Creativity in Language Teaching
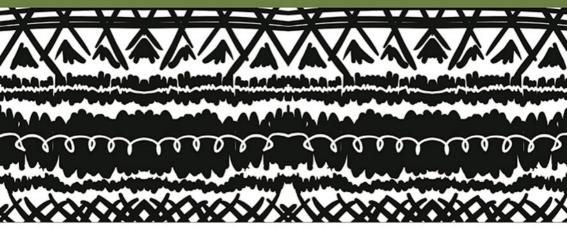
Perspectives from Research and Practice

Edited by Rodney H. Jones
and Jack C. Richards

CREATIVITY IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

Current, comprehensive, and authoritative, this text gives language teachers and researchers both a set of conceptual tools with which to think and talk about creativity in language teaching and a wealth of practical advice about principles and practices that can be applied to make their lessons more creative. Providing an overview of the nature of creativity and its role in second language education, it brings together twenty prominent language teachers and researchers with expertise in different aspects of creativity and teaching contexts to present a range of theories on both creative processes and how these processes lead to creative practices in language teaching.

Unique in the field, the book takes a broader and more critical look at the notion of creativity in language learning, exploring its linguistic, cognitive, sociocultural, and pedagogic dimensions. Structured in four sections—theoretical perspectives, creativity in the classroom, creativity in the curriculum, and creativity in teacher development—each chapter is supplemented by questions for discussion and suggestions for further research. Its accessible style makes the book relevant as both a course text and a resource for practicing teachers.

Rodney H. Jones is professor of sociolinguistics and new media at the University of Reading, UK. He has published widely in the areas of discourse analysis and language and creativity. He is editor of *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Creativity* (2016).

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PREFACE

Creativity is increasingly recognized by planners and policy makers, school and program administrators, curriculum developers, language teachers, and language learners as an essential element in language education. At the same time, there has been to date little research or serious theoretical discussion about what creativity actually means in the context of language teaching.

Creativity in Language Teaching: Perspectives from Research and Practice brings together the thinking of 20 prominent language teachers and researchers on the role of creativity in language teaching. In the past, discussions on creativity in language teaching have focused mostly on the use of creative texts (such as poetry or songs), games, and drama activities in the classroom, and its value was mainly seen in terms of increasing learners' motivation or making learning more "fun." This book takes a broader and more critical look at the notion of creativity in language learning, exploring its linguistic, cognitive, sociocultural, and pedagogic dimensions. Rather than a characteristic of exceptional teachers or learners or an optional ingredient that teachers can add in to "spice up" their teaching, creativity, it is argued, is a necessary component of all teaching and learning and has a particularly important role in the teaching and learning of languages.

The book is divided into four sections: (1) theoretical perspectives; (2) creativity in the classroom; (3) creativity in the curriculum; and (4) creativity in teacher development. The chapters in each section cover a range of theoretical approaches and teaching contexts, and each chapter is supplemented by a list of *Questions for Discussion* and *Suggestions for Further Research*.

No other book provides as thorough and wide-ranging a treatment of the topic. *Creativity in Language Teaching: Perspectives from Research and Practice* gives language

teachers and researchers, especially those at the beginning of their careers, both a set of conceptual tools with which to think and talk about creativity in language teaching and a wealth of practical advice about principles and practices that can be applied to making their lessons more creative.

The book is equally suited for use as a course book in MA programs in applied linguistics and language teaching and as a resource for established teachers and language-teaching researchers. It will make an important contribution to the ongoing debates about creativity in education in general and in language teaching and learning in particular.

Rodney H. Jones
Jack C. Richards

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Rodney H. Jones is professor of sociolinguistics and new media at the University of Reading. His main research interests include discourse analysis, health communication and language, and creativity. His recent books include *Discourse and Creativity* (Routledge, 2012), *Understanding Digital Literacies: A Practical Introduction* (with Christoph A. Hafner, Routledge, 2012), and *Health and Risk Communication: An Applied Linguistic Perspective* (Routledge, 2013).

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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SECTION I
Theoretical Perspectives

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CREATIVITY AND LANGUAGE TEACHING

Rodney H. Jones and Jack C. Richards

Introduction

In recent years, there has been an explosion of interest in the notion of "creativity" in nearly all walks of life. Governments, corporations, and schools are increasingly focused on how they can help people become more creative and innovative, and, in the popular media, creativity is often portrayed as the key to personal fulfillment, economic advancement, and the solution to many of the most vexing problems of the 21st century. It is especially in the realm of education that the value of creativity is most vigorously touted, with administrators and policy makers calling for more creative schools with more creative teachers that can produce more creative students who can contribute to more creative societies.

Language teachers, of course, have not been immune from this "epidemic of creativity." In 2009, for example, the European Commission on Languages announced "The Year of Creativity," proclaiming that "Creativity is central to language learning and hence language teaching" (European Commission on Languages, 2009), and research showing links between creativity and levels of attainment in second-language learning seem to confirm this statement (Dörnyei, 2005; see also Richards & Cotterall, this volume). At the same time, however, it seems to be increasingly difficult to foster creative language teaching in many teaching environments in which curricula and materials are more and more standardized, high-stakes language tests are more and more consequential, and teachers are more and more pressured to meet externally imposed performance benchmarks (Richards, 2013).

Although many language teachers consider themselves creative, and many administrators promote the idea of creativity in their schools, there is very little

understanding of what actually constitutes creativity in foreign-language teaching, if and why it is actually beneficial to language learning, and how it can be identified, evaluated, and successfully integrated into the curriculum.

Most discussions of creativity in language teaching in the past focused primarily on the use of "creative texts" (i.e., literature, poetry, songs) for language teaching (see, for example, Maley & Duff, 1989), or on the introduction of games and other ludic activities into the classroom (see, for example, Palmer & Rogers, 1983). More recently, it has become clear that being a creative teacher of language is much more complicated than just singing songs and playing games. There was also the assumption in the past that creativity mostly had to do with the affective dimension of language learning; that the main purpose of creative teaching was to motivate and interest students (Chastain, 1975). More recent research, however, has focused more on the cognitive and sociocultural dimensions of creativity in language teaching and learning (Ehrman & Oxford, 1995; van Lier, 2000), and the role of creativity in everyday conversation (see, for example, Carter, 2004). Changes in the way people learn (such as rapid advances in digital pedagogical technologies and the disruption of traditional practices of schooling) make it even more important for teachers to develop creative approaches to teaching.

This book brings together the ideas of 20 prominent language teachers and researchers about the role of creativity in language teaching. Contributors address the issue of creativity in a variety of teaching contexts from a variety of theoretical perspectives, dealing with such topics as creative classroom practices, multilingual creativity, creativity and technology, the characteristics of creative teachers, and creative teacher training. The purpose of this book is to provide language teachers and researchers, especially those at the beginning of their careers, with both a set of conceptual tools with which to think and talk about creativity in language teaching and a wealth of practical advice about principles and practices that can be applied to making their lessons more creative. It is by no means intended as the last word in creativity in language teaching. Far from it. Rather, its main purpose is to facilitate more discussion and encourage more research on this important topic. To this end, each chapter is supplemented by a list of discussion questions and suggestions for further research.

What Is Creativity?

When we were inviting contributors for this book, most of them replied to the invitation with the same question: "Yes, but what do you mean by creativity? Is there some definition or theory of creativity that you want me to follow?" Our response was always to hand the question back to them, to ask, "What does creativity mean to *you*? How do *you* define it?" We did this not just because it seemed to be in keeping with the spirit of creativity that motivated this project in the first place but also because of our awareness that creativity is a complex and

multifaceted phenomenon, and constraining our discussion to just one aspect or theory of creativity seemed counterproductive. As Nelson reminds us in her chapter, "in the transcultural arenas of language education, there are likely to be multiple and sometimes conflicting conceptions of creativity and its value to teaching and learning." It is therefore important, we felt, that teachers and researchers reading this book be given the opportunity to engage with a multiplicity of voices and perspectives. Our main objective was to find out how these experienced practitioners whom we had invited to write chapters had, in the contexts of their own classrooms and research sites, come to understand the notion of creativity. Consequently, you will not find in this volume a "unified theory of creativity." Rather, you will find a range of definitions and perspectives informed by literature from multiple disciplines (including anthropology, psychology, sociology, linguistics, literature, and literacy studies) and by the rich experiences of these authors.

While all of the contributors in this book introduce a slightly different take on creativity, there are a few principles about creativity in language teaching that nearly all of them share. First, in all of the chapters, there is a strong conviction that creativity is not an "optional" component in language teaching, something that we "tack onto" our lessons just to make them more interesting, or a kind of "luxury" reserved for the "talented" and "artistic" among us. Instead, creativity is seen as central to successful teaching and learning. Just as Carter (2004, p. 13) argues that "linguistic creativity is not simply a property of exceptional people but an exceptional property of all people," so the authors in this volume argue that, in the words of Richards and Cotterall, "All teaching involves acts of creativity." Creativity is not just ubiquitous; it is also purposeful. Real creativity is not merely decorative—it brings about valuable and concrete outcomes that are linked to the pedagogical knowledge and plans of teachers and the goals of learners (Richards & Cotterall, this volume).

The second principle that unites these chapters is the insistence that discussions of creativity in language teaching go beyond traditional notions of "creative language." Heavily influenced by literary studies, most early conceptions of creativity in language teaching focused on getting students to read and produce "creative texts," by which was usually meant "literary" or "poetic" texts, and, in the teaching of spoken language, it took the form of drama activities in which learners were encouraged to imagine themselves in various improbable situations and come up with clever things to say. Although the contributors to this book don't disparage these methods, most of them take a much wider view of creativity, seeing it not just as a matter of producing clever or "poetic" language but also, and more importantly, of *using* language in creative ways to solve problems, to establish or maintain relationships, and to get people to act, think or feel in certain ways. As Gee (this volume) argues, the real test of linguistic creativity is whether or not we are able to use language to "pull off" situated meanings and discourses and to portray ourselves as certain kinds of people.

This more discourse-focused view of linguistic creativity (Jones, 2010) permeates most of the chapters in this book, from Chappell's work on inquiry dialogues to Choi's focus on multilingual/multimodal texts to Hafner's examination of creative techniques for teaching scientific and legal genres. Very few of these chapters, in fact, involve examples of what are traditionally considered "creative texts." The idea is not just that nonliterary texts are also creative but that creativity resides not just in the *product* (the language that is produced by learners) but in the *processes* teachers and learners go through to bring about the conditions in which language can be produced and in the *people* involved in language teaching and learning (including not just teachers and learners but also administrators, policy makers, parents, and employers), their experiences, dispositions, and relationships with one another (Ellis, this volume; Densky, this volume).

Which brings us to the third principle of creativity in language teaching all the chapters in this book share, the fact that it cannot be accomplished alone. Creativity is, by its nature, social and collaborative. As Fisher (2004, p. 17) comments, "Success in any grand project needs help from others, means making alliances, means benefiting from the distributed intelligence of others—developing the 'info-structure'—interconnectivity through learning conversations with others." Most of the chapters in this book take a broadly sociocultural view of creativity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988), a view that, in the words of Sawyer (2006, p. 4), sees creativity as a matter "not just of individual inspiration but also social factors like collaboration, networks of support, education, and cultural background." The collaborative nature of creativity can be seen on the micro level of dialogue in which, as both Jones and Chappell (this volume) point out, what we are able to say depends on what others have said before us and determines what they can say after us, a fact that allows us to work together to create conversations, relationships, and, ultimately, societies. It can be seen on the level of the classroom when, as Richards and Cotterall observe, teachers listen to their learners and learners take responsibility for and control of their learning. It can be seen in institutions that support creative teachers and give them the opportunity to develop (Cremin, Barnes, & Scoffham, 2009), as well as the "affinity groups" in which learners mutually develop "shared passions" (Gee, this volume). It can be seen in the wider domains and disciplinary communities in which language teachers participate and which provide what Graves (this volume) calls the "conceptual spaces" that define the possibilities for creative action. And it can be seen in the rich fabric of our cultures, which provide the raw materials from which we create our social lives (see Densky, this volume). As Nelson (this volume; citing Philip, 2013, p. 365), argues, language teachers cannot be expected to develop creative teaching skills in isolation; they depend on support from a "system of interactions" involving institutional leaders, peers, colleagues, and other experts.

There are, of course, plenty of ways that other people (institutions, communities, and cultures) can *constrain* our creativity as well, but even such constraints can

sometimes foster the conditions for creative resistance, as Ollerhead and Burns (this volume) point out in their discussion of the ways teachers devise and implement innovation in the face of policies and institutions that act to limit creativity. "Creativity," as Jones (2010, p. 477) puts it, "is to a large extent a matter of finding our way around constraints or limitations placed on us by the discourses within which we operate."

Related to this notion of collaborative creativity is the realization that all creativity somehow builds upon work done in the past. Creativity does not necessarily require that we reinvent the wheel. Creative language use and creative language teaching are often a matter of refashioning, recontextualizing, and building upon the words and ideas of others (Pennycook, 2007). This realization can be a great relief to teachers and learners intimidated by the "cult of originality" that permeates much of the discourse on creativity.

Finally, nearly all the chapters in this book either directly or indirectly embrace the idea that creativity is somehow transformative, that, while much of creativity involves the appropriation and recombination of existing ideas, and some creativity involves thinking of new ideas within the boundaries of a domain's traditional conceptual boundaries, the real power of creativity is its potential to fundamentally transform what we are doing when we are teaching language. These transformations can occur in different ways and on different levels, from the small but consequential ways learners creatively transform their identities as they learn a new language to the creative acts that teachers engage in day after day of transforming "the subject matter of instruction into forms that are pedagogically powerful" (Richards & Cotterall, this volume) to the ways teachers share stories of their experiences, "interrupting . . . habitual ways of teaching" and transforming past events into "possible futures" (Conle, 2000; see also Jones, 2011), and finally to the ways entire disciplinary domains can be transformed when teachers, learners, administrators, and policy makers are willing to work together to take risks (Cremin, Barnes, & Scoffham, 2009).

The most important transformation creativity can bring about is a transformation in agency, resulting in increased self-efficacy and empowerment on the part of teachers and learners. As Freire (1970, p. 65, quoted in Ollerhead and Burns, this volume) proclaims, "critical pedagogy is based on creativity and stimulates true reflection and action upon reality, thereby responding to the vocation of persons as beings who are authentic only when engaged in inquiry and creative transformation."

The Structure of this Book

The book is divided into four sections: (1) Theoretical Perspectives, (2) Creativity in the Classroom, (3) Creativity in the Curriculum, and (4) Creativity in Teacher Development. The chapters are arranged to provide the reader with a coherent

pathway from theory to practice, though it is not necessary to read the chapters in this sequence, and indeed, many of the chapters do not strictly abide by the neat topical divisions of the sections. Most of the chapters in the theory section, for example, illustrate their points with examples from classroom practice, and all the chapters on classroom practice have strong theoretical underpinnings. The division between the classroom and the curriculum is also blurry, with some of the chapters like Coffey and Leung's chapter on teachers' perspectives of creativity, Chik's chapter on creativity and technology, and Hafner's chapter on creativity in discipline-specific English teaching making explicit attempts to link broader curricular questions with descriptions of concrete classroom practices. Finally, issues related to teacher development, especially the ways institutional and cultural contexts affect creative teaching are, to some degree, taken up throughout the book.

The book begins with a discussion by Rodney H. Jones on the relationship between language and creativity. The questions he addresses are, first, whether there are certain fundamental features of language that make it a particularity good tool for the exercise of creativity and, second, whether or not creativity is in some way a requirement for a successful language user. He answers these questions by identifying four design features or "affordances" (Gibson, 1986) of language that make it a tool for creativity, and four "affective abilities' learners should develop to take advantage of these affordances. The argument he makes represents the view expressed throughout this book that in addressing the issue of creativity, it is not enough to confine one's focus to the "product" ("creative language") or to the "people" ("creative teachers or learners") but that we must also examine how products and people interact in the various *processes* we go about to creatively take actions in our social environments, solve problems, and work together to generate new ideas and new realities. "What is 'creative' about language," he writes, "is that it allows us to *do* things in the world; to solve problems, to form and maintain social relationships, to get what we want, and to avoid getting what we don't want. And what is 'creative' about language users is that they are able to exploit language's inherent capacity for creative action."

In the next chapter, Rod Ellis focuses on the creative processes involved in learning a language and the inherent creativity of learner language. Taking up the emphasis on creative action introduced by Jones, Ellis discusses the strategies that learners engage in to "make do'" with their limited command of grammar and vocabulary while at the same time actively building abstract systems that allow them to use whatever scant linguistic resources they have available to them in creative ways. "All language learners engage in the creative construction and creative use of their linguistic systems," he writes. "That is, they naturally and automatically work on the raw materials provided by the input, combining words, breaking down multiword units into their component parts, and thereby arriving at abstract formulations that slowly and erratically converge on those of the target language." Thus, what are often considered errors by language teachers might

be more usefully seen as evidence of the creative processes learners are going through to "make sense" of the target language and "make do" with whatever linguistic resources are available to them at any given moment, processes that are facilitated by many of the "design features" of language discussed by Jones, such as the generative power of grammatical systems and the tendency for language to make available formulaic sequences that allow us to perform basic communicative functions. At the same time, it is possible, Ellis points out, for learners to be "too creative" in their invention of new linguistic forms. Thus, part of the job of language teachers is to provide space to allow learners to engage in experimentation with the target language while at the same time helping them strike a balance between creativity and conformity.

The third chapter by Karen Densky extends the discussion of creativity to the consideration of the role of culture in language teaching and learning. Like Jones and Ellis, Densky acknowledges that creativity involves the interaction among three components—the person, the product, and the process—and argues that all of these components play an important role in creativity in all cultures, though some of these components might be more valued in some cultures, while others might be more valued in others. The real value of Densky's chapter is that she broadens our understanding of creativity in language teaching from the primarily linguistic perspective offered by Jones and the primarily cognitive perspective offered by Ellis, showing how a host of mental, social, cultural, environmental, and historical factors can affect creativity, including the relationship between teacher and learner, the heritage and traditions of the learner, imagination and critical thinking, risk taking, notions of judgment and quality, and even political acceptance.

In the fourth chapter, James Paul Gee continues to broaden our understanding of creativity, in his case by challenging some of our most basic assumptions about what it means to teach a language and even what we mean by the term "language." The focus of language teaching, he argues, should be less on linguistic forms and more on the "situated meanings" and "social languages" that we use to build our identities and participate in what he calls "capital D Discourses." The goal of creative language teaching, he writes, should be "helping learners to be able to use language in combination with ways of acting, interacting, valuing, and using objects, tools, and technologies so as to 'pull off' consequential identities." Building on an analysis of how people learn to play the Japanese card game Yu-Gi-Oh (which involves both learning the particular "social language" associated with the game and taking on an identity as a certain type of player), he formulates 11 recommendations for how to make language teaching more creative and to tap into the creative capacities of learners, which include offering multiple ways to learn through multiple media and forms of social interaction, not divorcing language from action and experience, giving learners opportunities to "make, design, lead and follow, teach and learn, discuss and argue, and gain

a shared passion for what they are doing," and learning from manufacturers of games like Yu-Gi-Oh to think of teaching as "designing and resourcing a learning system with moving parts."

The final chapter in this section by Jane Spiro and Sue Dymoke provides a concrete account of some of the principles discussed in the previous chapter by Gee, describing the kinds of shifts in identity language users experience as they navigate transitions across what they call "writing worlds" (what Gee would call "Discourses"). The examples they give are from a study of academics who also engage in writing poetry, thus having to transverse the discourse of poetry and that of academic writing, and the particular "forms of life" (Wittgenstein, 1973) associated with these types of writing. Spiro and Dymoke compare these trans-versals to the kinds of identity shifts language learners need to negotiate as they switch from speaking one language to speaking another. What is interesting in their analysis is that they identify the locus of creativity not in one form of writing or another (either poetry or academic writing) nor, in the case of language learn-ers, in one language or another, but rather in the ability for writers and learners to flexibly commute between Discourses, discarding, taking on, and sometimes mixing identities, "reorganiz(ing) and in some ways organiz(ing) anew the plots of their life stories" (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000, p. 219) as they learn and use dif-ferent "social languages."

The second section of the book focuses more explicitly on classroom practices. It begins with a chapter by Jack C. Richards and Sara Cotterall in which they attempt to describe both the practices of creative teachers and the underlying abilities, beliefs, and dispositions that form the basis for such practices. The exam-ples they use come primarily from the experiences of Cotterall in teaching aca-demic writing in the United Arab Emirates, but the insights in this chapter come as well from the authors' observations over many years as teachers, teacher trainers, materials developers, and language teaching researchers. They boil down these observations into 11 characteristics of creative teachers, among which are flexibil-ity, willingness to take risks, a rich store of academic and pedagogical knowledge, a commitment to finding new ways to do things and to developing an individual teaching style, and the innovative use of technology in teaching. They then go on to identify ways in which institutions can support teachers in developing these capabilities, including recognizing and rewarding creative practices and providing opportunities for collaboration and creative partnerships. An important message from this chapter is that although much of creative classroom practice depends on the characteristics of individual teachers, these characteristics are developed and nurtured in collaboration with learners and colleagues in the context of creative schools and other institutions.

In the next chapter, Simon Coffey and Constant Leung continue to focus on teachers' beliefs and practices, starting with the assumption that, like all pol-icy goals, the goal to make language teaching more creative is understood and

implemented differently by different language teachers working in different contexts within a situated view of professionalism (Leung, 2013). In documenting and analyzing how teachers respond to the question "What does creativity mean for you in the context of language teaching?," they note a number of underlying tensions: the tension between an understanding of creativity associated with language use and one associated with pedagogic practice; a tension between safety and risk taking; and a tension between the goals and aspirations of individual teachers and the rules and requirements imposed by institutional settings. These discussions with teachers reveal that, far from an elusive quality of special individuals, most language teachers regard creativity as a concrete professional skill, one that is shaped by their beliefs and values about language teaching and learning, their ideas about what constitutes effective pedagogy, and the particular demands of the contexts in which they teach.

In the third chapter in this section, Philip Chappell echoes the sociocultural approach to language introduced by Jones in the first chapter and applies the concepts of mediation and social cognition to concrete classroom practices, specifically to the use of what he calls "inquiry dialogue" to create opportunities for learners to explore, share, and enquire about topics that matter to them and to engage in collective thinking. Like Jones, Chappell assigns to language itself a central role in enabling and affording creativity and collective cognition. Certain types of talk, however, are more conducive to creativity than others. While traditional discussion activities mostly consist of learners transacting information and opinions, inquiry dialogue allows learners to work together to build new knowledge and generate new ideas. Such talk naturally facilitates what Csikszentmihalyi (1997) calls "flow," a peak state in which the people involved in the conversation become absorbed in a common goal. Creating the conditions for such a state to emerge, Chappell suggests, is one of the central tasks of the creative language teacher.

In the final chapter in this section, Julie Choi explores how creativity can be fostered in language classrooms by giving students an opportunity to compose texts using the full array of semiotic resources available to them (including different languages as well as images) in order to communicate the multiplicity of their identities. She describes the results of an assignment in multimodal composition she set in a course for Japanese and Chinese students on Australian language and culture and uses this description as a launching pad to talk about the relationship among creativity, multilingualism, multimodality, and identity. While many language classrooms enforce a second-language monolingualism, Choi insists that allowing students to use their entire range of linguistic resources, and to mix codes and modes, is a way to encourage creativity. She draws heavily on the work of Li Wei on how "translanguaging" affords learners opportunities to push and break boundaries "between the old and the new, the conventional and the original, and the acceptable and the challenging" (Li, 2011, p. 1223). In the end of the chapter,

Choi calls for language teachers to move away from narrow, monolingualist views of language learning and to embrace the translingual reality of learners. It is only by doing so that we can tap into the unique creative resources that are available to teachers and learners in multilingual and multicultural settings.

The third section of the book deals more with the role of creativity on the level of curricula, but these chapters also describe curriculum-driven creative classroom practices. This section has three chapters, the first consisting of a more theoretical discussion of creativity in the language curriculum by Kathleen Graves and the second two focusing on particular dimensions of language curricula, Alice Chik's chapter addressing ways of creatively integrating technology into the language curriculum (as well as of creatively integrating language education into a tertiary general education curriculum), and Christoph A. Hafner's chapter addressing creative ways of teaching English for particular disciplines like science and law.

Graves's chapter draws on notions of creativity developed in cognitive science, especially the work of Margaret Boden (2004), conceptualizing creativity as a generative system within a domain of thinking. Creativity in curricular design, she argues, involves "exploring the conceptual space of curriculum, experimenting with its constraints, identifying gaps and discovering new possibilities, and potentially transforming it." She goes on to develop these ideas in several case studies of curricular innovation, some of which she judges more "transformational" than others. An important point she makes is that for a creative innovation in curriculum to be truly transformative, it must take into account all levels and dimensions of the system from the scale of the individual teacher to the wider scale of the school system.

In her chapter on technology, the first thing Chik does is to caution against the assumption that the introduction of technology automatically makes teaching more creative. She then goes on to argue that when technology is introduced creatively, it can sometimes result in unexpected benefits. She illustrates this point with a description of the adoption of a new technological interface, Google Maps, in a University general education course. The interface, she points out, was not introduced to encourage students to improve their English, but that was its effect, because, as learners adapted their production processes to the new technology, they opened up new possibilities for creative language learning and use.

Hafner's chapter starts by challenging the assumption that courses devoted to helping learners master often standardized specialized academic and professional genres leave little room for creativity. In fact, he argues, professional communication is an inherently creative process of balancing the generic requirements of the disciplinary community with one's own private intentions (see also Bhatia, 1993). He goes on to describe a basic principle for Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) task design, which involves students not only in language production but also in some kind of transformation, transforming, for example, spoken genres into written genres or specialized genres into popular genres. Such transformations

engage students in a "creative challenge, which is both linguistic and multimodal," forcing them to simultaneously focus on language, audience, and communicative intention in new ways.

In the final section of the book, the authors deal with the role of creativity in language teacher development. The first chapter, by Kathleen Bailey and Anita Krishnan, is written in the form of a dialogue between a teacher educator (Bailey) and her student (Krishnan) in which they discuss the meaning of creativity and some of the creative techniques Bailey uses to inspire, motivate, and help her graduate students understand difficult concepts. In the course of this conversation, a number of important points are made about how the creative use of things like visual aids, metaphors, and games can enhance students' mastery of abstract concepts and help them apply these concepts in creative and effective ways. It also illustrates the ways teacher educators can model creative classroom practices for novice teachers. Finally, the chapter itself constitutes an effective exemplar of creative teacher education as Bailey and her student engage in the kind of "inquiry dialogue" that Chappell talks about in his earlier chapter.

In the second chapter of this section, Susan Ollerhead and Anne Burns describe how language teachers manage to exercise creativity even within the constraints imposed on them by top-down ministerial policies, standardized curricula and materials, and performance benchmarks. Following Ahearn (2001, p. 112), they define creativity as a person's "socio-culturally mediated capacity to act," and show, through an account of case study research conducted within Australia's Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program (LLNP), that, despite conditions that constrain their agency, teachers still manage to find their way around the obstacles placed in their paths and create for learners authentic and expressive ways to use the a target language. From this perspective, creativity is seen not just as a pedagogical choice but also a political one, an act of "resistance." The extent to which the teachers they studied were able to exercise this kind of creativity, they argue, depended on their ability to make sense of their teaching situations, an ability that is deeply rooted in what Stritikus (2003) describes as their "pedagogical, personal and political ideologies."

In the final chapter of the book, Cynthia Nelson advocates creative storytelling as a tool for second-language teacher development. Sharing teaching/learning narratives for collegial support, she argues, not only helps teachers expand their creative repertoire but also promotes self-reflection, illuminating the dynamic theorizing and underlying emotions that lie behind their practices. For Nelson, what is creative about teacher narratives is not just the way they are put together but the way they are interpreted by listeners and by the storytellers themselves. By "reading around" the texts they produce, teachers can find hidden insights and networks of interdiscursivity that they never knew existed (Jones, 2010, p. 477). Because narratives often involve multiple perspectives, sharing them can give rise to multiple interpretations, sparking productive conversations among language teachers and language teaching researchers.

It is precisely these kinds of productive conversations—"inquiry dialogues," to once again use Chappell's term—that this volume hopes to facilitate. These conversations may be engaged in in structured ways by students using this book in teacher training courses, or they may occur informally in corridors, in teachers' lounges, or around coffee machines. "Creativity" is a term that is frequently bandied about in discussions of language teaching but is seldom sufficiently interrogated. It is an "ingredient" that teachers, administrators, policy makers, and students all seem to want to introduce into the language classroom, but little research or serious theorizing has so far been conducted on how to do so. The most important thing we can say by way of introducing this book is that it is meant merely to serve as the beginning of a conversation in which much more remains to be said.

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