawrence's great novels, *The Rainbow* (1915) or (even more so) *Women in Love* (1920), is valued by some, but criticised as repetitious, heavy-handed, and obfuscating by others. The repetition is textual, the valuation demonstrably varies, although I would probably put more weight on sociocultural explanations for this than would Toolan in his more textual approach.

Interest in repetition and difference also informs a later development of formalism less studied and reported on in Western literary studies than are deviance and foregrounding. This was the work on literary evolution or literary history, and particularly the history of genre evolution. This work is worth highlighting, however, in a discussion of how stylistics studies creativity, both of itself and for its links to the ongoing and later development of another twentieth-century theoretical school: the Bakhtin circle. By 1928, Jakobson had left Russia for Prague and, visited there from Russia by Juri Tynjanov, they formulated together an important set of hypotheses around what would come to be called 'literary evolution'. The focus was now not so much on innovation in individual works as it was on innovation in literary forms and schools. Why and how do new modes of writing come into being and become more highly valued, even as the older forms go out of fashion and seem to offer no further space for innovation (at that juncture, at least)? Their insistence now was that 'evolution is inescapably of a systemic nature' (Jakobson & Tynjanov, 1981 [1928]: 79) – that is, a new form cannot be understood without looking at all of the forms from which it consciously distinguishes itself: a comparative perspective again. Moreover, this perspective required the integration of what the linguistically trained Jakobson and Tynjanov (1928) called the *synchronic* and the *diachronic* – that is, historical social and cultural environments were relevant to literary developments, as well as the literary order itself. A new form develops because it is different from previously existing forms (a Saussurean structuralist principle), but also it develops because there are new speakers with new things to say and new experiences to write about (determinants external to the linguistic or literary system): change is not purely endogenous-internal and is not unmotivated even if it can be seen to take determinable forms. All forms, it was claimed, like all languages, as we recognise now, are continuously undergoing change, but these changes are not random, and can be studied and understood at least retrospectively, as variation from a 'dominant' form and style of a previous age. There is a system, but the system is changing all the time: what might now be called an 'emergent' system. The idea, developed further in later writings of Tynjanov in particular, is one of ongoing and unceasing 'struggle' for dominance between the new and the old – an idea anticipating a key claim of Bakhtin and Voloshinov, who were also beginning to publish around this time, although keen to distinguish their work from so-called scientific 'formalisms' (see also Erlich, 1980: ch. 14). The insight in Jakobson and other formalist writings that thought can be driven by language as much as language by thought is valuable for our understanding of creative and innovative thinking.

Elsewhere, Tomashevsky wrote of artistic evolution or innovation as 'creative deformation', and insisted that the 'perceptibility' of devices, apparent novelty, may actually be a return to an older, but recently unused device or form. For Shklovsky (quoted in Erlich, 1980: xiv), 'creation means change', although, of course, not all change will be generally positively evaluated. Thus, for later formalists, Shklovsky's idea of change as driven by 'deautomatisation' in art was not sufficient. Zhirmunskii, for example, in a polemic with

Shklovsky, argued that evolution cannot be accounted for in purely literary terms (quoted in Erlich, 1980: 256): 'The theory of automatization can explain only the fact of "movement" in literature, the inner necessity for its evolution, but not the nature or the forms of this development.' Later, in Prague, perhaps not coincidentally at the same time as Nazi forces were occupying Czechoslovakia, Muka ovský (quoted in Erlich, 1980: 256) made a stronger case still:

> Each change in artistic structure is induced from the outside, either directly, under the immediate impact of social change, or indirectly, under the influence of a development in one of the parallel cultural domains, such as science, economics, politics, language, etc. The way, however, in which the given external challenge is met and the form to which it gives rise depend on the factors inherent in the artistic structure.

Tynjanov saw parody in particular as a key moment in artistic development, when the old is sufficiently well known to be invoked, but can no longer be taken seriously as adequate expression and is becoming somewhat laughable. Again, we are reminded of Bakhtin on creativity and the importance of style: parody is an inappropriate or ironic, 'knowing' performance or imitation of a known pre-existing style, amusing in itself, but also intended to critique the inadequacy of the previous way of using language and of previous ways of thinking. The important factor to stress is again that of function: context, as well as content, make the difference; the parodied form would not be used to express that thought and therefore must be taken as parody. The parody is therefore understood ironically, itself inherently pleasurable to read and recognisable, but beyond that implicitly critiquing a previous ideological position, a way of thinking and using language no longer tenable. Lewis Carroll parodies established nursery rhymes expressing pious Victorian thoughts in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) because he finds such beliefs and such ways of teaching children both banal and wrong-headed. Readers are therefore invited to dismiss them by laughing at them.

A related and final important idea found in formalist writings on literary evolution, congruent with the points already made, is that the most highly valued literature can be understood and valued only against second- and third-rate contemporary writings; high, 'creative' literature is organically related to more popular literature. These works will all borrow from each other and use each other's devices, just as (for example) Shklovsky insisted that the *skaz* (folk tale) informed the development of the Russian novel (see also Propp, 1928) or as Bakhtin (1986) insists on the origin of literary genres in ordinary everyday 'speech genres'. Such positions are consonant with more modern ideas of the continuum of creativity, as opposed to exceptionalist ideas of literary creation, and creativity as perpetual and deliberate ongoing transformation of materials at hand into more highly valued 'new' forms, rather than the genius creating *ex nihilo* ('out of nothing') (compare, for example, Pope, 2005, as well as Carter, 2004). D. H. Lawrence's writings on love and sexual attraction are different, but not completely distinguishable, from mass readership romances of the later twentieth century if considered in purely linguistic terms, but they are valued quite differently (see Nash, 1990).

Discourse stylistics

With Bakhtin, many of whose writings revolve around investigations of creativity, we move from structuralism to a poststructuralist conceptualisation of creativity, from text

to discourse (see also Jones, Chapter 3). Bakhtin took strong exception to the idea that creativity can be considered as merely a rearrangement of the same old elements if that is what formalism seems at times to suggest. (I would argue that, at its best, it exceeds such thinking.) To catalogue the elements or devices of a work, or even of a genre, is rather like using grammar rules to explain invented sentences, and it cannot account for pragmatic meanings of utterances in use. Genre, for Bakhtin, is not to be seen as a mere collection of 'devices', but as a worldview, a vision of reality, and an intervention, inevitably partial, although it is claimed that the novel has the potential to show its users more than other genres. In this view, people respond to meanings, rather than language to language. The key to understanding genre, for Bakhtin and the Bakhtin circle, is the notion of any utterance being inhabited by, but nevertheless being a new, unique and distinctive, meaningful and evaluative inflection of, the words of others, 'appropriated' and 'accented' for new purposes in new circumstances. Bakhtin's most highly valued genre, or super-genre (exceeding the limits of previous genres), is the novel, its very name taken to indicate its potential for new ways of thinking and seeing, precisely because it is so catholic and capacious in the way in which it can borrow words of others – particularly in what Bakhtin called the 'polyphonic' novel, best exemplified for him by Dostoevsky's work. A literary genre like the novel includes 'secondary' transformations of multiple 'primary' speech genres and everyday genres, such as letters, diaries, and narratives. The novel, Bakhtin insists, relies on 'extra-artistic' sources for its new inflections and combinations. Genres, for Bakhtin, are forms of thinking, and are the major contribution of the humanities to Western thought and so to creativity, because they make alternative ways of thinking and seeing (and using language) possible. Crucially, literary genres offer an excess of potential for differential thinking beyond what is apparent in their own age, and to their own authors and first readers. The adaptability of genres is emphasised and the idea of cross-fertilisation.

In valuable Bakhtinian studies of the development of polyphonic free indirect speech by canonical modernist writers of fiction such as Lawrence and Woolf, Sotirova (2011, 2013) shows the workings of creativity as adaptation of an established technique into new ways of thinking and writing about the individual consciousness and interpersonal relationships. The distinct intonations of narrator and character perceived by readers in a work such as Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) are difficult or impossible to distinguish by the time of Lawrence's *The Rainbow* (1915), or Woolf's *The Waves* (1931). This is not because the writing is poorer or less self-assured (as some misinterpretations have it), but rather because ideas of truth, reality, and the individual consciousness had changed across the twentieth century and into modern times.

Julia Kristeva is usually credited with popularising Bakhtinian notions of transformations of the words of others into today's widespread conception across many disciplines of creation as 'intertextuality', emphasising Bakhtin's proto-poststructuralist idea of unfinalisability, the openness and inexhaustibility of semiosis in Kristeva's own later reformulations. (See Allen, 2011, for an historical and theoretical introduction to literary intertextuality.) Particularly attractive for key theoreticians of intertextuality such as Barthes (as summarised in Allen, 2011) was the idea of *heteroglossia*, the mixing of styles and genres in (for Bakhtin) the most highly valued literature – notably, the 'polyphonic' (many-voiced) novels of Dostoevsky. 'Voices', as signalled to readers by style shifts, are a central concern of any such analysis of novels and narration more widely, including key narratological issues such as focalisation and free indirect discourse. An evolution of the novel form from the romance of earlier ages is shown by Bakhtin (1981) to make possible new ways of thinking and talking about space and time, consonant with other social and cultural advances of

the modern age. In all of these ideas, the ascertainable derivation of new and creative forms and ideas from those pre-existing is a common theme.

Later, Derrida (1980) wrote in characteristically provocative ways of the simultaneous necessity, but impossibility, of genre for creative literature in particular. Repetition is a necessary, but impossible, condition for the workings of genre in this argument, and indeed Derrida's implicit argument seems to be that the most worthwhile literature will not quite fit any single genre even while playing with the possibilities offered by various genres. More modestly, Derrida could be read as claiming that all genres are necessarily intrinsically hybrid forms never finally allocatable to one single generic (assumed) tradition. In applied linguistic terms, this is also the position of Kress and Threadgold (1988), for example. Once again, repetition teases the researcher into creativity into or out of thought (as Keats might have had it). Genre is always mixed and processual (coming-into-being), but also constraining and pre-existent, and is therefore arguably both conservative and potentially subversive. The study of genre(s) in such a view can be seen as the entry into studies of creativity in language, ideology, and even of newly creative social identities (see Jones, Chapter 3; Bhatia, Chapter 9).

To consider a concrete example, the sonnet may be thought of by some as among the most fixed of literary genres. In the Victorian age, when there was a fascination with form and experimentation with forms not always recognised today, George Meredith, in his *Modern Love* sequence (1862), produced sixteen-line narrative sonnet sequences, yet many of us have been taught in school that sonnets, by definition, have only fourteen lines. Meredith's poems are nevertheless defensible and readable as sonnets – or at least as an orientation towards the classic sonnet – because of their structure, rhyme scheme, and concerns with love, but love for Meredith ('modern love') is now treacherous, adulterous, and leads to divorce, rather than echoes idealised cries to an unattainable Petrarchan or Shakespearean loved one. The sonnet has evolved to express new content and ideas. In the twentieth century, Tony Harrison also used sixteen-line sonnet sequences to write about his relationship with his parents in the *From the School of Eloquence* sequence (1978). Thus genre – for example, with the sonnet – can be shown to be more flexible than sometimes believed. In an interview, Harrison referred to Milton's earlier experimentation with the sonnet form to write about politics and religious violence as an important precedent for him in rethinking what he could do with the sonnet and in deliberately appropriating it for new contemporary purposes.

Staying with stylistic creativity as heteroglossia and transformation of supposed genre boundaries, a canonical poet such as Larkin (see examples in Toolan, 2012) deliberately and effectively mixes styles and registers to express his own contemporary thought and feelings. Cliché – supposedly the antithesis of literary creativity as originality and fresh expression – is repeatedly used by Larkin for effect. Hall (2000) writes on the pervasive use of cliché in Harrison: 'wish you were here', for example, is reframed from holiday postcard cliché to function as a particularly poignant farewell to his deceased parents. Normally unremarkable language is repeatedly foregrounded and held up for closer contemplation in the context of Harrison's late modern sonnets. Elsewhere, Samuel Beckett's pervasive uses of cliché are studied with great subtlety by Barry (2006), as Beckett explores religion, memory, literary, and other forms of authority, and indeed of the human condition as he sees it. Beckett, it goes without saying, consciously working in the 'wake' of James Joyce, but also of Flaubert and Proust, was one of the most creative and influential writers of the twentieth century, but this was not despite, but because of, his pervasive and defining use of cliché – that is, supposedly worn-out, meaningless, or uninteresting uses of language.

Again, how the language is used and its contexts of use show creativity in writing, rather than the forms themselves being intrinsically 'creative' or not. The language of the Bible, or of wider western European culture, is foregrounded and questioned by Beckett, as Barry reads his writing as a sustained interrogation of 'authority' in all of its forms. Beckett's linguistic strategies to achieve these wider aims are shown by Barry to be typically achieved by means of the modification of clichéd phrases, or through recontextualisation, including deliberately inappropriate or unexpected uses of set, intertextually recognisable phrases, as suggested by Bakhtin and the formalists' notion of 'parody'.

Future developments: Wider perspectives on semiotic creativity

The study of stylistics, in more recent incarnations, has extended its interests beyond the literary to the more everyday expressions, and beyond writing to other communicative modalities, in the Internet and other everyday exchanges (see Goddard, Chapter 23; Knobel & Lankshear, Chapter 25). Thus Carter and Fung (2007) study strategies of creativity in social media use – in this case, a sociolinguistic study of code switching, including the creative use of classical Chinese proverbs and idiomatic new coinages as Cantonese-using students explore and develop identities and social relationships and feelings about being away from home. The study is of interest as an example of creativity in practice, showing how pre-existing materials are adapted formally and functionally to new uses for new meanings in new contexts, whether the field is a literary one or more everyday exchanges.

Such sociolinguistic work on creative appropriations of language for new purposes can, in turn, be usefully related to wider important research on stylisation, notably in Coupland (2007) or Eckert (2000), in which stylisation is seen generally as a linguistic means to assert agency and identity for language users in given communities. Identity, in such a perspective, is differential, and register use, variation, and similar strategies are seen as deliberate innovations in pursuit of alternative or resistant values and worldviews. This area of research from sociolinguistics offers much to more obviously literary studies of linguistic creativity if the basic Bakhtinian paradigm of creativity as appropriation of others' words for new purposes is accepted as a working premise for research.

Elsewhere, O'Halloran (2014, 2015) argues for the stylistic interest of Internet 'film poems', in which images and even wider narratives are generated, or at least referred back, to precise linguistic details of the originating poem. Pedagogically, the approach promotes the study of linguistic creativity, but beyond this, students are prompted to work creatively themselves across modalities starting from a linguistic base. In his paper on 'performance stylistics', O'Halloran (2012) gives an example of how interpretation of literary texts can bring together Internet use and stylistics in new and creative ways, with inflections from literary and critical theory. The approach will not appeal to, or indeed convince, all, but is unarguably creative and innovative.

Jeremy Scott (2014) has taken broader proposals in Pope (2005) and others to develop a more specific book-length, bottom-up approach to teaching and developing creative writers by using the precise tools that stylistics can offer, with precise examples and exercises. A concern for creativity is increasingly important for pedagogy, and stylistics is seen by many stylistics writers as having much to contribute to a more participatory and interventionist teaching of language and literature, as well as to the teaching of creative writing itself (see also Harper, Chapter 31). Short (1996, for example) has similarly consistently claimed that stylistics can offer a secure way into literary reading for less experienced and less confident readers of literature.

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Another related area of creativity in language use on which stylistics is beginning to work more systematically is literary writing in the so-called new Englishes, world Englishes, or indeed beyond the ideology of a single self-contained language in our brave new multilinguistic and multicultural world – what Makoni and Pennycook (2007) and others characterise as 'translanguaging', which moves beyond anything that can be captured by classic notions of 'code switching' and bilingualism. In the kind of writings instanced in Ahmad (2007) and Chi'en (2004), we see again that value and creativity are typically contested topics and very much to be read in context. In those examples, the very notion of a single language called 'English' is effectively called into question more radically than the older ideas of 'deviance' or variation can capture. Value and 'verbal art' (Bauman, 1975) in such work are contested in Bakhtinian fashion in creative, innovative ways, with group and personal identities at stake. Literary creativity in 'new/world Englishes' is understudied or only poorly studied from the point of view of discourse stylistics. Talib (2002), Kachru (1985), or Chi'en (2004) focus too heavily on forms alone, ironically reinforcing hierarchies of value and power by foregrounding 'non-standard' uses of language, often from what seems an increasingly dated nationalistic and standard language perspective, whereby a national literature is assumed to be easily identified and the best way in which to consider language use in literary creativity is as variation from an assumed norm. They invoke the concept of 'speech communities' in which a more post structuralist take on sociolinguistics and identity prefers to consider more contingent and shifting 'communities of practice' in the contemporary world (compare Eckert, 2000). From the more contemporary perspective of 'translanguaging', to look at incidental linguistic features of dialect representation is inadequate, if not rather beside the point. Rushdie and Arundhati Roy, but also Ha Jin, Xinran, and other Chinese diasporic writers, are using English in their own ways for their own purposes, and it is not helpful to hunt for tokens of the exotic in their work (see Ahmad, 2007, for examples of texts that would prompt such analyses). Some indicative, more sophisticated, analysis can be found in Pope (2005) or Vethamani and McRae (2005), but there is no extended and systematic stylistic writing on this cutting-edge literary work as discourse rather than as, on the one hand, words and sentences, or on the other, literary criticism. Much more remains to be done in this challenging field to help us to better understand the larger issue of how creativity in language emerges and works, as well as to illuminate individual works and authors, to mediate, in fact, more traditionally linguistic and more literary approaches.

Sanders (2015), in the same way, usefully summarises and extends work on multimodality, adaptation, and appropriation – for example ongoing and ever-more-popular transmutations of Lewis Carroll's *Alice* books – but again more precise stylistic work of the transformations needs to be done to extend the reach of stylistics, and also to deepen understandings of how such cross-modal creativity can be seen to work to the benefit of both literary studies and of stylistics. The playfulness and characteristic pastiche and parody of much postmodern writing, largely intertextual in nature, would seem to require more careful stylistic analysis – specific attention to the details of the workings of language – than they are usually given. Beyond this, are reading and writing practices of modern audiences changing with new media and the ever-expanding availability and accessibility of multiple texts and modalities? It seems likely, but is an empirical question that will require further reader research to understand better (compare Swann, Chapter 16, on the study of readerships and literary reading). Jones (2012) includes important suggestive short essays by Thurlow and others on creativity in the new media, which can point us in directions for more future research.

Conclusion

In my opening paragraphs, I cited modern understandings of creativity as deliberate, valued innovation. The challenge for a discourse stylistics of creativity is to show, with any given text or set of texts, how they meet these criteria. Specifically, it needs to be shown how and why a text is, or came to be, valued for these qualities and by whom, and generally the context-bound nature of creative uses of language. Hence my own chapter here touches on relevant research in sociolinguistics and discourse analysis. My examples in passing of parody, cliché use, and creativity in world Englishes are intended to give an idea of what such an approach might study and how it might study it. I have also given some indication of the overlapping issue of how this study is being extended to creative, and arguably literary or near-literary, uses of language in the rapidly developing new communicative media. There is an exciting, ever-expanding body of work to be done on the stylistics of literary creativity, which can build on or extend most of the topics discussed in this volume.

Related topics

cognitive stylistics; creativity and discourse analysis; creativity and Internet communication; literariness; literary narrative; literature and multimodality; poetry and poetics

Further reading

Ahmad, D. (2007) *Rotten English*, New York: Norton.

This is an anthology of creativity in the so-called new Englishes.

Allen, G. (2011) *Intertextuality*, 2nd edn, London/New York: Routledge.

This book contains a useful introduction to intertextuality and its later developments into the study of multimodal creative adaptations and appropriations.

Fowler, R. (1982) *Literature as Social Discourse: The Practice of Linguistic Criticism*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

This volume contains some of the best stylistic analyses of literature from a Bakhtinian perspective to date, but much more interesting work remains to be done in this vein.

Jakobson, R. (1960) 'Linguistics and poetics', in T. Sebeok (ed.) *Style in Language*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, pp. 350–77.

This is a classic statement of modern textual stylistics – a benchmark for the discipline, even though many now would want to play up the functional aspects more than the textual-linguistic aspects, as argued in this chapter.

Leech, G. N. (1969) *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry*, Harlow: Longman.

This is another classic of stylistics, well worth revisiting for its lucidly argued and illustrated examples of textual and linguistic creativity in mostly canonical valued literary texts. Updated examples of the approach can be found in Leech (2008).

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Cognitive stylistics

Peter Stockwell

Cognition and style

When stylisticians of literature talk about 'style', they have traditionally referred to the textual patterns that are the result of choices made by writers. The creativity of the author has largely not been a direct concern; instead, authorial creativity has been regarded simply as the motivating force that produced the text. And it is the text itself that has been the focus of analysis and interest. At the same time, stylisticians have traditionally focused on the text as the location for meaning and aesthetic form, with the observing reader being regarded merely as the place where the effects of meaning, emotion, or evaluation happened. The creativity of the reader has not really been a direct matter for analysis either.

This text focus has been extremely productive and valuable for stylistics, serving as an antidote, on the one hand, to the sort of biographical speculation that has passed for literary criticism in the past and, on the other, against an approach that treats the reader simply as a psychological case study to be explained. Biographical criticism treats the literary text often simply as a fossilised historical artefact – as the fully formed product of artistic genius; psycho-criticism treats the reader as if on the couch, or it shades into a full social science of the process of reading in general. In both cases, the literary text itself, and the act of creation that is a collaborative process between author and reader, have often been neglected. Creativity itself has either been assumed to be an ineffable intuition of the author or a general human faculty that is common to all texts. In spite of the denials of a new historicism, pinning the literary work to its originating culture and authorial life effectively closes a range of readerly interpretations and leaves literature as a form of archaeology. Deconstructive approaches that emphasise a free play of meaning or meaninglessness are a travesty of linguistic description. And approaches that set out to explore psychological universals tend to lose sight of the uniqueness and singularity of the literary work. Creativity itself has been underexplored in all of these traditions.

My characterisation here is partly cartoonish, although I would insist that there is an element of truth in it. The argument is that creativity has not been directly addressed by a literary criticism that has mainly been concerned with the history of writing and the particular archival example of the literary work. It has not been addressed by a social science of reading that aims at an account of the psychology of reading in general. Even in stylistics, the focus on textual patterns has traditionally diminished attention paid to authorial and readerly creativity. For stylistics, this perhaps has its roots still in the twin prohibitions of Wimsatt and

Beardsley (1954a, 1954b) against the 'intentional fallacy', on the one hand, and the 'affective fallacy', on the other: do not imagine that you have access to the author's thoughts, and do not treat readers as case studies for reading in general.

These injunctions have served stylistics well for a long time. More recently, though, we have been able to develop better tools for understanding mind and language to the point at which we can face down these twin prohibitions directly. This better toolkit comes from the application of cognitive science and literary-linguistic analysis in the form of a *cognitive stylistics*, which forms part of a wider cognitive literary studies. The emphasis over the last couple of decades has been towards a rigorous account of reading and readerly effects; more recently, and surprisingly, we have been able to develop a similarly systematic account of what authorial creativity really involves.

The spread of cognitive poetics

Although it could be argued that the tradition of applying our latest best understanding of language and mind to literature has its origins in ancient classical rhetoric, the current manifestation of the phenomenon has its origins in Tsur's *cognitive poetics* of the 1970s. Tsur (1987, 1992) pioneered an account of literary meaning and effect that treated linguistic patterns as correlates of human cognition, and drew on neuropsychology, as well as stylistics and literary theory. A fortuitous collision of other advances immediately following this can also be discerned with hindsight. The field of stylistics was discovering new capacities arising from innovations in pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and discourse analysis in the 1980s. All of these disciplines offered a systematic means of exploring apparent intention, non-literal meaning, inference and implication, ideology and cultural setting, and a rigorous account of context. Crucially, it became obvious that literary meaning and aesthetic effects in language could be properly addressed only by considering whole texts, and involving the dispositions and knowledge that readers brought to the experience. Stylistics began to draw on empirical studies in psychology and social science in general, in order to explore readers and reading. (See Carter & Stockwell, 2008, for a historical survey.)

At the same time, a parallel movement within theoretical linguistics was emerging, with a similar dissatisfaction for formalist approaches to language. The efforts in the 1970s to develop artificial intelligence and machine language had directed researchers towards the understanding that schematic knowledge and idealised models of the world needed to be part of a linguistic account. A computer program needed to have a contextual experience of its world in order to be able to produce and understand utterances that had not been programmed in literally – which revelation brought creativity to the fore. Different models for understanding this readerly knowledge were developed, as scenarios, scripts, schemas, macrostructures, and frames – all essentially trying to describe the same observed phenomenon. Also within language study, a cognitive linguistics was emerging that aimed at describing language with the language-user in context as the focus of the account. Influential work connecting linguistic form and mental faculty appeared in the study of metaphor (Lakoff, 1987; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

By the turn of the century, there was a large body of work that could be gathered together as a broadly common cognitive scientific approach to literary description. Generally, this has been called 'cognitive poetics', widening Tsur's original coinage to include schematic and cognitive linguistic developments (Gavins & Steen, 2003; Stockwell, 2002). Where there has been a particularly text-based focus in the analysis, the approach has more often been called 'cognitive stylistics' (Semino & Culpeper, 2002). Where there has been less textual

focus and more thematic concerns, a broad 'cognitive literary studies' can be discerned (Jaén & Simon, 2012; Zunshine, 2010, 2015). What all of these associated approaches have in common is a concern to account for literature as a natural human capacity, and for reading as an activity that can be understood and explained in a disciplined way.

For cognitive stylistics researchers, style is the creative choice of an author, drawing upon the capacities that language affords and constrains. Drawing on those same language capacities, and sharing what might broadly be called their human condition, readers also engage in creative reconstruction and imaginative construction when reading literature. Cognitive stylistics or cognitive poetics (I will use the terms interchangeably) is thus centrally and inherently a discipline that explores literary creativity in all its aspects.

Key areas in cognitive stylistics

The fundamental principles of cognitive stylistics are largely drawn from the cognitive sciences in general. They can be summarised as follows.

- Language is not a separate part of human experience, but is fundamental to it. Language is therefore natural in origin, rather than artificial, or technological, or part of culture; these aspects emerged interconnectedly and later.
- Language is embodied in the sense that much of it is dependent on the fact that we all basically share the same human shape, condition, and experience. So it is not surprising when we see common metaphors or other language structures across the world's languages.
- Language is built on, and adapts, our other perceptual faculties, such as sight, sound, touch, taste, smell, and our sense of physical space and movement. There is no separate 'language module' in the brain. Patterns in language are thus continuous with these other aspects of experience.
- Language includes cognition, perception, memory, anticipation, speculative modelling, social relationships, meanings, and emotions, and so a disciplined account of it should encompass these matters as well.
- Language description must include an account not only of the constraints and habitual patterns of the system, but also of the creative flexibility and imaginative innovation at the centre of language practice.

These broad principles can easily be applied to literary reading. In this section, I can very briefly sketch some of the different aspects of the field. It is important to remember, though, that almost every literary text and reading can be analysed along every one of these dimensions. In essence, everything connects with everything else. It will become apparent that creativity is a basic design feature in all of these concepts.

Figure and ground

A fundamental human capacity is our ability to distinguish different objects in our perception, and to pay attention to one or a single group of them with more care and intensity than other, backgrounded objects. This capacity is clearly evident in the visual field, but also in our ability to filter in and out different sounds, tastes, smells, and physical textures. We can delineate objects from their backgrounds, discern nearness and distance, observe and predict spatial movement, conceptualise one thing being hidden by another thing, and understand

agency when an object acts on another. There are textual equivalences for all of these *figure and ground* relationships.

The ability to foreground a textual element and background the others is, of course, a matter of the patterning of the text, but it happens in the mind of a reader only with the involvement of the reader. The process can be automatic and habituated, whereby a particular reader simply makes sense of the text and does not notice certain elements being placed into the foreground of attention. Alternatively, the process of foregrounding can be increasingly active and self-aware, as readers notice certain aspects of the text, or are aware of their own reading process. This can reach its ultimate expression in a case in which a reader deliberately pays more attention to parts of the text that appear not to have been stylistically foregrounded by the author. This sort of resistant, or dispreferred, reading is an important part of the range of responses available to literary readers.

I will return to the notion of resistant reading below, but here we must notice that figuring and grounding seem to be fundamental to language itself. Many forms of *cognitive grammar* distinguish between the different prominence given to named objects in a textual field. It is possible, for example, to regard the agent of a clause typically as having figural prominence and the other referents in the sentence (such as direct and indirect objects, other circumstances, instruments, and patients and beneficiaries of the verb, for example) as being relatively backgrounded. Action and agency are thus matters of figure and ground relationships, and although the text provides the framework for generating these relationships, the imagination of them happens in the creating mind of the reader.

Figure and ground are not simply crucial matters of clausal grammar that enable cognitive stylisticians to explore prominence, significance, agency, ambience, and texture in literary works (see Harrison et al., 2014). The human capacity for attending to one thing in preference to another operates at every level of cognition. So certain characters have more prominence or significance than others; certain objects in a described room, or aspects of an imagined landscape, or certain striking descriptions in themselves will offer themselves for readerly figuration. In short, the entire texture of feeling across a literary reading can be explored and analysed based on figure and ground descriptions (see Stockwell, 2009).

Prototypicality

The emphasis on figure and ground might look at first like a simple binary pattern of the sort that informed much of the literary criticism arising from early structuralism. However, it is important to remember that figure and ground are attentional phenomena: a figure is a thing, but a ground is simply not-a-thing – that is, you cannot look at, imagine, picture, point at, or be aware of the ground, because as soon as you do that, it ceases being backgrounded and becomes a figure in your attention. Figure and ground are therefore not binary objects, but instead operate along a scale of attentiveness. The process of reading is online and dynamic, so a figure at one moment in a text can quickly be occluded by another and the first object can fade from attention to form part of the background.

Such a scaling of attention draws on the cognitive linguistic notion of *prototypicality* (see Lakoff, 1987). Simply, this claims that human categorisation does not operate in terms of absolute category-membership, but rather in terms of a sort of 'best fit' example. In other words, a poodle is not simply a type of dog, but is a good example of a dog. For many people, other dogs are more 'doggy' than a poodle, and so are better examples of a dog: a terrier, collie, or Labrador, perhaps. Some people think that big dogs are better examples of dogs than lapdogs. Most people will act as if an Old English Sheepdog is a better example

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of a dog than a Louisiana Catahoula Leopard Dog. In this sense, a cat is not simply 'not-a-dog'; it is simply a very bad example of a dog. If this sounds strange, simply consider that a spider, or a pencil, or the notion of liberty are even worse examples of dogs, compared with a cat – that is, 'dogness' is scalable. Prototypicality says that every concept is scalable.

The reason that prototypicality is crucial to human creativity is because this scalability is not absolutely shared identically by all people. Our notions of prototypicality are situated in the particular circumstances in which they occur and are experientially based. So your own sense of the best examples of dogs will depend on your own life experience of dogs and on the situation at hand. Isolated on an ice lake in the Arctic with a sled, a Siberian Husky is a better example of a dog than a Yorkshire Terrier. Dining in an exclusive Parisian bistro, a Pekingese is a better example of a dog than a St Bernard. It is this flexibility and adaptability in categorisation that allows us to imagine personification, for example: the dog that talks, wears clothes, has emotions, expresses a consciousness, has memory and ethics. Think of the different readerly scaling of dogs involved in imagining Snowy (*Tintin*), Jip (*David Copperfield*), Argos (*The Odyssey*), Buck (*The Call of the Wild*), White Fang (*White Fang*), Toto (*The Wizard of Oz*), or Mr Bones (*Timbuktu*). Our emotional proximity to or distance from a character can depend on how good an example of a person that character is. He or she might be fully and richly realised, or merely a type or token. Across this scale, different readers will have different relationships with fictional people.

Resonance and ambience

Together (and as mentioned briefly above), the notions of figure and ground and proto-typicality form the basis for a model of cognitive grammar that has been used by cognitive stylisticians to account for a range of literary effects. In Langacker's (2008) approach, clausal elements are understood as items that are profiled in attention, and the predications that verbs typically enact are understood as schematic motion. A clause acts like a sort of action chain, sending energy from the item with agency towards the other participants. This approach to grammatical form encompasses the creative imagination that is required of a reader as an inherent part of the theoretical apparatus. Different readers might construe the same sentence or passage of text in different ways, because their simulation of the meaning is likely to be different: they will pay more or less attention to certain elements, foregrounding some over others, and drawing on their own experience not only for meaning, but also for the feelings associated with the sense.

A cognitive grammatical stylistic analysis can thus begin to account for aspects of liter-ary reading that have traditionally eluded rigorous literary critical analysis because those aspects have been very delicate, subjective, or difficult to articulate. Matters of the per-ceived atmosphere and tonal qualities of a passage of literature, for example, are especially difficult to describe precisely – and yet this literary *ambience* can be explored in cogni-tive grammatical terms (see Deggan, 2013; Stockwell, 2014). The strikingness of a literary work, its memorability, how it *resonates* with your own life in either a phrase, or a powerful image, or how the voice of a narrator or character has an emotional impact: all of these common literary experiences can be explored from a cognitive grammatical perspective.

Of course, literary commentators have been able to discuss these sorts of impressions for centuries, but for the most part the discussion has not been very analytical or connected sys-tematically with an overarching theory until recently. A cognitive stylistic approach allows the researcher to understand how resonance and ambience work at a very particular clausal level, but also at a discourse level and all points in between. These discussions, until now,

have been purely intuitive and impressionistic, appealing to common experience with shared cultural presumptions. Cognitive stylistics allows a discussion of the variability of readerly creativity, while keeping cultural and personal experience to the forefront of awareness.

Metaphor and framing

Cognitive stylistics has maintained a central interest in *metaphor* from its inception as a discipline. Metaphor in cognitive linguistics is not only the textual realisation of a rhetorical trope, but also is treated as a fundamentally important aspect of human conceptualisation. Behind the linguistic metaphor 'The weight of this sad time we must obey' (*King Lear*) lies a set of conceptual metaphors in which time is concretised, balanced, and personified, for example. Some of this is conventional and some is innovative, and together the effect is to draw the audience into the sense of doom in the last few lines of the play.

Metaphors are thus neither simply linguistic forms nor mere ornamentation in cognitive linguistics, but have been regarded more importantly as textual manifestations of under-lying shared, or perhaps even universal, properties of human perception. The cognitive stylistic treatment of conceptual metaphor manages to capture this balance between the particular stylistic uniqueness of the expression and its cultural value and wider resonant power (see Freeman, 1996).

Metaphors, in this approach, activate domains, or *frames*, of knowledge and experience, with the new domain serving creatively to restructure the familiar domain. So the difficult concept of TIME is understood in terms of the familiar experience of SPACE, or ETHICS as BAL-ANCE, or BEAUTY as THE SUN, or LIFE as a JOURNEY, or TIME as MONEY, or IDEAS as BUILDINGS, and so on. These conventional metaphors are often so familiar that we barely notice them as metaphors at all, although they tap into a set of ideas and assumptions that underlie the language of a literary text. Striking and innovative, and deviant and dissonant, metaphors operate with the same mechanism, but they are often noticeable and resonant, and involve a greater demand and engagement of the reader. Such metaphors are often encountered in highly wrought poetic writing: lyricism, surrealism, imagism, for example.

A metaphorical practice can become normalised even with a single text, so that it seems to establish a frame of understanding. For a reader to engage with the text then involves repeated activation of that conceptual metaphor, and the framing discourse comes to seem reasonable and normal. This is a powerful political technique (see Lakoff, 2002, 2006), but it is also the basis for engaging a reader in a fictional world.

Simulation and deictic projection

One of the key insights from cognitive science has been that conceptualising an event or experience, and articulating it, or even reading about it, seems to activate the same faculties at second-hand as are exercised during first-hand experience. So the difference between, say, catching a ball and reading about catching a ball is not as great as you otherwise might imagine. This also goes for all activations generated by texts. It seems that we simulate the original perception offered by a text and recreate it in the mind in order to experience it again (or virtually for the first time) (see Gibbs, 2006).

Simulation accounts for the counterintuitive phenomenon in which readers of fictional events are moved emotionally by those events and the characters' experiences of them. Literary reading generates a range of emotions, moods, and other effects that are actual emotions and moods: we do not feel *fictional* sadness, or *imaginary* melancholy, or *pretend*

laughter during literary experiences.

In cognitive stylistics, we can trace the close textual patterns that allow for such experiences, for example by analysing the deictic aspects of a text. These are all those parts of a text that set out the different positionings of fictional, narratorial, authorial, and readerly minds. So, most obviously, the personal pronouns, and the spatial and temporal aspects of a text, allow a reader to imagine and locate a particular character's perspective, and also to establish what his or her imagined viewpoint is in relation to that deictic centre-point. This *deictic projection* is the stylistic means by which a reader can populate the imagined scene and keep track of all of the people in it.

However, other aspects of character positioning can also be found. Any element that delineates the interpersonal relationships between characters is an aspect of social deixis that can also be analysed. This includes not only terms of address and styles of speech, but also markers indicating the perception of social relations. Even the word choices that are associated with particular characters can draw a social deictic relationship in the world of a literary text. Of course, those choices are attached to characters, but are imagined to be the mediated words of narrators, and they are also the actually composed words of the author – and by exploring these textual and compositional deictic markers, the cognitive stylistician can trace all of the relationships established in a literary work. These include the author–reader relationship.

For example, in reading *David Copperfield*, I understand the relative positions of all of the characters physically, socially, and emotionally. I also understand the special relationship between the narrating character 'David Copperfield' and the other characters. Furthermore, I know that the narrating mind and the arrangement of the entire novel are part of the creative choices made by Charles Dickens. And I can see, for example, in the character of Mr Dick, an ironic counterpart of Charles Dickens and an in-text parallel commentary on the autobiographical aspects of the story. My picture and experience of all of this has been co-created with Charles Dickens, but the world that represents it finally is created in my readerly head. And it will be both similar to, and different from, your own picture of *David Copperfield* in many ways.

Text worlds

In processing the deictic centres of all of the different entities and characters that make up the minds within the novel *David Copperfield*, as a reader I direct my attention into and out of an imagined world. Across the boundary of that world, I have to keep track of different states of knowledge and experience, and the different properties of the fictional world compared with my own situation. The text itself does not provide enough denotative information to account for the richness of my sense of the fictional world, so I am clearly filling out the sense of the world as an act of my own imaginative creation. My mental representation of the fiction is modelled as a *text world* in cognitive stylistics (Gavins, 2007; Werth, 1999).

The text world that a reader co-creates with an author is not a static representation, but instead is conceived as a working heuristic tool that readers use as a fundamental means of reading. I build a world and use my model to keep track of who is where, who knows what, who remembers what has happened, what else is in the scene, and so on. The framework usefully allows us to discuss aspects of fictionality, plot development, and the landscapes of fictional works in systematic ways. It allows us to understand how we can hold metaphors,

negations, flashbacks and flashforwards, speculations, and other unrealised possibilities in our minds as part of the rich texture that we create as readers of literature.

However, text world theory has also been used as a means of analysing the emotional engagement of readers with literary worlds. The spatial metaphor underpinning the idea of motion into and out of a text world has also been shown to work in terms of the emotional closeness and distance between reader and character. When a reader's attention is focused inside a fictional text world, there is a transporting effect whereby a reader can become absorbed in the world of the literature (see Gerrig, 1993). In such reading experiences, readers report heightened feelings of involvement and emotional investment in the fictional people and worlds that they are experiencing.

Mind-modelling

In all of this process, it is clear that readers imagine versions of authorial, narratorial, and character minds, and are able to have relationships with them. This is possible because of our capacity for *mind-modelling* – that is, we imagine other people to have a consciousness like our own, and we fill in further details about their lives, thoughts, and perspectives. This cognitive poetic account of characterisation draws on the notions of 'theory of mind' and simulation from cognitive psychology. Under application to literary and fictional characterisation, our basic human capacity for imputing essential person-ness to other people is extended into a rich model of a fully rounded character (see Zunshine, 2006). We can imagine their beliefs, feelings, emotions, aspirations, goals, and so on, on the basis of the text-driven information that we are given as readers. It should be clear again that any given text cannot possibly provide all of the denotational information sufficient for the richly textured sense of character that the vast majority of readers routinely create in literary reading. Mind-modelling is an active, creative, and productive process that goes beyond the basic information of the text.

Mind-modelling is an everyday process that we use to keep track of our different relationships with every person in our lives. Literary mind-modelling is no different. Of course, readers mind-model not only fictional characters, but also the imagined authors of those literary works. This means that cognitive poetics has a theoretically grounded and systematic principled means of discussing and analysing authorial intention – not as telepathy, nor as the sort of speculative biographical criticism that I outlined at the start of this chapter, but as part of a stylistic account of language and its creative production.

The practice of cognitive poetics

It should be apparent by now that the discipline of cognitive stylistics or poetics has rapidly developed a rich toolkit for literary analysis. Regarded as an evolution of the field of stylistics, we are in a position to revisit the early prohibitions on contexts such as authorial intention and readerly psychology (Wimsatt & Beardsley, 1954a, 1954b). Regarded as a branch of literary criticism, we are able to address many of the topics that interest literary scholars, but with a renewed sense of principled confidence and cross-disciplinary validity.

It would be impossible to demonstrate an example of the discipline in this short chapter that would be anything other than partial, but perhaps a few illustrative observations will serve instead. Here, for example, is perhaps and arguably one of the most famous poems in the English language. . . What would a cognitive stylistic account of it look like?

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Sonnet XVIII

1   Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
2   Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
3   Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
4   And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
5   Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
6   And often is his gold complexion dimmed,
7   And every fair from fair sometime declines,
8   By chance, or nature's changing course untrimmed:
9   But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
10 Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,
11 Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
12 When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st,
13 So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
14 So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

(Shakespeare, 1609)

Although there is a great deal of discussion around the context and circumstances of the sonnet, there is a general critical consensus on its meaning. What has the surface appearance of a love poem praising the appearance and constancy of the addressee also gives the strong sense that this is a literary work about literary art itself, and the power of poetry not only to immortalise human lives and relationships, but also to outlast them. Setting aside historiographic and biographical discussions of the original addressee (whether a woman or a male youth, which then generates both heterosexual and homosexual romantic readings), the vast majority of non-scholarly readings regard this as a straightforward love poem: it is popular as a reading at weddings and baptisms, and on cards produced for Valentine's Day or equivalents around the world. Many online commentaries also note the possible subtext that the poem can equally be read in terms of the author's self-aggrandisement.

Given these readings 'in the wild', how would a cognitive stylistic account find the evidence by which they were created? Note, here, that it is not the primary business of cognitive poetics to generate new meanings – that can happen, but the generation of newly eccentric readings, however interesting, is the remit of literary criticism (or 'litcrit'); rather, cognitive poetics has a more descriptive and analytical purpose. There are several aspects of the poem that lend themselves to a cognitive poetic exploration.

First, there is an obvious metaphorical analysis to be sketched out that, sure enough, produces a primary set of meanings and also a subtext possibility. The primary metaphorical mapping is the YEAR IS A DAY conceptual metaphor. This produces stylistic realisations, such as 'Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May', 'summer's lease hath all too short a date', and 'thy eternal summer shall not fade'. The emphasis within the conceptual domain of the year is on the seasons, the natural scene, and the temperature, so the other metaphors in the poem have particularly apposite qualities primed: the personification of 'death' is followed by 'his shade', while the face is 'fair'. The primary metaphor is linked to the DAY IS A LIFE metaphor throughout. This means that there is a combined implicit metaphor in operation whereby the addressee's life seems simultaneously to be figured as a single day and as a year. This blurring extends across the poem, so that the dawn is spring, noon is the hot summer, and the afternoon ('dimmed') leads to a long tailing evening as the light 'declines'; then, there is a 'fade' and 'shade', until the final four lines combine dark, dimness, poor visibility, and death.

This combination of day to year to life, of course, mirrors the theme of the poem as one referring to an extended period of time beyond the current moment. The metaphor structures also mirror the iconic lengthening in the clausal syntax. Short, completed action chains typify the first four lines. The next four lines (lines 5–8) are less constrained by the line ending, with the trajectory of the agent 'eye of heaven' extending over two lines and lines 7–8 covering a single clause. Lines 9–14 can be regarded as more continuous, with the difference in action-chain patterning signalled by the contrastive 'But'. These lines match the profiling of the long ending of the day that the metaphorical patterning echoes. The heat and brightness of morning, spring/summer, and youth are linguistically realised relatively quickly.

The subtext is contained in a qualitatively different conceptual metaphor of accountancy and commerce that runs through the poem alongside the primary TIME metaphor. This is evident in the metaphorical use of words such as 'lease', 'gold', 'lose possession', 'ow'st', and even 'grow'st' (either as an appreciating investment, or homophonically as 'grossed'). Even the opening act of calm, cogitating comparison is an act of measurement and accountancy. The final phrasing reiterates this precise measurement: 'so long [as this] . . . so long lives [that]'.

Aside from the metaphorical domains, there is an interestingly doubled deictic patterning in evidence in the poem. Sonnets are prototypically addressed to the object of love or praise, so the intimate and familiar 'thee/thou/thy' address form of personal deixis is not surprising. The intimacy is echoed in proximal deixis throughout: '*thy* eternal summer' signifies a close possessive (and is iconically followed by the word 'possession'); '*that* fair thou ow'st' is used proximally in this context; and the poem ends most closely with '*this*' and '*this*'. Note, though, that these two final deictics refer to the poem itself. However, the sonnet is also addressed 'outwards' towards the reader: there is always a trace sense of this in second-person texts. This is, of course, not a direct explicit readerly address ('Reader, I married him'), but the poem is, of course, being read by an actual reader living 400 years adrift of the moment of composition. If these eternal lines have lived on through time, then the fact that they are addressed to the modern reader is a self-evident validation of the truthfulness of the poem's final assertion.

There is a final sense, of course, in which a reader could model the authorial mind here as self-promoting and egocentric, and then the second-person address can be taken as a rhetorically circular self-reference: Shakespeare is self-satisfiedly reassuring himself. The reiterated and self-referential 'this' at the end reinforces this sense. Lastly, it is even possible to draw a contrast between the 'thee/thou' address across lines 1–8 (although the addressee really disappears after line 2) and the appearance of 'thy' in line 9. The contrastive 'But' and the metrical stress that falls very heavily on 'thy' suggests a reading that contrasts the lover as 'thee' from a different addressee ('thy') as a rhetoricised Shakespeare himself.

If this begins to seem too tenuous, then there is some support if we consider the text world structure of the poem. Rather than a straightforward text world construction, the poem begins with a swift deflection into a modalised world-switch: 'Shall I . . . ?' The strong default assumption of such an opening would be for the reader to presume a text world in which a speaking poet asks the question, but the instant deflection supports the idea of an interior monologue rather than an actual public utterance. (The sonnet is the equivalent of a dramatic soliloquy, in this sense.) In that switched text world, the reference even then does not remain stable for long. The metaphors, as set out above, switch the reader's attention around, with further embedded metaphors often of personification ('darling buds', and the agency of 'Rough winds do shake', 'eye of heaven, and 'his gold complexion'). Negations also create a texture of world-switching: comparison, and 'more lovely and more temperate', implies 'less lovely' as well; 'untrimmed', 'not fade', 'declines', 'nor', 'lose'. These grammatical, morphological or lexical semantic negations

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all – in text world theory – suggest their negative qualities even when they are raised in an overall positive context. Even naturally positive qualities (the warmth of summer) are made negative ('too hot' and 'too short'). Overall, the text world patterning seems to suggest a stable and consistent state on the surface (at the initial matrix text world level), but a subtext of deflection and alternative perception.

Of course, these observations certainly do not exhaust the possibilities that a cognitive stylistic account can bring. For example, there is a schematic analysis of the knowledge structures that different readers bring to the sonnet, conducted by Yang (2005). He explores what the reader's schema of a summer's day and the English seasons look like if that reader is from Taiwan. Steen and Gibbs (2004) analyse the metaphors in the sonnet for their parallel effects. Steen (2014: 133) also analyses the deliberateness of the metaphorical intention, with reference to Sonnet 18. Freeman (2013) has explored the CONTAINER, SCALE, and PATH metaphors, and their interweaving in the poem. And in an earlier, different analysis, I explored the attention-resonance power of the sonnet (Stockwell, 2009: 30–5). All of these represent a variety of cognitive stylistic frameworks and approaches, but they illustrate the range of possibilities of analysis even over only fourteen lines.

New territories and directions for exploration

Cognitive poetics, or cognitive stylistics, the associated discipline of cognitive narratology, and the broader area of cognitive literary studies are fields still in their infancy, although they have come a long way in a short time. Their future development is tied to two impulses. First, there remains a great deal of work to do to apply what we already know about language and mind to literary writing and reading. As literary linguists, we have now a reasonably good account of how meaning is creatively generated by readers during an encounter with a literary text. We have made good progress in exploring the aesthetic effects, the emotions, feelings, and dispositions, which are created within readers by literature. We have the basis of an understanding of delicate matters of ambience, tone, and voice. We have even begun to engage with questions of readerly and authorial ethics from a cognitive narratological perspective. All of these developments are ongoing, and we can see that they will be further productive, because we already know about the unmined work in cognitive science that will allow this work to progress.

Secondly, there is an impulse from what we do not as yet know. Cognitive stylistics depends on the evolution of cognitive science, and as new insights and methods arise in that broad field, so they will be taken up within cognitive poetics. Furthermore, within cognitive stylistics itself, there has been, and will continue to be, theoretical refinement and innovation, some of which is particular to the literary context and some of which is generalisable back to the field of cognitive science. We have a good understanding of textual mechanics, but it could be better. We have a lot of work on readerly psychology and effects, but there is far more to learn. We have begun to talk rationally about creative authorial choice and the accidents of literary history, but we lack the means properly to do so yet. I am confident, though, that we will be able to explore areas of literary reading that we could not even have imagined, to find answers to the oldest questions about literature and artistic expression, and to discover new questions that, at this moment, we cannot even formulate.

Related topics

language, creativity, and cognition; literariness; literary stylistics and creativity; poetry and poetics

Further reading

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Amy Cook draws on cognitive science to explore textuality and performance in the theatre.

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Barbara Dancygier takes a sweeping overview of the conceptual patterns in narrative.

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14

Poetry and poetics

Michael Toolan[1]

Introduction

Situating poetry as a genre and genre recognition as sociocultural learning

No definition of poetry is entirely satisfactory, but a first attempt at situating poetry as a distinct kind of writing and speaking can be made using the idea of genres as a categorisation. Usually, when we encounter a text, we recognise it as of a particular and familiar kind, as belonging to a distinct genre or category, for example as a newspaper article, a blog, an insurance policy, or a recipe. For these widely divergent text types, serving different integrated purposes, we have developed (from exposure and schooling) a mental scheme of what to expect. We adjust our reading accordingly. This familiarity with the functions and conventions of the numerous textual genres that we encounter in day-to-day life is very much a result of our socialisation in the culture(s) to which we belong (Verdonk, 2002: 11). We consult a cookbook and an insurance policy for quite different purposes and with quite different expectations; different again are our purposes and expectations in reading or listening to a poem. But if communicative purpose – rather than simply recurring linguistic patterns – is finally a better basis for deciding genre membership, then the 'socio-communicative context' has to be taken into consideration (Busse, 2014: 109*ff*). This remains the case even if defining communicative purpose is subjective, and if the sociocommunicative context – for example the discourse community that uses a particular genre of texts – shifts in time and with change of place. A broad consequence, however, is that the genre of poetry continues to change, just as the nature of the poems deemed central or peripheral to the genre continues to change. The conditions of poetry production and reception in, for example, London have changed sufficiently in the past forty years that Kate Tempest is today hailed as a leading young poet, while two generations ago she might have been classified instead as a performance artist. One must exercise caution in any broad or notionally permanent claims about poetic forms or purposes.

These facts create difficulties for any attempt at a statement of 'poetics', if by this term one aims at a specification of the necessary, or typical, or sufficient features for a spoken or written text to qualify as a poem – for it is arguable that poetry is a linguistic activity that is intended to be the least genre-*bound* of activities, even though it remains a distinct genre. Every characterisation needs to be qualified by a 'usually' at the very least, including mention of the feature deemed applicable to most literature: fictionality. True, many poems

seem intent on immersing the reader in the seemingly 'safe' domain of the fictional and imaginary – but plenty of other poems prompt similarly complex thought and response with regard to real-world people, events, settings, and experiences.

Some typical features of poems

It is with the prototypicality notion in mind that I list some of the elements regularly found in greater concentration in poems than in non-poems (see also Verdonk, 2013: 119–20). Many of these are of special interest to the present authors, since they are instanced by linguistic expression.

A poem typically:

- makes no direct reference to the world of phenomena, but provides a representation of it;
- exploits ambiguity, polysemy, and elusiveness of intent or evaluative stance;
- is enriched by an attention to rhythm and meter;
- reflects care in its use of 'connective phonological tissue' among and across its lines;
- is sensitive to effects that draw on traditions of spatial arrangement into lines and stanzas (in most other kinds of writing, the line is not a semantic and prosodic unit at all, but is purely pragmatic and meaning-insensitive);
- is exceptionally careful in its deployment of semantic 'enrichments', such as imagery and figurative language, which may mean that metaphor is used sparingly – and there is far less 'routine' metaphor in a poem than, for example, in sports journalism;
- carries deliberate patterning and parallelism on all levels of linguistic organisation – that is, sounds, vocabulary, grammar, or syntax;
- reveals foregrounding – that is, deviant patterns on all of these linguistic levels;
- exploits intertextuality – that is, indirect allusions to other texts;
- is enhanced by its potential for oral performance – that is, reading a poem aloud makes it more vivid and memorable;
- is creative in its use of language; and
- gives aesthetic pleasure.

Some of these features can be elaborated upon, as follows.

- A poem must be spoken.
- It should be both (comparatively) difficult *and* memorable.
- Thus it must be challenging.
- It *may* give pleasure, but it may also give pain; either way, the text may furnish the reader with catharsis, therapy, stimulation, food for thought, consolation, or advice.

In particular, I wish to emphasise the aural essence of poetry: its fundamental spoken-ness and heard-ness. If cognitive embodiment theory has a particular relevance to poetry (see, for example, Gibbs, 1994; Stockwell, 2002), we should be able to say that just as running, dancing, and many sports encourage us to exploit the natural potential of our legs to the full, but within rule-governed forms, so poetry and song are practices in which we are encouraged to exploit the natural potential of our *voices* to the full. One difference between these related 'macro'-cultural genres is that poetry elevates language, used in combination with rhythm and intonation, while song elevates melody, in its combination with rhythm and (if present)

language. But it would be close to absurd to say that one can experience a song by close silent examination of the written song music, and it is not much less absurd to say that one can experience a poem simply by silent reading of the written text.

Prototypicality, scripts, and schemas are aids to the recognising and categorising that facilitates human interaction and coordination generally. We interact with others and engage with the world in a more 'chunked' and 'pre-sorted' way, with less minute and continuous analysis than we might otherwise suppose. Familiarity breeds content, for most of us in many situations. Categorisation, prototypicality, and schemata all combine to establish normal readings of situations, or rapid understandings of normal actions and states. The relevance of this to poetics and stylistics is that categories and schemas enable us to project a situational 'grounding' for a poem, in relation to which a foreground of whatever seems to us exceptional in the text becomes the more noticeable.

Prototypology and subgenres of poetry

The list of typical characteristics of texts classified as poetry is only a start, not least because, at a subgeneric level, there are many formally distinct types of poem, with their own features of poetry as prototypical of this genre. However, because this category shows a great variety of prototypes, many of these characteristics may be found in diverse subgenres such as sonnet, ode, villanelle, sestina, blank verse, free verse, lyric, ballad, haiku, limerick, nursery rhyme, comic verse, doggerel, etc. This shows again that categories have a graded membership, or degrees of 'match' between instances or groups of instances (on the one hand) and the prototype, and that (on the other) they have indeterminate borders.

On poetry, poetics, and creativity

Poetry and creativity

There is no getting to the bottom of *literary creativity*; each of these terms is much too fluid and multifaceted to submit to simple definition. Accordingly, what follows is no more than the most selective and partial discussion. It reflects an interest in whatever creativity we can find in a poem; what I have to say about 'poetics' is oriented towards this preoccupation. As is widely recognised (see, for example, discussion in Greene et al., 2012), the words 'poetics' and 'poetry' can be traced to a cluster of ancient Greek terms: *poi sis*, meaning 'making'; *poi ma*, meaning 'a thing made, a work'; *poi t s*, meaning 'a maker (poet)'; and *poi tike (techn)*, meaning 'the making (art/technique), (poetics)'. Accordingly, 'poetics' now standardly denotes the resources and techniques by means of which literature is created, or the description and study of those techniques (a similar ambiguity attaches to the word 'grammar'). So my aim is to present a brief sample of technique description relevant to the writing of poetry. What I will discuss are one or two of the many techniques or principles that, arguably, contribute to the kinds of creativity found in some of the most admired and anthologised poems (in process of canonisation) written in English in the mid-twentieth century. My focus poem is Elizabeth Bishop's 'At the Fishhouses' (see Appendix); I urge you to read it now.

As I have suggested elsewhere (Toolan, 2012), I believe that there is some danger of 'creative' having become such a semantically vague epithet that it cannot contribute to an attempt at systematic theory or analysis. Someone's mode of dress is found to be amusingly

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different and is called 'creative', or two ordinarily unrelated flavours are unexpectedly combined in a recipe and are called 'creative': the examples can be multiplied. There is a useful discussion of 'creativity' in Pope and Swann (2011) that historicises the term, noting the fascinating shifts over time in the meaning of creativity's lexical collocates – 'innovation', 'inspiration', 'imagination', 'originality', 'genius', 'invention' – but which veers away from a definition. It inclines towards the view that creativity is as widespread and everyday as culture itself, and that many people (a far larger constituency than an 'elect' of *literati*) routinely demonstrate their linguistic cleverness and proficiency in the wordplay, figurative language, and narrative skills to be found in their everyday conversational interaction. Ergo, there is no distinct creativity in literary language: the latter is on a continuum, or multiple continua – depending on the kind of inventiveness, memorability, etc., that one wishes to measure – with non-literary language.

All of these points are reasonable – but a few important factors may need renewed emphasis. One is that it is perfectly possible to dismiss the idea of a special creativity in 'literary *language*' while subscribing to the view that a special creativity is to be found in *literature*. That creativity certainly will not consist in the appropriate use of distinctively 'literary' vocabulary, although I would hesitate to declare that there are no words that we mentally 'tag' as literary. Arguably, there is some such vocabulary – but no poet would deploy it unknowingly or without awareness of the scope for irony. Thus, in Kathleen Jamie's poem 'Water Day', we may notice her use of the word 'blithe' in 'its blithe career', or, in the same poem, the word 'oracular', and wonder if these are not somehow subcategorised for 'poetry writing' in the well-read person's lexicon. But if we 'know' that these words are from a poetic register, Jamie knows that we know (her poem makes fun of 'heavy weather', romanticised interpretations of irrigation practices). Likewise, when, in Heaney's poems, we find words such as 'crepuscular' or 'quicken', alongside other favourites of his that one could not claim were notionally reserved for literary or elevated use, such as 'earth' and 'ground', we understand that such dialectal selectivity is anything but unaware.

Another consideration to mention is that putting the puns, similes, and skilled storytelling of everyday interaction on a continuum with Joyce and Shakespeare has its linguistic and other justifications – but it could encourage an insensitivity to the exceptionality of a Joyce or a Shakespeare, and a failure to appreciate the multidimensional importance of their texts (so different in degree as to approximate difference in kind), by comparison with everyday texts. Objections to claims about the exceptional art apparent in a Shakespeare or Stevens poem often take the form of complaints that those singling out such poets are reactionary, hieratic, elitist, exclusivist, dupes of the nexus wherein dwells the literary establishment, with its academic and publishing phalanxes. But such objections rarely go to the heart of the matter. Quite possibly, versions of each of Shakespeare's or Stevens' linguistic ingenuities taken separately may be found in the passing conversational sallies or breakfast cereal advertisements of innumerable uncelebrated contemporaries. But poetry must be recognised as a distinct genre (sitting within a family of genres: literature), with its own distinct characteristics and contractual arrangements with its users, just as genre theory extends to every other communicational practice. It is the total speech act of the poem in the total speech situation that, finally, we are assessing, and this assessment has to consider writers' and readers' purposes.

Stylisticians have taught themselves to resist a naive assumption that genres, including the genre of poetry (or a superordinate genre of literature), can be defined by the language that they use. Genres are staged and socially ratified activity types, designed to meet interactants' purposes and expectations, and it is those that define a particular genre more

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than the distinctiveness of the language used. So if tax documents are peppered with one kind of English, while legal documents are characterised by another distinct kind of English, still we cannot claim that the distinctive vocabularies and grammar 'make' the genres; likewise in the case of poetry, in which the language is exceptionally carefully chosen, but is not in itself special language. Any language can be used for literary purposes and no language can be identified, qua language, as instrinsically literary, or powerful, or beautiful, or emotive. Even the most piss-weak words, in the right context, can be perfectly suited to the purpose, including 'piss' and 'weak'.

I will argue that one of the distinctive characteristics of poetry – at least, of the kind that I will treat one poem by Elizabeth Bishop as an exemplary instance – is that, proportionately, it aims to generate more new thoughts or imaginings (more surprises, or unforeseen ideas) in more recipients (in more times, and more places), while itself taking up less time and less space than all other verbal genres. To do this, a modern poem has to be exceptionally creative, exceptionally fit for an emerging purpose, and, along the way, typically and in comparison with other genres of writing or speaking, it puts a tremendous strain on the coherence requirements of a text. By a text's 'coherence requirements', I mean its conveying to the reader of a sense of thematic integration – of a centre that holds or an arc that is unbroken – while also treating of a single topic in depth and from many perspectives. Thus the poem aims to express, or more usually to evoke or implicate, within the small scope of 1 or 2 minutes' worth of spoken language, as much difference and also as much similarity as it can muster, with regard to some topic – *any* topic! – that has caught and held the poet's attention. Repetition is one of its core resources in that effort.

Fitness for emerging purpose

The creativity in poems that is my focus of attention must be more than a saying that is new and different. At the same time, the semantic link between 'creation' and 'creative' may need reconsideration, especially since the focus here is on poetry. We should not be content with assuming that 'creation' is simply synonymous with 'making'. If it were, then it would also be synonymous with *poesis*, and all poems (being 'makings' or 'made things') would be creations or have creativity inherently and the word 'creative' would here be redundant. But this does not accord with our experience, which is that writing a poem does not guarantee that it will display much creativity – and indeed we will judge plenty of poems to carry rather slight creativity (most of the poems that I have ever written, for example). If there is creativity in poetry, it may involve making, and newness and difference, but it entails something other than these characteristics.

Indeed, at first glance, poetics and form might appear to be the antithesis of creativity, if they are regarded as an inventory of 'do's and 'don't's in the writing of poems, for example the formal requirements of the Petrarchan sonnet, sestina, or villanelle as restraints on creativity. They give scant encouragement to the poet who, in the interests of radical novelty, decides to have his or her lines rhyme at the beginning or in the middle only.

The creativity in poems need not display radical novelty or difference in all respects. Thoroughgoing newness or difference could render a poem uninterpretable to its target audience and compromise its claims to creativity. Forms and tradition are resources, to be redeployed in the new circumstances of today, so a principle of 'fitness for purpose' must be a key characteristic of poetic creativity, alongside the usual ideas of – to a degree – newness and difference. But a key proviso is this: the 'purpose' for which a poem or other literary work strikes us as exceptionally well fitted is often (always?) one of which the reader is not fully

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aware *prior to encountering the poem itself.* In a previous essay, I suggested that '[c]reativity becomes our term for the happy fitness of some new solution to a new or emergent problem, something we had not fully recognised *was* a problem' (Toolan, 2012: 18) – so it is an attribute conferred on something after the event, and there is neither recipe nor rules for being creative other than 'don't just follow the rules'. And even the word 'purpose' is not quite right, being too instrumental and suggestive of a burden to be lightened (see Hospers, 1985: 252): a creative poem addresses an emergent purpose more than it solves an emergent 'problem'. And a further condition may be added: we should stipulate that the purpose to which we judge the high-creativity poem to be an exceptionally suited treatment must be a significant one – not invariably serious, tragic, or deep, but significant. Significant in its playful levity if this suits. Sometimes what, for one person, is a significant theme is, for another person, triviality; such cases cannot be ignored. But there seems also to be abundant consensus as to significance of topic, even – as is often the case – where this is approached obliquely in a poem, which initially seems to be only about a skunk or a sandpiper. Other more specific desiderata, beyond 'fitness for new or newly configured significant purpose', include ingenuity, good design, with a power to move the reader/hearer and to stimulate, disturb, or reinforce their thoughts, rather than leaving him or her unmoved and unreflecting.

We approach a poem that is new to us a bit like the way in which the Lilliputians inspected Gulliver's watch: here was a complex, ingenious, machine, performing fascinating movements for a purpose that they struggled to comprehend, but mostly misjudged – although not without some shafts of satirical insight ('he assured us . . . he seldom did anything without consulting it . . . called it his oracle'). An extreme example, perhaps and too literally mechanistic, since the emerging purposes for which a poem seems in all of the circumstances to be an exceptionally good fit are not practical and instrumental like those of a watch, but ideational and emotional. If a poem is a tool, it is a tool with which we can think and feel, rather than bend the world to our needs, and the particulars of the thinking and feeling that it fosters dawn on us only gradually.

Critical issues and topics

The (primitive?) origins of poetry: Rhythm and repetition

In terms of *aesthetics* (what we judge to be pleasing or beautiful) and of *cognition* (the gaining of knowledge and understanding through thought and bodily experience), rhythm and repetition may be regarded as the foundational elements of poetry. Rhythm is rooted in our first sensory impression when we are floating in our mother's womb and hear the rhythmic beats of her heart. Indeed, mental awareness of rhythm is one of our most fundamental cognitive capacities, which, in the evolution of the human species, almost undoubtedly came before our power of speech (Cureton, 1993: 71). It is therefore generally assumed that poetry primarily originates in the rhythms of the chants, songs, and liturgical rites of primitive oral cultures (Parini, 2008: 103–4).

Rhythm appears to be closely related to repetition, in as much that the latter is the regular recurrence of certain elements that, in themselves, create the opportunity for rhythm. Putting it differently, a rhythmic flow is accomplished by repetition just as, for instance, by the waves beating on the beach, or birdsong. Rhythm is chronologically regulated repetition.

Other everyday bodily rhythms or everyday things done rhythmically include breathing in and out, our heartbeat and pulse, blinking (more regular than we think), walking, running, swimming, dancing, chewing, cutting food, wiping and polishing, clapping, shaving,

brushing hair, and cleaning teeth. Experiencing these rhythmic repetitions is part of what it is and means to be a body – and they are nearly universal among humans. In all of these, much of the time, there is a regular recurrence of an action or process, whether perceived or not as such by its source. Where it *is* perceived, the rhythmic repetition can come to seem a distinct source of structure and sense, adding to the meaning of the whole activity: you make a point of brushing your hair, and of doing so with thirty strokes, and may come to experience the activity as falling into two parts, the brushing and the strokes. Some of us remember being told off in childhood for wolfing down our food and being instructed to chew every mouthful a dozen times.

For me, repetition is the superordinate and more general category, while rhythm is a subordinate, more focused, more locally instrumental one. For rhythm, you have to have repetition *plus* something else: regularity of recurrence. For repetition, you need recurrence only, making it more basic. Many of the actions listed above can be repeated without achieving or creating a rhythm: you can walk along, changing your speed and length of stride, even disrupting the left–right alternation, so that there is no clear rhythm. But doing so is difficult, atypical, even quite disturbing in its unnaturalness. The rhythmic is often easier and more natural than the arhythmic.

Why should rhythmic repetition be so important to us? Because it marks time, that old father who will outlive us all: the ageless agent of our ageing. Time itself is abstract and intangible – but we know it operates upon us unceasingly, as surely as the turning of the earth brings us daily nearer the sun and then away from it.

Repetition, rhythm, and recurrence overlap considerably, and to this triad can be added parallelism, pattern, and equivalence. Pattern and parallelism are nothing but repetitions of particular kinds. For Leech (1969: 66), parallelism involves some variation or difference within a frame of recurrence or identity; thus, at the beginning of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, a familiar four-note phrase 'repeats' with differences – differences of pitch and of the duration of the final note. A century earlier, Gerard Manley Hopkins (1959 [1865]: 84) declared that the artifice of poetry 'reduces itself to the principle of parallelism', an observation that was cited by Jakobson (1960) and evidently congenial to him: he equally cites with approval Hopkins's defining of verse as 'speech wholly or partially repeating the same figure of sound' (Jakobson, 1981 [1960]: 28). Later, Jakobson (1981 [1960]: 28) describes rhyme as only a particular case of the general problem of poetry, 'namely parallelism', proceeding to quote Hopkins at length (see now also Frog, 2014). Jakobson (1981 [1960]: 42) is equally confident of the power of selective and strategic semantic repetition: 'In poetry not only the phonological sequence but, in the same way, any sequence of semantic units strives to build an equation. Similarity superimposed on contiguity imparts to poetry its thorough-going symbolic, multiplex, polysemantic essence . . . '

Elaborating on these ideas about rhythm and repetition, cognitive linguists argue that our innate habit to structure objects or events according to symmetrical patterns is, in fact, a projection of our embodied understanding of all of the symmetries to be found in the natural, as well as the artificial, world around us (Jackendoff, 1994). For example, in the myriad intricate patterns in flora and fauna (read Blake's 'The Tyger'!), and in architecture, music, and – last, but not least – in poetry.

Creativity and lexical repetition

In a previous essay on the subject (Toolan, 2012), I proposed that specifically lexical repetition was, perhaps paradoxically, an important form of creativity in poems, but only under

certain conditions. Long-distance verbal repetition (for example in lines 2, 22, and 42 of a 48-line poem) is often a powerful means of promoting cohesion and unity in a poem, almost imperceptibly (on a first reading, the two repetitions may not be noticed as such); absolutely adjacent full repetition ('break, break, break'; 'And there I shut her wild wild eyes'; 'put out the light and then put out the light', etc.) can be even more effective, but in a different, highly localised way (unless, as in the Tennyson poem, the triple phrase is repeated much later in the poem, so that local intensity is married to a poem-wide function for the phrase). What are usually disfavoured (and criticised as 'uncreative') are adjacent repetitions-by-paraphrase (of the kind to be found everywhere in the jobbing compositions of the great bad Scottish poet William McGonagall). This is one reason why Tennyson, Keats, and Shake-speare, respectively, did *not* write the following immortal lines:

> Break, smash, crash, / On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
> And there I shut her wild mad eyes;
> Put out the light and then snuff out the flame.

A demonstration

In fact, after (and only after) our students have sufficiently familiarised themselves with a poem to sense the impact of the lexical repetitions therein, it is a useful, further sensitis-ing – and amusing – exercise to ask them to replace any lexical repeats by their best effort at a near-synonymous alternative. Consider the too-famous early Seamus Heaney poem ('done' by a generation of British 16-year-olds during their first public exams), 'Digging'. With that word as poem title, each subsequent use of that word within the poem is, of course, a repeat. In order to appreciate what Heaney's repeats contribute, one can try to replace the first two repeated uses (here italicised) in the early lines of the poem (a third use comes fifteen lines later):

> 3   Under my window, a clean rasping sound
> 4   When the spade sinks into gravelly ground:
> 5   My father, *digging*. I look down
> 6   Till his straining rump among the flowerbeds
> 7   Bends low, comes up twenty years away
> 8   Stooping in rhythm through potato drills
> 9   Where he was *digging*.

One can present a student (or any reader) with the whole poem, including its title, except that the three subsequent uses of 'digging' are replaced by blank spaces, and ask the reader to choose, for each of the gaps, words that are (a) suitable, (b) not already used in the poem, and (c) different from each other. (They need not even be told that the removed recurring original word is *digging*.)

What words can replace 'digging', in lines 5 and 9? 'My father, *toiling* . . . Where he was *burrowing*'? 'Excavating', 'gardening', 'shovelling', 'grubbing', or 'rootling'?! Every alterna-tive seems ludicrous, ponderous, inept, utterly *unfit* for the purpose, given the sense and co-text in relation to which these choices must function. It is the evident aptness for the poem's purposes that makes Heaney's choices, the judicious repeating of 'digging', moments of creativity.

Immediate or adjacent *reformulatory* repetition always risk being breaches of the Gricean preferences concerning quantity and manner: a second (or subsequent) reformulation

promises further informativity (as per the *quantity* maxim), as the justification for not being as brief (the *manner* maxim) as the text otherwise would be. Where the addressee or recipient cannot derive such ideational or empathetic supplement, the adjacent reformulations may attract criticism, as instances of redundancy, prolixity, and the 'unpoetic' (as I argued, in Toolan, 2012, with respect to McGonagall's poems). By contrast, the manner and quantity breaches carried by adjacent *full* repeats are, of course, not hidden at all, but exceptionally overt, and invite the implicature that some further meaning or feeling should be derived, by way of justification. And, in suitably prepared context, it is remarkable how often such full repetitions are judged to be communicative of implicatures much less securely conveyed or invited were the text not to repeat in the way decided upon.

Current contribution: The poetics of repetition

But now, if we turn to a wonderful poet such as Elizabeth Bishop (whom I have been reading with undergraduates at the time of writing), we find poems that seem to put attempted stylistic generalisations about lexical repetition under interesting pressure. Bishop seems untroubled by using full repetitions in non-immediate, but close, proximity, in ways that by the lights of a different poetics might be regarded as casual, slack, and tending to dissipate the intensity of the design. Consider 'At the Fishhouses', for example. Assuming (as I do) that this is a great poem, can we clarify the poetics of repetition so that it values the practice of poets like Bishop?

In broad structure, the poem comprises two long sections and a short middle section, with a strong sense of development from the extended 'factual', almost journalistic, description of a set scene, to a much deeper sequence of concluding observations. But midway through the first and descriptive long section come these lines:

21   The big fish tubs are completely lined
22   with layers of beautiful herring scales
23   and the wheelbarrows are similarly plastered
24   with creamy iridescent coats of mail,
25   with small iridescent flies crawling on them.

Here there is not only the repetition of 'iridescent' within a line, but also the triple line-initial use of 'with' (the use of 'and' in the third line is not semantically radically distinct from 'with'), two of these functioning in the near-synonymous 'lined with' and 'plastered with'. There are also several words here that – as Bishop undoubtedly recognised – verge on the redundant or the unnecessary, and in other hands (such as McGonagall's) would surely earn censure: 'completely', 'beautiful', 'similarly', and 'small'. Bishop will have known that she could, alternatively, have written as follows:

The big fish tubs are lined
with layers of herring scales
and the wheelbarrows are plastered
with creamy iridescent coats of mail,
with iridescent flies crawling on them.

The question is why she did not. The amended version, without the allegedly near-redundant or low-informativity words, is rhythmically marred by comparison with the original and its

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approximation to four main beats per line; so there is a form-based argument against this specific revision. But the larger and simpler justification for Bishop's near-redundancies in these lines is that they are a best choice (and a brave one, risking censure of the kind rehearsed here), given what may be claimed to be the gradually emerging ultimate purpose of the poem. That purpose is to lead us from extensively descriptive contemplation of a highly particularised setting, a convergence of particulars, to an idea and an atmosphere that is profoundly abstract and, to use one of Bishop's own words, absolute: the flowing away of knowledge and history. But before all of this, the long first section is deliberately prosaic, and almost devoid of metaphor or abstraction, unless you regard the use of 'silver' to describe the herring scales as metaphorical (it is not: they 'look' silver), or see figurative mileage in the description of the ancient capstan as bearing 'some melancholy stains, like dried blood,/where the ironwork has rusted'. But it is the atmosphere of restrained, closely observant factuality and the reassurance to any reader/listener that such placid description conveys that are uppermost throughout the first section, and its relaxed lexical repetitions are instrumental in establishing that atmosphere.

While the first section is all close observation of the here and now – of the tangible, graspable, and concrete described in its permanence with reassuring clarity – the equally long second section advances to an ending that recognises historical knowledge as always moving away from us, with nothing fixed or comforting. The ultimate purpose of the poem really starts to come into focus only at the beginning of the second section:

47 Cold dark deep and absolutely clear,
48 element bearable to no mortal,
49 to fish and to seals . . .

Even here, the speaker has not really resorted to abstraction or metaphor, but they are clearly beginning to speak about wider or deeper phenomena than the 'sequins' coating the old fisherman's vest, the wheelbarrows and the slope, and the black old knife of line 39 (*sic*: not an old black knife), whose blade is almost worn away. And even this first venture towards the unbearable and the absolute is veered away from at once: we are distracted by a bit of business, a bit of whimsy, about a seal that is 'interested in music' and a fellow 'believer in total immersion': Baptist hymns for him! What an elegant way of conveying 'no rush' – no forcing of the poem along a path according to an agenda, towards a predictable outcome.

The encounter with the seal extends to eleven lines, before line 47 is repeated verbatim as line 60, but now with the subject of these predicates made explicit:

60 Cold dark deep and absolutely clear,
61 the clear gray icy water.

A simple concordancing of the poem's vocabulary reveals that the most frequent (thus most repeated) lexical item in the entire poem – thus excluding the grammatical words and focusing on what Louw and Milojkovic (2014: 264), refer to as 'quasi-propositional variables' – is 'water', used seven times. This is closely followed by 'stones' (six instances) and 'dark' (five). What do these obsessive repeatings signify, aesthetically? Consider 'stones': entirely absent from the first section and first mentioned in the brief transition section, 'stones' occurs five times in remarkably close succession – at lines 66, 68, 69, 70, and 75. In part, it functions like a tolling bell, but also contributes to a kind of polyphony of sound and meaning equivalences with associated items that are also used repeatedly and

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in ordered sequence in these lines: 'bones', and 'burn' or 'burns'. The pattern of repetitions implicates – rather than explicates – that to put your hand in this inhumanly cold water is to feel your bones to be stones, ones so cold that they burn, producing the almost alchemical 'dark gray flame'. (Not only are such outlandish suggestions protected from our disbelief by remaining covert and implicit rather than open and explicit, they are also hedged modally and counterfactually, by a clause-initial 'as if'.)

Stylistic iconicity

The lexical repetitions at the very end of the poem arguably work similarly, with individual instances of repetition mutating in the course of their reiteration into new terms, so that equivalence induces the emergence of disturbing new meanings. The semantic or phonological partial repeating is extensive here (consider, for example, 'bitter', 'briny', and 'burn'), but the most important pattern involves the interweaving of 'drawn (from)', 'derived (from)', 'flowing' and 'drawn', 'flowing' and 'flown'. As used in philosophical discourse, several of these items are already partially synonymous, but their proximate use in the final four lines creates a powerful blending effect. 'Drawn' features in lines 80 and 82; 'flowing' features in lines 82 and 83. So line 82 is prominent as the site at which both repeated words appear, in the phrase 'flowing and drawn'. If you blend or merge 'flowing' and 'drawn', the most natural – sequence-preserving – blend that you derive is the poem's last word, 'flown'. (Less 'naturally', you can derive 'drawing' or 'drowning'.) The effectiveness of the poem-final 'flown', as an inflected repeat of the immediately preceding 'flowing' and a repetition-blend of the phrase from the previous line, relates to its iconicity. By 'stylistic iconicity', I refer to that impression of exceptional 'embodiment' of a sign's meaning in its materiality, such that the communication seems to be a more direct and natural enactment of the meaning than the arbitrary and symbolic signification that we ordinarily look for in language (Fischer, 2014; Leech, 2008: 114–15, 149–50).

To claim that language is being used iconically is to claim that, to some degree, the form embodies the meaning; linguistic iconicity is at work when the form evokes the meaning because it resembles (visually or aurally) the thing meant. As such, in (rare) cases of what we might call 'absolute iconicity', an addressee should be able to grasp the meaning *without prior knowledge of the language in which it is carried*. Now, iconicity in poetry will be rarely if ever of this kind; rather, it is a relative support or enabler of meanings in large part conveyed symbolically. And Leech and Short's (2007: 195) warning against using iconicity claims to foist 'private and whimsical responses' on literary texts certainly needs to be attended to; still, it is also Geoffrey Leech (1969, 2008) who, over many years, recognised the importance of iconicity to poetics and stylistics. Iconicity forges a link, via technique or poetics, between 'fitness for specific emerging purpose or theme' and repetition. In these final lines of 'At the Fishhouses', I suggest, the content concerns knowledge (which must mean human knowledge, which by extension means 'being human', the quality of human life). The poem describes knowledge being extracted or delivered, taken out of these utterly inhuman elements, water and rock, and released into something that flows on, unstoppably and therefore impermanently, like a swimmer taken out to sea or over a waterfall by infinitely greater powers. And some of this meaning is arguably enacted in the language of the description, which repeats and modulates as succeeding words are drawn out of their predecessors by a seemingly parallel remorseless flow.

By the close of the poem, we have been shown how 'drawing' and 'flowing' move on to become 'flown', and despite this being a partial repetition of the previous words 'flowing',

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'drawing', etc., and therefore in principle the less surprising, still it *is* surprising and disturbing as used here, partly for reasons of grammar and collocation. The water/knowledge is, we are told, dark, utterly free, drawn from the hard mouth and the rocky breasts, and flowing – and all of these predicates, for all of their vivid figurativeness, are collocationally natural. It is not unnatural to describe water and knowledge, for example, as flowing, but it is quite unnatural and arresting to describe them as 'flown'. This is deliberate unidiomaticity. The past (not passive) participle 'flown', used without complement, typically collocates with birds or chicks (or figurative counterparts, such as the young adults of a family). Far more numerous are the corpus instances of perfective 'flown' with human subject ('he had flown to Maputo during the Commonwealth summit'), or passive 'flown' ('Cars and drivers were then flown to India'). As a brief check in the British National Corpus (BNC) confirms, 'water', 'river', 'tide', etc., never usually collocate as subject with '(have/is/are) flown'. There is a grammatical conflation or crossover here from the verb 'to flow', to the verb 'to fly'. For grammatical consistency, use of a single verb, the final three words should be either 'flowing and flowed', or 'flying and flown'.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have aimed to situate poetry as 'different in kind' from other uses of language, in so far as we can identify an array of typical (but not defining or necessary) genre characteristics of poetry; otherwise, I argued, poetry, and the creativity found in poetry, chiefly differ in degree from other kinds of speaking and writing. I then sought to suggest that some progress can be made in pinpointing the creativity or poetics of poems if the analysis integrates or brings into alignment three factors in particular:

- the poem's fitness for an unforeseen, but emerging, purpose (what the reader decides the poem is ultimately *about*);
- the poem's deployment of implicature-generating repetition, especially lexical repetition and para-repetition; and
- the poem's iconicity effects – those moments in the text when the meaning seems embodied in the language and not merely symbolically represented by it.

A poem (such as 'At the Fishhouses') that hits all three of these buttons, and in particular has moments at which the text seems to speak to all three factors at the same time, stands a good chance of also being celebrated for its 'literary creativity'. So these three factors seem to be among the most crucial in a description of the poetics of (modernist) poems.

Future directions

Given the deliberately restricted focus of interest of this chapter, the research methods are similarly restricted. Chief of these is a searching for, and an annotating of, every kind of lexical repetition or 'para-repetition' that one can find in a text. That is really the primary task and, with regard to poems, the 'what is said' and the 'what is reiterated' are inevitably more noticeable than those things unsaid in a poem. But the latter can also be coherently approached, in a controlled way, using ideas from Hoey and Louw (see below). Both involve probings not of lexical repetition as such, but of the collocations, the co-occurring words or structures, that tend to accompany particular words or phrases. These theorists ask us

in effect, in relation to the 'deviant' or marked uses of language and phraseology found in poems, to ponder what natural or normal phrasing or construction has *not* been 'repeated', ratified by normal use, in the poem under scrutiny.

In a series of publications, but most explicitly in Hoey (2005), Michael Hoey has argued that fluent language-users are primed to expect the occurrence of a particular word or phrase to be accompanied by its usual co-textual partners – that is, that there is a degree of predictability in the multiword chunks of language in use, and that we draw benefit from this predictability. By the same token, we notice, as unnatural or authorially motivated, any jarring uses of words flanked by utterly atypical collocates. Hoey relates this to primed or entrenched uses – typical uses alongside typical collocates, in typical positions in just this genre of texts and not those.

Louw (2010, for example) takes a 'striking' formulation, at some key point in a poem such as its opening or 'turn' or conclusion, and tells us that we must compare and contrast the usual phraseology or semantic prosody with the usually atypical semantic thrust of the instance found in the poem. There is arguably a Bakhtinian dual-voiced principle embedded in Louw's approach, which will take a phrase such as that at the opening of Yeats' 'Sailing to Byzantium', 'That is no country for old men', replace all its referentially rich words with wildcards (thus *That is no * for * *), and then search in an appropriate corpus for all verbal strings that exactly match this seven-word string (for example 'That is no reason for you to', 'That is no fun for the police', etc.). What Louw claims to find is that there is often a 'normal' or typical semantic profile, confirmed by the corpus evidence, with which the meaning of the phrase as used in the poem is interestingly at odds. Subliminally, we are aware of the typical meaning and cannot help but 'hear' this clashing with the contrasting meaning attempted in the poem (hence I suggest a kind of Bakhtinian clash of voices). The Louw method and theory is not unproblematic, but it is an interesting attempt to explore one kind of syntagmatic intertextuality, using modern corpus linguistic resources.

Related topics

cognitive stylistics; creativity and discourse analysis; creativity in response; language, creativity, and cognition; literariness; literary stylistics and creativity

Note

1 I am greatly indebted to Professor Peter Verdonk (University of Amsterdam) for many observations, references, and lines of argument that I have incorporated into this chapter, particularly concerning poetics and cognitive categorisation. In a few places, with his kind consent, I have retained his wording.

Further reading

Hoey, M. (2005) *Lexical Priming: A New Theory of Words and Language*, London: Routledge.

This highly original (and not always uncontroversial) study raises priming and collocation to the status of a foundational feature of language in use. It argues that fluent users (of a written language, especially) rely on innumerable known and expected patterns in the use of particular words at the level of phrasing, grammar, and siting with the paragraph and within the whole text, and even in relation to genre. Lexical priming is thus, for Hoey, a big part of a fluent speaker's background linguistic knowledge – a background against which literary creativity becomes noticeable.

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Leech, G. N. (1969) *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry*, London: Longman.

It is well worth turning to this beautifully written and classic contribution to the stylistics of poetry, which provides a masterly overview of many aspects of the language of poetry that have attracted further study in more recent decades. Some chapter titles reflect standard topics – foregrounding, patterns of sound, meter, figurative language – while others are remarkably prescient – verbal repetition and implications of context.

Leech, G. N. (2008) *Language in Literature: Style and Foregrounding*. Harlow: Pearson Longman.

This volume comprises Leech's uncollected stylistics articles, spanning forty years of reflection on language and literature – always illuminating, thoughtful, and balanced in his judgements, and often touching on themes taken up in the present chapter.

Louw, W., and Milojkovic, M. (2014) 'Semantic prosody', in P. Stockwell and S. Whiteley (eds) *The Cambridge Handbook of Stylistics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 263–80.

This dense, but stimulating, paper, cast in the form of a dialogue between its authors, demonstrates Louw's corpus-based method at work in a process that he believes uncovers the underlying prosody or subtext that importantly inflects many of the crucial lines of modern poems.

Stockwell, P. (2014) 'Atmosphere and tone', in P. Stockwell and S. Whiteley (eds) *The Cambridge Handbook of Stylistics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 360–74.

This essay is an excellent exemplar of the newest stylistics, drawing on corpus evidence and cognitive linguistic ideas, while working towards an original proposal about what the literary-critical terms 'atmosphere', 'tone', and 'ambience' mean and amount to, in the analytical terms of stylistics. Texts from Heaney, Keats, and John Fowles are discussed.

Verdonk, P. (ed.) (1993) *Twentieth-century Poetry: From Text to Context*, London: Routledge.

This is a useful collection of stylistic analyses from different scholars using a range of theories in the linguistic description and interpretation of specific poems by major twentieth-century poets.

Verdonk, P. (2013) *The Stylistics of Poetry: Context, Cognition, Discourse, History*, London: Bloomsbury.

This can be read as a companion volume to Leech (1969) above: the four terms of its subtitle are deftly attended to in wide-ranging analytical commentaries on major poems by Owen, Auden, Heaney, Larkin, and Hughes, which draws into the discussion such important influences as classical rhetoric, ekphrasis, and the varieties of emotive and cognitive response that poems may elicit from different readers.

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Appendix

'At the Fishhouses', Elizabeth Bishop

1 Although it is a cold evening,
2 down by one of the fishhouses
3 an old man sits netting,
4 his net, in the gloaming almost invisible,
5 a dark purple-brown,
6 and his shuttle worn and polished.
7 The air smells so strong of codfish
8 it makes one's nose run and one's eyes water.
9 The five fishhouses have steeply peaked roofs
10 and narrow, cleated gangplanks slant up
11 to storerooms in the gables
12 for the wheelbarrows to be pushed up and down on.
13 All is silver: the heavy surface of the sea,
14 swelling slowly as if considering spilling over,
15 is opaque, but the silver of the benches,
16 the lobster pots, and masts, scattered
17 among the wild jagged rocks,
18 is of an apparent translucence
19 like the small old buildings with an emerald moss
20 growing on their shoreward walls.
21 The big fish tubs are completely lined
22 with layers of beautiful herring scales
23 and the wheelbarrows are similarly plastered
24 with creamy iridescent coats of mail,
25 with small iridescent flies crawling on them.
26 Up on the little slope behind the houses,

27 set in the sparse bright sprinkle of grass,
28 is an ancient wooden capstan,
29 cracked, with two long bleached handles
30 and some melancholy stains, like dried blood,
31 where the ironwork has rusted.
32 The old man accepts a Lucky Strike.
33 He was a friend of my grandfather.
34 We talk of the decline in the population
35 and of codfish and herring
36 while he waits for a herring boat to come in.
37 There are sequins on his vest and on his thumb.
38 He has scraped the scales, the principal beauty,
39 from unnumbered fish with that black old knife,
40 the blade of which is almost worn away.

41 Down at the water's edge, at the place
42 where they haul up the boats, up the long ramp
43 descending into the water, thin silver
44 tree trunks are laid horizontally
45 across the gray stones, down and down
46 at intervals of four or five feet.

47 Cold dark deep and absolutely clear,
48 element bearable to no mortal,
49 to fish and to seals. . . One seal particularly
50 I have seen here evening after evening.
51 He was curious about me. He was interested in music;
52 like me a believer in total immersion,
53 so I used to sing him Baptist hymns.
54 I also sang 'A Mighty Fortress Is Our God.'
55 He stood up in the water and regarded me
56 steadily, moving his head a little.
57 Then he would disappear, then suddenly emerge
58 almost in the same spot, with a sort of shrug
59 as if it were against his better judgment.
60 Cold dark deep and absolutely clear,
61 the clear gray icy water. . . Back, behind us,
62 the dignified tall firs begin.
63 Bluish, associating with their shadows,
64 a million Christmas trees stand
65 waiting for Christmas. The water seems suspended
66 above the rounded gray and blue-gray stones.
67 I have seen it over and over, the same sea, the same,
68 slightly, indifferently swinging above the stones,
69 icily free above the stones,
70 above the stones and then the world.
71 If you should dip your hand in,
72 your wrist would ache immediately,

73 your bones would begin to ache and your hand would burn
74 as if the water were a transmutation of fire
75 that feeds on stones and burns with a dark gray flame.
76 If you tasted it, it would first taste bitter,
77 then briny, then surely burn your tongue.
78 It is like what we imagine knowledge to be:
79 dark, salt, clear, moving, utterly free,
80 drawn from the cold hard mouth
81 of the world, derived from the rocky breasts
82 forever, flowing and drawn, and since
83 our knowledge is historical, flowing, and flown.

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15

Literary narrative

Andrea Macrae

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Introduction

Literary narrative has (debatably) four essential elements: characters; plot; narration; and fictional worlds. The very nature of a literary narrative is creative, and these four constituents of its rich texture are made and moulded through creative uses of language. The construction of major and minor characters, character interaction, and other aspects of characterisation; the invention, portrayal, and sequencing of events; the mode and style of narration, and the role and voice of the narrator; the depiction of vibrant fictional worlds, from the realistic to the fantastic: each of these elements entails, invites, affords, and encourages different kinds of linguistic creativity.

This chapter provides an overview of the role of linguistic creativity in literary narrative. It explores the ways in which its elements, and the nature of literary narrative more generally, foster and facilitate linguistic creativity. The chapter begins with a brief definition of 'literary narrative' in relation to the concept of 'narrative', its different genres and forms, and literariness. The chapter then outlines founding approaches to the study of linguistic creativity in literary narrative, chiefly etymological, sociohistorical, and biographical approaches, influenced by modernist neoliberal concerns with the self and knowledge. Next, the chapter looks in detail at contemporary topics and issues in literary narrative and linguistic creativity, evolving from these roots, but reflecting modernist and postmodernist ideas about social, psychological, cultural, and sociolinguistic constructions of perspective and identity. This section of the chapter explores, in particular, the topics and issues of authorial style, mind style, character voice, other worlds, and cultural contexts. The next major section of the chapter then briefly illustrates dominant current theories and approaches serving to investigate these topics and issues: stylistic concepts of foregrounding and defamiliarisation; historical stylistics; relevance theory; schema theory; and cognitive poetic approaches more broadly. Examples of leading work in these areas are discussed, as models of current practice. Lastly, the chapter looks forward to future directions for research.

Narrative can be defined from a text-based, classical perspective, by its common characteristics – that is, its most basic ingredient: two or more events connected by a cause-and-effect relationship, usually involving a change of state. Post-classical approaches to narrative pay more attention to sociological, cultural, historical, and psychological contexts of narrative's production and reception – that is, recognising narrative as a discourse construct with a social function. Developing alongside post-classical approaches, cognitive narratology defines narrative from an experiential perspective,

in terms of the cognitive ways in which (and anthropological reasons for which) read-ers perceive and make sense of something (for example, a text) as narrative (Herman et al., 2005). In the latter view, 'narrativisation' is something that takes place in the reading experience, whereby the reader uses frames, scripts, schemas, and other cog-nitive processes to build conceptual representations of story worlds and, within those conceptual representations, create relationships between story world objects, charac-ters, and events. To scholars who hold this view, a fifth essential element of narrative would be the reader's perception or active, dynamic construction of a narrative *as nar-rative*. The different contributions to understanding of linguistic creativity in literary narrative outlined in this chapter can be located at a wide variety of points across this spectrum of theoretical stances towards narrative.

Western narrativity infuses a variety of literary genres, with its beginnings in ancient Greek and Sanskrit myths, in the heroic and poetic epic, and in the oral folktale. Scholes, Phelan, and Kellogg (2006: 11–15) tentatively trace the evolution of Western literary narra-tive, through genre and focus, to the birth of the novel, as illustrated in Figure 15.1.

It is perhaps easy to see how a culture in which the oral epic poem is ingrained can become rich in everything from lyric ballads, elegies, and processional plays to dramatic

Sacred, quasi-historical, or fictional myth, legend, or folktale

(Allegiance to re-creative telling of traditional story)

Example: Oral epic poetry

Empirical	**Fictional**
(Allegiance to reality)	(Allegiance to the ideal)

Historical	**Mimetic**	**Romantic**	**Didactic**
(Focus on truth of fact, past)	(Focus on truth of sensation and environment, present)	(Focus on rhetoric, beauty – aesthetics)	(Focus on intellectual and moral instruction)
Example: Biography	*Example: Autobiography*	*Example: Romance*	*Example: Fable*

(variably synthesised in)

The early novel

Figure 15.1 The evolution of Western literary narrative

histories and novellas. Scholes, Phelan, and Kellogg (2006: 15–16) are keen to emphasise the different kinds of interdependence, intertwining, and synthesis of conventions of form and focus throughout the history of literary narrative – bridging poetry and prose, bridging folktale and drama – and highlight modern disintegrations of formal syntheses too. The evolution of literary narrative, even if the scope of attention is limited to the West, is not linear and progressive. Scholes, Phelan, and Kellogg (2006: 16) see the markers of this amorphous amalgam in the contemporary novel in particular, arguing that:

> [I]n its instability the novel partakes of the general nature of narrative. Poised between the direct speaker or singer of lyric and the direct presentation of action in drama; between allegiance to reality and to the ideal; it is capable of greater extremes than other forms of literary art.

The novel is the form of literary narrative on which this chapter focuses.

This chapter adopts a perspective on literature and literary language that locates literariness on a cline. Different forms (poetry, drama, and prose) have different linguistic creative affordances (consider 'poetic syntax' in poetry, for example, whereby nouns can more regularly be *post*-modified with adjectives, for the purposes of metrical and sound patterning and/ or semantic foregrounding, and double syntax across enjambment can be exploited). These linguistic creative affordances are a significant factor in the perception of texts as more or less literary. Literary narrative is more literary than more prosaic kinds of narrative on two counts: its tendency to self-consciously construct fictional worlds, rather than to present a history of the real; and its tendency to use language to create meaning in more artful and poetic ways. These artful and poetic uses of language – these creative linguistic strategies – cross-cut the linguistic levels: literary narrative exploits the full range of semiotic play, from manipulation of morphology and syntax to represent regional dialects (or, more radically, to present invented languages), to the inversion of pragmatic norms within character dialogue to convey character dynamics. The contemporary critical issues and topics addressed in this chapter – authorial style, mind style, character voice, other worlds, and cultural influences – each involve creativity across multiple linguistic levels, as will be illustrated with a range of examples from modern novels.

First, however, a brief survey of historical perspectives on literary narrative and linguistic creativity is warranted.

Historical perspectives

Three areas of interest have dominated the study of language and creativity in literary narrative up until the late twentieth century: etymologically and anthropologically oriented work on lexical coinings and neologisms; biographical and sociohistorical attention to language as a marker of the world view of the author and his or her society; and study of language for the purposes of attribution of authorship.

Etymologists and sociolinguists have found literature to be a useful source of data through which to trace developments in language use (for example, changes in the lexicon, changes in literacy), and in interactions between languages and dialects across countries and regions. Old and Medieval English literature (such as *Beowulf* and Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*), for example, are invaluable historical texts full of revelations about the nature and development of the national tongue. The scarcity of manuscripts of

literary works of these eras makes it difficult to gauge the relative creativity of the language in terms of its inventiveness and how far the language is drawn from (or was subsequently absorbed into) everyday discourse. However, it is believed that many of the kennings (metaphorical descriptions created by the joining of two words) in *Beowulf* were original to that tale. *The Canterbury Tales* is revelatory in different ways, manifesting Chaucer's determined use (and co-construction) of an English vernacular, infused as it was with the influence of French (brought in with the Norman invasion) and Latin borrowings.

Some of these studies have also been used to suggest links between new word formation and ideological, philosophical, scientific, and technological developments: changes in ideas and new creations driving a need for new words through which to express those ideas and objects. While new terminology is not always attributed to literary authors, literary texts have been used as records of the point at which new words entered the cultural lexicon. Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* (1818), written c. 1798–9 and revised in 1817–18, famously mentions 'base ball' in its early pages, and is used thus to debunk the popular hypothesis that the game was not invented until the 1840s, in the United States. Occasionally, and within new historicism particularly, the creative expressions of popular authors have been regarded as a means of measuring popular sentiment. For example, the detail of the various metaphorical constructions through which Dickens establishes the overarching metaphorical conceit in *Bleak House* (1852–3) – that of the legal system (and other forms of institutional subjugation) as a ubiquitous, oppressive, far-reaching fog – have been interrogated as a reflection of contemporary social views and concerns.

More often, the language of a novel has been regarded as a possible lens upon the priorities and world view of the author, specifically. Leech and Short (2007: 151), for example, state that 'it is commonplace that a writer's style reveals that particular writer's habitual way of experiencing and interpreting things'. Similarly, although stylometry does not assert that style reflects ideology, it otherwise works on the same principle: that language use is author-specific. Stylometry is the statistical analysis of language use for the purposes of authorship *attribution*. Features such as word length frequency distributions, use of rare words, and communities of vocabulary (that is, groups of words that occur together in different works) have been common bases for arguments over authorship. Although stylometry has a long history (see Mascol, 1888a, 1888b; Mendenhall, 1887, 1901), authorial style remains of great interest within narratology (compare Morton, 1978), and is the first of several current critical issues and topics to which this chapter will now turn.

Critical issues and topics

This part of the chapter will move through three interrelated intersections of linguistic creativity and literary narrative at the forefront of critical attention: fictional voices (including authorial style, mind style, and character voice); fictional worlds; and the role of cultural contexts.

Authorial 'style' refers to an author's distinctive manner of expression. This includes an author's linguistic tendencies in terms of figurative constructions, descriptive choices, register, syntax, collocations, lexicon, etc. Authorial style (as opposed to plot, for example) is a common reason that readers give for favouring one author over another within a genre, although preference for a particular author's style is very much a matter of subconscious aesthetic motivations (Miall & Kuiken, 1994; Stockwell, 2009). As mentioned above, the concept of authorial style is used for authorship attribution and is often closely related to

authorial identity. Some authors, however, are more 'distinct' in their style than others: certain authors are known for their idiosyncratic expression. For example, Ernest Hemingway is often noted for his 'bare' style (Lodge, 1993), using simple sentences, with paratactic and polysyndetic structures lacking in evaluative adjectives, and other value-laden expressions, with simple, predominantly monosyllabic lexis. This is illustrated in the following extract from *The Old Man and the Sea* (1976 [1952]: 47, cited in Simpson, 2014: 140):

> He knelt down and found the tuna under the stern with the gaff and drew it toward him keeping it clear of the coiled lines. Holding the line with his left shoulder again, and bracing on his left hand and arm, he took the tuna off the gaff hook and put the gaff back in place. He put one knee on the fish and cut strips of dark red meat longitudinally from the back of the head to the tail. They were wedge-shaped strips and he cut them from next to the back bone down to the edge of the belly.

George Eliot, on the other hand, is renowned for her lengthy, hypotactic sentences, using multiple clauses, each laden with descriptive detail in fairly formal lexis, as in the following paragraph from *Adam Bede* (2008 [1859]: 85):

> Mrs Poyser curtsied duly, and watched the two horses until they had disappeared from the yard, amidst great excitement on the part of the pigs and the poultry, and under the furious indignation of the bull-dog, who performed a Pyrrhic dance, that every moment seemed to threaten the breaking of his chain. Mrs Poyser delighted in this noisy exit; it was a fresh assurance to her that the farm-yard was well guarded, and that no loiterers could enter unobserved; and it was not until the gate had closed behind the Captain that she turned into the kitchen again, where Dinah stood with her bonnet in her hand, waiting to speak to her aunt, before she set out for Lisbeth Bede's cottage.

Of course, authors do not write in a vacuum and some identify with, or are retrospectively identified with, particular literary movements that employ specific linguistic codes. Several literary movements can be distinguished and defined by their new, creative uses of language. Modernism, for example, is famous for the style known as 'stream of consciousness', illustrated in the following extract from Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* (2000 [1925]: 3):

> What a lark! What a plunge! For so it had always seemed to her when, with a squeak of the hinges, which she could hear now, she had burst open the French windows and plunged at Bourton into the open air. How fresh, how calm, stiller than this of course, the air was in the early morning; like the flap of a wave; the kiss of a wave; chill and sharp and yet (for a girl of eighteen as she then was) solemn, feeling as she did, standing there at the open window, that something awful was about to happen; looking at the flowers, at the trees with the smoke winding off them and the rooks rising, falling; standing and looking until Peter Walsh said, 'Musing among the vegetables?' – was that it?

Stream of consciousness writing tends to mimic – in its syntax, use of dashes, and topic shifting – the natural flow of thought. Although descriptive detail is often sensitive, attention is often fleeting: the object, moment, person, etc., in focus within the given point of view is only in focus transiently, the emphasis being much more on the perceiver's thoughts than the thing perceived. Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) and *To the Lighthouse* (1927)

are prototypical examples of this prose style. This creative use of language is linked to contemporary ideological concerns with the relationship between the subjective self and the world, and the representation of the psychological realities of the self. George Eliot's style, while sufficiently distinct to allow her prose to be identifiably hers, corresponds with the broader stylistic conventions of nineteenth-century realist fiction, marked as it is by its complexity of sentences structures and densely evaluative language. As with modernism, the stylistic conventions of the movement can be linked to the concerns of the movement as a whole, being motivated to authentically and convincingly depict and comment on social structures and relations, with an emphasis on detailed and complex portrayals of character and context rather than plot. Here, we can recognise Cook's (2000) perception of linguistic creativity as 'a force for conformity and solidarity, creating and reinforcing' group relationships and boundaries, as much as a tool for resisting and rebelling, and breaking new ground (Carter, 2011: 338).

The notion of distinct authorial style can be thus be challenged through contextualisation within contemporary literary movements and conventions, and related aesthetic and ideological priorities. Diachronic comparison of an author's work can also often reveal development and maturation in narrative style, and writing in different genres can lead authors in new creative directions, further problematising stylistic stereotyping. George Eliot's third novel *Silas Marner: The Weaver of Raveloe* (1861), for example, is much shorter than her more famous works, and is much simpler in overall narrative structure (with fewer secondary characters and subplots) and in style (with simpler lexis and sentence structuring, and less descriptive detail). Some authors also write in different styles and genres under different names and pseudonyms (compare, for example, Iain Banks with Iain M. Banks, and J. K. Rowling with Robert Galbraith). A further interesting case in point is the Mills and Boon industry: roughly 1,000 authors contribute to its range of genres, but each series, within each genre ('classic romance', 'contemporary romance', and so on), has guidelines and conventions for its required style sufficient to render its contributing authors' voices *in*distinct. All of these examples suggest that authorial style, written to stand out or blend in, to forge new experimental ground or to develop a conventional code, is perhaps partially a matter of subconscious channelling of habits of expression shaped by world view, but much more a matter of controlled construction and artful technique.

If it can be argued, with the mentioned caveats in mind, that an author's style is identifiable through its occurrence across the author's entire oeuvre, 'mind style' is the manner of expression specific to a work and reflecting the world view of a character or narrating persona. The term was coined by Fowler (1977: 76), who wrote that 'cumulatively, consistent structural options, agreeing in cutting the presented world to one pattern or another, give rise to an impression of a world-view, what I shall call a "mind-style"'. It is possible to distinguish narrator and character 'mind styles' from broader authorial style, and comparison of the mind styles apparent within an author's oeuvre can, in fact, aid in identifying authorial style – the authorial stylistic consistencies thrown into relief by the narratorial idiosyncrasies. Without a range of different narrators across an author's collected works, it is harder to draw a clear distinction between the voices of narrators and the voice and style of the author.

Both relatively conventional and highly abnormal mind styles are created through 'cumulative tendencies of stylistic choice' (Leech & Short, 2007: 151). Eccentric and unorthodox mind styles are created through a density of various kinds of defamiliarisation: the point of view through which the fictional world is portrayed is constructed as markedly deviant. The narrating protagonist of Samuel Beckett's novella *Molloy* (1951) depicts his world by means of highly modalised constructions, expressing uncertainty about much of what

happens, shifting between tenses, and often using free direct speech (without demarcating the words spoken by others, or by himself, from his narration). Although the narration is 'reliable' in the sense that it is honest, the effect is highly confusing and disorienting for the reader. The expression of the narrator protagonist of Eimear McBride's *A Girl is a Half-formed Thing* (2013) is much harder to follow, likewise employing free direct speech, but also using broken syntax and incomplete, often very short, sentences. The book opens with:

> For you. You'll soon. You'll give her name. In the stitches of her skin she'll wear your say. Mammy me? Yes you. Bounce the bed, I'd say. I'd say that's what you did. Then lay you down. They cut you round. Wait and hour and day.
>
> *(McBride, 2013: 7)*

The pained, rushed, and confused thoughts of the protagonist are portrayed in the stilted, frustrated, half-silenced, and stumbling style of narration. As the book jacket's blurb proclaims:

> [I]t is not so much a stream of consciousness as an unconscious railing against a life that makes little sense, forming a shocking and intimate insight into the thoughts, feelings and chaotic sexuality of a young and isolated protagonist. To read [this book] is to plunge inside its narrator's head, experiencing her world first-hand.

Irregular mind styles have become increasingly popular in the last two decades: *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* (Haddon, 2003), *The Selected Works of T. S. Spivet* (Larsen, 2009), and *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* (Foer, 2005) are just a few examples of works of fiction written in the first person through mind styles reflecting symptoms of autism or forms of obsessive compulsive disorder. Although more conventional mind styles likewise involve skilled creativity on the part of the author, different kinds of creativity, perhaps, are involved when constructing highly defamiliarising mind styles. This trend, the kinds of linguistic expression that are employed to portray unusual mind styles, and the rationale behind those linguistic choices are interesting issues in current narratology.

In some modes and styles of narration, it can be difficult to make a further distinction between the mind style of the narrating persona and the characters through which the narrator focalises. In some of Virginia Woolf's writing – *To the Lighthouse* (1927), for example – it could be argued that the mind styles of the various characters through which the narration focalises are not sufficiently different from each other – or that those differences are smoothed over by the stream of consciousness style – rendering the narratorial and character viewpoints and voices difficult to tell apart. The stream of consciousness style is also used in the modernist novels *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) by James Joyce and *Life and Death of Harriet Frean* (1922) by May Sinclair. In these novels, Joyce and Sinclair focalise the omniscient, heterodiegetic narration through the minds of the protagonists, and use this narratorial mode, combined with stream of consciousness, to portray the development of the protagonists' consciousness, and intellectual and verbal abilities. Unlike McBride's novel, in which the expression is fairly consistent throughout, these novels present the trajectory of the *bildungsroman* – from youth to adulthood – through language, as well as plot: at the novels' beginnings, the prose replicates early childhood babbling and sound play; gradually, the lexis and syntax progresses to portray more adult awareness and expression. In these contexts, the mind style in question is more directly attributable to a specific character viewpoint and voice, and is distinct from the focalising narration.

Constructing convincing characters that are distinguishable from each other, via the voice of the narrator, all of these fictional figures filtered through authorial style, requires a high degree of creative skill and subtle variation in linguistic techniques. The construction of spoken character discourse also opens up a further element of linguistic creativity, in the option of manipulating standard syntax and orthography to present more realistic verbal discourse. Part of the nineteenth-century realist endeavour was to portray the voices of the underrepresented working class with verisimilitude. Authors such as Charles Dickens and George Eliot use colloquial lexis and grammatically deviant syntax to mimic the accents and dialects of the working classes, in addition to what is conventionally referred to as 'phonetic spelling': consonant clusters are elided, and spelling is altered to replicate 'non-standard' pronunciation. The speech of the character Joseph, in *Wuthering Heights* (1995 [1847]: 308), is portrayed by Emily Brontë in language such as:

> Aw'd rather, by th'haulf, hev'em swearing i' my lugs frough morn tuh neeght, nur hearken yah, hahsiver! [. . .] It's a blaming shaime, us Aw cannot oppen t'Blessed Book, bud yah set up them glories tuh sattan, un' all t' flaysome wickednesses ut iver wer born intuh t' warld!

Novelists can exploit and experiment with the relationship between mind style and expression in interesting ways, especially in cases in which a first person narrator's manner of expression sits ambiguously somewhere between spoken and written styles of narration. Simpson (2014: 115) discusses the stylistic shifts that Irvine Welsh creates in the accent and dialect of the narrating protagonist Mark Renton in his novel *Trainspotting* (1993). Much of Renton's narration is expressed through phonetic spelling and non-standard syntax imitating an Edinburgh vernacular, but when the context requires it (in a law court, for example) Renton's expression shifts, and his voice is presented with standard orthography and spelling, and with use of a formal register and highly articulate lexis. This demonstrates the performative nature of his accent and dialect, while also highlighting a complication in the concept of mind style. Renton's narrating voice, one would assume, reveals his natural, habitual, subconscious style of expression – that of a working class, uneducated man – and yet his speech occasionally employs a very different style of expression. This problematises the drawing of a simplistic relationship between mind style, world view, and linguistic expression, just as the relationship between authorial style and linguistic expression can be problematised.

We now turn from fictional mind styles – perceptions of the world of the novel – to the fictional worlds themselves, and the ways in which linguistic creativity is involved in the building of rich and immersive story settings. The affordances of narrative fiction are greater, in this regard, than those of other kinds of literature, not least because of the scope available in long prose forms for the drawing of complex and detailed worlds. The aforementioned nineteenth-century realist texts of George Eliot and her contemporaries illustrate this well, with their fine-grained, vividly drawn, verisimilar depictions of domestic settings. All fictional worlds (as with fictional mind styles) involve both creativity at the level of ideas and premises, and creativity as manifest at the level of language. Although the latter is the focus of attention of this chapter, it bears a close relationship to the former, as demonstrated by the discussion of mind styles. Within the construction of fictional worlds that are very different from our reality – fantastic, dystopian, anti-realistic and non-realistic worlds – whereby different societal structures, laws of physics, genders, life forms, etc., are created, new names and noun phrases are most prototypically required, but sometimes also new verbs

and unusual descriptive collocations, for example. Rarely, but occasionally, authors create innovative, non-standard grammatical systems through which to express the communication of their characters – see, for example, Russell Hoban's *Riddley Walker* (1980) – or even invented (constructed) languages (see Ball, Chapter 8). In this, much like the use of phonetic spelling, a careful balance needs to be struck between innovative presentation, convincing realism (or, indeed, anti-realism), and decipherability. Invented languages, and narrative fictions more broadly, in their ontological departure from reality, consciously create and express new visions of the world.

The evolution of narrative has been linked to a cotemporaneous assertion and questioning of culturally dominant visions, truths, and 'knowledge' (such as religious ideas, understanding of the shape of the earth, etc.) (Ryan, 2005: 344). Structural forms, thematic concerns, and linguistic creativity in literary narrative are shaped by, and in turn impact upon and contribute to, cultural contexts. Western postmodernism, for example, has picked up and continued modernism's confrontation of the disintegration of trust in single, holistic meanings, in cohesive truths, to the extent that the very possibility of representing a narrative or truth is challenged and confronted. Brigid Brophy's *In Transit* (1969) intertwines a multitude of postmodernist threads. It is written in a multimodal style, shifting between genres including erotica, opera, detective fiction, and surrealist fiction, riddled with intertextual references, employing various languages through which to explore how these languages are ingrained with gender, and with a form of address and consciousness of an 'other' in the construction of the 'I', the self. The post-colonial context is also one in which language choices come to the fore, offering a new dimension to linguistic creativity. English is the language of colonisation, as well as of globalisation. Zoë Wicomb's post-apartheid novel *David's Story* (2001) is predominantly written in English, but is permeated with words from various languages used in South Africa (defined in a glossary), challenging simplistic notions of hybrid languages. This occurs at the same time as a destabilisation of reference all together, involving the literal decomposition of the word 'truth' (Wicomb, 2001: 136) within the narrative's overarching theme of the impossibility of authenticity, narrativisation, and representation. Here, the specific cultural context – the idiosyncratic sociopolitical, linguistic, and literary nuances of this moment within South Africa, as perceived by Wicomb – infuse the fiction with particular kinds of polyglot and referential linguistic creativity. As Carter (2011: 337) asserts, all creativity is a contextual act.

Finally, the kinds of literary structures and forms culturally available, dominant, and channelled also influence linguistic creativity. Modern, post-Renaissance, Western narrative is predominantly focused on the self, the individual overcoming adversity (the hero's journey, the *bildungsroman*), with a sole narrator and protagonist, and on knowledge and truths. Figure 15.1 above maps out the evolution of Western literary narrative, but within non-Western literary narrative there is a diverse range of story-forming and story-telling traditions and developments, including oral, performed, and collaborative story-telling, non-linear narration, short forms, a prominence of analogy and magic realism, mythical sagas, and lengthy narratives of whole families or communities, rather than sole heroes or anti-heroes, etc. Different ideological, philosophical, and sociopolitical concerns also determine the evolution of non-Western narratives in different ways. The South African fiction of Wicomb and others is variably influenced by the different story-telling traditions and literary heritage of the country's many racial communities. *David's Story* (Wicomb, 2001) includes a sub-narrative engaging with the journey narratives, legends, and histories of the repressed Griqua race, for example. In the late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century globalised

world, cross-fertilisation of forms, ancient and modern, 'Eastern' and 'Western', is rife, and tactical intertextuality abounds. This further undermines conception of authorial style as subconscious and habitual, determined by the world view and cultural context of the author, rather recognising style as a 'motivated choice' (Studer, 2008) and 'stylisation' as a knowing performance of style to conform to or deviate from cultural norms (Coupland, 2007).

Today's technological advances also drive and direct creativity in literary narrative. The development of printing and progressive economic efficiencies in publishing brought about the serialised literary narrative, and then the novel. This facilitated particular kinds of world-building, character development, themes, and styles motivated by the concerns of the widening and changing audience. Similarly, digitisation is shaping contemporary creative writing, bringing with it a democratisation in online publication, offering global access to web-based texts, with new affordances in the forms of hypertexts and e-literature, and contributing to new trends in short and quickly digestible forms (such as Twitter fiction). In the digital context, new freedoms and constraints encourage language to be used in different ways. Words on screens can become both referential and functional, presenting choice in narrative paths as hyperlinks to new lexia (electronic pages). Flash fiction (very short fiction, usually less than 1,000 words), becoming increasingly popular, forgoes character development and detailed setting to capture the mood and tone of a poignant moment, often with a lack of closure and a density of meaning-potential. These new literary forms and uses of language create a changed relationship between the language and the reader, and add new parameters to the act of narrativisation – the readerly reception, construction, and imaginative realisation of literary narrative.

Current contributions and research

This section of the chapter provides an overview of leading research into linguistic creativity in literary narrative, with an emphasis on methods of analysing the relationship between the language of the text and the process of reading and interpreting literary narrative. It takes up the three threads running through the prior section – fictional voices, fictional worlds, and the role of cultural contexts – and discusses several branches of contemporary stylistics that offer valuable approaches to these issues and topics.

The discipline of stylistics offers a wide range of tools for the analysis of language in fictional prose. The basic concepts of defamiliarisation and foregrounding (Leech & Short, 2007) are fundamental to appreciation and analytical understanding of linguistic creativity, in terms of literary linguistic 'artfulness', and in terms of inventiveness and originality. *Foregrounding* is the process of drawing attention to particular features of language. *Linguistic deviation*, often at the levels of morphology, lexis, grammar, and semantics, is used to disrupt the reader's inattentive reading, expectations of the familiar, and lack of conscious recognition of distinctiveness, to 'defamiliarise' (following Shklovsky, 1917) and make the world strange through artful expression. Leech and Short (2007), Simpson (2014), Verdonk (2002), and Toolan (2001) model very detailed analyses of linguistic defamiliarisation in literary prose. They each explore how authorial style, mind style, and character voice are created, and fictional worlds constructed, partially, but significantly, through foregrounding and deviation. Their wide-ranging analyses illustrate both the intricate level of detail at which linguistic creativity operates, and the originality and idiosyncrasy of much of this linguistic creativity: the stylistic dissimilarity from extract to extract, and the needs to address the linguistic particularities of each text individually, to respond to each extract with a sensitivity to the singular ways with which it manipulates language to create meaning

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(Attridge, 2004). Their analyses draw out the stylistic effects of participant relations within clauses, unusual agency, improbable juxtapositions and incongruent collocations, syntactic weighting, patterns of nominalisation, etc. Leech and Short (2007: 162–7) compare normal and unconventional mind styles. Their analysis of Benjy's unusual mind style in an extract from Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* (1931) moves systematically through structure, lexis, syntax, and 'textual relations' to demonstrate how Benjy's use of simple, monosyllabic lexis, few adjectives, paratactic sentence structuring, mistaken intransitive use of commonly transitive verbs, limited verb forms, and excessive use of pronominal forms instead of pronouns all indicate a mind incapable of synthesising and organising information in terms of relationships such as cause and effect, evaluating relative significance, and so on. There are countless such examples within stylistic scholarship of use of densely detailed analysis of linguistic defamiliarisation and foregrounding to reveal the workings of creative constructions in literature.

Historical stylistics (Busse, 2010) uses sub-branches of stylistics to investigate diachronic changes in the style of texts, or synchronic stylistic aspects of historical literary texts. Ingham (1992) combines feminist, sociolinguistic, and new historicist ideas in questioning claims that Dickens' female characters are stereotypes and/or caricatures of women in his own life. She compares the language that he uses to describe and voice female characters, including semantic fields, metaphors, and negation, with other fictional and non-fictional writing of the period, and argues that some aspects of his language use is fairly distinctive, while other aspects of his depiction of women reflect changing attitudes at the time. Ingham's combined methodology enables her to reveal Dickens' portrayal of female figures to be more detailed and problematic than mere stereotypes, and too patterned and bearing too many traces of broader sociocultural influences to be closely analogous to real individual women in his life. Historical stylistics increasingly involves the use of corpus stylistics, and sometimes computational stylistics, bringing contemporary technological advances to stylometry and employing the tools for broader ends than solely authorship attribution. For example, Mahlberg (2013) uses these methods to investigate various aspects of the language of Dickens, such as his use of body language in characterisation.

Relevance theory (Clark, 2009, 2013; Sperber & Wilson, 1995) is employed by stylisticians to study ways in which meaning is inferable from texts, making a distinction between what is linguistically encoded and what is pragmatically available for inference. Clark (2009) uses relevance theory to intervene in literary critical debates about the language of Golding's *The Inheritors* (1955), particularly in relation to the mind style of the character Lok and the divergent overarching interpretations of the text. Specifically, he addresses Halliday's (1971) lexico-grammatical analysis and interpretative arguments drawn from transitivity patterns, and the challenge presented to these argument by Hoover's (1999) more detailed corpus analysis of the lexis and agency in the text. Clark (2009) adds to this work by accounting for some of the interpretative effects described by Halliday, Hoover, and others via inferences available from textual details. Clark explores the clause structures and restricted diction of Lok's mind style in relation to the reader's expectation of informativity and veracity, and the inferences available therein. He notes the high frequency of unresolved questions within available inferences when reading passages focalised through Lok's mind style in comparison to the available inferences when reading passages from other narrative points of view in the text. He also discusses implicature in literary contexts: the fiction reader's interpretative intent to build up a rich conceptualisation of the story world, rather than to derive meaning with the same efficiency-based model of inference as everyday communication. Again, this is just one example

indicative of the advances offered by relevance theory in understanding the interpretative effects of linguistic creativity in literary narrative.

Schema theory (Schank & Abelson, 1977) shares some principles and priorities with relevance theory: both regard the text as a composition of cues evoking reader interpretation, and both focus on the work done by the reader in creating meaning. Schema theory operates on the assumption that efficient processing requires that we store scripts and schemas of experiences, so as to avoid having to comprehend everything anew when we meet previously encountered situations. Texts 'activate' readers' schemas through reference to particular aspects of situations, emotions, objects associated with particular processes, etc., and the readers then use their schema to make sense of the texts' information. At a basic level, this is how and why authors do not have to articulate all of the details of the fictional world of their story or of character behaviour: readers make a lot of assumptions from even minimal cues based on their schema. Culpeper (2001) explores how readers infer characterisation based on textual activation of schema. Schema are dynamic, reinforced or revised by new experiences. Linguistic creativity in literary narrative can be 'schema disrupting' or 'schema refreshing' within the fields of language schema, text schema, and world schema (as categorised by Stockwell, 2002: 80), through, for example, invented languages, hybrid genres, and sociopolitically persuasive dystopian visions in fiction, respectively. Cook (1994) finds schema disruption and refreshment to be what lies behind the concepts of defamiliarisation and foregrounding, and the basis of appreciation of literariness. Much of this work aligns with a view of linguistic creativity in literary narrative as not a completed product, but rather the process of interaction between the text and the individual reader in a dynamic cognitive context; the relationship between what is actually inscribed on the page and what scope and direction there is for interpretative realisation of that textual detail; the balance between the actual linguistic articulation and the facilitation of the creative imagination of the reader (Carter, 2011: 340; Stockwell, 2009).

Schema theory sits among a suite of models employed with the cognitive branch of stylistics, sometimes called cognitive poetics (Jeffries & McIntyre, 2010; Semino & Culpeper, 2002; Stockwell, 2002). Semino (2002) illustrates the ways in which Alekos, a character in *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* (de Bernières, 1999), relates to the world using a naive (and, necessarily, unusually flexible) ANGEL schema. Semino goes on, in the same chapter, to demonstrate the comparable value of *conceptual metaphor theory*, another approach among this suite, to the analysis of mind style. Semino employs conceptual metaphor theory to analyse the dominant metaphorical constructions, and the inferable psychology behind them, of Clegg, the protagonist of John Fowles' *The Collector* (1963). Clegg, Semino demonstrates, views his victim, Miranda, through the source domain of BUTTERFLY. This conceptual structure is so firmly embedded in his mind style that it enables him to act towards her as if she *were* a butterfly, recording his observations of her and capturing her. Following her capture, the clashes between her behaviour and what he can and wants to do with her, and the source domain of BUTTERFLY, frustrate him, and he in turn uses further butterfly metaphors to express this, and tries to rationalise her behaviour with different extensions of the metaphorical structure. Semino augments the analytical affordances of conceptual metaphor theory in this instance with insights from its progeny, blending theory (Fauconnier, 1997). Other work on readerly conceptualisation of narratorial and character voices includes Stockwell's (2009) notions of 'mind-modelling' and identification, which draw from, and add further cognitive stylistic insights to, post-classical narratological appropriations of theory of mind (Palmer, 2004; Richardson, 2006; Zunshine, 2006). This work variably attends to schemas and other cognitive systems and psychological concepts apparent in the ways in which a fictional

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narrator or character relates to the fictional world; readers' schema and other cognitive systems and psychological concepts appealed to in the authorial rendering of those characters and fictional worlds; and the relationships between them. Other approaches within cognitive stylistics – such as prototype theory (Rosch, 1975), text world theory (Gavins, 2007; Werth, 1999), and deictic shift theory (Duchan, Bruder, & Hewitt 1995), several leaning significantly on Langacker's (2008) cognitive grammar – offer insights on different aspects of interpretation of linguistic creativity in literary narrative, such as the process of fictional world-building, and readerly conceptual immersion and orientation within fictional worlds.

Recommendations for practice

The previous section presents a sample of leading research, modelling a range of approaches available for analysis of linguistic creativity in literary narrative in all of its genres and forms, all drawn from sub-disciplines of stylistics. More mainstream narratological and literary critical approaches can offer different emphases and insights, but stylistic approaches can often serve the same ends with richer gains and a keener grounding in the nuances of the text.

The approaches to linguistic creativity in literary narrative offered by stylistics and its cognitive branches, including and beyond those surveyed in the previous section, facilitate systematic, rigorous analysis with very close attention to linguistic detail. Understanding of the workings of linguistic creativity in literary narrative is not accessible without this acute attention to the minutiae of linguistic features. Few other literary critical disciplines focus on language to this degree, or with advanced linguistic and cognitive theory behind their methods. Good stylistic practice does not lose the thematic and contextual particularities of a literary text behind this linguistic rigour; rather, the systematic study of language is used to explain the interpretative effects of the creative singularity of the text.

Cognitive stylistics, particularly, also recognises the creativity involved in the act of reading, in the heteronomous quality of the reader's interpretative engagement with a work's textuality (Stockwell, 2009: 15). A fuller understanding of linguistic creativity in literary narrative requires appreciation of creativity as process not product, and as not individual, but collaborative and culturally contextualised. Cognitive stylistics is increasingly accommodating and incorporating this view into its methods.

Future directions

Two areas within linguistic creativity and literary narrative have been oddly neglected within literary scholarship, but are gaining ground within cognitive poetics. The first is aesthetics, and the role of 'matters of feeling, taste, preference' and evaluative aesthetic judgement in readerly responses to literary narrative (Stockwell, 2009: 10). Explanations of why a reader likes a particular author's style, or a particular novel, are significantly informed by these issues. Stockwell (2009) is gaining ground in this area. Linked to this is the neglect of real readers and their responses to literary narrative, in favour of the highly informed, attentive, and often critically biased readings shared and discussed within academia. New research methods and analytical approaches are being forged in this area too (see Gavins, 2013; Stockwell, 2009), with the promise of hugely valuable insights for disciplines that share the priorities of cognitive poetics.

The close study of linguistic creativity in literary narrative can also shed light on the construction of genre and on the use of linguistic creativity to conform, as well as to deviate. Gavins (2013) presents concentrated work on the literary genre of absurdist fiction, exploring

its common creative linguistic characteristics and readerly responses to those characteristics. Her work partially follows Steen's (2011: 32–3) framework for understanding genre, which is based on prototype theory and a model of radial structures for conceptual categories. There is a lot of scope for more genre-based work of this kind. Stockwell (2009) and others note the historic propensity of scholarship to focus on unusual fictional minds and worlds. This is perhaps understandable during a period of testing and developing new models, and of excitement about the insights made available by those new models. It is also further fuelled by current trends towards dystopian fiction and in deviant mind styles, as noted above. As Stockwell (2009) argues, however, the linguistic creativity involved in the construction of the conservative and the conventional – conforming kinds of creativity – and the subtle kinds of foregrounding and deviation at work in such texts is equally, if not more, worthy of analytical attention.

Gavins' (2013) method of research could also offer new insights into the linguistic characteristics of, and common interpretative responses to, particular forms of literary narrative. Research into short stories, and the ways in which meaning is constructed within them, remains sparse, lagging behind research into other newly popular forms such as digital and multimodal literary narrative. As much shorter forms proliferate (flash fiction, Twitter fiction, etc.), more literary critical consideration of the parameters of linguistic meaning making within different narratological constraints may evolve.

More important, though, and more culturally overdue and urgent, is the need to respond not only to new trends in literary form, but also to the nuances of linguistic creativity in literary narrative across the globe. Ironically, perhaps, the cross-fertilisation of genres and styles between different cultural contexts in the internationalised market for readers is drawing new attention to neglected non-Western kinds of linguistic creativity in literary narrative, both contemporary and historic, to the different ideological and sociopolitical movements that have shaped literary cultural heritage in different contexts, and to non-Western scholarly approaches to topics within these areas, including, for example, different conceptions of creativity. A more culturally diverse spectrum of research would radically enhance scholarly understanding in this field.

Related topics

cognitive stylistics; constructed languages; creativity and discourse analysis; lexical creativity; literary stylistics and creativity

Further reading

Jeffries, L., and McIntyre, D. (2010) *Stylistics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jeffries and McIntyre start with some basic concepts within stylistics and move onto its more cognitive branches, working through illustrative analyses in an accessible, textbook format.

Leech, G., and Short, M. (2007) *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose*, 2nd edn, Harlow: Pearson.

This book offers a thorough and systematic grounding in the stylistics of literary narrative, explaining and exemplifying detailed analysis of issues such as authorial style, mind style, characterisation, and fictional world-building, and drawing acute interpretative insights from rigorous linguistic investigation of a wealth of extracts of fiction.

Stockwell, P. (2009) *Texture: A Cognitive Aesthetics of Reading*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

In this theoretically dense and ground-breaking work, Stockwell provides a deep exploration of aesthetic aspects of reading such as resonance, intensity, sensation, and empathy, drawing on insights

from cognitive poetics. For more introductory outlines and literary analyses using some of the cognitive poetic models and approaches informing Stockwell's ideas here, see Jeffries and McIntyre (2010), Semino and Culpeper (2002), and Stockwell (2002).

Verdonk, P., and Weber, J.-J. (eds) (1995) *Twentieth Century Prose: From Text to Context*, London: Routledge.

This is a collection of essays by leading stylisticians, each modelling a detailed stylistic analysis of an extract of literary narrative. The volume provides a valuable overview of stylistic methodologies, an illustration of the interpretative analytical insights made available by those methods, and a demonstration of good practice.

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16

Creativity in response

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Joan Swann

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Introduction

> A clear requirement now is to embrace not simply the producer but the receiver of creative processes and to shift the analytical attention towards greater assessment and appraisal of creative outputs, with the aim of gaining enriched understanding of processes of reception on the part of different socially positioned readers or viewers of or participants in creative performances.
>
> <div align="right">

(Carter, 2007: 600)

> </div>

> Without a reader there is no text, without a text no reader. Arguably, however, stylistics has historically respected the textual term of this necessary relation more than the readerly, a trend continued today in dominant and developing stylistic approaches such as cognitive linguistics
>
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(Hall, 2009: 331)

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Ronald Carter (2007), in the first quotation, is responding to a special issue of the journal *Applied Linguistics* on language creativity. He sets out some of the achievements in this area of research – an understanding of creative practices across a range of genres and contexts – but comments that we need a greater focus on processes of reception. This comment is echoed in the second quotation from Geoff Hall (2009). Hall is responding to a special issue of the stylistics journal *Language and Literature*, focusing on literary reading as social practice. He contrasts this approach with a prevailing emphasis in stylistics on the analysis of literary texts in isolation from their reception by readers.

There is, however, an increasing swell of interest in reception, or response, as an aspect of creative practice, to which calls from researchers such as Carter and Hall (see also Hall, 2005, 2008) have themselves added impetus. While it is true that creativity in language is often considered in terms of linguistic characteristics and pragmatic functions of those texts – spoken, written, or multimodal – that are deemed to be in some way creative, recent attention has focused also on the take-up of such texts: how they are attended to and engaged with by an audience. In this chapter, I review different approaches to the study of aesthetic response. In keeping with current interests in language and creativity, I focus on research that seeks to understand the responses of 'ordinary' readers, viewers, etc., rather than the professional responses of critics. The story I shall tell applies particularly to literary texts, although I also refer to other texts and practices. I consider, in turn, a shift from abstract

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conceptions of 'the reader' and 'reading' to empirical studies of response, studies that take a more contextualised approach to response, and finally, more recent studies that focus on interpretive moments in everyday discourse. I argue that these last two approaches accord agency and potentially creativity to respondents themselves.

There remains the question of terminology. I use the terms 'reception' and 'response' according to which is used in the studies to which I refer (sometimes both are used inter-changeably). My own preference is for 'response' as a generic term, because this seems to allow for greater agency/creativity in the responsive act. A plethora of terms is available for those who make the responses, usually associated with particular receptive modes ('reader', 'listener', 'viewer', 'audience', etc.). In the main, I use 'reader', because of my starting point in literary response, and because 'reader' may also be used generically across different modes and media. I use other terms where these occur in particular studies or traditions.

The reader in stylistics: From idealised to empirical

Carter (2007) suggests that his call for a greater focus on reception in studies of language creativity would parallel a shift in literary criticism towards an increasing interest in reader response, although he concedes that, at the time he was writing, empirical studies of reader response were still limited. Allington and Swann (2009), similarly, note that while reader response theory focuses on the importance of reader–text interaction, reader response criticism tends to focus on the text itself rather than on responses from readers. This is consistent with Hall's appraisal of stylistics, with its 'textual' rather than 'readerly' focus. I shall illustrate this general point with reference to stylistics and its emphasis on the responses of ordinary readers.

The notion of 'the reader' is fundamental to stylistics, which, in its analysis, assumes an interaction between reader and text. The stylistician Mick Short (1996: 5) comments that stylistic analysis attempts, explicitly and systematically, 'to relate linguistic description to interpretation', and that this is 'part of the essential core of good criticism'. In practice, however, the interpretation comes from the analyst. The analyst invokes a more general reader, whose interpretations the analyst seeks to explicate, but this remains an abstract construct: an ideal or implied reader presupposed in the analysis of the text itself. This is evident in much of contemporary stylistics. In an examination of papers in *Language and Literature*, Allington and Swann (2009) found that 95 per cent of empirical studies referred to the reader, or reading, in their analysis, but most presupposed an ideal or implied reader rather than being concerned with responses generated by actual readers. The reader, and reading, also tended to be singular, with analysts constructing interpretations that are assumed to be held in common. What is at issue here is a kind of 'everyreader', with differences between readers, and conditions of reading, played down.

Short (1996: 6) concedes that readers bring different experiences to a text that may affect their interpretation, but argues that, despite these differences, 'there is a remark-able amount of agreement among readers over what particular texts mean'. For Short, this resides not only in common knowledge of linguistic structures, but also in common 'procedures of inference' that are used to interpret utterances. Some stylisticians do more to highlight difference. In setting out the principles of feminist stylistics, for instance, Sara Mills (1995: 8) notes that part of her concern is with 'the way readers form interpretations which are related to their gender – where the process of interpretation rests on cues in the text which have a different significance, or are significant to a different extent, depending on the reader's gender-identity'. Mills' analyses illuminate the gendered positionings

evident in many contemporary texts (not only literature). The analyses are designed to enable readers to distance themselves from these positionings. As in other approaches to stylistics, however, interpretations are constructed on the basis of textual analysis (and sometimes common cultural knowledge) rather than on consultations with actual readers. Mills is influenced by critical discourse analysis, and similar approaches to that which she adopts are evident in critical analyses of a range of popular media that assume effects on readers as a result of the characteristics of media texts (see discussion in Staiger, 2005).

Hall (2009) comments, as quoted at the start of this chapter, that even cognitive approaches to stylistics, with their explicit focus on interpretive processes, have been concerned predominantly with textual analysis and with abstract models of reading/interpretation. There have, however, been interesting developments in cognitive stylistics, with an increasing number of studies incorporating the responses of actual readers. A common research topic is *foregrounding*, the assumed psychological effect of linguistic deviation, which is a feature long associated with poetic language. Textual forms or structures that 'deviate' from linguistic norms are said to be foregrounded, or to stand out to readers. The ideas of deviation and foregrounding were developed by the early twentieth-century formalists (see Jones, Introduction) and are seen as fundamental in the stylistic analysis of literature (Short, 1996: 10*ff*). A special issue of *Language and Literature* (van Peer, 2007) provides examples of research on readers' – and, in one case, viewers' – responses to foregrounding, including: Fialho's (2007) work on 'foregrounding and refamiliarization' in two short stories; Hakemulder's (2007) study of different levels of foregrounding in films, including Shakespeare film adaptations; and Sop ák's (2007) comparison of foregrounding in different drafts of Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922).

This kind of empirical approach to reader response has been termed 'the empirical study of literature' (Miall, 2006; Miall & Kuiken, 1998). David S. Miall and Don Kuiken (1998: 328) contrast this with traditional literary study, in which 'literary scholars continue to produce readings of texts and elaborations of literary theory in an institutional culture that is inhabited almost exclusively by fellow scholars and senior students'. For Miall and Kuiken (1998: 328), the empirical study of literature sheds light on the responses to literature of readers outside such institutional settings, providing 'a more ecologically valid approach to understanding the role and functions of literature in general'. Miall (2006: 12) argues, more specifically, that 'our understanding of literary reading will be recast in the light of evidence gathered from real readers'.

While presented as ground-breaking in the study of literature, such empirical work has also attracted critical comment. Studies are often experimental or quasi-experimental, whereby subjects (frequently students) are presented with brief extracts from poetic and other texts. Texts are sometimes rewritten to allow comparison between particular textual features of interest. The situation is quite different from the more usual contexts in which people read, leading Hall (2008), and Allington and Swann (2009), to question their ecological validity. Hall (2008: 31) argues that they do not satisfy 'the very basic demand that a study actually tells us about the phenomenon it purports to tell the researcher and the readers of that research about, and not about a suggestive but frustratingly parallel research universe'.

Formal stylistic analysis, cognitive stylistics, and the empirical study of literature share an interest in the interpretations produced by ordinary readers that, at least in principle, would differ from a preoccupation with the expert and distinctive readings provided by literary critics. In his introduction to cognitive poetics, Stockwell (2002: 11) presents this as 'nothing less than a democratization of literary study'. There is a striking parallel between this position and Carter's (and others') interest in demotic creativity, and the extension of the notion of

'literariness' to everyday texts and practices. However, there is limited scope for creativity in the responses of an idealised reader constructed by an analyst. Critical approaches, such as Mills' feminist stylistics, might be said to assume some level of agency in encouraging readers to question dominant meanings, or to read against (in this case gendered) texts, but again the meanings associated with texts derive from textual analysis. And the responses of actual readers in the empirical study of literature tend to be highly constrained by an experimental research design. While these approaches have much to say about literary and other texts, they do not help us to attain Carter's goal of an 'enriched understanding of processes of reception' that takes into account the different social positions occupied by readers (or viewers, or listeners, or other participants in the creative process). This is, however, addressed in more contextualised approaches that allow for greater differentiation between readers and greater reader agency, to which I turn in the following section.

The study of reading experiences

In contrast to stylistics and the empirical study of literature, other academic fields interested in everyday reading have focused on the habitual behaviour of readers, acknowledging the significance of particular sociohistorical and cultural contexts of reception. These include the overlapping areas of the history of reading, cultural studies, literacy studies, and aspects of reception studies. In their focus on contextualised reading practices, and on difference and specificity in these practices, such approaches may collectively be termed 'sociocultural' (for example Gee, 2000), although they do not all use this term.

In a key text on the history of reading, Jonathon Rose (2001) discusses the reading practices of self-taught, British, working-class men and women (mainly men) in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Rose comments that, while we have ample evidence of the reading experiences of 'professional intellectuals' (authors, literary critics, professors, clergymen), less has traditionally been known about 'common readers'. Drawing on a range of sources, including memoirs and diaries, autobiographies, school and library records, and social surveys, he addresses questions that, he argues, have otherwise been the subject of speculation or assumption. To give an example, Rose (2001: 5) cites the assumption that canonical literature is irrelevant to people who have not received an orthodox Western education and contrasts this view with observations from readers such as the Labour MP Will Crooks:

> Growing up in extreme poverty in East London, Crooks spent 2d on a second-hand *Iliad*, and was dazzled: 'What a revelation it was to me! Pictures of romance and beauty I had never dreamed of suddenly opened up before my eyes. I was transported from the East End to an enchanted land. It was a rare luxury for a working lad like me just home from work to find myself suddenly among the heroes and nymphs of ancient Greece.'
>
> *(Rose, 2001: 4–5)*

Rose (2001: 404) argues that a sense of epiphany – 'The Book That Made All The Difference' – was a common theme in working-class autobiography.

A recent British project has compiled a Reading Experience Database (RED) (the current director of which is Shafquat Towheed): a historical record of the reading experiences of British subjects and overseas visitors to Britain from 1450 to 1945. The database includes more than 30,000 records of all kinds of reading, 'not only books but also newspapers, journals, posters, advertisements, magazines, letters, scripts, playbills, tickets, chapbooks and

almanacs' (RED, undated a). A 'reading experience' here means 'a recorded engagement with a written or printed text – beyond the mere fact of possession', and the researchers argue that:

> A database containing as much information as possible about what British people read, where and when they read it and what they thought of it will form an invaluable resource for researchers of book history, cultural studies, sociology and family history, to name but a few.
>
> *(RED, undated b)*

An example of research drawing on the database is Katie Halsey's (2009) study of reading experiences over the period 1800–1945, in which she provides evidence of the prevalence of: the reading aloud of literary texts throughout the nineteenth century and how this may have affected the reception of these texts; critical responses by readers to texts read aloud by authors, some of which seem to have contributed to the redrafting of texts; a close association between morality and style in readers' responses; and the importance of emotional responses. Both Halsey (2009) and Rose (2001) contrast the study of actual readers with abstract constructs of the reader evident in literary theory, contending that the latter obscure the diversity of readers and reading practices. Similarly, the compilers of the RED comment that this will 'certainly enable the study of readership to progress beyond the theoretical and speculative' (Open University, undated*a*).

The three-volume *History of Reading* (Crone & Towheed, 2011; Halsey & Owens, 2011; Towheed & Owens, 2011) provides further examples of studies of historical reading experiences. Other collections provide a greater focus on contemporary reading. The papers in Rehberg Sedo (2011), for instance, consider various forms of reading community, from face-to-face and online reading groups, to mass reading events, locating these within a broader historical context of shared reading. Lang (2012) brings together a series of studies of reading at the turn of the twenty-first century, when, she argues, social and technological changes have the potential to transform readers' engagement with texts.

Contemporary ethnographic studies, which go beyond written records of reading, can gain more direct access to Rose's 'common reader', providing greater detail on the reading practices of individuals and groups. Working within cultural studies, Janice Radway (1984) carried out a now-classic study of women reading romance literature. Radway (1991 [1984]: 7, emphasis original) comments that she began to distinguish analytically between 'the significance of the *event* of reading and the meaning of the *text* constructed as its consequence'. Her study became:

> less an account of the way romances as texts were interpreted than of the way romance reading as a form of behavior operated as a complex intervention in the ongoing social life of actual social subjects, women who saw themselves first as wives and mothers.
>
> *(Radway, 1991 [1984]: 7)*

Whereas textual studies of romance have seen this as a limiting genre that reproduces patriarchal values, Radway (1984) saw romance *reading* partly as a form of individual resistance, buying time away from the care and emotional nurturance of others. She comments too on the women readers' insistence that romance reading 'creates a feeling of hope, provides emotional sustenance and produces a fully visceral sense of well-being'

(Radway, 1991 [1984]: 12). Other studies have commented, similarly, on how readers use books, and reading experiences, for their own ends. As examples of studies carried out in rather different reading contexts, see Elizabeth Long's (2003) account of American women's reading groups, Azar Nafisi's (2003) account of a reading group for female students in Iran, and Shirin Zubair's (2003) account of a critical approach to literature teaching in Pakistan (mainly women, some men). In all of these cases, literary texts, and their discussion, led readers to explore and sometimes question aspects of their lives.

The research discussed in this section, in its acknowledgement of differences between readers and its emphasis on how these readers make texts work for them, allows space for reader agency and creativity. Some work has focused on responses that seem particularly creative in that they play with the boundaries between reading and rewriting. A prototypical example is fan fiction, in which readers rework existing stories, changing or elaborating the story world, plot, aspects of characterisation, etc. – a practice discussed in several publications by Henry Jenkins (2006, for example; see also Knobel & Lankshear, Chapter 25). Examples of the practice can be seen in one of the main websites, http://www.fanfiction. net, which includes responses to a range of texts, including books, anime/manga, movies, cartoons, plays/musicals, comics, television shows, and games. In turn, stories reversioned by fans may be subject to feedback from other fans. This popular form of rewriting is a continuation of an established literary practice: literature is full of intertextual references to earlier literary texts, and rewritings may become literary works in their own right, as in Jean Rhys' (1966) *Wide Sargasso Sea*, written as a prequel to Charlotte Brontë's (1847) *Jayne Eyre*, and numerous reworkings of Austen's (1813) *Pride and Prejudice*. In the United Kingdom, Rob Pope (1995) has developed this idea into an approach to reading and criticism that he terms 'textual intervention'. Pope challenges simple dichotomies between reading and writing, arguing, for instance, that reading necessarily involves rewriting in the sense of constructing meanings and interpretations. Textual intervention is a more developed form of criticism as rewriting, for example students may rewrite a poem, or rewrite and combine two texts from different genres. This encourages a creative engagement with texts in which the students produce critical commentary on the basis of their rewriting.

In Pope's case, ordinary, or at least non-expert, readers transform literary, and sometimes canonical, texts. Creative interplay between literary texts and reader responses may occasionally be constructed to work in the other direction, as in the example of an 'anti-edition' of Virginia Woolf's (1929) *A Room of One's Own* produced by the Swedish conceptual artist Kajsa Dahlberg and discussed by Mats Dahlström (2011). Dahlberg had become interested in marginalia as responsive texts, and collated pages from Woolf's essay that had been annotated by readers: in her anti-edition, these marginalia were prioritised over the original text. In this case, everyday responses were recontextualised as an art form in their own right. Dahlström (2011: 123) sees the result as a social text that plays with the boundaries between the private (marginalia) and public (a printed book), placed in the public sphere in an exhibition of work by the artist.

I commented earlier that the work discussed in this section could broadly be seen as adopting a sociocultural perspective on reading. Theorisations of the sociocultural would see readers as located within particular sociohistorical, cultural, and local interpersonal contexts that make available certain forms of engagement with text and potentially certain textual interpretations. Readers and readings are not, however, completely constrained by their sociocultural positioning. Lang (2012: 2), for instance, argues that while it is important to situate individual acts of reading in relation to the wider social and cultural relations within

which they are embedded, this should not 'lead us to lose sight of acts of individual agency, creativity, resistance, and freedom within the interaction between reader and text'. Such creative interactions would draw on whatever interpretive resources are available. Lang (2012: 2) gives as an example 'when new technologies open up spaces in which readers can generate their own construction of texts and offer critical responses that need not adhere to the sanctioned judgments of literary experts'.

This emphasis on the relative creativity of readers is consistent with wider preoccupations in the field of cultural studies. In a review of children's and young people's consumption of a range of cultural products, not only reading material, Mary Jane Kehily (2003: 282) comments on a shift that has taken place from seeing people as passive consumers, 'the manipulated dupes of omnipotent and highly persuasive commercial forces', to according greater emphasis to more active processes of consumption in which people are seen to exercise agency and creativity in their interaction with cultural resources.

Discourse analysis and the creative reader

Ethnographic and other relatively contextualised approaches to reading and other forms of response have advanced our understanding of interpretive activity in which readers (and listeners, and viewers) manipulate texts for their own ends and create, rather than take, meanings from texts. It is sometimes possible to look more closely at such interpretive processes – that is, to capture interpretation in the moment, as this occurs. In this section, I discuss discourse analytic studies that have this as their focus.

A precursor to contemporary discourse studies can be found in early anthropological research on oral literature and folklore. During the 1960s and 1970s, this field saw a major shift from the study of text to the study of performance. The earlier focus on texts, such as transcribed oral stories, had presented a relatively impoverished view of oral literature. Richard Bauman (1986: 2) commented that it left a 'thin and partial record of deeply situated human behaviour'. The contextualised study of performance, on the other hand, helped to revalue oral literature, revealing its skill and complexity. Of particular importance to this chapter is the fact that it also emphasised the significant role of the audience as a set of people, in a particular context, for whom the performance was designed and who themselves contributed to the quality of the performance. The audience became not simply consumers of oral literature, but also more creative participants. Close observation and recording of performance allowed a detailed examination of the interaction between different participants. In an early study of Limba storytelling in Sierre Leone, Ruth Finnegan (1967) discusses how audience members participated in performances with exclamations, laughter, and repetition, joining in songs, and movement (for example dancing). In a more recent reflection on this research, Finnegan (2006: 184) argues that the audience may be seen as 'co-creators of the performance'.

The idea of performance may also be applied to informal interactions, although here it is likely to be much more fleeting – a 'breakthrough to performance' (Hymes, 1975). In such cases, the distinction between 'performer' and 'audience' is not normally sustained during the interaction. Jennifer Coates (2007) documents a complex interactive process in the creation of play frames (Bateson, 1972; see also Jones, Chapter 3) in conversations between women friends. The idea of the creation of a new frame suggests that playful talk can be distinguished, in some way, from the surrounding talk, and Coates (2007: 38) argues that it is 'qualitatively different'. Episodes also include responsive laughter signalling amusement and appreciation, or involvement. This seems to lend playful talk some of the qualities of

creative performance, although Coates herself avoids this term. The play is highly collaborative and is better seen as a joint creative enterprise for which drawing analytical boundaries between 'performer' and 'audience' would be unhelpful. Coates (2007: 32) adopts the metaphor of jazz to describe this: 'Humorous talk often involves speakers constructing text as a joint endeavour, just as jazz musicians co-construct music as they improvise on a theme' (see also Sawyer, Chapter 4).

Such creativity in informal interaction, whether face-to-face or online, is necessarily responsive as speakers/writers orient towards prior talk – and indeed, intertextually, to prior utterances outside the interaction – but such talk routinely blurs distinctions between performer and audience as these roles blend or at least shift rapidly between participants (for an illustration from online interaction, see Goddard, 2011; Goddard, Chapter 23). Discussing this type of informal interaction, Maybin (2011: 129) refers to meaning, and therefore creativity, as occurring 'like a spark between people through the synergy between utterance and response, and through the cumulative criss-crossing chains of utterances and responses which link people together'. Maybin's own study was of contemporary letter-writing: she discusses the forms of creativity that occur as writers playfully echo and respond to each other over a series of letters.

By contrast with these highly interactive discursive processes, the act of reading itself, as a response to texts of various sorts, may seem to be a qualitatively different phenomenon in which the interaction occurs between an individual reader and a text, and usually in silence. The historical and contemporary studies of reading experiences discussed in the previous section have shown several ways of interacting with written text, including reading aloud and discussion. There is similar evidence of joint engagement with other media: see, for example, Morley (1986) for an early study of family television viewing in which discussion of programmes was an important component, and Staiger (2005), for a more general review.

Recent discursive approaches to reading focus on just such occasions on which, as commonly happens, people talk about a book (or film, television programme, etc.) that they are reading (or watching) or have previously read (or watched). While this might be thought of as talk about a prior act of reception, examination of the discourse suggests that it is better seen as a different form of reception: through talk, people co-construct joint interpretations that may differ from earlier readings. Researchers have adopted and sometimes combined different approaches to discourse analysis (conversation analysis, interactional sociolinguistics, linguistic ethnography – the boundaries may blur in contemporary iterations of these approaches). These allow one to identify micro-interpretive processes. For instance, I pointed out above that studies of reading experiences suggest that readers frequently use literary texts to explore aspects of their lives. This stands in contrast to the professional responses of academics and literary critics. Discourse analysis shows how this process is intricately played out between readers in their literary talk. In a study of the discourse of reading groups, David Peplow (2011) refers to the significance of a mimetic dimension in the groups' discussion, in which characters and events are responded to 'as if real'. Mimetic reading may support the exploration of 'real-life' issues of concern to readers, although Peplow comments that, in practice, it is often interwoven with more synthetic (that is, analytical) reading stances.

Several studies have examined the detail of 'reading-in-talk' (for example Benwell, 2009; O'Halloran, 2011; Swann & Allington, 2009), illustrating how this is rooted in particular interpretive contexts, and embedded in social and interpersonal activity: such social and interpersonal activity may affect readers' interpretations – what they say about a text – and, in turn, the text that is the object of discussion may be drawn on to construct particular social

relations and reader identities. Such collaborative, situated interpretive activity has been termed 'co-reading' (Peplow et al., 2015).

Some studies have focused on co-reading in institutional contexts such as schools (Cremin & Swann, 2015; Eriksson Barajas, & Aronsson, 2009). Cremin and Swann (2015) consider how, in extracurricular school reading groups, readers work at the construction of readings that differ from the schooled readings associated with English lessons; as part of this process, they also construct non-institutional relationships between themselves as readers. Similar discursive approaches have been taken to the analysis of talk around other media, for example Hmensa (2013) on Ghanaian radio adverts, and Maybin (2013) on a British television soap.

All of these studies accord readers a degree of creativity, although this is joint creativity and contingent on particular interpretive contexts. Readers are seen as jointly constructing interpretations, rather than simply uncovering meanings inherent in a text, and also as drawing on texts to construct social/interpersonal relations. Sometimes, co-reading displays a heightened form of creativity as, in their interactions, readers transform texts – recontextualising and elaborating particular sequences. This may be seen as a micro-equivalent of the more fully developed practice of fan fiction, or the approach to rewriting developed by Rob Pope (1995).

In her study of radio advertising, Hmensa (2013) comments that adverts sometimes presented very brief narratives (because of financial constraints, these might be only a few seconds long) that were suggestive of familiar scenes. In talking about these adverts, groups of listeners often extended the narratives, playfully relating them to their own lives. Janet Maybin (2013) analyses the talk of a group of 10–11-year-old children about an episode from the television soap *Eastenders*. The children used the television text to explore moral issues and share their emotional responses, but they also engaged in more artful responses, performing (recreating and embellishing) fragments of the original dialogue and later parodying these. In their work on reading group discourse, Peplow and colleagues (2015) consider practices such as replotting (whereby readers propose alternative plot lines), revoicing, elaborating, and sometimes parodying textual extracts, and on occasion blending the text world of the novel with the discourse world of the readers: for example, in comparing the narrative of Steinbeck's (1947) *The Pearl* with the story of someone winning the football pools in 1960s Britain, a group of women readers playfully blended elements from these narratives – a performance that resulted in uproarious laughter. Such creative interpretations, like the more general process of co-reading, also served concomitant interpersonal functions (alignment with others, mock self-deprecation, teasing, etc.).

While their focus is on micro-interpretive processes, discursive approaches to reading are compatible with the study of reading experiences discussed above. However, the emphasis in discourse analysis on response as located within, and to some extent conditioned by, social and interpersonal relations may lead analysts to caution against taking personal testimony such as autobiographical evidence at face value. This point has been addressed by reading historians – in discussing the RED, Katie Halsey (2008: 136) concedes that:

> Memoirs and biographies, like autobiographies, are involved in fashioning an image of the subject they treat. And because the books someone reads can be used as a kind of shorthand to describe the kind of person they were, it is wise to be wary of such descriptions.

However, personal testimony, such as Will Crooks' autobiographical account of his engagement with classical literature (Rose, 2001), still tends to be presented as a direct window on reading experiences. From a discourse analytic perspective, Crooks' and similar accounts

might be better seen as narratives, creative in themselves, which select particular experiences (and not others) to make sense of their lives from within a particular sociocultural context (Allington & Swann, 2011).

Like the study of reading experiences, discursive approaches to reading stand in contrast to the relatively decontextualised and singular readings that emerge from the stylistic research, whether from the implied reader presupposed in textual analysis or the experimental subjects in empirical studies. Some stylisticians have, however, combined stylistic analysis of literary texts with a discursive approach to their interpretation. In a cognitive stylistic study, Sara Whiteley (2011) analysed reading group responses to a novel – Ishiguro's (1989) *The Remains of the Day* – then identified features of the text that, she argued, might have occasioned these responses. In the following section, I consider further some possibilities for combining approaches that may, on the face of it, seem incompatible.

Next steps

In this section, I consider two principal ways in which the study of creativity in response has the potential to develop, both of which would also increase our general understanding of creativity: first, the possibilities afforded by challenging boundaries between analytical traditions; and secondly, taking greater account of a contemporary processual approach to the study of language and discourse.

I have suggested in this chapter that stylistic approaches to the reader, even those in the tradition of cognitive stylistics, have tended not to take account of situated reading practices, but that such practices are the preserve of more sociocultural (ethnographic, etc.) research. Both traditions have limitations, however: whereas stylistics ignores the reader (or at least the socially situated reader), sociocultural approaches, with their focus on reading experiences, may ignore the text. I cited earlier Radway's (1984) developing interest in romance reading as a form of behaviour rather than in how the texts themselves operated (for a critique of this position, see Hall, 2009).

Whiteley's (2011) research does something to link these two sets of interests, in analysing both literary texts and their reception by readers. This still, however, accords priority to the text in the creation of meaning: the focus is on textual features that might produce certain interpretations. While it is legitimate to focus on certain issues at the expense of others, it is also helpful, on occasion, to try to reconcile difference and bridge gaps. Our understanding of reading – and therefore of the potential for creativity in reception – would be enhanced by a systematic combination of textual analysis and a sociocultural analysis of reading practices – that is, by relating response to features of the text, how this is read, and the environment in which reading takes place. (For discussion and initial exploration of this with respect to reading groups engaged in literary reading, see Peplow et al., 2015.)

Some studies of media discourse have combined textual analysis with producer and reader/audience perspectives (see, for example, Cook, 2001, on the discourse of advertising, and Richardson, 2010, on television dramatic dialogue). In her study of Ghanaian radio advertising, Hmensa (2013) included producers' accounts of their practice, observations of advertising production, and the responses of selected listeners alongside an analysis of advertising texts. The research makes an attempt to understand the nature of the texts themselves, the motivations, constraints, ad hoc practices, etc., that produce just those texts, and their reception by the target audience. Further exploration is needed of different ways in which complementary methodologies may be combined to provide fuller accounts of creative language practices.

A similar point relates to the potential for combining cognitive and sociocultural perspectives on reception. This has long been a focus of attention in some research within the sociocultural tradition: see, for example, Gee (1992) on the social mind and, more specifically on reading, Gee (2000). The studies in cognitive stylistics discussed in this chapter tended to focus on reading as a relatively decontextualised and singular cognitive process, but seeing the mind as social makes relevant more contextualised approaches to collaborative interpretation. Littleton and Mercer's (2013) term 'interthinking' seems particularly valuable here. There is some consistency in approach between Littleton and Mercer's psychological research on children's learning as mediated through discourse and discourse analytic studies of co-reading, and such links could be further explored (see Peplow et al., 2015, for discussion and exemplification).

Much of the research that I have discussed in this chapter, across different traditions, has provided 'snapshots' of creativity in reception: the analysis of potential readings within texts; the identification of actual reading experiences; episodes from discussion of a book or other text. Sometimes, experiences are grouped to identify themes – for example Rose's (2001) reference to epiphanic reading experiences, or Halsey's (2009) discussion of the nineteenth-century practice of reading aloud – but the starting point is with one or more separate experiences. By contrast, some research on language and discourse carried out within a sociocultural tradition has adopted a more dynamic model of communication, often theorised in terms of Bakhtinian conceptions of dialogicality and addressivity (Bakhtin, 1935). Empirical research might focus on the shifts in meaning that occur when utterances and texts are recycled across times and places: see, for example, Blommaert (2005) and later discussion in Lillis (2013) on the idea of 'text trajectories'. Creativity in this case would be seen partly in terms of response – in the transformation of utterances and texts, not only individual creative acts. Some of the studies mentioned are compatible with these ideas: Pope's (1995) work on textual intervention and rewriting focuses on the critical/creative transformation of literary texts; Maybin's (2013) study of children's reading of *Eastenders* looks at how extracts from the original television dialogue are playfully recycled and recontextualised in the children's talk; Hmensa's (2013) study of radio advertising follows advertising texts from the original concept through a number of production stages during which they are responded to, adapted, etc., to their eventual reception by an audience; and Allington and Swann (2011) identify reading within a book club as a series of readerly acts in which interpretations are reworked over time and reversioned in different settings. There is a potentially rich seam here that could be exploited more systematically to deepen our understanding of creative practices and processes.

Related topics

cognitive stylistics; creativity and dialogue; creativity and discourse analysis; everyday language creativity; literary stylistics and creativity

Further reading

Lang, A. (ed.) (2012) *From Codex to Hypertext: Reading at the Turn of the Twenty-first Century*, Boston, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.

There are several recent collections on reading that are worth browsing, as noted throughout this chapter. Lang's volume on contemporary reading practices is a good starting point.

Long, E. (2003) *Book Clubs: Women, and the Uses of Reading in Everyday Life*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Long discusses her ethnographic and historical research on women's reading groups in the United States in a classic study of everyday literary reading.

Peplow, D., Swann, J., Trimarco, P., and Whiteley, S. (2015) *The Discourse of Reading Groups*, London/New York: Routledge.

A more recent study of everyday literary reading adopting a discourse analytic approach, this volume brings together cognitive and sociocultural approaches to reading group discourse, and includes a discussion of creativity.

Rehberg Sedo, D. (ed.) (2011) *Reading Communities: From Salons to Cyberspace*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

This is another interesting collection that looks at both historical and contemporary examples of reading communities.

Useful websites

http://www.beyondthebook.bham.ac.uk

The website for a project entitled Beyond the Book – a study and resources on mass reading events.

http://www.devolvingdiasporas.com

Devolving Diasporas is a study of responses, from readers in different geographical locations, to narratives of movement, migration, and diaspora.

http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/RED

The Reading Experience Database (RED) is an open-access database and research project, including more than 30,000 records of reading experiences. These are mainly British, dating from between 1450 and 1945, but the site is in the process of internationalisation.

http://www.open.ac.uk/dorg

The website for the Discourse of Reading Groups – a study of everyday literary response in reading groups across Britain.

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Creativity and translation

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Douglas Robinson

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Introduction

Theodore Savory (1968) noted decades ago that the prescriptions aimed historically at regulating translations have been notoriously conflicted or contradictory: translators should translate individual words/whole sentences; translators should highlight/conceal the translational nature of the target text; translators should modernise/archaise a literary classic, and so on. Partly, these tensions or contradictions are a by-product of disagreement among the authorities seeking to control translation; more importantly, they reflect the complexity of the act of translation and the impossibility of reducing it to a single simple set of rules.

Much the same is true of creativity in translation: paraphrasing Savory, we might want to say that the translator should be slavish/creative. Unpacking that a little, we might want to clarify that the translator is expected to give the impression of slavishness and hide whatever creativity is required to achieve that impression, or that translators have historically been expected to be slavish reproducers of the source text's syntax, semantics, text-linguistic coherence, pragmatics, style, etc., and that only recently has scholarly attention begun to be drawn to the (formerly repressed) creativity that translation inevitably requires.

If we add a perspectival element to that formulation, marking the traditional demand for slavish fidelity with 'A' and the more recent theorisation of the translator's creativity with 'B', and the practical and theoretical consequences of those two broad principles with '1' and '2', we obtain something like the following historico-theoretical guide to creativity and translation.

A. Translating is fundamentally a slavish act, subordinate to the source author's expressions.

   1. The translator has historically been expected to strive for slavish fidelity to the target text.
   2. The achievement of that slavishness has always required (B) great creativity.

B. Translating is fundamentally a creative act, transforming both the source text and the target language.

   1. The (A2) ineradicable creativity of the act of translation threatens (A1) the very definition of translation as slavish fidelity.
   2. B1 is precisely why, until the past two decades or so, translation theory has so determinedly sought to enforce (A) the translator's slavishness and to repress (B) the translator's creativity.

If we contrast the 'titular' propositions there alone – 'Translation is fundamentally a slavish act', 'Translation is fundamentally a creative act' (those surreptitious prescriptions disguised as abstract universal descriptions) – they would appear to form a simple binary opposition, opposed definitions of 'translation'. If we stop there, we have a debate: (A) traditionalists vs (B) radicals.

Once we add the numbered 'phenomenological' propositions, however, that binary opposition is both layered psychologically (overt mandates and 'repression') and curved around into circularity: emerging phenomenological awareness of A2 generates B, which at once sends shock waves through the (repressive) definitional serenity of A (*translation may be less slavish than we wanted to believe*) and is itself a channel of turbulence (*translational creativity may undermine our foundational understanding of translation*), necessitating a return to A.

The effort not to deviate from the source author's expressions requires of the translator semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic creativity (A2)

Semantic creativity

The translator seeking strict fidelity to the original does not simply open the bilingual dictionary to the entry for the problematic source-textual word and choose the first target-language item listed there. Typically, professional translators list synonyms in their heads and 'feel' their way to the best one – although that 'feel' may shift in the process, so that the eighth or the tenth item in the mental list may feel right enough to type into the translation, but may then begin to look or feel wrong as soon as it is written, or later in the editing process. Even when a dictionary or translation-memory software is used, and the translator chooses from among the semantic options provided there, the choice is creative in the sense that the skilled professional translator brings to bear on it a highly nuanced feel for the connotations and collocations of each semantic option – how each has been used in hundreds, or thousands, of similar and dissimilar contexts – and weighs the closeness of each to the source-textual word-in-context.

If true interlingual synonymy were ever possible, translation might be semantically less creative than it inevitably is – but then if true intralingual synonymy were ever possible, ordinary monolingual discourse might be semantically less creative than it inevitably is as well.

So-called *realia* – terms in the source language for which there are no target-language equivalents, typically because the objects to which they refer do not exist in the target culture – are a special case requiring semantic creativity of the translator. A humorous version of this might be 'the thing described by the source text is exactly like a doughnut, except that it's flat, square, black, and doesn't have a hole in the middle'. Does the translator call it a 'doughnut' in the target language, because that is the closest natural equivalent, even though he or she knows (and knows that the target reader will not know) that it is nothing like a doughnut? Does he or she use the source-language term and provide an explanation in the text or a footnote? Does he or she invent a word? Does he or she simply omit the word and translate around it?

Syntactic creativity

The syntactic differences between languages have been recognised for thousands of years; translators negotiate those differences in virtually every job they do. In the aggregate, the

professional translator does not find these differences difficult: every working translator develops transfer schemas for specific syntactic structures in the source language, and those transfer schemas often operate unconsciously and very rapidly to effect the creation of a target-language equivalent. But those very transfer schemas – convert a passive syntax to active, unpack an embedded syntax into subordinate clauses, etc. – are the automated products of past conscious creativity and continue to channel syntactic creativity into the translator's work.

Nor is the syntactic complexity of translation ever merely an aggregate affair, as the following demonstrates.

- *Source texts are not always syntactically felicitous.* Technical texts in particular are often written very badly and, when faced with a bad sentence, the translator will need to exert considerable syntactic creativity first to figure out what the source text is trying to say, then to come up with an equivalent in the target language. (Literary texts often have syntactic problems like this as well. Not all literature is James Joyce; much of it, in fact, is popular fiction that has been edited badly, or not at all.)
- *Every instantiation of a familiar syntactic pattern brings its own co-textual challenges, requiring slight modification(s) of the transfer schema.* Transfer schemas only partially automate the syntactic aspects of the translation process; local modulations require creativity.
- *Not every syntactic pattern in a source language will be familiar to the translator.* Translation is an intelligent activity, and every translator is continually learning new patterns. 'Learning new patterns' proceeds from the initial encounter (*surprise*, *bafflement*, *frustration*), through exploration (*seeking understanding through mental extrapolation*, *checking in grammar books and other published or online resources*, *asking a friend*) and mastery (*understanding this one case*, *understanding similar/ analogous cases*), to habitualisation (*developing a new transfer schema that will translate unconsciously*).
- *The source author's style is often in part a conglomerate effect of syntactic and semantic preferences.* Recognising and reproducing those preferences in the target language well enough to give the target reader the impression of an equivalent style is often difficult and requires great creativity.
- *Even apart from stylistic fidelity to the source text, there is a marked difference between a translation that is syntactically faithful, but 'flat', and one that feels 'alive'.* Not all syntactically faithful translations of a given sentence or paragraph are stylistically equal in the target language. The difference between a 'flat' and an 'alive' translation is often difficult to articulate or analyse, because the 'differential impressions' (Christiansen, 1909) on the basis of which we make such distinctions operate below the level of conscious awareness.
- *Any form of literary experimentation will require enhanced syntactic creativity.* Literary experimentation is typically not so much idiosyncratic expression as it is a playing with unused potentials in the relationship *between* idiosyncratic expression and established usage – and every one of those elements (usage, expression, and the relationship between them) is grounded in the history of each language. This makes recreating a source-language literary experiment in the target language extraordinarily difficult.

Pragmatic creativity

Given that the pragmatics of any text is shaped by the culture, and that the target culture by definition differs significantly from the source culture, the translator seeking strict fidelity to the source text will be faced with apparently insoluble pragmatic problems, and will be forced to call on considerable reserves of pragmatic creativity to reach even barely tolerable solutions. Registers of politeness and formality rarely overlap between cultures. Canons of relevance and verbal action differ from culture to culture. The skilled professional translator must be sensitive to these differences; but even the translator who recognises them easily will often be hard pressed to make the shifts in translation. If the speech act that the translator is attempting to reproduce does not exist in the target culture – is not recognised as a speech act, and therefore has no conventionalised meaning and no contextual variability – how is the translator to get the target reader to (a) understand what it is attempting to do, (b) recognise it as a speech act that might be performed effectively in the target culture, and (c) recognise it as a speech act that is taken for granted in the source culture? If what Grice (1989 [1975]) calls the 'Cooperative Principle' and its maxims differ from culture to culture (and they always do), how can the translator structure the target text so as to make it possible for target readers to work out conversational implicature?

Translating is fundamentally a creative act, transforming both the source text and the target language (B)

The translator always transforms the source text

At the very simplest level, the translator, by definition, transforms the source text into the target text; at a somewhat more complex level, the impossibility of exact equivalence between languages means that the target text will never mean or say the same thing as the source text; at a more complex level still, the very fact that the translator is not the source author means that the target text will reflect the translator's personal interpretive idiosyncrasies. If we take translation to be a form of quotation, it should be clear that no one ever quotes another person's words without transforming them – tonally, if in no other way. Bakhtin's (1984 [1929]) concept of 'double-voicing' would suggest that every quotation of another person's words retonalises those words with the new speaker's voice either 'unidirectionally' (agreeing with them, and so merely stylising them slightly differently) or 'varidirectionally' (disagreeing with them, or wanting to cast a critical eye on them, and so parodying them in some way). Sperber and Wilson's (1986) notion of 'echoic'/'interpretive' speech follows Bakhtin closely on this point.

More complexly, too, Hermans (1996) has argued persuasively that the basic communicative situation in translation is the translator addressing the target audience *through* the translation, *in* the supposed voice of the source text. In that sense, the translator 'quotes' the source author in the target language in order to have a certain kind of impact on the target audience. In Gricean terms, the translator manipulates the target-cultural Cooperative Principle and its maxims in order to elicit in the target audience a certain kind of desired implicature. In Bakhtinian terms, just as the source author of a novel creates (and double-voices) a narrator, who 'creates' (double-voices) a variety of characters, so too does the target author (translator) of that novel create the source author *as* a kind of narrator and double-voices that author/narrator. In that sense, the translator 'adds another voice' (Robinson, 2009) to

the mix of voices that is the source text and addresses the target reader not only through the added voice, but also through the composite of all of the resulting voices.

The translator always transforms the target language

Because languages and cultures differ so substantially, the translator's task of mediating between them inevitably introduces novel ideas, images, and expressions into the target language. From a purely phenomenological perspective – what it feels like to translate – it is clear that the translator is constantly pushing on the target language, trying to adapt it just slightly to the demands of each specific translation job. One metaphor for this experience is reflected in several languages' main verb for 'to translate': the Latin *(con)vertere* and Finnish *kääntää* both mean 'to translate' and 'to turn', and German *wenden* can be used in similar ways in certain contexts. One attempt to take this metaphor seriously imagines that the translator turns from the source text into the target text not quickly and easily, but slowly, laboriously, like a bulldozer turning off a paved highway into the forest, in the process blazing a new road (Robinson, 1991) – which is to say, transforming the target language.

In many linguistic domains, this process is manifest and recognised everywhere.

- *Television and film subtitling*, especially from a more powerful language to a less powerful language, tends to introduce the concepts of the former into the latter, typically via the medium of new coinages invented specifically as target-language equivalents. The popular audiovisual media of television and film tend to disseminate such coinages quickly through a population.
- *Philosophical vocabularies* in any given language tend to consist mainly of translations from key philosophical thinkers in other languages. Sometimes, rather than translating, translators will carry the original term over into the target language, as a loanword: *dao* from Daoism, *mimesis* from Plato, *catharsis* from Aristotle, etc. Sometimes, translators will simply translate literally: Kant's *Ding-an-sich* becomes 'the thing in itself', Heidegger's *In-der-Welt-Sein* becomes 'Being-in-the-World', etc. And sometimes there simply is no good target-language equivalent, and the philosophical target culture makes do with an awkward combination of the original as loanword and translation, as is the case with Heidegger's *das Man*, variously (and always inadequately) translated as 'the They', 'the Anyone', 'the Everyone', and so on.
- *Translations of key theological, legal, and educational terms from a colonising culture to the colonised culture* tend to reshape the latter in the image of the former. Post-colonial translation studies tends to deal with the history of such reshapings in the past, the resulting cultural hybridity that has resulted from them in the present, and the potential for transformative retranslations in the (decolonised) future (see Robinson, 1997b).

Historical perspectives

Until the past two decades or so, translation theory has determinedly sought to enforce the translator's slavishness

As Pym (1992: 152–3) has noted, the primal scene of translation is the summit meeting of two kings who do not speak each other's language and so have to rely on interpreters. The first question in that situation might be: 'Who will bring the interpreter?' But obviously,

if King A relies on the interpreter brought by King B, he has no way of knowing whether King B's interpreter is not simply spinning the conversation to suit King B; and the same is true if King B relies on the interpreter brought by King A. The obvious solution to that stand-off is for each king to bring his own interpreter. But that raises the second question: 'How can either monolingual king trust his own interpreter not to betray him to the other side?' After all, translators and interpreters are, by definition, intercultural beings who have learned not only the language of a foreign culture, but also the values and norms of that culture. The loyalty of translators and interpreters has always definitively been in question. Hence the historical importance of stressing fidelity not only to the source text, but also to the source author – not only to linguistic structures, in other words, but also to human agency and its intentions.

Normatively, throughout history, the translator or interpreter has been conceived as the *slave* (or servant) of the source author, required to translate or interpret in loyal service to his or her intentions:

> We as translators subjugate our pen to a foreign language and enslave our minds to the tyranny of another.
>
> *(Etienne Pasquier, in a 1576 letter to Odet de Tournebus,*
> *quoted in Robinson, 1997c: 113)*

> But slaves we are, and labour on another man's plantation; we dress the vineyard, but the wine is the owner's: if the soil be sometimes barren, then we are sure of being scourged; if it be fruitful, and our care succeeds, we are not thanked; for the proud reader will only say, the poor drudge has done his duty.
>
> *(John Dryden, in his 1697* Dedication to the Aeneis*,*
> *quoted in Robinson, 1997c: 175)*

The problem inherent in that orientation, of course, is that human beings are not robots – that is, it is ultimately impossible to thwart their creativity. Ideally, from the king's perspective, the translator-as-slave would be a mere mechanical extension of the king-as-source-author; hence the perpetual attraction of machine translation. Unfortunately for such idealisations, and fortunately for the actual human beings involved in creating translations, that mechanical reduction has proved elusive. Machine translation systems, especially the statistical kind pioneered by Google Translate, are beginning to produce nearly acceptable target texts – but they still require post-editing. (The new 'slavery' that translators complain about today is enslavement to translation-memory software and machine-translation systems, which seem to turn translators into mindless line workers.) Even the most loyal post-editor can get creative and introduce new ideas or attitudes into a text.

Pym (1993: 131, 149–50) elsewhere makes the important distinction between 'external knowledge' (the knowledge of clients, for whom translation is a text that should serve as a reliable guide to the foreign text that they cannot read) and 'internal knowledge' (the knowledge of translators, who know the extent to which the activity that produces that text is saturated in interpretive creativity), noting that translators have nothing to gain by revealing their 'internal knowledge' to their clients. In that sense, the 'creative turn' in translation studies has constituted a determined shift from the perpetuation of clients' 'external knowledge' (translation as structures of equivalence) to an exploration of translators' 'internal knowledge'.

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Beginning in the mid-1990s, translation theory has determinedly celebrated the translator's creativity

The year 1995 seems to have been a watershed for the study of creativity in translation, and the next few years saw the appearance of a rash of theoretical statements emphasising the creative nature of translation. If we take the title of Gui's (1995) paper – 'Das Wesen des Übersetzens ist kreativ' ('The essence of translation is creative') – to be indicative of the work published in those years, the approach seems radical, precisely because of the history of insisting the opposite – that the essence of translation is slavish; in fact, all of the arguments in this first group are fairly timid, arguing fundamentally (A2) that translators have to work very hard to create the illusion of slavishness.

For example, Kova i (1995) argued that the cultural complexity of audiovisual subtitling requires of the subtitler new forms of translational creativity, and of the trainer of subtitlers new forms of pedagogical creativity aimed at helping future subtitlers to access their full creativity. At the Ninth International Conference on Translation and Interpreting in Prague, in September 1995 (Beylard-Ozeroff, Králová, & Moser-Mercer, 1998), scholars applied Levý's and Popovi 's thoughts on translation as a decision-making communicative process to the creativity involved in the act of translating, with an eye to transforming translation pedagogy. Wilss (1996: 166) called translation a '"re-creative" linguistic activity', noting that 'translation is never a *creatio ex nihilo*, but the context-bound reproduction of a given text'; still, 'the most competent translators possess a malleable and creative mind', which enables them to mediate between the source text and the target language by developing 'decoding and encoding strategies'. Neubert (1997: 17) called the translator's creativity a 'derived creativity': 'A translation is not created from nothing; it is woven from a semantic pattern taken from another text, but the threads – the TL [target language] linguistic forms, structures, syntactic sequences – are new.' As typical translation procedures that are creative in nature, he listed syntactical transpositions and lexical modulations; precisely because one-to-one correspondence between the source text and the resources of the target language is rarely possible, varying degrees of creative approximation or new invention are necessary. Niska (1998), following an extensive review of the literature on translational creativity (on which the above relies) and creativity in general, outlined as the core of semantic creativity in translation 'four basic strategies for the interpreting of neologies: 1. omission; 2. use of existing term to denote "approximate" or "provisional" equivalent; 3. explanation of concept; 4. neologisms (loans, loan-translations and word creation)'.

At least three works published in the late 1990s took a slightly different tack. Nida (1996), dismissing the notion that there might ever be a 'science' of translation, insisted that it is always an art: a 'creative technology' that draws on strategies, techniques, and insights from many disciplines. And Kussmaul (1995) and Uzawa (1997) both used think-aloud protocols (TAPs) to explore creative strategies developed by their students in solving difficult translation problems, and then theorised creativity in ways aimed again at transforming translation pedagogy.

Kussmaul (1995), in particular, devoted an entire chapter to 'Creativity in translation', based on TAPs organised around 'texts with "poetic" features' (Kussmaul, 1995: 40); that is, 'texts which deviate from general linguistic norms and set patterns and which in addition often have a very complex structure'. Drawing on the four-phase model of the creative process first theorised by Poincaré (1913; see also Guilford, 1975; Taylor, 1975) – preparation, incubation, illumination, evaluation – Kussmaul first theorises, under 'preparation', the creativity of *comprehension*, which is 'not only guided by what we hear or read but also

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by our personal knowledge and experience', and thus is 'not merely a receptive but also a productive process' (Kussmaul, 1995: 41). His main focus, however, is on the 'incubation' phase, as illustrated by two student translators brainstorming together. Most powerful for him were examples of what Guilford (1975: 40) calls 'divergent production':

> Divergent production is a broad search, usually in an open problem, in which there are a number of possible answers. I also sometimes say that it is a generation of logical alternatives. Fluency of thinking is the name of the game. Convergent production, on the other hand, is a focused search, for, from the nature of the given information or problem, one particular answer is required. I sometimes say that it is the generation of logical imperatives.

'Convergent production', Kussmaul (1995) shows, is all too often the ideal in traditional translation pedagogy: focus on the problem; narrow your thinking to realistic alternatives; do whatever research is needed to exclude everything that does not contribute directly to an adequate solution. His own TAP research, by contrast, seems to suggest that divergent production is far more effective in opening up creative new avenues for the translator to explore. 'Lateral thinking', in particular, proved productive: students working in pairs would joke, and their jokes would take them (apparently) farther and farther away from the problem and its solution, until suddenly one of them would come up with the perfect solution. As Kussmaul (1995: 48) explains, this process both depended upon and produced a specific range of 'positive' or conducive emotions:

> It could be observed in the protocols, especially during incubation, when relaxation was part of the game, that a certain amount of laughter and fooling around took place amongst the subjects if they did not find their solution at once. This, in combination with the 'parallel-activity technique' described above, also prevented them from being stuck up a blind alley, and promoted new ideas. Laughter can also be a sign of sympathetic approval on the part of a subject and may help to create the gratification-oriented condition postulated by neurologists.

(For a translation textbook based on the creativity-oriented pedagogy that Kussmaul imagines, see Robinson, 2012 [1997].)

Critical issues and topics, and current research

The critical issues for the study of the translator's creativity arise out of (A2), an emerging phenomenological awareness of the ineluctable creativity that goes into even the most radically slavish translation, leading to (B), a new theorisation of translation as fundamentally and primarily creative. Given that traditionally translation has been theorised in terms of (A), the translator's instrumentality – that is, dehumanisation or depersonalisation, and thus radical lack of creativity – the first critical issue addressed by students of the creativity in translation is *the translator's agency and subjectivity*. To some extent anticipated by earlier approaches to translation as a turning or troping activity (Robinson, 1991), by the end of the 1990s translation scholars were increasingly concerned with the translator's agency (Boase-Beier & Holman, 1999; Sorvali, 1998), subjectivity (Robinson, 2001), and 'narratoriality' (Baker, 2000, 2006; Hermans, 1996; Shiavi, 1996). The ruling assumption here might be reduced to a syllogism: translators are human beings; all human beings possess

agency, subjectivity, and creativity; therefore all translators possess agency, subjectivity, and creativity.

A signal contribution to this path was the post-structuralist insistence that the 'original' author is neither free nor original: if the source author's originality (and thus agency) is deferred in much the same way as the translator's, there is no room for a free/bound binary between them. As Shiavi (1996) puts it in her paper's title, 'There is always a teller in a tale'. To the extent that a translation is a 'tale' told by the translator, the translator's style will be visible in the translation – and will provide evidence of the translator's agency, subjectivity, and creativity (see also Perteghella & Loffredo, 2006).

Since this individualistic focus is increasingly experienced as too narrow for the so-called sociological turn in translation studies, the second critical issue addressed by scholars has been *the relationship between the translator and the target audience*. To a large extent anticipated by earlier approaches to translation as manipulation (Hermans, 1985) and rewriting (Lefevere, 1992), by the early 2000s scholars were increasingly interested in the rhetorical situatedness of translation in the target culture. In this, they set themselves in opposition to an earlier 'transmission model' of translation according to which the source text and target text were sequential 'messages' transmitted from a depersonalised 'sender' to a depersonalised 'receptor': the sender was normatively the source author, but relieved of all human desires and so on, the receptor was the target reader – and the translator was squeezed onto the diagram awkwardly somewhere in the middle.

In the new model, the translator becomes the target author who addresses the target reader through the translation, marshalling a recreation of the source text as the 'quoted' channel of his or her address. This model is constructed around the work of Grice, Bakhtin, and Peirce (Robinson, 2003, 2009, 2011, 2015a) and Sperber and Wilson (Hermans, 1996).

Main research methods

The four main research methods brought to bear on the translator's creativity have been:

1. *theoretical/phenomenological*, based on introspection and the personal experience of creative translation, as well as the work of other theorists;
2. *literary-critical*, based on the close readings of the texts – source and target – generated in specific translation histories;
3. *activist*, based on 'intervenient' readings of specific propagandistic translation events; and
4. *empirical*, based on statistical analyses of translation corpora.

The dominant model for both (1) and (2) may be Steiner (1975); eager imitators a few years later would include Robinson (1991). A very different approach from (1) and (2), grounded explicitly in the semiotic theories of Charles Sanders Peirce, but implicitly perhaps in the Daoist call for 無爲, *wuwei* ('non-action'), or 爲無爲, *weiwuwei* ('action without action'), is charted by Hartama-Heinonen (2008: 256), for whom the problem with Robinson (1997a) is that it tracks 'a growth of the translator and, paradoxically, his or her anti-creative routines'. For Hartama-Heinonen (2008), the drudgery of checking lexical items, analysing sentences, and other routines mandated by the professional best practices of the translation marketplace has the effect of turning the translator into an uncreative drone. It is only, Hartama-Heinonen (2008: 245) believes, by excluding those 'anti-creative routines' from what she calls 'abductive translation' – surrendering passively, playfully, to the text, and so

letting the text *translate itself*, without interfering, without research, without editing, without language learning, ultimately without doing anything – and then by defining translation *tout court* as abductive, that we can free translators from this kind of mental 'straitjacket'. (For discussion, see Robinson, 2015b.)

Over the past decade, however, the tide has apparently been shifting from a preference for (1) and (2) towards a preference for (3) and (4); see, for example, Baker (2006, 2009, 2013), Munday (2007), and Tymoczko (2010) for (3); and Pekkanen (2010) for (4). Corpus-based studies of translator style/narratoriality (4) have considerable traction with translation scholars who believe that only empirical research is reliable and therefore worthwhile, and who reject outright the introspection-based theoretical/phenomenological approaches to the translator's creativity (1). In the middle realm between those two extremes, the clearest shift has been from literary-critical (2) to activist approaches (3).

Future directions

The 'cultural turn' in translation studies dominated work in the field throughout the 1990s. The 'sociological turn' has tended to dominate the field in the 2000s – although translation studies have been much more diversified in the new millennium, with room for the 'creative turn' (explored here) as well. Strikingly, 'intervenient' or activist studies of translation are usually grouped under the creative turn, rather than the sociological turn, despite the obvious points of contact that they have with the latter. Certainly, the overlaps between sociological/activist and creative/activist studies of translation should be increasingly explored.

In addition, while the neurological and cognitive underpinnings of translation as an event generated by the reciprocal creativity of the translator and the target reader have long been implicitly or explicitly part of the creative turn (Robinson, 1991, 2003, 2011), there are signs that those underpinnings are receiving more detailed attention (Tymoczko, 2015) – and they should continue to do so in the future.

Related topics

creativity and discourse analysis; discourses of creativity; lexical creativity; literariness; literary narrative; literary stylistics and creativity; poetry and poetics

Further reading

Croitoru, E. (2009) 'Creating "absence" in translation', *Romanian Journal of English Studies*, 6: 115–27.

This is a study of 'creativity in constraints' in terms of target readers' ability to 'feel' the translator's invisibility or 'absence' from the target text in translation tasks requiring enhanced creativity.

Huang, Z. (2005) 'Creativity and subjectivity in translation: A deconstructionist perspective', *Chinese Translators Journal*, 26(1): 19–22.

Huang offers a theoretical study of post-structuralist notions of 'unmaking' as applied to translation, with the aim of rethinking the translator's subjectivity and creativity.

Rydning, A. F., and Lachaud, C. (2010) 'The reformulation challenge in translation: Context reduces polysemy during comprehension, but multiplies creativity during production', in E. Angelone and G. Shreve (eds) *Translation and Cognition: Recent Developments*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 85–108.

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This chapter reports a comparative study examining creativity in the translation of polysemous words from English into Norwegian by professional translators and bilinguals, using keystroke- and eye-movement-tracking software.

Tymoczko, M. (2003) 'Translation, ideology and creativity', *Linguistica Antverpiensia, New Series*, 2: 27–45.

This paper offers an ideological history of thought about creativity in translation – specifically, its destabilising and transformative effects on post-colonial contexts.

Waldinger, A. (2009) 'Propositions of wit and memory: "Englishing" Christian Morgenstern (1871–1914) in the light of Paul Kussmaul's Kreatives Übersetzen', *Babel*, 55(1): 69–84.

Waldinger discusses Morgenstern's compositional strategies in writing his satirical poems as possible strategies to be adapted by translators of his work, in line with Paul Kussmaul's work on creativity in translation.

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Grice, H. P. (1989 [1975]) 'Logic and conversation', in *Studies in the Way of Words*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, pp. 22–40.

Gui, G. (1995) 'Das Wesen des Übersetzens ist kreativ', *Babel*, 41(3): 129–39.

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Part III

Multimodal and multimedia creativity

Creativity and multimodal literature

Alison Gibbons

Introduction: Creativity, multimodal deviation, and conceptual shifts

Creativity is an inherent possibility of human communication. This is David Crystal's argument in *Language Play* (1998), in which he understands linguistic creativity as a form of ludic play and a source of human pleasure:

> We play with language when we manipulate it as a source of enjoyment either for ourselves or for the benefit of others. I mean 'manipulate' literally: we take some linguistic feature – such as a word, a phrase, a sentence, a part of a word, a group of sounds, a series of letters – and make it do things it does not normally do. We are, in effect, bending and breaking the rules of language. And if someone were to ask why we do it, the answer is simply: for fun.
>
> *(Crystal, 1998: 1)*

Crystal argues that humans use language not merely to communicate, but often also as a means of self-expression and amusement. His reference to making 'it do things it does not normally do' points to linguistic deviation as a means of exploiting the compositional features of language – structure, sense, and sound – for creative purposes. Deviation is a device of *foregrounding* (van Peer, 1986), which attracts attention by disrupting textual patterns or by departing from expected norms in some way. It derives from the work of the Russian formalists – in particular, from the work of three key figures: Viktor Šhklovsky (1917), Bohuslav Hávranek (1932), and Jan Muka ovsky (1932). Šhklovsky proposed the concept of 'defamiliarisation', the essence of which is that art and literary language should not only draw attention to its own artfulness and constructedness, but also attract and hold that attention in the creation of literary meaning for the reader. Hávranek and Muka ovsky later built on the concept of defamiliarisation and it is from their work that the term 'foregrounding' stems. Although deviation is not the only creative technique available to writers, multimodal literature is heavily reliant upon creative deviations, both in terms of deviation from readers' expectations about the literary conventions of the so-called traditional literary text and in terms of deviations from expected linguistic structures.

When used to describe literature, *multimodality* indicates that the literary work uses multiple semiotic modes for creative narrative purposes: a work of multimodal literature includes not only the verbal orthographic text in the form of printed type; it may also use varied

typography, unusual textual layouts and page designs (including the concrete realisation of type, as in concrete poetry), the inclusions of images such as photographs or illustrations, colour, and so on. Of course, there are no hard-and-fast rules or formulae for identifying or writing a multimodal fiction, just as there can be no checklist or formalised nomenclature of literary-linguistic creativity. Creativity is both context-bound and dependent upon the interpretations of sender and receiver of the communicative act. Indeed, Ronald Carter (2004: 66), in his discussion of literariness and creativity, states that it is:

> important to isolate the different degrees of literariness, but even more important to understand that literariness and, by extension, literary language is socially and culturally relative. Because literary language is seen as creative, the same applies by extension to creativity.

Consequently, Carter (2004: 66) goes on to argue that 'it may be more instructive to see literary and creative uses of language as existing along a cline or continuum rather than as discrete sets of features or as a language-intrinsic or unique "poetical" register'.

In relation to the multimodal literary work specifically, Wolfgang Hallet (2009) has argued that reading printed multimodal fiction involves five 'conceptual shifts', which we can think of as literary deviations. The first conceptual shift features the creative process itself – what Hallet (2009: 149) calls the shift from 'writing to designing'. Creating the multimodal text involves more than just writing; it also involves considering the many different semiotic resources (words, image, colour, layout) available to the writer, who must decide how to use them in creative combinations for literary purposes. This, in turn, leads to a shift in the way in which the text itself is realised – or, as Hallet (2009: 150) puts it, a conceptual shift from 'the monomodal (verbal) text to multimodal, multimedial texts'. A third conceptual shift identified by Hallet (2009: 150) is that of the narrator becoming 'narrator-presenter', who 'apart from delivering a story, searches, retrieves and "collects" documents and sources and eventually presents them to the reader, the process of narrating includes "showing" and "presentation"'.

In the remaining two conceptual shifts, Hallet transfers his focus from the creator of the multimodal novel and the composition of the text to the receiver of the multimodal discourse. He speaks of a shift from 'reading to the transmodal construction of narrative meaning' (Hallet, 2009: 150). What he means by this is that readers must not only interpret meaning from the linguistic narrative, but also 'integrate various literacies' (Hallet, 2009: 150), construing meaning from the combination of modes that exist within the same textual space. Hallet's (2009: 150) final conceptual shift moves the reader from 'reader to user', whereby the reader not only interacts with the multimodal novel through his or her imagination, but also may be required to 'use' the text in various ways, such as physically moving it or writing on it.

In this chapter, I explore some of the creative devices of multimodal literature. First, in the next section, I introduce two of the founding works within multimodality studies. These are then placed within the context of the larger field of multimodality studies, which also introduces stylistic approaches to multimodal literature. I go on to provide three examples of multimodal literature: extracts from Mark Z. Danielewski's (2000) *House of Leaves*, Sherman Alexie's (2007) *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*, and Joe Meno's (2006) *The Boy Detective Fails*. Through these three literary examples, the final section illustrates the creative conceptual shifts at play within works of multimodal literature.

Historical development

The explicit study of multimodality stems from the work of Gunther Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen, whose 1996 book *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* brought multimodality to academic attention. In *Reading Images*, Kress and van Leeuwen set out to create a toolkit for the analysis of texts with visual elements. In their words, they seek to 'provide inventories of the major compositional structures which have become established as conventions in the course of the history of visual semiotics, and to analyse how they are used to produce meaning by contemporary image-makers' (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996: 1). Kress and van Leeuwen (1996: 183, emphasis original) first use the term 'multimodal' in their discussion of textual composition – that is, of:

> composite visuals, visuals which combine text and image, and, perhaps, other graphic elements, be it on a page or on a television or computer-screen. In the analysis of composite or *multimodal* texts (and any text whose meanings are realized through more than one semiotic mode is multimodal) the question arises whether the products of the various codes should be analysed separately or in an integrated way; whether the parts should be looked at as interacting with and affecting one another. It is the latter path we will pursue

They argue both for the importance of composite multimodal texts as artefacts of analysis and for an integrated form of analysis that attends to the combination of modes within a single textual product. They clearly state their aim in the following manifesto:

> We seek to be able to look at the whole page as an *integrated* text. Our insistence on drawing comparison between language and visual communication stems from this perspective. We seek to break down the boundaries between the study of languages and the study of images, and we seek as much as possible, to use compatible language, and compatible terminology in speaking about both, for in actual communication the two and indeed many others come together to form integrated texts.
>
> *(Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996: 183, emphasis original)*

In doing so, they categorise their work as an extension of existing semiotic analyses of non-linguistic communications (such as Barthes, 1964; O'Toole, 1994), combined with the adoption of systemic functional linguistics (Halliday, 1978; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004), an approach that they also take forward in later work (see Kress, 2010; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). Whilst Kress and van Leeuwen's work in multimodality studies is important, it has been argued that their approach is founded upon linguistic categories, and therefore treats the devices of language and image inappropriately, as self-identical systems of meaning-making (see Bateman, 2008; Forceville, 1999; Gibbons, 2012).

Kress and van Leeuwen also touch briefly on the tension between the notion of a systematic analytical toolkit, such as the 'grammar of visual design' that they offer in *Reading Images*, and the very nature of creativity. They argue that such a toolkit 'does not, of course, have to stand in the way of creativity' (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996: 3). Their discussion continues polemically in a way that accords with Carter's discussion of literary language and creativity, mentioned above:

> Teaching the rules of language has not meant the end of creative uses of language in literature and elsewhere, and teaching visual skills will not spell the end of the arts.

> Yet, just as the grammar creatively employed by poets and novelists is, in the end, the same grammar we use when writing letters, memos, reports, so the 'grammar of visual design', creatively employed by artists is, in the end, the same grammar we need when producing attractive layouts, images, diagrams, for our course handouts, reports, brochures, communiques, and so on.
>
> *(Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996: 3)*

Perhaps to evidence the false dichotomy that places analytical rigour in opposition to textual creativity, through the course of *Reading Images*, Kress and van Leeuwen investigate a number of different multimodal text types, from children's drawings to magazine articles and film stills. Such diversity makes the book a pioneering work within the canon of multimodality studies.

Another valuable text within multimodality studies is Anthony Baldry and Paul Thibault's (2006) *Multimodal Transcription and Text Analysis*, which can be seen as both a departure from, and an extension of, Kress and van Leeuwen's work. Baldry and Thibault's methodology is similarly drawn from systemic functional linguistics, although their approach is more overtly one of transcription – a method in which the composite text is broken down into its respective objects for analysis. A weakness of this method is therefore that it sometimes becomes a case of cataloguing the multimodal composition of the text, rather than considering how these elements work together to form integrated meanings. Nevertheless, in *Multimodal Transcription and Text Analysis*, Baldry and Thibault analyse a range of textual genres, including printed texts, web pages, and filmic works.

Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) *Reading Images* and Baldry and Thibault's (2006) *Multimodal Transcription and Text Analysis* stand as foundational readings in multimodality studies, particularly in terms of providing early analytical approaches to multimodal texts. Both have been charged with suffering from an overreliance on linguistic methodology to analyse more than language, inevitable resulting from the systemic functional basis of their approaches. Jewitt (2009a: 26), in her introduction to *The Routledge Handbook of Multimodal Analysis*, summarises this by saying that the discipline has often suffered from 'criticism that multimodality is a kind of "linguistic imperialism" that imports and imposes linguistic terms on everything. But these criticisms overlook the fact that much of the work on multimodality has its origins in a particular strand of linguistics'. Indeed, whilst 'language is part of a multimodal ensemble', Jewitt (2009a: 15) maintains that the study of multimodality 'proceeds on the assumption that representation and communication always draw on a multiplicity of modes, all of which have the potential to contribute equally to meaning'.

Multimodality studies and stylistics

Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) *Reading Images* essentially launched multimodality studies as an academic discipline in its own right. That discipline has inevitably diversified as it has grown, leading Jewitt (2009b: 28) to speak of multimodality studies as 'roughly categorized into three main approaches'. She identifies these as the social semiotic approach (seen most clearly in Kress and van Leeuwen's work), a discourse analysis approach (typified by Baldry & Thibault, 2006; O'Halloran, 2004, 2005; O'Toole, 1994), and an interaction analysis approach (with principal works by Norris, 2004; Scollon & Scollon, 2003). To this, we can add a fourth domain within multimodality studies: the stylistic approach. The stylistic approach to multimodality studies essentially seeks to explore how multimodal literary works are composed and how the various modes interact with each other to produce literary meaning. There are two strands of multimodal stylistics: the social semiotic approach, and the cognitive approach.

The former clearly follows existing work, grounding itself in Halliday's systemic functional principals and thus utilising many of the 'tools' put forward by Kress and van Leeuwen.

Nina Nørgaard (2010a, 2010b, 2014) has been the proponent of the social semiotic approach within stylistics. In her analysis of Jonathan Safran Foer's (2005) multimodal novel *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*, Nørgaard (2010a) focuses on three key features: photographic images, textual layout, and typography – building on van Leeuwen's (2006) 'grammar of typography'. A specific example will function to illustrate Nørgaard's approach.

Foer's novel is concerned with a young boy named Oskar who loses his father in the 9/11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. In the book's conclusion, Foer provides a series of sequential photographs of a figure of a falling man. Essentially, this is a flipbook section in which the figure, conversely, moves upwards – a gesture that echoes the preceding linguistic narrative in which Oskar reverses the pages in his own scrapbook so that 'the man was floating up through the sky' (Foer, 2005: 325) as a way in which to imagine an alternate fate for his father. In her analysis, Nørgaard relates the falling man flipbook to Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996: 186–206) deconstruction of visual composition along horizontal and vertical axes. The left side of an image is understood as 'Given' information, which is already known, and the right side of the image is understood to be 'New'. Similarly, the bottom part of an image is 'Real' – again, known and existing – while the upper part of an image is 'Ideal' – that is, an idealised promise. This model is an adaptation by Kress and van Leeuwen of Halliday's (1967) discussion of 'given-and-new' as a means of understanding linguistic knowledge and prosodic structure. Nørgaard (2010a: 123) uses this to conclude that the act of flipping the pages makes 'the man float from Real to Ideal', and thus argues that Oskar's attempt to revise his father's tragic fate is realised visually by the positioning of the figure of his father moving within the flipbook section from real to ideal textual space. Elsewhere, I have questioned the value of using Kress and van Leeuwen's model of textual layout as the most accurate model of understanding how readers process this narrative event (see Gibbons, 2012: 161–2), since the application is not unproblematic as a result of the fact that visual images do not operate with the same structural or temporal logic as verbal language. Nevertheless, Nørgaard's social semiotic stylistic analysis clearly demonstrates that meaning-making in Foer's novel is multimodal and that, in order to interpret Oskar's narrative hopes, readers must attend to both textual and visual resources.

The second strand of multimodal stylistics is, as mentioned previously, a cognitive approach. This can be seen in work by Masako K. Hiraga (2005) and Alison Gibbons (2008, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013). Hiraga restricts his focus to the analysis of metaphors in multimodal literature. In *Metaphor and Iconicity*, he devotes two chapters to the analysis of texts with a visual element using both English and Japanese examples (Hiraga, 2005: 57–126). Of most interest is his analysis of Roger McGough's (1971) poem '40-LOVE', a poem that undoubtedly relies upon its typographical arrangement for the conception of its meaning. With words positioned in two columns (each one syllable wide) to be read alternately, the poem is both literally about a tennis match and metaphorically about the relationship between a middle-aged couple. Hiraga (2005: 106) makes this clear, stating that the poem 'can be seen as a metaphor in which a love relationship is understood in terms of a game of tennis'. While Hiraga does not explicitly name the conceptual metaphor at work here, comprehension of the poem depends upon it nevertheless: LOVE IS A GAME. In looking at the linguistic details of '40-LOVE', Hiraga (2005: 106) articulates, 'small lexical elements are repeated in pairs 12 times in a row over the two pages as if they were the monotonous movement of a tennis ball across a net'. Actually, this monotonous movement is built into the text's structure only implicitly. The iconic arrangement of text serves to

generate the illusion of a tennis ball's movement by guiding the optical path that the reader must take in order to read and comprehend the poem's semantic content. Consequently, readers have a performative role to play in the construction and actualisation of metaphoric meaning. What Hiraga's analysis shows is that meaning, including metaphorical meaning, emerges in '40-LOVE' from the linguistic content, imagistic design, and the reader's relationship with the text.

My own work in cognitive poetics and multimodal literature offers a critical synthesis of tools within multimodality studies and within stylistics. As such, it draws on techniques suggested by the likes of Kress and van Leeuwen, and Baldry and Thibault, as well as attending to literary-linguistic devices, particularly foregrounding, as mentioned at the start of this chapter, as well as frameworks from the cognitive study of literature (see Gavins & Steen, 2003; Stockwell, 2002). In *Multimodality, Cognition, and Experimental Literature* (Gibbons, 2012), I present cognitive-poetic analyses of four twenty-first-century multimodal novels, of which one example will suffice here.

In a narrative episode from Mark Z. Danielewski's (2000) *House of Leaves*, one of the central characters, Navidson, is exploring a labyrinthine dark space that has appeared in the centre of his home and finds himself climbing what seems to be an endless ladder. The words of the text are arranged so that they form a visual ladder on the page. Thus, in the course of reading, the reader's eyes must travel upwards, climbing the ladder too. At the top of the ladder is an arrow symbol (↓), which transpires to be a footnote directing the reader to a smaller ladder of words that the reader must read downwards and the words of which are arranged in the opposite direction from that of the first ladder (for example upside-down). After rotating the book, the ladder can be read as follows:

↓ Erich Kästner in *Öberge Wein-
berge* (Frankfurt, 1960, p.95)
comments on the force of vertical
meanings:

The climbing of a
mountain reflects

redemption. That is
due to the force of

the word 'above,'
and the power of

the word 'up.' Even
those who have

long ceased to
believe in Heaven

and Hell, cannot
exchange the words

'above' and 'below.'

(Danielewski, 2000: 441)

This reflection upon the words 'up', 'above', and 'below' is essentially a meditation founded on two conceptual metaphors, GOOD IS UP and BAD IS DOWN. In this context, these conceptual

metaphors would be present regardless of textual design, since they arise from linguistic content. However, the reader's own optical journey – ascending the first ladder and then descending the second – has two effects. First, it adds intensity to their meaning, since the physical act of reading this part of *House of Leaves* can be connected to the philosophical musing. Secondly, it also refracts the meaning of the conceptual metaphors back onto the experience of the narrative. In the first ladder, Navidson's climb is related as an endless and exhausting journey, raising questions about whether he will succeed or whether his fatigue will overwhelm him. He does, though, reach the top, with readers informed that he now finds himself 'standing inside a very$^{\downarrow}$' (Danielewski, 2000: 441). Since the arrow leads readers to the second ladder, Danielewski's topsy-turvey page design has a disorientating effect for the reader and the narrative delay as to Navidson's location creates a cliff-hanger, whereby readers must turn the page for the reveal. As such, readers' understandings of GOOD IS UP and BAD IS DOWN, and the dual directionality of the ladder's reading paths (up–down), may raise anxiety as to the nature of the page-turning location overleaf: Will it be good or bad?

As with the examples from Hiraga and Nørgaard, my own reading of *House of Leaves* (see Gibbons, 2010: 71–5, for a more comprehensive study of this passage) shows that, within analyses of multimodal literature, language is a central feature. However, multimodal stylistic analysis involves interpreting linguistic structures within the context of other modal systems. Unusual textual layouts, for instance, are deviant in terms of readers' expectations about how novels tend to look, and consequently create unusual reading paths. Moreover, reader involvement is often a crucial and creative element of multimodal literature, and affects the ways in which readers experience narratives and their story worlds.

Multimodal literature in practice

This chapter has, thus far, sought to introduce the field of multimodal literature and the different critical approaches that have emerged within multimodality studies. The creative deviations and conceptual shifts brought about by multimodal literature – in comparison to what might be considered more conventionally designed literary works – have necessitated critical approaches that attend to both language in literature and to the other semiotics modes at play. In the previous section, in order to demonstrate the social semiotic approach and the cognitive approach to multimodal literature within stylistics, I reviewed examples from analytical works, in the process also providing literary illustrations. This section will offer three further examples of multimodal literature, paying particular attention to the creative deviations that they employ. Each extract has been selected in order to demonstrate the conceptual shifts of multimodal literature suggested by Hallet (2009) and discussed in the opening to this chapter.

Example 1: Writing to designing and mono- to multimodal

The first example comes from Mark Z. Danielewski's (2000) *House of Leaves*, an extract from which was discussed in the previous section of this chapter. Not only did the novel notoriously take its author ten years to write, but Danielewski also had to typeset the manuscript himself, since, at that time, the unusual textual layouts that the author had in mind were far from publishing norm. At 709 pages, *House of Leaves* features an array of concrete-poetic designs, the layouts of verbal text alternating from one page to the next. Thus, whilst the predominant mode in *House of Leaves* is written or typed verbal language, Danielewski exploits the visual dimension of language to shift the novel from the monomodal to a multimodal fiction.

Alison Gibbons

At the heart of the novel is the story of Will Navidson and his family, who have just moved into a house on Ash Tree Lane. The house initially appears to be unremarkable – until an unfamiliar door appears in the master bedroom. The door opens onto a dimly lit corridor and a series of disconcerting explorations into the dark space begin to reveal limitless proportions to the house's dark interior. The cavernous, labyrinthine, dark space becomes increasingly difficult to navigate. In one episode, Navidson, who has just found himself alone on a stairway, is equipped with a rope tied to the bottom of the final banister. On page 288, the text consists of three lines, all positioned at the bottom of the page:

Then as the stairway starts getting darker and darker and as that faintly illuminated circle above – the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel – starts getting smaller and smaller, the answer becomes clear:

(Danielewski, 2000: 288)

Whilst the blank white space of the page above the text might be considered deviant in terms of its departure from the conventional norms of printed books, the visual layout of the verbal narrative here is relatively unchallenging for readers. Danielewski's language is also relatively straightforward, although readers might notice the foregrounding alliteration in 'stairway starts', and the lexical repetition within 'darker and darker' and 'smaller and smaller', as well as the parallel structures that these two expressions employ.

A more dramatic layout occurs on the following page. The text is printed upside-down, so to speak, meaning that the reader must rotate the book 180° in order to read the printed text. The text itself can be read as 'Navidson is sinking.. or the stairway is stretching, expanding,'. The arrangement of text on the page, though, is particularly striking:

(Danielewski, 2000: 289)

The first line, 'Navidson is', is easy to read, conforming as it does to traditional Western reading patterns – that is, left to right, and from the top line to the bottom line, on the page. The verb 'sinking', however, has been divided into five fragments, or clusters, each a little lower and positioned a little further right than the preceding cluster. The effect of this is that Danielewski's arrangement of the word is iconic: the form reiterates the meaning with readers' eye movements in reading descending down the clusters in a motion that might be considered akin to sinking itself. The arrangement of text therefore creates a vector for the reading path by directing the eyes down the word 'sinking' and the succeeding punctuation, before making the reader begin the coordinated clause 'Or the stairway is' back on the left-hand side. Danielewski performs a similar trick with the verb 'stretching', which is arranged vertically down the right-hand side of the page, and the verb 'expanding', which spans the bottom of the page horizontally. In both, the spacing between letters grows through the word in order to iconically create the effects of 'stretching' and 'expanding', respectively. It should also be noted that the 's' in 'is' doubles up as the 's' in 'stretching', whilst 'stretching,' and 'expanding,' share the closing 'g,'. Combined with Danielewski's use of continuous tense, this acrostic technique allows the visual layout of text on the page to represent the effect of visual space distorting, just as Navidson experiences the shifting architecture in the dark stairway within the narrative world of *House of Leaves*.

Over the next few pages, the stairway continues to grow in proportion, placing increased stress on the rope. Finally, Danielewski (2000: 293–6) tells his readers, 'the rope snaps', although the realisation of the text on the page again takes an unusual design. 'the rope' sits on page 293, with the letters in the noun 'rope' arranged vertically down the right-hand side of the page in order to visually represent the length of rope. The word 'snaps' is separated into three parts: 'sn–' towards the bottom of page 294, '–a–' which sits close to the middle of page 295, and '–ps . . .' at the top of page 296. Divided in this way, the word is a visual embodiment of its meaning. Furthermore, as Danielewski explains in an interview (McCaffery & Gregory, 2003), the fragmented word takes on new significance for readers who realise that, backwards, it spells 'spans', an action that it also fulfils since each segment is placed on a separate page. Whilst the word is, as Danielewski (quoted in McCaffery & Gregory, 2003: 122) puts it, 'a literal, thematic, and semantic representation of all that's happening at that moment in the novel', it also embodies two opposing meanings simultaneously, thus exposing the relationship between words.

As this discussion of *House of Leaves* demonstrates, design plays an important role within multimodal fiction. In the case of *House of Leaves*, Danielewski uses textual concrete-poetic layouts in ways that exploit the semantic meaning of textual content. For readers, this means that their interpretations of the novel are based on both the described actions of the narrative world and their experiential relationship to the text itself.

Example 2: Narrator to narrator-presenter

The conceptual shift in which the narrator becomes a presenter of visual information is a shift from telling to telling-and-showing. The ease and more economic cost of printing images has meant that there are many published contemporary novels that feature narrator-presenters. Indeed, this is even the case in novels that feature a relatively low level of multimodality. What I mean by this is that the narrator might present visual images to the reader, but for the most part these images do not visually integrate with the written content – for instance as in the sort of concrete-poetic designs of *House of Leaves* (Danielewski, 2000). Nevertheless, it is a shift that is worth discussing through recourse to a short example.

One novel that features a narrator-presenter is *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-tme Indian* by Sherman Alexie (2007), illustrated by Ellen Forney. The novel's protagonist and narrator is Junior, a native American boy from the Spokane Indian Reservation who considers himself to be a budding cartoonist. Junior's cartoonic drawings feature as images within the novel. What makes Junior a narrator-presenter is that his narrative explicitly references these cartoons. He is their creator. As such, the images themselves do not function only as illustrations that sit alongside the text, but also have a place within the context of the narrative world. An example will clarify this.

In the first chapter, Junior tells the reader:

> I mostly hang out alone in my bedroom and read books and draw cartoons.
> Here's one of me:

(Alexie, 2007: 4–5)

At this point, the image of Junior's cartoon appears. In the book, it is designed to look like a scrap of slightly crumpled paper, with tape sticking it down onto the page on top-left and bottom-right corners. In the middle of the image is a gawky-looking boy, with a speech bubble occupying the space to his left. On the right, in a cartoon font, is the objective case of the first-person pronoun – 'Me' – and in smaller, handwritten text underneath are the words 'in all my glory'. The verbal text then continues:

> I draw all the time.
> I draw cartoons of my mother and father; my sister and grandmother; my best friend, Rowdy; and everbody else on the rez.
> I draw because words are too unpredictable.
> I draw because words are too limited.

(Alexie, 2007: 5)

The transmodal construction of meaning must take place here in order for readers to understand the image as being produced by the narrator. Junior's words of introduction to his picture are an aid in this respect, with the proximal reference of the locative adverb 'Here' directly referencing the surface of the page and therefore the picture that is presented. Moreover, in the text that follows, the repetition of 'I draw' at the start of four sentences foregrounds Junior as the active subject (as the narrative 'I') undertaking the action of the verb 'draw'.

This extract from *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* exemplifies the narrator-as-presenter that is often to be found in multimodal literature. As the discussion shows, it is important that the verbal text works in conjunction with the images, to anchor them within the context of the narrative world and to ensure that their function is not illustrative, but part of integrative multimodal meaning-making.

Example 3: Reading to transmodal construction and reader to user

In the examples from *House of Leaves* (Danielewski, 2000) discussed in this chapter, readers needed to rotate the book in order to read deviantly positioned text, as well as to reconstruct words from fragments often arranged across visual space or even pages. These are, of course, examples of the transmodal construction of narrative meaning, as was the combination of word and image in the discussion of the extract from *The Absolutely True*

Diary of a Part-time Indian (Alexie, 2007). However, acts that require the reader to physically engage with the book as artefact are also examples of readers having to 'use' the text in some way. The conceptual shift in which the reader becomes a user of the text sees the reader take on a performative role.

Perhaps a more overt case of the reader-as-user occurs when fictional texts contain hidden messages – ciphers that the reader must decode in order to gain additional textual information. A novel that frequently incorporates secret codes into its narrative is Joe Meno's (2006) *The Boy Detective Fails*, which tells the story of the boy detective in question – Billy Argo – who is not, in fact, much of a boy. When Billy leaves for college, devastating events tarnish the detective fantasies of his youth, the most tragic being the death of his sister Caroline, who supposedly commits suicide. After ten years in an asylum unable to deal with the loss, Billy eventually returns to society and takes a telemarketing job. Yet the world is not as it seems; rather, it is a surreal place in which buildings suddenly disappear and Billy, the now not-so-boyish detective, is determined to find out what really happened to his sister.

There are at least seven hidden messages within *The Boy Detective Fails*, the first of which appears in chapter 22:

> The boy detective is surprised to receive a mysterious letter in the mail when he returns to his room. There is no postmark or address. The envelope, in small black handwriting, simply says: *To the boy detective*. Billy slowly opens the letter, slipping his finger beneath the fold of paper and tearing. Inside is a single piece of yellowed paper that reads:

> **XI: 5–12–15–15–2**
> **26–11–2 11–4-25–8 2–18–24 9–18–21–10–18–23–23–8-17 16–8?**

> It is a secret code, but sent from who? The boy detective thinks *Caroline* immediately, and then admonishes himself for thinking that at all. He stares at it for a few moments more before giving up, hiding it under his bed, afraid of what it may be.

> *Perhaps dear reader, you might help him. Match the code XI with the decoder wheel found on the back flap of this volume.*

> (Meno, 2006: 113–14)

The letter that Billy finds contains a code, which is then presented to the reader by an omniscient narrator (rather than the more explicit first-person narrator of *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*). The code itself is foregrounded by means of its visual separation from the surrounding text and its realisation as emboldened type. Whilst some readers might be tempted to skip this in the hope that the hidden message will, in fact, be revealed later in the narrative, the italicised font at the end of the extract explicitly addresses the reader and asks him or her to undertake the task of decoding the message. It does this through the rather archaic literary address of 'dear reader', which is immediately followed by the apostrophic 'you'. The suggestion that 'you', the reader, should actively engage in the task of decoding the message is initially hedged with the epistemic modal in the verb phase 'might help'. However, the composition of the succeeding sentence eliminates the sense of possibility and readerly choice by issuing a directive: 'Match the code . . .'

The Boy Detective Fails does indeed come with a decoder wheel that the reader can use. The code in this extract uses numbers to represent letters. The most obvious number-to-letter code would be to number the letters A–Z as 1–26. This has not quite happened here:

the number for each letter has been shifted upward by three places, so that A is represented by 4, B by 5, and so on. Decoded, the message here reads: *Billy/Why have you forgotten me?* In the context of the story, this message is still somewhat ambiguous. Nevertheless, it provides additional narrative content and, more importantly, necessitates the reader's active physical engagement with the text.

Further directions

Future practice for research on creativity and multimodal literature should test the empirical validity of readers' experience of such creative literary texts. For instance, Gibbons (2012: 183–97) undertook an empirical study of readers' responses to an extract from multimodal fiction – namely, *Woman's World* by Graham Rawle (2005). Gibbons divided her participants into two groups: one group read the extract in its original multimodal form, whilst another group of readers functioned as a control group, reading a conventional-looking mock-up of the extract. This allowed Gibbons to compare the different textual experiences of the two groups. The study also consisted of two parts. First, readers were asked to write notes on the extract, so that their instant online reactions in reading could be accessed. Secondly, readers were asked to answer a short questionnaire about their reading experience. The questionnaire asked research-driven questions, such as whether readers experienced mental imagery whilst reading the extract. Ultimately, the empirical study provided insight into readers' reflections on the experiential dimension of reading multimodal literature, and showed that there is indeed a difference between reading multimodal text and reading more conventionally type-set texts. Further investigations should be conducted to extend and build upon Gibbons' study.

Another empirical approach to multimodal literature that may produce useful insight is the use of eye-tracking studies in order to provide data on reading paths, as well as how readers attend to the different multimodal elements within texts. For instance, Holsanova, Holmberg, and Holmqvist (2009: 1224) conducted an eye-tracking study of newspaper layouts and discovered that 'a difference in the spatial layout has a significant effect on readers' behaviour'. Specifically, when text and images are clearly separated, readers 'treat them as two independent units, and almost no integration occurs', whereas when text and images are arranged in a more integrated format by means of closer positioning, reading itself appears more integrated because 'it makes it easier for the reader to find the correspondences between referents in the text and in the illustration' (Holsanova, Holmberg, & Holmqvist, 2009: 1224). An eye-tracking study of a piece of multimodal literature would show the reading path taken by a reader, as well as (perhaps) show which parts of the text were the most deviant and deautomatised.

Related topics

creativity and digital text; creativity and technology; language, creativity, and cognition; literary narrative; metaphor and metonymy; stylistics; vernacular creativity in urban textual landscapes

Further reading

Gibbons, A. (2012) *Multimodality, Cognition, and Experimental Literature*, London/New York: Routledge.

This is the first book-length study devoted to exploring the literary-linguistic fabric of multimodal fiction and develops a cognitive-poetic approach to such visual texts.

Gibbons, A. (2013) 'Multimodal metaphors in contemporary experimental literature', *Metaphor in the Social World*, 3(2): 180–98.

This article explores conceptual metaphors in a range of multimodal literary works (poetry, fiction, and graphic novel) and, through stylistic analysis, argues that such metaphors are the creative products of a combination of verbal and visual modes, as well as readers' performative engagements.

Nørgaard, N. (2010a) 'Multimodality and the literary text: Making sense of Jonathan Safran Foer's *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*', in R. Page (ed.) *New Perspectives on Narrative and Multimodality*, London/New York: Routledge, pp. 115–41.

This book chapter presents a social semiotic stylistic analysis of Foer's multimodal novel, paying particular attention to typography, layout, and photographic images.

Nørgaard, N. (2014) 'Multimodality and stylistics', in M. Burke (ed.) *The Routledge Companion to Stylistics*, London/New York: Routledge, pp. 471–84.

In this book chapter, Nørgaard offers an excellent overview of work in stylistics and multimodality studies, focusing particularly on the social semiotic approach.

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19

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Language and music

Anna Jordanous[1]

Introduction and definitions

Bringing together language and music in creative activities opens up several promising routes for investigation. Language and music occur in every human society, regardless of the presence or absence of other cultural aspects (Nettl, 1983; Patel, 2008). By exploring similarities and differences between language and music, we can better understand how each of these two modes communicates or expresses creativity.

Some music terminology will be used throughout this chapter, which I shall define now. With a focus on popular and classical music, Levitin (2006) lists seven major elements of music:

- *pitch* – the frequencies that we hear in the music;
- *rhythm* – the duration and flow of notes, or musical events, within the music over time;
- *melody* – a group of notes or sounds over time, as a prominent linear sound within the music;
- *harmony* – groups of frequencies sounding together within the music that collectively establish musical context via chords or concurrent accompanying sounds;
- *tempo* – the general speed of the music;
- *metre* – the underlying regular 'pulse' of the music; and
- *loudness* – the volume and magnitude of the musical sounds.

Thinking about music from a broader perspective, we can add to this list two more major elements:

- *timbre* – the acoustic qualities of the sound that help to characterise that sound; and
- *space* – the spatial characteristics of the music, in which the musical sounds are located.

All of these aspects have a corresponding aspect in speech, helping to shape the sound of what is being spoken. For example, we can discuss the 'timbre' and the 'pitch' of a voice, referring to the sound of speech. If a man and woman talk in unison, their voices usually shift in pitch so that they become an octave apart, relative to each other (Levitin, 2006), as it would do if they were singing a song in unison (Jackendoff & Lerdahl, 2006).

This chapter examines critical issues around crossovers, parallels, and similarities between language and music that justify multimodal work. I will also acknowledge differences

between these two modes and any resulting constraints placed on multimodal work, because differences can be as informative as similarities in studying each mode. I will examine current contributions and research that combine creativity in both language and music, either practically or methodologically. Looking towards future directions in this area, I will consider creativity from a more general perspective, seeing how creativity transcends different modes to some degree, while still retaining some characteristics specific to individual modes. To illustrate this, I will look at a case study that uses principles from the study of language to identify key aspects of creativity both in general and in the specific case of musical improvisation.

Historical perspectives, critical issues, and topics

Language and music both play a key part in our lives, being two human capabilities 'that both involve complex and meaningful sound sequences' (Patel, 2008: 3). Various crossovers and parallels exist between language and music, which support the intertwining of these two modes. For instance, language and music share some neurological processes, and there are also theoretical and developmental models that support both modes of creativity. Some go as far to say that music *is* a language, although this is far from universally accepted. To lay the foundations for multimodal work, then, we should establish to what extent we can justifiably claim valid overlap between the two modes.

Music as a language

Music is sometimes treated as a language in its own right. Cooke (1959) sees music as a language focused on expressing emotion, an interpretation supported by Mithen (2005: 24–5). Musical scores (music in written form, like that at which we will look later in the chapter in Figures 19.1 and 19.2) have been likened to a communicative language by Magnusson (2011: 19), who asserts that 'the traditional score has evolved into a highly sophisticated language for encoding musical expression with various idiosyncrasies or personal styles'. Beyond the traditional musical score, music-based languages range from jargon terms and expressions for specific musical styles, through to languages for expressing music in different formats, and even to computational music generation languages.

Treating music as a language is by no means a universally accepted approach. Treitler (2007: 265) considers perceptions of 'the limited capacity of language to describe music', pointing out that music conveys concepts that cannot be put into words. (Treitler notes, however, that language can also be ambivalent, with semantics equally difficult to pin down.) Ethnomusicologists treat music as 'human sound communication outside the scope of language' (Nettl, 1983: 24). In other words, in communication, music is anything that is not language; hence the two are complementary and mutually exclusive. To an ethnomusicologist, therefore, sound and communications are either music or language – but not both. How, though, does singing fit into this ethnomusicological definition? Or scat singing (in which random syllables are sung as words to a melody)? Mithen (2005) cites another counter-example: John Cage's 1952 work *4:33* (4 minutes and 33 seconds during which the performers' directions are to be *tacet* – that is, not to play) (see Jaworski, Chapter 20).

It therefore appears that although some are comfortable treating music as a language, this is a contentious stance. Having said that, dividing lines drawn between language and music seem somewhat fuzzy – an issue to which Nettl (1983) later returns and critiques in his suggestions for ethnomusicological research. On the whole, a safer position for multimodal

work is to acknowledge the many shared similarities between language and music, while remaining mindful of notable differences – the topic that I address next.

Similarities and crossovers between language and music

As we have just seen, it is debatable whether music can be considered to be a language. Nonetheless, a diverse range of similarities can be drawn between language and music. These help to validate the multimodal combination of language and music, as well as show the potential for such combinatory creative work.

Both language and music require human capabilities in which we learn and develop competence, typically involving the generation and interpretation of sound. These capabilities are embodied in behaviours that are enhanced by interaction, gesture, and/or movement, consciously or subconsciously. Music is intrinsically linked to people's movement and participation on many levels and in many cultures. Similarly, speech is linked to body language.

Both language and music involve the processing of syntax and semantics. Language and music can both be structured according to grammatical rules, which help to structure longer phrases. Both tend to be structured hierarchically and can be grouped into elements at different hierarchical levels, increasing in size as we move up the hierarchy. A group of words (or notes) may transmit different meanings to the individual words (or notes), for example idioms and sayings (words), or musical cadences or chord progressions (music).

Language and music can both be used to communicate information and be assigned specific associations. Mithen (2005) gives as an example a television or radio programme's theme tune, which would be strongly associated with its corresponding programme. In language, catchphrases can be created to convey specific meanings. More generally, both modes can be used to express meaning to varying levels of significance and ambiguity, depending on context. A caveat here, though, is that language and music do not convey meaning in quite the same way or to the same degree: musical meaning generally contains more ambiguity and is more open to interpretation than linguistic meaning. 'Both forms of communication are processed auditorily,' say Gfeller, Asmus, and Eckert (1991: 128), 'but speech is much more efficient in transmitting specific referent information.'

Rhythm and metre, two key crossover elements in language and music, enhance the effective and clear communication of what information is being transmitted in language and in music (Levitin, 2006; Mithen, 2005). Although rhythm is generally seen as more significant in music than in language, rhythms can be strongly associated with speech patterns. For example, the phrase 'shave and a haircut: two bits' (see Figure 19.1) and its associated rhythm are exploited in the plot for the 1988 film *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*. Being pursued and hiding from his pursuers, Roger Rabbit is tempted out of his hiding place against his will because of his inability to hear the first part of this rhythmic phrase without being compelled to complete the full phrase. Similarly, cue phrases can be used in music pedagogy to teach specific rhythms. This author recollects using the phrase 'a cup-of tea' when learning to play triplet rhythms in one hand on the piano against duplet rhythms in the other.

Figure 19.1 The 'shave and a haircut: two bits' rhythm featured in the plot of *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (1988)

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Interactive behaviour with language and music on a broader level can also help us to develop and enhance our creative capabilities, especially in early childhood. According to Chen-Hafteck (1997: 95), 'music and language should be closely related in education. The interaction between the two in children's thinking may enhance the development of each other as well as creativity in both musical and linguistic expression'. A more recent review (Hallam, 2010) also finds that greater developments in creativity are likely when music lessons incorporate more creative explorative tasks, such as improvisation, as opposed to more didactic lesson formats.

Another area of similarity between language and music is in the expression of emotion. Many similar acoustic devices are used across both language and music for conveying emotion in each mode, including speed and tempo of delivery, pitch, and the extent of variability or regularity. Reviewing 155 studies on emotion in musical performance, Juslin and Laukka (2003: 797) found that 'the present findings strongly suggest that music performance uses largely the same emotion-specific patterns of acoustic cues as does vocal expression'. They also argue that 'there are emotion specific patterns of acoustic cues that can be used to communicate discrete emotions in both vocal and musical expression of emotions' (Juslin & Laukka, 2003: 794). This leads to a hypothesis that 'music may really be a form of heightened speech' and that our brain treats the sounds of musical instruments as the performances of 'superexpressive' voices (Juslin & Laukka, 2003: 805).

Neurologically, several points of overlap exist in the processing of language and music. Both language and music are human behaviours that are believed to have been present in early *Homo sapiens* society (Mithen, 2005). While the study of cognitive or neurological connections between language and music is in its very early stages, several meaningful discoveries have, however, been made from studying these connections. In the brain, Wernicke's area and Broca's area had been believed to be specifically for language processing, but Koelsch and colleagues provide evidence that these areas are also active in processing musical harmonies (Koelsch et al., 2002), musical syntax (Koelsch et al., 2005), and musical semantics (Koelsch et al., 2004).

There are also 'numerous points of contact between musical and linguistic melody in terms of structure and processing' (Patel, 2008: 238). Neural overlap areas can be further developed through musical training as a result of the brain's ability to reorganise itself in response to damage or to repeated changes in stimuli (Mithen, 2005). Musical training appears to shift some musical processing from the right hemisphere of the brain to the left hemisphere, as musicians learn to talk about – and perhaps think about – music using linguistic terms (Levitin, 2006). Specifically looking at creativity, Petsche (1996) uses electroencephalography (EEG) and coherence analysis to reveal brain activity patterns common to the neural processing of both language and music during creative mental tasks, compared with performing mental tasks designed to be non-creative.

Cognitively, we perceive music and speech in very similar ways when we hear it. Both speech and musical sound are segmented into different dimensions for us to be able to understand the incoming sound as a whole. We group together multiple incoming signals (for example sounds, voices, music). We can distinguish one particular stream of sound if we focus on it – a phenomenon in speech termed the 'cocktail party effect' by Cherry (1953), and in music as 'auditory scene analysis' by Bregman (1990). Using spatially and time-based cues, combined with some assistance from predictions and expectations, we can also fill in missing information or speed up processing, by anticipating what comes next (Huron, 2006; Lerdahl & Jackendoff, 1983; Levitin, 2006; Patel, 2008). The role of expectation is common to language and music because of a key similarity: both language and music

unfold over time, presenting different information as time progresses (unlike, for example, looking at a painting, during which the information from the painting remains the same and does not change over time) (Kress, 2010). As Mithen (2005: 66) writes, 'tonal knowledge creates expectations about what pitches will follow each other, especially when a piece of music comes to its end'.

Speech and music are also interlinked through the different ways in which they employ pitches, and patterns of movement between pitches. *Prosody* refers to the melodies and rhythms in speech, incorporating various aspects that cross language and music, including tone, pitch, accent, and stress. Generating and interpreting prosodic cues involves creative language and music skills. For example, in English, the spoken voice may rise in pitch at the end of a question, indicating the need for activity from the listener (to respond to the question), or fall in pitch to indicate the end of a statement. Such prosodic cues in language correspond to musical cultural conventions that we learn (Levitin, 2006). Patel (2008: 224) argues that 'implicit learning of prosodic patterns in one domain (ordinary speech) influences the creation of rhythmic and tonal patterns in another domain (instrumental art music)', whether consciously or subconsciously.

Pitch movements can also dictate semantics in some spoken languages. In tonal languages (also referred to as tone languages), pitch plays a key role in determining the meaning of a word, distinguishing between alternative meanings for the same lexical string. Two types of tonal language exist: *level-tone*, or *register-tone*, languages, such as the Bantu languages of West African languages, in which the pitch at which words are uttered remains the same throughout that word; and *contour-tone* languages, such as Mandarin Chinese, in which the pitch changes over the duration of the word. Tonal languages can use between two and five pitches, relative to and dispersed over the pitch range of an individual speaker. Tonal languages sit in contrast to non-tonal languages such as English, in which the meaning of a word is not directly controlled by how it is pitched. More than half the languages in the world are tonal; tonal languages are particularly common in South-East Asia and Africa (Patel, 2008). Native speakers of tonal languages are more likely than speakers of non-tonal languages to have absolute (or 'perfect') pitch (Deutsch et al., 2006) – that is, they are able to identify the pitch of notes that they hear even if they hear them in isolation, without any other pitches to which to make reference. As Jackendoff and Lerdahl (2006) point out, however, the comparison between tonal languages and musical use of pitch is not entirely analogous. As tonal language speakers speak, the range of tones used tends to drift downwards, and there is an accompanying decrease in the difference between high and low tones being used. In music, pitches stay at (or near) fixed frequencies.

Differences between language and music

Thus far, I have mostly discussed how language and music are governed by similar principles or complement each other, to see how multimodal studies of creativity are appropriate. At the same time, however, it is necessary to acknowledge differences between music-based and language-based creativity. This helps us to avoid the pitfalls of building too strongly on similarities, unaware of the extent to which those similarities are valid.

One question arises over whether music evolved in its own right (probably from a similar root to language) or human musical capabilities have developed only because we developed language facilities. As Mithen (2005: 11) asks: 'Is [music] simply an evolutionary spin-off from language . . . [or] adaptive and as deeply rooted in our biology as language?' Brown's (2000) 'musi-language', Wray's (1998) 'proto-language', and Mithen's (2005)

'Hmmmmmm' all describe a single evolutionary predecessor of both language and music, from which Mithen, Wray, and Brown posit that language and music both developed. Other theories are that language and music evolved in parallel, but independently, then later developed shared neural circuits. An alternative view of how musical capabilities evolved, as proposed by Pinker (1997), is that music is 'auditory cheesecake' – that is, an inessential side effect of our evolution of the ability to perceive and process linguistic sound. These controversial remarks have not been left unrefuted. Several authors critique Pinker's assertions as being misleading, ill-informed, or just plain incorrect (Carroll, 1998; Cross, 2001; Levitin, 2006; Mithen, 2005). Specifically on the focus of this volume, creativity, Carroll (1998) points out the importance of people being exposed to creative works in music, art, or literature, which helps them to develop an ability to deal with complex and changing scenarios in creative ways. If music is purely 'cheesecake', then it offers little other than sensory stimuli. In rebuttal, Carroll (1998: 482) argues that music (and art) actually play a 'vital role . . . in the healthy development of human beings', and that creativity offers evolutionary adaptive advantages.

Language and music are not completely co-dependent behaviours. Studies offer contradictory evidence of the extent to which linguistic and musical abilities are independent. People can function musically, but not linguistically, or vice versa – or they can develop problems functioning in either mode (Mogharbel et al., 2006; Patel, 2008; Tudor et al., 2008). There are also physical differences in how we perceive pitches and melodies in speech and language. To perceive different pitches, we construct a *tonotopic* map on the basillar membrane of the inner ear: a map of frequencies that is directly mapped in two dimensions on to the auditory cortex. '[F]or pitch, what goes into the ear comes out of the brain!' says Levitin (2006: 29).

There is no equivalent direct mapping within the brain for any language phenomena (assuming that we disregard prosodic attributes of speech). Furthermore, although some principles of melodic structure transcend both language and music, Jackendoff and Lerdahl (2006) and Patel (2008) highlight differences between linguistic melodies and musical melodies. The organisation of actual pitches used tends to vary (in music, pitches are usually taken from a fixed set of pitches, but in language, pitches are relative to the speaker's range). Jackendoff and Lerdahl (2006) also highlight other related differences that are peculiar to music, such as the existence of dissonance within a tonal space.

Taking musical elements of spoken language more generally, musical rhythm and speech rhythm are not completely alike: there is an element of periodicity or recurring metrical structure in many types of music that is not present in most spoken language. We should note, though, that periodicity is absent in some music styles, such as plainchant or some contemporary music. Generally, rhythmic elements in speech still have much in common with musical rhythm.

Other differences between language and music can be noted in how each mode is manifested in communication. Linguistic communication tends to involve an active speaker and passive listener, with those roles possibly changing, such as in conversations. In Western classical music, we often see the distinction between musical performers and listeners, but if we consider music more generally, then such distinctions can become more blurred. Emphasis is on active participation, rather than performance to passive listeners, for example when improvisers are listening to each other and playing at the same time, or in collective music-making scenarios such as in tribal groups (see Sawyer, Chapter 4).

These differences show us that care is needed when working with language and music. Although the two modes have much in common, there are limits to those commonalities

of which we should remain mindful when conducting multimodal work with creativity in language and music.

The next section in this chapter considers existing creative research and practice areas combining language and music that have successfully navigated across these modes.

Current contributions and research

Musical creativity can take a variety of forms, including composing music, musical improvisation, and performance, accompaniment, and interpretation of existing music. We can be creative with our choice of instruments or voices for a piece of music, and with our sonic, timbral, and harmonic choices during music creation and interpretation. Other ways of being creative with music include remixing or rearranging music, reinterpreting music in new ways, or performing music in new creative contexts, and many more.

This chapter focuses on creativity that combines music with language in some way. How can one be creative with language *and* music? Language is an integral part of many musically based creative activities (and vice versa). Composition and improvisation are creative activities that can occur using language or music. What we can generate both in music and in language is infinite in its possibilities; neither mode is necessarily bounded by constraints of size, maximum length, and so forth. This section presents demonstrative examples (rather than a comprehensive list) of interesting work currently being done with creativity in language and music.

Creative activities combining music and language

There are many crossover activities that necessarily require creative activity with both words and music. One example is song writing. Setting lyrics to music typically involves matching the linguistic accented syllable patterns with the metrical accents in the music. These activities are also relevant for poetry, in which part of the creative act revolves around metrical settings of words. 'For the [Ancient] Greeks, music and poetry were inseparable,' says Storr (1992: 14). In fact, the word 'melody' originally derives from the Ancient Greek word *melos*, which referred both to the words of poetry and to the music to which the poem was set. The Suyá people, an Amazonian tribe, exemplify a modern-day culture that hardly distinguishes between song and speech, but instead treats song and speech as essentially the same form of communication (Seeger, 1987).

In Western interpretations of song, musical and linguistic meanings are intimately connected. To illustrate, Patel (2008) gives examples of *word painting*: a feature of songs in which the meanings of words are enhanced with musical content, such as the way in which melodic contours in the American Spiritual song 'Swing Low, Sweet Chariot' underline the meaning of the lyrics (for example the use of a low note on the word 'Low' to *paint* the phrase 'Swing low'). Word painting is only one way in which music can enhance the lyrics of a song. In song writing, musical choices can complement – or contradict – the meaning of lyrics to creative effect, such as using stable tonality to underline lyrics about peace and stability (or contradicting such lyrics with occasional use of dissonant notes, to indicate that those lyrics may not be intended to convey quite so peaceful and stable a scene after all). Musical genres also affect how language is used for lyrics, for example in operettas, stressed syllables in the lyrics tend to align with strong beats in the music, whereas for rock songs, verbal stresses often occur slightly ahead of strong beats (Patel, 2008: 156).

Introducing multiple languages into song writing opens new avenues for creativity, as Chik (2010) has found within pop music in Hong Kong, a multilingual and evolving culture.

Chik reflects on how the creative use of English complements the musical conveyances of this song genre at different levels, for example to add comic effect (if pronounced with a highly exaggerated Cantonese accent) or to reinforce an intention to represent the idea of modernity within the song. The addition of English to Cantonese pop ('Cantopop') has widened the creative space of possibilities for pop composers in recent decades, towards a 'new genre of English creativity' (Chik, 2010: 521).

'Spoken music', such as chanting, rap, funk, hip hop, and beatboxing, combine speech and music for creativity in a multimodal setting. Alim and Pennycook (2007: 90–1) discuss the development of linguistic diversity in hip hop, considering 'limited language', 'ill literacy', and the development of 'ever free-forming and flowing' language. They consider how hip hop expresses socially or politically charged messages about power, politics, or identity through creative multimodal communication. Similarly for funk music, Morant (2011) illustrates the history of a spoken tradition being transferred into musical interpretations through a language-based musical genre.

Creativity is often demonstrated through remixes combining speech and music, such as Eminem's 'Stan' (2000), which samples Dido's song 'Thank You' (1999). Eminem's use of 'Thank You' significantly changed the semantics of the original Dido song. The sampled lyrics sung by Dido express sombre, mildly depressed thoughts and reflections. Dido's song originally moved on to considerably more positive and uplifting lyrics in the chorus, complementing the more melancholy verse lyrics that Eminem sampled. The version by Eminem did not include the positive chorus lyrics and instead added additional lyrics that were more aggressive, with greater negative sentiment (describing a fan writing to his or her idol and becoming increasingly angry by the lack of reply). Songs such as 'Everybody's Free (to Wear Sunscreen)' (released by Baz Luhrmann in 1998) also see speech placed over existing music. The original speech, written by *Chicago Tribune* columnist Mary Schmich in 1997, was made to students on their graduation day, and advised them how to live life successfully and happily. The remix places the speech itself in a new context with different emphases and, presumably, a quite different entertainment effect for its listeners. Considering performances of language that incorporate non-linguistic modalities, Bell and Gibson (2011: 566) reflect that '[t]he music sets up the interpretations which may be taken from the words'.

Employing one mode in the context of the other

In creative works that are strongly associated with one mode, music or language, one can be creative through appropriate use of the other mode. For example, Storr (1992) reports how the author James Joyce considered the sound of words in his writing, especially in later works. Directly incorporating music alongside language has been shown to enhance creativity and expressivity in digital storytelling (Bran, 2010; Yang, 2012). Another example of creatively using music in a linguistic mode is in the full title of Dueck (2013: 91), which includes the musical score of a famous jazz ending discussed in the paper, 'The Ellington ending' (see Figure 19.2).

Figure 19.2 The 'Ellington ending' that forms the first part of the published title of Dueck (2013), 'The Ellington ending: Jazz endings, aesthetic discourse and musical publics'

Background music has also been shown to assist creative language-based tasks such as expressive writing (Gonzales et al., 2010) and interpretation of speech by listeners (Gfeller, Asmus, & Eckert, 1991). Computational work by Monteith and colleagues (2011) has taken advantage of background music's effects on language, with their software program generating emotionally targeted soundtracks to fairy tales. The soundtracks, well received by listeners, use text analysis to identify emotions within the tales, the results of which guide the generation of appropriate music.

Language can also be used creatively in musical domains. Consider Levitin's (2006: 92–3) description of the second movement of Haydn's 1791 *Surprise Symphony*, which depicts how the music 'builds suspense by using soft violins', creating a 'soothing' sound that nonetheless 'sends a gentle, contradictory message of danger' through the use of pizzicato (very short) notes. Levitin's interpretations help to illustrate what is happening in the music. Similarly, music-theoretical terms used to describe intervals between notes such as 'the perfect fifth' and 'the devil's interval' provide added information about how that interval is interpreted musically. Another example is in Lopez Rúa's (2010) findings about how alternative music artists make creative use of language in choosing band names, to help to establish their musical identity and style.

Theoretical and methodological crossovers between language and music study

Crossovers between language and music creativity also occur at more theoretical or methodological levels. Language-based methods have been cross-applied for creative musical purposes and vice versa. For example, narrative-based methods have been used to trace linear development in musical works, and to discover new perspectives and interpretations (McDonald, 2004; Nattiez, 1990). Statistical models used in linguistics, such as n-gram models or hidden Markov models, have been applied for computational analysis and generation of music (Chan & Ventura, 2008; Conklin, 2003; Jordanous & Smaill, 2009), as have musical grammars (models containing rules about the grammatical structures within music) (Gillick, Tang, & Keller, 2010; Lerdahl & Jackendoff, 1983; Steedman, 1984).

Although poetry may be seen as a primarily linguistic activity, the use of rhythm in poetry often mirrors the use of rhythm in music, particularly in the creative use of expressive timing. Exploiting this, Lerdahl (2001) explores the potential of treating poetry as music, analysing a short poem by Robert Frost in crossover areas such as syllabic stress, grouping principles, and implied underlying metre. For example, in using music-analytic techniques to enhance prosodic analysis, Lerdahl (2001: 349) makes discoveries about the recurrence of sounds in the structure of the poem's sounds, using 'prolongational' theory from music. Accordingly, he posits that musically oriented analysis helps in developing complementary approaches to the study of poetry, such as exploring text setting through theoretical models.

Mode-specific requirements for creativity

Having considered various examples of multimodal creative work, it is now time to consider in more detail the concept of multimodal creativity itself. There is debate over whether creativity exists at a generic (abstract) level, such that there is a 'creativity' that transcends specific manifestations in different creative modes (the proposition argued by Plucker, 1998). The alternative view is that creativity is mode-specific (Baer, 1998; Csikszentmihalyi, 1988); therefore musical creativity is a different entity from linguistic creativity.

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Baer (1998) argues that it is safer for researchers to assume that creativity is mode-specific and offers several examples in which creativity in one mode does not necessarily correlate to creativity in another, as judged by experts in each mode. This view, however, does not account for 'multipotentiality', whereby people have creative achievements in more than one creative mode (Plucker & Beghetto, 2004), or the effects whereby creative training in one mode transfers to another (as discussed earlier in relation to the similarities and crossovers between language and music). A hybrid view is now more prevalent (Baer, 2010; Plucker & Beghetto, 2004), acknowledging that some aspects of creativity transcend modes, while others are specific to that mode. This leads to Plucker and Beghetto's (2004: 159) 'richer question': which aspects of creativity are general, and which are specific to particular creative modes?

In a multimodal approach to answering Plucker and Beghetto's question, Jordanous and Keller (2012) use language analysis to identify general aspects of creativity and aspects of creativity specific to musical improvisation. To identify cross-domain characteristics of creativity, they analyse the language used in academic discussions of creativity in comparison with the language used in academic papers not on creativity. Using the log likelihood ratio (LLR) statistic to identify words that appeared significantly more often in the writings on creativity, semantic similarity measures and clustering methods are applied to the identified words. As a result, fourteen key components of creativity are highlighted (see Figure 19.3). These fourteen components represent aspects and factors commonly related to creativity across domains.
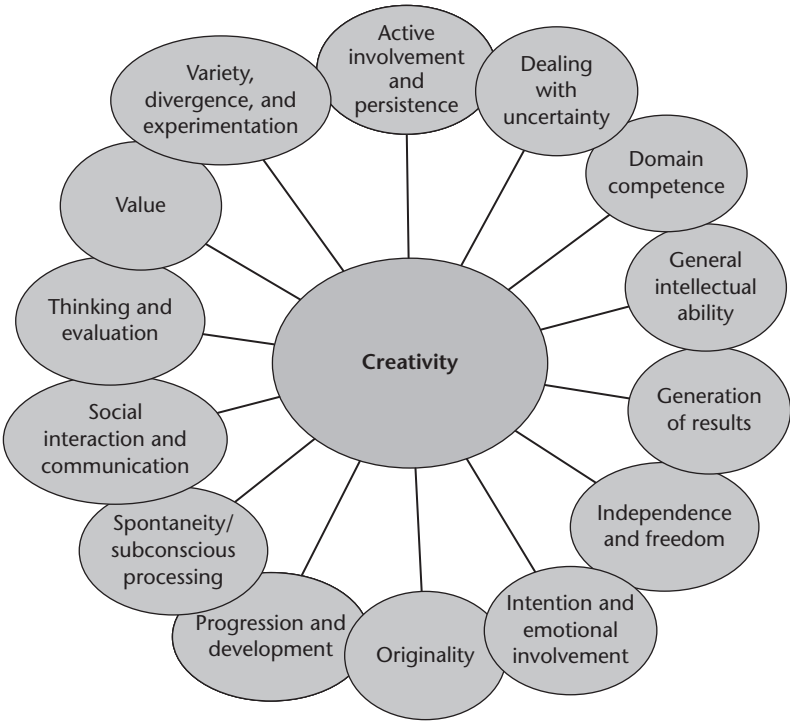
Figure 19.3 Fourteen key aspects of creativity

Source: Jordanous and Keller (2012)

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Table 19.1 The fourteen components of creativity and how they rank in importance for creativity in musical improvisation

Component of creativity	No. +ve occurrences	No. −ve occurrences
Social interaction and communication	44	0
Domain competence	43	6
Intention and emotional involvement	41	0
Active involvement and persistence	23	0
Variety, divergence, and experimentation	21	0
Dealing with uncertainty	19	0
Originality	17	0
Spontaneity/subconscious processing	16	0
Independence and freedom	16	0
Progression and development	16	0
Thinking and evaluation	16	1
Value	15	0
Generation of results	11	0
General intellect	4	0

Source: Jordanous and Keller (2012)

While each of the fourteen components in Figure 19.3 contributes to creativity in some way, some are more important in a given domain than in others. To identify what characterises a specific type of creativity in a certain mode, we can study the relative importance of each of these components in that creative mode. As an example, Jordanous and Keller (2012) use these linguistically derived components to investigate creativity in musical improvisation. Thirty-four participants with a range of experience in musical improvisation (from 'listener, but non-musician' to 'expert improviser') were questioned on what creativity meant to them in the context of musical improvisation. The components in Figure 19.3 were used to analyse responses. Based on occurrences of the components of creativity in the participants' responses, Jordanous and Keller (2012) conclude that three of these components are of primary importance for creativity in musical improvisation: social communication and interaction; domain competence and intention; and emotional involvement. In other words, the most important contributors for creative musical improvisation are the ability to interact and communicate with others, strong relevant musical knowledge and abilities, and the desire for and emotional involvement with the improvisational process. The relative importance of each component is pictured in Table 19.1.

What we have seen here, and indeed throughout this chapter, is that creativity in language shares various commonalities and shared characteristics with creativity in music, and indeed with other manifestations of creativity. The common characteristics that occur across multiple creative modes underline the validity of multimodal creative work such as the examples that we have seen in this chapter. It is also useful, though, to study what distinguishes one type of creativity from another, resulting in specific understanding of creativity in different modes. The combination of both routes of study enable us to construct a more informed perspective when considering multimodal creativity such as the combination of language and music.

Recommendations for practice and future directions

Multimodal creativity involving language and music can take a vast variety of forms, many of which hold great potential for further investigation. This chapter has shown that the

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similarities between language and music are wide-ranging; in fact, it is not uncommon for people to treat music as a language, although this is not universally so. We must be careful not to over-interpret the similarities between language and music; differences between language and music exist, and we should be aware of them as we work with the two modes in creativity.

Nonetheless, several authors (for example Jackendoff & Lerdahl, 2006; Juslin & Laukka, 2003; Koelsch et al., 2005; Patel, 2008) have directly recommended multimodal study as a way of gaining insights that would be hard to achieve in treating these two modes separately. As Patel (2008: 351) puts it: 'Comparative research on music and language can help illuminate the diversity of ways in which our mind derives meaning from structured acoustic sequences.' Various multimodal research findings have been discussed in this chapter that illustrate Patel's point. These include practical work, such as the use of appropriate generated music to help people to complete expressive writing in a more enjoyable fashion (Gonzales et al., 2010), and more theoretically oriented work, such as the work by Jordanous and Keller (2012) in applying analytical methods to language to learn about creativity in music.

As we saw in the last section of this chapter, language and music creativity are not alone in sharing numerous areas of crossover. Several common aspects exist across different creative modes, which contribute towards characterising creativity as a concept. Studying the commonalities affords a more tangible understanding of creativity in general, and multimodal creativity is a powerful tool for such study. Overall, there is great potential in sensibly approaching the combination of language and music in creativity; many fruitful avenues lie open for exploration.

Related topics

creativity and dialogue; language, creativity, and remix culture; poetry and poetics; silence and creativity

Note

1 Many thanks to Jennifer MacRitchie, Mona Mamoun, Caroline Hills, Simon Fox, and Rodney H. Jones for their constructive comments in shaping this chapter.

Further reading

Cooke, D. (1959) *The Language of Music*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cooke argues for the controversial hypothesis that music is a language, concentrating on communication of emotions.

Jordanous, A., and Keller, B. (2012) 'What makes musical improvisation creative?', *Journal of Interdisciplinary Music Studies*, 6(2): 151–75.

Jordanous and Keller identify aspects of creativity that are present to some degree across all creative modes and study how these aspects are prioritised in an individual creative mode (by means of a case study investigating musical improvisational creativity).

Lerdahl, F., and Jackendoff, R. (1983) *A Generative Theory of Tonal Music*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Lerdahl and Jackendoff provide a seminal work on grammar-based approaches to the study of music, working as a team consisting of a composer/music theorist (Lerdahl) and a linguist (Jackendoff).

Mithen, S. (2005) *The Singing Neanderthals: The Origin of Music, Language, Mind and Body*, London: Phoenix.

Mithen adopts an evolutionary perspective in discussing the links between music and language.

Patel, A. D. (2008) *Music, Language and the Brain*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Patel offers a thorough overview of research carried out investigating commonalities and differences between music and language from a neurological perspective.

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Silence and creativity

Re-mediation, transduction, and performance

Adam Jaworski[1]

Introduction: Creativity, repetition, transformation

John Cage's well-known 'silent' composition *4'33"* (1952) 'exists' in various forms: as a piece of experimental music; as a series of different performances – 'live' or 'recorded'; and as a number of scores – musical, visual, and linguistic. This chapter locates the creativity of 'Cage's silence' within the acts of re-mediation and performance, or, more specifically, in the in-between spaces of *transduction* (Kress, 2010) in which silence is not only repeated, but also re-perceived and transformed (Rogers, 1985). Before discussing *4'33"* in some detail, however, I discuss the transformative aspects of artistic creativity more generally.

Following Boden (2004) and others, Rodney H. Jones (2012) suggests that most art falls somewhere between what we may call '"big C" Creativity' and '"small c" creativity'. The former refers to the creativity of objects, processes, and events on a large scale – potentially a world scale. These can be significant works of art and literature, or scientific theories and discoveries that have the power to affect the lives and ways of thinking of large numbers of people, although not all art is 'genius' and not all of it has a universal reach. The latter refers to creativity on a much smaller, often personal, scale, evident in the mundane routines of 'problem-solving, joking and verbal play' (Jones, 2012: 2). The cline between 'small c' and 'big C' creativities corresponds to the scalar view of artful performance in sociolinguistics, which, as suggested by Nik Coupland (2007: 146–7), can be identified on a scale between 'high performance' and 'mundane performance', or what has been known in anthropological linguistics as the cline between 'full performance' and a 'breakthrough' into a fleeting performance in a strip of ongoing talk (Bauman & Briggs, 1990: 74; Hymes, 1975).

Art – especially contemporary art – complicates the notion of creativity in that it is almost impossible nowadays to identify what is creative about an art object as judged simply by its formal features. In literary works of art, we can certainly identify a number of linguistic forms and rhetorical figures that are typically employed to enhance the aesthetic quality of texts, for example rhyme, rhythm, repetition, alliteration, wordplay, evocative metaphor, and so on, but they can be found as much in published, widely admired literary works as well as in 'everyday'

language (Maybin, Chapter 1; Maybin & Swann, 2007; Tannen, 1989). In visual arts, the quality of composition, brushstrokes, or represented detail can also be considered important markers of artistry and creativity. However, the notion of finding artistic quality as located *in* the art object itself has been unsettled in contemporary art in no small measure owing to the work of Marcel Duchamp, who exhibited his sculpture *Fountain* at the first exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists in New York in 1917. As is well known, *Fountain* is a 'found object' – a urinal – that Duchamp had bought a few days before the opening of the exhibition from the showroom of the J. L. Mott Ironworks, then signed and dated 'R. Mutt 1917'. What Duchamp achieved in this momentous act was precisely a shift of focus away from the object itself to the artistic *process* of turning it into a work of art (see Veale, Chapter 22). Therefore, rather than taking the product-based approach to creativity – that is, focusing on the properties of a particular creative text, linguistic, visual, or otherwise – I am going to lean towards the process-based approach that is concerned with what people 'do to come up with a creative product or inventive solution to a problem' (Jones, 2012: 2).

This is not to say that the form or shape of the artwork is not consequential for its analysis. However, rather than on form per se, I focus here on what Gunther Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen (2001) refer to as the 'constraints' and 'affordances' – that is, the potential uses and limitations – of the material and formal properties of texts, objects, and events that allow us to perform specific actions, invoke particular representations, take preferred subject positions, or express and share indexical meaning. This is what Rodney H. Jones (2009) refers to as the 'technologies of entextualisation' and 'recontextualisation' – the meditational means appropriated for the production and transportation of texts, such as typewriters, computers, video cameras, oil paints, marble, metal, onstage performance, and so on – that create different spatial and temporal 'relationships of possibility' (van Lier, 2004: 105) in moments of social participation. There are strong echoes here of Bauman and Briggs' (1990) work on performance, which involves the recontextualisation, or transposition and relocation, of linguistic resources from one domain into another, frequently with artful overtones and form focusing (see also Coupland, 2007: 147). In performance, the importance of the 'referential' function may be subordinated to the 'poetic' function (Jakobson, 1960), or, in the words of Richard Bauman (2001 [1975]: 182), artful performance 'offers to the participants a special enhancement of experience, bringing with it a heightened intensity of communicative interaction'. According to Bauman and Briggs (1990), performance invokes or represents a special interpretive frame within which it is understood; it is highly (self-)reflexive, calling forth special attention and heightened awareness of the act of speaking, holding the performer to scrutiny and evaluation by the audience in terms of his or her skill and effectiveness. *Entextualisation* renders discourse 'extractable' from its surrounding environment, opening up ways of constructing histories of performance, 'linking performances with other modes of language use as performances are decentred [decontextualised] and recentred [recontextualised] both within and across speech events – referred to, cited, evaluated, reported, looked back upon, replayed, and otherwise transformed in the production and reproduction of social life' (Bauman & Briggs, 1990: 80; see also Maybin & Swann, 2007: 501).

In sum, performance is an interactive or interpretive frame (Goffman, 1974) that is organised as a succession of intertextually linked recontextualisations, isolating ready-made texts (discourses) and inserting them into new ones. Following on from Bakhtin, who treats all language as dialogic and thus either iterative (retro- or prospectively), Richard Bauman (2004: 9) cites Richard Schechner (1985: 36), who states that performance means 'never for the first time'. This notion then takes us to the consideration of *repetition*.

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Creativity as repetition

Entextualisation and recontextualisation have become particularly productive terms in current discussions of discourse creativity, especially when scholars turned their attention to the creative potential of repetition (see Carter, 2004; Johnstone, 1987; Tannen, 1989; Toolan, 2012). For example, while accepting the importance of the inventiveness and novelty in creative (literary) works, Michael Toolan (2012), following Jakobson (1960), considers creativity in terms of repetition. Toolan's (2012: 23) view of repetition is very broad, and includes all kinds of 'schemes' and 'tropes' that are often 'complex', detectable relationships of sound, rhythm, word shape, or meaning, rather than 'full and simple replication'. Examples include rhyme, metre, assonance and alliteration, intertextuality, and irony, as well as metaphor and figuration. However, Toolan (2012: 29) notes that not all instances of literary creativity are equally successful, although those that are enable or compel the reader to a sense of 'an enriched apprehension of the Other, and therefore of the Self' (see also Attridge, 2004), as well as a judgement 'that taken as a whole, in context . . . the text is to a significant degree *not* a repetition of previous works, but a new and unforeseen departure, a productive variation' (Toolan, 2012: 34, emphasis original).

Alastair Pennycook (2007, 2010) delves deeper into the resolution of the apparent paradox between the ubiquity of repetition and widespread creativity in everyday discourse. He suggests that traditional ideas about creative imagination linked to the romantic figure of an artist working in relative isolation and crafting unprecedented, completely novel artworks be replaced by a different philosophical tradition that 'emphasizes difference, repetition, intertextuality, flow, mimesis and performativity' (Pennycook, 2010: 42). Pennycook sees the origin of this approach in the Heraclitean notion of the impossibility of entering the same river twice. Running through Nietzsche, to Heidegger, and on to Deleuze and Derrida, Heraclitus' idea appears to foreground sameness and generalisability as marked and in need of explanation, in contrast to difference and repetition as unmarked. Deleuze (2004) argues that repetition is a form of difference and that it *produces* difference rather than sameness. This is, according to Claire Colebrook (2002: 120, cited in Pennycook, 2010: 43), because: 'Each repetition of a word is always a different inauguration of that word, transforming the word's history and any context.'

For Pennycook (2010), creativity conceived of as repetition is linked to intertextuality and recontextualisation, because no two occurrences of the same event, action, or text can ever be the same. In this vein, Bauman's (2004) account of performance involves the notion of rekeying of texts – that is, opening up alternative and shifting performance frames for understanding and interpretation, for example through reports, rehearsals, translations, relays, quotations, summaries, parodies, etc. Derrida's (1982) notion of *iterability* of language concerns its effectiveness judged by the recognition of some utterances as *citations*. Likewise, Bakhtin's (1935, 1953, 1963) literary theory (see also Vološinov, 1973) is centrally based on the related concepts of *dialogicality*, *heteroglossia*, and multiply embedded *speech genres* (see Pennycook, 2007: 504). Thus Pennycook (2010: 51) concludes: 'Language creativity is about sameness that is also difference, or to put it differently/similarly, language creativity is about sameness that is also difference.'

Creativity as transformation

In the last quote, Pennycook (2010) both raises and illustrates a paradox intrinsic to the view of repetition as creative. What I believe is central to the resolution of this paradox is the

notion of *transformation* that runs through the above discussions of recontextualisation, performance, and intertextuality. Transformation has been mentioned in passing several times, although the specifics of how it is brought about and how it 'works' in the creative process merit more detailed consideration. For this reason, I turn briefly to the work of the art and literary theorist Franklin Rogers, and his 1985 book *Painting and Poetry: Form, Metaphor and the Language of Literature*. I find Rogers' discussion of the transformative processes in the formation of the artistic vision, from the original 'recept image' to the 'artistic image', of particular relevance to sociolinguists interested in language/discourse creativity.

Rogers (1985) documents his formulation of the transformational process with several examples, ranging from Paleolithic cave paintings to modern art. By way of illustration, I cite here just a few. First, we can consider the idea of the prehistoric artist tracing with his fingers, or with a three-pronged instrument, the soft walls of a cave, leaving random markings called 'meanders', 'macaronis', or 'finger flutings' – a kind of prehistoric doodle (see Figures 20.1 and 20.2). In some instances, the free-flowing markings may have given rise to the shapes recognisable as human figures or animals. The shapes of these figures often tend to be distorted because of their 'found' character. On occasion, however, they are clearly recognisable, as in the case of one such figure on a cave ceiling in Altamira (Figure 20.3), where a prehistoric artist made a rather extensive field of meanders and then, as a consequence of these marks, either he or some subsequent artist found, near the right end of the field, a quite accidental linear formation suggestive of a bull's head. A few additional touches sufficed to provide the tip of the muzzle and the nostril, a better delineation of the eye, and a horn that, since it crosses over all other lines in its course, was obviously the last stroke in that portion of the drawing (Rogers, 1985: 29–30).

The 'meander' technique of the Paleolithic cave paintings turned out to be remarkably contemporary, when, some 35,000 years later, Max Ernst wrote about his accidental 'discovery' of the *frottage* technique of dropping pieces of paper on the floorboards and rubbing over them with a pencil, leaving traces of the wood's grain. Earlier, many other artists prided themselves on similar 'discoveries', among them Leonardo da Vinci, whose advice to would-be painters in inevitable cases of a loss of invention included the following:

Figure 20.1 Flutings on the ceiling of the Zone of Crevices, Gargas Cave, France (part of a 400m^2 panel)

Source: © Kevin Sharpe and Leslie van Gelder. By kind permission of Leslie van Gelder.
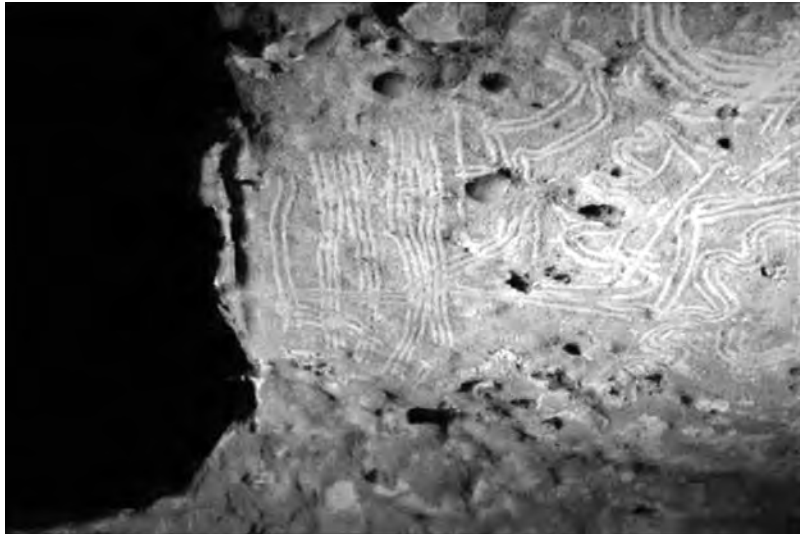
Figure 20.2 Flutings at the start of the 150m² Desbordes Panel, Chamber A1, Rouffignac Cave, France

Source: © Kevin Sharpe and Leslie van Gelder. By kind permission of Leslie van Gelder.

Figure 20.3 Cave of Altamira – Bisons in the Great Ceiling, 14.000BP

Source: © Museum of Altamira–P.Saura. By kind permission of the National Museum and Research Centre of Altamira, Department of Culture of Spain.

> I shall not fail to include among these precepts a new discovery and aid to reflection which, although it seems a small thing and almost laughable, nevertheless is very useful *stimulating the mind* to various discoveries. This is: look at walls splashed with a number of stains or stones of various mixed colors. If you have to invent some scene, you can see there resemblances to a number of landscapes, adorned in various ways with mountains, rivers, rocks, trees, great plains, valleys and hills. Moreover, you can see various battles and rapid actions of figures, strange expressions on faces, costumes and an infinite number of things which you can reduce to good integrated form.
>
> *(da Vinci, 1956: 50, quoted in Rogers, 1985: 24, emphasis original)*

As observed by Rogers (1985: 24), this discovery by Leonardo (and later by Ernst and others) was known not only to the early cave painters, but also to all other people, artists and otherwise, who have seen 'a figure in a piece of driftwood, a face in a grain of wood or stone'. More importantly, however, what all of these examples (and others discussed by Rogers) suggest is that creativity always concerns a pre-existing idea, object, text, or action and a transformative element that involves the artist's (or someone else's) imagination, or what will be called shortly 'memory image'.

We can now proceed to an overview of Rogers' (1985: 32–40) stages of the creative process in art, or his model of how the artistic vision is formed and how it informs the work of art.

1. The initial stage involves a *recept image* – that is, any object in the visible field, such as the cave wall (*as cave wall*), or the meanders or doodles traced by the fingers of the artist on the cave wall (again, *as meanders or doodles*). These could also be Leonardo's walls or Ernst's floorboards.
2. The next stage involves the formation of the *percept image* with some elements of the recept image retained and some filtered out in a selection–construction process. A *schematised memory image* of the percept image is formed.
3. Next, certain elements of the percept image are re-perceived as potential elements of something else – as elements of a memory image of objects of a distinctly different order. For example, a schematised memory image of a percept 'rock' (first-order object) is transformed into a memory image of another percept 'bison' (second-order object).
4. Once abstracted from the percept, and reduced to scattered and disjointed transformable form fragments in the artist's imagination, the form fragments are then reassembled with other elements from the memory image to form the *artistic image*.

In sum, the *transformative process* described above can be schematically reduced to four key stages arising from the presence of a recept image in the visual field: perception → deformation → reformulation → reassembling (see Figure 20.4). Each stage results from its own transformative process. First, the artist 'sees' or conceives the 'original' object, or recept image, with all of its elements available for selection or rejection in the subsequent creative process. We might say that this is the stage at which the artist weighs the affordances and constraints of the recept image for further action. The act of *perception* is the first transformative process through which the recept image is (de-)formed into a percept image by having its elements broken up and scattered in the artist's imagination (transformation[1]). A schematised memory image of the percept image is formed, which may include only some elements of the original precept; this is the transformative stage of *deformation* (transformation[2]). Next, the schematised memory image of the first order is *reformulated*

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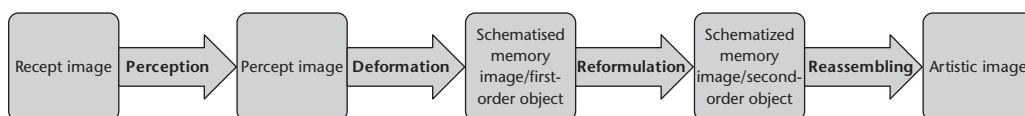
Figure 20.4 Schematic representation of creative transformations

Source: After Rogers (1985)

(transformation[3]) as a schematised memory image of the second order. Finally, the artistic image is arrived at through the *reassembling* (transformation[4]) of the selected elements of the memory image of the second-order object. In other words, a composite image results:

> from the fusion of transformable form elements in a percept image with trans-formable form elements in a memory image of a different order of objects, the fusion occurring under a transformational impulse in the artist of sufficient strength to remove the composite image to a plane clearly detached from the 'real' of the receptible environment.
>
> *(Rogers, 1985: 37)*

With reference to Gaston Bachelard (1943), Rogers (1985: 34) comments that rather than *forming* images, the imaginative process involves *deforming* the images furnished by percep-tion; creativity is, above all, the process of liberating ourselves from the initial images – of *altering* images. In view of the earlier discussions of creativity in the context of performance, recontextualisation, and repetition, this means, for example, the alteration and reformulation of verbal utterances through their rekeying, reframing, repurposing, or rematerialisation, in each case their formal and material properties effecting a new set of affordances and con-straints that affect our understanding and interpretation.

As is the case with all similar models, that just summarised is an abstraction. In fact, rather than the process of sensory perception in the creative process, it emphasises the role of the artist's image memory and the sensory, embodied processes of (re-)making (see Ingold, 2013). This echoes Delacroix's admonition that artists should be sufficiently trained so that they do not have to run back to look at their models each time they want to draw a human figure (or a bison, or any other figure or object):

> 'Par coeur! Par coeur! [By heart! By heart!]' Delacroix was fond of exclaiming and thus said as much as Sabartés and Brassaï in their long conversation about Picasso's image memory. Sabartés commented first on the fact that Picasso's memory for the forms of the world about him was so good that he no longer needed models. 'He knows them all by heart – their contours, their singularities, everything that makes them unique.' Agreeing with him, Brassaï suggested that Picasso's image memory reminded him of Balzac, who also was 'so impregnated' with the forms of the world that he, too, had no need 'to document' himself to create his characters. Sabartés found the comparison a just one: 'Yes, your comparison with Balzac seems right to me. With Picasso too, it's a matter of an extraordinary impregnation. At any instant all the forms of the real are at his disposition. What he has seen once, he retains forever. But he himself does not know when and how it may take form again. So when he places the point of a pen or a pencil on the paper, he never knows what will appear . . .' [Brassaï, 1966: 70]. This

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'extraordinary impregnation' – happy phrase – gives birth to both orders of memory images (rock protuberance and bison) which rise in the artist's consciousness to meet and merge in the moment's transformational perception.

(Rogers, 1985: 34–5)

Transformation is not the sole prerogative of creativity. In his social semiotic approach to communication, Gunther Kress (2010: 34) observes that the semiotic work of social interaction is always transformative – that it projects and proposes 'possibilities of social and semiotic forms, entities and processes which reorient, refocus, and "go beyond", by extending and transforming what there was before the interaction' (see also Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). Later in his book, Kress (2010) uses the term 'translation' as the super-ordinate term for 'moving' meaning 'within' and 'across' modes. The former, for which he reserves the term 'transformation', involves changes in representation with no change in mode (such as translation of a novel from English to German); the latter processes, which are labelled 'transduction', involve moving across modes (for example from image to speech), in a manner related to Roman Jakobson's (1959: 233) notion of 'intersemiotic translation', or 'transmutation', in particular concerned with 'an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems'.

One final remark is in order to conclude this section. The artistic transformative process discussed above does not simply concern the reconstitution of an anecdotal fact (the artist's original percept), but also the constitution of a new pictorial fact. What this means is that the artist's memory image of each 'order' (say, the protuberance on a cave wall and the bison) undergoes a deformation and transformation, not only the first-order image (the protuberance/cave wall) towards the idealised memory image of the second order (the bison). Both images move away from their sources in their respective orders towards an unanticipated union on a common plane, for example the cave wall. The example in Figure 20.3 provides some evidence of how the Paleolithic artist transformed and adapted his or her unquestionably intimate knowledge of the bison's anatomy to fit the elements of the wall selected for the projection of the bison's image. For example, the crouching position of the bison is more typical of a cat or a dog rather than of bovine animals, as bison's necks are too short to allow them to rest their jaws on the knees of their forelegs (Rogers, 1985: 36). This observation is an apt illustration of why art (of any sort) is rarely, if ever, *truly* life-like. In order for art to be 'art', it needs an element of deformation of the recept image, as well as the artistic image, and that always means a distortion of (perceived) 'reality'. Having said that, art is never outside of life, but always a part of it. As a performative mode, it is involved in social production of decentred discourse, and each instance of decontextualisation and recontextualisation of text is an act of control tied up with the issues of social power (Bauman & Briggs, 1990: 76).

What is silence?

Silence can be thought of as an 'acoustic fact': 'any interval of the oscillographic trace where the amplitude is indistinguishable from that of background noise' (Duez, 1982: 13). The 'noise' against which silence is to be 'measured' can be either linguistic (spoken) or non-linguistic (sound). In English, the word 'silence' is ambiguous, and it may mean either absence of talk or absence of sound. Other languages lexicalise this distinction, which means that there are two different nominal and verbal forms to refer to 'being silent' or being 'in silence'. In this chapter, for the most part, 'silence' is understood in its broader sense in relation to sound, linguistic and non-linguistic.

However, silence need not be considered only in terms of its 'negative' definition as absence of speech or of sound (Jaworski, 1993; Saville-Trokie, 1985). More generally, what we choose to refer to as 'communicative' or 'meaningful' silence is not a predetermined onto-logical entity. Its form, or 'shape', requires us to look beyond the binary oppositions, such as silence *vs* speech or silence *vs* sound. Rather, silence should be considered as a dynamic, emergent, and contingent resource deployed strategically in communicative events. Silence is always embodied, multimodal, and material – that is, it arises as a form of social practice, it interacts with other semiotic resources, and its affordances depend on the meditational means, or technologies of entextualisation and recontextualisation (Jones, 2009; Streeck, Goodwin, & LeBaron, 2011).

Nor is silence something that lies outside of language. It is capable of fulfilling a full range of communicative functions, for example ideational, interpersonal, and textual (Halliday, 1978). While silence may be relatively restricted in its capacity to fulfil the ideational function, it has been identified as a possible vehicle for expressing a number of pragmatic meanings (illocutionary force), and as a means of concealing information, maintaining confidentiality, secrecy, and so on – that is, as having a kind of *negative* referential function (Jaworski, 1993; Saville-Troike, 1985).

With regard to the interpersonal function, silence has a particularly salient role in mark-ing and managing the dimensions of 'power' and 'solidarity' (Brown & Gilman, 1960). For example, silence is frequently associated with the vertical/asymmetrical dimension of authority and control, especially in situations of extreme power differential (see Braithwaite, 1990), although it can also be used as a potent resource for challenging, defying, and subverting established power relations (for example Gilmore, 1985). In relation to the horizontal and symmetrical dimension of interpersonal distance, silence may be used to maintain extreme detachment between individuals, for example marking their relationship as 'strangers', or it may signal extreme closeness, for example between 'intimates' (Jaworski, 2000; Saville-Troike, 1985).

Finally, silence, or a pause, is often used to fulfil the textual function, for example indi-cating the relative salience or infrequency of the word to be said next (Chafe, 1985), or as a type of a 'contextual cue', or keying device marking a shift from, say, an 'interactional' to a 'performance' frame.

Creative transductions of John Cage's *4'33"*

In this section, I consider several examples of the transformation, or transduction, of silence in John Cage's 1952 composition *4'33"*.

John Cage's *4'33"* is one of the best-known examples of the manifestation and use of silence in art. The piece was first performed by David Tudor on the piano in the Maverick Concert Hall in Woodstock, New York, on 29 August 1952. Tudor marked the beginning and end of each part by closing and opening the keyboard cover. The silence produced by the piano is heard as 'filled up' with all kinds of incidental sounds made in the environment either by the audience (coughing or shifting in their seats) or any mechanical devices in the concert hall (an electric circuit, air conditioning). Variations in the performance of the piece may occur. For example, the 1993 recording by Frank Zappa of his cover of *4'33"* for the guitar includes the musician's audible breathing. Zappa's version is, then, arguably one that creates interpersonal intimacy, in which his breathing is an index of close proxim-ity between the performer and the listener (see van Leeuwen, 1999). Thus the form and the 'effect' of silence in any performance is dependent on its meditational means. It will be

different whether the piece is performed 'live' in a concert hall, or pre-recorded and experienced in the privacy of the listener's own home.

The BBC Symphony Orchestra, under Lawrence Foster, at the London Barbican on 16 January 2004 (Hoofd, 2010) took on a rather solemn tone, with the musicians and the audience exercising maximum silence and stillness, and a minimum of the coughs and sneezes that can also be heard during other performances of classical music. On other occasions, the player and the audience may take a more joyful, irreverent, or outright comical stance, with much deliberate shifting of posture, smiling and smirking, deliberate coughing, rustling, etc. Therefore, as noted by Jenni Sorkin (2012: 84):

> [E]ach version of *4'33"* is its own chance-inviting performance, authentically new and wholly contingent upon the environment and the audience's reaction: a different group witnessing itself reacting to the shock of prolonged silence and the eventual realization that any 'music' produced is the result of a dramatically altered subjectivity. Each subsequent presentation becomes a fresh endeavor, unable to be replicated. But while the original 1952 audience was unsuspecting, contemporary audiences have, by and large, come to anticipate the self-reflexive aural nature of the event. This expectation has, in turn, altered the legacy of *4'33"*, rendering it as a visual spectacle rather than an intensive listening experience.

A shift to the 'visual spectacle' in the performances of *4'33"* may be likened to one interlocutor looking up at the face of another to check the direction of their gaze in instances in which a verbal turn is expected, but is not forthcoming. This suggests both that silence, like any other communicative resource, needs to be understood as multimodal and that it can be represented (transduced) through modes other than sound. Cage's *4'33"* is an apt illustration of Kress' transduction because Cage produced three types of notation of the piece, each exploiting a different mode. The first, from 1952, now lost and existing only as a reconstruction, was used by David Tudor for the premiere of the piece. It was a blank staff notation, with each half-inch equal to 1 second of the duration of the piece. Subsequently, the notation became more abstract and more linguistic. One version, so-called proportional, consists of parallel, vertical lines symbolically delineating the duration of the three movements. Finally, the written version contains three occurrences of the word *tacet*, arranged vertically and separated on the page by three roman numerals – I, II, and III – defining the three movements of the composition (Robinson, 2012: 210).

By conceiving this piece of music, inspired largely by Robert Rauschenberg's 1951 *White Paintings*, Cage transformed acoustic silence (*recept image*) into three types of notation, each with different affordances specific to their modes. The musical notation of *4'33"* underscored the status of the piece as 'a timeframe without intentional sound' (Daniels, 2012: 24). The graphic score (of which the first version was made in 1953) contained almost no traditional features of the musical composition. It became closer in appearance to Rauschenberg's and other artists' abstract monochrome paintings, with the vertical lines separating the different parts of the piece suggesting gaps between canvases (Thoben, 2012). The linguistic scores (produced both in typewritten and calligraphic versions) gave the piece a quality similar to that of concrete poetry. In the words of Liz Kotz (2007: 17):

> Cage reconceived the musical composition as a time structure, voiding the work's internal musical syntax by gradually abandoning conventional musical notes in favor of noise sounds and quantitatively defined 'sound parameters,' and moving toward an

indeterminate relationship between score and performance in which the musical notation ceases to be a system of representation and instead becomes a proposal for action.

The 'proposal for action' is certainly crucial here. In his outline of the social semiotic theory of meaning and communication, Gunther Kress (2010: 54) stipulates as one of its fundamental assumptions that 'signs are always newly *made* in social interaction'. The notations of *4'33"* do not aim to capture faithfully an idealised version of the piece, because none exists. Each performance of *4'33"* is a different reiteration of all previous ones (see Pennycook, 2010) and a remaking of a collective experience of art in the moment of its creation. Originally dedicated to and performed on the piano by David Tudor, inscriptions on later scores state that *4'33"* is a composition in three parts for 'any instrument or any combination of instruments'. The emphasis on agency and contingency of the piece, its creative re-enactments, were emphasised by Cage in his subsequent alterations to the linguistic scores, first made in 1957 or 1958, with the first typewritten version produced in 1960. The new scores are indicative of Cage's continual reworking and reimagining of the piece. Jan Thoben (2012: 81) notes that the most significant changes in the subsequent versions of the scores were the loosening of the rigid time grid, and the replacement of 'any instrument' with a more personal and agentive 'any instrumentalist'.

Conclusion: The making and remaking of *4'33"*

Famously, the main prompt for Cage to compose *4'33"* was his experience of hearing two sounds in an anechoic chamber at Harvard University in 1951: one was the low tone of his blood circulating; and the other, the high tone of his nervous system. This episode redirected Cage's attention from silence as an acoustic phenomenon to an intellectual and artistic one (see Thoben, 2012: 76). It took Cage several years to conceive of *4'33"* and several days to write it. In subsequent years, he continued to work on the scores and notations in different modes, and on performances in varied social conditions and with new combinations of instruments, including an empty glass, which he turned down for 10 seconds to indicate the 'pauses' between the parts. Each new type and version of the score or its copy, each performance and its recording, or its account (verbal, written, or pictorial), enters a chain of transformative and creative realisations of the original recept image (acoustic silence) and the percept image (involuntary noise), and their deformations and reformulations into subsequent artistic images (scores and performances).

The creative process initiated by Cage continues to this day, years after Cage's death in 1992. Numerous other artists – musicians, visual artists, filmmakers, and performers – have produced one-off or multiple versions and accounts of *4'33"*. In a personal note, James Cronin draws my attention to David Toop (2005), Paul Hegarty (2007), and Sara Maitland (2008), who have all argued that sound and silence have a history, and are, in turn, 'haunted' by memory and time. These authors specifically speak of the performances of John Cage's *4'33"* as 'haunting' the late twentieth-century soundscape.

While this is not the place to review Cage's legacy, others have documented how his followers have carried on, 'passing on' Cage's silence as a relay baton with an astounding range of further transductions (see Daniels & Arns, 2012; Kamps & Seid, 2012). Cage wrote *4'33"* building on his experience in the Harvard anechoic chamber, Rauschenberg's *White Paintings*, and other 'silences' encountered in his varied intellectual pursuits. Yet none of these transpositions from one semiotic mode to another produce simple 'semantic equivalences' (Iedema, 2003). On the contrary, our interpretations of 'displayed silence',

in all instances of its re-mediation, transduction, and performance, are subject to varying, systemic constraints and material affordances of the modes and circumstances in which they are deployed. It is these spaces of contrast and change across modes and materialities that are the sites of artistic creativity.

Related topics

creativity and dialogue; creativity and discourse analysis; creativity and technology; language and music; language, creativity, and remix culture

Note

1 I thank James Cronin and Maciej Stanaszek for their useful comments on the final version of this chapter.

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21

Creativity in the fourth dimension

The grammar of movement according to Jean Tinguely

Theo Van Leeuwen

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Introduction

In 'The semiotics of kinetic design' (Van Leeuwen & Caldas-Coulthard, 2004), Caldas-Coulthard and I described how toys and/or their parts can be made to move, and how such movements can be made to have meaning. The work was part of a research project titled *Toys as Communication* in which we investigated the learning potential afforded by toys and other objects. We had observed that display dolls such as Barbie and Action Man communicate discourses of gender not only visually, through Action Man's muscles and square jaw, and Barbie's wasp waist and impossibly long legs, but also through their materiality and their kinetic design. Display dolls are *articulated*. Their heads and their limbs can be moved, and the way in which they can be moved follows semiotic, rather than anatomical, rules. Comparing the kinetic design of a Sindy doll and an Action Man in the same price class, we found, for instance, that Action Man's head could only move sideways, and not up and down, while Sindy's head could move in every direction, creating the coy 'head cants' on which Goffman (1979: 47) had commented in his study of gendered poses. Again, Action Man's legs could be spread, allowing him to sit in the way in which many men sit, with legs spread wide, but Sindy's legs could not. On the other hand, Sindy could bend her knees (in fact, she had three degrees of knee bend), so she could adopt the 'body cants' and 'bashful knee bends' also described by Goffman (1979: 45–6), while Action Man could not. But Action Man could be made to stand on his feet, while Sindy could not, and Action Man's hands could hold objects, while Sindy's could not. In short, kinetic design conveyed the same gendered meanings that Goffman had so strikingly analysed more than twenty years earlier: women are represented as unable to support themselves, literally and figuratively, and as tending to make themselves small and childlike, which can then 'be read as an acceptance of subordination, and expression of ingratiation, submissiveness and appeasement' (Goffman, 1979: 46), while men are represented as seeking to occupy the maximum amount of space, and as standing erect, ready for action, and in no need of support. Having discovered this, we investigated other dolls and other toys – baby toys, toy telephones, toy clocks, toy computers, toy cars, toy locomotives, toy guns, and more – so as to construct a 'grammar of kinetic design'. I will summarise our findings in the next section.

At the end of our article, we added two afterthoughts. First, we noted that many formerly inert objects, such as chairs and light fittings, are today also designed kinetically. Desk chairs have wheels, they can swivel, their height can be adjusted, and their backs are flexible, and so on. Light fittings, such as the Anglepoise light on my desk, can be tilted up and down, or panned sideways, and their shades can be swivelled in any direction. Even text has become movable – thanks to Microsoft Word, I can lift words, or clauses, or whole paragraphs and deposit them elsewhere at the click of my mouse, and in film titles, television commercials, and websites, bits of text are constantly on the move (compare Van Leeuwen & Djonov, 2014).

The other thing that we noted was that kinetic design has not only been studied academically, but also by modernist artists such as Calder and Tinguely – very thoroughly and well before academics began to take note. Focusing on Tinguely, we wrote that his oeuvre can be understood as having developed a grammar of kinetic design through the production of sculptures, rather than through writing academic papers (Van Leeuwen & Caldas-Coulthard, 2004: 379):

> Every type of movement we discovered in exploring toys and other objects has been used in [Tinguely's] work in complex and multiple ways, in a wide range of combinations, and in objects which have no use value of any kind and may therefore appear absurd or humorous, but nevertheless form a systematic exploration of the semiotics of kinetic design.

At the time, this was little more than an assertion. In this chapter, I want to put that assertion to the test and describe that grammar. As such, the chapter fits in with another strand in my work: interpreting the work of selected modernist artists as semiotic research (compare Van Leeuwen, 2006, 2011; Van Leeuwen, Djonov, & O'Halloran, 2013). In what follows, I will first summarise the main findings of the 2004 study, then analyse the grammar of movement implicit in Tinguely's work, and finally draw some conclusions about creativity in art and semiotics.

The kinetic design of toys

In our 2004 article, Carmen Caldas-Coulthard and I sought to describe the 'mathetic potential' (potential for learning) afforded by the kinetic design of toys. To do so, we identified a number of types of movement, as shown in Figure 21.1. I will discuss each below.

Mobility and movability

Mobility is the potential for displacement of an object, as realised, for example, by wheels. *Movability* is the potential for movement of all, or part, of an object that does not involve the displacement of the object as a whole, as realised, for example, by the articulated limbs of Sindy and Action Man. The two types of movement can, of course, be combined in a single object: a toy car can have wheels as well as opening doors, for instance.

In the world of toys, not only cars, but also many other kinds of objects are mobile: toy telephones, for instance, and toy computers. There are even books for very young children with wheels. In such cases, mobility becomes a metaphor and a major cultural lesson. It teaches that telephones, computers, and books 'get you somewhere', help you to 'move on', and that mobility is a good thing. And, as we have already seen, this is not restricted to toys; everyday designed objects may also become mobile.

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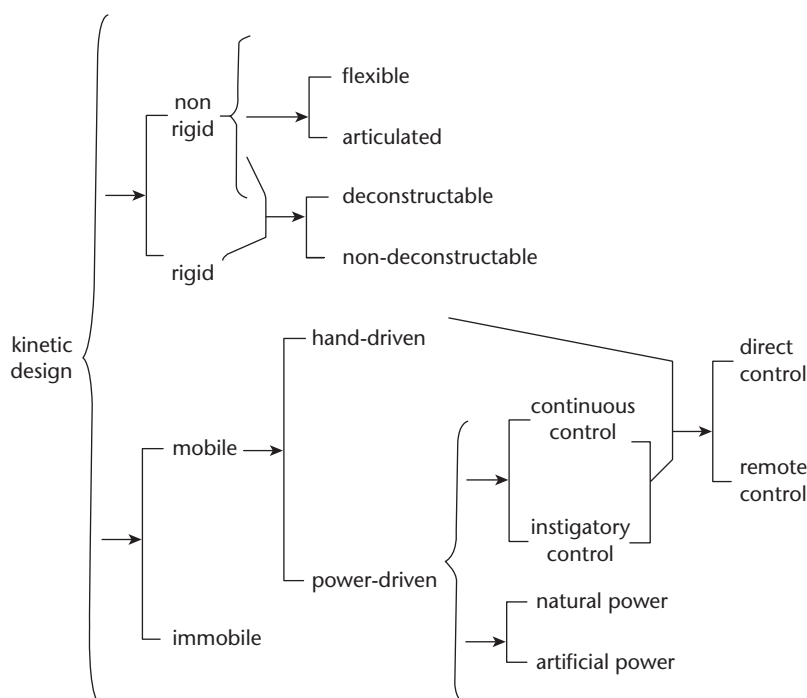
Figure 21.1 System network of the kinetic design of toys

Mobility and movability not only communicate meanings and values, but also facilitate and constrain the user's actions by creating subject positions. The mobile desk chair defines its user as agile, 'busy' – moving from one activity to another. The same is not true for the driver's seat in a car: here, a single-minded focus on the road ahead is encouraged. Until recently, this also applied to students' seats in lecture theatres, but in some new lecture theatres in my university, the seats can now swivel, so that students can engage in group activities, rather than only listen to the lecturer. In the case of toys, such subject positions become imaginary. If, in a toy car, only the driver's door and the steering wheel are movable, the user is positioned as an imaginary driver. If the bonnet can also open, revealing an engine, the user becomes an imaginary mechanic as well. Thus toys encourage and facilitate some interests, yet create obstacles for exploring and developing others. And an important part of their learning potential consists precisely in encountering and noting such obstacles and their implicit messages.

Articulation and flexibility

There are two types of 'movability': *articulation* by means of joints or hinges, as with the limbs of Sindy and Action Man; and *flexibility*, or the ability of an object, or part of it, to be bent or moulded into different positions or shapes, as with Sindy's hair, which can be combed and styled in different ways, in contrast to Action Man's hair, which takes the form of a rigid plastic cap. It should be added that flexibility is a matter of degree. Sindy's face is also flexible, made of relatively soft plastic, whereas her body is made of hard plastic. But this does not make her face as flexible as the face of a ragdoll or a soft glove puppet.

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Here is another example of the way in which movability (articulation, in this case) can create meaning. In a plastic baby 'pram rattle', a number of objects could rotate around a plastic pipe: a kind of paddle wheel; something resembling a heavily profiled tyre; and, in the centre, a yellow plastic dog. The 'technical' objects, the paddlewheel and the tyre, rotated easily, without friction. The dog, on the other hand, rotated stiffly, by means of a noisy ratchet mechanism. An abstract quality of the objects and an ideologically tinted message, well suited for the coming age of robots, is revealed here: technology is more easily controlled and offers less resistance than living creatures.

The difference between articulation and flexibility is important. Articulation determines what will and what will not be movable and how, as with the movements of Sindy and Action Man. Flexibility not only provides users with more tactile satisfaction, because it always involves a degree of softness, but it also allows more freedom of action. Soft toys such as rag dolls and teddy bears, for instance, not only have affective value because they can be cuddled, but also have a more open-ended kinetic potential. The ways in which they can be bent and moulded is not 'built-in', but derives from the flexibility of the material. But the transformations that flexibility allows will often be transitory, because the materials will bounce back in their original shape as soon as the user withdraws his or her hands. This teaches another lesson: tactile, affective, and creative experiences are fleeting and transitory. They leave no traces. There are, of course, flexible materials that do allow more permanent transformation, such as rubber, but interestingly their use in toys has remained relatively marginal.

Deconstructability

Deconstructability provides a 'hands-on' lesson in what things are made of and how they fit together. Even when toys are not designed for deconstruction, children want to take them apart – not from some kind of destructive urge, but out of curiosity, because of a desire to learn. Deconstructability teaches analysis.

Any object can be analysed in different ways and according to different principles. In the past, and to a degree still today, construction toys such as Meccano or Lego taught children that the world is built up out of a small number of, in themselves, meaningless items ('atoms' or 'molecules', you might say, or 'phonemes', if you want a linguistic example). Larger, meaningful items could be constructed from these basic items, and this required careful calculation of the proportion of different basic units required. The basic units themselves connoted construction methods prevailing at the time of their invention: steel girders, in the case of Meccano; building blocks in modernist colours, in the case of Lego. Here, the user became an imaginary engineer or builder. More recently, construction toys are marketed in do-it-yourself (DIY) construction kits that provide just the right amount of blocks for one and only one larger item – a helicopter or *Star Wars* spacecraft, for instance – or as ready-made, already-meaningful items for assembly. This positions users as consumers, rather than as builders or engineers, and withholds a whole dimension of analysis and construction from them. In Lego, it has also facilitated a quite extreme and, in my view, deplorable differentiation between toys for boys and toys for girls.

Forms of control: Hand-driven or power-driven

Mobility and articulation can be manually driven or powered by some form of artificial energy: a clockwork mechanism, for instance, or an electromotor. Often, this is an either/or choice.

Many artificially powered objects are not easily moved by hand and thereby demonstrate our dependence on artificial energy.

Toys may also be driven by natural power: wind, water, or gravity. Few contemporary toys make use of this, so that especially urban-resident children may not get enough opportunities to learn how to work with these forms of power, despite the fact that many traditional toys, such as kites and spinning tops, owe their enduring fascination precisely to the way in which they allow the exploration of, and interaction with, natural forces.

Forms of control: Instigatory and continuous

In the case of *instigatory control*, the user sets the object in motion, or exposes it to a natural energy source, but does not control its movement throughout the duration of that movement, as is the case with clockwork cars or paper aeroplanes. In the case of *continuous control*, control is exercised throughout the duration of the movement.

Hand-driven instigatory control may require skill and coordination, especially when the effects of natural forces are to be predicted and inculcated in the movement. The instigatory control of artificially powered movement is mostly a matter of pressing a button or flicking a switch, although touch control has introduced a small element of skill here. The continuous control of power-driven movement ('human–machine interaction') also requires some skill, and has been an area of continuous experiment and innovation – from joysticks and drawing pads to control through speech or gesture.

Many of these types of movement allow for further more 'delicate' choices: degrees and types of flexibility, degrees and types of friction in the articulation of objects, and so on. All allow for syntax – for combinatory meaning-making following the principles of transitivity (compare Halliday, 1994) – with kinetically designed objects as 'participants' and the movements that they allow as 'processes'. These participants and processes then combine into intransitive representations, such as 'Sindy's knees bend' or transitive representations such as 'Action Man's hand grasps a plastic gun', with either the user and/or the source of power as a causative agent, for example 'the child makes Sindy's knees bend' or 'the child makes Action Man's hand grasp the plastic gun', and 'the wind makes the paper aeroplane fly' or 'the child causes the wind to make the paper aeroplane fly'.

Specific kinetically designed objects or types of object will have a built-in lexicon of possible 'processes', a built-in 'movement potential'. It is therefore possible to specify the movement potential of toys in general, or, for instance, the movement potential of Microsoft PowerPoint, which includes movements such as 'fly in', 'float in', 'swivel', 'bounce', 'pulse', 'split', 'grow', and so on. In short, there is something like a 'language of kinetic design', with syntagmatic structures of the kind just described – rules that specify which kinds of objects or parts of objects can go with which movements – with paradigmatic structures of the kind mapped in Figure 21.1, and with registers that specify what can be 'meant' with kinetic design in a given sociocultural context.

The grammar of kinetic design according to Tinguely

Although this chapter will focus on only one aspect of Tinguely's work – the grammar of movement implicit in his work – I should stress that his work is thoroughly multimodal. He experimented with colour throughout his career, from his early work, which borrowed colour schemes from Kandinsky, Malevich, and other abstract artists, to later monochrome work and work using the colours of the found objects of which it was made, which ranged

from rusty bicycle and pram wheels, to plastic toys and devotional objects. He also experimented with light and lighting, using spotlights to create moving shadows and incorporating rows of flickering lights into his machine-like sculptures.

Sound played a crucial role throughout, most often by making the moving parts of his sculptures hit resonant objects such as cans, pots, pans, and percussion instruments, and by the squeaky, grinding, and thumping sounds of the rusty gears, cams, cranks, and levers that Tinguely used to make the sculptures. *Mengele* (1986), a large sculpture made from the charred remains of a farm that had burnt down close to Tinguely's home, has been described as emanating 'grating, sighing, creaking, murmuring sounds mixed in a discordant requiem' (Violand-Hobi, 1995: 145). These sounds can be heard on a video of the sculpture (see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DKdTF77RoxU). The fountain-sculptures that Tinguely created with Niki de Saint Phalle, near the Pompidou Centre in Paris (*Stravinsky Fountain*, 1983), orchestrate the dripping, sprinkling, spattering, and splashing of water in rhythmical patterns reminiscent of the work of Stravinsky, after whom the fountain was named.

Tinguely was also interested in smell. *Mengele* (1986), for instance, emanated the smell of burnt wood, and *Homage to New York* (1960), a 7m long and 8m high sculpture with eighty bicycle, tricycle, and pram wheels driven by fifteen motors, contained bottles with chemicals that produced foul smells and smoke.

Two further aspects of his work are worth mentioning. First, many of Tinguely's sculptures are 'co-authored', most famously with his second wife, Niki de Saint Phalle, but also with many other artists. *The Fantastic Paradise* (1966–7) consisted of six works in which Tinguely's black metal mechanical creatures interacted with de Saint Phalle's colourful and amply proportioned polyester women: Tinguely's *Madwoman*, for instance, caressed de Saint Phalle's *Tree-Nana* with fork-like tentacles, while wiggling a large mechanical tail (see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Z8C7hMZcwo). Secondly, Tinguely consistently sought to embed his work in events and practices, to create both 'texts' and 'contexts', so to speak, one-off theatrical shows, and events such as the destruction of *Homage to New York*, which went up in flames in front of hundreds of viewers in the sculpture garden of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. As always, Tinguely was interested here in transience and transient media: the work 'had to pass by, make people dream and talk' for a moment and 'be gone the next day' (Tinguely, quoted in Hulten, 1987: 350).

In discussing the types of movement that Tinguely developed in his work, I will use the terminology that Caldas-Coulthard and I developed in our work on toys, introducing additional terms where necessary. The discussion is based on the extensive illustrations and descriptions in Violand-Hobi (1995), together with Hulten (1975, 1987) – the most detailed source of information on Tinguely's work – and works that I have seen in the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and the Louisiana Museum in Humlebæk, Denmark, and on videos of Tinguely's work, especially those produced by the Tinguely Museum in Basel.

Articulation and flexibility

The majority of the movements in Tinguely's work are 'articulated'. Tinguely used electro-motors (initially often 78 rpm gramophone motors), and later also petrol engines, to drive the gears, cams, cranks, and levers that produced the movements. Many of these articulated movements are *repetitive*, and such repetition is then either *regular* or *irregular*: Tinguely devised many techniques for producing irregularity and unpredictability – differently sized wheels, elastic rubber belts, the use of several motors, etc.

Repetition was used to create meaning in many different ways. In *Chariot 8* (1964), a large crescent-shaped object repetitively pokes a kind of clockwork – a 'mechanism that makes love', as Tinguely explained in an interview (quoted in Violand-Hobi, 1995: 60). In *Inferno* (1984), a metal beam repeatedly tries to lift itself into an upright position, but never manages to do so, in endless, Sisyphus-like toil, while other, smaller parts of the same sculpture energetically repeat the same pointless movements – intransitive actions all, without any impact on anything: movement for the sake of movement. When the actions of Tinguely's machines are transitive, they often have a destructive effect. In *Rotozaza II* (1967), a hammer mechanically and repetitively smashes beer bottles (see http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QLVOTM5rKrc). *Rotozaza III* (1969) similarly smashed plates and was exhibited in a shop window. Again, the context was part of the meaning of the work as a statement about consumerism and its wastefulness: Tinguely had wanted the machine to smash Swiss watches and other symbols of conspicuous wealth, but that turned out to be too expensive (compare Violand-Hobi, 1995: 77).

Irregularity is another source of meaning in Tinguely's work. *Jealousy I* (1960) represents jealousy by means of the nervous jiggling of strings of wooden beads suspended from a moving metal bar. In *Transmission of Death* (1986), animal skulls move to and fro on a conveyor belt, and are mounted on springs, so that they tremble anxiously as they are carried along. (Grammatically, this could be seen as a case of embedding – a linguistic 'translation' might be 'the conveyer belt conveys trembling skulls' – or perhaps as a complex 'sentence', translatable as 'the conveyer belt conveys skulls which tremble'.) In *Selfportrait* (1988), an animal skull with rags hanging off it and a falcon on the 'shoulder' (the costume that Tinguely had worn in a Carnival parade) dangles on chains and is pulled now to the left, now to the right, by chains connected to a large and heavy wheel (see http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GMPLRm56_ZI).

In most of Tinguely's sculptures, there is little flexibility, which says something about the machine-like universe that he created. But feathers and other flexible materials, such as dusters, rags, and clothing, gradually began to appear in his work; it was, apparently, Niki de Saint Phalle who first suggested that he should use feathers in his work. In *Fairy Tale Relief* (1978), a 'happy duck' has its backside tickled by a fluffy duster, and in *The Furious Feather* (1986), a large feather and a kitsch sculpture of a fox devouring its prey, bought at a flea market, are mounted on a rotating wheel, performing a kind of dance that creates a contrast between the freely moving feather and the rigidity of the animal sculpture. Flexibility was also used in *Maramar* (1961), a hanging sculpture described by Hulten (1975: 204) as follows:

> Nine levers hung from camshafts which were hidden by an intermediate ceiling. When the machine was switched on, the levers tore at a tangled heap of junk and rags, a dirty nightdress, an artificial leg wearing a red sock, a washing-up bowl, coffee-tins and lengths of film. After the machine had been running for a certain time, this collection of jumble suddenly exploded into violent, spastic jerks.

Mobility

Although many of Tinguely's sculptures are immobile in the sense in which I have defined that term above, he used mobility almost from the beginning, mostly by putting his sculptures on wheels, but also by using rails, conveyer belts, and so on. *Auto-Mobile* (1954), a small sculpture looking somewhat like a fragile Calder mobile, can move through the

room driven by a small electromotor. *Metamatic* (1959) and *Gismo* (1960) are larger sculptures that move in a similar way. In *Klamauk* (1979), Tinguely used a tractor to support a contraption made of cogwheels, the motions of which activate hammers and metal sticks banging on bells and cymbals in a happy fairground cacophony (see http://www. youtube.com/watch?v=si0UitSaUhg). Sculptures such as *Hannibal II* (1967) and *Cenotaph for a Kamikaze* (1969) run on rails, and consist of a large cart covered by a kind of turtle shell pushing and pulling a smaller cart, while chains rattle and what looks like a large gun barrel moves rhythmically backwards and forwards (see http://www.youtube. com/watch?v=GmrDEX4P518). As Violand-Hobi (1995: 78) describes it:

> Animal-like, the sculpture crouches on a low podium ferociously extending and contracting its members. The deep rumbling clatter and scraping noises add to the impression of brutal aggression and stubborn fanaticism . . . Such works seem to incarnate the machinery of war that tramples dreams of freedom.

Powering

While many of Tinguely's sculptures are driven by motors, he also explored manually and naturally powered motion. His *Prayer Mills* (1954) are wire sculptures with interlocking wheels – some vertical, some horizontal – which the viewer can move with a crank handle. *Cyclograveur* (1960) is a stationary bicycle with a saddle for the viewer to sit on, and pedals to activate a rusty and complex set of interlocking cogwheels, which ultimately drive a mechanical arm creating a drawing – and which also drive a drum, a cymbal, and a rusty toy car. The handlebar is a lectern allowing the viewer to read a book while pedalling. *Cenodoxus* (1972) was created as the set of a religious play written in 1602 by a Jesuit monk. A kind of seesaw, mounted high up on a slanted pole, represents heaven, seating God on the one side and a group of angels on the other. God's throne can be lowered, so as to allow God to become Man – a theological concept realised through kinetic design. Hell is a Ferris wheel, with actresses playing prostitutes presided over by the Devil.

Instigatory control

In many of Tinguely's sculptures, viewers can manually (or with their feet) instigate the movement, as in *Prayer Mills* and *Cyclograveur*. In other cases, they can switch on the motor, as in *Machine Bar* (1960–85), in which small moving sculptures can be activated by push buttons on the floor: a witch then climbs in and out of a metal box, a toy gets crushed by a big hammer, and so on. In *Drawing Machine* (1959), viewers can attach a piece of paper (pre-signed by Tinguely) and a coloured pencil or crayon to the machine, then insert a coin in a slot to make its mechanic arm create a drawing, with highly complex, erratic movements (see http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZpEYLa9PGs). In many works, the viewer's role as causative agent becomes part of the meaning. In *Rotazaza I* (1967), viewers throw balls into a kind of chute; the machine then throws the balls back to the viewer, so that the viewer's actions merge with those of the machine (see http://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=f80SLYonPO4). In *Dissecting Machine* (1965), the viewer activates drills and saws that attack the dismembered parts of a life-like window dummy, so diminishing, as one reviewer put it, the 'gap between the vicarious enjoyment of cruelty and the act itself' (*Herald Tribune*, 28 May 1971).

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In other cases, however, the movement is *auto-kinetic*: no causation is visible to the viewer, and the machine appears to have a life of its own. The duration of this 'life' may then be varied, as can be seen in works that are deliberately short-lived, such as *Homage to New York* (1960).

Velocity

The speed of movement is another source of meaning in Tinguely's work. Animal skulls rock gently, and discs rotate furiously, expressing anger and frustration. *Chaos I* (1973–4) was programmed to move at different rates during the day:

> It will start very slowly in the morning, like the city getting up, and begin moving faster and faster until it reaches a crescendo at noon, Then it will quiet down for an afternoon rest and build up the same way again until 6, when everybody is going home and the city is at its busiest. It will quiet down again for dinner, then keep getting busier until 10 pm.
>
> *(Tinguely, quoted in Violand-Hobi, 1995: 86)*

The system that underlies Tinguely's work therefore not only defines specific movement-processes, but also the manner in which these processes can be *modified* – a form of 'circumstantial' meaning in terms of Halliday's (1994) systemic-functional grammar. A linguistic 'translation' of the movement processes would have to introduce adverbs or prepositional phrases, for example 'the animal skulls wiggle irregularly', 'the discs rotate in a furious way'. The two key forms of 'manner' that Tinguely developed were, as we have seen, *(ir)regularity* (jerkiness, rhythmic unpredictability, and so on) and *velocity*.

The network in Figure 21.2 represents these options. The principal difference from the toy network in Figure 21.1 lies in the contrast between repetitiveness and singularity, and in the modifications of movement (regularity and velocity) that Tinguely developed. Instigation also acquires another dimension, because it involves not only the contrast between instigatory control and continuous control (the latter occurs, for instance, when the viewer activates a sculpture by 'cranking', as in the *Prayer Mill*), but also the contrast between causativity and auto-kinesis – that is, (apparent) 'self-driven-ness'. On the other hand, despite Tinguely's interest in destruction, deconstructability does not play a role in his work: the artist remains the creator of the work (the 'text'), rather than the creator of resources for others to create works with, despite the tentative moves in this direction represented by the drawing machines.

I should add that the system in Figure 21.2 is based on the material, technical resources – the tools that *articulate* meaning – which Tinguely developed, rather than on the movements that they can create. In a paper entitled 'The morphology of movement', Rickey (1965) formulated nine kinds of movement based on directionality – a system that, of course, could also apply to other forms of kinetic art, such as animation, and even to static designs and, in fact, for Rickey kinetic art also included artworks suggesting movement or creating apparent movement, as in 'op art':

> Western music has twelve tones. Kinetic art has scarcely more . . . A bald summary of possible movements in kinetic art would be: linear movement along the three axes, rotations around them, and rotations around centers lying outside the object, nine in all.
>
> *(Rickey, 1965: 106)*

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Kinetic design processes

Kinetic design circumstances
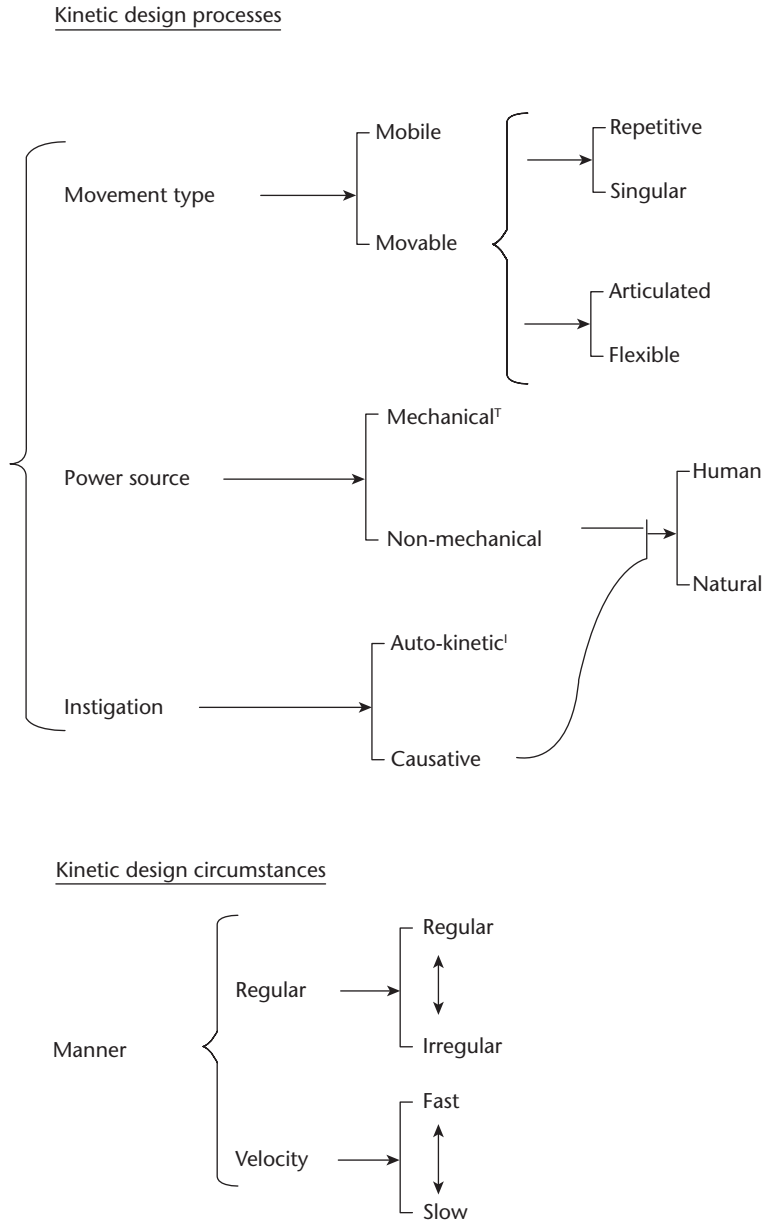
Figure 21.2 System network of the motion options in Tinguely's oeuvre

In the same paper, Rickey (1965: 112) listed eight as-yet-unexplored possibilities of kinetic art:

1. Water-driven sculpture tied as naturally to moving water as Calder's is to moving air.
2. Motion supplied by, with bodies supported in, magnetic fluxes.
3. Bodies supported by jets of water or of air, freeing the machine from the mechanical shackles that bearings become.

4. Movement of stretched membranes by pressure from behind as a form of kinetic drawing, painting . . . , or relief sculpture.
5. The movement of forms and the changes of colour developing in the passage of polarized light through media of varying densities or subject to varying stresses . . . .
6. Non-visual kinetic sculptures – kinetic "feelies" which need not be seen . . . .
7. Greater use of chance as a component . . . .
8. Kinetic work on a huge scale . . . .

We have seen that, between the time when this was written and his death in 1991, Tinguely explored at least three of these in detail: water-driven sculpture; the use of chance as a component (his interest in irregularity); and kinetic work on a huge scale (*Head* is a 22.4m high sculpture built in the middle of Milly la-Forêt forest, near Paris, between 1971 and 1978).

Two types of creativity

In his *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture* of 1912, the sculptor and writer Umberto Boccioni described machine movement as a potential new form of artistic expression:

> We cannot forget that the tick-tock and the moving hands of a clock, the in-and-out of a piston in a cylinder, the opening and closing of two cogwheels with the continual appearance and disappearance of their square cogs, the fury of a flywheel or the turbine of a propeller, are all plastic and pictorial elements of which a Futurist work in sculpture should take account.
>
> *(Boccioni, 1912, quoted in Kepes, 1965: 81)*

In 1920, the brothers Naum Gabo and Antoine Pevsner, in their *Realist Manifesto*, introduced the term 'kinetic art':

> We renounce the thousand year old delusion in art that held that static rhythms are the only elements of the plastic and pictorial arts. We affirm in these arts a new element, the kinetic rhythms, as the basic forms of our perception of real time.
>
> *(Gabo & Pevsner, 1920, quoted in Kepes, 1965: 81)*

Earlier, in 1913, Marcel Duchamp had mounted a bicycle wheel on a stool and called it *Mobile*. Everywhere, movement was heralded as a new semiotic mode, in ways that were clearly connected to new technologies, whether technology was used as a new motif, a new subject matter for art (as in the work of Léger), or as a new medium and a new language (avant-garde artists of the 1920s also eagerly embraced the new medium of film) (compare Popper, 1968).

None of this was entirely new. For several hundreds of years, people had used clockworks to create animated chess players, walking dolls, dolls playing a miniature piano or writing a few words, and so on, and all through the nineteenth century people had been fascinated by the forerunners of the cinema, from flip charts to more complex 'kinetoscopes', 'praxinoscopes', etc., which were used as toys, as well as tools for the study of movement by Muybridge and others. But it was only in the early twentieth century that these developments began to find a place in the mainstream of cultural, social, and economic life, in a process that is still continuing as movement is increasingly integrated in the design of toys, everyday objects, and even texts (see Simanowski, Chapter 24). In 1961, after watching an animation

film by Norman McLaren projected onto the gigantic Animated Electric Screen in Times Square, New York, the historian of typography Beatrice Warde was as impressed by the novelty of introducing movement into the formerly static mode of typography as Gabo and Pevsner had been forty years earlier in relation to sculpture, even though artists such as Len Lye and Norman McLaren had been animating letterforms for some time:

> I saw two Egyptian A's walking off arm in arm with the unmistakable swagger of a music-hall comedy team. I saw base serifs pulled together as if by ballet shoes, so that the letters tripped off literally *sur les pointes*. I saw words changing their mind about how they should look even more swiftly than a woman before her milliner's mirror. After forty centuries of the necessarily static alphabet, I saw what its members could do in the fourth dimension of time, 'flux' movement.
>
> *(Warde, 1961, quoted in Bellantoni & Woolman, 2000: 5)*

And, today, moving dolls are finally leaving the sphere of toys and scientific curiosities:

> Nao, a 58-centimetre-tall humanoid developed by the French company Aldebaran Robotics . . . will begin work on a trial basis at one or two branches of Mitsubishu UFJ Financial Group from April. Equipped with a camera on his forehead, Nao is programmed to speak 19 languages. He analyses customers' emotions from their facial expressions and tone of voice, enabling him to greet customers and ask which services they need.
>
> *(*The Guardian Weekly*, 13 February 2015)*

Lewis Mumford (1939) has described the long incubation periods of the inventions that change our lives as a period of 'cultural preparation', in which they already exist as ideas that powerfully attract philosophers, scientists, and artists, even though they may not always fully understand why, or as apparently trivial playthings and crazes that nevertheless exert a strong fascination on people, or in seemingly marginal applications that nevertheless herald changes to come. Mumford described this process in relation to the clock. Long before it began to regulate and control every aspect of social life, the clock had existed in monasteries to regulate the daily prayer routine, and it had fascinated people as an object of curiosity displayed in in public places, as with the huge clock in the Piazza di San Marco in Venice with, among other things, its two large bronze figures hitting a bell every hour and its three Magi, led by an angel with a trumpet, appearing from a door behind the number 6 on 6 January. But only later, driven by an economic need for order and regularity in the factories, and subsequently in other institutions, did the clock come to play the crucial role in social, cultural, and economic life that it plays today, which then led to many other inventions in the which the clock became embedded in other technologies, such as today's computers.

All of this suggests two kinds of creativity: the creativity of the pioneers, who create new technologies and new forms of expression – new languages in which to formulate the issues of a new age; and the creativity of the next generation, who embed the technology in new applications and genres – and in further technologies, as is the case with kinetic typography, which, fifty years after Beatrice Warde marvelled about it, is now available to all in software such as Microsoft PowerPoint and Adobe AfterEffects.

In Tinguely's work, all of these phases can be observed. In his early 'Meta-mechanical reliefs', he created abstract paintings, inspired by Malevich, Kandinsky, and others,

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Figure 21.3 Meta-Malevich 'Point Rouge' (©Jean Tinguely/billedkunst.dk, 1956)

the forms of which could move by means of pulleys of different sizes linked by a rubber belt that were hidden behind the work, as can be seen in his *Meta-Malevich 'Point Rouge'* (©Jean Tinguely/billedkunst.dk, 1956) (see Figure 21.3). Perhaps he was inspired by the story that Alexander Calder, when visiting Mondrian in his studio in 1930, suggested that the coloured squares that Mondrian had tacked to the wall should be made to move.

But, after that, Tinguely systematically began to investigate machine motion itself, developing the resources that I have described in the previous section, and exploring their meaning potential primarily in relation to the machine itself and in relation to human–machine interaction – the machine's mindless repetition, its wastefulness (as in the machine that endlessly smashes bottles), the way in which it can make people subservient to its purposes (as in the *Dissecting Machine*), and so on – but often lightening his critique of the machine with humour. Here, creativity lies in developing a new language for artistic expression with the resources of mechanical technology and at the same time using it to critically reflect on that technology, in a kind of love–hate relationship. In *Chariot M.K. IV* (1966), for instance, a crescent-shaped blade endlessly moves forwards and backwards, poking against a constellation of interlocking wheels, while at the same time projecting a macabre shadow on the wall behind (see Aguiar, 2014; see also Figure 21.4): 'I wanted people to be shocked by the machine itself, to make big monsters, scorpions, bizarre things – and I came to make mechanisms that make love' (Tinguely, quoted in Violand-Hobi, 1995: 60).

In later work, this language had developed far enough to take the next step. Now, Tinguely broadened his vocabulary, using not only machine parts, but also plastic toys, feathers, animal skulls, and so on, to investigate the use of the new language in an increasingly wide range of genres and contexts, from altar pieces and portraits, to children's playgrounds and theatrical sets. In his *Self Portrait* (©Jean Tinguely/billedkunst.dk, 1988) (see Figure 21.5), he was able to use movement to portray himself as a kind of carnavalesque, but also mortal (the

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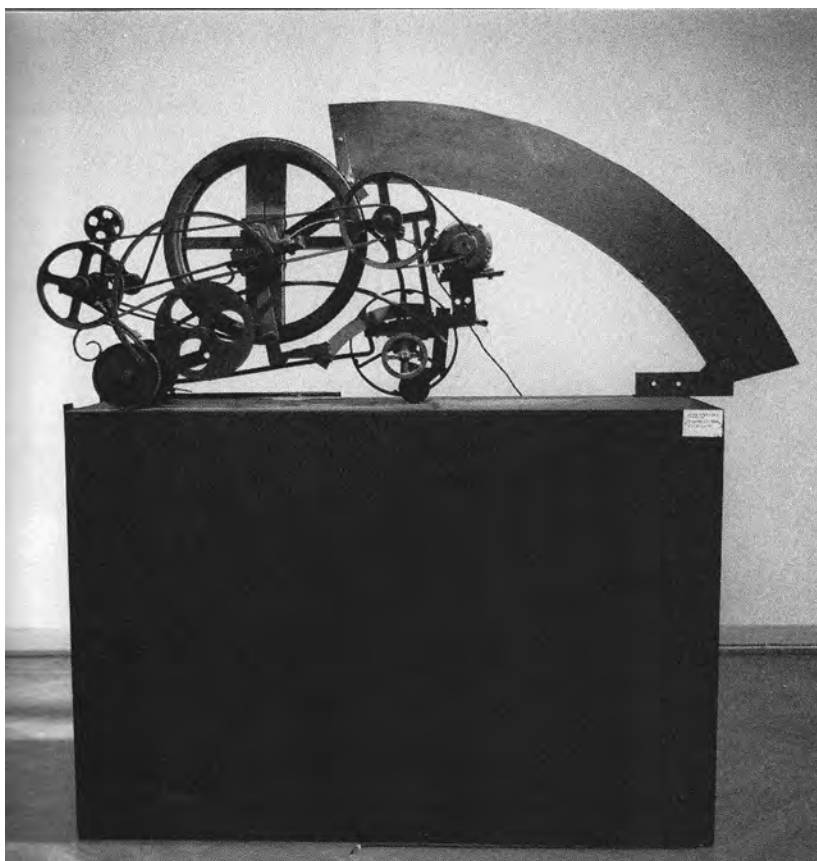
Figure 21.4 Chariot M.K. IV (©Jean Tinguely/billedkunst.dk, 1966)

skull), ragdoll, chained to, and pulled and pushed by, a large, heavy wheel, which therefore literally and figuratively 'had a hold over him'.

In his article on the 'morphology of movement', Rickey (1965: 114) wrote:

> If kinetic art is to have a characteristic form, it will be determined by two things: first by what range of moving constructions it is technically possible to devise; then by the way talented artists adopt and adapt these constructions as a vehicle for their ideas.

I hope that this chapter has brought out Tinguely's contribution to both these things.

The artist as semiotician

In the same article, Rickey (1965: 11) also listed the skills and talents needed by the kinetic artist – a list that I would like to quote in full:

1. Patient craftsman with knowledge of common machine and hand tools and a high degree of manual dexterity.

Figure 21.5 Self Portrait (©Jean Tinguely/billedkunst.dk, 1988).

2. Theorist with understanding of balance, moments, friction, power transmission, gravitational forces, stability.
3. Conceptual thinker who can adapt a visual idea to a mechanical device and give it human relevance and "artistic truth".
4. Designer able to conceive directly in four dimensions.
5. Long range thinker who can keep an abstract idea alive during long hours, days, even months of tedious construction and adjustment.
6. Organizer with capacity to bring a complex structure to a single conclusion, without loose ends or confusing afterthoughts.
7. Sensitive, poetic observer of his environment and the human condition.

Somewhat more recently, I made a somewhat similar list of 'what semioticians do' (Van Leeuwen, 2005: 3) which I will quote in full too:

1. Collect, document and systematically catalogue semiotic resources – including their history
2. Investigate how these resources are used in specific historical, cultural and institutional contexts, and how people talk about them in these contexts – plan them, teach them, justify them, critique them, etc.
3. Contribute to the discovery and development of new semiotic resources and new uses of existing semiotic resources

Clearly, there are differences between the two lists. But there are also overlaps: the kinetic artist, working in a developing field, needs to be a conceptual thinker and theorist, just as much as the semiotician; and the semiotician needs to engage just as much as the artist with the discovery and development of new semiotic resources, and new uses of existing semiotic resources. There is commonality here. Both the artist and the semiotician are engaged in changing the semiotic landscape – in developing, and seeking recognition and understanding for, new semiotic modes. They are in the same business of 'cultural preparation', of showing what can be done – and this, at all times, with a social critical eye.

But the differences between the two lists should also be noted. The semiotician can learn from the artist. If we are to revalue the intellectual aspect of the artist's work, we should equally revalue the intuitive aspects of the semiotician's work: the need for semioticians to engage, just as much as artists, with the material, technical basis of semiotic modes, and with the 'relevance' and 'truth' of their work; and the need for semioticians to remember the fundamental role that 'sensitive, poetic observation of the environment and the human condition' should have in the arts and humanities.

Truly pioneering artists perform creative intellectual work in exploring the means of expression, as well as in expanding their use in new areas. We need case studies to argue this point in detail. I hope that this study has done so for the work of Tinguely, in the same way as I have tried, in earlier work, to understand Barnett Newman as a theorist of colour (Van Leeuwen, 2006, 2011), and to understand and appreciate David Byrne's innovative use of Microsoft PowerPoint as an art medium (Van Leeuwen, Djonov, & O'Halloran, 2013).

Related topics

creativity and digital text; language and music; literature and multimodality; silence and creativity

Further reading

Jones, R. (ed.) (2012) *Discourse and Creativity*, Harlow: Pearson Education.

This edited book includes papers on multimodality and creativity by Charles Forceville, Sigrid Norris, and Theo Van Leeuwen.

Kress, G. (1997) *Before Writing: Rethinking the Paths to Literacy*, London: Routledge.

Often using children's drawings as examples, Kress' work stresses sign-makers' creative use of the affordances of the semiotic resources available to them.

Van Leeuwen, T. (2005) *Introducing Social Semiotics*, London: Routledge.

The second chapter of this book deals with semiotic change, the creation of new semiotic modes, and new uses of existing semiotic modes.

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Williams, R. (1983) *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, London: HarperCollins.

The entry on 'creativity' is as good an introduction to the problems attached to the term 'creativity' as any – although perhaps in need of updating, now that 'creativity' has become such a keyword in contemporary global corporate culture.

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Computational approaches to language and creativity

Creativity *ex machina*

Tony Veale

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Introduction

Creativity is a concept in flux. All too often we put creativity on a pedestal, as though the very concept were itself a product of human artistry, carved from the enduring marble of received wisdom. Yet any notion that the linguistic tender of words such as 'creativity' and '*art*' is backed by a resolute gold standard at the level of conceptual structures and formal definitions is itself just a convenient fiction. If we feel that we know creativity when we see it, our experience with art – the most paradigmatic domain (along with science) in which we perceive creativity – shows that the most creative art is that which causes the most people to shout 'That's not art!' or 'My 5-year-old could have done that!' (see, for example, Hodge, 2012) – for the reality belies the fiction, and our collective concepts of creativity and art are constantly being reshaped by new cultural, societal, and technological forces. Each new century presents new challenges to our shared understanding of art and, by proxy, to creativity more generally (Sawyer, 2006). In the twentieth century, three challenges in particular have cumulatively chipped away at our human-centric ideal of creativity, and opened up the possibility that machines can be more than tools in the hands of a creator and be truly intentional, autonomous creators in their own right.

The first of these challenges was launched by Dadaist and artist-provocateur Marcel Duchamp (Kuenzli & Naumann, 1989). In 1917, Duchamp submitted a urinal to an exhibit of the Society of Independent Artists in New York. Cheekily titled *Fountain* and adorned with the signature of its supposed maker, 'R. Mutt 1917', Duchamp's contribution is what artists call a 'ready-made' (Taylor, 2009): a 'found' object with perceived merit that an artist chooses and presents as a work of art. While the Society initially rejected Duchamp's *Fountain*, denying that it was any kind of art at all, it has since found lasting fame as one of the most influential artworks of the twentieth century. Yet Duchamp had a much larger goal than the artistic rehabilitation of the much-maligned urinal: his goal was to challenge cosy conceptions of what does and does not constitute artistic creativity (see also Jaworski, Chapter 20). Duchamp's *Fountain* asks us to view a piece of porcelain toiletware not only as an object with its own aesthetic value, but also as a signifier for something larger: the

artist's power to decide on what constitutes art itself. Duchamp (1917: 5, emphasis original) anonymously defended *Fountain* in an article for the art journal *Blind Man*, arguing that:

> Whether Mr. Mutt made the fountain or not has no importance. He *chose* it. He took an ordinary article of life, placed it so its useful significance disappeared under the new title and point of view – created a new thought for that object.

Duchamp reimagined the artist as primarily a creator of meanings, and in doing so, he dissolved the seemingly indissoluble bond between artefact generation and creativity. Before Duchamp, artists were expected to generate and to select, to skilfully produce and to critically filter. After Duchamp, creators were free to apply their selective aesthetics and critical filters to the skilled outputs of others, such as the artisan J. L. Mott of 5th Avenue, from whom Duchamp bought his urinal and to whom he playfully alludes with the signature 'R. Mutt' (the initials R. M. also denoting 'Ready-Made').

The second challenge of the twentieth century came from the 'beat' writers Brion Gysin and William S. Burroughs (1963; see also Lydenberg, 1987). Looking to the world of visual art to spur innovation in the world of literary creativity, Gysin believed that literary art lagged at least fifty years behind its visual sibling and that recombinant techniques from the latter, such as collage, should be vigorously explored by exponents of the former. Dadaist-style word games, such as 'exquisite corpse' – in which words are combined without regard to their context in an effort to trump the mind's love of cliché – had long been popular as a parlour game amongst surrealists, but Gysin and Burroughs were to take these games to the next level with their randomised textual collages. These writers sought more than a conscious disavowal of cliché; they sought a radical means of escaping the deep-hewn ruts that unconsciously inhibit one's spontaneity and creativity. As Burroughs (1978: 29) put it, one 'cannot will spontaneity' into being, but one can 'introduce the unpredictable spontaneous factor with a pair of scissors'. The scissors here alludes to the 'cut-up method' pioneered by Burroughs and Gysin, in which a linear text is sliced, diced, and randomly spliced together into new texts that give rise to new and unexpected meanings. The purpose of the method is twofold: not only does it aim to create new combinations from old, but it also consciously aims to subvert existing idioms and to disrupt the mind's unconscious efforts to group frequently co-occurring words and ideas into familiar gestalts.

Burroughs and Gysin built on the revolution launched by Duchamp in 1917, showing that not only does a creator *not* have to manually produce the key elements of his or her own works, whether linguistic objects or artisanal products, but also these elements need not be treated with the reverence traditionally given to an artistic output. Great violence could be done to them, and key decisions about their use and alignment could be made randomly, so as to exult in the sheer combinatorial possibilities of a domain. If the cut-up method is a vehicle for creativity, it is an off-road jeep, allowing a driver to veer off the trails blazed by other writers and to explore the negative space that is implicit in what has already been written (see, for example, Lydenberg, 1987: 44, who refers to the 'negative poetry' of the cut-up method). As writer William Gibson (2005: 118) put it: 'Burroughs was interrogating the universe with scissors and a paste pot.' Yet, as imagined by Burroughs and Gysin, the cut-up method is a vehicle that requires a human driver, someone to purposefully filter its outputs, to choose what is surprising, but meaningful, and to reject what is random and unusable.

The third challenge, then, which has its roots in the twentieth century, but which is only forcefully asserting itself now, is the notion that any algorithm, such as the cut-up technique, might contain its own autonomous driver for deciding what is a meaningfully creative output

or what is an innovative direction to pursue. Just as artificial intelligence (AI) is on the verge of giving us fully autonomous, driverless cars, AI is also close to giving us recombinant algorithms that can make their own creative decisions. When William Gibson met William Burroughs and asked whether the pioneer of the cut-up technique had yet embraced the new possibilities offered by modern computers, Burroughs disdainfully replied, 'What would I want a computer for? I have a typewriter' (quoted in Gibson, 2005: 118). The third challenge to our human-centric sense of creativity suggests that our tools can be more than mere tools and more than mere generators to be guided by human hands. Computers are so much more than typewriters. The new field of *computational creativity* (CC) allows *meta*-creators to place their own creativity into their tools, to produce outputs that can delight *and* surprise us (see Veale, 2012; Wiggins, 2006). Moreover, CC allows our machines to follow their own creative trajectories, to diverge from the paths identified by their creators in much the same way as good students step out of their teachers' shadows to find their own paths and their own voices.

This chapter thus explores the core principles and techniques of CC as they relate to linguistic creativity. I begin, in the next section, by providing a more solid grounding of CC as a new sub-discipline of AI, before adopting a more specifically linguistic perspective in the sections to follow. By describing CC systems old and new – this review is necessarily selective – as well as those yet to be constructed, I aim to understand why anyone would want the field of CC to thrive, and to show how CC systems can foster *more*, rather than *less*, creativity from the humans who work with them and create through them.

Computational creativity

Those who push against boundaries should not be surprised when those boundaries push back. Consider the case of Wegman's bakery of New York, which – courtesy of a special printer loaded with food dyes instead of inks – will decorate your cake with any text or digital image that you care to provide via email. But technology can often throw the most unexpected of spanners into the works. Microsoft Outlook, for instance, inserts unseen HTML tags into its emails, for the benefit of recipients who happen to use the same email client. Those using a different program, such as Wegman's, may not always know what to do with these additional tags, if indeed they notice them at all, as content is hurriedly cut-and-pasted from email client to printer interface. The cake shown in schematic form in Figure 22.1 is a real product of the unintended bisociation of different email clients: one that garnered entirely the wrong kind of media attention for Wegman's in 2007. In an apologia of sorts, Wegman's explained the bakery's workflow as follows:

> We just cut and paste from the email to the program we use for printing the edible images. We are usually in such a hurry that we really don't have time to check, and if we do the customers yell at us for bothering them.

> *(Quoted in Agarwal, 2012)*

So while it is tempting to blame the technology, the fault here lies mostly with the technology's human users and, residually, with the human clients of its users. Ultimately, the cake mistake in Figure 22.1 arose from a lack of engagement with the processes of its production, rather than from the technological nature of these processes. While computers excel at executing a formal process that is grounded in explicit rules and can efficiently detect when an input or output fails to meet these rules, they fare less well at handling

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Figure 22.1 A genuine example of a birthday cake from Wegman's bakery, Rochester, NY, with an unexpected sprinkling of raw HTML courtesy of Microsoft Outlook

Source: Based on Agarwal (2012)

the emergent properties of unanticipated situations in sensible ways (although Wegman's human employees fare no better here), or indeed, at recognising that an exceptional case may be aberrant in a way that is novel *and* apt. Suppose that this HTML cake had been intended for Tim Berners-Lee, or more poetically, for a Microsoft software developer: it might then be considered apt rather than inept. Of course, one can always program a software system with ever more rules, to anticipate a richer taxonomy of exceptions, with an ever more nuanced set of predetermined responses. However, to the chagrin of AI researchers, who refer to this dilemma as the 'frame problem', new rules often breed new exceptions of their own and so require even more new rules to fix, in an ever-spiralling bureaucracy of rules that govern rules that govern rules.

If the problem lies not in the rules, but in a lack of engagement with the process of applying the rules, then the solution is not to abolish rules outright, but to make our rules-based software systems more adaptive and sensitive to real usage data. Suppose that Wegman's bakery fully automates its cake creation service, to work unsupervised from a customer's email to a customer's front door. Let's call this hypothetical CC version of Wegman's service Weg*machine*. Rather than hand-craft a raft of brittle rules, suppose that we allow Wegmachine to learn and evolve its own rules and its own criteria for aesthetic judgement from a large collection of real cake commissions. Just as human artists hone their skills with years of practice, our hypothetical Wegmachine would likewise grow into its job, although at a much faster rate. To augment its corpus of past commissions, Wegmachine might periodically download a stream of relevant images and text from online Christmas cards, birthday cards, Mothers' and Fathers' Day cards, and so on. For any holiday *H* for which one might buy a greeting card or a cake, pictures of representative *H*-cards with corresponding imagery and text can be automatically harvested from the Internet and used as further training data. Language models can then be derived from the cards' pithily expressed sentiments, so that our Wegmachine can learn what one is likely to say, and what a cake is most likely to express, in diverse contexts, from 'It's a girl!' to 'Today, you are a man'. Cultural nuances that affect the choice of text or visuals, such as the subtlety of 'Happy Christmas' vs 'Happy Holidays', as well as starker lessons still, such as that few cakes contain raw HTML tags, can be implicitly learned. Using basic image analysis techniques, Wegmachine might even learn to associate

clusters of visual features (such as colours, shapes, textures, font sizes and styles, etc.) with specific themes, target groups, ages, and genders, since stores helpfully organise greeting cards by occasion, recipient age, and recipient gender.

An aptly decorated cake is still a cake that can be enjoyed as such. What, then, of purely textual creativity, which has only its form and its meaning to offer? Can a machine offer real meaning and real insight in the texts that it produces, or must its texts derive their worth from being packaged with something of concrete value? An answer can be found, obliquely, in the following quote from Orwell's 1949 novel *1984*:

> The book fascinated him, or more exactly it reassured him. In a sense it told him nothing that was new, but that was part of the attraction. It said what he would have said, if it had been possible for him to set his scattered thoughts in order. It was the product of a mind similar to his own, but enormously more powerful, more systematic, less fear-ridden.
>
> *(Orwell, 1983 [1949]: 434)*

Creativity often surprises us by cleverly repackaging what we already know. So a computer can use its knowledge of the world to reason about the obvious consequences of those facts and rules, and still produce utterances of creative value, if it can crystallise these consequences in words that make apparent what the reader already knows, but does not (yet) consider salient, or perhaps does not yet know how to clearly express for himself or herself. Our computers can assume the role of a 'mind similar to [one's] own' (in the way in which it models the world), which is 'enormously more powerful' (in its ability to retrieve and pull together relevant facts), 'more systematic' (in its use of these facts), and 'less fear-ridden' (in so far as it lacks any concern about social etiquette or fear for its own reputation). Machines may lack feelings, but they can express the possibilities of a situation in concrete ways that help to crystallise our own 'scattered thoughts' and feelings.

To do this well, a machine must avoid two equally seductive poles that may be considered the Scylla and Charybdis of CC. For one, it must avoid *mere generation* – that is, the production of well-formed outputs that become the responsibility of someone else, typically the end user, to critique and filter. The cut-up method on its own is a technique for the mere generation of random splicings of text. It falls to the owner of the scissors to sort through the space of possibilities and select those with creative value, such as those that exhibit initially jarring, but resolvable, semantic tensions (Veale, 2014). Indeed, mere generation is so ingrained in the cut-up method that Burroughs saw no real value in computers over typewriters, because the outputs of the technique would, in any case, still have to be filtered through his uniquely artistic sensibility.

The second pole is *pastiche*, a problem that plagues human art as much as any machine. Creators can produce outputs that are sensible, meaningful, and superficially novel by following too closely in a master's footsteps. One could, for instance, ape the style of Magritte and paint trivially novel pictures of bureaucrats, whose faces are obscured with fruits other than apples, or of mantle pieces from which vehicles other than locomotives appear to burst out, just as a computer might be trained to spatter a canvas with paint in much the same style as Jackson Pollack. Although one may hone an ability for pastiche to virtuoso levels, as in the case of the master Vermeer forger Han van Meegeren, the best for which one can ever aim is to be considered an ingenious fraud and not a true creator. Cut-ups and other recombinant production techniques flirt dangerously with pastiche and mere generation, but a true CC system must know enough to knowingly steer between these two polar extremes.

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Computational linguistic creativity

The notion that creativity and insight might arise from searching a space of possible solutions is deeply entrenched in the language of problem solving. We speak of 'searching for a solution', 'hitting a dead end', 'taking the path less travelled', and being 'forced to backtrack' or to 'go back to square one'. This search metaphor is, unsurprisingly, also key to the AI approach to problem solving, most famously articulated by AI researchers Alan Newell, Cliff Shaw, and Herbert Simon (1963). Although intelligence-as-search is now often ridiculed with the label 'good old-fashioned AI' (GOFAI) (see Veale, 2012), it also forms the basis of Margaret Boden's (1990, 1999) conceptual spaces theory of creativity. In Boden's view, creators explore an abstract space of possibilities, looking for areas of as-yet-untapped value. An explorer may use combinatorial means to traverse a space by combining aspects of past successes, or may, in rare cases, succeed in going outside the space itself, by changing the parameters that define the space to obtain a truly transformational result. Wiggins (2006) offers a formal CC treatment of Boden's model, showing how transformational creativity is just exploratory creativity taken to the level of whole spaces, so that a radical creator searches through a *space of spaces*, looking for the right settings.

The geography of an abstract space does not afford its mental explorers the same abilities to grasp, follow, and peer into the far distance as a physical terrain. The abstract terrain and its map are one, and afford a limited view of the search space as a whole. So it was apt of Gibson to describe Burroughs' method as one of 'interrogating the universe with scissors and a paste pot'. Abstract explorers must likewise interrogate a space – their universe of possibilities – by generating new states (tentative solutions or way-points), by testing whether these states are viable and by asking whether they take one closer to a desired goal state. To the extent that such actions are performed *blind*, in the absence of knowledge, any output from such a system must be a product of mere generation. Systems can negotiate a space using decomposition operators to pick apart the current state (Burroughs' scissors) and recombination operators to put its parts back together in random ways (the AI equivalent of Burroughs' paste pot) to generate new states, but any appreciation of these new states must employ some form of knowledge. Getting such knowledge into a computer is the bottleneck that most hinders the development of creative AI systems, and so AI/CC systems take their knowledge wherever they can find it. Naturally, the more superficial the knowledge, the more superficial the creativity that it affords to an AI/CC system.

Consider the development of CC systems adept at punning humour. Punning is often ranked bottom of the pile when it comes to wit, and this intuitive ranking is reflected in the level of sophistication and knowledge-engineering needed to build the computational equivalent of a human punster. Yet computer systems have proven quite successful at entertaining the target audience of most puns – children – and so this is no mean feat in itself. The Joke Analysis and Production Engine (JAPE) program of Binsted and Ritchie (1997) generates punning riddles with a version of Burroughs' cut-up method: familiar phrases, or dictionary definitions of familiar words, are cut up and recombined so that key elements are replaced with (nearly) homophonous alternatives. Thus, for instance, 'serial killer' becomes 'cereal killer', affording the punning riddle: 'What kind of killer has fibre? A cereal killer.' Because children form the largest constituency for weak puns, a subsequent evolution of JAPE, called the System to Augment Non-speakers' Dialog Using Puns (STANDUP) (Ritchie et al., 2006), has proven useful for interacting with children with special learning needs. To these children, it does not matters that JAPE and STANDUP rely on simple knowledge sources (such as a phonetic dictionary), since they exhibit precisely the right kind, and just the right

amount, of linguistic creativity to engage their audience. Puns remain an active area of CC research (see, for example, Hempelmann, 2008), not least because more can be done to generate outputs that hit the trifecta of sound similarity, semantic opposition (to yield a striking, but meaningful, incongruity), and pragmatic resonance.

That successful puns can be generated without insight into their meaning or as to why an audience might find them funny makes most CC pun creation an act of mere generation. Pun generation might also be considered a form of pastiche, in so far as it characterises a CC system that skates on the surface of language, which relies too heavily on an existing stock of familiar phrases and idioms, and which lacks the wit to venture into the unknown territories of novel conceptual humour. This is a graded, rather than binary, distinction, for some CC systems may venture further away from familiar shores than others. Consider the Humorous Agent for Humorous Acronyms (HAHAcronym) program of Stock and Strapparava (2006), which invents new expansions and meanings for familiar abbreviations and acronyms. Such humour combines punning with a degree of meaning invention, such as that found on T-shirts that proclaim their 'FBI' wearers to be 'Female Body Inspectors' or 'Full-Blooded Italians'. HAHAcronym uses the lexical resource WordNet – a dictionary/ thesaurus, the senses of which are organised taxonomically (see Fellbaum, 1998, for an introduction and a range of its uses) – as well as additional resources that indicate the general domain of a word sense (for example that 'theology' is in the RELIGION domain) and that indicate which senses exhibit a strong semantic or pragmatic opposition (for example 'religion' and 'science'). This knowledge allows HAHAcronym to reinvent meanings for familiar abbreviations such as MIT ('Mythical Institute of Theology') that are superficially apt, but which exhibit a deep incongruity (contrasting with the purpose of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology). HAHAcronym uses more semantic insight than JAPE or STANDUP, yet its outputs are more constrained and this makes them seem more formulaic. HAHAcronym is noteworthy for another reason, however: it is the fruit of the first CC humour project to be directly funded by the European Commission.

To what extent do existing CC systems, which wear their limitations openly, define the scope of future CC implementations? Each CC system may be seen as the patriarch of a family of yet-unborn systems that rely on the same techniques. The LightBulb Joke Generator (LIBJOG) program of Victor Raskin and Salvatore Attardo (1994) is the patriarch of CC systems that overly rely on templates that come complete with a convenient stock of fillers. As Raskin and Attardo note, LIBJOG is capable of generating lightbulb jokes about members of various ethnic groups (such as 'Q: How many X-Men does it take to change a lightbulb? A: It takes Y. One to hold the bulb and Y-1 to spin the room around') only because the desired jokes are effectively *baked into* the templates. Hempelmann (2008: 338) argues that this failure of creativity is precisely the goal of LIBJOG: to expose the inherent limitations of systems that use templates without adequate knowledge. In this view, LIBJOG is not so much a CC system as a Duchampian prank: a trap into which subsequent humour systems such as JAPE and STANDUP unwittingly fall.

Yet even humans obtain good mileage from templates, and other rules and tricks, for linguistic creativity. Consider what Matthew McGlone and Jessica Tofighbakhsh (1999) call the *Keats heuristic*, an insight about creative language that owes as much to Nietzsche ('We sometimes consider an idea truer simply because it has a metrical form and presents itself with a divine skip and jump') as to John Keats ('Beauty is truth, truth beauty'). McGlone and Tofighbakhsh (2000) demonstrated that, when presented with uncommon proverbs with internal rhyme (such as 'woes unite foes'), subjects tend to view these as more insightful about the world than the equivalent paraphrases with no rhyme at all

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(for example 'troubles unite enemies'). If the Keats heuristic is not exactly a licence to pun, it is a licence to rhyme, and to give as much weight (or more still) to the superficial aspects of linguistic generation as to the underlying semantics and pragmatics of poetry generation. As such, the Keats heuristic is implicitly key to the operation of almost every CC system to date for generating poetry (see, for example, Chamberlain & Etter, 1983; Gervás, 2000; Manurung, Ritchie, & Thompson, 2012). If good human poets ask questions first and rhyme later, CC systems typically rhyme first and ask questions later, if at all. If the human jury in the O. J. Simpson trial could be turned against bald facts with a Keatsian 'If the glove don't fit, you must acquit', readers of computer-generated poetry can likewise be persuaded to see meaning and deliberate resonance in any CC output that has a 'divine skip and jump'.

For example, the Full-FACE poetry generator of Colton, Goodwin, and Veale (2012) uses a template-guided version of the cut-up method to mash together semantically coherent text fragments in a way that meets certain overarching constraints on metre and rhyme. The text fragments in question come from a variety of sources, such as from online news articles, from short social media messages (Tweets), or from a large stock of stereotype-laden proverbial similes. News stories are a rich source of phrases that convey resonant images, and these can be clipped from a news text using standard natural-language processing techniques. Likewise, Tweets that use affective language to express strong emotional viewpoints can be extracted automatically using standard sentiment analysis lexicons and tools. Most interestingly, perhaps, a large stock of resonant similes, such as 'as blue as a blueberry' or 'as hot as a sauna', can be extracted from the texts of the Internet using a search engine such as Google (see Veale, 2012: 61–86), since the simile frame AS X AS Y is specific enough to query for, yet promiscuous enough to allow a bountiful diversity of possible X:Y mappings. Such mappings can also be recast in a variety of poetic forms to make their clichéd offerings seem new again, as in 'Blueberry-blue overalls' or 'sauna-hot jungle'. Indeed, the very act of combining clichés can itself be a creative act, as evidenced both by the success of the cut-up method in general, and the success of specific cut-ups in particular. Consider William Empson's withering analysis of the persnickety, cliché-hating George Orwell, whom Empson called 'the eagle eye with the flat feet' (quoted in Ricks, 1995: 356, who admires Empson's 'audacious compacting of clichés'). The Full-FACE system is just one of many CC poetry systems that use an autonomous variant of Burroughs' cut-up method, building tight constraints on form and loose constraints on meaning directly into Burroughs' 'scissors and paste pot'.

Linguistic creativity as a service

Despite the radical shift initiated by Duchamp in 1917, who licensed artists to outsource key creation tasks to third-party artisans, and by Burroughs and Gysin in the 1960s, who showed how artists might randomly, but meaningfully, mash up the creative outputs of third-party creators like so much papier mâché, the popular imagination still sees the artist as a complete creator, one who does everything. In contrast, we accept that large companies will outsource many of their creative needs to external agencies with niche specialties and proven track records. Even Apple, a technology company with as much hipster appeal and artistic credibility as many highly regarded human artists, has been known to reuse old ideas and to outsource creative tasks to outside agencies. Steve Jobs conceded a spiritual debt to Pablo Picasso, but built his legacy on following Marcel Duchamp and by elevating existing electronic commodities into desirable works of artistic design.

Computational creativity systems that aim for human-comparable outputs are often modelled on the idea of the lone artistic creator, yet a better model for CC systems is the company that is not afraid to outsource its creative needs whenever an external agency offers a superior service. Comparative advantage is as real a factor in the design of large CC systems as it is in the running of a large economies, especially when deep knowledge, or the flexible representation of such on a machine, is so hard to acquire, organise, and robustly exploit in a computational system. It makes sense, then, that CC systems that possess certain kinds of knowledge, and which know best how to exploit it, be offered as specialist services that can shoulder some of the creative responsibilities of other CC systems. For instance, the outputs of a CC system that has been carefully crafted to create metaphors on demand, or conceptual blends, or puns, or poetic couplets, and which has marshalled all of the necessary knowledge and lexical resources to fulfil this goal with aplomb, can be offered to other systems that need metaphors or puns or blends. If multiple services later compete to offer metaphors on demand, then third-party systems suppliers can shop around and choose whichever service works best for the particular task at hand.

Technologically, online services are best positioned to support this emerging marketplace of creative services (see Erl, 2008, for a discussion of what constitutes a service-oriented web architecture). The Internet is a well to which human creators frequently return, and CC services can be established online to invite both human and machine visitors to take up their offerings. Consider one such service – actually a suite of related services – called Metaphor Magnet (Veale, 2013a). Metaphor Magnet (online at http://boundinanutshell.com/metaphor-magnet-acl) provides metaphors on demand for a given target, or a given pairing of target and source domains. For instance, given the target 'religion', Metaphor Magnet will scour a large database of Web snippets – called the Google n-grams (see Brants & Franz, 2006) – to find copula metaphors of the form RELIGION IS A Y. The values that it retrieves for Y will vary from 'comfort' to 'myth' to 'philosophy' to 'virtue'. One can ask for only the negative metaphors by prefixing 'religion' with a minus sign (–*religion*), while for positive metaphors, + is used (+*religion*), spurring Metaphor Magnet to retrieve 'sham', 'lie', 'cult', 'virus', 'scourge', 'delusion', and 'fallacy'. Or one can ask for specific metaphors to elaborate on the general conceit that SCIENCE IS A –RELIGION, prompting Metaphor Magnet to view its negative metaphors for –*religion* through its knowledge of *science*, to offer views of science as a 'complicated bureaucracy', a 'predetermined dogma', a 'troubling mystery', and an 'irrational child'. The system acquires its stereotypes of children, dogmas, mysteries, and bureaucracies largely from its large inventory of common similes, themselves harvested automatically online (as described in Veale, 2012). These are the same similes exploited in Colton, Goodwin, and Veale's (2012) Full-FACE system, and Metaphor Magnet can also be viewed as a knowledge-driven embodiment of the cut-up method. Indeed, if ever there were a vast textual resource that was ideally suited to the autonomous generation of creative cut-ups, it is Google's n-gram database.

Metaphor Magnet provides a range of follow-up services for its metaphors. For instance, one might ask about the emotional resonances of a metaphor – how is an audience likely to feel about a given source concept? – and receive, in reply, a description of likely emotions, such as that troubling mysteries make one feel 'troubled' (naturally), 'confused', 'threatened', 'intimidated', 'perplexed', and 'exhausted'. These feelings are suggested by corpus analysis, which observes how the typical properties of mysteries ('challenging', 'weird', 'engrossing', etc.) are commonly coordinated with properties that convey feelings ('confusing', 'perplexing', etc.). In addition, one might ask for a deeper, conceptual blending analysis of a metaphor (as defined in Fauconnier & Turner, 2002), to identify the specific

emergent properties that arise from its pairing of ideas. For instance, when SCIENCE is viewed as a RELIGION, it can be seen to possess an 'analytical grip' (*analytical* from science, *gripping* from mystery), 'complicated twists', a 'spellbinding fascination', a 'defined magic', and a 'scholarly allure'. These bridging phrases are extracted from the Google n-grams database so as to marry a property of the source domain to one of the target domain, and thus suggest a nuanced blend-property that emerges from the integration of both domains. Bridging phrases are often poetic, and in so far as they originate in other literary works the snippets of which are captured within the Google n-grams, they may be viewed as *linguistic ready-mades* that are ready to do service in newer literary contexts. (The conceit of a linguistic ready-made is developed at length in Veale, 2012, 2013b.)

Metaphor Magnet will generate poems on demand for any of these blends, by sampling the space of properties (both simple and blended) that emerge from each metaphor or blend, and by using linguistic ready-mades and familiar tropes – such as simile, superlative, rhetorical questioning, chiasmus, alliteration – to package each sampled property into its own poetic line (see Veale, 2013c, for the technical details). One such poem, for SCIENCE as 'troubling mystery', begins 'My science is an exhilarating mystery, sacred gods of rigorous description do sciences enshroud' and ends 'Oh Science, you shock me with your impenetrable confusion'. The key point here is not the quality of the text as poetry (like most CC poetry systems, Metaphor Magnet still has a long way to go), but its use of deliberate metaphors to bridge the domains of SCIENCE, RELIGION, and MYSTERY. Of course, if any poem fails to please, another can quickly be generated to take its place.

Bot poets and the Twitter generation

To see all that is good and bad about humanity, we need only look at Twitter. Some users rise to the challenge of its 140-character message limitation, to craft aphoristic Tweets with wit, allusion, and high reuse value. Others brush off the challenge and fill their Tweets with prattle and bile. To see all that is good and bad about CC, one should also look to Twitter. *Twitterbots* (in which 'bot' is a common term for an autonomous software robot) are systems that generate their own Tweets for the knowing enjoyment of human followers. No attempt is made to hide the software basis of most bots from their followers, although the converse is not always true, as in the case of the now infamous @Horse_eBooks bot. This Twitterbot began as a simple application of the cut-up method, tweeting enigmatic, but largely random, gobbets of online books that were viewed by many as oddly poetic. Having attracted more than 200,000 followers at its prime, the bot was sold to an artist/marketer who exploited its popularity, but compromised its autonomy, to distribute hand-crafted marketing materials. The outrage that ensued shows that modern Internet users still appreciate the outputs of autonomous systems in a very different way from those generated by humans. The mechanical provenance of the creative output is a key part of its appeal and an important dimension in its evaluation. One is reminded of Samuel Johnson's quip about dogs who can stand on their hind legs: 'It is not done well; but you are surprised to find it done at all.' It is worth noting that Johnson addressed his quip to the topic of 'a woman's preaching' – a topic that now raises no eyebrows at all. Perhaps the same will be said of the 'preaching' of CC bots in years to come.

This is not to say that most Twitterbots are *CC* Twitterbots, because most fall into the traps of mere generation or pastiche. Almost all employ the cut-up method in a non-reflective mode, to generate Tweets that meet some formal constraints, but about the meaning or contextual aptness of which the system has no real insight. Bot designer Darius Kazemi

(@tinysubversions) describes bots as 'tiny subversions': playful software systems that exist somewhere on the spectrum from Dadaist joke to conceptual art. Consider @everyword, a bot designed by Adam Parrish that tweets a single word every half-hour. Although @everyword simply doles out successive entries from a large alphabetised word list, its many followers see it as a regular reminder of the importance of words in our lives, and retweet individual words when they seem to capture the current mood of the follower or of the news cycle. For instance, as reported by Dewey (2014) in the *Washington Post*, the @everyword tweet 'woman' was retweeted thousands of times when its appearance coincided with the firing of the *New York Times*' female executive editor Jill Abramson. (Dewey goes on to argue that the Twitterbot is quickly becoming a new modality of conceptual art.) A bot named @sandwiches_bot tweets a novel cut-up recipe for a different sandwich every lunch time, such as: 'The Consultant: A fried or scrambled egg, brie and corned beef served on a buttered sesame bun.' Yet it is a bot named @twoheadlines that comes closest to the spirit of Burroughs' and Gysin's use of the cut-up. This bot chooses two random headlines from an online news service, and splices them into a novel, well-formed, fantastical whole by clipping and swapping their named entities. Thus a headline about Samsung releasing Q3 financial results becomes a headline about NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden releasing (*leaking*?) those results. When this bot works well, it works very well indeed. Unfortunately, it lacks knowledge of the world to tell it which cut-ups will thrive and which will die on the page.

This lack of knowledge and linguistic know-how in merely generative bots is where creative Web services can turn unreflective bots into reflective *CC* bots. These CC bots can still be rapidly prototyped as lightweight tiny subversions, yet marshal all of the resources of a large, complex knowledge-based creative system. Consider a bot named @AppreciationBot, which feeds off the outputs of another bot called @MuseumBot. The latter demonstrates the power of simplicity by tweeting a new catalogue entry (photo plus caption) from New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art four times a day. Its followers thus receive a regular jolt of art and culture in their daily Twitter feed. @AppreciationBot responds to each Tweet by @MuseumBot with an apt metaphor, cast in the form of a critical appraisal. For instance, in response to the Tweet '*Saint Simon*' (with a photo of the Met's statue of Saint Simon attached), @AppreciationBot tweets '.@*MuseumBot A reigning tyrant. Interesting representation of a saint. Who would like this?*' Critical adlibs (for example 'Who would like this?') are chosen randomly from a list, but the metaphor in each case is sourced in real time from a Web service: Metaphor Magnet.

@AppreciationBot is a third-party bot that shows the utility of Web services as reusable bricks in new CC systems. But it is the bot @MetaphorMagnet that is the full and official Twitter incarnation of the MetaphorMagnet service. It is instructive to compare this CC bot to the merely generative @metaphorminute, which playfully tweets a random metaphor every 2 minutes by filling a generic template – such as A T IS AN S: A, B AND C, in which T denotes the target of the metaphor, S denotes its source, and A and B denote shared properties that are projected from S to T – with related words from the third-party Web service Wordnik. This bot is an enigmatic, yet mostly random, user of words, generating Tweets such as 'a separation is a stroma: blurred and transhuman'. In contrast, @MetaphorMagnet calls on its underlying service to squeeze metaphors, blends, and emotions into poetic tropes, and to craft aphoristic Tweets that exploit the Keats heuristic to the fullest. Examples include 'What is a monarch but an unelected senator? What is a senator but an elected monarch? #MonarchOrSenator?' and '#Irony: When some rulers appoint "leading" governors the way bosses appoint submissive lackeys. #RulerOrBoss #GovernorOrLackey'. The bot, like most

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CC bots, is a work in progress: a *meta*-creator that captures the voice of its creator, yet which explores new ways in which to surprise us with what we already know.

Concluding remarks

Since the heyday of Burroughs' and Gysin's cut-up method, computers have gone from being powerful alternatives to the typewriter to potentially credible alternatives to the person that uses the typewriter. Although the field of CC is still inchoate, recent developments in the sphere of social media suggest that it will grow quickly as people warm to the social dynamics of computational creativity (see again, for example, Dewey, 2014). Not only do meta-creators inspire other meta-creators, but also their bots provide the necessary conceptual and linguistic impetus for other bots to do their thing. One especially exciting dynamic can be seen in the trend for autonomous bots to interact with other autonomous bots. To consider a small, but illustrative, example, the @youarecarrying bot taps into the tropes and texts of classic text-adventure games (which, incidentally, were created at much the same time as Burroughs and Gysin developed the cut-up method) and tweets random collections of the game items that players were expected to acquire in those games (maps, swords, lanterns, ticket stubs, etc.). A rival bot, @_The_Thief, was quickly developed to exploit the outputs of the former, with a twist: @_The_Thief reuses the vivid textual descriptions of thieves from old adventure games, to offer crime reports on how the items 'carried' by specific followers of @youarecarrying have just been stolen by a colourfully novel criminal. While such interactions are still merely generative, they raise the possibility of true CC bots that use language to creatively riff with each other, bringing the linguistic equivalent of jazz improvisation to the Twittersphere.

For just as a sufficiently expressive medium can eventually become its own message, a sufficiently complex tool may eventually become its own user. Whether everyone agrees with this perspective is beside the point, because producers and consumers of all stripes continue to squabble, and will always squabble, about the creative status of certain human artists and their outputs. What matters is that, when judged purely on performance, our CC systems are seen to produce outputs that are both novel and useful, and to produce them with such variety and virtuosity that the apparent ingenuity on display cannot be attributed to any simple trick or reductive technique. Computational creativity may eventually lead to insights into the mechanics of human creativity – humans define what it means to be 'creative', after all, and to play in this rigged game, a computer may well need to tap into the same structures that allow *us* to innovate – but it is just as likely to force another historical shift in our collective concept of creativity, leading us to discriminate between human and machine creativity. Conceding the idea that computers may be creative, even in a very different way to humans, however, will be a seismic shift in itself.

Related terms

creativity and digital text; creativity and technology; language, creativity, and cognition

Further reading

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This online book provides an introduction to the field of computational creativity.

Veale, T. (2012) *Exploding the Creativity Myth: The Computational Foundations of Linguistic Creativity*, London: Continuum/Bloomsbury.

This volume provides a more comprehensive introduction to the algorithmic treatment of creative linguistic phenomena.

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Creativity and Internet communication

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Introduction and definitions

Internet communication has disrupted traditional definitions and conceptualisations of language in some interesting ways, not least around ideas about speech and writing that have circulated in linguistics for many years. Researching the language of new communication tools has meant questioning linguistic orthodoxies and, as a result, thinking more creatively about how language should be described. It has also meant understanding much more about the nature of language as a commodity. In new communication contexts, language is bought and sold, and as a result there are powerful corporate interests working to represent language in particular ways. Linguists are therefore in a position in which they need to critique the terms with which they are working for two distinctively different reasons: first, in order to challenge problematic linguistic conventions that no longer fit; and second, to resist descriptions and accounts that are driven by commercial investments.

At the most basic level, researchers have had to respond to these problems by deciding for themselves what to call the language that they are researching. Consider 'chat', which, in pre-Internet days, referred to informal spoken language: in a search of the Collins Cobuild Corpus in 2005, the term 'chat' featured frequently in descriptions of informal speech contexts, accompanied by 'with' and the personal names of individuals. This contrasted markedly with the collocations of the term 'discussion', which related much more to topics and content: 'discussion of', compared with 'chat with' or 'chat to' (Goddard, 2005).

Given the 'semantic prosody' (Sinclair, 1991) of 'chat' as language used in close inter-personal exchanges, it is not surprising that the early producers of new communication tools found this term useful to label a form of writing that might at first seem alien to consumers: interactive writing, composed in real time, using keyboard symbols – termed 'interactive written discourse' (IWD) by Ferrara, Brunner, and Whittemore (1991). As computers moved from restricted use as part of military defence systems to become personal accessories (it is easy to forget that within computing, 'PC' originally meant 'personal computer'), the general public had to be persuaded that these new machines were user-friendly. What better message to give, then, than the idea that they could be used for informal communication of the kind normally reserved for use between friends and family, in relaxed or even intimate settings? In advertising fields, the idea of attributing emotional appeal to technical products is well known:

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> High tech/high touch is a formula . . . to describe the way we have responded to technology. What happens is that whenever a new technology is introduced into society, there must be a counterbalancing human response – that is, *high touch* – or the technology is rejected. The more high tech, the more high touch.
>
> *(Naisbitt, 1982: 39, emphasis original)*

It is problematic if linguists and other researchers of new communication tools use the same labels as those used in the marketplace, because written, computer-based 'chat' does not necessarily share much common ground with spoken language. Ideas about speech and writing are elaborated further in this chapter, but the perils of confusion are clear: individual Internet users who think of their keyboard or touchscreen as a simple 'chat' tool can face dire consequences if they have a permanently embedded idea of their audience as an intimate circle of friends. Exactly the same problem attaches to Twitter, which is a million miles from the innocent chirping of birds. Since linguists know only too well that language has the power to construct realities for its users, they have a particular responsibility to reveal its representational values.

Historical perspectives

When computer-mediated communication (CMC) first emerged, it did not fit easily into the frameworks current within linguistics to describe speech and writing. Of course, descriptions of speech and writing could simply have been ignored. But this was problematic for two reasons. First, the new tools themselves were being given the names of genres that were currently in existence, precisely because producers of the tools wanted them to seem familiar; so terms such as 'chat' and 'mail' brought a sense for users that they would be on safe ground. If advertisers wanted to be creative and suggest innovation, they might also reference another known genre and describe the new communication tool as a hybrid form: for example, in one early campaign, British telecom referred to email as 'the new way to write a phone call', while in another, the German phone company Mannesmann exhorted consumers to 'turn on the phone and watch the news'. These advertising hooks looked startlingly rule-breaking at the time because they challenged ideas about the relationship between established genres and channels of communication.

The second reason for retaining connections with concepts of spoken and written language was so that researchers could understand how users were transferring the skills of communication that they already had and creatively adapting them to new environments. New technologies have reconfigured the conventional way of thinking about language acquisition as a developmental aspect of young lives: we are all now permanently in a state of language acquisition as we move from one technology to the next. Assessing the skills displayed by learners also required – and continues to require – an understanding by educators of exactly what the demands of different communication environments are. An early example of potential confusion in this respect is reported in Goddard (2005): the head of learning and teaching at a university said that a chat tool, which was a real-time, writing-only space, would enable students who performed 'better orally than in writing' to be successful.

However, linguistic studies of speech and writing have themselves been entangled in some complex history of their own. In terms of formal description, speech has been much less researched than writing, partly because of the lack of availability of portable, cheap recording equipment. As a result, structural descriptions of language that may have suited writing do not work for speech at all (see Carter, 1997).

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Carter also points out that culturally, speech and writing have often been valued differently, with literacy – particularly the specialist form of literacy associated with literary works and with conventional notions of creativity – being seen as a highly developed, rare skill and a hallmark of an educated person. Goddard (1996: 5, emphasis original) notes that, in contrast, spoken language – particularly in the form of everyday encounters – has not been seen as a very skilful or creative activity:

> We have difficulty thinking that everyday talk is metaphorical because this idea goes against the received wisdom we have about talk, which is that it is somehow straight-forward and serviceable – a bit like Marks and Sparks underwear, hard-wearing but not particularly sexy, getting us through life without major mishap . . . so we certainly don't see everyday talk as being the home of figures of speech (even though we call them figures of *speech*) like metaphor.

An associated difficulty in linguistic treatments of speech and writing has been the long tradition of taking a binary approach, classifying these modes as either discrete systems with no relationship between the two, or as oppositional, suggesting that what one had, the other lacked (so if writing was 'creative', then speaking was not). Street (1988) notes how this classic concept of 'the great divide' between speech and writing has been embedded in many research papers over the years; and maintains that its replacement during the 1980s by the notion of a speech-writing 'continuum' simply amounts to a renaming of the divide, rather than a different approach.

The idea of the 'great divide' has resulted in some tangible problems of description, because it tends to treat speech and writing as monolithic entities:

> Speech is typically time-bound, spontaneous, face-to-face, socially interactive, loosely structured, immediately revisable, and prosodically rich. Writing is typically space-bound, contrived, visually decontextualised, factually communicative, elaborately structured, repeatedly revisable, and graphically rich.
>
> *(Crystal, 2001: 28)*

In fact, this account works only if the model for speech is face-to-face, casual conversation taking place within a shared physical context, and if the model for writing is 'essayist literacy' (Tannen, 1982), a lone practitioner committing words to paper for an audience removed in time and space.

If such notions of binary contrast were seen as problematic before the development of new CMC genres, their application to electronic discourse, particularly to real-time writing, rendered them largely redundant. In operating both visually and synchronously, IWD is simultaneously space-bound *and* time-bound, spontaneous *and* editable. In considering the 'face-to-face' aspect of communication, IWD in its earlier forms involved 'presence', if not face visibility. In any case, the idea of presence has a variable definition across different academic subject areas, with some scholars in CMC research regarding the concept not simply as physical visibility or even geographical location, but as various degrees or aspects of force or effect – in other words, as impressions of agency. Stone (1995: 93), for example, suggested that 'narrow bandwidth' communication (that is, CMC in its then form) could produce a more intensive experience of engagement – a more heightened sense of 'presence' – than the 'wide bandwidth' variety (that is, face-to-face interaction): 'The effect of narrowing bandwidth is to engage more of the participants' interpretive faculties . . . Frequently in narrow-bandwidth

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communication the interpretive faculties of one participant or another are powerfully, even obsessively, engaged.'

In comparison with other academic disciplines, it seems that linguistics was rather slow to recognise computer-based communication (CMC) as offering scope for research. Said Herring (1996: 3): 'Although text-based CMC is constructed almost exclusively from linguistic signs, linguists have been slow to consider computer-mediated language a legitimate object of enquiry.' This could be because, as has been suggested already, rigid systems of linguistic classification offered little support for the description of new fluid types of communication. Carter (1999: 195), talking of the creativity of everyday speakers, maintains that the history of twentieth-century linguistics has not equipped it to deal with real language use at all, let alone forms of new communication: '[T]he preoccupation of much modern linguistics with invented data, sentence-level grammar and a narrowly truth-condition-determined semantics does not allow any direct engagement with such data and its associated issues.'

Herring's (1996) explanation for the tardiness of linguists is slightly different. She suggests that this may have been because, when networks were first designed in the 1960s, their primary purpose was to transfer information between computers, so no one conceptualised the machines as conduits for human communication. The idea of 'language' was then seen more as an issue for programmers than for ordinary users. However, some academics working in other disciplines did characterise language, without necessarily aiming to do so, in their early commentaries on Internet communication. The first accounts of the potential of the Internet for new types of communication tended to be somewhat utopian. The idea of a new era in which communication would be free of attitudinal encumbrances such as accent prejudice, and gender and racial stereotyping – since such factors are often thought to be linked with acoustic and visual embodiments of difference – was articulated in statements such as Donna Haraway's (1990) 'A manifesto for cyborgs'. This idea suggested a default model of language as face-to-face speech – or a model of writing that was somehow free of 'attitudinal encumbrances'.

Herring's (1996) collection of research papers, which is often seen as a benchmark in being the first significant scholarly treatment of language use in CMC, also included some utopian ideas about how language might work in new communication contexts. For example, van Gelder (1990: 130) claims that, since race, physical appearance, and language accent are non-existent in CMC interactions, 'a more egalitarian situation is created', in which 'the most important criterion by which we judge each other in CMC conversations is one's mind rather than appearance, race, accent, etc.'. And Ma (1996: 177) expresses the idea of electronic spaces as a cultural no-man's land: 'Those from different cultures engaging in computer-mediated conversations do not occupy a common physical space, so they are not bounded by any particular set of cultural rules.' Ma (1996: 179) sees CMC as a kind of meeting of minds in free-floating space: 'The focusing-on-mind computer mediated conversations should provide a better opportunity for information exchange between participants from different cultures.' These statements imply a model of language in which physically embodied non-verbal communication carries most of the meaning and, again, in which language is a simple information conduit.

Not all of the articles in Herring's (1996) collection had this same model of language, however. Rather than seeing CMC as a context that potentially reduces the idea of social difference, Hall (1996) argues that CMC actually increases the level at which individuals construct their social selves. In this case, she is talking about gender: 'Rather than neutralizing gender, the electronic medium encourages its intensification. In the absence of the

physical, network users exaggerate societal notions of femininity and masculinity in an attempt to gender themselves' (Hall, 1996: 167). Hall's work on 'cyberfeminism' indicates that CMC leads not to 'cyborgs', but to 'goddesses and ogres'.

From a contemporary perspective, Ma's (1996) idea of the Internet as a culturally neutral space in which disembodied minds simply exchange information seems to have more in common with utopian science fiction than with everyday experience. On the other hand, Hall's (1996) description of social scripting seems very familiar.

Early ideas that the Internet would lead to a more democratic society because the 'mental' would no longer be limited by the 'physical' positioned both language and the Internet itself as having no materiality. Ironically, it is the very materiality of the Internet – allowing a real feeling of presence across vast distances and helping users to experience each other's cultures via multimedia tools – that, if anything, has been the more powerful democratiser.

Another distinctive strand of early work on Internet communication focused on the way in which users could be seen as inhabiting a new creative space that appeared to be conducive to play and performance. Laurel (1993) and Turkle (1995) both explored notions of CMC in metaphorical terms: Laurel, via the metaphor of the theatre; and Turkle, via the screen. A special issue of the *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication* in 1995 was devoted to play, including the staging of a party event via the use of real-time writing and a performance of a text-only version of *Hamlet*. At this pre-broadband time, the idea of dialogic writing seemed like a venture into an unknown world that was fragile and precious. Note, though, that these early forays were staged set pieces, including a Shakespeare play, rather than everyday communication in any sense.

Critical issues and topics

The Web 2.0 expansion of online participation that we have seen in recent times, supported by the 'always on' potential of broadband, has had interactivity at its core, rather than only the reading of published content. We are now not 'online' or 'offline' in any simple way; rather, digital communication and systems are so embedded in our lives that there is scarcely a single activity that we undertake that does not involve mediation by them. New communication tools that were once divided into 'asynchronous' (in which participants did not have to be online together, such as email) and 'synchronous' (in which they did, such as IWD) have increasingly converged, so that more and more contexts are dialogic, with users aware of the activity of their interlocutor.

Descriptions of CMC language that characterised it as a single entity – Crystal (2001), for example, describes it as 'netspeak' – have given way to more detailed accounts of the constraints of the particular CMC tool in its context of use. The idea of 'constraints' as factors shaping any act of communication derives from the work of Erving Goffman (1981), who divided 'ritual constraints' (factors associated with the culture of the speakers) from 'system constraints' (what the medium of communication affords and limits). Herring (2001) notes that early research tended to produce overgeneralisations, seeing linguistic features as a part of the medium rather than as a choice made by the users. The result of such generalisations was to stereotype forms of CMC discourse, for example seeing IWD as 'anonymous' and 'impersonal' because it was not face-to-face (Herring, 2001: 613).

Herring (2004) also notes a change in CMC research from an earlier idea of cyberspace as a new, extraordinary, and unknown frontier, towards more of a sense of CMC as utilitarian, everyday communication: the title of her 2004 paper, 'Slouching towards the ordinary', suggests a second wave of scrutiny that is more grounded in its expectations. It also suggests

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a fall from grace and loss of innocence, in its intertextual reference to Yeats' poem, 'The Second Coming'.

One of the issues that arises in identifying an example of language as 'creative' in the CMC context is that there have been seismic shifts in what Goffman (1981) would have termed *system constraints*. This means that language producers' starting points can be very different, in terms of the raw materials with which they have to work. There are also, of course, many disputations about what the term 'creative' means, as well as about what the function of any piece of creativity actually is: this book offers many different perspectives on both these issues.

Assessments of creativity need to be made with reference to the context in which users are, which means a careful delineation of the characteristics not only of the medium, but also of the participants. Koestler's (1976: 644) broad definition of creativity – one that is often quoted and applied – links creativity with the idea of breaking and realigning existing frameworks: 'The creative act does not create something out of nothing, like the God of the Old Testament; it combines, reshuffles and relates already existing but hitherto separate ideas, facts, frames of perception, associative contexts.' An assessment of creativity against this benchmark needs to include some awareness of participants' starting points and also the resources that are available to them.

This twin focus is exemplified in Goddard (2005), which study researched the language strategies used by participants new to a simple, writing-only IWD context. Some 36,000 words of IWD data were collected over the course of an academic term (twelve weeks) during 1999–2000. Participants were also interviewed about their language choices once the IWD data collection had finished.

It is interesting now to look back to a point at which 'being online' was a largely unknown or rarely experienced context, which was the case for the participants in this study. They were beginning undergraduates using an IWD tool in order to discuss language topics. In what would now be considered a very stripped-down, somewhat arid environment in which not even emoticons were available, participants found ways in which to create three-dimensional worlds from words. Some data samples from this study are given in the following text. (Note that all data samples are written here as they appeared originally. Where the lines are written consecutively, they appeared consecutively in the data. Where there is a space between lines, they have been taken from different parts of the data.)

Technologies have changed and developed, and although some aspects of the behaviour illustrated have become normalised in our everyday digital exchanges, there are other examples that shed light on what we do every time we are presented with a new environment. The study highlights the role of creative play in exploring new communication contexts, as well as the importance of creativity for interpersonal connection, for the expression of individual identity, and for group cohesion. All of these areas are still key topics in language and Internet communication, as well as in the wider field of language and communication in general.

Creative language play enabled participants to explore the reconfigured nature of the spatio-temporal dimensions inherent in their new environment. In the playful line below, Ryan registers that fact that, in this new space, the text has replaced him. But where is he?

RyanS>>.   look im over here

The speed of writing required in the new context led to many errors – but did they count as errors in this new world, or as a creative new way of looking at language? Either way, errors were a fertile source of language play and interpersonal involvement. Below,

Alex – who, interestingly, was dyslexic and, despite her initial anxiety, loved this new environment – responds to Andrew's criticism of her initial mistake of running two words together by creating a whole sentence written as one word:

> Alex>>I would considerate
> Andrew>>conseiderit is not oneword
> Alex>>ItsanewmoneysavingschemefromMcDonalds

The participants below explore the effect that the linearity of writing has on opening routines in multiparty contexts. In speech, opening routines can achieve economy via orchestrated simultaneity, but interactive writing does not offer this affordance. Ryan's creative reduction of 'hi there' to 'hi', to 'h', to '….', and ending with 'zzzzzz', performs a sense of comical fatigue in transferring this routine from the rapidity of speech to the laboriousness of writing. The potentially endless nature of this cycle (repeated many times playfully in closing routines in the data) has been termed 'broken record' (Gillen & Goddard, 2000):

> Laura>>hey. sorry i am late, this is group nine isn't it?
> Ryan>>hi there
> Laura>>hello
> RyanS>>welcome
> Rebecca>>hello laura
> Ryan>>hi
> Laura>>hello
> Ryan>>hello laura
> Laura>>hello
> Rebecca>>hi
> Ryan>>h
> Laura>>hello
> Ryan>>.....
> Rebecca>>h
> Laura>>hello
> Ryan>>zzzzzz

Participants showed a range of linguistic strategies to metaphorise the new spaces in which they found themselves. Spaces were quickly textualised via metaphorical deictics of 'in–out' and 'here–there', which then blended seamlessly with ideas about outer space and the spirit world:

> is there anyone in here?'

> 'is anyone coming in?'

> 'anyone there?'

> 'is there anybody out there?'

> 'Hello spirits is their any one out there?' [*sic*]

Distinctive registers were used to create voices invoking various institutional contexts and spaces, such as a bar brawl:

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 RyanS>>mr peters are you threatenning me
 Devin>>Yes mr schmidt that is exactly what i'm doing
 RyanS>>come on you and me outside

Or a police officer encountering someone acting suspiciously:

 Joanne>>hello hello hello

Or parents scolding their children for messing up their room:

 Ryan>>oi clean your room
 Rebecca>>stop it and tidy up!

Or a forlorn intertextual version of Julius Caesar conquering Gaul:

 Glyn>>I came, I saw, and no one turned up

And a comedic media representation of a hospital scene:

 David>> ohhhh matron!

Participants had to judge how prosodic aspects familiar to them in speech might be represented in writing. For example, in the following interaction, Natalie and Simon are trying to capture the prosodics of variants of 'yeah':

 Natalie>>yeak
 Natalie>>sorry yea
 Simon>>why yeah
 Natalie>>i dont mean it like yeah man i mean it like yeay
 Simon>>what is the difference
 Natalie>>it's happier and less cheesy
 Simon>>and that is worthy of a yehah

The following list shows frequency of the variants above within the context of other examples in the data:

yaaa	1	yeh	1
yea	1	yehah	1
yeah	42	yep	6
yeahbut	1	yes	87
yeahhh	1	yess	1
yeak	1	yeay	1

In formulating the 'response cries' (Goffman, 1981: 121), participants had to be creative in their spelling choices, because sometimes the item had (and still has) no standardised written form. Such interjections as those below fall outside the scope of phonology, which focuses only on sound – but neither are they seen as lexical items, so they do not feature in dictionaries. In his own exploration of response cries, which he describes as 'blurted vocalisations',

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Goffman (1981) notes how these forms sometimes pass between speech and writing in subtle ways. For example, we can make a disapproving 'tsk tsk' noise, but because we also write 'tut-tut', we can say that too. However, saying 'tut-tut' can be a much more knowing and complex expression of attitude, suggesting that the activity in question is normally subject to opprobrium, but that this attitude is not necessary shared by the speaker:

> oops
> uh-oh!
> arhhhhh!!!!
> duh
> eek
> wey hey!/woo hoo!
> WOOOOOPEEEEEE!!!!!
> Ta da!

With our more frequent digital interactions, some of these spellings seem to have been on the move. For example, 'yeay' can also be seen as 'yay', expressing delight at an achievement, and 'oops' can appear as 'whoops', or even 'woops'; a current British advertising campaign for a cosmetic product uses 'Ta Dah!'

Representations of laughter also demonstrated some subtleties of meaning, as can be seen from the following list. When participants were interviewed, they were able to describe quite precisely how they intended different items to be 'heard'. For example, while the first two examples were seen as straightforward laughter, 'heh heh' was described as a chuckle and 'tee hee', as sniggering laughter. Bracketed laughter and 'har har' indicated a judgement that the humour was predictable, while the final example was one student's attempt to, as she put it, 'laugh uncontrollably'. She added, philosophically, 'I realised that you can't laugh uncontrollably in writing, because you're controlling your writing':

> ha ha ha
> he he he
> heh heh
> tee hee
> I'm in Manchester and from Manchester (ha ha)
> oh har har
> hee hee hee ha ha ha hooooo hoo

Representations of 'yes', of laughter, and of response cries can all be seen in contemporary language use on social media sites and in everyday exchanges of email. It is interesting that items that might initially have been thought of as existing only in a real-time context can now be seen in other contexts too. For example, the idea of response cries has traditionally been that they were a spontaneous expression of emotion triggered by an event or stimulus in the local environment. Goffman's (1981) classic example is of someone tripping over a paving stone and expostulating, as a result. But Goffman makes the point that the cry occurs only when the person has recovered, not while the mishap is actually in motion. He speculates that its function is a face-saving one: showing any bystanders that normal action is resumed. The cry performs a momentary, but temporary, loss of control. So perhaps these little pieces of behaviour were always ready-primed for symbolic functions in social interactions? If someone sends another person a 'duh' or an 'oops', because he or she did something wrong in a

previous email, that person is inviting his or her reader to be an audience to the mini-drama that ran in the sender's own head when he or she discovered the mistake. But the sender is also saying that he or she has recovered – and that it is back to business as usual.

The aspects of prosody and paralanguage illustrated below can also been seen in many examples of contemporary use in different digital contexts – capitals for volume, duplicated letters for speed and length of utterance, repeated dots (not always three-dot ellipses) to represent a pause for thought or (as in the final example) perhaps adding an element of 'vocal fry' (Wolk, Abdelli-Beruh, & Slavin, 2012) to the breathy phonation:

> To Nadia MEOW saucer of milk table 7!!!
>
> NO NO NO NO NO!!!!
>
> Ssssllllllllooooowww
>
> don't go pleaseeeeeeeeeee
>
> He needs someone to love him cause hes so...........lonely
>
> Andy mine oohhhhhhhhhh b...........aby

While some of the response cries could be seen as connecting intertextually with the language of comics, some of the examples echo the established conventions of literary representations, for example in novelistic dialogue.

The creative manipulation of IWD seen in these examples are not great pieces of literature or staged events of the type described in the *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication* special issue on play in 1995. The participants were certainly highly skilled language users, but their language choices reflected both their explorations of the new environment into which they had been invited and their explorations of each other. They were new to university and, as beginning undergraduates, new to each other too – although, as the term went on, they did meet face-to-face, in other lectures on their programme. On many occasions, creative language use was a way in which individuals could invite others to connect with them: it was a way of announcing themselves as sociable and ready to be a conversational partner or group member. It also invited others to make aesthetic judgements of their performances, involving a degree of risk-taking: others might not approve, or may not even understand the language as play, or may not think it creative at all. But where creative effort is made, there is often overt appreciation too:

> Andrew>>Hi Lucy, I thought the chat had got your tongue, excuse the pun
> RyanS>>nice
> Sorcha>>god andrew what have you started
> Andrew>>I'm no god, but thanks for the compliment
> Sorcha>>heh heh

There are also examples of some highly complex group performances in which there is more fun to be had in adding to the play than in commenting on it. The following example shows not only creative play with patterns of sound and symbol, but also intertextual references to shared cultural knowledge (*The Wizard of Oz*, *The Blair Witch Project*, a song by Prodigy). These are not random references; rather, they all involve threatening figures or ideas, appropriate perhaps to people experiencing a strange new medium in which others are invisible and may therefore be up to no good:

> Nadia>>Andie can you stop your twitching please
> Glyn>>your name has been added to the list you will not see another sunrise Andrew
> RyanS>>the blair twitch project
> Alex>>So your a twitcher then Andy
> RyanS>>smack my twitch up
> RyanJ>>the wicked twitch of the west
> RyanJ>>or wirral

(Note that 'twitching', as in bird-watching, had occurred in previous dialogues in connection with ideas about 'blokeish' behaviour, as had references to stalking and undercover warfare.)

The idea of how people establish and maintain Internet communities, and how participants negotiate their identities (including their gender identities) and interpret the language choices of others: these are all topics that continue to be significant, despite the very real differences in the creative resources that are available for participants to use. Some communities are simply about creative language play itself, with users experiencing pleasure in creating humorous and witty texts for others to enjoy, and for the appreciation of others' skill in doing the same. This phenomenon is exemplified by the huge success of sites such as Lolcats (http://icanhas.cheezburger.com) or Doge (see Hern, 2014). However, it is important to realise that, even on such sites, value is attached to individual efforts to conform with 'rules' for language use, making the examples more or less likely to be 'upvoted' as good creative outputs.

Public discourses about the language skills involved in Internet communication represent another important area for research. Web 2.0 is driven by the idea of creative self-publishing and much is made of the need for people, particularly the young, to be able to manage themselves in new communication environments. However, new technologies are often demonised in the popular media and held responsible for declining rates of literacy, or the acquisition of the 'wrong' type of literacy (see Goddard & Geesin, 2011, for examples of such media coverage). At the same time as the British government pronounces on the importance of the new creative industries and youth entrepreneurship, digital texts are not allowed to feature on GCSE national examination papers for English, and pen-and-paper tests are still overwhelmingly the norm in all assessments.

But employability skills in the real world increasingly involve Internet communication, often in 'English as lingua franca' (ELF) contexts in which users need to make judgements about appropriate language choices and how far they can be creatively informal. Are the kinds of representations of informal, everyday language items outlined earlier – for example variants of 'yes' or of laughter, response cries, or the use of expressive punctuation – easily understood? Is there a kind of 'online ELF' that supersedes more localised Englishes? And, if so, whose norms are being applied? In the example below, a British student, Dave, attempts to 'correct' Helene, a Swedish student, who, along with Dave, is part of a collaborative project linking together university students in the United Kingdom and Scandinavia (see Goddard, 2003, 2011). This example suggests that some of the forms of language use that are developing in new communication environments might involve some interesting challenges to native speaker norms:

> Dave>>by the way, It might be best to say 'okay' rather than okey
> Helene>>okey!
> Dave>>sorry and all that!!!
> Helene>>okey!:)

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Current contributions and research

As should be evident from this volume, the study of creativity does not represent a single or unified field. Although this is a strength, in that it can be viewed from many different perspectives, it is also a disadvantage, because connections between disciplines are therefore hard to make. Even the divisions in this volume suggest predetermined boundaries that need to be challenged. For example, from a formalistic perspective, it is hard to see any difference between 'literary' creativity and the types of creativity illustrated in the examples of IWD quoted in this chapter. (These examples are not an isolated occurrence of particular features: see Goddard, 2003, for a discussion of 'literariness' with reference to IWD produced in communication between British and Swedish students.)

A further complexity in thinking about language and creativity is the fact that linguistic creativity is so closely associated with play. This means that research papers focusing on play in Internet communication may be more likely to offer fruitful insights than those with 'creativity' in their title or keywords, since the latter may well be focusing on literary publications or performances – a play, rather than play itself.

Cook's (2000: 5) definition of what play involves indicates how close the two concepts of play and creativity can be 'the patterning of linguistic form, the creation of alternative realities, and the social use of both of these for intimacy and conflict'. Unfortunately, research on play is itself fragmented across different disciplines.

Cook (2000) maintains that, while adult imaginative behaviour is cordoned off in 'the arts' (or in studies of mental health, depending on how imaginative behaviour is being defined), childish make-believe is to be found in psychology or child language studies. Crystal (1998: 218) calls for a whole new discipline of 'applied ludic linguistics', claiming that, as yet, creative language play has not been incorporated into general educational thinking about language learning – particularly the acquisition of literacy.

Obviously, another point of access to studies of Internet communication is in Internet studies, which has become a field in its own right – although, of course, language and creativity will represent only one focus among the many topics that will feature. Relevant publications include: *Information, Communication and Society*, the journal of the Association of Internet Researchers; the *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication*, from the International Communication Association; *M/C*, which focuses on media and culture, with each edition revolving around a single term interpreted in different ways; and *Language@ Internet*, a journal that has language in constant focus, if not always creativity.

Language use in Internet communication can encompass a wide range of contexts, from interpersonal exchanges between individuals, through studies of social groups in special interest or learning forums, to organisational aspects of communication in multinational companies. The briefest perusal of *Language@Internet* will reveal this variety and more, but a good starting point to understand the history and trajectory of language studies is represented by two reports by Herring (2010, 2011).

Main research methods

As different technologies have become available for communication, they have also become available for collecting and researching that communication. Real-time writing can be collected via chatlogs; Skype and other multimodal communication systems can be archived and replayed; emails can be copied and pasted; web pages of all kinds can be preserved via links and screenshots; microblogging tools, such as Twitter, can be used to harvest data

from large numbers of users. Communication tools with specific constraints, such as the 140-character limit of Twitter, can generate creative strategies for economy in a similar way as those seen in former Short Message Service (SMS) usage (Thurlow, 2003).

However, the technology needs to be seen not as the research method, but rather as a result of the method chosen. And the method, of course, is determined by the research focus. This means that the same types of question about method apply here as they do to any other research field. For example, would the study benefit more from a qualitative or quantitative approach? A qualitative, discourse-analytic method might suit research involving the nature of interactivity between participants, while a research focus on the use of a particular word or phrase might benefit more from quantitative evidence. An example of the latter – although not specifically focused on creativity – was research in 2014 by academics at the University of London Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis, which monitored all geo-located Tweets in the United Kingdom over a particular period of time for swearing. Some 1.3 million Tweets from smartphones were reviewed and the biggest peak occurred on football's transfer deadline day, with the most 'profane' areas being Redcar and Cleveland, and the least, Kensington and Chelsea (BBC News, 2014).

A further, relatively recent, computer-based method is that of corpus research. Because CMC is collectable, it is also storable in a way that enables it to be searched for specific occurrences, including the frequency of items, but also their habitual environments or collocations. Building one's corpus from a collection of data can yield interesting results that can be hard to observe manually, particularly in long episodes of IWD. Results can be compared with other corpora that do not include data from CMC sources. Corpora can be very revealing, but it is important to recognise that they reflect only the language of the particular users who have contributed to it.

A mix of methods can be valuable. For example, where the researcher is not part of the community whose language is being researched, asking questions of the producers of the language in question can provide useful insights into different ways of viewing the same language item. For example, a British student participant in Goddard (2003) produced an opening line in an IWD exchange with Swedish students of 'Hello, England calling', which to an older researcher suggested might reference World War II or a 1940s BBC radio programme called *Forces Favourites*. However, when interviewed, the student said that it referred to the Eurovision song contest and was intended as recognition of the success of the Swedish supergroup, Abba. These different interpretations support ideas suggested by Bakhtin (1981) that language is culturally suffused and intertextual, carrying traces of its history of use, but open to new layers of meanings with each reiteration.

Finally, it is important to recognise that not all methods can simply be transferred from one application to the next. At the start of this chapter, I suggested that Internet communication broke many aspects of the existing paradigms of speech and writing. If therefore follows that if a method devised for researching an aspect of language is derived from existing paradigms, it is unlikely to be transferable. An example of this in practice is the idea at the basis of many former studies of speech and writing that interactivity involved sound – because, at that time, there was no such thing as real-time interactive writing. New forms of communication need some methodological creativity.

Recommendations for practice

Internet communication can all too easily be cast adrift from its context in the process of analysis, perhaps because of its very nature of seeming 'out there'. It needs to be recognised

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that the Internet is a context, not an absence of one, and that ethical considerations attach to this arena as to any other place in which human beings communicate. For users, Internet communication has a material existence that lives alongside the other types of communication embedded in daily experience. Producing and receiving Internet communication is a physical activity, even if it is not acoustic (which it may well be, if the tool is multimodal). Typing on a keyboard or touchscreen, perhaps adding attachments, designing a text, seeing it appear, processing others' communication: all of this is physical activity, set within the other physical parameters of where any user is, what room they are in, what kind of computer they are on, whether they are multitasking, who else is around, and so on. If participants are involved in IWD, then textual processing takes on a very sharp temporal aspect, as well as a spatial one, with language items spilling down the screen and then disappearing from view as the screen scrolls to accommodate others' contributions. It is likely that participants end up with their lines in a different place from where they intended to insert them, if they are slow at typing messages. Keeping track of conversations can be a complex activity that is nothing like turn taking in spoken language.

I have offered this description because it is easy to take something like a chatlog as a decontextualised and self-sufficient text, and read it as if it were a literary play script, complete with voices of one's own making. A chatlog is not the same thing as the real interaction, the interaction itself; it is simply the result of the interaction – it is what the users have left behind. It is comparable to a speech transcript, which is a representation of speech, not the speech itself. In both cases, the participants could not foresee what was going to happen at any point in time. Real-time discourse unfolds in time and no one in an interaction really knows how it is going to end. But an analyst is able to look at the whole thing, and indeed often does so. There is nothing wrong with that, of course – but reading backwards and forwards in a text from an analytical point of view produces a different version of the event from that experienced by the participants. And in 'voicing' the language of others, an analyst may be adding a creative performance of their own that was not really there in the original.

Future directions

Future directions are certainly going to be interesting, if the past twenty years are anything to go by. It is likely that new communication tools will continue to emerge and to offer new opportunities for creativity, as well as new challenges for research and analysis. Because social awareness tends to lag behind the technical affordances of communication, there will be plenty of public debate about the nature of language use in these new environments.

From a linguistic perspective, there is still much to learn about how we learn – how we take what we know from one context and adapt to new constraints. And there are still many unanswered questions about the hybrid nature of the new forms of language that we are producing. We often see the language referred to as 'speech-like' when we are only just learning, from an academic perspective, how speech works. It would be good to see some much better, specific ideas about the ways in which Internet communication can be said to resemble speech, or the ways in which it is nothing like it at all. Then we would be able to say with more clarity how users are deploying their linguistic resources for all of the purposes served by communication – including that of creative language play – in their everyday Internet encounters.

Related topics

creativity and digital text; creativity and technology; everyday language creativity; humour and language play; literary stylistics and creativity

Further reading

Crystal, D. (2011) *Internet Linguistics: A Student Guide*, New York: Routledge.

As the title suggests, this is a guide aimed at students, offering a range of different approaches for students who are interested in researching Internet language use.

Danet, B., and Herring, S. (2007) *The Multilingual Internet: Language, Culture and Communication Online*, New York: Oxford University Press.

This is a slightly older book than the others listed, but its focus is multilingual.

Goddard, A., and Geesin, B. (2011) *Language and Technology*, London: Routledge.

The authors look at aspects of language use in new communication contexts, including evidence of public attitudes and behaviour around new forms of communication.

Thurlow, C., and Mroczek, K. (eds) (2011) *Digital Discourse: Language In The New Media*, New York/London: Oxford University Press.

In this text, the authors take a sociolinguistic approach to new media contexts, covering different types of communication and different languages.

Thurlow, C., Lengel, L., and Tomic, A. (2004) *Computer Mediated Communication: Social Interaction and the Internet*, London: Sage.

This is an older text, but one that still has useful things to say about the new social practices that surround language use in computer-mediated environments.

Both the *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication* and *Language@Internet* include articles about Internet communication involving languages other than English.

Useful websites

http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jcmc.2009.14.issue-4/issuetoc

This links to a special issue, (2009) 14(4), of the *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication* devoted to technology and young people.

http://www.lkl.ac.uk/cms/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1

Researchers at London University's Knowledge Lab have produced many publications that are particularly relevant to educational contexts.

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Creativity and digital text

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Introduction and definitions: Digital literature

Any discussion on digital text has to start with a differentiation between 'digital' and 'digitised' text. The most popular misconception is to understand text appearing in digital media as digital text or, to use the concept more important for the discussion at hand, digital literature. This is not very different from saying that a story read on the radio is a radio play. To avoid such misconceptions, it has been asserted that digital literature should be 'born digital'. However, this stricture does not help much if it is understood as a requirement to create the text on or using a computer: typing a novel using a keyboard and reading it on the screen does not turn it into digital literature. The Electronic Literature Organization (ELO), founded in 1999 'to foster and promote the reading, writing, teaching, and understanding of literature as it develops and persists in a changing digital environment', tries to be more precise when answering the question of what is electronic literature: 'Electronic literature, or e-lit, refers to works with important literary aspects that take advantage of the capabilities and contexts provided by the stand-alone or networked computer' (ELO, 1999). This definition introduces a second problem – without really solving the first – by shifting from '*digital* environment' to '*electronic* literature'. Leaving alone the troubled waters of 'important literary aspects', a poem using the distribution facility of email or weblogs – thus taking advantage of the capabilities of a networked computer – is still a poem.

No matter how we eventually define the specific 'literariness' of digital literature, it is evident that it undermines the identity of digital literature as *literature*. In addition to the *sine qua non* of literariness, there is another *sine qua non* regarding the essence of digital literature: that it is more than literature in the traditional sense. By definition, digital literature has to go beyond the employment of letters and it has to make *aesthetic* use of the features of digital media. In digital literature, computation is essential not only to the text as a particular kind of physical artefact, but also to the specifically literary properties of the text. The implication of such a notion is fundamental: if the features of digital technology are essential to the literary properties of the text, they inevitably undermine, more or less, the dominant status of text.

An example and precursor in the history of experimental literature is concrete poetry, in which the linguistic value of the text is accompanied and supplemented by its visual qualities. Thus concrete poetry moves from the paradigm of creating a world in the reader's imagination based on a specific combination of letters towards presenting an event to the viewer

and reader's eye directly. More precisely, the meaning of a concrete poem consists of a combination of the linguistic signification with the way in which this signification (that is, the characters) appears. Thus, in Eugen Gomringer's (1954) concrete poem 'Schweigen', the word *Schweigen* ('silence') is presented in five horizontal and three vertical lines surrounding an empty, silent space in the middle of the third horizontal line (Gomringer, 1969: 27). Understanding the linguistic meaning of the text allows for understanding the meaning of the gap between the fourteen utterances of *Schweigen*. In digital media, concrete poetry becomes kinetic, as in John Cayley's (2004) installation *Overboard*, in which a program of carefully designed algorithms allows characters to disappear or be replaced by other characters, thus undermining the lexical relationship of the word until the original characters are restored. The poem about a man falling overboard during a storm continually drifts in (rising) and out (sinking) of legibility, and thus renders its own message visually.

As this example demonstrates, digital text is digital only if it is, in another sense, not only digital. Undermining the prevalence of text as a linguistic declaration also undermines the digital nature of digital literature: while it enters the realm of the digital on the operational level, digital text or literature must leave it on the semiotic one. The former refers to the computer as a technology based on digitisation; the latter refers to the nature of literature as being grounded on a combinatory system of digital units, such as letters, phonemes, and words. If, by definition, digital literature – digital as an aspect of technology – has to be more than digitised text, then it must also not be limited to the digital nature of text – digital in a semiotic sense.

To put it another way: since language consists of discrete signs, one could say that text is always the result of digital encoding, unlike images or sound, which are based on non-discrete signs. This is the basis for linguists' objections to the prevailing expansion of the term 'language' to non-linguistic signs such as images. They are not based on 'a combinatory system of digital units, as phonemes are', as Roland Barthes (1991 [1964]: 21) holds in his essay 'Rhetoric of the image'. However, in the case of digital text, both concepts of language apply. Since digital literature, by definition, is different from traditional print literature, it also, by definition, has to surpass semiotic digitality. This is achieved by connecting to non-discrete signs such as visual, sonic, and performative elements. The term 'digital literature' therefore points to the *technological* and not the *semiotic* aspect of the medium. The result of this characterisation is a shift from linguistic hermeneutics to a hermeneutics of interactive, intermedial, and performative signs. It is not only the meaning of a word that is at stake, but also the meaning of the performance of this word on the monitor that may be triggered by the reader's action.

Thus digital literature can be defined as literature that is not only presented in and distributed by digital media, but also takes *aesthetic* advantage of their specific characteristics, which can be identified as interactivity, intermediality, and performance (Simanowski, 2002). *Interactivity* aims at motivating the recipient to co-construct the work. This encompasses reacting to:

- characteristics of the work (programmed interactivity: human–software), which includes first of all (but certainly not exclusively, or even primarily) multilinearity in hypertexts requiring readers to make navigational decisions on their own; and
- activities of other recipients (network-bound interactivity: human–human via software), which includes cooperative writing projects asking all readers entering a website to become authors of a given project.

Intermediality marks the (conceptual-integrative) connection between the traditional media of expression: language, image, and music.

Performance (or processualisation) refers to the programming of an intrinsic performance or of one that is dependent on reception. One could inscribe aspects of the performance into the invisible textual level of the digital work, for example the succession of images, the number of loops, or the background colour in simple gif animation. Another textual level, much more easily accessible, is the HTML source, with its executive commands and the Java-Scripts, which, while not appearing as text on the interface, invisibly continue their activity in the background. The prompt can come either from the program or from the recipient. In the latter case, we are again dealing with the aspect of programmed interactivity mentioned above. In either case, however, the data presented are altered during the process of reception, which requires directing aesthetic attention not only to the predetermined relationships among data, but also at the dynamics of their processualisation.

The given characteristics of digital literature – which, of course, act to various degrees and in a wide variety of combinations – moves the subject at hand from the realm of literature towards the realm of art. The question of when to call a specific aesthetic phenomenon digital *art* rather than digital literature may be accompanied by the question of how much text such a phenomenon must contain in order to still be called *literature*. It has been argued that the difference is based on the materials used: if words outweigh graphic and other elements, then we are dealing with literature (Ziegfeld, 1989). However, the counting of words or characters may not be the most sufficient means to decide this question, since, as this chapter will illustrate, there are many works that provide a lot of words and characters, but nonetheless can be perceived without any reading. Hence a more appropriate question will be how the audience engages with a piece that contains characters without being reduced to pure text. If the piece still requires reading as a central activity, we may call it *digital literature*. If it allows us to play with the letters as mere visual objects, we may consider it *digital art*.

Historical and theoretical perspectives: Competition of words and pictures

In his book *The Language of New Media*, Lev Manovich (2001: 78) claims that:

> The printed word tradition that initially dominated the language of cultural interfaces is becoming less important, while the part played by cinematic elements is becoming progressively stronger. This is consistent with a general trend in modern society toward presenting more and more information in the form of time-based audiovisual moving image sequences, rather than as text.

The notion of the decline of the printed-word tradition is in line with the assumption that electronic media, computers, and the Internet undermine the authority and cultural supremacy of the word. Three significant books demonstrate this view: Neil Postman (1985) claims, in *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, that the inevitable message of the medium of television is entertainment and distraction; Barry Sanders (1994) holds, in *A Is for Ox: Violence, Electronic Media, and the Silencing of the Written Word*, that literacy is on the decline because of our fascination with electronic media – television, videos, computer games – which fail to provide the narrative power of true literary sources; and Nadin

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Mihai (1997) entitles his book *The Civilization of Illiteracy* precisely because it addresses an unfolding civilisation in which the language of the Internet, interactive multimedia, and virtual reality have become the new languages of human interaction.

The advent and success of the Internet has – as soon as digital media also provided images – enhanced the notion of the decreasing authority of the word after the 'pictorial turn' in contemporary culture (Mitchell, 1992). Hyperfiction author and theorist Michael Joyce predicted in 1995 that the 'post-alphabetic image' will soon 'either rob us of the power – or relieve us of the burden – of language' (quoted in Joyce, 2000: 42), and Jay David Bolter, who investigated, in his 1991 book *Writing Space: Computers, Hypertext, and the History of Writing*, the new opportunities for the word in digital media, spoke in 1996 of the 'breakout of the visual' in the digital world, observing that, in multimedia, the relationship between word and image is becoming as unstable as in the popular press, in which images do not appear subordinate to the word anymore and 'we are no longer certain that words deserve the cultural authority they have been given' (Bolter, 1996: 258).

The observed subversion of the text's authority can be treated with the concept of remediation, which, a few years later, Bolter and his colleague Richard Grusin developed in their book *Remediation: Understanding New Media*. Bolter and Grusin (1999) describe media history as 'the representation of one medium in another', a process in which the formal logic of prior media is refashioned, remediated, in new media. Bolter and Grusin (1999: 45) speak of a 'competition or rivalry between the new media and the old'.

Another concept to understand this rivalry is the cultural perspective on cannibalism developed in Brazil seventy years ago. In his 1928 *Anthropophagic Manifesto*, Oswald de Andrade claimed that the Brazilian must 'devour' – critically assimilate rather than imitate – European codes using irreverence, inversion, joke, parody, sacrilege, and insult as subversive anti-colonialist strategies (Bary, 1991). De Andrade's manifesto appeared in the first edition of the *Revista de Antropofagi* and sparked the very influential anthropophagic movement of the Brazilian avant-garde. An example of the subversive anti-colonialist strategies was to adopt the coloniser's biased view of the colonised as a cannibal and to base the quest for an originally Brazilian identity on the trope of cannibalism (Bary, 1991). In contrast to the nationalist xenophobic movements of the time, the concept of *Antropófago* aimed to produce national identity not through isolation or ignorance of foreign stereotypes and imported culture, but through its intentional ingestion and digestion. Thus *Antropófago* (and its offspring in the 1960s tropicalism) led to manifold metamorphoses, recognising other cultures, opening the way for non-homogeneous cultural encounters.

If we extend de Andrade's cultural conceptualisation of *Antropófago* to media, we may understand the ongoing shift from the old, elitist medium of text to the new, popular audiovisual media as a kind of *reconquista* of the centre stage of culture. This centre stage had been 'colonised' by the 'Gutenberg Galaxy' (McLuhan, 1962) in the wave of the 'Coming of the book' (Febvre & Martin, 1997) and the so-called *Leserevolution* ('reading revolution'), with its 'structural transformation of the public sphere' (Habermas, 1991) in the eighteenth century.

This 'roll-back' began with the twentieth century and the increasing importance of visual culture in the form of cinema and television, which Guy Debord in 1967 famously identified as *The Society of the Spectacle*, and which Theodor W. Adorno (2005: 54) remarkably called 'language of images' and 'hieroglyphic writing'. The triumph of the image entered a new stage with digital technology at the end of the twentieth century when software such

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as Shockwave and Flash facilitated the general 'shift away from prior modes of spectator experience based on symbolic concerns (and "interpretative models") towards recipients who are seeking intensities of direct sensual stimulation' (Darley, 2000: 3). Despite artistic projects to re-establish the authority of text within the aesthetic of the spectacle – such as Michael Snow's text-film *So Is This* (1982), and Barbara Kruger's and Jenny Holzer's text installations – text has increasingly been substituted by the visual and spectacle. The latest example of the anthropophagic process is the fact that the Global Language Monitor (2014) chose an emoji – the icon   for 'love' – as its 'Top Word' of 2014.

This substitution occurs not only as the deletion of text by replacing it with images, but also as devouring the textual by turning text itself into an image – or into a sonic object. There is a trend in interactive installations to incorporate text as an element of the work that is not to be read, but to be looked at or played with. Such desemanticisation evokes a 'cannibalistic' relationship between the semiotic systems of text, on the one hand, and of visual, installation, or performance art, on the other. However, sometimes these works allow us to regain the linguistic significance of the text in later operations of reading and interpretation. Hence some works may be digital art and digital literature at the same time, or, at least, consecutively – if their audiences and readers are indeed interested enough to engage in an adventure that aims to rescue their literary 'prisoners'. The following sections illustrate this 'cannibalistic' approach to text by means of a close reading of three examples.

Case study 1: Text Rain

In the interactive installation *Text Rain* by Camille Utterback and Romy Achituv (1999), viewers stand or move in front of a large monitor, in which they see themselves as black-and-white projections on which letters 'fall' from the top edge. Like rain or snow, the letters appear to land on participants' heads and arms, and respond to their motions, and seem able to be lifted and let fall again. The falling letters land on anything darker than a certain threshold value and 'fall' whenever that obstacle is removed. Participants who have accumulated enough letters can sometimes decipher an entire word or even a phrase. The installation does not completely strip letters of their linguistic value, but allows *reading* the text in addition to *playing* with it, employing passages from the poem 'Talk, You', from Evan Zimroth's 1993 book *Dead, Dinner, or Naked*.

In my own experiences of, and in documentary evidence about, *Text Rain*, however, the lines can hardly be deciphered, even after the viewer has painstakingly collected all of the letters. Generally speaking, viewers do not engage in the reading process, but rather test the interface. The fact that there are words formed by the letters encourages viewers' dialogue with the letters, but it does not allow them to read the entire poem, nor does it elicit the intention to do so. The work functions primarily on the physical level: the fascinating elements of the installation are the movements that it creates in front of the monitor as viewers interact with the falling letters. The letters are liberated from their representational function: they have left language behind and turned into visual objects as part of an interactive installation. The viewer (or 'interactor'), on the other side, is liberated from reading the text and looking for meaning: he or she can simply enjoy the moment of playing.

However, in Utterback and Achituv's installation, text does still play a certain role *as* text. On the one hand, it appears as letters that the interactor can collect, unlike in Zachary Booth Simpson's similar installation *Sand* (2000), in which a stream of liquid sand flowing

from above reacts to the interactor's shadow on the screen. On the other hand, if one reads the poem, one realises a deeper relationship between the text and the installation. The poem is about the conversation between bodies. Two of its lines read: 'At your turning, each part/ of my body turns to verb.' This relationship between verb and body, between 'You' and 'I', is mirrored in the installation, in which the movement of the interactor's body creates words. However, the poem ends with the lines 'and yet turn to nothing/*It's just talk*'. This can be understood as a celebration of the aimless conversation, which does not turn into a linguistic message as a practical result. Such aimless talk reflects exactly what the user does in his or her interaction with the letters in the installation, which likewise does not lead to any specific result in terms of a message: it is just play.

The installation turns out to be a performance of the poem from which it gains its meaning. The text is devoured and metamorphosed as an object to play with. However, it is important that the 'dismembered' text remains readable (in a book, or on the website for *Text Rain*), since only its perception as intact poem reveals how the installation has digested its meal.

It may not come as a surprise that most visitors experiencing *Text Rain* never look up the provenance of the text, which is not provided at the installation venue. The majority engage with the installation only on the level of a joyful play with falling letters and hence miss the deeper meaning of the installation possible through interpretation of the text. The majority of interactors are not really interested in putting the text together again and, certainly, to assemble the text would require not only collecting some of its letters on one's arm, but also retrieving and reading it in its original form. While the artists may hope that the audience will consult the original text to understand the installation, the audience may opt out of doing so and simply consume the letters as visual, interactive objects.

Case study 2: Listening Post

The installation *Listening Post* (2000–01), by the statistician Mark Hansen and sound designer and multimedia artist Ben Rubin, consists of 231 miniature text display screens organised on aluminium poles on a suspended curved grid of 11 rows and 21 columns, with overall dimensions of 21ft × 14ft × 3ft. Several computers analyse data from thousands of Internet chatrooms, bulletin boards, and other public forums. The culled text fragments are fed to a statistical analysis server, which selects certain phrases to be displayed across the grid of screens and read aloud by computer-generated voices.

The piece is organised into a repeating 17-minute sequence of separate compositions, each consisting of six movements with different data-processing logics and arrangements of visual, aural, and musical elements. While, in the first movement, cycles of text wash in from right to left over the entire grid of 231 screens, rendering text as a mere visual, illegible object, in the second movement the text snippets are presented in a readable way, distributed to the 231 screens. The texts are organised by topic clusters, for example phrases starting with 'I am', 'I like', or 'I love'. In the third movement, the text scrolls within each screen at high speed, stopping from time to time, thus allowing the reading of a snippet of the captured conversation. The fourth movement begins with blank displays that eventually fill out completely with texts spoken by a voice synthesiser generating a cacophony of overlapping voice streams. Movement five is visual and silent, presenting sets of four screen names that appear on a single screen, scrolling bottom to top, from the edges to the centre. Movement six presents four-character words scrolling downward and then fading upward.

Rubin explains the intention behind *Listening Post:*

> My starting place was simple curiosity: What do 100,000 people chatting on the Internet sound like? Once Mark and I started listening, at first to statistical representations of web sites, and then to actual language from chat rooms, a kind of music began to emerge. The messages started to form a giant cut-up poem, fragments of discourse juxtaposed to form a strange quilt of communication. It reminds me of the nights I spent as a kid listening to the CB radio, fascinated to hear these anonymous voices crackling up out of the static. Now the static is gone, and the words arrive as voiceless packets of data, and the scale is immense. And so my curiosity gave way to my desire to respond to this condition.
>
> *(Hansen & Rubin, 2001: 1)*

There was a mutual understanding between Rubin and Hansen that their projects should have a strong social component, which is why they used data from online chats rather than from a website. As Rubin says in an interview: 'Internet chat is a strange mirror to look at society. It reflects something about our society but I am not always sure what' (Abumrad, 2002). Steve Johnson, in an interview with *Studio 360*, compares *Listening Post* with Google's zeitgeist portraits, which show the most prevalent search requests over the year, and hence give an idea of user search behaviour and contemporary culture (Abumrad, 2002). Jad Abumrad (2002), in his feature for *Studio 360*, sees *Listening Post* as mirroring 'the mood of the web in that moment'. Sex, the war on terror, the space shuttle: everything that is obsessing people on the Internet at that moment enters the room in a stream of text and sound. However, this installation is more than simply documentation, which already becomes clear from the fact that only some of the six movements allow actual reading of the texts. As Roberta Smith (2003: 1) notes, *Listening Post* 'operates in the gaps between art, entertainment and documentary'. There are specific aesthetic qualities that overwrite this installation's function as mirror to the zeitgeist.

First of all, one may wonder whether the cut-up method, in which the text is assembled, and the collage form, in which it is presented, really provide an accurate reflection of ideas communicated on the Internet. Taking text snippets out of their context resembles rather a distorting mirror. This aspect of the piece is underlined in the third movement, when only a very small part of the scrolling text becomes readable, which actually re-enacts the underlying technique on the screen and underlines – as *pars pro toto* – the decontextualised status of the presented text.

Apart from the questionable documentary value of the text assemblage, the way in which the text appears distracts from its reading. The text is 'flying by like blood racing through a vessel, accompanied by the chittering sound of a rainstorm', report Pop Fizz and Melanie McFarland (2002). Peter Eleey (2003) speaks of the 'particularly striking moments the text washes rapidly across the screens in patterns akin to the topologies created by the movement of wind across a wheat field':

> At one point, what begins with one phrase builds into a cacophonic deluge of communication, suggesting a kind of *horror vacui* in the human psyche. During another act the text bursts across the screens like a flock of birds alighting, crawling in a Holzerian manner, like stock quotes.

In addition, the sonic and visual arrangement of the text contributes to the aesthetic thrill: the darkened gallery space features text pulses of soft blue light, and accompanying waves

of synthetic voices and sonorous Glass-esque musical chords. There are eight computer voices emanating from different speakers around the room, separately or in unison, in call-and-response or round robin patterns. The sonification of the text is in line with the general aesthetics of the piece – namely, its theatrical effect – which is reinforced by the location of benches in front of the 'text curtain'. The theatricalisation makes the text part of a larger event – that is, dissolves it into the experience of the sonic and visual environment. This experience has been compared with 'watching graffiti out of a window of a moving car' (Abumrad, 2002), or looking at a modern painting, the canvas of which consists of a curtain of computer screens (Gibson, 2003). Rubin himself compares the 'giant cut-up poem' *Listening Post* with 'a kind of music' (Hansen & Rubin, 2001: 1).

This appearance and arrangement of text lets visitors experience the installation as 'beguiling, sublime' (Schmader, 2002), as 'almost irresistible, like magic' (Smith, 2003), as 'meditative, sublime and elevating . . . hypnotic and captivating', making it easy 'to be lulled into a trance-like state, forgetting the passage of time and the surroundings' (Huhtamo, 2004: 3). One may conclude that, in the end, the set-up of the installation over-shadows the text that it presents and actually (mis)uses words as ornament. This 'misuse' is the very artistic merit of Rubin's and Hansen's work.

At the end of her review, Roberta Smith (2003: 1) wonders whether *Listening Post* 'is simply the latest twist in the familiar modernist tradition of making art from chance arrangements of everyday materials, and is more a result of technological progress than genuinely new thought'. Smith's concern is a valid one, because there are many examples of applied technology that have been labelled art, although they are missing a genuine idea or artistic statement beyond their actual application. As other critiques note, Rubin and Hansen 'do what composers have done for centuries: transform ordinary, overlooked means of expression into art' (DeLaurenti, 2002). Rubin describes his position as an artist with respect to *Listening Post* as follows:

> As an artist right now with the whole prospect of war it's a very difficult thing to know how to conceive of a response. And this piece has no political message per se but it is listening. It is at least an open space.
>
> *(Abumrad, 2002)*

Rubin's words explain and justify the withdrawal of the artist and the abdication of a personal message symptomatic of naturalistic examples of mapping art, which mirror everyday data found online without adding a specific artistic statement (Simanowski, 2011: 158–86). However, *Listening Post* not only listens – or transmits the data collected – but also speaks to its audience, providing a specific message through the way in which the data are presented. One aspect of its specific manner of presentation is the trance-like experience, which overwhelms the overt message of the data presented. There are more metaphors to be taken into account.

Debra Singer, curator at the Whitney Museum, points out that participating in a chatroom is, while ostensibly social, actually solitary and isolating – 'just the lone person, you in front of your keyboard' – and holds that *Listening Post* gives 'a sense of that collective global buzz. It sort of makes visceral the diversity and the scale of Internet conversations and exchanges' (quoted in Balkin, 2003). Singer is absolutely right in that *Listening Post* indicates the magnitude of virtual communication. As Rita Raley (2009: 31, emphasis original) notes, '"Listening Post" *is* the crowd, or least a representation of the crowd.' However, it is an artificial crowd created by Hansen and Rubin, because *Listening Post* makes data public

that are 'private to a particular community', as Raley (2009: 27) also notes, referring to the element of surveillance in this piece. The texts are taken from communities resembling salons rather than crowds on the street. The crowd presented in *Listening Post* is the result of the collage that Hansen and Rubin generate. The crowd represents individual groups, rather than a crowd unified by the same opinion and intention. Only the combination of all of the more or less private communicative communities creates the sense of a crowd. The scale of Internet conversations, the sense of the 'collective global buzz' that *Listening Post* provides, according to Singer, is the result of a collage of different communications making obvious their diversity rather than their unity.

Even though Hansen and Rubin (2001) consider the 'creation of a kind of community from the informal gathering of thousands of visitors to a given Web site' to be a by-product of their Internet traffic sonification, the correlation between the crowd and the individual, the social and solitary, is perceived as the underlying subject of *Listening Post.* Although the piece funnels communication from thousands of chatrooms into the installation space, one wonders whether this space is another room: thousands *plus one*. How does the exhibition space connect to the online world? How does *Listening Post* talk about its own audience? There is anecdotal evidence for the relationship between both spaces: 'Hansen recalls one showing that amused a silent audience when the installation's strange song began with a short solo that loudly asked, "Are there any bisexuals in the room?"' (Fizz & McFarland, 2002). At least after bringing to mind the given exhibition situation, the audience knows that it is not the addressee for this question. Nevertheless, the ambiguity of its situation of communication points to the difference between both spaces. The audience of *Listening Post* is listening (it is assumed silently) to the presented collection of text snippets, while people out there are sending messages. The latter sit separately behind keyboards connecting to other people via the Internet; the former come together in a room, most likely not connecting to one another in person. *Listening Post* addresses two completely different situations of crowd or groups. The text from the Internet – and not only the quoted particular question – asks people in the gallery who they are and how they connect to each other. The answer may be that they too connect via chatrooms to other people, which would only affirm the advantages of the virtual room over the real.

But there is more: the meaning of *Listening Post* also lies in the texts' dissolve into sound or background music. The decontextualisation that *Listening Post* is undertaking – Rubin calls the piece 'a big de-contextualization machine' (quoted in Coukell, 2004) – makes it hardly reliable as documentary. This very fact, however, underscores its potential as an interactive story. Rubin explains that, when everything is pulled out of its original context, he tends to project around the fragments that he hears, to imagine the conversation from which the fragment came (quoted in Coukell, 2004). When people listen to messages such as 'I am fifteen', 'I am alive', 'I am lonely and sad too', 'I am cooking now for my son', 'I am sexy but not mature', 'I am getting tired of Muslims', 'I am back', to quote only from the 'I am' proclamations, they wonder what these messages mean, what their context may be, and to whom they are addressed, as well as what they are responding to and how they may have been answered. Thus *Listening Post* actually has its audience doing more than listening; it also prompts them to fill in the gaps. The listeners are provoked to use their imagination; they become co-authors in a kind of delayed collaboration with the unknown authors from the Internet.

This is true at least as long as the text is presented in a readable way, and as long as the audience stays with the text and moves through it as reader. The moment at which the listeners – or visitors – step away from the text is the point at which the linguistic

phenomenon eventually leaves the centre of attention, giving space to the experience of sonic and visual effects no longer based on deciphering the text. And that brings us back to our initial question: is *Listening Post* linguistic or visual art?

Eric Gibson, in his 2003 review in the *Wall Street Journal*, compares the experience of *Listening Post* with the experience of a painting:

> The viewer relates to *Listening Post* much as he does [to] a traditional painting, that is, by alternating between the part and the whole. One may back up to take everything in, then move in to scrutinize a detail – in this case a message on the screen.

Gibson's comparison of the installation to the traditional medium of painting may intend to furnish the former with the dignity of the latter, but it is nonetheless misleading. Although Gibson sees a quantitative change between only the part and the whole, there is also a qualitative change between two completely different modes of perception. The alteration between the part and the whole is an alteration between reading and watching. The audience redirects its attention from the text conveyed to the installation conveying it. The installation takes on its own life, which is more than the sum of its parts.

What would be the meaning of the transformation from reading to watching – or 'taking everything in', as Gibson phrases it – in the case of *Listening Post*? Pop Fizz and Melanie McFarland (2002) describe this change of experience as follows: 'Close to the screens, voices and content color the experience more than if you take it as a whole from farther away, a perspective that makes it look like a raging river.' What has been text, with its particular linguistic meaning, becomes the image of a raging river when one steps away. This change from reading the single text to taking it (in) as a whole is not only a change between two modes of perception regarding the language of signification, but also a change in the perceived mood. Reading the single text stimulates us to imagine its context. In this situation, the reader deciphers the text and connects with it, like a detective or archaeologist. The reader feels himself or herself to be the agent of this undertaking. Stepping away from the texts, the letters become a 'raging river', to which the visitor feels subjected and inclined to surrender. The sensation of having control gives way to the overwhelming, 'hypnotic and captivating', 'trance-like', 'sublime' experience reported earlier.

Listening Post lives a double life as a 'document' of online communication – or rather a 'giant cut-up-poem' (Hansen & Rubin, 2001) – and as a sculpture or installation with its own aesthetic value. As a document or poem, the piece presents text in a readable way. As a sculpture – a gigantic curtain of screens with ever-changing compositions of dissociated messages – it uses text as visual and sonic icon to convey the magnitude and immediacy of virtual communication. Close to the screen, *Listening Post* therefore may be considered an example of experimental literature. Farther away, when letters turn illegible, it becomes visual and sonic art; it exists outside the linguistic paradigm and has to be read like a sign in visual art or an action in a performance. This transmedial transition is the effect of walking. Perceiving *Listening Post* either way lies in the hands (or rather the feet) of the audience.

One may go one step further in understanding the symbolic power of *Listening Post*. Although it is debatable to what extent the work mirrors 'the mood of the web in that moment' (Abumrad, 2002), it can be argued that the work tells the story of its history: walking away from the curtain is walking in time. At its beginning, the Internet consisted only of words appearing as green letters on a black screen – pretty much the way in which text is presented in *Listening Post*. What hyperfiction writer Michel Joyce (1995: 47) said about the hypertext as an essential feature of the computer – 'the word's revenge on TV' – was equally

true for the Internet. However, with the arrival of the World Wide Web, people observed the 'breakout of the visual' (Bolter, 1996: 258).

This development is re-enacted in *Listening Post* by walking away from the curtain. The walk communicates the history of the Internet in two ways. First is that the scale of communication changes: stepping back widens and deepens the perspective; the single-text screen comes into sight as part of a grid of 231 screens, demonstrating the organic growth of the Internet. Second is that the way of communication changes: stepping back shifts the attention from the text as linguistic sign to the audiovisual environment demonstrating the development of the Internet from textual towards multimedial signs. In this perspective, *Listening Post* is not only about the content transmitted on the Internet, but also about the way in which content is transmitted online. It is a linguistic artwork that turns into a sculpture and allows the audience, in this transmedial transition, to experience time by experiencing space. Walking backwards from the screen is going forwards in the history of the Internet.

Case study 3: The Complete Works of William Shakespeare

The Complete Works of William Shakespeare by Caleb Larsen (2008), a former student at the Rhode Island School of Design, represents letters with random visual signs. Larsen employs a copy of the complete works of William Shakespeare from Project Gutenberg, which provides a corpus of literary texts online. He has parsed the entire work of Shakespeare, replacing each letter with a small coloured square: Each alphabetic character, plus space and apostrophe (twenty-eight characters in total), is assigned a colour, the name of which starts with that letter (for example B = blue, G = green, C = cyan, A = azure, etc.), with white (blank) being a space and black being an apostrophe. The result is a huge image in a 'pointillistic' style, with the difference that it is much less figurative and at the same time far more 'representative' than an image by Georges-Pierre Seurat or Paul Signac, for example. What looks like a decorative painting seems to hold a tremendous depth, because it represents the texts of Shakespeare line by line, play after play: the entire work in *one* view. Although the text itself has no appearance at all, it is present in its disguised form.

This presence is the *sine qua non* of Larsen's piece. *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* would not be interesting if William Shakespeare were an unknown pointillist painter. One would perceive (and dismiss) Larsen's work as a mere decorative painting with little visual allure. Would it be interesting if William Shakespeare were an unknown writer? Yes, because the relation between the coloured points and the text would still be intriguing. However, one certainly cares more about such transmedial manipulation if one cares about the writer whose text is behind the canvas. The 'eaten' text nurtures the work. Larsen is well aware of this and allows the piece to pay tribute to the text (or rather: to text) in the semiotic conceit of assigning to each letter a colour, the name (that is, textual existence) of which starts with that letter. Although *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* annihilates the text in an even more radical way than *Listening Post* or *Text Rain*, with the right technology for recoding the pixel as letters, one could still gain access to a meaningful text.

Conclusion

Depriving text of its linguistic value and turning information into an ornament can, as noted in this chapter, be situated within the aesthetics of the spectacle that is part of the contemporary 'society of the spectacle' (Debord, 1967). With a perspective more centred in media studies, the transformation of text from a linguistic artefact to an audiovisual object can also

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be discussed by means of the concept of the visual as pornographic, as developed in Frederic Jameson's (1992) *Signatures of the Visible*. According to Jameson (1992: 1), 'the visual is essentially pornographic' because 'it has its end in rapt, mindless fascination'; pornographic films are therefore 'only the potentiation of films in general, which ask us to stare at the world as though it were a naked body'. As in McLuhan's (1964) dictum that 'the medium is the message' and Neil Postman's (1985) use of this dictum with respect to television as inevitable medium of amusement, Jameson ascribes a certain quality to the medium of film and questions its critical-utopian potential. For him, film is part of mainstream culture to the extent that it presents a phenomenon as interesting, attractive, and seductive as a naked body at which the spectator is staring with astonishment and affection.

Jameson's concept of the visual has been applied to the role that text plays in electronic media. Thus Janez Strehovec (2010: 221) – who picks up Manovich's notion about the cinematic character of the language of new media quoted earlier in this chapter – holds that an important part of the textual production in contemporary culture is based on words in motion and that a great amount of it is 'presented as naked bodies'. As a case in point, Strehovec refers to Brian Kim Stefans' (2000) *The Dreamlife of Letters*, a flash animation of moving letters that ends, quite adequately, with the sentence: 'Thanks for watching.' Like many other examples of kinetic text in digital media, *The Dreamlife of Letters*, with its syntax of surprise and shortcuts, owes much to the aesthetic of cinema and music video. Hence Strehovec (2010) notes that text, formerly representing the rather elite medium of literature, is refashioned and appropriated as something adequate to the contemporary movie industry and club culture.

A similar observation can also be made concerning *Text Rain* and *Listening Post*. Text appears as a captivating event and physical body to be stared at, rather than as a linguistic object to be read and understood. Jameson (1992: 2), describing the visual and musical as the physical and not essentially linguistic elements of text, notes:

> The more advanced and rationalized activity [that is, the engagement with text as a linguistic object] can also have its dream of the other, and regress to a longing for the more immediately sensory, wishing it could pass altogether over to the visual, or be sublimated into the spiritual body of pure sound.

Text Rain and *Listening Post*, as well as *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, surely carry out such sublimation into the sensory. The text, in its physicality, is stared at in 'rapt, mindless fascination', to use Jameson's (1992: 1) words.

To be precise, what is stared at is the hidden, unexposed, embedded text: the programming code. The code makes the text – the words falling down in *Text Rain* and pulled from websites in *Listening Post* – appear in a particular, fascinating way, and so, during this process, the code is in fact exhibited itself. However, we do not stare at the code as an alphanumerical equation, but rather as a materialisation on the screen or on the scene: the falling, flying text. Staring at the code processing the text is inter-reliant with stripping this text of its linguistic value. Blending de Andrade, McLuhan, and Jameson, we can describe the concept in the following way: the pornographic message of digital media is code devouring text. This can be linked to N. Katherine Hayles' (2006: 182) notion about the 'eventilidation' of the text in digital media, whereby each letter is the result of the computer's processing. While the audience may not be aware of this 'eventilisation' when reading (seemingly) static text on the screen, the 'cannibalisation' or 'pornographisation' of text draws their attention to it. In this perspective, the pornographic turns into elucidation: making the text illegible makes the code visible.

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Such a conclusion can be arrived at with respect to the three works discussed here and many other installations employing text as audiovisual objects, as well as with respect to other genres of digital art, such as kinetic concrete poetry, computer-generated text, and mapping art (Simanowski, 2011). In fact, the focus on code may, with the application of the title of another seminal text by Jameson (1991), even be considered the inherent 'cultural logic' of digital technology. Even though processing in digital media is primarily invisibly embedded behind the interface, we may say that it is this technology's natural (narcissistic) intention to centre stage its own basic material: code work. The shift from the linguistic to the physicality of text, from the expression of ideas to the thrill of technical effects, demonstrates the desire for publicity and recognition. This desire, however, builds completely on discipline (that is, the skill of virtuoso programming), for it is the faultless code that generates the 'perfect body' (or 'visual') at which we cannot help staring.

The discipline of coding has its counterpart in perception. As the close readings of *Text Rain* and especially *Listening Post* have shown, the thrill of the technical can, beyond sensual stimulation, also be approached within a hermeneutic model. Although text deprived of its linguistic value no longer utters a specific message, the way in which such text is presented is surely meaningful. In the end, the pornographic of the medium lies in the eyes of the beholder: staring at the materialisation of code can always (and finally should) turn into looking through it down to its deeper meaning.

Related topics

computational approaches to language and creativity; creativity and technology; literature and multimodality; silence and creativity

Note

1 The chapter combines passages from earlier discussions of the subjects presented in Simanowski (2010, 2011, 2012).

Further reading

Bolter, J. D. (1996) 'Ekphrasis, virtual reality, and the future of writing', in G. Nunberg (ed.) *The Future of the Book*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, pp. 253–72.

This essay compares the 'breakout of the visual' in the digital world to the relationship between word and image in the popular press, holding that the word is losing its traditional cultural authority against the image.

Darley, A. (2000) *Visual Digital Culture: Surface Play and Spectacle in New Media Genres*, London/ New York: Routledge.

This book explores the prevalence of technique over content and meaning in contemporary culture with respect to contemporary movies, music videos, and computer games.

Debord, G. (2006 [1967]) *The Society of the Spectacle*, Oakland, CA: AK Press.

In this essay from 1967, Debord develops his thesis about the increasing commodification of modern society and the function of the spectacle as a relationship between people mediated by images.

Mitchell, W. J. T. (1992) 'The pictorial turn', *Artforum*, 30(7): 89–94.

In this essay, Mitchell discusses the relationship between text and image, and portrays a movement of various disciplines in the humanities towards the picture as research subject.

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Language, creativity, and remix culture

Michele Knobel and Colin Lankshear

Introduction and definitions

This chapter builds on our particular understandings of five central concepts: 'creativity', 'remix culture', 'language', 'learning to be', and 'appreciative systems'.

Creativity

As the contributions to this book demonstrate, 'creativity' means different things to different people and is valued by them for quite different reasons. While seeking a final, definitive account is pointless, there is strong support for the idea that creativity involves *producing* something that has *value* for, or is *appreciated* by, people beyond the creator, which is regarded as being of *high quality* or *excellent* of its kind by those who are competent to judge, and which is in some way *new*, *innovative*, and/or *surprising* or *unexpected*.

   As is often noted, creativity does not occur in a vacuum; it always arises within some context, and involves drawing on resources, purposes, challenges, and so on that already exist, and then doing something that transcends what already exists. As Negus and Pickering (cited in Thurlow, 2014: 169) state, creative acts are 'usually shaped by convention'; creativity involves 'giving form to the material we draw on and transform, and this cannot be done without reference to existing rules, devices, codes and procedures'. These materials, together with the rules, devices, and codes, are the properties and resources of the domain or field of activity within which the creators work and upon which they draw in order to produce and innovate. This domain or field is also populated by other participants who are aware of these same properties and resources – knowledgeable insiders to the field and activity – and it is they, first and foremost, who appraise and recognise instances of creativity. Of course, the fruits of creative and innovative production can be recognised, and appreciated, and enjoyed by all manner of people outside the original field of endeavour to different degrees and in different ways. But to the extent that 'creativity' is a matter of esteemed appraisal, the initial appraisers are informed insiders to the field.

   Three related points about creativity are important for the present discussion. First, it is important to acknowledge a spectrum of creative production, from major innovative achievements through to more everyday contributions that constitute incremental improvements, changes, or originality (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Florida, 2012). Secondly, creativity is always

supported to a greater or lesser extent by others within a domain and by shared cultural stock, as noted already, and creative achievement often reflects collaborative endeavour by groups or teams rather than individuals (Robinson, 2011). Finally, those who see creativity as a defining feature of our times – as integral to meeting contemporary challenges, handling unpredictability, and as a key to prosperity and advantage – emphasise the importance of a socialising component to creativity: that creativity can and should be nurtured by providing appropriate learning contexts and opportunities (Florida, 2012; Robinson, 2011). From this perspective, the kinds of popular cultural remix practices and 'communities' engaged in and inhabited by research subjects in the studies on which we draw in this chapter can be seen as important socialising environments for fostering creative capacity.

Remix and remix culture

'Remix' has long been a word in English, but in the sense under discussion here, the term entered everyday use from the 1970s, referring to the practice of taking 'samples' from analogue audio tracks (tape and later, with DJ scratching, vinyl) and putting them together into new musical products that nonetheless retain the 'identity' of the borrowed 'samples' in some recognisable form (Jacobson, 2010: 28). In this sense, the 'mix' component of 'remix' referred to the sound engineer's mixing console in a recording studio. Like all key subsequent forms of media remixing, music remix moved from analogue to digital format with the development and everyday uptake of digital electronic technologies.

Once the term 'remix' had entered everyday language in this sense, it took on wider and narrower uses, and was applied retrospectively. In the wider sense, 'remixing' involves processes of taking any kinds of cultural resources, and combining and manipulating them into new (kinds of) blends and products. As such, remixing is something that we do all the time. As Lessig (2005) explains, remixing is the basis of culture – of cultural development, sustainability, enrichment, and well-being. We see a film and then retell the plot to our friends, mixing in our own commentary and evaluations regarding how much we loved or hated it, and referencing other films that we have seen or different actors, thereby remixing the creativity of the film's director into our own lives and ways of seeing and valuing, etc. For Lessig (2005), 'every single act of reading and choosing and criticizing and praising culture is in this sense remix' and 'it is through this general practice that culture gets made'. This broad sense of remix has sometimes been used in arguments designed to try to win some concessions from copyright and intellectual property restrictions, and to inform efforts to build 'remix culture' (to be defined shortly).

The narrower and more specialised sense of remix with which we are concerned here grew from the early 2000s as new technical and participatory developments played into popular cultural media productions and expressions on an escalating scale. 'Remix' is used to name diverse popular media practices, including music remixing, political commentary media remixing, film trailer remixing, fan film remixing, machinima, anime music video (AMV) remixing, photoshopping, fan art, fan fiction, game modding, web application mashups, and even fan-based cosplay or live action costume role plays, to name just a few. As in the origins of music remix, participants in these media remix practices use the original source material in ways that remain clearly recognisable within the new work – that is, remixes are 'identifiably indebted to previous work in ways that pervade large portions of the work' (Stedman, 2012: 108).

When we speak of 'remix culture', we mean the idea of spaces that enact a general openness to, and support for, digital remixing practices. It is what Lessig and others refer to as 'Read/Write culture' (as distinct from a 'Read Only culture', in which a minority of

'professionals' create cultural items for a majority to consume by reading, viewing, and listening to them), in which the many who 'read' the resources of their culture also 'add to the culture they read by creating and re-creating the culture around them . . . using the same tools the professional uses' (Lessig, 2008: 28). Remix cultures can operate at a large, nationwide (or wider) scale through to smaller-scale, (sub-)cultural group levels. They comprise a kind of 'creative commons', making resources, advice, and tools available for contributing to the culture. Remixed additions – especially by amateurs and novices – are welcomed and encouraged; this is a collective space in which to share, contribute, and use cultural resources made readily available to everyone.

Digital remix culture is marked overall by a generosity of spirit concerning media resource sharing, and a willingness to have others take up one's original work and make something else of it. At the more 'micro' level, fans or aficionados themselves develop specific support materials and online spaces to resource particular shared interests or passions. There is a willingness to share content and content sources, and to provide troubleshooting advice and feedback on remixed works, and to share know-how and expertise with others. Much of this idea is reflected also in the idea of 'participatory culture' (Jenkins et al., 2006).

Language

We view 'language' broadly as a 'set of social conventions, shared by a group of people, about how to communicate' or exchange meanings (Gee & Hayes, 2011: 6). This is a help-ful conception of language for talking about remix and creativity. It admits the full range of communicative modes and registers, resonating with Kuhn's (2012) identification of remix as 'a digital utterance expressed across the registers of the verbal, the aural, and the visual'. It also emphasises *conventions*, which are shared or communal properties and have to be acquired within contexts of being socialised into proficiency.

Language in this sense self-evidently includes everyday spoken language. It also encom-passes written language in the ordinary sense of literacy, as well as an expanded sense of written language relevant to communicating 'multimodally' by means of digital media. Digital technologies function on the basis of foundational programs written in programming language or code. Once we are at the level of the screen, 'writing' with keyboard, mouse, or touch are all communication modes on the same plane. We click, key, or drag for sound, for text, for colour, for animation, for whatever. But to communicate meanings successfully from this plane, we need to master the relevant conventions germane to whatever discourse, genre, or practice we are in at the time.

Language and creativity intersect at different points and in different ways, which are nicely illustrated within the cultural worlds of remix. Sometimes, the focus might be on how language mediates the pursuit of creative ends, such as asking questions or shar-ing information within a forum. Sometimes, the focus might be on language as the crea-tive product itself or a substantial dimension of it, as with a work of fan fiction or a fan film trailer. Alternatively, a digital remixer might employ creative forms of language (for example poetic language forms) within the pursuit of a larger creative end, which itself consists in language. Exploring language and creativity in remixing involves considering all such combinations, and others besides.

Learning to be

The more creative a process and outcome is, the more it will reflect deep learning in a sense that enables 'real understanding, the ability to apply one's knowledge, and . . . to transform

that knowledge for innovation' (Gee, 2007: 172). Deep learning involves what Gee (2007) calls 'learning to be' (and not simply 'learning about' in the sense of learning facts, and where they come from and who believes them). 'Learning to be' involves taking on an identity – such as be(com)ing a biologist, or a tailor, or a chef, or *some kind of media remixer* – and coming to see the world and act on the world in the ways that biologists, tailors, chefs, and particular kinds of remixers do. This is so, says Gee (2007: 172), because:

> [I]n any domain, if knowledge is to be used, the learner must probe the world (act on it with a goal) and then evaluate the result. Is it 'good' or 'bad,' 'adequate' or 'inadequate,' 'useful' or 'not,' 'improvable' or 'not'?

To make such judgements, learners must develop 'appreciative systems' (Gee, 2007: 172)

Appreciative systems

The concept of 'appreciative systems' comes from design theory (Schön, 1991, citing Vickers, 1978). When we are creating or producing something within a field of activity, aiming to get it as good as we can and as right as possible, and perhaps to create something that is significantly new in the process, we make 'moves' in our work, in the light of what we know and what we have available, and then make qualitative judgements about what we have done. We make these judgements on the basis of appreciative systems that are relevant and appropriate to the activity in which we are engaged. These are systems of 'beliefs, values, norms, prizings' (Schön, 1991: 12) that we have developed and which are shared by groups, affinities, and sometimes by entire cultures. Gee (2007: 172) describes them as value systems that are 'embedded in the identities, tools, technologies, and worldviews of distinctive groups of people . . . who share, sustain, and transform them'. We are initiated into them, become committed to them, master them, and enact them as a consequence of taking on identities within fields of activity, striving within those fields, and interacting with others in the field and heeding their expertise. Fields of remix practice are, precisely, examples of contexts within which we develop appreciative systems as part of learning to be.

Background to remix and historical perspectives

As noted earlier, popular cultural creative activity involves diverse types of remix practice. By way of background to our wider discussion, we briefly identify and describe some of the more popular and commonly researched types: fan fiction, game modding, machinima, AMV, video remixing, and photoshopping.

Fan fiction – or 'fanfic' to its aficionados – is the name given to the practice whereby devotees of some media or literary phenomenon such as a television show, film, video game, or book write stories based on its characters. Most fanfic is written as narrative, although songfic and poetryfic are also popular forms, and some fan fictions are carried as manga drawings and animations. Fanfic writing can be classified into a number of different types. The most common of these include in-canon writing, crossovers, relationshipper (or 'shipper') narratives, and self-insert fanfic (for example Black, 2008).

Game modding uses a video game's imaging and strategy engines (underlying software) to create fan-generated 'modifications' to the game. These may expand a level in the game, create new levels by introducing further layers of complexity or difficulty to the game, or even create a new game altogether. Typical modifications include adding a new mini

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adventure or quest for player characters to complete, or developing original resources such as new characters, weapons, enemies, mini-storylines, etc.

Machinima (*machin*e + cin*ema*, with a hint of a*nime*) involves remixers using three-dimensional video game animation engines and on-screen recording software to create films. These animated films can be fan homages to the originating game or may have very little to do with the original storyline. Machinima films can be created using a scripting editor that enables the remixer to write small 'programs', or scripts, for the game engine to follow and which, once running inside the game, will automate what characters say and do (see, for example, ScriptEase for *Neverwinter Nights*). The remixer then 'films' this pre-programmed action and splices these clips together to create a video, adding sound effects and voice tracks once the editing is done. Alternatively, creators manipulate player-controlled characters like puppets and record the resulting action, before splicing different 'takes' together into a final video.

Anime music video remixes are a popular practice within anime (animated Japanese cartoons) fanship. Most anime conventions, for example, include AMV competitions or screenings (Ito, 2010), and many AMVs posted to YouTube attract hundreds of thousands of views. Anime music video remixes comprise snippets of anime edited together and synched to a soundtrack of the remixer's choosing (typically a Western/Euro song). Anime music video remixes can sample clips from within one anime series or film, or across several. These short videos use the soundtrack and anime clips to tell a story connected to the original anime, or a new story altogether, or can convey a message (for example the remixers' feelings about war, friendship, betrayal, etc.), or examine characters' biographies or relationships in ways that add to the original anime, and so on (Milstein, 2007). The remixes can be used for social critique or parody, but mainly celebrate the original anime on which they draw.

Video remix is a large, loose category of different ways of re-editing existing or 'found' video into new forms. 'Shreds' take an intact music video and painstakingly recreate – in a deliberately amateur way – some or all of the soundtrack, carefully synching on-screen action with the new soundtrack to parody the original. Political video remix uses news clips to create social commentary (for example video of national leaders edited to look like they are having an affair). Film trailer remixes resequence clips from a film to create a trailer that presents the film in a completely different light (for example *Mary Poppins* as a horror film). Other types include dance, queer, and commercial video remixes, among many others.

Photoshopping involves manipulating images using digital image editing software to create a new image. Image remixing takes various forms, including adding text to images, creating photo montages that mix elements from two or more images, changing the image content itself in some way, and changing image properties (for example changing colours or image focus, manipulating brightness levels or shading, etc.). Photoshopping is often done for fun or humour, to express solidarity or affinity, or for political/activist purposes.

Historically, once 'remix' entered everyday talk riding on the back of music remix (for example dub, scratch, rap, DJ, hip hop), and particularly once copyright cases began impacting on media remixers, scholars began applying the term retrospectively to historical cases such as Shakespeare (Pettitt, 2007), Virgil (Gruber-Miller, 2013) and literary, political, and philosophical authors at large (for example Frosio, 2013). They reoriented long-standing scholarship on the 'borrowings' of famous figures in terms of what is significant for the affordances of digital technologies, especially in relation to copyright law and infringement. Looking beyond the canon and to more recent history, researchers working with a remix perspective have traced the history of fan fiction in its current form at least to the *Star Trek*

fandom from the 1960s (Black, 2008), and of video remix genres such as vidding (Tushnet, 2011) and fan music video genres such as AMV (Springall, 2004) to the 1980s.

Thus the recent history of remix spans *analogue* and *digital* technologies. Research addresses both media, although unsurprisingly the bulk of studies deal with digital remix. Nonetheless, bodies of research and remix creations from the analogue period drawn on by authors such as Tushnet (2011) affirm the inventive uses of available tools and workarounds, and the imaginative, informed, and rhetorically powerful mixing of video resources, to achieve widely appreciated multimodal narrations prior to digital media tools becoming the norm.

Similarly, scholars such as Henry Jenkins (1992) do the same work for analogue (print-based) fan writing. Indeed, Jenkins' landmark work on 'textual poachers' can be read as a treatise on analogue fan creativity across fan writing, fan music, fan art, and music video remixing – showing how creativity spans processes and outcomes, as endorsed by the frame developed in our opening section. Jenkins carefully documents the development and maintenance of fan practice communities in ways that show how conventions, support and sharing systems, feedback, and evaluative protocols developed across multiple practices and genres; he appraises, from the standpoint of a literary scholar and critic, the creative quality of specific fan works (see, for example, Jenkins, 1992: 177–84); he describes the 'bringing-into-existence' of entirely new creative practices and genres; and he captures specific instances of creative symbol use, such as the appropriation of the / (forward slash) symbol to name the genre of fan writing focused on same-sex relationships among key characters (for example Kirk and Spock, or 'K/S', within *Star Trek* fandom).

As noted, however, most research on remix addresses *digital* creations, which will be addressed in the central section of this chapter concerning research on remix and remixers.

Key issues and topics

Among the many issues and topics attaching to remixing and research on remix activities, five are of particular interest here:

- copyright and intellectual property laws;
- digital remix as an under-researched activity;
- the importance of researchers having 'insider' credibility;
- the fact that creativity means many different things to many different people; and
- the impediments posed to language and creativity by existing education policies and practices.

The most obvious issue concerns copyright and intellectual property law, legal infringements that may arise for remixers, and the restrictions that Read/Only culture entail for the development and enrichment of Read/Write culture grounded in the value of creative activity and production (Lessig, 2008). Ignorance of copyright law and its actual application can itself curtail remix activity when fear of infringement impedes participation – yet where the law itself provides some degree of flexibility (for example for educational use) and where flying beneath the radar is tolerated (Knobel, Lankshear, & Lewis, 2010: 222–3). Moreover, developments such as creative commons licensing arrangements offer important alternatives for creating remix. Such alternatives simultaneously enlarge Read/Write culture, enrich remix communities, and build the conditions for seriously creative production (Lessig, 2008).

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Secondly, to date, digital remix activity – being so recent – is absolutely under-researched, let alone in terms that are explicitly concerned with language and creativity. Most research so far focuses on music remix, much of which is tangential to a focus on language and creativity. At best, available research speaks 'indicatively' to the theme of language and creativity – something with which we have had to wrestle in writing this chapter.

Some writers (for example Stedman, 2012) emphasise the importance of researchers avoiding 'drive-by' outsider studies of remix practices in general – and fan remix in particular. They indicate the importance of making research intentions clear to participants from the outset and of knowing how to convincingly demonstrate one's insider credentials to potential participants. Beyond this, from the perspective of studying creativity in remix, the approach that we have taken here implies that some degree of 'insiderliness' is probably required in order to make statements about the creative status of instances of remix activities and creations.

Among its advocates, we find very different perspectives on the nature and significance of creativity. Some associate creativity with the pursuit of individual self-expression, unique-ness, and untrammelled exploration. They value creativity intrinsically, and nurture it by fostering free and open discovery, and 'letting go'. Others also value creativity intrinsically, seeing creative outcomes as ends in themselves, in virtue of their beauty, excellence, and sophistication, but at the same time seeing such products as the fruits of discipline, learn-ing, and of knowing rules, conventions, and extant achievements very well in order to push beyond them. Still others – and this may well have become the most influential view – see creativity in more pragmatic-instrumental terms: as the driving force in an age that faces deep challenges (economic, environmental) and unpredictability (Florida, 2012; Robinson, 2011). This view also emphasises discipline and deep learning grounded in knowing the conventions, standards, and achievements of a field, but privilege 'applied forms' of such awareness through fertile interactions among technological, economic, artistic, and cultural creativity (Florida, 2012: 6). Approaches to researching language and creativity, within remix practices or anywhere else, will vary considerably across such perspectives, as will research outcomes.

Finally, regardless of the perspective taken on the nature and significance of creativity, advocates of creativity are likely to see current formal education policies and practices as inimical to fostering expansive and productive relationships among language, creativity, and cultural engagement in activities such as remix (Florida, 2012; Gee, 2007; Robinson, 2011).

Researching remix and remixers

In surveying the research literature, peer-reviewed and research-based publications were located using the Google Scholar search engine, and the Proquest and J-Stor databases. A range of search terms and combinations of search terms were employed. Besides the primary key terms of 'remix', 'language', and 'creativity', a number of cognate/related terms were employed for each. Hence, remix was searched using terms such as 'bricolage', 'hybrid', and 'mashup', as well as the names for remix types, such as 'machinima', 'Photoshop', etc. Language was searched using 'discourse' and 'literacy', along with specific concerns with composition, narrative, and authorship. Creativity searches were buttressed with terms such as 'originality', 'imagination', and 'innovation'. An initial pool was reduced to thirty stud-ies that we believed could plausibly be seen to substantially address aspects of language and creativity in remix. These provided a good spread of research approaches across theory, design, data collection, and data analysis.

Most studies investigated adolescents engaged in self-chosen remix pursuits (for example Black, 2008; Chandler-Olcott & Mahar, 2003; Thomas, 2007), undertaken in out-of-school spaces such as fan fiction sites and purpose-built online forums, with researchers 'finding' their participants online and rarely meeting them in person. Gustavson's (2008) study of a turntablist using a school space with permission during breaks and study periods is a notable outlier. Several studies investigated remix activity within literacy, art, and media classes in schools (for example Burn, 2009), after-school programmes (for example Ahn et al., 2012), and universities (for example Dubisar & Palmeri, 2010), while some covered remix practices of people within larger contexts of being online (for example Ito et al., 2010) and in whole-community settings (for example Ahn et al., 2012; Diakopoulos et al., 2007; Durga, 2012; Hayes & Lee, 2012; Keegan, 2010). Others analysed texts or sites, such as films involving remix and remixing remixes (for example Cheliotis et al., 2014; Frølunde, 2011).

To best convey the kinds of insights into language and creativity afforded by this research, we will briefly render three typical core cases.

Case: Nanako

Tanaka Nanako was one of several anime fan fiction writers whom Rebecca Black studied on FanFiction.net over a three-year period (Black, 2008). A native Mandarin speaker, Nanako moved to Canada and began learning English just two-and-a-half years prior to Black's study commencing. Nanako had long been a fan of anime and was pleased to discover the anime fan fiction community on FanFiction.net at age 13, shortly before Black's study began. FanFiction.net is an English-dominant, online community in which authors post their fan narratives and readers can write reviews. Black found Nanako 'exceptional' in terms of the popularity of her writing. When the study concluded, Nanako, at age 16, had 'developed a considerable group of readers and avid followers' and had 'over 6000 reviews of her 50 plus publicly-posted fan fiction texts' (Black, 2007: 120). These numbers suggest that Nanako's work was rated highly by other fans within this community.

Initially, Nanako spent much time reading and reviewing other people's fan fiction to gain a sense of how these texts were written and to make connections with other writers before posting her own stories (Black, 2008). She mainly wrote romantic 'in-canon' fanfics, taking characters from within the same anime and exploring romantic relationships not developed in the originals. Her first stories drew on models provided by other popular fanfic writers. Hence one early narrative included pop song lyrics to help to convey mood, reflecting the influence of one of her favourite fanfic writers (Black, 2008). Later stories were longer, more complex, used more polished language and refined plots, and also integrated some Japanese and Mandarin language content. Nanako was learning Japanese at school and found that including Japanese character dialogue added valuable cachet to anime fanfics. Her stories also began capitalising on Chinese anime characters, and she wrote their dialogue in a form of Mandarin (for example a Chinese exchange student who appears in the *Card Captor Sakura* anime). At the close of Black's (2008: 94) study, Nanako explained that she was planning a crossover fic between *Card Captor Sakura* and the book/film *Memoirs of a Geisha*, to inform readers about Japanese and Chinese history.

Nanako's earliest stories showed that she understood the remix culture enacted on FanFiction.net. She used author notes to explain a story, to thank reviewers, and to seek constructive feedback. These notes showed that she grasped the practice of declaring non-ownership of characters taken from anime, and the practice of 'borrowing' (with acknowledgement) other fanfic authors' original characters and remixing them into a story of her own. Her notes

regularly expressed appreciation for reviewer feedback, and time taken to read and respond to her stories. Nanako also included Japanese expressions in her author notes, such as *Konnichiwa* as a greeting, or *gomen nasai* to apologise for sloppy grammar and spelling. She used 'manga-fied' emoticons to underscore meaning and to express affiliation with anime fandom (for example, ^_^, a variation on :)). Including Japanese and anime markers in her notes helped to cement Nanako's alignment with other anime fans. While some fanfic aficionados deride author notes, arguing that a story should stand on its own (Black, 2008), Nanako used her notes as a social space in which to highlight connections with other fanfic authors, to thank her 'fans' for adding her to their 'Favourite Authors List', and to acknowledge how much she appreciated others enjoying her stories. She also understood the value placed on regularly adding chapters to stories-in-progress and posting fresh stories. Nanako regularly revised her texts in light of comments and suggestions, again showing that she valued others' feedback. Likewise, she understood the importance of supporting other writers and regularly posted reader feedback for others.

Reviews indicated what others valued in Nanako's narratives. Some commented on narrative developments, for example 'This is really interesting, the plot is thickening every minute!' (Black, 2008: 89). One reader focused on more technical aspects and writing: 'Congratulations! I deem you another Han Yu Ping Ying champion! :D', referring to Nanako's proficiency in phonetically spelling Chinese (Black, 2008: 88). Another wrote, 'You use different languages in just the right places . . . it makes the story complete' (Black, 2007: 131). Many wrote about how much they loved her particular romantic pairings and her narratives, begging for more: 'Will the season finale be followed up by a sequel? I hope!' (Black, 2007: 131).

To summarise, Nanako drew on existing anime and took up unexplored romantic pairings in fresh, new ways that were valued by her community of anime aficionados. That her stories attracted so many reader reviewers indicates their perceived quality and popularity within the community. Nanako's language use carried her ability to tell a good story and to achieve an esteemed final product. She also used language creatively *within* her remix: characters spoke in Japanese or Chinese (with translations provided within parentheses). She wove in different genres, for example song lyrics and email messages sent between characters. She wrote her author notes and narratives with the values of the anime fanfic community in mind, which meant attending to anime fan preferences, quality of plotlines and character development (in keeping with the characters as they appear in the original anime), and observing standards for spelling and grammar. Cases like Nanako's remind us that simply researching final remix products risks overlooking important 'insider' values, practices, and interactions that contribute to the quality and take-up of the remix, and how these play out in creative practice.

Case: AMV remixers

Mimi Ito, a cultural anthropologist, has long been interested in anime fans and their practices. Her research reports case studies of anime fans and their AMV production (for example Ito et al., 2010) through to larger-scale studies of the 'social structure of the contemporary AMV scene' (Ito, 2010). Ito (2010) observes that, prior to 2005 and the launch of YouTube, AnimeMusicVideos.org was a key space within which to access fan-made AMVs, to share editing tips and video resources, and to exchange constructive feedback. Within this space, veteran AMVers willingly shared their expertise and newbies felt welcome to ask on the forums for help with technical problems. Part of the allure of AMV remixing, Ito (2010)

argues, is that the availability of computers, and sound and video editing software, means that more and more fans see AMVs as something that they can produce themselves for their own and others' enjoyment; for example 'My first video took about two and a half hours to make and it turned out extremely horrible. But I loved it', said a remixer calling himself or herself 'Gepetto' (Ito, 2010).

The anime industry has been lenient with copyright laws, seeing these videos as a form of free advertising and promotion. Typically, AMV remixers are drawn to the practice through their anime fanship and develop their technical video editing skills along the way, usually by means of emulating more polished AMVs. 'Insiders' to AMV remixing soon become aware of what constitutes a 'good-quality' AMV. For example, clichéd anime + song pairings are to be avoided – especially *Dragon Ball Z* anime paired with any Linkin Park song, as one AMVer found out the hard way: '[Experienced AMV remixers] were accusing me of not being very creative because the anime has been so overdone' (Ito, 2010). In our own study of AMV remixing, 'Dynamite Breakdown' spelled out key elements of the appreciative system to which he attends in his own work (Knobel, Lankshear, & Lewis, 2010; Lankshear & Knobel, 2011). These included: careful synchronisation between on-screen action and the soundtrack, with serious value placed on being able to lip synch characters' mouth movements to the song lyrics; ensuring consistent resolution quality across all of the clips used; matching the chosen song to the kind of anime drawn on, unless a clashing effect is wanted; recognising the importance of sharing videos and advice freely, and leaving feedback for others on AMV.org and YouTube; and taking time when creating an AMV and working on innovative editing techniques, regardless of the software being used, to name a few. Thus, while AMV remixing is open to anyone, there are nonetheless obvious standards that set good-quality or innovative AMVs apart from the rest.

Language-wise, AMVs can be 'read' as personal interpretations of anime storylines, especially from a non-Japanese standpoint (Ito, 2010). Dynamite Breakdown works hard to ensure that he authors an engaging narrative that stands on its own, while at the same time adding layers of meaning for those familiar with the source anime. Colour and the mood of a song are used to convey information, too. Dynamite also superimposes words over clips at times to emphasise the message that he wants to convey (for example 'Trust', 'Courage'). Some AMV remixers use song lyrics and video clips to speak to inequality (for example the portrayal of women in anime), or to comment on the futility of war and so on. Lessig's (2008) point about young people 'writing with images' is exemplified in the world of AMV remixing.

The research of Ito and others suggests an AMV is considered by remixers to be creative when it has a seamlessness that tells a whole new story or message, but looks as though the anime was tailor-made for that specific video. Anime fans consider AMVs 'successful' when they evoke emotional and appreciative responses in viewers – because the video resonates with their own fanship of an anime, the video is thought-provoking, it brings together different anime in innovative ways, or the remixer has used unexpected visual effects to weave clips together. Ultimately, however, AMV remixing is all about participating in a particular fandom, regardless of the quality of the remix or the status (newbie, veteran) of the remixer.

Case: Machinima

In machinima, scope for creativity exists at several levels: the story being told; the ways in which constraints and affordances of the animated actors, props, and settings available are used by the remixer; and how the 'aura' of the original game is built into the story.

Andrew Burn (2009) documents the case of Britta Pollmuller, an artist, animator, and teacher, and her work in an after-school programme with a group of 13–17-year-olds as she helps them to create a machinima movie inside the three-dimensional virtual world, *Second Life*. Britta found the automated animation functions (for example the walk cycle), and the flexibility of being able to create settings and props, and to modify and dress avatars, etc., appealing as an animation medium and began teaching herself to make machinima within *Second Life*. She learned from members of the *Second Life* machinima community, and attended machinima festivals and seminars within *Second Life*. She participated in an Ed Wood festival (entrants have 48 hours in which to create a machinima responding to a supplied film title), winning first prize for her horror animation. Britta worked collaboratively with others to design, script, and film her prize-winning machinima, which influenced her subsequent approach to machinima work with students.

Britta became involved in the Open University's (UK) Schome project (*sch*ool + h*ome*), which owned an island with building rights within the *Second Life* 'Teen' grid. Britta and her group of teens met in the 'Teen' grid for two hours each afternoon, five days a week, throughout the three-month project. They used much of this time to brainstorm their film idea, develop props – either finding them in-world or creating them using *Second Life*'s building algorithms and scripting tools – and write their script. Burn (2009: 153) says that they needed to 'beg, borrow, steal, as well as design, invent and transform'. Britta explicitly taught participants filmic language and galvanised the group as a film crew (working on everything from costume design, through setting up camera shots, to editing, etc.), which she saw in terms of 'professional apprenticeship [rather] than amateur production' (Burn, 2009: 153).

The group created a 12-minute machinima about the 1937 Hindenburg airship disaster (inspired by an airship that Britta had brought with her from the open *Second Life* grid and which was previously her avatar's home). Britta consciously acted as 'technician' for the group (Burn, 2009: 147), and challenged them to think about what they were filming and why – especially if it was a topic or 'move' that had become clichéd in media or popular culture. Collaboration on all aspects of their film – down to camera angles and costume details – was a key element of their work together.

Language played a central role in their virtual world sessions, with everyone using public and private chat to make decisions to troubleshoot, to get organised for filming that day, to role play their script development, and so on. They also engaged in learning the scripting language needed for building items in *Second Life*, such as understanding prims, vectors, x, y, and z axes, what it means to 'rez' something, and so on. The storyline itself took the historical narrative of the Hindenburg disaster, and blended it with murder and thriller genres, to produce 'a mysterious saboteur who kills a guard and plants the explosive which destroys the ship' (Burn, 2009: 148). Burn (2009: 147) construes creativity as being able to 'rework remembered or found cultural resources into something new', attributing this quality to the students' machinima.

Main research methods

Research addressing remix culture, language, and creativity comprises a disparate, loose-linked assemblage of work spanning varied disciplines, fields, and informing theories. Disciplines include sociology, anthropology, sociolinguistics, cultural studies, and education. More specific fields include composition and rhetoric studies (for example Dubisar & Palmeri, 2010), English and foreign language learning studies (for example Black, 2008),

literacy studies (for example Thomas, 2007), media studies (for example Ito, 2010), communication and journalism studies (for example Diakopoulos et al., 2007), and games and education studies (Hayes & Lee, 2012), in particular. Given that many researchers do not yet speak explicitly in terms of 'remix', it was necessary – as explained earlier – to identify the phenomenon, in addition to relying on how it is named in order to generate a substantial corpus of studies to review. That said, an interesting trend exists in composition and rhetoric studies whereby an overt focus on 'remix' and 'remix culture' appears to have gained significant ground in recent years (Church, 2013; Jones, 2015).

Most studies focus on remix*ers* rather than remixes. This is surprising, given the ready accessibility of digital remix productions (videos, music tracks, artworks). It is also advantageous, however, since our own study of media memes (Knobel & Lankshear, 2007) – one of the few to examine remix artefacts apart from their creators – revealed limitations resulting from *not* documenting remixers' design and meaning-making decisions, values, and strategies. A number of studies examine sites and 'affinity spaces' dedicated to particular remix practices, or to remix based on fanship associated with particular media or video games (for example Keegan, 2010; Lammers, 2012; Stedman, 2012). These typically include interviews with remixers or their forum posts as data. This focus on *remixers* is a positive methodological trend, because remix research is not reduced to mere 'text analysis', and instead asserts the importance of process, design, and attention to what is valued within specific remix practices.

The most common research design that we found is case study. These tend to focus on a single user – for example Barb and her fanfic writing in Trainor (2004); Gil and his turntable music remixing in Gustavson (2008); Jack and his work in a fan community in Curwood (2013) – although multiple case studies are not unusual (for example Chandler-Olcott & Mahar, 2003; Dubisar & Palmeri, 2010; Magnifico, 2012). Ethnography – ranging in length from twenty weeks to four years – is likewise a popular methodological approach, although specific cases from these ethnographies are often written up for publication (for example Black, 2007; Ito et al., 2010; Lammers, 2012; Thomas, 2007). Other research designs include interview- and survey-based studies (for example Ahn et al., 2012; Diakopoulos et al., 2007; Stedman, 2012), analysis of online forum posts (for example Hayes & Lee, 2012; Lammers, 2012), and remix video analysis (for example Frølunde, 2011).

Most studies to date have been conducted either fully online or in non-school spaces. Nonetheless, we found a growing body of studies addressing remix, language, and learning within formal contexts, such as school classrooms, university coursework, or after-school programmes (for example Ahn et al., 2012; Burn, 2009; Dubisar & Palmeri, 2010; Lacasa, Martínez, & Méndez, 2011; Thomas, 2010).

Data collection methods include documenting online spaces through participant observation and artefact collection, interviews (conducted in person, in groups, via email or Skype, or instant messaging), surveys, collecting bounded sets of forum posts, and collecting remix products – including comments or posts about these artefacts. Data analysis methods range from variants on discourse analysis and systemic functional linguistics, through semiotics and multimodal analysis, to basic and thematic coding strategies.

Surprisingly, we found no remix studies documenting and analysing what remixers *do* as they do it – that is, recording the actual creative process through which a remixer goes to produce a final, polished remix. This is a serious oversight from the standpoint of understanding the interplay of language and creativity. Such studies illuminate the specific design decisions that people make and their reasons for making them at key points in the process, especially in relation to how they wittingly collocate or juxtapose sound, images, and shared understandings of the original remix resources in order to create meaning.

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Some basic recommendations for practice

When creativity is viewed in the kind of way in which we have understood it here, two points immediately arise. The first is that, in many ways, the practices and communities, or affinities, of remix instantiate much about the 'logic' of creativity. They represent paradigm reference points for people engaging in the sorts of processes and in the sorts of ways exemplified in classic cases of creative endeavour. If we were looking for 'sandboxes' to nurture what people such as Florida (2012) and Robinson (2011) see as the creative potential capable of being stimulated and developed in all people, then it would be difficult to imagine better options for sandboxes than popular cultural remix practices. Equally, when we are looking to understand 'from the inside' how ordinary people proceed on their ways to developing and refining their creative capacities, remix practices represent an obvious choice – except that, to date, this choice has apparently not been obvious to many researchers.

The second point is that 'creativity' can be seen as part of a larger family of concepts drawn on to express ideals for learning and personal development in the twenty-first century. These include broad concepts such as deep learning, thinking like a designer, and becoming expert problem solvers, as well as many of the more specific candidates for 'twenty-first-century skills'.

When we put these two points together, and ask where research momentum and critical mass have been achieved in investigating 'new learning' phenomena at the intersection of everyday people in their everyday worlds, the focus on games studies stands out – particularly within the area of education and language use. The achievements of dedicated research programmes focusing on games and learning are outstanding, and continue to flourish. We would argue that developing dedicated research programmes with a remix focus is an obvious strategy for enhancing knowledge and understanding of relationships between language and creativity.

We would urge the 'insider principle' at the practical level for implementing good remix, language, and creativity research, too. One of the fundamental lessons to be drawn from the success of games studies research is how much it owes to researchers who have themselves been gamers. This extends Stedman's (2012) point about 'insiderliness' being important for gaining entry to the field in the first instance. It asserts the idea that relevant experience is important for knowing the places to look for what we do not know and for reflecting upon what we do not know, but think might be important for us to know. Researching remixers and their remix practices effectively from the standpoint of understanding the dynamics of language and creativity will benefit from researchers being, to at least some extent, remixers themselves.

Finally, as noted in the previous section, in order to understand the dynamic interplay of language and creativity within remix practices, it is important to document and analyse what remixers say and do as they say and do it. Outside the ambit of remix studies, Andrew Burn (2008) provides an excellent introduction to what this involves, how it is done, and what may be gained from doing it in his account of studying a 14-year-old youth engaging in designing a computer game, *Rebellion*. Burn shows the kind of richness that can be brought to a focus on language, multimodality, and creative activity by bringing an ethnographic approach to the research. And while Burn himself was not a fully fledged game designer at the time, he certainly had sufficient relevant cultural knowledge of video games, as well as digital multimedia proficiency, to plan the nature and scope of data collection effectively. Hence his account also illustrates our previous point concerning 'insiderliness'. Consequently, studies like Burn's investigation of designing *Rebellion* represent the kind of research of which we hope to see more for the field of popular cultural remix.

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Future directions

While there has not been space in which to develop the theme beyond a mention here, 'creativity' is a contested concept in the sense that there are multiple, long-standing, and competing discourses of creativity. Currently, however, the 'creative economy' and 'creative industries' variant probably rules the roost. At the same time, however, it typically glosses the concept of creativity itself, ignores competing traditions, and subordinates creative endeavour to a set of instrumental-pragmatic ends. These latter are important, but the argument from this perspective ends up advocating the integration of historically central aspects such as literary, artistic, and cultural creativity, with their connotations of intrinsic worth, into a worldview that rarely gets beyond considerations of economic and technological growth, and ideas of sustainability compatible with those considerations.

By contrast, research in the area of language and creativity – as reflected in this volume – resists a reductionist approach and provides an important corrective. Peters and Besley (2008: 103) conclude a discussion of academic entrepreneurship and the creative economy with the claim that, in the current conjuncture, 'we need to creatively revisit "creativity", its historical conceptions and its philosophical underpinnings', and at the same time seek a better understanding of how some (academic) institutional practices 'encourage and harness talent in individuals and communities while others constrain or prevent it entirely'. Over-domination by a single creativity paradigm is likely to constrain or prevent forms of creative endeavour emanating from alternative value positions and visions of a good life. It is important to note here that one of the central messages communicated by research subjects engaged in media remixing is their passion for their interest and the extent to which they pursue it to the limits as an intrinsic end – as activity in which they live richly, and with a sense of personal vocation and fulfilment. Whatever the future directions of researching the intersections among language, creativity, and remix, we would hope to see as many creative revisitings of creativity as possible.

While the stock of research studies of remix practices remains small and some practices are minimally represented, we were nonetheless surprised to find no studies whatsoever of people creating serviceware mashups, or 'apps': the process of mixing together two or more application programming interfaces (APIs) with each other and/or available databases to leverage what already exists for the purposes of doing something new. Given the ubiquity of apps, and the disposition of many fans to create apps as resources to be used productively for building the affinities to which they are committed, and given the interesting ways in which language – not least language as *programming* – plays out in creating apps, we anticipate future research in this area.

Finally, while it may take some time, we anticipate learning within formal institutions to gradually include opportunities for digital remix creation within their curricula (Erstad, 2013; Jenkins, 2010), and with such shifts will come further opportunities and incentives for enacting and understanding how language and creativity may be related, and for improving practice in the light of what we find. Effective change that genuinely enlarges scope for creative achievement will not come easily, however, since we are inevitably limited by our imaginations. Some of the challenge involved is nicely captured by Stedman's (2012) report of a hypothetical college course on remix culture, mooted in a 2010 article in the future-oriented magazine *Wired* under the description of 'Seven essential things you didn't learn in college' (or school, for that matter). Stedman (2012: 107) notes how, paradoxically, the course emphasises students writing essays that analyse remixed cultural artefacts, yet includes only a lone sentence referring to some actual creative composition activity, which was 'dropped in at the end of the article'.

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For future directions in formal learning to tap productive links between language and creativity, there is likely much to be gained from paying attention to cases of creative achievements by analogue and digital media remixers, and their cultural contexts of production, learning, sharing, and interaction.

Related topics

computational approaches to language and creativity; creativity and digital text; creativity and discourse analysis; creativity and Internet communication; creativity and technology; everyday language creativity

Further reading

Curwood, J. (2013) 'Fan fiction, remix culture, and the Potter Games', in V. Frankel (ed.) *Teaching with Harry Potter*, Jefferson, NC: McFarland, pp. 81–92.

An ethnographic study of Cassie, a 16-year-old fansite moderator, with an emphasis on writing and social purposes.

Ito, M., Antin, J., Finn, M., Law, A., Manion, A., Mitnick, S., Schlossberg, D., and Yardi, S. (2010) *Hanging out, Messing around, and Geeking out: Kids Living and Learning with New Media*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

This volume presents twenty-three case studies from a three-year ethnographic study of integrating new media into their lives and learning within home, after-school programme, and online settings, with close analysis of group dynamics.

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26

Vernacular creativity in urban textual landscapes

Victoria Carrington and Clare Dowdall[1]

Introduction

The urban landscape – the urban design, infrastructure, architecture, and social patterns of the urban spaces in which we dwell – has always been a message system that proclaims wealth, political power, and cultural values. Writing in the field of globalisation, Sassen (1998, 2007) noted that contemporary urban landscapes are shaped by – and therefore tell the story of – the cultural, racial, and spatial diversifications and contestations that occur within them. Mitchell (2000: 102), writing about the production and consumption of landscapes from the perspective of cultural geography, reminds us that 'landscape' is a relational process: '. . . an ongoing relationship between people and place.' In this chapter, our interest lies in examining the ways in which texts form a key part of this relational process. We begin this chapter from the position that the urban landscape is textual, as well as architectural, characterised by the presence of the printed and visual texts that are arranged in and around these spaces, contributing in their own way to the deployment of values and identities.

   While there have been linguistic mappings of various neighbourhoods (Aalbers & Rancati, 2008; Backhaus, 2007), explorations of youth geographies (Holloway & Valentine, 2000; Skelton & Valentine, 1998), studies of graffiti culture (Carrington, 2009; Moje, 2000), and some important early work on developing a semiotic framing of urban signs (Scollon & Scollon, 2003), the ways in which existing and incoming groups and individuals read, and then write themselves into, the textual landscape is not yet well documented or systematically analysed. Surveys such as those focused on linguistic diversity carried out by Backhaus (2007) in Tokyo and Ben-Raphael and colleagues (2006) in Jerusalem approach the task as a snapshot of a single layer of text or signage in time, rather than chronicle change over time, or explore the ongoing relationship between people, text, and place. This chapter and the research underpinning it have moved to explore this landscape.

Text, discourse, power, and urban space

Text as a social practice is important. Luke (1995: 13), writing in the field of critical discourse analysis, describes texts as 'the artifacts of human subjects' work at the production of meaning and social relations'. For Luke, texts are moments of intersubjectivity, used

by humans to make sense of their worlds, to position themselves in relation to others, and to construct identities. He argues that spoken and written texts are moments in which cultural representations, and social relations and identities, are articulated through language and other sign systems (Luke, 1995: 18). Writing as a critical discourse scholar, Luke privileged discourse and identity along with issues of power, and considers the text to be the manifestation of these social and cultural forces. Fairclough (1999: 75) similarly argues that daily life is 'pervasively' mediated by texts, noting that, in these circumstances, the 'politics of representation becomes increasingly important – whose representations are these, who gains what from them, what social relations do they draw people into, what are their ideological effects, and what alternative representations are there?' This chapter takes Fairclough at his word, and focuses on texts as they appear in and on selected urban landscapes, forming what we might call the 'textual landscape' (Carrington, 2005, 2009), giving consideration to how these landscapes can be read in relation to the individuals and groups travelling through them. In this context, 'text' is understood as a publicly visible artefact (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010) that contributes to the materiality of the urban landscape, as well as the creative communications of the individuals and groups who inhabit urban spaces. Interpreting text as a material artefact is also important in understanding how we live out our lives in communities and neighbourhoods.

Blommaert (2010) has argued that while the language practices and cultures of communities have historically been interpreted in relation to stable locations in horizontal sites and spaces, there is an increasing need to conceptualise these spaces with more nuance and complexity. Attempting to capture the increasing mobility and diversity of linguistic practices, Blommaert (2010: 5) argues that 'every horizontal space (e.g. a neighbourhood, a region, or a country) is also a vertical space, in which all sorts of socially, culturally and politically salient distinctions occur'. Here, he describes a 'layered and stratified space', rather than a one-dimensional and homogenous place. Thus while every space is horizontal – in which texts are arrayed in relation to particular types of regulatory, communicative, and transgressive work – it is also a vertical and layered space, in which a range of social, cultural and political distinctions play out materially and temporally. This view is also reflected in Scollon and Scollon's (2003) parallel work in geosemiotics. They argue that any urban space is composed of 'semiotic aggregates' – that is, multiple discourses competing and overlapping, amplified or silenced by their materiality and positioning. In essence, Scollon and Scollon (2003: 175–89) identified four distinct types of discourse in urban spaces: municipal regulatory discourse; municipal infrastructural discourse; commercial discourse; and transgressive discourse. Focusing on signage in place, they noted that different orthographies and fonts carry meanings differently. They also pointed out the fixed or impermanent nature of the sign itself, arguing that 'once the sign is in place it is never isolated from other signs in its environment, embodied or disembodied' (Scollon & Scollon, 2003: 205). Texts are therefore material contributors to the sedimented histories of each neighbourhood – located in time and place.

Taken together, Blommaert and the Scollons establish that texts are linked to complex systems of meaning and differential valuations of linguistic and cultural practice. The Scollons' work argues for the importance of location and temporality, as well as the content of text in public urban settings, while Blommaert's work reimagines the ways in which linguistic communities move through time and space in contemporary globalised conditions. In a study of graffiti and street art, Carrington (2009: 2) notes that, 'in urban sites, the sanctioned and unsanctioned dwell alongside each other, jockeying for attention and space, representing the views and interests of the often quite diverse individuals and groups sharing and competing for urban spaces'. Against this background, this chapter uses data collected as part of a study

of urban textual landscapes to take up these ideas as the basis for a close consideration of text as an artefact of social practice in two urban environments. Drawing from Blommaert and the Scollons' frameworks for considering discourse and its textual artefacts in urban spaces, we argue that it is important to map and analyse the ways in which the texts written onto, and displayed within, urban landscapes write individuals and groups into and out of the changing urban environments in which they live. The chapter reports specifically on data collected in two sites – one in the United Kingdom and another in the Netherlands – with a particular interest in the creativity displayed by the various uses of texts. Drawing on data from both sites, the chapter analyses the material evidence of diverse textual practices, focusing particularly on evidence of creativity in the textual landscape.

Notes on methodology and methods

The sites

Two urban sites were selected for exploration: one within the city of Exeter, in the United Kingdom; and the other in Amsterdam, Netherlands. Each site met a series of criteria laid out by Lynch (1960) in his study of the lived experience of the city: each area was formed around identifiable 'paths', such as streets, transit lines, or walkways; each had identifiable 'edges', such as edges of development or walls; each had distinguishable 'districts', or zones; each contained a node point or intersections and crossings; and each had landmarks such as key buildings, street furniture, or other external reference points. Both sites, although intrinsically different, met these criteria.

- *Site 1: Exeter, Queen Street*
  Exeter is a small historic city located in the south-west of England. According to 2011 census data from the Office for National Statistics, it was then the sixty-first most populous built-up area in England, with a growing population that was passing 117,000 (http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/index.html). The population is predominately white British (93 per cent). Of the 6.9 per cent of the population who describe themselves as 'minority ethnic', 3.9 per cent describe themselves as Asian.

  Queen Street in Exeter – the site of data collection – is a busy, non-residential, main thoroughfare linking Exeter High Street, the main shopping area, with Exeter Central Railway Station. Beyond the research site, but of note because of its proximity, lies Exeter College, a large, thriving tertiary college that serves a mixed population, including adults and young people, many of whom make use of Queen Street as a route to and from the college. Exeter Central Station (the third busiest railway station in Devon) is at one end of the research site. This is one of two main transport hubs located in the city. The railway station is served by local commuter services, as well as the mainline service to London Waterloo. The station's main entrance is situated amongst the shops in a 79m curved brick building erected in 1933. At the other end of the research site is the Royal Albert Memorial Museum. Founded in 1868, at the time of the study this city museum had recently undergone extensive refurbishment. It reopened on 14 December 2011, and is a popular attraction for local residents and tourists, having been awarded the National Art Fund Prize, 'UK Museum of the Year 2012'.

  The Queen Street research site is approximately 175m long and restricted to one side of the road. This main thoroughfare to the railway station, further education college,

and high street is populated with large buildings dating from the late nineteenth century. These buildings are occupied by an eclectic variety of independent shops and civic services, including the railway station and its entrance, cafes and restaurants, hair salons, a handicraft shop, a music shop, a card shop, the entrance to some public gardens, a large solicitors' office, County Chambers, and the Royal Albert Memorial Museum.

- *Site 2: Amsterdam, Kinkerbuurt*
  Kinkerbuurt is located in Amsterdam's Oud West district, comprising an area of 1.70km^2 and with a population of around 31,000, representing 177 different nationalities. A quarter of this population are of Surinamese, Turkish, and Moroccan descent, predominantly first- or second-generation migrants. This reflects the broader demographics of Amsterdam, where 45 per cent of the population has non-Dutch parents (https:// en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amsterdam#Twenty_first_century).

  This mixed residential/commercial area is one of the most densely populated neighbourhoods in Amsterdam. Named after the eighteenth-century lawyer Johannes Kinker, the neighbourhood was established around 1900 when Amsterdam was experiencing rapid expansion following a period of immigration. In the 1970s, the next wave of immigration saw an influx of Moroccan and Turkish families moving into the area to occupy cheap housing estates, as simultaneously numbers of ethnic Dutch moved to other areas of the city. More recently at the time of the study, Oud West had been identified as an area 'threatened by long-term unemployment, poverty, a growing feeling of insecurity, low average education, a homogenous housing supply of poor quality and only a few public spaces all in a poor state of repair' (European Commission, 2001) and a series of resulting investment programmes had led to the cascading gentrification of some areas, an increasing growth in owner-occupancy, the return of small numbers of ethnic Dutch, and upgrades to public areas and housing.

  Kinkerbuurt sits alongside the main transport and shopping route through the district, the Kinkerstraat, and is bounded by a set of tramlines, canals, and intersecting main streets. A number of Turkish and Surinamese restaurants, greengrocers, bakers, carpet and bric-a-brac stores, and cafes line the street, and the permanent street market that is a feature of the area provides a mix of traditional Dutch and immigrant goods and foods. Intersecting Kinkerstraat are a series of smaller streets, with a mix of residential and small commercial properties that include kitchenware, local restaurants, a pet store, shoe repair, cafes, and a newsagent. This was the site from which the Amsterdam-based data was collected.

As a geographic locator, each research zone was selected because it represented the intersection of main thoroughfares in the identified areas, meeting Lynch's (1960) criteria. The two sites, however, have distinctive features: the Exeter site can be described as predominantly civic and commercial; the Amsterdam site is mixed residential and commercial, with a range of social housing backing onto a busy commercial and transport main road and shopping district. Despite their differences, both sites reflect the intersection of diverse groups and individuals, and provide the opportunity to focus on a range of textual landscapes in motion over time.

Data collection

Using a digital camera, photographic data was collected at each site using a 'photographic mapping' technique. As outlined by Collier and Collier (1986), 'photographic mapping'

can act as a baseline to establish the range of textual artefacts present. This mapping was then used on subsequent site visits and repeated, in order to create a layered view of change in particular sites. The researchers visited the chosen sites five times in a three-month period between September and November 2011. In each visit, photographic data were collected to record and preserve noticeable textual artefacts, potentially making available detail that is not noticed by an observer operating in real time. This method provided 'an absolute check of position and identification in congested and changing cultural events' (Collier & Collier, 1986: 9), as the researchers revisited the same urban sites. For the purposes of this chapter, the focus was on capturing texts in situ in boundaries and nodes, to observe instances of sanctioned and unsanctioned text, and to identify textual nodal points and changes in text over time. Field notes were made to support observations and to raise questions that occurred at the time of each photographic mapping. Analysis of the photographic data and accompanying field notes included consideration of the key types of sign/text photographed, the features of signs/texts photographed, and time-dated shifts in the display and presence of signs/textual artefacts. Following the working process established for the study codes, categories and themes were generated out of the photographic data and observational field notes.

Textual landscapes: The data and analysis

In each site, texts were categorised and interpreted according to the categories identified by Scollon and Scollon (2003): municipal regulatory discourse, municipal infrastructural discourse, and commercial discourse, all of which form the 'official' texts of a location; and transgressive discourses, which are formed by vernacular 'unofficial' texts. Sensitive to the issues of physical placement noted by the Scollons, we have adopted these broad terms to support initial description and categorisation. Each instance of text was further categorised as monolingual or multilingual, and then categorised even further across a range of intersecting criteria that attempted to capture the complexities of urban textual landscapes in action: sanctioned–non-sanctioned; layering–sedimentation; material construction and placement; appearance–disappearance; vernacular; government–municipal; and commercial.

Exeter

In Queen Street, the first impression of the textual landscape is that of a highly regulated space. 'Official' municipal texts dominate and, on initial scrutiny, vernacular trangressive texts are notable by their apparent absence. Many of the official regulatory texts are particularly prominently placed. These include parking notices and restrictions, mainly relating to parking fines and warnings. They are made from metal sheets and displayed at eye level on specially erected posts or attached to existing walls. Important information is often presented in red (see Figure 26.1).

Civic/municipal texts giving information about the neighbourhood and areas of specific interest are also evident. These include maps and directions, and information about local attractions. The maps are displayed beneath laminated screens, where they cannot be defaced, on purpose-built posts and blocks. The materiality of these formal municipal infrastructural texts contributes to their official status. However, some official regulatory and infrastructural texts also appear to have been placed more opportunistically: 'official' stickers on lampposts are used to direct walkers towards the city centre, railway station, cycle routes, and Exeter

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Figure 26.1 Municipal texts in Queen Street, Exeter

Cathedral (a main tourist attraction). These provide information about routes, distances, and time to travel. A 'no smoking' sticker has been added to the wall of the telephone box, long after the telephone box was erected. These official texts are made from long-lasting, sticky-backed, laminated material. They have been attached to the lampposts and street furniture manually, and are designed to last – to be impermeable to the weather and to unofficial attempts to remove them. The result, however, is less slick. While these texts are professionally printed and glossy, they do not achieve the same sense of authority as the metal-formed regulatory and infrastructural texts that sit alongside them.

Commercial texts, in the form of signage and sanctioned advertising, which have been purchased and displayed on laminated hoardings, are also evident (for example signs and posters for Exeter Central Station, a coffee shop, a handicraft shop, and a coffee brand). These also vary in materiality, with some signage being painted or printed, or even chalked on boards, while the sign for the long-established 'County Chambers' office is carved in stone above its doorway. These commercial texts have a sense of permanence. In addition, other 'official' texts with less permanence are also displayed: in the telephone box, an official Samaritans leaflet has been opportunistically placed; outside the museum, temporary hardboard hoardings cover the red-brick walls as the museum undergoes refurbishment. Attached to these mainly empty hoardings is a life-sized poster of a Roman centurion and information about how to access museum activities during the refurbishment. Of note in what is clearly a larger multimodal textual landscape (Jewitt, 2013) is the absence of image-driven texts. With the exception of the poster of the Roman centurion, most of the official texts displayed in Queen Street are word-dominant.

These less-permanent 'official' texts sit atop the regulatory and infrastructural textual landscape. They exist as a superficial layer or sediment of the textual landscape that occupies a more temporary timescale and materiality than the permanent municipal texts. Regarded in this way, the positioning and materiality of the full range of 'official texts' begins to reflect Blommaert's notion of landscape as a vertical space, in which linguistic

practices intersect, and political and social subjectivities compete for attention and authority. The range of official texts identified on initial scrutiny did not change through the duration of the study. Municipal regulatory and infrastructural texts, such as parking notices and maps to the city centre, and the permanent official signage for shops, cafes, and commercial enterprises (including lawyers, hairdressers, and card shops), remained a permanent and dominant feature of the textual landscape.

In addition to Queen Street's dominant 'official' textual landscape, initial scrutiny of the district identified the presence of unofficial textual artefacts too. Graffiti, in the form of tags, is painted in the telephone box and on street furniture. Slaps – small printed stickers made by graffiti artists – are stuck to lampposts and traffic lights (Delana, undated). Independently produced posters advertising music events, and relocation information, are displayed in empty shop windows. Stickers advertising 'spaces available for rent in nearby carpark' are attached to parking meters, and semi-permanent stencils on the pavement advertise a competitor to Queen Street's Exeter College.

Fighting against this trail of unofficial textual activity, some surfaces show evidence that tags or fly posters have been removed by official or unofficial clean-up operations. Some stickers have been removed roughly, leaving sticky marks; some surfaces are newly cleaned. Queen Street is a site of regeneration. At the time of data collection, the Royal Albert Memorial Museum was covered in plain hoardings while it was being refurbished, and the railway station entrance was preparing for redevelopment. Consequently, the site could have been appropriated by opportunistic fly posters and guerilla marketeers. However, what is noticeable in this textual landscape is the apparent absence of opportunistic flyposting. During the data collection period, the number of posters and slaps increased slightly, but the museum hoardings remained mainly empty and the landscape seemed largely devoid of transgressive, vernacular texts, despite its selection as a district with potential for this study. On first inspection, this landscape seems so highly regulated and sanitised that it is almost atextual in relation to the presence of unofficial vernacular texts.

However, while not initially obvious, of note in the Queen Street district was the increasing presence of slaps (small printed stickers) over time (Figure 26.2). These texts sometimes overlay municipal texts, while in other places they were attached to bollards and traffic lights, almost hidden from the view of casual passers-by. Sometimes, they are above eye level; sometimes, they are placed in quite obscure positions, for example at the back of an official sign. The slaps displayed in Queen Street are relatively unobtrusive, often much smaller than a banknote. However, while apparently inconspicuous, closer scrutiny revealed that some slaps were not merely the independent productions of graffiti artists, aiming to present themselves in the landscape; rather, these texts were functioning to publicise a brand or potent message. Distinctive, image-driven slaps for the bands 'Gecko' and 'Cosmo Kings' appeared on numerous bollards and other street furniture within the district. These repeating texts, once noticed by the passer-by, serve to create a witty, vivid logographic representation working to market products, services, or events.

Further research revealed that some apparently 'innocent' slaps carried complex messages. A slap portraying a comic-strip-style image and the wording 'This was your life' was identified as a tract from the evangelical website Chick Publications (http://www.chick.com). The slap shows the key image from Chick Publications' most popular tract, which explains the 'Day of Judgement'. This slap would be meaningless to uninitiated viewers, but for converts to evangelism, and this form of worship and message sharing, the graphic and text would be meaningful and significant. Another slap positioned nearby simply read

Figure 26.2 Slaps in Queen Street, Exeter

'GORF STR' in tag-style script. This slap is a tag for a well-known and popular street artist who apparently died early in 2011: GORF was a member of the Cardiff-based Small Time Rockers (STR) Crew (http://streetswithart.wordpress.com/2012/06/11/upfest-2012-bristol-str-crew/), whose work is recognised and admired. Whether this slap had been posted as a tribute or had existed since GORF's active time as a street artist was uncertain, but along with the Chick Publications slap it exemplified the notion that, as textual artefacts in a textual landscape, slaps can exist to do more than merely stake a claim in the landscape. They have a backstory and intertextuality that connects them significantly to the textual landscape and the occupants in it, for whom they have meaning. Equally, these slaps exclude the uninitiated from making meaning. They are highly complex texts that serve to alienate, as well as to communicate. Vertically, they are layered over (or under) other sanctioned textual forms, yet their potential for intertextuality, and to include or exclude, suggests that these texts are highly connected and contestable by groups wishing to communicate across local and more global spaces.

The existence of Queen Street's slaps, secreted amidst a regulated and sparse textual landscape, raises questions about the layering of texts and the behaviours of text producers in a given textual landscape. Over the duration of the study, occasional new slaps and tags appeared in Queen Street. However, their witty positioning, high on lampposts or behind the 'official' face of street furniture, rendered their potential for unofficial communication extraordinarily subtle. When these texts are made visible, they provide evidence in Queen Street of some contestation for space and audience using textual forms. The voices of the text producers are cleverly concealed here, perhaps to avoid attention from the official forces, who may seek to remove them.

This apparent lack of vernacular texts contrasts starkly with the landscape in Kinkerbuurt, where vernacular texts abound.

Kinkerbuurt

Any contemporary urban setting is the site of many overlapping and competing imagined communities (Anderson, 1991) and narratives. Many of these can be read on the textual landscape. For the Kinkerbuurt neighbourhood of Amsterdam, many of the larger stories are about immigration and change, of cooperation and tension between individuals and groups. The shared public space of the textual landscape is a location where these stories can be read and interpreted. Kinkerbuurt is a mixed economy area, with residential housing, large-scale commerce, and smaller local business rubbing up against each other. Reflecting this, there is a mix of commercial, informational, and commercial signage clearly displayed. There is also a range of vernacular and unsanctioned texts on display, contributing to the textual landscape.

Informational signage on council bins provides details on recycling and contact information. Where appropriate – for example informational text identifying the bicycle lane, parking sites, or rubbish bins – images are used. The TNT postbox located on the street corner displays a semi-permanent sign – in Dutch – outlining mail pick-up times; parking meters provide information on parking costs and directions about how to pay; residences have signage on their letterboxes that either encourage or discourage 'junk' mail. Commercial signage is readily visible: location, colour, and font combine to attract attention. Shop windows display a mix of commercial and informational text, advertising goods, as well as providing information on, for example, the availability of wi-fi. Council power substations have commercial advertising spaces, such as poster frames, permanently attached to their backs, while local newsagents shop windows display posters advertising council-funded cultural events.

Non-sanctioned and/or non-authorised texts abound. They exist simultaneously on and with the authorised texts visible in the landscape. Vernacular and non-sanctioned texts are often more complicated than they initially appear. For example, commercially produced promotional stickers masquerade as slaps: a sticker on the pole holding a street sign promotes the San Franciso-based indie reggae/hip hop collaborative and label 'Audiopharmacy'; another street pole atop which is an official sign is covered in smaller hand-made stickers, which provide often opaque commentary and messages; an exchange box is the site for a 'Hello, my name is . . . ' sticker and some tags. Examples of sticker bombing and guerilla marketing abound. Further along, on a crossing on the main street, an anti-fur sticker combining English 'Fur is sick, not chic' and Dutch '*Respect voor dieren.nl*' is attached to a street-crossing pole. Not only does the sticker mix and match English and Dutch, but it also overlays a well-known animal rights agenda with a commercially operated veterinary practice. There are small stickers promoting the Dutch DJs 'Girls love DJs' and the Amsterdam Student Association on multiple lampposts. In fact, it seems that, for every official text, there are multiple stickers piggybacking on the key location, materially different and speaking to a different audience. Here, the texts are sedimented in terms of placement in time, but also in terms of to which and for which audiences they speak.

Taggers have also left their mark on the neighbourhood (Figure 26.3). Shop blinds, flower markets, council bins, exchange boxes, and bicycle baskets around the neighbourhood have been tagged. The residential properties, however, appear not to have been targeted across the time frame of the data collection.

The textual landscape of this area also contains home-made, one-off signage, such as lost cat announcements, and messages taped to doors for delivery people and visitors. On one street, a construction site is cordoned off on one side by a tall wooden temporary wall that is

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Figure 26.3 Tagging in Kinkerbuurt

covered with fly posters (Figure 26.4). Colourful posters with eye-catching fonts and visual designs are on repeat display along the fence, drawing attention to DJs, gigs, clubs, and other events. Over the course of the data collection, almost all of the signs were replaced or covered up multiple times, and as a result the wall is sedimented with torn and faded posters layered one over the other. The depth of each flyer under the more recent layers signals its relative age. As each set of posters starts to wear, the older layers are revealed.

These fly posters and home-made messages are ephemeral texts, with a fragile materiality, designed to send a message that has a time limit. Interestingly, ephemerality does not always mean home-made. The fly posters are commercially produced en masse and act to attract the attention of passers-by to commercial events such as concerts, plays, and festivals. They are all, however, designed to be disposable, with a certain redundancy built in via the materiality of their design and their multiple nature. These disposable texts located in high sedimentation locations feature a mix of English signs and Dutch language. These signs – concert/event fly

Figure 26.4 Fly posters in Kinkerbuurt

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posters in particular – mix fonts and colours along with languages. There is rarely, if ever, a single poster. The posters are glued to the fence in large numbers, in a set. Part of their striking visual imagery is linked to their display in multiples. In this site, these professionally produced texts mixed English and Dutch, speaking to an imagined community of bilingual youth interested in clubs and events taking place in other areas of Amsterdam. There is a distinctive difference in materiality, audience, and temporality in this sticker signage. While civic and municipal signage is designed to be relatively permanent in situ – long-term mounted and highly visible (for example street signs, rubbish bins, crossings) – the small stickers appear on them like fungi or parasites.

Vernacular creativity in urban textual landscapes

The contestation between the official and vernacular texts within the textual landscapes explored in the study was characterised temporally by the differing rates of decay and overlay of textual artefacts, and geographically by the positioning of texts. Municipal texts, predominantly created using metal sheets and poles, are designed for permanence. They reflect the anticipated longevity of civil codes and the authority that underwrites them, taking meaning from both location and materiality (see Scollon & Scollon, 2003). There are penalties for defacing, removing, or ignoring these aspects of the textual landscape and the messages that they communicate. If you litter or drive the wrong way on the cycle path, or park your car outside the area identified by authorised texts, you may be penalised.

Other less 'official' texts are more ephemeral, reflecting a different relationship with authority and time. These texts tend to be less robust in material terms and more layered, as artefacts that are placed on top of existing textual artefacts or surfaces, which are designed with an official function. This ephemeral layering creates sediments of shifting meaning over time. It is here, among the seemingly non-authorised and unsanctioned texts, that the most dynamism and creativity is evident: a process that we call a 'vernacular creativity'.

This act of *vernacular creativity* can be complex and transgressive. In both sites, it is exploited not only by independent street and sticker artists, whose tags and slaps serve to proclaim their presence and transgress otherwise controlled environments, but also by those organisations that have traditionally produced more conventional, 'official' texts. These organisations have now turned to the production of slaps in what can be described as an act of counter-transgression. Their attempts to adopt guerilla marketing techniques to hijack the transgressive act of stickering and slapping is evidence of the potential of vernacular creativity to work for sanctioned and non-sanctioned text producers alike, alongside the creative leaps that textual artefacts can and do make. It also pinpoints the power of the truly vernacular texts in urban sites, acknowledging the cultural importance of these practices by the very act of co-opting them.

These vernacular texts speak to multiple layers of audience and social practice operating within the same physical space. The stickers speak to an insider audience that recognises the messages and intent – and may draw from global, as well as local, cultural references – while outsiders see merely sticker graffiti. These two groups value the texts differently. The construction of varying audiences – local and global – is a creative act that is accomplished via these texts, situated in the landscape. Interestingly, Blommaert's (2007) descriptions of polycentricity – the multiple sources of authority in relation to which individuals and texts reference themselves – can be seen in play here as differing logics of authority and reference operate in the same physical spaces. In the Exeter site, key authorised authority and reference points appear to be supplied by municipal or commercial groups, while some

commercial and religious agencies voice their own logics of authority in the same spaces using multiple 'slaps'. Both types of text refer to authority that sits outside the actual site: municipal authority resides in the local or district council, which itself references national legislation. Commercial texts, from the more obvious advertising billboards to the guerilla marketing slaps, reference products and activities that are predominantly accessed outside the location in which the texts are located. In the Kinkerbuurt site, in addition to municipal centres of authority, commercial organisations, indie popular culture, and individuals are referenced as sources of legitimation for texts.

There are real issues of temporality involved in the ways in which textual landscapes build over time. While the municipal and larger commercial texts have longevity in the urban landscape, the more ephemeral texts come and go as their messages outlive their purpose or audience. Vernacular creative texts often have a limited lifespan. For one thing, these ephemeral texts are materially different from the permanent authorised texts that take up dedicated spaces. Some of these vernacular texts are made of paper and attached to other surfaces, piggybacking on the space offered by the more permanent texts. Others are written in paint or ink and use the surface of buildings as spaces on which to write, ignoring whatever else is placed there and often overwriting existing forms of authorised text, all fading and weathering over time. Some of these vernacular texts are layered over each other, forming sediments and textual echoes. Some, but clearly not all, of these vernacular texts are contestational. Graffiti tags applied to existing authorised texts – on postboxes and shop shutters, for instance – may well be challenging their authority, but simultaneously they are claiming space and speaking to a particular audience (Carrington, 2009). Thus the textual landscape is formed by a juxtaposition of authorised, long-term stationary texts with the cacophony of temporary and ever-changing vernacular texts that operate at different scales and speak to fluid and mobile readers.

Geographically, the positioning and incidence of official and non-official texts is also of note. In particular, the Queen Street site, despite the opportunities provided by the regeneration of the site for flyposting and graffiti, seems almost sanitised. An aesthetic of clean urban space prevails. Official municipal texts dominate the landscape and unofficial texts are almost concealed from the unenlightened passer-by. In this relatively atextual space, little stickers and slaps work very hard to contribute to subtle webs of intertextuality that move communication from the local to the global. Here, alongside the existing forms of graffiti and tagging, new forms of counter-transgression, whereby a range of commercial and non-commercial organisations communicate complex messages using stickers and slaps, can be recognised. Insider knowledge is required to read and contribute to this urban textual landscape, which both includes and excludes. The use of space and the act of concealment contribute directly to these subtle acts of contestation.

Concluding thoughts

As Blommaert (2011) argued, there is an indexicality of texts in these urban textual landscapes. Every space is a layered space – socially and materially – in which different texts speak to different audiences in different ways, and invoke differing norms and authorities. As part of this, the textual landscape is a cauldron of creativity, as people and texts interact across and within these different scales and layers. In Blommaert's terms, these differing forms of text percolate at different scales – that is, they have validity and meaning at different scale levels. A poster for a lost neighbourhood cat operates at a very local scale, which may stretch only for a few streets or even houses, while a municipal traffic sign is linked

to a broader, potentially globalised, scale by its connection to other like signs at the city, national, and international levels.

The textual landscape is a vibrant and creative space that swirls around the permanent fixtures of the urban environment. The municipal and regulatory signage acts as static and long-term structures on and around which entire ecologies of vernacular texts circulate, coming and going at different rates of decay. The messages of both forms of text are designed to pull the attention of particular audiences within particular time frames as they move through these landscapes. The municipal and regulatory texts are fixed in place, and are constructed materially to last indefinitely. Once this work is done, these texts are replaced by newer messages and texts that may speak to the same, or differing, audiences. The materiality of these ephemeral vernacular texts makes this sedimentation of meaning and moment in time possible. The limited lifespan of these texts and their often smaller size in comparison to the regulatory signage amongst which they dwell requires that they are responsive and ever-changing. This rapid layering and turnover of fleeting text fuels a vibrant and creative zone. As Anderson (1991) noted in relation to nations, cities and their various neighbourhoods are imagined communities, as well as physical spaces. They are hauled into being by the creative processes and by those who move through them. These layers of text, official and vernacular, contribute to the identities and identity practices of the individuals and groups who engage with them and to the landscapes that they occupy.

Luke's (1995) work around the role of texts in the construction of identities, and the distribution of social and cultural power and authority, reminds us that everyday engagement with these urban textual landscapes does, in fact, matter. It matters who is represented in these texts and who is not. It matters that some individuals and groups find themselves reflected only in the ephemeral vernacular and unsanctioned texts identifiable in the landscapes around them. It matters that some centres of authority are accessible by the individuals and groups traversing this landscape, while others are not. It also matters that the temporality of these differing texts sends messages about what really counts in our social spaces. Equally of note is the sense that transgression through text production and distribution is becoming appropriated by new organisations, as the producers of pseudo-unofficial textual forms (religious and political messages), in an attempt to beguile an insider audience, use stickers and slaps to communicate their messages. The key message of this chapter is that textual landscapes are an important window into the social and cultural patterns of the communities that create and occupy them. As Luke (1995) would remind us, none of the texts in these landscapes are neutral: the seemingly immutable regulatory signage draws from local, national, and international authority, seeking to naturalise particular power distributions; the glorious cacophony of vernacular texts speaks to a range of different audiences and references numerous alternate authority sources – and yet each of them is attempting to build an imagined community.

The research made it clear that a key feature of these landscape are the texts that form, decay, and are replaced in cycles that exist outside municipal and regulatory channels. These texts and the vernacular creativity that spawns them are important barometers of everyday life in these neighbourhoods, and the ways in which individuals and groups engage with each other and the larger imagined communities (Anderson, 1991) to which they are allied. As such, they should not be overlooked nor their importance discounted.

Related topics

creativity and discourse analysis; language, creativity, and remix culture; literature and multimodality

Note

1 The project 'Urban textual landscapes: Diversity and change' was funded by a United Kingdom Literacy Association (UKLA) research grant.

Further reading

Backhaus, P. (2007) *Linguistic Landscapes: A Comparative Study of Urban Multilingualism in Tokyo*, Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

This is a key text that analyses signage in positioned locations, specifically Tokyo, to build an analysis of the dynamics of contemporary multilingual urban contexts. Backhaus constructs a detailed and fascinating analysis of contesting, overlapping, and diverse language use that shows clearly the complexities of urban linguistic landscapes.

Blommaert, J. (2011) *The Sociolinguistics of Globalization*, London: Cambridge.

An important text in the field of sociolinguistics, with implications for a range of other fields, Blommaert's work addresses issues around language use and power in an era of increasing mobility, globalisation, and cultural/social change. He makes a case for the decline of traditional modernist sources of power and legitimacy for language use, arguing instead that we are now deeply embedded in an era in which new sources of legitimacy and new priorities around language use are emerging.

Pahl, K., and Rowsell, J. (2010) *Artifactual Literacies: Every Object Tells a Story*, New York: Teachers College Press.

Kate Pahl and Jennifer Rowsell make a compelling case for looking beyond our cultural bias to written text in order to engage with the powerful discourses embedded in material culture. They propose a social semiotic, multimodal approach to understanding language and literacy practices in contemporary culture, engaging in innovative and important work.

Scollon, R., and Scollon, S. (2003) *Discourses in Place*, London: Routledge.

This text was, and remains, ground-breaking, both theoretically and methodologically. Scollon and Scollon argue that public texts, such as road signs, advertising signage, logos, and municipal signage, can be understood only in their location and by seeing them in relation to the social, cultural, and physical context in which they are placed. It was one of the first theorised studies to explicitly consider the materiality of text and the ways in which it contributes to urban life.

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Part IV

Creativity in
language teaching and learning

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Creativity in
second-language learning

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Tan Bee Tin

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Introduction: Stepping differently on creativity

Creativity is highly valued and widely researched in various disciplines such as science, arts, business, literature, education, and psychology. Despite the copious literature on creativity, there are few studies focusing on the role of creativity in second-language learning. This chapter attempts to fill that void, examining the concept of creativity with reference to second-language learning. Views of language in complex/dynamic theories show that creativity drives human desire to develop and learn complex language (for example Ellis, 2008; Steels, 2005). Language and meaning grow in complexity concurrently as children deal with complex tasks and explore new meaning about the world (Tomasello, 2000). This also applies to the evolution of human language more generally, which undergoes the same trajectory of change as we use it to create new meaning and knowledge (Slobin, 2005).

Designing 'communicative' tasks and creating a 'communicative' desire have been the focus of much second-language education, often with an emphasis on using language to talk about known meaning. This chapter challenges this utilitarian, 'communicative' view of language and proposes a 'creative' view of language as a tool for making new meaning. The chapter contends that language learning tasks should be set up to instigate a creative desire in language learners, creating a need to say something new so as to help them to explore and transform their second-language knowledge and their knowledge about the world. These proposals are discussed with reference to several key theories, such as complex/dynamic theory, the cognitive psychological view of creativity as process, and the Vygotskian view of creativity and learning.

Research on creativity and second-language learning

Studies on creativity can be divided into four approaches: person, product, process, and environmental (Rhodes, 1961). The focus of each approach is summarised in Table 27.1.

Creativity research also differs according to disciplinary emphasis, such as cognitive, biological, social, and (applied) linguistic. Researchers in various disciplines have used the term 'creativity' in various ways. In the field of linguistics, creativity is often viewed as a form of language 'play' (Carter, 2004), which can occur at three levels: form, meaning, and use

Table 27.1 Research on creativity

Main focus	Some key findings from general creativity research	Studies related to second-language learning
Person approach		
Focus on characteristics of creative individuals	Characteristics of creative individuals include broad interests, attraction to complexity, curiosity, risk-taking, tolerance of ambiguity, imagination, high energy, independence of judgement, autonomy, and intuition (e.g. Barron & Harrington, 1981)	Studies investigating relationships between individual creativity and second-language learning (e.g. Albert, 2006; Ottó, 1998)
Product approach		
Focus on characteristics of creative products	Characteristics of creative products include novelty, appropriateness, usefulness, social acceptance, transformation, surprise, and problem solving (e.g. Amabile, 1996)	Studies analysing the formal and functional features of creative texts, and promoting the use of creative texts and notions of creative competence in the second-language curriculum (e.g. Carter, 2004; Cook, 2000)
Process approach		
Focus on the process people go through in creative tasks	Some processes involved in creative thinking include: chaotic and ordered thinking (Finke, 1996); combinational, exploratory, and transformational thinking (Boden, 2001); and idea generation and idea exploration phases (Finke, Ward, & Smith, 1992)	Studies identifying the processes that students undergo in creative tasks and their contribution to second-language learning (e.g. Tin, 2011b)
Environmental approach		
Focus on situational features that contribute to or hinder creativity	Positive external features contributing to creativity include freedom, autonomy, good role models and resources, encouragement for originality and innovation, freedom from criticism, and tolerance of failure (e.g. Amabile & Gryskiewicz, 1989) Negative external features hindering creativity include time pressure, competition, unrealistic expectations, constraint, lack of recognition for originality, and lack of autonomy and resources (e.g. Runco, 2004) Positive internal task-related features contributing to creativity include disciplined and imaginative use of task constraints (e.g. Stokes, 2008)	Studies investigating different language learning opportunities in different creative language learning task types, including of: constraints internal to creative tasks vs free tasks (Tin, 2011b, 2012, 2013) rule-based games vs role play (Kim & Kellogg, 2007) play episodes vs non-play episodes (Pomerantz & Bell, 2007)

Source: Adapted from Tin (2011a)

(Cook, 2000; Maybin & Swann, 2007). The focus of many language creativity studies has been on describing the finished product rather than identifying the process involved in producing creative texts. Numerous studies have described formal and functional properties of creative texts produced in various contexts ranging from literary to everyday contexts, from classroom to workplace communication. Although some studies have examined the cognitive processes, their focus is often on the 'reader', exploring the processes through which the reader goes in interpreting creative texts (finished products) (see, for example, Maybin & Pearce, 2006) rather than investigating the processes that the social actor undergoes in producing such texts.

The findings of product-oriented language play studies have made contributions to second-language curricula in terms of language learning objectives and the nature of language to be reflected in language teaching materials. However, less attention has been given to the design of tasks, the cognitive processes involved in creative thinking, and the conditions in which creativity can prosper. As Tosey (2006: 30) suggests, as language educators, 'we may not need to create "creativity" so much as generate conditions in which it can flourish'. To understand the conditions in which creativity can thrive, we need to consider the processes involved in creative thinking.

Vygotsky (1971), taking a process approach to creativity, calls for studies that focus on the creative process in motion. A researcher cannot trace the creative process back from the finished product because 'the product has crystallized the process in such a way that obscures the process' (Vygotsky, 1971, cited in Moran & John-Steiner, undated: 7). Both product and person approaches to creativity seem to deal with the fossilised outcome (either in the form of a creative person or a creative product) of a creative process that has already been completed and do not provide answers to how that particular creative outcome happened.

Many language play studies in second-language contexts leave several key questions unanswered, specifically questions regarding why and how play tasks contribute to the production of rich, complex language. Apart from describing learners' performance in play tasks, those studies do not fully clarify the processes by which learners arrive at more complex language in some play tasks as compared to other tasks. They do not fully detail the conditions and task features that might have led to the qualitative difference in learner language. For example, Pomerantz and Bell's (2007) study shows a qualitative difference in language produced between the language play episodes and non-play episodes/transactional talk. In play episodes, learners exhibit richer use of language at both syntactic and lexical levels. Kim and Kellogg's (2007) study, on the other hand, compares the language quality produced in two different play tasks: role plays and rule-based games. Their study shows that rule-based games produce more complex linguistic products – more complex discourse structures, more negotiation and co-construction of messages, and more complex language patterns. However, they still do not answer the question of why some play task types, such as rule-based games, lead to more complex language patterns as compared to other non-play, transactional episodes or role-play activities.

In this chapter, following the cognitive approach, I use the term 'creativity' to refer to the processes involved in creative thinking – that is, the process involved in generating new and valuable ideas. Three critical questions are explored, as follows.

1. How does creativity, as the process of producing new ideas, contribute to second-language learning – in particular, the emergence of rich, complex language?
2. What are the processes involved in creative thinking and producing new valuable ideas? How do new ideas emerge?

3. What are some conditions that can promote creative processes that, in turn, can contribute to the development and transformation of learner language? Why do some language learning tasks lead to the emergence of complex language patterns and new ideas, whereas others do not?

These questions are explored with reference to various key theories such as the cognitive approach to creativity as process, emergentism or the complex/dynamic theory of creativity, and Vygotsky's view of creativity and development. The various issues discussed are also illustrated with a sample analysis of pairwork discussions during two different language learning tasks.

Creativity as co-emergence of language and meaning

One central issue that needs to be addressed is how creativity, as the process of producing new ideas, contributes to the emergence of rich, complex second-language patterns in learners. The answer to this question lies in our views of language and its relationship with knowledge and meaning.

Language is often treated as a tool for expressing ideas and experience – a medium to communicate private thoughts and known ideas to the interlocutor. This communicative view has dominated language learning tasks such as information gap tasks, in which learners use language as a tool to talk about pre-given messages, to bridge the information gap, or to communicate about known ideas and meaning to their interlocutor.

However, recent work in complex/dynamic theory and emergentism has transformed our view of language from a 'representational' to a 'dynamic' view – that is, from a 'communicative' to a 'creative' view. As Roth and Duit (2003: 870) contend, language and meaning/knowledge, 'mutually constitute each other and therefore cannot be considered in isolation . . . Changes in language are related to changes in the articulated world'. Similarly, Gartner (1993: 238) argues that the possibilities for new behaviours or the ability to generate new ideas are 'dependent on generating new words [and new language patterns] to talk about what we see and experience'. Language is not only a tool for communicating or transferring existing knowledge, but also a tool for creativity – a means by which new ideas are constructed, and past and existing ideas are transformed. In other words, new language patterns co-emerge along with our need to construct new knowledge. When this is applied to second-language learning, promoting a creative desire or creating a need for learners to say something new is important if we want learners' language to be pulled out of their familiar comfort zone and to grow in complexity.

However, our search for new language patterns to talk about new experiences is not an easy task because:

> one has only learnt to get the better of words
> For the thing one no longer has to say, or the way in which
> One is no longer disposed to say it. And so each venture
> Is a new beginning, a raid on the inarticulate
>
> *(Eliot, 1943: 31, cited in Gartner, 1993: 238)*

So how might we create conditions for the co-emergence of complex[1] language and new knowledge? To help us to answer this question, the next section takes a closer look at the nature of emergence and creativity as process. How new ideas emerge has been the focus

of creativity researchers taking the cognitive psychological approach and the complex/ dynamic systems approach.

Creativity as emergence of new knowledge: The cognitive approach

Several cognitive processes activated when engaging in a creative task have been identified. Finke (1996) proposes two thinking types: chaotic and ordered. *Chaotic thinking* is generally impulsive, spontaneous, reactive, and divergent, focusing mainly on occurrences of the moment and exploring novel alternatives without specific plans or goals. It involves the natural emergence of structure from complexities. *Ordered thinking*, on the other hand, generates new ideas through purposefully analysing and extending existing ideas. It is often highly structured and directly connected to previous ideas and concepts. The structure is imposed and complexity is reduced.

Boden (2001), meanwhile, proposes three types of creative thinking: combinational, exploratory, and transformational. *Combinational thinking* produces new ideas by associating old ideas in unfamiliar, yet intelligible and valuable ways. *Exploratory thinking* explores all possibilities inherent in a current conceptual space using existing rules. *Transformational thinking* significantly alters one or more rules of the current conceptual space, enabling the generation of certain ideas that 'simply could not have been generated before the rule change' (Boden, 2001: 97).

Finke, Ward, and Smith (1992) propose two phases involved in creative thinking: idea generation and idea exploration. The *idea generation* phase involves generating ideas or 'pre-inventive forms' without knowing what they will be used for. The *idea exploration* phase involves re-interrupting those previously generated pre-inventive forms, constructing new meaning and functions in retrospect (see Tin, 2012, 2013, for examples). The novel outcome produced could not have arisen without the ideas generated in the previous phase, but neither could they be predicted either at the idea generation phase.

Although the emergence of new ideas is unpredictable, they can be seeded by some situational features, one of which, according to cognitive creativity researchers, is the disciplined and imaginative use of constraints (for example Stokes, 2008). Constraints, desirable for creativity, are two-sided: one side encourages search among the unknown, while the other prevents search among the known (see Tin, 2012, for examples).

In recent years, 'systems', 'dynamics', and 'complex' have become key terms in creativity research in the cognitive approach (for example Kerne et al., 2008). Many ideas from complex dynamic systems theory, which deals with the emergence of new ideas, provide opportunities to expand and clarify cognitive creativity research.

Creativity as emergence of new knowledge: The complex/dynamic system theory

The *emergence* of novel and coherent structures and properties, in the complex/dynamic theory, can be defined as 'the process by which new, more complex order arises from that which is, in some sense, simpler or more predictable' (Cariani, 1997: 2). There are several features that a complex system must display if emergence of radical novelty is to take place: the system must be self-organising (that is, display 'adaptability-seeking behaviour'); it must be non-linear; it must involve the amplification of random events (also known as the 'beyond equilibrium condition'); and there must be attractors (see, for example, de Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007; Kim, 2006; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008; Snowden, 2002).

Emergence takes place during the process of *self-organisation* in complex systems. This arising or emergence of new properties is neither predictable in advance of, nor deducible from what came before or from, lower or micro-level components. Thus an emergent new phenomenon can be described only after it has manifested. A complex system requires multiple interacting agents, components, or basal elements. The *repeated interaction* between these multiple agents over time within a (usually simple) set of rules (often known as the system's 'sensitivity to initial conditions') gives rise to the emergence of new complex patterns. These new patterns, once emerged, become part of the complex system, giving rise to further emergence at the higher level.

The relationship between lower level and higher level properties in a complex system is *non-linear*: a small change can have a big impact on the system as a whole, whereas a big change may have little impact. The relationship is also dialectical or dynamic – through repeated interaction, lower level components affect the system as a whole and are in turn transformed.

Emergence is also associated with the arising of *attractors* that are not pre-given. New attractors show themselves when a dynamic system bifurcates, giving rise to both a quantitative and qualitative change. These new attractors dominate the system, allowing for the emergence of something radically novel in comparison with what came before.

This arising of radical novelty, which characterises emergence, involves taking advantage of *accidental occurrences* or *random events*, which are required for the system to bifurcate and for new attractors to appear.

However, not all knowledge systems are complex. Researchers make a distinction between ordered (simple or complicated) systems and complex, unordered systems. Snowden (2002) notes that, in an ordered system, various components that make up the system have a fixed, linear, cause-and-effect relationship. Both the system's components and all of their relationships are known, knowable, and definable. Cause and effect can be separated, and we can predict and control outcomes in such ordered systems. However, a complex system has many interacting components. Both the components and their relationships are not fixed, but are changing: 'Cause and effect cannot be separated because they are intimately intertwined' (Snowden, 2002: 14).

Although emergence of new knowledge in complex systems is unpredictable, it can be identified, influenced, and reinforced. For emergence of new complex ideas and language patterns to take place, language learning tasks need to create a complex system that comprises multiple interacting components and a set of rules (initial conditions), which can seed the emergence of patterns, affecting the patterns of interaction, allowing the interaction to create coherence and meaning. Designing tasks plays an important role, and it is important to consider what sets of rules or task features are likely to disrupt, reinforce, and seed the emergence of new, complex patterns. Do students come up with less complex language in some language tasks with looser formal constraints (such as role plays, transactional, information-gap tasks) because the set of rules desirable for complex systems are missing, and because such language tasks create an ordered system made up of known, knowable components and predictable outcomes? Do some tasks create order and predictability, whereas others enable complex dynamic interactions and radical change? To understand this, we need empirical studies that investigate the process of creativity-in-the-making in different language learning task types with different levels of constraints and rules. We need studies that examine the effect that constraints, rules, and initial task conditions have on creativity and emergence.

Researching the process of creativity-in-the-making through collaborative tasks

Studying creative processes or the emergence of new ideas at the individual level is a challenging task, because it is difficult to get participants to verbalise their inner thinking when engaging in a creative task. Although think-aloud protocol (TAP) is possible, it can affect and interfere with the pattern of thinking. Retrospective interviews also have limitations, because creative products, while they may be based on past experiences, are so transformed that their sources and the trajectory of their emergence cannot be identified or recalled.

Following Vygotsky's work on creativity and play, researchers have proposed collaborative tasks, rather than individual tasks, to investigate creative processes. Researchers adopting a sociocultural view of creativity have proposed collaborations as important sites for creativity, and have characterised creative processes as primarily social, collective, and collaborative (Littleton, Rojas-Drummond, & Miell, 2008). Collaborative tasks create a natural environment for thinking processes to be expressed and verbalised, and thus help in discovering the micro-genetic developmental processes. However, it is important to set up a natural environment, paying particular attention to the social relationships between the participants. Several studies, as Moran and John-Steiner (undated: 36) note, 'often throw strangers together to perform a short-term task', and this does not allow time for the emergence of trust and complementarity, which are important for creative development and production.

Creativity-in-the-making: A study

Background

The study reported here is a replication of a study that I conducted (Tin, 2011b). The data were collected and transcribed by Tzu Ning Huang (2013). The tasks used in the study were jointly designed. The findings reported in Tzu Ning Huang (2013) are similar to my earlier study, showing that, in tasks with high formal constraints, students engage in more negotiation, exploration, and transformation of not only ideas and meaning, but also language. Here, the data are reanalysed, paying particular attention to the emergence of new meaning and language patterns. The process that the pair undergo is detailed with reference to various issues discussed so far in this chapter to illustrate how creativity takes place (or does not take place) in two language learning tasks with different sets of initial rules, constraints, and conditions.

Participants

The participants, N and S, were non-native English-speaking Taiwanese students in their final year at a university in New Zealand. At the time of data collection, they had been in New Zealand for about five years. They were both aged in their early 20s and had been good friends for several years. They were used to speaking Chinese when they met. The study was conducted at N's home in one evening. N and S had not yet had dinner when they performed the tasks and the feeling of hunger often popped up during their discussions. The main data used here were the final written products and the transcripts of their discussions during pair writing tasks.

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Task design

The pair engaged in two types of task: acrostics and similes. For acrostics, they were shown some examples of acrostics and a brief explanation was given in Chinese concerning the rules of acrostics:

- the formal constraints – that is, the requirement to start each line with the letter of the key word provided; and
- the semantic constraints – that is, that the poem produced must be related to the key word.

In the simile task, they were also shown some examples of similes and were given a brief explanation in Chinese – that is, they needed to provide two reasons for a given simile ('Hope is like parking spaces'). The given simile was randomly generated before the data collection.

The two tasks differed in their initial conditions and rules: while the acrostic task had higher formal constraints in addition to semantic constraints, the simile task had looser formal constraints. In the simile task, the pair needed to expand the pre-given relationships between the two concepts: HOPE and PARKING SPACES. In the acrostic task, they were merely provided with the key word TIME, and no other concepts and relations were given. The simile task was similar to many language learning tasks in which learners were required to talk or write about a pre-given topic freely, providing specific details or reasons in support of the topic (in this case, in what way 'HOPE is like parking spaces'). However, in the acrostic, they could not freely write about TIME because their thinking was constrained by the formal requirement (the need to start lines with letters from the key word).

Data analysis

Table 27.2 illustrates the two poems produced by the pair.

The finished products by themselves do not give clues about the way in which the ideas and language are formulated. To understand the process through which the pair went, the transcripts of their discussion need to be examined in detail (see Appendices A and B). In both tasks, N and S spoke mostly in Chinese, and the translation of their discussion is typed in italics, while the English words that they used appear in roman font.

Extract 1: Acrostic ('Time')

Introduction

The pair took about 17 minutes to write the acrostic (see Appendix A). The process through which they went can be divided into two phases: idea generation (lines 1–61) and idea exploration (lines 62–166).

Table 27.2 Poems produced by the pair

Acrostic	Simile
The one thing that	*Hope is like parking spaces*
Inhibits	Because it is hard to get and
Marriage to last	People steal each other's parking spaces
Eternally	Like destroying their hope.

In the first phase, they generated words randomly and engaged in exploration at the lexical level. They also generated new self-invented rules and constraints, such as 'changing an angle from thinking about words to time-related behaviours' (line 50), 'categorising words into categories' (line 62), and 'starting with the biggest group' (line 97). These self-imposed constraints/rules emerged as they carried out the task and were not planned in advance. Words (pre-inventive forms) were randomly generated without knowing what they would be used for. The pair also freely generated words not necessarily starting with the letters of the key word, thus slightly transforming the formal requirement of the task. A complex system requires many interacting agents/components and it seems that, by engaging in random exploration of words, the pair's performance demonstrates one of the features of the working of a complex system.

In the second, idea exploration, phase (lines 62–166), the pair engaged in exploring and transforming the ideas generated both at the lexical and syntactic levels within the formal and semantic constraints of the task. Along with the meaning, the syntactic structure emerges.

Idea generation phase (lines 1–61)

After coming up with 'gold', 'money', and a common phrase related to TIME ('time is money'), in line 12 N suggests 'marriage', a sudden deviation from the concept of 'time,' but which seems connected to 'money' in terms of form because both words start with 'M', the third letter in the given key word TIME. This diversion to 'marriage' serves as a form of bifurcation, taking the pair's language – in particular N's – to new attractors, generating a different set of words (for example 'food, patience, life, pressure, age, study') in the subsequent lines (lines 16–30). In line 31, S also bifurcates, providing a word 'universe', which is recognised by N as 'different' (line 32). This seems to help N to bifurcate to more new attractors, such as 'belief' (line 34).

S then goes back to generating some basic words directly related to 'time', such as 'watch' (line 39), leading N to generate 'jewellery' (line 40), which usually co-occurs in the same category as 'watch', although unrelated to TIME. In line 44, N offers 'forever', a word that is perhaps related to 'universe', suggested by S in line 31. In the subsequent line, S suggests a different word, 'speed', drawing upon her past experience about a book that she has been reading. N, in turn, continues 'speed' with a related word 'distance' in line 49 ('Then, how about "distance"?').

In lines 50–52, N proposes to bifurcate their language further by suggesting that they 'change an angle' and think about 'something time-related behaviours' in addition to 'words' (nouns) generated so far. This leads to the emergence of new attractors in subsequent lines, such as verbs and sentences. In line 53, N reshapes the meaning of 'marriage' that she proposed in line 12 by saying 'marriage is a behaviour, right?' Then N says the word 'cooking' (line 54), probably prompted by a feeling of hunger and related to her earlier word 'food' (line 16); S elaborates the word into a short sentence by relating it with TIME ('cooking takes time') (line 55). S then generates more words related to TIME such as 'minute, second, month, year' in line 57. After a long pause, N says 'self-awareness' (line 59), a different word from those that have gone before, perhaps a further attempt to bifurcate their language.

The process of generating words in these lines illustrates a form of chaotic thinking, focusing mainly on *occurrences of the moment* and exploring novel alternatives without specific plans or goals. The pair's thinking is generally impulsive, spontaneous, reactive, and divergent. They generate a series of words without worrying about what they will be used for. Some are related to the concept of TIME, while others, although unrelated, arise

from words generated in the earlier lines or from the pair's experience. The words generated seem to serve as 'pre-inventive forms' (forms generated without knowing what they will be used for), which in turn serve as the 'multiple interacting agents' that a complex system requires if emergence of new knowledge is to take place.

Idea exploration phase (lines 62–100): Imposing self-generated rules

Starting from line 62, the pair engage in the idea-exploration phase, using a set of self-generated rules (organising words into categories and starting with the biggest group) and the constraints imposed by the task.

In line 62, S introduces a new self-generated rule ('Okay, should we categorise what we write?'). Following this new rule, the pair organise the words generated into five groups (lines 62–95) (see Table 27.3). They then explore the semantic connection between words:

- S: 'age is more like the life' (line 69);
- N: 'patience is more like belief' (line 72);
- N: 'love is more like forever' (line 74);
- S: 'it (universe) is more like speed' (line 77);
- N: 'studying and cooking is more random' (line 80); and
- S: 'pressure and self-awareness are similar' (line 83).

In lines 96–99, N notices that they have more words in group 2 and proposes a new rule that they start with the biggest group. She also notices that 'they are all time-related' (line 99).

In this way, the pair start exercising ordered thinking, and attempt to generate new ideas through purposefully analysing and extending *existing ideas*. Their thinking is highly structured and directly connected to previous ideas and concepts. The structure (that is, self-generated rules – categorisation and starting with the biggest group) is imposed.

Idea exploration within task constraints (lines 102–17): Seeding the emergence of syntax

After a long pause, in line 102, S suggests 'MY ENERGY', fulfilling the requirement to start lines with the letters of the key word TIME. Although the words that she uses here come from neither group 2 nor the other groups, her diversion seems to lead their language to a new attractor: from 'words' to the beginning of 'syntax'.

After a pause, N also agrees, saying 'I want to write "MY something" here', looking at the third letter 'M' in the acrostic. S suggests another alternative 'yeah, or a verb' (line 105),

Table 27.3 The pair organising words into groups

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
Universe	Self-awareness	Life	Clock/watch	Cooking
Distance	Pressure	Age	Jewellery	Working
Minute, second, hour	Patience		Money	Studying
	Marriage			
	Love			
	Belief			
	Forever			

further seeding the emergence of syntax. N acknowledges that it is hard to think of a word for 'T' (the first line in the acrostic) (line 106), and later she chooses a simple word 'the' and suggests 'how about "Tʜᴇ one"' (line 108). S agrees, saying that 'we can add many words after the letter', further reinforcing the emergence of syntax. N realises that although they need two more words (for 'I' and 'E'), she is constrained by the semantic requirement of the task (line 114: 'but it can only be time-related'). After a pause, N suggests 'Eternal' for 'E' in line 116, and this word seems to be probed by an earlier word in group 2 ('belief') (N: 'I just thought of "eternal" . . . because many beliefs are about . . . . . . you know'). The word 'eternal' also seems to be related to 'forever' in group 2, a word that N proposed earlier in the idea generation phase.

Idea exploration (lines 118–43): Finding new relations between existing words and transforming the form

This accidental emergence of 'eternal' (which arises through interaction between the person, the task, and previous words) is taken advantage of by S, who suddenly sees a new connection between the word 'eternal', the previous word 'marriage' in group 2 and the key word ᴛɪᴍᴇ (S: 'time may cause marriage to . . . prevent marriage from going . . . . . . eternally') (line 118).

Along with the emergence of this new meaning, the pair engage in transforming the form further in lines 122–35. S expands it by connecting the last two lines ('M', 'E') with the first line 'the one thing' ('So if we can start with T . . . like . . . the one thing . . . or the one . . . . . . .something': line 122). They also think about how to use 'eternally' in a sentence, for example, S: 'Do we need a noun?' (line 128), N: 'Is eternally adjective?' (line 129), N: 'So, give me a sentence' (line 131), and N: 'When do you use eternally?' (line 135). Finally, in line 136, S proposes the sentence 'the one thing that prevents marriage going eternally', using a relative pronoun 'that' to combine all of the previous words into a noun phrase. N accepts S's proposal and explanation (S: 'because time has limits').

Task constraints (lines 144–66): Further transformation and exploration

After a pause, S comes up with an alternative 'inhibit' ('inhibit is like prevent, right?'), fulfilling the formal requirement of the task (the need to start with 'I', the second letter in the key word ᴛɪᴍᴇ). She then checks it in the dictionary to see whether it is correct. S then further suggests that they transform the word 'go' ('Is there a better word than "go"?': line 158). The pair then propose alternatives ('hold', 'sustain') and finally N comes up with 'last' (line 163), which is changed slightly into 'to last' by S, who accepts it as a good alternative. They then write the final poem down.

The final poem written (the product) is not produced in a linear order. Instead, it emerges as the various components of the complex system (various words generated, the pair, their experience) interact with each other within a set of task constraints (formal and semantic requirements) and a set of self-generated rules (changing an angle from words to behaviours, organising words into groups, and starting with the biggest group). During the task, the pair often fall into 'attractors' (for example generating similar words), but they also manage to pull themselves out of the attractors and their lexical trajectory bifurcates into 'new attractors'. They engage in the transformation and exploration of both ideas and form. The sentence structure emerges and is transformed along with the emergence of new connections

between words. What has emerged (the final product) is just one of the possible outcomes, and cannot be predicted or knowable in advance from the lower level order (the letters of the given key word TIME and words generated in the idea generation phase). However, it can be explained in retrospect. We can identify and trace the co-emergence of meaning and form: how the various words lead to one another, and how the syntax and the new meaning (that is, the new relation between 'time' and 'marriage') emerge. When the word 'marriage' is first generated in line 12, there is no apparent connection between 'marriage' and 'time' yet. However, as the discussion continues, the new meaning emerges, along with the transformation of their language.

Extract 2: Simile ('Hope is like parking spaces')

Introduction

It takes the pair only about 7 minutes to write the simile (see Appendix B). There is little transformation of their language and meaning. The poem that they write reflects more about the common ideas associated with 'parking spaces' ('hard to get', 'people steal from each other'). The meaning of parking spaces is not transformed in the process of comparing it with 'hope'. The idea that they write seems to be a knowable, predictable idea, or a 'resultant property', rather than an 'emergent property'. Resultant properties are additive and subtractive properties, and are predictable from information at the lower level, whereas emergent properties are 'neither additive nor subtractive, and not predictable, on the basis of the lower-level properties from which they arise' (Kim, 2006: 550). The pair – in particular, N – get the idea right from the beginning based on N's own negative experience with parking spaces. Because the idea that they want to convey is already known, there seems to be a lack of desire to transform their language. Their discussion lacks complex negotiation, transformation, and exploration of meaning and form. They simply apply what they know about 'parking spaces' to 'hope', with little transformation of the sentences generated. Lack of constraints (although randomness generates an interesting outcome) leads to this. No new self-generated rules and constraints emerge either. The final product is written in a rather straightforward linear manner.

Retrieving known and knowable ideas (lines 508–51): Working within an order system

Right from the beginning, N gets the idea for the simile: 'people tend to steal parking spaces' (lines 511–15), drawing on her own negative experience with parking spots. When S asks 'why is it like hope?', N explains 'it's like people taking your hope away' (line 517). Although the meaning may shed a new light on the meaning of 'hope', it does not really transform N's known meaning and past experience with 'parking spaces'. N then continues the idea in a linear manner with the second reason for the poem: 'parking spaces are hard to get.' Although they engage in some discussion concerning the form, the discussion lacks negotiation, exploration, and transformation. N suggests 'I think we need "and"' when watching S write and proposes 'Can we change it a bit?' (lines 535–7). N then adds 'each other's' in front of 'parking spaces' (line 541) and replaces 'like taking your hope away' with 'like destroying their hope' (line 543). When S asks 'Should we split the sentence?' (line 544), N simply suggests 'we can add the thing in the middle . . . the . . . slash' (line 547) and they agree to add 'and' to connect the two reasons (line 551). Their editing and

production is more like adding and subtracting words (a feature of an order system), rather than transforming the sentence.

Unlike the acrostic, the pair's language and ideas in the simile are not explored and transformed, and the final product is written in a linear manner, mainly proposed by N. While in the acrostic N tends to dominate (by proposing most of the words, such as 'marriage', 'eternally', 'the one', which are finally used in the poem), S plays an important role in transforming their meaning and form by exploring new relationships between words generated. However, in the simile task with looser formal constraints, S lacks an opportunity to contribute to the writing task. N is also unable to transform what she knows about 'parking spaces'. Along with this static known meaning, they fall into known forms, using sentences and words that readily arise and which they already know. The task seems to create an order system in which the pair impose 'structure' and 'order' on what could have been a complex meaning.

In the acrostic, the connection between 'time' and 'marriage' is an unusual, novel emergent property that arises through the process of various components – the various randomly generated words, the pair's experiences, and the task constraints – interacting with each other in a complex manner. However, in the simile task, the connection or the imaginary situation ('hope is like parking spaces') is pre-given at the beginning of the task, requiring the pair to elaborate it freely. This different initial condition somehow leads to a different trajectory in their thinking: they seem to simply apply the known features of one concept to another instead of trying to transform their current conceptual space (that is, what they know about 'parking spaces'). The process that they undergo is somewhat linear: because the meaning is known, there is a lack of desire to further transform their language and meaning. However, in the acrostic, their meaning is shaped and reshaped until the end, along with their language. The language changes as they use it to explore and construct the unknown.

Recommendations for practice: Towards creativity

Several recommendations can be offered for designing language learning tasks to promote rich, complex learner language. Attention needs to be given to the task conditions in which creativity can prosper. Creative tasks need to facilitate the working of a complex system. Tasks with higher formal and semantic constraints are more likely to engage students in creative processes, helping them to form their self-propelled zone of proximal development, and to actualise the 'possibilities' inherent and latent in themselves and the environment.

It is important to create opportunities for students to engage in the idea generation and exploration phases. In the idea generation phase, students should be involved in generating multiple pre-inventive forms without knowing in advance what functions they will serve. In the idea exploration phase, conditions also need to be set up to give students the opportunity to explore pre-inventive forms within constraints, making meaning in retrospect. Initiating and taking advantage of random events, working within the task constraints (both self-discovered rules and other-imposed rules), is important in the exploration and transformation of learner language and knowledge. The final meaning to be constructed should not be predictable *a priori*. In order to facilitate this, tasks need to be ill-defined rather than well defined (Tin, 2012). In a well-defined task, students are given clear instructions concerning the final outcome to be achieved. This often results in the use of familiar language and known utterances to talk about known, knowable, or predictable outcomes and meaning. In ill-defined tasks, the final outcome to be produced is not knowable in advance, and there are opportunities for the amplification of random events, for bifurcation, and for discovery of new constraints and rules as the task proceeds.

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Future directions: Broadening 'possibilities'

Studies on creativity in language learning are fewer than in other disciplines. Given the increasing importance of creativity, more research is required to delineate the role of creativity in language learning. In particular, processes involved in creative thinking and their role in language learning are underexplored, and process-oriented creativity studies are urgently needed. The findings of such studies will contribute to the design of language learning tasks and the promotion of conditions that can actuate the flow of creativity.

Investigating the creative process is a challenging task, because it involves gaining access to students' thinking. Collaborative creative tasks are more desirable than individual creative tasks. However, creative development occurs over time and the use of short tasks, such as those used in the study reported here, has limitations. We need to study the process of creativity in the making over a longer time span in natural environments. Longitudinal case studies could be conducted, following a small group of students engaging in creative language learning tasks. Comparative studies can also be carried out, comparing two groups of students studying in two different types of course over a longer period (for example students studying following a creative language curriculum vs those following a traditional language curriculum), comparing the gains that they achieve over time.

Students' success is often measured in terms of how well they perform in tests and examinations in many educational contexts. Thus, in order to persuade practitioners and policymakers to promote creativity in language learning, we also need to prove that students engaging in creative tasks can do well in language tests in addition to improving their creative competence. Such projects would be welcome topics for future postgraduate students and researchers who are willing to step differently on creativity – willing to find 'new angles to look at the topic', to broaden not only what we have done so far, but also what we can and may do, and to connect what we know today about creativity with what we could know tomorrow.

Related topics

creativity and dialogue; creativity and discourse analysis; everyday language creativity; language, creativity, and cognition; language, creativity, and remix culture; literature and language teaching; teaching creative writing

Note

1 The word 'creativity' has often been used in association with 'complexity' in many discussions of creativity in the linguistic discipline. Complex linguistic patterns emerge along with our constant need to construct new meaning (see, e.g., Steels, 2005). In other words, creativity (the human need to construct and communicate about new meaning) gives rise to the emergence of complex linguistic patterns – in particular, complex grammar.

Further reading

Carter, R. (2004) *Language and Creativity: The Art of Common Talk*, London/New York: Routledge.

The book explores the creativity inherent in everyday spoken language and demonstrates how ordinary language users exercise language creativity in everyday contexts.

Cook, G. (2000) *Language Play, Language Learning*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

This book examines the importance of language play and creative language use for human life, human thought, culture, and language learning.

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Craft, A., Jeffrey, B., and Leibling, M. (eds) (2001) *Creativity in Education*, London/New York: Continuum.

This book contains a lively collection of chapters on the issue of creativity in general educational settings, and the role of creativity in learning and teaching.

Tin, T. B. (2011) 'Language creativity and co-emergence of form and meaning in creative writing tasks', *Applied Linguistics*, 32(2): 215–35.

Refer to this article for more information about how new ideas and language co-emerge or lag behind one another in different creative writing tasks. It investigates the cognitive processes that students undergo and the role of first language vs second language in two different creative writing tasks.

Tin, T. B. (2012) 'Freedom, constraints and creativity in language learning tasks: New task features', *Journal of Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 6(2): 177–86.

This article discusses several task features to be considered when promoting creativity for language learning.

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Key to transcription symbols

…	pause
@	laughter
(word)	comments added by the transcriber
aaa	translation (italics)
aaa	original words in English (roman)

Appendix A

Extract 1 ('Time'): Transcript

1	N:	What do you think? 'Time'.
2	S:	'Time'…
3	N:	Somehow I think of 'gold'
4	S:	Yeah… 'money'
5	N:	Why? Oh so 'time is money'…
6	S:	Hmm…
7	N:	'Time'…
8	N:	Yeah see, 'time is money'. @@
9	S:	@@… 'Time is money'
10	N:	What else is about 'time'? Uhh…
11	S:	Let's write it down.
12	N:	So what were we saying? 'Money'…Oh how about 'marriage'?
13	N:	How do you spell marriage? @@…
14	S:	@@… M-A-R-R-I-A-G-E…
15	N:	@…Uh…What else?
16	N:	'Food'…? How does 'food' relate to time? …
17	S:	Hmm…
18	N:	'Money, marriage'…What else? 'Patience'?…
19	N:	How do you spell 'patience'?
20	S:	Uhh do you want me to write?
21	N:	@@ yeah you better do it.
22	N:	'Money, marriage, patience'… Time
23	S:	Hm.
24	N:	And 'life'.
25	S:	Hm.
26	N:	'Love'. Hmm… 'Pressure' …
27	S:	Hm. [writing]
28	N:	What else?… 'Age'…Hmm……
29	S:	Hm.
30	N:	'Study'!
31	S:	… 'universe'?
32	N:	'Universe'? Good good. That's different. @@ not bad.
33	S:	@@…
34	N:	'Belief' …
35	S:	Why?
36	N:	because you said universe… @@
37	S:	@@…
38	N:	Hmm…
39	S:	The most basic… 'watch' and…?
40	N:	Oh yeah… 'jewellery'!
41	S:	Uhh why?
42	N:	because you said 'watch'.
43	S:	Oh…@ okay…
44	N:	Hmm… 'forever' …
45	S:	'Speed' …
46	N:	Ohh!!!
47	N:	Is this physics? @@…
48	S:	Yeah @@ because I read a book recently …
49	N:	Then how about 'distance'? @@
50	N:	What else? If we change an angle… something time-related …
51	S:	Hmm…
52	N:	Besides words… some behaviours?
53	S:	'Marriage is a behaviour', right?
54	N:	Hmm…what else… 'cooking'? …
55	S:	Hmm…yeah 'cooking takes time' …
56	N:	What else?…
57	S:	Oh that 'minute, second, month, year', and something like that
58	N:	Ohh oh….yeah……(long pauses)
59	N:	Do you know what I mean if I say 'self-awareness'?
60	S:	Yeah…
61	N:	Then write 'self-awareness'.
62	S:	Okay…should we categorize what we write?
63	N:	Yeah this, this, and that… (pointing at words)
64	S:	Yeah…
65	N:	Let's label group 1 group 2…
66	N:	So for group 1, this, this, that, this…… (pointing at words)
67	S:	Yeah and for group 2 ………(numbering words)
68	N:	Does 'age' count?
69	S:	Hm..age is more like the 'life' group, group 3
70	N:	Yeah and 'love' as well?
71	S:	And 'patience'?
72	N:	But patience is more like belief…
73	S:	Yeah…
74	N:	And love is more like forever…
75	S:	So marriage is in group…
76	N:	Group 2…so…how about universe?
77	S:	It's more like speed…
78	N:	So the physics group.
79	S:	Yeah…
80	N:	Studying and cooking is more random … another group?
81	S:	Yeah…
82	N:	Wait these two are in the same group, like accessories… group 4
83	S:	Yeah and pressure and self-awareness are similar

(continued)

84 N: So 4...and study is 5
85 S: Yeah...
86 N: So we have more words in group 2
87 S: 1.2.3.4....(counting)
88 N: What about money? Which group is money?
89 S: Should be like jewellery... group 4
90 N: Do we have more paper?
91 S: Yeah here...
92 N: Okay can you draw a table...?
93 S: Yeah sure... (starting drawing table and filling the table with words)
94 N: .... (long pause)
95 S: Okay done.
96 N: Okay. So...we have more words in group 2
97 N: So let's start with group 2...what do you think?
98 S: Yeah...
99 N: They are all time-related...(looking at group 2)
100 S: .... (pause)
101 N: Hmm ....
102 S: I want to write something like... 'My energy'...
103 N: Hmm ....
104 N: I'd like to write 'My' something.... Here
105 S: Yeah or a verb...
106 N: So if we write ... 'My' ...... But words start with T is hard...
107 S: @ yeah...
108 N: How about 'the one'?...
109 S: The one? Where?
110 N: Just... 'the one', starts with T
111 S: Oh yeah...we can add many words after the letter
112 N: Hmm yes...should be okay if we add only 2 more words....

113 S: ....
114 N: But what if...... but it can only be time-related...
115 S: ....
116 N: I just thought of 'eternal'... because many beliefs are about......you know...
117 S: ....
118 S: I'm think...just... because 'time may cause marriage to...prevent marriage from going..... eternally'...
119 N: Hmm...prevent?
120 S: Yeah...because...... M is marriage and E is... like we said...eternally...
121 N: Hm....
122 S: So if we can start with T...like...the one thing...or the one...... something...
123 N: Oh I know what you mean...so it's marriage...eternally...
124 S: Yeah...
125 N: So the exact word is 'eternal'?
126 S: ...eternally...
127 N: Eternally.
128 S: Oh do we need a noun?
129 N: Is eternally adjective?
130 S: Uh...adverb...
131 N: Okay...so give me a sentence...
132 S: Ahhh......
133 N: Yeah something something eternally ...
134 S: Hmmm...
135 N: When do you use eternally?......
136 S: It is 'The one thing that prevents marriage going eternally'... because time has limits...
137 N: Ohhhhh!!! I see I see. (feeling excited)
138 S: @@ ....

139 N: Ohhhhh I see I see now...
140 S: But it sounds very negative...
141 N: Hmm......
142 S: Don't know why I keep thinking about "the Lord of the Ring"......my precious... @@...
143 N: Yeah time is precious...@@
144 S: ....
145 S: Or 'the one that...inhibit'...? Uhh inhibit is like 'prevent', right?
146 N: Inhibit?
147 S: Yeah... (checking dictionary)
148 N: Yeah it starts with I...
149 N: So the one thing... is it too long?
150 S: I think it's okay...I'll write it down...
151 N: Yeah yeah...
152 S: ....(writing)
153 N: @@ it's like writing essay...so cool...So what should we say?...
154 S: Maybe it's too long?
155 N: No no it's fine. (Reading the sentences)
156 S: You think so?
157 N: Yeah that's it.
158 S: Really? Is there better word than 'go'?
159 N: I don't think there's better word than 'go'......marriage......
160 S: To...hold?
161 N: To...sustain?
162 S: Sustain......
163 N: Last!
164 S: To last. Yes yes 'to last'! That'll do.
165 N: Okay 'last'. That's it.
166 S: ....(writing)
167 S: Done.
168 N: Cool.

Appendix B

Extract 2 ('Hope is like parking spaces'): Transcript

508	S:	So we have to write a simile poem…
509	N:	Yeah two to three sentence
510	S:	………what do you think?
511	N:	…… 'people tend to' … 'people tend to' … umm…wait, don't write yet
512	S:	Oh…
513	N:	Hmm…
514	S:	'Unpredictable'?
515	N:	'Unpredictable'…… I was thinking 'people tend to steal parking spaces… take … tend to take your space …. take your spot before you get it'…
516	S:	Why is it like hope?
517	N:	because 'it's like people taking your hope away'
518	S:	Ohh!!! I see…
519	N:	Yeah
520	S:	So negative @@…
521	N:	@@ yeah negative from beginning to the end @…
522	S:	Umm……… 'so people take away other's hope'…
523	N:	'Like'…
524	S:	'by taking their spots'? @@
525	N:	Yes, 'like they are all in front of you and you watch them take them away so unpredictably'…
526	S:	Oh……you seem to know it very well
527	N:	Yeah personal experience…very bad feeling…
528	S:	@@…
529	N:	Uhh…………
530	S:	So how many reasons do we have?
531	N:	Hmm…two…one is 'parking spaces are…… hard to get', the other is… 'people steal parking spaces from others'…
532	S:	Hmm…………
533	N:	'Stealing others' parking spots'…… ……………(writing)
534	S:	…………(writing)
535	N:	I think we need 'and'…(watching S write)
536	S:	Okay………… (writing)
537	N:	Hmm ……… can I change it a bit?
538	S:	Yeah yeah sure, go ahead
539	N:	Okay………people……(writing)
540	S:	Umm…………
541	N:	And 'people steal…… people steal each other's' ……
542	S:	You really like 'each other' @…
543	N:	… 'each other's……parking spaces…… like …… hmmm…destroying their hope'…yeah (writing) ….
544	S:	(read the sentence written) Should we split the sentence?
545	N:	What do you mean?
546	S:	Like writing a poem we have to have…… different lines…
547	N:	Oh……we can add the thing in the middle… the…slash?
548	S:	Yeah yeah…… so do we need the 'and'?
549	N:	These two sentences are already connected by 'and'. So full stop and then next one?
550	S:	So no 'and'?
551	N:	Yeah why not ……like this …………… (writing)
552	S:	Okay done.
553	N:	Yeah.

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Multilingual creative cognition

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Theory and practice

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Anatoliy V. Kharkhurin

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Overview

This volume presents a comprehensive overview of the state of the art of the conjunction of two important fields of scientific inquiry: language and creativity. In doing so, it declares a sound position of the cross-disciplinary approach incorporating efforts of scholars working in both areas. The volume extensively deals with how language use interplays with creative practice. This chapter adds a cognitive developmental perspective, in which language is perceived as a dynamic system undergoing constant modifications at both intra- and inter-personal levels (see also Langlotz, Chapter 2; Veale, Chapter 22). We start from scratch and develop into fully functioning language users. Acquisition of such a complex cognitive system inevitably leaves a trace on an individual's general cognition. Development of the latter may spur creative development. Indeed, increase and decrease in creative performance with age is well documented in creativity literature (for example Johnson, 1985; Torrance, 1968). In other words, it is prudent to consider the relationship between language and creativity in a developmental perspective, and to look at how language acquisition influences an individual's creative potential. In this framework, a synergy of scientific investigation in both fields flows from the theoretical framework of linguistic relativity (Lucy, 1997; Pavlenko, 2014): a reciprocal effect of language and thought plays out in the relationship between linguistic expression and creative thinking. Thus this chapter explores the relationship between language and creativity by addressing contemporary trends in language acquisition and use from the perspective of creative cognition.

It is evident that vastly increased human mobility, communication technologies, and the accelerating integration of the global economy have increasingly abolished geographic boundaries and brought together people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The close interaction of people speaking different languages emphasises the phenomenon of multilingualism as never before. New scientific research reflects on these tendencies and provides a rapidly growing body of empirical investigation into the phenomenon of multilingualism. This chapter introduces this phenomenon to the language–creativity equation, and provides a tentative answer to the following question: what cognitive mechanisms underlying creative thinking could benefit from the acquisition and use of multiple languages?

The chapter starts with an outline of the multilingual creative cognition framework. As we will see, studies show that speaking multiple languages extends our cognitive capacities. Creativity can be explained by enhanced normative cognition – that is, multilingual practices may strengthen certain cognitive functions, which in turn may lead to increases in our creative potential. A series of studies conducted in various geographic, linguistic, and cultural locations have revealed that language and culture-related factors have an impact on the development of the specific cognitive mechanism underlying an individual's creative performance. The chapter presents a brief overview of these studies and employs their findings to strengthen the theoretical framework of multilingual creative cognition. Specifically, it identifies the cognitive mechanisms underlying creative thinking, which are potentially encouraged by an individual's cross-linguistic and cross-cultural experiences. The chapter concludes with a discussion of potential applications of the multilingual creative cognition framework. Specifically, it proposes an educational model that accounts for both multilingual and creative aspects of human development. Both multilingual and creative educational models are gaining increasing credibility in the scientific, educational, and legislative communities. They recognise the necessity of fostering students' creative potential and multilingual competence. The analysis of various teaching strategies inherent to both types of education programme shaped the construction of a theoretical framework for the bilingual creative education programme (Kharkhurin, 2012a).

Theoretical framework

The scientific inquiry into multilingual creativity appears at the intersection of two highly elaborated fields: multilingualism and creativity. Similar to many other topics in scientific scholarship, in-depth research in both disciplines reveals more questions than answers and makes the subject matter increasingly confusing. This confusion is reflected in a major controversy around the definition of each of these phenomena (for example Cook & Li Wei, in press; Kharkhurin, 2014; Runco & Jaeger, 2012). The discussion of these controversies falls beyond the scope of this chapter; instead, this section presents the definitions of these phenomena adopted in contemporary multilingual creativity research.

Multilinguals[1] are considered to be individuals who are fluent in all of their languages or those who actively use, or attempt to use, more than one language, even if they have not achieved fluency in all of them (Kroll & de Groot, 1997). This definition addresses the notion that multilinguals do not form a homogeneous group and that the majority of individuals speaking more than one language hardly display equal command of these languages. Their linguistic competence is contingent on the age and circumstances of acquisition of respective languages and the context (for example social, cultural, emotional) in which these languages are acquired and used. Multilinguals are assumed to possess a highly dynamic language system, in which individual languages interact and influence each other. It is assumed that speaking multiple languages not only adds to an individual's linguistic repertoire, but may also influence his or her cognitive functions, conceptual representations, and even personality traits (compare 'linguistic multicompetence': Cook & Li Wei, in press) – that is, it has an impact on the whole mind (on all language and cognitive systems). It follows, then, that variations in acquisition and use of languages would have ramifications for the individual's cognitive development.

During the past few decades, research in the area of bilingual cognitive development has made tremendous progress and provided evidence supporting the notion that speaking more than one language extends, rather than diminishes, an individual's cognitive capacities (see, for example, Bialystok, 2005, for an overview). There is a strong argument in the

literature that multilingual development may result in establishing specific architectures of the mind that are likely to promote later cognitive advantages. On the other hand, according to the creative cognition approach, creativity is considered a product of normative cognitive functioning.

The conceptual framework of creative cognition rests on two major assumptions. First, according to the psychometric tradition, creative capacity is perceived as an ability to initiate multiple cycles of divergent and convergent thinking (Guilford, 1967). A combined effort of these two types of thinking creates an active, attention-demanding process that allows generation of ideas satisfying the defining characteristics of a creative product: *novelty* (that is, original or unexpected) and *utility* (that is, useful or meeting task constraints) (see Mayer, 1999, for an overview).[2] Over the last half-century, numerous studies have provided evidence for the ability of divergent thinking tests to predict certain aspects of creative problem-solving performance and real-world creative achievement. Although, as Runco (1991: ix) argued, '[d]ivergent thinking is not synonymous with creative thinking', many researchers believe that divergent thinking is a defining component of the creative process (Lubart, 2000). Guilford (1967) associated the properties of divergent thinking with four main characteristics: *fluency* (the ability to rapidly produce a large number of ideas or solutions to a problem); *flexibility* (the capacity to consider a variety of approaches to a problem simultaneously); *elaboration* (the ability to think through the details of an idea and carry it out); and *originality* (the tendency to produce ideas different from those of most other people).

Secondly, 'ideas and tangible products that are novel and useful are assumed to emerge from the application of ordinary, fundamental cognitive processes to existing knowledge structures' (Ward, 2007: 28). An individual's creative performance can be understood in terms of the use of specific processes, and the richness and flexibility of stored cognitive structures to which these processes are applied (Ward, Smith, & Vaid, 1997). Creative capacity is therefore assumed to be an essential property of normative human cognition (Ward, Smith, & Finke, 1999), and an increase in general cognitive functioning may facilitate an individual's creative abilities.

Hence, if multilingualism facilitates general cognitive functioning and results in more elaborate cognitive structures and/or functioning, it may also facilitate creative functioning (Kharkhurin, 2012a).

Empirical evidence

Unfortunately, the relationship between multilingualism and creativity has not received adequate consideration in the scientific community. The reasons for this oversight can be presented as a threefold argument. First, as became evident from the previous discussion, both theoretical constructs are fuzzily defined, and researchers still struggle with a precise description of the phenomena (Simonton, 2008).

Secondly, the impact of multilingualism on creativity is mediated by the effects of multicultural experience. On one side, the term 'culture' has numerous overlapping and misleading meanings, which hampers adequate quantitative analysis of its relation to cognitive functioning. On the other side, the influence of sociocultural context on an individual's creative abilities has in itself received substantial attention in the scientific community (for example Leung et al., 2008; Lubart, 1999; Niu & Sternberg, 2001).

Thirdly, the research into creativity has virtually no overlap with that of multilingualism. Although both fields are largely developed and have received a substantial amount of empirical investigation, the studies focusing on the intersection of these two areas are few.

Creative performance of bilinguals and monolinguals

In her seminal review paper, Ricciardelli (1992b) reports twenty-four studies that took place between 1965 and 1992. In the decade following, this scarce research was complemented by six dissertations, six peer-reviewed journal articles, and one book.[3] In total, bilingual research in creativity produced approximately forty studies over forty years. Only recently has this topic received systematic empirical investigation in my own longitudinal project studying cognitive processes underlying multilingual creativity (see an overview in Kharkhurin, 2012a). After that, five additional studies addressing the relationship between bilingualism and creative and insightful problem solving have appeared in various publications. Two more studies focus on bilingual and gifted populations. Most of the studies have been conducted with children and only recently were they complemented by research with college students. In most of these studies, creativity was assessed by divergent thinking tests, and the comparison was made between bilingual and monolingual groups.

The results of these studies have delivered a relatively consistent pattern of findings. Bilinguals were found to systematically outperform their monolingual counterparts on divergent thinking tests. These studies demonstrated bilinguals' advantages on divergent thinking traits, such as fluency (for example Carringer, 1974; Hommel et al., 2011; Jacobs & Pierce, 1966; Karapetsas & Andreou, 1999; Ricciardelli, 1992a), flexibility (for example Adi-Japha, Berberich-Artzi, & Libnawi, 2010; Carringer, 1974; Konaka, 1997), elaboration (for example Kharkhurin, 2008; Srivastava & Khatoon, 1980; Torrance et al., 1970), and originality (for example Cummins & Gulutsan, 1974; Kharkhurin, 2009; Konaka, 1997; Okoh, 1980), on insight problems (Cushen & Wiley, 2011), and on structured imagination tasks (Kharkhurin, 2009). In the rare cases in which monolinguals outperformed bilinguals (Fleith, Renzulli, & Westberg 2002; Garcia, 1996; Gowan & Torrance, 1965; Lemmon & Goggin, 1989; Stephens, 1997; Torrance et al., 1970), it was argued that the latter were not sufficiently fluent in either of their languages for creative advantages to occur (compare the threshold hypothesis of Cummins, 1976; see also Ricciardelli, 1992a).

However, as noted earlier in the chapter, people in bilingual and monolingual groups seem to have two distinct cognitive structures. This means that their comparison would not shed any light on creative advantages of the former; thus a body of empirical data accumulated in bilingual creativity research would not illuminate the important determinants of creative performance inherent to multilingual individuals. It is therefore prudent to systematically investigate multilingual speakers with different histories of language acquisition and use to identify what factors can facilitate the cognitive processes underlying creativity.

Factors of language acquisition and use facilitating creative cognition

Language proficiency appears to be the first factor that might have an impact on multilingual creative performance. Indirect evidence for the role of language proficiency in an individual's creative abilities comes from the studies comparing bilinguals with monolinguals. Cummins' (1976) threshold theory predicts that bilinguals need to achieve high levels of proficiency in both of their languages before bilingualism can promote cognitive advantages. This was demonstrated in the studies with bilingual children and college students, which revealed greater divergent thinking performance of participants with high proficiency in both languages, as compared to their linguistically unbalanced counterparts. For example, Ricciardelli's (1992a) study with Italian-English bilingual and English monolingual children revealed that only bilinguals with high proficiency in both languages showed greater fluency and imagination

compared with their monolingual counterparts. Similarly, Lemmon and Goggin's (1989) study with Spanish-English bilingual college students found that the tendency of monolinguals to outperform their bilingual counterparts on fluency and flexibility was ascribed to those participants classified as a low proficiency group. In the same fashion, Konaka (1997) reported that the degree of bilingual balance – based on the score computed from Japanese-English bilingual children's self-rating and their performance on the Word Association Test (Lambert, 1956) – significantly predicted performance on fluency, flexibility, and originality.

A few recent studies conducted with different types of bilinguals in various geographic locations and cultural contexts confirmed the effect of language proficiency on creative capacities. Bilinguals with high scores on both English and Russian versions of the Picture Naming Test (Kharkhurin, 2012b) performed better on elaboration than those with moderate scores on either or both of these versions (Kharkhurin, 2008). Similarly, Farsi-English bilinguals highly proficient in both languages (assessed by the same Picture Naming Test) outperformed their unbalanced and moderately proficient counterparts on fluency (Kharkhurin, 2009). Moreover, Lee and Kim (2011) found that more balanced Korean-English bilinguals (whose level of bilingualism was assessed by the Word Association Test) obtained higher creativity scores than their less balanced counterparts. These findings were complemented by those of another study conducted with bilinguals with different proficiency levels in English (Kharkhurin, 2011). This study revealed that more linguistically proficient bilinguals tended to score higher on originality and revealed more unstructured imagination, as measured by the Invented Alien Creature test (compare Ward, 1994).

The second factor refers to the age at which individuals acquire their languages. Traditionally, the distinction is made between simultaneous and sequential bilinguals (McLaughlin, 1984). *Simultaneous bilinguals* learn both of their languages from the onset of language acquisition. The *sequential bilinguals* learn their second language after the age of 5, when the basic components of first language are already in place. Sequential bilinguals are further divided into early and late, reflecting the age at which second-language acquisition occurred (Genesee, 1978). A group of simultaneous Armenian-Russian bilinguals scored higher on flexibility and originality than their sequential counterparts, who started to learn one of the two languages between two and four years later (Kostandyan & Ledovaya, 2013). There is also evidence that Russian-English bilinguals who acquired a second language at a younger age scored higher on fluency and flexibility (Kharkhurin, 2008). Similarly, bilinguals who acquired their second language (English) by the age of 6 tended to solve insight problems more readily than their counterparts, who acquired a second language after this age (Cushen & Wiley, 2011).

The third factor addresses a defining feature of multilingualism – namely, *code switching* – the alternation and mixing of different languages in the same episode of speech production. Code switching has been argued to be a creative act (for example Li Wei & Wu, 2009). For example, linguists working in the linguistic ethnography tradition replaced code switching with other terms such as 'translanguaging' to capture its creative and dynamic nature (see a review in Garcia & Li Wei, 2014). They investigated the use of translanguaging in diverse contexts, from literature and drama, to pop songs, new media, and public signs (for example Androutsopoulos, 2013; Chik, 2010; Jonsson, 2005; Sebba, Jonsson, & Mahootian, 2012). These studies consider code switching to be not only a juxtaposition of different grammatical structural elements, but also an expressive and creative performance. Bhatia and Ritchie (2008) reveal various facets of bilingual creativity through code switching as it manifests itself in the day-to-day verbal behaviour of a bilingual. They argue that code switching is essentially an 'optimising' strategy

rendering a wide variety of new meanings that the separate linguistic systems are incapable of rendering by themselves. The only empirical evidence for the relationship between code switching and creativity is Kharkhurin and Li Wei's (2015) finding that those individuals who switch codes frequently and regularly obtained higher scores on originality than those who do not do so in their everyday practice.

The fourth factor reflects the context of language acquisition and use. The studies of bilingual creativity generally disregarded the fact that most participants in the target samples experience and participate in more than one culture. These individuals are primarily immigrants, migrant workers, members of minority groups, or foreign students exposed to different educational systems. They acquire each of their languages in the respective cultural environments in which different cultural cues are available (Pavlenko, 2000). Therefore, in addition to acquiring several languages, they can also adopt a range of multicultural values and beliefs. Acculturation studies support this view by demonstrating that language acquisition is often accompanied by adoption of the cultural values of the country in which this language is acquired (for example Birman, Trickett, & Vinokurov, 2002; Gordon, 1964). On the other hand, creativity research has demonstrated that the specific economic, political, social, and cultural aspects of the environment can have a considerable influence both on levels of creative potential and on how creativity is evaluated (for example Lubart, 1999). Sociocultural values and norms determine and shape the concept of creativity, which in turn may influence the manner in which creative potential is apprehended and incarnated. Hence, if multilinguals acquire their languages in different countries, they are most likely to have been exposed to different sociocultural environments. This multicultural experience encourages a variation in the development of creative potential. Therefore multilingual individuals' experience with multiple sociocultural settings may increase their creative potential.

This argument finds support in cross-cultural research demonstrating that the effect of multilingualism on creative performance is often confounded with the effect of multiculturalism (see Kharkhurin, 2012a, for a discussion). For example, Kharkhurin (2008) found that the length of residence in the new cultural environment was related to Russian-English bilingual college students' fluency, flexibility, and elaboration above and beyond the effect of bilingualism. Similar findings were obtained by Maddux and Galinsky (2007), who found that the amount of time that MBA students from forty different nations had lived abroad significantly predicted creative solutions of Duncker's (1945) candle-mounting problem when the effect of bilingualism was controlled.

Another line of research proposes that, in addition to directly contributing to this performance, the specific settings of the sociocultural environment to which an individual is exposed may modulate the impact of multilingualism on creativity (for example Kharkhurin, 2010; Leung et al., 2008). This idea stems from cross-cultural research in creativity demonstrating that variations in the manner of socialisation, degree of self-perception and self-expression, and education and social conduct may modulate the differences in creative performance of the representatives of different cultures (for example Kharkhurin & Samadpour Motalleebi, 2008; Niu & Sternberg, 2001; Zha et al., 2006). If individuals' creative potential may be influenced by their experience with different cultures, the variations in multilinguals' cultural settings may have an impact on different aspects of their creative thinking. For example, Kharkhurin (2010) compared Farsi-English bilingual and Farsi monolingual college students residing in the Middle East with their Russian-English bilingual and English monolingual counterparts residing in the United States. The study demonstrated that the interaction between bilingualism and the sociocultural environment had a significant influence on creative performance. Moreover, this study speculated that the cultural distance between the environments to

which bilingual groups were exposed in the respective countries could also play a role in an individual's creative behaviour.

The fifth factor also addresses the context of language acquisition and use. However, this one is concerned with emotional experience. Creativity literature regards an individual's emotional state as an important determinant and powerful engine of creative behaviour (for example Averill, Chon, & Hahn, 2001; Kaufmann, 2003). Various researchers have claimed that emotions can either help or hurt creative endeavours (for example Montgomery, Hodges, & Kaufman, 2004; Russ, 1999). At the same time, extensive literature demonstrates that bilinguals' emotions are realised differently in their different languages and that bilingual individuals have particular preferences for one or another language when it comes to expression of their emotions (see Pavlenko, 2006, for an overview). The experience of different emotions in different linguistic contexts can therefore lead to a variation in creative performance. Kharkhurin and Altarriba (accepted) tested this hypothesis with Arabic-English bilingual college students, who were induced into positive or negative mood states using either Arabic or English linguistic contexts. The study revealed an interactive effect of the emotional state and linguistic context on an individual's creativity. Specifically, participants obtained significantly greater non-verbal originality when they were induced to a positive mood state while being tested in English or to a negative mood state while being tested in Arabic, as compared to when they were induced into a positive mood state while being tested in Arabic or a negative mood state while being tested in English. The role of emotions in multilingual creativity was hinted at in Kharkhurin and Li Wei's (2015) study, which provided an interesting account in which emotion-triggered code switching resulted in activation of creative capacities. Specifically, code switching induced by a particular emotional state appeared to relate to increase in originality in thinking. Research on the relationship between multilingualism and emotions provides evidence that code switching is often triggered by the speaker's emotions and other affective factors (for example Dewaele, 2010; Pavlenko, 2005). This, in turn, could boost creativity, possibly because code switching breaks the conventional conversational routine by introducing different, emotionally laden elements of language.

Cognitive mechanisms underlying multilingual creativity

So far, I have identified five factors of language acquisition and use that might contribute to multilingual creativity: language proficiency; age of language acquisition; code switching; cross-cultural experiences; and emotional experiences. Now, I will explore the cognitive mechanisms underlying creative thinking, which are potentially facilitated by multilingual practice.

Recall that, in psychometric literature, creative thinking is perceived as an ability to initiate multiple cycles of divergent and convergent thinking (Guilford, 1967). The fundamental difference between these two processes is that *convergent thinking* is a conscious attention-demanding process, whereas *divergent thinking* occurs in an unconscious mind in which attention is defocused (for example Kasof, 1997; Mendelsohn, 1976) and thought is associative (for example Koestler, 1964; Mednick, 1962; Ward, Smith, & Vaid, 1997). Convergent thinking seeks one correct answer to a question or solution to a problem, which question or problem must have a single answer or solution (Runco, Dow, & Smith, 2006). Divergent thinking, on the other hand, involves a broad search for information and generation of numerous novel alternative answers to a question or solutions to a problem, which question or problem has no single solution (Guilford, 1967). The solutions generated during divergent

thinking are subsequently evaluated during convergent thinking, which narrows all possible alternatives down to a single solution. There is evidence that multilingual practice facilitates both divergent and convergent thinking: the former may benefit from the specific architecture of multilingual memory; the latter may benefit from multilinguals' highly developed selective attention.

The functioning of divergent thinking can be explained as an automatic spreading activation mechanism that simultaneously triggers a large number of mental representations. These representations are stored in conceptual memory. The latter is assumed as a pattern of spreading activation (McClelland & Rumelhart, 1985) over a large set of mutually linked units of meaning (or conceptual features) organised in the conceptual networks (Lamb, 1999). The spreading activation mechanism transfers activation between conceptual features providing facilitation for related concepts and inhibition for unrelated ones. This property of the conceptual system was illustrated in priming studies (for example Meyer & Schvaneveldt, 1971), which show that semantically related words tend to influence each other. The associations between distant mental representations can be established as a result of the distributed nature of the conceptual system (see Kharkhurin, 2012a, for details). In light of this discussion, divergent thinking takes place when a large number of, often unrelated, conceptual representations are accessed simultaneously. Spreading activation among distributed conceptual representations may build the links between distant, often unrelated, concepts. A large number of simultaneously activated solutions may establish a rich plane of thought from which original and novel solutions might be extracted.

The specific architecture of multilingual memory is argued to facilitate the greater spreading activation between conceptual representations and thereby to stimulate divergent thinking (see Kharkhurin, 2012a, for a detailed discussion). This may be accomplished through language-mediated concept activation (Kharkhurin, 2007, 2008). The idea of this mechanism is based on the assumption that translation equivalents automatically activate each other through shared conceptual representations (for example concept mediated translation, in Kroll & de Groot, 1997). Although translation equivalents share most of the conceptual features, these representations are not identical (for example Paradis, 1997). Variations in the conceptual representations of translation equivalents may result in the simultaneous activation of additional concepts, which eventually may produce a large pattern of activation over unrelated concepts from different categories. The activation of these concepts is assumed to take place through the lemmas representing the translation equivalents in multiple languages and/or through the word forms (for example phonetic, orthographic) shared by these languages. The evidence for the language-mediated concept activation is provided by the cross-language studies using semantic (see Kroll & Tokowicz, 2005, for a review) and translation (see Altarriba & Basnight-Brown, 2007, for a review) priming paradigms. These studies revealed that automatic spreading activation takes place not only between translation equivalents in different languages, but also between semantically related words in different languages. The elaborate language-mediated concept activation triggers simultaneous processing of a large number of unrelated concepts from different categories – that is, it may stimulate multilinguals' divergent thinking. The empirical evidence for the language-mediated concept activation was obtained in a study comparing the performance of Russian-English bilingual and Russian monolingual college students on divergent thinking and a cross-language priming tests (Kharkhurin & Isaeva, 2015). The latter presented participants with pairs of Russian words, which were unrelated in Russian, but related through their translation equivalents in English (for example   , meaning 'branch', is unrelated to   , meaning 'tree', but 'branch' is related to 'tree').

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Bilingual participants showed stronger priming effect and revealed greater flexibility in thinking than their monolingual counterparts.

The purpose of convergent thinking is to find the single best (or correct) answer to a clearly defined problem (Cropley, 2006). This cognitive function appears inevitable when a large pool of ambiguous divergent thoughts needs to be narrowed down to a single creative solution. The possible candidates should be explored, criticised, and evaluated to select the best fit to the problem. Kharkhurin (2011) argued that individuals' efficient selective attention may support creative problem solving at the stage at which a conscious attention demanding process assists in narrowing a multitude of possible alternatives down to a single original solution. At the same time, selective attention was demonstrated to benefit from bilingual practice (see review in Bialystok, 2005). Bilinguals' selective attention is facilitated by their extensive practice with two active language systems, during which they have to solve the conflicts in lexical retrieval, which are unravelled by efficient executive control (Bialystok, 2007; Bialystok & Feng, 2009; Bialystok, Craik, & Ryan 2006). Kharkhurin (2011) identified two control mechanisms of selective attention that may contribute to the improvement of bilinguals' creative abilities: the facilitation of relevant information was likely to boost the ability to activate a multitude of unrelated concepts and to work through the concepts already activated; and the inhibition of irrelevant information seemed to enhance the capacity to produce original and useful ideas.

Practical applications

The research reviewed in this chapter presents a case for a facilitatory relationship between multilingualism and creativity. These human capacities can be nurtured through education, and so this discussion would not be complete without placing it in a pedagogical context. It is evident that programmes intended to foster creativity often operate separately from those offering multilingual instruction, and that researchers and teachers in these areas have mutually exclusive training. They are educated in either creativity- or language-related disciplines. Overall, the academic community generally disregards the potential relationship between multilingualism and creativity (Kharkhurin, 2012a). Similarly, the benefits of merging programmes fostering creative potential and multilingual abilities seem to escape the attention of the educators. However, the efficacy of a programme combining both efforts can be directly inferred from the research reviewed in this chapter. Various factors in individuals' multilingual development have been demonstrated to facilitate certain cognitive mechanisms underlying their creative capacities. Therefore, by combining multilingual and creative educational strategies, a far greater synergy could be generated: a multilingual creative education programme would capitalise on the assets of both forms of education to establish an effective and comprehensive curriculum. The need for this type of programme turns out to be immense, considering the outcomes of scientific investigation, initiatives advanced by governmental policies, and public opinion (see review in Kharkhurin, 2012a).

Kharkhurin (2012a) proposes a bilingual creative education programme, which constitutes a unified teaching model introducing both language learning and creativity-fostering instruction into the school curriculum. The rationale is not to establish a special programme focusing on children with exceptional abilities, but to suggest modifications to existing curricula and/or the classroom environment to promote multilingualism and creativity in early schooling. The programme is grounded on several conceptual premises. First, it disqualifies

the elitist view, and provides opportunities to enhance the linguistic and creative capacities of all students, regardless of their intellectual and creative predispositions.

This entails the second characteristic of the programme – its scope of application: the programme can be implemented in any school curriculum, depending on the specific details of a given school. The role of the programme coordinator would be to modify the core of the programme to reflect the specificity of the student body and the economic, sociocultural, and political environment of each particular school. Instead of establishing a new school or a special classroom with an entirely new curriculum, this programme suggests necessary modifications to convert any curriculum into one fostering linguistic competences and creative potential. Therefore it reflects the recommendation to the European Union member states (Marsh & Hill, 2009) that methodologies should be developed to modify and improve the effectiveness of existing educational programmes. Moreover, these modifications can be accomplished at a low cost, because they would not require major restructuring of existing school curricula.

Third, the goal of the programme is to facilitate linguistic abilities in a diversity of student populations. This programme is designed not only for migrants who speak their home language and who are attempting to acquire the language of the country to which they have migrated, but for all children who want to acquire an additional language.

Fourth, another goal of the programme is to foster children's creative potential. The focus of the programme is not on '"big C" Creativity', but on the '"small c" creative' capacities (compare Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009) that are grounded in mundane cognitive functioning and can be applied to everyday problem solving. The outcomes of this programme do not reflect the ambitious aspirations of nurturing eminent individuals (although this perspective should not be excluded); rather, the programme aims at facilitating the overall linguistic, intellectual, and creative competences of young children, thereby meeting the recommendations of certain governmental policies (for example Commission of European Communities, 2008).

Thus the purpose of a bilingual creative education programme is to introduce students to a bilingual school curriculum and to foster the four defining aspects of creativity established earlier in this chapter. To accomplish this goal, the programme utilises a holistic approach that combines cognitive, personal, and environmental factors. This approach considers not only educational aspects directly pertinent to the school curriculum, but also those reflecting a child's personality and extracurricular settings.

Note, however, that the sketch of this programme presented in the current chapter intends to stimulate the creative thinking in education professionals rather than to provide an explicit step-by-step description of the programme. I direct the interested reader to Kharkhurin (2012a), which presents a detailed description of, as well as the theoretical and empirical considerations underlying, the programme.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented a perspective that reflects the cross-linguistic and cross-cultural interactions in the modern world. It assumed language to be dynamically developing system, which engages linguistic and conceptual representations inherent to different linguistic, social, and cultural contexts. Thus language and thought develop at the intersection of multiple languages and cultures. This is also the case with creativity. The latter is assumed not as a product of eminent creative achievement, but as potency, which may or may not be

developed as result of intra- and interpersonal experience. Thus this chapter has presented the relationship between language and creativity as the relationship between multilingual practice and creative potential. The dynamic nature of both linguistic and creative systems supplies ever-changing products, which appear difficult to study and to relate to each other. The focus is therefore on the cognitive processes underlying both multilingual practice and creative potential – that is, multilingual creative cognition.

How does it work? We have identified the language- and culture-related developmental factors facilitating at least two important cognitive mechanisms contributing to multilingual individuals' creative performance. According to the multilingual creative cognition paradigm, the acquisition and use of multiple languages appears to have an impact on the structure and/ or functioning of an individual's memory. The strengthening of certain cognitive functions may have an impact on creativity fostering traits, such as cognitive flexibility, tolerance for ambiguity, open-mindedness, and intrinsic motivation (see Kharkhurin, in press, for a discussion). Thus multilingual practice may facilitate creative performance.

In this regard, it is essential to recognise a limited scope of contribution of multilingualism to creativity. The acquisition and use of several languages in several sociocultural environments facilitates certain cognitive functions underlying creativity traits. However, these traits may also develop as a result of life experiences beyond multilingual and multicultural ones. Creative capacity is a complex phenomenon, which can be boosted by a large variety of factors such as talent, education, expertise, motivation, personality traits, personal experience, and socioeconomic and sociocultural conditions. Multilingualism may play an insignificant role here and its effect can be overridden by those factors. In other words, the specific economic, political, social, cultural, and educational aspects of individuals' development may have an impact on their creative performance above and beyond the effect of multilingualism. This means that multilingualism will not stipulate creativity. It is therefore prudent to talk about a creative *potential*. Anyone with normal cognitive capacities can reach a level of accomplishment in some domain that results in producing work that some people may consider creative (Amabile, 1983). This means that everyone has a potential to develop creative abilities, but this potential is realised differently in different people because of the variety of factors just mentioned. Multilingual practice would add to this list of factors as the specifics of personal experience. A person may realise creative potential only if a critical constellation of those factors permits it. Multilingual practice appears to have quite an irrelevant role in this process. This notion accounts for a discrepancy between real-life observations and empirical findings demonstrating greater creative performance among individuals speaking multiple languages. In particular, we do not witness exceptional creative accomplishments in the predominantly multilingual countries such as Switzerland, Belgium, or Canada.

Despite the limited contribution of multilingual practice to creative potential, the application of a multilingual creativity paradigm can be immense. A brief discussion of the proposed bilingual creative education programme aims to expand the boundaries of contemporary discourse of education. This new form of education promises to have important ramifications for students' learning and their future employment. It is important for educators to recognise the positive effect of multilingual creative education, and to start transforming schools into educational enterprises that value linguistic and cultural diversity and creative potential.

Related topics

cognitive stylistics; creativity and translation; creativity in second-language learning; language, creativity, and cognition

Notes

1 In the literature, especially in that reporting earlier research in the field, the term 'bilingualism' is used to refer to individuals speaking only two languages. This term reflects a so-called monolingual perspective, in which the users of a second language were considered from the perspective of the first-language users. The second language is added to the first-language competence, and this extra competence was assessed against the only language of a monolingual native speaker. Traditionally, these studies made a direct comparison between bilingual and monolingual speakers. This approach was criticised within the linguistic multicompetence framework (see Cook & Li Wei, in press) based on the ground that individuals speaking more than one language may have a distinct frame of mind that cannot be compared with the monolingual one. Therefore a direct comparison between bilingual and monolingual speakers does not hold. Throughout this chapter, the term 'bilingualism' refers to the studies taking a 'monolingual' perspective.

2 Kharkhurin (2014) challenged this definition as being biased by a Western perception of creativity. He proposed an alternative four-criterion construct of creativity, which, in addition to novelty and utility, considers two other characteristics typical for an Eastern perception of creativity: aesthetics and authenticity.

3 Limited space of this chapter prevents the author from listing all publications addressing the relationship between multilingualism and creativity. The interested reader can refer to Kharkhurin (2012a), which provides a complete list of these publications.

Further reading

Cook, V., and Li Wei (eds) (in press) *Cambridge Handbook of Linguistic Multicompetence*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

This volume presents an up-to-date view of multicompetence, its main components, how it has developed, the research questions that it has generated, and the methods that have been used to research it.

Kaufman, J. C., and Sternberg, R. J. (eds) (2010) *The Cambridge Handbook of Creativity*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

This volume presents a comprehensive overview of creativity research, covering such diverse topics as the brain, education, business, and world cultures.

Kharkhurin, A. V. (2012) *Multilingualism and Creativity*, Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

This monograph presents the results of the empirical investigation into the impact of multilingual practice on an individual's creative potential.

Kroll, J. F., and de Groot, A. M. B. (2005) *Handbook of Bilingualism: Psycholinguistic Approaches*, New York: Oxford University Press.

This volume comprises essential reading for cognitive psychologists, linguists, applied linguists, and educators who wish to better understand the cognitive basis of bilingualism.

Runco, M. A. (2014) *Creativity: Theories and Themes – Research, Development, and Practice*, 2nd edn, Boston, MA: Elsevier.

This textbook presents an integrative introduction and extensive references to the theories and themes in research on creativity.

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Literature and language teaching

Gillian Lazar

Historical background and definitions

Using literary texts in the classroom exposes language learners to creative uses of language and generates creative responses, and has been a fundamental part of language teaching for centuries. Literary texts have been considered to stimulate language acquisition, expose students to the culture of the target language, and engage the learner cognitively and emotionally. Literary texts have also been characterised as embodying stylistic and rhetorical devices that convey the highest aesthetic values, as well as providing an illustration of grammar rules to learners. Even Henry Sweet, described as the a 'prime originator of an applied linguistics approach to the teaching of languages' (Howatt & Widdowson, 2004: 199), included the teaching of literature as the penultimate stage in the graded curriculum proposed in his book *The Practical Study of Languages*, published in 1899. It was generally held that more advanced learners would refine their knowledge of language through exposure to a canon of great writers, judged according to the 'enduringly serious nature of their examination of the human condition' (Carter, 2007: 5). This meant that literature was inevitably defined as classic novels, poetry, and plays, written by a highly selective number of writers, and deemed by teachers, exam boards, publishers, and critics to convey superior aesthetic and imaginative use of language, which could serve as an exemplar for learners (Kramsch & Kramsch, 2000).

As English language teaching oriented itself to more instrumental and functional approaches, from the 1960s onwards, the focus shifted towards exposing learners to language as used in everyday interactions or to the specific language required for specialist discourse communities such as English for academic purposes (EAP) or English for specific purposes (ESP). However, a number of researchers point out that there were many parts of the world in which literary texts – meaning classic texts from the canon – still continued to form part of the curriculum (Gilroy & Parkinson, 1996; Paran, 2006), even though this was not reflected in academic publications. By the mid-1980s, there was renewed interest in the use of literary texts in language teaching, as illustrated in a number of publications (see, for example, Maley & Moulding, 1985; McRae & Boardman, 1984). As will be seen in this chapter, this interest led to a questioning of many of the assumptions about the role of literary texts in language teaching, and some debate about how to define precisely what is meant by 'literature'. One response to this debate was to differentiate between an ontological approach and a functional approach (Ellis, 1974, cited in Parkinson & Reid-Thomas, 2000: 22). Rather than seeking to define literature as something within itself (*ontological*), a *functional* approach focuses on what something does or what we do with it. Thus the definition of the term 'literature' could

be broadened to include literature with a small 'l' or 'any text whose imaginative content will stimulate reaction and response in the receiver' (McRae, 1991: vii). Of course, such a definition may be problematic in that it poses the questions of whether to exclude texts such as journalism, non-fiction essays, or oral fables, for example, as well as whether judgements about the quality of a text should be taken into account. Nevertheless, a functional definition of the term 'literature' does enable us to recognise that definitions of literature are themselves developed in different social, cultural, and historical contexts. Thus any recent definition of literature within the field of language teaching is inextricably linked to the theoretical and pedagogic contexts in which it is explored by both teachers and academics. In the last decade, this definition has grown out of McRae's 'literature with a small l' to incorporate a widening range of genres, including children's literature, fairy tales, popular fiction, and even auto-biographical narratives (Paran, 2006).

Critical issues

Reasons for using literature

A number of reasons have been put forward for using literary texts with the language learner. One of these – which has a lengthy pedigree, as we have seen – is that literary texts expose learners to the finest examples of 'good grammar' and vocabulary, thus providing a model of 'correct' language. However, it is tricky to sustain this view, since there is considerable debate about whether or not literary texts can provide learners with a model of 'correct' language. Another frequently mentioned reason for using literary texts with the language learner is that literary texts serve a wider educational function, broadening out the curriculum to promote personal growth, self-awareness, and critical thinking. This does provide a compelling argument for language teachers to be more than simply 'technicians', fostering the mechanical acquisition of functional uses of language. Nevertheless, it has been criticised as rather vague, since different types of non-literary texts could also serve the same educational functions. Thus proponents of literature in language teaching have attempted to advance more precise reasons for using literary texts.

One such reason is that literary texts are authentic pieces of discourse. With the advent of communicative language teaching, the use of authentic texts, having a real social purpose for the native speaker, has taken precedence over the use of texts artificially manufactured by textbook writers to illustrate a particular grammatical or lexical point. Unabridged literary texts are thus seen to 'offer genuine samples of a very wide range of styles, registers and text-types at many levels of difficulty' (Duff & Maley, 1990: 6).

Linked to this notion of authenticity is that of motivation: it is argued that exposure to authentic literary texts is highly motivating for many learners (Duff & Maley, 1990; Lazar, 1993). Literary texts are seen as stimulating deep personal involvement by providing learners with engaging, non-trivial content including the complex depiction of human emotions and dilemmas, as well as the aesthetic pleasures of language. Naturally, the choice of text is important here, since certain texts may prove to be more engaging for a particular group of learners than for another.

A third reason for using literary texts with language learners is because they expose students to a different culture. Clearly, a literary text cannot simply be seen as a documentary rendering from which students can mine factual information about a particular culture. This is because writers' portrayals of their own cultures may be idiosyncratic, rather than naturalistic, or because the reader's own closeness or distance from the culture in question may determine

his or her interpretation of the text. Nevertheless, Kramsch (1993: 175) argues that, by studying a particular text, 'students are given access to a world of attitudes and values, collective imaginings and historical frames of reference that constitute the memory of a people or a speech community'. However, Kramsch does not conceptualise this access to culture as enabling students to extract data about the other culture, but rather as facilitating a critical reflection on both the native and the target cultures, in which learners actively construct meaning for themselves and begin to create a 'third place' for themselves beyond the confines of a monolithic notion of culture or identity.

This active construction of meaning is one of the key reasons advanced for using literature with language learners. According to Widdowson (1983, cited in Brumfit & Carter, 1986: 14), 'procedures for making sense are much more in evidence in literary texts'. This is because literary discourse is representational, rather than referential (Widdowson, 1984). It does not refer directly to an immediate social context, but rather to the internal fictional world that it creates. The reader has to actively engage with the text in order to infer the complex meanings that lead to an interpretation, because meanings cannot simply be extracted by reference to the real world. Thus using literary texts in the classroom aids the acquisition of 'sense-making procedures', since highlighting interpretive procedures while reading literary texts develops a learner's ability to infer meaning in other contexts – a vital skill for the language learner. In addition, because literary texts are open to multiple interpretations, they are an excellent resource in communicative classrooms, which aim to provide real reasons for learners to interact with each other.

In order to justify a particular interpretation of a text, readers are forced to consider the language in the text, and its specific meanings and effects. This heightened emphasis on language increases the learner's sensitivity to specific uses of language, such as how a grammatical structure has been used to convey a particular meaning, or how the connotation of a particular word is activated by the surrounding discourse. Thus literary texts are seen as a useful resource for increasing students' overall language awareness and understanding of discourse.

These reasons have, however, been dismissed by Edmondson (1997), who argues that no valid claims can be made regarding the special status of literature, since, at the time of his writing, there were no empirical studies verifying its psycholinguistic efficacy in promoting language learning. Further, Edmondson argues that other types of text are equally as authentic, as motivating, or as helpful in promoting cultural understanding. Edmondson's position has, in turn, been criticised as taking a narrow view of language learning as largely utilitarian and failing to account for more holistic perspectives in which students' affective needs, for example, are considered (Paran, 2008). It could also be argued that the aesthetic pleasure and 'mysteries of experience' (Widdowson, 1992: 181) that learners sense in literary texts cannot easily be replicated by using other types of text in the classroom.

The nature of literary language

One issue to consider relating to the use of literary texts with language learners is the nature of literary language and whether, and to what extent, it differs from other uses of language. Such an issue is important for language teachers, since if one of the aims of language teaching is to provide learners with 'correct' pedagogic models of language to emulate, can literary texts be described as good models of correct language?

According to formalist literary critics, such as Roman Jakobson, literary texts, particularly poetry, are characterised by a highly self-conscious use of language that draws attention to

itself through, for example, unusual word order ('deviance'), extensive use of metaphor, and deliberate patternings, seen in devices such as alliteration, assonance, rhyming, and other repetitions. In this way, literary language 'defamiliarises' reality, by making the everyday seem strange through the use of linguistic deviations from the norm. Widdowson's (1975) pioneering work *Stylistics and Language Teaching* explores the notion of 'deviation' by considering some of the ways in which particular grammatical rules are broken in selected literary texts. Nevertheless, Widdowson (1975: 37) also makes the point that there is a considerable body of literature that does not show any 'marked linguistic oddity' and which cannot be defined in any satisfactory way in terms of textual deviation.

This key point is developed further by other theorists. Brumfit and Carter (1986: 6) argue, for example, that it is 'impossible to isolate any single or special property of language which is exclusive to a literary work'. This means that many of the features of literary language (such as the creative construction of neologisms, playing on the double or multiple meanings of words, mixing of styles, etc.) can also be found in other forms of discourse as well. This has been borne out by corpus studies, which reveal that many creative uses of language are also present in everyday speech and casual conversation, leading to Carter's (2004: 215) observation that '[c]reative language is not a capacity of special people but a special capacity of all people'.

It is also impossible, in purely linguistic terms, to describe literary language itself as a specific variety or register, such as the language of law or medicine. In fact, literary texts seem to be the one form of discourse in which different varieties of language (for example dialects, spoken or written forms, formal and informal language, etc.) can all be mixed in new and inventive ways (Hall, 2005). Nevertheless, it is clear that certain creative uses of language are more pervasive in literary texts, suggesting that different types of text can be placed along a cline or gradient according to the extent of their literariness.

This notion of a continuum in linguistic terms between literary and non-literary language has important implications for classroom practitioners. First, instead of regarding a poet's unusual language as deliberate and intentional, while a language learner's errors are seen as deficient and requiring correction, both the poet and the language learner can be seen as engaging creatively with the expressive resources of language. From the point of view of the language learner, this chimes with the emphasis on fluency in communicative language teaching, by valuing and encouraging the creative capacity of the learner. Secondly, the concept of the continuum suggests that an important way of exploring literary texts is by studying them alongside non-literary texts in order to identify key continuities and differences between them. A third implication is that practitioners may want to broaden out the idea of 'correctness'. Thus, instead of teachers asking learners to pinpoint 'wrong' or 'deviant' uses of language in literary texts, Parkinson and Reid-Thomas (2000: 71) suggest that students are asked to respond in a 'more open and plural' manner. For example, when engaging in paraphrasing activities designed to encourage basic comprehension, they could be asked to suggest similar phrases to those in the literary text which might be more normal or standard in the kind of English that the student is learning, thus acknowledging that norms of correctness may vary in different speech communities.

The role of the reader

When considering the use of literary texts in the classroom, practitioners need to consider not only the nature of the language being studied, but also the creative role of the reader in

interpreting it. Thus reading can be seen as a transaction between the reader and the text, in which the reader draws on his or her personal experiences, values, and beliefs to interact with the text and make sense of it (Rosenblatt, 1978). Reader-response theories arising from literary criticism are relevant here, and have had an influence on possible classroom approaches and activities.

Reader-response theory puts the reader at the very centre of the relationship between author, text, and reader. Thus reader-response critics focus less on the text or the author's intentions within the text, and more on how the reader actively engages with text in order to make interpretations. According to Hirvela (1996: 128–9), there is a continuum of views concerning the balance between the reader and text, with some critics (such as Iser, 1972, and Rosenblatt, 1978, cited in Hirvela, 1996) regarding the reader and text as having roughly the same importance, while other critics (including Fish, 1982, cited in Hirvela, 1996) 'assign sole interpretative authority to the reader'. For Fish, literary texts do not intrinsically themselves possess meaning; rather, that meaning is conferred on the text by the reader. As Parkinson and Reid-Thomas (2000: 8) point out, this would seem to be a 'recipe for interpretative anarchy', or the attitude that any interpretation, however far-fetched, is valid. Fish, however, does place limits on this by suggesting the notion of an 'interpretive community', which, according to Parkinson and Reid-Thomas, Fish construes as the academic community. But this notion could be widened to include any group of readers who do not necessarily share a particular interpretation of a text, but who do share some conventions for understanding and making sense of a text. From the point of view of language teachers, this raises the questions of what these conventions might be and how they relate to the concept of literary competence, how such conventions might vary cross-culturally, and whether it is part of the language teacher's role to 'socialise' students into using these conventions. Such questions may be particularly pressing in contexts in which students have to take exams in which only some interpretations are regarded as valid responses to specific literary texts.

The significance of the role of the reader in making sense of text has impacted on classroom methodology and task design. Thus it has been suggested that diaries or personal response journals are useful tools for developing the reader's personal response to a text. For example, students can write repeated reflections about a literary work in a reading diary: initially after reading, then after sharing responses with others, and finally by writing a full-scale response (Ali, 1993). Alternatively, students' personal response journals can be used to help them to 'develop and refine their responses' (Liaw, 2001: 38). The ultimate aim of such diaries or journals is to enable students to become more sensitive readers, but the starting point is the students' personal involvement with the text and their response to it. However, Hirvela (1996) has argued that personal-response approaches to using literature, while motivating for students and leading to the production of original discourse, are still generally reactive and privilege the text, rather than the reader. Hirvela proposes instead that classroom methodology and materials should draw on Culler's (1982: 35) notion that a reader's response to a text tells 'a story of reading', in which the text is recreated during the reader's process of reading and an interpretation of a work becomes an account of how the reader makes sense of it. The emphasis is therefore on the readers' exploration of their own process of reading and how it facilitates interpretation, rather than on producing a personal response after extracting meaning from the text. Nevertheless, while such activities may indeed encourage learners to become more aware of the process that they undergo in order to reach an interpretation, there is perhaps the danger that students' recording of this may be rather general, because such an approach to reading could be applied to any type of text. This suggests that classroom activities may

need to prime students to focus on some of the more 'literary' aspects of the text, so that these can then feed into their accounts of their reading.

Different approaches/methodologies

Historically, the methodology adopted for using literary texts in English language teaching reflected the central tenets of grammar translation, with common activities including teacher-directed analysis of literary passages or translations of particular texts. Texts were often seen as providing access to a particular culture, and the role of the teacher was to provide learners with information regarding the historical, political, and cultural background to the text. This emphasis on culture has led Carter and Long (1991: 8) to identify a cultural model for teaching literature in which the text is regarded largely as an object for study 'about which students learn to acquire information'. However, with the influence of communicative language teaching (CLT), more process-oriented, student-centred approaches have come to the fore. Thus Carter and Long also identify a language model and a personal growth model. The former is seen as providing a systematic set of procedures for students to access literary texts, while the latter encourages student to link the text to their own experiences, in order to express their feelings and opinions. In practice, however, as we shall see, there is often an overlap between these different approaches.

The cultural model suggests that the literary text is a cultural artefact, which can be understood by using traditional procedures for teaching literature, such as identifying particular literary devices or providing learners with the characteristics of literary movements. With the advent of CLT, however, Carter (1996) identifies a move away from teaching literature per se towards exploring the interface between language and literature. This integration can itself be seen along a continuum on which, at one end, there is a strong literary focus, while at the other, literature is used simply as text without focusing on 'literary values, literary knowledge or literary skills' (Paran, 2008: 467). Where exactly teachers position themselves along this continuum depends on the context in which they are teaching, why their students are learning English, and which external constraints (such as curricula and assessments) impact on classroom practice.

We can begin at one end of the continuum, where literary texts are simply seen as a resource for generating stimulating language activities and developing personal response. According to Duff and Maley (1990: 5), the aim is to 'cut away the dead weights of critical commentary, method and explanation', and to engage students interactively with texts, their fellow students, and the teacher. In this approach, the text itself is of primary importance, and students do not passively absorb an authorised interpretation of the text, but actively construct it themselves by engaging in various tasks or activities. Many of the techniques used in CLT are thus used with literary texts, including those involving cloze and gap fill, prediction and ranking, information gap, and sentence and paragraph reordering. Such activities are seen in a number of resource books for teachers (for example Bassnet & Grundy, 1993; Collie & Slater, 1987) and books for students (for example Collie & Slater, 1993; Lazar, 1999). Duff and Maley (1990) provide a useful toolkit of generative procedures that can be applied to literary (and non-literary) texts as a way of developing language activities for the classroom.

This approach has a number of advantages for classroom practitioners. First, by applying typical CLT procedures to literary texts, teachers lacking in literary knowledge may develop the confidence to explore literary texts with their students. Secondly, this approach recognises that literary texts provide an excellent authentic resource that enables the exploration

of more absorbing themes than the somewhat superficial topics often found in textbooks. Thirdly, this approach is language-focused in that 'students are obliged to pay careful attention to the text itself and to generate language in the process of completing the task' (Duff & Maley, 1990: 5). Finally, this approach can be of real benefit to elementary and intermediate-level language learners, because it enables the use of linguistically more accessible texts that do not have to have canonical status. However, it could be argued that such an open approach to the choice of texts does not necessarily enable either teachers or students to discriminate in terms of quality of text, thereby forgoing any evaluation of their literary excellence. As a corrective to this, Parkinson and Reid-Thomas (2000) suggest that any rewritings that students make of a text should always be considered alongside the original. A further critique of this approach is that it does not focus on any distinctively literary characteristics of a text in any targeted way.

One language-based approach that can be used to draw attention to the distinctive literary characteristics of a text is that of stylistics. The use of stylistics, which draws on linguistic analysis in order to reach an interpretation of a literary text, has been somewhat controversial in second-language teaching. In general, stylistics aims to identify key linguistic features of a text (often those that are deviant, foregrounded, or patterned in some way) and analyse them in detail, so as to facilitate interpretation. As such, it is useful for language learners, helping them to notice significant features of a text and to consider the meanings that they transmit. Thus teachers might undertake their own analysis of the text and then develop a series of questions or activities that alert students to these features, enabling them to consider these features in reaching an interpretation of the text.

Proponents of stylistics argue that while native speakers may have intuitions about textual meaning that enable them to formulate interpretations, learners of English may lack these intuitions, since their grasp of the norms of use for grammar, syntax, vocabulary, and discourse in the second language is still developing. Asking learners simply to respond to texts may elicit no response whatsoever, unless some form of scaffolding is provided. Stylistics can serve this purpose by providing a set of transparent procedures for analysing texts, which can empower both teachers and learners, and develop their confidence in making interpretations (Parkinson & Reid-Thomas, 2000; Widdowson, 1975).

However, stylistics has not been without its critics, particularly Gower (1986), who considers it to be a sterile and dull procedure that bypasses the affective and cognitive responses of the reader/student. Gower asserts that stylistics replaces the process of reading and the attendant involvement of the reader with a rather mechanical analysis of 'objective' linguistic facts in a text. Another criticism of stylistics is that it focuses too narrowly on the actual texts themselves, rather than on how students make sense of them (Paran, 2008). Its occasional overuse of technical linguistic terms can also make it seem remote from the everyday concerns of classroom teachers.

Some of these criticisms, however, can be countered by using classroom tasks that are pitched at the right level for the students, and which engage them in discovery-based group or pair interactions (Durant, 1996; Rosenkjar, 2006). Stylistic analysis can be enhanced by providing learners with pre-tasks that engage students both emotionally and cognitively with the themes of a text (Rosenkjar, 2006). Stylistics can also be complemented by providing contextual information relating to the biography of the author (Durant, 1996), the genre of a text, and its historical context. Such information can be provided once students have attempted to reach their own interpretation of the text, and their interpretations can then be reconsidered in light of this information. This means that a plurality of interpretations can be encouraged in the classroom, but, as Rosenkjar (2006) argues, such interpretations will

be logically argued and consistent with the evidence in the text. Such interpretations can also be reached by asking students to test out their intuitions about language by comparing particular usages in a literary text with those in a large corpus (Louw, 1997), thus integrating corpus-based linguistic research into stylistic methods.

Stylistics is a method that draws on linguistic concepts, and the influence of linguistics can also be seen in approaches that are sensitive to the notion of literary genres and use theoretical concepts from linguistics to inform classroom methodology. Thus the distinctive features of different literary genres can be identified in order to suggest appropriate class-room methodology and activities (Lazar, 1990, 1993; Parkinson & Reid-Thomas, 2000). For example, with regards to the teaching of short stories, Parkinson and Reid-Thomas (2000) draw on elements of both structuralist narratology and sociolinguistic analysis of oral narratives. This enables them to provide a checklist of features of narrative to take into account when planning classroom work. Parkinson and Reid-Thomas (2000: 54) explicitly state that they are interested in teaching, and therefore use 'simple and partial versions of some theoretical concepts' to inform their suggestions for classroom practice. Nevertheless, their approach not only provides suitable scaffolding for learners and teachers, but also combines careful attention to the generic features of text with the possibility of genuine personal response. This suggests that teachers can benefit by using theoretical concepts to inform and inspire task design.

As we have seen, language-based approaches range from those using literary texts as a resource to those drawing on stylistics or linguistic concepts linked to different genres. Nevertheless, a significant criticism of such approaches is that they can become rather reductive and ahistorical if they rely only on a process orientation that privileges student responses. Carter (1996), for example, has argued that it is often necessary to provide social, historical, or biographical information in order to arrive at a viable understanding of a text. This may be particularly true if students are being asked to make sense of texts from earlier periods in history or from a culture radically different from their own. Lazar (1993) raises the issue of whether, and to what extent, background cultural information to a text provided by teachers may alter, and indeed deepen, students' interpretation of a text. Students can be asked, for example, to engage in an interpretation of a poem, such as Robert Browning's 'Andrea Del Sarto' (1855), both before and after receiving information about its protagonist (a real historical figure), as well as the genre of dramatic monologues. The aim of such activities is to enable learners to reflect on how interpretations can be informed by background literary, cultural, or historical knowledge. Thus, when developing appro-priate classroom methodology, we need to 'look both ways before crossing' (Carter, 1996) in terms of both language and literary development. Moreover, we also need to ensure that students engage emotionally and cognitively with literature in order to develop a personal response that will enable them to critically evaluate the text.

Current research

The focus has recently switched to the need for more data-driven, empirical research into the use of literature in language teaching. Two issues need to be considered: first, why research is required; and secondly, what is admissible as research and what it might include. Paran (2008: 470) makes a strong case for more research by pointing out that both supporters and opponents of language education agree that there is a 'paucity of empirical evidence' for the claims regarding the use of literature in language learning programmes. Paran argues that the aims of research should be to validate the largely theoretical writing

on the topic, while Hall (2005: 181) points out that there are 'unresolved questions still insufficiently investigated'. Some of these questions might focus on how learners make sense of literary texts, learners' and teachers' attitudes to using literary texts in language courses, and what kinds of curricula, methodologies and tasks incorporating literary texts demonstrably improve language acquisition.

A variety of research methods have been used to begin to investigate these questions, including analysis of student discourse when discussing literary texts. One key study by Hanauer (2001), for example, used an in-depth analysis of the transcribed discussions of pairs of Israeli college students, in order to investigate how learners read and understand poetry, and whether or not studying poetry enhances linguistic and cultural knowledge. The students were asked to read and discuss in pairs Leonard Cohen's poem 'Suzanne' (1966), with the aim of understanding it. Discussions between each pair were recorded, and the protocols of the participants were transcribed, coded, and analysed according to nine categories, which included such functions as 'noticing', 'questioning', 'making interpretive hypotheses', and 'presenting world knowledge'. According to Hanauer, while eight out of the nine categories were associated with meaning construction, the two most prevalent were those of *noticing*, which involved participants directing attention at a specific aspect of the text, and *interpretive hypotheses*, which involved participants proposing a new option for understanding a specific linguistic element or questions raised in the poem. Thus Hanauer suggests that readers direct attention towards the formal language structures of the poem and use these to construct meaning, supporting the position that poetry can be used to enhance linguistic and cultural knowledge of the target language.

Another study, by Kim (2004), analysed student interactions during discussions in student-led literature circles in order to explore whether literature enhances linguistic and cultural knowledge. Kim's methods included participant observation of lessons, recording and analysing discussions, field notes, and follow-up informal interviews with participants. Her qualitative analysis of the classroom discourse recorded provides evidence that literature discussions have the potential to develop communicative competency by involving students both emotionally and intellectually, and increasing their enjoyment of reading.

In contrast to these studies, rather different research methods were used by Yang (2001), who undertook a statistical analysis of multiple-choice tests for two separate groups of students, designed to assess their knowledge of English grammar, sentence structure, and usage both before and after a language course. One group of students followed a general English curriculum, while the others were obliged to read an Agatha Christie mystery novel, which was then discussed for an hour each week in class. The findings indicate a 'substantial advantage for the novel-reading classes' (Yang, 2001: 457) in terms of their mean test scores. This research was triangulated with statistical analysis of student questionnaires, as well as in-depth interviews with twenty-four students, in which it was confirmed that students felt positive about the learning afforded by reading an authentic text.

These studies all use a variety of methods, some of which may be relevant largely to professional researchers with access to relatively sophisticated resources. However, the need for practitioner-based research, undertaken as a form of action research (Hall, 2005) or as case studies (Paran, 2006), in real classrooms by teachers, has also been highlighted. Paran (2008: 470) points out that, because the classification of what constitutes research is variable and potentially circumscribed, it is important to validate the 'testimony of a practitioner reflecting on what they do in class'. Such practitioner-based approaches may also pave the way for more studies to be undertaken in primary and secondary classrooms, rather than largely in universities, as happens currently.

An emphasis on practitioner-based research means that qualitative research methods will tend to be favoured over quantitative methods. The advantage of qualitative research is that it enables the exploration of 'nuances and detail of particular individual cases and situations' (Hall, 2005: 183), often in naturalistic classroom settings. For practitioners, such research is frequently easier and more practical to carry out, especially since it is often generated from a practical classroom problem that requires further investigation. Hall provides a list of methods for data collection in addition to those mentioned already, including think-aloud protocols (TAPs) or 'free writing', diaries and journals, observation, and field notes. He also makes recommendations for enhancing practitioners' own research, including how to formulate a research question and select appropriate research methods, and makes suggestions regarding projects for further investigation. If these are taken up, they will undoubtedly lead to the further development of data-driven investigation of using literature in language teaching.

Validating theory through empirical data provides strong support for the use of literary texts in the classroom. Nevertheless, it is precisely some of the qualities of literary texts – their playfulness, sense of an alternative reality, appeal to the imagination, pleasure in the aesthetic – that may most engage our learners, but which perhaps cannot always be captured in empirical studies. Thus it could be argued that insisting only on data-driven research to endorse the use of literature in the classroom could limit classroom practice to achieving overly functionalist aims.

Recommendations for practice

When considering classroom practice, teachers need to consider a number of factors, including the students themselves, the texts selected, appropriate methodology and the concomitant activities or tasks devised, and the role of the teacher. The starting point for any teaching should naturally be the students, and a consideration of their linguistic and educational needs, their age and cultural backgrounds, their interests, and their purposes in learning English. Prioritising the learners will enable teachers to make informed decisions about the selection of an appropriate text, if indeed the teacher is able to do so and this has not already been prescribed by a syllabus. The key considerations are whether or not the text is likely to engage and interest the students, and whether it is written at an appropriate linguistic level to challenge students, rather than demotivate them. The aims of using a literary text should also be considered: if is to encourage very close attention to language, then poetry may be a good choice, whereas if it is to provide students with as much extensive reading practice as possible, then novels, including popular forms such as thrillers, might be a better choice.

Once the text has been selected, the teacher needs to consider what type of methodology to adopt in the classroom. As we have seen, a variety of different approaches are possible, ranging from using the text as a resource to stimulate personal response, to focusing in detail on its linguistic features through stylistics or on its more literary features by providing key background information. Here, it is important to bear in mind that, paradoxically, creativity of response is best stimulated by ensuring that there are certain constraints (Tin, 2011; see also Tin, Chapter 27). Whatever methodology, or combination of methodologies, is chosen, it is important to provide students with some form of scaffolding, either in terms of sequenced tasks or by means of skilled teacher intervention in the form of appropriate questioning.

Sequenced tasks, informed by five key principles, might help learners to find meaningful points of entry into the literary text. The aim behind the principles is not to insist on a

particular interpretation or response to the text, but rather to provide students with sufficient scaffolding to make a well-justified and confident interpretation themselves. Task design should be underscored by a progression of tasks from easier to more complex. Easier tasks might include those relating to the more referential content in the text, while more complex ones might be connected to teasing out the representational meanings implicit in the text.

The first principle to consider is that of *relevance*: how can the text be made relevant to the students' own experience? Can task design incorporate certain aspects of students' schematic knowledge, either as a point of entry into the text or as a point of comparison? For example, students might be asked to free-associate around some of the key themes in a literary text before being asked to read it themselves. On the other hand, it could be argued that one of the pleasures of reading literary texts is precisely that they take us beyond the limits of our own experience – thus insisting on too narrow a definition of relevance could be counter-productive.

The second principle relates to *cultural background*: will students need some cultural background information to make sense of the text, and if so, what? Can a contrast be made explicitly between the students' culture and that in the text? Can the activities relating to the text encourage students to develop a 'third space' (Kramsch, 1993)?

A third consideration is the *language principle*: to what extent may the language in the text be seen as unusual ('deviating from the norm') or highly patterned in some way, and what kinds of tasks can be used in order to help students to notice this language? A simple example might be a poem in which new metaphors are created by breaking collocational restrictions. Students might first be asked to consider what the usual collocations might be, and then to comment on the meanings created by violating these restrictions.

A fourth consideration is that of *literary background*, and how necessary or important this might be for students: do the students already have the kind of literary competence to iden-tify the more literary features of a text, such as its genre (e.g. sonnet, thriller, extract from an absurdist play) or its formal features (e.g. alliteration, rhyme, metaphor)? How important is it for them to do so, and what kinds of tasks might be devised to assist with this?

Finally, if sufficient attention is paid to these principles, then it should be easier to focus on the *interpretation principle*, which encapsulates the idea that students may need some support in arriving at an interpretation of the text. This is particularly the case for elementary and intermediate-level learners, who may be cognitively capable of making an interpreta-tion of the text, but may lack the full linguistic capacity to do so. Different tasks could be devised to help them, including writing short titles summarising the key theme or 'message' of a text, or choosing between alternative written interpretations provided by the teacher. It is also important to build in the opportunity for some personal response to the text.

Teachers may decide not to provide any specific tasks in a lesson, but to adopt a more student-led approach in which students, for example, discuss a text in literature circles/reading groups and record their responses in reading journals. If more open-ended class discussions do take place, then the teacher has an important role in orchestrating opportunities for student talk. An interesting study by Boyd and Maloof (2000) suggests that if teachers play the role of 'questioner, affirmer and clarifier', they may significantly encourage students' active par-ticipation in a literature lesson, by validating different interpretations and enabling students to make links between the text and their own experience.

Research into creativity suggests that social networks and flat hierarchies – including a good mix of people who know each other well, along with some 'outsiders' – make for greater levels of creative teamwork (Lehrer, 2012). Thus active participation may also be fostered by organising pairs and groups so as to include a mix of different students. There

may also be scope for 'small group multi-tasking' (Baurain, 2007) in lessons, in which students in large classes all work on different tasks, drawn from a stable framework, which are rotated throughout the course.

Future directions

It is not easy to predict future directions in the uses of literature in language teaching, but a number of trends are emerging. These are strongly influenced by globalisation, the rapid increase in Internet technology, the influence of positivist, empirical paradigms in the field of English language teaching, and the engaging possibilities offered by creative writing.

Globalisation has meant that English is now a global language, with the divisions between Kachru's inner and outer circles at times becoming more flexible. Nativised varieties of English have legitimacy in many part of the world and are being used by many writers as a way of exploring complex local identities. According to Talib (1992), literary texts written in a variety of English with which students can empathise are more likely to promote the integrative goal in language teaching, because such texts enhance students' sociocultural awareness and sense of identity. Talib argues that using a short story called 'The Taximan's Story' by Catherine Lim (1978), a Singaporean writer, which is written in an approximation of Singaporean colloquial English (SCE), affords many opportunities for developing sociocultural language awareness among learners. For example, learners might be asked to discuss certain linguistic forms in the text in terms of the extent to which they are an accurate representation of SCE or depart from more standard forms. Vethamani (1996) endorses this use of 'new literatures in English' by providing a set of language-based activities and stylistic analysis for texts from Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines, although interestingly the texts to which he refers appear to be written largely in standard English. This suggests that there is a continuum of post-colonial texts that teachers can use, ranging from those written in standard English to those written in nativised varieties. There is also a possible development in terms of increasingly bilingual populations of readers globally who are able to enjoy texts that incorporate code switching, such as *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Díaz (2007), written in a 'sort of streetwise brand of Spanglish' (Kakutani, 2007). Such novels are published in both languages (in this case, English and Spanish), and so there may be an opportunity to develop classroom activities in which more advanced students are encouraged to comment on the quality of a translation, or perhaps write their own translation before comparing it with a published translation.

The Internet will certainly continue to have a profound effect on the use of literature in language teaching. First, it affords many opportunities for project work in which students investigate the background to a literary work. In addition, students can be tasked with creating hyperlinks to a literary work as a form of textual intervention, or with creating their own piece of writing through participation in fan fiction websites (Lazar, 2008). The many different tools offered by computers, such as corpus analysis, word processing, email, and the exchange of audio recordings, can all be harnessed to generate highly interactive dialogue about literary texts between learners of English in one country and, for example, native speakers in another (Meskill & Ranglova, 2000). A number of writers have already explored the use of films and videos of literary texts in the classroom (see Delanoy, 1996; Yeh, 2005), but it may be the case that, in the future, the division between text-as-words and text-as-images is increasingly blurred with the development of multimodal texts online, which include text, images, sound, and hyperlinks (see Gibbons, Chapter 18; Simanowski, Chapter 24). A generation of digital natives may have no trouble consuming and enjoying

such texts, but the challenge for teachers will be how to develop appropriate methodologies for 'reading' such texts, so that students are encouraged to be critical and self-reflective in their reading.

As we have seen, there is likely to be more data-driven research into the use of literary texts in language teaching, which might challenge some of the assumptions of theory in this area. Paran (2008) has argued that the contexts for using literature will be extended, with literary texts being used in both EAP and ESP settings, and that the different genres being taught will also be extended, with the inclusion of more non-canonical works, young adult literature, and children's literature, including picture books. Empirical investigation of the efficacy of such an expansion will also need to be carried out, with further refinement in research methods.

While data-driven research is likely to increase, so too is the trend towards highly participatory creative writing activities, some of which stem from the drive to study a text more closely. Pope (1995: 1) advocates the use of textual interventions in the classroom, whereby students make changes in the text from 'the merest nuance of punctuation or intonation to total recasting in terms of genre, time, place, participants and medium'. By intervening in the text, and actively changing it, students come to understand it more deeply, both linguistically and ideologically. For Pope, the starting point is the original text itself, while for Spiro (2004, 2006), either a text or a carefully scaffolded activity stimulates the student to write creatively and use language imaginatively. Such output can be published, for example in school magazines or on the Internet, so that learners of English may increasingly become creative producers of English with a real audience, beyond the confines of the traditional classroom.

Related topics

creativity in second-language learning; literariness; literary stylistics and creativity; literature and multimodality; teaching creative writing

Further reading

Carter, R., and McRae, J. (eds) (1996) *Language, Literature and the Learner*, Harlow: Longman.

   A collection exploring both practical and theoretical issues relating to the interface between language and literature in the second-language learning classroom.

Collie, J., and Slater, S. (1987) *Literature in the Language Classroom*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

   A practical resource book for teachers, which includes a range of activities, drawing on communicative methodology.

Hall, G. (2005) *Literature in Language Education*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

   A thorough account of relevant literary theory, an overview of current research, and a guide to appropriate research topics and methods.

Paran, A. (ed.) (2006) *Literature in Language Teaching and Learning*, Alexandria, VA: TESOL.

   A collection of practitioners' case studies from around the world, focusing on a range of genres and approaches.

Parkinson, B., and Reid-Thomas, H. (2000) *Teaching Literature in a Second Language*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

   A comprehensive overview of key issues and theory, with practical classroom suggestions for different literary genres.

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30

Creativity in composition

Martha C. Pennington

A call for creativity in composition pedagogy

Creativity is not usually an explicit focus of writing pedagogy, other than sometimes for teaching writing to children. Beyond primary school, composition pedagogy typically places a heavy emphasis on structure and language – much heavier an emphasis than is placed on creativity, which is sometimes ignored entirely. In the United States, this is largely the result of the dominance of the field of rhetoric and composition, the home discipline for teachers of writing, in setting the agenda for required university first-year writing (FYW) courses, which inevitably have 'trickle-down' effects on the teaching of writing at secondary level. This field has generally been bereft of any focus on creativity or style seen as involving an original voice rather than mere variations in register – a view of style as an aspect of convention (Hesse, 2010: 40). A telling indicator of the lack of focus on creativity in FYW is that the words 'creativity' or 'creative' do not appear in the Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA) (2005–10) *Outcomes Statement for First-year Writing*, nor in the list of the five most important characteristics of good writing in the disciplines identified in a survey of university faculty (Addisson & McGee, 2010: 166–7).

The writing across the curriculum (WAC) (Segal & Smart, 2006) and writing in the disciplines (WID) (Russell, 2002) orientations have evolved as complementary or supplementary orientations to FYW in US higher education, but with a greater recognition of the requirements and properties of writing in specific courses and disciplines. In other countries, such as Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Singapore, and Hong Kong, the teaching of writing is heavily influenced by systemic functional linguistics (SFL) (Christie, 2012; Halliday, 1978, 1985), including – especially at (both undergraduate and postgraduate) university level – the English for specific purposes (ESP) orientation (Paltridge & Starfield, 2013), which evolved primarily within the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL).

These two parallel strands for teaching composition – the one dominant in the United States and the other dominant in much of the rest of the world – agree in centring instruction on genre (Hyon, 1996), based on the perceived need to raise learners' awareness of the structure and language of different types of text as a basis for the students' own writing. While genre is a logical focus for composition instruction, it needs to be taught in ways that do not overly constrain students' options for their own writing. Coe (1994: 188) spoke of the 'tyranny of genre' to constrain individual creativity. Yet, like other models and categories, a genre is approximate and has fuzzy boundaries. It is, in fact, a living category subject to modification and change over time as a natural result of human processes of creativity.

In spite of the recognition among writing theorists of genre as providing flexible models that can be adapted and challenged (Lillis, 2013) for creative expression, one of the effects of the genre focus in composition pedagogy has been to tie teaching and learning to genre models with a lack of attention to the creative aspects of writing. Attention to creative aspects of writing might involve learning to say things in new and different ways, learning to inject one's personal perspective, voice, and experience into writing, and learning to adapt or challenge genre conventions for the writer's own purposes. An important goal for composition is to develop a pedagogy that balances the two goals of ensuring that students have awareness and control of (a) the structural patterns and language of different genres, and (b) the creative options for establishing an original voice and perspective that also connects to the voices and perspectives of others.

An additional reason for the minimal attention paid to creativity in composition pedagogy may be because creativity is often thought of as a high-level achievement of only a select group of talented individuals. Indeed, within creative writing, there is widespread scepticism as to whether creativity can be taught (see, for example, Menand, 2009). This way of thinking about creativity stems from a distinction that has often been made between '"big C" Creativity', or artistic creativity, and '"little c" creativity', or everyday creativity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Kozbelt, Beghetto, & Runco, 2010: 23–4; Merrotsy, 2013; Pennington, 2012). '"Little c" creativity' is built into human nature and makes it possible for all of us to understand and deal with new situations, solve daily problems, and respond appropriately in word and deed in the virtually infinite variety of situations with which human beings are faced during a day or a lifetime. This kind of ordinary human creativity is 'not only universal, but necessary to our very survival' (Richards, 2010: 190). The fact that creativity is a general and universal human capacity suggests a foundation on which teaching can be built that moves away from an emphasis on '"big C" Creativity' and considers creativity in a new light.

Historical perspectives on composition pedagogy

The lack of attention in composition pedagogy to creativity is largely a product of the history of how the study of language, and of English in particular, evolved. English composition has been a required subject for all students entering university in the United States since the late nineteenth century, when it was first implemented by Harvard University (Crowley, 1998: 1, 4). It was conceived as essentially a service course benefiting other disciplines and having no specific subject matter of its own (Johnson, 2005). The purpose of the required composition course was to ensure that students could express themselves clearly in written form using standard English and correct conventions to perform critical analysis and effective argumentation on paper. The values of the composition course centred on clarity, correctness, analytical and critical thinking, and logic, with creativity a limited consideration mainly connected to the requirement of creating a unique analysis and synthesis of ideas from sources.

English literature emerged as a subject around the same time, as an offshoot of the study of languages in philology (Crowley, 1998: 10). Often, teachers of English literature also taught composition, resulting in a curricular emphasis on reading and analysing literary works as a basis for writing. Courses in creative writing, which Myers (1996: 7) says were originally associated with the discipline of education, came later, in the middle of the twentieth century (Myers, 1996: 207). At first, these were often taught by composition instructors, but soon they were staffed mainly by creative writers, which led Myers (1996) to title his book on the

history of creative writing *The Elephants Teach*. This title stems from a remark attributed to the linguist Roman Jakobson, who is said to have responded, when Vladimir Nabokov was being considered for a chair in literature at Harvard: 'What's next? Shall we appoint elephants to teach zoology?' This remark suggests the long-standing academic differentiation between creative and scholarly practice. The three areas of the English curriculum within universities – composition, literature, and creative writing – continued to diverge and develop as separate fields or academic disciplines (Nystrand, Greene, & Wiemelt, 1993).

Like English literature, English composition has strong formalist roots, and from the 1940s to the 1960s, it developed a form-focused rhetorical orientation centred on textual features of writing (Nystrand, Greene, & Wiemelt, 1993: 274–8). Composition has largely been taught as analysis of texts read outside of class, transmission of information about the characteristics of model texts and the rules for good writing, and the writing of papers outside of class, which would then be graded – sometimes with a general comment added. The method of learning to write was thus an indirect one in which the student was expected, through a process of induction (or osmosis), to be able to acquire the habits of effective writing. Creative writing went a very different way, developing a workshop approach centred on writing critique. According to Crowley (1998: 207), 'workshops came into their own as a pedagogical tool during the middle of the twentieth century with the establishment of programs in creative writing', the first of which – still considered the leader in the field – was established as the Iowa Writer's Workshop. The Iowa workshop model, which is widespread in creative writing, is based on the idea of critically moulding people who already have shown writing talent. Like the textually focused method for teaching writing in composition classes, the kind of workshop model practised in creative writing teaches writing indirectly and does not serve as a model for teaching creativity.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the process writing movement (for example Emig, 1971; Flower, 1979) challenged the adequacy of formalist approaches to rhetoric and influenced composition practice to centre on the writing process rather than on texts. Process models of writing incorporate both the mental and physical processes connected with planning, generating ideas, refining ideas, and drafting a composition through successive stages of development. Writing is then seen as an individual achievement resulting from a series of creative acts performed by each writer. In recognition of writing as creative behaviour, process approach methodology includes activities aimed at generating ideas – such as prewriting discussion, brainstorming, and free-writing – as an important formative step in the writing process. Process methodology also encourages writing as a form of personal expression, thereby connecting it to creative writing (Myers, 1996: 4). According to Young (1987), the process movement inspired an increased focus on invention in rhetoric and composition that can be connected to an emphasis in the twenty-first century on non-literary aspects of creativity (see, for example, several of the chapters in Donnelly & Harper, 2013; for review, see Pennington, 2014). Process-oriented instruction is still widely applied in schools in the United States (McQuitty, 2014), especially in the collaborative writing workshop method, as practised in elementary and middle schools (Calkins, 1994; Ray & Laminack, 1991), and aspects of process methodology, especially peer review and submission of a non-final draft for formative feedback, now pervade most composition pedagogy.

The 1980s saw a turn to social constructionism (for example Bartholomae, 2005 [1985]; Bazerman, 1988; Brodkey, 1987; Nystrand, Greene, & Wiemelt, 1993: 285–301) in writing studies and functionalism in linguistics (Halliday, 1985), which impacted on views of writing and writing pedagogy. Social constructionism suggests that writing is a social act

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through which writers construct meaning and their own identities in interaction with others. Looked at through a social constructionist lens, writing involves the creation and negotiation of meaning in interaction with an audience, which may be specific individuals or larger groups or discourse communities to which the writer wants to belong. It is therefore creative, and yet must adhere to norms of communication with others. From this perspective, a main goal for a writer is to learn the conventions of written language as used in a certain field, area of specialisation, or genre, and how linguistic forms realise its specific functions and purposes. This goal is essentially that of WID, WAC, or the ESP orientation to teaching English, which has a strong writing strand (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995). The other main goal for a writer from a social constructionist perspective is to creatively challenge, violate, and recreate the discourse norms and the texts associated with a specific communicative context – whether it be a specific genre, academic discipline, field of employment, or other field of activity. In so doing, a writer learns to balance the linguistic constraints of a specific discourse community – the collective – against her or his entitlement and desire to express individual identity and create something original.

In recent decades, composition instruction has come to be focused on the specific forms of writing needed in different disciplines and for different purposes, an emphasis connected to WAC, WID, and ESP. These emphases challenge the value of an autonomous, general-purpose FYW course; and, increasingly since the 1970s, writing has been offered in the United States in upper division, specialised WAC writing courses (Russell, 2002) and in other countries in ESP writing courses tied to specific disciplines, such as writing for business or writing for engineering. Although these subject-focused writing courses fill a need for specialised genre-focused writing development, they have a potentially undesirable side-effect of giving the writing course a primarily utilitarian orientation that de-emphasises creativity.

Since the 1980s, the rise of SFL growing out of Halliday's work has ensured a strong place for genre in the teaching of writing. Modern views of genre recognise its flexibility and mutability (for example Lillis, 2013), and the need to teach students to modify and rethink genres in terms of their own purposes (English, 2015). Since the 1990s, writing pedagogy has included more involved and expressive writing within considerations of both process and genre, as can be seen in the National Writing Project (http://www.nwp.org) and the writing workshop approach practised in elementary and middle schools in the United States, which incorporates attention to genre and language through model texts and may also include explicit strategy training (Harris, Graham, & Mason, 2006). At the present time, most writing pedagogy represents a hybrid of process and genre pedagogy, with varying emphases of these two strands and varying emphases on creativity. However, even those approaches to composition pedagogy that recognise its importance to writing often do not include any specific methodology for teaching or enhancing creativity. While some approaches, such as process writing and the collaborative writing workshop, incorporate attention to creativity, any approach to writing can be supplemented by techniques to work on students' creativity.

Critical issues surrounding creativity in composition pedagogy

The first issue involving creativity in composition pedagogy is how to teach creativity – that is, what instructional approaches are available and which approaches can be effectively adapted to the university composition class. It is natural to look first to the techniques used in the teaching of creative writing as possible pedagogical approaches for the FYW, WAC,

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WID, or ESP composition course. Although widely used in creative writing, the 'workshop model', in which teacher and peers critique an individual student's work in a non-interactive, one-way process with the writer 'in the hot seat', can, at best, only indirectly enhance creativity and can, at worst, completely discourage a writer. A wide range of other techniques have been developed for enhancing creativity, although systematic investigations of creative approaches to teaching composition at university level are lacking.

A second issue for composition instruction is balancing the requirements of creativity with those of structure and genre, helping students learn to operate within the dynamic of these two foundational elements of good writing. Student writers have often learned to construct a paper without attention to creativity or connections of writing to personal knowledge or identity. Instead, their writing process relies heavily on constructing a paper within vaguely apprehended constraints of organisation and genre, using information drawn from external sources, with little in the way of original analysis or synthesis of other people's ideas into the writer's own framework. They also tend to try to write final text as first text, with the aim of reducing the need for revision or rewriting. Thus instruction might assist students to carry out a staged writing process, with specific activities designed to encourage agency, original thinking, and analysis and synthesis of the writer's own ideas in relation to those of others.

Composition teachers and students must learn how to balance the contrasting requirements of conventionality and standardisation, on the one hand, and originality and personalisation, on the other (Enright, 2014; Hartley, 2007; Pennington, 2011). This is especially challenging in an era of assessment in which teachers are being pushed to anticipate, as well as to structure in advance, everything that a student might do on an assignment, so that marking can be tied to specific measurable features of what is produced. Structuring assignments in such as way as tailor them to pre-specified outcomes values adherence to norms over creative response, and limits students' independence, autonomy, and initiative in pursuing those ideas and topics that are most original and most challenging, but which may be of greatest interest to them. These are exactly the sorts of writing projects that do not easily fit into highly structured and staged assignments. Over-specification of a writing assignment, as encouraged by the assessment culture, often leads students to focus more on its formal, secondary features (for example formatting, correct mechanics) than its primary purpose and content features (Enright, 2014). As Spitzer (2015: 244) observes about his creative puppet theatre assignments for university writing, some kinds of writing assignments are better 'half-baked', because a significant degree of openness and non-specificity leaves room for student writers' own exploration and discovery process, allowing them to tailor the assignment to fit their own interests and purposes.

Too much direction from the teacher can be stifling of creativity in another sense. Marking correct and incorrect features and giving grades on all writing that is handed in to the teacher encourages students to be dependent on the teachers' view of their writing rather than their own view. They learn not to trust their own perspectives and do not develop their own values about writing. Students can then lose interest and become uninvested in their own writing, writing merely to satisfy the demands of an assignment and to get a grade – which means that they are writing essentially for the teacher rather than for themselves or any other audience. Such uninvolved, utilitarian writing lacks motivation or inspiration, bypassing or shortcutting the creative thinking-and-writing process that results in a unique voice and point of view, and instead produces unoriginal, highly derivative, or plagiarised writing (Pennington, 2015). An aspect of writing instruction aiming for creative engagement should therefore be to help students to become invested in, take responsibility for, and learn how to respond to their own work.

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A further issue is how to incorporate technology in the teaching of writing in ways that encourage creativity and also help to balance the dual formal and creative goals of composition. Composition students need to learn how to creatively borrow and remix text in print and digital forms through the processes of:

mashing   locating relevant source materials and combining them in effective and appropriate ways;

modding   modifying, altering, or building upon the ideas that have been borrowed from others to create some kind of new idea or perspective; and

memeing   presenting the new idea or perspective in a way that makes it memorable, relevant, useful and/or emotionally compelling for readers.

(Jones, 2015)

In other words, they need to learn how to acceptably (that is, in ways that avoid plagiarism) use and combine (mash), and how to modify and build on (mod) existing resources to create a new and memorable perspective (*meme*). We might also add, following Manovich (2007), the ability to *sample*, in the sense of students being able to select pieces of text to quote in their own work. In the digital era, the key is for students to learn, using combinations of print text and other multimedia resources, how to sample, mash, mod, and meme combinations of existing resources into their own original creations in ways that give sufficient and appropriate credit to others. (For a discussion of issues, see Jones & Hafner, 2012: 45–7; see also Knobel & Lankshear, Chapter 25.)

Research perspectives on creativity in composing

Harper (2013) observes that creative writing is often a kind of research in the sense of being a questioning, or quest, seeking some new understanding or knowledge. The knowledge produced through creative writing research in this sense is individualised and 'strongly situational, based in the individual creative writer's needs, desires, feelings and reasons as that writer undertakes creative writing' (Harper, 2013: 107). Research of different kinds may also 'explor[e] the actions, artefacts and contexts of creative writing' (Harper, 2013: 108), including pedagogical and 'practice-led research'. However, as Hesse (2010: 32) has observed, creative writing 'is largely disinterested in (and occasionally contemptuous of) systematic research on writing and writers, especially empirical studies, trusting instead authors' own accounts, in memoir, essay, or interview, as far more valuable than anything in the guise of "scholarly article"'.

Psychometric, neurobiological, and biographical approaches to research have resulted in a wide range of theories of creativity (Boden, 2004; Kozbelt, Beghetto, & Runco, 2010; Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). Qualitative methods to uncover creative traits and practices include self-reports and interviews with writers and other people recognised as creative (for example Burton, 2006; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Doyle, 1998; Florida, 2002), as well as surveying the beliefs and practices of teachers of creative writing and observing their practices (Burton, 2006; Vandermeulen, 2011). Attempts to enhance students' creativity have spawned research in university and in primary and secondary educational contexts, sometimes with a specific emphasis on writing and sometimes producing other findings which help to elucidate writing processes or which offer teaching approaches that can be applied to composition, although there are few studies of writing pedagogy at university level and an insufficient body of comparative research (Reisman, 2012).

Early research on creativity led to the development of Finke, Ward, and Smith's (1992) Geneplore model of creative cognition. The model describes creative outcomes as resulting from two interacting phases of thought: a 'pre-inventive', *generative* phase of producing 'candidate ideas' with creative potential; and an *exploratory* phase of selecting some of those ideas to develop further into a creative product. The generate–explore process emphasises divergent, associative thinking to collect and conjoin a diversity of conceptual components, which are then selectively shaped through convergent thinking into novel products. As Ward and Lawson (2009: 197) maintain, 'it is the recursive nature of the generate–explore process that results in large-scale creative products'.

Waitman and Plucker (2009: 306) note the close parallels of the recursive Geneplore sequence to the processes of creative writing, and parallels can also be noted in descriptions of the composing process (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Emig, 1971; Flower & Hayes, 1981; Perl, 1994; Sharples, 1999). The methods of composing process studies (Nystrand, Greene, & Wiemelt, 1993: 81) were often think-aloud protocols (TAPs) in which writers orally describe and record their thinking and writing processes as they work, or retrospective reflections, in which writers describe their thinking and writing process immediately after they finish drafting, sometimes based on viewing a video recording of their composing process. This body of composing research led to a characterisation of the writing process as incorporating recursive iterations of generation and exploration of ideas through activities such as making notes and lists, outlining, and free-writing, with frequent rereading and micro-level tinkering leading to revision of previously generated text and addition of new text. These activities feed the development of provisional text in the form of draft material, which is then further shaped – through focused attention, critical reflection, and revision with the writer's purposes in mind – into polished text that is the writer's creative product. The writing process, which builds ideas and text cumulatively, with frequent revision of already generated text and integration of new text, has been greatly aided since the availability of word processors has made it easy to continually generate, alter, eliminate, and move written text.

Consistent with what is known about the early stages of creative production of all kinds (Boden, 2004; Kaufman & Sternberg, 2010), a creative writing process includes a stage in which writing is accomplished in a cognitive mode focused on ideas or mental pictures more than text itself (Kellogg, 1994, 2008: 10) – one that is more intuitive, imagistic, and free-flowing than the more purposeful and critical mode of thought tailored to construction of final text. Csikszentmihalyi (1996) interviewed nine writers, finding that they tended to generate small caches of ideas (fragments of dialogue, descriptions, scenes, or images), and then worked from these to find a mental focus and build text (draft material) around it. Doyle (1998: 30) interviewed five fiction writers, observing that they started with a 'seed incident' that was 'touching, intriguing, puzzling, mysterious, haunting or overwhelming' as a focal mental point for evolving further ideas. In capturing the seed incident in verbal and/or visual form (for example as a sentence, paragraph, or picture plus caption), the writer moves into a 'fiction world' and sets the stage to start working mentally in that world, in which processes such as automatic writing, free-writing, and narrative improvisation occur. In the best case, the writer will be in a 'flow' experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996), losing track of time and physical surroundings, writing fluently and non-critically, with attention to new viewpoints.

Fiction writers move back and forth between the world of the imagination and flow experience and the world of communicative meaning and intention in which they must evaluate the linguistic construction generated in that free-flowing imaginative state with a

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critical eye. In so doing, they cycle between the creative mind working at the imaginative edge of idea processing and the rational mind needed to shape language in consideration of how words and successive levels of linguistic structure – from phrases, to sentences, to paragraphs, to whole genres – are shaped to meet writer intentions and audience needs. One successful fiction writer describes the process as follows:

> For a creative writer, the negotiation between the focused awareness required for language manipulation and the relaxation state required for image and fantasy formation is a difficult juggle. Writing fiction demands a moment-by-moment journey to and from the inner paths of the brain and the outer regions of the attention network, as the writer has to remain in a state of focused alertness while engaged in working memory retrieval and task-completion for each word written, each carefully sculpted sentence, each structurally managed paragraph; and yet the writer must also be ready to drop that alertness from moment to moment, in order to re-enter the anxiety-free, relaxed mind-state from where the writer will purloin spontaneously arising daydreams, or empathize with a character's plight, and envision plot possibilities.
>
> *(Valeri, 2014: 188–9)*

Creativity requires 'a mental state where attention is defocused, when thought is associative, and when a large number of mental representations are simultaneously activated' (Kaufman et al., 2010: 218). Each of these psychological conditions (defocused attention, associative thought, and simultaneous activation of a large number of mental representations) is antithetical to genre requirements in writing – that is, for selection of words and grammatical structures that precisely convey the author's intended meaning within rhetorical considerations of audience and purpose. Such selection and construction of sentences, and more generally of a logically sequenced and both cohesive (grammatically well-structured) and coherent (semantically well-structured – that is, meaningful) text that speaks to a certain audience, requires highly focused attention and critical, convergent thinking. It also requires controlled activation of a global mental representation of the target for which the writer is aiming, in terms of the overall purpose and goal of the writing, as well as a related set of mental representations – of audience, tone, relevant facts, organisational options, etc. Generating novel ideas, and then tying those to coherent language and rhetorical patterns, invokes the sequential and interactive engagement of 'traditionally "left-brain" processes of information acquisition and storage . . . with processes associated with the "right brain", such as abstract and novel integration' (Kaufman et al., 2010: 221). Through these different kinds of brain activity, 'the primordial chaos of the writer's mind' is transfigured into an embodiment of mental phenomena forming a coherent linear sequence of words, a written text, which is tailored to a certain rhetorical purpose and represents the writer's 'version of things' (Gammarino, 2009: 20).

Balancing the different mental states during writing is a challenge given that creative thinking seems to involve 'cognitive disinhibition, or the ability to shed the schematic constraints and biases that impede creative thought' (Kaufman et al., 2010: 222), while operating within specific schematic constraints is essential for producing any text intended to be read and understood by another. This is especially obvious for scholarly writing, which has relatively strict requirements for transparency, clarity, and conventionality, while also valuing originality. Thus scholarly writers, in order to satisfy needs for originality and individual expression, while also meeting genre requirements, must learn how to operate within these different states of cognitive activation: one intuitive and imaginative (abstract, holistic, multidirectional); the other controlled and rational (analytical, critical, sequential). Since the pursuit of a creative goal in writing requires different

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kinds of brain activation from composing focused on schematic structure, and since these cannot be maintained simultaneously, but require different mental states at different times during the writing process, creativity and genre can be taught as separate facets of composition pedagogy. Separating out the various processes of composing is of value for novice writers, who cannot juggle them all simultaneously owing to the complexity of writing (McCutcheon, 1996), which Kellogg (2008) suggests takes at twenty or more years to master. The challenge for teaching is to help students learn to write in both of these different states and to integrate the products of the creativity-focused state with those of the information-focused state.

Recommendations for enhancing creativity in composition instruction

At a minimum, it is recommended that university-level composition instruction inject creative elements into a controlled and rational, purpose-driven writing process. Composition teachers can set up facilitating conditions for creativity by making time for students to write in class under conditions in which their work will not be graded, in which they are encouraged to express themselves freely and uncritically, and in which they can carry out 'internal research' (Pennington & Welford, 2014) to explore their personal knowledge and connections to a topic. In addition, techniques to stimulate creative thinking and expression can be borrowed from the creativity literature (Reisman, 2012; Sternberg & Lubart, 1999) and used to stimulate creativity at the pre-writing stage – and also at middle stages of writing, during composing and revising. A goal for the writing class can be for students to develop a self-directed writing process in which they use creativity techniques to get started on a topic, as well as to help them when they get blocked at a later stage.

As Waitman and Plucker (2009: 302) observe: 'The beginning writer must become familiar with the successive experience of initially producing a malleable text and then cultivating the analytic prowess to successfully review this text.' The generate–explore process of drafting, which results in the production of candidate ideas and a malleable text for potential further consideration, exploration, and development, can be seen as a crucial part of a larger process aimed at producing an original written work for a specific audience and purpose. By learning to begin their writing with a creativity-oriented generate–explore phase, in which they evolve a significant amount of draft material and a direction and purpose for their writing, followed by a genre-oriented reflect–revise phase, in which they critically assess and further develop text to achieve their purposes, student writers will become more engaged in their writing and will have more control over their own writing process and outcomes. The predictable result is more original and well-developed compositions.

Recommended generate–explore activities involve a repeating cycle of:

1. expansive, divergent thinking – such as through free-writing and free-associating or newly associating ideas – that can produce new connections, such as through metaphor, analogy, and comparison;

followed by

2. critical, convergent thinking and writing to narrow down the options and select the best ideas and language in which to express them.

These creativity-focused activities can be connected to methodologies for implementing genre-oriented reflection, critique, and revision, such as adaptations of the strategy development and collaborative workshop methods used in primary and secondary education, in addition to

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Vandermeulen's (2011) proposed adaptations of creative writing workshopping methodology, which involve restricting the type of feedback allowed in an attempt to reduce its often highly critical nature, using the writer's own reflections and questions as a starting point for critique by others, and supplementing or complementing whole-class critique by a more collegial form of interaction among novice writers in small writing groups.

In addition, at university level, creativity-oriented activities need to be integrated with materials and activities to focus student writers' attention on:

3. the structural patterns and language of different genres, the knowledge and expectations of the intended audience, and how individual writers wish to represent or challenge these to achieve their own purposes in writing; and
4. the processes of searching, assessing, and integrating textual and non-textual sources into their writing in both appropriate and original ways, and of developing information in alternate modes using digital tools.

Not only genre models, but also specific linguistic techniques of creative expression that are applicable to writing in a range of genres can be taught as part of fulfilling the knowledge requirements of (3), such as:

associations between different domains;
semantic deviations and surprising lexical choices;
syntactic deviations and unconventional sentence structures; and
narrativization of agents and actions.

(Marsen, 2012)

As an aspect of (3), students can be asked to consider the novel concepts and language in model texts, and as an aspect of (4), their intentions in terms of developing and presenting new concepts or perspectives on others' work and how they plan to do this.

The recommendations of Kim (2010) for the digital competencies that all university graduates need include being able to individually and collaboratively create wikis, blogs, websites, and other kinds of digital objects – such as audio, podcasts, photos, and video – and then to integrate these within a wiki, blog, or website. Other useful creative media skills suggested by Kim are creating voice-over presentations to enhance online texts, and using images and sound to tell a good story. In addition, the ability to create various types of graphical representation of information, such as infographics and digital timelines (Gruber, 2015), using online tools for creating these and for building on previously created graphics, can add new creative dimensions to composition. The abilities both to create and to creatively embed, alter, and animate such digital objects are highly valuable skills for creatively developing new kinds of multimedia texts. This means being familiar with the available websites and tools, and, in the best case, having some facility with computer code as well.

To encourage creativity, the teacher must make it a priority in course activities, feedback, and grading. Rhetorical analysis can consider the types and the overall level of linguistic and conceptual creativity evident in different exemplars of academic and non-academic writing. Matters of style can also be addressed and included in assessment criteria, and students can perform a stylistic analysis of their own writing and the functions and purposes that it accomplishes (Carpenter, 2005), as a basis for drawing their attention to their own voice and creative options in writing. In addition, students might be allowed or encouraged to write assignments not only in the classic, 'objective' or detached thesis-centred argumentative style, but

also in a more contemplative, 'subjective' and involved style that allows for more personal reflection and less definitive conclusions. In recognition of the value of creative assignments for motivating student interest and engagement, and of the value for university graduates of both critical and creative thinking and communication, teachers might consider including one or more creative writing assignments, as Gammarino (2009) advocates, in their FYW or other academic writing syllabi. They might also allow or encourage students to submit hybrid works combining, for instance, poetic expression and critical essay or autobiography and research (Pennington & Welford, 2014; Welford, 2015).

Lim (2015: 255–6) suggests the possibility of:

> useful crossovers from creative writing features to academic writing practices. Some examples are the occasional deployment of a personal voice/subjective narrator; the use of different points of view and of narrative to dramatize an argument; and the appeal to human interest, in the portrayal of characters and particularities. Shared stylistic concerns include the function of economy and the judicious use of figurative language; and the deployment of narrative, description – setting – and dialogue for greater clarity and illumination. That is, academic writing is never without the resources that mark the creative writing text in vivifying the argument paper.

Composition teachers can raise students' awareness of these creative possibilities for academic writing and give students credit for them in their own writing.

Future directions for creativity in composition

More research is needed on the ways in which creativity can be enhanced in writing at all levels, and on the effects of creativity-oriented instruction within a standardised curriculum and a regime of outcomes assessment and high-stakes testing of writing. Studies examining approaches that attempt to ensure creativity within a genre emphasis would be especially welcome, as would studies seeking to show the value of creative orientations to university writing at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Research orientations to studying writing processes could be adapted to incorporate attention to creativity, and some data from classic process studies could be reanalysed in creativity terms, such as how writers have balanced the two goals of producing creative vs conventional language and ideas, and the two broad types of thinking-and-writing processes involved. Data from future research on student writers, as well as professional literary and non-literary writers, might also explicitly examine how they balance these different demands of writing, such as through interview, TAP, or post-writing reflection questions that specifically contrast these two aspects of writing.

Matters of style, often within genre concerns (Johnson & Pace, 2005), will continue as a topic in university composition, and the centrality of the research report and the 'objective', thesis-driven essay will increasingly be problematised (Archibald, 2015; Huber, 2015; Welford, 2015) as the demand grows for students to be able to compose in multiple genres and media. A focus on creativity would seem to be required to fulfil the new audience requirements of online contexts: 'Unlike the old composition, the new composition includes textmaking for situations in which readerships are neither compelled nor circumscribed. One of its main challenges is how writers make readers pay attention' (Hesse, 2010: 45).

A focus on creativity may also be required to meet the needs of writing in the disciplines. Bizzaro (2013: 172) predicts that 'the rhetorician and the poet will soon need to help those

in the professions who are working at the cutting edge with difficult concepts generally unavailable through language to lay persons'. The many potentials for cross-fertilisation and alignments of composition, creative writing, and writing in the disciplines, in the context of the ongoing evolution of creative uses of digital media, are predicted to be the dynamic elements out of which the future of creativity in composition will be constructed.

Related topics

language, creativity, and remix culture; literature and language teaching; teaching creative writing

Further reading

Chik, A., Costley, T., and Pennington, M. C. (eds) (2015) *Creativity and Discovery in the University Writing Class: A Teacher's Guide*, Sheffield/Oakville, CT: Equinox.

A practice-oriented collection contributed to by creative writers and composition specialists, proposing creative and discovery-oriented approaches to teaching writing at university level.

Johnson, T. R., and Pace, T. (eds) (2005) *Refiguring Prose Style: Possibilities for Writing Pedagogy*, Logan, UT: Utah State University.

A historical, theoretical, and practical review of style, as applied to the teaching of composition.

Millan, H. L., and Pennington M. C. (eds) (2014) *Creativity and Writing Pedagogy: Linking Creative Writers, Researchers, and Teachers*, Sheffield/Oakville, CT: Equinox.

An edited volume examining the topic of creativity in writing from theoretical, practical, and research perspectives, and showcasing creative pedagogy.

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A comprehensive guide to creative writing practices and techniques.

Sharples, M. (1999) *How We Write: An Account of Writing as Creative Design*, New York: Routledge.

Sharples presents an original view of writing as involving creative design and an in-depth examination of writing processes.

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Teaching creative writing

Graeme Harper

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Introduction

Creative writing has been one of humankind's most pervasive and long-lived arts, as well as one of our most intriguing forms of human communication. *Long-lived*, in that as soon as we humans began to inscribe words, we began to use that inscribing for creative purposes. *Intriguing as a form of communication* because creative writing is often not aiming to communicate directly or unambiguously, but rather to encourage thought, to elicit emotional response and personal interpretation.

Ancient in its foundation and strongly present in the contemporary world, almost every location around the globe has seen some human engagement in creative writing, and in many it has contributed to the emergence and prominence of the publishing, media, and performance industries, among other creative industries. Creative industries are those parts of the economy that trade in creative products and creatively enhanced experiences, as well as in the generation and exploitation of knowledge. Despite this, situating creative writing within a discussion of the creative industries is not very common. Much more common is discussing creative writing in relation to specific material outputs (that is, novels, poems, scripts, and so forth) and according to its relationship with particular kinds of language use.

An initial difficulty lies in how we define 'creative writing' compared to other forms of writing. In the simplest terms, where does creativity begin and where does it end? There is no easy answer. Another significant puzzle relates to whether we define creative writing according to material things or according to actions. In the larger part, history has witnessed creative writing defined by its material outputs. Thus the teaching of creative writing has been divided along the lines of teaching students to write poetry, or teaching them to write short stories, or teaching them to write screenplays, and so on. This is not universally the case, but frequently it has been so. The final output in effect creates the definition of creative writing and the teaching associated with it. By defining it this way alone, we miss much of what creative writing really involves. We can, instead, define creative writing by saying that it is the actions associated with writing creatively, that these are informed by the human imagination and by the intellect, and that these actions employ individual, as well as cultural, knowledge. Of course, to describe creative writing only this way leaves out something of the truth.

Therefore, we best define creative writing by saying: *Creative writing is the action of writing creatively, informed by the human imagination and the intellect, employing both*

personal and cultural knowledge, and creating a variety of results, some private, some public, some tentative, and some in various ways complete.

Historical perspectives

When, in the seventeenth century, Anthony A. Wood (1691–92) undertook his monumental work *Athenae Oxonienses: An Exact History of All the Writers and Bishops Who Have Had Their Education in the University of Oxford – To Which Are Added the Fasti, or Annals of the Said University*, he was, according to his title, referring to those who had learned writing while at Oxford University. Not all of those included in Wood's survey are what we would call creative writers in a contemporary sense; some, we almost certainly would. Furthermore, the education to which Wood refers is not largely based in formal creative writing classes, but in a variety of informal learning, from personal mentorship to what, in today's university, would often be called interdisciplinary exchange.

Anthony Wood's creative writers were largely learning to write creatively via what can be called educational osmosis. In a similar informal pedagogic vein, John W. H. Walden (1919: 11), in his *The Ancient Universities of Greece*, makes note of the singing of lyrical poetry to the accompaniment of the lyre in fifth-century BC Athenian education. However, Walden (1919: 6) pinpoints some more formal aspects of writing teaching by suggesting that such learning was enhanced by the studying of literary style, expression, and the power of description. Topics such as these are not unusual in formal creative writing teaching even today.

In his 1955 book *Ancient Education*, William A. Smith (1955: 81) speaks of the influence and power of those with developed skills of literary expression in ninth-century AD China, and comments that much emphasis was therefore placed on this within Chinese colleges and schools, at one point to the detriment of education in science and technology. Smith's (1955: 81) wariness – Smith commenting that, because of this emphasis on education in literary expression in China at that time, 'science and technology failed to develop on an adequate scale' – is perhaps as much influenced by notions present in the mid-twentieth century, when he was writing as it is a depiction of conditions in ninth-century China. Concern over how much formal creative writing education should occupy the time of students in higher education, or how productive such formal teaching really is for the individual, as well as for society more generally, remain topics of debate.

Commonly, teaching is considered to be the bringing about of learning, or the leading of someone to knowing something. Imparting, guiding, and instructing are all associated with teaching. Palpable examples of creative writing teaching away from institutions of education quickly come to mind: the creative writer learning while working in some kind of publishing, or in some other field of writing such as journalism; the creative writer taught by his or her involvement in another creative art in which such things as form, function, style, or address to an audience traverse the mediums of expression; the creative writer guided by or led to knowledge through his or her exposure to finished works of creative writing.

DeWitt Henry (2012: 17) writes of such informal educational circumstances when he asserts that 'just as the combination of shoptalk, mutual editing and critical theory is exemplified by Wordsworth and Coleridge, surely the nexus of Hawthorne, Emerson, Fuller, Thoreau and other New England writers of the 1840s exemplifies an American school "without walls"'. Writing earlier, Muriel Harris (1921), in an article in *The North American Review*, similarly bridges a discussion of Britain and the United States in the activities of the French salon and the English coffee house. She comments on Henry James living in the

London borough of Chelsea, 'carrying the salon spirit with him', continuing to note that, 'in Chelsea too, there are today a number of well-known English families of long literary heritage, whose weekly gatherings have a good deal in common with the thought of the salon' (Harris, 1921: 827).

As Harris' comment shows, not least because of the predominant social dimensions of the borough of Chelsea, the impact of social class and the commodification of literature has had some part to play in the history of informal creative writing learning. So it was that the eighteenth-century shift away from literary patronage and towards commercial publishing created conditions under which creative writing learning of an informal nature was interwoven with changes in how literature might reach its readership.

While the later existence in the early twentieth century of such groups as, say, the Bloomsbury Group could be said to represent another condition of informal creative writing learning, whereby group members learned from each other, it cannot be said that, in a group such as Bloomsbury, creative writing learning was made available to an extended social group, its members being so entirely upper middle class. The same difficulty of locating widely impactful informal creative writing teaching and learning can be recognised in how eighteenth-century shifts in literary commodification impacted on the coteries and circles of literary London, as 'a professional writer, it was felt, should be servant to no one but the public. His work should not reflect the etiolated taste of a sybaritic aristocrat but rest on the firmer foundation of public approval' (Brewer, 1997: 162). But the type of person who might learn to write creatively was still very socially limited, up until the expansion of access to higher education, particularly in the latter half of the twentieth century.

There are today a relatively small number of histories of formal creative writing teaching in modern universities and colleges, although there are many commentaries on the emergence of particular creative writing courses, biographical notes on teaching faculty, or notes on the publishing success of a particular student or students. Thus Robert Dana's (1999) edited work *A Community of Writers: Paul Engle and the Iowa Writers' Workshop* cannot be faulted for being a history of the Iowa Writers' Workshop; after all, it claims to be nothing more. However, history works in the relationship of the holistic to the individual, the wider story to the personal story, as well as in the relationship of the individual to the holistic, the personal stories that contribute to the whole. It is the former that remains uncommon in the historiography of formal creative writing teaching and learning. Furthermore, concerted historical accounts of research undertaken into the practice of creative writing, or through the practice of creative writing, so as to inform methods of teaching or to offer interpretive or theoretical insights, are so far so rare that they might be considered non-existent.

This largely reflects a tradition, into which Dana's book neatly fits – that is, the tradition of speaking mostly about those who have taught in an institution or department, or of making note of the successes of students in having their finished works published or performed. A good example of this tradition is provided by the American Association of Writers and Writing Programs (AWP), founded in 1967, in the programme for its annual conference, the largest creative writing teaching conference in the world. The AWP conference programme contains dozens of advertisements listing faculty and students' successes in gaining publishing or performing credits, very little about pedagogic approaches, and nothing about discoveries made through creative writing research.

Because there are still relatively few comprehensive histories of creative writing teaching in modern universities and colleges, it is important to highlight examples. *The Elephants Teach: Creative Writing since 1880* by D. G. Myers (1996), *Creative Writing and the New Humanities* by Paul Dawson (2005), Michelene Wandor's (2008) *The Author Is Not Dead,*

Merely Somewhere Else: Creative Writing after Theory, and Mark McGurl's (2009) *The Program Era: Postwar Fiction and the Rise of Creative Writing* are all excellent examples.

The Elephants Teach: Creative Writing since 1880, although the oldest of these four works, is no less influential today than it was when published. Myers' (1996) book has as its focus the teaching of creative writing specifically in American colleges and universities, and this needs to be kept in mind when considering the conclusions reached. The existence in the United States of teaching units concerned with composition and rhetoric sets apart this American experience from those in some other national arenas in which these do not exist. Additionally, the author's analysis emerges from his interest in the condition of literary study and departments concerned with this. Screenwriting and creative writing in art and design therefore receive little attention in the book. His arguments that, following the Second World War, 'creative writing programs became a machine for creating more creative writing programs' (Myers, 1996: 146) and that 'creative writing was originally an enterprise for bringing the understanding of literature and the use of it into one system' (Myers, 1996: 167) do not hold entirely true in countries such as the United Kingdom and Australia.

Australian Paul Dawson (2005: 2) remarks, in *Creative Writing and the New Humanities*, that 'the history of creative writing needs to be seen as a series of educational responses to the perennial "crisis" in English Studies, rather than an apprenticeship which developed alongside and largely untouched by Literary Studies'. He chiefly explores notions of knowledge in creative writing, saying in contrast to Myers that:

> instead of resting on an assumption that writers were absorbed into the academy, the account of the historical origins of creative writing which I shall provide is a means of enquiring into *how* it came to serve the needs of writers in terms of apprenticeship and patronage.
>
> *(Dawson, 2005: 5, emphasis original)*

He concludes that 'the disciplines of creative writing hovers today between a vocational traineeship for the publishing industry and an artistic haven from the pressures of commercialism' (Dawson, 2005: 214).

In her *The Author Is Not Dead, Merely Somewhere Else: Creative Writing after Theory*, Michelene Wandor (2008), who is based in the United Kingdom, offers a third geographically informed history. For example, Myers' (1996: 168) notion that 'creative writing had become a national staff of writers who teach writers who go on to teach, and to hope for tenure and promotion' is at best partly correct in the United Kingdom, not least because there is no system of academic tenure. Wandor undertakes a wider sweep than either Myers or Dawson, from critical trends to creative writing organisations, from self-expression to literacy. She suggests that:

> [T]eachers from [creative writing] in the UK come from two professional groups: (a) career academics (generally within English) and (b) professional writers, brought into higher education to parallel musicians, performers, painters etc. (professional practitioners) who have for many decades taught their art expertise to students.
>
> *(Wandor, 2008: 2)*

Myers and Dawson speak of creative writing in higher education as the story of a success, and Wandor (2008: 1) begins plainly with her statement that it is 'one of the success stories of the late twentieth century in the UK'. Mark McGurl (2009: ix) similarly opens *The Program*

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Era: Postwar Fiction and the Rise of Creative Writing with a success statement, saying that 'paying attention to the increasingly intimate relation between literature production and the practices of higher education is the key to understanding the originality of postwar American literature'. He reads the history of creative writing in higher education from the fictional texts emerging in the post-war period, and he reads into and through the biographical trails of the authors whom he considers. With chapters such as 'Art and alma mater: The family, the nation, and the primal sense of instruction', this is the history of certain creative writers on campus and the works that emerged because of their academic location, and it is the history of the condition of post-secondary education in post-war America.

Because of the scarcity of comprehensive histories of creative writing education, there is a tendency to fall back on individual institutional or individual creative writer histories. While these provide some background, they distort the historical picture. For example, creative writer histories tend to be about writers who have gained some fame. The majority of creative writers do not become famous, so those histories do not give a balanced picture of creative writing education, nor, in fact, do they claim to be seeking to give a balanced pedagogic history.

Certainly, such institutional developments as the Iowa Writers' Workshop in the United States, founded in 1936, and the postgraduate course in creative writing at the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom, founded in 1970, heightened public knowledge of creative writing in higher education while further formalising the educational exchanges involving creative writers that had long occurred in universities and colleges. More so, however, contrasting aspects of the history of creative writing in higher education are revealed by first considering the existence of formal units in US post-secondary education devoted to composition and rhetoric, where there are strong theoretical contentions. This contrasts with conditions in countries such as the United Kingdom and Australia, where these units do not exist. Thus theoretical investigations specifically of creative writing more readily occur, for example, in Australian higher education.

The general American insistence on creative writing as exclusively studio arts practice, theoretically underpinned by the critical study of literature, as indicated by both Myers and McGurl, means that the history of creative writing teaching in the United States is in the largest part the history of that relationship. Contrasting national conditions also mean that the idea of research in and through creative writing, widely referred to and funded by research sponsors in countries such as the United Kingdom and Australia as 'practice-led research', whereby creative writing is understood to be able to 'produce new knowledge' (Harper, 2013: 280), is not a significant feature of creative writing pedagogic history in the United States. 'National differences' such as these likewise relate to how current critical issues and topics in the teaching of creative writing are focused and find audiences (Earnshaw, 2007: 7). Nevertheless, some shared international issues have historically arisen.

Critical issues and topics

The issue summed up in the simple question 'Can creative writing be taught?' continues to appear as one international topic of discussion, both in academic and popular culture circles (Galchen & Heller, 2014; Murray, 2011), even though creative writing has been taught for so long and by so many people, with so many students, in so many places that to ask if it can be taught avoids the fact that it has been – much as to suggest that there is tension between 'nature' and 'nurture' in creative writing learners' abilities ignores that we have attempted to teach creative writing to a wide variety of people regardless. This does not make the 'nurture'

vs 'nature' debate irrelevant because, as Anne M. Harris (2014: 33) suggests in her chapter 'Young playwrights' ink', it is possible to find 'deeply important patterns' when the 'creative skills, gifts and attributes' of individuals are considered. However, just as Harris (2014: 33) questions whether her own sample study is at all 'generalisable', so too teachers of creative writing commonly have dealt with individual cases of a learner's 'skills for creative thinking and endeavor' (Harris, 2014: 24) and generalised observations have proven as unproductive.

That noted, reasons for teaching creative writing do at first appear to be widely polarised. This is a second key issue. At one pole there appears to be the ideal of self-expression, self-development, self-determination. As both art and communication – and as an art involving that most common communication tool: words – creative writing is expected to empower the individual emotionally and, in a broad sense, developmentally. At the other pole there is economic pragmatism, the pursuit of a career in which writing creatively is either an essential skill (for example working as a writer for television, film, or leisure software) or in which the study of creative writing provides career enhancement (for example teaching the language arts in a primary or secondary school, or writing for communication fields such as advertising or journalism).

This neat polarisation is attractive. Sadly, it does little to reflect reality. It is impossible to separate self-expression from employment, or personal pleasure from pragmatic labour, in creative writing. Some creative writing teaching relates to the commercial world; some, more to self-expression. The learner exploring poetry might not imagine the potential blockbuster income of the screenwriter, or the writer of stories for computer games might not be in a position to express quite the personal sensibilities available to the writer of experimental short fiction, but this is a spectrum of practice, not a polarisation.

If teaching creative writing must in some way articulate its core pedagogic approach – and in much formal twenty-first-century education, subjects of study are asked to do this – then a teacher of creative writing usually situates his or her teaching within a network of human interests, personal, pragmatic, individual, and cultural. Often, defining types of success best pinpoints a teacher's purpose: if no one in the creative class succeeds in having a work commercially published or performed, if no one sells a story or a poem, a script, or a novel to any publisher, media company, or similar, a creative writing class can still be successful because what is learned is not necessarily commercially significant. A creative writing class can be successful if a student releases not a single word into the public realm, but privately writes many words and, because of the class – perhaps during the class – discusses some things about creative writing that he or she did not previously know, and perhaps was even able to put these into practice, strengthen them, and come to understand them further.

The teaching of creative writing incorporates such things as a critical understanding of creative practice, enhancing knowledge about creativity. Creative writing teaching also incorporates the understanding of the forms and functions of texts, introduces and examines choice of modes of communication, and even potentially improves self-confidence by developing skills of self-expression. Carl Vandermeulen (2011: 2), surveying creative writing teachers, writes that they 'say their teaching is most heavily influenced by their experience as writers and readers', and that:

> [A]lthough many of us have been exposed to composition theory, nearly 60% of teachers responding to my survey indicated either little or no influence upon their teaching of creative writing from books, articles, conference sessions, workshops or courses in composition theory and practice.

(Vandermeulen, 2011: 8)

Nigel McLoughlin (2008: 90) also comments that 'since most Creative writing teachers learn to teach through watching their predecessors teach them, most pedagogical practices are passed on in a rather unstructured, piecemeal and almost osmotic or subliminal fashion'.

In this sense, creative writing teaching is a highly individualised activity, much like creative writing itself, to the point where some educationalists, such as Mike Sharples (1999: 3), comment that 'there seems to be an unbridgeable gulf between everyday scribbling and great creative writing', and therefore 'asking authors and poets how they work just widens the gulf'. Alternatively, Suzanne Greenberg (2005: 125, emphasis original) says that she undertakes to grade students' portfolios of creative work together with a '250–500 word *typed* essay that discusses both their development as writers over the course and how they chose the work to include in their portfolio'. While she considers herself 'a process reader' she feels she cannot 'grade solely on process. The final product must figure in the course grade, or we are left in the untenable situation of awarding a mediocre writer with an A simply because he worked diligently all term long' (Greenberg, 2005: 126). In this way, Greenberg identifies what Sharples likewise struggles to reconcile. Neither suggests that he or she has overcome the dilemma of weighting an assessment of process or product; both recognise something along the lines that Sharples (1999: 128) describes in saying 'a writer is a member of a community of practice'.

With the community in mind, it is sometimes said that things learned in creative writing courses – that enhanced knowledge about creativity, the greater understanding of the forms and functions of texts, those choices in mode of communication – can 'transfer' out of the learning creative writing into other parts of life. Transferrable skills are seen by some as part of recognition of the importance of what is learned when learning to write creatively. Terry Gifford (2002: 45), writing about teaching what he calls environmental creative writing, talks about creative writing classes teaching 'environmental awareness'. In academic transferability, Patrick Bizzaro (2013: 171) suggests that his interest is:

> not in how philosophy, history, science and other subjects might be used in a creative writing classroom, but in how creative writing might be taught in philosophy, history, science and other academic courses to help future professionals in those fields better describe new discoveries.

Others find the notion of transferability to be, at best, a distraction from teaching creative writing in order that students should learn to write such things as poems, short stories, novels, and scripts.

Practically, most undergraduate creative writing programmes are constructed according to genres of writing (the novel writing class, the poetry writing class, etc.). Alternatives exist – classes in narrative, classes in storytelling, classes in imagery or the sound of poetry – but these are less frequently seen. At graduate level in the United States, the Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degree has for many years been predominant. It is the spiritual home of the creative writing workshop, the most well known of formal creative writing classes. The MFA is also considered to be a 'studio' degree, much like other MFA degrees in fields such as drama, fine art, and filmmaking.

The creative writing workshop has generated a great deal of pedagogic discussion, mostly in the United States, from that concerned with the social dynamics of the workshop to that concerned with productive workshop topics and foci. Commentators have sometimes imagined its demise or considerable reinvention. Stephanie Vanderslice (2011: 3) comments in the opening of her *Rethinking Creative Writing in Higher Education: Programs and Practices*

that Work that the contemporary world requires 'a host of new knowledge and skills from the aspiring writer that a general creative writing workshop cannot possibly contain', while Dianne Donnelly (2010: 2), in *Does the Writing Workshop Still Work?*, proposes that 'there is significant interest in more radical openness and re-envisioning of the workshop model'. Nevertheless, the workshop idea, as un-radicalised or 'traditional' (Vanderslice, 2011: 6) as it might often be, continues to be a primary site of creative writing education, and is declared particularly so in the United States, where its association with the notion of creative writing being a studio art is clearest. A studio, after all, involves some kind of workspace in which creative work is produced.

'The act of workshopping – the sharing of written work, the offering of comments, and the receiving of critique – can be extraordinarily difficult for students', writes Anna Leahy (2010: 69), revealing key aspects of the operation of the creative writing workshop. Jeri Kroll (2013: 103), alternatively, imagines in a declared metaphoric exploration 'creative writing in the university as an experimental site', and comments in this exploratory work that 'just as biology students understand basic laboratory procedures, the writing students in my scenario understand how workshops function' (Kroll, 2013: 107). Kevin Brophy (1998: 41), in his book entitled *Creativity: Psychoanalysis, Surrealism and Creative Writing*, suggests that 'creative writing is recognized partly through assertions of its presence and partly through certain contrived contexts such as workshops, "creative writing" courses, community writing groups'. His comment here is referring to the nature of the workshop as a kind of collaborative space and to his consideration of how this might relate to notions of individual authorship.

Current contributions and research

Relatively recently, there has been discussion of the possibilities of developing the field of 'creative writing studies' in which the critical perspectives, theoretical underpinning, and general reasoning relating to creative writing mean that studying it, and considering its pedagogies, identifies it as a distinct field. Dianne Donnelly (2011: 4), in her book *Establishing Creative Writing Studies as an Academic Discipline*, makes a good case for this, suggesting situating this field 'shoulder-to-shoulder with literary studies and composition studies as a pedagogically and programmatically sound entity fully empowered in its own identity and scholarship'. She argues that 'creative writing and creative writing studies are two distinct enterprises' (Donnelly, 2011: 2).

Regardless of the strength of her argument, Donnelly's statement might not gain global support. Although the term 'creative writing studies' has been used in countries such as the United Kingdom – and I have personally used it as a title of a book co-edited with Jeri Kroll, although in a slightly different way from how Donnelly uses it (Harper & Kroll, 2008) – the separation of creative writing from the study of English literature or English studies has no parallel example in the United Kingdom, to take one instance, owing to the absence of departments of composition. Creative writing therefore does not have, in the United Kingdom, the peers in 'literary studies and composition studies' (Donnelly, 2011: 4) on which it might build that suggested 'shoulder-to-shoulder' relationship.

Pointing to differing national histories again here is not merely intended to draw attention to differences in course and degree structures, which in any teaching reflect prevailing educational philosophies, but to identify a primary reason why what constitutes a current contribution to debate in creative writing pedagogy, to creative writing research, and to exploring topics in the discipline of creative writing so often varies according to location. In

short, national pedagogic histories currently play significant definitional roles. A case study of papers published in the international creative writing journal *New Writing: The International Journal for the Practice and Theory of Creative Writing* over the past decade reveals elements of how this has influenced discussion.

In the second issue of *New Writing* (2004) 1(2), Amanda Boulter (2004: 134) of the University of Winchester, in 'Assessing the criteria: An argument for creative writing theory', suggests going beyond formalist paradigms and developing new theories of creative writing's engagement with the world. In 'The "problem" of creative writing: Using grading rubrics based on narrative theory as solution', published in *New Writing* (2008) 5(3), Alicita Rodriguez (2008: 167), teaching at the Western State College of Colorado, talks instead about debunking 'the fallacy of expressivism' to challenge 'the myth of automatic writing'. Both authors wish to redefine how creative writing process and creative writing end product are discussed; however, Boulter looks to reassess literary theoretical positions, while Rodriguez wishes to challenge the grading of students' work, suggesting incorporating more formal narrative theory in grading techniques.

In *New Writing* (2010) 7(1), Robert L. Lively (2010: 35) argues, in 'Rhetoric's stepchildren: Ancient rhetoric and modern creative writing', for the connecting of 'modern issues in creative writing pedagogy with the ancient theories of rhetoric'. Specifically, he aims to engage with ancient rhetorical concepts of *tribe* (natural ability), *techne* (art or craft), and *empeiria* (learning by doing), and to relate these to theorising about how to teach creative writing. In their article, 'Excursions into new territory: Fictocriticism and undergraduate writing', in *New Writing* (2011) 8(1), Donna Maree Hancox and Vivienne Muller (2011: 147) of the Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane Australia explore fictocriticism, 'a term that first emerged in the Australia academy in the 1990s by way of French feminist interest in a new kind of writing defiant of phallocentrism'. They further describe fictocriticism 'as a form of writing continues to make a home in the academy, particularly as an exciting and challenging form for scholars, writers and increasingly post-graduate students in Creative writing, Literary Studies and Cultural Studies' (Hancox & Muller, 2011: 147).

Finally, in *New Writing* (2013) 10(1), Vida L. Midgelow (2013: 3) of the University of Northampton is concerned, in 'Sensualities: Experiencing/dancing/writing', with the 'interplay between writing and improvisational dancing to describe a methodology for an embodied, sensual and experiential mode of writing/dancing in which the boundaries between these two disciplines are blurred'. In the same issue, 'The recipe for novelty: Using bilingualism and indigenous literary genres in an advanced level L2 creative writing context in Pakistan', by Asma Mansoor (2013) of the International Islamic University of Islamabad, Pakistan, has a subject that will be obvious from the title, while in *New Writing* (2013) 10(2), Nigel McLoughlin (2013: 219) of the University of Gloucestershire outlines, in 'Negative polarity in Eavan Boland's "The Famine Road"', a 'cognitive stylistic framework to identify and analyse the pattern of negation in the poem "The Famine Road" by Eavan Boland'.

These examples represent some aspects of the current critical investigation of creative writing and the teaching of creative writing. At this point in the history of the teaching of creative writing in higher education, critical difference rather than critical pre-eminence prevails, the reason being that the differing national traditions define levels of national, if not international, significance of any critical work. Crossovers between nations occur – and certainly the work of Rodriguez, or Lively, or McLoughlin, for example, would find a readership outside their national arenas. But each of these examples is informed by prevailing national conditions.

New Writing: The International Journal for the Practice and Theory of Creative Writing has had some advantage in the past decade in highlighting the international plainly in its

title and its outlook – but only in serving to offer a platform for current difference. Additionally, a journal or magazine is published by each of the largely national creative writing organisations focusing on creative writing teaching: the American Association of Writers and Writing Programs (AWP), which is by far the largest of such organisations in the world, publishes *The Writers' Chronicle*; the National Association of Writers in Education (NAWE) in the United Kingdom publishes *Writing in Education*; and the Australasian Association of Writing Programs (AAWP) publishes *TEXT*. These journals publish work largely, but not solely, from the national arenas.

Together with the independent journal *New Writing*, the focus and publications of these organisations have assisted in supporting, as well as defining, critical work undertaken in the field over the past quarter of a century or so. More recent organisations, such as the European Association of Creative Writing Programmes (EACWP), with institutional members in a number of European countries including the United Kingdom, and the Canadian Creative Writers and Writing Programs (CCWWP), formed as recently as 2010, are making their contributions now to both national and, increasingly, international exchange on questions of what critical work might be undertaken with regard to creative writing and the teaching of creative writing.

Main research methods

In the United States, with the expression 'research and creative activities' or its close equivalents being a common description of types of undertaking in universities and colleges, definitions of research often talk about 'testing' or 'evaluation' and making a contribution to 'generalisable knowledge'. Investigating creative writing and the teaching of creative writing does not fall easily within these American definitions. Some American universities do include creative practice within such a research definition; however, in the United States, the critical apparatus applied to understanding creative writing, and how to teach it, is most often drawn from the field of literary studies, which is considered a cognate, but appropriately critically informed research field. Drawing on the field of literary studies, biographical and textual analysis predominate when considering creative writing itself, and such activities as close reading and comparative cultural investigations, genre studies, or situating of creative writing styles and content in historical context. When considering creative writing teaching, action research drawing on an ethnographic sense of a 'community of practice' prevails.

Joyce Carol Oates (1997: 7), well known as a creative writer, but also long-time Roger S. Berlind Distinguished Professor in the Humanities at Princeton University, writes:

> The other writers in the workshop take on, for the duration of the workshop, roles as editors, too: it's our task to work meticulously with the material given us, and to contribute all that we possibly can to improving it.

In this vein, research methods might be said to be individual and group experiential exchanges, conducted in relation to content, form, and structure, and modes of expression, and explored according to the situation that a creative writer faces when writing a particular piece of work.

The contribution additionally of those in the discipline of composition studies in the United States has already been noted and the emergence of the idea of creating a field called creative writing studies is one interpretation of how those in composition, and perhaps those

also in English, might contribute to research in creative writing. Tim Mayers (2009: 218) writes: 'Creative writing studies, on the other hand, is a still-emerging enterprise that has been set in motion by some of the problems and internal contradictions of creative writing. Creative writing studies is a field of scholarly inquiry and research.' Further, writing in US journal *College Composition and Communication* in an article entitled 'The place of creative writing in composition studies', Douglas Hesse (2010: 36) suggests that 'there is also the relative absence of theoretical/pedagogical writing about creative writing, especially by writers themselves in any venue, let alone in composition journals'. He concludes by suggesting that 'composition studies unilaterally explore the place of creative writing – of creative composing – in teaching, in scholarship, and in our expanded sense of ourselves as text makers' (Hesse, 2010: 36).

In both the United Kingdom and Australia, researching creative writing has incorporated research *through* creative writing. Whether in terms of creative writing or in the teaching of creative writing, the now-common term 'practice-led research' has informed ideas of what research in the field constitutes in these countries. Major funders of research such as the Australian Research Council (ARC) and the United Kingdom's Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) have considered creative writing practice as research, and thus funded projects about creative writing and involving creative writing.

Research methods in countries such as these, where practice-led research has been ascendant since the late 1980s, have also drawn from literary studies, and biographical and textual analysis, undertaking close reading, comparative cultural investigations, and genre studies, or situating creative writing styles and content in historical context. However, a greater range of methodological choices emerge because, unlike in the United States, undertaking creative writing is more widely seen as a research practice. Differences of emphasis have created some international student movement too, particularly where graduate students have sought out support for alternative research methodologies. Kerry Spencer (2013: 79, emphasis original), an American young adult fiction writer who teaches creative writing at Brigham Young University, Utah, but who undertook her PhD in creative writing in the United Kingdom, comments: '[I]f creative writers are so willing to engage in non-traditional research *for* their creative works, why be so hesitant to try new modes of research when we are researching about creative writing?'

Practically, the methodological range associated with creative writing research in countries such as the United Kingdom and Australia can include the actions of drafting and redrafting, revising, editing, reading, annotating, and/or graphically depicting (for example doodles, sketches, charts). Beyond modes of literary analysis, it can involve modelling, a consideration of other creative writers' works, or the speculative consideration of technique or of the creative writer's own decision-making. Interviewing or surveying might occur, as observation or action research, in or outside a classroom. A creative writer might re-examine his or her previous works in light of new knowledge about practice, genre, or the physical appearance of the end results. There might be workshopping undertaken – which, in the United States, would not be defined as a research activity – whereby the creative writer has access to peers whose opinions she or he values. A comparative study might occur, a creative writer comparing his or her actions and results with other human practices, artistic or otherwise, and this could extend to comparisons of design, shape, style, structure, or form (Harper, 2008: 163).

Teachers of creative writing in higher education in countries such as the United Kingdom and Australia investigate their field through methods such as these, and there are many nuances and individual interpretations. In essence, such a perspective can

be summarised in the idea that a creative writer will, and should, draw from what best suits a given writing situation. This is what I have called the creation of 'situational knowledge' (Harper, 2013: 284). *Situational knowledge* provides solutions to problems or needs relating to writerly actions. That knowledge might relate to content, structure, voice, or any other writing-related issue. Each instance in which situational knowledge is needed provides a learning opportunity, and it is these learning opportunities that those teaching creative writing aim to harness.

Recommendations for practice

The teaching of creative writing has often been disadvantaged by being absorbed into other things, rather than treated as an activity in its own right. In particular, the recognition of creative writing as a distinct field of human endeavour has not always been supported or pursued because it was seen to be part of the study of literature or because the critical apparatus applied to it was seen to most appropriately be drawn from the study of literature. Alternatively, the teaching of creative writing has been advantaged by our ability to draw from other avenues of teaching to produce critical insights, such as those provided by the study of literature, and by using the critical apparatus used in the study of cognate areas of human knowledge, we have been able to build up a better understanding of the influences and results of writing creatively. These alternative points of view are presented because each has some validity and both views have their supporters.

My recommendation for understanding and pursuing the teaching of creative writing is to begin by recognising that creative writing is human action, informed by varieties of knowledge, and that any teaching must therefore locate itself in the interaction between creative practice and critical understanding. Our creative practices are determined by cultural influences, but also are distinctively individual, a combination of our individual psychology, history, and even physiology. Our critical understanding is drawn from a vast range of knowledge forms and types – and it is wrong to suggest that only knowledge of literature can inform a creative writer or the teaching of creative writing. Whether writing novel or poem, screenplay or libretto, story for computer game or short story for a book, a creative writer will draw on those avenues of knowledge and understanding that best inform their practice. Some of this knowledge will be knowledge of similar work, or the understanding of particular forms, but just as importantly a creative writer will draw on form and content knowledge that ranges right across the spectrum of human engagement with life. A creative writer will draw from what best suits the writing situation – that is, will form 'situational knowledge' (Harper, 2013: 284). Each instance in which situational knowledge is needed provides a learning opportunity, and it is these learning opportunities that those teaching creative writing can harness.

A creative writer seeking to structure a novel might be assisted by exposure to other novels, successful and/or unsuccessful work that can provide a textual model, but he or she might just as likely be informed by considering the structure of a building, of a train and its carriages, by using a mathematical analogy, or by imagining a mechanism, or by considering the relationship between parts of a landscape. A writing situation arises and a creative writer deals with it in motion, fluidly accessing knowledge and understanding that, to him or her, best helps in dealing with that writing situation.

The creative writer who is capable of drawing on a number of potential solutions, applying his or her understanding, and being confident, or at least comfortable, with how good results might happen can be considered to have a high level of situational knowledge – whether that

knowledge has been acquired informally or whether it is part of what is today an increasingly wide range of formal courses or classes.

Future directions

In the post-industrial world in which we are living, in which knowledge and creativity are energetically exchanged for pleasure and/or profit, but also leisure time is far greater than in previous eras (at least in the developed world), participation in creative writing will continue to grow. With that in mind, creative writing teaching will continue to expand, and greater and stronger discussion of creative writing as a distinctive field of human practice and knowledge will occur.

It is likely that more creative writing will be taught by means of methods whereby students are not all in the same physical space. We see an expansion of this already in what are called low-residency courses (particularly MFAs). The physical bookstore is likely to disappear well before mid-century. The question of whether the paper book will survive is an interesting and poignant one for those currently teaching creative writing. Most likely, the paper book will remain an option for the delivery of works of creative writing – but other electronic options will continue to grow in importance for both readers and writers, and the opportunity for incorporating aspects of the visual and aural into creative writing texts will therefore become greater. Changes in the kinds of works produced will thus naturally occur, some older forms losing ground or entirely disappearing, and newer forms emerging that draw on the new digitally provided choices.

Partly because of the expansion of the teaching of creative writing, partly because the post-industrial world also involves a strong sense of personalisation of choice, and partly because we are living in an era in which we exchange our experiences (whether through social media or through wider avenues of travel and exposure to experiential choice), it is likely that the experience of engaging with a text produced by a creative writer will also increasingly incorporate a desire to engage with the actions that produced it. We see this already in the exchange of 'works-in-progress' in online communities of creative writers. Intriguingly, we have long seen this in the creative writing workshop in the discussion of drafts and the exchange of ideas about works that are not yet complete. Enhanced by new media, the opportunity to incorporate this kind of interaction into how we purchase works of creative writing seems sure to encourage more such exchange to occur, and with an increase in people who have undertaken some kind of formal creative writing education, the expectations and possibilities for this kind of interactive exchange also grow.

Teaching creative writing might best be seen as an activity with a considerable number of types and complexions. Certainly it has, and will have, importance in the training and development of people who find employment in one or more of the creative industries; but because creative writing combines individualism with cultural and social influences, and often encourages personal interpretation and expression, its teaching is often associated with self-expression and self-realisation. Finally, because undertaking creative writing involves the use and application of situational knowledge, its teaching will continue to be an important way in which we can explore how human beings come to understand the world, their lives, and the knowledge that informs them, as well as providing an avenue for applying such knowledge in the pursuit of an end goal – whether that goal is a completed text that will be released into the world or simply a personally satisfying creative exploration.

Related topics

creativity in composition; creativity in second-language learning; discourses of creativity; literary narrative; literature and language teaching; poetry and poetics

Further reading

Harper, G. (2014) *The Future for Creative Writing*, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

This book suggests how creative writing and the teaching of creative writing might appear in the near and not so near future.

Krauth N., and Brady T. (2006) *Creative Writing: Theory beyond Practice*, Tenerife: Post-Pressed.

If you are interested in what theory connected with creative writing might look like, this edited collection provides a multi-voiced exploration.

Kroll, J., and Harper, G. (2012) *Research Methods in Creative Writing*, London: Palgrave.

In this book, writers explore what research in, and through, creative writing can entail.

Mayers, M. (2005) *(Re)Writing Craft: Composition, Creative Writing, and the Future of English Studies*, Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

This book looks at gaps in conversations between creative writing and composition studies, especially relating to the discourse common in English departments, and suggesting the potential for what Mayers calls 'craft criticism'.

Moxley, J. (1989) *Creative Writing in America: Theory and Pedagogy*, Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers.

Twenty-three essays provide evidence of what contributors found was happening, and what they believed was needed, in the teaching of creative writing at the end of the 1980s.

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