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Effects of Task Design on EFL Learners' Written Language Performance

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Task structure as a task characteristic is believed to have a considerable effect on task performance in terms of accuracy, fluency and complexity. Studies in the literature focused on investigating task structure impact on *oral* out-put; however, this study examines how *written* task performance is affected by task structure. Thirty two EFL learners were selected for data collection. Each participant, then, narrated two tasks which differed with regard to their inherent structure (tight *vs.* loose). Collected data were coded and checked for measuring their accuracy, fluency and complexity. Findings of the statistical analysis revealed that structured tasks produced more fluent and complex performances while accuracy remained unaffected. Results have practical implications for language teaching, research and syllabus design.

Key words: task-based language teaching, task structure, tightly structured task, loosely structured task, written task performance

INTRODUCTION

Research in the area of second language teaching is conducted with the aim of investigating how different instructional and methodological factors affect second language learning. Over the past two decades the focus has been on exploring the role of "task", its characteristics, performance conditions and their impact on different aspects of language production (Bygate & Samuda, 2005; Ortega, 1999; Rahimpour, 1997; Robinson, 2007; Skehan & Foster,1999).

Recently, task structure (a task design feature) has been the center of attention of many studies (Skehan & Foster, 1999; Tavakoli, 2009; Tavakoli & Skehan, 2005; Tavakoli & Foster, 2008) which have examined the impact it has on language out-put in terms of accuracy, fluency and complexity. Interestingly enough, all of these studies have focused on how *oral* performance is influenced by task structure.

Although writing has become to be the center of the attention of some studies recently, it has been ignored and viewed as the orthographic representation of speech for many years. For these reasons, maybe, writing tends to be the most difficult skill both for L1 and L2 learners. At the same time; with the electronic kind of writing growing popular, it is one of the most important skills in the modern world. Furthermore, Writing involves both higher (planning and programming) and lower (spelling, punctuation and …) levels of skills and L2 learners have to consider both when engaged in doing a written task. Taking all these reasons and many others into account, it is clear that planning and teaching a course in writing is not a simple task and research is needed to find out what kind of activities would help learners develop their writing skills.

Bearing the importance of writing in mind and since all of the studies in the literature investigated the impact of task structure on oral performance; the present study is conducted with the aim of finding out task structure effect on *written* task performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Task Structure

Foster and Skehan (1996) and Skehan and Foster (1997) investigated how familiar and unfamiliar task content would affect L2 task performance in terms of accuracy, fluency and complexity. Interestingly, results indicated that two of the tasks employed for data collection in these studies promoted fluency and led to more accurate performance under planned condition. This was not completely in line with their predictions. Therefore, a post hoc analysis of the data was conducted and it turned out that another variable other than the familiarity of task content was at work. Since both of the tasks had a clear beginning, middle and end, the interpretation was that this variable was task structure which facilitated L2 processing burden and resulted in more fluency and accuracy. To test this interpretation, Skehan and Foster (1999) examined the impact of narrative structure and processing conditions on narrative retellings. Results showed that the structured task generated more fluent and more accurate performance while complexity left unaffected. This supported the interpretation that task structure serves to ease the narrative processing by taking less attention to language meaning and allowing more attention to be allocated to form.

To define task structure, Tavakoli and Skehan (2005) point to these characteristics: a clear time line, a script, a story with a beginning, middle and end, an appeal to what is organized and familiar in the speaker's mind, and finally, the presence of a problem solution structure. Based on this definition, Tavakoli and Skehan (2005), Tavakoli and Foster (2008) and Tavakoli (2009) conducted a research study to find out the way task structure affects task performance and found out that structured task performance was more accurate and fluent comparing to that of the unstructured task.

Foster and Tavakoli (2009) replicated the study by Tavakoli and Foster (2008) to examine the impact of task structure on native speaker task performance and find out whether this variable affects task response in

similar ways as it influences L2 performance. To collect data, the researchers employed the same tasks that were used in Tavakoli and Foster (2008). As a result, it turned out that task structure had no impact on the fluency of the native speaker performance.

In a more recent study (Mehrang and Rahimpour, 2010) the impact of task structure was investigated under planned *vs.* unplanned conditions. Results indicated that task structure had no effect on the accuracy and complexity of performance while promoted fluency under the planned condition.

Since all of the above studies focused on examining how task structure affected oral language performance, this paper aims at finding out the way written task performance is influenced by task structure.

Task and Written Performance

In contrast to the number of studies that have explored the impact of different task characteristics and performance conditions on oral performance of EFL learners, there have been very few studies investigating these effects on written output.

In a study by Ellis and Yuan (2004), the effects of three types of planning conditions, namely pre-task planning, unpressured on-line planning, and no planning were examined on written performance of Chinese learners. They found that pre-task planning resulted in greater fluency and syntactic variety. However, unpressured on-line planners produced more accurate performance.

Later, Ishikawa (2006) examined the effect of task complexity and language proficiency on task-based writing performance. Task complexity was manipulated along here-and-now / there-and-then dimension. The results showed that increasing task complexity for high-proficient learners had positive effects on accuracy, structural complexity and fluency, though; it had negative effects on lexical complexity. The results of increasing task complexity for low-proficient learners, however, showed the positive effects on four modes of production metrics.

Another study to report is the one by Kuiken and Vedder (2007) who

investigated the effects of cognitive task complexity on written production for accuracy and lexical variation by using specific measures of writing proficiency regarding the type of errors made by the students and the frequency band of the words they used. Their study was conducted among 84 Dutch university students of Italian and 75 students of French and task complexity was manipulated along two variables of Robinson's Triadic Componential Framework, the number of elements and reasoning demands. The results showed that both students of Italian and French produced fewer lexical errors in the complex task. However, the students of French made significantly more inappropriateness and other errors in complex tasks than in simple tasks. In addition, the students of Italian used more high frequent words in complex task whereas the students of French used more infrequent words in complex task.

Following this, Kuiken and Vedder (2008) studied the effect of cognitive task complexity on written output in Italian and French as a foreign language. The participants were 91 Dutch students of Italian and 76 students of French. They performed two writing task with prompts of differing cognitive complexity. The participants were asked to write a letter to a friend and make a recommendation out of five holiday destinations with three requirements in the simple task and six requirements in the complex task. In their study cognitively more demanding task turned out to be more accurate but no effect on the written output was observed on measures of syntactic complexity and lexical variations.

Speech Production Model

To justify the findings of the above studies, it's important to know how speech is produced and what processes are involved when language learner performs a task.

According to Levelt (1989) speech is produced in three stages. *Conceptualization* which involves setting the communicative goals, selecting the relevant information needed to achieve these goals and producing the

preverbal message which is not linguistic in nature. The second stage, *formulation*, involves encoding the preverbal message into linguistic form by retrieving lemmas and lexemes and thus, establishing the 'internal speech' (Levelt, 1989). During the third stage, *articulation,* the internal speech is executed through neuromuscular instructions. Moreover, there is monitoring and editing which work to identify the probable mistakes and correct them.

However, the model proposed by Levelt (1989) explains the way speech is produced by L1 speakers, While Ellis (2005) emphasizes that unlike L1 speakers, L2 learners have to activate their linguistic knowledge through controlled processing when formulation and articulation stages are concerned. Consequently, problems may arise for them during these stages because the processes involved are demanding on working memory and will need much of the speaker's attention.

This is a very important issue because human attention is limited and it is demanding for a L2 speaker to attend to both form and meaning at the same time and as Skehan (1998) proposes, there are always trade-offs between form and meaning prioritizing one over the other. Of course, it's noteworthy that different task characteristics can affect the way attention is allocated among form and meaning. One of these characteristics is task structure. Since task structure is concerned with what is clear and organized in speaker's mind and contains a clear beginning, end and middle, it increases the accuracy and fluency of task response by easing the pressure over the working memory and making enough attention available to be allocated to form and meaning.

In the following section, a model suggested by Kellog (1996) for producing written texts is elaborated.

Models of Writing

Kellog (1996) proposes three different systems for producing a written text: 1. *Formulation*, 2. *Execution*, and 3. *Monitoring*. Formulation is involved with **planning** and **translating**. In other words, first, the writer

establishes the writing goals and then thinks up ideas to realize these goals. Second, the writer selects appropriate lexicon and syntax to encode the ideas from the planning phase and makes linguistic units ready for execution which is concerned with **programming** (the outcome of the previous stage is transformed into production schema for the motor system) and **executing** (sentences are produced). The last stage, monitoring, is made up of **reading** and **editing.** In this stage, the writer reads the produced text and corrects any mistakes evident. It is worth noting that just like speaking; these three systems work in parallel which is demanding on the working memory.

In order to predict the way task structure affects written performance, let us take a look at the similarities and differences between speech and writing production models.

Reviewing Levelt's and Kellog's models, it is evident that both models include the same processes in producing speech and writing. On the other hand, Ellis and Yuan (2005) argue that there are two differences between speech and writing performances: one quantitative and the other qualitative. The quantitative difference is that since speaking occurs in real-time, the pressure on working memory is greater when learners are involved in speaking. As a result, in case of writing, learners, especially those who lack procedural knowledge, have enough time to engage in controlled processes. The qualitative difference is concerned with the results of the production processes. In other words, the output of the writing process is a visual object making it easier for the writer to engage in monitoring by reading the text.

METHODOLOGY

Research Question and Research Hypothesis

Research Question: What is the effect of task structure on EFL learners' written performance in terms of accuracy, fluency and complexity?

Research Hypothesis: Structured task will lead to a more accurate, fluent and complex written performance.

Participants

Participants of the study were 32 senior students (8 Males and 24 females) studying English Literature at the University of Tabriz, Iran with the average age of 25. They had passed courses on English reading, grammar, vocabulary, writing, listening and speaking for three years. Moreover, some took English classes at different language institutes outside the university. They were from wide variety of language backgrounds including Azerbaijani Turkish, Persian, Kurdish and some other dialects which are spoken in different cities in Iran.

Tasks

To better operationalise the independent variable of the study, that is Task structure, narrative tasks were the best among the different task types. They were the tasks which were made up of series of pictures which were sequenced to indicate a story. To find out the tasks to match the aims of the researchers and be employed in the study, several picture stories were investigated. The goal was to find those tasks that were culturally familiar and clear enough for the participants. Then, these tasks were categorized into structured (ST) and unstructured (UST) based on the definitions given earlier in this paper. That is, the tasks in which the events could not be reordered without losing coherence and had a problem-solution structure were labeled as structured (ST) while the ones in which the events could easily be reordered without compromising the story were labeled as unstructured (UST).

As a result of this categorization, two tasks were selected to be employed for language elicitation (see Appendix A). The first task, football task, was the structured task of the study in which a father and his son head for the stadium to watch a soccer match live, but unfortunately they are faced with

"NO TICKETS" sign. Thus, they try to solve the problem by climbing up the wall of the stadium and taking the film of the game. On the other hand, the second task, birthday task, served as the unstructured task of the study. It was about a birthday party that a father had held for his son and invited a group of his son's friends to enjoy the party. The task was all about the activities and the games that the children played during the party, so the events could easily be reordered without the coherence of the story being lost.

Setting and Procedures

In the present study, task structure was considered as a within-participant variable. That is, all 32 participants performed both structured and unstructured tasks which gave the researchers the opportunity to make comparisons between their performances on two tasks.

Data were collected inside the classroom in two sessions with the time interval of one day. Prior to data collection, instructions were given to participants completely in Persian and they received a piece of paper to write down their responses. Besides, they were informed that their performances would be confidential and anonymous and would have no effect on their course grades. During the first session, the participants were given 30 minutes at the end of the session to perform the football task, while the birthday task was performed during the second session. While writing, the students had the picture stories in hand and were allowed to ask questions if any. Moreover, they were provided with task prompts for both tasks. For the structured task, the prompt was 'Sam's father had promised to take Sam to a soccer match. On Sunday, . . .' while for the unstructured task it was 'It was Sam's birthday and his father had decided to . . .'. Then, the written performances were collected and used for data collection.

Measures

Accuracy Measure

The participants' written performances were evaluated in terms of accuracy through dividing the number of error-free T-units by the total number of T-units (Arent, 2003; Storch, 2009). All the main clauses plus any subordinate clauses attached to or embedded in them were counted as T-units. However, only those T-units that contained no grammatical, syntactic, lexical, or spelling errors were counted as error-free T-units.

Fluency Measure

To measure fluency, the number of words per T-unit was calculated (Arent, 2003; Ishikawa, 2006). It means that the total number of words in the narrative was divided by the total number of T-units.

Complexity Measure

In order to measure complexity, a measure of S-nodes per T-units was employed (Gilabert, 2005; Ishikawa, 2006; Rahimpour, 1997; Robinson, 1995). In this case, the total number of sentence nodes, indicated by tensed and untensed verbs, was divided by the total number of T-units.

RESULTS

As stated in the previous section, the written performances of the learners were investigated in terms of accuracy, fluency and complexity. To measure accuracy, total number of error-free T-units was divided by the total number of T-units (Arent, 2003; Storch, 2009). However, fluency was achieved by calculating the number of words per T-unit (Arent, 2003; Ishikawa, 2006).

Finally, the total number of S-nodes was divided by the total number of T-units to measure complexity (Gilabert, 2005; Ishikawa, 2006; Rahimpour, 1997; Robinson, 1995). To achieve these measures, the written performances of the participants were coded and checked by two of the authors to ensure the inter-rater reliability. The raw scores, then, were fed into the computer software SPSS for further data analysis. Afterwards, the paired samples t-test was adopted to test the hypothesis of the study and find out the way accuracy, fluency and complexity of the written performance are affected by task structure.

Accuracy

It was predicted earlier in this paper that the accuracy of the performance would increase if learners engage in performing tasks with a problem-solution and sequential structure. Since task structure was a within-participant variable, paired samples t-test was employed to test this and compare the accuracy of the performances of the two tasks. The results of the t-test presented in table 1 indicate that the mean of the accuracy of the performances for the structured task (Mean = .4653) is slightly less than the unstructured task (Mean = .4669) which is not in line with our predictions. As a result, our hypothesis stating that **"Structured task will produce a more accurate written performance"** is rejected (Sig. = .964 > .05).

TABLE 1
Paired Samples Test to Compare the Accuracy of the Performances in Structured vs. Unstructured Tasks

Measure	Structure	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Accuracy	ST	.4653	.18854	-.046	.964
	UST	.4669	.22033		

The following figure delineates the mean differences in the rate of accuracy for structured *vs.* unstructured task.

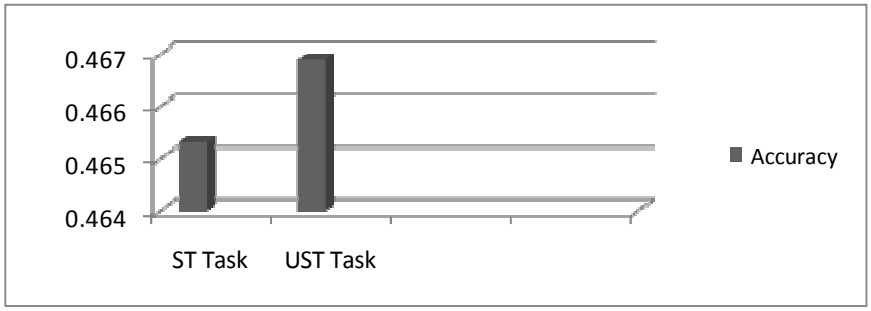

FIGURE 1
Mean Differences in the Rate of Accuracy for the Structured vs. Unstructured Tasks

Fluency

When fluency is concerned, it was hypothesized that learners would produce a more fluent language while describing the events in the structured task. As table 2 shows, the fluency mean of the structured task performances (Mean = 10.2419) is more than that of the unstructured task (Mean = 9. 1719) which is as it was predicted. Moreover, t-test results comparing the fluency of the performances of the two tasks (Sig. = .023 < .05) indicate that there is a significant difference between the performances of the structured task compared to that of the unstructured one. In other words, the hypothesis of the study predicting that **"Structured task will produce a more fluent written performance"** is proved.

TABLE 2
Paired Samples Test to Compare the Fluency of the Performances in Structured vs. Unstructured Tasks

Measure	Structure	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Fluency	ST	10.2419	3.06544	2.398	.023
	UST	9.1719	2.03104		

Figure 2 illustrates the mean differences in the rate of fluency between

structured *vs.* unstructured task.

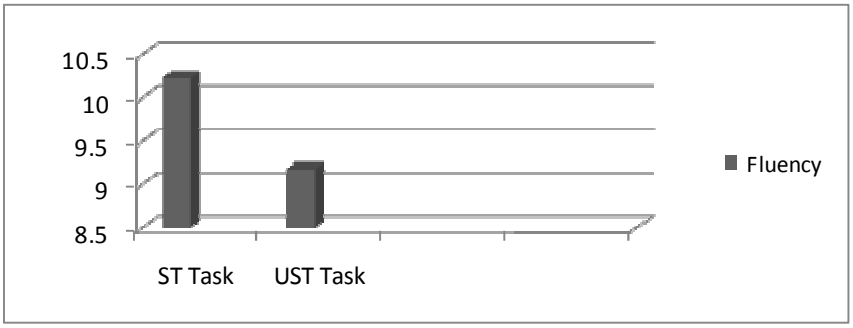

FIGURE 2
Mean Differences in the Rate of Fluency for the Structured vs. Unstructured Tasks

Complexity

The hypothesis of the study predicted that the participants would produce a more complex language if they performed the structured task. According to table 3, the complexity mean of the structured task performances (Mean= 1.9309) is considerably greater than that of the unstructured task (Mean = 1.6891) which is in line with what was predicted earlier in the study. Further, T-test results in table 3 (Sig. = .008 < .05) strongly support the predictions regarding complexity. That is, there is a statistically significant difference between the complexities of the structured task performance compared to those of the unstructured task. Consequently, the hypothesis of the study assuming that **"Structured task will produce a more complex written performance"** is proved.

TABLE 3
Paired Samples Test to Compare the Complexity of the Performances in Structured vs. Unstructured Tasks

Measure	Structure	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Complexity	ST	1.9309	.49917	2.840	.008
	UST	1.6891	.32787		

Figure 3 indicated the mean differences in the rate of the complexity between structured vs. unstructured task.

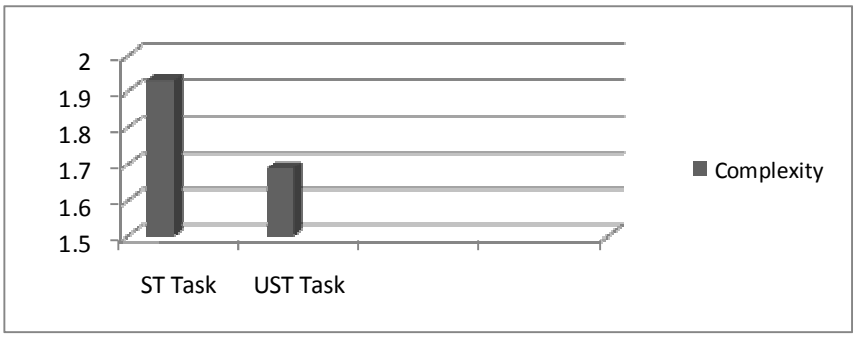

FIGURE 3
Mean Differences in the Rate of Complexity for the Structured vs. Unstructured Tasks

In sum, the results of the statistical analysis revealed that the fluency and complexity of the language production increase when learners engage in performing the structured tasks. This increase is especially evident when complexity is concerned. On the other hand, accuracy is not affected by task structure. That is, the accuracy does not differ from the unstructured task response to that of the structured one.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the statistical analysis in the previous section suggested that task structure leads to more fluency and complexity of written performance while accuracy remains unaffected. As a consequence, the hypothesis of the study stating that "**Structured task will result in more accurate, more fluent and more complex written performance"** is only proved regarding fluency and complexity.

According to Skehan (1998), humans have limited attentional resources

and cannot attend to all aspects of language (accuracy, fluency and complexity) at the same time. Thus, learners have to prioritize what aspects to allocate attention to and trade-offs will occur between the different aspects. In other words, if a language user focuses on producing a more fluent language and draws on exemplar-based system, their production will be less accurate and less complex. However, since the participants produced a more fluent and more complex language and could focus on both form and content at the same time, the theory proposed by Skehan (1998) is not supported. This can be attributed to the characteristics of task design (structure) and the way written performance is produced. When a task is tightly structured, it contains a clear time line with a conventional beginning, middle and end. Besides, it is in line with what is familiar and organized in the speaker's mind (Tavakoli and Skehan, 2005). All these characteristics together ease the processing burden on the attentional resources and let language users allocate more attention to different aspects of language and engage in more controlled processing which is involved in writing.

Moreover, when learners produce a fluent language, they have to draw on their memory-based system and deploy ready-made chunks of language, while complexity requires them to draw on their rule-based system and engage in syntactic processing (Skehan, 1998). This kind of processing occurs during the formulation system of Kellog's (1996) writing model in which learners engage in setting writing goals and thinking up ideas and then selecting appropriate lexicon and syntax to encode those ideas. As Kellog (1996) believes, due to the limited capacity of working memory, language producers tend to focus on formulation taking priority over execution and monitoring and thus producing more complex and more fluent language performance.

Unlike the present study, earlier studies investigating the impact of task structure on oral performance (Mehrang & Rahimpour, 2010; Skehan & Foster, 1999; Tavakoli & Skehan, 2005) found no or little effect of task structure on complexity. This can be justified considering the differences between the models of writing and speech production. The main processes

involved in speaking are conceptualization, formulation and monitoring (Levelt, 1989). According to Ellis and Yuan (2005), L2 learners especially the ones with limited L2 knowledge may have problems when formulating a message which can be compensated for by monitoring the language out-put if the working memory is not overloaded. When learners produce written production, the pressure on working memory is less than that of speaking because it does not happen in real-time. Further, the production is a visual object. Consequently, learners have additional time to monitor by means of controlled processes and thus contribute to more accuracy and complexity.

IMPLICATIONS

To summarize, the findings of this study propose that the presence of a problem-solution and a sequential structure promotes fluency and complexity in written narrative tasks. That is, when a task is tightly structured, the pressure on working memory is facilitated and this leaves more attentional resources free to be devoted to different aspects of language and hence results in more fluent and more complex written task response. On the other hand, when a task is loosely structured and lacks any sequential or problem-solution structure, it will be cognitively challenging for L2 learners and need more attention to be allocated to its organization and consequently, leaves less attentional resources to be paid to different aspects of language out-put.

These findings have great implications for Language Teaching research and syllabus design. First of all, the most important problem Task-based Language Teaching suffers from is how to select and sequence tasks so that they match the learner's needs and proficiency level (Robinson, 2003, 2006). Research into task-based language teaching sheds light on different criteria which affect task difficulty and gives a teacher or a syllabus designer the opportunity to design those tasks that are relevant to their course objectives.

In addition, since human attention is limited and humans are not able to attend to all areas of language simultaneously to establish a balance between

them, reported results can help a syllabus designer design sequences of tasks that promote all areas of language out-put namely accuracy, fluency and complexity, so that the goal of balanced development is achieved.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. This study used only one story regarding each type of task to collect data. In order to avoid the biased results that these stories may have had, it's suggested to replicate the study employing different stories.
2. The participants of the study have not been selected randomly and their number was also limited. It is advised to consider these points in further research in the future.

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APPENDIX A

Look at the following pictures and narrate the story they indicate. Write three or four sentences for each picture. You have thirty minutes to complete your stories.

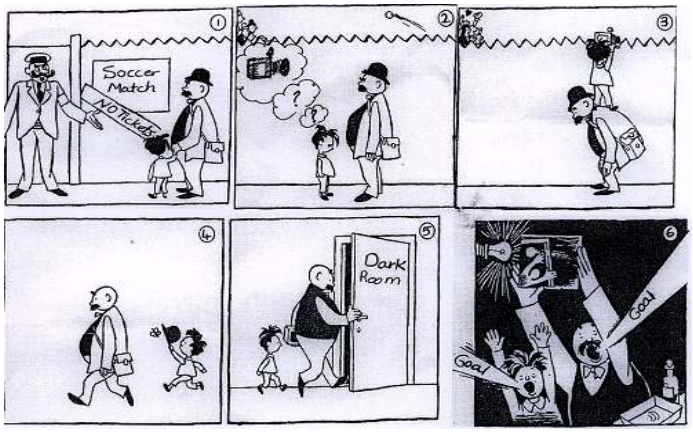

FIGURE A1

Football Task

Start like this:

Sam's father had promised to take Sam to a soccer match. On Sunday, . . .

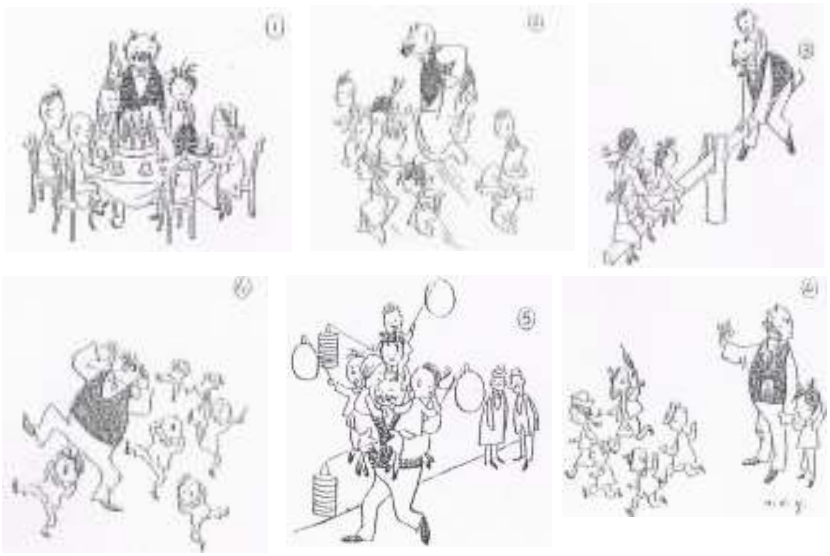

FIGURE A2
Birthday Task

Start like this:

It was Sam's birthday and his father had decided to . . .

APPENDIX B

A Sample Narrative Written for the Structured Task (Football Task):

Sam's father had promised to take Sam to a soccer match (1 T-Unit [Error Free], 2 S-Nodes). On Sunday, Sam and his father went to the stadium (1 T-

Unit [EF], 1 S-Node). They saw a sign on the wall "No Tickets" (1 T-Unit [EF], 1 S-Node)! All the tickets had been sold (1 T-Unit [EF], 1 S-Node) and there were no tickets left (1 T-Unit [EF], 2 S-Nodes).

Sam became very sad (1 T-Unit [EF], 1 S-Node). He was very eager to watch the match (1 T-Unit [EF], 2 S-Nodes). He thought for a while and decided to do something (1 T-Unit [EF], 3 S-Nodes).

He went up his father's back (1 T-Unit, 1 S-Node). He could see the field above the wall (1 T-Unit, 1 S-Node). By means of a camera, he took some photographs of the soccer match (1 T-Unit [EF], 1 S-Node). Then, Sam and his father left there (1 T-Unit [EF], 1 S-Node). Sam was very happy (1 T-Unit [EF], 1 S-Node). As they were walking, Sam was trying to catch a butterfly (1 T-Unit [EF], 3 S-Nodes).

His father took the camera to the dark room (1 T-Unit [EF], 1 S-Node). Sam followed him (1 T-Unit [EF], 1 S-Node). They were going to develop the photographs (1 T-Unit [EF], 1 S-Node). After they developed the photos, Sam and his father looked at them (1 T-Unit [EF], 2 S-Nodes). It was the scene of scoring a goal (1 T-Unit [EF], 2 S-Nodes). They shouted joyfully "Goal" (1 T-Unit [EF], 1 S-Node)!

Accuracy: $\frac{EFTU}{TU} = \frac{18}{20} = 0.90$

Fluency: $\frac{Words}{TU} = \frac{156}{20} = 7.80$

Complexity: $\frac{SN}{TU} = \frac{29}{20} = 1.45$

A Sample Narrative Written for the Unstructured Task (Birthday Task):

It was Sam' birthday (1 T-Unit [Error Free], 1 S-Node) and his father decided to entertain little Sam and his friends (1 T-Unit [EF], 2 S-Nodes). He held a party and invited all of Sam's friends (1 T-Unit, 2 S-Nodes). He bought a cake with seven candles on it because Sam was going to be 7(1 T-

Unit [EF], 2 S-Nodes)! After eating the cake, they played a funny game together (1 T-Unit [EF], 2 S-Nodes). They wore some bags on their legs and tried to jump (1 T-Unit [EF], 3 S-Nodes). The children loved the game (1 T-Unit [EF], 1 S-Node). Next, Sam's father took the kids to the part (1 T-Unit, 1S-Node). At the park, they sat on the see-saw and enjoyed a lot (1 T-Unit [EF], 2 S-Nodes). Later, they sang a sound aloud while they were dancing (1 T-Unit [EF], 2 S-Nodes). The people on the street watched them (1 T-Unit [EF], 1 S-Node). The children mounted up Sam's father's shoulders while they were flying their colorful balloons (1 T-Unit, 2 S-Nodes). At last, Sam and his father said goodbye to the kids (1 T-Unit [EF], 1 S-Node). They went back home (1 T-Unit [EF], 1 S-Node). Sam never forgets his seventh birthday (1 T-Unit [EF], 1 S-Node). He thinks that his father is the best father in the world (1 T-Unit [EF], 2 S-Nodes).

Accuracy: $\frac{EFTU}{TU} = \frac{13}{16} = 0.81$

Fluency: $\frac{Words}{TU} = \frac{153}{16} = 9.56$

Complexity: $\frac{SN}{TU} = \frac{26}{16} = 1.62$