A Japanese Teacher Education Course in Creative Composition Project for Non-Music Majors:
Challenging Creativity and Collaboration

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study documents the creative composition project for non-music education major students in Japan to investigate the process of learning from each other. The participants (N=49), non-music major university students, employed Higuchi's idea marathon (IM) to maximize creativity by writing down and recording innovative ideas daily. They spent six months composing music regularly. Some of the challenges that students felt were peer learning to learn together as the composition could be solitary work, and there were many students who possessed different musical background as well as preference in musical style. In this study, the teacher-researcher encouraged each student to care, and group of students to help and support each other and share the work of the students regularly in class. At the end, students reflected on the process of peer learning and peer-assessed creativity in each composition, and students performed the selected song in small groups as units. The study particularly focuses on how students learned from each other and achieved kyosei goal by sharing creativity.

INTRODUCTION

Creativity has become one of the most multifaceted, controversial, dynamic and fascinating research topics of our time. Although many creativity scholars have agreed to define creativity as "novel and useful," (Amabile, 1996) or "novel, appropriate and high quality," (Matlin, 2009) there have been controversies and diverse views on creativity of everyday sense. recent creativity research suggests that there are certain cognitive universals to support the view that everyone is creative, including children (Runco, 2007 and Richard, 2009). In specific, a research labels the eminent level of creativity for genius or special talented people as larger-C Creativity, and others including "the neat things children often say, or the creativity all of us share just because we have a mind and we can think" as smaller-c creativity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). From the standpoint of social psychology, Amabile (1996) also points out that the importance of conducting research on non-eminent level of creativity as a normal cognitive ability in our everyday lives (p.82).

More recently, many subcategories are added to describe subjective and personal creativity, and creative experience of our daily lives as mini-c creativity or everyday creativity (Kozbelt, Beghetto, Runco, 2010). To describe, "mini-c creativity captures the idea that even very young individuals and those without a large amount of knowledge construct personal understanding of the world" (Ward, Kolomyts, 2010, p.96). In addition, Richard (2009) explains everyday creativity as a universal capability both for adults and children, and notes as follows:

We humans are often 'everyday creative,' or we would not even be alive. To cope with changing environments, we improvise, we flexibly adapt… and change the environment to suit us (p.3).

Everyday creativity is a way of life and learners generate new perspectives by using their own creativity (Richard, 2009).

From an Asian perspective, traditionally, "the key to creativity is the process more than the result," and the process involves connecting to a larger reality by reconfiguring or rediscovering existing elements; thus Asian view that "tradition is not alien to creating" (Lubart, 2010). Confucian philosophy describes that learning, as an ultimate human pleasure, is meant to search past reflectively to discover a new meaning or personal understanding (Koyasu, 2010).

To interpret the word *Dao* (道)that occurs some eighty times in *The Confucius's Analects,* and is of central importance for reading early Chinese thinkers, Ames & Rosement (1998) simply translated as "the way" or "path" of life, but it could be interpreted as "the active project of road building." Specifically, "to realize *Dao* is to experience, to interpret, and to influence the world in such a way as to reinforce and

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