Chapter 4
So, What is Creativity?
Animation Students and Teachers’ Conception of Creativity in China

Henry Ma
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong

ABSTRACT
With the impact of the development of the Creative Industries in the UK and other countries, China adopted the term Cultural and Creative Industry in a national strategy to initiate a structural refinement of the industrial sectors. The animation industry in China has long served as a major original equipment manufacturer (that is, producers of contract work for an external brand) to foreign investors. It then started to develop into a center of original design manufacturers (self-originated work sold to others) and original brand manufacturers (self-originated, self-branded work). This led to a rapid demand for creative talent from higher education institutes. Creativity is a relatively complex concept, and successfully fostering creativity in education demands a clear conception of what creativity and creativity education are. The objective of this chapter is to explore how teachers and students perceive the meaning of the term creativity and identify factors that contribute to teachers and students’ conception of creativity in education.
INTRODUCTION

Animation education has developed at a fast pace in China over the past ten to fifteen years. In 2000, there were only two higher education institutes providing animation education programs. By 2010, more than 1,000 higher education institutes were providing about 2,000 animation programs in China (Xiao, 2011). The rapid expansion of animation education was due to the intensive support for the development of the Cultural and Creative Industries by the government. The animation industry, as one of the key Cultural and Creative Industries, benefited from such a move (Wang, 2012).

The tremendous support and investment in animation education resulted in the rapid growth of the number of animation education programs and of the student intake. The increase in the number of programs and students seemed to be a success, but on the downside, it also created lots of problems in the animation education system (Bo, Jing & Liu, 2009). In 2013, a search with the keyword “animation education” in the China Journal Full-text Database returned more than 400 articles, and half of them discussed development issues in animation education. Most of them claimed that animation education could not produce enough talent to match the demand from the animation industry, and identified a serious shortage of qualified animation teachers. A large number of articles also touched upon words like creativity and innovation, but no article actually focused on nurturing creativity in animation education in China.

Animation is one of the key sectors of the Cultural and Creative Industries. If creativity is considered a major component in the Cultural and Creative Industries, nurturing creativity should play an essential role in animation education. However, in the vast number of published articles on animation education, we seldom see research topics addressing this issue. This reveals a potential knowledge gap in the nurturing of creativity in animation education. The study of nurturing creativity in animation education will contribute to achieving a greater understanding of the development of animation education as well as the promotion of the Cultural and Creative Industries.

The main focus of this research project was to explore the current situation regarding the teaching objectives and approaches of higher education institutes on the subject of animation education, and try to understand how teachers and students perceive the meaning of creativity in that field.
Related Content

Early Childhood Programs as Professional Development Schools
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/early-childhood-programs-as-professional-development-schools/116181?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/early-childhood-programs-as-professional-development-schools/116181?camid=4v1a)

Metacognition in Higher Education: Successful Learning Strategies and Tactics for Sustainability
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/metacognition-in-higher-education/175775?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/metacognition-in-higher-education/175775?camid=4v1a)
Faculty Videos of Resilience Narratives at Two Institutions: Residency Resilience Skills Program Innovation
[www.igi-global.com/article/faculty-videos-of-resilience-narratives-at-two-institutions/245770?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/faculty-videos-of-resilience-narratives-at-two-institutions/245770?camid=4v1a)

Evaluation of Multi-Peer and Self-Assessment in Higher Education: A Brunei Case Study