Creativity through Dialogue Writing: Letting It Get a Bit Weird
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ABSTRACT
This paper explores the potential use of a creative dialogue-writing activity in an English discussion course. It reviews the literature to present a complex understanding of creativity and the potential benefits of creativity for language learning. It describes the author’s development and use of a gap-fill activity to help learners produce imaginative dialogues. The paper illustrates how learners used the activity creatively and how they seemed to transfer their creativity into discussions. It also presents the author’s investigation into hypothesized indirect benefits of promoting creativity for language learning. The results of this investigation suggest that the activity may have improved the quality of use of some creative functional language, but that there were no significant observable effects on the quantity of this use, learners’ sense of ownership and interest, or their emotional states. Thus, the activity may be useful only for providing an additional creative outlet for learners.

INTRODUCTION
Professor, I’m sorry, but this got a bit weird.

Years ago, I wrote this note (in Japanese) at the top of one of my Japanese homework assignments. The assignment was straightforward: write a dialogue in which a friend asks a favor of another and one in which a friend invites another to do something. Since we had recently learned the functional language for requests and invitations, the aims of the assignment seemed equally clear: review the transactional target language and assess our understanding of it. However, when I began writing, the assignment and its purposes began to twist and expand. I abandoned the generic “A” and “B” characters of my simple first draft and restarted instead with a dog and a tanuki (“Japanese raccoon dog”). As I began to play creatively at the limits of my language abilities, I became completely absorbed in the writing task and in the world I was creating through it. My odd characters said things that I never would in my own voice, switching between rudeness and politeness in their exchange. The dog was ultimately unable either to comply with the tanuki’s request for help getting a garbage bag from behind a crowded convenience store or later to accept his invitation to eat and drink leftovers behind an izakaya (a Japanese pub) because he was chained up and the tanuki remained unwilling to release him for mysterious reasons, even when it would have seemed to his advantage. In the end, I had a composition that entertained myself and others, and it remains one of my most salient memories as a language learner, a high point of a sense of ownership of the language and pride in my use of it.

With this learning experience in mind, I have long hoped to design an activity that would recreate for the language learners in my classroom an opportunity for similar investment and pride. I have explored promoting play with target language (Kasparek, 2015; Kasparek & Turner, 2016; Turner & Kasparek, 2017), and the results of my investigation into playful practice’s effects (Kasparek, 2016) suggest that it leads to greater internalization. While this work has certainly involved learner creativity, play has remained the central organizing concept. However, I began to wonder if creativity, rather than being simply an element of play, might be a better organizing concept. In this paper, I explore the concept of creativity and the potential benefits of promoting creativity for language learning, describe the development and use of one activity that attempts to promote the creative and imaginative use of language in an English discussion course, and investigate the activity’s possible effects in my classes.
What is creativity?

Creativity defies simple definition. Recognizing that creativity is always “also something more and something different” (Bohm and Peat as cited in Pope, 2005, p. 35), Pope (2005) nonetheless attempts several provisional and exploratory definitions in his book-length study of the concept, including this one: creativity is “the capacity to make, do or become something fresh and valuable with respect to others as well as ourselves” (p. xvi). Each of these words is chosen carefully, but for the purposes of my activity, the “fresh and valuable” elements are central, since they highlight how acts, products, or ways of being are invested with a sense of ownership and interest.

The inclusion of “with respect to others as well as ourselves” also emphasizes an important point at the outset: what is creative is defined according to the particular context of this act or product. As Carter (2004) emphasizes, following systems theorists, creativity thus needs to be considered “with reference to a confluence of different systems involving both mentalistic predisposition and sociocultural domains” (p. 41). This again emphasizes that creativity can never have one satisfactory definition, since it is recognized and given meaning only within its field. Pope (2005) thoroughly explores such an open approach to creativity by meditating on its various aspects. He proposes one expansive sentence to begin the exploration: “Creativity is extra/ordinary, original and fitting, full-filling, in(ter)ventive, co-operative, un/conscious, fe<>male, re … creation” (p. 52). For his part, Carter (2004) focuses on creativity’s extra/ordinariness, concluding that “creative language is not a capacity of special people but a special capacity of all people” (p. 215). While creativity has traditionally been regarded as beyond the average mind, Carter (2007) notes agreement in the literature that it is not “simply the exclusive preserve of the individual genius or the pathological outsider” (p. 598). This reminds us that the object of creative activities is not to teach learners to be creative but to provide outlets for the creative capacity they already have. Moreover, this broad conception of creativity reminds us that it is already ubiquitous.

However, as Boden (1996) points out, it is not enough simply to be novel or inventive to be creative, because producing a nonsense sentence would fail to be valuable in one’s context. Furthermore, there are different degrees of creativity. Helpful here is Boden’s (1996) influential distinction between “P-creativity,” referring to the psychological and personal variety, and “H-creativity” that generates ideas of historical importance; the lower bar for P-creativity is that the idea must only be new and valuable to the individual and need only take its meaning from the individual’s context. All language users find ways to use P-creativity to say something fresh or in a fresh way for themselves, and as Carter (2005) illustrates through numerous examples from “common talk,” this is often accomplished by collaborating with conversation partners to form new patterns and recontextualize and thereby refresh old sayings in meaningful ways. Tin (2013) also draws on Boden’s (1996) work on creativity to offer this definition of language creativity: “the playful use of language to construct new and surprising meaning” (p. 387).

This touches on the “original and fitting,” “co-operative,” and “re … creation” elements of Pope’s (2005) creativity, as the old can be made new through interaction with new contexts and new interpretations. For Pennycook (2007), this kind of repetition, more than some inspired invention ex nihilo, is the real source of linguistic creativity: “Creativity rests in the recontextualization of others’ expressions” (p. 580). For example, this may take the form of “pastiche,” or the “pleasure in the play of voices” other than one’s own (Rampton as cited in Bell & Pomerantz, 2016, p. 90). Pope (2005) channels Derrida to make a similar point about re-creation more generally: it is “an ongoing transformation of past-through-present-to-future and self-through-other-to-otherwise” (pp. 86-87). By responding to others, and by transferring other ideas and sayings across contexts, language users find fresh, other meanings in the different ways the words and ideas fit the contexts.
More practically, Jordan and Carlile (2013) categorize these various conceptions of creativity and suggest their implications for teaching. For instance, if teachers view “creativity as cognition,” they should “allow for the playful engagement with ideas” and “view creativity as the summit of cognitive activity” (p. 31). Respect for the serious thinking behind creativity would entail creating opportunities for learners to play creatively and recognizing and valuing expressions of creativity. Similarly, if teachers view “creativity as everyday,” they should “promote imaginative activities and play to encourage flexible thinking” (p. 34).

**Why promote creativity in a language class?**

Creativity thus seems a complex and elusive element of everyone’s language use, and it follows from the discussion above that teachers should be open to its expression in various forms. However, as Jordan and Carlile’s (2013) implications suggest, beyond just being open to creativity, teachers can actively promote it for probable benefits to learning. In this section, I propose four potential benefits for language learning from the literature: facility with the imaginative use of language, transferability, a sense of ownership and interest, and affective filter management.

Scholars have suggested that there is value in providing opportunities for language learners to use language in more than transactional ways (e.g., Tin, 2013; Pennycook, 2007; Carter, 2007). There is no doubt that transactional language is important, but it does not cover the full range of language use; in particular, a transactional focus ignores the imaginative use of language. If this use is neglected, there is a risk of implicitly “encouraging the use of English for uncritical obedience, bland politeness, and false consensus” (Carter, 2007, p. 604). In contrast, through practice with the “creative functions” of language, learners may gain “a sense of ownership of the language” beyond its utilitarian functions (Carter, 2007, p. 604).

It follows that with this sense of ownership, language learners would be more prepared to use the language in unfamiliar ways, experimenting with it across contexts. This relates to one big concern about using a creative writing activity in a speaking-focused course: it may not provide the right kind of practice for learners. However, as Carter (2004) notes, speaking and writing form a continuum rather than a binary, and cites a general consensus that “there is no simple, single difference between speech and writing” (p. 57). Dialogue-writing especially falls somewhere between writing and speaking, as writers strive to produce a spoken style of language. Moreover, the creative element may enhance the learners’ ability to transfer language skills in new ways. Pope (2005) notes the idea that creativity helps develop in learners “the ability to transfer knowledge from one context to another” (Seltzer & Bentley as cited in Pope, 2005, pp. 26-27).

One of the fundamental tenets of teaching functional language chunks is their transferability to new situations. Through focused practice on forms in line with a principled communicative approach, learners are encouraged to “creatively automatize” these distinct language chunks (Gatbonton & Segalowitz, 1988). Creativity is a key component of this process, though for Gatbonton and Segalowitz (1988), creativity only means that learners “generate (create) communicative intentions and produce the correspondingly appropriate utterances” (p. 476). The automatization can involve creativity in two additional senses: learners can begin to use more of their cognitive processes for creative ideas because they no longer need to think so much about language structure, and then they can practice creating fresh and original sentences by combining this language with various types of content. As Carter (2007) puts it, “the less the working memory, the more creative the constructions that are likely to be produced” (p. 606).

However, this creative output is not guaranteed. As Tin (2013) notes, “Very often, learners finish the task using simple, safe, and known utterances instead of retrieving less accessible language and knowledge” (p. 386). By sticking to what is already familiar, they can ensure that they succeed in the limited task and be “creative” in Gatbonton and Segalowitz’s (1988) limited
sense, but they may not find this particularly interesting; they may feel that they are just saying commonsense ideas. In contrast, if learners feel compelled to “say something new” or be creative in a broader sense, they may take more ownership of the language and find more interesting uses for it. Bell and Pomerantz (2016) summarizes research that documents how learners who are asked to repeat an activity rarely simply repeat it; instead, they may give “sarcastically exaggerated responses” (p. 117). Like in my learning experience, the next iteration can get weird due to learners’ desire to keep it fresh. By presenting learners with authorized opportunities to be creative, teachers may provide support for learners to gain greater facility with the target language in novel situations.

However, this openness to experimentation requires a certain level of comfort in the language classroom. SLA scholars have been keenly aware of the important role of affect in language learning (Dewaele, 2015). Much of this has focused on the “affective filter” (Krashen, 1982), and anxiety has been investigated as undermining language learning and production (Horwitz, 2000). However, others have pointed out that anxiety is just the negative valence of what might be termed tension or arousal, and they suggest with a positive valence, “euphoric tension” should actually improve language learning (Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001). Internal emotional states playing a central role in language learning might thus be mapped along the three basic dimensions originally proposed by Wundt in 1896: pleasure, arousal, and control (Bradley & Lang, 1994, p. 49).

How, then, might English discussion teachers promote creativity?
I describe the development of a brief creative writing activity that learners can use to review and extend their English discussion skills in creative ways. I also narrate my inquiry into its possible effects in an English discussion course and analyze how learners actually used it. I began my project with the hope that I could operationalize creativity in a relatively simple, quantifiable way and find promising correlations between it and other quantifiable teaching objectives. However, as described above, the literature on the complexity of creativity persuaded me to take a different approach, namely, focusing on how the learners and I developed and used the activity.

My central research question is thus open-ended and exploratory: Does a creative writing activity have a place in an English discussion course? I start with the general hypothesis that such an activity can be creatively adapted to promote learning in an English discussion course. Specifically, I sought to investigate four hypothesized benefits of this activity: more imaginative use of English, creative automatization and transfer of target language learning, increased sense of ownership and interest in using the target language, and less interference from affective filters.

METHOD
For this project, I first needed to attempt to develop and refine a creative writing activity that fit the focused goals of an English discussion class. This entailed drawing on my experience and the literature to create the first version and then using observation to improve the activity in successive iterations. To avoid burdening learners with extra homework or using too much valuable class-time, I provided a template for learners to use. Thus, rather than an open-ended creative writing assignment, it is more of a gap-fill activity. However, unlike many gap-fill activities that assess learners’ ability to produce accurate language forms, this review activity provides the target language in a model structure and challenges learners to provide the ideational content, such as Appendix A. Following Tin’s (2013) principle of facilitating creativity with constraints, the activity adds constraints to “prompt learners to search among the unknown to construct new meaning” (p. 390).

The primary creative constraint in this activity is the invitation to speak in others’ voices. In other words, learners are invited to join a “pastiche” play frame (Bell & Pomerantz, 2016, p.
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Learners are instructed to choose any two characters for their dialogue and to imagine what these characters would say about the topic. Typically one character is the primary speaker, while the other serves as an active listener. Those who do not want to join the play frame are free to write in their own voice, so they can easily bypass the constraint if it produces anxiety. Learners are typically given several minutes in class to fill in the blanks with their imagined content. Learners can choose to add more outside of class or to improvise when they perform the next week.

In both semesters, I randomly assigned four intermediate-level classes to a treatment group and four to a control group. I used the activity only in the eight treatment group classes while collecting data from all classes. In the treatment group classes, I observed how learners used the activity to determine its fit with the discussion course goals, and I made adjustments in each iteration. I use these observations of how learners and I actually used the activity in order to present an argument of how well the activity may fit the course. Taking a mixed-methods approach to test the more specific hypothesized effects, I attempted to operationalize the key concepts under investigation, with the awareness that crude, simple measures would tell only a small part of the story and that the effects of a brief, occasional activity would likely be modest. As described in more detail above, the hypothesized benefits of this creative activity were greater opportunities for the imaginative use of language, better transfer of language and skills to new contexts, more of a sense of ownership and interest, and less interference from learners’ affective filters.

I rely on my observations and the learners’ written examples to investigate how learners used language imaginatively. I explore how learners used the activity and seemed to express creativity in discussions. A quick, informal survey completed near the end of the course supplemented my observations with information about how learners perceived their creativity in the course and how learners viewed the activity. I operationalized transferability as my observation of specific functional language use in the formal small-group discussions. I chose to compare discussions in the lessons in which the treatment group learners performed their creative-writing dialogues, and I focused on the taught functional language that I felt most depended on creative thinking: Examples, joining the discussion to ask follow-up questions, and Possibilities in Semester 1; and Different Viewpoints and Balancing Opinions in Semester 2. Learners’ sense of ownership and interest were primarily measured through a simple survey in which participants rated their level of agreement with provided statements. I supplemented this with my observation of interactions and classroom atmosphere. Similarly, I measured learners’ affective states through Bradley and Lang’s (1994) brief image-based questionnaire (Appendix B). This questionnaire was developed to help respondents quickly self-report three dimensions of their emotional state: valence, arousal, and sense of control (Bradley & Lang, 1994).

RESULTS

I used a version of the creative gap-fill activity for review in every treatment group class for every discussion test in the research period. However, the ways in which the learners and I used it evolved with each iteration in response to time considerations, the fit or lack of fit to lesson topics and goals, and my observations about how learners were using the activity. In Semester 1, I handed out the blank template at the end of the lesson before the review lesson, went over the instructions, and provided a brief model. I told learners that they would have time in the next lesson to complete it and then perform it, but that it might be fun to think of some ideas outside of class. In the first iteration, learners could select suggested content by circling it and then complete the free-response gap-fill, but the next iteration used only free-response sentence completion. In Semester 2, I shifted the timing of the activity for better topic alignment and time management. I gave learners time to write at the end of the review lesson and asked them to perform it as a warm-up review in
the discussion test lesson. For the final iteration, I could not set aside class-time for learners to write, so I just handed out the template at the end of class for optional homework.

In the first iteration, many learners struggled to begin writing. They appeared engaged, pencils hovering over the blanks, but they seemed to want to have the complete dialogue in mind before they began. Meanwhile, others wore down their erasers, starting and restarting multiple times, often ending up with a similarly blank sheet. Learners seemed unsatisfied with this result, so after the first deadline, I added another couple minutes for them to get at least something down on paper. Though by this point I was having serious doubts about the utility of the activity, all learners were able to complete most of the dialogue in this brief added time. Moreover, although many still seemed unsatisfied with their own writing at the final deadline, they all seemed to enjoy performing them with their partners, laughing and praising each other’s ideas.

In future iterations, with a model and with practice, all learners got faster at the sentence completion, though the reticence to begin writing remained for some. In response to this challenge, I decided to make sure always to provide a possible starter idea, suggesting a character and eliciting from the group what this character might say. Many learners then chose to use this character or a similar character for their dialogues. For instance, when I suggested that learners could choose the animated character Lupin III, an unabashed and joyful thief, when the topic was the best way to get money, many chose a character that boldly advocated taking it from others. Many learners chose characters from popular culture or people who were currently in the news. Some put themselves in dialogue with fictional characters or world leaders. Others chose to speak for me, their friends, or their family. Still others went further afield, imagining the sun’s and the earth’s voices or animals’ perspectives. For instance, one learner imagined a dialogue between a melon and a watermelon, in which the watermelon expressed its wish to be cut with a knife rather than smashed with a stick. Some learners, however, left the character fields blank, letting the speakers’ characteristics emerge through the dialogue itself. Indeed, I noticed that many would skip over the character fields until later in the writing process, returning to it after they had already filled in several lines of dialogue. In other cases, especially as the dialogues became more abstract and academic, the connection between the characters and their statements grew tenuous. For example, in one dialogue, a dog and a cat had a serious discussion about why various professionals in Japan might need to use English for their jobs. Learners often expressed ideas that seemed to reflect their own opinions drawn from their everyday lives. For instance, one learner imagined having a boyfriend would transform a trip to a local park into “a special date.”

In some cases, learners recycled famous lines or translated running gags. Many drew upon their knowledge of fictional worlds from manga, anime, or literature to provide another view on the week’s topic. For instance, characters from the Anpanman animated children’s series considered whether the villain would be happier or more bored if he were Anpanman’s friend rather than his enemy, and one learner seemed to channel a Natsume Soseki novel to imagine being happier if she were a cat. Others used their knowledge of political debates, reflecting on national tax policy and the implications of machine translation on language education policy.

Regarding the transfer of creative modes of thinking, I observed slightly greater use of the Different Viewpoints function among the Semester 2 treatment group learners in both lessons compared. More interestingly, I heard more examples of fresh and surprising perspectives in these classes’ discussions than in the control group classes. For instance, these learners imagined a chef’s perspective, gold investors’ point of view, and an ill person’s viewpoint in a discussion focused on issues of money and poverty. Meanwhile, while the control group learners also had interesting discussions and added fresh ideas in other ways, they mostly used the standard perspectives raised earlier in class. Later in the term, some learners in the control group added imaginative viewpoints such as “bad boys” and “excited people,” but treatment group learners
seemed to play even more with the particularity of perspectives, such as imagining the recently elected Tokyo mayor’s viewpoint about Tokyo’s image leading up to the 2020 Olympics. This suggests that the pastiche element of the activity may have transferred into these discussions. While there was little effect on the average number of functional language uses per student for my other selected “creative function” in Semester 2, Balancing Opinions, the treatment group showed more consistent performance across classes, and there were more examples of imaginative ideas. For example, against the commonsense consensus, one learner commented that one disadvantage of waiting in line politely is that it is more difficult for groups to wait together.

The Semester 1 results on creative automaticity and the transfer of creative skills were more mixed. Both groups produced a great deal of functional language for examples and possibilities, with the control group actually using more possibilities in Lesson 12 (a week after this target language was taught). The treatment group had a higher instance of using the joining phrase “Can I ask a question?” in Lesson 8, which fit with the lesson objective of asking follow-up questions. Nonetheless, my observations again reveal potential evidence of the activity’s effects: learners in the treatment group more often explored imagined cases at length.

For example, in response to a question about how she would manage if the food in England were not delicious, one learner first suggested that she would bring cup noodles and on further thought, added that she would eat fish and chips every day. The group seemed temporarily transported through their classmate’s fantasy to another time and place, and they imagined further details together. Another learner imagined a fresh solution to her current difficulties with being independent, such as cooking and waking up without her parents’ help: “I will get a nice-guy boyfriend who will cook and wake me up.” Her classmates then asked for details about this strategy. Of course, some learners in the control group also displayed this tendency, with one class in particular seeming to take special pleasure in following ideas to their sometimes absurd conclusions. One example is a learner’s comment that he would conquer the world if he had a lot of money, which prompted his classmate to ask, “How would you conquer the world?” Ideas were questioned, challenged, and explored collaboratively. The treatment group learners generally engaged in this process more, but some learners in the control group were among the most enthusiastic participants in this imaginative collaboration.

While my hopes for the survey data were modest, the results are even less helpful than hoped. This is likely because there were too many confounding factors that had a much stronger effect on learners’ perceptions and responses than an infrequent and brief review activity could ever have, and the classes and learners in each group varied greatly. The activity seems to have had no impact on learners’ self-reported emotional states, sense of ownership, or interest in the class. The only partly suggestive result from the survey data is that the Semester 2 treatment group showed an increase in self-reported interest, ownership, and control when comparing the first survey to the final survey, while the control group showed a decline. However, this is tempered by the fact that the treatment group had especially low averages on these items when first measured in Lesson 2, and the control group’s absolute averages remained higher on most metrics. Likewise, there were no significant differences between the control group and the treatment group regarding their perception of how creative they were in the course or how interesting or easy they perceived their comments in the class to be. This is supported by my observations that learners were indeed creative in discussions in all classes; however, as illustrated above, treatment group learners displayed a tendency to be more creative in particular ways.

DISCUSSION
One of the primary questions of this research project was if a creative writing activity has a place in a discussion course. The simple fact that I was able to find a way to use the activity in every
review or discussion test lesson suggests that it can have a place. Moreover, the evolution of how I and the learners used the activity shows that it provided practice for skills important for discussion class participation. One concern was whether the focus on writing would overwhelm the speaking-focused goals of the course, but the focus on the collaborative reading/speaking performance allowed all learners to practice both the spoken discussion language skills and the creative ideation skills required for discussion participation.

However, the evolution of the activity did not result in perfection; indeed, the final iteration seemed to swing too far away from writing, such that learners may not have had enough time to decide on particular voices as creative constraints or to generate imaginative content. In order to better foster the collaborative element of creativity, the activity should have begun with a group- or pair-based brainstorming task in which learners generate a list of characters to choose from. Moreover, the activity might have been taken up more quickly if it were scaffolded differently in each progressive iteration. In the first iteration, learners could have first filled in only the target language, like a traditional gap-fill exercise, for my model; then generated a list of characters together; then circled some responses; and finally completed a few brief sentences to complete the dialogue. In the second iteration, learners could again generate a list of characters together and then complete sentences with the target language providing the structure. In the final iteration, learners could brainstorm characters and use target language from an unstructured bank of phrases.

Despite the activity’s limitations, learners were able to use it to express their creativity and to practice the imaginative use of language. Many learners were creative in an everyday sense, using relatively ordinary ideas from their lives but exploring them in more extraordinary detail. For instance, the extended fantasy of how life would be different with a romantic partner was an especially rich example of this. Some also performed impressive cognitive leaps into extraordinary circumstances. The meditations on life as a cat, the inner desires of a watermelon, or the various intellectually consistent mash-ups of fictional characters and political figures are impressive examples. Due to the nature of the task and how I presented it, there was a great deal of re-creation also. Learners repeated stories and ideas from various types of literature, which took on fresh meaning in the different context of a simulated discussion dialogue. The creative constraints seemed to inspire learners to say something new and fresh. Moreover, learners in the treatment group seemed more open to using English for imaginative purposes in the discussions. In general, they seemed to explore imagined cases in greater detail than learners in the control group.

The results suggest that the secondary benefits of this relatively brief and occasional activity were predictably modest. There seems to have been some transfer of creative functional language to the formal small-group discussions, but more in terms of quality than in terms of quantity. The greater frequency of original viewpoints and fresh advantages and disadvantages suggests a deeper internalization of this functional language, as learners seemed to be able to devote more of their attention to producing creative content than to producing the language forms. However, the results show that in terms of simple frequency of occurrence, there was little difference between the treatment group and the control group. If one’s goal is simply to elicit the appropriate use of target language, then there are surely more straightforward activities for this.

Likewise, since the survey responses failed to confirm the study’s hypotheses, this activity cannot yet be recommended as a way to increase learners’ sense of ownership and interest in the course or to help them manage their affective state. While from my observations, learners seemed generally to enjoy performing the dialogues with their partners, this did not show up in the survey data. It is likely that the instruments used were not adequate to measure these aspects in the first place, but it is also likely that the brief activity used simply does not have significant far-reaching effects on learners’ overall affective states or their overall perceptions of their use of language. If
a teacher senses a need to make significant improvements in these areas, a much more sustained and dramatic intervention would undoubtedly be required.

**CONCLUSION**

This paper primarily set out to investigate if and how a creative dialogue-writing task might fit in an English discussion course. While the mixed results emphasize that such an activity is certainly not a vital element for the specific goals of the course and may not have effects on learners’ sense of ownership, interest, or affective states, the examples produced by learners in the treatment group also illustrate that a creative dialogue-writing activity can at least provide learners an additional creative outlet to use their second language (L2) imaginatively. Moreover, this creative practice may play a role in encouraging some learners to use the English language for more than transactional purposes and to venture beyond the safe and familiar in their discussions. As the literature reminds us, creativity is complex and ubiquitous, and it is important to remember that it is expressed in many ways. The literature and examples presented in this paper illustrate that teachers who value creativity should be prepared to find it expressed in unexpected ways.

My creative dialogue activity seemed to succeed in the sense that it opened more space for the unexpected. While it did not replicate my learning experience of autonomously creating a creative dialogue in my L2, it seems that by encouraging learners to join a pastiche play frame, this activity helped learners be creative in the sense of making something “fresh and valuable” (Pope, 2005, p. xvi). Just as this emerged in my own L2 writing from my openness to “construct[ing] new and surprising meaning” through constraints (Tin, 2013), it seemed to emerge for the learners in my classroom when I provided a safe structure to let things get a bit weird.

**REFERENCES**


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**APPENDIX A**

*Choose any 2 characters (A & B). Use your imagination to complete their discussion. Their ideas can be silly or serious.*

A: ____________________________ B: ____________________________

B: What are your views on the best way to get money?
A: I would say that ____________________________

B: I see what you mean, but can I ask a question? Which is better – that way or ____________________________?
A: Well, I prefer ____________________________

B: Why is that better than ____________________________?
A: It’s better because it is more ____________________________ than ____________________________.

B: That could be right, but how about from ____________________________’s perspective?
A: Right. From their point of view, ____________________________

How do you feel about the best way to get money?
B: I’m afraid I disagree with your idea. For example, from ____________________________’s perspective, ____________________________

**APPENDIX B**

*How did you feel in today’s class? [今]のクラスで、どう感じましたか？*

(対向、ポジティブ、ミリオン、パワフル？)

How much do you disagree or agree?  (反対 / Disagree  ➔  同意 / 賛成)

I said my own ideas. 私のアイデアを言った。

We said interesting ideas. 私たちは面白いアイデアを言った。

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9