

STUDENTS' CREATIVE REPRESENTATION OF ENGLISH NOUNS THROUGH LINE DRAWING: A QUALITATIVE IMAGE-BASED INTERPRETATIVE STUDY

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Abstract

This study explores how students creatively represent English nouns through visual line drawing tasks in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, focusing specifically on the forms, patterns, and variations of students' visual representations as reflected in their simple drawings. A qualitative image-based interpretative research design was employed. The analysis reveals that students' drawings exhibit diverse visual forms, ranging from literal depictions of objects such as houses, mountains, trees, flowers, vases, and cars, to imaginative and interpretative representations that incorporate functional, contextual, and personal elements. Students demonstrated varying levels of vocabulary comprehension, including literal recognition of shapes, understanding of object function, situational and environmental awareness, creative interpretation, and overall complexity in meaning construction. The findings indicate that visualization through line drawing promotes active engagement, multimodal learning, and student-centered approaches, enabling learners to construct meaning at multiple levels and develop higher-order thinking skills. Overall, line drawing tasks emerge as an effective tool for enhancing vocabulary acquisition, deepening comprehension, and promoting creativity and cognitive integration in EFL classrooms.

Keywords: English Nouns; Image-Based Approaches; Line Drawing

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana siswa secara kreatif merepresentasikan kata benda bahasa Inggris melalui tugas menggambar garis visual di kelas Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing (EFL), khususnya bentuk, pola, dan variasi representasi visual siswa sebagaimana tercermin dalam gambar sederhana mereka. Studi ini menggunakan desain penelitian interpretatif berbasis citra kualitatif. Analisis menunjukkan bahwa gambar siswa mengungkapkan beragam bentuk visual, mulai dari penggambaran literal objek seperti rumah, gunung, pohon, bunga, vas, dan mobil, hingga representasi imajinatif dan interpretatif yang menggabungkan unsur fungsional, kontekstual, dan personal. Siswa menunjukkan berbagai tingkat pemahaman kosakata, termasuk pengenalan literal bentuk, pemahaman fungsi objek, kesadaran situasional dan lingkungan, interpretasi kreatif, dan kompleksitas keseluruhan dalam konstruksi makna. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa visualisasi melalui menggambar garis mendorong keterlibatan aktif, pembelajaran multimodal, dan pendekatan yang berpusat pada siswa, memungkinkan peserta didik untuk membangun makna pada berbagai tingkatan dan mengembangkan keterampilan berpikir tingkat tinggi. Secara keseluruhan, tugas menggambar garis muncul sebagai alat

yang efektif untuk meningkatkan pemerolehan kosakata, memperdalam pemahaman, serta mendorong kreativitas dan integrasi kognitif di kelas EFL.

Kata kunci: Kata Benda; Pendekatan Berbasis Gambar; Menggambar Garis

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary plays a fundamental role in language comprehension and communication. Without an adequate vocabulary, students may struggle to understand texts, express ideas clearly, or participate actively in conversations. Vocabulary knowledge forms the foundation for all language skills, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking, making it a critical aspect of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. Student engagement is essential for L2 vocabulary learning in EFL contexts. Engaged students are more likely to focus, retain new words, and use them accurately (Teemueangsai et al., 2025). Such students are also motivated to learn vocabulary outside the classroom, which promotes vocabulary development and overall language improvement.

Among the different parts of speech, nouns are particularly essential because they serve as the basic building blocks of sentences, providing the main subjects, objects, and concepts around which meaning is constructed. A strong understanding of nouns enables learners to form meaningful sentences, engage in coherent communication, and comprehend the structure of the English language more effectively. However, many EFL students face challenges in memorizing and using words accurately (Dakhi & Fitria, 2019). Traditional vocabulary learning methods, such as rote memorization and repetitive drilling, often fail to engage learners or support long-term retention. As a result, students may struggle to recall nouns when speaking or writing, limiting their overall language proficiency.

Addressing these challenges requires innovative approaches that promote active engagement, meaningful learning, and creativity in vocabulary acquisition. Despite its importance, vocabulary learning remains a significant challenge for many EFL students. Traditional methods, such as rote memorization and repetitive drilling, are still widely employed in classrooms. Although these methods may help learners temporarily retain words, they typically result in low retention rates and limited ability to apply vocabulary in real communication. Students may quickly forget words after a short period, which hampers their language development and overall confidence in using English.

Another challenge is the lack of engagement and creativity in vocabulary learning. Many students find traditional exercises monotonous and uninspiring, which reduces their motivation to participate actively in learning activities. Without opportunities to interact with the language in meaningful or creative ways, students may struggle to internalize and effectively use new vocabulary (see Azizah et al., 2025; Arifin & Harida, 2022; Abshori et al., 2020). Additionally, there is a limited use of visual or multimodal techniques in classroom activities. Visual tools such as images, drawings, and graphic organizers can significantly enhance vocabulary acquisition by helping learners connect words with concrete representations. However, these strategies are often underutilized in EFL classrooms, which prevents students from experiencing more dynamic and engaging learning processes. Incorporating creative and visual methods can address these challenges

by fostering active learning, stimulating interest, and improving students' retention and understanding of vocabulary.

Visual learning plays a crucial role in supporting language education, particularly in vocabulary acquisition (see Purwaningtyas et al., 2025; Wulandari & Muliani, 2023). By connecting words with meaningful images, students form stronger mental associations that aid in comprehension and retention. Visual representations make abstract concepts more concrete, helping learners understand word meanings more effectively than through text alone. One effective approach within visual learning is the use of drawing or line-based tasks. These activities encourage students to create their own representations of words, such as drawing objects, scenes, or symbols that correspond to specific nouns. Engaging in this process not only reinforces memory but also allows learners to deepen their understanding of vocabulary by transforming linguistic input into visual forms. This hands-on approach promotes active learning, making new words more meaningful and enjoyable.

In addition to enhancing memory and comprehension, visual tasks foster creativity and student participation. When students are encouraged to illustrate words in their own unique ways, they become active participants in the learning process rather than passive recipients of information. Such tasks stimulate imagination, problem-solving, and individual expression, all of which contribute to a richer and more engaging learning experience. By integrating visual learning into language classrooms, teachers can support both the cognitive and creative development of their students while simultaneously promoting effective vocabulary acquisition.

Encouraging students to create their own visual representations of nouns fosters a sense of ownership in learning. When

learners are actively involved in illustrating words, they take responsibility for their understanding and interpretation of the language. This process transforms vocabulary learning from a passive activity into an engaging, student-centered experience, allowing learners to connect personally with the material. The act of drawing also reflects students' creativity and comprehension of language concepts. Through their illustrations, students demonstrate how they perceive and internalize the meaning of nouns. Creative representations provide insight into their cognitive processes, revealing how linguistic input is transformed into visual forms. This not only supports memory retention but also enables teachers to assess the depth of students' comprehension in an innovative and meaningful way.

Moreover, visual tasks serve dual purposes as both learning tools and assessment artifacts. As students create drawings, they actively engage with vocabulary, practice recall, and explore the meanings of words. At the same time, the completed visual products can be analyzed to evaluate students' understanding, patterns of thinking, and creative expression. By integrating creative visual tasks into the classroom, teachers can foster engagement and conduct assessment in a way that is motivating, interactive, and aligned with the goals of language learning. In educational research, visual artifacts such as student drawings provide a unique opportunity for observing learning processes. Rather than relying solely on written or verbal data, visualizations allow researchers to see how learners interpret and internalize language concepts. Through students' drawings, abstract ideas—such as the meaning of nouns—are transformed into concrete visual forms, rendering learning visible to both the teacher and the researcher.

Image-based approaches such as visual storytelling, photo-elicitation, photo-walking, and visual auto-ethnography have been employed as novel exploratory tools in psychology and social science for examining visual identities, life histories, and other collective elements of local cultures (Pepe, 2022). The term 'image-based' is meant to reflect the use of a wide range of visuals—including film, video, photographs, and cartoons—within a qualitative research context (Prosser, 1996). Image-based interpretative research specifically examines how learners transform linguistic input into visual representations. In the context of EFL classrooms, visualization becomes a tool for exploring students' understanding of English nouns. By creating line drawings, students not only process vocabulary cognitively but also express their comprehension creatively. These visual products serve as a medium through which learners externalize their mental models, making their thinking patterns and conceptual understanding observable.

Visualization is the process of representing ideas, information, or concepts in visual form so that they can be understood more easily (Fitria & Simbolon, 2024). Visualization has been used for decades as a strategy to help readers construct meaning (Fitriani et al., 2019). It can be accomplished internally, by creating mental imagery, or externally, by producing a visual representation. Visualization involves transforming abstract thoughts, data, or experiences into images such as drawings, diagrams, charts, maps, or other visual symbols. In the visualization strategy, students make sense of a text by constructing an image of it in their minds (Ayuningrum, 2023). The images of language learning that students produce in their drawings can provide insights into their personal experiences of language learning (Inözü,

2018). Furthermore, McKillop (2007) argues that using visual representations is a valuable means of furthering our understanding of the student learning experience and of enabling students to reflect on their own experiences.

Generating a visual representation of a concept through drawing has been established as a valuable strategy for improving memory (Jalava et al., 2023). Furthermore, visualization through image-based research helps identify patterns, forms, and creative expression in student work. Researchers can analyze variations in drawings to uncover differences in perception, conceptualization, and imaginative expression. This approach emphasizes meaning-making through visual forms, enabling educators to assess not only the accuracy of vocabulary comprehension but also the depth of engagement and creativity. Incorporating visualization into research therefore enriches both data analysis and pedagogical insights, providing a more holistic understanding of how students learn, interpret, and internalize language.

Several previous studies have investigated visual tasks, visualization, and related topics. McKillop (2007) discusses the use of visual representations as a method for understanding students' experiences of the assessment process in art and design, finding that preliminary analyses of drawings highlighted factors such as negative reactions to assessment, the use of metaphor and simile, and the effectiveness of visual representations in conveying experience. Liu (2007) examines the relationships between creativity, drawing ability, and visual/spatial intelligence among third-grade students in Taiwan, revealing positive relationships between a child's creativity potential and self-image of artistic ability. Literat (2013) explores the use of participatory drawing as a non-mechanical visual research method in qualitative research

with children and youth, arguing that its co-constructed and playful nature, combined with its lack of dependence on linguistic proficiency, makes it a highly efficient and ethically sound research strategy.

Riley (2017) reasserts the primacy of drawing as a driver of creativity within art schools, reviewing aspects of visual perception theory and visual communication theory relevant to a pedagogical strategy aimed at nurturing an ‘intelligence of seeing’ in art students. Listyani (2019) explains how pictures and comic strips can be used to enhance students’ narrative writing ability and creativity, finding that visual images were very useful in helping students generate ideas, develop creativity and imagination, and improve motivation in writing. Chad-Friedman et al. (2019) compared the effects of two teaching methods—teacher-directed versus choice-based—on children’s art skills, drawing ability, motivation, and creativity, finding that children from teacher-directed programs scored significantly higher on art skill and realistic drawing ability. Cheng and Beal (2020) examine the effects of student-generated drawing and imagination on learning recall, transfer, and cognitive load, finding that when spatial ability was high, students in the drawing group had significantly higher learning recall than those in the imagining group. Abdullah et al. (2024) present a case for integrating drawing practices in higher education, arguing that drawing can enhance students’ ability to think creatively and visually in both academic and professional contexts.

Jasrial et al. (2025) employed drawing-based writing tasks to empower young learners to produce simple descriptive texts, finding that drawing helped learners generate content and reduced cognitive load during writing. Bayraktar (2025) explores the pedagogical

thinking patterns and professional identity formation of prospective Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge teachers by analyzing their visual representations of the concept of “learning,” finding that most participants conceptualized learning from a traditional, teacher-centered perspective.

Although previous studies have explored visual tasks, drawing, and image-based activities in various educational contexts, significant gaps remain in the specific application of these approaches to English vocabulary learning—particularly nouns—in EFL classrooms. For instance, McKillop (2007) and Literat (2013) highlight how visual representations can help students reflect on experiences or co-construct meaning, while Riley (2017) emphasizes the role of drawing in fostering creativity within art education. Other studies, such as Cheng and Beal (2020) and Jasrial et al. (2025), examine the effects of student-generated drawings on learning recall, writing, and cognitive load. Although these studies provide valuable insights into creativity, visual learning, and student engagement, most focus on art education, science learning, or early childhood education rather than EFL vocabulary acquisition.

Moreover, prior research often emphasizes creativity, visual-spatial intelligence, or narrative writing (Liu, 2007; Listyani, 2019), while giving limited attention to how line-based drawings specifically support the understanding and meaning-making of linguistic concepts such as English nouns. Although Abdullah et al. (2024) and Bayraktar (2025) illustrate the benefits of drawing in higher education and teacher cognition, the role of visual line drawings in facilitating students’ interpretation, comprehension, and creative expression of vocabulary in a foreign language classroom has not been fully investigated. This gap highlights the need for

a study that systematically analyzes students' visual representations of nouns as a means of both understanding and creativity in language learning.

This study is novel in its integration of visual line drawing tasks with EFL vocabulary learning, specifically targeting students' comprehension and creative representation of English nouns. Unlike previous studies that focus on art education, cognitive skills, or narrative writing, this research applies image-based interpretative analysis to understand how learners transform linguistic input into visual forms within a language classroom. By analyzing the forms, patterns, and variations in students' drawings, this study provides a new perspective on how visual tasks can reveal both cognitive understanding and creative expression in vocabulary acquisition. Furthermore, the study offers pedagogical insights by demonstrating how line-based drawing activities can actively engage students, enhance creativity, and support meaning construction in language learning. By combining a descriptive qualitative methodology with image-based interpretative analysis, this research positions itself as an innovative approach in the field of EFL education, bridging the gap between visual learning strategies and vocabulary development.

In line with this, the purpose of the study is to explore how students creatively represent English nouns through visual line drawing tasks in an EFL classroom. Specifically, the study aims to describe the forms, patterns, and variations of students' visual representations as reflected in their drawings, and to examine how these visual products demonstrate students' understanding of noun meanings. By analyzing students' drawings as visual artifacts, the research seeks to identify the ways in which learners transform linguistic

input into visual expressions, highlight the role of creativity, visual interpretation, and meaning construction in vocabulary learning, and ultimately provide pedagogical insights into how visual line-based drawing activities can support vocabulary development and enhance student engagement in language learning.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative image-based interpretative research design, which focuses on exploring and interpreting visual artifacts to understand the meanings, patterns, and creative expressions embedded in students' representations (Fitria, 2024a). Unlike quantitative methods that measure achievement numerically, an image-based interpretative approach emphasizes the analysis of visual data to capture the depth, variation, and contextual richness of students' drawings. Image-based approaches such as visual storytelling, photo-elicitation, photo-walking, and visual auto-ethnography have been employed as novel exploratory tools in psychology and social science for examining visual identities, life histories, and other collective elements of local cultures (Pepe, 2022). Image-based interpretative research specifically examines how learners transform linguistic input into visual representations. This design was chosen because the primary objective of the study was to explore how students creatively represent English nouns through line drawing tasks in an EFL classroom. Students' drawings were treated as meaningful artifacts reflecting their comprehension of vocabulary, individual interpretation, and creative strategies for visual representation. By employing an image-based approach, the study could systematically examine the forms, patterns, and variations in students' visual

outputs, providing insights into both cognitive understanding and creative processes.

The primary method of data collection was classroom observation, in which the researcher also functioned as the instructor who assigned students a drawing task. Observation is defined as a systematic technique of collecting data by directly monitoring participants' behaviors, activities, and interactions within their natural setting. In this study, observation was conducted during the teaching and learning process when students were given the task of freely drawing English nouns using line elements as the key visual requirement. The researcher carefully observed students' engagement, participation, creativity, and responses to the task, including how they selected objects, planned their drawings, and translated vocabulary into visual forms. This observation allowed the researcher to obtain real-time data about students' learning processes and creative actions rather than relying solely on final products.

In addition to observation, this study utilized documentation as a complementary data collection method. Documentation refers to a systematic technique of collecting and analyzing existing records, artifacts, or written materials that provide relevant information about the research phenomenon (Fitria, 2023). In this study, documentation included students' drawing products as the primary visual data, which served as direct evidence of students' creative representation of nouns. Supporting documents also consisted of national and international journal articles related to visual learning, vocabulary development, multimodal learning, and creative pedagogy, which were used to strengthen the theoretical framework and support data interpretation.

The data were analyzed using qualitative visual content analysis, which focuses on identifying patterns, characteristics, and meanings from visual artifacts (Fitria, 2024b). The analysis process involved organizing students' drawings, categorizing them based on the types of nouns represented, and reducing the data by grouping drawings according to visual characteristics such as level of detail, representation style, and use of lines. The researcher then identified patterns of representation, including literal object representation, contextual scene representation, functional representation, and creative or symbolic representation. Finally, the researcher interpreted how students transformed linguistic input into visual forms and drew conclusions regarding overall trends, variations, and pedagogical implications of using visual line drawing tasks to support vocabulary learning in EFL classrooms.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The analysis shows that students produced diverse visual forms in representing nouns, ranging from concrete object depictions to symbolic and interpretative representations. Some drawings reflected direct visual imitation of real objects, while others demonstrated imaginative interpretations, simplification of shapes, and contextual additions that enriched meaning. Patterns observed in the drawings indicate varying levels of vocabulary comprehension, visual abstraction, and creative expression. Additionally, students tended to use recognizable features, essential lines, and contextual cues to convey meaning effectively, despite the simplicity of line drawings. These findings suggest that line drawing

tasks encourage learners to actively process vocabulary, engage in visualization, and express understanding creatively. The visual representations not only reflect students' lexical comprehension but also reveal their cognitive processing, interpretation strategies, and creative thinking, confirming that image-based tasks can serve as meaningful pedagogical tools for supporting vocabulary learning and promoting student creativity in EFL classrooms.

Examples of Students' Drawings of English Nouns

The analysis of students' line drawings reveals how they creatively represent English nouns in an EFL classroom. Each drawing serves as a visual artifact reflecting students' understanding, interpretation, and construction of meaning for the target

vocabulary. The drawings vary in form, level of detail, and complexity, illustrating differences in literal recognition, functional understanding, contextual awareness, and creative expression. By examining these visual products, it is possible to identify patterns in how learners transform linguistic input into visual representations, as well as the ways in which they integrate personal interpretation, environmental context, and narrative elements.

The following section presents examples of students' drawings for various nouns, highlighting five analytical dimensions: literal understanding, function and use, contextual/environmental representation, creativity and personal interpretation, and complexity of meaning construction.

Table 1: Examples of students' drawings of English nouns

Object/ Drawing	Literal Understanding	Function/Use	Contextual/ Environ-mental	Creativity & Interpretation	Complexity
House	Simple shapes: roof, walls, door, windows; basic recognition	Furniture, yard; understanding the house as a place to live	Neighborhood, trees, fences; environmental awareness	Gardens, chimneys, pets; personal interpretation	From a simple geometric shape to a detailed contextual scene
Mountain/ View	Triangular peaks, slopes; basic recognition	Trails, rivers added for practical or recreational context	Sun, clouds, trees, and villages at the foot of the mountain	Imaginative landscapes: sunset, birds flying	Simple peaks to full scenic compositions
Park/ Garden	Grass, benches, pathways; object recognition	Swings, playground, benches; functional understanding	Trees, flowers, fountains, people; environmental context	Animals, picnic scenes, imaginative fairy gardens	Single-object to narrative social/environmental scenes
Tree	Trunk and canopy; basic recognition	Fruits, nests; function as food source or habitat	Trees in yards, forests, parks; environmental awareness	Stylized, abstract, and patterned trees	Trunk and leaves to full ecosystem with animals and sky

Flower	Petals and stem; object recognition	Bouquets, garden flowers; decorative function	Gardens, parks, vases; environmental context	Color, pattern, and arrangement variations	Single flower to multiple arrangements
Vase with Flowers	Vase shape with flowers; object recognition	Decorative and ornamental function	Table or room background; spatial context	Variation in flower types, patterns, and colors	Simple vase to elaborate table setting
Car	Basic shape, wheels, windows, doors; object recognition	Roads, passengers; transport function	Streets, parking lots, city scenes	Colors, designs, imaginative features (e.g., flying cars)	Single-car outline to narrative street scene

The analysis of students’ line drawings provides insight into how they creatively represent English nouns in an EFL classroom. Each drawing serves as a visual artifact reflecting students’ understanding, interpretation, and meaning-making of the target vocabulary. The drawings vary in form, level of detail, and complexity, revealing differences in literal recognition, functional understanding, contextual awareness, creativity, and conceptual depth. By examining these visual representations, the study captures how students transform linguistic input into images, integrate personal interpretation, and situate objects within real-life contexts. The following sections present a detailed explanation of the findings according to six analytical dimensions.

Object/Drawing

This dimension lists the nouns drawn by the students, such as house, tree, car, or flower. It indicates the visual focus of the study, showing which objects are being analyzed and how students represent them through line drawings.

Literal Understanding

This dimension reflects the students’ basic understanding of the object’s shape. Examples include a simple house with a

roof and walls, a table with legs and a flat surface, or a flower with a stem and petals. It demonstrates students’ ability to recognize the object visually and link it accurately to the corresponding vocabulary word.

Function/Use

This dimension describes students’ understanding of the practical function or use of the object. For instance, a table with books may represent a study area, a chair in a living room indicates a seating function, and a vase with flowers represents decoration. This demonstrates that students are aware not only of the object’s form but also of its real-life function and practical meaning.

Contextual/Environmental Representation

This dimension shows how students situate the object within a relevant context or environment. Examples include a rice field drawn with farmers and the sun, a house surrounded by trees or fences, or a car placed on a street with a city background. This demonstrates students’ ability to associate vocabulary with real-life situations and cultural or environmental contexts.

Creativity and Personal Interpretation

This dimension reflects the level of creativity and personal interpretation in students’ drawings. Examples include a

house with a garden, a rice field including narrative elements, or a car with unique colors and designs. It shows that students go beyond replicating simple shapes and actively incorporate imagination, individual ideas, and expressive details.

Complexity

This dimension measures the depth and elaboration of the drawings. Some drawings are simple and depict only a single object, while others include contextual or narrative elements, forming a visual story. This reflects the students' ability to construct meaning, demonstrate vocabulary mastery, and integrate creative and contextual understanding in their visual representations.

Taken together, the analysis of students' line drawings demonstrates that learners exhibit varying levels of understanding, creativity, and contextual awareness in representing English nouns. Through their drawings, students accurately depicted the basic forms of objects such as houses, mountains, trees, flowers, vases, and cars, indicating their recognition of shapes and essential features. Beyond literal representation, many drawings also reflected the functional or practical aspects of the objects, such as tables with books suggesting a place to study, chairs in living spaces indicating seating, bouquets or vases serving as decoration, and cars positioned on roads to convey transportation purposes. A significant number of students placed objects within meaningful contexts—houses in neighborhoods, mountains with villages and sunlight, or flowers arranged in gardens—demonstrating an awareness of environmental and cultural settings. Creativity and personal interpretation were also evident in many drawings, as students added imaginative elements, stylistic variations, and narrative details such as decorated houses, scenic

mountain landscapes, and stylized flower arrangements. The complexity of the drawings varied widely, ranging from simple single-object sketches to elaborate compositions with contextual or narrative elements, indicating different levels of cognitive and conceptual depth. Overall, these findings suggest that line drawing activities provide an effective means for students to connect words with visual meaning, express personal interpretation, and demonstrate both literal and contextual understanding of English nouns.

Variation in Visual Representation Forms

Students' line drawings reveal notable variation in the forms of visual representation for different English nouns. While some drawings were simple and literal, capturing only the essential shapes of objects—such as a basic house with a roof and walls, a triangular mountain, or a flower with a stem and petals—others incorporated functional elements indicating the object's use, such as a table with books suggesting a study area, a chair in a living room, or a vase with flowers as decoration. Many students also included contextual and environmental details, situating objects within meaningful surroundings, such as houses in neighborhoods, mountains with villages and trees, parks with pathways and benches, or cars on streets and in city scenes. The level of creativity and personal interpretation varied widely, with some students adding imaginative or stylistic elements such as gardens, pets, sunset landscapes, decorated vehicles, or stylized flower arrangements. The complexity of the drawings ranged from single-object sketches to multi-element compositions with narrative or contextual features, reflecting differences in cognitive depth and conceptual understanding. Overall, this variation highlights how students interpret nouns not only literally, but also functionally,

contextually, and creatively, illustrating the richness of meaning construction through visual representation.

Patterns of Meaning Construction through Visualization

The analysis of students' line drawings reveals clear patterns in how meaning is constructed through visual representation. At the literal level, students consistently depicted the essential shapes and features of objects, such as the basic structure of houses, triangular mountain peaks, or the stems and petals of flowers, demonstrating foundational recognition of the nouns. Moving beyond literal depiction, many students incorporated functional elements that conveyed the practical use of the object—such as a table with books indicating a study area, a chair in a living room, a vase with flowers, or cars on the street—demonstrating an understanding of the objects' roles in real-life contexts. Furthermore, a significant number of drawings included contextual and environmental details, situating objects within meaningful surroundings, which indicates that students associate vocabulary with lived experiences and cultural or environmental knowledge. The drawings also reveal varying levels of creativity and personal interpretation, with students adding imaginative elements such as gardens, animals, stylized trees, sunset landscapes, decorated vehicles, or arranged flower bouquets, illustrating the integration of personal perspective into meaning-making. Finally, the complexity of visual representation ranged from simple, isolated objects to elaborate, multi-element compositions that included narrative and contextual cues, demonstrating progressive levels of cognitive depth and conceptual understanding. Overall, these patterns suggest that visualization allows students to construct meaning at

multiple levels—from literal recognition to functional use, contextual awareness, creative interpretation, and complex integration—highlighting the richness of visual tasks in vocabulary learning.

Levels of Vocabulary Comprehension Reflected in Drawings

Students' line drawings not only depict objects visually but also serve as indicators of different levels of vocabulary comprehension. Each drawing reflects how learners understand, interpret, and contextualize English nouns, moving from simple recognition of shapes to more complex representations that integrate function, context, creativity, and personal meaning. By analyzing these visual artifacts, it is possible to identify patterns in how students construct meaning and express their understanding of vocabulary in a multi-dimensional and dynamic way.

Literal Understanding

Students demonstrated a strong grasp of the basic forms and features of the objects they drew. Simple shapes such as houses with roofs and walls, triangular mountain peaks, tree trunks with canopies, and flowers with stems and petals were consistently represented. These drawings indicate that students can accurately recognize and identify the lexical meaning of English nouns, showing foundational understanding at the visual and conceptual level.

Function/Use

Many drawings went beyond mere shape to illustrate the practical function of the objects. For example, tables with books suggested a study area, chairs in living spaces indicated seating, bouquets and vases represented decoration, and cars positioned on roads reflected their transport

function. These details show that students can connect vocabulary with real-life applications and functional meaning, demonstrating comprehension beyond literal depiction.

Contextual/Environmental Awareness

A significant proportion of students incorporated contextual or environmental elements into their drawings. Houses were often drawn within neighborhoods, mountains included villages, sunlight, and trees, and parks featured benches, pathways, and people. These additions indicate that students can situate vocabulary within meaningful real-life and cultural contexts, linking words to the environments in which they naturally occur.

Creativity and Personal Interpretation

Students frequently added imaginative and expressive elements to their drawings, reflecting personal interpretation and creativity. Examples include gardens surrounding houses, sunset landscapes with mountains, flying birds, uniquely decorated cars, and arranged flower bouquets. These creative additions demonstrate that learners are not merely reproducing objects but actively expressing ideas, narrative elements, and personal meaning through visual representation.

Complexity

The level of complexity in students' drawings varied widely. Some were simple, single-object sketches, while others were elaborate compositions integrating multiple elements, contexts, and narrative cues. This range indicates progressive levels of cognitive engagement, conceptual depth, and integrative thinking, showing how students construct meaning from basic recognition to rich, multi-dimensional representations.

Overall Pattern

Taken together, these findings suggest that line drawing tasks reveal multiple levels of vocabulary comprehension: literal recognition, functional understanding, contextual awareness, creative interpretation, and complex integration. This demonstrates that visual tasks are highly effective for exploring how learners construct meaning and deepen their understanding of English nouns, providing valuable insight into EFL vocabulary acquisition and learning processes.

Visualization as an Active Learning Process

Visualization through line drawing serves as an active learning strategy that engages students in the process of transforming language into meaningful visual representations. Unlike passive memorization techniques, this approach requires learners to actively interpret and depict English nouns, connecting words with their forms, functions, and contextual environments. By translating vocabulary into drawings, students not only reinforce their understanding of meaning but also develop creativity, critical thinking, and personal interpretation. This task encourages student-centered learning, as each learner makes individual choices in representation while engaging multimodal skills—visual, spatial, and linguistic.

Active Engagement

The line drawing task encourages students to actively participate in the learning process rather than passively memorizing vocabulary. By interpreting nouns and transforming them into drawings, learners engage multiple cognitive processes, including observation, analysis, and creative representation. This active engagement not only helps students retain information more effectively but also

promotes deeper understanding of language content.

Linking Words to Visual Meaning

Through the line drawing activity, students connect vocabulary items with concrete visual representations, such as drawing a house, a park, or a car. This process reinforces the association between the lexical meaning of nouns and their visual forms, enabling students to internalize words more effectively by seeing, imagining, and producing representations of them.

Promoting Creativity and Interpretation

The drawing task provides students with the opportunity to express personal interpretation and creativity. For example, learners may add gardens, animals, people, or other narrative elements to their illustrations. Such creative elaborations demonstrate how students interpret and represent objects in unique ways, allowing them to go beyond literal depiction and showcase their own understanding and imagination.

Contextual and Functional Awareness

Many students situate their drawings in meaningful contexts, such as houses in neighborhoods, mountains with villages and trees, or parks with benches and playgrounds. These contextual additions indicate that learners are aware of the functional and environmental aspects of the objects, linking vocabulary to real-world situations. This deepens students' understanding of how words operate in everyday life.

Student-Centered Learning

The line drawing task allows each learner to produce a unique visual representation, reflecting individual choices in style, complexity, and meaning. This approach fosters autonomy and learner ownership, as students decide how to depict objects,

incorporate context, and add creative elements. Such activities promote engagement and encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning.

Multimodal Learning and Cognitive Development

By combining visual, spatial, and linguistic modes, the drawing task supports multimodal learning, which enhances cognitive flexibility and problem-solving skills. Students integrate multiple layers of meaning in their drawings—from literal recognition to functional understanding and creative narratives—strengthening both vocabulary comprehension and higher-order thinking skills.

Enhanced Engagement and Motivation

Line drawing as an active learning strategy increases students' motivation and involvement. The task is exploratory and playful, reducing learning anxiety while sustaining curiosity and attention. Students become more engaged in classroom activities as they create, interpret, and share their visual representations, making vocabulary learning both enjoyable and meaningful.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that students' line drawings serve as meaningful visual representations of English nouns, reflecting their understanding of vocabulary through literal recognition, functional awareness, contextual placement, creative interpretation, and varying levels of complexity. These findings align closely with previous research highlighting the pedagogical and cognitive value of drawing tasks in EFL classrooms.

Rajuan and Gidoni (2014) emphasized that drawing activities can reduce general and language-specific anxiety while promoting

focus and emotional regulation. Similarly, in the present study, students' engagement with line drawing tasks appeared to support active participation and sustained attention, as they translated linguistic input into visual forms. The process of creating drawings such as houses, mountains, or flower arrangements encouraged learners to focus on multiple aspects of vocabulary, integrating meaning and form in a low-pressure, expressive context. This suggests that visualization through drawing not only aids comprehension but also contributes to students' emotional engagement and comfort in language learning.

Albay (2015) highlighted the effectiveness of simple drawings in facilitating vocabulary acquisition, even when teachers are not skilled artists. The present study corroborates this finding by showing that students can construct detailed and meaningful visual representations of nouns without needing advanced artistic ability. For example, simple sketches of houses, trees, or cars were often elaborated with context, function, or imaginative elements, indicating that visualization supports both memorization and deeper cognitive processing. These visual artifacts also create opportunities for collaborative learning, as they can spark classroom discussion and peer feedback.

Gidoni and Rajuan (2018) reported that drawing tasks increase motivation, participation, and content retention in EFL lessons. The current findings similarly indicate that line drawing activities actively engage students, enabling them to construct meaning and internalize vocabulary. Students added narrative elements, stylistic variations, and contextual details to their drawings, which not only demonstrated comprehension but also promoted higher-order thinking, creativity, and personal interpretation. This confirms that drawing tasks function as

both an affective and a cognitive scaffold for vocabulary learning, enhancing motivation and involvement.

İnözü (2018) emphasized the use of children's drawings as a window into their perceptions of language learning, revealing personal experiences and beliefs. In this study, although the participants were older EFL learners, their drawings similarly provided insight into how they conceptualize and internalize English nouns. The line drawings served as a mirror of learners' cognitive and creative processes, revealing associations with context, culture, and personal interpretation. The visual products themselves functioned as rich qualitative data, illustrating learners' understanding and meaning-making strategies.

Sukma et al. (2020) highlighted the effectiveness of drawing tasks in task-based language teaching, noting that such tasks increase engagement, authenticity, and creativity in comprehension activities. The present findings extend this notion to vocabulary learning, showing that line drawing tasks offer a similarly authentic and creative means for learners to interact with target words. Students' drawings went beyond literal representation to include functional, contextual, and imaginative aspects, demonstrating active learning, creativity, and personal expression while reinforcing vocabulary knowledge.

Overall, the results of this study align with and extend prior research on the pedagogical value of drawing in EFL contexts. By connecting words to visual meaning, fostering active engagement, supporting creativity, and integrating cognitive and affective processes, line drawing tasks serve as an effective tool for vocabulary acquisition. This study reinforces the view that visualization is not merely a mnemonic device but a multi-dimensional

strategy that promotes comprehension, contextual understanding, and student-centered learning in EFL classrooms.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of students' line drawings revealed that learners produced diverse visual representations of English nouns, ranging from simple literal depictions to more imaginative and interpretative forms. Many drawings showed direct imitation of real objects using essential features, while others reflected simplification, symbolic representation, and contextual additions that enriched meaning. These variations indicate different levels of vocabulary comprehension, abstraction, and creativity. Even with basic line drawings, students effectively used recognizable shapes and contextual cues to communicate meaning, demonstrating active vocabulary processing and creative engagement.

Examples such as houses, mountains, parks, trees, flowers, vases, and cars were consistently illustrated with core defining features, but many students went beyond basic forms by adding functional details and environmental contexts, such as neighborhoods, gardens, roads, or daily-life scenes. Some drawings also included imaginative elements such as animals, decorative designs, and narrative settings, showing personal interpretation and deeper conceptual involvement.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that visualization through line drawing supports multi-level meaning construction, encompassing literal recognition, functional understanding, contextual awareness, creative interpretation, and integrated conceptualization. By transforming words into visual representations, students were able to internalize vocabulary, connect linguistic

input with real-life experiences, and express personal understanding. The activity also functioned as an active, multimodal learning strategy that engaged visual, spatial, and linguistic skills simultaneously, promoting higher-order thinking, motivation, and learner autonomy. These results confirm that drawing-based visualization not only strengthens vocabulary retention but also fosters creativity, meaningful learning, and deeper cognitive processing, making it an effective and engaging approach for EFL vocabulary development.

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that educators and curriculum designers consider integrating line-based visual drawing tasks as a regular component of vocabulary instruction in EFL classrooms. Such activities not only enhance students' understanding of nouns but also foster creativity, critical thinking, and active engagement in learning. Teachers can encourage students to produce diverse and imaginative representations of vocabulary items, which can serve as both learning tools and assessment artifacts. Future research may expand this approach to include other parts of speech or more complex language structures, investigate its effects on different age groups or proficiency levels, and explore the integration of digital or multimodal drawing tools to further enrich students' visual and cognitive learning experiences. Moreover, this study highlights the potential of qualitative image-based interpretative methods as an innovative research approach, which could be applied in other educational contexts to gain deeper insights into students' meaning-making processes and creative expressions.

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