

“Enhancing Creativity Through Substitutive Linguistic Means Among College Students”

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In contemporary times, the concept of creativity needs no introduction, and the necessity to be creative in all areas of life is almost self-evident. In such a cultural environment, the ongoing immense popularity from which creativity benefits lends it considerable symbolic capital: Even after decades of academic research, creativity has withstood its de-mystification and still denotes secretive and mystically-inclined exclusivity and superiority. This subtextual semiotic relation often accompanies seemingly rational, democratized and well-elucidated references to creativity. In other words, this mental concept remains powerfully intimidating. This talk draws on years of teaching creativity in academic settings, and contends that enlisting alternative and non-threatening terms in relation to creative exploits wield a reassuring and empowering effect on college students. Whenever possible, reformulating creative endeavors as serendipitous luck, methodical professionalism, psychological warfare, social privilege or technical achievement strip the concept of creativity from much of its angelic aura. In a pedagogical context, an increased awareness of the influence of speech on cognition and practice invoke an alternative rhetoric in order to refer to creativity differently. By virtue of being less daunting, a powerful critical stance of creativity's lofty cultural status that tempers its admiration may be forged. This template can be used for designing emboldening cultural environments and modes of thought among students, and more generally among people who strive for an adequate mastery of the concept.