ROUTLEDGE LINGUISTICS CLASSICS

LANGUAGE AND CREATIVITY

THE ART OF COMMON TALK

RONALD CARTER

ROUTLEDGE

Language and Creativity

Language and Creativity has become established as a pivotal text for courses in English Language, Linguistics and Literacy.

Creativity in language has conventionally been regarded as the preserve of institutionalised discourses such as literature and advertising, and individual gifted minds. In this ground-breaking book, bestselling author Ronald Carter explores the idea that creativity, far from being simply a property of exceptional people, is an exceptional property of all people.

Drawing on a range of real examples of everyday conversations and speech, from flatmates in a student house and families on holiday to psychotherapy sessions and chat-lines, the book argues that creativity is an all-pervasive feature of everyday language. Using close analysis of naturally occurring language, taken from a unique five million word corpus, *Language and Creativity* reveals that speakers commonly make meanings in a variety of creative ways, in a wide range of social contexts and for a diverse set of reasons.

This Routledge Linguistics Classic is here reissued with a new preface from the author, covering a range of key topics from e-language and internet discourse to politics, social context and value(s) to English language teaching, media communication and world Englishes. *Language and Creativity* continues to build on the previous theories of creativity, offering a radical contribution to linguistic, literary and cultural theory. A must for anyone interested in the creativity of our everyday speech.

Ronald Carter is Research Professor of Modern English Language in the School of English at the University of Nottingham, UK. He is the series co-editor of the *Routledge Applied Linguistics* and *Routledge Introductions to Applied Linguistics* series. His recent books include: *How to Analyse Texts* (Routledge, 2016), *Spoken Corpus Linguistics* (Routledge, 2013) and *Vocabulary* (reissued as a Routledge Linguistics Classic, 2012).

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Language and Creativity

The art of common talk

Ronald Carter

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In general the arts establishment connives to keep alive the myth of the special, creative individual artist holding out against passive mass consumerism . . . Against this we insist that there is a vibrant symbolic life and symbolic creativity current in everyday life, everyday activity and expression – even if it is sometimes invisible, looked down on or spurned. We don't want to invent it or propose it. We want to recognise it – literally re-cognise it . . .

We are thinking of the extraordinary creativity of the multitude of ways in which young people use, humanize, decorate and invest with meanings their common and immediate life space and social practices – personal styles and choice of clothes, selective and active use of music, TV, magazines, decoration of bedrooms; the rituals of romance and subcultural styles; the style, banter and drama of friendship groups, music-making and dance . . . There is work, even desperate work in their play.

(Willis *et al.*, 1990: 1–2)

Literature lives within language and language within everyday life. The study of literature must live within the study of language, and the study of language within the study of the everyday mind . . .

These assumptions are deadly. Common language expressing common thought is anything but simple, and its workings are not obvious. Special language expressing special thought is an exploitation of the common and to be analyzed only in relation to it.

(Turner, 1991: 4, 14)

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Ronald Carter, Nottingham, July 2015

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Acknowledgements for the First Edition

> Many, and perhaps most, creative accomplishments in this world are neither the products of single individuals working in isolation nor the products of historical geniuses but are instead the products of several people working in intended or unintended collaboration.
>
> (Harrington, 1999: 144)

It is now standard practice to make something close to an Oscar acceptance speech in book acknowledgements. And this book is no exception. It cannot be otherwise, since the more I reread the book the more I realise I haven't really done that much by myself.

Above all, I owe much, and much more than he will himself acknowledge, to Michael McCarthy, friend, collaborator, fellow-traveller and co-director of the CANCODE project. Mike has over the past twenty years provided all manner of points of inspiration for my own work, and in work we have done together; the many conversations, exchanges of ideas and joint seminars we have had mean, as a quick look at the bibliography for this book will demonstrate, that, not just in a metaphoric sense, this book is as much his as mine. Several of the chapters here contain voicings, tracings and in some cases liftings from papers we have co-authored, and I am grateful to Mike for allowing me to use them co-creatively in this book. I also owe much to Chris Candlin, who has provided inspiration to and encouragement of many, many academics in the field of applied linguistics and is simply the best editor and critical commentator on the work of others that I have had the pleasure to work with. Much of the work in the following chapters derives from Chris's own work on creativity over the years, and I have benefited greatly from innumerable conversations with him and for his encouragement to me in this work – which dates back to an American Applied Linguistics Association conference in Baltimore in 1994. I also owe more than they may imagine to Guy Cook, John McRae and Rob Pope, whose work on literary language, creativity and language play has been a constant source of encouragement and inspiration during the writing of this book. Rob Pope was generous enough to allow me to see an advance copy of a manuscript for a forthcoming book (Pope, forthcoming) from which I not only learned much but also filched some excellent quotations. And particular thanks

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CANCODE and Cambridge University Press

This book has made use of the Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English (CANCODE). CANCODE is a 5-million-word computerised corpus of spoken English, made up of recordings from a variety of settings in the countries of the United Kingdom and Ireland. The corpus is designed with a substantial organised database giving information on participants, settings and conversational goals. CANCODE was built by Cambridge University Press and the University of Nottingham and it forms part of the Cambridge International Corpus (CIC). It provides insights into language use, and offers a resource to supplement what is already known about English from other, non-corpus-based research, thereby providing valuable and accurate information for researchers and those preparing teaching materials. Sole copyright of the corpus resides with Cambridge University Press, from whom all permission to reproduce material must be obtained.

Ronald Carter
Nottingham, July 2003

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Preface

Language and Creativity: recent past and nearer future

> Every culture proliferates along its margins. Iruptions take place that are called 'creations' in relation to stagnancies. Bubbling out of swamps and bogs, a thousand flashes at once scintillate and are extinguished all over the surface of a society. … Daily life is scattered with marvels, a froth on the long rhythm of language and history that is as dazzling as that of writers and artists.
>
> (de Certeau, 1997:139-42)

Apparent Madrid; Real So So Bad; North Career; Partizan Potternewton; Real Madras.[1]

This chapter has two main purposes: to reflect on major changes in the field of creativity and language studies since the publication in 2004 of the first edition of *Language and Creativity: The art of common talk*; and to offer, as a complement to this necessarily largely retrospective view, a brief view of some likely directions that this field might take in the future.

In the past decade and a half creativity studies have become an even more highly active field of research and application. One chapter cannot, of course, capture all of this diversity and richness; this chapter is organised therefore around key landmarks. These are:

1. Language and creativity: the moving landscape
2. Corpus and creativity
3. New media and creativity: a spoken written continuum
4. Politics, social context and value(s)
5. Pasts and futures: new research directions.

1. Language and Creativity: the moving landscape

In the past century and stretching back even further in time the topic of creativity has tended to be seen and investigated largely as a matter of mind and cognition. The first chapter of this book seeks to explore this dimension and to underline its importance to our better understanding of creativity and its particular properties. Work in this tradition has continued (Kaufman and Sternberg, 2006) and has

enhanced our better understanding of the relationship between the human mind and its production of language with far reaching implications both for fundamental research in psychology and for its applications to, for example, education, including theories of language learning and teaching (see 4. below as well as Mueller, Melwani and Goncalo, 2012 and Amabile and Pillemer, 2012 for more social and cognitive perspectives). Exploring and explaining creativity continues to be central to efforts to unravel the minds of exceptional individuals, seeing individual creative outputs mainly as exemplars of an essentialist and universal cognitive capacity. In relation to major cultural artefacts such as music, art and literature the nature of creativity also continues to be seen as something separate and apart, placing the individuals who exemplify it in a world that only few do or can inhabit.

There is no denying the continuing value of research in this tradition, 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. Two eloquent and challenging recent accounts that insist on the significance of this account and argue against what is seen as the narrowly 'clinal' description found in this book can be found in Cameron (2011) and Cook (2011). Both stress that producing what is shown in this book as ordinary or everyday creativity is in both essence and quality different from the work of creative artists and different from the processes of creative art and cannot be discounted by a view of creativity seen in their view as relativistic or as no more than a simple creativity continuum.

However, this century is witnessing a greater opening up of the topic of creativity to different research traditions which in turn are playing a part in re-conceptualising language and creativity and in re-positioning it in more interdisciplinary frameworks and contexts across the humanities, social sciences and sciences. Central to these alternative paradigms and central to a greater shift away from more psychological and mentalistic approaches to creativity is the notion of discourse and of language as social discourse. Put crudely, 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 only 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 (Maybin and Swann, 2006; Swann, 2012 a and b; Atkins and Carter, 2010; Peplow, 2014; Stockwell, 2009; Holmes, 2007; Handford and Koester, 2010; Mason and Carter, forthcoming as well as numerous papers in Munat, 2007).

The word creative does not now only collocate with 'writing' or 'literature' or 'art' or 'poetic'; it collocates with an astonishing variety of concepts and words such

as *silence*, *business*, *professional*, *media practices, classroom learning*, *internet, public relations, architecture, digital, scientific, personal relationships*, *English as a lingua franca* (ELF), *improvisation*, *computational, humour, industries* and *play.* And in the conjunction of creativity with language play, creativity is not just allied with a post-romantic preoccupation with serious production but is also properly consonant in both a literal and metaphoric sense with re-creation. In *Language and Creativity: The art of common talk* the aim has always been to underline the significance of this direction and since its publication in 2004 the move towards the social discourse dimensions of language and creativity has grown exponentially (for a more comprehensive overview of these many aspects of creativity, see Jones, 2015). This chapter can only review a segment of these developments and it does so with particular reference to creativity in relation to spoken language.

2. Corpus and creativity

Corpus, creativity and patterns

> *An understanding of the background of the usual and everyday – what happens millions of times – is necessary in order to understand the unique.*
>
> (Stubbs 2005: 5)

A five million word corpus of spoken discourse was used as a principal source to illustrate examples of creative language in use in this book. At the outset of this section and with reference to corpus data it should be noted that the CANCODE spoken corpus used for the empirical data for this book has also been criticised (Culpeper, 2011) as being in places overly consensual and lacking in the kinds of conflictual data of argument and disagreement that may sometimes provide a quite different colour and texture to definitions of creativity and to how it may be seen to operate in spoken discourse. Culpeper's is a helpful reminder that careful scrutiny of the organisation of any database is vital before too many claims are made for properties of language use.

In the intervening years since 2004 both corpus methodologies and the range of corpora themselves have grown rapidly and more studies are relying less on individual perceptions and intuitions of creativity and more on empirical evidence drawn from large language databases. Renouf (2007) draws primarily from a large newspaper corpus of over 700 million words, collected between 1989 and 2005, and examines lexical creativity in a diachronic manner but suggests possibilities for similar explorations in spoken corpora over time. With particular reference to figurative language in different discourses Handford and Koester (2010), Cameron (2007) and Semino (2008) also offer text and corpus-based analyses of contexts of spoken and written interaction.

Corpora have played a large part in creativity studies and have undeniably pushed the field forward. Different aspects of creativity have been unravelled using corpus data and analyses, strengthening our understanding of the subject matter. That creative language in the form of everyday metaphors, puns, idioms, riddles or verbal duelling, and the like, is ubiquitous in everyday conversations has led authors to argue that creativity and literariness are not exclusive to literature, the same case that is argued throughout this book. Examples include a study of idiomaticity (Langlotz, 2006) which draws on the British National Corpus database and Hoey (2007a and b) which draw on a range of corpora; both also have a particular relevance for studies of patterns of figures of speech explored in chapter 3 of this book (see also Vo and Carter (2010) for an overview).

Hoey's concept of *lexical priming*, (Hoey 2005), that is, the process whereby a word becomes cumulatively loaded with our knowledge of the contexts and co-texts in which it is encountered is an especially relevant corpus-based account with relevance for our understanding of language and creativity. The priming effect is, however, as Hoey emphasises, more a matter of weighting, than a matter of rule. As a result, creativity is possible through resistance to rules of priming by a selective overriding of the primings (see again Hoey, 2007a and b). For example, the habitual collocates of *break out*, as evidenced in the British National Corpus (BNC), include generally unpleasant or undesirable things and events, showing a tendency towards negative meanings or negative 'semantic prosodies'. Such co-occurrences dictate that any 'pleasant' collocates of this phrasal verb are to be considered departures from recurrent patterns. As a result, when *freedom* (a desirable state of affairs) is coupled with *break out* as in '*freedom was breaking out everywhere*' (BNC), the sentence is considered creative, unusual and intended to emphasise and draw attention to the paradoxes inherent in the statement.

Semantic annotation and creative idiomaticity

Further technical advances in corpus linguistics are still required. Various studies in corpus linguistics, supported by other research in the field of cognitive semantics, suggest that the fixedness of idioms may be actually conceptual rather than lexical. For example, in Vo and Carter (2010) and as illustrated alongside the canonical form *eat humble pie*, the following variants were found in the BNC (spoken and written) among the concordances for the phrase *humble pie*:

were swallowing large slices of **humble pie** after the reformed
for ever now began to chew **humble pie** and were drawn to
Yes, I tasted the sourness of **humble pie** … 'So do you
He found the taste of **humble pie** just a little too much to stomach

Although the actual word *eat* is replaced in these examples, the concept is still there, albeit with slightly different meanings imparted to each substitute *swallow*,

chew, *taste* or *taste the sourness of*, *to stomach*. It suggests that corpora need to be semantically annotated and tagged into semantic categories on the basis of their senses being related to each other at some level, including synonyms, antonyms, hypernyms and hyponyms (the same principles are used in the electronic lexical database WordNet, see Fellbaum, 1998). In the case of *swallow/chew/taste/stomach humble pie* above, for instance, if all the synonyms of 'eat' could be considered and incorporated into the concordances, the probability of identifying creative variants of the idiom would significantly increase.

Wmatrix — a software tool for corpus analysis and comparison — provides, alongside methodologies such as frequency lists and concordances, a web interface to CLAWS — a corpus annotation tool developed at the University of Lancaster, England. The software offers automatic semantic annotation of English texts whereby each content word in the text is assigned a value within 21 primary semantic fields, which are then further subdivided into 232 categories. F1 for example, is the category of FOOD. The level of sophistication of these categories still requires further elaboration, but the principles can be applied to any corpus so that each word can be tagged with semantic information as well as lexico-grammatical information. The tool has been applied to a number of different literary texts: for examples of applications see Archer, Culpeper and Rayson (2010) and Culpeper, Hoover and Louw (2010). Compared with the CLAWS syntactic tagger, *Wmatrix* is at its current stage of development only about 90% reliable, so it is necessary, in order to discount oddities, to explore qualitatively the contexts of the vocabulary items, as well as understand more precisely how the lexical items operate thematically. But this does not invalidate its developing value in helping systematic analysis not just of literary vocabularies but of everyday creative spoken language too.

These and similar corpus search tools increase the possibility of identifying creative variants of different figures of speech while at the same time easing the potentially laborious process of performing repeated individual searches for each entry. It is one of many future challenges and one with particular relevance for the play with semantic categories that can be so pervasive in everyday interpersonal spoken discourse.

3. New media and creativity: a spoken written continuum

It is estimated (very conservatively) that 100 billion emails, 300 million tweets and 6 billion SMS messages are sent and received each day. A number of recent studies (e.g. Sindoni 2013) have illustrated that such texts offer rich material for explorations of creativity in everyday interaction, providing a further extension to material covered in the final chapter of this book (chapter 6) where it is argued that e-language of this kind has features associated with the immediacy, turn-taking conventions and fluencies of spoken communication. Such forms of communication

indicate a marked turn to lexico-grammatical structures that are close to speech but are associated with neither speech nor writing and are rather more accurately described as hybrid forms or an amalgam of both speech and writing (Crystal 2011: 69ff).

Corpus research has continued here too with studies undertaken on individual forms of e-language from SMS messages, to blogs and e-mails. At present such corpora tend to be either small-scale and/or consist of a single e-language variety (Tagg, 2012). Research involving the one million word CANELC[2] corpus has, however, enabled fuller exploration of forms and functions between and across different forms of e-language and is an example of a possible future phase in the exploration of the evolution of spoken creativity (see Carter and McCarthy (2015) for a fuller review with particular reference to spoken grammar).

Corpus evidence reveals patterns of on-line 'chat' that, though obviously written or keyed into a screen, is commonly formed from grammatical features such as situational ellipsis, free-standing or independent 'subordinate' clauses, sentence tags, and phonetic representations of speech that bring it closer to spoken than to written representation. As Tagg (2012) has illustrated it is also a rich source of word play and creative pattern-forming and re-forming.

A: Ooh, 4got, i'm gonna start belly dancing in moseley weds 6.30 if u want 2 join me, they have a cafe too.
B: Not sure I have the stomach for it ...
A: Yeah right! I'll bring my tape measure fri!
B: Ho ho - big belly laugh! See ya tomo x

A: Lets say 8.30. Im gonna b late.
B: Yes see ya not on the dot
A: Thanks lotsly!

The CANELC corpus contains similar examples from everyday text messages:

> [message between two friends aged 25–29]:
>
> Hahaha, will be over in ten to decide a plan for the day. Pop the kettle on. Quite fancy tea. Should I bring some cow juice with me.

The CANELC corpus also includes examples from *twitter* where more public and self-conscious word play and humour exists but with a clearer sense of a wider audience and of pressure to maintain, play with, construct and re-construct social identities (Page, 2011).

> When in writing mode I get up earlier and earlier. 3.45 this morning. Bonkers. Trouble is, it means I'm ready for bed at 7. Sheesh. [taken from @Stephen Fry: CANELC corpus]

> I'm going to meditate now and tune into the silent consciousness that unites us all. ALL. So, abundant, limitless love to EVERYBODY. X [taken from @Russell Brand: CANELC corpus]

In some cases, especially in more personalised forms such as texts and twitter feeds, a spoken character is commonly further enhanced by the inscription (page and text metaphors continue) of a physical presence in the shape of exclamations, discourse markers, capitalizations, abbreviations, omissions of apostrophes and commas, haptic discourse (e.g. *hugz*), kisses (*xx*), emojis and smileys - punctuation, in other words, designed primarily to capture voice and to mark, signal, co-construct, or negotiate identity and relationship. And these are only some of the possible forms. The absence of a face-to-face dynamic may, depending on context, contribute to a greater individual presence and identity display. Alternatively, it may be that the pressures of speed of communication override (or, conversely, reinforce an expressive and creative play with) textual choices (Sindoni 2013). As we do so, in some cases we move across data streams from one physical space or dynamic context to another or, in some digital modes such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, across multiple audiences with the added creative potential for re-sending, copying and re-tweeting accepted as part of the dynamic of multiply distributed communication across time and space (see Fung and Carter, 2007; North, 2008; Shortis, 2007, Goddard, 2011; Tagg, 2015; Sergeant and Tagg 2012). Thurlow (2012) illustrates many of the creative possibilities of self-consciously playful visuality with examples drawn from non-institutionalised on-line data where social and personal relationship boundaries are challenged and explored. Thurlow also makes the case that discursive creativity, especially in the on-line discourses of young people in these new media, is 'often poetic, usually playful and always pragmatic'.

4. Politics, social context and value(s)

Thurlow (2012) is interested, however, not simply in these dimensions but also in exploring what exactly is the value in creativity and how and by whom values are defined and determined. He underlines how power, politics and ideology cannot be discounted and shows how the creative play with word forms, spellings, interactive practices is devalued by the 'adult' world which controls judgements on what counts as creative. At the same time, of course, such creativity is appropriated by that same adult world for commercial purposes in the world of advertising and promotion. Creativity researchers have not yet evolved appropriately nuanced research tools for capturing and accounting for such emergent, rapidly developing and sometimes transient creativity as is found in new media discourses. It is, of course, too, not simply a matter of better refining our description of verbal

creativity in such domains but also a matter of locating and utilising tools for appreciating and valuing such technologically mediated creativity as it occurs across different times and spaces and cultural locations. It is recognized too that just because it is technologically innovative is not an automatic or non-negotiable sign of creativity.

One of the aims of *Language and Creativity: The art of common talk* is to question and contest standard descriptions of creativity. Since 2004 these questions have been taken further in many different studies and it is clear that the socio-contextual database of the book would need to be considerably extended to account for the wider domains of activity and practice, including, for example, language and globalization, political and commercial activity and the relationship between the verbal and the visual, all of which raise important further questions of politics and value. 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 therefore raises significant questions. We are asking not simply: what is creativity? We are asking: How is creativity appreciated and valued? And who makes the valuation anyway and with what criteria? One key question, for example, is how the global nature of and status of the English language may be reconfiguring its use for linguistic and semiotic use and do we possess the appropriate frameworks for evaluating such creativities? (see Pitzl, 2012; Isar, 2010; Pennycook, 2010; Hultgren, forthcoming). Indeed, the very fact that creativity in English is seen as ordinary, everyday and global could be said to require even more attention to issues of value.

Swann and Maybin (2008) give particular attention to *contextuality*. 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, as indicated in 3. above, even more the case in an age of ever more ubiquitous digital media practices. The notion of creativity and contextuality raises numerous key questions. For example: to what extent can context be a determining or constitutive factor in creative production? In fact, is context only a matter of social factors, that is, simply a matter of who writes/speaks what to whom, how, when and where? How far is creativity in context a mix of cognitive and social factors and, if so, what is needed for cognitive factors to be more fully integrated and evaluated? To what extent will aesthetic questions remain central to judgements of and responses to creativity? How far can we define creative language only in relation to its socio-poetic 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? How far are we able to say what isn't creative?

Here we are seeing creativity not just as 'language' but as what people do with language and the creative social actions they take with it (to give only random examples): 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 re-structuring interactions with patients in a care home, where previously more predictable or routine actions obtained; to generate laughter and humour by surprising word play or picture in digital media such as Twitter or Instagram.

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 creativity within only a single exclusive and possibly elitist aesthetic sphere. Even given recent improved corpus-informed accounts of the relationship between creativity and social context, a number of questions remain. These are elusive questions demanding much more empirical and ethnographic fieldwork. In many ways such considerations move us beyond language form per se and require a shift from the traditional emphasis in creativity studies on the *producer of* and *in* the creative process.

For example, if there is a shift in the way we communicate with one another in the workplace, especially in the use of new social media, how can these often very gradual processes be calibrated in the creative experience of the users of these media? How creatively produced are these new forms of communication, how are they registered and developed, conformed to and deviated from by individual users? And what can the newly created re-shapings of communication tell us about different social and interpersonal conditions?

Developing further understanding of the connections between creativity and context offers real possibilities, therefore, not only for tighter specification of the fit between creative language use and the type of interaction and social roles engaged in by speakers and speaker/writers but the process also underlines the need for a fuller description of context in terms of 'participant design'. There has been a focus in this book on the interrelations between creativity and social context, facilitated in part by producer data that is sociolinguistically profiled and differentiated contextually and generically. 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 better understanding of processes of reception on the part of different socially positioned readers or viewers of or participants in creative performances.

It is a position that entails a consideration of values rather than value (Carter, 2007). There are strong cultural tendencies to see value, especially aesthetic value,

as a singular, timeless and contextually-transcendent property. A more plural position proposes that contextually variable values should prevail in preference to more universalist assumptions of value, developing a collective, variable and social aesthetics rather than the singular individualist aesthetics conventionally associated with much post-Romantic culture. This process was foreshadowed by the early work of Czech structuralists such as Jan Mukarovsky who in their turn were reacting to the largely decontextualised, overly text-immanent focus of the early Russian formalists who have had such an influence on Western modernist aesthetics. To paraphrase Mukarovsky: cultural and aesthetic variationism and the boundaries between the various realms of culture are permeable, shifting and variable from community to community. Aesthetics is for Mukarovsky domain- and culture-specific. There can, therefore, be no coherent essentialist or universalist specification of art. "…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" (Mukarovksky (1936/1970:16) Mukarovsky's position requires an acceptance of contexts as dynamic and changing. Such a position sharply qualifies the notion advanced in chapter 2: that of a single cline from the literary or the aesthetic product to the non-literary, which assumes one continuum of value from high to low, from the transcendent to 'everyday' (terms with an already inbuilt metaphoric assumption of value). In other words, value is context-and culture-specific and cannot simply be a universal or timeless quality.

And yet again the pertinent question is: who is responsible for accepting something as creative? For example, in the context of the teaching and learning of second or foreign languages where are lines drawn between errors and creative uses of language by learners? Instead of the dismissal of much second or foreign language creative production as error, what community or local or context-specific conditions and value systems obtain in order for the creativity of a language learner to be recognised and accepted? Such questions have been significantly advanced in the past decade and a half. Prodromou (2008) is an illuminating study of the difficulties that SUEs (successful users of English) have in generating creative uses of idiom (as opposed to being seen as making errors) in everyday conversational exchanges when they are perceived as non-native by a particular community of users. (See also Pitzl, 2012 and a very valuable overview of these questions by Bell, 2012.)

5. Pasts and Futures: new research directions

Some main conclusions in the light of future research challenges are:

- Firstly, that there are real dangers in seeing creativity wholly in terms of producers and producer design. Future research into language and creativity

needs to take fuller account of recipient design and construct social ethnographic research that captures such perspectives, while simultaneously accepting that implicit intentions and motivations cannot ever be fully accessed in the retrospection and prompted recall of our researched subjects. Such research can nonetheless provide a platform for capturing more dynamic and emergent participant perceptions and researcher descriptions of context.

- Secondly, that we need to be better able to specify what is *not* creative. Language learning and teaching may be a valuable site for such exploration. For example, it is widely hypothesised that the more the working memory demands of a task, the more memorised patterns of formulaic speech will be used; the less the working memory, the more creative the constructions that are likely to be produced. There now exists a growing literature on formulaic language, its role in communication and its contribution to fluency in second language learning contexts with growing evidence provided from large corpus-based samples that illustrate the extent to which such forms of language occupy a significant place in the total output of users, especially in spoken language where processing constraints indicate a greater reliance on 'fixed' as opposed to creative expressions (see Wray, 2008). To what extent does the existence of formulaic sequences have implications for how creativity is described? Is it only a matter of working memory? What are the social and interactive contexts where speakers can rely more on pre-processed language, what are the contexts in which they can be more overtly creative by breaking rules and what are the contexts in which creativity can be based on more creative uses of repetition and, as is suggested more than once in this book, what are the contexts in which pedagogies for creativity can be supported? To do this, we need to view the language classroom differently in terms of what is sanctioned interactively and what is seen as acceptable as language use. Such a research design would considerably expand the data and directions explored in chapter 4 of this book in relation to figurative speech.
- Thirdly, creativity in spoken language is never simply a matter of words. Words are accompanied by body language and the use of gestures, eye-contact and gaze, as well as uses of silence, and different kinesic and proxemic constraints. And the communication is often even more acute in the case of the listener who, while not speaking much, may contribute even more (creatively) to a communication through channels of non-verbal feedback. As e-communication becomes ubiquitous and pervasive in everyday life, our descriptive frameworks may require some re-evaluation in terms of the extent to which they can account for simultaneous, multi-channel communication and the more constantly shifting and fragmented nature of contexts of use (Adolphs and Carter, 2013:180). In complex social media, a mid-ground between interactive audio messages, texts that are conventionally written, those which are

written-as-if-speaking, body language and other visual anchors such as photographs and video clips may emerge, creating new relationships between language and its contexts of use, and new, unforeseen creative configurations, including new orthographic symbols and innovative punctuation. We can no longer assume that the definition of a 'conversation' is anything as simple as a face-to-face or even an audio-visual encounter unfolding sequentially in real time. Multi-modal corpora are a step in the direction of a fuller breaking down of boundaries between text and context and, in the case of speaking, avoid the separation of speech and gesture. This is one of the richest potential sites for further research into language and creativity, especially in its less institutionalised forms and at the rapidly evolving interfaces between spoken, written and visual modes. (See in particular Veale, 2012 for a challenging account of computational creativity.)

There are many approaches to creativity described in the preceding paragraphs (as well as others not mentioned or mentioned only indirectly). Creativity and the challenges to us in better understanding its importance is a defining feature of our times. It is important to embrace creative writing, literary stylistic approaches, conventional analysis of literary tropes, creativity in everyday discourses, creativity and cognition, corpus and computational resources for creativity research, multilingual creativity, creativity in language learning and teaching, creative internet use, translation and creative language use, creativity within and across different Englishes. 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. This book, with its emphasis on creativity in everyday 'common talk' is only one part of this developing and ever-moving landscape but it is hoped that it continues to be seen as one key figure in that landscape.

Notes

1 Names of 5-a-side football teams playing in amateur leagues in Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire, England. Some of the names play self-deprecatingly with famous teams in Europe. 'North Career' represents players from a government Employment Office in the north of England; 'Real Madras' represents players from an Indian restaurant.
2 CANELC stands for Cambridge and Nottingham E-language Corpus, a one million word corpus of internet communication. The corpus is © Cambridge University Press. For further description see Knight, Adolphs and Carter (2014).

References

Adolphs, S. and Carter, R. (2013) *Spoken Corpus Linguistics: From Monomodal to Multimodal*, London and New York: Routledge.