



The Effect of the Learning by Contracts Strategy on EFL Eleventh-Grade Students' Writing Performance in Jordan

Younus Mahamoud Alqyyam* , Amal Shehadeh ALNatour 

Department of English Language Curricula and Teaching Methods, Faculty of Education -Yarmouk University, Jordan

Abstract

Objectives: This study aimed to examine the impact of a contract learning strategy on the writing performance of eleventh-grade female students in Jordan who are learning English as a foreign language.

Methods: The study adopted a quasi-experimental approach to examine the relationship between two variables as they exist in real-life settings, without manipulation by the researchers. The sample consisted of 84 students, divided into two groups: an experimental group of 42 students (who learned writing using the contract learning strategy through an educational program designed by the researchers) and a control group of 42 students (who learned writing using traditional methods as outlined in "Action Pack 11" textbooks). The results of the post-test on selected writing skills for the experimental group served as the dependent variable, while the contract learning strategy was the independent variable.

Results: The results showed statistically significant differences at the level of ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the writing performance of eleventh-grade students learning English as a foreign language in Jordan. These differences can be attributed to the teaching strategy (contract learning versus traditional strategies).

Conclusions: The study revealed an improvement in the writing performance of participants following the implementation of the contract learning program. It recommends using the contract learning strategy to teach writing skills to students in Jordan, given its clear positive impact on the writing performance of the experimental group.

Keywords: Eleventh grade; learning by contracts strategy (LBC); writing performance

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* Corresponding author:
younusalqayam@gmail.com

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أثر استراتيجية التعلم بالعقود على الأداء الكتابي في اللغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية لدى طلبة الصف الحادي عشر في الأردن

يونس محمود القيام*، أمل شحادة الناطور

كلية التربية، قسم مناهج وأساليب تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية، الأردن، إربد

ملخص

الأهداف: هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى فحص أثر استراتيجية التعلم بالعقود في الأداء الكتابي لدى طلاب الصف الحادي عشر في الأردن بوصفهن متعلمات لغة أجنبية لغةً أجنبية.

المنهجية: اقتضت طبيعة الدراسة أن تعتمد المنهج شبه التجربى؛ أي دراسة العلاقة بين متغيرين كما هما موجودان في الواقع، دون أن يقوم الباحث بالتحكم بهما. إذ تكونت العينة كاملاً من (84) طالبة، قسمت إلى مجموعتين: المجموعة التجريبية وفيها (42) طالبة (درسن الكتابة وفقاً لاستراتيجية التعلم بالعقود ضمن برنامج تعليمي صممته الباحثان)، والمجموعة الضابطة وفيها (42) طالبة (تعلمن الكتابة بالطريقة التقليدية وفقاً لكتب "أكشن بالك" (11)). وكانت نتائج الاختبار البعدي في مهارات الكتابة المُتَعَدِّدة للمجموعة التجريبية هي المُتَعَدِّدة بينما كانت استراتيجية التعلم بالعقود المُتَعَدِّدة المستقل.

النتائج: أظهرت نتائج الدراسة وجود فروقٍ لها دلالةً إحصائيةً عند مستوى ($\alpha = 0.05$) في الأداء الكتابي لدى طلاب الصف الحادي عشر بوصفهن متعلمات لغةً أجنبية في الأردن، ويمكن عزو ذلك إلى الاستراتيجية التعليمية (التعلم بالعقود مقابل الاستراتيجيات التقليدية).

الخلاصة: كشفت الدراسة عن تحسُّنٍ في الأداء الكتابي للمشاركات بعد تنفيذ برنامج التعلم بالعقود. وتوصي الدراسة باستخدام استراتيجية التعلم بالعقود في تعليم مهارة الكتابة للطلبة في الأردن، نظرًاً لتأثيرها الإيجابي الواضح الذي ظهر على الأداء الكتابي للعينة التجريبية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الصف الحادي عشر، استراتيجية التعلم بالعقود، الأداء الكتابي.



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Introduction

Writing is a skill that demands an effective combination of concepts with word choice (Nunan, 2003). It needs the ability to grasp the productive use of language parts involving grammar, concepts, rhetoric, vocabulary, and other aspects of language (Zhang & Choe, 2020). Writing is a multifaceted ability that necessitates an advanced understanding of syntax, vocabulary, and style, along with other language elements (Shamsuzzaman, 2015).

In the discourse of every subject, writing is considered a crucial talent for the growth and dissemination of knowledge, making it one of the most significant academic development abilities for students. Students' ability to effectively convey their ideas and knowledge is a major factor in determining how well they perform academically in academic contexts. It helps students with significant assignments, improves their ability to think critically, and enhances their performance and cognitive functioning (Graham & Perin, 2007).

Canagarajah (2013) attributes the significance of writing to its five key components. First, writing is a social interaction between the writer and the reader in a particular place and time. Secondly, writing both generates and reflects reality. Third, the negotiation of the writer's resources within a certain environment result in writing. Fourth, writing gives authors a platform to communicate their personal ideologies, convey who they are, and assign values to things. Fifth, writing is a historically dynamic process in which readers' and writers' opinions and stances are invited in relation to the ideas, struggles, conflicts, and conceptions of the text.

High-quality writing is not only a means of demonstrating one's understanding of an academic subject but is also integral to the acquisition and consolidation of knowledge. The cognitive function of writing includes the process of representing information in the mind, transforming and organizing thoughts, and translating those thoughts into a coherent and meaningful narrative (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987).

Writing performance refers to the evaluation of an individual's written output, focusing on the quality and effectiveness of their writing practices (Woodworth & Barkaoui, 2020). In an academic setting, an individual's writing performance is typically assessed through writing tasks that measure their ability to achieve specific communicative goals and fulfill the expectations of particular genres and discourse communities (Hyland, 2007).

As students progress through their education, they are constantly tasked with improving their writing performance to meet increasingly complex expectations, such as producing well-structured, coherent, and logical arguments, demonstrating their understanding of subject matter, and adhering to the conventions of academic integrity (Krashen, 2008).

The significance of writing and writing performance stems from the fact that writing is a crucial skill for students learning a second or foreign language (Valdes, Haro, & Arriarza, 1992). Students that possess this talent will not only be able to articulate their ideas more effectively and receive higher grades, but they will also find it easier to land better employment and opportunities in the future (such as those in academia, research, or journalism).

The learning by Contracts (LBC) strategy first emerged from the work of Malcolm Knowles, who emphasized self-directed learning and the importance of learners taking responsibility for their education (Knowles, 1975). (Hiemstra & Sisco, 1990) further developed this perspective by introducing the idea of contracts as a way for students and tutors to negotiate and agree on learning goals, objectives, and expectations.

LBC strategy, as a student-centered pedagogical approach, entails the negotiation and signing of a contract between the teacher and the learner (Weimer, 2013). The contract sets the learning objectives, standards, resources, and assessment criteria tailored to the individual's needs, interests, and learning styles (Knowles, 1975).

LBC strategy as an individualized and self-directed learning approach, has recently garnered much attention for its potential advantages in teaching writing (Ismail & Yusof, 2012). The LBC strategy proves to be a valuable tool in enhancing learners' writing abilities (Aly, 2006). By emphasizing the integration of language components and fostering a comprehensive approach, the LBC strategy facilitates a more holistic and effective improvement in writing skills (Jabri et al., 2022). This approach not only sharpens linguistic proficiency but also nurtures creativity and clarity in expression, contributing to overall language mastery.

These advantages help cultivate critical thinkers and problem-solvers capable of adjusting to the exigencies of the

twenty-first century (Ghazali, 2020). Engaging students in a contract fosters a sense of ownership, motivation, persistence, and effective time management, ultimately increasing their self-efficacy in writing (Graham, Harris, & Troia, 2000). By actively shaping their learning goals, students gain greater control over their learning and can adapt it to their individual needs (Franklin & Harrington, 2019). Most importantly, they can develop lifelong learning skills such as self-efficacy and self-regulation (Hamlin, 2022). LBC develops learners' metacognitive skills by promoting active reflection on their learning, goal-setting, and self-assessment (Boyer, 2003). Through ongoing introspection, learners acquire a deeper understanding of their strengths and areas of improvement, enabling them to devise suitable writing strategies (Flavell, 1979).

Students must have a certain level of maturity, autonomy, and competence to successfully participate in the LBC strategy (Hiemstra & Sisco, 1990). (Guglielmino & Guglielmino, 2003) report that students who used the LBC technique outperformed their colleagues in more conventional learning environments in terms of critical thinking, problem-solving, and self-directed learning.

Students participating in the LBC strategy demonstrated increased levels of critical thinking, problem-solving, and self-directed learning compared to their peers in more traditional learning environments.

Therefore, the goal of this study is to assist Jordanian students in improving their writing performance by utilizing the LBC strategy. In the process, it will go over the usefulness and consequences of LBC in meeting the demands and difficulties of Eleventh-Grade students, enabling them to develop into competent writers.

Statement of the Problem

Various studies have shown that many students in Jordan struggle to perform writing tasks effectively. A general weakness in students' ability to write coherent sentences, structured paragraphs, and concise essays has been identified (Bani Younis, 2016; Obeiah & Bataineh, 2016). This might be because the teaching techniques used to teach this skill is conventional and lacks the creativity to appeal students' attention (Al-Awamleh, Bajes, Majali, & Inshasi, 2021).

The researchers have observed that eleventh-grade students exhibit unsatisfactory levels of writing proficiency which could be related to the inefficiency of the teaching strategies and techniques. Therefore, they intended to implement the Learning by Contracts (LBC) strategy, as suggested by studies like Guglielmino & Guglielmino (2003), Hashem, (2023) and Sumarsono & Permana (2023), to enhance students' writing abilities and performance.

Purpose of the Study

This study aims to investigate the effect of the LBC strategy on Jordanian EFL eleventh-grade students' writing performance.

Question of the Study: Are there any differences which are statistically significant at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the Jordanian EFL eleventh grade learners' mean score on the post-test writing performance which is due to the instructional strategy (LBC vs. Conventional)?

Significance of the Study

The importance of this study stems from its significance in exploring the effect of the LBC strategy on the writing performance of Jordanian students in public schools. To the best knowledge of the researchers, this study may be the first to investigate the effect of LBC on EFL students' writing performance in Jordan. This study may encourage students to learn English language in general and writing in specific. LBC may be useful for students who struggle in writing and help them improve their performance in it.

TEFL teachers may take advantage of LBC in teaching writing skills. In addition, the study's significance lies in its ability to help legislators and curriculum designers understand the potentials of LBC strategy in improving writing performance and encourage them to utilize this strategy in designing English-language writing activities and material.

The Ministry of Education may benefit from this study also by conducting trainings for teachers in applying LBC in teaching writing to enhance their students' writing performance.

Moreover, this study may inspire other researchers to investigate the effect of LBC on other skills and other subjects.

Operational Definition of Terms

LBC Strategy: is a tool for tailoring any educational experience. According to Anderson, Boud, and Sampson (2013), it is a written agreement between the learner and the teacher stating that a particular activity will be carried out to attain a particular learning goal. LBC is a cooperative and learner-centered approach where students individually or collectively, in consultation with their teacher, develop a contract that outlines the goals, content, and assessment criteria relevant to their learning needs (Knowles, 1986).

In the current study, LBC is the strategy in which eleventh-grade students take an active role in setting their learning goals to learn writing activities in the target units in their Action Pack 11 and create a contract after negotiating with their teacher to determine the tasks and procedures they will complete to achieve their goals.

Writing performance: Writing performance refers to the evaluation of an individual's written output, focusing on the quality and effectiveness of their writing practices (Woodworth & Barkaoui, 2020). In an academic setting, an individual's writing performance is typically assessed through writing tasks that measure their ability to achieve specific communicative goals and fulfill the expectations of particular genres and discourse communities (Hyland, 2007).

In this study, writing performance was measured using the writing pre-post-test. The pre-post- tests measure writing a sentence, a paragraph, and an essay in line with the writing assignments of two units in Action Pack 11.

Limitations of the Study:

The generalizability of the study was limited to:

1. School type and participants: Only eleventh female graders in AL-Khansa Secondary School for Girls (a public school in Jerash Directorate of Education) participated in this study.
2. Intervention period: The study's timeframe was eight weeks during the first semester of the academic year 2023/2024. A longer period of time might have generated different outcomes.
3. Action Pack 11 is the textbook that was used for this investigation since it is used in Jordanian public schools. Results may vary amongst textbooks with different content.

Review of Related Literature

Lemieux (2001) investigated learning contracts as instruments for accountability and empowerment. A short test examining the core concept of empowerment was completed by 100 students enrolled in five graduate-level courses. The average final results for each class were compared between the first and final versions of their assignments. Students expressed a sense of personal accountability for their educational experience and thought they had the ability to make decisions. Additionally, they showed statistically significant empowerment in performance ($p < 0.0001$) following assignment revision. The results indicated that learning contracts are useful instruments for encouraging improved performance outcomes and fairly distributing power.

Frank and Scharff (2013) investigated the impact of personalized, voluntary learning contracts on 18 students who struggled during the first part of the semester. The contracts were expected to enhance commitment and motivation, resulting in improved behaviors and academic performance. The study found that students who signed the contracts attended office hours more frequently, prioritized homework more consistently, and showed a tendency towards better exam performance. Overall, learning contracts may serve as an inexpensive and simple strategy to increase student commitment, improve academic outcomes, and foster self-directed learning.

Abdullah and Yih (2014) evaluated the use of learning contracts with 57 undergraduate students enrolled in a second-year computer science course at Taylor's University. Data on students' motivation to learn the course were gathered both before and after the use of the learning contracts, using a qualitative pilot questionnaire and a quantitative standard questionnaire grounded in the theory of planned behavior. The findings showed a boost in students' motivation to learn, as well as an increase in the sharing of practical outcomes between students and their lecturer. Additionally, the study revealed an improvement in students' self-directed learning when using learning contracts.

Emran and Al-Shara (2016) explored the impact of the learning contracts strategy on the academic performance of sixth-grade female students at Madaba Primary School for Girls in Mathematics. The study involved 74 female students, who

were evenly split between an experimental group and a control group. The study demonstrated that there were statistically significant differences between the average scores of students in the experimental and control groups, in favor of the experimental group in both the achievement test.

Ibrahim and Eldemerdash (2018) assessed the impact of the learning contract educational strategy on nursing students' motivation and learning outcomes. The research was conducted at the Faculty of Nursing, Damietta University, El Beheira, Egypt, involving 210 students enrolled in the Community Health Nursing course during the 2017-2018 academic year. The results revealed a statistically significant difference in motivation scores between the experimental and control groups, favoring the group using the learning contract strategy. Additionally, the experimental group outperformed the control group in main aspects of students' learning outcomes, achieving significantly higher scores in presentations, health class evaluations, and problem-oriented recording.

Oh, Huh, and Kim (2019) examined the impact of learning contracts on the problem-solving abilities, self-directed learning skills, and communication self-efficacy of students. The study involved 50 junior nursing students from a college in Daejeon City, South Korea, with 25 students in each group. The results demonstrated that the experimental group had higher scores in problem-solving skills, self-directed learning capability, and communication self-efficacy compared to the control group.

Ward (2021) investigated the effects of contract grading on the annual research papers of students at Good Shepherd High School. The study included 53 students from seven senior-level English classes. While three classes used a traditional teacher-generated grading rubric, the remaining four classes implemented mastery-based grading contracts with the goal of achieving either an A or B grade. The results showed that students in the contract grading group found the workload and time constraints to be significantly less burdensome. Additionally, 84% of these students met the contract's requirements, and the experimental group earned six times as many A grades and 2.5 times as many B grades as the control group. Therefore, the grading contract proved effective in reducing workload stress and enhancing student grades in the experimental group.

Mohammadi and Zandi (2023) explored the effectiveness of contract learning as a personalized learning method for fostering self-regulation among non-traditional learners during the COVID-19 pandemic. Adopting a qualitative approach, the participants of the study were one teacher and seven non-traditional learners enrolled in an online English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course. Data were gathered through teacher logs over an eight-month period and semi-structured interviews with the students. The deductive thematic analysis of the data revealed that contract learning had a positive impact on the forethought, performance, and self-reflection stages of the learning process.

Hashem (2023) conducted a study to find out how well pre-master's degree students may strengthen their essay writing skills by using a contract learning-based approach. 100 students were placed in the experimental group and 100 students in the control group at random for each participant. An essay writing test and a grading contract (A & B) were the two tools employed to gather data. For three months, the control group received traditional instruction in an English language course, whereas the experimental group received instruction based on a contract learning model. The post-performance of the experimental group was significantly better than both its pre-performance and the control group's post-performance, according to the data. As a result, the outcomes demonstrated how well the contract learning-based approach developed EFL essay writing.

Sumarsono and Permana (2023) carried out a study titled "Contract Learning as Individualized Instructional Strategies in Improving Students' Performance in Academic Writing Courses" to decide if contractual learning significantly impacts students' academic writing performance. Utilizing a mixed-methods interventional approach, the study collected both quantitative and qualitative data. The sample included 21 third-year students from the English Department at Mandalika University of Education. The findings indicated that contract learning had a positive effect on student performance, enhanced academic writing, and provided valuable self-study materials and various forms of feedback from lecturers.

Concluding Remarks

The current literature review of the study included prior studies from Jordan and other countries. In general, research

on LBC strategy in Jordan was limited when compared to research undertaken elsewhere. This study revealed that the use of the LBC strategy is still in its infancy in Jordan and has yet to be investigated on EFL students' writing performance among Jordanian students in public schools.

The researchers highlighted the absence of prior research on this subject in Jordan and emphasized the role of the literature review in laying the groundwork for the study.

The literature review helped to pave the way and lay the foundation for the researchers to achieve the objectives of the current investigation.

In addition, the current study aims to add to the existing literature by providing empirical data that may aid EFL educators who employ the strategy to teach writing to secondary students. The positive impact of the LBC strategy was confirmed through an examination of relevant literature regarding its efficacy in improving writing performance.

This study differs from others in that it looks at how the LBC strategy affects female students' writing performance in Jordanian public schools. It may therefore be beneficial for the creation of curriculum and pedagogical implications that help EFL students stay motivated and engaged throughout sessions. By providing empirical data that could assist EFL teachers in utilizing the LBC strategy to teach students writing, this research aims at closing the gap in the related literature.

Concerning the theoretical significance of the research, future scholars investigating this area may find it valuable. The dearth of research in Jordan could influence the development of English curricula and teacher training programs, especially given the ongoing, rapid changes in education.

Methodology

Design and Variables of the Study

This study adopted a quasi-experimental design, using one control group and one experimental group (one to learn writing according to LBC strategy and another to receive their learning conventionally).

LBC strategy is the independent variable while the learners' writing performance in the post-test is the dependent variable.

Participants of the Study

The sample consisted of (84) eleventh-grade female students from Al-Khansa's Secondary School for Girls, a public school in Jerash Directorate of Education. The school was chosen intentionally. The sample was divided into two groups: (42) students in the experimental group (who were taught writing using LBC strategy within an educational program designed by the researchers) and (42) students in the control group (who were taught writing utilizing the conventional method according to Action Pack 11 textbooks issued by the Ministry of Education). The two groups were randomly selected to participate in this study. The students in both groups were tested for equivalence.

Instrument of the Study

In order to achieve the goals of the study, the researchers created pre- and post-tests that were based on the specific outcomes of the eleventh-grade English textbook, Action Pack 11.

The Writing Performance Pre- and Post-Tests

The researchers developed a pre- and post-writing performance test after reviewing relevant prior research. This test assessed three key writing performance levels: sentence, paragraph, and essay. To evaluate these levels, sentence completion, topic sentence writing, and essay planning and writing were questioned and crafted by the researchers with an alignment with the writing material used in the eleventh-grade curriculum in Jordanian public schools. The writing performance test was based on the instructional resources from the teacher's book. This test aimed to gauge students' writing performance levels individually and in groups, both before and after implementing the LBC strategy. The primary goal of the post-test was to determine if the LBC strategy led to significant differences in writing performance between the experimental and control groups of eleventh-grade students.

Validity of the Writing Performance Test

The jury evaluated the validity of the writing performance test. They were invited to review the test and assess its content and language for suitability. After their evaluation, the jury provided the researchers with feedback and suggestions. The researchers considered their recommendations and concerns, such as substituting ambiguous questions with clearer ones, and made adjustments to the test accordingly, in line with the jury's advice.

Reliability of the Writing Performance Test

A pilot study was conducted to verify the reliability of the writing performance pre- and post-test to confirm the test's reliability. They were taken out of the study's sample. Two weeks was between the test and the retest. Table 1 shows the results:

Table 1: Test-Retest of Writing Performance Test

Writing Performance Test	Test-Retest Reliability	Sig.
Pre-test	0.90	0.000
Post-test	0.88	0.000

Table 1 shows that the reliability coefficient for writing performance on pre- and post-tests is 0.88 and 0.90 respectively, these values are considered suitable for the objectives of the present study.

The Instructional Program Based on the LBC Strategy

The LBC educational program was developed by the researchers for helping the participants in enhancing their writing performance skills in order to meet the study's objectives. So as to enable the experimental group participants to implement the techniques of the LBC strategy in their writing classes, the researchers additionally modified the writing tasks in units three and four.

Objectives of the Instructional Program

The researchers designed the curriculum to give EFL students in the eleventh grade an opportunity to their writing performance using the LBC instructional program. The educational program is after achieving the following purposes: Eleventh-grade students' writing performance will be enhanced on the sentence, paragraph, and essay levels. Their writing performance skills will also be strengthened, and they will be assisted in doing the writing tasks. In addition, students will become aware of the usefulness of implementing writing performance skills, especially those that are being studied and will have the chance to do more activities utilizing the LBC strategy.

The Instructional Material

In the current study, the instructional materials were derived from the writing performance tasks found in Units 3 and 4 of the Student's Book and Activity Book of Action Pack 11. The researchers redesigned the tasks utilizing the LBC strategy, which was used to teach writing to the participants in the experimental group.

Validity of the Instructional Program

The researchers presented the program to a panel of ten experts in English curriculum and teaching to validate its effectiveness. The jury was asked to review the program and offer feedback or recommendations. The researchers then implemented the suggested modifications based on the panel's input.

Teaching Methods for the Two Study Groups

Teaching Procedures for the Control Group (The Conventional Method)

The control group was taught writing following the steps given in the teacher book of Action Pack 11, as follows:

1. Students generate ideas and organize their thoughts before they begin writing. Brainstorming, mind mapping, outlining, and discussing topics. These activities encourage students to plan and structure their writing.

2. To demonstrate effective writing techniques and provide clear examples, the teacher writes a sample text in front of the students, explaining the process and decisions made at each stage. This might include how to craft a strong thesis, develop paragraphs, or use transition words.

3. To provide support as students begin writing, the teacher guides students through the writing process by offering prompts, answering questions, and providing real-time feedback. This can include group writing exercises or one-on-one support.

4. To encourage collaborative learning and improve writing through feedback, students exchange their drafts with peers for review. They provide constructive criticism focusing on clarity, structure, grammar, and content, which helps them learn to revise their own work.

5. To refine and improve the quality of the writing, students revise their drafts based on feedback, focusing on improving content, organization, and language. This step also includes proofreading for grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors before final submission.

Teaching the Experimental Group (Using the LBC strategy):

The below steps clarify the procedures concerning the teacher: the role of the researchers with the teacher:

1. The researchers introduced the LBC strategy, which is the basis of the instructional program, to the teacher and clarified its use and benefits after administering the writing pre-test.

2. The researchers explained to the teacher the importance of setting goals and objectives for writing tasks and how the LBC strategy can help learners take ownership of their learning and develop their writing skills.

3. The researchers provided the teacher with an overview of the LBC strategy, including its underlying principles, benefits, expected obstacles, and how it can be applied to teaching writing to secondary learners.

4. The teacher developed a contract between her and the learners to set goals, objectives, and evaluation criteria for a specific learning task or project.

5. The researchers demonstrated effective teaching techniques that support the LBC strategy, including how to develop writing contracts with clear objectives, how to provide feedback on student writing, and how to encourage self-reflection.

6. The researchers provided training on the LBC strategy to teach writing to the teacher, including how to design writing contracts that align with the Jordanian curriculum, how to use rubrics to assess writing, and how to provide feedback in a culturally sensitive manner.

7. The researchers provided ongoing support and feedback to the teacher as she implemented the LBC strategy in writing instruction. This can include observing classroom instruction, providing feedback on writing contracts, and offering guidance on how to address challenges that may arise.

Overall, the key to training a teacher to adopt the LBC strategy for teaching writing to secondary learners is to provide her with a clear understanding of the strategy, practical examples of how it can be implemented in writing instruction, and ongoing support as she integrates the LBC strategy into her teaching practice.

The following steps clarify the procedures concerning the participants: implementing the strategy:

This includes three stages:

I. Pre-writing stage:

1. The researchers asked students to think of different topics they prefer to write about. After gathering information, students were required to present their findings to the class in written form. This served as a warm-up activity to prepare them for more structured writing tasks later in the learning process.

2. Students will be introduced to the LBC strategy, its use, procedures, benefits, and requirements. Learners should be aware that the LBC strategy encourages their autonomy, engagement, commitment, and responsibility for their learning outcomes.

3. Preparing for the Contract: In this step, the students discuss the learning objectives, the method of instruction, and the evaluation criteria. They identify their goals, interests, and learning styles.

4. Negotiating the Contract: In this step, students negotiate the terms of the learning contract. The contract specifies

the learning objectives, the method of instruction, the evaluation criteria, and the timeline for completing the learning activities.

II. Writing stage:

1. Implementing the Contract: In this step, the students engage in the learning activities according to the contract. The teacher's role is limited to providing guidance, feedback, and support to the students as needed. Students are responsible for monitoring their progress and adjusting their learning activities to achieve the learning objectives.
2. Students write their answers in their notebooks so the teacher will be able to observe their work.
3. Students, while participating in the classroom activities to complete writing tasks, help each other, and do teamwork duties. They were given points and badges.
4. Students participated in peer feedback sessions, exchanging their written tasks and providing constructive feedback to one another. This process encouraged real-time collaboration and reflection on the quality of their writing.

III. Post-writing stage:

1. Evaluating the Contract: In this step, the teacher and the students evaluate the learning outcomes based on the evaluation criteria specified in the contract.
2. The students will reflect on their learning experience and provide feedback to the teacher about the effectiveness of the learning contract.
3. Renewing or Modifying the Contract: In this step, the teacher and the students renew or modify the learning contract based on the evaluation results.
4. If the learning objectives have been achieved, the contract may be renewed to extend the learning experience or explore new topics.
5. If the learning objectives have not been achieved, the contract may be modified to adjust the learning activities or evaluation criteria.
6. Students will have complete independence; compared with traditional classrooms, they can express their ideas more freely.
7. The teacher encouraged students to compile a portfolio of all their writing tasks from the contract period. Along with the portfolio, students were asked to write reflective paragraphs where they evaluated their own progress and growth in writing skills.

Data Analysis

Since this is a quasi-experimental investigation, the data was analyzed quantitatively through a multi-step process. The researchers first collected data from the participants' performance in writing tasks, which were then subjected to statistical analysis. To address the research questions, the students' scores were analyzed using means to determine the average performance of each group, and standard deviation to measure the variation in scores within the groups.

Additionally, t-tests were conducted to identify whether there were statistically significant differences in writing performance between the experimental group (which used the LBC strategy) and the control group (which used a traditional teaching approach). The t-tests helped determine if any observed differences in performance were likely due to the teaching strategy rather than chance.

To provide further insight into the findings, the results were also analyzed descriptively, where patterns and trends in the data were explored and summarized. This descriptive analysis supported the statistical results by offering a more detailed explanation of how the students' performance varied between the two strategies, shedding light on specific areas where the LBC strategy showed a significant impact on student writing outcomes.

Results

This study aims to demonstrate the effect of the LBC strategy on EFL eleventh-grade students' writing performance in Jordan. Therefore, the first analysis of one-way ANCOVA, means and standard deviations were calculated.

Results related to the question: Are there any statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in Jordanian EFL eleventh-grade learners' writing performance that can be attributed to the instructional strategy (LBC vs. Conventional)?

Means and standard deviations and estimated marginal means of the pre-and post- test of the Jordanian EFL eleventh-grade learners' mean scores on the writing performance, attributed to the instructional strategy (LBC vs. Conventional), are shown in the table 2.

Table 2: Means, Standard Deviations and Estimated Marginal Means of Pre and Post -test Scores of the Jordanian EFL Eleventh- Grade Learners' Mean Scores on the Writing Performance, Attributed to the Instructional Strategy (LBC vs. Conventional).

Group	N	Pre		Post		Estimated Marginal Means	Std. Error
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation		
Experimental	42	8.48	4.186	14.40	2.359	14.214	.334
Control	42	7.95	4.179	8.67	4.720	8.858	.334

Table (2) shows a variance in the means of the pre-and post-Jordanian EFL eleventh-grade learners' writing performance, attributed to the instructional strategy (LBC vs. Conventional) with an Estimated Marginal Mean of (14.214) of the experimental against (8.858) for the Conventional.

To determine whether LBC strategy as a teaching technique has any statistically significant effects on these means of the post-writing performance test scores, one-way ANCOVA was conducted. Results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: One-Way ANCOVA Results of Jordanian EFL Eleventh-Grade Learners' Writing Performance Post-Test Scores, Attributed to the Instructional Strategy (LBC vs. Conventional)

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Square D
Group	761.668	1	761.668	162.448	.000	.667
Pre-test (covariate)	600.099	1	600.099	127.989	.000	.612
Error	379.784	81	4.689			
Corrected Total	1832.893	83				

Table (3) shows there are statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the post-writing performance scores of the Jordanian EFL eleventh-grade learners attributed to the instructional strategy (LBC vs. Conventional) in favor of the LBC strategy.

Discussion

The Results of the study showed at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the post-writing performance scores of the Jordanian EFL eleventh-grade learners assigned to the instructional strategy (LBC vs. Conventional) in favor of the LBC strategy.

The results of the study show that the LBC strategy works to raise the writing performance skills of the eleventh-grade female students in Jordan with an arithmetic average of (14.40). The control group was taught according to the conventional method and obtained an average score of (8.67). The results of the pre-test for the experimental group were the opposite, as the arithmetic average for the LBC strategy was (8.48). The Conventional method was (7.95), this was before developing the program to increase writing performance according to the LBC strategy.

This means that the LBC strategy is considered an excellent teaching method for improving the writing performance of foreign students and has a significant and positive impact on improving and developing the writing performance of eleventh-grade students.

This may be due to different reasons: first, the utilizing of the well-designed LBC instructional program to teach the experimental group may enhanced the experimental group's performance. Second, the way the writing assignments

designed, influenced and enhanced students' performance positively. Third, LBC as a new strategy in teaching writing, attracted students' attention and enhanced their motivation to learn more to do the tasks and participate actively. Fourth, LBC allows the personalized approach that each educator can focus on certain areas they require to enhance. Fifth, LBC encourages educators to take responsibility for their learning. The contract clearly proposes what is anticipated in terms of writing product, such as the number of sentences, paragraphs, and essays. This structure aids educators in realizing what they need to accomplish. Finally, LBC can permit educators to explore various writing styles and genres.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The present study is administered to investigate how the LBC strategy affected the writing performance of Jordanian female EFL eleventh graders. To attain this, an LBC strategy-based educational program was designed and set up for the 2023–2034 academic year. Students' writing performance improved after applying the LBC strategy. The results were shown as:

- The application of the LBC strategy improved writing performance. The six phases of the LBC strategy (identifying learning objectives, choosing learning activities, setting evaluation criteria, establishing learning resources, scheduling learning time, and reviewing and revising the learning contract) were put into practice for the students.
- The instructional program also improved students' three levels of writing (sentence, paragraph, and essay) and increased their engagement in the classroom.
- Students' writing performance on the post-test enhanced when writing tasks were taught using the LBC strategy, ensuring the program's effectiveness.

Based on the results, the successive recommendations are put forward:

- The Ministry of Education (MOE) should consider the significance of using the LBC strategy in teaching writing and instruct EFL teachers on how to use and applying this strategy in their classrooms and change their conventional teaching methods.
- EFL teachers should utilize the LBC strategy, which permits their educators to perform writing tasks fruitfully and engage in the teaching and learning process.
- EFL textbook creators should embody the LBC strategy into both the teacher's and the student's textbooks with intelligibility, providing a varied scope of instructional tasks that center around various writing levels.
- Researchers are urged to investigate how the LBC strategy affects other language skills and students' attitudes towards it.

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