

**People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research**

University of Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia - Jijel

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of English Language and Literature



**Exploring Learner Autonomy in Writing: The Case of
Third Year Undergraduate Students and Teachers at
the Department of English, University of Jijel**

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master in
Didactics of Foreign Languages

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2022 - 2023

Declaration

We hereby declare that the dissertation entitled “Exploring Learner Autonomy in Writing. The Case of Third Year Students at the Department of English, University of Jijel” is our own work and all the sources I have used have been acknowledged by means of references. I also certify that I have not copied or plagiarized the work of other students or researchers partially or fully. In case any material is not documented, I shall be responsible for the consequences.

Ms Saoussene BOUHANOUNE

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Dedication

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful,

It is with a debt of gratitude and warm regard that I dedicate this work to:

*The apple of my eye, my beloved parents “**NOUREDDINE** and **RAZIKA** “who have never failed to give me financial and moral support, for providing all my needs and choosing my comfort over theirs. Thank you for everything.*

*To the source of inspiration and support in life; my sisters **Houda, Widad, and Fadia**. I am very lucky to have you in my life.*

*My brothers-in-law; **Ahmed, Omar** , and **Nassim***

*My nieces: **Amira, Jana Chiraz , Rihab Saoussene , Aridj and Sidra** .*

*My nephews: **Nedjmeddin, Med Firass, and Abd el Waddoud***

*My soul sister, my lovely **Raouane**. Thank you for being by my side in every moment*

*My teacher and my friend **Manal Yellas**. Thank you for supporting me for five years, this humble work sees the light due to your constant support.*

*My irreplaceable partner **FATIMA**. Thank you for your tremendous help and patience.*

*My friends: **Ahlem** and **Asma** with whom I share unforgettable memories*

It wasn't easy but I did it, I dedicate this work to myself, I am proud of overcoming everything I have gone through and proud that I was able to complete the path to the end.

SAOUSSENE

Dedication

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, I dedicate this work:

*To the symbol of power my beloved father “**Slimane**”*

*To the source of happiness my beloved mother “**Fatiha**”*

Thank you for always meeting our needs and preferring us over yourselves

May God bless you for us and prolong your life to see us in the highest ranks

*To my brothers: “**Mahmoud**”, “**Mohammed**” and “**Ali**”.*

*To my dearest sister: “**Khadidja**”.*

*To my sister-in-law “**Ibtissem**” and my nieces “**Sirine**” and “**Rahaf**”.*

*To my lovely cousin “**Meriem Saadoune**”.*

*To my stunning and precious partner: “**Saoussene**”, for her tremendous help,*

*a special thanks to her parents aunt “**Razika**” and Uncle “**Noureddine**”.*

*To my special ones from the “**Ridiculousness group**”.*

To all my friends, classmates and lovers.

Last but not least, I want to thank me for believing in me. I want to thank me for doing all this hard work. I want to thank me for having no days off. I want to thank me for never quitting. I want to thank me for just being me at all times.

Fatima

Acknowledgements

First, all praise be to the Most Graceful and the Compassionate the Almighty Allah who supplied me with strength, guidance, courage and blessing in time to accomplish this modest work.

We would like to express my profound appreciation and sincere gratitude to Dr. Samira CHAIBDDRA for accepting to guide this humble work by offering her precious time, valuable comments and sharing her knowledge and experience. Thank you Miss for your persistent support, without which this work would not have seen the light in its current form; we are honored to be your students.

Sincere thanks go to the board of examiners Mrs Sara MEZERREG and Mr Redouane NAILLI who have kindly spared their precious time to examine this research. Their insightful comments during the viva will undoubtedly add greatly to the worth of this humble work.

We would also like to express our profound gratitude to Dr. Izzeddine FANIT and Miss LALAOUA for devoting their time to answer the research questionnaire.

We also express our sincere appreciation to our teacher Dr. Safia NEGHIZ for providing us with valuable resources.

Our sincere appreciation goes to our teacher Dr Mohammed BOUKAZZOULA. Thank you for helping us to take the first step.

Our profound gratitude to all third-year students who kindly accepted to help in the data collecting procedure.

Abstract

Implementing and promoting learner autonomy in English as a Foreign Language teaching/learning and particularly in writing is still at the core of interest of many educators and researchers in language for its significance and benefits. The present study was conducted with the primary objective of exploring learner autonomy in writing at the Department of English, University of Jijel. To answer the study's research questions, sixty (60) third-year students were randomly chosen to complete a questionnaire that explores their attitudes towards learner autonomy and verifies whether these students are autonomous in writing. In addition, two (2) third-year teachers of writing at the department voiced their perspectives towards learner autonomy through a teacher questionnaire. The results yielded by both questionnaires revealed that both third-year students and writing teachers have positive attitudes towards learner autonomy. The participants' answers, however, were not sufficient to prove that the students are autonomous learners in writing as their answers uncovered many contradictions about their understanding of autonomy and their answers did not correspond their teachers' perceptions and views. Accordingly, it is required to ensure that third year EFL students at the Department of English, University of Jijel grasp the meaning of autonomy in writing through both cognition and practice. The teachers of writing are also requested to help their students become autonomous.

Key words: Learner autonomy, writing, students' attitudes, teachers' perspectives

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FL: Foreign Language

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

Q: Question

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1. Background of the Study

The concept of autonomy has its origins traced back to ancient Greece; the word autonomy is divided into two parts; auto (self) and nomos (rule or law) which indicates a state of self-government (Bound, 1981 as cited in Alhaysony, 2016). The emergence of autonomy in the field of education resulted from the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project established in 1971. Among the first scholars who defined autonomy is Holec (1981) who defined it as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (p. 3), i.e. the capacity to govern and direct one's own learning, as well as the capacity to accept responsibility for one's own learning. For more than three decades, learner autonomy has been a central point of research. There have been abundant studies that attempted to define what it is, discussed numerous approaches to encourage its implementation in the study of foreign languages and proposed theories about how to move from teacher-centered to learner-centered education.

Learner autonomy is clearly regarded to be a requirement for learning achievement and efficacy because it fosters students' growth in critical thinking and learning responsibility (Benson & Lor, 1998). A considerable amount of literature has been published on learner autonomy in writing. Among these studies, Lunyk-Child et al.'s (2001) study on teachers and students perspectives of self-directed learning showed that students go through an evolution that starts with negative emotions but ends with confidence and skills. That is why teachers must encourage their students as they pursue self-direction and go through this change. Another study conducted by Usuki (2002) on Japanese students' attitudes toward autonomy in learning English revealed that the Japanese students, in fact, have a positive perspective towards their role in learning individually, and they are satisfied to be autonomous in their writing. Little's (2004) article "Learner Autonomy and the Learning of a Foreign Language through Writing" looked at

how learner autonomy affects the acquisition of a foreign language through writing. The research emphasized the importance of writing portfolios, learner reflection, and learner-generated content in fostering learner autonomy in writing. After the Second World War, research on language learning and instruction grew interested in autonomy and self-directed learning, perceiving them as effective substitutes for traditional teaching. They asserted that five factors contributed to the birth of autonomy at the time: the growth of the movement for monitoring rights, the waning of behaviourism, the rising interest in minority rights, the advancement of technology, and internationalism.

2. Statement of the Problem

Learner autonomy is a concept that has raised controversy in relation to theories and practices of language learning and instruction. Since the shift from teacher-centered to learner-centered approaches in English language instruction, numerous alternative views regarding the significance of learner autonomy have surfaced. Learning a foreign language requires significant autonomy development, dedication, and hard work on the side of the student; they can establish their own goals and use their strategies to achieve them. In addition, it is a lifelong endeavour, not just something that happens in a classroom. Consequently, it can be claimed that while the growth of learners' autonomy may start in the classroom, it may also go beyond it. With regard to writing, it is a crucial component of how the learner autonomy principle is implemented in classrooms by which students can permanently record their experiences, think and plan, organize their thoughts and ideas, reflect on their work, discuss it with their peers, and, in the end, publish their final written production. In addition, it might be claimed that the emergence of students' autonomy may begin in the classroom but may also go beyond it. Thus, students can leave university as autonomous learners in writing. Until recently, there has been no sufficient existing research about learner autonomy in writing at the Department of English, University of

Jijel. Due to this insufficiency, this study is set to investigate learner autonomy in writing to perceive to what extent students are knowledgeable about the significance of autonomy in writing and to seek the existence of learner autonomy in writing at the department.

3. Aims and Significance of the Study

The present research study aims at investigating the existence of learner autonomy in writing at the Department of English, University of Jijel. The study inspects the reasons and benefits of the students' shift from dependency to autonomy. That is to say, it looks into the extent to which learner autonomy is common among third-year Licence students and applied by them in their writing. It also aims to explore the students' and teachers' perceptions and attitudes toward learner autonomy in writing.

4. Research Questions

In order to investigate the existence of learner autonomy in writing at the university level, this research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the EFL student's attitudes towards learner autonomy in writing?
2. Are third-year EFL students autonomous learners in writing at the Department of English?
3. What are the EFL teachers' perspectives towards learner autonomy in writing?

5. Research Methodology

The current study is a descriptive research that necessitates quantitative data elicitation techniques by adopting a questionnaire as the most appropriate design for investigating the issues of interest. A student questionnaire has been distributed at the Department of English at the University of Mohammed Seddik ben Yehia, Jijel addressing third year students to elicit data about their attitudes toward learner autonomy and their adoption of learner autonomy in writing and a teacher questionnaire to collect data about

teachers' perspectives on the potential of learner autonomy as an essential tool for enhancing writing.

6. Structure of The Study

The present study is divided into two chapters: the literature review and the fieldwork. The first chapter is composed of two sections. The first section addresses writing by reviewing its definition, importance, characteristics, approaches, and writing in English as a foreign language, while the second deals with learner autonomy in writing. It starts with its definition and its origins, then the characteristics of autonomous learners followed by a highlight of its significance in education. In addition, the remarkable place of learner autonomy in writing is discussed in this section. Chapter Two presents the practical part that describes the adopted research design as well as the analysis of the generated data through the questionnaires.

Chapter One: Exploring Academic Writing and Learner Autonomy

Introduction

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Chapter One: Exploring Academic Writing and Learner Autonomy

Introduction

This chapter attempts to highlight writing and learner autonomy through two sections. The first section provides an overview of academic writing and discusses the definition of writing, its importance, the characteristics of good writing, and the writing approaches. The second section sheds light on learner autonomy, its definition, and its origins in language learning, and then demonstrates the characteristics of autonomous learners, the significance of learner autonomy in education in general, and in writing in particular.

1.1. Exploring Writing in the EFL Context

1.1.1. Definition of Writing

Mastering any foreign language requires mastering the four skills; listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The ability to write well has been regarded as the most challenging skill since it calls for a strong grasp of word association to produce an ultimately cohesive document. Albeshier (2012) considers “writing, as one of the important means for communication, is very important in English language learning particularly in academic scenario in the universities” (p. 192). Hence, it is a mode of communication which enables learners to put their beliefs, views, and thinking on paper in a manner that structures all their ideas into solid and persuasive arguments by written symbols to ensure that others comprehend the message conveyed. Longo and Kmiec (2017) stated that "writing is a visual form of communication. It relies on the manipulation of symbols into patterns and the patterns into units of written communication texts that are recognizable and accessible to someone in a shared language community" (p. 8). Writing enables students to comprehend and share their perceptions of the world. In this sense, Clark (2007) identifies writing as “an instrument of thinking that allows students to express their

thoughts. Writing helps the students to understand and share their perceptions of the world around them” (p. 4). As a consequence of its complexity, writing can be seen as a difficult integration of many skills and sub-skills. In this regard, Bell and Burnaby pointed out that writing is “a cognitive activity mainly complex in the way that the writer is simultaneously required to control a number of variables, such as content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, orthography and letter formation at the sentencing level” (as cited in Nunan, 1989, p. 36). Writing was also thought to serve as a graphic system for producing clear and acceptable thoughts or as a visual representation of speech. Byrne (1979) revealed that writing is the act of forming graphic symbols. Therefore, writing is the procedure for turning letters into words, and words into ideas, to produce a coherent whole. Moreover, writing may be described as a creative process of sharing knowledge by using the appropriate grammatical and lexical structures of the language.

1.1.2. Academic Writing

Writing is deemed the primary means of academic communication and it is typically the main specific form of communication that students utilize to complete their tasks effectively. It has been the subject of much discussion in academia and it is considered the hardest skill for the majority of students to master. Moreover, writing has been an important area in EFL learning. “Academic writing refers to a particular style that researchers use to define the intellectual boundaries of their disciplines and specific areas of expertise” (Hartley, 2008), In this sense, academic writing is any writing that is done for research reasons or created by college students. Kemp (2007) described academic writing as “the style of writing found in academic and scholarly journals in education, dissertation; and masters’ thesis and other professional publications in education” (p. 9). It is the writing intended to be read by other academics and required in university and college. It shines out for its formality and neutrality, and it is distinct from other types of

writing because of its tone, target audience, and purpose. The tone describes the style of your writing, such as how formal or informal it is, how much of your own experiences you include versus how objective you need to be, or whether you have a specific viewpoint or attitude toward the subject at hand. The audience means the people who will read the article in academic writing written for instructors, a committee of professors, or even colleagues in the same field. Last, the purpose is what effect the writer hopes to have by explaining ideas and findings, as well as persuading readers with the given explanation.

Al Fadda (2012) stated that “Academic writing is a mental and cognitive activity since it is a product of the mind. The image of an individual working alone in a quiet environment has furthered the view of writing as a mental and cognitive activity”(p. 124), which means that academic writing is an intellectual process that has been strengthened by the idea of a person working alone in a peaceful environment. Several language features make academic writing appear formal; it is characterized by the absence of conversational features and the use of formal vocabulary, verbs, and grammar structures. One crucial point since this type of writing present topic facts and concepts, and ensures that the reader can comprehend all the thoughts and arguments is that the piece of writing must be clear, direct, unambiguous, and precise, besides avoiding flowery language use, difficult word combinations, contractions, and hesitation fillers.

1.1.3. Importance of Writing

Among the most complex and challenging abilities for EFL students to master and one of the essential skills that significantly contributes to the language development of learners is writing. Writing serves a number of different purposes. For academic and professional objectives, it has become more and more important to learn how to write in English. Harmer (1998) emphasized the significance of writing as “it is a basic language skill, just as important as speaking, listening and reading. Students need to know how to

write letters, how to put written reports together, how to reply to advertisement and increasingly, how to write using electronic media”(p.79). He also addresses the function of writing in everyday communication since it mediates interactions between individuals in various spheres of life. Harmer (2004) stated that “all human beings grow up speaking their first language (and sometimes their second or third) as a matter of course. Writing has to be taught” (p. 3). Writing ,therefore, is essential for teaching and learning languages. Additionally, stressing the relevance of writing, Barras (2005) said that:

“only by writing well can you give a good account of yourself as students or when applying for employment, or in a career when writing email memoranda, letters, instructions and reports. It is by your writing but many people judge you” (p. 1).

Writing then is a fundamental instrument for learners to employ in order to improve all aspects of their language skills and develop dependability and self-discipline. In addition, it encourages them to collaborate and correct one another. Writing instruction helps EFL students improve their abilities to summarize, interpret, and evaluate written works. It also gives writers the opportunity to edit, amend, and improve previous work. Harmer (2001) stated that “the reason behind teaching writing to students of English as a FL includes reinforcement, language development, learning style, and writing as a skill in its own right” (p. 12). He illustrates these reasons as follows:

- **Reinforcement**

Writing is a procedure by which students reinforce the grammar rules and vocabulary they have learned. It provides learners with the opportunity to be autonomous in how they apply both their abilities and knowledge.

- **Language Development**

Writing serves as a vital element of instruction that enables students to learn more about the structure of languages. Each time they practice writing, the students engage in a significant mental process that aids in knowledge construction and reproducing well-written texts.

- **Learning Style**

Because they have the opportunity, the time, and the free mind to write and indirectly address the audience, so many students value writing. As a result, when writing, individuals must only concentrate on their intended audience.

- **Writing as a Skill**

Writing is an essential skill that students should master because it is required in various areas. In addition, this skill is frequently needed in standard language because written forms must convey information to the reader using the correct spelling, punctuation, grammar, and vocabulary. Overall, writing is important in every aspect of daily life because it is required everywhere and at all times. Accordingly, more emphasis and attention should be placed on developing this skill.

1.1.4. Characteristics of Good Writing

Writing has developed into a crucial tool for communication both inside and outside of educational contexts since it is a process of conveying and converting ideas to the audience. Hence, it is assumed that when writing, people are expected to produce an accurate, concise, and good piece of writing. According to Starkey (2004), an effective piece of writing ought to be well-organized, coherent, and clear, with accurate language and word choice.

1.1.4.1. Organization

The first step to reach a good piece of writing is organization. It is the piece's internal structure and the logical progression of ideas. In addition, it is considered an essential step

since, in the absence of organization, thoughts would remain without a logical context, confusing the audience or reader. Starkey (2004) emphasized the significance of organization. “Organization also benefits the reader... you will guide your reader from your first to last sentence. He or she will be able to see how the various points make in your essay work together and how they support your thesis” (p. 2), i.e. the way an essay is organized serves as a road map for the reader and organization makes it easier for readers to understand how ideas are connected to one another and how the thesis is validated.

1.1.4.2. Clarity

This fundamental component relates to the process of making the content comprehensible, brief, and clear. Typically, this involves employing words or expressions with clear, distinct meanings. Murray and Hughes (2008) stated that “Clarity is essential, so you need to make your writing easy to read and accessible to your readers possible” (p. 86). They emphasize the significance of clarity as a key component in creating readable, accessible writing. They believe that the secret to clarity is to keep sentences concise and to the point, to make every word count, and to prevent expressing more than one thought in a single sentence. Moreover, according to Starkey (2004), the learner should avoid words or phrases that have multiple alternative interpretations and use strong, precise adjectives and adverbs to remove ambiguity. Using powerful, precise adjectives and adverbs is one approach to achieving clarity.

1.1.4.3. Coherence

The concept of coherence is the logical flow of thoughts. That is to say, there is an obvious connection between the sentences and one concept leads to the next. Using a pattern of organization, such as time order, location order, or order of importance, is one technique to produce coherence in a piece of writing. According to Wang (2013), coherence in writing means that “all the ideas in a sentence flow smoothly from one idea to

the next thanks to the effective use of connectors” (p. 16). He goes on to say that a coherent composition makes it easier to understand the thoughts the reader was trying to convey.

1.1.4.4. Cohesion

The connection of ideas from sentence to sentence is referred to as cohesion. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), “Cohesion refers to the relations of meaning that exist within the text, and is expressed through the stratal organization of the text... It occurs where the interpretation of some elements in the text is dependent on that of another” (p. 4). Thus, they believe that cohesion is reflected in part by the grammar and in part by the vocabulary in the text. Grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion are the two potential types of cohesion. Grammatical cohesion is the cohesive connection that is communicated by the grammatical system of language, including conjunctions, ellipses, references, and substitution.

1.1.4.5. Word Choice

Word choice has a crucial role in all types of writing. The writer selects certain words that convey meaning and arranges them in phrases and paragraphs. This improves the reader's comprehension of the writer's content. According to Starkey (2004), there are two considerations that should be made while making word choices. The first is the denotation, which refers to a word's literary meaning, and the second is connotation, which refers to feelings and presumptions of a certain culture.

1.1.5. Writing Approaches

Since the early 1980s, various approaches and methodologies have been implemented in teaching writing. The emphasis is now on usage and text organization rather than sentence form and grammatical exercises. As every discipline values its understanding and implementation, and each requires a particular teaching strategy,

numerous approaches and instructional techniques have been developed. Although none of these strategies can be regarded as optimal, they have all demonstrated success at some point. The immediate result is that there are currently several approaches that are competing in the writing process. The product approach, the process approach and the genre approach are the most important approaches and have been the interest of language teaching and learning researchers.

1.1.5.1. The Product Approach

From the beginning of the 20th century until the mid-1960s, the product approach dominated writing instruction. This approach focuses on the end product, which may be tied to a model or essay often offered by teachers, rather than giving attention to the writing process. More specifically, this approach concentrates on the output of writing and views linguistic proficiency, syntax, vocabulary, and coherent devices as fundamental components of the written product. Nunan (1989) asserted that “the product approach to writing focuses on the end result of the act of composition, i.e. the letter, essay, story, and so on” (p. 36). The product approach encourages students to mimic model texts to learn certain grammar and vocabulary. A model text is given to students in a typical product approach-oriented classroom to be utilized as a source of imitation. The model is then read and examined by the learners. The target structures' essential characteristics are emphasized. After that the students are instructed to use these structures to create their pieces of writing. According to the product approach, learners may produce intelligible words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs when they mimic a model text.

The product approach comprises four stages: familiarization, controlled writing, guided writing, and free writing (Pinacs, 1982, as mentioned in Richard & Goodith, 2000, p.153). Familiarization is making learners aware of certain elements of a given text. Students' attention might be attracted to the significance of paragraphing and the language

used to make formal demands, for instance, if they are studying a formal letter. As a student reads a story, the other students might concentrate on the methods the author utilized and where and how to use them to make the story attractive. In the controlled writing section, the students practice the skills with increasing freedom. Following the first stage's example, students are now asked to practice writing introductions, thesis statements, conclusion paragraphs, and other writing tasks. In the guided writing section, the organization of the ideas occurs at this crucial stage. Teachers that follow this approach feel that language control and thought structure are equally as important as the ideas themselves. In the free writing section, students select from a variety of writing assignments that are similar. Students work independently to generate the written work, using the skills, sentence structures, and vocabulary they have been taught to demonstrate their proficiency as language users.

1.1.5.2. The Process Approach

Traditional approaches to teaching writing were heavily product-focused up to the 1970s. As a response to the product approach, the process approach, which emphasizes the writing process and fluency, was developed. Thus, the stages and actions that the writer takes to generate a good piece of writing are now the central focus rather than the final product. The act of writing is the central focus of the process approach. This approach assists learners in writing more effectively by providing them with knowledge on how to set up and complete a writing task and helping them to generate and connect ideas. “Writing in process approaches is seen as predominantly to do with linguistic skills, such as planning and drafting, and there is much less emphasis on linguistic knowledge, such as about grammar and text structure.” Badger and White (2000, p. 54). Hence, the process approach emphasizes the significance of the four writing steps: prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. The process approach differs from the product approach in that it is

not a linear process. Tribble (1997) proposes that process approaches prioritize “(...) writing activities which move learners from the generation of ideas and the collocation of data through the publication of a finished text” (as cited in Badger & White, 2000, p. 154). This means that the fundamental purpose of this approach is to make the writing process transparent and understandable.

The four steps that Tribble (1996) defined as required for producing a piece of writing are prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. Writers can go back to the pre-writing tasks because these writing stages are performed in a recursive manner. For instance, following some editing or revision (as cited in Badger & White, 2000, p. 154).

1.1.5.2.1. Planning

Planning is a critical step in the writing process. Before starting to write or type at this point, writers plan what they are going to write. They make an effort to choose what they will produce. Although prewriting is the initial step in the writing process, coming up with ideas is a continuous process. In this phase, the writers have to consider three important elements represented in the purpose of writing, the audience for whom they are writing and the structure of the content of their writing (Harmer, 2004).

1.1.5.2.2. Drafting

At this stage, the writer has already determined what to write and starts to clarify what to include and exclude in their piece as well as make important decisions regarding the organization of thoughts. According to Richard (2002) “in the drafting stage, the writers do not focus on the fluency of writing and are not preoccupied with the grammatical accuracy or the neatness of the draft... We can refer to the first version of a piece of writing as a draft (Harmer, 2004, p.5). Drafting is also known as composing Tribble (1996) believes

that “Successful composing only happens after a writer has built up an extensive experience of written texts, has developed a range of skills as a writer, and has then done work in specific preparation for the text in hand”. Rather than on mechanics and norms at this stage, the emphasis is on content and meaning.

1.1.5.2.3. Revising

Large changes occur during the revising stage, where entire sections may be added or omitted, the subject matter of the piece may be altered, and supporting evidence may be expanded upon, added, or even removed entirely. According to Brown and Hood (1989), the revision phase is an important stage in the writing procedure. It includes checking that your content and objective are clear and appropriate for your audience, in a specific writing situation. It is not just a matter of checking spelling, punctuation and grammar. It involves organizing, changing, adding, leaving out words, and so on.

1.1.5.2.4. Editing

The fundamental mechanics of the piece are the main focus at this point. To catch grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and other errors, the writer should double-check that they have used all the appropriate terms and reread their content. The writer evaluates his writing during the editing phase to make sure the concepts are relevant and the grammar is sound. It just entails carefully reading each sentence to ensure that it is purposeful and well-designed

1.1.5.3. The Genre Approach

The genre approach first appeared in the middle of the 1980s. As a result of both the product and process approach shortcomings. It was developed to concentrate on various underlying purposes and objectives and to focus mostly on teaching students several genres to meet their demands in various contexts. The focus of this approach is on achieving specific goals in certain situations. The fundamental tenet of genre writing is that it

emphasizes the understanding of the context in which writing occurs and this is viewed as a deliberate effort. The genre approach is best suited for students studying English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Despite this, using it in any English classroom can be beneficial. (Harmer, 2001, PP.258-259).

Richards (2003) claimed that “these abstract, socially recognized ways of using language for particular purpose are called genres” (p. 18). In other words, a writer considers genres as societal constructs that signify a particular objective when writing. He adds “writing instruction begins with the purposes for communicating, then moves to the stages of a text which can express these purposes” (p. 20). Because of this, writing is a social process that combines students' knowledge of various text genres and their communicative goals.

The genre-oriented approach is referred to as a cycle strategy in learning since the stages that comprise its procedure are interdependent. Firkins, Forey, and Sengupta (2007) developed three major elements:

Modelling a text: It refers to the needs of the students, in which the teacher chooses a specific style of literature to supplement the classroom activities. In the second step, they (teacher and students) operate, interpret, or even edit the text in order to comprehend its function in connection to communicative aims. As a last operation in this level, learners are guided and aided in studying the genre's word usage and structural pattern.

Joint construction: At this level, the teacher and students work together to build a writing sample by paraphrasing, summarizing, and incorporating what they have learned as vocabulary, grammar patterns, or textual devices (e.g., using the whiteboard). Furthermore, the teacher constantly monitors his or her students and provides constructive feedback.

Independent construction: relying on a given genre and its main features, students independently apply what they have learnt in their writing pieces.

Although genre approaches highlight that writing changes depending on the social environment in which it is produced, they share the same belief that writing is primarily linguistic with product approaches. The genre approach to teaching writing is primarily focused on teaching specific genres that students need to master in order to flourish in particular contexts, as the name suggests. This could involve placing more attention on the text's content as well as the context in which it was written.

1.2. Exploring Learner Autonomy in Writing

1.2.1. Definition of Learner Autonomy

The concept of learner autonomy was introduced into education in the 1980s by one of the earliest pioneers in the field “Henery Holec” who defined it as: “the ability to take charge of one’s own learning, having all responsibility for all decisions concerning all aspects of this learning “(1981, p. 3). For Holec (1981), autonomous learners make decisions about every aspect of their educational journey. This skill should accordingly be demonstrated in all choices related to the many modes of the learning process such as choosing the learning objectives, content, methodologies, and evaluation. Although a teacher may assist students in choosing effective learning strategies, the learners themselves should take the ultimate responsibility. He also said that autonomy is a developed skill compared to an innate one and self-directed learners should try to put the modes of the educational process discussed above into practice. This particular idea is highlighted in Dickinson’s (1987) definition of autonomy as he stated it is the “situation in which the learner is totally responsible for all the decisions concerned with his learning, and the implementation of those decisions”. According to Benson (2001) describing autonomy is crucial for the following two reasons. Construct validity is a crucial prerequisite for an optimal learning process to start with. Second, initiatives or programs

aimed at promoting autonomy are more likely to succeed if they are founded on a clear knowledge of the behavioral changes they seek to encourage.

Divergent definitions are found in the literature, Little (1990) defined learner autonomy as “a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision making and independent action. It presupposes, but also entails, that the learner will develop a particular kind of psychological relation to the process and content of his learning” (as cited in Benson, 2001, p. 49) . Little (1991) highlighted a significant element that was overlooked in the prior interpretation of learner Autonomy namely “cognitive ability”, and he confirms this point and believes that by integrating the important role of mental capacity, his perspective completes Holec’s (1981) idea. Later Benson and Voller (1997) adopt Holec’s (1981) definition of Learner Autonomy and point out that the latter is used in at least five different ways:

- 1-for situations in which learners study entirely on their own ;
- 2-for a set of skills which can be learned and applied in self-directed learning ;
- 3-for an inborn capacity which is suppressed by institutional education;
- 4-for the exercise of learners’ responsibility for their own learning ;
- 5- for the right of learners to determine the direction of their own learning. (p. 2)

According to Little (1991), it is crucial to know what autonomy is not before defining what it is. In this regard, he made five suggestions that in his opinion encapsulate what autonomy is not:

1. It is neither learning independently nor without an instructor's guidance.
2. It is a matter of allowing the students to go as naturally as possible; yet, it does not exclude the teacher from moving on or intervening.
3. It is not a new approach, and lesson plans cannot be used for improving it.
4. It is not just one distinct, observable behaviour.

5. It is temporary and not easily accomplished.

1.2.2. The Origins of Learner Autonomy

Acknowledging the field of autonomy requires an understanding of its roots and historical background. The term "autonomy" comes from the Ancient Greek word "autonomia," by combining the words "autos" which means "self" and "nomos" which means "law". The concept of learner autonomy in education first came into existence in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when numerous scholars highlighted the importance of autonomy in learning. At the beginning of the 20th century, the concept of "autonomy" was widely used in philosophy and various social sciences. Since then, the field of education has been one of these sciences, and numerous academics and educationalists have concentrated on the concept of autonomy and asserted that education should be independent by itself (Kadi, 2018, pp. 5-6). The notion of learner autonomy began to receive attention in the field of language learning in the 1970s. Since many individuals at the time believed that language ought to serve as a tool for communication, communicative language teaching approaches were introduced to foreign language classes. These approaches highlighted how crucial it is to involve the learner in the learning process. According to Benson (2001), various scholars over the years have emphasized the value of autonomy in the paradigm of education, including Galileo, Rousseau, Dewey, and Kilpatrick. Galileo, for instance, who held the opinion that "you can not teach a man anything; you can only help him find it within himself" (p. 22). Moreover, in Rousseau's Model Learning, learners are in charge of their own decisions and acquire knowledge by reaping or suffering the results.

Originally, autonomy was considered a natural outcome of the practice of self-directed learning, in which the targets, contents, progress, methods, techniques, procedure of acquisition, and evaluation of learning are, in part or totally, set by the learners themselves.

Briefly stated, it all started with the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project (Benson, 2006), Henri Holec introduced the term in the field of language learning for the first time in 1979. With the growth of learner-centered approaches and notions in the years that followed, learner autonomy became increasingly important, because of its significance, a large number of educators have written various works on learner autonomy in the area of learning foreign languages.

1.2.3. Characteristics of Autonomous Learners

For people, the idea of autonomy has been a crucial concern. They all have motives for their actions, and they are able to think back on them. Individual freedom has therefore become crucial to daily life. A self-sufficient individual lives a self-sufficient life. By choosing what is valuable and significant, people can recognize the possibilities that are available and make something of their lives. The effectiveness of students' learning is directly affected by their capacity for autonomous learning.

Usuki (2002) asserts that learner Autonomy is a kind of character that each individual in the world should have in order to be successful. Students' act of taking responsibility for their own learning for being autonomous paves the way for their achievement in professional life. Because once a person becomes autonomous, she/he reflects it in other aspects of life (as cited in Genç, 2022, p. 22).

For the majority of research studies on the subject of education, the emphasis on autonomy and learner-autonomous characteristics has been and continues to be a source of concern. For example, Cortes & Lujan (2005) identified the characteristics of autonomous learners by looking into different perspectives, where the autonomous learner is able to take responsibility for setting learning goals, organizing the program structure and content, and accepts accountability for achieving these goals, appears to have the ability to work

collaboratively with peers who are taking the same program, as well as to use studies for information effectively and to set a goal for self-evaluation, and can provide feedback. In addition, he can maintain high motivation despite potential difficulties during the learning process and can employ the best learning techniques for each topic, along with the ability to convey information through a variety of topics. Last but not least, the independent learner can discover his or her solutions to problems and must exercise discipline and creativity (as cited in Genç, p. 22).

There are various levels and degrees of learner independence that are situated on a continuum. Nunan (2003) worked on moving students along this continuum from complete reliance on the teacher to independence, and this is done by following a number of steps.

- Step 1: Make instruction goals clear to learners by clearly stating the objectives of the lesson to the students, they will evaluate their current learning strategies and identify their strengths and weaknesses.
- Step 2: Allow learners to create their own goals by enabling them to establish their own objectives, they will choose the goals they want based on their particular learning needs and aspirations.
- Step 3: Encourage learners to use their second language outside the classroom to develop their self-awareness by keeping an eye on their own learning activities, finding areas for growth, and asking for feedback.
- Step 4: Raise awareness of learning processes to improve their learning abilities, learners voluntarily create systems of support, including study groups or language exchange partners.
- Step 5: Help learners identify their own preferred styles and strategies. To find what works best for them, learners experiment with a range of tools and approaches, including online resources, printed materials, and language learning apps.

- Step 6: Encourage learner choice by taking ownership of learning through choosing what, when, and how they learn, as well as by looking for chances for self-directed learning and take ownership of their learning journey.
- Step 7: Allow learners to generate their own tasks. Encourage independent learning by giving students the freedom to create their own assignments; learning activities that are self-directed by the learner include dedicating time to studying, keeping a learning journal, and working on individual learning projects.
- Step 8: Encourage learners to become teachers. At a more difficult level, learners would become teachers after frequently assessing their progress and the effectiveness of their learning procedures. Nothing stimulates learning like the impending necessity of having to provide knowledge.
- Step 9. Encourage learners to become researchers. It is feasible to teach students to work as researchers. Learners engage in reflection as they evaluate their learning experiences, recognize achievements and obstacles, and make strategies for future learning objectives (Nunan, 2003, pp.196-203).

1.2.4. Significance of Learner Autonomy in Education

Due to the century's demands, the concept of learner autonomy has gained importance as learner-centered approaches have replaced traditional teaching methods. Wang (2011) argues “It is much more important to let the students know about their own learning style if they are to take responsibility for their learning process” (p. 275). Benson (2001) states that many advocates for autonomy are concerned primarily with the ability to learn effectively in terms of personal goals.

Jiao (2005) gives four substantial reasons in support of learner autonomy for English learning; it enhances learner's motivation and leads to more effective learning. It also provides learners with more opportunities to communicate in English in an environment

that is not their native language. It also meets the individual needs of learners at all levels and it has a lasting impact.

According to Benson (2013), autonomous learning significantly aids in the success and advancement of language acquisition. Additionally, it promotes the language learning processes and the learner's techniques, enabling behavioural and emotional engagement as well as active participation in education (Reeve et al., 2004).

Little (2015) goes on to say that raising lifelong learners both during and after the educational experience is the main significance of learner autonomy. In this respect, he identified three reasons why autonomy matters in education and after education. He stated that the role of formal education is not to teach knowledge, but to direct learners to be capable of learning outside the school stage. Besides that, being an autonomous learner is a crucial way to cope with the new adjustments taking place in modern language curricula. Thus, the advancement of education level is heavily based on the degree to which learners are autonomous. The more learners know that it is their responsibility to acquire knowledge, the more effective education programs are.

Haddad (2016) stated that “students who depend on themselves in learning vocabulary are more able to succeed academically and more motivated than those who do not have effective strategies in learning by themselves” (p. 785). Accordingly, he emphasized the value of student autonomy in the acquisition of vocabulary and claimed that when students recognize language-learning techniques, they progressively gain independence by choosing and using various words in various contexts.

According to Little (2004), Leni Dam; was a teacher in a Danish comprehensive school, establishing language learner autonomy in her English classes, believed that her success depended on the growth of the learner's autonomy. Where her responsibility was to get her students to the point where their "action knowledge" included the ability to read,

write, speak, and listen in English. Her students were capable at using English for communication even after a year. Although some did it more accurately, with a wider vocabulary, and with greater fluency than others, they were all English language users in the English-speaking classroom. The actions of Leni Dam were motivated by six elements, which appeared to be central to her teaching approach, these elements are: (1) she began by using only the target language in the classroom and expected her students to do the same; (2) she engaged her students in a never-ending search for effective learning activities, which the class shared, debated, analyzed, and assessed; (3) she demanded that her students select their own learning objectives and activities, which were also the subject of discussion, analysis, and evaluation; (4) despite the fact that her students had to set their own goals, they primarily worked collaboratively in small groups to achieve them; (5) all of her students were required to maintain written records of their learning, including lesson plans, project checklists, lists of important words, and any texts they created; (6) she encouraged her students to regularly assess both their individual and class development. The example provided by Leni Dam demonstrated how autonomy in language learning and autonomy in language use are two sides of the same coin.

Leni Dam (1995) highlighted the importance of collaborative learning with others as well as the social component of autonomy. However, all three types of autonomy can overlap if there is a specific objective that the learner is aiming to accomplish. The most crucial factor is the learning aim, which can be achieved in a variety of ways, including being an active learner and taking part in activities, being motivated and capable of succeeding, making judgments regarding the learning content, or even combining parts of all three.

1.2.5. Learner Autonomy in Writing

For EFL learners, autonomy is a vital and essential cognitive process since it aids in the development of their writing abilities and skills. Little (1997) claimed that:

ex to achieve autonomy as learner users of a second language, we need to develop both language awareness in the psycholinguistic sense and language awareness as externally derived knowledge about language the former underpinning spontaneous language use and the latter providing the means to reflect analytically on our target language as a rule-governed system and medium of two communication. (p. 73)

When it comes to learners' autonomy in writing, the development of learner autonomy is seen as difficult and troublesome. In fact, most English Language students are not ready to take the burden of their education, especially in writing, when it comes to learning a second language. Thang (2003) argued that EFL students, especially those in higher education, need to be encouraged. This is because it enables them to do additional writing tasks or training outside of the classroom at their own pace.

Bagheri and Aeen (2011) in their study, supported the effectiveness of training autonomy in improving intermediate EFL learners' writing skills. Their findings showed that, at the intermediate level of language competence, writing achievement of the EFL subjects was significantly impacted by exercising autonomy.

1.2.6. Learner Autonomy Abilities in Writing

The general concept of learner autonomy in language learning has been covered in great detail, according to a review of the relevant studies. Yet, there have been very few attempts to design models that explicitly identify the skills necessary for growing learner autonomy with reference to writing skills. He's (2015) contribution is one of these attempts. According to his model, planning and writing portfolios are seen as skills that promote learner autonomy in writing.

In planning, learners are encouraged to plan their learning process in order to promote learner autonomy in writing. Thus, He (2015) proposes a two-level working plan that would make this process easier on both a short and a long-term level. Learners must specify in full what they expect to do in each of the abovementioned phases of the writing process at the short-term level of the plan, including the choice of topics, writing styles, and content. In the long term, learners must describe the intended outcomes they hope to attain, such as enhancing their writing abilities, critical thinking skills, and learning management skills. Setting such a plan offers learners with the chance to appropriately establish a self-improvement process in writing because the plan is developed by the learner himself, based on his own characteristics, requirements, and circumstances.

The basis of writing portfolios is the notion that there should be a connection between feedback and the quality of learning (He, 2015). It implies that learners are expected to gain maximum benefit from the various kinds of feedback they receive. In order to improve students' writing, feedback is given a lot of weight because it draws their attention to their errors. The teacher is responsible for supervising students' written work. Nonetheless, as the trend toward learner autonomy gains momentum, both teachers and students should be responsible for providing feedback. He (2015) asserted that a learner's ability to provide feedback to both themselves and their peers is a requirement for developing an effective writing portfolio. He (2015) contends that there are three stages that should be followed for feedback on student writing portfolios to be effective. The first step is encouraging students to check their own writing for various errors, such as incorrect spelling and poor grammatical usage, and correct them. The establishment of peer feedback for writing instruction is the following step. Peer feedback is beneficial because it gives learners the freedom to think for themselves and to edit one another's work. The teacher's written feedback should be given as a last step. Although the teacher should not

address the mistakes, this input should not be in the form of explicit feedback. Such corrections should be made in the first two steps. In fact, teachers should instead provide some supportive remarks.

Conclusion

This chapter was concerned with learner autonomy in writing. It first started with the concept of academic writing and defining writing, which is viewed as a form of communication that allows students to express their thoughts. Then, it defined the concept of learner autonomy. Moreover, this chapter shed light on the importance of writing and the characteristics of good writing, and then it provided a clear understanding of the writing approaches, which are the product, the process and the genre approach. In addition, the present chapter provided an elucidation of the origins of learner autonomy and the characteristics of autonomous learners, besides its significance in education, ending up with learner autonomy in writing and its abilities.

Chapter Two: Field Work

Introduction

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Chapter Two: Field Work

Introduction

The previous chapter presented a literature review of learner autonomy and writing, while this chapter is concerned with the fieldwork of the present study, which explores the existence of learner autonomy in writing at the Department of English, University of Jijel and the attitudes of third-year students and teachers towards it. It sheds light on the procedures used for gathering the data that is presented, analyzed, and whose results are thoroughly discussed.

2.1. Population and Sampling

The current study targets a population of third-year undergraduate students and teachers at the Department of English at the University of Mohamed Saddik Ben Yahia during the academic year 2022-2023. The sample consists of sixty students out of two hundred and forty-one EFL students who were present during the data-collecting process and two writing teachers. The choice of third-year undergraduate students was based on their strong academic writing qualifications compared with sophomores and freshmen and our belief that they should particularly leave university as autonomous learners in writing.

The researchers were present during the whole administration time to provide explanations or clarification to the respondents. The administration of the questionnaire lasted two days and the return rate was 100%.

2.2. Research Methodology and Instruments

According to Williams (2007), descriptive research is a research method that can determine the situation in current phenomenon. Nassaji (2015) states that the purpose of descriptive study is to draw and classify the phenomenon. The present research is descriptive and was conducted through a quantitative data collection method. This study's primary instrument, the questionnaire, is adopted to achieve the best results to meet its objective. A questionnaire is a research tool that consists of several questions intended to gather crucial data from respondents. According to Creswell (2012), a questionnaire is “a form used in a survey design that participants in a study complete and return to the researcher” (p. 382). Its objective in a research study is to assist the researcher in collecting data that will help him/her in achieving the research aims (Brace, 2008). Thus, 2 printed questionnaires were addressed to sixty third-year undergraduate students and two third-year writing teachers at the Department of English at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University.

2.3. Student Questionnaire

2.3.1. Description of the Student Questionnaire

The student questionnaire was adapted from the nine steps to learner autonomy suggested by Nunan (2003). It consists of eighteen questions classified into nine closed-ended questions for which students are supposed to give “yes” or “no” answers and nine open-ended questions whereby the participants are requested to justify their answer and provide the researchers with other suggestions or examples that can be related to the study. In the end, a scale of twenty-two statements was designed with six Linkert scale response

options which are “strongly agree”, “agree”, “somewhat agree”, “somewhat disagree”, “disagree”, and “strongly disagree”.

The student questionnaire is divided into two sections. The first section is entitled “Student’s Attitudes Towards Learner Autonomy”, and it aims at gathering information about third-year EFL learners’ insights about writing and their perceptions of learner autonomy. It contains eighteen questions. Question 1 (Q1) intends to rate their level of academic writing. In Q2 and Q3 students are asked if they enjoy writing and select the difficulties if they faced any, Q4 and Q5 targets to see the other sources used if the learner does not rely completely on the knowledge presented in the classroom. Q6 investigates how the learner finds the knowledge presented by the writing teacher.

The questions from Q7 to Q18 aim at investigating the learners’ attitudes toward learner autonomy. First, Q7, Q8, and Q9 sought to find out whether the learners learn writing outside the classroom and how much time they spend doing that, and also if they prefer writing in the classroom while guided by the teacher or writing alone outside of the classroom. In Q10 and Q11 students are inquired about the importance of learning English autonomously with an attempt to check their ability to attain it. Next, in Q12 and Q13 students are questioned if they set any goals and if they feel motivated to enhance their writing. Next, in Q14 the EFL learners are asked if they receive any support to learn writing alone and to select their source of support. In Q16 and Q17, they were required to show their opinion about the importance of learner autonomy in developing writing proficiency. Finally, Q18 is to investigate the learner’s view about the most important person in the writing process. The second section entitled “Testing Students’ Learner Autonomy in Writing” is made up of twenty-two statements to gather information about the existence of learner autonomy in the students’ learning of writing journey as well as the

steps and procedures taken by the learners to move from dependency to autonomy, and it is based on the nine steps to learner autonomy by David Nunan.

2.3.2. Analysis of the Student Questionnaire

Section One: Students' Attitude Towards Learner Autonomy

Question1: Rate your academic writing skills:

Table 1

Students' Rate of their Academic Writing Level

Options	Subjects	Percentage
Poor	4	6,7%
Average	24	40%
Good	28	46,6%
Excellent	4	6,7%
Total	60	100

This question aims to know the students' views about their writing level. Table 1 shows the obtained results which indicate that 46,6 % of the students admitted they have good academic writing skills. This means that they are confident enough about their writing. Another significant portion of 40% opted for the average option. Only four students (6,7%) considered that they are excellent in writing. In the same regard, four students think that they have poor writing level.

Question 2: Do you enjoy writing?

Table 2

Students' Enjoyment of Writing

Options	Subjects	Percentage
Yes	45	75%
No	15	25%
Total	60	100%

In the second question, third year students were asked about whether or not they enjoy writing and were requested to justify their answers. Table 2 shows that forty- five students (75 %) enjoy writing. According to the participants it allows them to express their feeling, thoughts, opinions, and ideas creatively. Besides that, it improves their understanding and develops their writing skills and critical thinking. Whereas fifteen of them (25%) do not enjoy it because they find it boring, difficult when it comes to rules, or because they have insufficient knowledge about the specific writing topic, some of them also referred to time constraints as a hindrance to their enjoyment.

Question 3: Do you find serious difficulties in writing?

Table 3

Students' Views on Encountering Difficulties in Writing

Options	Subjects	Percentage
Yes	39	65%
No	21	35 %
Total	60	100 %

Question 3 seeks to determine whether the learner encounters substantial difficulties or struggles with the process of writing. The question tries to explore the person's experience with writing and determine their level of comfort and ability in this skill. It also intends to determine whether the person faces any significant hurdles. The results demonstrate that twenty-one participants (35%) do not find any serious difficulties in writing; whereas, thirty-nine students (65%) do find serious difficulties.

To further investigate the reasons behind the individual's writing difficulties, the students were required to select from a list of potential factors that could contribute to this challenge, represented in time constraints, lack of practice and lack of support from the teacher. Figure 1 presents third-year students' choice of difficulties. Thirty students (75%) agree that those difficulties are due to lack of practice, then seven of them (17,5%) relate it to time constraints, and just three participants (7,5%) agree that the lack of support from the teacher is the main reason.

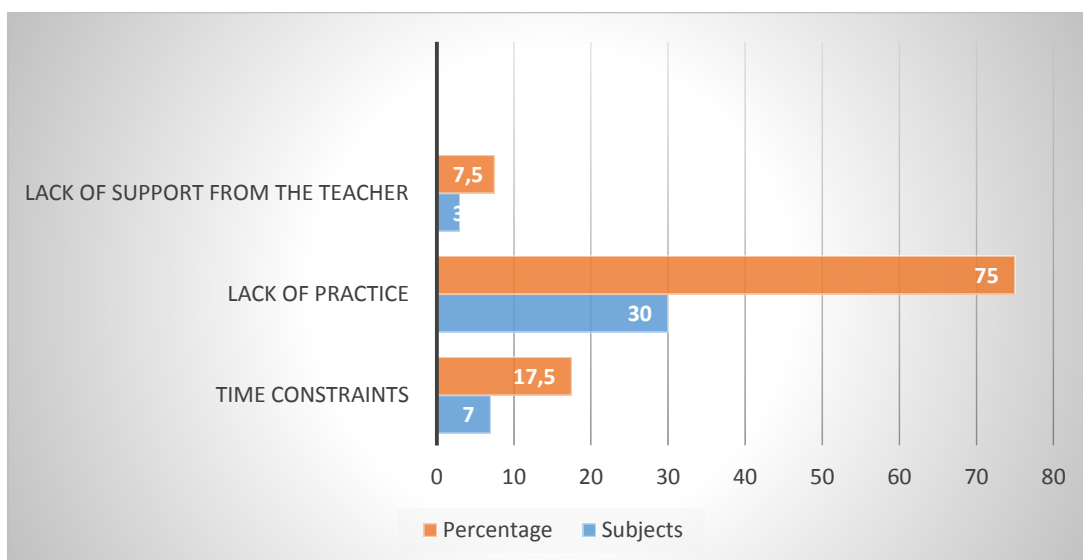


Figure 1. Reasons Behind the Difficulties in Writing

Question 4: Do you completely rely on the knowledge presented in the classroom for your learning of the writing skill?

Table 4

Students' Reliance on the Knowledge Presented in the Classroom

Options	Subjects	Percentage
Yes	35	58,3 %
No	25	41,7%

Total	60	100 %
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This question attempts to determine whether the person's learning of writing is mainly limited to what is taught within the classroom context and to comprehend the individual's reliance on formal instruction as opposed to other possible sources of learning or self-directed practice outside of the classroom. The results show that thirty-five students (58,3%) rely completely on the knowledge presented in the classroom in learning writing skills in contrast to twenty –five participants (41,7%) who do not.

Question 5: If no, what the other sources do you use?

This question addresses the category of participants who do not rely on the knowledge presented in the classroom for their learning of the writing skills. The results show that learners use various sources to enhance their skills beyond classroom instruction. The majority of the responses turn around the use of online resources among them; online platforms and websites such as Google and YouTube as well as personal writing practice such as journaling, creative writing, or blogging that allows learners to experiment with different writing techniques

Question 6: How do you find the knowledge presented by your writing teacher?

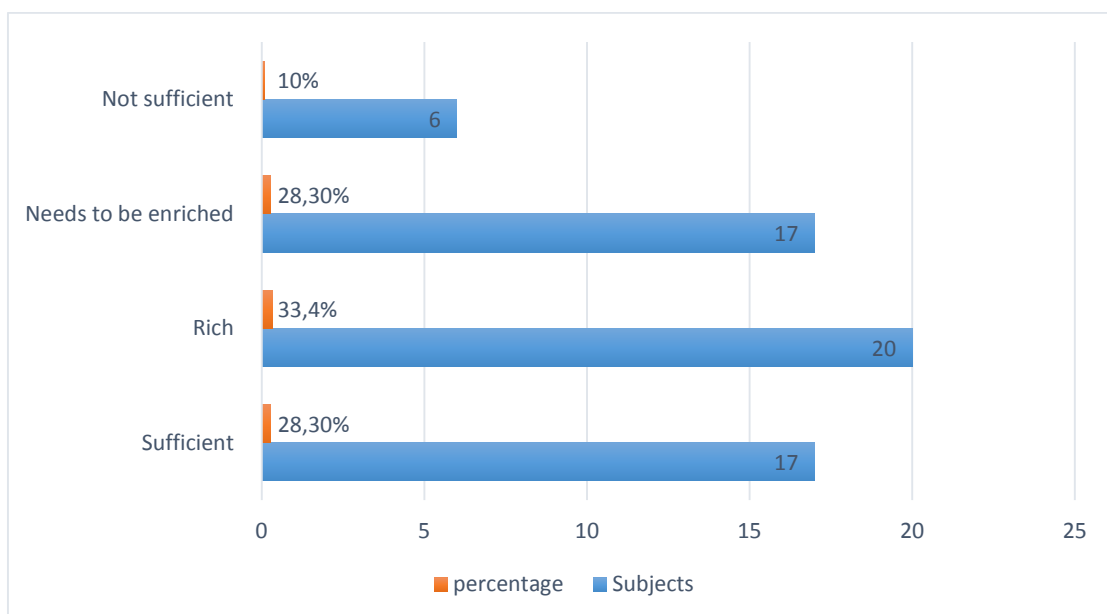


Figure 2: Students' Estimation of the Knowledge Presented by the Writing Teacher

Question 6 tries to discover the student's perspective of the effectiveness, relevance, and quality of the material offered by the teacher with regard to writing in order to figure out how they perceive and evaluate the knowledge shared by their writing teacher. It particularly attempts to evaluate the student's level of satisfaction, engagement, and perceived value of the information their writing teacher provides them. The findings shown in Figure 2 demonstrate that twenty participants (33,4%) agree that the knowledge presented is rich. Next, "sufficient" and "needs to be enriched" were rated by the same percentage of 28,3 % of students. Six students (10%), on the other hand, believe that the knowledge presented by their writing teacher is not sufficient

Question 7: Apart from doing homework, do you learn writing outside the classroom?

Table 5

Students' Attempts for Learning Writing outside the Classroom

Options	Subjects	Percentage
Yes	36	60 %
No	24	40 %
Total	60	100%

This question aims to explore whether the learners participate in any extra writing-related activities and educational opportunities besides what is given to them as homework and to find out if they proactively seek additional resources, activities, or experiences that improve their writing abilities. The results indicate that thirty-six participants (60%) seek to learn writing outside the classroom because they have a personal interest in writing such as writing diaries and short stories and this helps them improve their writing proficiency. However, twenty-four students (40%) do not learn writing outside the classroom because of the time constraints due to their hectic schedules and personal responsibilities. In

addition to that, some of them ascribed this to their lack of interest as they prefer speaking and reading to writing.

Question 8: If yes, how much time do you spend on writing outside the classroom?

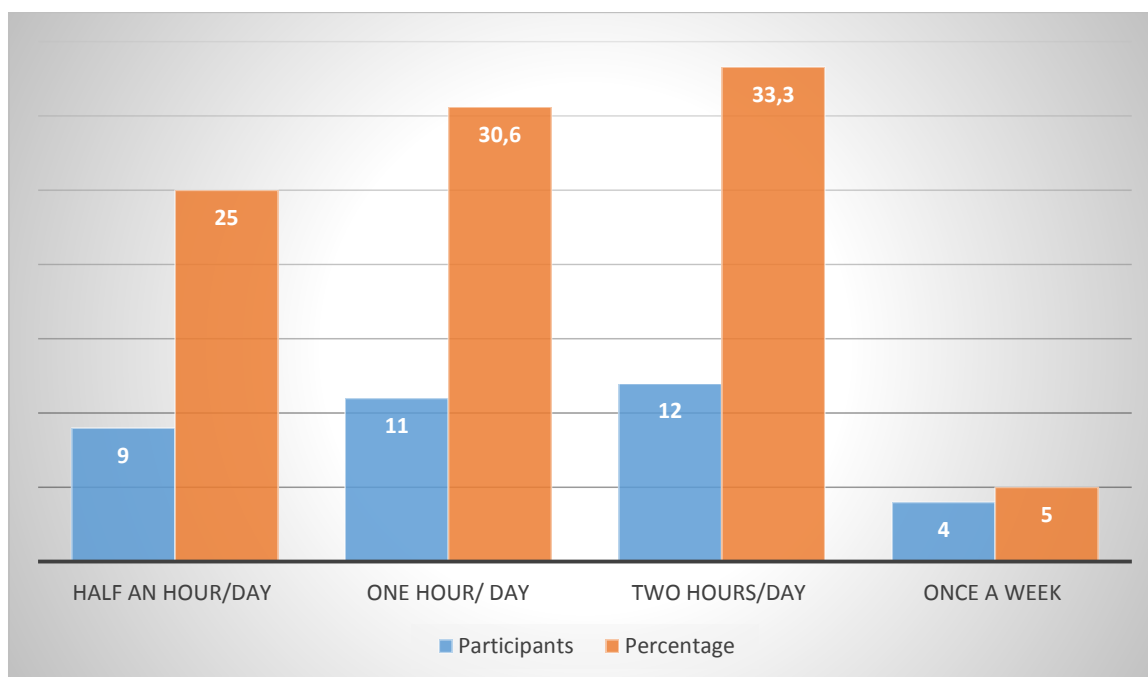


Figure 3. Frequency of Writing Outside the Classroom

The purpose of this question is to figure out the amount of time the student spends on writing outside of the commitments for university. The results show that nine participants (25%) pass only half an hour per day in writing. Two hours per day is selected by twelve students (33,3%). Then, eleven members (30,6%) stated that they spend one hour. Finally, four students (11,1%) agree that they practice only once a week.

Question 9: Do you prefer writing in the classroom while guided by the teacher or writing out of the classroom alone?

Table 6

Students' Preference about Writing in or outside the Classroom

Options	Subjects	Percentage
In the classroom	43	71,7%

Outside the classroom	17	28,3 %
Total	60	100 %

The Question 10 aims to determine if the student prefers working independently outside of the classroom or in a structured environment with instruction from a teacher. It also attempts to comprehend the student's preference for the setting in which writing activities make them feel more productive or comfortable. By inquiring about their preference, the question seeks to discover more about the respondent's preferred learning method, level of independence, and comfort in various writing situations. The results show that forty-three participants (71,7%) do prefer writing in the classroom and seventeen (28,3%) do not. The reason why the majority of the students prefer writing in the classroom while guided by the teacher is that they need assistance and feedback from the teacher who would help them to understand their weaknesses and make necessary improvements. In addition, the students can share and exchange feedback and learn from each other's writing in the classroom. More than that, they believe that the classroom environment makes them feel more motivated and accountable when writing. While the minority of the students prefer writing outside the classroom because this gives them the freedom to choose their own topics of interest. Besides, writing outside the classroom, they say, allows them to write at their own pace and makes them feel comfortable and explore their creativity.

Question 10: Do you think that it is important to learn writing in English autonomously?

Table 7

Students' Attitudes towards Learning Writing in English Autonomously

Options	Subjects	Percentage
Yes	50	83,3 %
No	10	16,7 %

Total	60	100%
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According to Table 7, 83,3% of the participants opted for the positive answer “yes” about the importance to learn writing in English autonomously, while 16,7% chose “no”. The reason behind the positive answers from the students about the importance to learn writing in English autonomously is that it fosters personal growth and self-expression and it enhances critical thinking besides improving their writing skills. Additionally, they believe that practice makes perfect, and being independent in learning to write autonomously allows them to discover their weaknesses in writing. On the other hand, the ones who have negative answers worry about using the wrong language or making grammatical mistakes, thus they believe they need to be guided by teachers in order to recognize their mistakes and correct them when necessary. In addition, writing in English can be challenging and considered a skill that requires practice and feedback to improve, which is why they need assistance from the teacher.

Question 11: Is it easy for a student to learn English writing autonomously?

Table 8

Students’ Insights into Learning English Writing Autonomously

Options	Subjects	Percentage
Yes	33	55 %
No	27	45 %
Total	60	100%

From the data illustrated above, it can be noticed that 33 of the participants (55%) see that the students can learn English writing independently while 45% of them agree that is difficult for them to do.

Question 12: Do you set any goals for developing your writing outside the classroom?

Table 9

Students’ Attempts to Set Goals for Developing Writing

Options	Subjects	Percentage
Yes	46	76,7%
No	14	23,3 %
Total	60	100%

We have asked this question for the sake of knowing whether the person establishes specific objectives or targets for themselves in terms of improving their writing skills outside of formal educational settings. Table 9 reveals that forty-six of the participants (76,7%) independently set their learning goals and objectives; whereas, fourteen of them (23,3%) do not.

Question 13: Do you feel motivated to work on yourself for enhancing your writing skill?

Table 10

Students' Motives to Work on themselves for Enhancing Writing

Options	Subjects	Percentage
Yes	47	78,3 %
No	13	21,7 %
Total	60	100 %

The aim behind asking this question is to understand the individual's level of personal drive and enthusiasm and to determine whether a third-year student has the desire and determination to devote time and effort to improving their writing abilities. In response to this question, a great number of the participants forty-seven (78,3%) feel motivated to work on themselves, while 21,7% think oppositely. The students who feel motivated to work on themselves for enhancing their writing skills agree that the improvement of writing skills can be considered a personal achievement and this enables them to achieve better grades. Also, they are aware of the benefits of having great writing abilities outside of the classroom. Those who do not feel motivated generally do not perceive the direct

connection between their writing skills and their own goals or interests and they find no encouragement inside or outside the classroom.

Question 14: Do you receive any support to learn writing alone?

Table 11

Students' Reception of Support to Learn Writing Alone

Options	Subjects	Percentage
Yes	29	48,3%
No	31	51,7 %
Total	60	100 %

Question 14 is asked to find out if the individual is getting any assistance to develop their writing abilities while learning alone, without specific direction or instruction from a teacher, and to determine whether the person has access to any resources, tools, or software that can help them advance their writing skills without receiving formal instruction. The results showed that 51,7 % do not receive any support, whereas 48,3% do receive.

Question 15: If yes, where does this support come from?

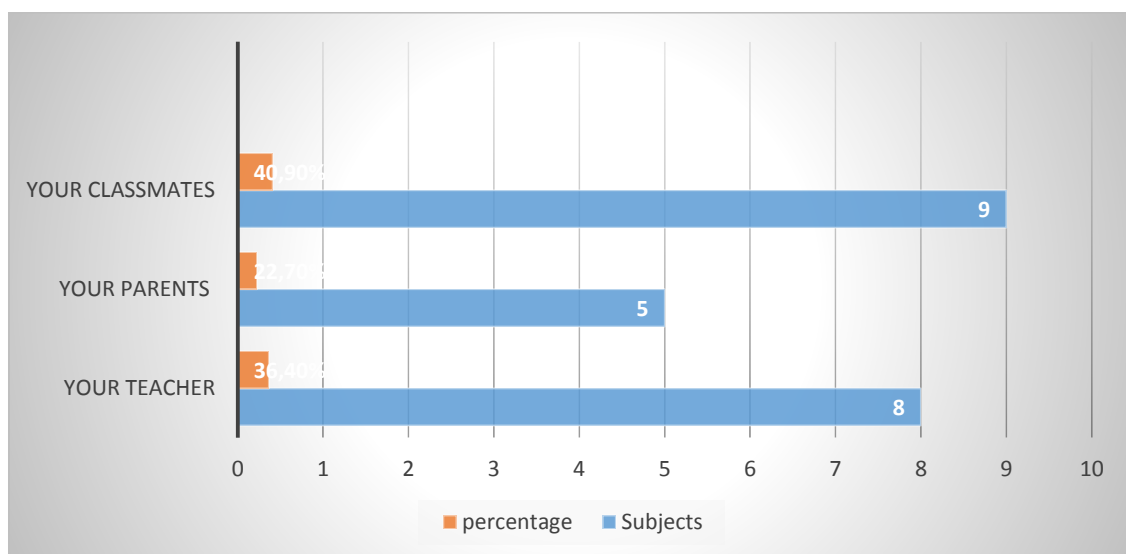


Figure 4. Source of Students' Support to Learn Writing

The participants claim that they receive support to learn writing alone. According to nine of them (40,9%) as shown in Figure 4, this support comes from classmates, by creating writing groups or participating in peer editing sessions to get assistance from their peers and by exchanging written work with students and giving one another feedback . Also the support can come from the teachers, it was stated by eight participants (36,4%), who provide valuable guidance and recommend resources, suggest writing exercises, provide feedback on the written works and offer general advice to enhance writing skills. Last and not least, five participants (22,7%) agree that the support can come from the parents who are the first and permanent support for their children. Others specify that this support comes from private teachers, social media, and themselves (internal support).

Question 16: Do you think that learner autonomy is important in developing your writing proficiency?

Table 12

Importance of Learner Autonomy in Developing Writing Proficiency

Options	Subjects	Percentage
Yes	58	96,7 %
No	2	3,3 %
Total	60	100%

Table 12 reveals answers about the importance of learner autonomy in developing writing proficiency. The final results show that the vast majority of the students (96,7%) believe that learner autonomy is crucial.

Question 17: Please justify your answer.

Learners do think that learner autonomy is important in developing their writing proficiency because it gives them the ability to take charge of their own learning, so they

believe that it is crucial for improving their writing skills. Learner autonomy allows them to participate in setting their goals, determining their educational needs, and selecting the techniques and resources that will function most effectively for them. The students who do not think that learner autonomy is important in developing their writing proficiency mostly have a lack of confidence and need instruction from teachers, in their view, relying on teacher direction might be seen as a more efficient way to improve their writing proficiency.

Question 18: Who do you think is the most important person in learning writing?

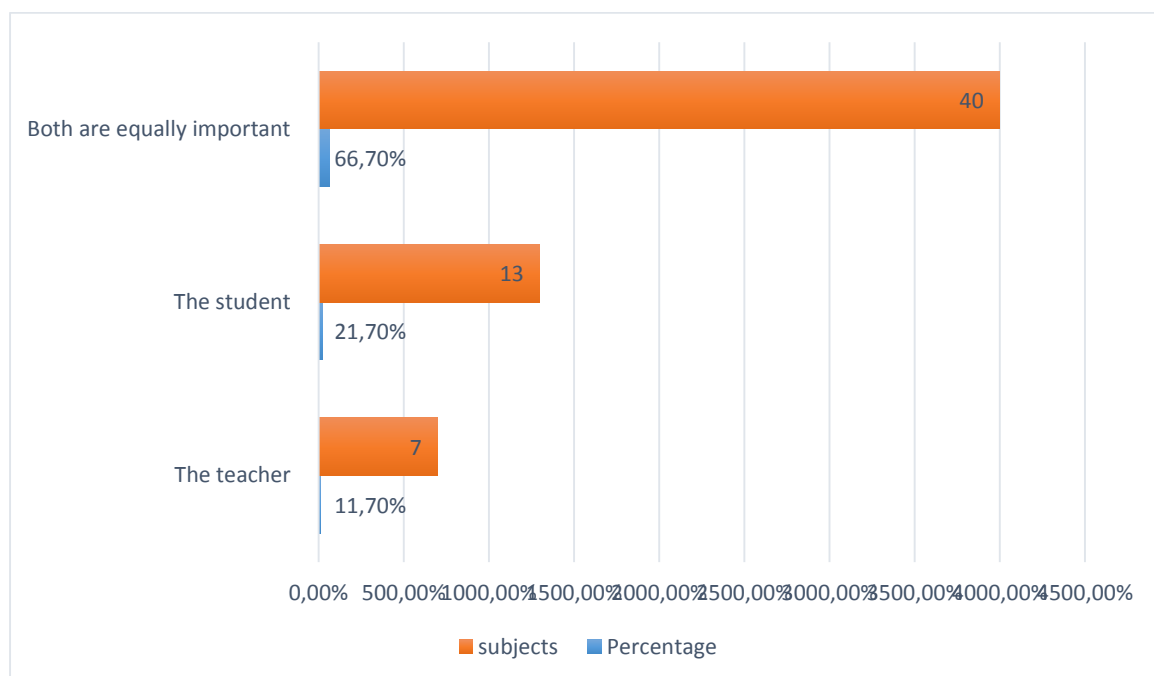


Figure 5. Students' Estimation of the Most Important Participant in Learning Writing

The purpose of this question is to determine the individual that has the greatest influence on a person's development of writing skills and to identify who plays a significant role in facilitating and fostering effective writing abilities. Figure 4 demonstrates that Forty students (66,7%) think that both teachers and students are equally important. This is because they see it as a complementary relationship, where the teachers bring knowledge, experience, and expertise to the writing-learning process and provide

guidance, instruction, and feedback for the students who bring their own ideas, perspectives, and creativity to the task of writing and engage in critical thinking, analysis, and interpretation as they construct their written work. Then thirteen of the participants (21,7 %) agree that the students play the most crucial role because they believe that they are the ones who will benefit from improved writing skills. Last, only seven students (11,7%) chose the teacher because he is the one who provides them with knowledge inside the classroom, gives them advice and instruction and can spot their mistakes easily.

Section Two: Testing Students' Learner Autonomy in Writing

Please select the responses that best reflect your perspectives using the linker scale.

1. I take responsibility for my own learning of writing.
2. I have the ability to choose my own strategy for learning writing.
3. I am guided by the teacher of writing to identify my own preferred learning styles and strategies to learn writing.
4. I can adapt my learning methods and preferences to the writing task at hand because I am flexible.
5. I can spot my writing weaknesses.
6. I am able to assess my writing and the writing tasks assigned to me.
7. I am able to remain motivated to learn writing.
8. I consider teachers more as learning facilitators than just knowledge providers.
9. I cannot learn without the teacher's supervision.
10. I can determine my level of writing proficiency thanks to the feedback from my writing teachers.
11. I am actively engaged in learning writing.
12. I am good at managing my time effectively to learn writing.
13. I practice writing outside of the classroom.

14. I am ready to take risks to learn writing and determined to complete challenging writing tasks.

15. I am able to think critically when assigned a writing task.

16. In learning writing I enjoy tasks whereby I can learn on my own.

17. I often discuss learning problems with classmates both inside and outside the class.

18. I sometimes do assignments which are not obligatory; for example, writing compositions, blogs, letters, etc.

19. I set clear goals to improve my writing.

20. In the classroom, I am granted the freedom to choose from different writing tasks.

21. In the classroom, I am encouraged to generate my writing tasks and create new ones.

22. I am encouraged to teach writing to my classmates.

Table 13

Students' Learner Autonomy in Writing

Statements	strongly Agree	agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
1	26,7	36,7	21,7	10	3,3	1,6	100%
2	31,7	33,4	18,3	8,3	3,3	5	100%
3	18,3	25	35	6,7	5	10	100%
4	16,7	30	30	13,3	10	0	100%
5	26,7	16,7	25	15	11,6	5	100%
6	26,7	21,7	25	11,7	11,6	3,3	100%
7	21,7	28,3	21,7	15	10	3,3	100%
8	33,4	31,7	18,3	8,3	8,3	0	100%
9	15	11,7	25	15	20	13,3	100%

10	18,3	35	28,3	11,7	1,7	5	100%
11	13,3	31,7	25	16,6	6,7	6,7	100%
12	21,7	11,7	23,3	23,3	11,7	8,3	100%
13	26,7	21,7	13,3	16,7	11,6	10	100%
14	20	30	23,3	16,7	8,3	1,7	100%
15	25	21,7	28,3	15	8,3	1,7	100%
16	10	26,6	30	11,6	13,3	6,6	100%
17	18,4	26,7	23,3	15	8,3	8,3	100%
18	16,7	18,4	33,3	8,3	15	8,3	100%
19	18,4	38,3	23,3	10	6,7	3,3	100%
20	11,7	16,6	35	11,7	11,3	11,7	100%
21	18,3	25	18,3	21,6	10	6,6	100%
22	15	25	18,3	10	15	16,6	100%

Following Table 13, the results reveal the students' learner autonomy in writing, particularly in terms of the extent to which they take responsibility for their own learning, their ability to set goals and strategies to improve learning writing, and their need of the teachers' supervision. The findings clearly indicate that most of the students (26,7% to 36,7 %) who stated "strongly agree" and "agree" claim to take responsibility for their own learning of writing due to their ability to spot their writing weaknesses and their active engagement in learning writing. Also, by testing the range to which they set, the goals and the strategies in order to improve their learning writing, the findings highlight that 38,3 % of the respondent agree with the previous statement and the overwhelming majority of the students (31,7% to 33,4%), state "strongly agree" and "agree", that they have the ability to choose their own strategies for learning writing. However, learners assert the role of the

teacher, where 25% somewhat agree that cannot learn without the teacher's supervision, while 20% disagree.

2.3.3. Discussion of the Student Questionnaire Results

Based on the analysis of the student questionnaire, the collected data from the first section reveals that third-year EFL students at the Department of Jijel rate their academic writing level as good. Additionally, they enjoy writing in the light they can express their feeling, thoughts, opinions, and ideas creatively. However, they have different weaknesses in writing and they relate them to the lack of practice and time constraints but this does not deny the fact that they rely on the knowledge presented in the classroom by the teacher for their learning of the writing skill, since they consider it rich. The learners do much effort to learn writing outside the classroom since they believe that it is important to learn writing in English autonomously due to their feeling of motivation to work on themselves for enhancing their writing skills. Besides, they set goals for developing it outside the classroom. The most important thing is that they think that learner autonomy is important in developing their writing proficiency and they see both the teacher and the student as equally important, for the reason that the teacher fosters learning, conveys knowledge, and offers assistance. On the other hand, the students actively participate, learn, and apply the knowledge obtained to advance academically and intellectually. Here the results indicate that the students have a positive attitude toward learner autonomy in writing; they seem that they want to work on themselves and they accept the idea of being an autonomous learner.

According to the gathered information from the second section, the students take responsibility for their own writing and they can set clear goals and strategies to improve their writing. Moreover, they practice writing outside the classroom, but this does not prove they are autonomous students in this department because it appears that the students

simply chose to agree and strongly agree to simply demonstrate their autonomy, which caused them to fall into several contradictions with their answers in the first section. Among these contradictions; they find serious difficulties in writing, where thirty students (75%) agree that those difficulties are due to lack of practice, then seven of them (17,5%) relate it to time constraints, while just three participants (7,5%) agree that the lack of support from the teacher is the main reason. The majority of these students (58,3%) rely on the knowledge presented in the classroom for their learning of the writing skill consider the knowledge presented by their writing teacher rich as well as sufficient, which is not a sign of autonomy. In addition, the ones who do not rely on this knowledge do practice the writing skill outside the classroom by journaling or blogging, writing diaries and short stories, which is considered as a practice of creative and not of academic writing. The overwhelming majority, also, spend only half an hour to two hours per day practicing writing outside the classroom, because they do not receive support to learn alone and this is not enough to say that they are autonomous learners.

Most of the students (83.4%) consider teachers more as learning facilitators than just knowledge providers, and (51.7%) cannot learn without the teacher's supervision. It is obvious, therefore, that they need assistance and guidance from teachers, which is why 43 participants (71,7%) do prefer writing in the classroom. The reason why they need feedback from the teacher who would help them understand their weaknesses and make necessary improvements. In addition, they can share and exchange feedback and learn from each other's writing in the classroom. More than that, they believe that the classroom environment makes them feel more motivated and accountable when writing. This however contradicts their answers to the second section in which they demonstrate that they are successful autonomous learners of writing outside the classroom in the absence of the teacher.

2.4. Teacher Questionnaire

2.4.1 Description of the Teacher Questionnaire

The teacher questionnaire (See Appendix B) aims to gather information about the teachers' attitudes towards learner autonomy in writing at the English Department, University of Jijel. It consists of twenty questions and is divided into two sections. Section one is devoted to the background information, and section two is about teachers' views about learner autonomy in writing. The first section, entitled "Background Information", is made up of two questions. Q1 attempts to identify the teachers' degrees, then Q2 investigates the experience of teaching writing in years.

The second section, "Teachers' Views about Learner Autonomy in Writing", consists of eighteen questions from (Q3 to Q20). Q3 demonstrates the teacher's evaluation of the student's proficiency in writing. Then, the difficulties that students usually face while learning to write are generated by Q4. Q5 intends to identify the approaches teacher adopt when teaching writing in the classroom. Next, Q6 and Q7 aim to know if the teacher encourages the learners to do writing tasks and activities outside the classroom and how often the teacher assigns these tasks to them. Q8 and Q9 seek to highlight whether the teachers assign writing tasks that motivate the students to work together outside the classroom and if they grant learners the freedom to choose from different writing tasks. After that, Q10 is directed to investigate the teacher's point of view about students' attitudes towards learner autonomy. Q11 targets verifying whether the teacher asks their learners to set up their learning writing goals and to provide the justification for the answer in Q12. From Q13 to Q15 are set to gather information about the teachers' points of view to see if they assist learners to identify their learning styles, encourage them to become teachers and researchers, and use portfolios to improve writing. In addition, Q16 and Q17 investigate whether teachers think that motivated learners are more likely to develop

learner autonomy than those who are not and whether they think that the students take responsibility for their own learning of writing. In Q18 and Q19 teachers are asked about their opinion and if learner autonomy should be fostered in EFL writing classrooms by providing a clear justification. Last but not least, Q20 asks teachers whether they have ever encouraged their students to be autonomous by explaining the notion to them.

2.4.2. Analysis of the Teacher Questionnaire

Section One: Background Information

Question 1: Which academic degree do you hold?

Table 14

Teachers' Qualifications

Master	Magister	PhD	Total
1	0	1	2
50%	0	50%	100%

Table 14 indicates the teachers' qualifications. One teacher (50%) holds a PhD degree while the other teacher (50%) holds a master's degree.

Question 2: How long have you been teaching writing?

Table 15

Teachers' Experience in Teaching Writing

Responses	participants	Percentage
1 – 5 years	1	50%
6 – 10 years	0	0
+ 10 years	1	50%
Total	2	100%

Table 15 demonstrates the teachers' teaching writing, experience. 50% of the participants have taught writing for 1-5 years; whereas, the remainder 50 % have taught writing for more than 10 years.

Section Two: Teachers' View about Learner Autonomy in Writing

Question 3: How would you rate your student's proficiency in writing?

Table 16

Teachers' Estimation of the Students' Proficiency in Writing

Options	Participants	Percentage
Outstanding	0	0%
Above the average	0	0%
Average	1	50%
Below the average	0	0%
Low	1	50%
Total	2	100%

Table 16 represents the students' level of writing from the teachers' perspectives. It shows that 50% of the teachers consider that the students have low proficiency in writing, and 50% of them rate their level as average.

Question 4: What are the difficulties that your students face while learning to write?

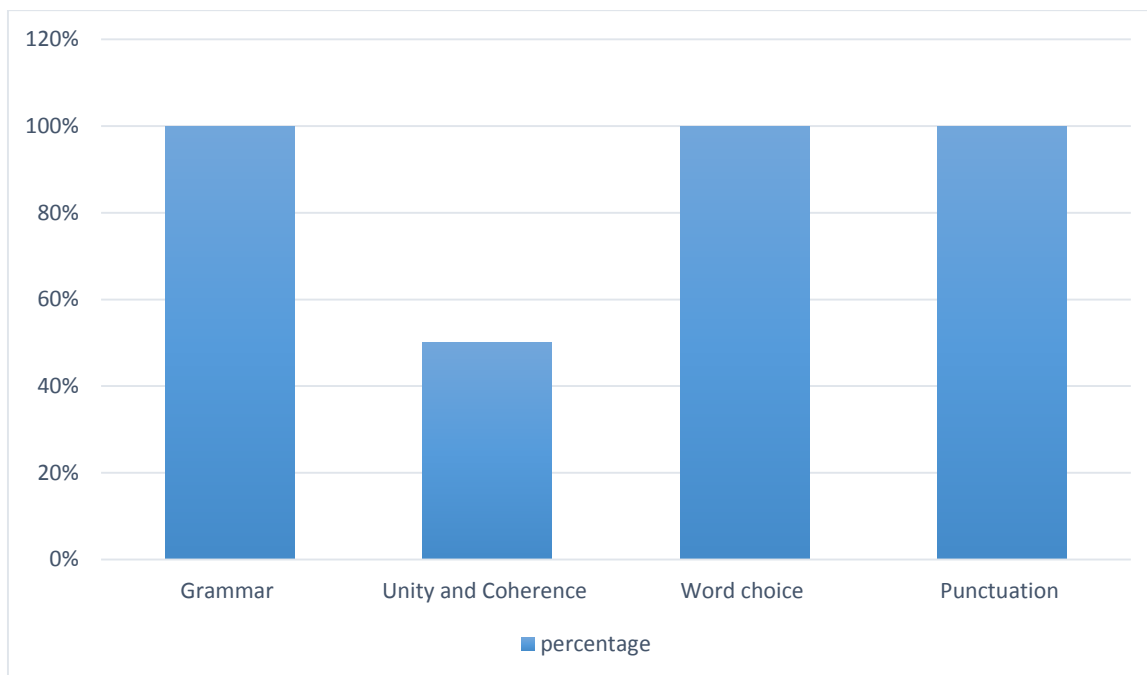


Figure 6. Students' Difficulties in Learning Writing

According to teachers; grammar, word choice, and punctuation are the most difficult aspects for students when learning to write (100%), then unity and coherence (50%)

Question 5: Which approaches do you adopt when teaching writing in the classroom?

Table 17

Teachers Approaches to Writing

Options	Participants	Percentage
The Product Approach	0	0%
The process Approach	1	50%
The Genre Approach	1	50%
Total	2	100%

This question aims to inquire about the strategy and approach that teachers use to teach writing to their students in an educational setting. The results indicate that 50 % of the participants use the process approach and the other 50% use the genre approach.

Q6: Do you encourage your learners to do writing tasks and activities outside the classroom?

Table 18

Teachers' Attempts for Encouraging Learners to Do Writing Tasks

Options	Participants	Percentage
Yes	2	100%
No	0	0%
Total	2	100%

Table 18 displays that 100% of the respondents agree upon the fact that they encourage their learners to do so.

Question 7: If yes, how often do you assign these tasks to them?

Table 19

Frequency of Assigning Writing Tasks

Options	Participants	Percentage
Always	1	50%
Often	1	50%
Sometimes	0	0%
Rarely	0	0%
Total	2	100%

Table 19 indicates that 50 % of the participants always assign these tasks to the learners while 50% choose often.

Question 8: Do you assign writing tasks that motivate your students to work together outside the classroom?

Table 20

Teachers' Assignment of Motivational Coperative Writing Tasks

Options	Participants	Percentage
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Yes	0	0%
No	2	100%
Total	2	100%

Table 20 presents the respondents' answers about whether they assign writing tasks to motivate students to work in collaboration outside the classroom; the results show that 100% of the participant do not assign these tasks.

Question 9: Do you grant your students freedom to choose from different writing tasks?

Table 21

Students' Freedom to Choose Their Task

Options	Participants	Percentage
Yes	0	0%
No	2	100%
Total	2	100%

Table 21 demonstrates that 100% of the participants do not grant the freedom for their learners to choose from different writing tasks.

Question 10: Do you think your students' attitude towards learner autonomy is:

Negative, Positive, or apathetic

Table 22

Students' Attitude toward Learner Autonomy

Options	Participants	Percentage
Negative	1	50%

Positive	0	0%
Apathetic	1	50%
Total	2	100%

The aim of this question is to know the perception and opinion of teachers and understand their perspective on how their students approach and embrace the concept of learner autonomy in their learning journey. The results show that 50 % of the respondents think that the students have negative attitudes while 50 % think they are apathetic.

Question 11: Do you ask your learners to set up their learning goals?

Table 23

Teachers' Encouragement of Learners' Establishment of Learning Goals

Options	Participants	Percentage
Yes	1	50%
No	1	50%
Total	2	100%

The results show that 50 % of the teachers ask their learners to set up their learning goals; whereas, 50 % of the teacher do not ask learners to do so.

Question 12: Would you please justify your answer?

The teachers do ask learners to set up their learning goals because they think that it helps them get involved in their learning process, in addition, it a sense of achievement as they get more responsible towards meeting these goals. In contrast, teachers who do not ask learners to do so prefer to set up them by themselves.

Question 13: Do you assist your learners in identifying their preferred learning styles in writing?

Table 24

Teachers' Assistance in Identifying Learners' Preferred Learning Styles

Options	Participants	Percentage
Yes	1	50%
No	1	50%
Total	2	100%

Table 24 shows that 50 % of the respondents do assist learners in identifying their preferred learning styles in writing, while 50 % do not.

Question 14: Do you encourage your students to become teachers and researchers?

Table 25

Encouraging Students to Become Teachers and Researchers

Options	Participants	Percentage
Yes	2	100%
No	0	0%
Total	2	100%

Table 25 displays that 100 % of the respondents agree upon the fact that they encourage their students to become teachers and researchers.

Q15: Do you encourage your students to use portfolios to improve their writing?

Table 26

Encouraging Students to Use Portfolios to Improve Writing

Options	Participants	Percentage
Yes	0	0%

No	2	100%
Total	2	100%

Table 26 illustrates that 100% of the participants agree that they do not encourage their students to use portfolios to improve their writing.

Q16: Do you think that motivated learners are more likely to develop learner autonomy than those who are not?

Table 27

The Potential of Motivated Learners to Develop Learner Autonomy

Options	Participants	Percentage
Yes	1	50%
No	1	50%
Total	2	100%

The aim of this question is to understand the teachers' beliefs with respect to the role of motivation in fostering learner autonomy and to check out whether motivated learners are more inclined to take initiative, set goals, seek resources, and engage in learner autonomy compared to learners who lack motivation. The results show that 50% of the respondent agree with this statement while 50% are against it.

Q17: Do you think that your students take responsibility for their own learning of writing?

Table 28

Student's Responsibility for their Own Learning of Writing

Options	Participants	Percentage
Yes	1	50%
No	1	50%
Total	2	100%

The responses of the teachers show that 50% of them think that students take responsibility for their own learning. In contrast, 50% disagree.

Q18: Do you believe that learner autonomy should be fostered in the EFL writing classroom?

Table 29

Teachers' Attitudes toward Fostering Learner Autonomy

Options	Participants	Percentages
Yes	2	100%
No	0	0%
Total	2	100%

Table 29 displays that 100% of the respondents agree upon the fact that learner autonomy should be fostered in the EFL writing classroom.

Q19: Would you please justify your answer?

The teachers believe that learner autonomy should be fostered in the EFL writing classroom considering that learner autonomy improves the overall level of the learners as they are active members of the learning process. Additionally, self-reliance pushes the learner to work harder, it engraves knowledge better than teacher autonomy does.

Q20: Have you ever encouraged your students to be autonomous through the notion to them?

Table 30

Teachers' Attitudes towards Learner Autonomy

Options	Participants	Percentage
Yes	2	100%
No	0	0%
Total	2	100%

Table 30 shows that 100% of the respondent agree on the fact that they encourage their students to be autonomous by providing a detailed or clear explanation of the concept of “Autonomy” to them.

2.4.3. Discussion of Teacher Questionnaire Results

The data provided and analyzed from the teacher questionnaire provided some insights with regard to learner autonomy and its effectiveness in enhancing students' writing. Third-year writing teachers hold PhD and Master's degrees and they have a long experience in teaching writing. This means that their opinion about learner autonomy in writing is based on both their high qualification and their experience. The teachers shared their views about their student's proficiency in writing and thought that it is weak. They also mentioned that the writing difficulties that the majority of learners struggle with are grammar, word choice, and punctuation. Teachers stated that they do adopt the process and genre approach when teaching writing in the classroom and do motivate and encourage their learners to do writing activities outside the classroom. In addition, they stated that students' attitudes towards learner autonomy are negative the reason why they strongly believe it should be fostered in the EFL writing classrooms. Thus, they do encourage students to become teachers and researchers. One of the teachers does assist her learners to identify their learning styles in writing as she believes that her students should take responsibility for their own learning of writing; whereas, the other one set them by himself. Finally, they both believe that learner autonomy improves the student's level of writing and that self-reliance pushes the learner to work harder, which engraves knowledge better than reliance on the teacher; the reason why teachers encourage their learners to be autonomous.

2.5. Discussion of the Overall Results

The results from the student and the teacher questionnaires, which were administered to third-year EFL students and their teachers of writing at the English Department,

University of Jijel, to investigate their views on learner autonomy in writing helped us to know that both students and teachers have positive attitudes towards learner autonomy in writing. The gathered data revealed that both students and teachers agreed on the fact that learner autonomy is important to learn writing and it should be fostered in the EFL writing classrooms.

Accordingly, the findings answered the research questions. Almost all of the EFL students and teachers hold positive attitudes towards learner autonomy in writing. However this does not mean that the students are autonomous learners in the department of English outside the classroom. The reason why there are some shortcomings despite the fact of holding positive attitudes towards learner autonomy. The teachers do not assign tasks that motivate learners to work in groups outside the classroom, where working in groups is crucial and essential to encourage active learning and develop critical thinking, communication and the students' skills. Moreover, the teachers of writing do not encourage their students to use portfolios to improve their writing, especially that using portfolios provide students with the opportunity for self-reflection and a great starting point of setting goals. Another shortcoming is that teachers do not grant their students freedom to choose from different writing tasks, while the students enjoy writing about their interest topics. The contradictions between students' answers and teachers' views showed a difference in rating the writing level, where teachers believe that the students have a poor level and in contrast to that, the students believe they have a good level. Here, the students are not aware that they even have a poor level in writing. Also, teachers do not think that students take responsibility for their own learning while students said they do take responsibility. Besides that, the teachers strongly believe that their students do have negative attitude towards autonomy. To conclude, the students' answers to the statements are not enough to determine whether they are autonomous or not, but it seems that they are

not autonomous learners, especially that the teachers' answers confirm and show that they are not autonomous

2.6. Limitations of the Study

Despite the research study's effectiveness in answering its main questions, it is crucial to highlight some limitations that future researchers may want to be aware of while conducting similar studies. The following challenges experienced by the researchers:

- The difficulty was faced when trying to obtain some important literature and references that are related to learner autonomy in language teaching and learning.
- The unavailability of certain sources such as books which are not found in the central library.
- The questionnaire was provided in the penultimate week of the second semester and it was not easy to contact third-year students of English. In addition, they did not want to answer the open-ended questions, which were required for a complete data analysis.
- The insufficiency of research about learner autonomy in writing at the Department of English besides the unfamiliarity with the concept among the third-year students of English was also a hindrance in the progress of research.

2.8. Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Research

It is hoped that the findings of this study will serve as a resource for the teaching and the learning process of writing at the Department of English and will help to further ameliorate the level of students' writing. Following the analysis of learners' and teachers' perceptions in light of the study's results, the following suggestions are put forward:

For students:

- As a result of their lack of experience, students should write more often.
- Students are highly recommended to rely on themselves to learn writing without the total reliance on their teachers.

- Students are recommended to set clear goals and choose their own strategies to improve their writing.

For teachers:

- Teachers are recommended to advise and support their third-year undergraduate EFL learners to learn writing alone, especially outside the classroom.

- Teachers are recommended to grant their students freedom to choose from different writing tasks to foster autonomy in their writing classes.

Conclusion

The present chapter presented an analysis and interpretation of the results generated by the research instruments used in this study. Two questionnaires administered to a sample of third-year EFL students and two teachers. The study's findings, which were presented in the form of quantitative tables and visual representations, revealed that third-year students and teachers have positive attitudes towards learner autonomy in writing, which should be fostered in EFL writing classrooms due to its importance in improving writing abilities. At the end, of the chapter, the results closed up with a set of pedagogical recommendations for further research.

General Conclusion

A learner must develop productive and receptive skills to fully comprehend a language. For EFL students developing writing as a skill is challenging and it requires much effort to attain the desired level. In addition to the effort they have to exert in the classroom for learning to write well they have to equally learn to write independently and use strategies that enhance their writing abilities outside the classroom

The present study mainly aimed at exploring learner autonomy in writing. There are two chapters in this research study. The first chapter of the research work included the theoretical part, and the second chapter focused on the practical part. The theoretical part aimed to take an overlook into writing and learner autonomy, it provided an overview of academic writing and addressed the definition of writing, its importance, following with the characteristics and the approaches of writing, then, it shed light on the definition of learner autonomy and its origins in language learning. After that, it demonstrated the characteristics of autonomous learners, concluding with the significance of learner autonomy in education and in writing. The practical part on the other hand focused on the

procedures and methods used to collect data about the topic. The research study adopted two printed questionnaires, one distributed to third-year undergraduate students and the other was administered to third-year writing teachers. Additionally, a thorough analysis and discussion were presented in this chapter.

The research study revealed interesting results regarding attitudes and perceptions towards learner autonomy in writing at the Department of English, University of Jijel. The overwhelming majority of students hold positive attitudes towards learner autonomy in writing. They seem that they accept the idea of being autonomous learners. Likewise, teachers believe that learner autonomy in writing should be fostered in the department of English because of the difficulties that the students encounter due to their lack of practice. To sum up, the participants are not autonomous learners, despite the fact that they hold positive attitudes towards learner autonomy.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Student Questionnaire

University of Jijel
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English

Academic year : 2022/2023

Dear students,

You are kindly requested to respond to this questionnaire, which examines students' perceptions of learner autonomy and tests their autonomy in writing. The data gathered will be used in the fieldwork of a master's dissertation in English didactics. Please check the appropriate responses, bearing in mind that your responses will be handled anonymously and the data you possess here will remain completely private.

In advance, thank you for your participation.

Key Definitions :

1. **Learner autonomy** is the ability to take control and responsibility for one's own learning

Section One: Students' Attitudes Towards Learner Autonomy

1. Rate your academic writing skill :

- Poor
Average
Good
Excellent

2. . Do you enjoy writing?

Yes No

• Please justify your answer:

.....
.....
.....
.....

3. Do you find serious difficulties in writing :

Yes No

If yes, are the difficulties faced due to:

- Time constraints
Lack of practice
Lack of support from the teacher

4. Do you completely rely on the knowledge presented in the classroom for your learning of the writing skill?

Yes No

5. If no, what are the other sources do you use?

.....
.....
.....

6. How do you find the knowledge presented by your writing teacher?

Sufficient
Rich
Needs to be enriched
Not Sufficient

7. Apart from doing homework, do you learn writing outside the classroom?

Yes No

• Please justify your answer:

.....
.....
.....
.....

8. If yes, how much time do you spend on writing outside the classroom?

.....

9. Do you prefer writing in the classroom while guided by the teacher or writing out of the classroom alone?

Yes, inside the classroom No, outside the classroom

• Please justify your answer.

.....
.....
.....
.....

10. Do you think that it is important to learn writing in English autonomously?

Yes No

• Please justify your answer.

.....
.....
.....
.....

11. Is it easy for a student to learn English writing autonomously?

Yes No

12. Do you set any goals for developing your writing outside the classroom?

Yes No

13. Do you feel motivated to work on yourself for enhancing your writing skill?

Yes No

- Please justify your answer

.....
.....
.....
.....

14. Do you receive any support to learn writing alone?

Yes No

15. If yes, where does this support come from?

Your teacher

Your parents

Your classmates

Others, please specify

.....
.....
.....

16. Do you think that learner autonomy is important in developing your writing proficiency?

Yes No

17. Please justify your answer.

.....
.....
.....

18. Who do you think is the most important person in learning writing?

The teacher

The student

Both are equally important.

- Please justify your answer

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Section Two: Testing Students' Learner Autonomy in Writing

Please select the responses that best reflect your perspectives using the Linkert scale below. Note that:

- 1. Strongly agree**
- 2. Agree**
- 3. Somewhat agree**
- 4. Somewhat disagree**
- 5. Disagree**
- 6. Strongly disagree**

Statements	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. I take responsibility for my own learning of writing.						
2. I have the ability to choose my own strategy for learning writing.						
3. I am guided by the teacher of writing to identify my own preferred learning styles and strategies to learn writing.						
4. I can adapt my learning methods and preferences to the writing task at hand because I am flexible.						
5. I can spot my writing weaknesses.						
6. I am able to assess my writing and the writing tasks assigned to me.						
7. I am able to remain motivated to learn writing.						
8. I consider teachers more as learning facilitators than just knowledge providers.						
9. I cannot learn without the teacher's supervision.						
10. I can determine my level of writing proficiency thanks to the feedback from my writing teachers.						
11. I am actively engaged in learning writing.						
12. I am good at managing my time effectively to learn writing.						

13. I practice writing outside of the classroom.						
14. I am ready to take risks to learn writing and determined to complete challenging writing tasks.						
15. I am able to think critically when assigned a writing task.						
16. In learning writing I enjoy tasks whereby I can learn on my own.						
17. . I often discuss learning problems with classmates both inside and outside the class.						
18. . I sometimes do assignments which are not obligatory; for example, writing compositions, blogs, letters, etc. ,						
19. I set clear goals to improve my writing.						
20. In the classroom, I am granted the freedom to choose from different writing tasks.						
21. In the classroom, I am encouraged to generate my writing tasks and create new ones.						
22. I am encouraged to teach writing to my classmates.						

Appendix B: Teacher Questionnaire

University of Jijel
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English

Teacher Questionnaire

Learner autonomy has recently gained researchers' attention after being adopted in teaching language skills, specifically writing. The current study examines the attitudes of both learners and teachers towards learner autonomy in writing at the English Department. We would be extremely grateful for your cooperation in providing us with the data we need in our research work by complete this questionnaire.

Thank you in advance!

Section One: Background Information

1. Which academic degree do you hold?

Master Magistère PhD

2. How long have you been teaching writing?

1-5 years 6-10 years +10 years

Section Two: Teachers' Views about Learner Autonomy in Writing

3. How would you rate your student's proficiency in writing?

- Outstanding
- Above the average
- Average
- Below the average
- Low

4. What are the difficulties that your students face while learning to write?

- Grammar
- Unity and coherence
- Word choice
- Punctuation

5. Which approaches do you adopt when teaching writing in the classroom?

- The Product Approach
- The Process Approach
- The Genre Approach

6. Do you encourage your learners to do writing tasks and activities outside the classroom?

Yes No

7. If yes, how often do you assign these tasks to them?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely

8. Do you assign writing tasks that motivate your students to work together outside the classroom?

Yes No

9. Do you grant your students freedom to choose from different writing tasks?

Yes No

10. Do you think your students' attitude towards learner autonomy is?

- Negative
- Positive
- Apathetic

11. Do you ask your learners to set up their learning writing goals?

Yes No

12. Would you please justify your answer?

.....

.....

.....

13. Do you assist your learners in identifying their preferred learning styles in writing?

Yes No

14. Do you encourage your students to become teachers and researchers?

Yes No

15. Do you encourage your students to use portfolios to improve their writing?

Yes No

16. Do you think that motivated learners are more likely to develop learner autonomy than those who are not?

Yes No

17. Do you think that your students take responsibility for their own learning of writing?

Yes No

18. Do you believe that learner autonomy should be fostered in the EFL writing classroom?

Yes No

19. Would you please justify your answer?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

20. Have you ever encouraged your students to be autonomous through explaining the notion to them?

Yes No

Your time and effort are much appreciated!

Résumé

De nombreuses études récentes ont appliqué l'autonomie de l'apprenant à l'enseignement/apprentissage de l'anglais comme étant une langue étrangère, particulièrement au côté « écriture », car cela reste une tâche difficile et stimulante pour les apprenants.

L'objectif principal de notre travail de fin d'étude est d'explorer l'autonomie de l'apprenant en écriture au niveau du département d'anglais, dans l'Université de Jijel. Afin de répondre aux questions de recherche; soixante (60) étudiants de troisième année, ainsi que deux (2) professeurs d'écriture de troisième année, du département d'anglais de l'Université Mohammed Ben Yahia, Jijel, ont été sélectionnés au hasard pour répondre à un questionnaire. Dont, l'hypothèse été que les étudiants et les enseignants ont, les deux, une attitude positive envers l'autonomie de l'apprenant et que les étudiants ne sont pas des apprenants autonomes.

Ce qu'on a obtenu comme résultats des deux questionnaires, montrent que les étudiants du troisième année et les professeurs d'écriture ont une attitude positive envers l'autonomie de l'apprenant. Notamment, les conclusions des réponses des participants montrent plusieurs contradictions dont tombent ces étudiants, lorsqu'ils croient prendre la responsabilité de leur apprentissage, mais ils ne peuvent pas apprendre sans la supervision de l'enseignant. De ce fait, il est donc évident qu'ils ne sont pas des apprenants autonomes.

Il est suggéré que les étudiants doivent compter sur eux-mêmes en apprenant à être autonome, et de fixer des objectifs. En outre, les enseignants devaient être un support pour ces étudiants, les aider à apprendre à écrire seuls, sans la nécessité de leurs supervision.

Les mots clés : Autonomie de l'apprenant, écriture.

ملخص

لا يزال تنفيذ وتعزيز استقلالية المتعلم في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية للتدريس / التعلم وخاصة في الكتابة مصب اهتمام العديد من المعلمين والباحثين في اللغة لمدى أهميتها وفوائدها. أجريت الدراسة الحالية بهدف أساسي وهو استكشاف استقلالية المتعلم في الكتابة في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة جيجل. للإجابة على أسئلة البحث، تم اختيار ستين (60) طالبًا في السنة الثالثة بشكل عشوائي لإكمال استبيان يستكشف مواقفهم اتجاه استقلالية المتعلم ويتحقق مما إذا كان هؤلاء الطلاب مستقلين في الكتابة. بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، أعرب اثنان (2) من مدرسي السنة الثالثة للكتابة عن وجهات نظرهم اتجاه استقلالية المتعلم من خلال استبيان المعلم. كشفت النتائج الناتجة عن كلا الاستبيانين أن كلاً من طلاب السنة الثالثة ومعلمي الكتابة لديهم مواقف إيجابية اتجاه استقلالية المتعلم. ومع ذلك ، لم تكن إجابات المشاركين كافية لإثبات أن الطلاب هم متعلمون مستقلون في الكتابة لأن إجاباتهم كشفت عن العديد من التناقضات حول فهمهم للاستقلالية وأن إجاباتهم لا تتوافق مع تصورات معلمهم ووجهات نظرهم. وفقًا لذلك ، يجب التأكد من أن طلاب السنة الثالثة للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة جيجل يفهمون معنى الاستقلالية في الكتابة من خلال الإدراك والممارسة. كما يُطلب من معلمي الكتابة أيضًا مساعدة طلابهم على أن يصبحوا مستقلين.

الكلمات المفتاحية: استقلالية المتعلم ، الكتابة ، مواقف الطلاب ، وجهات نظر المعلمين