

# AI-Collaborative Continuation Task: Reconstructing Instructional Models and Cultivating Student Creativity

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**Abstract:** Generative artificial intelligence (AI) is developing rapidly and brings both challenges and opportunities for changing how we teach the continuation task. This teaching approach centers on interactive alignment. This study builds a three-phase instructional model called the “AI-Collaborative Continuation Task.” In this model, the AI system serves as a linguistic scaffold, a thought catalyst, and a mirror for comparative analysis. These three distinct roles are strategically aligned with the three phases of the writing model constructed in this study. Working with AI helps students use less effort on basic language tasks. This lets them focus more on creating stories and expressing emotions. The paper explains how the model works with specific instructional cases. It also discusses the model’s success and practical ways to help students improve language output, boost creativity, and develop metacognitive and critical thinking skills.

**Keywords:** AI-Collaborative Continuation Task; Continuation Task Instructional; Student Creativity Cultivation; Generative Artificial Intelligence; Writing Instruction Innovation

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## 1.Introduction

The continuation task is a teaching method designed to improve second-language (L2) writing skills. It encourages students to align their reading and writing. This approach is important in senior high school English classes in China (Wang Chuming, 2010). The key to this method is that learners absorb language patterns and story structures from the source text during writing. They then reshape these patterns unconsciously. This process helps them acquire language more effectively (Wang Min & Wang Chuming, 2014).

However, this task works well only if students have a strong base in language skills. Teaching experience shows that students need sufficient vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, and logical analysis to complete continuation tasks (Huang Huilian et al., 2023). The task also needs logical thinking, plot creation, and clear expression. This makes it quite demanding (Liu Qingsi, 2016). In practice, many students struggle. They lack basic language tools and spend much energy on simple language tasks. As a result, they cannot handle larger issues, such as telling a clear story or showing emotion (Huang Huilian, 2023). Their writing can become shallow and unoriginal, and the task’s goal of using real, creative language is rarely achieved.

Generative artificial intelligence may help with this instructional problem. In this study, we see AI not as a threat but as a constructive scaffolding tool (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). We suggest an AI-Collaborative Continuation Task with three phase. In this model, AI offers language support, sparks creative ideas, and gives examples for students to compare. By having AI handle foundational tasks, the model reduces students’ cognitive load, giving learners more mental capacity to explore creative work. This enables them to focus on expressing emotions and forming unique perspectives, which constitute the distinctive strengths of human intelligence and align with the standard criteria of creativity—novelty and appropriateness (Runco & Jaeger, 2012). The goal is to advance learning beyond surface-level tasks toward deeper, creative integration, laying the foundation for developing both language skills and creativity. In this study, the AI-collaborative process was facilitated by the GPT-4 large language model.

## 2.Construction and Implementation of the Instructional Model

To validate the application of generative AI in continuation-task teaching, this study developed a three-phase instructional model: from initial material preparation and idea generation, through independent writing and personal expression, to final comparative analysis and text refinement. To clarify its procedures and effects, we used a

high-quality test item from the 2025 adaptive joint examination for eight provinces as a teaching case. Specifically, the original text creates a tense scene. The protagonist is on a business trip in Philadelphia. They go alone to a theater for a documentary screening and an animal rescue fundraiser. On arrival, the protagonist is intimidated by a group of tough bikers. They feel strong fear and conflict. This setting allows for emotional changes and cognitive dissonance in the continuation. The continuation task requires students to complete the story based on the following two opening sentences:

Paragraph 1: I hurried into the theater, only to find there were even more bikers inside.

Paragraph 2: When the film began, I realized the bikers were an animal rescue group.

## **2.1 Phase 1: Material Preparation and Idea Generation**

In this initial phase, AI acts as a linguistic scaffold and thought catalyst to help students prepare for writing. As a scaffold, it offers targeted language resources, including advanced vocabulary and sentence structures tied to specific emotional or narrative themes. As a catalyst, it suggests a range of narrative possibilities and plot options, helping students explore creative directions and break cognitive barriers. This support provides learners with a strong foundation for expression and inspiration before they write independently.

### **2.1.1 First, as a Linguistic Scaffold:**

In practice, The instructor begins by designing targeted prompts. These are tailored to the emotional and narrative demands of the continuation task. Students use the prompts to interact with the AI. Through this process, they retrieve curated thematic vocabulary and sentence patterns. These include expressions for “fear,” “relief,” or “interpersonal tension.” By analyzing large-scale corpora, the AI supplies language just beyond learners’ current proficiency. This systematic input replaces random encounters with vocabulary. The method enables students to overcome expressive barriers when describing emotions and mental states. It also lays a foundation for nuanced and personalized language use in their independent writing.

Prompt Example: “Please list 20 sophisticated English words or phrases for describing ‘fear,’ ‘anxiety,’ ‘relief,’ and ‘being moved,’ tailored for a story about misunderstanding and revelation.”

AI Output Example: “The following 20 sophisticated English words and phrases, tailored for a story revolving around ‘misunderstanding and revelation,’ are provided, covering the four emotional states of fear, anxiety, relief, and being moved:

(1) Fear: Heart pounding / Filled with trepidation / On edge / Intimidating presence / Paralyzed with fear

(2) Tension: Nerve-wracking / Bated breath / Tense silence / Knotted stomach / Sweaty palms

(3) Relief: A wave of relief / Weight off one’s shoulders / Breathe a sigh of relief / Cloud of doubt lifted / Burden lifted

(4) Being Moved: Overwhelming warmth / Moved to tears / Heart swelled with emotion / Profound respect / Look past appearances.

### **2.1.2 Second, as a Thought Catalyst:**

In practice, to spark narrative creativity, the instructor designs open-ended prompts. These guide the AI to generate different plot developments and possible situations. The AI uses pattern recognition and information synthesis to present students with narrative options. For example, it suggests transitions from fear to understanding. This process helps students break away from fixed thinking, compare choices, and refine their stories. Its value goes beyond overcoming narrative bottlenecks. More importantly, it helps students build uniquely creative and logically coherent stories.

Prompt Example: “For the scene after ‘I hurried into the theater and found even more bikers inside,’ devise five distinct key events or details that could illustrate the character’s internal shift from fear to understanding.”

AI Output Example:

(1) Detail 1: I noticed the most burly biker had prominent animal claw scars on his arm while he was gently stroking a small dog.

(2) Detail 2: Before the film began, the entire group stood in solemn silence, paying tribute to a service dog that had died in a rescue mission.

(3) Detail 3: I accidentally bumped into one of them. He turned around with a fierce look, but first steadied my nearly dropped wallet and kindly reminded me to be careful.

(4) Detail 4: I heard a muffled sob behind me. Turning around, I saw a fully tattooed biker diligently comforting a small dog that had been startled by the film. His gentle whispers contrasted sharply with his rugged appearance.

(5) Detail 5: As the lights came back on, the biker seated beside me proactively showed me dozens of photos on his phone of himself with rescued animals. He explained sheepishly, “We just... wanted to give them a home too.”

## 2.2 Phase 2: Independent Writing and Personal Expression

This phase shifts to independent creation. The student is now the main author. Building on earlier language and ideas, students express their own voice and perspective. The instructor guides emotional exploration, helping students examine character psychology, clarify emotional shifts, and find deeper themes. The goal is to turn outside input into personal creative output. Students blend AI materials with their own experiences, values, and emotions. The outcome is writing marked by genuine feeling and personal thought, a shift from learning skills to true expression.

### Student Text Sample:

*I hurried into the theater and found even more bikers inside.* Panic swept through me. My heart sank as I saw this. I was on edge, holding my breath, and wished I had returned to the hotel instead. Yet, my surprise and confusion grew as I saw how orderly everyone was. Quiet conversations filled the air. Many spoke affectionately about the dogs they had saved. I took a deep breath and chose a corner seat, as far from the group as possible. My stomach was still knotted, and I glanced over at them while I waited for the film. I wondered about their intentions.

*When the film began, I realized that the bikers were an animal rescue group.* Little did I know they were attending for the very same purpose as I to support local animal shelters. The film showcased their dedicated efforts to rescue stray dogs, and soon, my initial fear was overshadowed by a wave of relief and overwhelming warmth when I understood the meaning behind their insignia. Moved to tears by their compassion and dedication, I felt a profound respect for these people I had so misjudged. I donated generously to the fundraising event after the film to express my admiration, feeling as if a weight had been lifted off my shoulders. This unexpected encounter taught me an important life lesson: never judge a book by its cover.

As shown in the student's text above, the AI's language resources from Phase 1 were effectively internalized. For initial fear, the student used AI-suggested phrases like “on edge” and “stomach was still knotted.” To show the emotional shift, they used expressions like “a wave of relief,” “overwhelming warmth,” “moved to tears,” and “a weight had been lifted off my shoulders.” This shows the AI was useful as a linguistic scaffold and that the student personalized the vocabulary, moving from learning to application.

## 2.3 Phase 3: Comparative Analysis and Text Refinement

During the reflective enhancement stage, the instructional emphasis shifts to a systematic comparison of human and AI-generated texts. This approach supports the advanced development of students' writing skills. The phase commences with the use of paradigmatic prompts to direct the AI in generating a continuation text on the same topic, which then serves as a reference for analysis. Subsequently, the instructor guides multi-dimensional comparisons, prompting students to evaluate their work against the AI's output from emotional, narrative, linguistic, and thematic perspectives. Ultimately, students revise their texts based on analytical insights, thereby transforming critical reflection into practical improvements.

The primary value of this process lies in directly comparing paradigmatic AI-generated texts with individualized student writing. This side-by-side comparison enables students to identify specific differences: AI-generated texts often demonstrate technical accuracy and linguistic consistency, while student writing reveals strengths in emotional authenticity and narrative innovation. This clarification allows students to set a clear self-assessment framework, recognize linguistic limitations, and appreciate creative strengths. Ultimately, this approach equips students to master foundational skills while developing their own confident and creative voice.

#### AI-Generated Text Example:

*I hurried into the theater, only to find there were even more bikers inside.* My heart sank. They occupied entire rows, their leather jackets and heavy boots creating an intimidating presence. I quickly found an empty seat near the back, trying to make myself as small and invisible as possible. The air was filled with their deep, rumbling conversations, and I nervously clutched my wallet, questioning my decision once more. Just then, a particularly large biker with a long beard sat down next to me. I flinched slightly, but he merely nodded politely and turned his attention to the stage. As I scanned the room more carefully, I noticed something unexpected. Many of them were holding flyers about the documentary, and some even had small patches on their jackets depicting paws or the name of an animal shelter.

*When the film began, I realized that the bikers were an animal rescue group.* The documentary showcased the work of “Guardians on Wheels,” a network of bikers who volunteered to transport rescued dogs across states to their forever homes. The screen showed these big, tough-looking men gently handling scared puppies, feeding them with bottles, and even building cozy kennels on their motorcycles. The biker next to me sniffled, and I saw him discreetly wipe a tear from his eye during a particularly emotional scene. My fear completely melted away, replaced by a profound sense of respect and shame for my earlier judgment. When the lights came up, the audience erupted into applause, and I found myself smiling and clapping alongside these kind-hearted rescuers, feeling a warm connection in that theater I had been so afraid to enter.

## 2.4 Case Analysis

This part uses the comparative analysis framework from Phase 3 on a specific case. By directly comparing the earlier student writing sample and the AI-generated text, the framework shows the full operational process. The analysis examines four core dimensions—emotional expression, narrative construction, linguistic features, and thematic development, to separate the unique traits of human and AI-generated texts. This case shows that structured textual comparison offers clear pedagogical value, helping students build self-awareness and make effective revisions to their writing.

### 2.4.1 Emotional Expression: Formulaic vs. Personalized

The AI-generated text uses formulaic emotional phrases like “My heart sank” and “My fear completely melted away.” These are accurate but unoriginal. In contrast, the student’s text feels more personal, with phrases like “A wave of panic swept through me” and “I was completely on edge, my breath held.” Not only does the AI text provide general emotions, but the student’s text also describes specific physical and psychological states, resulting in a more unique emotional experience.

### 2.4.2 Narrative Construction: Completeness vs. Authenticity

The AI-generated text follows a standardized narrative flow. For example, it opens with: “Their leather jackets and heavy boots create an intimidating presence.” This is followed by the transition: “As I scanned the room more carefully, I noticed something unexpected.” The emotional trigger appears: “The biker next to me sniffled, and I saw him discreetly wipe away a tear.” Finally, the narrative ends with: “My fear completely melted away.” This conventional structure sets up a contrast with the student’s approach discussed next. On the other hand, the student’s narrative feels more authentic. It begins with an intense reaction: “A wave of panic swept through me.” Unlike the AI text, the student observes, “their tones were rich in affection and care.” Emotional change appears through phrases

like “a wave of relief and overwhelming warmth” and “as if a weight off my shoulders.” While the student’s logic is less polished than the AI’s, the emotional arc, compared to the AI’s refined flow, feels real and moving.

#### **2.4.3 Linguistic Features: Normative Precision vs. Conventional Expression**

The AI-generated text demonstrates normative, precise linguistic characteristics, using idiomatic and literary expressions such as “intimidating presence” and “profound sense of respect,” and structuring sentences that reflect professional proficiency. In contrast, the student’s writing uses more conventional language. While it correctly employs basic rhetorical devices, such as “their tones were rich in affection,” it includes grammatical inaccuracies, such as “donated generous” (instead of “generously”) and “everyone was” (instead of “was”). Additionally, the student’s writing displays limitations in syntactic complexity and lexical innovation. This comparison highlights differences in linguistic standardization and expressive accuracy and identifies areas for potential improvement in the student’s grammatical precision and expressive ability, providing direction for instructional focus.

#### **2.4.4 Thematic Depth: Explicit Statement vs. Implicit Emergence**

The AI text states its theme explicitly at the end by mentioning “a profound sense of respect and shame for my earlier judgment.” This can feel didactic. By contrast, the student’s text is more subtle; its theme emerges through personal actions and emotions, such as “feeling as if a weight had been lifted off my shoulders” and “never judge a book by its cover.” This difference makes the student’s approach more evocative and enlightening.

### **3. Discussion**

#### **3.1 Key Shifts in Teaching Implementation**

The effective operation of this model relies on two fundamental shifts. At the operational level, prompt design becomes the crucial interface through which teachers and students guide the AI. Precise, specific prompts can elicit high-quality teaching materials, whereas vague instructions often yield mediocre responses. This necessitates that both teachers and students enhance their ability to craft prompts, establishing it as a core competency for leveraging intelligent tools. Concurrently, the teacher’s role must evolve from knowledge transmitter to learning architect, focusing on structuring the teaching rhythm, designing heuristic questions, and guiding students to discover and develop their unique value within human-AI collaboration.

#### **3.2 Innovations in Assessment Systems**

To ensure the teaching model genuinely serves the cultivation of creativity, assessment criteria must transition from emphasizing linguistic accuracy to prioritizing creative merit. If grading remains primarily based on grammatical correctness and content completeness, students may settle for generating standardized yet mediocre compositions with AI assistance. The new assessment framework should significantly increase the weighting of dimensions such as emotional authenticity, narrative originality, intellectual depth, and creative contributions that surpass AI capabilities. This realignment through evaluation anchors the pedagogical focus on the distinctive strengths of human intelligence.

#### **3.3 Ethical Norms and Healthy Development**

Human-AI collaborative teaching requires clear ethical boundaries. The primary task is to prevent students’ over-reliance on intelligent tools by strictly defining the AI’s auxiliary role and ensuring students maintain independent thinking, particularly during the creative writing stage. Furthermore, requiring students to explicitly document the specific contexts and purposes of AI use not only upholds academic integrity but also cultivates essential metacognitive skills and a responsible research ethos in the digital age.

### **4. Conclusion**

This study has developed a three-phase instructional model for the “AI-Collaborative Continuation Task,” which, through a systematic division of labor between humans and AI, successfully redirects students’ cognitive

resources toward higher-order narrative creation and emotional expression. Its deeper contribution lies in its forward-looking re-conceptualization of the teacher's role, the assessment system's function, and the boundaries of teaching ethics. The research demonstrates that the future of writing instruction lies not in simply rejecting or embracing technology, but in teachers and students collaboratively learning to co-evolve with AI as a "super assistant" where teachers excel at designing collaborative workflows, and students master leveraging their irreplaceable creativity within a technologically enhanced environment. Future research can build upon this foundation to further explore the model's adaptability across diverse learning contexts and genres, thereby continuously advancing the deepening and innovation of foreign language education in the age of artificial intelligence.

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