

# Journal of Communication and Cultural Trends (JCCT)

Volume 4 Issue 1, Spring 2022

ISSN(P): 2706-9141 ISSN(E): 2706-915X

Homepage: <https://journals.umt.edu.pk/index.php/jcct/Home>



Article QR



**Title:** Learner Autonomy: Effectiveness and Challenges at Intermediate Level in Punjab, Pakistan

**Author (s):** Muhammad Rizwan Ilyas<sup>1</sup>, Sadia Azam<sup>2</sup>


**Affiliation (s):** <sup>1</sup>Punjab School Education Department, Sialkot, Pakistan  
<sup>2</sup>English Department at Aspire Group of Colleges, Sialkot, Pakistan

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.32350/jcct.41.03>

**History:** Received: November 3, 2021, Revised: March 15, 2022, Accepted: March 18, 2022

**Citation:** Ilyas, M. R., & Azam, S. (2022). Learner autonomy: Effectiveness and challenges at intermediate level in Punjab, Pakistan. *Journal of Communication and Cultural Trends*, 4(1), 00–00.  
<https://doi.org/10.32350/jcct.41.03>

**Copyright:** © The Authors

**Licensing:**  This article is open access and is distributed under the terms of [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

**Conflict of Interest:** Author(s) declared no conflict of interest



A publication of  
Department of Linguistics and Communication  
University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan

## **Learner Autonomy: Effectiveness and Challenges at Intermediate Level in Punjab, Pakistan**

Muhammad Rizwan Ilyas<sup>1\*</sup> and Sadia Azam<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Punjab School Education Department, Sialkot, Pakistan

<sup>2</sup>English Department at Aspire Group of Colleges, Sialkot, Pakistan

### **Abstract**

The effectiveness of learner autonomy with respect to second language acquisition has been investigated by various researchers all over the world. Still, it is not given adequate attention in Pakistan, where language proficiency is mostly a matter of developing expertise in writing skills. The education system in Pakistan is highly teacher-centered. It is based on delivering instructions through traditional methods that compel students to do nothing but merely listen to the lecture, passively. Later on, they are evaluated solely on the basis of their performance in the written exam. This research aims to evaluate the effectiveness and challenges of introducing learner autonomy in developing writing skills at intermediate level in ESL classrooms in Punjab, Pakistan. Learner autonomy works in three major areas. Firstly, it aims at enhancing the effectiveness of learning in short- and long-term language learning contexts. Secondly, it lowers the barriers between language learners and learning contexts. Thirdly, it transforms language learners into useful and effective individuals. The research sample comprised the intermediate students of Sialkot district. For the current study, a total of 120 female students of intermediate were selected. Experimental research design was used. The students were divided into two groups: control and experimental. Control group was taught the lecture using the existing teacher-centered approach. Experimental group was taught through autonomous activities using student-centered approach in order to develop learner autonomy in them. Lesson plans were designed and paired sample t-test was employed for the analysis of pre-tests and post-tests. The results revealed that the students of control group, who were taught by the lecture method, showed better results in their post-tests. On the contrary, students of experimental group, who were taught using a

---

\*Corresponding Author: [rizwanilyas786@gmail.com](mailto:rizwanilyas786@gmail.com)

student-centered approach to develop learner autonomy, showed a remarkably small growth in their post-tests. The researchers observed that there was relatively low harmony and collaboration in between students and teachers, while pursuing for learner autonomy. They also conducted participants' observations and interviews for data triangulation. They observed that most of the teachers do not want to promote learner autonomy and remain stuck with the traditional lecture method in order to ensure the success of the participants in written examination. The current research will help the teachers and students to remove the barriers and promote learner autonomy for the real acquisition of the English language.

**Keywords:** ESL, lecture method, learner autonomy, student-centered approach

## Introduction

The Grammar Translation Method used to be quite popular in language teaching and learning. Teachers had a lot of obligations in language teaching under the impact of this system. They played the most important roles in the classrooms and students were respectful towards their facilitators'. They carried the learned skills and techniques from their facilitators to focus more on their own growth They carried out the instructions of their lecturers. Teachers were the givers of information, while students were the receivers. These learners played a passive role in the language acquisition process, being fully reliant on their teachers they lacked initiative. The emphasis in the classroom was on the learning outcome and on the teacher. In such classes, learning was extremely tedious.

According to Wu (2008), with language teaching becoming increasingly communicative, traditional classroom teaching is facing a significant challenge and is being replaced by learner-centered teaching. The concept of learner autonomy emerged from the learner-centered approach in EFL. One of the earliest proponents of autonomy in language education, Holec (1979; as cited in Wu, 2008 ), defined it as the "capacity to take care of one's own learning." Despite of the fact that different scholars have various other interpretations of this phrase, it appears to be widely acknowledged. In both general education and language learning, a popular argument for supporting student autonomy is that autonomous learners become highly motivated, and that autonomy leads to better and more successful work. This highly

learner driven learning will be more interactive, creative, and autonomous. That is, a highly driven learner will take more initiative and be more creative in their learning, making classroom instruction more helpful.

It is self-evident that writing is a tool for learners to record and reformulate knowledge and to develop ideas. It can also be a vehicle for self-discovery, creation, and expression. Wade (1995; as cited in Al-Hazmi, 2006) argues that, writing is an important component of critical thinking teaching since it encourages more self-reflection and broadening of perspectives than uttered speech. Appropriate written projects, she argues, can encourage classroom writers to naturally improve their active learning. Writing is an approach particularly, a process of self-critical activity. By its very nature, writing, particularly the process approach, is a self-critical activity. It encourages students to reflect on their understanding and express their feelings about what they know, what they're doing, what they're dealing with, and how they're learning (White & McGovern, 1994).

Previously, the beacon of knowledge was believed to be the teachers where teachers were in authority. It was quite similar to a banking system of education. As asserted by Freire (1974), the process of learning was observed as passive. At that time, there were many instructional methods which were beneficial for the self-sufficient learning. Over a span of time, various instructional methods were available to be benefited from in that time. For example, in the field of language teaching, grammar translation method got some attention. In grammar-translation method, according to its proponents, the instructor was seen as an authority from whom the knowledge dissipates to the learners in a particular fashion.

However, with time, the grammar translation method was switched to the language learning approaches that focused more on communication. Presently, the authoritative role in learning has been leveled with a significant focus on the learner, which was not the case earlier. The center of attention in the concurrent approaches is the learner. Hence, the language learning mechanism is now in a changed shape where every strategy eventually leads towards the learners (Wu, 2008). The concept of problem posing education (Freire, 1974) and communication-oriented classroom (Wu, 2008) induced learner's autonomy.

The present study has proceeded in lines with the findings and suggestions of Borg and Al- Busaidi (2012) who recommended very important ways to promote learner autonomy. Such ways are listed below as:

1. Teacher and student's discussion and interaction about autonomy
2. Encouragement by the teachers for autonomous activities and behaviours
3. Try to involve language learners in autonomous reflection on learning
4. Promotion of autonomy inside a class
5. Managing learner autonomy outside the classroom

The study of Borg & Al-Busaidi (2012) was highly rich in learner autonomy and offered correct approaches to enhance autonomy in language learning and teaching methods. The present research study aims to fill the gap by doing an experimental research in an ESL classroom. This study further investigates the implementation of learner autonomy in an ESL classroom by analyzing the practices and writing skills in an ESL context. The current study attempted to bridge the gap by doing empirical research in an ESL classroom with practicing learner autonomy.

### **Statement of Problem**

In Pakistan, knowledge is passively transferred to learners (Yasmin & Sohail, 2017). In teacher-centered contexts, this idea of learner autonomy is difficult to practice. So, there is a need to investigate learner autonomy in the ESL context of Pakistan. The present research focuses on implementation of the learner autonomy for developing writing skills in a traditional ESL context.

### **Research Objectives**

The objectives of the present study are:

1. To explore the effectiveness of learner autonomy in developing writing skills in ESL class at Inter level.
2. To investigate the challenges of ESL learners while implementing learner autonomy at Inter level.

### **Research Questions**

The present study is based on the following research questions:

1. What is the effectiveness of learner autonomy in developing writing skills in an ESL class at Inter level?
2. What are the responses of ESL learners towards learner autonomy regarding writing skills at Inter level?

### **Significance and Rationale of the Study**

The current study is relevant in terms of the pedagogical process of learner autonomy in an ESL classroom. Introducing Learner autonomy is a relatively new domain in the ESL context, especially at an intermediate level in Pakistan. Learners are accustomed to be in rote learning and pouring written expression on the folio. Though the introduction of learner autonomy is challenging, however, in the long run, induction of autonomous language learning methodologies would be effective not only in building writing skills but also in the overall development of English language skills at the Inter level. Learners would encounter activities such as in developing logical reasoning, reflection, or collaborative faculties.

This study will assist ESL and EFL teachers to focus on challenging areas in order to promote learner autonomy for language learning especially for writing proficiency. This research may also be helpful for the policy makers and curriculum developers to make autonomous ESL text books that will be effective to promote learner autonomy among learners.

The present research has a special focus to highlight the importance and effectiveness of problem-posing education (Freire, [1974](#)) to develop language skills autonomously. Its implications will enable students to be more reflective and interdependent.

Cooperative language learning and peer language assessment will be beneficial for both the language learners and language teachers. It is expected that this research will functionalize autonomous ways of ESL teaching and learning.

The purpose of this study was to break the chain of teacher imposing knowledge, to test the application of learner autonomy in the light of Freier's ([2013](#)) critical pedagogy, problem- posing education, and to give learners freedom in organizing and assessing their own writing tasks for the

development of writing proficiency effectively in learning of English as a second language.

### Review of Literature

The enactment of learner autonomy (LA) as a significant educational goal is deeply in line with modern language education. The importance and necessity of autonomy are rooted in the growing need to improve a well-equipped learning society that is ready to adapt to change. Learners must be self-directed, autonomous, and capable of using personal learning strategies in order to achieve this goal. The LA idea aims to balance authority in the classroom, respect learners' right to express their opinions on the learning process and to provide a variety of learning materials. In reality, it provides the language learning process with a democratic element by allowing students to participate in the planning, monitoring, and assessment of their own learning (Tajmirriahi & Rezvani, [2021](#)).

Many attempts have been made to define and develop the concept of learner autonomy in ESL contexts, yet the term has so many different interpretations and levels of meaning. It is a difficult concept to grasp and define because it has a wide range of meanings, each of which has been explained differently by researchers in order to construct the concept of learner autonomy as an individual being who, according to the most widely accepted definition of learner autonomy, has the ability to direct his or her own learning. A self-directed learner is one who has the ability to act in any learning setting' (Holec, [1979](#)). Van Lier ([1996](#)) is in the view that to have individualized language learning, autonomous learners must be forced to make critical decisions about what, how, and when to study. Most scholars have developed their own definition and explanation of learner autonomy in order to pursue language acquisition and carry out their research. The learner who is directly or indirectly responsible for his or her own individual and self-learning falls under the notion of an autonomous learner.

Little ([1995](#)) explains learner autonomy with the following framework:

- Formatting their self-learning outcomes
- Uniqueness and individual development for realization
- Formation of study objectives and layout
- Identification and adopting the meaningful ways

- Self-evaluation of learning goals

Language learner autonomy has long been a major concern in terms of language management and self-direction. Many conversations have concluded that teachers must seek for and speed the transition from teacher-centered to self-directed learning, which distinguishes an independent learner from a non-autonomous learner (Little, [1995](#)). Learner autonomy was defined by Holec ([1979](#)) in terms of learner self-direction and management of the learning and educational setting.

As a result of the definitions and explanations offered, it is evident that learner autonomy is concerned with accepting, using, and promoting the target language independently. Some people consider learner autonomy to be an inborn ability to deal with language, while others believe it has roots in academics and behaviour. Culture, personal, statutory, institutional, and many other elements all have an impact on . tThe heart of all autonomy concepts, however, is that they promote self-promotion at all levels, and learner autonomy entails lifelong learning.

### **Learner Autonomy and English Writing Skill**

Writing facilitates not just the generation of ideas in the mind of learners but also their recording and reformulation. It also leads to the development of writing an expression as well as the formation of an identity. When compared to oral expressions, the writing process, as indicated by Wade ([1995](#)), polishes the talent of critical thinking and fosters self-reflection in broader dimensions.

With regard to writing ability in English language acquisition, learner autonomy was determined to be critical (Bagheri & Aeen, [2011](#)). Cakici ([2017](#)) believes that English language learners must learn four skills that in writing are often overlooked and that English writing competence can be fostered through cultivating learner autonomy in language classes. Cakici ([2017](#)) emphasized the importance of the teacher's role in the development of learner autonomy, describing teacher mentoring as a foundation pillar in encouraging learner autonomy.

The attitudes of a Pakistani university ESL students about learning English were explored by Badshah et al., ([2017](#)) who discovered that learner autonomy has no value in ESL courses. Yasmin & Sohail ([2017](#)) suggested,



conducting an advanced and empirical classroom analysis to determine the relationship between learners and learner autonomy in ESL settings, as well as instructor and ESL student perceptions and practices at the college level.

Using a learner-centered approach, this study looked into EFL learners' readiness in terms of the factors that contribute to LA in writing, as well as the influence of ASC and academic accomplishment. The results of the autonomy questionnaire and the focus group interview provide sufficient evidence to infer that, although demonstrating acceptable levels of autonomy in their attitudes toward writing, EFL university students are not completely prepared to apply writing techniques and skills (Tajmirriahi & Rezvani, [2021](#)).

Based on the findings and discussion above, it is clear that fostering and increasing learners' writing autonomy is critical. As a result, ESL lecturers must be familiar with tactics that promote learner autonomy. There are two ways that can be used to increase student autonomy. To begin with, computer-assisted language learning (CALL) has the potential to make education more empowering for individual students. Learners can take an active role in determining what they learn, as well as how and when they learn it. Second, learner-centered instruction in the English for Written Communication (EWBC) course will aid them in resolving any difficulties they encounter during their studies (Sidupa, [2016](#)).

Most English language teachers in Pakistan employ the lecture style and avoid student-centered approaches, which is a major impediment to the development and promotion of learner autonomy (Yasmin & Sohail, [2017](#)). However, no experimental study in Pakistan has looked into the impact of establishing learner autonomy on the development of intermediate ESL learners' writing skills.

As a result, this study was done to determine the extent to which learner autonomy is effective inside the classroom, particularly in terms of the development of English writing skills.

### **Activities that Contribute Towards Language Learner Autonomy**

This action research on the effectiveness and promotion of learner autonomy has focused on many important autonomous activities that may develop an attitude toward autonomous language learning in the view of second language learning and some of the very effective autonomous

activities have been discussed followed. Peer assessment & learner self-assessment along with homework (individualized) are the two very important activities that helped a lot in the promotion of inside and outside classroom autonomy during the course of this research.

- Peer assessment & learner self-assessment.
- Home work (individualize)

## **Research Methodology**

### **Research Design**

The present research has followed mixed method approach. Experimental research design has been used for analyzing the effectiveness of learner autonomy as strategy of teaching writing at intermediate level. Pre-test and post-test was conducted for comparison between autonomous and non-autonomous groups' performance. For triangulation of results interviews of the ESL learners at Inter level were conducted.

### **Participants**

One hundred and twenty female English as Second Language (ESL) learners were selected from the population of intermediate, district Sialkot, Punjab. Sample consisted of 120 participants were selected randomly and were divided into two groups in equal numbers, 60 in each group, respectively. One group was treated as a controlled group and other as an experimental group. The controlled group was non-autonomous and taught under the existing teaching method, under the authoritative influence of a teacher, and the experimental group was an autonomous group that was entertained with learner autonomy as a teaching strategy where the learner was given prime importance.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Learner Autonomy and Freire's (1974) Critical Pedagogy provides the basis for construction and promotion of learner autonomy. Critical Pedagogy, proposed by Freire (1974) showed following basis for learner autonomy:

- Teaching is much more than mere transmitting knowledge. Teacher's role is crucial to work as oppression liberators.

- Language learning is a constructivist process and depends on meaningful interaction and context.
- Banking system of education is a great barrier to autonomous learning.
- An autonomous learner is not one who learns independently rather he/she learns in the interest and benefit of his/her peers and society.
- Nicolaides & Fernandes (2008) related LLA to the social context and interaction.
- Auerbach (2000) on “participatory pedagogy”. She focused on the importance of social contexts in learning and specially in learning a language or L2.

### **Instrument**

Researchers used Composition writing test as instrument of data collection and writing rating scale is used in measurement of written tests performance.

### **Writing Composition**

Two writing composition tests designed under the supervision of expert by following the standards of test design given in Brown (2004). Both tests were constructed on the same structure; one was used as a pre-test for both groups and the other was used as a post-test for both, controlled and experimental groups. Writing composition test items have been selected in accordance with board evaluation criteria. Writing items include summarizing text, paragraph writing, and essay writing. Summary writing and paragraph writing lead toward essay writing. Participants had fifty minutes to write any of the writing tests. In pre-test and post-test participants performance was evaluated on essay writing.

### **The Writing Rating Scale**

Khabiri (2003; as cited in Bagheri & Aeen, 2011) designed ‘Writing Scoring Profile’ for rating writing tests. This rating scale has five components namely content, rhetorical features, cohesion, vocabulary and sentence structure. The researchers selected cohesion, content, and sentence structure and measured pre-test and post-test on Khabiri’s (2003) writing scale.

### **Methodology**

One hundred and twenty female learners of second year, studying in local college, were selected randomly and divided into autonomous and non-autonomous group. Writing composition task of essay writing was initially administered among both groups to be compared with the performance of post-test. For objective rating of the performance of autonomous and non-autonomous group writing scoring profile has been used.

Then, study groups relieved treatments. They received treatments for six weeks. Time allotted for class was fifty minutes. Each group consisted of sixty participants. Autonomous group entertained liberty in the selection of writing tasks (paragraph writing, summarizing, or essay writing), choosing writing topics, setting goals and making outline of the sub-areas to discuss under the selected topic and assessment of their own production. Autonomous group was further sub-divided into groups of six participants in each. In course of experiment, they worked in library. They discussed the assigned task, selected material from the library and wrote the composition within thirty minutes. Then, for the rest of the time, they assessed each other's writing composition and highlighted the mistakes and corrected each other. In the task of assessment, for the first ten minutes they did peer evaluation then the performance sheet of each group was randomly distributed between groups for counter assessment. In this way, researchers made sure that they offered autonomy. At the last of every session teacher researcher collected papers and assessed them.

Non- autonomous group treated traditionally where they were given and they had to memorize the content from the fixed expressions of books under the supervision of authority. They were not allowed to make a choice from a variety of topics and material and they worked individually (rote learning and memorization). After memorization, they produced text and got them checked by the teacher. In the traditional setting, a teacher is responsible for highlighting and correcting errors and mistakes.

The same process was reversed and post-test administered to compute results for analysis. The non-autonomous group worked in supervision while the autonomous group independently selected the topic and content of essay writing and produced output and conducted an autonomous evaluation. For the objective evaluation of the pre-test and post-test

researchers consulted experienced English language Teachers (ELTs) and their assessment scores were processed in SPSS for paired sample t-test.

### Ethical Consideration

This research has been conducted in Govt. Degree College Hajipura and ethical consideration was taken by the principal of the concerned college.

### Results

Experimental study was conducted with pre-test and post-test. During experimentation experimental group (autonomous group) received treatments consisting of writing composition. Writing composition enhanced motivation, confidence, and learner autonomy among participants of autonomous group. In allotted tasks autonomous group had evident autonomy. On the other hand, traditional controlled group participants performed under strict authoritative observation with no choice of freedom at any point.

### Control Group Results

Scores of pre-test and post-test processed in SPSS for results. Paired sample test run to produce result.

**Table 1**

*Paired Samples Test of the control group.*

|                              | Paired Differences |                |                 |  | T      | Df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|--|--------|----|-----------------|
|                              | Mean               | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference<br>Lower Upper |        |    |                 |
| Pair 1<br>pretest – posttest | -.86667            | 4.87980        | .62998          | -2.12725 .39392  | -1.376 | 59 | .174            |

Table 1 indicated that the results of the paired sample test are not significant at the 0.05 level of significance. Significant (2-tailed) value for pre-test and post-test of controlled group is  $.174 > 0.05$  at the level of significance. Results showed that there was no difference in the performance of the controlled group, studying under the influence of traditional teacher centered classroom where focus was on memorization of content only. The insignificant difference between the scores indicates that the students of the control group (who were not given autonomy) have

showed consistency in their pre-test and post-tests. Their performance in the pre-test and post-test remained consistent.

### Experimental Group Results

To investigate the effectiveness of autonomy in English as Second Language (ESL) classrooms, pre and post- test scores have been processed by using paired sample tests in SPSS.

**Table 2**

*Paired Samples Test of the experimental group working with learner autonomy.*

|                                 | Paired Differences |                |                 |   | T       | df      | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|---|---------|---------|-----------------|
|                                 | Mean               | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |         |         |                 |
|                                 |                    |                |                 | Lower                                     | Upper   |         |                 |
| Pair 1<br>pretest –<br>posttest | 4.466678           | 2.2247         | 1.06152         | 2.34258                                   | 6.59076 | 4.20859 | .000            |

According to table 2 results of pre-test and post-test are significant at the 0.05 level of significance. Significant (2-tailed) value for pre-test and post-test of experimental group is  $.000 < 0.05$  at the level of significance. This marked significant difference between the performance of autonomous group's pre-test and post-test.

To find out the significance difference, difference between the traditional methodology and autonomy as teaching strategy promoting autonomous learner centered approach, results of paired sample test ( $.000 < 0.05$ ) directed towards statistics.

**Table 3**

*Paired Samples Statistics*

|        |          | Mean    | N  | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|--------|----------|---------|----|----------------|-----------------|
| Pair 1 | pretest  | 32.7167 | 60 | 7.03283        | .90793          |
|        | posttest | 28.2500 | 60 | 6.99304        | .90280          |

Table 4.3 shows difference in mean scores of pre-tests (administered before giving autonomous treatment) and post-test (after giving autonomous treatment). Mean score of pre-tests is 32.71 and post-tests score

is 28.25 which is less than pre-test score. Difference in mean score  $32.71 > 28.25$  resulted in the fact that learner autonomy as teaching strategy proved ineffective at intermediate level.

As compared to the controlled group, the mean scores for the experimental result show that there is significant difference in the pre-test and post-test results. The mean score of the pre-tests in this group is 32.71 whereas the mean score of the post-tests is 28.25 as shown in table 4.3. In experimental group, learner autonomy was introduced as a teaching method and participants were provided the liberty to have educational goals, objectives, the right to find the material, and use their own resources to improve the reading skill. The post-test score, which is less than the pre-test score, indicates that providing autonomy to the students in their learning was not affective in the existing teacher-centered and lecture method approaches.

### **Discussion**

The small difference in results suggests that the control group's pupils (who were not granted autonomy) performed consistently in pre- and post-tests. Their results in the pre-test and post-test were identical. The experimental results demonstrate a substantial difference in pre-test and post-test outcomes when compared to the control group's mean scores. As indicated in table 4.3, the mean pre-test score for this group is 32.71, while the mean post-test score is 28.25.

Learner autonomy was introduced as a teaching approach in the experimental group, and participants were given the freedom to choose educational goals, objectives, and the right to find and use their own resources to develop their writing skills. The fact that the post-test score was lower than the pre-test score implies that in the present teacher-centered and lecture method approaches, giving students more autonomy in their learning was ineffective.

### **Conclusion**

In the present study impact of an independent variable (learner autonomy) is investigated on a dependent variable (writing skill) from the performance of female intermediate English as a Second Language learner.

Bagheri & Aeen (2011) investigated learner autonomy on the writing ability of Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners and found results in favour of introducing learner autonomy in classrooms. While present study obtained contrastive results in introducing learner autonomy to intermediate ESL learners. The results have a slight decline in the obtained marks of the experimental group between their pre and post-tests. The participants of the control group had consistent performance in the tests while the participants of the experimental group achieved relatively low performance in the post-tests.

From the results, it is proved that learner autonomy proved ineffective in developing writing skills among female ESL learners at an intermediate level.

### ***Challenges in Introducing Learner Autonomy***

For triangulation of results researchers conducted interviews to investigate the effectiveness of practicing autonomy and possible challenges. Following are some challenges reported after the analysis interviews:

Traditional teacher centered approach of teaching has compatibility and effectiveness with respect to the present examination system which is in favour of cramming. In order to bring good results and a good name to institutions, teachers are bound to follow traditional authoritative norms in class.

Time constraint is another challenge. Usually language class has a duration of one and half hours to three hours. While in the context of Punjab language class usually has a time duration of forty to fifty minutes which is not supportive of autonomous class as learners have to organize and execute their own learning plans in collaboration

In Punjab, English language class does not enjoy the status of ESL class rather it is treated as a subject class. This causes conflict in conducting classes because at the end of the session students have to pass through the



same evaluation process as content subjects do. Consequently, teachers stuck to the traditional teacher-centered approaches in order to remain effective in the written curriculum-based board exams.

The researchers have observed that there was relatively low harmony and collaboration in between students and teachers, while pursuing for ‘Learner Autonomy’.

### **Suggestions**

Following are some suggestions to improve the existing highlighted situation to promote learner autonomy:

- Teachers should be trained enough to organize autonomous class by giving a degree of freedom in the ESL learning process. English Language Teachers (ELTs) should be trained in a way to organize the autonomous class to cope with the examination system as well.
- Learners should be given awareness to view ESL class as a language class rather than a subject class.
- In Pakistan classes are large. The time duration of ESL classes should be increased. Language classes should be long enough that language activities should be managed in large classes.

### **Limitations**

- Present study is experimental, conducted in Sialkot, Punjab.
- Findings are meant for the population of the territory.
- Variable of study is writing skill; other language skills are not tested.
- The results might not be extendedly generalizable.

### **Recommendations**

Following are the guidelines or recommendations for future researchers to investigate autonomy:

- Prospective researchers should conduct research in investigating autonomy in English listening and speaking skills.
- Future researchers should conduct a correlational study in co-class (gender-wise) to compare the effectiveness of learner autonomy in gender comparison.

- Researchers should conduct research outside the classroom through autonomous homework tasks in English language learning in real informal situations.

### References

- Al-Hazmi, S. (2006). Writing reflection: Perceptions of Arab EFL learners. *South Asian Language Review*, 16(2), 36-52.
- Auerbach, E. R. (2000). Creating participatory learning communities: Paradoxes and possibilities. In J. K. Hall & W. Eggington (Eds.), *The sociopolitics of English language teaching* (pp. 143–163). Multilingual Matters.
- Badshah, I., Kausar, G., & Khan, R. N. (2017). Investigating Pakistani University Students' Beliefs about Learning English. *The Dialogue (Pakistan)*, XII(4), 415-432.
- Bagheri, M. S., & Aeen, L. (2011). The Impact of Practicing Autonomy on the Writing Proficiency of Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners. *Journal of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics*, 15(1), 1-13.
- Borg, S., & Al-Busaidi, S. (2012). Learner autonomy: English language teachers' beliefs and practices. *ELT journal*, 12(7), 1-45.
- Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by principles: An approach to language pedagogy*. Englewood Cliff.
- Brown, H. D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2004). *Language assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices*. Pearson Education.
- Cakici, D. (2017). An investigation of learner autonomy in Turkish EFL context. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 6(2), 89-99.
- Freire, P. (1974). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (trans: Ramos, MB). Continuum.
- Freire, P. (2004). Pedagogy of the oppressed. In D. J. Flinders, S. Thornton, D. J. Flinders, & S.J. Thornton (Eds.), *Curriculum Studies Reader E2* (2nd ed.). Routledge.  
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203017609>
- Holec, H. (1979). *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning*. Longman.

- Khabiri, M. (2003). *A study on the validity of the English proficiency test of postgraduate TEFL admission examination: A proposal for an LSP testing model* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Islamic Azad University.
- Little, D. (1995). Learning as dialogue: the dependence of learner autonomy on teacher autonomy. *System*, 23(2), 175-181.  
[https://doi.org/10.1016/0346-251X\(95\)00006-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/0346-251X(95)00006-6)
- Nicolaides, C. S., & Fernandes, V. (2008). Learner autonomy in the light of Freire. *DELTA: Documentação de Estudos em Lingüística Teórica e Aplicada*, 24(esp), 493-511.
- Sidupa, C. (2016). Fostering learners' autonomy in writing. *Journal of English Education*, 1(2), 158-164.
- Tajmiriahi, T., & Rezvani, E. (2021). Learner Autonomy in L2 Writing: The Role of Academic Self-Concept and Academic Achievement. *Education Research International*, 2021, 1-10.  
<https://doi.org/10.1155/2021/6074039>
- Van Lier, L. (1996). *Interaction in the language curriculum: Awareness, autonomy, and authenticity*. Longman.
- Wade, C. (1995). Using writing to develop and assess critical thinking. *Teaching of Psychology*, 22(1), 24-28.  
[https://doi.org/10.1207/s15328023top2201\\_8](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15328023top2201_8)
- White, R. V., & McGovern, D. (1994). *Writing: Teacher's Book*. Prentice Hall International  
English Language Teaching.
- Wu, L. L. (2008). On cultivation of learner autonomy in EFL classroom. *US-China Foreign Language*, 6(3), 43-46.
- Yasmin, M., & Sohail, A. (2017). Realizing learner autonomy in Pakistan: EFL Teachers' beliefs about their practices. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 8(2), 153-162.