The Ef

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Compositional Tasks

As the nature of compositional tasks may influence students' motivation, it is necessary to review the relevant literature on the nature of compositional tasks. Some studies have employed the computer as a tool for composition (e.g., Folkestad, 1996; Airy & Parr, 2001; Nilsson & Folkestad, 2005), while others have involved students in composing for acoustic instruments and voices (e.g., Hogg, 1994; Burland & Davidson, 2001; Ke

non-participant observational method
(Cohen & Manion, 1994) in the s

self-efficacy, for which students were asked to exhibit their confidence in composing music on an 11-point scale (i.e., from 0%, 10%, 20%, etc., to 100% confidence). The questionnaires were written in Chinese, which was the mother-tongue of the students, and were piloted beforehand by five students from each school. Minor refinement of the wording was carried out according to the students' feedback. In general, the content of the pre- and post-activity questionnaires was the same, but the wording was slightly different in terms of tenses.

Results

The results of this study can be divided into qualitative and quantitative aspects. For the qualitative aspect, based on the class observation, review of the video recordings and discussion with the teachers after school, important factors affecting the students' motivation in com

front of the students throughout the two observed lessons, and she always employed a commanding manner when asking her students to work on their compos

Table 1
A Comparison of Four Cases

	Teacher A	*Teacher B*	*Teacher C*	*Teacher D*
Students' Academic Background	Average	Average	High	Low
Teacher Presentation	Pleasant and friendly, confident	Didactic, unconfident	Pleasant and friendly, confident	Didactic, confident
Compositional task	Composing a piece to express an idea/story/scene	Composing a melody for a rhyme	Composing a piece to express personal feelings	Composing a melody using specific devices
Computer-assisted Composition	No	No	Yes	Yes
Level of Structu				

self-efficacy level recorded an increase after the compositional activity, while all of the other five showed slight decreases. Students from School C showed rather positive motivational change after their compositional task. They increased their self-efficacy, intrinsic value, attainment value, and utility value towards composition while decreasing their cost and expectancy levels. School D was the most positive group and showed an increase in all six motivational measures after its compositional task.

In terms of motivational measures, self-efficacy received the most positive results; students from all four schools seemed to have increased their self-efficacy. In addition, both the attainment value and the utility value were recorded rather positively in that three of the schools showed increases. In contrast, cost and expectancy received the most negative results; only one school showed increases in these two measures, while three schools demonstrated decreases. Table 2 shows the mean scores and standard deviation of the motivational measures.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics of the Six Motivational Measures in Different Schools

Table 3 shows the results of a series
of paired *t*-tests that were used to compa

compositional task may provide freedom for students to explore their compositions. This result supplements the findings of Burnard (1995) that more capable students prefer more open-ended structural tasks. As supported by Berkley (2004), the real facilitation of teaching composition a

Appendix A
Questions Surveying Students' Motivation toward Composing Music

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Efficacy

How confident are/were you that you can/could compose an interesting piece of music?

nsic Value

To what extent do you think the compositional task might be/was interesting?

To what extent do you think the compositional task might be/was enjoyable?

Compared to other musical activities you normally do at school, such as singing and listening, how interesting do you think the chance to compose music will be/was?

Compared to other musical activities you normally do at school, such as singing and listening, how enjoyable do you think the chance to compose music will be/was?

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inment Value

To what extent do you think the compositional task might be/was important?

Compared to other musical activities you normally do at school, such as singing and listening, how important do you think the chance to compose music will be/was?

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ity Value

To what extent do you think the compositional task might be/was useful?

Compared to other musical activities you normally do at school, such as singing and listening, how useful do you think the chance to compose m