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The Routledge Handbook of Language and Creativity

Edited by Rodney H. Jones

The Routledge Handbook of Language and Creativity

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.

Divided into four parts, it covers:

- different aspects of language and creativity, including dialogue, metaphor and humour
- literary creativity, including narrative and poetry
- multimodal and multimedia creativity, in areas such as music, graffiti and the internet
- creativity in language teaching and learning.

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The Routledge Handbook of Language and Creativity

*Edited by
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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 Muka ovský (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.

Foreword

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.

Ronald Carter
16 February 2015
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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

Introduction

Rodney H. Jones

Defining language and creativity

The first thing that will become apparent to readers of this book is that questions regarding the relationship between language and creativity are complex and multifaceted, contingent on how one defines ‘creativity’ and how one defines ‘language’, neither of which allow for easy definition.

The term ‘creativity’ is particularly notorious for being difficult to pin down, and the authors of the following chapters define it in a variety of ways, each of these ways aligning them to particular disciplinary traditions (such as psychology, cognitive sciences, sociology, philosophy, and literary studies). For some, creativity is located in the minds of individuals; for others, it is more a matter of an interaction among broader social forces. For some, the term ‘creativity’ is used to describe a process undertaken by individuals or groups, whereas others use the term to describe the characteristics of particular products such as linguistic forms, works of art, or clever solutions to problems.

Although the definition of ‘language’ seems much more straightforward, in the context of this book it is also highly contested. Do we mean, by ‘language’, an abstract system of meaning-making that exists independent of its use, or are we more interested in the way in which people use language in particular social contexts? Is language more a matter of what goes on in the individual mind of the language user, or is it more a matter of what goes on between people when language users interact? What sorts of language should scholars interested in creativity focus on? What makes some instances of language use more creative than others?

Rather than dwelling on the differences and disputes among proponents of different definitions of ‘language’ and ‘creativity’, I would like to use this introduction to construct a conceptual framework within which the different perspectives represented in this book can be profitably related to one another. That is, at the risk of sounding overly optimistic, I would like to suggest not only that all of the sometimes competing definitions of ‘language’ and ‘creativity’ represented in this book are valid, but also that they can actually complement and inform one another when situated in a broader conceptual ‘map’ of creativity – one that takes into account both product and process, both system and use, and both the individual mind and social interaction.

A complete picture of linguistic creativity must take into account at least four aspects of the phenomenon:

1. the materials out of which people create things – specifically, the *semiotic resources* that people have available for creativity;
2. the *cognitive processes* that take place within individuals' minds that make linguistic creativity possible;
3. the *social processes* necessary for linguistic creativity; and
4. what is created – that is, the *product* of the interaction among the other three aspects – whether a textual artefact, a verbal interaction, or some non-verbal outcome such as the resolution of a problem, the transformation of a social relationship, or the invention of a new social practice (see Figure 1.1).

In the chapters of this volume, you will find that different authors tend to concentrate their attention on different territories of this map: some focusing more on linguistic resources; others, on cognitive processes; others, on social processes; and still others, on creative products. At the same time, you will also be hard pressed to find any author who is able to stay within the borders of one segment of the map. This is because it is almost impossible to deal with one aspect of creativity without, to some degree, taking into account the others: semiotic resources do not really exist apart from the minds that process them and the countless incidents of social interaction through which their functions and values are forged; social processes, of course, depend on the workings of individual minds and a common store of semiotic resources with which to accomplish social actions; and, as Vygotsky (1962) and his followers have so convincingly argued, individual cognitive processes are developed and scaffolded through social interactions, with the aid of semiotic resources and other artefacts. Finally, creative products, whether they be durable artefacts such as written texts, or more ephemeral verbal phenomena, or phenomena that may not seem on the surface to have much to do with language at all (such as paintings, machines, music, social identities, and social practices), all depend on the interaction of cognitive processes, social processes, and semiotic resources. Anything that is deemed 'creative' is somehow the outcome of this interaction. In other words, it is more useful to see these different aspects of linguistic

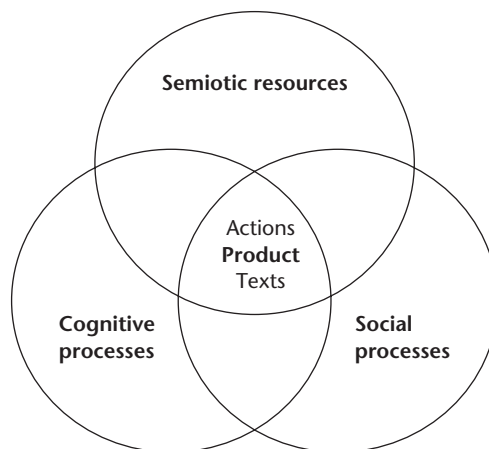


Figure 1.1 Conceptual map for language and creativity

creativity not so much as territories (which need defending), but as reference points that give us access to different insights about the complex phenomenon of linguistic creativity.

What is created?

I will begin with the issue of the creative product, since no matter on which point of reference a scholar settles – whether he or she is more interested in language as a set of resources for creativity, or in the cognitive or social processes that result in creativity – the creative product must be the starting point, for it is how we know that creativity has occurred in the first place. The creative product is evidence of creative processes and, as many of the chapters in this book show, it is often the main means through which scholars make inferences about how these processes unfold. Sternberg and Lubart (1999: 3, emphasis added), for instance, define creativity as ‘the ability to produce *work* that is both novel (i.e. original, unexpected) and appropriate (i.e. useful, adaptive concerning task constraints)’. In this and similar definitions, the nature of creativity as an ‘ability’ is premised on particular concrete characteristics of the ‘work’ produced (in this case, originality and appropriateness).

But what do we mean by a creative linguistic work? Most studies of linguistic or literary creativity begin with the assumption that what we mean is some kind of verbal or textual artefact such as a poem, a novel, a conversation, or even a single metaphor or figure of speech. Most people equate the creative linguistic work with the literary work of art, and many approaches to language and creativity focus on using tools from linguistics as a way of exploring what makes the language of literary works of art ‘literary’ or ‘poetic’. This was the starting point for the Russian formalists and their followers: ‘The object of study in literary science is not literature’ said Jakobson (quoted in Eichenbaum, 1971: 7–8), ‘but “literariness,” . . . the specific properties of literary material . . . that distinguish such material from material of any other kind.’ (See also Miall in Chapter 11 of this volume.) In this view, the main characteristic of creative language is that it is, as Sternberg and Lubart (1999) put it, ‘novel’, ‘original’, and ‘unexpected’ – that is to say, that it is somehow ‘different’ from everyday language. This difference has to do not only with the use of particular phonological forms (rhythm and rhyme) and ‘figures of speech’, such as metaphors and puns, but also, more broadly, with the operation of ‘foregrounding’ (Muka ovský, 1964) and ‘defamiliarisation’ (Shklovsky, 1965 [1917]). *Foregrounding* refers to the way in which authors and poets make certain aspects of their language use ‘stand out’ by deviating from what is ‘normal’ or ‘expected’. *Defamiliarisation* refers to the more general process of making the familiar seem unfamiliar through language. ‘The technique of art,’ wrote Shklovsky (1965 [1917]: 12), 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.’ Both of these concepts – ‘foregrounding’ and ‘defamiliarisation’ – are consistent with Jakobson’s (1960) definition of the poetic function of language as that function which draws our attention to the ‘message for its own sake’.

These concepts became the basis of early work in stylistics (see, for example, Fowler, 1996; Leech & Short, 1981; see also Miall’s Chapter 11 and Hall’s Chapter 12 in this volume). Even as early as the late 1960s, however, disagreements among linguists and literary critics were erupting regarding the appropriateness of using principles from linguistics in the analysis of literary works of art. In the beginning, the concern was whether or not such principles could actually capture what was ‘really’ creative about literature: aspects of the literary work that involve, as Bateson (quoted in Simpson, 2004: 152) famously argued,

not only ‘appropriate stylistic devices’, but also ‘humane value judgements’. By the 1980s, however, the focus of the argument was not so much on why literary language is ‘special’, but on why it is not. Scholars were beginning to notice that those features and devices that had been seen to set literary language apart from ‘everyday’ language actually occur frequently in everyday conversation and ‘non-literary’ writing (such as newspaper articles and advertisements). Brumfit and Carter (1986: 6) declared it ‘impossible to isolate any single or special property of language which is exclusive to a literary work’, and later, as a result of an exhaustive study of the 5-million-word Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English (CANCODE), Carter (2004: 66) concluded 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’. Nowhere is this more evident than in the frequent episodes of humour and language play in which we participate in our daily lives (Cook, 2000; Crystal, 1998), but it also surfaces in more serious forms of talk whenever we use language in inventive or ‘out of the ordinary’ ways.

This more ‘democratic’ view of creativity dominates many chapters in this volume, beginning with Maybin’s opening chapter on everyday linguistic creativity (Chapter 1), and elaborated on in Munat’s chapter on lexical creativity (Chapter 5), Bell’s chapter on humour (Chapter 7), and Goddard’s chapter on online creativity (Chapter 23), among others but also finding expression in chapters on literary creativity by Miall (Chapter 11), Stockwell (Chapter 13), and Toolan (Chapter 14). This view, of course, greatly expands what we consider a creative product, but in so doing it introduces new sorts of challenges for the analyst. Literary works of art, at least, are bounded, durable artefacts. But the kind of creativity described by scholars such as Carter and Maybin, occurring as it does in stretches of casual conversation, often goes undocumented (except by linguists). There is also the problem, in such situations, of determining where the creative product begins and ends: are only the parts of a conversation containing metaphors and puns creative, or can the whole conversation be seen as a kind of ‘creative work’?

Some analysts solve this problem by focusing on particular forms of creative language such as new words (Munat in Chapter 5) and metaphors (Hidalgo-Downing in Chapter 6). Others focus on creative language produced in particular contexts or using particular ‘technologies of entextualisation’ (Jones, 2009). Goddard (Chapter 23), for example, and Knobel and Lankshear (Chapter 25), consider the creative language of computer-mediated communication, and Carrington and Dowdall (Chapter 26) address the creative aspects of urban graffiti and ‘stickers’. In all of these cases, however, what is creative about the texts that these and many other authors in this book examine is not only the originality of the language, but the way in which language interacts with some sort of specific context of communication, and often with the broader social or economic contexts of the societies in which it is produced (see Jones in Chapter 3).

The importance of context in judging whether a text is creative speaks to the second half of Sternberg and Lubart’s (1999) definition of a creative product: it is not enough that it be ‘novel’ and ‘unexpected’; it must also be ‘appropriate’ for a particular time, place, audience, and task. Of course, what is meant by ‘context’ can vary from scholar to scholar and from text to text. We might, for example, speak of the appropriateness of a metaphor in the context of a poem, or the appropriateness of a poem in the context of a particular society. Similarly, we might consider the appropriateness of a joke in the context of a particular social situation (such as a wedding or a funeral), or we might consider whether the joke has broader social or political implications (revealing something, for example, about gender or race relations, or being used as an indirect means to challenge authority).

This whole business of context presents a particular challenge for scholars of everyday creativity – particularly those interested in ‘creative’ linguistic forms such as puns and metaphors – highlighting the fact that whether or not such forms can be considered creative depends very much on the context in which they are used. An apparently creative utterance exhibiting originality, or making use of ‘literary’ techniques such as rhyme or metaphor, may actually be introduced into a totally inappropriate context, and an apparently prosaic utterance with nothing at all unique or ‘literary’ about it may constitute a particularly creative use of language in a particular context. What this means is that creative language cannot be studied simply by isolating sentences that fulfil some formal criteria for ‘literariness’ or ‘originality’ from the world in which they were produced, any more than the creative language of a novel can be studied by considering sentences isolated from the ‘world’ of the novel (the plot, setting, characters, etc.). In this way of thinking, a creative text is always more than just a text, for part of what makes it creative is the way in which it is contextualised (Jones in Chapter 3) and sometimes recontextualised (Bauman & Briggs, 1990; Knobel and Lankshear, Chapter 25; Maybin, Chapter 1). In fact, Pennycook (2007) goes so far as to assert that much linguistic creativity nowadays is not so much about reformulating language as it is about recontextualising it (see also Jones, 2015). At the same time, contexts themselves are often complex and multilayered – a fact illustrated particularly dramatically in Carrington and Dowdall’s discussion, in Chapter 26, of urban textual environments:

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.

A related issue, of course, is the fact that, especially nowadays, language is seldom the only semiotic means used in creative texts, and so some of what is inventive and appropriate in a text comes from the way in which words interact with other semiotic modes. This is most apparent in advertising (see Langlotz, Chapter 2) and on the Internet, but can also be seen in many new forms of literature, such as those described in the chapters by Gibbons (Chapter 18) and Simanowski (Chapter 24). Multimodality has always been a central aspect of verbal creativity: any good actor, storyteller, speech maker, or stand-up comic will attest to the importance of gestures, facial expressions, and bodily movements for delivering their lines effectively, and there has long been a close relationship between the modes of spoken language and music (see Jordanous in Chapter 19).

This focus on the ‘everyday’ character of linguistic creativity in context inevitably leads us to a view of the creative product that is beyond language. Sometimes what is created is not ‘creative language’, but rather something else: a new way of doing something, for example, or a new way for people to relate to one another. In other words, what is created may be the result of language used in a deliberate and artful way, but may not in itself be considered a creative *linguistic* product. A group of business people might use language to creatively solve a problem, or a group of diplomats might engage in talks that lead to an important breakthrough in relations between two nations: one could not deny the centrality of creative language use in such situations, yet what is created is not a creative text. Linguistic creativity is sometimes spoken of as occurring on three levels: the level of linguistic form; the level of meaning; and the level of language *use* (Cook, 2000; Maybin & Swann, 2007). The level of which I am speaking here is the level of language use, and this aspect of linguistic creativity remains the least researched, although it is

well represented in this volume in chapters by Maybin (Chapter 1), Jones (Chapter 3), and Carrington and Dowdall (Chapter 26), among others. It is, as Kramsch (2008: 402) puts it, the ability to use language not only to produce texts, but also to ‘reframe human thought and action’. This view of linguistic creativity resonates with Dewey’s (1917) notion of ‘situated creativity’ – that is, creativity as it emerges through our interaction with the world. It is also articulated, in a different context, by Toolan (2012: 18), who defines creativity as ‘the happy fitness of some new solution to a new or emergent problem, something we had not fully recognised was a problem’.

What Toolan’s definition hints at is that, sometimes, the most important things we create through language are not solutions, but problems. Indeed, just as creativity in linguistic form disrupts our expectations about language, creativity in language use has the potential to disrupt habitual social practices, social orders, and relationships of power. As Lemke (1995) puts it, ‘making meaning’ is one of our most effective ways of ‘making trouble’. For many scholars, such as critical discourse analysts (see, for example, Fairclough, 1992) and cultural critics of the Birmingham tradition (see, for example, Hall, 1997; Willis, 1990), the most potent products of linguistic creativity are these moments of social disruption (see Jones in Chapter 3).

Finally, there is a perspective that considers the most important products created through linguistic creativity to be human languages themselves. This is, of course, easy to see in the case of ‘constructed languages’ such as those discussed by Ball (Chapter 8): languages that emanate from the mind of a single creator and are often invented in the context of other creative products such as novels, films, or television shows, or even in the case of other types of constructed language, such as computer languages. It may be less obvious in the case of ‘natural’ human languages, the creation of which is the result of many iterative acts of lexical, grammatical, phonological, and pragmatic inventiveness by individuals and groups over the course of many centuries. In a sense, the languages of the world may be considered among the greatest creative products of humankind. Wildgen (2004), in fact, asserts that the development of language constitutes the first complex expression of human creativity and the foundation upon which all other forms of creativity (artistic, scientific) evolved, and the German romantic poet August Wilhelm Schlegel (quoted in Chomsky, 1966: 17) declared that ‘language is the most wonderful creation of the human poetic ability . . . it is an always becoming, always changing, never complete poem of the whole human race’. Languages themselves not only are highly intricate creative products, but also provide resources that allow us to articulate the world, to create shared meanings, social relationships, and societies, which is the aspect of linguistic creativity to which I will turn my attention in the next section.

Language as a creative technology

In order to create, we need materials and tools. Sculptors need granite or marble, chisels, and hammers, and those who wish to engage in linguistic creativity need language, with all of its attendant ‘parts’ (words, sentences, genres, and registers). According to Pope (2005: xv), linguistic creativity is a 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. In this section, I will consider not so much this process as the potential of language to facilitate this process. Just as any assessment of a great sculptor must take into account the kinds of materials that he or she uses, and the kinds of shapes and textures that those materials make possible, so any discussion of linguistic creativity must account for the nature of language itself, and the kinds of forms, meanings, and actions that it makes possible.

The idea of language as a ‘creative technology’ (Jones, 2015) is, of course, not new. It is, in fact, a central tenet of many approaches to linguistics, from Chomsky’s (1965) generative approach, to Halliday’s (1973) functional approach. It is an idea with a long history, going back to ancient Greek rhetoricians and philosophers, who painstakingly catalogued the many devices that language makes available for touching people’s hearts and influencing their thoughts, and even further back to the Old Testament, in which the act of creating the universe is made possible through the *word* of God (later conceived of as *logos* in the Gospel according to John). It is also an idea that dominated the work of many nineteenth-century linguists and philologists such as Michal Bréal, who marvelled at how language has the power to transform the world by making it ‘speaking’, and who saw speaking as more than just encoding thoughts, but as a ‘creative adaptation of means to ends’ (Nerlich, 1990: 71).

When viewed from this reference point, creativity is not only located in the texts that people make and the actions that people take, but is a fundamental *potential* embodied in the linguistic resources on which people draw to make these texts and take these actions. To put it in terms popularised by evolutionary psychologist James J. Gibson (1986), language makes available certain *affordances* for creativity, affordances such as the ability to combine a limited number of elements into different patterns and to mix it with other modes to increase its meaning potential. There is, of course, a ‘flip side’ to the idea of affordances: the fact that, for all of the things that a particular tool or technology allows us to do, there are also many things that it can prevent us from doing. In other words, along with affordances, language also introduces *constraints* on meaning-making and action. However, as numerous authors in this book point out (see, for example, Sawyer’s Chapter 4, Stockwell’s Chapter 13, Robinson’s Chapter 17, Goddard’s Chapter 23, and Tin’s Chapter 27), one of the great paradoxes of creativity is that it often seems as much an outcome of the *constraints* imposed on creators by the resources they have available to them as of the *affordances*. In her book *Creativity from Constraints*, Patricia Stokes (2005: xiii) maintains that the ‘creativity problem’ is always both ‘strategic and structural’: it involves selecting appropriate constraints and then working within them in novel ways.

The combinations of affordances and constraints for creativity that language offers can be seen on multiple levels. They can be seen on the level of lexicogrammar – that is, in the ability that language gives us to, as Chomsky (1965: 6) puts it, use a finite number of elements ‘for expressing indefinitely many thoughts and for reacting appropriately in an indefinite range of new situations’. They can be seen on the level of pragmatics, in the ability that language gives us to combine it with non-linguistic aspects of context in order to ‘mean more than we say’. And they can be seen on the level of discourse, in the wealth of text types that languages provide as means of expressing ‘private intentions in the framework of socially recognised communicative actions’ (Bhatia, 1993: 13).

While the notion that the creative potential of language lies in its system of grammatical rules is usually most closely associated with Chomsky, the seeds of this idea can be found in the work of nineteenth-century Cartesian linguists – most notably Humboldt (1999 [1836]), for whom the essence of language was its capacity to ‘make infinite employment of finite means’, a capacity that he summed up with the term *erzuegen*. Attempting to understand what it is about language that makes this possible was really the starting point for Chomsky’s generative grammar. ‘Although it was well understood that linguistic processes are in some sense “creative”,’ he wrote in his *Aspects to the Theory of Syntax* (Chomsky, 1965: 8), ‘the technical devices for expressing a system of recursive processes were simply not available until much more recently.’ For Chomsky, the solution to the

problem of language's creative potential lies in this system of recursive processes that is not specific to any particular language, but instead constitutes a 'universal grammar'.

This solution served as a sharp contrast to the view of language held by behaviourist linguists such as Bloomfield, for whom language was seen as a set of norms and creativity was seen chiefly in terms of artful violations of those norms – a view, as I noted above, that also dominated early work in stylistics by scholars such as Muka ovský (1964) and Spitzer (1948). (For a more extended discussion, see Beaugrande, 1979.) For Chomsky (quoted in Newmeyer, 1986: 79), it is the norms – or, as he conceived of them, the *rules* – of language that make creativity possible: 'True creativity', he insists, 'means free action within the framework of a system of rules.'

Chomsky (1974: 152) does make a distinction between the everyday creativity of linguistic competence (what he calls 'normal creativity') and the more lasting creativity of literature and other art forms, but even in the case of these instances of "'big C" Creativity' (see, for example, Simonton, 1994), he insists that what makes them possible are the constraints imposed by systems and structures (Chomsky, 1976).

There have, of course, been many criticisms of Chomsky's approach to creativity. Some, such as Harris (1997: 279), criticise him for confusing creativity with 'productivity', and others, such as Hymes (1977: 132), criticise him for confusing it with 'novelty'. Still others, such as Sampson (1979), find Chomsky's vision too mechanistic: seeing creativity in terms of finite sets and rules, they argue, cannot account for the ability of language to express things that hitherto had been inconceivable, and, in some cases, to actually bring those things into existence.

Perhaps the most influential alternative to Chomsky's view of lexicogrammatical creativity is that proposed by Halliday (1973) in his systemic functional linguistics (SFL). For Halliday, the creative potential of language is less a matter of some universal set of recursive principles than it is a matter of the system of *choices* that language offers for making meaning in different social situations. In other words, whereas Chomsky views language as an essentially cognitive tool, Halliday views it as a social tool, forged and used in the context of the social world. It is in this interaction between the structure of language and the structure of society that creativity becomes possible. 'Creativity', he insists, 'does not consist of creating new sentences. Creativity consists in new interpretations of existing behaviour in existing social contexts; in new semiotic patterns, however realised . . . the creativity of the individual is a function of the social system' (quoted in Martin, 2013: 36). This is a perspective the influence of which can be seen in a number of chapters in this volume, including those by Jones (Chapter 3), Jaworski (Chapter 20), and Van Leeuwen (Chapter 21).

An even more radical departure from Chomsky is the integrative linguistics of Roy Harris. Based on what Harris (1977) calls 'the creativity thesis in linguistics', this approach, like that of Chomsky, promotes the idea that creativity is an aspect of *all* language use. Where it sharply diverges from Chomsky is in its insistence that the creative potential of language lies not in some self-contained system, but in the ability of language to be 'integrated' with the physical, psychological, and social dimensions of whatever situation in which it is used. What is creative about language is that its words and its structures can mean very different things in different moments of use. This creative potential, however, Harris (1990: 49) warned, 'must remain mysterious until we have a linguistics that recognises that communication situations are not the same, and that, typically, language supplies only one ingredient of communicative behaviour in any such situation'.

Perspectives like those of Halliday and Harris push us towards an understanding of language's creative potential beyond systems of rules governing the combination of sounds

or words, and towards an understanding of language as a tool, the ‘affordances’ of which come from the way in which it is able to interact with the world – or, to put it in Austin’s (1976) terms, away from an emphasis on the ways in which language allows us to produce an infinite number of meanings, and towards a perspective that explores the ways in which language allows us to ‘do things with words’.

Interestingly, the most influential proponents of this perspective have not been linguists, but rather philosophers and anthropologists. One such figure was the ordinary language philosopher H. L. Austin, whose work forms the basis for the linguistic subfield of pragmatics. Ordinary language philosophy is not often associated with the topic of creativity, and Austin himself hardly mentioned the word. Some, in fact, such as Bertrand Russell (1960: 13), explicitly criticised Austin and his associates for ignoring the creative potential of language. But, as Jones argues in his chapter on creativity and discourse analysis (Chapter 3), Austin’s view of the performative nature of language can be seen as essentially a theory of radical linguistic creativity – one that insists that the greatest affordance of language is not that it allows us to create meanings or texts, but that it allows us to create *actions*, social situations, and social relationships. With Austin, the ‘word’, so to speak, becomes ‘flesh’.

Another proponent of this more action-oriented view of language was the American anthropologist Dell Hymes (1977: 106, emphasis added), who proposed an approach to studying language that focuses on ‘not only the organisation of linguistic means, but also the *consequence of their use*’. This approach, which he dubbed the ‘ethnography of speaking’, in Hymes’s (1977: 93–4) words, ‘shares Chomsky’s concern for creativity and freedom, but recognises that a child, or person, master only of grammar, is not yet free’. He continues:

I share Chomsky’s goals for linguistics, and admire him for setting them, but they cannot be reached on his terms or by linguistics alone. Rules of appropriateness beyond grammar govern speech, and are acquired as part of conceptions of self, and of meanings associated both with particular forms of speech and with the act of speaking itself.

(Hymes, 1977: 94)

Two important points can be made about these more ‘action-oriented’ or ‘context-sensitive’ views of linguistic systems. First, they help to reintroduce into the discussion the second component of creativity in Sternberg and Lubart’s (1999) definition discussed at the beginning of this introduction: appropriateness. As I mentioned above, it is not enough that texts or utterances be unique or original; they must also be designed to fit artfully into particular social situations.

Second, they remind us that language is not a single system, but rather a set of interacting systems, ‘whose workings are made possible by mutual correlation’ (deBeaugrande, 1979: 274). To recognise the importance of a system of norms governing the way in which language is used in particular speech events, or a system of ‘maxims’ (Grice, 1989) governing processes of conversational implicature, in no way denies the importance of the generative capacity of language on the level of lexicogrammar. As Hymes (1977: 92, emphasis added) puts it, the goal of such approaches is not so much to challenge Chomsky as it is to ‘*complete* the discovery of the sphere of “rule governed creativity” with respect to language’.

Once our view of language as a creative technology is broadened in this way, we are also able to consider how other systems of linguistic/cultural convention help to facilitate creativity, systems governing things such as genres and styles. In her ground-breaking work on genre, for example, Devitt (2008) remarks on how, by their very nature, genres ‘enable

creativity’ by presenting writers (and speakers) with sets of choices and constraints. This is as true, she insists, for genres not usually thought to be creative, such as lab reports, as it is for literary genres. This is also a point that Pennington makes in her chapter on creativity in college composition (Chapter 30). Even genres such as research papers and argumentative essays provide writers with the means to exercise considerable creativity. In considering more literary genres, Toolan (Chapter 14) reminds us that ‘forms and traditions’, as much as they may constrain us, ‘are *resources*’ (emphasis added), which, when ‘redeployed in the new circumstances of today’, create new opportunities for innovation – or, as he puts it, new ‘problems’ to be discovered. Similarly, Hall (Chapter 12) notes: ‘Genre is always mixed, processual (coming-into-being), but also constraining and pre-existent, and is therefore arguably both conservative and potentially subversive.’

The same goes for registers or styles, what Gee (2014) (after Bakhtin, 1981) calls ‘social languages’. Here, we are perhaps more inclined to see the connection with creativity, since the idea of ‘style’ is often associated with the individual ‘voice’ of a particular writer or speaker. But styles (registers/social languages) are also governed by systems of use characterised by constraints, and it is often through playing with these conventions and constraints that creativity is realised. As Hymes (1977: 112) writes, ‘registers are not chosen only because a situation demands them; they may be chosen to define a situation, or to discover its definition by others’. He writes similarly of styles, declaring that ‘knowledge of speech styles is essential to complete the discovery of the sphere of rule-governed creativity with regard to language’, since ‘it is often complex use of styles that underlies individual acts that are creative in the sense of involving meanings and mediation and innovation with regard to rules’ (Hymes, 1977: 106).

Finally, a discussion of language as a creative technology would not be complete without a mention of the other technologies with which it is often used in conjunction, and the systems of affordances and constraints that they entail. As I mentioned above, language is hardly ever used in isolation from other modes, such as font, layout, and images (in the case of written language), and gesture, gaze, prosody, and object handling (in the case of spoken language). The notion of ‘multimodality’ (Kress, 2010) goes beyond the fact that people, when they are communicating, use more than one mode. It attempts to understand how meaning and action are dependent on how these modes (and the systems of affordances and constraints that they entail) *interact* with one another. In this regard, both writing and speaking are increasingly seen both by scholars of language (such as Kress, 2010) and scholars of literature (such as Hallet, 2009) as processes of ‘design’ in which creativity is chiefly a matter of playing the affordances and constraints of multiple semiotic systems off one another. This process is evident in the examples given in the chapters by Gibbons (Chapter 18), Jordanous (Chapter 19), Jaworski (Chapter 20), Van Leeuwen (Chapter 21), and Carrington and Dowdall (Chapter 26).

At the same time, language is also mediated through various other technologies such as print, web pages, film and video, and even the human voice, and these different media also involve affordances and constraints. The phonological systems of human languages, for example, are constrained by the human articulatory organs, and the kinds of sounds and sound combinations that they make possible. The printed page comes with its own sets of affordances and constraints, as do other media such as film and television. Recently, of course, there has been great interest in the myriad ways in which digital technologies facilitate creativity, from allowing people to mix together different kinds of texts and different semiotic modes, to allowing them to manipulate the spatial and temporal dimensions of language use in dramatically new ways. These are among the issues taken up in the chapters

by Veale (Chapter 22), Goddard (Chapter 23), Simanowski (Chapter 24), and Knobel and Lankshear (Chapter 25). Simanowski (Chapter 24), for example, describes digital media as encouraging a ‘shift from linguistic hermeneutics to a hermeneutics of interactive, intermedial, and performative signs’. As with other technologies involved in linguistic creativity, of course, constraints are just as important as affordances. As Goddard (Chapter 23) notes:

One of the issues that arises in identifying an example of language as ‘creative’ in the context of computer-mediated communication (CMC) is that there have been seismic shifts in what Goffman 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.

Language and the creative mind

Probably the most common way of looking at creativity has been to see it as the result of processes that take place in the mind (or ‘imagination’) of the creative individual. Rather than seeing creativity as a property of the creative work, or of the semiotic systems that make that work possible, this perspective sees creativity as a property of people, whether that property be the ‘genius’ of ‘exceptional people’, or the quality of all people that makes them capable of thinking, saying, or doing ‘exceptional’ things (Carter, 2004). This approach has not only appealed to scholars from a variety of disciplines, but has also captured the popular imagination, particularly in the form of the valorisation of great artists, and in various attempts to ‘unlock the secrets’ of the ‘creative mind’ (see, for example, Evans, 1990).

This idea of the ‘creative mind’ is actually not terribly old. Before the Renaissance, individuals were given very little credit for their own creativity; instead, creativity was seen as the result of possession by some external force such as ‘divine inspiration’ (referred to by Plato as *mania*). What creative artists aimed for was not to express their unique, individual vision or perspective, but rather to give form to some notion of purity or perfection, or divine truth, to accurately represent nature, or to successfully imitate the work of established masters (Sawyer, 2006). Even during the Renaissance, when the idea of individual genius was starting to take hold, the majority of creative works were collaboratively produced: paintings were produced in workshops, where apprentices often did much of the work and masters simply added the finishing touches, and literary works such as plays – even those of Shakespeare – often came from the pens of several authors working either together or separately.

The idea that creativity is an aspect of the individual (and unique) human mind did not really take strong hold in Europe until the Enlightenment, when the notion of human divinity replaced the idea of an external god as the source of all creation (see Nelson’s Chapter 10). Perhaps the strongest expression of this new ‘cognitive’ view of creativity came from Descartes, and it was his ideas that ended up being so influential in later conceptualisations of linguistic creativity, including those of Chomsky and his followers (discussed above). Arguing against a mechanistic view of human behaviour, Descartes (1960 [1637]: 47) proposed that what separates humans from animals is the ability to think and act in a way that is independent of experience, rooted instead in the internal capacity for reason that makes it possible for people to operate in all sorts of situations. For Descartes and others of this period, the important thing about thought was not only that it proves our existence (*cogito, ergo sum*), but also that it allows us to bring into existence an infinite number of new ideas and to express those ideas in an infinite number of new ways through language. While

neither animals nor machines are capable of such variety of expression, declared Descartes (1960 [1637]: 47), ‘there are no men so dull-witted and stupid, not even madmen, that they are incapable of stringing together different words, and composing them into utterances, through which they let their thoughts be known’. Here, then, we have not only the beginnings of a more mentalist idea of creativity, but also the seeds of the democratic notion of linguistic creativity championed in various ways by modern linguists (such as Carter, 2004; Chomsky, 1965, 1966).

The idea of the individual as the source of creativity was even more fervently promoted in the eighteenth century by Romantic poets and philosophers, whose theories of creativity and the imagination are still extremely influential today. The difference between the Romantics and the Enlightenment philosophers was not their conviction that creativity has its source in the individual, but their beliefs about what aspect of human consciousness is most responsible for it. For Descartes and his contemporaries, the source of creativity was human reason; for the Romantics, it was human feeling. This conviction is reflected in Wordsworth’s (2008 [1800]: 183) characterisation of poetry as the ‘spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings’, and Coleridge’s (1984 [1817]: 80) description of the poetic process as the shaping of ‘deep feeling’ through ‘profound thought’ into words that possess a sense of ‘novelty and freshness’. Two major marks that the Romantics left on contemporary notions of creativity are, first, what has been called the ‘cult of originality’ (Millen, 2010) – the idea that creative works of art must be, above all, ‘novel’ and ‘unique’ – and second, the idea that creativity has its source in the particular disposition of the artist, and that the creative process consists of the personal exploration and authentic expression of that disposition.

Contemporary research on the creative mind takes place mostly in the disciplines of psychology and the cognitive sciences (including cognitive linguistics). In a way, this research agenda still retains a trace of the conceptual split between the Romantics and the rationalists, with some research – especially psychological studies conducted in the latter half of the twentieth century – focusing on discovering the characteristics of the ‘creative personality’ and more recent research – especially in cognitive sciences – more interested in understanding the cognitive processes associated with creative thinking.

Research into the psychological characteristics of ‘creative people’ has suggested a number of traits that seem to be associated with creativity, such as flexibility, fluency, openness to new experiences, ambition, and self-acceptance. Undoubtedly, the most frequently cited characteristic of creative people discussed in the literature is a penchant for ‘divergent thinking’ – that is, the ability to generate a large range of diverse, yet appropriate, responses to situations (Guilford, 1967) – and this observation has been the basis of much psychometric testing of creativity – most notably, the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (Torrance, 1974). In this volume, the impact of such work can be seen most clearly in the chapter by Kharkhurin on bilingual creativity (Chapter 28), in which he argues, based on the results of such tests administered to monolingual and multilingual subjects, that acquiring a new language may have a positive impact on creativity, by fostering divergent thinking and attendant traits such as flexibility, fluency, ability to elaborate, tolerance for ambiguity, and open-mindedness.

Most tests of creativity, while they usually do not test ‘linguistic creativity’ specifically, generally use language as the basis for assessment, which raises questions, like those discussed by Jordanous in her chapter on language and music (Chapter 19), as to whether creativity in different semiotic modes is associated with different sorts of mental capacities. Such questions as whether or not linguistic creativity is related to visual/spatial creativity

or to musical creativity are increasingly important, given that producing linguistic texts nowadays more often than not means also engaging with these other semiotic modes.

While psychometric research on creative traits has contributed much to our understanding of the creative mind, it is research into the *cognitive processes* associated with creativity that has had the biggest impact on language and creativity research, as evidenced by the strong representation of such theories in this volume (see, for example, Langlotz's Chapter 2, Hidalgo-Downing's Chapter 6, and Stockwell's Chapter 13).

Scholars interested in the cognitive processes associated with linguistic creativity start from the assumption that language structure and use (including features such as analogy, metaphor, conceptual spaces, and transformational rules) provide evidence of the creative potential of the human mind. As Langlotz points out in Chapter 2, researchers in this area have generally clustered around several key approaches, each with its own distinct model of human cognition.

The model that will likely be the most familiar to readers is the computational model: a model that focuses on the mind as a relatively autonomous, central processing unit, independent of both the body and the social environment, and which sees linguistic structures as evidence of an innate cognitive capacity – a 'mental module' (see Chapter 2) specially designed to generate infinite utterances based on a finite set of rules. This, of course, is the model of cognition subscribed to by Chomsky, and although many cognitive scientists have moved on from this model, finding it too narrow and limiting, it remains the basis for a challenging field of research that raises questions about the extent to which machines, programmed with more and more sophisticated capacities to generate original language, can be said to be 'creative' (see Veale's Chapter 22).

An alternative to the computational model of creativity comes from the field of cognitive linguistics, which, rather than regarding language as emanating from an autonomous central processing unit that operates based on a set of rules, sees it as arising from a broader collection of cognitive capacities, including perception, conceptualisation, and categorisation (Langlotz in Chapter 2). Central to this approach is the idea that cognition is *embodied* – that the way in which we think is partly determined by the way in which we experience the world through our senses and that language is chiefly built around these experiential parameters.

Cognitive linguists interested in creativity have focused their attention on several key aspects of language use, the most important being metaphors, which are treated as not only clever rhetorical devices, but also outcomes of cognitive processes of conceptualisation and categorisation. Scholars such as Lakoff and Johnson (1980), and Gibbs (1994), have argued that a key part of the mind's fundamental capacity for creativity comes from its ability to represent so much of reality metaphorically.

Another important contribution to our understanding of creativity that has come out of cognitive linguistics is the notion of 'mental spaces' (Fauconnier, 1994): mini models of the world and of experience that we build in our minds and map in relation to other mental spaces. This idea forms the basis of Fauconnier and Turner's (2008) 'blending theory', which offers a model of creative thinking that is more dynamic and situated than conceptual metaphor theory. People come up with new ideas, it argues, by selectively mapping and blending mental spaces, thereby generating new mental structures.

It is work in cognitive linguistics that has most profoundly influenced research on the cognitive aspects of literary creativity, which includes not only work on the creative production of literary texts, but also work on the creative mental processes that readers use when they interpret them. 'Cognitive poetics' (Stockwell, 2002a; Tsur, 1992, 2008) and 'cognitive

stylistics’ (Stockwell, 2002b; also Chapter 13) draw on a range of theories from cognitive linguistics to understand, for example, how devices of foregrounding in literary texts operate cognitively, how literary metaphors are related to more universal conceptual metaphors, how texts work to create cognitive ‘frames’ through which readers interpret characters’ words and actions, and how readers and writers work together to create ‘text worlds’ – mental representations of the fictional world of the literary work, which readers map against their own experience and use to track various states of knowledge and experience. As literary works have become more multimodal, there has also been interest in applying concepts from cognitive linguistics to understanding how viewers process visual imagery and how they relate it to written text (see, for example, Forceville, 1996, 2012; Gibbons, 2012; Hiraga, 2005; see also Chapter 18).

One potential danger of focusing on creativity in terms of cognitive processes that take place in the minds of individuals is that it can lead analysts to ignore the fact that individuals exist in societies and cultures, and much of the way in which they think is shaped and influenced by their interaction with other people. One set of approaches to cognition that attempts to address its social aspects is that which focuses on what is referred to as ‘distributed’ or ‘situated cognition’ (see, for example, Hutchins & Klausen, 1996), and these are complemented in the literature on creativity in work on what has come to be known as ‘distributed creativity’ (Gileanu, 2014). Such approaches have their roots in the work of Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1962), who saw human cognition as *mediated* through ‘cultural tools’, the most important being language itself. From this perspective, all cognition is essentially social, supported by the resources made available to the thinker by his or her society and reflecting the structures of that society. This more socially grounded approach to creative cognition has also influenced approaches to linguistic creativity based on mediated discourse analysis (see, for example, Jones et al., 2012).

Creativity as a social practice

In contrast to the more individualistic and mentalist perspectives of most cognitive approaches to creativity are approaches that see creativity not as a process that takes place in the minds of individuals, but as a kind of social practice that is embedded in particular social contexts and depends on various forms of social interaction. The key point of such approaches is not only that creative texts are forms of ‘communication’ with which creators interact with audiences, and which are judged based on the values and fashions of the societies in which they are created, but also that the creative act itself is social and that the notion of the ‘creative mind’ as an entity independent of other creative minds is essentially a fiction. As Carter (2004: 28) puts it, acts of creativity are ‘responsive, dialogic, interpersonal acts of mutuality’, not limited to what Chomsky describes as our ability to produce and understand an unlimited number of new sentences (see also Carter’s Foreword to this volume).

Like the concept of the creative individual, more socially grounded conceptions of creativity have a long history. In fact, as I mentioned earlier in the chapter, viewing the creative process as the result of the interaction of multiple individuals and institutions was the norm before the late Renaissance. Interestingly, many of the same philosophers and linguists who inspired individualistic, cognitive views of creativity contributed to this more social perspective. Humboldt’s (1999 [1836]: 44) notion of *erzeugen* (meaning ‘to produce’ or ‘to generate’), for example, which so inspired Chomsky (as we saw above), also posits a key role for society upon which individual production depends: language constitutes more than

just ‘a linkage of thoughts’, but also a ‘world-view’ that presupposes ‘the understanding of all’ and ‘rests upon the collective power of man’.

Among the most influential critiques of the individualistic idea of creativity in the field of language studies comes from the Soviet literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin. As Maybin (Chapter 1) argues, perhaps Bakhtin’s greatest contribution to our understanding of language and creativity was his insistence, in opposition to the formalist views of linguistic creativity dominant in his day, that ‘the aesthetics of language must have a social dimension’. The operation of this social dimension of linguistic creativity is explained by Bakhtin by means of his concepts of ‘heteroglossia’ and ‘dialogism’ (see Jones, Chapter 3). With his concept of *heteroglossia*, Bakhtin challenged the idea that the essence of creativity consists of our ability to generate ‘new’ and ‘unique’ utterances. Such utterances, he argued, do not really exist; rather, all utterances are cobbled together from the words of others. Creativity lies not in our ability to say new things, but to say them in new ways in new contexts – to effectively mix together the voices of others and to give to them our own ‘accent’ (Bakhtin, 1981: 293). With the concept of *dialogism*, he challenged the idea of the autonomous creator. All utterances are created in response to previous utterances and in anticipation of future utterances. Thus all linguistic creativity is a matter of social interaction, or ‘dialogue’, between the writer or speaker and both those who have written or spoken before him or her and those who will write or speak afterwards.

The ideas of Bakhtin play a central role in many of the chapters in this book, including those by Maybin (Chapter 1), Jones (Chapter 3), Bhatia (Chapter 9), Swann (Chapter 16), and Jaworski (Chapter 20). They are also evident (though not explicitly acknowledged) in Knobel and Lankshear’s notion of ‘creative remix’ (Chapter 25), and in Carrington and Dowdall’s description of polyphonic urban landscapes (Chapter 26).

One area of study that Bakhtin’s concepts of heteroglossia and dialogism open up is the consideration of the reader’s role in the creation of literary texts: not only of the reader as a cognitive entity, as conceived of in some of the work in cognitive stylistics reviewed above, but also the reader as a *social* being, ‘located within particular sociohistorical, cultural and local interpersonal contexts that make available certain forms of engagement with text and potentially certain textual interpretations’ (Swann, Chapter 16). Another area that Bakhtin’s work opens up is the study of how these interpretations change as texts and utterances travel across what Lillis (2013) calls ‘text trajectories’ and what Scollon (2008) calls ‘itineraries of discourse’. In both of these cases, linguistic creativity is seen less as a matter of ‘generating’ or interpreting texts, and more as a matter of sharing, contesting, and transforming them in the course of social interaction.

Apart from the foundational work of Bakhtin, insights concerning the social dimensions of linguistic creativity also come from key work in anthropology and sociolinguistics, particularly around the notion of ‘performance’. The work of anthropologists on verbal performances associated with such events as religious rituals, for example, helps to highlight the situated and occasioned nature of linguistic creativity: how it, in the words of Bauman and Sherzer (1989: xvii–xix), arises from the ‘dynamic interplay between the social, conventional and ready-made in social life and the individual, creative and emergent qualities of human existence’ (see also Maybin, Chapter 1). Work in sociolinguistics, on the other hand, shows how linguistic performance permeates everyday life in the form of stylisation and style-shifting (Coupland, 2007; Eckert, 2000), code-switching and ‘crossing’ (Rampton, 2005), and what has come to be known as ‘translanguaging’ (Garcia & Li Wei, 2004; see also Kharkhurin, Chapter 28), all of which are forms of linguistic creativity that are intimately tied to expressions of social identity and group affiliation.

‘Performance’ is also a key theme in studies on collaborative linguistic creativity, such as those conducted by Sawyer (2001; see also Chapter 4). Basing his observations on the study of improvisational theatre, but arguing that they apply equally to the ‘improvisational’ nature of everyday conversation, Sawyer shows how individuals work together to create social realities through the negotiation of ‘frames’ in interaction. This work draws on a large body of work in conversation analysis and interactional sociolinguistics, work also discussed by Jones in his chapter on the discursive dimensions of linguistic creativity (Chapter 3), which explores the ways in which social interaction involves people working together to perform social actions, construct social situations, and enact social identities jointly.

Perhaps the most important contribution that a more socially grounded view of creativity can make is to show how linguistic creativity is not only socially constituted, but also socially consequential – that is, how it can actually act as a force to change the societies in which we live. In 1926, the Marxist literary critic Georg Lukács (2011 [1926]: 160) railed against an attitude towards art that focused only on its aesthetic value, ignoring its social function: ‘This social uprootedness of the artist goes hand in hand with the inner rootlessness of art.’ The same might be said of theories of everyday linguistic creativity that limit their view of the creative to formal aspects of people’s utterances. A socially grounded view of linguistic creativity leads inevitably to a socially engaged view – one that asks questions such as what are the effects of social orders and economic systems on people’s capacity for linguistic creativity, and in what ways can our facility for linguistic creativity be called into the service of effecting positive social change? These are questions that are explicitly raised in the chapters by Maybin (Chapter 1) and Jones (Chapter 3), and hinted at in the contributions from Sawyer (Chapter 4), Knobel and Lankshear (Chapter 25), and Carrington and Dowdall (Chapter 26).

Maybin (Chapter 1) raises these questions in the context of performance, pointing out that verbal performances – by virtue of their power to call attention to, and heighten our awareness of, language use – constitute unique opportunities for performers to challenge linguistic conventions and the social conventions associated with them. Jones (Chapter 3) raises these same questions in the context of resistance, suggesting that among the most important aspects of linguistic creativity is its potential to disrupt dominant ways of thinking and talking about things that support relationships of power and inequality – that is, its potential to create ‘cracks’ in the discursive edifices that protect some members of our societies and marginalise others.

Creativity, of course, has multiple functions in human societies. It can be used to entertain and engage people or to distract them, to solidify social relationships or to create wedges between ‘us’ and ‘them’, to inspire, to amuse, to educate, to solve problems, or to make mischief. All of these functions have consequences for people’s well-being – their security, their agency, and their freedom – and theories of language and creativity must eventually find ways in which to address these consequences.

Finally, a more socially grounded and socially engaged take on linguistic creativity must acknowledge that creativity is itself socially constructed and ‘discursively constituted’ (Nelson, Chapter 10). All definitions of creativity (and all definitions of language, for that matter) are products of particular political and economic conditions, and serve the interests of particular social groups. This is particularly evident today as businesses, governments, and educational institutions promote definitions of ‘creativity’ that reproduce neoliberal notions of productivity and individual responsibility (Hall, 2010; Hocking, 2011). But, as Nelson’s chapter persuasively demonstrates (Chapter 10), ‘the creative idea’ has always been shaped by the dominant ideologies of particular time periods, as well as helping to

shape those ideologies. What is of particular interest in Nelson's chapter is not only the surprising roots of contemporary notions of creativity in scientific, rather than artistic, discourse, but also her wider observations about how, over the years, the notion of creativity has 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'.

Understanding how our views of linguistic creativity are themselves shaped by language, and how the dominant 'orders of discourse' of our societies affect how we think about creativity, talk about it, and study it, should be a central concern for any scholar interested in language and creativity. Of course, as Nelson (Chapter 10) reminds us, to say that creativity is discursively constructed is not to say that it is not real, 'for discourse has a weight, and a materiality, and a productive power'. The strongest evidence for the creative potential of language, in fact, might be its ability to create 'creativity' itself.

The way this book is organised

One of the biggest challenges of editing any book is organising the chapters in a coherent way, and – perhaps because of the rich and varied ways of understanding the relationship between language and creativity that I have outlined in this introduction – I found settling on a principle of organisation for the chapters in this book to be particularly daunting. In the end, I settled on organising the chapters into four sections, as outlined below, but it will not take readers long to find chapters that address issues that straddle these sections, or chapters that, for one reason or another, might have been situated in a different section from that in which they appear.

- In Part I, which I call 'Dimensions of Language and Creativity', I have placed chapters that deal with different aspects of 'everyday linguistic creativity', and which introduce key theoretical approaches from fields such as applied linguistics, cognitive sciences, discourse analysis, and psychology. Of course, when I speak of 'everyday linguistic creativity', I am not talking only about casual conversation, but also include all sorts of linguistic creativity ranging from advertisements to political speeches. This part begins with Janet Maybin's overview of everyday linguistic creativity (Chapter 1), which draws on theories from applied linguistics, anthropological linguistics, and sociolinguistics. Following this are chapters by Andreas Langlotz on cognitive approaches to linguistic creativity (Chapter 2), Rodney H. Jones on discourse analytical approaches (Chapter 3), Keith Sawyer on the dialogic nature of linguistic creativity (Chapter 4), Judith Munat on lexical creativity (Chapter 5), Laura Hidalgo-Downing on metaphor (Chapter 6), and Nancy C. Bell on humour and language play (Chapter 7). After these appears a chapter by Douglas Ball on constructed languages (Chapter 8), and one by Vijay K. Bhatia on creativity in corporate and professional communication (Chapter 9), which draws on principles from critical genre analysis. The section ends with Camilla Nelson's reflection on the discursive construction of the idea of creativity itself (Chapter 10), particularly as it developed in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe and the United States, as a response to both political conditions and advances in scientific thinking.
- Part II of the book deals with 'Literary Creativity', particularly those approaches to literature such as stylistics, which apply linguistic tools to understanding the nature of 'literariness' and processes of literary creation and literary reading. The opening chapter by David S. Miall on literariness (Chapter 11) sets the scene for this section, laying out some of the major debates surrounding this notion. This is followed by chapters by

Geoff Hall on literary stylistics (Chapter 12), Peter Stockwell on cognitive stylistics (Chapter 13), Michael Toolan on poetry (Chapter 14), and Andrea MacRae on narrative (Chapter 15). The section ends with a more socially oriented take on literary reading by Joan Swann (Chapter 16), and an exploration of the challenges associated with literary translation by Douglas Robinson (Chapter 17).

- Part III of the book, entitled ‘Multimodal and Multimedia Creativity’, contains chapters that consider both the relationship between linguistic creativity and other modes of expression, and the effect of technology on linguistic creativity. It begins with a chapter by Alison Gibbons on literature and multimodality (Chapter 18), which serves as a bridge between this section and the previous one. After that is a chapter on language and music by Anna Jordanous (Chapter 19), and one on silence and creativity by Adam Jaworski (Chapter 20). Theo Van Leeuwen’s chapter, in which he examines the creative grammar of movement in the mechanistic artworks of Jean Tinguely, incorporates both a focus on multimodality and a focus on technology (Chapter 21). Following that are four chapters that address the impact of digital technology on creative linguistic practices: a chapter by Tony Veale that discusses the capacity for computers to exercise linguistic creativity (Chapter 22); a chapter by Angela Goddard on creative language use in text-based computer-mediated communication (CMC) (Chapter 23); a chapter by Roberto Simanowski on digital literature (Chapter 24); and an examination of the culture of digital ‘remix’ by Michele Knobel and Colin Lankshear (Chapter 25). The part ends with Victoria Carrington and Clare Dowdall’s exploration of creative linguistic landscapes (Chapter 26).
- In the final part, Part III, ‘Creativity in Language Teaching and Learning’, I have placed chapters that focus on pedagogical aspects of linguistic creativity. The opening chapter by Tan Bee Tin discusses creativity in second-language teaching and learning (Chapter 27). This is followed by a chapter by Anatoliy V. Kharkhurin that explores the connection between multilingualism and cognitive processes associated with creativity, and introduces an educational programme that takes advantage of this connection (Chapter 28). Following that are chapters by Gillian Lazar on literature and language teaching (Chapter 29), Martha C. Pennington on creativity in the teaching of composition (Chapter 30), and Graeme Harper on the teaching of creative writing (Chapter 31).

This book is by no means an exhaustive treatment of the vast and growing field of language and creativity studies, and there are many important topics and theoretical perspectives that are missing. I take these obvious gaps not only as a reason to offer my apologies to readers who have not found what they are looking for in these chapters, but also as a reason to celebrate the diversity of work addressing issues related to language and creativity – work that is too rich and too varied to be accommodated in any single book.

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Part I

Dimensions of language and creativity

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

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 (Muka ovský, 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.

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 'stylistisation' 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

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.

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; formulae 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

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

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 micro-level, 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

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 'polylinguaging' 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