

Knowing Creativity. Commentary on Glăveanu, V. (2014). The Psychology of Creativity: A Critical Reading

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Knowing
Knowledge
Creativity theory

Article history:

Received 9 October 2014

Received in revised form 18 December 2014

Accepted 19 December 2014

ISSN: 2354-0036

DOI: 10.1515/ctra-2015-0013

ABSTRACT

In this commentary an indispensable aspect of creativity, knowing creativity, is articulated as a response to Glăveanu's (2014) inquiry into advancement of the field of the psychology of creativity. Connotations of knowing are presented such as perceiving and understanding ourselves within our environment. Accordingly, knowing creativity is about genuinely seeing, sensing, feeling, and relating creativity for self and the common good.

INTRODUCTION

We Know More Than We Tell

This commentary entitled *Knowing creativity* focuses on providing some preliminary insights into Glăveanu's (2014) inquiry into advancement of the field of psychology of creativity: *Developing towards what?* (p.10). Specifically, the commentary echoes an increasing awareness among scientists of the limitations of science, which in scientific writing has been summarized briefly in the following remarks: "We know more than we can tell" (see Polanyi, 1983, p.4). "When we try to describe (knowing) it we find ourselves at a loss, or we produce descriptions that are obviously inappropriate" (Schon, 1983, p. 49, the word in brackets, added by the author of this commentary). The concepts of knowing and knowledge are interrelated (Gurm, 2013). "(K)nowing is about perceiving and understanding ourselves within our environment; whereas, knowledge is about being able to communicate the knowing (this is making it public)" (Gurm, 2013, p. 2). Knowing (music) leads to the heart of creativity. Being knowledgeable about something is demon-

strated by writing and talking about the art of it (see Rozman, 1999). In the search for “the informal logic - on which science rests” (Polanyi, 1968, p. 27), Michael Polanyi (1801-1976) called for the awareness of relating knowing and knowledge. According to him, science is “an extension of perception” (Polanyi, 1968, p. 28). The scientist ultimately relies on the power of the mind for establishing a true coherence in nature (p. 29). The mind rooted in the body from which it transcends is free in action (Polanyi, 1968). To Polanyi (1968) science was based on our powers to discern coherence in nature. Scientists have the ability to integrate the perceived in terms of what ordinary people cannot readily handle. He reminded us that we should insist on recognizing our powers to know far more than we can tell.

Beyond Knowing Forms and Types

Scientific writing (knowledge) has yet to adequately describe our lived experience, learning, and creativity (knowing). It is easy to articulate the “static” of the “moving”, “being” of the becoming, or the observable of the unperceived part of the result of our action. Schon (1983) explained that “our knowing is in our doing” (p. 49). Knowing creativity includes, but goes beyond types and forms of creativity (e.g., eminence, Simonton, 1999; mini-creativity or transformational learning, Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009). It is dealing with knowing human nature, the relatively stable and the changeable, deviant, ambiguous and often contradictory (Birgerstam, 2002, p. 431), and how their interactions relate to growth. Consciousness-based creativity (Sundararajan & Raina, 2014, p. 6), for instance, concerns participation and involvement in the process or self-reflectivity or self-transcendence of the seer (p. 7). The frame of reference in *consciousness*-based creativity shifts from generating knowledge to developing self. The main focus of *consciousness*-based creativity is for breakthroughs in consciousness, the relational nature of consciousness as co-creator with Nature. In this sense, creativity is an active creation of the individual. “Seers are not mere transmitters of traditions, but can, when necessary break the tradition and establish the new” (Sundararajan & Raina, 2014, p. 7). Some novel behaviors in practicing *consciousness*-based creativity include staying away temporarily from the crowd, detaching from the material world, and committing to intangible efforts. Creativity for self is about enhancing sensitivity to the world, and emergence of wisdom.

Knowing the Unperceived

Creativity can emerge in intersubjective space, in play, and in immediate experience. Creation emerges in relaxation (Bergson, 1911). In conversation morality arises (Gadamer, 2004). Wisdom and compassion emerge in one-pointed concentration. Creativity in doing challenges our existing styles of reporting, measuring and theorizing it:

“(T)he unperceived part of the result of a person’s action that does not depend directly on the consciously set goal and sometimes plays the decisive role in a creative act” (Ponomarev, 2008, pp. 18-19). That is why Ponomarev (2008, p. 20) committed to the study of psychic, with two aspects of investigation. The ontological aspect is related to psychic reflection as investigated existence. The epistemological aspect concerns psychic reflection as the relationship of knowledge of existence to existence itself. For the former, consciousness is part of being, which makes it possible for the psychic to be incorporated into the systems of forms of movement of matter. This category of interaction is established and applicable to the study of psychic reality. For the latter, being determines consciousness. In creating, the whole person engages in doing, acting, expressing, thinking, dialoging, meditating, imagining, feeling, relating, and so on. The body and the mind are inseparable. The whole person is involved in communication, relating to others, interaction, conversation, intuition, relaxation and imagination.

CONCLUSION

A brief response to Glăveanu’s (2014) remark on “developing psychology of creativity towards what?” can be: “Towards better knowing creativity”. “Knowing is tacit, implicit, within our patterns of action with which we are dealing” (Schon, 1983, p. 49). Knowing creativity includes not only measuring goal-directed behavior (e.g., the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking, Torrance, 1974; and consensual assessment, Amabile, 1983) but also understanding the unperceived part of the result of a person’s action, which is important for creativity. In teaching and learning, aesthetic knowing, which can be intuitive and practical, is the art of doing that leads to transformation, creativity, and new knowledge in a particular context (Gurm, 2013). In practicing meditation or yoga the participant observes the rise and fall of his (her) breaths or thoughts. S/he strives for attaining inner peace, compassion for others, and loving-kindness for all living beings. A feature of consciousness-based creativity is self-transformation and emergence of wisdom (Sundararajan & Raina, 2014). Intuition-based creativity is characterised by being spontaneous, free, non-linear, non-sequential, adventurous, knowing without conscious reasoning, or a realization of wholeness that transcends intellect and reason (see Lawrence, 2012).

Further to the hint about the state of the psychology of creativity that is close to a crisis (Glăveanu, 2014, p. 10), two additional questions are posed: Where are we? Where are we going? A preliminary answer to the former question can be: We are at the crossroads of thinking of possibilities and learning to live well. We are also in the reflective duration of knowing creativity for developing personhood and sustaining the common good. A temporary answer to the latter question can be: We are going to engage in boundary crossing

studies that appreciate potentialities and inclusivity, that embrace contradictions, and that search for collective attention and similarities (see e.g., Tan, 2013). Creativity research and theorizing can attempt to relate to the powers of knowing through creating new languages (Glăveanu, 2013), and synthesizing tacit knowledge, aesthetic knowing, intuition-based creativity, consciousness-based creativity, and knowing creativity. Sundararajan and Raina (2014) highlighted some biases in our understanding of the world: We emphasize words more than number, focus on the social norm account that denies creativity by choice, and dismiss the law of small number contributions of hermits such as Chuangzi and Loazi, as well as poets. We shall continue posing bold questions (see Glăveanu, 2014), challenge existing theories, methodologies, and paradigms of understanding creativity, and examine the accuracy of the representation of creativity with reference to lived experiences and practices. More importantly, we shall continue seeing, sensing, feeling, and knowing creativity for self and the common good, even if we seem to be at a loss for words in describing it.

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