

Writing Tasks to Elicit Language and Creativity: Describe Completed Drawings vs. First Draw, Then Describe*

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This study investigated a new writing task that utilizes drawing to elicit students' language and original thinking. Two forms of pictures were designed and administered to 118 children. One form was conventional and consisted of completed pictures, requiring students to simply describe the pictures in writing. The other form, which was new, comprised incomplete pictures, requiring students to first draw and then describe them in writing. The descriptions were scored for originality (to represent creative thinking) and vocabulary and text length (to reflect linguistic domains). The originality scores were higher for students who were given the unfinished pictures regardless of their writing proficiency. Vocabulary diversity and text length fluency depended on the level of writing proficiency: for poor writers, these abilities were facilitated when they were given completed pictures, while for good writers, the form variation made no difference. This study highlights that to stimulate original thinking, an unfinished picture form is useful because it affords students opportunities to express unique ideas regardless of poor or good writers.

Key words: drawing, incomplete, unfinished pictures, writing task, originality, creativity, text length, vocabulary

1. SIGNIFICANCE AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Creativity is an ability that can produce innovations and revolutionary changes in a society. Creative ideas are sought when facing problems at work and school, and some say

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that creativity is now at a historical premium (Sternberg & Kaufman, 2010). Teachers and students recognize the necessity of creativity. However, the importance of creativity may be only an abstract consideration for those who do not know how creativity can be encouraged and improved.

Few practical methods have been developed for encouraging and measuring creativity at school. Some challenges have existed with regard to measuring creativity because it requires a wide range of tools, such as games and standardized tests (Torrance, Ball, & Safter, 1992). It is difficult, however, to apply such methods in the classroom due to practical and technical constraints associated with time, administration, and scoring. Therefore, useful methods are required to stimulate and incorporate students' creativity in practical ways in education and assessment.

In an attempt to develop and assess students' creativity, various kinds of pictures have been used, since it is known that pictures can stimulate students' imagination and promote creativity (Choi & Kim, 2007). Pictures have also been widely used to elicit, improve, and compare students' language production (Bae & Lee, 2010).

Using picture prompts, this paper addresses a method for encouraging and improving creative thinking in writing education and assessment. Specifically, the research aims to ascertain whether there might be a beneficial influence on creative thinking to be derived from completing an unfinished picture in a picture-based writing task.

To achieve this goal, two series of pictures were developed and compared as test forms: *completed* vs. *unfinished*. One series was a conventional form and consisted of completed pictures. The other form was new, consisting of unfinished pictures. Detail regarding these picture forms is provided in the "Methods" section. As detailed there, elementary school students ranging from good to poor writers, were randomly assigned one of the two test forms. Based on the written texts, certain linguistic and creative aspects of writing ability were measured using these pictures. With this design, the research questions were formulated in relation to the two test forms and writing proficiency groups as follows.

1. In a writing task using picture description, which picture form (completed vs. unfinished) is useful to teach and assess linguistic and creative elements?
2. Are the findings from the question above consistent across groups of good and poor writers?

Previous studies using pictures have mostly used completed pictures. This study is significant because few studies have examined whether there might be any benefits in educational assessment if unfinished pictures are used. The current study began from the perspective that using unfinished pictures might improve student creativity. This form of testing affords students an opportunity to draw pictures and would seem likely to have the

collateral effect of stimulating creativity in their English writing. If this turns out to be true, it could represent a new method of English writing instruction and testing, allowing teachers to help students incorporate creativity in language production tasks.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Creativity and Originality

Many definitions of creativity have been proposed. For instance, Treffinger (1996) described over 100 different definitions, while others suggested 101 contemporary definitions (Aleinikov, Kackmeister, & Koenig, 2000). However, no definition has been broadly accepted, and researchers' definition of creativity differ. Yet, coming up with definitions *are* important because assessment begins with defining abilities.

According to Cropley (2001), creativity as described in education and psychology includes the following core notions:

- (1) Originality (a creative production, action, or idea which ... departs from the familiar);
- (2) Fluency (it has results and achieves some end – which may be artistic or spiritual, but may also be material, such as making a profit).

Some common characteristics in the definitions of creativity are as follows. Treffinger (2002) used the following sub-categories to explain the meaning of creativity:

- (1) Originality – the ability to generate new and unusual ideas
- (2) Fluency – the ability to produce a large number of ideas
- (3) Flexibility – the ability to change the direction of one's thinking or views
- (4) Elaboration – the ability to add details and expand ideas

Gardner (1993) proposed that a creative person solves problems or defines new questions in a novel way. Guilford (1977) said that creative thinking brings about a new outcome that in turn produces new responses to that new situation. He identified components of creativity, including sensitivity to problems, fluency, flexibility, novelty, synthesis, and reorganization. Isaksen, Dorval, and Treffinger (2000) stressed a balance between creativity and critical thinking in solving problems. In their definition, creativity contains original possibilities, paradoxes, and opportunities, and critical thinking involves care and possibilities to refine and develop in problem solving.

Although there have been many definitions of creativity, it cannot be boiled down to a single sentence. Therefore, which definition one chooses when studying creativity will determine the path of one's research. It would be desirable to have a single, unified understanding of what creativity means, although this is no easy task in that the various characteristics of creativity regarded as important are different.

In line with this desire, in this study the definition used does follow a simple, clear, and central component of creativity, the most popular definitions. The authors of this study adopt the definition of originality to mean the novelty of ideas or meaning (MacKinnon, 1962). This definition is the same as one of the components of Cropley's (2001) and Treffinger's (2002) creativity, which they call "originality." A case could be made that originality is the main category, superordinate to all of the others, and could qualify by itself as the main definition of creativity. It is impossible to measure all aspects of creativity within a single study. Originality could be regarded as representing a characteristic of creativity. Therefore, this paper uses "originality" as synonymous with and representative of "creativity" in order to evaluate creativity.

2.2. Pictures, Writing, and Creativity

A main reason for teaching and learning writing skills, according to Yun (1995), is that writing is a creative activity that contributes to language learning. In most testing contexts of writing, students are only assessed on linguistic measures. Writing studies that have been conducted in combination of creativity are found in a limited amount. Among the scarcity, Gutbezahl and Averill (1996) investigated individual variability in emotional creativity using story writing and drawing. The authors found that participants who scored higher on emotional creativity showed greater creativity in expressing emotions, both verbally and nonverbally. More research that combines writing and creativity would be beneficial in the era of creativity. The present study is in line with this need. The study combines English writing with creativity. In the study, writing is divided into two domains: the linguistic domain, including vocabulary and text length, and the creativity domain, represented as originality.

In testing writing production, pictures have been used in numerous studies. For instance, Yun (1995) described a method of writing with pictures and provides a summary of research on writing using pictures from around the world, supporting that pictures can be a significant element in teaching writing. Mun and Im (2010) investigated the effectiveness of utilizing pictures on the writing ability of beginning-level English learners. Compared with the prevailing grammar-translation method, the method using pictures demonstrated a significant improvement.

Pictures have also been used to test creativity. The Torrance tests of creative thinking use pictures (Torrance, 1998, 2008; Torrance, Ball, & Safter, 1992). Kim (2002) found that realistic illustrations appear in high school English textbook at a large scale, but that to stir up imagination, unrealistic illustrations are more efficient than realistic ones in which all the meanings are expressed and the learners feel no need of imagining.

Choi and Kim (2007) proved the effectiveness of visual images to improve creativity by taking school children to a museum, and then taking them back to school to write about what they had seen. This provides evidence that visual images can be a major factor in creativity. Kaplan and Kaplan (1989) and McCoy and Evans (2002) also suggested the potential role of visual materials in creativity. Kim and Bae (2015), Lee and Bae (2018), and Suh and Bae (2016) used a task where a single-scene event is provided and students were asked to create a story by imagining what happened before and after that event. Investigating different topics, these studies indicated the usefulness of pictures for stimulating imagination in writing when the task provides appropriate verbal directions.

In the present study a new set of pictures has been developed and used to encourage and elicit students' original ideas: unfinished vs. completed pictures. No or very few studies, if any, have used and compared these types of pictures to tap into creative thinking and language skills. The current study draws on the potential usefulness of pictures to encourage students' imagination and original thoughts. The use of unfinished in comparison to completed pictures is a unique approach that is not found in prior studies. The study will demonstrate whether the unfinished picture version can be used more effectively to elicit language and originality.

3. METHOD

3.1. Participants

The study participants comprised 118 elementary school students (55 boys and 63 girls). Of these, 40 were first graders, 40 were second graders, and 38 were third graders. The school, located in D City, Korea, has operated a partial English immersion program, where a certain portion of the curriculum is taught in English while the rest in Korean. Students receive a substantial amount of instruction in English for chosen subjects such as math and science, and they are expected to speak and write in English during these classes. A detailed nature of the language acquisition in this school is not the scope of this study but appears in Bae, Bentler, and Lee (2016). Because all the students enrolled in the school were learning and using English, they had at least a basic level of English ability. Thus,

although they were first, second, and third graders and included poor and good writers, all of the students were able to perform the English writing task.

3.2. Test Instrument

To answer the research questions specified earlier, two forms of a writing test were developed: *completed* vs. *unfinished*. Figures 1 and 2 show these forms. The pictures appearing in the unfinished test were obtained from an internet site that makes unfinished pictures freely available so that children around the world can enjoy drawing pictures. These unfinished pictures are part of *The Shape Game*, which was introduced by Anthony Browne as a fun way to encourage children to be creative (website: <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/what-we-do/childrens-laureate/former-laureates/anthony-browne/the-shape-game/>). This shape game inspired this research. Since these shapes are officially provided for children, this study chose several pictures from the site and used them in the test design.

When it came to designing the complete pictures, the first author of this study completed the pictures using the unfinished pictures and by adding the author's own imaginations: See Figures 1 and 2 for sample tasks. Within each form, there were six pictures. The difficulty of the six pictures was controlled to be similar in terms of the number of major drawings, the degree of complexity, and the degree of perfection.

FIGURE 1
Sample Task 1

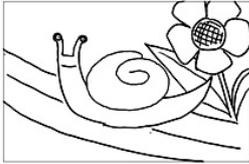
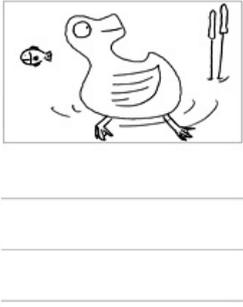
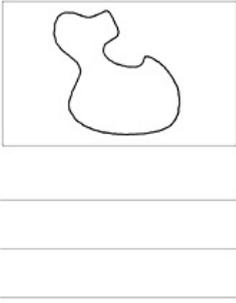
Completed	Unfinished
<p data-bbox="336 1301 715 1357">다음 그림들에 대해 영어로 써 보세요. (Write about the pictures in English)</p> <p data-bbox="336 1384 355 1406">1.</p>  <p data-bbox="435 1644 684 1771">_____ _____ _____</p>	<p data-bbox="807 1301 1257 1413">다음 그림들을 완성하고 완성된 그림에 대해 영어로 써 보세요. (Finish the pictures by adding your own drawing. Then write about the completed pictures in English.)</p> <p data-bbox="807 1417 826 1440">1.</p>  <p data-bbox="895 1666 1163 1771">_____ _____ _____</p>

FIGURE 2
Sample Task 2

Completed	Unfinished
<p>2.</p> 	<p>2.</p> 

The intention of comparing the two forms was to ascertain whether utilizing the unfinished forms in teaching and testing would encourage creative thinking. Intuitively, with the completed pictures there is little need for adding original thinking, but the unfinished ones are inviting for the students to fill up with their own ideas. Whether that assumption is true or not requires empirical evidence, hence this study.

3.3. Test Administration

During students' normal class hours, students were given the writing test without prior announcement. There were three separate testing occasions, one for each grade level, on the same day. Each testing occasion lasted 40 minutes.

The two test forms were assigned randomly in each classroom. Form Complete was assigned to every other student, and Form Unfinished to the remaining students. By this assignment, two groups were produced, distinguished by the test form they received. All other variables except for the test form, such as gender, parents' social status, and other background variables, were expected to be comparable across the groups. Any difference in test results between the groups would be due to the variation in the picture form.

The group equivalence except for the picture variation was also enhanced by using a covariate. With the 118 students in this study, one group would possibly have, for example, more students with higher writing proficiency than the other group. This preexisting variable is known as a covariate and must be held constant statistically, i.e., controlled for, across the picture groups in order to validly compare the groups for the study variables, direct interest in this study. To collect the covariate to be used as an index for the students'

existing writing proficiency around the time of the picture description task, the authors implemented a separate story task. In this task, students were asked to write a short story based on a 3-scene picture series where a boy encounters a friend whose umbrella has broken in the rain.

3.4. Variables and Scoring

The study variables comprised three scores of writing ability and creativity: *text length*, *vocabulary*, and *originality*. In this study, text length refers to “how much is written” (Bae & Lee, 2010, p. 161). As long as the words written are relevant to the topic and are not meaningless repetitions of words, text length may indicate “writing fluency,” (Bae & Lee, 2012, p. 351), perhaps fluency of both ideas and language combined. This could comprise a linguistic component and a fluency component of creativity. Therefore, it was considered a reasonable element to include in this paper. As in the studies cited above, text length was calculated by counting the total number of words in the text.

The second element is vocabulary, more specifically, vocabulary diversity. This is quite different from the first element, because the vocabulary, in this case, refers to content words. Content words, as distinguished from function words, are lexical words, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs; they contain meaning or content (Lee & Bae, 2013). They represent user’s topical knowledge. Vocabulary is also of a grammatical, linguistic nature; that is, words contain not only world knowledge, but also linguistic information, such as how they sound and are spelled and whether they are nouns, verbs, or adjectives (Bae, Bentler, & Lee, 2016; Pustejovsky, 1995).

Vocabulary was scored by counting the number of content words. Repeated content words were eliminated, and different derivational forms within a cover term were included in the counting (e.g., *develop*, *development*, *developer*). However, repeated inflectional words were removed from the counting (e.g., *snow*, *snowed*; *friend*, *friends*).

The final component is originality, a core component in this paper. Originality refers to the novelty of meaning connections (MacKinnon, 1962) or unique ideas expressed, in the context of this study, in drawing and English descriptions. Originality can best represent creativity based on Cropley (2001) and Treffinger (2002), and it is distinguished from text length and vocabulary in that originality is least linguistic. With this definition, originality was evaluated on a 5 point scale (4: absolutely so, 3: novel but not wonderful, 2: somewhat novel, 1: limitedly so, 0: never so). A 0.5 point was allowed between the five scale points. Originality was scored by the first author of the present study. The rater’s decisions about the scale points were holistic and judgmental. Although the present study used the simple descriptors as above, readers interested in more elaborate criteria for scoring originality could refer to Bae, Bentler, and Lee (2016) for a more expanded version of the criteria,

which are in line with, but a more developed version of, the scoring framework conducted in the present study.

Finally, this study scored the performance on the covariate test, which, as mentioned previously, was a short story task to assess students' preexisting writing ability around the time of the description task. The stories were assessed holistically for overall writing ability using a 5 point scale. Since all that was necessary was an overall judgment of writing proficiency, it was sufficient to provide a single holistic score for each writer. Since each test form had six pictures, the written descriptions of each picture received a score for vocabulary, text length, and originality separately. For each component, the average of the six scores was used as the final score.

3.5. Analysis

The data were analyzed using SPSS version 23. This study had three dependent variables (text length, vocabulary, and originality) and one independent variable (the group with two levels, completed and unfinished). With this design, MANOVA (multivariate analysis of variance) was a proper method for addressing the research questions, the effects of the picture form on the mean performances with respect to the three dependent variables. In addition, this study had covariate, scores for pre-existing English writing skills. Therefore, MANOVA with a covariate, MANCOVA, was used.

To address research question 2, which concerned whether the results were the same across writing proficiency groups, the entire group was divided into two writing proficiency groups. A cumulative frequency table regarding the covariate (overall writing) scores was used for this purpose. The best way to divide the group into two was to use the dividing points at which 47.5 % of the data were treated as the good-writer group ($N = 56$, scores ≥ 2.25), and 52.5% as the poor-writer group ($N = 62$, scores ≤ 2).

4. RESULTS

4.1. Correlations

The correlations between the two raters who scored the covariate were .880 (Pearson) and .883 (Spearman), which indicated high rater reliability. Since the rating scales for the covariate generated ordinal scores, a Spearman coefficient was appropriate. At the same time, the scores were virtually intervalized (consisting of as many as 18 points with average scores), so a Pearson coefficient was also appropriate and supplementary.

The correlations are provided in Table 1. Text length and vocabulary demonstrated a high correlation (.948), indicating that they shared similar characteristics. For instance, both qualities take on linguistic form, and single words were counted for measurement. They indicate the amount, the fluency, of language and content knowledge.

In comparison, originality showed a weaker correlation with both vocabulary and text length, indicating that originality, unlike words, is beyond single words and comprises the uniqueness of meaning connected across both local and global discourse contexts. All correlations were significant at a p level of .05; therefore, another assumption for using MANOVA was satisfied.

TABLE 1
Correlations

	Covariate	Vocabulary	Text length
Vocabulary	.567**		
Text Length	.607**	.948**	
Originality	.210*	.203*	.218*

* significant at $p = .05$, ** significant at $p = .01$

4.2. Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of the three dependent variables per picture group. The skewness and kurtosis of these variables ranged between +/-2, except for one variable, which was 3.21. The deviation was considered minor and acceptable. Therefore the normality assumption for using correlations and MANOVA was met.

TABLE 2
Descriptive Statistics for Two Picture Groups
($N = 59$, Completed; $N = 59$, Unfinished)

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Mean	SD	Kurtosis	Skewness
Vocabulary	Completed	5.31	2.03	.17	.68
	Unfinished	4.54	2.08	3.21	1.47
Text Length	Completed	9.71	4.66	.15	.75
	Unfinished	8.10	4.20	1.87	1.21
Originality	Completed	1.39	.44	.64	1.12
	Unfinished	2.28	.55	-.30	.24

4.3. RQ 1: Mean Comparison of the Two Picture Groups

This section answers research question 1, *Which picture form is useful, completed or unfinished, to teach and test linguistic and creative elements?* To answer this question,

MANCOVA was performed to compare the means between the two picture groups using all of the data, that is, with the two proficiency groups merged. The covariate, existing writing ability, had a significant effect on the three variables (vocabulary, text length, and originality) taken together, $F(3, 113) = 16.95, p < .001, \eta^2 = .310$ (Wilk's lambda). This significant effect was expected in the significant correlations between the covariate and the three dependent variables (.567, .607, .210). Therefore, it was worth collecting the covariate scores to control for the existing differences in writing ability.

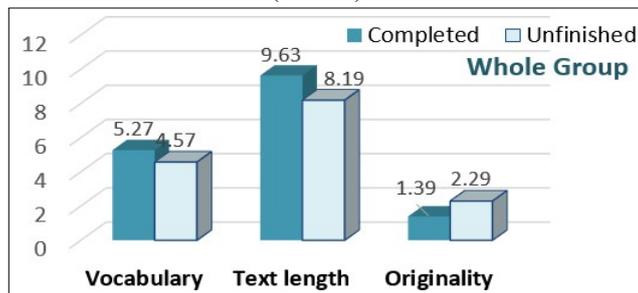
Holding constant the effect of the covariate between the groups, the main effect of the picture group on the three dependent variables taken as a whole was significant, $F(3, 113) = 50.53, p < .001, \eta^2 = .573$. The effect size was substantial: as much as 57.3% of the total variance of the set of dependent variables was accounted for by the picture difference.

To see where the differences lay, post hoc tests (Bonferroni) were performed, and the results are provided in Table 3. In addition, Figure 3 shows the comparisons of the means for the three writing components between the groups using all of the data. As shown, for vocabulary and text length, the completed-pictures group had significantly higher means than the unfinished-pictures group ($p = .032, .036$). For originality, the reverse was the case: the unfinished picture group had a significantly higher originality mean ($p = .000$).

TABLE 3
Post Hoc Significance of Mean Differences Between Picture Groups: Whole Group

	Mean Difference (Completed – Unfinished)	<i>p</i>
Vocabulary	.697	.032
Text Length	1.447	.036
Originality	-.903	.000

FIGURE 3
Mean Comparisons Between Picture Groups: Whole Group
(*N* = 118)



Note. The means are the estimated means adjusted for existing writing ability.

4.4. RQ 2: Consistency Across Good and Poor Writers

This section reports the results of research question 2, *Are the findings from research question 1 consistent across good and poor writers?* To answer this question, MANCOVA was performed separately for the two writing proficiency groups.

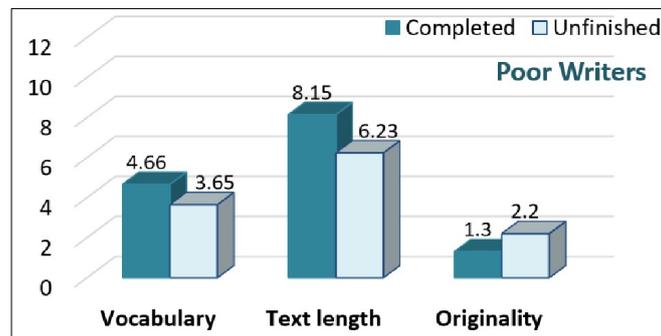
MANCOVA was first performed for the poor-writer group. The covariate was significant, $F(3, 57) = 8.64, p < .001, \eta^2 = .313$, as was the main effect of the picture group, $F(3, 57) = 27.91, p < .001, \eta^2 = .595$. The effect size was substantial (.595). Therefore, holding constant the effect of pre-existing writing ability between the two groups, the picture distinction had a significant effect on the three dependent variables taken together.

Table 4 and Figure 4 show the post hoc results. In the poor-writer group, the completed-picture group had a significantly higher mean for vocabulary and text length ($p = .008, p = .021$); the unfinished-picture group had a significantly higher mean for originality ($p = .000$). Therefore, the results of the poor-writer group were consistent with the pattern previously reported for the entire group which included both good and poor writers.

TABLE 4
Post Hoc Significance of Mean Differences Between Picture Groups: Poor-Writers
 ($N = 30$, Completed; $N = 32$, Unfinished)

	Mean Difference (Completed – Unfinished)	<i>p</i>
Vocabulary	1.009	.008
Text Length	1.914	.021
Originality	-.906	.000

FIGURE 4
Mean Comparisons Between Picture Groups: Poor Writers
 ($N = 62$)



Note. The means are the estimated means adjusted for existing writing ability.

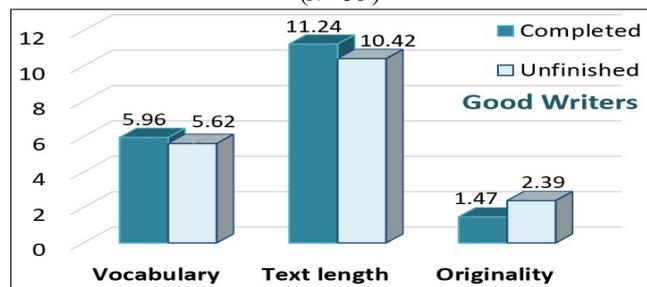
Subsequently, MANCOVA was performed for the good-writer group. For this group, the covariate was nonsignificant, $F(3, 51) = 1.72, p = .175, \eta^2 = .092$. The covariate did not affect the main performances significantly. The main effect of the picture group on the set of the three dependent variables was significant, $F(3, 51) = 23.46, p < .001, \eta^2 = .580$. The effect size was also substantial (.580). Therefore, holding constant the effect of the pre-existing writing ability, however insignificant it might be, the two picture forms had a significant effect on the set of dependent variables taken together.

Table 5 and Figure 5 show the post hoc results and the mean comparisons for the good-writer group. For the good writers, the means for vocabulary and text length looked slightly higher in the completed picture group, but these observed differences turned out to be non-significant ($p = .545, p = .476$). This was not the case for originality, for which, the unfinished group had a significantly higher mean ($p = .000$).

TABLE 5
Post Hoc Significance of Mean Differences Between Picture Groups: Good Writers
 (N = 29, Completed; N = 27, Unfinished)

Dependent Variable	Mean Difference (Completed – Unfinished)	p
Vocabulary	.332	.545
Text Length	.816	.476
Originality	-.918	.000

FIGURE 5
Mean Comparisons Between Picture Groups: Good Writers
 (N = 56)



Note. The means are the estimated means adjusted for existing writing ability.

5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This study developed and used a new task in which students are required to complete unfinished pictures in drawing and describe them in writing. The primary intention of this

research was to ascertain whether there might be a beneficial influence on creative thinking by using this task. For this purpose, the new task was compared with a conventional description task that uses completed pictures. The results are summarized and discussed below.

5.1. Vocabulary and Text Length

Among the three ability components, vocabulary and text length demonstrated the same pattern of results, and therefore, they are discussed in the same section. The same pattern of results makes sense because the two qualities had a very high correlation, meaning that they shared common characteristics, as discussed in the “Variables and Scoring” and “Results” sections.

In the poor-writer group, the students who received the completed picture form had significantly higher means for both vocabulary and text length. With poor writers, the demonstration of both vocabulary diversity and text length fluency would be positively facilitated when given the completed picture test. Poor writers who were assigned to an unfinished picture form had to add drawings on their test sheets, so the additional activity of drawing reduced the time for their writing activity. In contrast, poor writers assigned to the completed picture form did not need to spend the time on drawing, and therefore, they were able to focus their time more on writing, resulting in better vocabulary and fluency.

The pattern of results was different for good writers, whose performances in vocabulary and text length fluency were not affected by the picture type. Presumably, good writers had a certain threshold ability in English, and even with the additional activity of drawing required of them, they were still able to write about the pictures.

One recommendation based on these results is that a different type of pedagogy and test instrument may be appropriate for students with different levels of English proficiency. When it comes to improvement and demonstration of vocabulary and text length fluency, for good writers it could be acceptable to use either completed or unfinished pictures. For poor writers, however, it might be better to use a completed picture tests to facilitate their vocabulary skills and to encourage to write as much as they could.

5.2. Originality

Originality demonstrated a different pattern of results from that obtained with respect to vocabulary and text length. This made sense based on the weak correlation between originality and the other two components, as discussed previously.

Originality performance varied significantly as a function of which type of picture form was provided for the students. In both the good-writer and poor-writer groups, a

significantly higher originality performance was demonstrated by the group who received the unfinished picture form. It seems clear that the unfinished picture form afforded the students at all levels of ability an opportunity to use their imagination and to express and incorporate their unique ideas in the drawing and writing. To summarize, regardless of the students' levels of English proficiency, the unfinished picture form seems to have been effective in stimulating the students' original ideas.

5.3. Implications and Suggestions

Based on the results, the following interpretations are suggested. It has been shown that the unfinished picture prompt stimulated the students' original thinking and writing more than the conventional, completed picture prompt did. The unfinished picture form is more useful because it affords students an opportunity to express and incorporate their creative thoughts more than the conventional, completed picture forms, certainly in the context of teaching and testing writing.

For students at all grade levels and all proficiency levels of this study, this research has demonstrated that it is possible to elicit original thinking in test-taking by exposing them to an unfinished picture and allowing their imaginations to work by freely drawing what they like and completing the picture before writing about it.

With the specified research findings, this study has suggested a new type of English writing task that uses pictures. This new type of task will enable students to think more differently and creatively in their English writing. The unfinished picture form can be an addition to the teacher's list of creative tasks for engaging students in writing whether in a daily writing activity or for testing purposes. Using this activity, beginners in English can start writing without feeling the pressure so often associated with writing English and activate their original thinking through a class activity.

Caution is necessary when generalizing the findings of this study. The study participants were limited to lower grade levels of elementary school, and the number of participants was not large. If the participants had been more varied, the range of scores might have been larger, and a more reliable and interesting profile of findings would have been expected. More empirical studies could relate creativity with a broader range of English proficiency, not only elementary school students but also middle and high school students.

Based on the tasks designed and presented in this study, a variety of pictures could be developed to measure participants' originality. Based on these materials, teachers could broaden the options for student assessment to include creativity in language assessment. Future studies may well apply the instrument suggested in the present study and further investigate what beneficial influence this new task could have on students, teaching, and testing, and whether the influence would extend to other grade levels of student.

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Applicable levels: Primary

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