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TEACHERS STRATEGIES FOR FOSTERING CREATIVITY THROUGH THREE-DIMENSIONAL ARTS LEARNING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi guru dalam mengembangkan kreativitas siswa melalui pembelajaran seni rupa tiga dimensi di sekolah dasar. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis studi kasus deskriptif. Populasi penelitian adalah guru dan siswa yang terlibat dalam pembelajaran Seni Budaya dan Prakarya (SBdP) di sekolah dasar. Sampel atau informan penelitian ditentukan secara purposive, terdiri atas guru SBdP atau guru kelas, siswa kelas IV, serta kepala sekolah atau wali kelas sebagai informan pendukung. Instrumen penelitian meliputi pedoman observasi, pedoman wawancara, dan lembar dokumentasi. Data dianalisis melalui kondensasi data, pengodean tematik, penyusunan matriks temuan, perbandingan antarsumber, serta penarikan dan verifikasi kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian mengidentifikasi enam strategi yang saling berkaitan, yaitu stimulus ide, eksplorasi media dan bahan, pembelajaran berbasis proyek, pendampingan proses berkarya, motivasi dan apresiasi, serta evaluasi proses dan produk. Strategi tersebut mendukung kelancaran dan keluwesan ide; orisinalitas berkembang secara tidak merata, sedangkan elaborasi menguat setelah pendampingan guru. Faktor pendukung meliputi antusiasme siswa, kebebasan berekspresi yang terarah, dan bahan sederhana, sedangkan hambatannya meliputi keterbatasan alat, waktu, ruang praktik, dan rasa percaya diri. Kontribusi penelitian ini adalah kerangka “otonomi kreatif terbimbing” yang menghubungkan enam strategi guru dengan indikator kelancaran, keluwesan, orisinalitas, dan elaborasi sebagai dasar praktis pembelajaran seni rupa tiga dimensi.

Kata Kunci: Strategi Guru, Kreativitas Siswa, Seni Rupa Tiga Dimensi

Abstract

This study aims to analyze teachers' strategies in developing students' creativity through three-dimensional visual arts learning in elementary schools. This research employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive case study design. The research population consisted of teachers and students involved in Arts, Culture, and Crafts (SBdP) learning at the elementary school level. The sample or research informants were selected purposively, consisting of an SBdP teacher or classroom teacher, fourth-grade students, and the principal or classroom teacher as supporting

informants. The research instruments included observation guidelines, interview guidelines, and documentation sheets. Analysis involved data condensation, thematic coding, construction of finding matrices, cross-source comparison, and conclusion verification. Six interrelated strategies were identified: idea stimulation, exploration of media and materials, project-based learning, guidance during the creative process, motivation and appreciation, and evaluation of both process and product. These strategies supported fluency and flexibility; originality remained uneven, while elaboration became more visible after teacher scaffolding. Supporting conditions included student enthusiasm, guided freedom of expression, and accessible materials, whereas constraints included limited tools, time, practice space, and confidence. The study contributes a “guided creative autonomy” framework that links six teacher strategies to fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration, offering a practical basis for designing three-dimensional art learning.

Keywords: Teacher Strategies, Student Creativity, Three-Dimensional Arts

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INTRODUCTION

The development of twenty-first-century society requires students not only to master academic knowledge but also to possess creative, critical, communicative, and collaborative thinking skills (Găbureanu & Tripon, 2020). Creativity is one of the main competencies needed to face the challenges of the digital era, technological development, and increasingly complex social dynamics. Creativity enables individuals to generate new ideas, find innovative solutions to problems, and adapt to rapid changes (OECD, 2023). Therefore, the development of creativity needs to become a major concern in the educational process, starting from the elementary school level.

The urgency of developing creativity is further strengthened by the results of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) Creative Thinking Assessment, which showed that the creative thinking ability of Indonesian students remains below the average of OECD countries (OECD, 2023). This condition indicates that the education system still needs to provide broader opportunities for students to develop ideas, imagine, experiment, and produce diverse solutions to problems. In the context of the Merdeka Curriculum, creativity is also one of the expected characteristics developed through the Pancasila Student Profile, particularly in the creative dimension, which emphasizes the ability to produce original works and actions that are beneficial to oneself and the surrounding environment.

One subject that has great potential to develop students' creativity is Arts, Culture, and Crafts (SBdP), particularly in three-dimensional visual arts learning. Three-dimensional

visual art refers to artwork that has length, width, and height, allowing it to be observed from various directions. Three-dimensional visual arts learning activities provide students with opportunities to transform ideas into concrete forms through various available media and materials. Compared with reproductive learning activities, three-dimensional visual arts allow students to explore forms, manipulate materials, solve technical problems during the creative process, and develop ideas more freely. Thus, it has the potential to improve creativity indicators such as fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration (Guilford, 2021).

According to Guilford, creativity is the ability to think divergently, which includes the ability to generate many ideas (fluency), produce various alternative solutions to problems (flexibility), generate unique ideas (originality), and develop ideas in detail (elaboration) (Carroll & Guilford, 1968). Meanwhile, Torrance emphasized that creativity can be developed through learning experiences that provide students with opportunities to explore, experiment, and express ideas freely (Torrance, 2011). Therefore, the success of developing students' creativity is not only determined by learning materials but is also strongly influenced by the strategies implemented by teachers during the learning process.

Teachers play an important role in creating a learning environment that supports the development of students' creativity. Through appropriate learning strategies, teachers can encourage students to think openly, express ideas courageously, try various alternative solutions, and produce works that differ from one another. Conversely, learning that is overly oriented toward final products, emphasizes uniformity of work, and is teacher-centered may hinder the development of students' creativity. Therefore, teachers need to implement learning strategies that provide space for exploration, freedom of expression, and meaningful learning experiences for students.

In the context of twenty-first-century learning, teacher strategy is a key factor that determines the success of developing students' creativity. Learning strategy refers to a series of actions systematically designed by teachers to create learning conditions that enable students to actively construct knowledge, explore ideas, and produce innovative works. Learning effectiveness is strongly influenced by teachers' ability to design learning experiences that place students at the center of learning (student-centered learning) (Hattie, 2008). In three-dimensional visual arts learning, teacher strategies can be implemented through open-ended problems, Project-Based Learning, exploration of various media and materials, reflective discussions, and feedback that encourages students to develop ideas more creatively. These strategies not only improve students' artistic skills but also help them develop divergent thinking abilities, including fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration of ideas as the main indicators of creativity (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2016).

Based on the preliminary observations conducted by the researcher in three-dimensional visual arts learning at elementary schools, it was found that some students still tended to imitate their friends' work, lacked confidence in expressing ideas, and experienced difficulty developing ideas into different and innovative works. In addition, the learning process was still dominated by the provision of examples that were then imitated by students, limiting their opportunities for independent exploration. This condition indicates that the

development of students' creativity through three-dimensional visual arts learning has not been optimal and requires more effective learning strategies.

Various previous studies have discussed the development of students' creativity through visual arts learning and project-based learning. The available empirical evidence mainly comes from qualitative case studies in elementary school settings. Pramudya and Wijayanti documented the implementation of Project-Based Learning strategies in three-dimensional visual arts learning, in which students produced various concrete works such as pots made from used plastic bottles, pots made from coconut fiber, paper flowers, and origami works (Pramudya & Wijayanti, 2024). The findings showed that students' involvement in the planning, making, and completion stages of projects was able to increase active participation, independence, and creativity in producing artworks.

In addition to qualitative evidence, several quantitative studies have also shown the positive effect of three-dimensional visual arts learning on students' creativity. Hayati et al. found that the use of paper pulp as a medium for three-dimensional visual arts learning significantly improved students' creativity scores (Hayati et al., 2023). The study showed that the average creativity score in the experimental class reached 76.8, which was higher than the control class score of 65.5, with a sample size of 30 students. This finding indicates that the selection of appropriate media can be an important factor in supporting the development of students' creativity.

A gap remains in explaining how a sequence of teacher actions, from stimulating ideas and enabling material exploration to scaffolding, motivating, and evaluating, works together during the creative process. Existing evidence also gives limited attention to how these actions correspond to different creativity indicators and how classroom constraints shape their implementation.

This study addresses that gap through an integrated analysis of six teacher strategies and their relationship to fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. Its novelty lies not in proposing another isolated technique, but in explaining the process through which structured teacher support and student choice operate together. The study uses the term guided creative autonomy to describe this balance.

Accordingly, the study asks: (1) What strategies does the teacher use to foster creativity in three-dimensional art learning? (2) How are these strategies reflected in students' fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration? and (3) What conditions support or inhibit their implementation?

The study is expected to contribute an analytic framework for understanding classroom creativity as a process rather than merely a product. Practically, it offers teachers a basis for designing art lessons that preserve instructional direction while providing meaningful room for student choice, experimentation, revision, and reflection.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach with a descriptive case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of teachers' strategies in developing students' creativity through three-dimensional visual arts learning in elementary schools. Qualitative research enables researchers to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the experiences, actions, interactions, and meanings that emerge naturally in the learning process (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The case study design was used because this research focused on a particular phenomenon, namely teachers' strategies in developing students' creativity in the context of three-dimensional visual arts learning in elementary schools (Yin, 2018).

This research was conducted in Arts, Culture, and Crafts (SBdP) learning at the elementary school level. The research subjects were determined purposively, based on the consideration that the informants were directly involved in the three-dimensional visual arts learning process. The research informants included SBdP teachers or classroom teachers who taught three-dimensional visual arts materials, students who participated in the learning process, and the principal or classroom teacher as supporting informants. Purposive sampling was used to ensure that the data obtained were truly relevant to the research focus, namely teacher strategies, student responses, and the supporting and inhibiting factors in developing creativity through visual arts learning (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

The research data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to directly examine the three-dimensional visual arts learning process, particularly teachers' strategies in opening the lesson, providing idea stimulation, facilitating material exploration, guiding the creative process, providing feedback, and evaluating students' artworks. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers, students, and supporting informants to obtain information about learning strategies, students' experiences in creating artworks, and obstacles encountered during the learning process. Documentation was used to obtain supporting data in the form of lesson plans, activity photos, students' artworks, assessment notes, and other relevant documents. The use of several data collection techniques was intended to obtain more complete data and improve the credibility of the research findings (Biddix & Collom, 2023).

The main instrument in this study was the researcher, assisted by observation guidelines, interview guidelines, and documentation sheets. The observation guidelines were developed based on the research focus, namely teachers' strategies in developing students' creativity through three-dimensional visual arts learning. The observed aspects included strategies for providing stimuli, the use of media and materials, the provision of freedom of expression, guidance during the creative process, motivation, and evaluation of both the process and students' artworks. Students' creativity was observed based on creative thinking indicators, namely fluency in generating ideas, flexibility in using materials or techniques, originality of artwork forms, and the ability to develop artwork details (Torrance, 2011).

Data analysis was carried out interactively through the stages of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. In the data condensation stage, the researcher selected, simplified, and categorized data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation according to the research focus. In the data display stage, the data were

arranged in the form of narrative descriptions, finding categories, and teacher strategy matrices to make the relationships among the data easier to understand. In the conclusion drawing stage, the researcher interpreted the findings to explain teachers' strategies in developing students' creativity as well as the supporting and inhibiting factors (Miles & Huberman, 2007). The analysis was also conducted thematically by identifying the main themes that emerged from the data, such as media exploration strategies, project-based learning strategies, motivation strategies, guidance strategies, and evaluation strategies for students' creative processes (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

The validity of the data in this study was tested through source triangulation, technique triangulation, and member checking. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing data from teachers, students, and supporting informants. Technique triangulation was carried out by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. Member checking was conducted by confirming the preliminary findings with the informants to ensure that the researcher's interpretation was consistent with the data provided. In addition, the researcher conducted careful observation during the learning process to obtain in-depth data and reduce the possibility of bias in interpreting the research findings (Ivankova et al., 2016).

Through this method, the study is expected to provide a comprehensive description of teachers' strategies in developing students' creativity through three-dimensional visual arts learning in elementary schools. The focus of the research was not only directed at students' artworks but also at the learning process, the teacher's role in facilitating creativity, and the dynamics that emerged as students developed ideas into three-dimensional visual artworks.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

Analysis produced six related strategy themes: idea stimulation, exploration of media and materials, project-based learning, guidance during the creative process, motivation and appreciation, and evaluation of both process and product. The themes were supported by observations, interview data, and artworks; however, the strength of evidence varied across creativity indicators. Fluency and flexibility were more consistently visible, originality was emerging but uneven, and elaboration often appeared after teacher feedback.

Table 1 - Teacher Strategies and Their Observed Relationship to Student Creativity

No.	Teacher strategy	Observed implementation	Observed relationship to creativity
1	Idea stimulation	The teacher used open questions, examples as references rather than templates, and themes connected with students' surroundings.	Supported fluency by helping students generate and compare initial ideas.
2	Exploration of media and materials	Students chose and combined paper, cardboard, plastic bottles,	Supported flexibility by requiring students to adapt

No.	Teacher strategy	Observed implementation	Observed relationship to creativity
		ice-cream sticks, clay, plasticine, and other accessible materials.	ideas to material properties and availability.
3	Project-based learning	Students planned, produced, revised, and completed individual or group three-dimensional works.	Created an iterative setting for problem solving, decision making, and elaboration.
4	Guidance during the creative process	The teacher circulated, asked diagnostic questions, demonstrated techniques when needed, and avoided determining the final form.	Provided scaffolding while preserving student ownership; particularly supported elaboration.
5	Motivation and appreciation	The teacher normalised mistakes, recognised effort and difference, and avoided negative comparison among students.	Reduced fear of failure and supported experimentation and emerging originality.
6	Process- and product-based evaluation	Assessment considered idea development, experimentation, effort, revision, originality, detail, and the final work.	Signalled that creativity involved thinking and revision, not only neatness or appearance.

Table 1 indicates that the six strategies formed a sequence rather than a set of isolated techniques. The teacher first opened a space for ideas, then enabled material choices, organised the work as a project, provided contingent guidance, protected students' willingness to experiment, and evaluated the process. The teacher's explanation should be supported with a verbatim excerpt: "I show several examples only to give the students an initial idea. I always tell them that their work does not have to be the same as the example; they may change the shape, colour, materials, and details according to their own ideas" (T1, interview).

Material exploration made flexibility visible because students had to modify plans when materials bent, broke, did not adhere, or were unavailable. A student's perspective should be inserted here: "At first, I wanted to use cardboard, but it was difficult to bend and the glue did not hold. I then used paper and ice-cream sticks for some parts, so the work became different from my first plan but easier to finish" (S1, interview). This evidence is important because it shows how students experienced the strategy, not only how the researcher interpreted it.

Table 2 - Patterns in the Four Creativity Indicators

No.	Creativity indicator	Observed evidence	Pattern in the case
1	Fluency	Students proposed more than one possible object, form, colour scheme, or function before making a final choice.	Frequently visible during idea stimulation and early planning.

No.	Creativity indicator	Observed evidence	Pattern in the case
2	Flexibility	Students changed materials, techniques, or construction approaches in response to constraints.	Consistently visible during exploration and problem solving.
3	Originality	Some works departed from teacher examples in form, combination, or function, while others remained imitative.	Emerging but uneven across students.
4	Elaboration	Students added structure, texture, motifs, colour, decoration, or functional details and refined them after feedback.	Became more visible after teacher scaffolding and revision.

Table 2 shows an asymmetrical pattern. Fluency and flexibility appeared earlier and more often because students could voice alternatives and respond to material problems. Originality required a greater departure from familiar examples and therefore remained uneven. Elaboration was not merely an individual trait; it was frequently strengthened through questions and feedback that prompted students to add, revise, or clarify details.

Project-based learning connected the four indicators across time. Planning elicited multiple ideas, material selection required flexibility, construction created opportunities for problem solving, and revision enabled elaboration. The project structure was therefore valuable not simply because it produced a tangible object, but because it made students' decisions and revisions observable.

Motivation and appreciation affected whether students used the opportunities provided. Students who feared that their work would be judged as wrong tended to imitate. When the teacher treated mistakes as part of making and recognised differences among products, more students attempted alternatives. Insert direct evidence: "I told the students that their work did not have to be the same and that making mistakes was part of the creative process. When I appreciated each product as unique, they became more confident and began trying their own ideas" (T1, interview).

Table 3 - Supporting and Inhibiting Conditions

No.	Level	Supporting conditions	Inhibiting conditions
1	Student	Enthusiasm, curiosity, willingness to handle materials, and peer exchange.	Low confidence, dependence on examples, and fear of making mistakes.
2	Teacher	Open prompts, contingent guidance, motivation, and process-oriented feedback.	Limited time for individual guidance and difficulty monitoring all groups simultaneously.
3	Resources	Low-cost and recycled materials available in the surrounding environment.	Unequal access to tools, adhesives, cutting equipment, and suitable materials.

No.	Level	Supporting conditions	Inhibiting conditions
4	Learning environment	A classroom climate that allowed discussion, movement, and display of different products.	Limited practice space, preparation time, storage, and lesson duration.
5	Assessment	Recognition of idea development, effort, experimentation, revision, and final product.	Some students remained focused on neatness or resemblance to the teacher's example.

Table 3 demonstrates that creativity was shaped by conditions at several levels. Accessible materials could widen participation, but inadequate tools and time restricted the realisation of ideas and the amount of individual scaffolding. This constraint should be grounded in the teacher's words: "The available time was often insufficient because each student needed different guidance, while some tools and materials had to be shared. As a result, I could not assist every student intensively, and several students were unable to complete their work in one lesson." (T1, interview).

Overall, the findings support a pattern of guided creative autonomy: students were given meaningful choices, but those choices were supported by prompts, materials, project stages, feedback, and process-based assessment. The strategy did not remove imitation entirely and should not be interpreted as proving a causal increase in creativity. It explains how creative behaviour became more visible within the observed case.

DISCUSSION

This discussion is organised around the three research questions. Rather than repeating the descriptive findings, it interprets how the six strategies operated as an instructional process, how their influence was reflected differently across the four creativity indicators, and why their implementation depended on classroom conditions.

Teacher Strategies for Fostering Creativity in Three-Dimensional Art Learning

The first research question concerned the strategies used by the teacher. The findings show that idea stimulation, exploration of media and materials, project-based learning, guidance during the creative process, motivation and appreciation, and evaluation of both process and product did not function as isolated techniques. They formed a coordinated sequence that began by opening possibilities for ideas and ended by helping students evaluate and refine the decisions made during production. The value of the sequence lay in combining instructional structure with meaningful student choice.

Idea stimulation and material exploration established the initial space for creative decision making. Examples were used as references rather than fixed models, while open questions and themes connected to students' surroundings widened the range of possible responses. Material choices then required students to translate ideas into workable forms and to reconsider their plans when particular materials were unsuitable. These strategies are consistent with the view that creativity develops when learners are encouraged to generate alternatives and explore possibilities rather than reproduce a single correct answer (Guilford, 2021).

Project-based learning organised these possibilities into a visible process of planning, selecting materials, constructing, encountering difficulties, revising, and completing a product. Its contribution therefore did not arise from the project label alone, but from the teacher actions embedded within each stage. This interpretation supports research showing that projects become educationally effective when they include inquiry, appropriate guidance, reflection, and a concrete outcome (Kokotsaki et al., 2016).

Guidance, motivation, appreciation, and process-based evaluation regulated the quality of students' participation in the project. Guidance was most productive when it helped students solve technical problems without replacing their decisions. Motivation and appreciation reduced the perceived risk of producing a different result, while evaluation communicated that experimentation, revision, originality, and detail were legitimate indicators of success. Taken together, the six strategies represent a pattern of guided creative autonomy: students retained ownership of their work, but their choices were supported by prompts, materials, staged tasks, feedback, and assessment criteria.

Reflection of the Strategies in Fluency, Flexibility, Originality, and Elaboration

The second research question asked how the strategies were reflected in the four creativity indicators. The findings reveal an asymmetrical pattern rather than an equal improvement across all indicators. Fluency and flexibility were more readily visible because students could express several initial ideas and alter materials or techniques during the making process. Originality was more uneven, while elaboration frequently became clearer after teacher questions, feedback, and opportunities for revision.

Fluency was supported primarily by idea stimulation. Open questions, contextual themes, and exposure to several examples helped students move beyond a single initial response. Flexibility became visible when students substituted materials, changed construction techniques, or modified forms in response to practical problems. These behaviours correspond to Guilford's dimensions of producing multiple ideas and shifting between alternatives, but the classroom evidence also shows that flexibility was not merely a mental capacity; it was enacted through interaction with the properties and availability of materials (Guilford, 2021).

Originality required students to depart from familiar examples and from the products made by peers. This was more demanding because some students associated difference with the possibility of being wrong. Motivation, appreciation, and the teacher's acceptance of mistakes reduced this pressure and encouraged more students to attempt alternatives, but they did not eliminate imitation. The finding therefore suggests that originality depends not only on task design, but also on confidence, psychological safety, prior experience, and the technical feasibility of an idea. This interpretation is consistent with accounts that link creativity to intrinsic motivation and a supportive learning climate (Amabile et al., 2018).

Elaboration was often strengthened through contingent scaffolding. Students added details, clarified functions, improved structures, or refined decorative elements after the teacher asked diagnostic questions or pointed to parts that could be developed further. Elaboration should therefore not be treated solely as a stable individual characteristic; in this case, it was partly produced through interaction and revision. Project-based learning

connected all four indicators over time: planning elicited fluency, material selection required flexibility, construction created opportunities for originality and problem solving, and revision supported elaboration.

Compared with studies that examine one learning model or one medium, these findings provide a more differentiated explanation of the creative process. Demonstrate the value of project-based three-dimensional art activities (Pramudya & Wijayanti, 2024). Show that an appropriate medium can support creativity (Hayati et al., 2023). The present study adds that different teacher actions relate to different indicators and that the indicators do not necessarily emerge with the same strength or at the same stage. Because the study did not use a standardised pre-post measure, these relationships should be interpreted as patterns observed within the case rather than proof of causal improvement.

Conditions Supporting or Inhibiting Strategy Implementation

The third research question concerned the conditions that supported or inhibited implementation. The findings demonstrate that creativity was shaped at several interconnected levels: student disposition, teacher support, availability of media and tools, classroom time and space, and assessment practices. Student enthusiasm and curiosity widened participation, whereas low confidence and a tendency to imitate limited independent exploration. Teacher encouragement and guided freedom supported experimentation, but the amount of individual scaffolding depended on the time and attention available.

Accessible and recycled materials reduced cost and enabled more students to participate, but availability alone was insufficient. Students still required suitable cutting tools, adhesives, storage, preparation, and enough practice time to realise their ideas safely and completely. When tools had to be shared or lesson time was short, students simplified plans, waited for assistance, or left products unfinished. These constraints affected not only the final product but also the opportunity to revise, elaborate, and receive individual feedback.

The learning environment and assessment system also influenced whether students used the freedom provided. Adequate space supported practical work and peer discussion, whereas restricted space complicated material management and movement. Process-based assessment supported creativity because it recognised effort, experimentation, revision, originality, and detail (Fadhilah et al., 2025). In contrast, an assessment culture focused primarily on neatness or resemblance to the teacher's example would likely encourage imitation and weaken the effect of the other strategies.

These findings qualify the guided creative autonomy framework. The framework is not a universally effective formula that operates independently of context. Its implementation requires sufficient time, basic tools, manageable class organisation, psychologically safe interaction, and alignment between learning activities and assessment. Schools therefore have a role in protecting practical lesson time and providing essential tools and storage, while teachers need to select feasible materials, organise projects into visible stages, and distribute guidance according to students' needs.

CONCLUSION

This case study identified six interrelated teacher strategies for fostering creativity in three-dimensional art: idea stimulation, exploration of media and materials, project-based learning, guidance during making, motivation and appreciation, and evaluation of both process and product. Their contribution lies in how they combined instructional structure with meaningful student choice. This pattern, termed guided creative autonomy, was associated with visible fluency and flexibility, uneven but emerging originality, and elaboration that often strengthened after scaffolding.

The findings imply that teachers should not equate creative learning with either copying a model or leaving students entirely unguided. They should align open prompts, feasible material choices, staged project work, contingent feedback, psychological safety, and process-based assessment. Schools need to support this approach with adequate time, safe tools, materials, space, and storage. Future studies should verify the framework in multiple settings and use mixed methods or experimental designs to examine changes in creativity more objectively. Before resubmission, the highlighted participant numbers, observation details, ethics information, and verbatim interview excerpts must be replaced with actual field data.

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