

and control” (216). In keeping with her unequivocal stance throughout the book, she outlines the benefits, both individual and societal, of preserving and promoting multilingualism and the resources that minority languages embody.

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(Received 9 September 2005)

Language in Society 36 (2007). Printed in the United States of America
DOI: 10.1017/S0047404507250134

RONALD CARTER, *Language and creativity: The art of common talk*. London: Routledge, 2004. Pp. xiii, 255. Hb \$99.95, Pb \$29.95.

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The central idea of Carter’s wonderful new book is that “Creativity is a pervasive feature of spoken language . . . a key component in interpersonal communication, and . . . is a property actively possessed by all speakers and listeners” (p. 6). Carter is a scholar with a long history of solid work, both as one of the leaders of the CANCODE corpus effort (the Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English), and as the author of two books on English grammar (Carter, Hughes, & McCarthy, 2000; Carter & McCarthy, 2006). During countless hours reviewing transcripts from the CANCODE corpus of spoken English (5 million words, collected between 1993 and 2001), he repeatedly noticed that “patterns and forms of language which as a student of literature I had readily classified as poetic or literary can be seen to be regularly occurring in everyday conversational exchanges” (10).

Carter’s examples of creativity include repetition of words, phrases, or idioms, sometimes with improvisational embellishments – what is called “intertextuality” or “indexicality” by many scholars. As long ago as Bakhtin 1986, scholars were noting that some utterances contain traces of prior utterances within them, while altering those prior utterances to suit the present context. The idea is now widespread (A. L. Becker 1995; Fairclough 1992). Other scholars have studied the poetic creativity of repetition and embellishment, including Jakobson 1960, Silverstein 1984, and Tannen 1989.

Carter’s key questions are the same ones that have guided my own comparisons of jazz, theater improvisation, and everyday talk: Why do we conventionally think of linguistic creativity as written rather than oral? Are there degrees of

creativity, and are some instances more highly valued than others? How does verbal creativity differ between when it is planned and when it is spontaneous? In what contexts is verbal creativity more likely to occur? (See Sawyer 2001, 2003a, 2003b.)

This book focuses not on the content of everyday talk but on its interactional form – the ways that speakers respond to each other, build on their partner’s statements, and collectively build an emergent social product. “The examples here are pieces of everyday linguistic interchange, unremarkable in their way in that such exchanges occur routinely, but remarkable in that such everyday exchanges are far from mundane and illustrate a pervasive creativity in common thought” (24). In Carter’s examples, people use language to create attitudes and to maintain relationships, to establish group solidarity, to make jokes, to compete, to insult, to play with gender relations. In this, Carter’s study is part of a long tradition of research in sociolinguistics, Conversation Analysis, and pragmatics. It breaks with the linguistics tradition proper; the closest that pragmatics gets to an analysis of language use is speech act theory. But in speech act theory, the functions of speech are encoded in the performative verbs of the sentence; Carter’s examples are radically more creative, and they rarely encode any of the speech acts lexically or even referentially.

In chap. 1, Carter provides an overview of different types of verbal creativity. There are obvious examples, like children’s word play (“knock knock” jokes), puns (from movies like *Airplane*), cute retail shop names (“The Whole Story” for a health food shop), advertising language (his first example of language creativity is an ad at the airport that reads “abcdefghijklmnop rstuvwxyz”, with a “missing q” signifying the fact that the airline had no “queues” waiting for check-in). Carter uses these examples to convince the reader that language is fundamentally creative. Many of the examples involve irony, sarcasm, satire, understatement, or hyperbole, requiring the listener to figure out what the non-literal intention of the speaker is.

Chap. 1 also provides a quick review of the psychology of creativity (psychometric, social, and personality approaches), and it argues that social and cultural factors have been relatively neglected; for example, creativity is socially constructed and is defined differently in different times and places (also see Sawyer, 2006). Carter adopts Csikszentmihalyi’s well-known “systems view” of creativity (37–39), in which creativity is defined by and emergent from a system that includes not only the creative individual but also the culture (domain) and the society (field). There is, unfortunately, only a brief mention of the “ethnography of performance” approach – anthropologists who study the linguistic creativity of verbal performance, a tradition that Carter might have drawn on more extensively (44–46).

Chap. 2 turns to linguistic approaches, noting that the psychological and sociocultural approaches to creativity have neglected language (with the excep-

tion of my own work: see Sawyer 2001, 2003b). This chapter quickly reviews literary creativity, creative language, speech act theory, Bakhtin's concept of "addressivity" and how it implicates listener creativity, and, importantly, Conversation Analysis.

Chap. 3 turns in force to the analysis of data from the CANCODE corpus, identifying examples of spoken discourse that display creative properties. The CANCODE researchers emphasized informal discourse in noninstitutional settings. Two of Carter's most important goals are to identify differences between creativity in written and in spoken texts, and to identify particular creative patterns in spoken language. Chap. 3 presents examples of creativity with larger units of language that Carter calls "patterning" – proverbs or formulaic utterances that are embellished or modified, as in this comment about a married couple who are barely talking to each other: "Out of the frying pan into the deep freeze this time" (95). He continues with examples of "morphological inventiveness," creations of new words, often by adding the suffix *-y*, *-ly*, or *-ness* to a word, as in this example where two people are preparing food and one has asked the other for a bowl, but then has to clarify: the little ones are "sort of salad . . . that fruit bowl would be ideal" (99).

Particularly interesting to me were the examples of group creativity, when speakers build on one another's utterances, using repetition, parallel syntactic forms, and embellishment over the course of an exchange (100–9). These collaborative creative exchanges are often "relationship creating and relationship reinforcing" (107), tending to occur in small, intimate groups of close friends. The poetry of these exchanges was first noted by Jakobson 1960 and Silverstein 1984, but Carter's examples are more compelling and more lucidly explained. Carter follows the CA tradition in arguing that these collaborative creative patterns are emergent across speaking turns, and that participants are not consciously aware of them.

Chap. 4 analyzes figures of speech that are often found in literary texts, such as metaphors, metonyms, idioms, and hyperbole. Carter begins by presenting the notion of a "core vocabulary," the most common and unmarked words that everyone knows and uses, and argues that there is a cline from core to non-core vocabulary, and that non-core words have greater expressive possibilities. He also identifies a range of other clines, or dimensions, in language use: intimacy, intensity, and evaluative stance (117). In general, he finds that non-core words are associated with greater intensity and intimacy, as is greater use of figures of speech. He also notes that some metaphors require greater processing effort than others: "elephant bottom" is relatively easy to understand (referring to someone's large behind), whereas "genetic roulette" requires background knowledge from a newspaper article on the dangers of genetically modified foods (122–23). In the second half of the chapter, Carter provides several examples of embellishment of formulaic speech, noting that some idioms are more resistant to embel-

ishment than others. The chapter ends with a wide range of small but fascinating sections; in some cases, each paragraph makes an insightful observation that could easily result in a journal article.

Whereas chaps. 3 and 4 focus on linguistic creativity within the transcript, chap. 5 examines the relations between creative language use and social context. Carter argues that creative language use tends to function to maintain interpersonal relations and to construct social identities, and thus is more likely to be found in settings where such dialogue is occurring. The CANCODE researchers coded each episode for “context type” (transactional, professional, socializing, intimate) and for “interaction type” (collaborative idea sharing, collaborative task execution, to information provision, which is noncollaborative; see p. 150). This 3-by-4 coding scheme results in 12 different situation types, and Carter’s team identified 10 extracts for each of these 12 types, to identify regularities in linguistic creativity across contexts. Carter’s general conclusion is that creativity increases as the context type becomes more intimate, and as the interaction type becomes more collaborative (165), a convincing finding and one that is related to similar analyses I have done (Sawyer 2001, 2003a).

Chap. 6 extends these findings and analytical frameworks to non-CANCODE data, for example creativity in multilingual groups, called “code-switching” by Gumperz 1982 but here attributed to Rampton 1995 and called “crossing”; creativity in Internet chat rooms, also often between bilingual speakers, and in MUDs and MOOs; and creativity in professional settings, such as psychiatric counseling. Many of the examples in this chapter have a more critical feel, as speakers use language creatively to tease, to criticize, or to manage difficult “liminal” social moments.

Carter has accomplished his stated goals: to show that creativity is universally present in everyday talk, that it is contextually framed, that it has social functions, and that it emerges from collaborative interaction with everyone contributing equally. This is a fascinating book that I recommend highly, and I look forward to follow-on studies in this tradition.

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(Received 13 September 2005)

Language in Society 36 (2007). Printed in the United States of America
DOI: 10.1017/S0047404507260130

EIJA VENTOLA, CASSILY CHARLES, & MARTIN KALTENBACHER (eds.), *Perspectives on multimodality*. (Document Design Companion Series.) Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins. 2004. Pp. x, 250. Hb eur. 95.00/\$114.00.

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This sixth volume in the Document Design Companion Series, like its predecessors, is devoted to issues of written, spoken, and visual (electronic) discourse as a contextual undertaking. While other volumes have roots in social semiotics, this one is unique for the breadth of its multimodal curiosity. Its cross-section of essays emerged from discussions that took place during the First International Symposium on Multimodal Discourse at the University of Salzburg. The symposium’s organizers, who are also this book’s editors, hope their work will foster discussion encompassing theory, method, and an eclectic array of applications, from the multisemiotic construction of mathematics to visual/verbal humor in comics. From their point of view, this work suggests possibilities for future study rather than fully realized principles in a field where nonlinguistic meaning making is only beginning to be incorporated into linguistic analysis. Therefore, one can often forgive the uneven nature of this undertaking. Stronger concerns arise when problematic or missing information affects a central claim.

The book consists of 12 chapters, organized into two parts. Part I deals with theory and method. The eight chapters in Part II consider multimodal application and analysis. Theoretical interests begin with Hartmut Stöckl’s hierarchically structured and networked system of sensory channels (visual/auditory), core modes (image/language), medial variants (static/dynamic), peripheral modes (such as typography), submodes (such as gesture), and features (such as