Creative Chat is Fashionable

Mary Stokrocki*

Professor Emerita, Arizona State University, USA

Abstract

We are all familiar with emojis attached to our text messages. People communicate via multi-literacies, such as text/creative chat, IM, 3-D visual installation, gesture, music, video, et al., [1]. Global communication these days require lots of notation and the Internet and cell phones have made it easier and more fun to do so. Globalization is "the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa" [2]. It is the result of the evolution of global economy, transnational connections with new collaborative decision entities, development of transnational institutions and communication, and formation of new military ties [3]. Creative chat as part of the *History of Popular Pleasures* [4].

Keywords: Chat; Globalization; Calligraphy; Parody; Creativity; Critical thinking

Introduction

I have been teaching on and researching life on virtual worlds namely (SL) Second Life for over 10 years. I enjoyed the creative communicating, especially creative chat. I started collecting examples of these short conversations. Chat consists of computer type: Lettering, numbers, notes, etc., arranged in playful ways. Lettering becomes more expressive when the letters form iconic images, including greetings, cat sentences, bunny logos, emoticons, and whimsical musical scores. Repetition is the aesthetic key and many of these arrangements are created on the avatar's own computer and uploaded. Such creative lettering has Asian influences.

Method

Most East Asian writing traditionally consists of pictographs. Chatting "is a collage or union of bits of writing or rhythm" by reforming, remixing, & appropriating [type] or words" [5]. Some time ago, Mitchell Stephens [6] predicted that the Internet would free us from the limitations of formal language by presenting language as a visual phenomenon, as done in Asian calligraphy. Calligraphy is a way of scripting or writing. Graph means graphic symbol. In my studies of the new visuality and communicating in Korea, we discovered later that the visual language was a mix of Asian and Euro scripts [7]. Here are some of the chat examples. Much of it consists of typed letters formatted in different ways on the computer but also stuffed into images. Examples include animals, noises.

Result and Examples

Examples included animal images, noises and actions, exaggerated words and different viewpoints, Holiday Script Images, Word Embellishments & Signals, Creative Sculptures, Architecture and Candy Parody Drawings. Finally, I offered my students a lesson on Postmodern Parody.

Animal images, like cats

For me, the most popular chat images are animals, especially cats, because I own two of them (Figure 1). In French, cat is "chat."

***Corresponding author:** Mary Stokrocki, Professor Emerita, Arizona State University, USA

```
 ⁄l、
(ﾟ 、。7
 l、ﾞ~丶
 じしf_,)ノ
```

Figure 1: Mew~ North American wild animal avatar from Club Hallyu.

Animal noises and actions

Even my students started to find creative animal action, noise examples and different viewpoints (Figure 2a&b).

Figure 2a.	Figure 2b.
(◡‿◡*) hiii ✿hug✿ (*◡‿◡)	(\ /)
ﾟ、。7 meow 💗	(. .)
╟ じしf)	(")(")
	Hop Back! To Wild Cat Country

Figure 2a&b: Hug and Meow noises and hop back moves from Jared's Wildcat.

Exaggerated words and different viewpoints. Animal images came from different views and exaggerated words (Figure 3)

```
    _____
  / 0    \____
 /  _  \_/    \
/ / \   ____   \
/_/   I  I    I  I
      I  I    I  I
```
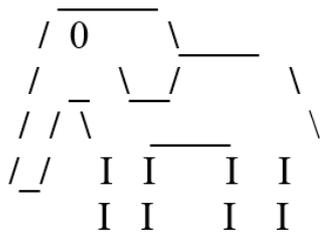
Figure 3: Elephantastic from the sideview and exaggerated lettering.

Szavanna Anatra just emigrated from South Africa to England. She is a DJ for Sun vibes World Music on SL for Inspiration Island, Whole Brain Health.

Holiday script images

On SL, 11/2020, Avatar Mentor Elli Pinion invited students, to HOWloween (Halloween sic). She stated, "Our students have made a Howl-o-ween Haunted House/Hunt....but it opens at the same time NPC's party starts. I'm going to slip you an invitation if you'd like to drop by later. It should be open for a while." See Howl-o-ween (Figure 4a). Elli later invited us to her Thanksgiving Party as well (Figure 4b).

```
            ∧
           / \
          /___\
         / ( o \
        /l  // \-'
     ___(o,    /\
      ) / l   /_ \
>>>>==( (__u---(___ )-----
                //
               /__)        -
```
Neil Smith in Elli Pinion 's Class
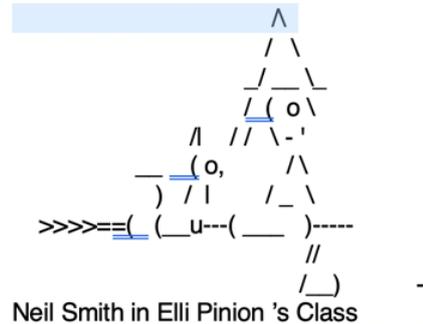
Figure 4a: Halloween witch.

```
        ))
     ))   ))
   )_) )_) )_)
  )___))___))___)\
 )____)____)_____)\\
_____|____|____|____\\\___
.---------\       /---------
^^^^^ ^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^
```
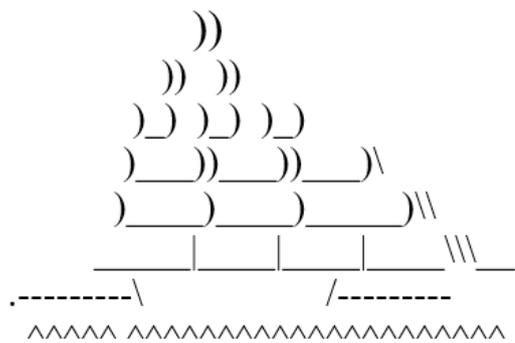
Figure 4b: Thanksgiving party sailboat invite.

Body action & image chat

When Dancing at the Second Life Clubs, students found body action & image chat. See the Body image in Figure 5. MTBD x I'm Him x Good Boy-Mashup... come let me fill your ears with yummy music at Club Hallyu dance, 8/15/2015 [7].

Word embellishments & signals

The Chat eventually evolved with word additions, like musical notes and hand motions, such as Stella Quandry: LOL THUNDERRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR! (Figure 5) at the Junkyard Blues Club. They also saw hand signals and notes as in Figure 6.

- [17:54] R3VI3: Junin (226,225,25) (June 4, 2015)
- [18:39] CRłSSy GaR Cia: ◯
- [18:39] CRłSSy GaR Cia: /) (\
- [18:39] CRłSSy GaR Cia: «(_i)
- [18:39] CRłSSy GaR Cia: \ I /
- [18:39] CRłSSy GaR Cia: Y ~$håK ∑ ¥øur ßøø † ¥~
- [17:53] R3VI3: I got the tunes spinning playing now is.... CL x Mino x GD x Taeyang

Figure 5: Body action and image chat.
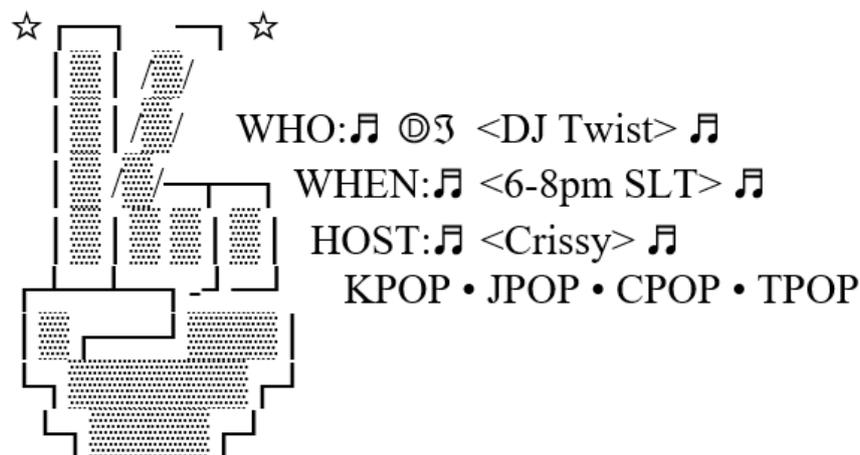
Figure 6: Totally 80's PG Club's signals and music notes.

Later, we discovered that avatars could purchase a Chat Emoter or HUD [attachment] to wear to send messages to avatars when dancing on SL. They need to choose an avatar and a message and send it to those participating at the event.

Creative sculptures

I was so surprised to see chat words, such as hope, love, and peace as a tree and other colorful words floating around at Project Hope Island. The word PEACE here was built into the tree and the background was made transparent (Figure 7). Peace tree and the floating yellow "Sunshine" letters.

Figure 7: Peace tree and the floating yellow "Sunshine" letters.

Giant architecture

Second Life features giant architectural and sculptural lettering. Patrick Moya now has his own island and museum, featuring his "MOYA" name as giant tower, arch entrance, and in paintings and sculptures all over the place [tiny ones at bottom below] (Figure 8).
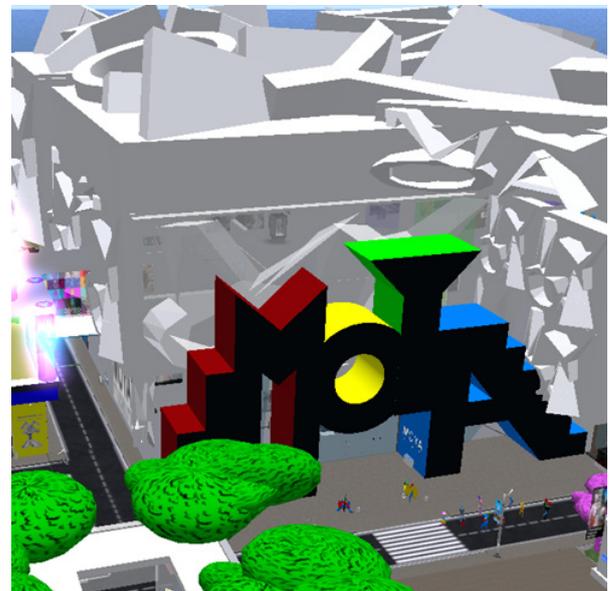

Figure 8: MOYA Art Museum consists of his name in giant letters.

Postmodern candy parody

Finally, I offered my students a lesson on Postmodern Parody of their favorite candy to encourage critical thinking chat. Parody is a distortion, imitation, satire, spoof, etc. of a commercial product in this case. We uploaded the drawings and students spun them around. Results had double meanings-critical of human issues or problems.

They loved it! One study explained that Lady Gaga below loved to send kisses to her fans as part of a "comeback video" with this finger gesture (Figure 9). This scene is meant as a teaser for her little monsters (an endearing term for her fans). The lesson became a favorite parody that enabled students to devise creative ways to criticize and communicate. This critical thinking approach uncovers "the privileged boundaries of art, social desire, agency, power, representation, history, pleasure, and spectatorship" [8].

Figure 9: Lady gaga postmodern parody of lady finger candy at my Second Life Art Ark School.

Discussion: Creativity and Critical Thinking

Such examples of Creative Chat are not always easy to manipulate but can be playful pedagogy [9]. My findings reveal that creativity involved communication via multimedia and students' social networks. Teachers need to attend to students' social networks and encourage students to negotiate this media model complexity, including virtual worlds, and "to suggest skills, resources, and critiques when warranted" [10]. Creativity then becomes more than "chatty" (pun).

References

1. Stokrocki M (2014) Exploration in virtual worlds: New digital multi-media literacy investigations for art education. National Art Education Association, Reston, Virginia, USA.

2. Giddens A (1990) The consequences of modernity. Cambridge, UK.

3. Torres CA (2002) Globalization, education, and citizenship: Solidarity versus markets? American Educational Research Journal 39(2): 363-378.

4. Duncum P (2021) Popular pleasures: An introduction to the aesthetics of popular visual culture. Bloomsbury, London, United Kingdom.

5. Ayers R (2014) Creative writing: The long and winding road. In: Marshall J, Donahue D (Eds.), Art-Centered Learning Across the Curriculum: Integrating Contemporary Art in the Secondary Curriculum. Techers College Press, New York, USA, pp: 120-138.

6. Stephens M (1998) The rise of the image, The Fall of the Word. Oxford University Press, Oxford, United Kingdom.

7. Stokrocki M, Yujn J (2017) Chap 16. Promoting global multi-literacy through investigating traditional and pop culture on second life Korean hangouts. In: Shin R, Lim M, Dimitriadis MB, Lee O (Eds.), Pedagogical Globalization: Traditions, Contemporary Art, and Popular Culture of Korea. International Society for Education through Art (InSEA) E-book Publication.

8. Marita S, Lisa C (2001) Practices of looking: Introduction to visual culture. Oxford University Press, New York, USA.

9. Duncum P (2015) Prosumers, parasites, and playful pedagogy. In: Bastos F, Zimmerman E (Eds.), Connecting creativity research and practice in art education: Foundations, pedagogies, and contemporary issues. National Art Education Association, Reston, Virginia, USA, pp: 251-257.

10. The SL Enquirer (2015) Bending the boundaries of gender in Second Life.