

Investigating the Effectiveness of Creative Writing in Language Didactics

التحقيق في فاعلية الكتابة الإبداعية في تعليم اللغة

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Abstract

This research is primarily concerned with presenting Creative Writing as a modern and more intriguing approach to teaching English as a foreign language. In point of fact, the Creative Writing Approach is regarded as a remedy to the difficulty and complexity of the writing task, as well as a means to reinforce and promote students' enthusiasm toward the writing function. On the other hand, it is viewed as a response to sociocultural changes, along with the increased demand for creativity, flexibility, and effective communication skills. Accordingly, the current study is an attempt to investigate the effectiveness of this method in advancing the process of foreign language teaching at Djillali Liabes University's Department of English.

Keywords: Creative Writing, Didactics of English, Writing Skills, Innovative Teaching Approaches, English Language Learning.

ملخص:

يهدف هذا البحث في المقام الأول إلى تقديم الكتابة الإبداعية كنهج حديث وأكثر إثارة للاهتمام لتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. في الواقع، يُنظر إلى منهج الكتابة الإبداعية على أنه علاج لصعوبة مهمة الكتابة وتعقيدها، وكذلك وسيلة لتقوية وتعزيز حماس الطلاب لوظيفة الكتابة. من ناحية أخرى، يُنظر إليه على أنه استجابة للتغيرات الاجتماعية والثقافية، فضلاً عن الطلب المتزايد على الإبداع والمرونة ومهارات الاتصال الفعال. وبناءً على ذلك، فإن الدراسة الحالية هي محاولة للتحقق من فاعلية هذه الطريقة في دفع عملية تدريس اللغات الأجنبية في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة جيلالي ليايس.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الكتابة الإبداعية، تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية، مهارات الكتابة، مناهج التدريس المبتكرة، تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية

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1 Introduction

It is an undeniable fact that having the means and skills to write English as a second or foreign language is increasingly being recognized as a critical competence that should be acquired and developed in order to meet educational, occupational, and personal reasons and objectives, particularly in pursuing careers that require extensive writing. The significance of improving writing skills is demonstrated by how success in the three cycles of the LMD system and academic career is based on learners' subject knowledge. Their academic writing abilities in English are unavoidably the most prevalent means for them to express their level and expertise to professors and supervisors; either by writing essays or dissertations in the target language. Indubitably, EFL students at the English Department of Dillali Liabes University (DLU) of Sidi Bel Abbes (Algeria) are obliged to write explicitly in English in all modules to complete various assignments, mostly examinations, and tests; hence, improving the writing skills is more than necessary for them.

It is a common knowledge that Writing is the most complicated and difficult language skill to learn since it requires continuous practice and instruction. EFL students frequently struggle with developing and producing an adequate piece of writing; their compositions lack cohesiveness and coherence, and many students are unable to utilize proper vocabulary or write with accurate spelling while adhering to correct grammatical norms. In other words, students may have an idea but lack the necessary foreign language abilities and pragmatic knowledge to turn it into an interesting production. However, in the DLU English Department, teachers in charge of the Written Expression and Comprehension course focus on what students have to study following a specific syllabus, but unfortunately, teachers do not rely on a needs analysis when designing the syllabus for this course. They neglect the students' wants and interests, which happen to motivate and hook the learners to learn writing and find it easier and pleasant.

The major approach in this course is Teacher-Centered, and the curriculum and methods are language-based and accuracy-oriented. The primary initiators in class are the instructors, and the focus is on language proficiency and grammatical accuracy. Furthermore, learners are required to write in a formal style. As a result, students are discouraged from expressing themselves via writing, and they find less motivation and pleasure in honing their writing skills. The formality of the educational system for English learners in Algeria comprises conventional drills and planned written activities in which students must adhere to writing models rather than write freely. Consequently, learners prefer to rely on their teacher to give modeled written passages, which stops them from being exploratory, brave, and creative in their writing. In other words, the current educational system limits students' creative drives or impulses for

self-expression. The educational systems for learning writing skills view writing as a subject required for examination purposes rather than acquiring the necessary writing competencies. As a result, at the final stage of education, the teaching of writing in DLU should be reinforced and developed in order to equip and enrich the learners with writing and communicative skills, as well as to provide them with an opportunity for self-discovery and expression of their own original ideas, emotions, and feelings. In this sense, EFL learners will find writing interesting and, to some extent, easier.

Under the concept of globalization and within the modern educational systems as LMD, that is implemented in the Department of English at DLU. To maximize efficiency and improve English teaching and learning, TEFL must be oriented toward cooperative learning and student-centered classrooms. In this regard, new novel approaches and methods are necessary for strengthening language skills and facilitating the learning of difficult skills, particularly writing. Therefore, the introduction of new appealing and modern methods of teaching English is highly recommended and urged in the English Department of DLU. In this regard, this study offers light on Creative Writing in order to meet the expectations and needs of successful writing teaching and learning. It studies the usefulness of creative writing as a powerful and effective English learning instrument, as well as its potential to motivate students to participate in class activities, enjoyably utilize the language, and therefore enhance it. Furthermore, the current study is an action research study conducted in DLU's English Department with a group of third-year license students who were invited to attend a creative writing course for one academic year.

2 Creative Writing Approach

The methods and approaches for teaching the writing skills have never ceased evolving and changing throughout time in order to provide more effective and advantageous teaching and learning processes. The approach under the scope is more contemporary and modern in terms of teaching FL skills in general, and writing skills in particular. The following introduces the principles of creative writing, defines creative writing, and highlights the path of creative writing as an academic field and way of teaching English as a foreign language. Furthermore, the advantages that this method provides to EFL students are investigated.

The approaches to teaching this skill have transitioned from conventional approaches centered on grammar and linguistic forms in which the instructor was central to the teaching and learning process to alternative approaches defined by an emphasis on specific components of writing. For instance, the purpose and reasons for writing, the content, arrangement of the writing composition, or/and the process

undertaken to write productively are all taken into account. Students who were at the center of the learning process learned how to plan, create, revise, and edit their works using these approaches. However, the type of writing, students were required to do *"frequently resulted in a lack of enthusiasm, interest, or efforts, as well as an elevated degree of anxiety and procrastination among students"* (Avramenko et al, 2018:55). According to Mirsha (2016:33), *"the current approaches to teaching writing place little emphasis on self-expression; students learn predetermined essays and responses then reproduce them in the test."* Students lose interest in language learning as a result of these methods, which provide little incentive for unique ideas and critical thinking.

As a result, the Creative Writing Approach was considered as a solution to the problems and complexity of written output, as well as a means to reinforce and promote students' enthusiasm toward the writing task. On the other hand, it was regarded as a response to societal shifts in tandem with the increased demand for creativity, flexibility, and effective communication skills (Ibid: 57). Proponents of this modern approach believed that creative writing was a very effective tool for teaching writing and promoting inspiration, motivation, imagination, and creativity by focusing on students' individuality; students were addressed as individuals with different personalities, motivations, and learning styles. As a result, students' learning experiences become more pleasant, enjoyable, and valuable. According to Avramenko et al (2018:57), this approach was based on the idea that creativity as an innate quality could be beneficial for language learning. She claimed that: *"every individual is capable of being creative under certain conditions, with the teacher having to stimulate this faculty in students through creative activities in the furtherance of language learning"*. As a consequence, creativity and creative writing stimulate learners' aesthetic senses and assist them in engaging in contented writing.

Creative Writing is articulating thoughts and ideas creatively, that requires imagination, critical and creative thinking to express ideas and emotions naturally and spontaneously, not necessarily to be new but expressed in a novel and personal way. Harper (2015:34) defined it as *"the action of writing creatively, informed by the human imagination and the creative and critical understanding of the writer"*. Creativity is referred to as the ability to generate new ideas or to portray ideas in an appealing manner in order to elicit vivid sensations in the readers. Essentially, creative writing is a conversation between the authors and themselves, between the writer and the reader, and between the process of writing and the finished result of writing. *"In fact, the writer does not know what his/her writing will be until the end of the process"* (Maley 1986, cited in Mirsha, 2016:7).

Hyland (2002:6) categorized Creative Writing as any writing that happens outside of daily professional journalistic, academic, or technical forms of writing that focuses on rhetorical patterns and discourse expectations of disciplinary groups (cited in Pelcova, 2015:15). By the same token, Maley claimed that "*Creative Writing is any kind of writing that has an aesthetic or effective intention or purposes rather than a purely pragmatic intention or purposes*". He thought that if a self-individual voice can be heard, any writing has the potential to be innovative (cited in Ruzbeh, 2015:77). Thus, creative writing is the creation of artistic and imaginative writings, rather than just informational, utilitarian, or pragmatic texts, with the primary goal of expressing, sharing ideas with others, making an effect, and establishing a personal touch to be admired or appreciated by the rest.

In essence, Creative Writing was implemented in many national and international curricula, namely in the United States, United Kingdom, South Africa, and other nations worldwide, to develop learners' writing skills under the premise of inspiring students' creativity. To teach EFL, many forms of creative written assignments were incorporated. This writing method was viewed as a chance to inspire students to write and enhance their language at all levels by utilizing their creativity (Akhter, 14). According to Alan Maley (2015), this approach to language learning was founded on some broad facts and generic concepts essential to foster a creative environment in the FL classroom. The former referred to regular practice activities that encourage students to express their creativity; by implementing and exposing students to a variety of inputs, processes, and outputs, appropriate writing skills and techniques are developed, creating a supportive and cooperative environment in the classroom. Furthermore, the latter concentrated on the application of heuristics, which is any approach to problem solving or self-discovery that employs a practical method that is not guaranteed to be optimal, perfect, or rational, but is nonetheless sufficient for reaching an immediate, short-term goal or approximation. Thus, via Creative Writing, the learning of writing was approached from an alternative standpoint (Cited in Avramenko et al, 2018:57). Within this paradigm, Avramenko et al (2018:57) stated that language teachers have three advantages: first, creativity allows humans to transmit ideas in a variety of ways. Second, creative writing covers a variety of themes, broadening learners' horizons while remaining focused on language. Finally, students can discover writing styles by engaging in various creative writing activities.

3 Creative Writing and Writing Instruction

It is worth mentioning that writing instruction is provided in all three educational cycles in Algeria: elementary, secondary, and tertiary. Given that writing has always

been an important aspect of learning a foreign language, it is taught at DLU's English Department in the first, second, and third year Licence through the Written Expression and Comprehension course. This module introduces students to many aspects of writing, such as sentence and paragraph patterns, writing mechanisms, and the development of various types of essays and expository writings appropriate for an academic environment. As a result of this module, students are supposed to compose unbiased and accurate writings. However, the current teaching curriculum does not adequately cover the genuine writing expression process; in which students express themselves, ideas, and opinions. According to the researcher, students learn the academic writing style through this module, but the primary goal of writing is not yet met. Therefore, this study advocates for the inclusion of a Creative Writing course in the English Department's curriculum. It emphasizes its effectiveness in developing EFL learners' writing skills, taking into account that through writing, students should be able to express their ideas, opinions, thoughts, personalities, identities, and interests...etc; and Creative Writing plays the role of the vehicle that provides students with such ability, in addition to effectively learning writing skills.

In terms of writing, Creative Writing is believed to be beneficial and helpful in improving students' writing on two levels: personal and linguistic. The former relates to the reduction of fear and anxiety, as well as increased drive and self-discovery, whilst the latter is intended to improve writing and other language abilities. First, Hinzpeter (2009) contends that in Creative Writing, students write texts based on their interests or imagination and creativity, which enhances their desire and self-confidence, which were previously among the handicaps that made writing difficult. Hence, Creative Writing can be advantageous for learners with low self-esteem since it allows them to progressively recognize and be drawn to their strengths via self-discovery and self-expression. Regarding the second level, according to Kristen (2009), creative writing contains components such as word construction, cohesiveness, and coherence; and because writing a creative composition takes time, students are given the opportunity to come up with techniques and new ideas to build and enhance their writing, as well as resolving any issue that arises while writing their content. In other words, students become more productive, self-directed, and independent learners since they are under less pressure.

Over and above that, as Maley indicates, Creative Writing increases learners' language "*playfulness*," in that learners prefer to play with language to find what is more appropriate, rather than what is proper, and how to expand the vocabulary and structure of language. Maley (2015) defines the latter as "*discriminatory use of vocabulary*," referring to appropriate vocabulary selections. Word choices are important in creative writing because they accentuate or clarify the content. Students

will be obligated to restore and bank a large amount of vocabulary and to use it fully in this regard; hence, they will not only practice the language, but also learn how to utilize it rigorously. Furthermore, Maley (2015) explains that students gained better control over the language's phonological resources, "*students need to pay attention to the cadences and heartbeat of the language*" for their writing to sound right, not just look right, as Creative Writing encourages them to develop this process (Ruzbeh, 2015:78).

Above all, realizing that writing is intrinsically related to reading, many experts believe that integrating reading with creative writing activities improves both abilities in a mutually beneficial way. According to the National Association of Writers in Education in UK, "*improving creative writing requires massive amount of exercises and practices, this suggest that actual writing not just being attentive to lectures dedicated to writing or doing grammar or vocabulary exercise, but achieving success in improving creative writing also requires reading appropriate texts*" (cited in Pawliczak, 2015:348). Students get an understanding of how to produce their own creative writing products by being exposed to various types of literary works. They develop a deeper awareness of the writing process, narrative strategies, and suitable writing styles and forms, as well as insight into other aspects of life that they were previously ignorant of. As a consequence, students will find and gain information, or they may be encouraged to write about it.

On this matter, Harper (2015:75) affirms that exposing students to writers' works is a combination of learning writing techniques and sharing experiences that covered a feature of education, which cannot be accommodated by another course. Similarly, Pelcova (2015) notes that through reading materials, Creative Writing can be considered as an introduction to the world of literature and books, since students may find their way towards this field, and thus become gradually interested in literature, reading and creative writing. This supports Shultz's (2001) argument that "*creative writing was crucial in strengthening reading and writing skills, and it also enables students to explore and perceive their identity from a different perspective through learning a foreign language*"(cited in Anna Avramenko et al, 2018:59). The unique aspect of creative writing provides continued writing skills improvement and more profound, exposure to FL.

From this vantage point, and to explain how the current teaching style, which focuses on expository writing, fails EFL learners to dramatically increase their writing ability. It is essential to go through the characteristics of both expository and creative writing. In his paper, Creative Writing for Students and Teachers, Maley (2012) contrasted the essential qualities of Expository and Creative Writing, reporting that the

former has been taught at universities and in previous cycles. According to him, it is time to incorporate Creative Writing in university teaching curriculum in order to provide students with writing elements that they have not yet experienced. According to Maley, expository writing is based on a set of externally imposed norms and conventions that include grammatical and lexical clarity, fit for certain genre limits, and adherence to stringent writing requirements. Students, he claims, must deal with reasonable, consistent, and impersonal writing while remaining objective.

Creative writing, on the other hand, pushes the limits of the language's rules to see how far it can go before breaking down under the strain of creativity. As a result, this style of writing is said to be useful for sharpening grammatical structures, experimenting with other ways of expressing oneself, and increasing one's vocabulary (Pelcova, 2015:21). In reality, unlike an explanatory text, Creative Writing is founded on intuition, personal observation, imagination, and experiences. *“It has an authentic or effective rather than purely pragmatic intention or purpose”*, as well as, *“it is characters by a playful engagement with language, stretching and testing its rules to the limits in guilt free atmosphere where risk is encouraged”* (Maley 2015:9).

Therefore, with adequate instruction, students may develop their writing skills, imagination, and creative expression, articulate their voices, and express their identities, all while improving expository writing. As a result, Maley and many other academics advocated on including Creative Writing into the TEFL teaching curriculum because of its use in language learning and its role in enhancing students' motivation and responsiveness to writing in general. In this regard, Harper (2015:80) assured that teaching Creative Writing has a lot to give students as a practice course to master writing in a FL, as it greatly contributes to students' overall growth in higher education.

4 Investigating Creative Writing Effectiveness in DLU's English Department

After considering how these principles may be used in the field of TEFL, the researcher concluded that Creative Writing is an ideal instrument and approach to dealing with the aforementioned issue. In reality, Creative Writing is considered for its characteristics that strongly support the LMD system and student-centered learning objectives. Students can debate social issues and evaluate their opinions toward them via Creative Writing assignments. Essentially, education is developed through this method of teaching with the purpose of improving learners as intellectual individuals and valued members of society who can contribute to the resolution of various social issues. Furthermore, Creative Writing allows students to not only study English language skills but also apply them to a greater extent.

Given that there is no Creative Writing module in the curriculum of Algerian Departments of English, and that the learners have little to no advanced training in creative writing, the researcher felt compelled to implement a Creative Writing course for his third year students throughout the 2018/2019 academic year. In order to properly teach this module and support students in their learning, he gathered materials and resources and explored various teaching methods and strategies. Indeed, the Creative Writing course incorporates a variety of activities to provide diversity in learning and a fertile ground for students to significantly and dynamically benefit from renowned sources and techniques of teaching EFL. Ideally, combining multiple activities functions as a strategy to diminish the teachers' centrality of the teaching and learning process. Instead, it enables instructors to embrace their new responsibilities under the Learners-Centered Learning Approach, shifting from information provider to guide and prompter in supporting students' learning processes, in which they become actively involved. Thus, those various activities should be learner-centered and participated individually or collaboratively. Furthermore, using short narratives as an example, this strategy has been proven to be helpful in enabling students to construct a bridge between the social and abstract dimensions and the individually lived, personal dimensions on which they express themselves better.

At last but not least, in order to collect relevant data about the issue, the researcher implemented a Creative Writing course, as well as unstructured classroom observation. The inquirer observed the participants' motivation and attitudes toward creative writing activities, for the sake of examining the benefits of this course in terms of enhancing the learning process and learning experience in general.

5 Research Participants and Informants

Participants in the current study are third-year EFL students at DLU of Sidi Bel abbes. They took part in an action research study that lasted the entire 2018/2019 academic year. The participants are between the ages of 19 and 22 and have comparable knowledge bases. Nonetheless, the most majority are from Sidi Bel Abbes. The researcher invited forty students (20 males and 20 females) to attend a Creative Writing course taught by the researcher once per week. These students expressed great interest and enthusiasm in learning about this course; some of them were already passionate about creative writing; they wrote poems and free passages, while the rest agreed to participate in this study because they believed it would help them develop their writing skills.

It is also worthwhile to mention that the researcher was the teacher of these students in their first and second years at the university as he was in charge of teaching Written and Oral Expression and Comprehension modules. In the light of this, the

investigator has invited forty (40) students to be participants in this study; they were elected randomly not for their mastery of their English language skills, but rather for their willingness and commitment to participate in the action research conducted in this inquiry.

6 Data Collection Procedures and Instruments

The process of obtaining information from all relevant sources in order to solve the research problem, test the hypothesis, and assess the results with the goal of increasing human knowledge is usually referred to as data collection. For this goal, regardless of the subject of study, proper data collecting is critical to maintaining research integrity. The selection of appropriate data collection instruments, which are the major sources of information gathered throughout the research, is a critical aspect in executing a successful study. Given the diversity and uniqueness of research instruments, the fusion or reconciliation of several data gathering instruments ensures the results' trustworthiness, dependability, and authenticity. Thus, in the current study, the investigator has employed two (2) research instruments to target the research problematic from different angles. In doing so, the researcher comes to delve further into the study findings and, as a consequence, to provide richer and more credible results. The investigator used a mixed-methods approach in this study, including case study and action research, as well as two research tools, notably classroom observation and testing (pre and posttests). In an effort to shed more light on the present study, the following section will provide a thoroughly detailed account of each research instrument to enlighten its purpose and significance to this research.

The first instrument of the study is classroom observation that has been undertaken throughout the whole academic year. Observation is incorporated to assist the researcher's efforts of drawing relevant comparisons between what the informants offer (through tests) and what is happening in the classroom during the action research. Indeed, the observation process is widely acknowledged as an excellent research approach for collecting direct, realistic, and trustworthy data on the major issues under inquiry. It allows the investigator to witness the issue closely. Through it, the researcher is immersed in the research setting, and this, in turn, allows him/her to cover the different dimensions of that setting in terms of behaviors, actions and interactions. To be more specific, an unstructured classroom observation was chosen for this study. An unstructured observation allows the researcher to examine events that occur spontaneously over a set period of time, which can then be reported and evaluated. Taylor et al (2008:106) contend that the goal of such observations is to acquire and communicate direct comprehensive information about participant behavior. It is only through the unstructured observation that the researcher analyzes

the difficult circumstances without imposing any structure of study. In this respect, simultaneously the observer has greater latitude in terms of what is noticed, has more flexibility to observe behaviors as well as classroom events.

To recapitulate, classroom observation starts from the beginning of the academic year 2018/2019, with the special class of forty (40) students attending voluntarily the Creative Writing courses. The class is observed during twenty sessions of one hour and half (1h30) per week, through which, the researcher plays the role of an instructor, investigator, an analyst and as well as an evaluator of the teaching and learning situation in the classroom. Hereby, the researcher focuses on the students' feedback and motivation regarding the teaching and learning of Creative Writing and its role in enhancing students' writing skills.

Along with classroom observation, a second form of data collection has been implied which is tests. The inquirer has adopted this method to deal with the before and after research design, also known as pre and post-testing. The latter is valuable for enriching the quality of data gathered from the participants about the issue of the study. The advantage of the test is to pertain axiomatically the measurement of change in participants' skills, achievement, abilities and even pitfalls through a certain period of time, often after implementing a modification or revision of a given procedure. This process can be carried out in different ways; whether through various forms of questions or essays, to mention but a few.

To fulfill the researcher's aspiration of testing the importance of teaching Creative Writing courses at English Department of DLU, for enhancing and boosting the students' writing skills and improving their level of mastery of the English language are the main objectives. The tests are established at the beginning and end of the action research enrolled through the Creative Writing courses taught to forty DLU EFL students during the academic year 2018/2019. Importantly still, the tests are partitioned sequentially into one pretest (at the beginning of the first semester, before engaging with Creative Writing courses), beside one posttest (at the end of the second semester, after dealing with twenty Creative Writing sessions). Accordingly, the pretest is assigned to the participants before the use of interdisciplinary approach to teaching Creative Writing, whereas the posttest is administered afterward. The purpose of these tests is to appraise the inquirer's ability to compare between students' writings with respect to the development of writing competencies. To fulfill this goal, the participants were assigned a home work about writing an informative essay (of less than 2 pages) about the Algerian society. As a matter of fact, the informative essay is selected to allow the investigator to analyze the following criteria: first, their style of writing in terms of: managing the sentences and paragraphs, cohesion and coherence;

second, their writing competencies involved grammar and conjugation patterns of tenses; third, the range and variety of vocabulary implemented in their compositions. Moreover, the rigorousness of their compositions: showing interest and motivation was taken into account. In addition, their personal touch was appreciated, i.e. showing their point of views and perspectives, beside the level of creativity in their compositions and the implication of critical thinking and problem solving skills in their writings.

The endeavor for which the posttest is framed is to examine the likelihood of enhancements in students' learning achievements in terms of the writing skills, and creative writing. In essence, the posttest is designed to compare the learners' written compositions before and after engaging with Creative Writing courses, which would allow the researcher to spot the importance and advantages of teaching and learning Creative Writing compared to the traditional way of teaching the writing skills at the English Department of DLU.

After assisting the participants to learn how to write short stories, a posttest has been administered to diagnose the learning outcome before and after the enrollment of Creative Writing courses. To fulfill this goal, as a homework that they submit a week after, the forty students were asked to finish an introduction of a short story. Through this, on the one hand, participants will have a chance to use their creative and imaginative skills in addition to their problem solving skills. Furthermore, this test is a feedback to the lectures of Creative Writing conducted during the academic year. On the other hand, their compositions will allow the investigator to analyze students' performance and recheck the writing competencies they developed throughout these lectures by examining the same criteria analyzed through the pre-test.

7 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Through the unstructured observation, the researcher plays the role of an instructor, investigator, an analyst as well as an evaluator of the teaching and learning situation in the classroom. The course of 1hr 30 per week during two semesters allowed the investigator to know more about the participants and their attitudes towards Creative Writing activities either from their spontaneous oral answers or from their writings. Moreover, concerning their motivation towards Creative Writing, students were interested in writing creative stories and were motivated to share them in the classroom; they even asked the teacher for a small competition about the best creative story. Students were engaged in this kind of activity for the reason that creative writing enabled them to express themselves as they are not limited with the topic or the style. To it, Creative Writing allowed them to share their imagination and creativity. As

noticed in the classroom, students generated lengthier compositions compared to expository writing products, which means that they practiced the writing skills more than through expository writings, where their ideas are limited. Moreover, the range of vocabulary used in this type of writing is extensive and considerable as they were engaged in describing details or tackle various areas and domains.

According to the test results, the participants have overcome, to a large extent, various writing terms that they struggled with prior to taking the Creative Writing course, they have developed their writings to produce more structured and coherent compositions with correct conjugating of tenses, and spelling mistakes in their texts have significantly decreased. Furthermore, the participants were able to extend their word stock since they employed a wide range of language and avoided repetition, which was common in the pre-test essays. In fact, EFL students are more excited and have favorable attitudes toward the creative writing assignment; they were inspired to share their lengthy works, which were full of intriguing ideas and thoughts, with their peers. They were also eager to share and argue their points of view both within and outside of the classroom. Unleashing the participants' creativity and imagination enables them to write differentiated, intriguing, unique, and unpredictable texts through which they exercise and boost their critical thinking and problem solving skills.

As a result, based on the examined criteria and compared to the pre-test findings, the Creative Writing course not only improves students' writing skills, but also increases their energy and motivation to learn this skill; it evolves them from students who are essentially completing a task to individuals who are keen to share their thoughts, points of view and perspectives in a more creative and imaginative manner. The fundamentals of writing that students gain in the Written Expression and Comprehension modules assist and permit them to go further in their writing practice, preparing them to manage the recommended module of Creative Writing. The latter switches the emphasis from teaching merely the writing skill to teaching students how to write and express their thoughts, imagination, and points of view in a creative way, making them not only better language learners but also better thinkers and intellectuals. In a nutshell, research participants shown remarkable enthusiasm for creative writing assignments, which have been proved to be useful in teaching writing skills alongside other language skills, as well as increasing learners' critical thinking, imaginative and problem-solving skills.

8. Conclusion

Along with the study's findings, many language teaching experts, such as Maley, Harper, Hyland, and Mirsha, agree that creative writing, which is a type of writing that expresses, thoughts, and ideas in an imaginative way, is a very effective tool of teaching EFL, as well as a versatile tool that offers a lot of potential to engage and develop learning in various ways. It increases writing abilities, improves all language skills and develops significant personal skills; in other words, the value of creative writing is molded in the personal and linguistic growth of learners who fulfill the principles of centered learning under the LMD system. In fact, adopting Creative Writing in English classes allows students to not only study but also practice writing. On the one hand, exposing students to a variety of literary works teaches them the components, structures, kinds, and styles of writing; they also learn how to present compositions, construct paragraphs, and draw conclusions. They become also aware of the importance of cohesion and consistency, as well as punctuation, grammar, and writing mechanisms. They also learn a wide range of language and explore the functions and benefits of writing. In this regard, the distinctive characteristic of Creative Writing promotes ongoing writing skill improvement and ensures deeper exposure to EFL.

Admittedly, unlike expository writing, creative writing allows students to express themselves since they have a variety of themes to write about. According to the findings of the action research, students develop longer compositions than expository writing products, implying that they exercise writing skills more than in explanatory writings where their ideas are constrained. Furthermore, the vocabulary utilized in this form of writing is extensive and noteworthy, as they participate in explaining details or cover a wide variety of topics and domains. Creative Writing is beneficial for students at different levels, as it fosters their artistic expression, explores the functions and values of writing, clarifies thinking, stimulates their imagination, helps students in their search for identity and more importantly enables them to learn reading and writing. To put it another way, creative writing sharpens students' thinking and helps them to explore diverse areas of life, comprehend the world around them, and eventually discover themselves and identities, increasing their self-confidence and self-esteem.

In essence, as they deal with diverse genres of writing, different styles of writing, and gain information, teachers of this course increase their language abilities as well. Furthermore, they are exposed to a significant quantity of language; as a result, the sense of learning among teachers is constantly reinforced. Additionally, creative writing activities allow teachers to get to know their students better, to learn about their interests, needs, and weaknesses. As a result, they may exert the proper approach of teaching their students under student-centered learning.

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