

Effects of the Integrated-Skills Approach on Elementary School Students' Writing Performance

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Kim, Kyu-Hwa. (2008). Effects of the integrated-skills approach on elementary school students' writing performance. *Modern English Education*, 9(1), 52-72.

The aims of this study are to suggest writing tasks based on the integrated-skills approach (Task C) and to identify its effects on elementary school students' writing performance. Two classes of students in the sixth grade, Class A and Class B, participated in this study, and three tasks were devised: Task A, which was extracted from the sixth-grade English textbook Task B, which was based on the separated-skills approach and Task C, which was based on the integrated-skills approach. Classes A and B had similar student self-assessment results in relation to their performance of Task A. They also completed Tasks B and C, respectively, and the results were compared. The results of the student self-assessment show that the students in Class A had higher interest and satisfaction means than the students in Class B and came up with richer written products than did the latter. In summary, Task C positively affected the students' attitudes towards and performance of English writing tasks. Thus, by applying Task C, English textbook developers can provide students with learner-centered English writing tasks that will be able to draw their interest and active involvement and that will help them come up with rich written products.

[writing tasks/the integrated-skill approach/쓰기 과제/통합적 기능 접근법]

I . INTRODUCTION

English writing activities start from the fifth grade in Korea. These activities begin with writing upper- and lower-case letters of the English alphabet to writing easy and simple words, and then writing English phrases or sentences that the students have already learned orally. Among the four kinds of language-skills-based activities, elementary school students show the lowest interest

and highest burden of learning in English writing activities (Seung Min Lee, 2003). Most of the writing activities in the present elementary school English textbooks do not require the use of other language skills; the learners are usually asked only to copy letters, words, phrases, and sentences and are not made to undertake oral-based communicative activities. In addition, according to the English national curriculum, the teaching of speaking and writing, both productive skills, should focus on delivering messages in the early stages, and should gradually develop fluency rather than accuracy. The writing tasks in the present English textbooks, however, are designed to develop accuracy, which is form-focused, rather than fluency, and writing activities become a learning purpose themselves, thus making writing tasks both boring and demanding. Most types of writing tasks in the textbooks involve copying letters, words, or sentences and fill-in-the-blanks using words provided. These tasks have limitations in that they do not allow students to do original writing in order to express themselves.

The aforementioned problems highlight the need to develop effective English writing tasks, which may be addressed through the implementation of the integrated-skills approach to writing tasks. In the integrated-skills approach, in which the students are trained to write and speak English at the same time, the communication of the message is of paramount importance. As such, poor handwriting, spelling errors, and grammatical mistakes are accepted. The students are expected to acquire and hone these skills while carrying out the writing activities, and these skills are further developed in individual and small-group interviews (Heald-Taylor, 1994). As mentioned above, while communicating, students may use oral English or their mother tongue to negotiate and share the meanings that they are trying to express in English.

Sixth-grade elementary school students have more than three years of experience in learning English and one year of experience in learning English writing, with a focus on skills and accuracy. Thus, there is a need to revise their English writing tasks in such a way as to base these on the integrated-skills approach and to make them focus on meaning and fluency so that their interest in accomplishing such tasks can be drawn. The present article suggests writing tasks based on the integrated-skills approach, particularly involving pair/group work, and points out their effects on elementary school students' writing performance. The results of the study will have important pedagogical implications, especially in terms of devising writing tasks and developing English textbooks.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1. Separated-Skills Approach vs. Integrated-Skills Approach

1) Separated-Skills Approach

The traditional ESL/EFL programs reflect the separated-skills approach and focus on skill segregation (Oxford, 2001). Most material developers, teachers, and exporters believe that it is logistically easier to teach writing separately from speaking, and listening separately from reading, and that it is practically impossible to concentrate on more than one skill at a time. It may be possible to fully develop one or two language skills without integrating all the others, but such an approach will not ensure appropriate preparation for or later success in academic communication, career-related language use, or daily interaction in the language (Oxford, 2001). This means that the separated-skills approach restricts language learning to a very narrow, noncommunicative range that does not prepare students to use the language in their everyday life.

In the separated-skills approach, what is seen as the key to successful learning is the mastery of discrete language skills such as reading and speaking, and language learning is typically treated separately from content learning (Mohan, 1986). Such approach creates a big gap between natural language learning or acquisition in a natural environment and formal language learning in schools. Furthermore, people use their language skills to communicate normally and in an integrated way.

2) Integrated-Skills Approach

The integrated-skills approach can be introduced as the counterpart of the separated-skills approach. It contains the integration of the four primary skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, including associated and related skills such as knowledge of vocabulary, spelling, pronunciation, syntax, meaning, and usage (Oxford, 2001). It assumes that this approach leads to optimal ESL/EFL communication when the skills are interwoven during instruction. Peregoy and Boyle (1997) assert that listening, speaking, reading and writing occur together, integrated in specific communicative events. According to them, the integrated -skills approach is important since listening, speaking, reading and writing also

occur naturally together in learning events in school at all grade levels, even though traditionally they were taught separately. They further indicate that the Integrated Skills Approach, using a variety of activities to develop four skills of English, helps to promote learners' language development.

There are two types of integrated-skills approach: content-based language instruction and task-based instruction. In this present study, task-based instruction will be mainly dealt with, and content-based instruction will not be mentioned because the participants in this study are considered to have low English language proficiency and as the emphasis of the study is on English language learning and not on the contents of the other school subjects. Task-based instruction is clearly oriented towards integrating communication skills and emphasizes learning content through language, while content-based instruction stresses doing tasks that require communicative language use (Willis, 1998). It benefits from the availability of a diverse range of materials, textbooks, and technologies for the ESL or EFL classroom.

The integrated-skills approach provides English language learners with authentic language and gives them good opportunities to interact naturally in the language (Oxford, 2001). As a result, learners rapidly grasp the richness and complexity of the English language as a communication tool. In this approach, English is a real means of interaction and sharing among people. By applying the approach, teachers can simultaneously track their students' progress in the acquisition of multiple skills. Integrating language skills also promotes the learning of real content and not just the dissection of language forms. Finally, the integrated-skills approach can motivate students of all ages and backgrounds to accomplish English writing tasks.

2. Written Task in Task-Based Language Teaching (hereinafter referred to as, TBLT)

Task-based instruction is focused on process writing (Batstone, 2002), and it is a form of integrated-skills approach (Oxford, 2001). Nunan (1989) defines the communicative task as "a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form" (p. 10). The task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right. Basic pair work and group work are often assigned to increase student interaction and collaboration. More structured

cooperative-learning formats can also be used in task-based instruction. Task-based instruction is relevant to all levels of language proficiency, but the nature of the task varies from one level to another, with tasks becoming increasingly complex at higher proficiency levels.

According to Willis (1998), in some cases, the final product of a writing task must be a polished written document that could assume any of different forms, depending on the agreed-upon outcome of the task. This final product should be introduced orally or by reading in the pre-task phase, then discussed as an integral part of the task stage, drafted collaboratively at the planning stage, and finalized for the reporting stage. Willis (1998) claims the following:

If the written work will be read by most of the members of the class at the reporting stage, it will be considered a public document and must therefore be well written. The planning stage of a writing task or activity may well be longer than that needed for an oral presentation. (p. 62)

3. Process Writing

According to Heald-Taylor (1994), process writing is an approach that encourages young ESL learners to communicate their own written messages while honing their speaking and reading skills, rather than delaying their involvement in the writing process, as advocated in the past, until they have perfected their handwriting, reading, phonetics, spelling, grammar, and punctuation. This current approach in writing instruction focuses on the process of writing rather than on its end-product (Tompkins, 1990). The basic premise of process writing is that all children, regardless of their age, can write. The initial focus is on creating good content and learning the genres of writing. The implementation of process writing can take several forms. Some examples of its classroom application are holding a writers workshop, writing across the curriculum, using journals or logs, and modeled writing.

When writing, students work through the stages of the writing process. Writing basically consists of five stages, namely: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing (Tompkins, 1990). Gardner and Johnson (1997) also explained the stages of the writing process: pre-writing, drafting, rereading, revising, editing, writing the final draft, and publishing. During the pre-writing stage, students generate topics to write about through any of the following ways: brainstorming; reading literature; creating life maps, webs, and story charts; developing word

banks; deciding on the form, audience, voice, and purpose of their writing or written work; and teacher motivation. In the drafting stage, students put their ideas on paper and write without concern for conventions. Furthermore, their written works do not have to be neat. In the rereading stage, students assess their own written works by reading them aloud and checking if they make sense, sharing these with their respective peer reviewers, and offering suggestions for their improvement, such as asking "who," "what," "when," "where," "why," and "how" questions about the parts of their written works that their respective peer reviewers do not understand; looking for better words; and talking about how to make the works better. In the revising stage, students improve their narratives by adding details or improving their imagery. Students also remove unnecessary details, implement peer suggestions for improvement, and clarify meanings. In the editing stage, students work together to check and correct errors in mechanics and spelling, persevering to make their works error-free. In the final-draft-writing stage, students discuss their written works with their teacher and write final drafts, taking into consideration their teacher's comments and suggestions. Finally, in the publishing stage, students send their written works to publishers, read these aloud, and expand these into books.

According to Gardner and Johnson (1997), writing is a fluid process that is created by writers as they work. Accomplished writers move back and forth between the stages of the process, both consciously and unconsciously. Young writers, however, benefit from the structure of the writing process and the sense of security that complying with it brings. In actuality, the writing process is not a highly organized linear process but a continual back-and-forth movement between the different steps of the writing model.

4. Research on English Writing Instruction

Yeong-Tae Kim and Soon-Yeong Cho (2000) suggested several kinds of writing tasks for elementary school students in terms of the alphabet, words and phrases, sentences, and paragraph levels. Considering the big difference between the cognitive levels and English writing abilities of elementary school students, Hyun-Jin Kim (2000) revised the stages of process writing into eight stages of writing lesson plans for elementary school English classes: choosing topics, collaborative brainstorming, deciding writing purposes, drafting, listening to readers' opinions, revising, proofreading, and publishing. Based on Hyun-Jin Kim's study (2000), Min-Seon Shim (2007) tried to identify the effects of using

graphic organizers on elementary school students' English writing.

According to Kreeft-Peyton and Reed (1990), dialogue journals, in which teachers reply in writing to the student entries, and learning logs, in which students write about what they learned, have been found effective in encouraging English language learners to write daily, interact with their teacher, and reflect upon their learning and comprehension. Teachers also support students' writing by simplifying complex tasks into steps and stages that students can manage (Yedlin, 2003). Authentic writing assignments such as invitations, letters, recipes, and simple books for younger children also can greatly motivate students. Writing may well be the most challenging of the literacy domains (Juel, 1994), but a rich and responsive environment and well-scaffolded writing tasks can help students flourish as writers.

III. METHOD

1. Participants

The subjects of this study were 65 sixth-grade elementary school students who belonged to either of two classes: 32 students were in Class A (15 male, 17 female) and 33 were in Class B (15 male, 18 female). Originally, a total of 79 students from the two classes were asked to complete Task A, a writing task extracted from the English textbook, and those among them who finished the task without any difficulty were selected to ensure that both groups have similar writing abilities. Here, the phrase "those who finished the task without any difficulty" does not mean that those students are first-rate students but that they achieved the objective of the lesson based on the standard achievement of the national curriculum. In other words, students with average writing skills who could successfully complete the writing task in the textbook were involved in the study.

2. Types of Writing Tasks Applied

The writing tasks that the subjects of the study were made to accomplish had the same topic, "Writing a Diary." but the types of tasks were varied as follows:

a skill-separated and textbook-extracted task, a noncommunicative-contained and skill-separated task, and a communicative-contained and skill-integrated task.

1) Task A: A Writing Task Extracted from an English Textbook

A writing activity, "Writing a Diary," was chosen from Lesson 13 ("That's Too Bad") of the English textbook that is currently being used. This activity is likely to develop in students a desire to write because the topic that the students are supposed to write about is related to their daily lives and is thus familiar to them. Students usually have much to say and are usually willing to tell others something about their daily lives. Task A was used as a preliminary.

According to the teachers' guidebook, the teaching procedure is as follows:

- (1) Introducing the activity
- (2) Reading the model diary
- (3) Looking at the pictures and the diary with some missing parts
- (4) Filling in the blanks in the diary (under the pictures)
- (5) Checking the answer.

2) Task B: A Writing Task Based on the Separated-Skills Approach

The teacher in this study gave every student a sheet of paper, and the students were asked to come up with their own diaries without any pair or group work. They had to rely mainly on their writing skills to complete the task. The procedure that was used to present and process Task B was as follows:

- (1) Introducing the task: The teacher introduced the task and explained how it can be accomplished.
- (2) Reading the model diary: The students were asked to read the model diary in the textbook.
- (3) Self-brainstorming: The students thought about what they did the previous day by themselves.
- (4) Drafting: The students wrote their diaries.
- (5) Giving of peer feedback: The students exchanged their diaries with their partners and wrote down some comments on their partner's diary.
- (6) Completing the task: The students revised their diaries.

3) Task C: A Writing Task Based on the Integrated-Skills Approach

Task C was carried out through pair work or small-group work. For the application of Task C, the procedure of TBLT and the stages of Gardner and Johnson's process writing were integrated. As the editing and publishing stages were not needed for the Task C of this study, they were deleted. The details of the procedure that was used to implement Task C are as follows:

(1) Pre-writing: Whole-class work

- ① The teacher introduces the task and the topic of the written work.
- ② The students talk about what they did the previous day by themselves.
- ③ The teacher writes down the sentences that the students have made during the brainstorming session above.

(2) Writing: Pair or group work

- ① The students make rough drafts, check, and revise them together.
- ② The students read their final draft in class.

(3) Post-writing: Pair or group work

- ① The teacher gives feedback to the students.
- ② The students rewrite or copy the final draft, taking the teacher's feedback into consideration.

3. Procedures

The procedures for the study were as follows;

First, to compare the participants' attitudes towards Task A, the student carried out a self-assessment to serve as a pre-test (self-assessment I).

Second, Tasks B and C were devised, and the participants were asked to complete the tasks; Class A accomplished Task B and Class B Task C.

Third, after completing the tasks, the participants were again asked to answer the same items as those in self-assessment I (self-assessment IIs).

Fourth, the results of the participants' self-assessment and the written works produced by both classes were analyzed and compared in terms of the students' attitudes towards writing tasks and the quantity of their written products.

Lastly, pedagogical suggestions for teaching English writing based on the integrated-skills approach and on English writing tasks in elementary school English classes were made.

4. Data Collection and Analysis

1) Students' Self Assessment

The students in both classes were made to evaluate their performance of the writing tasks two times, respectively. The first self-assessment was accomplished by both classes after they completed Task A, and the second was accomplished by Classes A and B after they completed Tasks B and C, respectively. Then, using the SPSS 12.0 program, t-tests were conducted to determine the reliability of the items and the differences between the responses given by the two groups. As illustrated in Table 1, only one student self-assessment checklist was used for every student self-assessment. The students were asked to write "1" if they strongly disagree to the statement, "3" if they strongly agree to it, and "2" if they neither strongly agree nor disagree to it. The reliability results of all the items had very high alpha values ($\alpha = 0.8960$). As such, it could be said that the items were reliable.

Table 1

The Students' Self Assessment Checklist

No	Criteria	Rating	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3
1	The task was fun.	3,2,1			
2	I was satisfied with my writing.	3,2,1			
3	The task was easy.	3,2,1			

2) Written Products

When the students had completed Tasks B and C, their diaries were gathered and converted into text files so that the WordSmith 3.0 program could be run. The students' written products were compared and assessed based on their overall tokens and types, using the WordSmith program. The grammatical accuracy of the written works was not looked into because the study focused on the fluency of such works and not on their accuracy.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Results of the Students' Self Assessment I

To determine the differences between Classes A and B, all the subjects were made to accomplish Task A and were asked to answer the self-checklist.

Based on the results of the students' self-assessment I, a t-test was carried out. As illustrated in Table 2, the results of the test showed that there was no significant difference between Classes A and B ($p = 0.784$ in terms of interest, $p = 0.911$ in terms of satisfaction, and $p = 0.792$ in terms of ease).

Table 2
Results of the T-Test of Classes A and B

	Group	N	M	SD	t	p
Interest	Class A	32	1.81	.82	.275	.784
	Class B	33	1.76	.79		
Satisfaction	Class A	32	1.78	.87	.112	.911
	Class B	33	1.76	.83		
Ease	Class A	32	2.34	.60	.265	.792
	Class B	33	2.30	.64		

Table 3 shows that there was no significant difference between the male students in Class A and those in Class B ($p = 0.658$ in terms of interest, $p = 0.831$ in terms of satisfaction, and $p = 0.577$ in terms of ease).

Table 3
Results of the T-Test of the Male Students in Classes A and B

	Group	N	M	SD	t	p
Interest	Class A	15	1.87	.83	.447	.658
	Class B	15	1.73	.80		
Satisfaction	Class A	15	1.87	.83	.215	.831
	Class B	15	1.80	.86		
Ease	Class A	15	2.33	.62	.564	.577
	Class B	15	2.20	.68		

Table 4 also shows that there was no significant difference between the female students in Class A and those in Class B ($p = 0.963$ in terms of interest, $p = 0.956$ in terms of satisfaction, and $p = 0.862$ in terms of ease). This means that the differences between the two groups of subjects according to gender did not affect the t-test results of Classes A and B.

To sum up, although many factors must be considered in determining the degree of similarity of the two groups of subjects used in this study, the results

Table 4

Results of the T-Test of the Female Students in Classes A and B

	Group	N	M	SD	t	p
Interest	Class A	17	1.76	.83	-.047	.963
	Class B	18	1.78	.81		
Satisfaction	Class A	17	1.71	.92	-.055	.956
	Class B	18	1.72	.83		
Ease	Class A	17	2.35	.61	-.175	.862
	Class B	18	2.39	.61		

show that Classes A and B can be regarded as fairly similar groups because there was no significant difference between the results of their self-assessment in relation to their performance of Task A. Therefore, although Tasks B and C were accomplished by two different groups, Class A and Class B, respectively, the results could be compared with each other. If students are asked to complete Tasks A, B, and C, their written products may be affected because they will become familiar with the later task, which will affect the results of their performance of the task. Thus, to avoid familiarity with the tasks on account of their repetition, two fairly similar groups of subjects were used for the study.

2. Comparison of the Results of the Students' Self Assessment IIs

Class A was made to accomplish Task B, and Class B was made to accomplish Task C. After the two groups completed their respective tasks, the student self-assessment was carried out: II-1 by Class A and II-2 by Class B.

Table 5

Comparison of the Results of the Students' Self Assessment IIs (t-test)

	Group	N	M	SD	t	p
Interest	Class A	32	1.69	.86	-2.261	.027
	Class B	33	2.15	.80		
Satisfaction	Class A	32	1.66	.90	-2.654	.010
	Class B	33	2.18	.68		
Ease	Class A	32	1.31	.64	-3.877	.000
	Class B	33	1.94	.66		

Table 5 shows that there were significant differences between the two groups in terms of their interest in, satisfaction with, and ease of performing the

assigned tasks ($p=0.027$ in terms of interest, $p=0.010$ in terms of satisfaction, and $p=0.000$ in terms of ease). Here, all the values of t were negative ($t=-2.261$ in terms of interest, $t=-2.654$ in terms of satisfaction, and $t=-3.877$ in terms of ease), and the mean scores of Class B were higher than those of Class A. This means that Task C affected the subjects' attitudes towards English writing more positively than Task B did.

3. Comparison of the Results of the Students' Self Assessment I and IIs

As shown in Figure 1, Classes A and B had similar interests and satisfaction means in relation to Task A as there was no significant difference between the two groups in that regard. The scores obtained by the students in Class A in relation to Task B were very low, which may mean that they did not find Task B fun and that they were not happy about the written works they produced after they completed Task B. In contrast, the scores obtained by the students in Class B in relation to Task C were very high, which may mean that they found Task C quite fun and that they were highly satisfied with the written works they produced after they completed Task C.

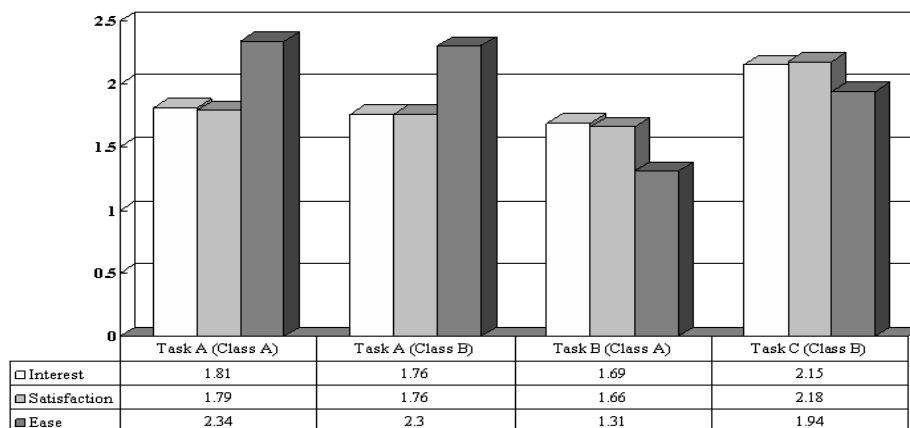


Figure 1. Results of the students' self assessment in terms of their means.

In terms of the ease of performing the task, the mean of Task A was the highest, followed by that of Task C. Task B had the lowest mean. However, as Task C showed the highest scores in terms of interest and satisfaction, it may be argued that the easiest task does not guarantee a high degree of interest and satisfaction on the part of the students who will be made to accomplish it, but

that appropriate levels of cognitive challenge, or those that students are capable of dealing with, will raise their interest in the given task and will make them satisfied with their written works.

4. Analysis of the Students' Written Products

1) Richness of the Students' Written Products

The students' written products were compared in terms of their overall tokens and types, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6
Comparison of the Written Products of Classes A and B

	Written products of Class A (Task B)		Written products of Class B (Task C)	
	Overall	Average	Overall	Average
Numbers of texts	32	1	33	1
Text file				
Tokens	864	27	1,260	38.18
Types	164	5.125	278	8.42

The average text that was written by the students in Class A was 27 words long, and there were 5.125 different words in each text. On the other hand, the average text that was written by the students in Class B was 38.18 words long, and there were 8.42 different words in each text. This means that the students in Class B, who accomplished Task C, used more words and came up with more new words when they wrote their diaries than did the students in Class A, who had accomplished Task B. It can thus be said that Task C leads to greater fluency and facility of expression when students write their diaries.

2) Examples of the Students' Written Products

To compare Task C with Task B, the students' written products in relation to Tasks B and C (except Task A) were analyzed. The comparison of the two groups' written works on Task A was meaningless. Their written products on Task A contained very similar words because they were asked only to fill in the blanks of the diary that pertained to the picture therein.

(1) The Students' Written Products in Relation to Task B

Task B was based on the separated-skills approach. The examples of the students' written products are shown in Figure 2. As can be seen in Table 6 and Figure 2, the students' written products in relation to Task B were relatively short (27 words long).

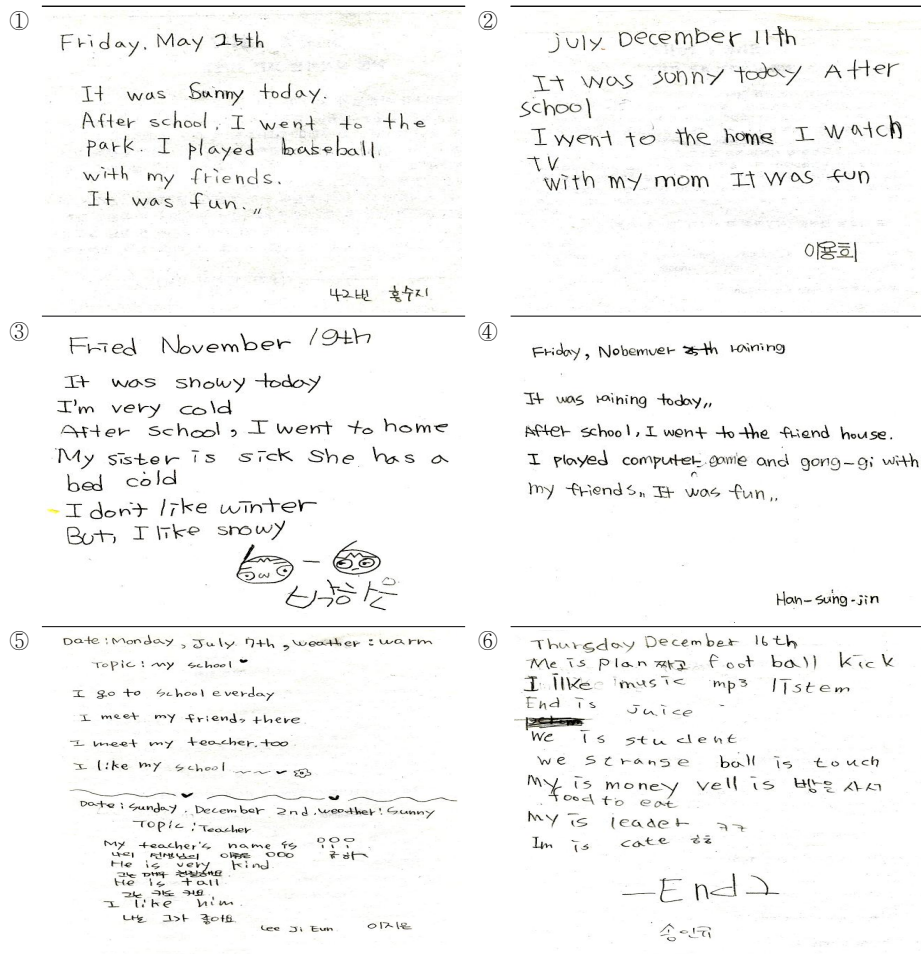


Figure 2. The students' written products in relation to Task B.

The students just copied several expressions that appear in the English textbook and simply followed the model diary's discourse structure. The model diary in the textbook was "It was cloudy today. After school, I went to the park. I played soccer with my friends. It was fun." Its text structure is "Weather + went somewhere + played something with someone + feeling." Diary examples ①, ②, ③, and ④ were the typical cases. As seen in Diary ⑤ and ⑥, some students depended on the Korean language, translating English into Korean and using

Korean words to convey a certain meaning.

(2) The Students' Written Products in Relation to Task C

Task C was a pair-work writing task based on the integrated-skills approach. Examples of the students' written works in relation to such task are shown below.

<p>① Monday, October 26th It was sad today. I had a test today It was difficult. I'm so tired and sad My mother and father said "Don't worry. I'm sure you'll do better next time." And my brother said "hahaha I'm so angry. My brother is a bad boy. I'm so sad and tired today. I'm very very hate test."</p>	<p>② Thursday, November 25th, windy. Today is very funny day. Because I'm visited the grandparents's house. My grandparents lives to Daeseon. My aunt is too. I'm eat to the pizza. I like pizza. The pizza is a very, very delicious. After eating pizza, I'm listening to music in the grandmother's house. ^{because} I like listening to music. ^{because} my hobby is listening to music. The dinner time, I'm eat a dinner. And, I'm go to the home. ^-^</p>
<p>③ Friday, November 26th Today is Very not good. because, out side raining I'm don't like rain. rain is very bad. because, school, big washing I'm so bad I'm like snow. because, I make a snowman, and play the snow board. hurry up, start snow. tomorrow, stoped rain. rain! I don't like! then you!</p>	<p>④ Monday, November 26th I don't play the badminton. Because: It's rainy today. then, I go to th Academy. teacher called me "How are you feeling today Kiyoon?" "SoSo... Because I didn't played badminton..." said Kiyoon. "oh~ that too bad..." said teacher. I give taught(?) then, I go back to the my home. I want to sleep. Soon, I will sleep. today was awful. today weather is very terrible.</p>
<p>⑤ Sunday, November 27th, sunny today is Sunday. I visited my grandmother home I'm happy Because I visited my grandmother her. I play computergame and talk my family. I eat apple, pear and lunch. today is very nice. I like my family and grand mother. I want to watch TV. today is very happy and funny. ☺</p>	<p>⑥ Sunday, June 19th It was sunny. It was hot. I went to the park together my family. I am ate icecream. My family play soccer. My mother and my sister was win. My father and I was lose. I was sad, but I was interesting. At to the home. My My family is sleeping. I want ^{to} sleeping too.</p>

Figure 3. The students' written products in relation to Task C.

As shown in Table 6 and Figure 3, the students' written products in relation to Task C were relatively long (38.18 words long). Most of the expressions that appear in their works were created by the students themselves, without referring to the model diary in the English textbook. Furthermore, the examples shown

above reflect various text structures. The students did not only start with the weather; they also started by talking about how they felt, what day it was, etc. Furthermore, most of the students did not use Korean words to convey certain meanings.

5. Discussion

Apparently, the degrees of the students' interest in, satisfaction with, and ease of accomplishing Task B, which was a typical separated-skills approach and mainly involved individual work, were lowest among those of the three language tasks included in this study. In the case of Task A, the students could use several cues when completing the diary, but the degrees of their interest in and satisfaction with the task were lower than those in relation to Task C because Task A is not authentic, approximates the separated-skills approach, and mainly involves individual work. As such, no meaningful communication occurs between the students. Task C, which was based on the integrated-skills approach and was focused on peer/group interaction and communication, showed the highest degrees of student interest and satisfaction, although its degree of ease was slightly lower than that of Task A. Task C, however, challenged the students cognitively, and the oral communication that occurred between the students when they were accomplishing Task C provided them with a sufficient preparation, or with a scaffold, for writing diaries. Ultimately, the students' written works in relation to Task C turned out to be more fluent than their works in relation to the other tasks.

In addition, while they were accomplishing Task C, the students cooperated with one another by discussing how to write their own diary. Through the brainstorming activity that they were made to undertake, they made a decision as regards what they were going to write, wrote it in English, suggested proper words or expressions that could be used therein, checked the sentences or expressions that were used, etc. Their cooperation with one another as they were accomplishing the English writing tasks made them participate in the writing task more actively, develop a keener interest in accomplishing the task, and come up with more fluent English compositions. After completing the writing task, they were proud of their written works and of themselves.

V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Owing to theoretical and practical considerations, the present English textbooks have been developed in accordance with the separated-skills approach. This orientation may be appropriate at the early stages of English learning, but in English lessons that deal with only a single skill, the segregation of language skills might only be partial or even illusory. As the level of the students' English proficiency increases, their English lessons that bear a discrete-skill title might actually involve multiple, integrated skills. For example, in an English lesson for reading in the sixth grade, the teacher perhaps completely or partially gives the directions orally in English, thus requiring the students to use their listening skills to understand the assigned task.

As shown by the results of this study, the writing tasks in the present sixth-grade English textbooks, which have been designed in accordance with the separated-skills approach and individual works, cannot fully draw the students' interest and satisfaction. To help the students become fluent English writers, the integrated-skills approach through pair/group work should be used. Accordingly, the writing tasks should be revised in the future so as to base them on the integrated-skills approach involving pair/group work. This will allow the students to practice all the language skills in an integrated, natural, and communicative way, despite the fact that the writing tasks at the early stages of English learning are focused on writing skills.

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APPENDIX


Possible Task C in the 6th Grade

Unit	Writing Task	Main Topic
1. Where Are You From?	Where Am I From?	Introducing one's self
2. Is This York Street?	Making A Map	Giving directions
3. I Like Spring	Four Seasons	Telling the seasons
4. When Is Your Birthday?	When Is Your Birthday?	Surveying the birthdays of one's friends
5. May I Help You?	For Sale	Advertizing goods
6. Can I Have Some Water?	I Like Food	Expressing one's physical needs
7. My Father Is A Pilot	My Family	Introducing one's family members
8. What Will You Do This Summer?	Summer Vacation	Planning one's vacation

9. How Was Your Vacation?	My Vacation	Telling stories about one's the summer vacation
10. I'm Stronger Than You	I Am A Ruler	Comparing the heights of one's friends
11. What Do You Want To Do?	After School	Speaking about what one wants to do after school
12. Will You Help Me, Please?	Helping Others	Discussing helping others
13. That's Too Bad	Writing A Diary	Thinking about what one did in the previous day
14. Would You Like To Come To My House?	Making An Invitation Card	Writing an invitation letter
15. It's Time To Go Home	My Daily Schedule	Talking about one's daily schedule
16. So Long, Everyone!	Writing A Letter	Writing a letter to my friends

1. Where Are You From?

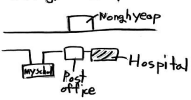
where am I from?



I go to Samsu elementary School.
My classroom is on the first floor.
I am from Jincheon.
I live in Byeong Apartment.
My home is on the fourth floor.
I like my house.

2. Is This York Street?


Making a map



This is my school.
Go straight and turn left at the corner.
The post office is on the left.
The Nonghyeop is on the left.
The hospital is near the post office.

3. I Like Spring

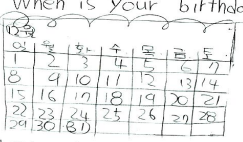
Four Season



I like summer.
It's hot.
We can swim.
We can go to the beach.
I like to swim in the beach.
But Junha likes winter.
Winter is cold.
We can make snowman.

4. When Is Your Birthday?


When is your birthday?



1. My birthday is July second.
2. Joehyeon's birthday is December twenty second.
3. Ohseon's birthday is January thirty first.
4. Seunggi's birthday is May seveneenth.
5. Yujin's birthday is December thirty first.
6.

5. May I Help You?

For Sale



This is my favorite book.
This book is 2,000won.
It's very fun.
You will like it.
Buy it and read it!

6. Can I Have Some Water?


I like food



It's too hot.
I'm thirsty.
I want some cold water.
I'm hungry.
I want to eat hamburger.
Hamburger is delicious.
Yum Yum

7. My Father Is A Pilot

My Family



This is my father.
He is a official worker.
He is nice.
This is my mother.
She is a farmer.
we have a family farm.
This is my brother.
He is young.
He likes to play computer game.

8. What Will You Do This Summer?

Summer Vacation



Wow! Summer Vacation.
I will visit my grandparents in Daesehon.
I will go to the beach.
I will swim there.
I like summer and my grandparents.
This is Daesehon Beach.
It's beautiful.
I like the beach.

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Received in January, 2008

Reviewed in February, 2008

Revised version received in March, 2008