

a dual purpose: to loosen their preconception of what lesson planning is about and to push them to consider possibilities they might not think of otherwise. In the ensuing discussion, audience members expressed their surprise at the speed at which meaningful activities could be generated.

### **Dynamic feedback**

Feedback is a key feature of group dynamics but is often seen as an *effect* of teacher–student interaction, and not enough as an actual driver for collaborative learning. With this in mind I discussed three types of feedback: immediate, delayed and post-activity. The key idea here was to discuss how these types of feedback are integral to student development in second language acquisition. How we give but also handle feedback helps shape and support student learning. Some found this more driver-oriented approach to classroom feedback a real eye-opener.

### **Conclusion**

No-one said it, but in retrospect I felt more workshop time was needed to explore the potential of this approach. One thing was however clear: we can adopt multiple perspectives when we reimagine the classroom, but using affordance and group dynamics as a lens certainly provides a productive starting-point.

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### **References**

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## **5.5 It's a many splendored thing: reconceptualising teacher creativity**

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### **Introduction**

In a number of contexts around the world, creativity seems to have moved to the forefront of language education. The need for learners to engage with language in creative ways is increasingly considered of paramount importance. Despite the emphasis placed on learner creativity, research indicates that this can only be maximised if there are sufficient opportunities for teacher creativity. The premise is that teachers who are capable of being creative and teaching creatively are best placed to foster learner creativity (Xerri and Vassallo 2016).

Nonetheless, there exist a number of obstacles that inhibit teachers from positioning themselves as creative practitioners. One of the most powerful impediments that teachers have to struggle with is their own conceptualisation of creativity. Hence, it is important to challenge certain myths that might hinder teachers from acting creatively.

## Myth busting

Burkus (2014) identifies ten myths about creativity that people in a wide variety of fields believe in. In my creativity research in five different international contexts I have found that five of these myths are especially prevalent in education, these myths being shared by a significant number of the teachers I have interviewed.

The first myth consists of the belief that creativity is the product of a 'eureka' moment, i.e. a flash of inspiration that an individual is suddenly presented with by an external source. This myth ignores the fact that when teachers come up with ideas and solutions these have been incubating in their minds for some time, and both active and passive processes have been in operation.

The breed myth is based on the assumption that only certain individuals are born with a creative streak. This myth fails to consider that rather than being due to some genetic predisposition, creativity is a democratic phenomenon that can be developed in most people. Teachers who believe in this myth are likely to perceive their learners as either having been born talented or not. They are also likely to see themselves in that way and thus refrain from tapping their creative potential if they consider it to be absent.

Those teachers who conceive of creativity solely in terms of originality are bound to set a very high bar for themselves and their learners when it comes to describing something as creative. This myth disregards the fact that one of the most common forms of creativity is combinatory. When teachers establish connections between divergent influences, when they remix and reshuffle different kinds of texts, when they adapt materials to new purposes and groups of learners, they are being creative (Xerri 2016).

The lone creator myth is based on the beliefs that creative individuals can only operate autonomously, and that creativity consists of producing something on one's own. Teachers who hold these beliefs might discourage their learners from engaging in such activities as creative writing because they might see these as being at variance with a communicative pedagogy. They seem to forget that many creative productions are in reality the fruit of collaboration among different individuals.

Some teachers refuse to acknowledge that they can be creative because they believe that creativity can only flourish in an environment free of constraints. While a social environment that supports creativity is conducive to creative acts and processes, it is also true that some of the most creative ideas and solutions are generated in situations that are governed by clear rules and limitations. Many teachers manage to find a way of being creative while working within the parameters set by curricula, examinations, and policies. They succeed in doing so simply by opting to be creative rather than feeling disenfranchised.

## Conclusion

If we agree on the value that creativity has in enriching language learning, we must find ways of developing teacher creativity. The latter seems to be one of the facilitative conditions for the nurturing of creativity as an educational outcome given that creative practitioners are much more likely to use the classroom as a creative space that they and their learners can exploit to the full. However, it might first be fundamental for teachers to appreciate that there exist divergent conceptions of creativity, some of which might bar them from positioning themselves as creative practitioners.

Reconceptualising creativity as an inclusive and collaborative phenomenon that transcends the notions of inspiration and inherent talent, and that can thrive in constraints might encourage more teachers to seek ways of teaching creatively and for creativity.

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## 5.6 Increasing individual stretch and challenge: a practical solution

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### Introduction

Stretch and challenge, differentiation and personalised learning are central to current teaching and learning approaches within the Further Education sector in the United Kingdom. Ensuring this is evident in teaching on a regular basis can be problematic: it can be difficult to plan for systematically, and it requires additional preparation time for already stretched teaching staff. We presented our solution to this challenge, ADD ON: ADD IN; this is a systematic, task-based approach to ensure all teachers have high expectations for learners and learners progress from their individual starting points.

### Agreed principles

Tasks need to add value to the learners, not be a repetition of something already studied, and definitely do not include additional worksheets. They need to be easy for learners to understand and carry out with minimal teacher intervention. They should be straightforward for learners to check, by themselves or with a partner, without lengthy teacher feedback. To encourage learner autonomy, personalised learning and task ownership, there has to be an element of choice. Finally, tasks should be presented as cards distributed as appropriate in class, and task completion should be recorded in a vocabulary organiser.

### Project methodology

The ADD ON: ADD IN project formed the major part of our departmental continuing professional development (CPD) across the academic years 2015–2017. The project started with a literature review of professional publications and websites to identify ideas and activities which would meet the agreed principles. These ideas then were discussed and the best ideas were selected for initial trial with students. At regular periods during the academic year, the project and chosen tasks were evaluated and