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**LEARNER CREATIVITY - A POTENTIAL FACILITATOR
FOR ORAL TASK PERFORMANCE?**

**MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND
LANGUAGE (TESL)**

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Abstract

The study investigated the relationships between learner creativity and oral task performance of the learners of English as a second language at a state university in Sri Lanka. The sample consisted of 20 intermediate level second year undergraduates who were following the Core English Language (CEL) as part of their Degree Programme. Their creativity was measured by employing a standardized creativity test and oral task performance was examined on two oral tasks: narrative and expository.

The findings of the study showed that there were no statistically significant positive correlations between learner creativity and oral task performance whereas statistically extensive negative relationships exist among all the aspects of creativity: originality, fluency, flexibility and certain oral task performance measures. The results of the present investigation deviate from the findings of the previous studies (Albert, 2008; Albert & Kormos, 2004; Otto, 1998) which assert the existence of moderate and statistically substantial correlations between learner creativity and oral task performance. Hence, the current research findings contradict the view of the proponents (Ehrman, 1996; Grigorenko, Sternberg & Ehrman, 2000) who declare that the ability to cope with novelty is a remarkable feature that affects the success of language learning. However, findings affirm Skehan's (1998a) framework of task difficulty as opposed to the claims of the Cognition Hypothesis (Robinson, 2003, 2005). The existence of strong negative relationships between learner creativity and oral task performance on the cognitively more complex tasks further supports the supposition of Skehan that greater cognitive intricacy, involuntarily results in reducing accuracy, fluency and complexity.

It is significant to note that in comparison with the results of the previous research, certain relationships detected by this study are different. Therefore, further investigations are necessary to determine the fixed correlations of variables prior to arriving at far-reaching conclusions.