

The effect of the novel-based creative writing workshop on English as a Foreign Language students' creative writing level

L'effet de l'atelier d'écriture créative (romanesque) sur le niveau rédactionnel des étudiants d'Anglais langue étrangère

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Abstract: This quasi-experimental research investigates the effect of implementing a novel-based creative writing workshop on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' creative writing level. The study was conducted following the one-group pretest/posttest design with 14 Master One EFL students enrolled at Chadli Bendjedid University. The research findings revealed that the participants' scores significantly increased; thus, the novel-based creative writing workshop proved to be effective in improving EFL students' creative writing levels. The study concludes with a set of recommendations to make Chadli Bendjedid University in collaboration, with the Department of English, a cultural centre that implements and encourages creative writing.

Keywords: creative writing - English as a Foreign Language – novel – rubric - workshop.

Résumé : Cette recherche quasi-expérimentale étudie l'effet de la mise en œuvre d'un atelier d'écriture créative, notamment romanesque, sur le niveau rédactionnel des étudiants en ALE de l'Université Chadli Bendjedid. L'étude a été menée selon la méthode du prétest/post-test, à groupe unique, composé de 14 étudiants en Master 1. Les résultats obtenus ont révélé une amélioration significative des notes des participants. Ainsi, l'atelier en question s'est avéré efficace pour accroître le niveau rédactionnel des étudiants en ALE. L'étude se conclut par une série de recommandations visant à faire de l'Université susmentionnée, en collaboration avec le département d'anglais, un centre culturel qui met en œuvre et encourage l'écriture créative.

Mots- clés : écriture créative, Anglais Langue Etrangère, roman, rubriques, atelier.

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1. Introduction

Despite its long-standing status, creative writing has been one of the most undervalued among other academic disciplines because of the unfounded belief that it has no sustainability in language learning and academic outcomes; thus, it should not be on par with other disciplines (Smith, 2013). Nevertheless, countless investigations, namely Maley's (2009), Smith's (2013) and

Akhter's (2014), have shown that these beliefs are invalid and that creative writing can be a significant tool in developing students' levels in many pedagogical areas which led to its crucial position worldwide nowadays.

Not only can creative writing be a central element in language learning, but it can also be a fun and highly motivational activity which allows students to unleash their innovative and artistic abilities. At present, it gained a respectable and essential position in the academe due to its immense importance, paving the way to an even more promising future (Pelcová, 2015).

As EFL students at Chadli Bendjedid University advance in their learning throughout the years, creative writing is hardly dealt with or spoken of. Despite its immense benefits on students' language development in many areas such as grammar, lexis, motivation, etc., and its critical growing role in education that has encouraged many universities all around the world to put it under the spotlight, the subject is undeniably still neglected at Chadli Bendjedid University. Consequently, students who are unfamiliar with the creative writing conventions and stylistic features will be deprived of fruitful learning opportunities; and thereby many promising potentials for future talented writers would be wasted. Such talents would fade away if they are not polished and encouraged under the right supervision in a suitable environment.

Under the lack of emphasis and devotion of Algerian universities towards creative writing and its potential benefits, it is crucial to explore different procedures that would develop EFL students' creative writing and push forward the discipline in the academic field. In an attempt to boost the quality of students' creative pieces and support them to make use of their full creative abilities, this study examines the effect of adopting the novel-based creative writing workshop on the improvement of EFL learners' creative writing level, thereby determining whether relying on this procedure can help to develop students' creative writing skills. The research findings may serve as a foundation for the endorsement of the novel-based creative writing workshop as a teaching method and an effective tool that would serve to sharpen the students' creative writing talent along with many other additional benefits such as critical thinking, critical reading, cooperative learning, etc. The recommendations provided by the research attempt to be valuable assets to promote the creative writing craft at Chadli Bendjedid University. Therefore, as an attempt to find an efficient and appropriate method that would aid the students to thrive in their creative writing level, and brace Chadli Bendjedid University to be an appropriate institute in developing talented creative writers, this study was conducted to attempt to answer the following question:

Q1: Does the novel-based creative writing workshop improve EFL students' creative writing level?

This paper, thereafter, makes a humble attempt to present a set of recommendations on how to integrate and develop creative writing within the university realm, which can be considered as an additional small step towards the massification and globalization of the Algerian higher education system.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Creative Writing

Creative writing is any type of writing that diverges from normal professional, journalistic, academic, or technical forms of literature, usually with an emphasis on the narrative craft, character development, and the use of figures of speech. It goes from poetry, prose (e.g., novels, plays, short stories, and epics, etc.) to creative non-fiction (e.g., biographies, autobiographies,

memoirs, essays, etc.) (Premchandran, 2013). Harper (2015) views creative writing as the originative way of writing, relying on the writers' imaginative, creative and critical minds, influenced by their individual history and culture and guided by structures of individual information. In the same vein, creative writing could be defined as *"the production of texts which have an aesthetic rather than a purely informative, instrumental or pragmatic purpose"* (Maley, para. 7: 2009). Hyland (2002) also notes that creative writing is any fiction or non-fiction writing that occurs outside of everyday professional, journalistic, academic and technical forms. Recently, creative writing has become an independent academic discipline (Hyland, 2002). Since then, scholars have kept trying to explore new procedures that aim to find the best and easiest way to teach it. *"In the academic setting, creative writing is typically separated into fiction and poetry classes"* (Premchandran, 1: 2013). Hyland (2002) stated that students usually choose between fiction and poetry when taking creative writing courses and further develop their writing and editing skills in a particular area.

2.2. Creative Writing Workshop

One of the objectives of creative writing courses is to give new writers the time to develop themselves and their work. The best way to achieve that and accelerate the process is through writing workshops, which are places that support innovation, creation, and production (Morley, 2007).

For the majority of students, the creative writing workshop is *"the heart of the course and its most beneficial and memorable element"* (Newman, 31: 2007). It is a non-traditional academic approach that presents writing as an active, strategic process in which all students are actively involved. The workshop provides an interactive and dynamic atmosphere where participants share informed criticism and become increasingly aware of how their own and others' decision-making drives the written work. The aim of the workshop is to create a kind of literary café in which students analyse their classmates' works, comment on how they succeed and give their opinions on what to do in order to improve them. That would considerably contribute to the re-drafting process and to the critical commentary of creative writing works. Furthermore, the workshop approach privileges process over product and accentuates how complex and time-consuming the creative arts are. The workshop is already being used in pedagogy and it is promoted by many findings in cognitive science (Swadner et al., 2007).

According to The Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP) Directors' Handbook (2012), the majority of creative writing teachers find that the most effective and productive teaching experience occurs in the workshop format. It is noted that the creative writing workshop should not have more than 15 students, with 12 as the most ideal and effective number, but at the same time acknowledges that most workshop groups accommodate between 11 and 20. The handbook also notes that teachers of the creative writing workshop should equally distribute time between the study of literary pieces and writing exercises. It is worth mentioning that many institutions consider that the writing workshop equals teaching two courses due to the additional work and sessions' intensity that students go through.

2.3. Role of Reading Literature in Creative Writing

Extensive reading of literature can be largely considered as a prerequisite to becoming a good writer. In fact, *"In order to master the craft of creative writing, one must first become an expert reader"* (The AWP Directors' Handbook, 10: 2012). Most writing teachers acknowledge that talented writers read a lot. Riabokrys and Mishchenkob (2016) remark that creative writing students

must learn basic literary expression techniques including narrative strategies, genres, and aesthetics which can be acquired through continuous reading. Gardner (1983) notes that the writer benefits from reading other writers' works. He encourages writers to read in order to check the progress they achieved, see whether they made the suitable approach for certain situations, and consider if they would have been better or worse, and why.

According to the AWP Directors' Handbook (2012), undergraduate creative writing courses should give prominence to reading literary works. Nurturing students in various literary models would permit their full comprehension of the possibilities which come with each literary genre and attain their true potential.

2.4. Teaching Creative Writing Using Novels

Sumardjo (29: 1998) defines the novel as *"a story with the prose form in a long shape, this long shape means the story including a complex plot, many characters, and various settings"*. Alhwaimil (2014) states that for readers, the novel is the most flexible type of literature, which gives it the most amount of language-learning possibilities. It is thus advised to rely on novels as valuable learning material due to the myriad of benefits it represents. In addition to the plethora of writing styles, new vocabulary and sentence structures it represents, the novel can be considered authentic material which can serve as a bank of innovative ideas that could inspire students and act as a tool by which they reflect on their own progress.

2.5. The Assessment of Creative Writing

The assessment of creative writing in education has been a subject of hot debate between the scholars who believed that the assessment of students' creative works could only be subjective according to the teachers' preferences, thus, not reliable; and the scholars who opted for the use of rubrics which, in their opinion, were objective, reliable and efficient to rely on (Mozaffari, 2013). On the presumption of the subjectivity of the assessment of creative writing, May (2007) refutes the idea and argues in favour of an objective assessment where creative works could be assessed if teachers were to establish and rely on a set of standard and objective criteria.

Since creative writing is included in the academe, it is natural that it needs to be assessed. Like any other subject of other disciplines, it requires grades and constructive feedback from students. According to Harmer (2007), the marks students receive will enable them to judge the quality of their performance and their progress. However, Kantor (1975) and England (2009) argue that teachers frequently find themselves facing a challenge when it comes to assessing creative writing. Vaezi and Rezaei (2018) point out the source of the assessment's challenge as scholars overlooked developing appropriate, reliable and valid evaluation techniques with the inclusion of creative writing programmes into the academe.

Creative writing is usually assessed in formative and summative ways. Formative assessment is concerned with the student's strengths and continuous day-to-day development rather than the mark. This type of assessment can be done by the tutor, students among one another or the students' self-assessment. Summative assessment, on the other hand, evaluates the students' outcome with a mark which contributes to the final outcome grades of the course (Newman, 2007).

According to Mozaffari (2013), creativity is assessed based on:

(1) Specific theories of creativity such as Divergent Thinking, (2) Consensual Assessment Techniques, relying on the judgment of experts in creativity, though not taking into account any specific strands to base their judgment on, and (3) based on Attributes related to creativity in

theory, as originality, image, and voice used in rubrics, and which is commonly believed to be the most valid technique.

3. Methodology

The current study is a quantitative quasi-experimental research, following the one-group pretest/posttest design, which includes a pretest followed by a treatment and a posttest for a single group (Creswell, 2003).

3.1. The research setting

The research took place at Chadli Bendjedid University, El-Tarf, in eastern Algeria during the academic year 2018/2019. The experiment was conducted at a reading section at the university's library in an attempt to mirror the workshop form and make use of the location's suitable writing atmosphere, multiple materials and the flexible tables' layout that would facilitate the group teamwork.

3.2. The Participants

The participants in this study were randomly selected among Master One students of English specialising in Didactics at Chadli Bendjedid University, EL-Tarf, Algeria. The sample consisted of fourteen ($N=14$) students with an age ranging from 21 to 36 years ($M=23.92$, $SD=4.23$). The sample was chosen due to Master One students' relatively higher level and ability in narrative writing as they have studied Literature and Written Expression modules during their License course of study, thus they were deemed to acquire the needed basic knowledge about literary texts and writing conventions that would allow them to produce decent written productions.

3.3. The Research Instruments

To ensure that the experiment is conducted under the proper circumstances and that the data are collected in a valid setting, a set of instruments was carefully chosen to achieve accurate and reliable results.

3.3.1 The Pretest and the Posttest

In order to measure the students' creative writing level, both the pretest and posttest were designed as prompts which provided students with carefully chosen fictional settings, offering them vast opportunities to demonstrate their creative abilities. Both the pretest and posttest settings were close in terms of the story, and the students were asked to develop a part of the story in order to complete the prompts in no more than 300 words.

3.3.2 Workshop tools

Several tools formed the basis of the learning materials during the workshop. Excerpts from three different novels were rigorously chosen for their richness in descriptive features which would boost the 'image' attribute in addition to showcasing authentic examples of the use of dialogue which serves the 'characterization' feature when blended with narration. Moreover, novels display creative writing in a natural context, giving students an insight into the stylistic conventions and characteristics in addition to being a source that inspires them, and from which they can imitate their writing.

Few creative writing exercises, such as showing vs. telling worksheets and collaborative story writing, were designed as additional tools, each to serve a defined purpose that would make the creative writing level more efficient. The exercises were used to raise students' awareness of the power of description and display to them how to best use it in order to have a story with an excellent 'image' feature. Furthermore, they present an opportunity to practice the story writing

conventions, using decent descriptions and the right use of dialogue while practising critical thinking and making use of other learners' feedback in a cooperative setting.

Additionally, A set of lesson-related handouts were selected and distributed to the participants in order to be discussed and be used as lesson back-ups and reminders that can be relied on during and outside the workshop

3.3.3 Creative Writing Assessment Rubric

In order to accurately assess the students' pretest and posttest, an analytical rubric was designed based on Mozaffari's (2013) one and its developed version made by Vaezi and Rezaei (2018). The rubric's criteria accommodate only what has been taught in the workshop abiding by the regulations formulated by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in England and Wales which consists that tutors can only assess what they have formally taught. Assessing the students' writing 'image' and "characterization" was on the basis of four levels of achievement; each level matches a grading point from one to four.

According to Burroway (2011), 'Image' stands for the type of writing which appeals to emotions and stimulates the reader's senses and feelings in a way that evokes an image of people, places, and objects in the story. She stresses that it is a fundamental element in creative writing and has a major significance as it brings the writing to life and makes the reader indulge in the story and stay eager for more. The 'image' criterion can be achieved by detailed descriptions which appeal to the senses and with the proper use of figurative speech in addition to other techniques that were addressed during the workshop.

The 'characterization' criterion on the other hand refers to the techniques used by the writer in order to reveal the characters' personalities, identities, and habits in a way that makes the reader connect with and feel for them (Burroway, 2011). A good 'characterization' can be met by the style of writing that emphasises 'showing' with detailed depiction through the actions of the characters, their thoughts, what they say and the manner they say it using dialogues instead of 'telling' with a flat description and monotonous narration.

The score is given according to students' performance and application of the defined creative writing criteria as follows:

- 1 point (Poor): the criterion is not respected at all.
- 2 points (Fair): the criterion is minimally achieved.
- 3 points (Good): the criterion is partially achieved.
- 4 points (Excellent): the criterion is excellently used.

After getting the rubric ready, it was handed to multiple university literature teachers and a couple of novel writers to give their opinions regarding its validity as an accurate research tool for our research objectives.

3.4. The Research Procedures

3.4.1 The Pretest

During the first meeting with the participants, the students sat for a pretest designed to test their creative writing level and were required to develop a writing prompt into a short-written work. The prompt is a story topic which can be a short sentence, a paragraph or an image, used as a kick-starter for the story when the writer does not know how to start and allows the creativity to flow. Writers may stay close to the original prompt as they may refract in another direction (Kewin, 2010).

3.4.2 The Treatment

Following the pretest, the treatment period adopted the workshop setting, held once a week with 14 students following the AWP directors' handbook recommendation for best results. The workshop was structured into a theoretical part devoted to the study of features of creative writing and the analysis of novel samples, and a practical part for practising the writing process.

The first workshop session introduced the participants to the bases of creative writing, the power of aesthetic language, and the techniques used in fiction writing, as well as addressing the value of reading literacy on students' writing.

The second workshop session was devoted to creating an appealing 'image' through descriptive writing. The participants studied the concept of 'showing' vs. 'telling' in fictional narratives, using excerpts from a novel that is replete with descriptive features, namely 'Veronika decides to die' by Paulo Coelho, in which students analysed descriptive passages where the writer used 'showing' instead of 'telling', and instances where he alternated between showing and telling accordingly. In fiction, showing is used in order to convey vivid imagery, thus evoking the readers' emotions, and making them live inside the story by targeting their senses, making them visualize, hear, and feel what the characters are seeing, hearing, and feeling, with the intent of propelling the plot. On the other hand, telling is used to speed up the narration and to narrate unimportant transitions in the story (Burroway, 2011). After the participants had a grasp of the concept and were able to identify cases of showing and telling, they were given a written practice to test their understanding.

The third workshop session covered a lesson about 'characterization', how to use it, and its impact on building a connection between the readers and some vivid, developed characters. The session covered some innovative techniques on how to reveal the characters through physical descriptions, thoughts, and actions. Further, it mainly focused on the power of dialogues as an effective means to serve a good 'characterization'. The participants were shown the right ways to use dialogue and its paramount role in building the characters' personalities, describing the relationships between one another, and how dialogues paint the scenes as the characters are interacting while moving about, exploring, and reacting to their surroundings. The implementation of dialogue in the narration serves as a way of giving the readers a clear image of the characters' whereabouts. Relying on samples from the novels *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald and *The Secret History* by Donna Tartt. The participants analysed how authorial use of dialogues reveals implicitly, relationships between characters, their state of mind and emotions, and when dialogues are fused with descriptive narration. After that, the participants were given a collaborative practice in order to apply their newly acquired knowledge.

The fourth and last workshop session was a reinforcement of the 'image' and 'characterization'. It dealt with the vocabulary used for physical descriptions of characters, and words used for dialogue tags. The participants were provided with printed handouts containing lists of words used to describe the characters' physical traits put forward by Donovan (2015) those words were helpful for the reader to clearly visualize the characters while reading the story (e.g., the eyes' shape and colour; the hair's texture and colour; body type, etc.). The dialogue tags given to the participants were lists of words to replace 'said' in the dialogue. The tags were organized according to tone and emotion (e.g., happiness, anger, fear, etc.).

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It is worth noting that the workshop setting differs from that of the classroom in that it grants more freedom and flexibility to students and creates an egalitarian, learner-centred and engaging environment which stimulates their innovative potential on a deeper level.

3.4.3 The Posttest

After completing the treatment, the posttest was administered to the participants in order to measure to what extent the treatment was effective. Similar to the pretest, the posttest consisted of a prompt and the participants were asked to develop it, applying all that had been learnt in the workshop.

To make sure that the assessment procedure is reliable and valid, each one of the pretests and posttests papers was carefully examined and assessed twice by the researcher, relying on the developed creative writing analytical rubric. Then the given scores were distributed to a literature teacher with experience in creative writing for revision. The scores that were agreed upon were admitted. In case of a difference in opinions between the given scores of the same paper, a third revision and discussion by another teacher would take place, settling the final mark with an agreement.

Some of the participants' statements and comments were taken into consideration due to their importance in clarifying the data discussion in addition to their high degree of transparency and validity as they were genuinely reported by the students without them being asked to.

4. Data Analysis

According to data presented in Table 1, Figure 1 and Figure 2, the pretest showed that even though most students had some interesting storytelling ideas, they lacked the fundamental creative writing techniques as most of them failed to meet the required 'image' and 'characterization' criteria.

The posttest data showed that there was a significant improvement in the students' overall scores including the 'image' and 'characterization.' The overall mean increased from 3.21 to 6.07 with a change of +2.86, including all students.

The 'image' mean arose by +1.3 from 1.62 to 2.92. The majority of students; 12 out of 14 (85.71%) were concerned with the improvement, while only 'student 7' and 'student 12' scores remained the same. The 'characterization' mean increased from 1.57 to 3.14 with an increase of +1.57. Almost all of the students (92.85%) have shown a significant improvement, only 'student 10' kept the same score.

Pretest (N=14) Mean	Posttest (N=14) Mean	Change
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Overall score	3.21	Overall score	6.07	+2.86
Image	1.62	Image	2.92	+1.3
Characterization	1.57	Characterization	3.14	+1.57

Table 01: Comparison between Pretest and Posttest Means

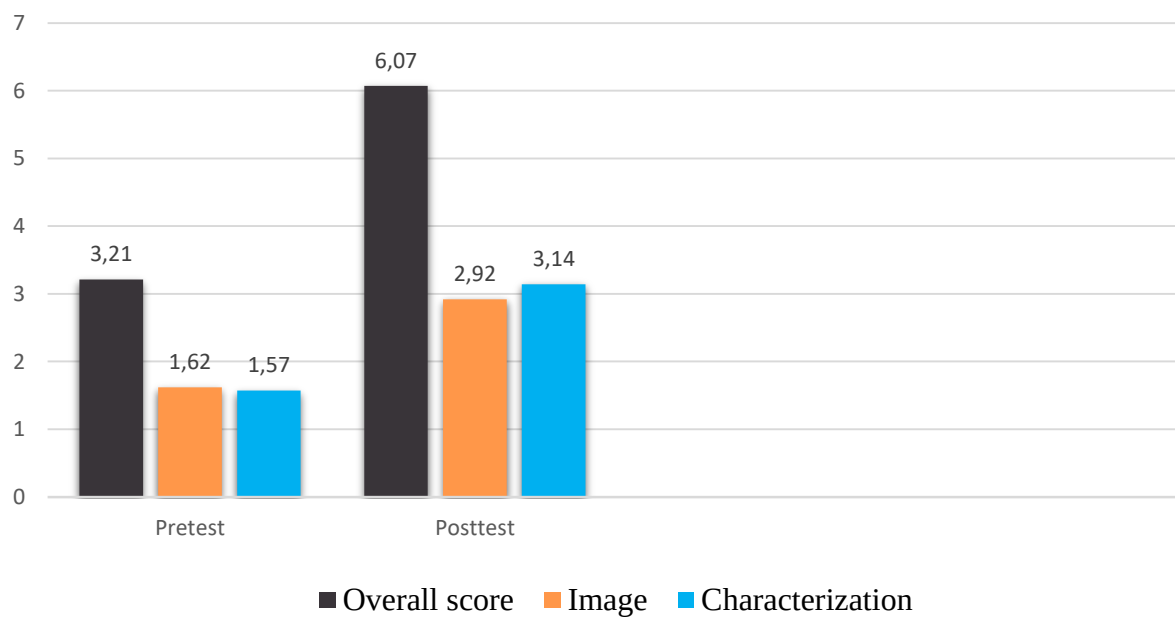


Figure 01: Graph Showing a Comparison Between the Pretest and Posttest Means

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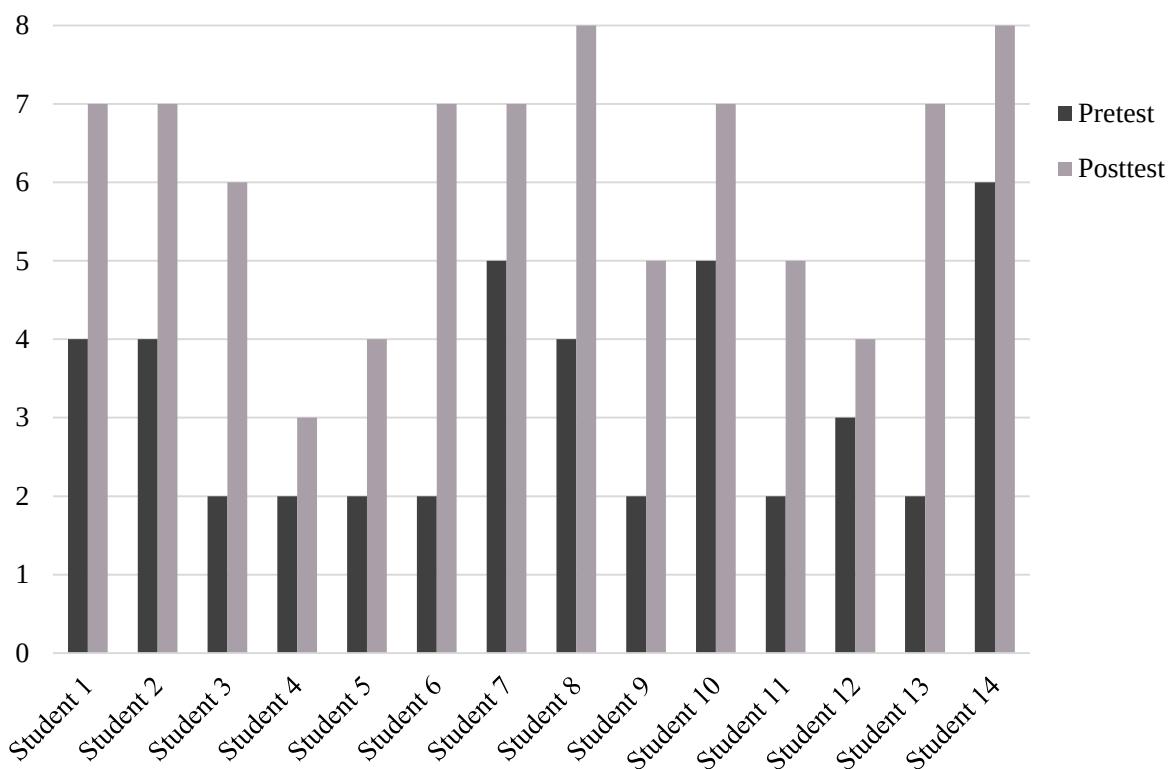


Figure 02. Students' Pretest vs. Posttest Overall Scores Comparison

5. Discussion

Judging from the data results, the novel-based workshop treatment proved to be an effective tool to improve the creative writing level of Master One students of English at Chadli Bendjedid University. The improvement was apparent in the increase in the mean of students' 'image' and 'characterization' and overall scores. In addition to the benefits that the workshop provides, students showed eagerness to learn and declared that they were excited to participate in the creative writing treatment. During the workshop, they showed positive attitudes towards it, and most of them asserted that they found the workshop beneficial, fun, and motivating which played a role in getting the best outcomes.

The workshop courses, which focused on the 'image' and 'characterization', made up for the shortage of time with the intensity and the deep discussions which were substantial parts of the workshop. The participants were introduced to the important role that the two criteria play in building a high-quality story. Each student tried to contribute to the discussions by giving thoughts, examples, and ideas about the best ways to apply the creative techniques. The results of these fruitful exchanges were clear in the students' later works.

In order to reinforce the newly acquired knowledge, the workshop relied on the use of the novel excerpts as a core element to provide the students with concrete examples about the application of the techniques in their natural context which gave them a better understanding and inspired them to develop their writing style. Having the participants read novels' portions gave them an insight into how the writers use different elements to create the appropriate setups for an effective 'image' and 'characterization' display. Furthermore, the imitation of the writers' techniques with an emphasis on keeping the participants' own style gave some

pleasant results which lead eventually to an increase in the post-test marks. This confirms Reyes' (2015: 2) claim that "imitative writing can be useful in exposing students to get a style and common patterns in writing"

The given handouts played an important role as instruments that the students could rely on to develop their writing and also as reminders that helped them acquire new techniques, rules, and vocabulary. At the end of each workshop session, the worksheet exercises were essential to put their knowledge into practice, stand on the lacks and what needs to be improved and the results confirmed their level growth and level of understanding.

All of the above-mentioned elements contributed to the development of the students' 'image' and 'characterization' writing techniques, which led to the significant improvement of their creative writing level. This answers the research question by validating that, indeed, the creative writing workshop does improve EFL students' creative writing level. Therefore, it can be an effective and feasible technique to foster creative writing at universities. Furthermore, the experiment gives an evident answer to a recurring question in the creative writing field: "*Can creative writing be taught?*" (Harper, 2: 2015; Earnshaw, 4: 2014); the results confirm that teaching creative writing is possible by improving the students' creative writing techniques. Finally, the research results are encouraging for higher education institutes to set up a novel-based creative writing workshop project which would benefit universities' own image and reputation.

6. Recommendations

In order to turn Chadli Bendjedid University into a centre where talented writers can polish their skills under professional guidance and with the necessary equipment, a set of recommendations was established based on the results of the novel-based creative writing workshop experiment. These recommendations aim to establish the basis for a successful creative writing programme that would benefit the students' creative writing competencies, help improve the university's reputation, and be an innovative source of income.

Given the fact that the institution is in need of teachers who are specialized in creative writing and generally in literature, the university is advised to invest in sending teachers to creative writing training events and seminars. In this regard, MacCorquodale et al. (2011) indicate that creative writing is designed to be taught by teachers who are interested enough and have a good understanding of the creative writing process. Having qualified and well-formed teachers who are able to oversee the creative writing workshop is required. Trained teachers would have the eligibility and experience to determine the students' needs, assess their work and guide them to exploit their full potential.

The project should be backed with administrative support. It is necessary that the university shows a serious commitment and financial assistance towards the integration of the creative writing workshop. It may prove to be a good investment. A suitable writing atmosphere is important to the success of the workshop. Having decent and accessible university infrastructures that can provide a fitting space as a workshop would maintain a convenient place for writing, listening, exchanging feedback, and better concentration. A rich and accessible university library that holds a myriad of literary books which can be used in the workshop is essential.

Moreover, the university's creative writing programme should be introduced and promoted by taking the initiative in participating in and hosting creative writing events, conferences, and tournaments in collaboration with art and culture affiliations and clubs. Cooperation with well-

known culture clubs that have experience in organizing these kinds of gatherings and competitions would be a good and motivational opportunity to put students' skills into practice, exchange expertise and even attract publishers' attention in addition to its advertising factor. As the university's creative writing programme gains more prominence, inviting well-known writers to present about creative writing at conferences and share their experiences may inspire and influence students, provide them with learning opportunities, and give them new perspectives on the creative writing craft.

The creative writing workshop should also be open for graduate students who wish to take further courses in exchange for a small fee which can be an investment for the workshop's decoration, materials, organizing competitions or even nourishing Chadli Bendjdid University's library which lacks literary books. Hosting guest students who are interested in creative writing from other streams and faculties can be a valuable occasion to acquire new knowledge and exchange experiences that would help boost the students' creative writing quality.

Technological devices should be made available as computers would offer students a professional writing experience in which they can easily write and edit their manuscripts without hindrance or handwriting problems. Furthermore, the digital exchange of written assignments between the teacher and the students would allow a smooth feedback and assessment process. Students can also make use of the different word processing programs and assisting tools available on the internet such as online dictionaries.

In an initiative to urge Chadli Bendjdid University's students toward a professional creative writing career, the university can form partnerships with publishing companies and invite publishers to examine the workshop students' work. This may open opportunities for students to publish their first work and engage in their writing career after they acquired the publishing basics during the workshop.

7. Conclusion

This study investigated whether or not adopting a novel-based creative writing workshop would improve EFL students' creative writing level. In this regard, the research was conducted with 14 Master One students of English at Chadli Bnedjedid University who were subjected to a period of treatment between a pretest and posttest settings which evaluated their creative writing level in narrative fiction.

The research data for both the pretest and posttest were quantitatively analysed, and the findings showed that after being introduced to the novel-based creative writing workshop, the participants' creative writing skills significantly improved which was apparent in the increase of the participants' scores in narrative fiction's 'image' and 'characterization' attributes. The results of this research showed that creative writing attested to the presumption that adopting the novel-based creative writing workshop improves EFL students' creative writing skills and that creative writing can be taught.

This study provided a set of recommendations and pedagogical suggestions in order to pave the way for a successful creative writing programme at Chadli Bendjeddi University and make the university a cultural and creative writing centre that forms future published writers. Standing upon Chadli Bendjedid EFL teachers' and students' readiness and attitude towards creative writing, further research may be conducted to explore their perceptions towards the creative writing craft.

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