



“School of Humanities”

“The Teaching of English as a Foreign/International Language”

Postgraduate Dissertation “Investigating the Potential for Integrating Creative Writing into the EFL Curriculum: Perceptions of Secondary Education English as a Foreign Language Teachers in Greece”

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Patras, Greece, June 2024

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“Investigating the Potential for Integrating Creative Writing into the EFL Curriculum: Perceptions of Secondary Education English as a Foreign Language Teachers in Greece”

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Acknowledgments

After researching for months, whilst working long hours at my job, this endeavour and research journey comes to an end.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Kourkouli immensely for her valuable support, and guidance throughout this journey. She went above and beyond to help me achieve this huge task. Her commentary and insight carried me through this process and none of this would be possible without her emotional support and patience.

I would also like to thank my mom, sister, partner and friends who have been a constant support all this time and who have been cheering me on to finish this Dissertation from the guidelines. You know who you are and I appreciate you dearly.

Last but not least, I would like to thank all the EFL teachers that spent their time to willingly answer the questionnaire, because it was due to their contribution and input that this research ended up being fruitful.

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Abstract

This study investigates the potential for integrating creative writing into the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curriculum in Greek secondary education by examining the perceptions of EFL teachers. The research addresses four key questions: the extent of awareness and implementation of creative writing, teachers' attitudes towards different types of creative writing, perceptions of its value and usefulness, and the availability and need for professional training in creative writing. The findings reveal that while Greek secondary education EFL teachers generally have positive attitudes towards creative writing and recognize its educational value, practical challenges and variability in implementation exist. Teachers reported several obstacles, including limited class time, a crowded curriculum, and a lack of resources specifically designed for creative writing. Additionally, there was considerable variability in how creative writing was incorporated into lessons, with some teachers dedicating regular sessions to creative writing activities, while others only touched on it sporadically. This inconsistency was often due to differing levels of confidence and experience among teachers, as well as varying degrees of institutional support. Teachers expressed a strong need for more professional development opportunities and institutional support to effectively integrate creative writing into their teaching practices. These insights highlight the importance of addressing the identified barriers and enhancing training programs to optimize the benefits of creative writing in EFL instruction in secondary public education in Greece.

Keywords

Creative Writing, EFL (English as a Foreign Language), EFL Curriculum, Secondary Education, Teacher Perceptions, Professional Development, Greek Education System, Teacher Awareness, Teacher Training, Curriculum Integration

Περίληψη

Αυτή η μελέτη διερευνά την δυνατότητα ενσωμάτωσης της δημιουργικής γραφής στο πρόγραμμα σπουδών της Αγγλικής ως Ξένης Γλώσσας (ΑΞΓ) στη δευτεροβάθμια εκπαίδευση στην Ελλάδα, εξετάζοντας τις αντιλήψεις των εκπαιδευτικών EFL. Η έρευνα επικεντρώνεται σε τέσσερα βασικά ερωτήματα: την έκταση της εξοικείωσης και εφαρμογής της δημιουργικής γραφής, τις στάσεις των εκπαιδευτικών απέναντι σε διάφορους τύπους δημιουργικής γραφής, τις αντιλήψεις για την αξία και την χρησιμότητά της και τη διαθεσιμότητα και την ανάγκη για επαγγελματική κατάρτιση στη δημιουργική γραφή. Τα ευρήματα αποκαλύπτουν ότι ενώ οι εκπαιδευτικοί Αγγλικής στη δευτεροβάθμια εκπαίδευση στην Ελλάδα γενικά έχουν θετικές στάσεις απέναντι στη δημιουργική γραφή και αναγνωρίζουν την εκπαιδευτική της αξία, υπάρχουν πρακτικές δυσκολίες και διαφοροποιήσεις στην εφαρμογή της. Οι εκπαιδευτικοί ανέφεραν αρκετά εμπόδια, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του περιορισμένου χρόνου μαθήματος, ενός φορτωμένου προγράμματος σπουδών και της έλλειψης πόρων που προορίζονται ειδικά για τη δημιουργική γραφή. Επιπλέον, υπήρχε σημαντική μεταβλητότητα στον τρόπο ενσωμάτωσης της δημιουργικής γραφής στα μαθήματα, με ορισμένους καθηγητές να αφιερώνουν τακτικές συνεδρίες στις δραστηριότητες δημιουργικής γραφής, ενώ άλλοι την αγγίζουν μόνο σποραδικά. Αυτή η ασυνέπεια συχνά οφειλόταν σε διαφορετικά επίπεδα εμπιστοσύνης και εμπειρίας μεταξύ των καθηγητών, καθώς και σε διαφορετικούς βαθμούς θεσμικής υποστήριξης. Οι εκπαιδευτικοί εξέφρασαν την έντονη ανάγκη για περισσότερες ευκαιρίες επαγγελματικής ανάπτυξης και θεσμική υποστήριξη για να ενσωματώσουν αποτελεσματικά τη δημιουργική γραφή στις διδακτικές τους πρακτικές. Αυτές οι πληροφορίες τονίζουν τη σημασία αντιμετώπισης των αναγνωρισμένων εμποδίων και ενίσχυσης των προγραμμάτων κατάρτισης για τη βέλτιστη αξιοποίηση των οφελών της δημιουργικής γραφής στην εκπαίδευση της Αγγλικής ως Ξένης Γλώσσας στη δημόσια δευτεροβάθμια εκπαίδευση στην Ελλάδα.

Λέξεις – Κλειδιά

Δημιουργική Γραφή, Αγγλικά ως Ξένη Γλώσσα (ΑΞΓ), Πρόγραμμα Σπουδών Αγγλικών, Δευτεροβάθμια Εκπαίδευση, Αντιλήψεις Εκπαιδευτικών, Επαγγελματική Ανάπτυξη, Ελληνικό Εκπαιδευτικό Σύστημα, Ενημέρωση Εκπαιδευτικών, Εκπαίδευση Εκπαιδευτικών, Ενσωμάτωση στο Αναλυτικό Πρόγραμμα

Introduction

During my final year of undergraduate studies in 2017, participating in the Erasmus+ student exchange program at the University of Brighton afforded me the opportunity to enroll in a creative writing module. Drawn by my longstanding interest in creative outlets, this experience profoundly reshaped my understanding of creativity and personal expression, setting the stage for my future as an English language teacher (Craft, 2005). Creative writing courses prioritize practical application over theoretical knowledge, encompassing styles such as short stories, novellas, poetry, and plays (Weldon, 2010). Despite initial apprehensions about workshops and receiving feedback, the collaborative environment fostered constructive discussions on themes, writing styles, and language elements (Craft, 2005; Spencer, Lucas, & Claxton, 2012).

This immersive experience bolstered my confidence in writing and significantly enhanced my ability to draft and revise texts—an essential skill in language teaching (Craft, 2005). Subsequently, during my master's studies, I delved deeper into Teacher Education in English Language Teaching (ELT). For a pivotal assignment, I developed a seminar on creative writing in education for English teachers, revealing a gap in training opportunities for public-school educators in Greece. This realization prompted my investigation into potential unmet needs among teachers, aiming to influence curriculum decisions at a broader level.

My academic journey led me to examine the extent of creative writing integration in Greek secondary EFL classrooms. Despite reviewing literature and curriculum guidelines, unanswered questions persisted, motivating me to focus my thesis on this aspect of EFL education. Recent research underscores the transformative potential of creativity in education, challenging traditional views and highlighting its role in fostering innovation and cognitive development (Robinson, 2011).

Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap by investigating the current state of creative writing in Greek EFL classrooms, exploring teachers' attitudes, perceptions, and professional development needs. By addressing these questions, the research seeks to inform curriculum enhancements and professional development initiatives, ultimately contributing to more effective English language teaching practices in Greek secondary education.

Creative writing has evolved to play a significant role in education, moving beyond the confines of traditional academic disciplines. Since the 1990s, its popularity has surged as a valuable educational tool, contributing to various aspects of learning (Craft, 2005, p.3). This shift is largely due to a broader understanding that creativity is not exclusive to the "talented" or "special" but is accessible to everyone. As a result, educators, psychologists, and policymakers have increasingly recognized the importance of fostering creative environments conducive to exploration and expression (Sæbø, McCammon, & O'Farrel, 2007).

In the context of English Language Teaching (ELT), creative writing is particularly relevant as it aids in the development of language skills and enhances cognitive learning outcomes (Robinson, 2011). This global trend underscores the potential benefits of integrating creative writing into EFL curricula, prompting a closer examination of its implementation and impact in specific educational contexts, such as Greek secondary education.

Motivated by these global trends, this study seeks to investigate the current state of creative writing in Greek secondary EFL classrooms. While there is widespread recognition of the benefits of creative writing internationally, its implementation in specific contexts, such as Greece, remains underexplored. Understanding the extent to which Greek EFL teachers incorporate creative writing into their teaching practices, their attitudes towards it, and their professional development needs is crucial. By addressing these aspects, the research aims to inform curriculum enhancements and professional development initiatives, ultimately contributing to more effective English language teaching practices in Greek secondary education.

By understanding the historical and theoretical underpinnings of creative writing in education, I aim to contribute to the ongoing dialogue about its role and potential, advocating for a more inclusive and innovative approach to language teaching that leverages the full spectrum of students' creative abilities.

For the purpose of identifying the aforementioned objectives, an online questionnaire was disseminated to EFL teachers in Greek secondary education. This method was chosen for its efficiency and broad reach (Dörnyei, 2007).

Research Focus and Thesis

This research aims to investigate the role of creative writing in English language learning (ELL) within Greek secondary education, focusing on teachers' beliefs, practices, and the potential integration of creative writing into the curriculum. The study explores how teachers perceive and utilize creative writing as a pedagogical tool, along with their interest in professional development opportunities related to creative writing.

Research Questions

To guide this exploration, the study addresses the following questions:

1. **Extent of Implementation and Awareness (RQ1):** To what extent are Greek secondary education EFL teachers familiar with creative writing practices, and to what extent do they incorporate these practices into their teaching?
2. **Attitudes towards Creative Writing (RQ2):** What are the attitudes of Greek secondary education EFL teachers towards integrating creative writing into their EFL teaching practices?
3. **Perceptions of Value and Usefulness (RQ3):** How do Greek secondary education EFL teachers perceive the value and usefulness of creative writing in enhancing English language learning among their students?
4. **Teacher Training and Educational Needs (RQ4):** What opportunities exist for Greek secondary education EFL teachers for training in creative writing, and how do they perceive the need for such education to achieve optimal teaching results?

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis unfolds in several chapters, each addressing specific aspects of the research:

1. **Introduction:** Provides an overview of the research topic, establishes the thesis statement, outlines the research questions, objectives, and discusses the significance of the study in the context of Greek EFL education.
2. **Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework**
 - Explores existing literature and theoretical foundations related to creativity in education, creativity in ELL, and the implications for integrating creative writing into language teaching within the Greek educational context.

3. Chapter 2: Methodological Framework

- Details the research methodology employed, including the design of the study and the methods used to collect and analyze data. It discusses considerations such as validity, reliability, and potential limitations of the research approach.

4. Chapter 3: Empirical Findings

- Presents and analyzes the data obtained from an online questionnaire distributed to EFL teachers in Greek secondary education. This chapter examines teachers' responses, identifies key trends, patterns, and insights regarding their perceptions and practices related to creative writing in the EFL curriculum.

5. Chapter 4: Discussion and Synthesis

- Synthesizes the empirical findings with the theoretical framework established in Chapter 1. This chapter critically discusses the implications of the research findings for practice, including recommendations for curriculum development, teacher training initiatives, and policy enhancement to effectively integrate creative writing into Greek EFL education.

6. Conclusion

- Summarizes the key findings of the study, reflects on their implications for enhancing English language teaching in Greek secondary education through creative writing, and proposes directions for future research in the field.

7. Appendices

- Includes supplementary materials such as the survey instrument used, detailed tables of data analysis, and additional resources referenced throughout the thesis.

1. Literature review

1.1 Introduction to the literature review

The aim of this literature review is to explore the role and significance of creative writing in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction, particularly within Greek secondary education. This review aligns with the research objective to investigate the current state of creative writing in EFL classrooms, examining its potential benefits, the pedagogical approaches involved, and the perceptions and professional development needs of teachers. By understanding these dimensions, this study aims to fill a gap in the literature and provide insights that can inform curriculum enhancements and teacher training programs.

1.2 Role and significance of writing in EFL

1.2.1 Writing as a fundamental skill

Writing is a fundamental component of language learning and literacy. It facilitates cognitive development, supports language learning, and enhances communication skills (Graham & Perin, 2007). Writing in a foreign language provides learners with opportunities to practice language structures, vocabulary, and grammatical rules, thereby reinforcing their overall language proficiency (Hyland, 2013). Furthermore, writing promotes critical thinking and allows learners to organize their thoughts and present arguments coherently, which are essential skills in both academic and professional contexts (Flower & Hayes, 1981).

In the context of EFL, writing serves as a crucial medium for language learners to express their ideas, reflect on their learning experiences, and interact with various texts. It also provides a platform for feedback, enabling learners to improve their linguistic accuracy and fluency over time (Nation, 2009). The act of writing itself engages multiple cognitive processes, including planning, drafting, revising, and editing, which collectively contribute to deeper language learning (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1987).

1.2.2 Creative writing's educational contributions

Creative writing, a form of writing that emphasizes imagination and self-expression, plays a unique role in education by fostering creativity, critical thinking, and emotional development (Fisher, 2004). It encourages students to experiment with language and develop their voice, making it a powerful tool for language learning and literacy (Cremin & Myhill, 2012). Creative writing activities can stimulate learners' interest and motivation, making language learning more engaging and enjoyable (Maley, 2012).

Moreover, creative writing helps learners to explore different perspectives and cultural contexts, enhancing their intercultural competence and empathy (Harmer, 2004). By engaging in creative writing, students can express their personal experiences and emotions, which can lead to a deeper connection with the language and a more meaningful learning experience (Ladousse, 2004). The process of creating original texts also allows learners to apply their language knowledge in novel ways, promoting greater linguistic flexibility and innovation (Craft, 2005).

1.3 Pedagogical approaches to teaching writing

1.3.1 Product-based, process-based, and genre-based approaches

Teaching writing can be approached from various pedagogical perspectives, each with implications for creative writing. The product-based approach focuses on the final written product, emphasizing correctness and adherence to conventions (Pincas, 1982). This approach often involves providing models for students to imitate and focuses on producing polished, error-free texts. While this method can help students understand the structural aspects of writing, it may limit opportunities for creative expression and personal voice (Badger & White, 2000).

In contrast, the process-based approach prioritizes the stages of writing—planning, drafting, revising, and editing—encouraging students to see writing as a recursive process (Flower & Hayes, 1981). This approach promotes the development of writing skills through continuous feedback and revision, allowing students to refine their ideas and improve their texts over time. By focusing on the writing process, this method supports creativity and allows students to experiment with different ideas and styles (Tribble, 1996).

The genre-based approach, meanwhile, emphasizes understanding and producing different types of texts, helping students learn the conventions and purposes of various genres (Hyland, 2004). This approach integrates the teaching of writing with the study of genre features, enabling students to produce texts that meet specific communicative purposes. By exposing students to a variety of genres, this method encourages creativity and helps students develop a versatile writing repertoire.

These approaches collectively impact the use of creative writing in EFL classrooms by shaping how writing tasks are structured, how creativity is fostered, and how students engage with language and genre conventions (Hyland, 2004).

1.3.2 Creativity in writing process

Creativity in writing encompasses various stages that are elucidated by influential models such as Wallas' (1926) four-stage model and Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) concept of flow. These frameworks provide insights into how creative thinking unfolds throughout the writing process, contributing to a deeper understanding of how educators can foster and support creativity in their students.

Wallas' (1926) model outlines four distinct stages: preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification. During the preparation stage, writers gather information, brainstorm ideas, and engage in preliminary research to lay the groundwork for their writing task. This stage is crucial as it sets the foundation for the creative process by stimulating initial thoughts and inspirations.

Following preparation, the incubation stage allows for subconscious processing of these ideas. Writers may step away from direct engagement with the task, allowing thoughts and concepts to ferment and develop unconsciously. This stage is characterized by a period of reflection and internalization, where ideas may evolve organically without active cognitive effort.

The illumination stage represents a critical juncture where sudden insights and breakthroughs occur. These moments of clarity often emerge unexpectedly, marking a significant leap forward in the creative process. Writers may experience "aha" moments or sudden realizations that bring new perspectives or solutions to the forefront of their thinking.

Finally, the verification stage involves refining and evaluating the creative output generated during the previous stages. Writers critically assess their ideas, revise their drafts, and polish their work to enhance clarity, coherence, and effectiveness. This stage is iterative and may involve multiple cycles of revision as writers strive to achieve their intended communicative goals.

Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) concept of flow complements Wallas' (1926) model by emphasizing the psychological state of optimal experience during creative endeavors (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Flow occurs when individuals are fully immersed in an activity, experiencing deep concentration, intrinsic motivation, and a sense of enjoyment and fulfillment. In the context of writing, flow enables writers to enter a state

of heightened creativity and productivity, where ideas flow effortlessly, and the writing process feels seamless and engaging.

Educators can leverage these models to design writing activities that support creative thinking and facilitate the attainment of flow in students' writing experiences. By understanding the intricacies of each stage in Wallas' (1926) model and the conditions conducive to flow described by Csikszentmihalyi (1990), educators can create environments that nurture creativity, encourage experimentation with ideas and styles, and ultimately enhance students' proficiency in writing (Sawyer, 2012).

1.4 Creative writing in EFL instruction

1.4.1 Benefits and challenges

Creative writing offers several benefits for EFL learners, including enhanced language skills, increased motivation, and improved self-expression (Maley & Peachey, 2015). Creative writing tasks, such as writing short-stories, poetry, dialogues and collaborative writing can help students practice language in meaningful contexts, allowing them to use new vocabulary and grammatical structures in authentic ways. This experiential learning can lead to deeper language retention and greater confidence in language use (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000).

However, teachers may face challenges such as limited time, curriculum constraints, and a lack of confidence in their creative writing abilities (Nunan, 1989). In some educational contexts, there may be a greater emphasis on standardized testing and academic writing, which can limit opportunities for creative expression. Additionally, teachers may need professional development to effectively incorporate creative writing into their teaching practices and to support students in developing their creative writing skills.

1.4.2 Types of creative writing

Creative writing encompasses various forms, including poetry, drama, and short stories, each with distinct educational benefits. Poetry encourages linguistic creativity and emotional expression, allowing students to experiment with language and rhythm (Spencer, Lucas, & Claxton, 2012). Drama promotes collaborative learning and spoken language skills, as students work together to create and perform scripts (Wagner, 1998).

Short stories help develop narrative skills and cultural awareness, providing opportunities for students to explore different perspectives and experiences (Hedge, 2005).

Building on the benefits of creative writing in EFL education, Fearnside (2009) defines creative writing as writing that goes beyond conventional boundaries to explore imaginative and original ideas. This definition highlights the importance of creativity and innovation in the writing process. By engaging in different forms of creative writing, students can develop a range of skills and deepen their understanding of language and culture.

1.5 Teacher perceptions, practices, and development

1.5.1 Influence of teacher beliefs

Teachers' beliefs profoundly influence their instructional practices and teaching approaches across various dimensions, including their attitudes towards students, preferred teaching methods, and the importance they attribute to different educational aspects. Within the realm of language teaching, integrating creative writing hinges significantly on teachers' perspectives regarding creativity, language acquisition, and the role of writing in education (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

Educators who hold positive beliefs about creativity often regard creative writing as a potent tool for enriching language learning experiences. They perceive creative writing tasks as opportunities for students to express themselves authentically, delve into language usage in meaningful ways, and cultivate their communicative skills beyond the confines of traditional academic writing (Borg, 2006). Such teachers are inclined to foster classroom environments that encourage risk-taking, experimentation, and the exploration of diverse viewpoints through writing activities (Richardson, 1996).

Conversely, educators who harbor negative or skeptical views towards creative writing may resist its integration into the curriculum. Concerns about its perceived complexity in assessment or its perceived lesser importance compared to other language learning components may lead them to prioritize conventional language instruction methods over creative expression (Borg, 2006). This mindset can curtail opportunities for students to engage deeply with language and overlook the cognitive and emotional benefits that creative writing can offer.

Furthermore, teachers' beliefs not only shape their personal attitudes towards creativity but also dictate their instructional decisions and classroom practices. Teachers who recognize the value of creative writing are more inclined to incorporate a variety of writing tasks such as narratives, poetry, and storytelling into their lessons (Maley & Peachey, 2015). This holistic approach not only enhances students' language proficiency but also bolsters their motivation to learn and their capacity to articulate thoughts effectively in the target language.

Understanding the underpinnings of teachers' beliefs regarding creative writing is pivotal for developing curricula and implementing professional development initiatives aimed at enriching language education. By addressing and supporting teachers' perspectives on creative writing, educational stakeholders can foster more engaging and effective language learning environments that cater to the diverse needs of students.

Research indicates that teachers' beliefs regarding creativity profoundly influence their instructional decisions and the nature of activities they implement in the classroom (Stipek, 2002). Teachers who recognize creative writing as pivotal to language learning are more inclined to integrate creative writing tasks into their lessons and to foster an environment where students can creatively express their ideas (Pennington, 1996).

1.5.2 Professional development and CPD

Professional development is integral to equipping teachers with the necessary skills and confidence to effectively integrate creative writing into their instructional practices. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities play a pivotal role in addressing gaps in knowledge and enhancing teachers' competencies (Day, 1999). These programs focus on fostering creativity in teaching practices, promoting ongoing training and development, and supporting the process of teacher change within educational contexts (Craft, 2005).

In teacher education, the process of professional development involves more than just skill acquisition; it encompasses transformative learning experiences that align with adult learning principles (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). Adult learners, including educators, benefit from programs that are learner-centered, contextualized, and collaborative, facilitating meaningful engagement and application of new knowledge (Knowles, Holton III, & Swanson, 2015).

Effective CPD programs often employ diverse methodologies such as:

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- **Workshops:** Provide structured learning environments for exploring innovative teaching strategies.
- **Collaborative Projects:** Encourage peer learning and the exchange of best practices.
- **Mentoring:** Support individualized professional growth and reflective practice.
- **Online Learning Modules:** Offer flexible opportunities for self-paced learning and skill development.
- **Action Research:** Engage teachers in systematic inquiry to improve their own teaching practices (OECD, 2009).

These methods are essential for enhancing teachers' instructional capabilities, particularly in integrating creative writing effectively into their classrooms (Kennedy, 2005). Ongoing support mechanisms ensure that teachers can navigate challenges associated with curriculum integration and student engagement (Guskey, 2000).

By participating in CPD initiatives grounded in adult learning principles, teachers can continuously update their knowledge base, refine their teaching practices, and adapt to evolving educational standards (Merriam et al., 2007). This proactive approach not only supports teacher professional growth but also enriches student learning experiences through enhanced creativity and engagement in language education.

1.6 Creative writing within the Greek EFL context

1.6.1 Current integration in Greek secondary education

In Greece, the integration of creative writing in EFL instruction remains underdeveloped. This study aims to address this gap by examining current practices and identifying areas for enhancement. Despite the recognized benefits of creative writing, its adoption in Greek secondary education is limited, primarily due to curriculum constraints and insufficient teacher training. The official EFL curriculum (Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports, 2023) outlines the importance of creative writing in enhancing teaching methodologies and achieving learning objectives, yet practical implementation lags behind. By scrutinizing the existing curriculum and gathering insights from EFL teachers, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the obstacles and opportunities related to the integration of creative writing in Greek secondary education.

Greek secondary education places a strong emphasis on grammar and vocabulary acquisition, often at the expense of creative and communicative language activities. This study seeks to understand the extent to which creative writing is currently used in EFL classrooms and to identify the factors that influence its implementation.

To support these assertions, it is essential to consider the Greek EFL curriculum (2023) guidelines and their implications for English language teaching practices in Greece. The curriculum outlines specific learning objectives and instructional strategies for the teaching of English, yet it lacks explicit support for integrating creative writing into the instructional framework. This gap underscores the need for targeted professional development initiatives and curriculum reforms to empower teachers and enrich student learning experiences in EFL classrooms.

1.6.2 Importance in secondary ELT

Creative writing is widely acknowledged for its capacity to enhance literacy and language proficiency across different educational levels. In secondary education, it assumes a pivotal role in fostering critical thinking and communication skills (Ellis, 2012). Through creative writing activities, students engage in exploring intricate concepts, honing their analytical prowess, and advancing their overall language competence.

Research by Ellis (2012) underscores the transformative impact of creative writing on secondary students' cognitive and linguistic development. By actively participating in creative writing tasks, students not only refine their language skills but also cultivate deeper insights into diverse subject matters. This process facilitates a dynamic approach to learning that encourages students to articulate their thoughts creatively while expanding their communicative abilities. In the context of Greek secondary education, integrating creative writing into EFL instruction can provide students with opportunities to develop their language skills in engaging and relevant ways, supporting their academic and personal growth.

1.7 Existing research and gap in literature

While some studies have examined writing instruction competencies and students' narrative skills in international contexts (Drew, 1998; Larsen, 2009), there is a scarcity of research specifically focusing on creative writing in the Greek educational system. Drew (1998) emphasizes the importance of developing writing competencies among

teachers to enhance student outcomes, and Larsen (2009) highlights the role of narrative skills in fostering cross-cultural understanding and communication. However, these studies do not address the specific challenges and opportunities related to creative writing in the Greek EFL context.

Existing literature on creative writing in education primarily focuses on broader educational contexts, leaving a void in country-specific insights explores creative writing practices in Greek secondary education, revealing a lack of systematic integration into the curriculum. The role of creativity is examined in Greek EFL classrooms, identifying significant barriers to implementation, such as insufficient training and support for teachers.

This study's significance and value lie in examining Greek secondary education EFL teachers' beliefs and decisions regarding creative writing. By filling this research gap, the study aims to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the current state of creative writing in Greek EFL classrooms and to identify pathways for enhancing teacher training and curriculum development. Specifically, this research aims to examine the beliefs of EFL teachers regarding the utilization of creative writing in their classrooms and to explore their interest in training to enhance their competency in this area. By doing so, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how creative writing can be more effectively integrated into the Greek EFL curriculum.

1.8 Research value

As discussed earlier and detailed in the introduction, the integration of creative writing in schools and the broader concept of creativity are subjects of ongoing debate among educators and policymakers. This debate centers on the balance between fostering creativity and ensuring the development of fundamental academic skills. Researchers such as Craft (2001, 2003, 2005) and Spencer Lucas, and Claxton (2012) have extensively explored these issues, particularly in the UK and the US, highlighting both the potential benefits and challenges of incorporating creative writing into the curriculum.

On one hand, proponents like Craft (2005) argue that fostering creativity in education can significantly enhance student engagement and cognitive development. Creative writing, in particular, is seen as a powerful tool for encouraging self-expression, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. Claxton et al. (2012) further emphasize that

creativity is essential for preparing students to navigate complex, real-world problems, thereby equipping them with the skills needed for future success.

On the other hand, critics like Buckingham and Jones (2001) caution that an overemphasis on creativity can potentially undermine the development of essential academic skills and rigorous content knowledge. They argue that without a solid foundation in basic literacy and numeracy, students may struggle to succeed in more advanced areas of study and in their future careers. Additionally, the subjective nature of assessing creative writing can pose challenges in maintaining consistent educational standards.

This ongoing debate highlights the need for a balanced approach that integrates creative writing into the curriculum while also ensuring that students acquire the necessary academic skills. By examining these complex issues, the present study aims to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how creative writing can be effectively utilized in Greek EFL classrooms.

While understanding the benefits and challenges of creative writing in education is crucial, gaining insight into teachers' perspectives on the matter is equally essential. Teachers play a pivotal role in deciding whether and how creative writing is integrated into classroom instruction. Engaging with teachers' beliefs and practices can offer valuable insights into the current landscape of creative writing education. This research endeavors to provide much-needed insights into teachers' views and may pave the way for new understandings of the factors influencing the current status and implementation of creative writing in Greek EFL classrooms. By examining teachers' attitudes and practices, the study aims to identify barriers and opportunities for enhancing the role of creative writing in language education.

1.9 Conclusion of literature review

In conclusion, this literature review has explored the multifaceted role of creative writing in EFL instruction, emphasizing its educational benefits, pedagogical approaches, and the importance of teacher perceptions and professional development. It has identified a significant research gap in the Greek context, where there is limited systematic integration of creative writing into the EFL curriculum. Existing studies highlight the importance of developing writing competencies and narrative skills

(Drew, 1998; Larsen, 2009), but they do not specifically address the challenges faced by Greek EFL teachers in incorporating creative writing.

The review also underscores the need for understanding teachers' beliefs and experiences, as these play a crucial role in the successful integration of creative writing into classroom practices. Professional development and continuous training are essential to equip teachers with the necessary skills and confidence to use creative writing effectively in their instruction.

By addressing these themes, this review sets the groundwork for investigating the integration of creative writing in Greek secondary EFL education, aiming to provide insights that can inform curriculum enhancements and professional development initiatives. The overarching goal is to examine the beliefs of Greek EFL teachers regarding creative writing, their current practices, and their interest in further training. This study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding if creative writing can be more effectively integrated into the Greek EFL curriculum, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of EFL instruction and fostering students' creativity and language skills.

2. Research methodology

2.1. Introduction

This chapter delineates the research methodology utilized to investigate the possibility of integrating creative writing in English Language Teaching (ELT) within the Greek secondary educational context. The study employs a quantitative approach to systematically gather and analyze data, aiming to address the research questions derived from the study's objectives. The methodology chosen aligns with the need to explore EFL teachers' perceptions, practices, and professional development needs regarding creative writing in ELT.

Creswell (2014) emphasizes the importance of quantitative methods in educational research for systematically investigating variables and outcomes. This approach supports the study's aim to statistically analyze teachers' responses to identify trends and patterns in their beliefs and practices.

Richards and Rodgers (2014) provide a comprehensive overview of language teaching methodologies, which underpins the study's focus on innovative teaching practices such as integrating creative writing into the ELT curriculum. Their work highlights the need for diverse instructional strategies to enhance language learning, supporting the rationale for exploring creative writing as a pedagogical tool.

2.2 Methodology and rationale

This section outlines the methodological approach employed to investigate the role of creative writing in English Language Teaching (ELT) within the Greek secondary educational setting. The study addresses four research questions (RQs) aimed at exploring EFL teachers' familiarity with and integration of creative writing practices, their attitudes towards such integration, perceptions of its value in enhancing language learning, and their training needs in this area.

2.2.1 General research objectives and sub-questions

As mentioned previously, the overarching aim of this study is to examine the beliefs of teachers regarding the integration of creative writing in the classroom, alongside reviewing the guidelines provided by the official curriculum issued by the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports. The curriculum outlines the significance of creative writing in ELT, emphasizing its potential impact on teaching methodologies and learning objectives (Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports, 2023).

This study aims to explore the specific challenges that teachers might encounter in this endeavor, including conceptual, pedagogical, and practical obstacles. By analyzing data gathered from questionnaires administered to Greek secondary education EFL teachers, this inquiry seeks to provide insight into the current implementation status of creative writing within the local context and how the curriculum guidelines influence teachers' perspectives and practices.

To further address the core issue, the thesis will pose sub-questions designed to deepen the investigation. They encompass a range of inquiries aimed at offering diverse perspectives and a comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to the current state of creative activity in Greek schools.

The study focuses on the following research questions:

- **RQ1:** To what extent are Greek secondary education EFL teachers familiar with creative writing practices, and to what extent do they incorporate these practices into their teaching?
- **RQ2:** What are the attitudes of Greek secondary education EFL teachers towards the integration of creative writing in their EFL teaching practices?
- **RQ3:** How do Greek secondary education EFL teachers perceive the value and usefulness of creative writing in enhancing English language learning among their students?
- **RQ4:** What opportunities exist for Greek secondary education EFL teachers for training in creative writing, and to what extent do they perceive a need for such education to achieve optimal teaching results?

2.2.2 Methodological Approach

The research employs a descriptive quantitative approach to systematically collect and analyze data. This approach is chosen for its ability to quantify responses and derive statistical inferences from survey data (Creswell, 2014). The methodology includes the development and distribution of a structured questionnaire designed to capture EFL teachers' perceptions and practices related to creative writing in ELT.

2.2.3. Research Validity and Ethical Considerations

In this study, several measures are taken to enhance the validity of the research. First, the survey instrument is carefully designed to capture relevant constructs related to the

integration of creative writing in Greek secondary ELT, based on existing literature (Bryman, 2016).

Prior to full-scale distribution, the questionnaire underwent a pilot phase to assess clarity, reliability, and validity of the survey items (Smith, 2020). Ethical considerations, including participant privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity, were strictly adhered to throughout the data collection process. Participants were informed of their rights and the purpose of the study, with assurances that their responses would remain confidential and used solely for research purposes. Ethical guidelines outlined by relevant institutional review boards, including measures to obtain voluntary participation and protect participants' privacy, were strictly followed (Resnik, 2015). Additionally, the study adheres to the American Psychological Association's Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (American Psychological Association, 2017).

Participants in this study were provided with a written explanation outlining the objectives and procedures of the research at the beginning of the questionnaire. They were assured of the anonymity of their responses, with no collection of identifying information such as email addresses or names. Participants were also informed that they could access the results of the study upon request.

By rigorously addressing validity and reliability considerations, this research aims to produce robust and trustworthy findings that contribute to the existing knowledge base on the potential for implementing creative writing in language learning in secondary education in Greece.

2.2.4. Sample

The sample comprises 71 in-service English teachers from public secondary schools across Greece, encompassing both Junior and Senior High school levels (Smith, 2020). Targeting teachers in various regions across the country ensures geographic diversity, providing a broader perspective on the integration of creative writing practices in different educational contexts (Benson, 2012). This approach allows for insights into regional variations in teaching practices and perceptions related to creative writing in English language education.

2.3 Questionnaire

The research methodology employed in this study is a quantitative approach using survey research. Survey research is chosen due to its effectiveness in gathering data and measuring multiple opinions (Smith, 2020; Jones, 2015).

The questionnaire was based on the framework presented by Dornyei and Taguchi (2009). Some of the items have been modified by the researcher in order to examine the perceptions of EFL teachers towards creative writing and its potential to be integrated into the current curriculum. These modifications aimed to enhance relevance and applicability to the Greek secondary education context. Notably, adjustments were made to certain items to better align with the research objectives, such as refining questions on the challenges associated with creative writing activities. The questionnaire utilizes Likert scale and some open-ended questions to measure teachers' perceptions, attitudes, challenges, related to creative writing in the EFL curriculum. It consists of 26 items divided into four sections: personal and professional data, creative writing in EFL education, teachers' perceptions, teachers' training and professional development. This organization was chosen to streamline the questionnaire's structure, making it more accessible and less burdensome for participants.

The questionnaire is designed to gather comprehensive data on teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards creative writing integration, as well as their professional development needs in this area. Serving as a crucial instrument in social science research, the questionnaire facilitates the collection of data, insights into participants' characteristics, behaviors, and factors related to the research topic (Bulmer, 2004).

To reach the defined population, the researcher distributed the survey to EFL teachers through Facebook groups primarily consisting of English teachers in public education. Participants were encouraged to share the questionnaire with their colleagues to maximize participation and gather a broader range of responses. This distribution method aimed to ensure a comprehensive and diverse dataset, providing valuable insights into the current status and challenges of integrating creative writing into EFL instruction.

Furthermore, the questionnaire is structured into four distinct sections aimed at systematically exploring various facets of creative writing in English Language

Teaching (ELT) within the Greek secondary education context. Each section serves a specific purpose aligned with the study's objectives and research aims.

2.3.1 Section A: Demographic Information

Section A (questions 1-7, appendix I) gathers demographic data essential for profiling the respondents and contextualizing their responses within specific demographic categories. It includes questions concerning gender, age, academic qualifications, years of working experience, and years of experience as teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) (Smith, 2020). These demographic details are crucial as they provide foundational insights into the participants' backgrounds, and insights into potentially correlating these factors with their perceptions and practices related to creative writing in ELT.

2.3.2 Section B: Familiarity and Implementation of Creative Writing in EFL Education

Section B (Questions 1-8, appendix I) focuses on exploring the familiarity and implementation of creative writing practices among EFL teachers. This section comprises questions designed to assess teachers' familiarity with creative writing processes, their utilization of creative writing activities in classroom instruction, and their perspectives on the challenges associated with these activities (Jones, 2015). By examining these aspects, the section aims to uncover reasons behind teachers' decisions to adopt or omit creative writing techniques in their teaching practices.

This part has a few open-ended questions, as this type of questions serve several important purposes.

Firstly, it aims to uncover specific instances where teachers have successfully implemented creative writing activities (Smith, 2010). By asking for examples, researchers can gain firsthand accounts of what works well in educational settings. Secondly, it helps in understanding the strategies and methods teachers employ to integrate creative writing into their lessons effectively (Shen et. al, 2003). Teachers' responses provide valuable details about the types of activities, formats, themes, and student reactions that contribute to successful implementation.

Moreover, while quantitative data (like percentages and frequencies) provide a broad overview, qualitative responses to open-ended questions offer contextual richness (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). They provide depth by illustrating real-world applications

and the nuances of how creative writing is utilized within specific educational contexts. This qualitative data complements quantitative findings by offering insights into the motivations behind teachers' choices and their reflections on pedagogical practices.

Including the open-ended question enhances the study's comprehensiveness by bridging the gap between theoretical understanding and practical application. It allows researchers to triangulate data, providing a holistic view that informs recommendations for curriculum development and teacher training in creative writing within EFL education (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

2.3.3 Section C: Teachers' Perceptions

This section consists of 4 questions that are related to teachers' beliefs on creativity, 4 Items: Part C: Question 1-4

Section C delves into the beliefs and perceptions of EFL teachers regarding creativity and the integration of creative writing practices in ELT. It includes questions aimed at understanding teachers' attitudes towards creative writing as a pedagogical tool, their criteria for selecting materials to support creative writing instruction, and the perceived benefits or challenges associated with its implementation in the classroom (Borg, 2003).

Research consistently demonstrates that teachers' beliefs significantly impact classroom practices and student learning outcomes (Pajares, 1992; Borg, 2003). Teachers' beliefs about creativity and creative writing influence their instructional methods, the types of activities they prioritize, and their approaches to assessment (Borg, 2006; Norton, 2001). For instance, teachers who perceive creative writing as essential for enhancing language proficiency are more likely to integrate it into their teaching (Harmer, 2007). Conversely, beliefs that creative writing is time-consuming or difficult may hinder its implementation (Borg, 2006).

2.3.4 Section D: Teachers' Professional Development

Section D investigates the professional development experiences of EFL teachers in relation to creative writing. This section explores whether teachers have received formal training in creative writing, their perceptions of the adequacy of current resources and training opportunities, and their preferences for future professional

development initiatives (Craft, 2005). Understanding teachers' professional development needs is crucial for identifying strategies to enhance their confidence and competence in incorporating creative writing into ELT practices.

This section employs a mixed-methods approach, utilizing both closed-ended and open-ended questions to capture a comprehensive understanding of teachers' professional development experiences. Closed-ended questions, including Likert scales, offer a structured format with predefined response options, allowing teachers to indicate their agreement or disagreement on specific statements regarding training adequacy and resource sufficiency (Craft, 2005). Multiple-choice items are used to gather quantitative data on teachers' participation in formal training programs and their preferences for future professional development initiatives. These items include options for selecting specific types of training or indicating additional preferences, with an "other" category provided to capture diverse responses and nuanced perspectives.

Open-ended questions supplement these quantitative measures by inviting teachers to provide detailed explanations, examples, and suggestions regarding their professional development experiences related to creative writing. This qualitative data enriches the understanding of teachers' perceptions, challenges, and aspirations concerning creative writing instruction in EFL contexts. By offering a range of response options and ensuring inclusivity through the "other" category, this survey methodology aims to gather comprehensive insights into the diverse professional development needs of EFL teachers (Craft, 2005).

2.4 Data collection

Data collection occurred voluntarily between March and April 2024 from EFL teachers in secondary education, employing random sampling techniques. Participants were briefed on confidentiality and were encouraged to contact the researcher for any queries before engaging with the research instrument.

Before formal distribution, the questionnaire underwent a piloting phase. It was reviewed by three EFL teachers and former colleagues to enhance clarity of questions, instructions, and overall reliability. Following piloting, questions lacking differentiation were removed, and adjustments were made to options and expressions based on participants' suggestions. Formal distribution of the questionnaire ensued, resulting in the collection of 71 questionnaires. Distribution channels included online

distribution among various Facebook groups of in-service teachers in public education Greece, who were encouraged to further distribute it among their colleagues to maximize participation across different regions of Greece.

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Table 1. Stages and Main Elements in a Questionnaire Survey.

Stages	Main elements
Questionnaire construction	The main parts of a questionnaire Question types in the questionnaire Rules of writing questionnaire items
Questionnaire administration	Piloting questionnaires Sampling strategies Strategies to increase the return rate
Questionnaire processing and reporting	Doing reliability and validity analysis Statistical analysis Summarizing and reporting questionnaire data

2.5 Data analysis techniques

Quantitative data analysis involves the systematic examination of numerical data to identify patterns, relationships, and associations. The collected data underwent analysis using JASP (Jeffreys's Amazing Statistics Program), a statistical software known for its user-friendly interface and robust analysis capabilities (Love et al., 2019). JASP is particularly suited for survey research, offering tools for descriptive statistics and inferential analyses that align with the study's objectives (Van Doorn et al., 2021). Its open-source nature and growing popularity in the scientific community provide reliability and transparency in statistical reporting, aligning with best practices in contemporary research methodologies (Field, 2018).

The analysis will primarily focus on descriptive statistics to present the frequency and percentage of teachers' perceptions regarding creative writing in EFL education. To address the open-ended questions, qualitative data analysis and thematic analysis will be employed to identify recurring themes and patterns from the responses. This approach allows for a comprehensive exploration of participants' viewpoints, complementing the quantitative data gathered from Likert scale questions (Creswell, 2014; Braun & Clarke, 2006). By correlating themes from the open-ended responses

with the quantitative data, this study aims to provide a holistic understanding of teachers' perceptions and practices related to creative writing in the EFL context.

In this study, the author investigated if there were correlations between the variables, ensuring a nuanced exploration of relationships aligned with research objectives (Johnson et al., 2018). The researcher will calculate correlations using Excel and JASP software to determine associations between questionnaire responses and key research themes.

Tables summarizing the findings will be created using Excel to visually present the data in a clear and accessible format. This methodological choice ensures flexibility in data presentation while adhering to rigorous academic standards for clarity and transparency (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

2.6 Limitations of the study

Despite its strengths, quantitative research methodologies have inherent limitations that necessitate acknowledgment. One such limitation is the use of predetermined survey items (utilization of fixed response options in the questionnaire), which can constrain participants' responses and potentially overlook nuanced insights (Bryman, 2016). While structured surveys provide systematic data collection, they may not capture the full range of participant perspectives or unexpected findings that could emerge from more open-ended approaches.

Another limitation is the susceptibility to response biases and social desirability effects inherent in survey-based research (Groves et al., 2009). Participants may provide answers they perceive as socially acceptable or expected, rather than reflecting their true beliefs or experiences, thus potentially compromising the validity of the findings.

Additionally, the cross-sectional design employed in this study limits its ability to establish causal relationships or capture changes over time (Dillman et al., 2014). Longitudinal studies would be necessary to observe how perceptions and practices regarding creative writing in EFL education evolve over an extended period. Such studies could include interventions, such as targeted professional development programs or curriculum changes, to assess their long-term impact on teachers' attitudes and the implementation of creative writing practices. By tracking these interventions,

researchers could gain a deeper understanding of the factors that facilitate or hinder the integration of creative writing in EFL classrooms.

Moreover, the electronic distribution of surveys without direct oversight introduces the risk that participants may not fully engage with or respond consistently to the questions (Tourangeau et al., 2014). Future research could address this limitation by employing more interactive data collection methods or integrating qualitative interviews to supplement survey responses, providing richer insights into participants' perspectives.

Acknowledging these limitations underscores the need for caution in interpreting the findings and emphasizes opportunities for future studies to build upon this research, expand methodologies, and explore emerging trends in creative writing integration within EFL education. Future research could explore alternative data collection techniques such as focus groups or ethnographic approaches to gain deeper insights into the complex dynamics of creative writing instruction. Additionally, comparative studies across different educational contexts or longitudinal investigations could elucidate how perceptions and practices evolve over time and in response to educational reforms.

Furthermore, if future studies demonstrate successful outcomes and robust findings regarding the benefits of integrating creative writing into EFL education, there is potential for these findings to inform curriculum revision efforts. Educational policymakers and curriculum developers could use empirical evidence to advocate for and implement changes that better align with current pedagogical needs and student learning outcomes in language education.

2.7 Conclusion

The quantitative research methodology employed in this study offers a systematic and rigorous approach to investigate the integration of creative writing in Greek secondary education English Language Teaching (ELT) (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). By systematically collecting numerical data, analysing statistical relationships, and adhering to ethical guidelines, this research aims to contribute valuable insights into the role of creative writing in language learning and teaching practices within the Greek educational context (Johnson & Christensen, 2019).

3. Presentation of results

This section presents the analysis of the data collected through the questionnaires, focusing on exploring the perceptions and practices of Greek secondary education English Language Teaching (ELT) teachers regarding the integration of creative writing.

The data was primarily analysed using the JASP software (see section 2.8 above) to calculate frequencies and percentages. Microsoft Excel was utilized for data input and to create visual representations such as pie charts and graphs, which are included in Appendix III. The analysis process involved calculating percentages and examining correlations to respond to the research questions posed. The theoretical framework guiding this analysis is based on quantitative data analysis techniques, which allow for systematic investigation of the relationships between variables and support the research questions presented earlier.

Before jumping to the presentation of results, it is crucial to explain these terms which can be found in the data tables below:

Percent: This column typically represents the percentage of responses or cases relative to the total number of cases in the dataset. It shows the distribution of responses as a percentage of the total sample size.

Valid percent: This column adjusts the percentage calculation by accounting for missing data or responses that are considered invalid or not applicable. It excludes cases with missing or invalid responses from the denominator when calculating percentages. Valid percent gives a more accurate picture of the distribution among valid responses.

Cumulative percent: This column shows the running total of valid percentages as you move down the list of categories or responses. It helps in understanding the cumulative distribution of responses up to a certain point in the dataset.

3.1 Presentation of questionnaire results

3.1.1 Demographic information

The first part of the presentation focuses on Table 1, where the teachers' gender is revealed. All 71 participants replied and the men constitute 14% of the participants, while the women occupy almost 86%.

Table 1: Gender distribution of participants

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Man	10	14.1%	14.1%	14.1%
Woman	61	85.9%	85.9%	100.0%
Total	71	100.0%	100.0%	

In Table 2 and Graph 2 (see both in Appendix III) regarding the ages of the participants, approximately 37% are EFL teachers aged 41-50, followed by 31-40 (28%), 21-30 (23%) and lastly 51-60 (11%).

Table 2: Age distribution of participants

Age group	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
21-30	16	22.5%	22.5%	22.5%
31-40	20	28.2%	28.2%	50.7%
41-50	26	36.6%	36.6%	87.3%
51-60	8	11.3%	11.3%	98.6%
Other	1	1.4%	1.4%	100.0%
Total	71	100.0%	100.0%	

Table 3 and Graph 3 (see Appendix III), indicate the teachers' educational level. More than half of them 55% have a postgraduate degree in their possession, 36% hold a university degree and 8% have a Ph.D. It can be inferred that 63% of the participants possess advanced skills and qualifications for teaching in public education be teaching in public education, so it is interesting to see how their beliefs are shaped regarding creative writing's implementation in class.

Table 3: Educational level of participants

Educational level	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Ph.D.	6	8.5%	8.5%	8.5%
Postgraduate	39	54.9%	54.9%	63.4%

Educational level	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
University Degree	26	36.6%	36.6%	100.0%
Total	71	100.0%	100.0%	

Furthermore, teachers were asked to record their working experience in years. The results indicate a relatively experienced group of participants. 34% of reported having worked between 11-20 years, 28% have been working for 6-10, while 23% has 0-5 working experience. The rest 15% have a long experience spreading from 21 years and more. All the percentages mentioned are according to Table 4 and Graph 4 (see both in Appendix III).

Table 4: Years of working experience

Years of experience	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
0-5	16	22.5%	22.5%	22.5%
6-10	20	28.2%	28.2%	50.7%
11-20	24	33.8%	33.8%	84.5%
21+	11	15.5%	15.5%	100.0%
Total	71	100.0%	100.0%	

Furthermore, 42% of the teachers are substitute teachers, 35% are permanently appointed and 23% work on an hourly basis. Almost half of them, 49% are from an urban area, 27% from a semi-urban area (town) and 24% reside in rural areas (villages).

Continuing, the majority of participants teach in Junior and Senior High Schools (90% combined), which makes sense since secondary English teachers often teach across multiple grades based on demand. Given that on average each grade has to study English for three teaching hours/week, then for most teachers teaching both junior and senior high school is normal. The remaining 10% of the participants teaches in Technical Vocational School.

Table 5: Teaching levels of participants

Teaching level	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Junior High School	32	45.1%	45.1%	45.1%
Technical Vocational School	7	9.9%	9.9%	54.9%
Senior High School	32	45.1%	45.1%	100.0%
Total	71	100.0%	100.0%	

3.1.2 Awareness and use of creative writing

Moving on, regarding the first research objective and sub-question which asks about the extent that Greek secondary education EFL teachers in state schools are aware of creative writing as a practice, the questionnaire's replies reveal that 48% of them are familiar with it, 38% being somewhat familiar with the practice. Lastly, 8% are highly familiar and 6% are not familiar at all (see Table).

Awareness of creative writing is crucial for EFL teachers as it expands their instructional repertoire beyond traditional language learning approaches. Creative writing fosters students' linguistic creativity, allowing them to explore language in diverse and imaginative ways. For EFL teachers, understanding creative writing practices enhances their ability to engage students actively in language acquisition, making learning more meaningful and enjoyable (Craft, 2003). It also supports the development of critical thinking, communication skills, and cultural understanding among students. By promoting awareness of creative writing, EFL teachers can effectively integrate innovative teaching methods that cater to different learning styles and enhance overall language proficiency (Spencer, Lucas, & Claxton, 2012). This knowledge empowers teachers to adapt their teaching strategies to create inclusive and stimulating learning environments that nurture students' language development and creativity.

Table 6: Familiarity with creative writing in EFL

Familiarity level	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Not at all	4	5.6%	5.6%	5.6%

Familiarity level	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Somewhat familiar	27	38.0%	38.0%	43.7%
Familiar	34	47.9%	47.9%	91.5%
Highly familiar	6	8.5%	8.5%	100.0%
Total	71	100.0%	100.0%	

Now, concerning the second sub-question, a significant majority of participants (76%) reported having utilized creative writing in their classrooms, whereas 24% indicated they have not (see Table 7). This statistic is noteworthy considering that creative expression is not a formal part of the curriculum's objectives. It suggests that teachers believe integrating creative writing methods can enhance their students' learning efforts and overall educational experience (Craft, 2005; Spencer, Lucas, & Claxton, 2012). By incorporating these methods, teachers aim to foster students' language proficiency, creativity, and critical thinking skills, which are essential for their academic and personal development.

Table 7: Utilization of creative writing in class

Utilization	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
No	17	23.9%	23.9%	23.9%
Yes	54	76.1%	76.1%	100.0%
Total	71	100.0%	100.0%	

All 71 participants were asked, as part of the questionnaire, to rate some factors and how they affected their lack of implementation of creative writing in class. Insufficient training in creative writing was a moderate factor in 27%, 16% considered it a major factor and 15% and 13% considered it "a minor factor" and "not a factor" respectively. Then, concerning their personal comfort level with these methods, 26% consider it a moderate factor, 23% a minor factor, and 11% replied with "a major factor and "not a factor".

Regarding the factors influencing the exclusion of creative writing exercises from the curriculum, 20% of participants viewed it as a "minor factor" or "moderate factor," while 18% considered it a "major factor," and only 13% believed it was "not a factor."

Time constraints emerged as the predominant issue, with 26% identifying it as a "major factor," 18% as a "minor factor," 16% as a "moderate factor," and 11% as "not a factor." Lastly, participants indicated that their personal preferences for other writing methods were a "moderate factor" for 27%, "minor factor" or "not a factor" for 20%, and a "major factor" for just 4% of respondents.

Table 8: Factors influencing the decision not to incorporate creative writing

Factors influencing decision	(In percentages %)	Not a factor	A minor factor	A moderate factor	A major factor
Insufficient training in creative writing	13	15	27	16	
Personal comfort level with such methods	11	23	26	11	
Familiarity with creative writing techniques	10	19	24	18	
Creative writing exercises not included in the curriculum	13	20	20	18	
Time constraints	11	18	16	26	
Preference for other writing methods	20	20	27	4	

"What genres are predominantly employed?" An overwhelming 69% of teachers have implemented "short stories" as an activity "collaborative writing" is following close behind with more than half of the teachers (53%) choosing it. Also, "journal writing" is quite popular with 32% and lastly "poetry" and "dramatic writing" share a 25% each.

Table 9: Types of creative writing activities used

Activity Type	Frequency	Percent
Journal writing	23	32%
Poetry	18	25%

Activity Type	Frequency	Percent
Short stories	49	69%
Collaborative writing	38	53%
Dramatic writing	18	25%
Other	2	2%
Descriptions	1	1%
Social media posts	1	1%
Narrative interactive games	1	1%

Table 10: Challenges in integrating creative writing

Challenge	Frequency	Percent
Student reluctance	21	31%
Limited time	28	41%
Difficulty assessing and evaluating assignments	16	23%
Limited access to resources and materials	20	29%
Lack of support from colleagues or parents	6	9%
Balancing with curriculum requirements	29	43%
Classroom management issues	14	20%
Other	8	11%

However, although teachers have implemented some creative activities in their classroom, the question still remains: what is the extent of their active implementation? Judging from question 6 of the second part of the questionnaire, a 43% is struggling with "balancing creative writing with the other curriculum requirements", a 41% "struggles with limited time" and a 31% states their students' reluctance as one of the challenges they face during creative writings' integration in the EFL class. So, it can be inferred that the implementation is not constant judging from the answers, national curriculum's lack of creative writing activities and at the same time demanding requirements to be met throughout the school year, could potentially be a reason why creativity is hindered in view for more traditional genres of writing.

Table 11: Future use of creative writing activities

Activity Type	Frequency	Percent
Journal writing	39	54%
Poetry	39	54%
Short stories	35	49%
Collaborative writing	39	54%
Dramatic writing	36	50%
Other	4	5%
Social media posts	1	1%

To address the objective concerning EFL teachers' attitudes towards creative writing, it is noteworthy that not a single respondent indicated reluctance to incorporate creative writing if given the opportunity. This insight emerges from the responses gathered in question 4 of the second part of the questionnaire (see Appendix I), where teachers were asked to select types of creative writing activities they would consider integrating into their lessons. More than half expressed interest in journal writing, poetry, collaborative writing, and theatrical plays, which is addressed by question 4 of the questionnaire (see Appendix I).

3.1.2. Teachers' qualitative insights and experiences on creative writing practices

Accordingly, the open-ended question (Part B, question 5, appendix I), "Could you provide an example of a successful creative writing activity that you would use or have already used during class?" was strategically included in the questionnaire to elicit detailed qualitative insights from participants regarding their practical experiences with creative writing in the classroom.

In response to the open-ended question about successful creative writing activities used or envisioned by teachers, the participants provided a diverse array of examples, highlighting their innovative approaches and the positive reception from students. Many teachers emphasized the success of collaborative writing activities. For instance, one teacher described a project with first-year Senior High School students who collaboratively wrote an opinion essay on animal rights. Similarly, other examples include students working together to create short stories inspired by Vincent Van

Gogh's biography or contributing to a story chain that involved multiple rounds of collaborative additions, 32 respondents noted having utilized a form of a creative writing activity (see Table 9 above and Table 12 below).

Short story writing was another prevalent activity, often initiated by providing students with a story beginning, ending, or specific phrases to incorporate. This method was noted to be engaging and enjoyable for students, fostering creativity and narrative skills. Additionally, dramatic writing projects, such as writing and performing a school play, were mentioned as effective means to integrate creative expression with collaborative efforts (see Table 9 above and Table 12 below).

Short story writing and dramatic writing are prominent educational activities noted for fostering creativity and language proficiency among students. Short story writing encourages concise narrative structuring, character development, and plot creation, enhancing language mechanics and critical thinking skills (Craft, 2005). Meanwhile, dramatic writing engages students in dialogue, characterization, and plot development through performance, promoting empathy and teamwork (Spencer et al., 2012). Both activities provide platforms for self-expression and collaboration, enriching students' linguistic abilities and imaginative capacities within educational settings (Robinson, 2011). Integrating these creative writing forms into curricula supports holistic student development by empowering them as confident communicators and expressive individuals (Craft, 2005; Spencer et al., 2012).

Some teachers (2) incorporated journal writing, with themes ranging from personal reflections to character diaries from literature lessons. Others experimented with thematic prompts, like writing from the perspective of a human organ or creating holiday-related stories. Poetry also featured prominently, with several teachers having students write haikus or poems on topics like climate change (see Tables 9 and 12).

Journal writing and thematic prompts are effective educational approaches that offer numerous benefits to students in developing their language skills, reflective abilities, and overall cognitive development. These methods are particularly valuable in fostering self-expression, critical thinking, and personal growth within educational contexts.

Journal writing provides students with a structured, private space to express thoughts, feelings, and reflections, enhancing writing fluency, grammar, and vocabulary over

time (Craft, 2005). It fosters self-awareness and introspection as students explore emotions and perspectives through reflective writing (Fang, 2010), promoting cognitive and emotional development by encouraging self-regulation and mindfulness (Robinson, 2011). Additionally, journal writing serves as a therapeutic outlet for managing stress and anxiety (Craft, 2005).

Thematic prompts guide students to explore specific topics deeply, stimulating creativity, critical thinking, and analytical skills (Spencer et al., 2012). They encourage students to connect personal experiences with broader themes, enhancing interdisciplinary learning and real-world application of knowledge (Craft, 2005). Thematic prompts also cultivate argumentation skills and the ability to analyze multiple perspectives (Robinson, 2011).

In educational settings, journal writing and thematic prompts promote active learning, self-reflection, and engagement with course content, fostering students' academic performance, personal growth, and emotional intelligence (Spencer et al., 2012). These approaches empower students to develop language proficiency and critical thinking abilities essential for academic success.

In terms of unique approaches, one teacher employed a board game ('Cluedo') to inspire creative writing, while another had students create posters or blurbs for books and movies. These activities enhanced writing skills by challenging students to craft narratives that fit within the game's mystery genre or succinctly summarize complex plots into concise formats suitable for posters or blurbs. Furthermore, they promoted critical thinking as students analyzed characters, motives, and plot twists inherent in 'Cluedo' or in the stories they summarized. Additionally, artistic expression flourished as students visually interpreted themes and moods through poster designs or captured the essence of a story in a few compelling sentences for blurbs (see Table 9 above and Table 12 below).

Teachers (2) also expressed interest in exploring further creative writing methods, such as keeping journals or developing collaborative writing skills, though some indicated a need for additional training to be able to implement these effectively (see Table 9 above and Table 12 below)

Table 12: Examples of successful creative writing activities

Activity Type	Example Description	Frequencies
Collaborative Writing	Writing an opinion essay on animal rights, short stories inspired by Van Gogh, story chain exercises	8
Short stories	Using specific prompts or phrases, writing alternate story endings	5
Dramatic Writing	Creating and performing plays, such as a version of "Christmas Carol"	2
Journal Writing	Personal diaries from literature characters, thematic journals on holidays	3
Poetry	Writing haikus and poems on climate change	6
Thematic Prompts	Writing from the perspective of human organs, holiday-themed stories	2
Unique Approaches	Creative writing through "Cluedo" board game, poster/book or movie blurbs, end-of-year English play projects	3

The responses to the question about creative writing activities reveal a rich tapestry of pedagogical strategies employed by EFL teachers. Collaborative writing emerges as a particularly popular and effective method, with numerous teachers recounting successful projects that engaged students in group storytelling and essay writing. Short story writing, often initiated by specific prompts, also appears to be a favoured activity, allowing students to explore narrative construction creatively. Dramatic writing projects, journal writing, and poetry are other common practices that teachers find beneficial. Additionally, some educators have implemented innovative approaches, such as using board games or thematic prompts, to stimulate students' imaginations and foster a deeper engagement with the English language. These examples highlight the teachers' dedication to enhancing their students' learning experiences through creative and collaborative methods, even as they express a desire for further training to expand their repertoire of creative writing activities.

3.2 Perceived value and usefulness of creative writing

The third objective of this research pertains to assessing the perceived value and usefulness of creative writing among Greek EFL teachers and their students. Table 13 presents the findings, illustrating that a significant majority of participants regard creative writing as highly beneficial in EFL instruction. Specifically, 51% of respondents rated it as "moderately useful," while 37% considered it "highly useful" (see Table 13 below).

To provide more context, this objective explores how Greek EFL teachers perceive creative writing's utility within their instructional practices and its impact on student learning outcomes. By examining these perspectives, this researcher aims to uncover insights into the educational value attributed to creative writing in the context of English language teaching in Greece.

Table 13: Usefulness of creative writing for EFL instruction

Usefulness level	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Not useful	1	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%
Somewhat useful	8	11.3%	11.3%	12.7%
Moderately useful	36	50.7%	50.7%	63.4%
Highly useful	26	36.6%	36.6%	100.0%
Total	71	100.0%	100.0%	

Additionally, the following graph (Graph 1) shows specifically the specific areas where teachers have actually observed positive development in their students' learning journey. Language skills development (39% and 21% "to a moderate and to a great extent"), increased creativity (30% and 24% "to a moderate and to a great extent"), peer interaction and collaboration (30% and 26% "to a moderate and to a great extent") as well as critical thinking (39% and 23% "to a moderate and to a great extent"), seem to be affected in a moderate and to a great extent by creative writing's inclusion in the classroom. Judging from the answers, it looks like EFL teachers recognize the value and usefulness of creativity in the foreign language instruction.

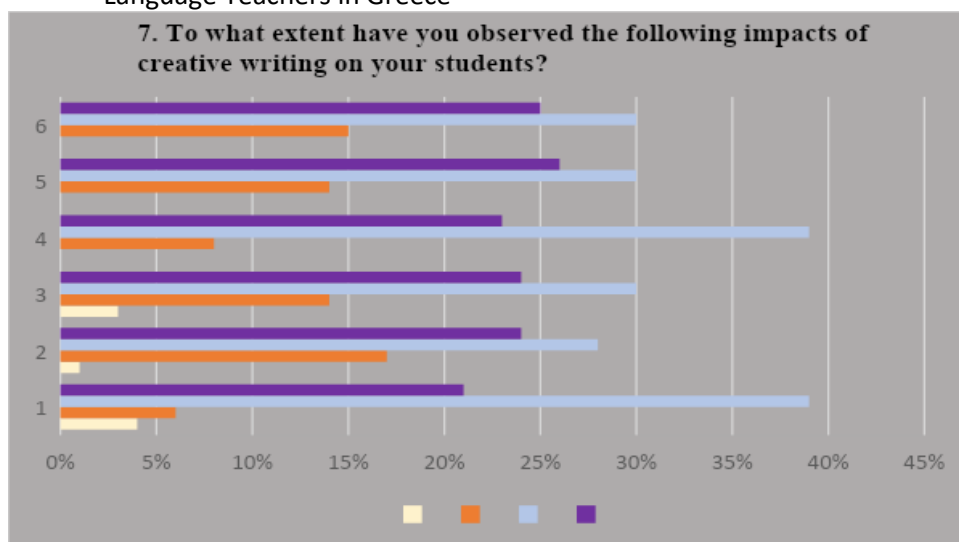


Figure 1: Areas of Positive Development through Creative Writing

1) Language Skills Development, 2) Enhanced Student Engagement, 3) Increased Creativity, 4) Promoting Critical Thinking, 5) Fostering Collaboration and Peer Interaction, 6) Encouraging Self-expression and Voice Development

3.2.1 Qualitative insights into usefulness and effectiveness of creative writing

Teachers reported numerous positive outcomes from incorporating creative writing into their EFL curriculum. Many (24%) observed that students developed better writing skills, including a more structured approach to writing tasks, improved vocabulary (4%), and the effective use of story linkers. Creative writing activities also fostered critical thinking (10%), collaboration (10%), communication (10%), and organizational skills (10%). Teachers noted increased student engagement and participation, with students finding writing tasks more enjoyable and motivating (17%). This enthusiasm was particularly evident in students who typically struggled with traditional educational activities, as creative writing offered them a more inclusive and less anxiety-inducing platform to express their ideas. Students exhibited a heightened interest in lessons, demonstrated more active imaginations, and showed a willingness to utilize their language skills confidently (10%).

Additionally, creative writing boosted students' self-esteem (10%) and allowed them to express their feelings and opinions openly, strengthening the bond between students and between students and teachers. Specific activities such as collaborative story creation and journaling were highlighted for their ability to spark joy and anticipation among students, making the learning process more dynamic and engaging. Overall, the

incorporation of creative writing not only enhanced language development but also contributed to a positive classroom atmosphere and social bonding among students.

Table 14: Positive outcomes observed in students

Outcome	Example Responses	Frequencies
Improved Writing Skills	Better writing structure, correct use of vocabulary and story linkers, improved writing skills	7
Increased Engagement and Participation	Classroom atmosphere more fun, students engaged in the teaching process, more student participation	5
Enhanced Critical Thinking and Creativity	Broadened critical thinking, active imagination, cultivation of imagination	3
Boosted Confidence and Self-Esteem	Students feel confident to use the language, self-confidence boosting, rise of self-esteem	3
Improved Social and Collaborative Skills	Collaboration and communication skills, stronger bonds between students and teachers	2
Increased Motivation and Interest	More interest in lessons, students look forward to writing tasks, excitement about creating stories	2

The 2nd question of part C of the questionnaire (see Appendix I), examines the extent to which teachers believe that creative writing (see Table 15 below):

A. Is the individual's ability to control their creative thoughts and turn them into writing:

The majority of respondents (27 out of 62) believe that creative writing helps individuals control their creative thoughts to a great extent, while 25 respondents indicated a moderate extent. Only a small number of teachers (10) think this occurs to a small extent, and none believe it does not occur at all. This indicates a strong belief

among teachers in the potential of creative writing to enhance students' ability to harness their creativity for writing purposes.

B. Is a modern educational method that approaches learners' linguistic and cognitive capabilities in an experiential way, combining fun with learning:

A significant majority (34 out of 62) believe that creative writing fulfils this role to a great extent, with 17 indicating a moderate extent. Only 11 respondents felt it achieves this to a small extent or not at all. These results highlight that teachers widely recognize the experiential and engaging nature of creative writing as an educational method.

C. Is based on the reconstruction of the elements of a word, a sentence, or a text, seeking to produce new texts:

Responses were more varied here, with 26 teachers indicating a great extent and 15 each for moderate and small extents. No respondents selected "not at all," suggesting that while opinions vary, there is a general consensus that creative writing involves reconstructing linguistic elements to create new texts.

D. Aims to cultivate a personal relationship with language and alleviate fears or aversions towards writing:

A considerable number of teachers (29 out of 62) believe creative writing achieves this to a great extent, followed by 21 indicating a moderate extent. A smaller number (11) thought it did so to a small extent or not at all. This suggests that many teachers see creative writing as a means to develop a more personal and less intimidating approach to language use.

E. Aims to create stimuli for parallel group activities in the classroom, such as theatrical games:

Most respondents (30 out of 62) believe creative writing stimulates group activities to a great extent, with 15 indicating a moderate extent. Fewer respondents (16) felt it does so to a small extent or not at all. This demonstrates a belief in the collaborative benefits of creative writing in educational settings.

Table 15: Teachers' perceptions of the extent of creative writing's effects

Agreement on Creative Writing Extent to:	Not at all	To a Small Extent	To a Moderate Extent	To a Great Extent
A. Control creative thoughts into writing	0	10	15	27
B. Modern educational method (experiential learning)	1	10	17	34
C. Reconstruct linguistic elements to produce new texts	0	15	15	26
D. Cultivate a personal relationship with language	2	9	21	29
E. Stimuli for group activities (e.g., theatrical games)	2	14	15	30

The third question examines the level of agreement of teachers with statements on creative writing (see Table 16 below):

A. "Creative writing is an effective way to enhance language learning."

A significant majority of teachers (33 out of 71) agree, and 28 strongly agree that creative writing is an effective way to enhance language learning. Only a small number (10) disagree or strongly disagree. This indicates a broad consensus on the effectiveness of creative writing in enhancing language learning (see Table 16 below).

B. "Creative writing fosters students' creativity and self-expression in language learning."

An overwhelming majority (39 out of 71) strongly agree with this statement, and 23 agree that creative writing promotes creativity and self-expression in students during their language learning process. Very few teachers (9) disagree or strongly disagree, highlighting a strong belief in the role of creative writing in fostering creativity and self-expression as detailed in Table 16.

C. "I am confident/have the ability to integrate creative writing into my lessons."

While a majority of teachers (39 out of 71) agree with this statement, only 14 strongly agree, and a notable number (18) disagree or strongly disagree. This suggests that while many teachers feel confident in their ability to integrate creative writing, there is still a significant portion that lacks confidence.

D. "Creative writing aligns with the language learning goals and standards of the Greek EFL curriculum."

Responses were more divided here, with 26 teachers agreeing and 17 strongly agreeing, while a notable number (28) disagree or strongly disagree. This indicates mixed opinions on whether creative writing aligns with the Greek EFL curriculum standards.

E. "Creative writing positively affects students' overall language proficiency in English."

A majority of teachers (32 out of 71) strongly agree, and 29 agree that creative writing positively affects students' language proficiency. Only a small number (10) disagree or strongly disagree, suggesting a general belief in the positive impact of creative writing on language proficiency.

Table 16: Agreement on Creative Writing Statements

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A. Effective way to enhance language learning	3	7	33	28

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
B. Fosters creativity and self-expression	2	7	23	39
C. Confident/ability to integrate creative writing	2	16	39	14
D. Aligns with Greek EFL curriculum standards	5	23	26	17
E. Positively affects overall language proficiency	2	8	29	32

3.3 Training and educational needs

The last objective was to examine teacher's training and educational needs, by asking if as educators, they have received any form of training in creative writing. According to the data presented in Table 17, 27% of all participants have not received any formal training in order to be equipped with the skillset to be able to handle creative writing activities in class. Another 22% have independently participated in a seminar and have used their own resources to educate on integrating creative writing in class. More than half of the participants do not have the opportunity to be formally educated on the matter, and not surprisingly almost 60% have suggested that they haven't incorporated creative writing because of insufficient training.

Table 17: Reported training and resource needs

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A. Do you believe there is a need for specific guidelines or standards set by educational authorities for incorporating creative writing into the EFL curriculum?	5	15	34	17
B. Have you received any training or professional development related to teaching creative writing?	14	22	27	8
C. Are there resources (e.g., textbooks, online platforms, writing prompts) available by the state that support your creative writing activities?	13	29	28	1
D. Are there accessible technological or digital tools (e.g., software, apps, online platforms) that can support the use of creative writing?	3	10	34	24
E. Would you collaborate with colleagues to share creative writing teaching methods and experiences?	2	4	40	25
F. Do you think that integrating creative writing into the EFL curriculum should be encouraged at a national level in Greece?	5	15	34	17
G. Do you feel that the current EFL curriculum at your institution is	9	23	29	10

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
flexible enough to accommodate creative writing activities?				

According to the data in Table 18, teachers identified various resources that support the endeavour of creative writing's implementation in class, varying from online platforms (53%), literary works (36%), textbooks (34%), as well as writing workshops (23%), collaboration with peers (19%), and contests/publication opportunities (11%). No participant though seems to list any available resources from the Ministry of Education or any trainings that they have undertook and offered by the Institute of Educational Policy (IEP), as most trainings for teachers in state education are taking place on that platform.

Table 18: Resources available for supporting creative writing activities

Resource Type	Frequency	Percent
Textbooks	29	40%
Online platforms or websites	37	56%
Access to a variety of literary works	24	37%
Writing workshops or guest speakers	15	23%
Peer collaboration and feedback	12	18%
Creative writing contests or publication opportunities	7	11%
Videos, audios, flashcards, board games	1	1%
Writing templates online	1	1%
Own copies	1	1%
Training	2	2%
Coursebooks, storyjumper.com	1	1%

Resource Type	Frequency	Percent
Searching the net for ideas	1	1%

Based on the findings from Table 19, it is evident that EFL teachers have identified specific training and resource needs to enhance their ability to teach creative writing effectively in their current educational settings. The data reveals that a significant majority, comprising 60% of respondents, expressed a strong interest in advanced workshops or courses to bolster their expertise in creative writing instruction. Following closely, 52% of participants emphasized the importance of mentorship programs, highlighting a desire for ongoing support and guidance from experienced educators or writers.

Moreover, access to professional development resources was deemed crucial by 41% of the respondents, underscoring the need for readily available materials and training opportunities that align with best practices in creative writing pedagogy. A notable portion, accounting for 30% of participants, identified the necessity of funding dedicated to classroom materials specifically for creative writing instruction. Additionally, collaborative projects or partnerships with local writers were favored by 27% of the respondents, indicating a desire for real-world connections and practical learning experiences.

The findings also indicated that 26% of participants valued access to research articles and best practices, suggesting a desire for evidence-based approaches to inform their teaching. Other suggestions included practical seminars (4%), digital tools (1%), free platforms with videos and materials (1%), state-provided training courses (4%), online training opportunities (1%), and general guidance (1%).

In conclusion, these insights underscore the varied and specific needs of EFL teachers regarding training and resources for integrating creative writing into their classrooms. The data from Table 19 provides a clear snapshot of these preferences and highlights areas where targeted support can enhance professional development in creative writing instruction.

Table 19: Training and resources needed for teaching creative writing

Training or Resource Needed	N	%
a) Advanced workshops or courses	40	60%
b) Mentorship programs	34	52%
c) Access to professional development resources	27	41%
d) Collaborative projects or partnerships with local writers	18	27%
e) Funding for classroom materials and resources dedicated to creative writing	20	30%
f) Access to research articles and best practices	17	26%
g) More practical seminars	4	4%
h) Digital tools	1	1%
i) Free platform with videos and available material	1	1%
j) Training courses provided by the state	4	4%
k) Online trainings and practicing	1	1%
l) Guidance	1	1%

Hence, it seems that participants are willing to be educated in teaching creative writing in class, which means there is a need for creating educational training programs, so that they can be equipped to bring such practices in the EFL classroom.

3.3.1 Challenges and limitations

Despite recognizing the benefits of creative writing in EFL instruction, teachers identified several gaps and areas needing improvement to better support these activities. One significant gap identified by teachers (Question 4, Part D, appendix I) is the lack of a structured framework within the Greek EFL curriculum to systematically integrate creative writing. Four teachers highlighted this need for a framework-based support.

Additionally, teachers emphasized the necessity for official training and professional development opportunities to enhance their confidence and skills in guiding creative writing exercises. Assessment methods for creative writing were also noted as insufficient, leaving educators without clear criteria for evaluating student work effectively. Furthermore, there is a perceived lack of open-mindedness and peer collaboration, which are crucial for fostering a supportive environment for creative writing. Time constraints were repeatedly mentioned, with large class sizes making it

challenging for teachers to fully commit to creative writing activities. Motivation, both for students and teachers, emerged as another significant area needing more focus and resources, as highlighted by 7 responses. For instance, one teacher expressed, 'Students often struggle to see the relevance of creative writing in their language learning journey.' Another mentioned, 'I find it challenging to maintain enthusiasm for creative writing activities amidst other curriculum demands.' These examples underscore the need for more comprehensive support structures and resources to address motivational challenges in integrating creative writing effectively within the EFL context.

Overall, these gaps suggest that while the potential for creative writing in EFL is recognized, there is a need for more comprehensive support structures and resources to overcome these challenges.

Table 20: Identified gaps in supporting creative writing activities

Gap Identified	Example Responses	Frequencies
Lack of Assessment Methods	Assessment	5
Lack of Curriculum Framework	A framework-based support by the Greek EFL curriculum	3
Need for Open-Mindedness	Open-mindedness	2
Lack of Official Training	Lack of official training	10
Need for Guidance	Guidance	9
Time Constraints and Motivation	Time and motivation, time constraint with large classes	7
Lack of Peer Collaboration	Peer collaboration	3
Overall Commitment Challenges	Difficulty in committing to the activity in large classes	6

3.3.2 Benefits of additional resources for creative writing

The qualitative data underscores the necessity of expanding resources to support creative writing in the EFL classroom. Teachers believe that enhanced resources would enrich and broaden their approach and methodology, making their instruction more methodical and effective.

Teachers (Question 6, Part D, appendix I) also noted that access to more resources, as indicated by responses from 7 teachers, could significantly impact teachers' and students' attitudes toward writing, making the process more engaging and less daunting (Table 21 below). Resources, as highlighted by respondents, would aid in providing constructive feedback, adapting to curriculum changes, and focusing on practical solutions to common challenges. With a wider array of tools and materials (as mentioned in the table), students are more likely to be motivated to participate in creative writing activities, which is crucial in an age where writing is often neglected. As one respondent noted, 'Nowadays we don't write much, so we could use all the encouragement we can get.

Table 21: Teachers' perspectives on the benefits of additional resources

Reason for Needing Additional Resources	Example Responses	Frequencies
Enrich and widen approach and methodology	"They would enrich and widen my approach and methodology to creative writing."	1
Improve methodical and effective teaching	"So as to be more methodical and effective."	1
Foster idea sharing and mentorship	"Because ideas need to be shared both on a peer-to-peer and on a mentoring process level."	1
Change attitudes toward writing	"They could make a change in both teachers' and students' attitudes to writing in the classroom."	1
Provide feedback and focus on solutions	"To give feedback, adapt to certain changes, help focus on solutions etc."	1
Increase student participation and interest	"With more resources, students can become more interested in	1

Reason for Needing Additional Resources	Example Responses	Frequencies
	attempting to participate in creative writing. Nowadays we don't write much, so we could use all the encouragement we can get."	

3.4 Correlations

In this section, we explore the descriptive correlations among various aspects of creative writing instruction as reported by the participants. Through quantitative analysis, we aim to identify patterns, relationships, and trends within the data set, shedding light on the perceptions and practices of EFL teachers regarding creative writing in the classroom.

1. Relationship between perceived effectiveness of creative writing and training:

An initial analysis of the data indicates a potential correlation between the perceived effectiveness of creative writing in EFL instruction and teachers' training experiences. According to responses from Question 1 regarding the usefulness of creative writing for EFL instruction, 47.89% of teachers rated it as highly useful (3), with notable representations from those who participated in workshops, seminars, or short courses (19.72%) and used online resources or self-study materials (21.13%), as detailed in Question 2. Conversely, teachers who did not find creative writing useful (1.41%) or applicable (39.44%) were predominantly those without formal training (47.89%). This distribution suggests that teachers with formal training or self-directed learning in creative writing tend to perceive it more favorably for EFL instruction, indicating a potential influence of training on attitudes towards integrating creative writing into language teaching practices. Further statistical analysis would be beneficial to ascertain the significance of these findings.

Table 22 : Correlation 1

1. How useful for the effectiveness of the EFL instruction do you think it is to work with creative

Antonia Poutouli: "Investigating the Potential for Integrating Creative Writing into the EFL Curriculum: Perceptions of Secondary Education English as a Foreign Language Teachers in Greece "

writing? Answers: 1,2,3,4 with 2. If you have received training in teaching creative writing, please select the option that best describes your experience and how it influenced your teaching approach

Our percentage is based on 100%, since 71/71 respondents replied to the questions.

I have completed a formal education or certification program specifically in teaching creative writing, which has significantly shaped my teaching methods.

b) I have participated in workshops, seminars, or short courses focused on creative writing instruction, gaining valuable insights and strategies for my teaching.

c) I have independently used online resources, books, or self-study materials to improve my skills and knowledge in teaching creative writing.

d) I have not received any formal training or engaged in significant self-directed learning specifically for teaching creative writing.

Question 2						
Question 1		a)Completed formal education	b)Participated in workshops	c)Have used online resources	d)Not received any formal education	Total
	1	1 (1,41%)	-	-	-	1
	2	1(1,41%)	2(2,82%)	2(2,82%)	3(4,23%)	8
	3	5(7,04%)	4(5,6%)	6(8,45)	19(26,76%)	34
	4	1(1,41%)	8 (11,27%)	7(9,8%)	12 (16,90%)	28
	Total	8	14	15	34	71

2. Influence of Training on Incorporation of Creative Writing:

Further analysis explores the impact of training on the incorporation of creative writing activities into classroom practice. Table 15 details the distribution of responses regarding the extent of training received and its influence on teaching approaches. Out of 32 respondents to Question 2 (If you have received training in teaching creative writing), 25% have completed a formal education or certification program (a), 9.38% have participated in workshops, seminars, or short courses (b), and 18.75% have independently used online resources, books, or self-study materials (c). Conversely, 46.88% of respondents indicated they have not received any formal training or engaged in significant self-directed learning specifically for teaching creative writing (d). By correlating these responses with qualitative data on successful creative writing activities

(Question 5), we aim to determine whether teachers who have undergone formal training are more inclined to implement diverse and innovative writing tasks in their classrooms.

Table 23: Correlation 2

2. If you have received training in teaching creative writing, please select the option that best describes your experience and how it influenced your teaching approach with 5. Could you provide an example of a successful creative writing activity that you would use or have already used during class?

The percentage here is based on the 32/71 that responded to the question. So, the 100% is based on the 32 responses.

a I have completed a formal education or certification program specifically in teaching creative writing, which has significantly shaped my teaching methods.

b I have participated in workshops, seminars, or short courses focused on creative writing instruction, gaining valuable insights and strategies for my teaching.

c I have independently used online resources, books, or self-study materials to improve my skills and knowledge in teaching creative writing.

d I have not received any formal training or engaged in significant self-directed learning specifically for teaching creative writing.

Question 2						
Question 1		a)Completed formal education	b)Participated in workshops	c)Have used online resources	d)Not received any formal education	Total
	Collaborative writing	1(3,13%)	2(6,25%)	1 (3,13%)	3(9,38%)	7
	drama	-	-	-	1(3,13%)	1
	Short stories	2(6,25%)	1 (3,13%)	-	4(12,5%)	7
	Haiku	1 (3,13%)	-	1 (3,13%)	-	2
	Fantasy	1 (3,13%)	-	1 (3,13%)	-	2
	Poetry	1 (3,13%)	-	2(6,25%)	-	3
	Story chain	-	-	1 (3,13%)	2(6,25%)	3

	Journal	-	-	-	2(6,25%)	2
	Board game	2 (6,25%)	-	-	-	2
	Project	-	-	-	1 (3,13%)	1
	Fairytale	-	-	-	1 (3,13%)	1
	Continue story	-	-	-	1 (3,13%)	1
	Total	8	3	6	15	32

3. Utilization of Creative Writing in Educational Settings by Educational Level

Regarding the educational background of respondents, Question 2 inquired about their utilization of creative writing in class. Out of 71 participants, 56 (78.87%) have employed creative writing activities, while 15 (21.13%) have not. In terms of educational attainment, Question 1 revealed that among those who have utilized creative writing, 30.99% hold a university degree, 36.62% possess a postgraduate degree, and 11.27% have obtained a Ph.D. Conversely, among those who have not utilized creative writing, 4.23% have a university degree, 16.90% hold a postgraduate degree, and none have a Ph.D. These findings suggest a higher propensity for employing creative writing activities among respondents with higher educational qualifications, highlighting a potential correlation between educational level and the integration of creative writing in educational settings.

Table 24: Correlation 3

3. Educational Level with 2. Have you ever utilized creative writing in class?

	Question 2			
Question 1		YES	NO	Total
	University degree	22(30,99%)	3 (4,23%)	25
	Postgraduate degree	26 (36,62)	12(16,90)	38
	Ph.D	8(11,27%)	0	8

	Total	56	15	71
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4. Utilization of Creative Writing in Educational Settings by Years of Working Experience

Exploring the utilization of creative writing among educators based on their years of working experience in education, Question 2 asked whether respondents have utilized creative writing in class. Out of 71 participants, 53 (74.65%) have incorporated creative writing activities into their teaching practices, while 18 (25.35%) have not. The breakdown by years of experience is as follows: 16 (22.54%) respondents with 0-5 years of experience have utilized creative writing, comprising 12 (16.90%) "yes" responses and 4 (5.63%) "no" responses. For educators with 6-10 years of experience, 17 (23.94%) have used creative writing, with 15 (21.13%) responding affirmatively and 2 (2.82%) negatively. Among those with 11-20 years of experience, 24 (33.80%) have employed creative writing, including 16 (22.54%) "yes" responses and 8 (11.27%) "no" responses. For educators with 21 years of experience or more, 14 (19.72%) have utilized creative writing, with 10 (14.08%) responding "yes" and 4 (5.63%) responding "no". These findings underscore varying levels of engagement with creative writing activities across different stages of educators' careers, suggesting a nuanced relationship between years of experience and the integration of creative writing in educational practices.

Table 25: Correlation 4

4. Years of working experience in education with 2. Have you ever utilized creative writing in class?

	Question 2			
Question 1		YES	NO	Total
	0-5	12 (16,9%)	4(5,63%)	16
	6-10	15 (21,30%)	2 (2,82%)	17
	11-20	16 (22,54%)	8 (11,27%)	24
	21 and over	10 (14,08%)	4 (5,63%)	14
	Total	53	18	71

These findings highlight the diverse utilization of creative writing activities among educators based on their years of working experience in education. As we transition to the next section, we will delve deeper into the implications of these results, exploring how educators' varying levels of experience may influence their perceptions and practices regarding the integration of creative writing in educational settings.

3.5 Final remarks

The data analysis reveals a highly qualified and experienced group of EFL teachers who are generally familiar with and have utilized creative writing in their classrooms. Despite facing challenges such as balancing creative writing with curriculum requirements and limited time, there is a clear interest in incorporating creative writing activities in the future. The findings suggest that additional training and resources could further support these teachers in integrating creative writing into their teaching practices effectively. Through the descriptive correlations, this chapter aimed to uncover underlying patterns and associations within the data set, providing valuable insights into the complex interplay between teacher perceptions, training experiences, resource utilization, and instructional practices related to creative writing in EFL classrooms.

4. Discussion and implications

The purpose of this section is to examine whether the research questions posed in this research have been answered based on the data collected through the questionnaires and the subsequent analysis of the data retrieved. The study and the questionnaires investigated the following questions:

- To what extent are Greek secondary education EFL teachers in state schools aware of and actively implementing different types of creative writing with their students?
- What attitudes do Greek secondary education EFL teachers hold towards various types of creative writing in their teaching practice?
- How do Greek EFL teachers in secondary education perceive the value and usefulness of integrating creative writing into their language teaching?"
- What opportunities exist for Greek EFL teachers in secondary education for training in creative writing, and how do they perceive their need for such education to achieve optimal teaching results

4.1 Awareness and implementation

The first research question aimed to determine the extent to which Greek secondary education EFL teachers in state schools are aware of and actively implementing different types of creative writing with their students. According to the data (Table 6, Chapter 3 above), 52 respondents (73.24%) reported a moderate to great extent of awareness of creative writing techniques. This indicates a significant familiarity with creative writing methods among participating teachers, which can be attributed to professional development activities such as workshops, seminars, and formal education programs (30% participated in workshops, 13% completed formal education). These findings align with existing literature emphasizing the importance of continuous professional development in enhancing teachers' pedagogical skills and awareness (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

Regarding implementation, 44 teachers (61.97%) actively integrate creative writing into their curriculum to a great extent. Common activities include collaborative writing, story continuation, and journal writing, which are known to foster language skills

effectively (Harmer, 2007; Hedge, 2000). However, challenges such as large class sizes and time constraints were noted by 35 teachers (49.30%), reflecting common barriers to implementing innovative teaching methods (Borg, 2006). Professional development remains crucial, with 60% of teachers expressing a need for advanced workshops or courses and 52% seeking mentorship programs to support their efforts (Guskey, 2000). Collaborative projects with local writers and funding for classroom materials were also highlighted as beneficial initiatives to bridge the gap between theory and practice in creative writing instruction (Cremin & Myhill, 2012).

Comparative analysis with similar studies, such as those conducted by Mashhady, et. al (2012) in Iran, shows both similarities and differences in educational contexts and support systems.

4.2 Attitudes towards Creative Writing

The second research question aimed to understand Greek secondary education EFL teachers' attitudes towards various types of creative writing in their teaching practice. The majority of teachers expressed positive attitudes, with 61 respondents (85.92%) agreeing or strongly agreeing that creative writing enhances language learning (Table 7, Chapter 3).

Despite this positivity, practical challenges such as managing activities in large classrooms and time constraints were cited as concerns (Table 8, Chapter 3) echoing previous research (Borg, 2006). Particularly, 35 teachers reported only a moderate extent of implementation, and some expressed challenges in integrating creative writing consistently. These challenges include large class sizes, time constraints, and a lack of formal training. For instance, one teacher noted, "I feel like I can't fully commit to this activity in every classroom, especially if there are 27 students in it. Time constraint is a major issue."

Teachers favored activities perceived as directly beneficial to language development, such as journal writing and story continuation, while more complex tasks like poetry writing received less enthusiasm due to perceived difficulty and additional guidance required (Harmer, 2007).

Training significantly influenced attitudes, as teachers who participated in workshops or formal education programs reported feeling more confident in integrating creative

writing activities. This correlation underscores the role of professional development in fostering supportive attitudes towards creative writing (Guskey, 2000).

4.3 Perceptions of Value and Usefulness

The third research question explored how Greek EFL teachers perceive the value and usefulness of integrating creative writing into their language teaching. The majority of respondents (94.37%) recognized creative writing as valuable for enhancing language proficiency, critical thinking, and self-expression (Table 15, Chapter 3). Practical benefits included improved student engagement and enhanced writing skills, as noted by 67 respondents (94.37%). However, concerns about implementation persisted among teachers, with 33 respondents (46.48%) expressing uncertainty about their ability to integrate creative writing effectively due to practical constraints (Table 10, Chapter 3).

Institutional support was identified as crucial, with teachers advocating for more professional development opportunities, resources, and administrative backing. These sentiments underscored the need for systemic support to overcome practical challenges and maximize the benefits of creative writing in language education (Cremin & Myhill, 2012).

4.4 Training and Educational Needs

The fourth research question examined the availability of training opportunities for Greek EFL teachers and their perceived need for such education. While some teachers reported access to workshops and formal education programs (43% combined participation), others highlighted gaps in structured training opportunities. A strong demand for further training was evident, with 60% of teachers expressing interest in advanced workshops or courses and 52% seeking mentorship programs to enhance their teaching practices (Guskey, 2000) (Table 17, Chapter 3).

Training significantly influenced teaching practices, as evidenced by teachers who participated in workshops or formal education being more likely to integrate creative writing activities into their lessons. Barriers to training included time constraints, financial limitations, and limited local offerings, underscoring the need for more accessible and comprehensive professional development initiatives (Harmer, 2007) (Table 20, Chapter 3).

4.4.1. Continuous Professional Development and Support

The positive findings regarding teachers' attitudes and practices in creative writing underscore the potential for further enhancement through structured professional development. Moon (1994) suggests that mentorship can significantly contribute to in-service development, aligning with the study's findings that ongoing training is crucial for sustaining innovative teaching practices (ELT Journal, 48/4:347-355). Timpereley et al. (2008) argue that career growth should be seen as an ongoing goal, reinforcing the importance of continuous professional development in educational contexts (Pennington, 1996: 132).

4.4.2 Collaboration and Constructive Learning Theories

Collaboration emerges as a pivotal concept in promoting teacher learning (Boyle et al., 2003). The study's alignment with constructive learning theories (Bruning et al., 2004; Scardamalia & Bereiter 1987) suggests that fostering collaborative networks among teachers could further enhance the integration of creative writing practices in EFL classrooms. These differences in educational contexts inform specific recommendations for Greek EFL teachers, emphasizing the creation of supportive environments and the cultivation of professional learning communities (Table 19)

4.4.3 Importance in the Broader Context of EFL Teaching

Positive attitudes towards creative writing are crucial in the broader context of EFL teaching as they contribute to enhanced student engagement, language acquisition, and overall learning outcomes (Harmer, 2007). The study's findings provide a good foundation for future research and highlight the impact of integrating creative writing into language education.

4.4.4 Strategies to Overcome Challenges

To address challenges identified by teachers, such as time constraints and institutional support, mentorship programs and collaborative networks are recommended (OECD, 2009a). These strategies align with effective professional development models that involve training, practice, feedback, and follow-up support (OECD, 2009b). Participation in networks and mentoring has shown significant associations with professional growth and improved teaching practices, suggesting their relevance for enhancing creative writing instruction in Greek EFL classrooms.

4.5 Implications

4.5.1 Implications of the Research

This section explores the practical implications of the study's findings on the integration of creative writing in Greek EFL classrooms. Insights from the research offer educators, policymakers, and stakeholders' valuable perspectives on the benefits and challenges associated with incorporating creative writing into language instruction.

4.5.2 Educational Policy and Curriculum Development

The study underscores the importance of recognizing creative writing in EFL instruction within educational policies and curriculum standards. Formally integrating creative writing activities into the curriculum can enhance students' language proficiency, foster creativity, and develop critical thinking skills, thereby enriching their educational experience.

4.5.3 Teacher Training and Professional Development

The findings highlight the critical role of comprehensive training and professional development for EFL teachers to effectively incorporate creative writing into their classrooms. Training programs should equip educators with the necessary pedagogical strategies, resources, and assessment tools for engaging and meaningful creative writing experiences.

4.5.4 Resource Allocation and Support Systems

Effective resource allocation and support systems are essential for the implementation of creative writing activities in EFL classrooms. Educational institutions and stakeholders should invest in providing teachers with access to diverse resources and professional development opportunities to enhance their teaching practices and improve student learning outcomes.

4.5.5 Assessment and Evaluation Practices

Developing appropriate assessment frameworks and evaluation criteria is crucial for measuring students' progress and achievement in creative writing. Formative and summative assessment strategies should assess both the process and product of creative writing, promoting continuous improvement and meaningful feedback.

Assessment Methods:

To enhance the effectiveness of creative writing activities, it is crucial to establish effective assessment methods tailored to various forms of creative writing. Developing

standardized rubrics and assessment guidelines, along with providing professional development on how to use these tools, will help ensure consistent and constructive evaluation of student work.

4.5.6 Student Engagement and Learning Outcomes

Incorporating creative writing activities into EFL instruction can promote student engagement, motivation, and language acquisition. Students benefit from opportunities to express themselves, explore linguistic structures, and develop critical thinking and communication skills, leading to improved learning outcomes and academic achievement.

4.5.7 Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Recognizing and embracing cultural and linguistic diversity in creative writing instruction is essential. Educators should encourage students to draw upon their cultural backgrounds and experiences to enrich their writing, fostering inclusivity and respect for diverse voices and narratives.

4.5.8 Open-mindedness and Peer Collaboration:

Creating professional learning communities where teachers share experiences, strategies, and resources related to creative writing is essential. Peer collaboration promotes a supportive environment and fosters innovative teaching practices. A very effective example of online teacher communities has been implemented in the Greek context for EFL teachers (Kourkouli, 2024) .

In summary, the implications drawn from the research underscore the transformative potential of integrating creative writing into Greek EFL classrooms. Addressing identified challenges and leveraging opportunities presented will enable stakeholders to collaboratively create an educational environment that nurtures students' creativity, linguistic competence, and overall well-being.

4.6 Enhancing Creative Writing in EFL Classrooms: Practical Suggestions

Creative writing plays a pivotal role in advancing language learning and nurturing students' linguistic and creative skills within EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms. Based on comprehensive research and insights gathered, this chapter

presents practical suggestions to optimize the integration of creative writing activities, addressing key areas for improvement.

Tailored Assessment Strategies

Effective assessment is fundamental to fostering and evaluating creative writing in EFL contexts. To enhance assessment practices: Teachers are encouraged to develop tailored rubrics and assessment criteria specific to various forms of creative writing, such as narratives, poetry, and descriptive writing. These tools provide clear benchmarks for evaluating student performance and offer constructive feedback to promote continuous improvement. Moreover, professional development opportunities should be prioritized, equipping educators with the necessary skills to effectively implement these assessment tools. Workshops and training sessions on assessment strategies can empower teachers to use rubrics judiciously, ensuring fair and consistent evaluation of student work.

Curriculum Integration

Formal integration of creative writing into the EFL curriculum is essential to provide a structured approach and clear learning objectives. To achieve this: Curriculum guidelines should be revised to incorporate dedicated modules for creative writing across different proficiency levels. This ensures that creative writing activities are seamlessly integrated into existing language learning frameworks, enhancing overall learning outcomes. Comprehensive lesson plans and instructional resources aligned with these objectives should be developed. These resources not only guide teachers in designing engaging creative writing activities but also facilitate meaningful learning experiences for students, fostering their language proficiency and creativity.

Professional Development Initiatives

Continuous professional development is critical for educators to stay abreast of effective pedagogical practices in creative writing. Key initiatives include: Offering regular workshops, seminars, and online courses focused on creative writing pedagogy. These opportunities enable teachers to explore innovative teaching methods, share best practices, and refine their instructional strategies. Collaborating with universities and educational institutions to facilitate ongoing professional learning opportunities. Partnerships with academic experts and researchers can enrich teachers' understanding of current trends and research in language education, empowering them to implement evidence-based practices in their classrooms.

Creating Supportive Learning Communities

Building a supportive environment is pivotal in fostering student engagement and motivation in creative writing. Strategies include: Establishing teacher communities or networks where educators can collaborate, share resources, and discuss effective strategies for teaching creative writing. Encouraging peer collaboration and feedback among students through group projects, peer review sessions, and collaborative writing exercises. These activities promote a supportive learning environment where students can refine their writing skills and receive constructive input from their peers.

Flexible Classroom Strategies

To address logistical challenges and optimize instructional time for creative writing, educators are encouraged to: Advocate for flexible scheduling and resource allocation to accommodate dedicated time slots for creative writing activities within the curriculum. Leverage technology and online platforms to facilitate asynchronous learning and collaborative writing projects. These tools empower students to engage in creative writing outside of traditional classroom settings, promoting autonomy and self-directed learning. Implement differentiated instruction techniques to cater to diverse learning styles and language proficiency levels among students, ensuring that all learners have equitable access to creative writing opportunities.

Motivation and Recognition

Sustaining student interest and enthusiasm in creative writing is vital for long-term engagement. Strategies include: Organizing creative writing competitions, contests, and themed writing prompts to stimulate creativity and foster healthy competition among students. Recognizing and celebrating student achievements through awards, certificates, or public showcases of their work. These initiatives not only validate students' efforts but also motivate them to strive for excellence in creative expression. Encouraging peer feedback and constructive criticism to cultivate a collaborative writing community where students can learn from each other's perspectives and refine their writing skills.

Advocacy for Policy Support

Institutionalizing creative writing within the broader educational framework requires advocacy for supportive policies and resources. This includes: Advocating for policy changes that prioritize the inclusion of creative writing in national and regional language education standards. Lobbying for smaller class sizes, additional classroom

resources, and funding to support the effective implementation of creative writing initiatives in EFL classrooms. Collaborating with stakeholders, policymakers, and educational leaders to raise awareness about the educational benefits of creative writing and garner support for sustainable implementation strategies.

By implementing these practical suggestions, educators and policymakers can create a nurturing environment where creative writing thrives as an integral component of EFL education. These initiatives not only enhance language learning outcomes but also empower students to become proficient and confident communicators in English, fostering lifelong skills in creative expression and critical thinking.

4.7 Limitations

Despite the valuable insights provided by this research, several limitations should be noted. The study's reliance on self-reported data from questionnaires may introduce bias, as teachers might overestimate their awareness and implementation of creative writing techniques (Dörnyei, 2007). Future research should consider observational studies or interviews for a more nuanced understanding of teachers' practices and attitudes.

The sample size, while adequate for initial insights, may not fully represent all Greek secondary education EFL teachers. A larger and more diverse sample could offer a more comprehensive view of the educational landscape.

The study primarily focused on teachers' perspectives, potentially overlooking students' experiences and outcomes related to creative writing activities. Including student feedback in future research would provide a more balanced assessment of the impact of these practices on learning and engagement.

Lastly, the study's cross-sectional design limits its ability to capture changes over time or establish causal relationships between variables. Longitudinal studies tracking teachers' development and student outcomes would offer deeper insights into the long-term effects of integrating creative writing into EFL instruction.

4.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study contributes valuable insights into the awareness, attitudes, and implementation of creative writing among Greek secondary education EFL teachers.

Despite challenges such as time constraints and limited resources, teachers demonstrate a strong awareness of creative writing techniques and hold positive attitudes towards their integration into language instruction.

The findings underscore the importance of professional development, institutional support, and curriculum integration in promoting effective creative writing practices. Addressing identified gaps and challenges—such as the need for effective assessment methods, structured curriculum frameworks, official training programs, open-mindedness, and peer collaboration opportunities—will facilitate the advancement of creative writing in EFL classrooms. This, in turn, will enhance student engagement, language proficiency, and overall educational outcomes.

Future research should explore innovative strategies for overcoming implementation barriers, investigate student perspectives on creative writing activities, and assess the long-term impact of these practices on language learning and academic achievement. Additionally, expanding the research to include observational studies or interviews could provide a more nuanced understanding of teachers' practices and attitudes, complementing the self-reported data from questionnaires. By addressing these areas, educators and policymakers can create a more supportive environment that nurtures students' creativity, linguistic competence, and overall well-being in Greek secondary education.

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6. Appendices

6.1 Appendix I

Teachers' Questionnaire

Title: Investigating the Potential for Integrating Creative Writing into the EFL Curriculum: Perceptions of Secondary Education English as a Foreign Language Teachers in Greece

Purpose:

The following questionnaire is intended for the quantitative assessment of English language teachers' perceptions regarding the possibility of integrating creative writing into the EFL curriculum. It was written in the context of the preparation of my thesis in the Master's program of The Teaching of English as a Foreign/International Language of the Hellenic Open University. Your opinion is deemed necessary because it plays an important role in the conduct of this investigation. It only takes a few minutes of your time to complete. It is necessary to answer all questions according to your personal opinion and experience. The answers will be used exclusively for research purposes, while at the same time the anonymity of the participants will be fully respected. The research results will be available to you after gathering the desired number of questionnaires. If possible, the completion should be done up until 31/03/24. Thank you very much, in advance, for your participation and valuable help.

Poutouli Antonia, English Language teacher and postgraduate student of the Hellenic Open University

In case of questions and/or clarifications, you are welcome to contact me on my institutional email: std517752@ac.eap.gr

Part 1

A. Personal and Professional data

1. Sex (Choose one answer) *

Man

Woman

2. Age (Choose one answer) *

21-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

Other:

3. Educational Level (Choose one answer) *

University Degree

Postgraduate Degree

Ph.D.

4. Years of working experience in education (Choose one answer) *

0-5

6-10

11-20

21 and over

5. What is your employment status? (Choose one answer) *

Appointed teacher

Substitute teacher

Hourly-paid teacher

6. Please classify the location of the school where you are currently teaching based on the following options: (Choose one answer) *

Rural (village)

Semi-Urban (town)

Urban

7. In which grade of secondary education do you teach? (Choose all that applies)

*

1st grade - Junior High School

2nd grade - Junior High School

3rd grade - Junior High School

1st grade - Senior High School

2nd grade - Senior High School

3rd grade - Senior High School

1st grade - Technical Vocation School

2nd grade - Technical Vocation School

3rd grade - Technical Vocation School

Part 2

B. Creative Writing in EFL Education

1. To what extent are you familiar with the practice of creative writing in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education? *

1. Not at all, 2. Somewhat familiar, 3. Moderately familiar, 4. Highly familiar

2. Have you ever utilized creative writing in class? *

Yes

No

2b. If you have not incorporated creative writing into your classroom, could you indicate how much the following factors have influenced your decision? *

1. Not a factor, 2. A minor factor, 3. A moderate factor, 4. A major factor

A. Insufficient training in creative writing

B. Personal comfort level with such methods

C. Familiarity with creative writing techniques

D. Creative writing exercises not included in the curriculum

E. Time constraints

F. Preference for other writing methods

3. Which of the following types of creative writing activities have you previously used in your EFL classes? (Select all that apply) *

Journal writing

Poetry

Short stories

Collaborative writing

Dramatic writing (e.g., plays)

Other - Specify below...

4. Which of the following types of creative writing activities would you consider using in your EFL classes in the future? (Select all that apply) *

Journal writing

Poetry

Short stories

Collaborative writing

Dramatic writing (e.g., plays)

Other – Specify below...

5. Could you provide an example of a successful creative writing activity that you would use or have already used during class?

Your reply...

6. What specific challenges have you encountered while integrating creative writing into your teaching practices? *

Student reluctance

Limited time

Difficulty assessing and evaluating creative writing assignments

Limited access to resources and materials

Lack of support from colleagues or parents

Balancing creative writing with other curriculum requirements

Classroom management issues during creative writing activities

Other:

7. To what extent have you observed the following impacts of creative writing on your students? *

Not at all To a small extent To a moderate extent To a great extent

Language Skills Development

Enhanced Student Engagement

Increased Creativity

Promoting Critical Thinking

Fostering Collaboration and Peer Interaction

Encouraging Self-expression and Voice Development

8. In your experience, what positive outcomes have you observed in students as a result of incorporating creative writing into the curriculum? (You may share a specific example)

Your reply...

Part 3

C. Teacher's perceptions

1. How useful for the effectiveness of the EFL instruction do you think it is to work with creative writing? *

1. Not useful, 2 Somewhat useful, 3. Moderately useful, 4. Highly useful

2. To what extent do you think creative writing: *

1. Not at all 2. To a small extent 3. To a moderate extent 4. To a great extent

A. Is the individual's ability to control their creative thoughts and turn them into writing

B. Is a modern educational method that approaches learners' linguistic and cognitive capabilities in an experiential way, combining fun with learning

C. Is based on the reconstruction of the elements of a word, a sentence, or a text, seeking to produce new texts

D. Aims to cultivate a personal relationship with language and alleviate fears or aversions towards writing

E. Aims to create stimuli for parallel group activities in the classroom, such as theatrical games

A. Is the individual's ability to control their creative thoughts and turn them into writing

B. Is a modern educational method that approaches learners' linguistic and cognitive capabilities in an experiential way, combining fun with learning

C. Is based on the reconstruction of the elements of a word, a sentence, or a text, seeking to produce new texts

D. Aims to cultivate a personal relationship with language and alleviate fears or aversions towards writing

E. Aims to create stimuli for parallel group activities in the classroom, such as theatrical games

3. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements: *

1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Agree, 4. Strongly agree

A. "Creative writing is an effective way to enhance language learning."

B. "Creative writing fosters students' creativity and self-expression in language learning."

C. "I am confident/ have the ability to integrate creative writing into my lessons."

D. "Creative writing aligns with the language learning goals and standards of the Greek EFL curriculum."

E. "Creative writing positively affects students' overall language proficiency in English."

F. "Creative writing skills are important for students' long-term success in using English in their personal and professional lives."

G. "Integrating creative writing into the EFL curriculum can contribute to a lasting improvement in students' language proficiency and writing skills."

H. "H. Assessments focused on creative writing should be more prominently incorporated into the EFL curriculum."

I. "Integrating creative writing contributes to a more enjoyable and fulfilling learning experience for students"

J. "Creative writing makes EFL classes more memorable and engaging for your students"

4. How would you select materials for creative writing activities in your teaching?

*

Based on your own interests

Based on the interests of the students

Based on attractive illustrations

Based on colleagues' recommendations

Based on attraction/influenced by their interesting titles

Other:

Part 4

D. Teacher's Professional Development

1. Please rate your level of agreement for the following questions/statements: *

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree

- A. Do you believe there is a need for specific guidelines or standards set by educational authorities for incorporating creative writing into the EFL curriculum?
- B. Have you received any training or professional development related to teaching creative writing?
- C. Are there resources (e.g., textbooks, online platforms, writing prompts) available by the state that support your creative writing activities?
- D. Are there accessible technological or digital tools (e.g., software, apps, online platforms) that can support the use of creative writing?
- E. Would you collaborate with colleagues to share creative writing teaching methods and experiences?
- F. Do you think that integrating creative writing into the EFL curriculum should be encouraged at a national level in Greece?
- G. Do you feel that the current EFL curriculum at your institution is flexible enough to accommodate creative writing activities?

2. If you have received training in teaching creative writing, please select the option that best describes your experience and how it influenced your teaching approach. *

- a) I have completed a formal education or certification program specifically in teaching creative writing, which has significantly shaped my teaching methods.
- b) I have participated in workshops, seminars, or short courses focused on creative writing instruction, gaining valuable insights and strategies for my teaching.
- c) I have independently used online resources, books, or self-study materials to improve my skills and knowledge in teaching creative writing.
- d) I have not received any formal training or engaged in significant self-directed learning specifically for teaching creative writing.

Other:

3. Please specify what resources you have found available to support your creative writing activities. *

- a) Textbooks specifically designed for creative writing instruction
- b) Online platforms or websites offering writing prompts and exercises
- c) Access to a variety of literary works for inspiration
- d) Writing workshops or guest speaker sessions
- e) Peer collaboration and feedback opportunities
- f) Creative writing contests or publication opportunities

Other:

4. Following the resources you've identified, please describe any gaps or areas you think are lacking in your effort to support your creative writing activities.

Your reply...

5. From your perspective, what specific training or resources do you believe would further support your ability to teach creative writing in your current teaching environment? *

- a) Advanced workshops or courses focusing on specific aspects of creative writing instruction (e.g., poetry, fiction, non-fiction)
- b) Mentorship programs connecting teachers with experienced creative writing instructors
- c) Access to professional development resources tailored to creative writing instruction
- d) Collaborative projects or partnerships with local writers or authors
- e) Funding for classroom materials and resources dedicated to creative writing
- f) Access to research articles and best practices in creative writing pedagogy

Other:

6. Following the previous question, could you briefly state why you believe certain resources would be beneficial

Your reply...



6.2 Appendix II

Teachers' qualitative responses

5. Could you provide an example of a successful creative writing activity that you would use or have already used during class?

32 replies

1. I have used collaborative writing with First grade of Senior High School. The general umbrella topic was on animal rights and students had to work on writing an opinion essay on a specific topic. They were in groups of 3, they followed the analysis of the topic we had done in class, they brainstormed ideas, they divided the tasks among them (who would write what), they connected and edited the essay and they ended up writing an essay all together.
2. fairy tale
3. Collaborative writing of a story
4. Short stories given the beginning or ending of the story, or just a phrase to be used in it
5. Dramatic writing for a school play
6. Students seem to enjoy writing short stories
7. Imagine that you are the main hero of the story (that we have read in Literature lesson).
8. Write in your diary your thoughts and feelings.
9. Continue the story
10. I would be interested in encouraging learners to keep journals but I'm not really sure how to do it. The same applies with collaborative writing but I feel that I need proper training.
11. (Collaborative writing) : Short stories , written by students of the A Senior High School Classes. They were inspired by Vincent Van Gogh (his biography and work) and the relevant text in their English book..
12. Poster making project/book or movie blurbs
13. Christmas Holidays journal, Halloween scary story
14. Creative writing through board game "Cluedo"
15. Imagine you are a human organ. Write how you feel or write a dialogue btw two or more organs .
16. Pupils were told to write short stories using a specific sentence as inspiration
17. Journaling
18. The Story Chain. Here's how it works: You start with an open-ended prompt. This could be a sentence, an image, or a scenario. Then you pass it on: Each student starts writing a story based on the prompt for a set amount of time (e.g. setting the scene or developing the beginning of the story). Then you rotate: Each student passes their story to the person on their right. Now, each student continues the new story they've received, picking up where the last person left off. This rotation may happen several times. Finalize and share: Each story should have contributions from multiple students. In the final round, students can

conclude the story they currently have. Then, each story is read aloud to the class. It's often fun to see how the stories can take unexpected turns. Finally, reflect and discuss: Have a discussion about the experience. Students can talk about the challenges and surprises they encountered, the creative process, and what they learned about collaborative storytelling.

19. End a story with a different narrative ending
20. My students wrote poems on the issue of climate change and the environment
21. Students wrote their own short play version of "Christmas Carol" by Dickens and performed it at Christmas
22. Students worked together (3rd graders- Junior High School) to create an English end of year play (collaborative- dramatic writing)
23. Haiku
24. writing haikus
25. Poems
26. Creation of a crazy story using the words of the vocabulary
27. Create a story based on another's story characters
28. Collaborative writing
29. Writing collaborative articles for online Erasmus+ project magazines (based on specific topics, i.e. concerning well-being at school).
stream of consciousness, dream description, images to inspire
30. Poetry
31. I have used short stories and journal writing
32. Collaborative writing was very successful in the classroom

8. In your experience, what positive outcomes have you observed in students as a result of incorporating creative writing into the curriculum? (You may share a specific example)

28 replies

1. Students can be benefited by learning how to approach a topic in writing, how to analyse it, generate ideas and how to develop them. Generally, writing skills can be greatly honed as well as critical thinking, collaboration, communication and organisation.
2. classroom atmosphere gets more fun they are engaged into the teaching process correct use of vocabulary and story linkers
3. Better understanding of the writing process and willingness to participate in writing tasks
4. They feel more confident to utilize what they know while verbalising their imagination
5. Confidence to use the language
6. It's a fun activity that makes writing more interesting

7. More interest about the lesson, cultivation of imagination, general improvement of school performance
8. Broaden their critical thinking
9. I haven't because I haven't incorporated it yet but I'm sure that learners would be positively influenced and their motivation would be enhanced.
10. a) Increased interest during the lesson b) all the students were involved c) great imagination (I was pretty much surprised in some cases) d) students' contentment and gratification for their work e) positive reinforcement f) self-confidence boosting
11. Participation on behalf of students with learning or focusing difficulties
12. A spark of joy while writing
13. More students participate and find it more fun.
14. Anticipation. Look forward to writing and then reading their works. Learn voc and grammar in a sufficient way
15. They tend to get excited about the fact that they were able to create their own story.
16. More active imagination, improvement in writing skills
17. Improved writing skills
18. Utilization of creative writing-related potential
rise of self-esteem, expressing feelings and opinions openly
19. Students become more enthusiastic and willing to work, feel proud of themselves and tend to be more interested in the English language as a means of expressing their thoughts, feelings or world view. What is more, a stronger bond tends to develop not only between students but also between teacher and students.
20. Expression of feelings
21. Increased motivation and engagement
22. Active involvement
23. Improved writing
24. Social bonding between students
25. Students unwilling to get involved in typical educational procedures feel more integrated and confident as their ideas are more accepted by peers and they do not have the anxiety of their performance being actually tested.
26. students become more sensitive to language and style, interesting conversations, increase of self-esteem
27. Language development and more engagement in the class
28. students are more willing to engage in the activity and they discover aspects of their personality they didn't know about. Even students who are usually more shy tend to participate more given the chance.

4. Following the resources you've identified, please describe any gaps or areas you think are lacking in your effort to support your creative writing activities.

9 replies

1. Assessment
2. A framework-based support by the Greek EFL curriculum
3. Open-mindedness
4. Lack of official training
5. Guidance
6. Time and motivation
7. I have none
8. Peer collaboration
9. I feel like I can't fully commit to do this activity in every classroom, especially if there are 27 students in it. Time constraint is a major issue

6. Following the previous question, could you briefly state why you believe certain resources would be beneficial

6 replies

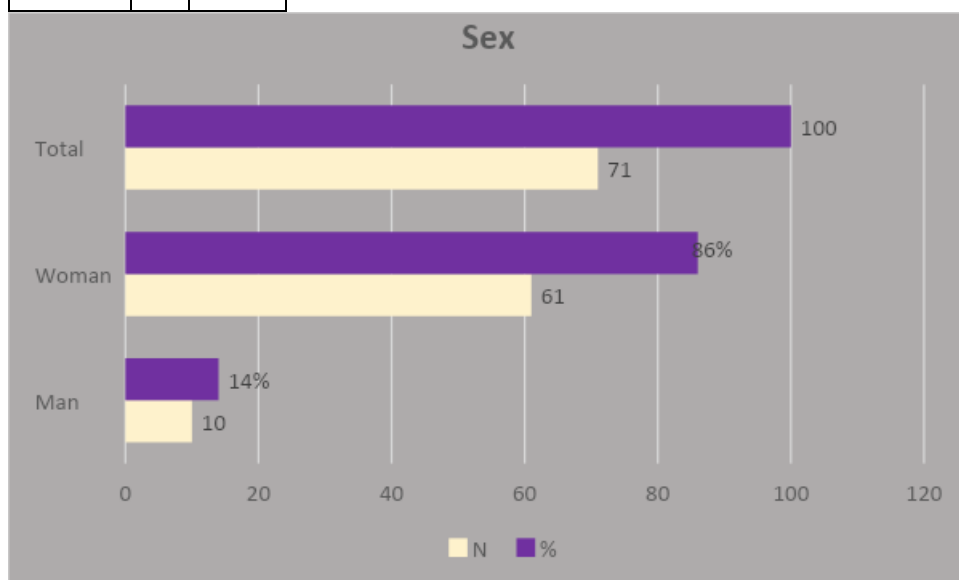
1. They would enrich and widen my approach and methodology to creative writing
2. So as to be more methodical and effective
3. Because ideas need to be shared both on a peer-to-peer and on a mentoring process level.
4. They could make a change in both teachers' and students' attitudes to writing in the classroom.
5. To give feedback, adapt to certain changes, help focus on solutions etc.
6. With more resources, students can become more interested in attempting to participate in creative writing. Nowadays we don't write much, so we could use all the encouragement we can get.

6.3 Appendix III

Graphs

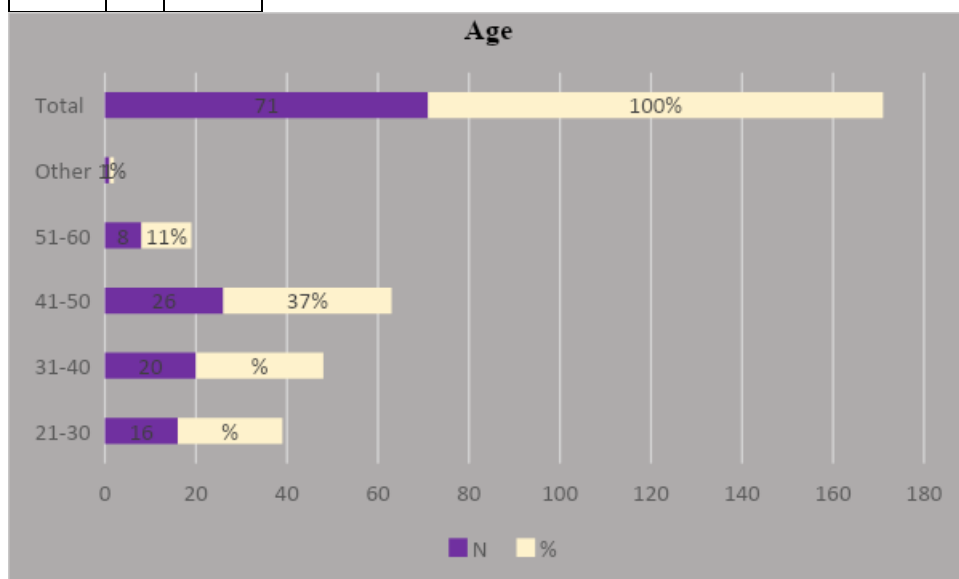
1)

Sex	N	%
Man	10	14
Woman	61	86
Total	71	100%



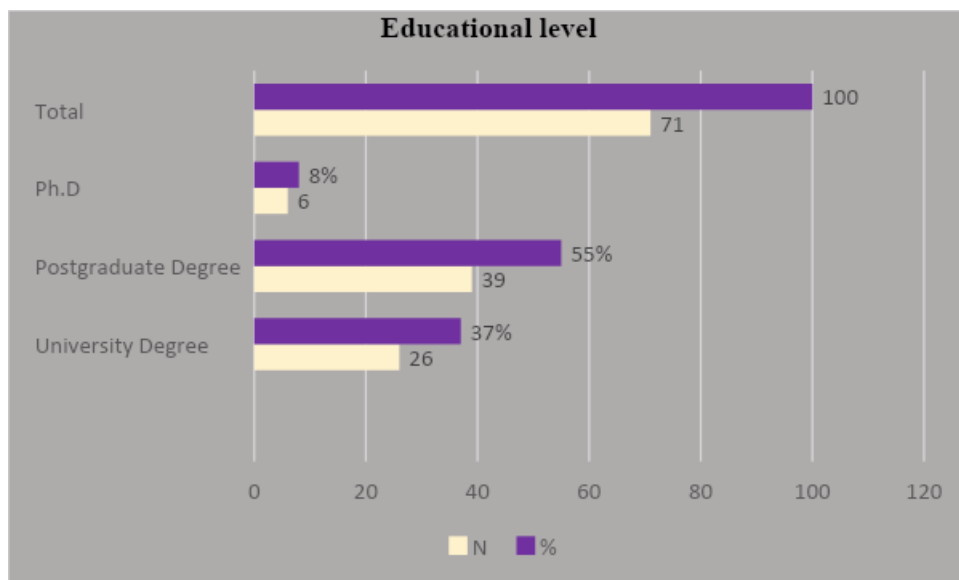
2)

Age	N	%
21-30	16	23
31-40	20	28
41-50	26	37
51-60	8	11
Other	1	1
Total	70	100%



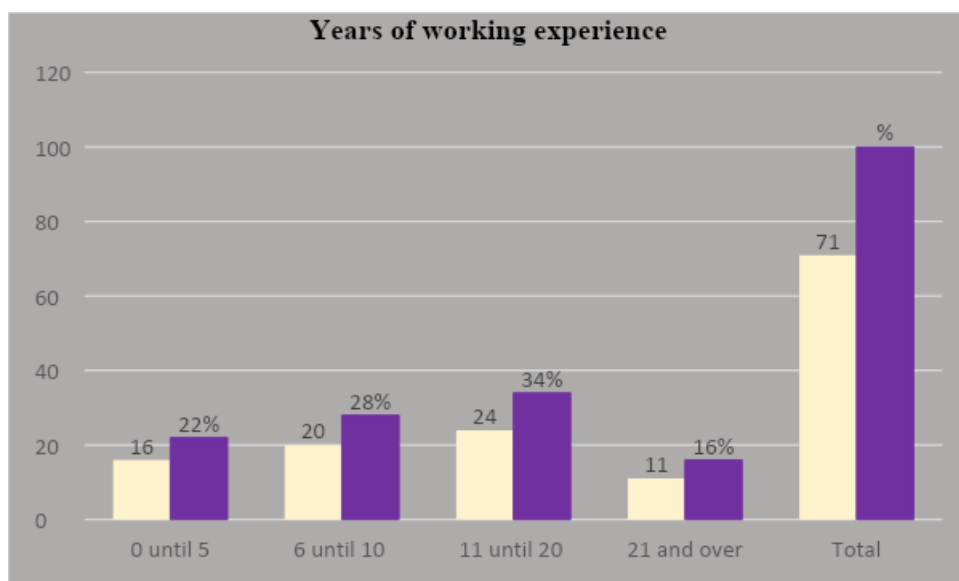
3)

Educational level	N	%
University Degree	26	37
Postgraduate Degree	39	55
Ph.D.	8	6
Total	71	100



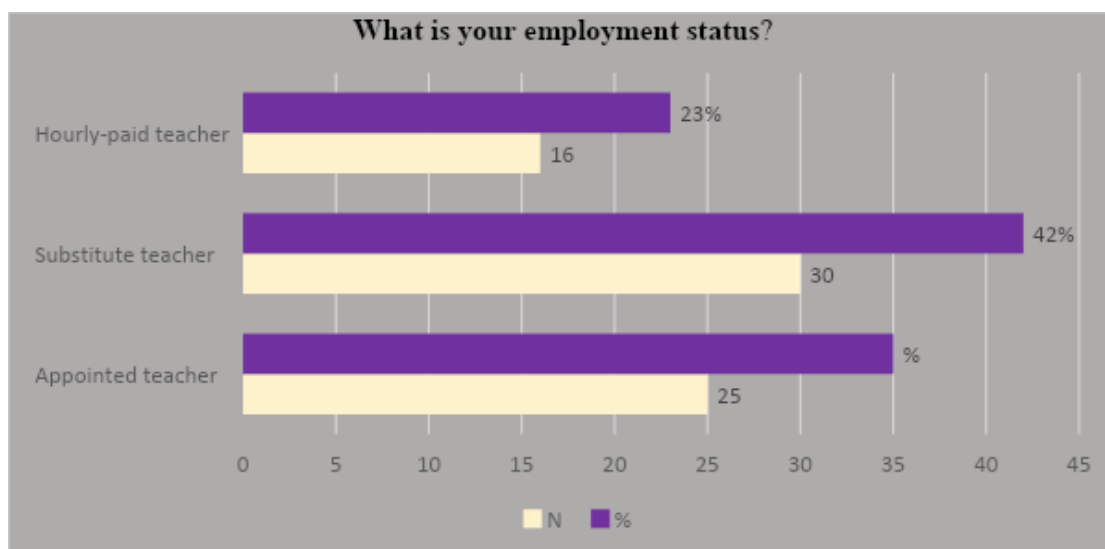
4)

Years of working experience	N	%
0-5	16	22
6-10	20	28
11-20	24	34
21 and over	11	16
Total	71	100



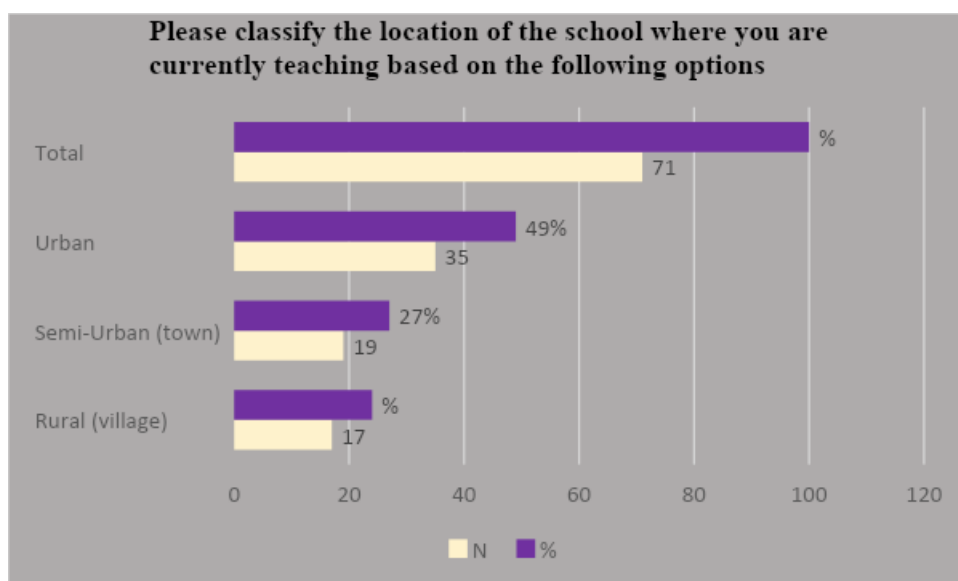
5)

What is your employment status?	N	%
Appointed teacher	25	35
Substitute teacher	30	42
Hourly-paid teacher	16	23
Total	71	100



6)

Please classify the location of the school where you are currently teaching based on the following options	N	%
Rural (village)	17	24
Semi-Urban (town)	19	27
Urban	35	49
Total	71	100

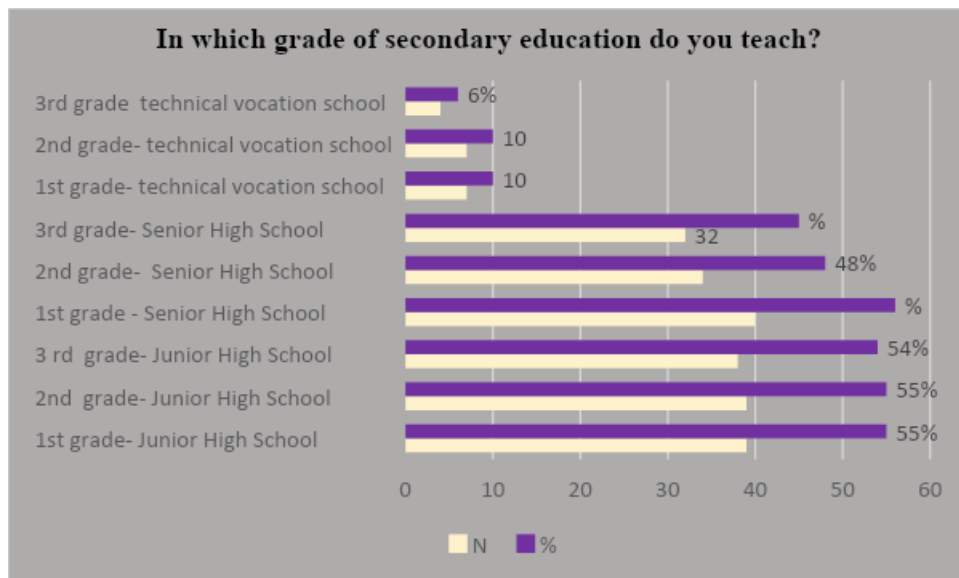


7)

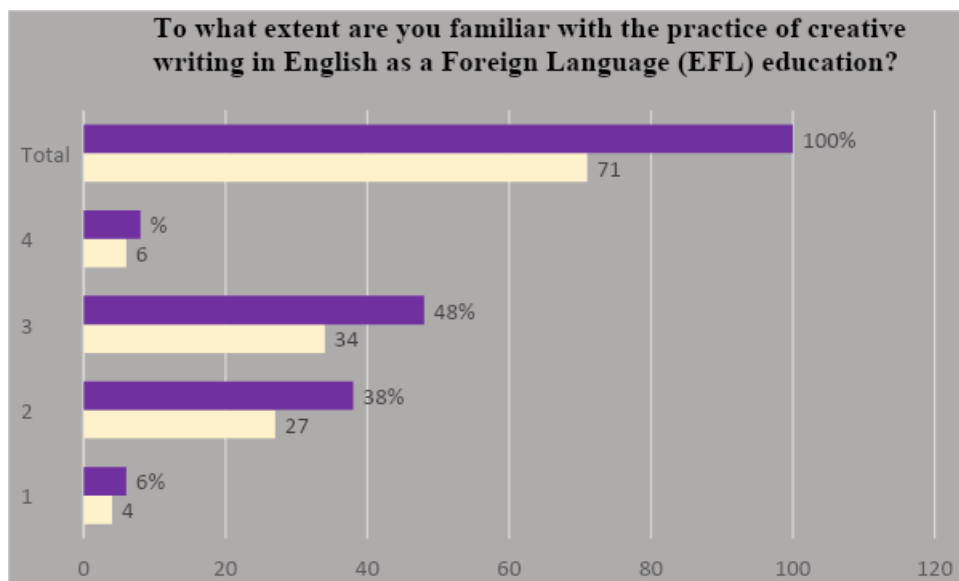
In which grade of secondary education do you teach?	N	%
1 st grade- Junior High School	39	55

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2 nd grade- Junior High School	39	55
3 rd grade- Junior High School	38	54
1 st grade - Senior High School	40	56
2 nd grade- Senior High School	34	48
3 rd grade- Senior High School	32	45
1 st grade- technical vocation school	7	10
2 nd grade- technical vocation school	7	10
3 rd grade technical vocation school	4	6



Creative Writing in EFL Education

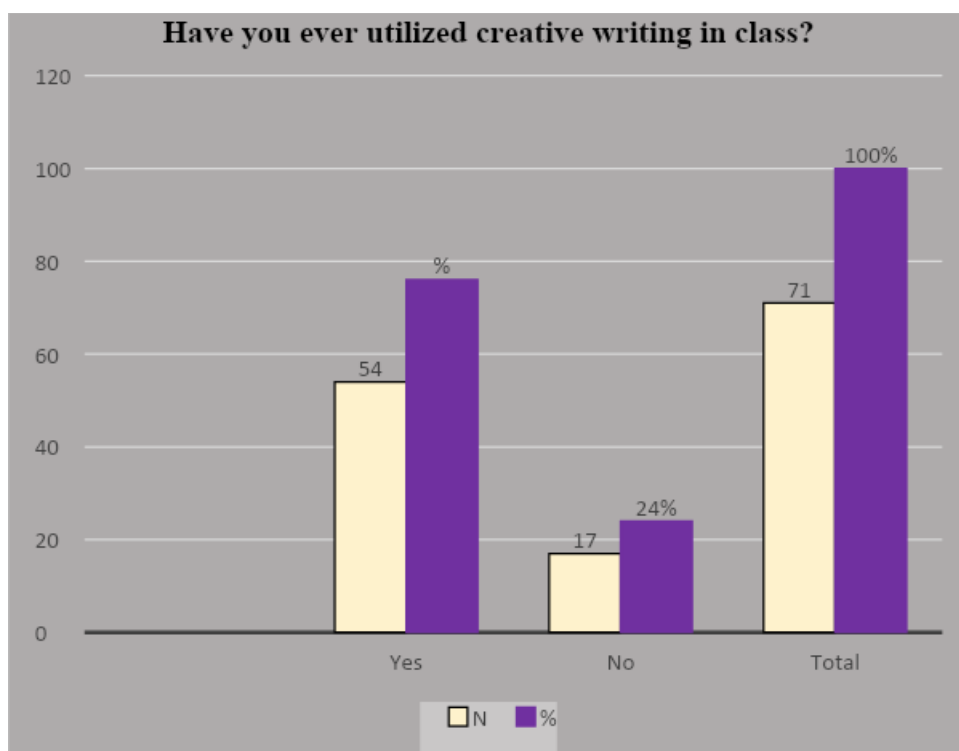


1)

To what extent are you familiar with the practice of creative writing in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education?	N	%
1	4	6
2	27	38
3	34	48
4	6	8
Total	71	100

2)

Have you ever utilized creative writing in class?	N	%
Yes	54	76
No	17	24
Total	71	100

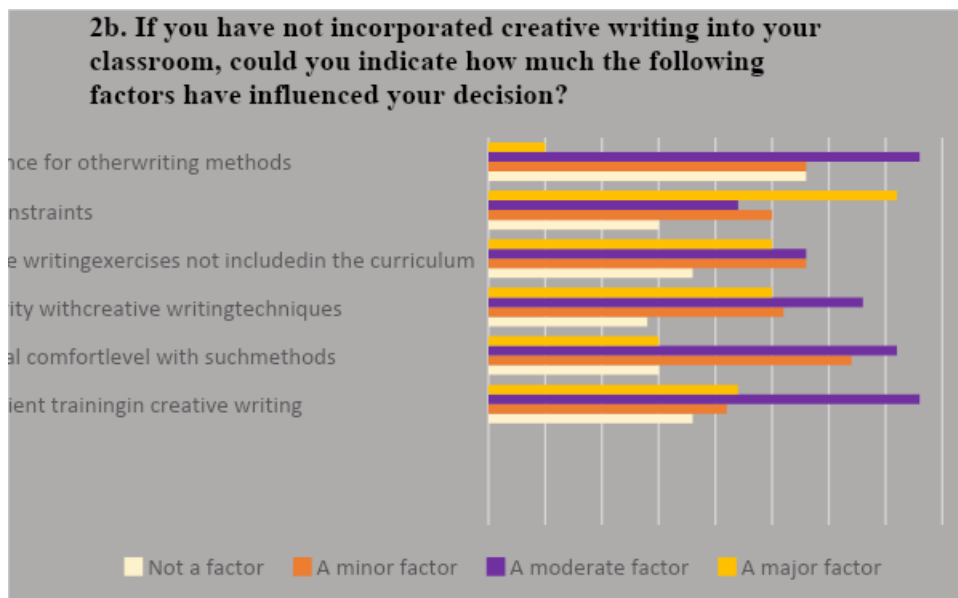


3)

2b. If you have not incorporated creative writing into your classroom, could you indicate how much the following factors have influenced your decision?	Not a factor	A minor factor	A moderate factor	A major factor
Insufficient training in creative writing	18%	21%	38%	22%

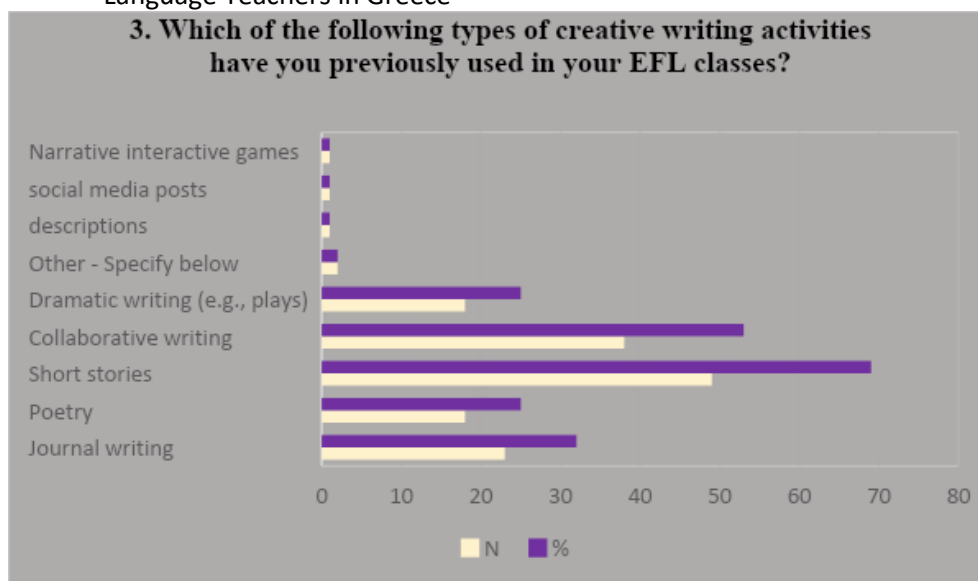
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Personal comfort level with such methods	15%	32%	36%	15%
Familiarity with creative writing techniques	14%	26%	33%	25%
Creative writing exercises not included in the curriculum	18%	28%	28%	25%
Time constraints	15%	25%	22%	36%
Preference for other writing methods	28%	28%	38%	5%



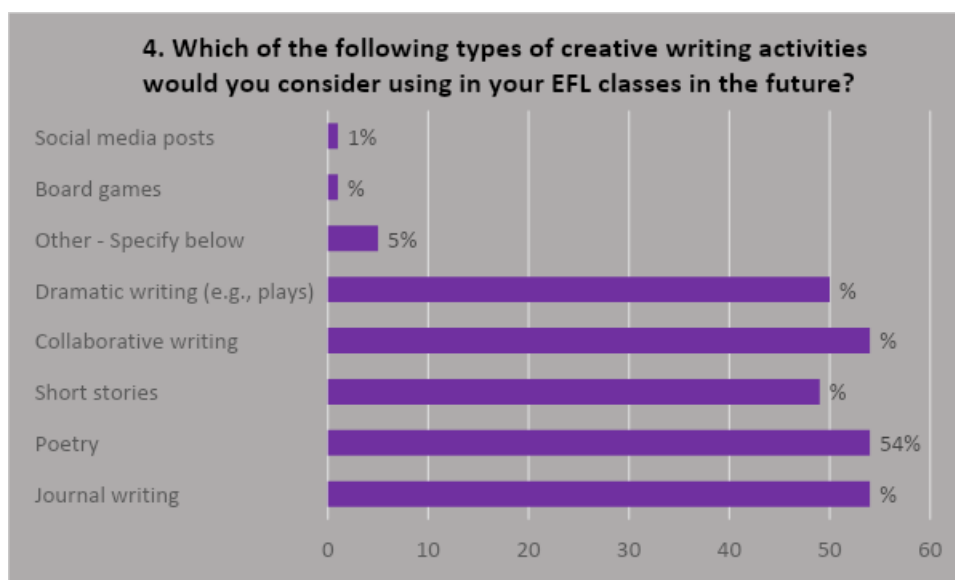
4)

3. Which of the following types of creative writing activities have you previously used in your EFL classes?	N	%
Journal writing	23	32
Poetry	18	25
Short stories	49	69
Collaborative writing	38	53
Dramatic writing (e.g., plays)	18	25
Other - Specify below	2	2
descriptions	1	1
social media posts	1	1
Narrative interactive games	1	1



5)

4. Which of the following types of creative writing activities would you consider using in your EFL classes in the future?	N	%
Journal writing	39	54
Poetry	39	54
Short stories	35	49
Collaborative writing	39	54
Dramatic writing (e.g., plays)	36	50
Other - Specify below	4	5
Board games	1	1
Social media posts	1	1



6)

5. Could you provide an example of a successful creative writing activity that you would use or have already used during class?	N	%
Collaborative writing	7	21
Fairy tale	1	3
Short stories	5	16

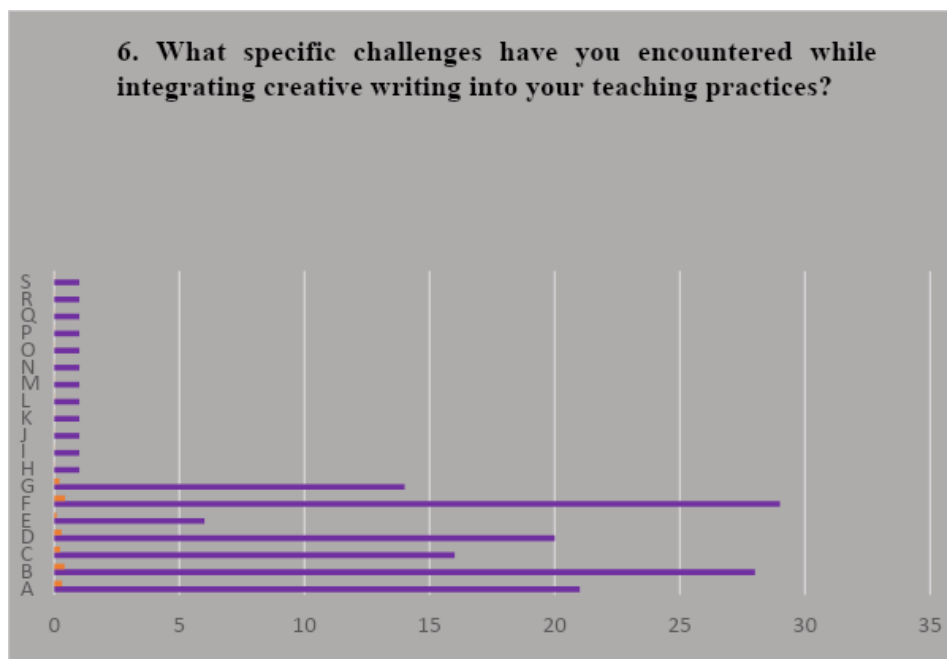
Dramatic writing	2	6
Continue stories	1	3
Poster making project/book or movie blurbs	1	3
Scary story	1	3
Creative writing through board games	1	3
Write a dialogue	1	3
Journal writing	3	9
Story chain	1	3
End a story with a different narrative ending	1	3
Writing poems	3	9
Writing Haiku	2	6
Create a story	2	6



7)

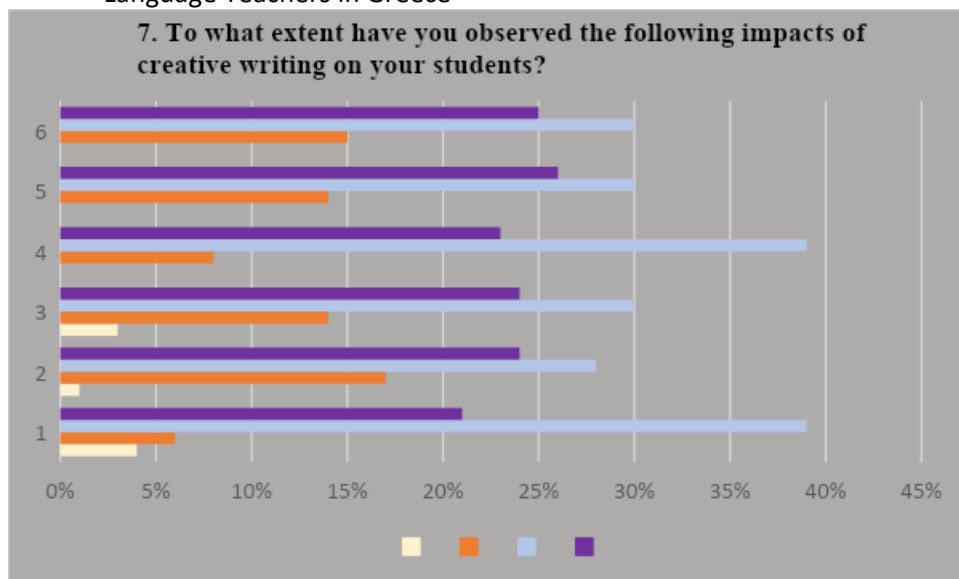
6. What specific challenges have you encountered while integrating creative writing into your teaching practices?	N	%
a. Student reluctance	21	31%
b. Limited time	28	41%
c. Difficulty assessing and evaluating creative writing assignments	16	23%
d) Limited access to resources and materials	20	29%
e) Lack of support from colleagues or parents	6	9%
f) Balancing creative writing with other curriculum requirements	29	43%
g) Classroom management issues during creative writing activities	14	20%
h) Students were not familiar with this type of technique. Also, they were not familiar with the steps of analysing the topic, brainstorming ideas and writing all together. Finally, time constraints was somehow a challenge so we had to finish this in two sessions.	1	1%
i) The fact that this method is considered extremely difficult for some students	1	1%
j) The fact that this method is considered extremely difficult for some students.	1	1%
K) Lack of proper training, time constraints and the need to follow the syllabus.	1	1%
l) management of the class b) team work c) peer instruction d) active learning	1	1%
m) No challenge, interest has been raised through this teaching practice	1	1%

n) Student boredom, low self esteem of some students, lack of time	1	1%
o) Excessive imagination	1	1%
p) There is not enough time to implement this type of writing as schools are exam oriented	1	1%
q) Lack of educational materials	1	1%
r) Student Reluctance, limited time and curriculum constraints	1	1%
s) Discipline problem	1	1%



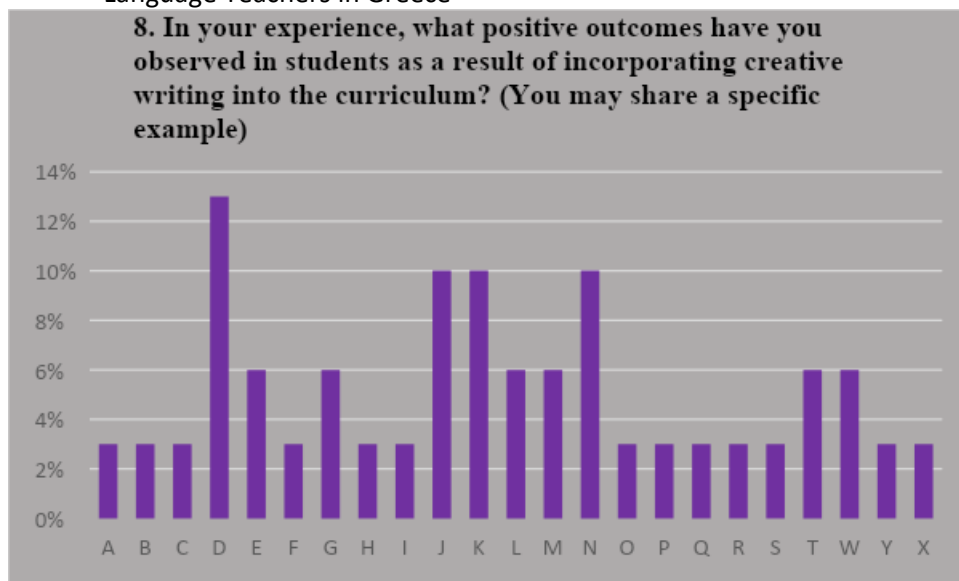
8)

7. To what extent have you observed the following impacts of creative writing on your students?	Not at al	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent
1) Language Skills Development	4%	6%	39%	21%
2) Enhanced Student Engagement	1%	17%	28%	24%
3) Increased Creativity	3%	14%	30%	24%
4) Promoting Critical Thinking	0	8%	39%	23%
5) Fostering Collaboration and Peer Interaction	0	14%	30%	26%
6) Encouraging Self-expression and Voice Development	0	15%	30%	25%



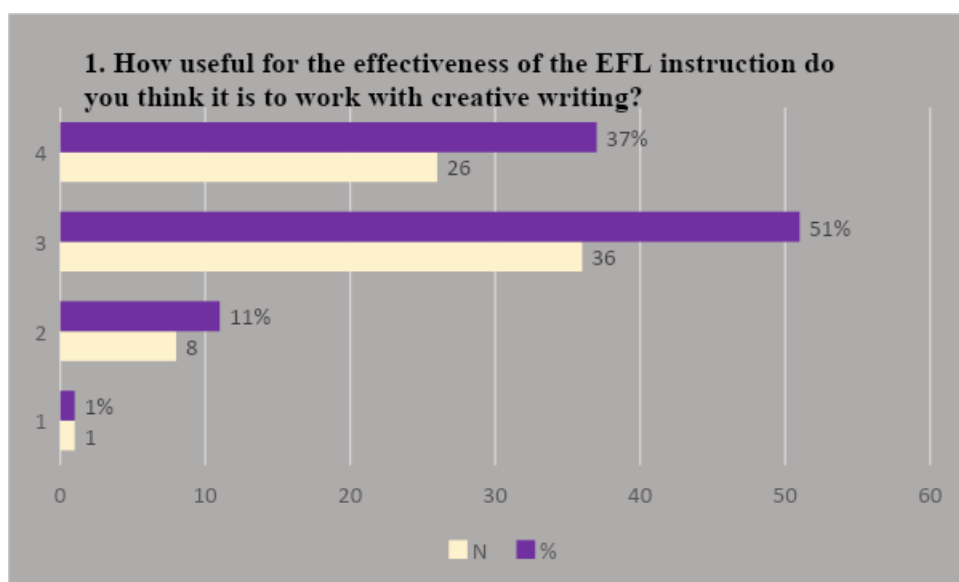
9)

8. In your experience, what positive outcomes have you observed in students as a result of incorporating creative writing into the curriculum? (You may share a specific example)	
A)Learn to aproach a topic	3%
B)Learn to develop ideas	3%
C)Learn to analyze a topic	3%
D)Improve writing skills	13%
E)Improve critical thinking	6%
F)Improve collaboration	3%
G)Improve communication	6%
H)Improve organisation	3%
I)Atmosphere gets more fun	3%
J)Willingness to participate in writing tasks	10%
K)Use imagination	10%
L)Participate in writing tasks	6%
M)Confidence to use the language	6%
N)More interest about the lesson	10%
O)Improve grades	3%
P)Contentment and gratification for their work	3%
Q)Participation on behalf of students with learning or focusing difficulties	3%
R)Anticipation	3%
S)Self confidence	3%
T)Expressing feelings and opinions	6%
W)Interested in the English language	6%
Y)Social bonding between students	3%
X)Confidence as the ideas are more accepted by peers	3%



Teacher's perceptions

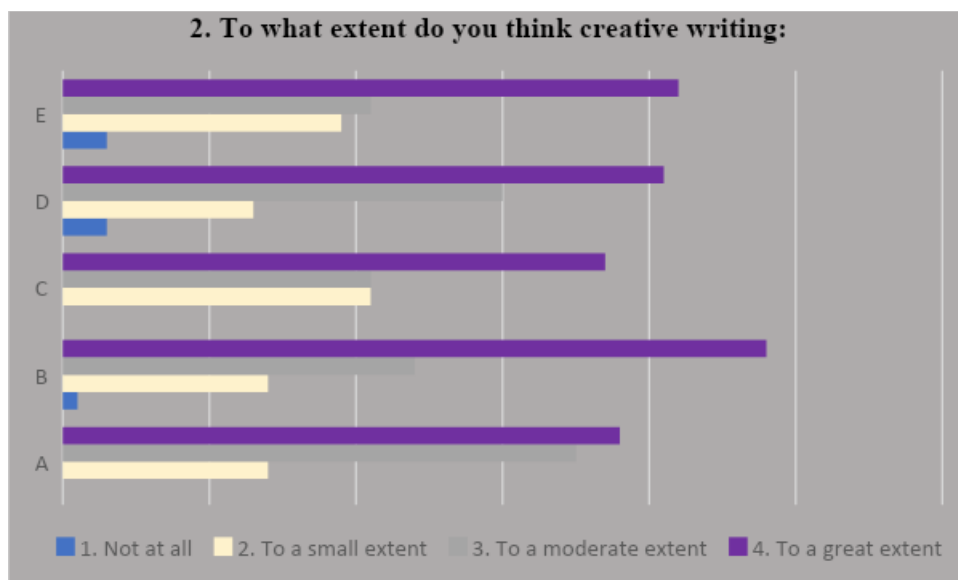
1. How useful for the effectiveness of the EFL instruction do you think it is to work with creative writing?	N	%
1	1	1
2	8	11
3	36	51
4	26	37



2)

2. To what extent do you think creative writing:	1. Not at all	2. To a small extent	3. To a moderate extent	4. To a great extent
A. Is the individual's ability to control their creative thoughts and turn them into writing	0	14%	35%	38%

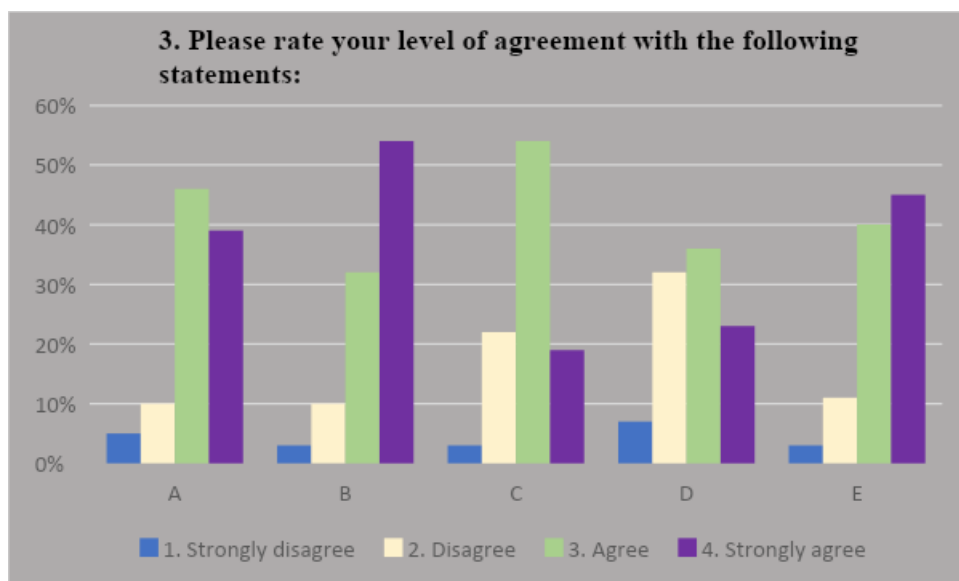
B. Is a modern educational method that approaches learners' linguistic and cognitive capabilities in an experiential way, combining fun with learning	1%	14%	24%	48%
C. Is based on the reconstruction of the elements of a word, a sentence, or a text, seeking to produce new texts	0	21%	21%	37%
D. Aims to cultivate a personal relationship with language and alleviate fears or aversions towards writing	3%	13%	30%	41%
E. Aims to create stimuli for parallel group activities in the classroom, such as theatrical games	3%	19%	21%	42%



3)

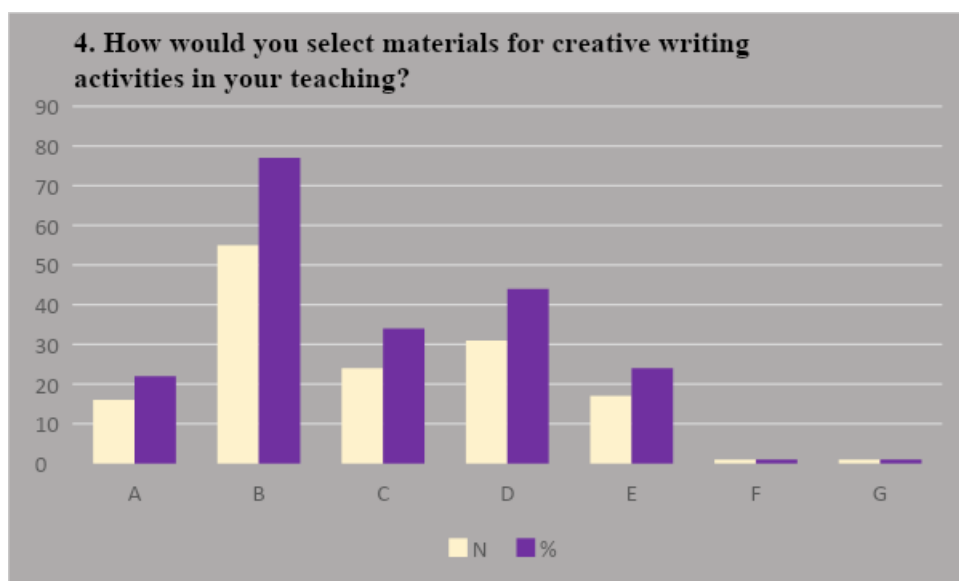
3. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Agree	4. Strongly agree
A. "Creative writing is an effective way to enhance language learning."	5%	10%	46%	39%
B. "Creative writing fosters students' creativity and self-expression in language learning."	3%	10%	32%	54%
C. "I am confident/ have the ability to integrate creative writing into my lessons."	3%	22%	54%	19%
D. "Creative writing aligns with the language learning goals and standards of the Greek EFL curriculum."	7%	32%	36%	23%

E. "Creative writing positively affects students' overall language proficiency in English."	3%	11%	40%	45%
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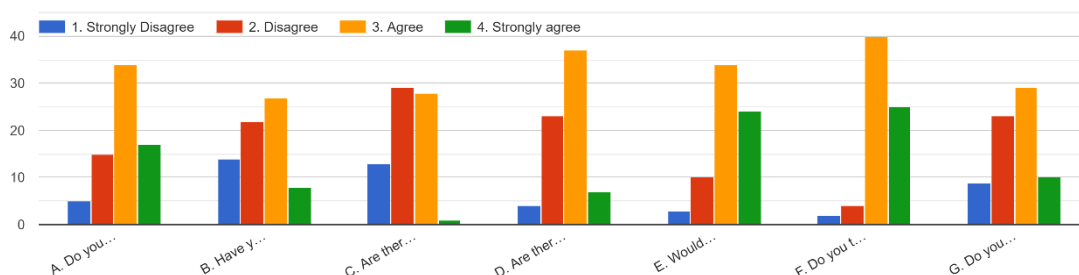
4)

4. How would you select materials for creative writing activities in your teaching?	N	%
A)Based on your own interests	16	22
B)Based on the interests of the students	55	77
C)Based on attractive illustrations	24	34
D)Based on colleagues' recommendations	31	44
E)Based on attraction/influenced by their interesting titles	17	24
F)I choose materials, not books	1	1
G) I choose materials, not books	1	1



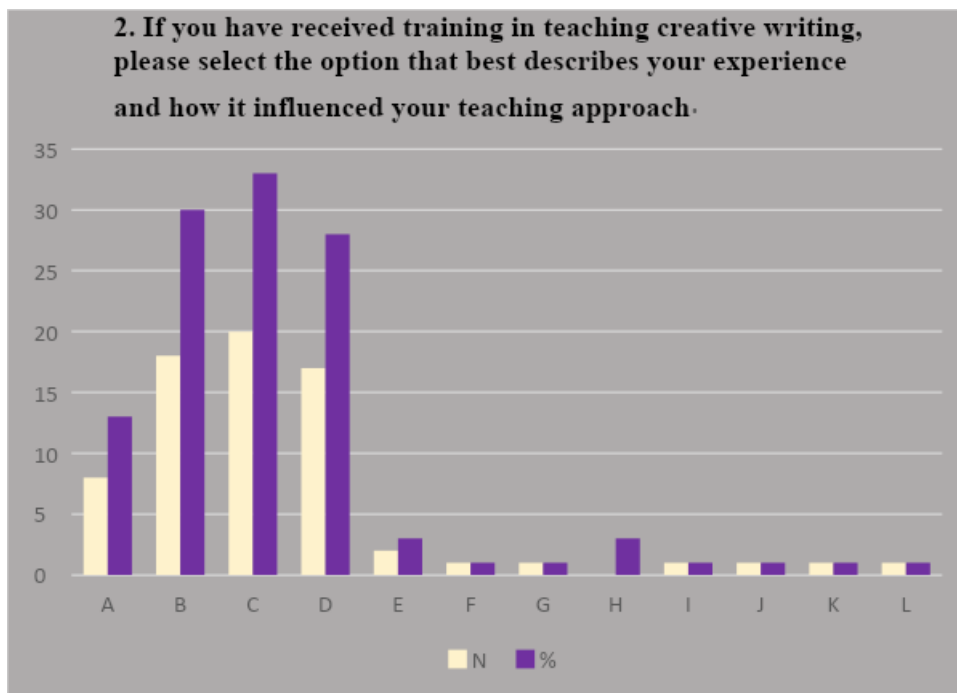
Teacher's Professional Development

1. Please rate your level of agreement for the following questions/statements:



1)

1. Please rate your level of agreement for the following questions/statements:	1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Agree	4. Strongly agree
A. Do you believe there is a need for specific guidelines or standards set by educational authorities for incorporating creative writing into the EFL curriculum?	7%	21%	48%	24%
B. Have you received any training or professional development related to teaching creative writing?	19%	30%	38%	11%
C. Are there resources (e.g., textbooks, online platforms, writing prompts) available by the state that support your creative writing activities?	18%	40%	39%	1%
D. Are there accessible technological or digital tools (e.g., software, apps, online platforms) that can support the use of creative writing?	6%	32%	52%	9%
E. Would you collaborate with colleagues to share creative writing teaching methods and experiences?	4%	14%	47%	33%
F. Do you think that integrating creative writing into the EFL curriculum should be encouraged at a national level in Greece?	2%	6%	56%	25
G. Do you feel that the current EFL curriculum at your institution is flexible enough to accommodate creative writing activities?	12%	32%	40%	14%



2)

2. If you have received training in teaching creative writing, please select the option that best describes your experience and how it influenced your teaching approach.	N	%
A. I have completed a formal education or certification program specifically in teaching creative writing, which has significantly shaped my teaching methods.	8	13
B. I have participated in workshops, seminars, or short courses focused on creative writing instruction, gaining valuable insights and strategies for my teaching.	18	30
C. I have independently used online resources, books, or self-study materials to improve my skills and knowledge in teaching creative writing.	20	33
D. I have not received any formal training or engaged in significant self-directed learning specifically for teaching creative writing.	17	28
E. I haven't	2	3
F. It was an eye opening experience and showed me that writing can be creative, fun, engaging and actually learn from it. I use it very often in my teaching.	1	1
G. University course in an English institution	1	1
H. No		3
I. No training	1	1
J. Just attended a creative writing course as an undergrad student	1	1
K. My experience was really educative and it has made my teaching more interesting and meaningful.	1	1
L. I have not received formal training or resources for teaching creative writing.	1	1

3)

3. Please specify what resources you have found available to support your creative writing activities.	N	%
a) Textbooks	29	40%
b) Online platforms or websites	37	56%
c) Access to a variety of literary works for inspiration	24	37%
d) Writing workshops or guest speaker sessions	15	23%

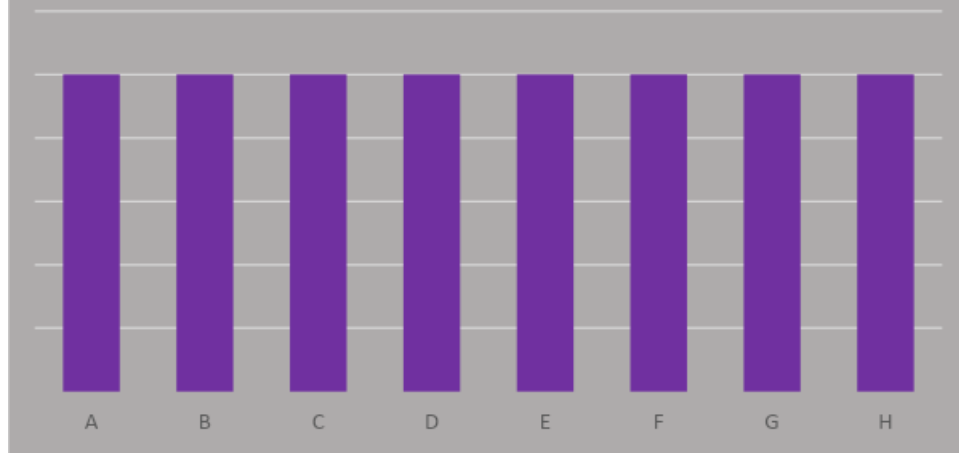
e) Peer collaboration and feedback opportunities	12	18%
f) Creative writing contests or publication opportunities	7	11%
g) videos audios flashcards board games	1	1%
h) writing templates online, stories with blank spaces, journaling templates.	1	1%
i) own copies	1	1%
j) Training	2	2%
k) coursebooks/storyjumper.com	1	1%
l) Searching the net can provide a lot of ideas.	1	1%



4)

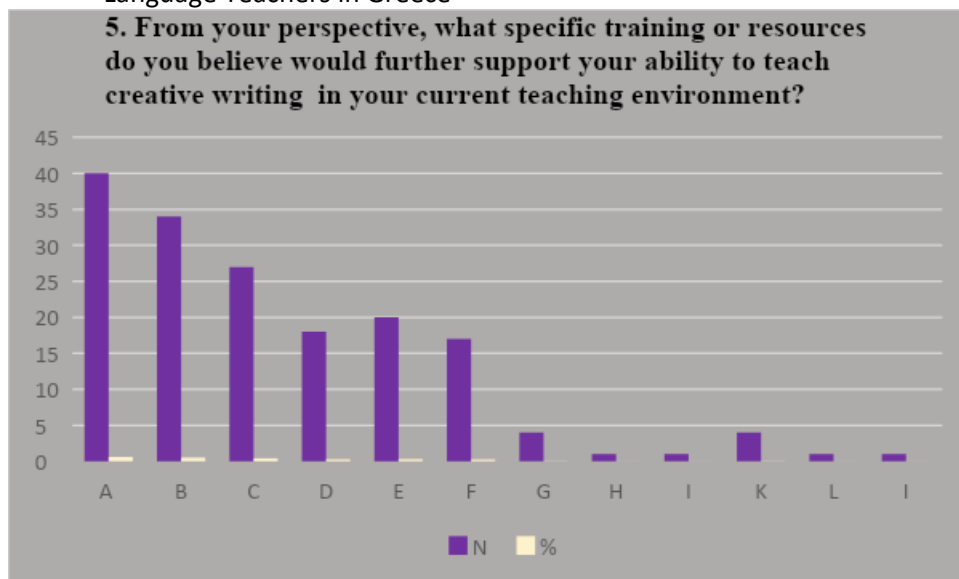
4. Following the resources you've identified, please describe any gaps or areas you think are lacking in your effort to support your creative writing activities.	N
a) Assesment	1%
b) A framework-based support by the Greek EFL curriculum	1%
c) Open-mindedness	1%
d) Lack of official training	1%
e) Guidance	1%
f) Time and motivation	1%
g) Time and motivation	1%
h) Peer collaboration	1%
i)Time constraint is a major issue	1%

4. Following the resources you've identified, please describe any gaps or areas you think are lacking in your effort to support your creative writing activities.



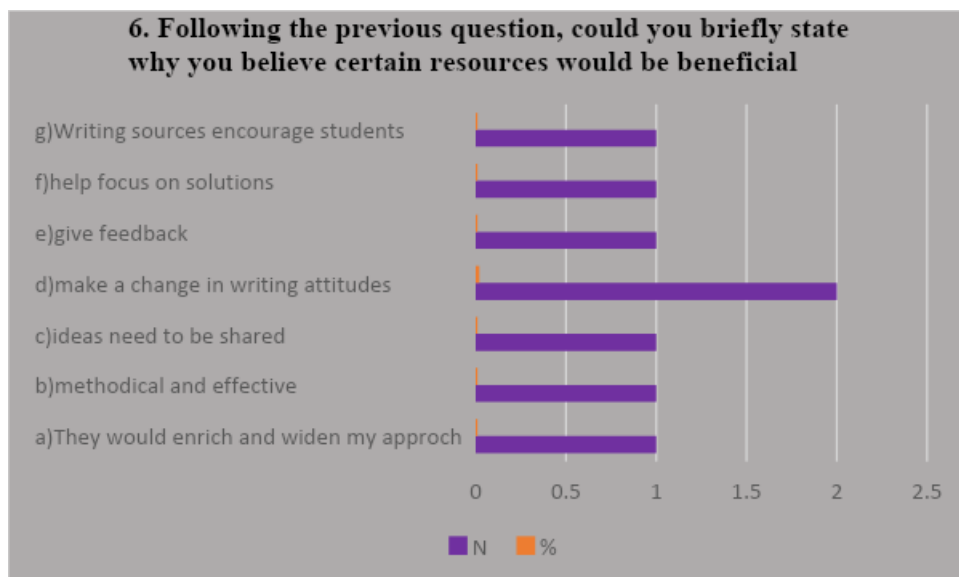
5)

5. From your perspective, what specific training or resources do you believe would further support your ability to teach creative writing in your current teaching environment?	N	%
a) Advanced workshops or courses	40	60%
b) Mentorship programs	34	52%
c) Access to professional development resources	27	41%
d) Collaborative projects or partnerships with local writers	18	27%
e) Funding for classroom materials and resources dedicated to creative writing	20	30%
f) Access to research articles and best practices	17	26%
g) Maybe more practical seminars	4	4%
h) digital tools	1	1%
i) Free platform with videos and available material	1	1%
j) Training courses provided by the state	4	4%
k) Online trainings and practicing	1	1%
l) guidance	1	1%



6)

6. Following the previous question, could you briefly state why you believe certain resources would be beneficial	N	%
a)They would enrich and widen my approach	1	1%
b)methodical and effective	1	1%
c)ideas need to be shared	1	1%
d)make a change in writing attitudes	2	2%
e)give feedback	1	1%
f)help focus on solutions	1	1%
g)Writing sources encourage students	1	1%



6.4 Appendix IV

EFL curriculum 2023-2024

Junior High School

Όπως προκύπτει από τον παραπάνω πίνακα, στο τέλος της Γ' Γυμνασίου, οι μαθητές/-ήτριες αναμένεται να έχουν κατακτήσει επίπεδο γλωσσομάθειας B1+ και, ενδεικτικά, να είναι ικανοί/-ές:

- να κατανοούν και να παράγουν απλά δομημένα και σαφή κείμενα σχετικά με προσωπικά τους ενδιαφέροντα, όπως το σχολείο, ο ελεύθερος χρόνος, οι κοινωνικές σχέσεις, κ.λπ.,
- να αφηγούνται γεγονότα, να περιγράφουν εμπειρίες και προσωπικά σχέδια και να διατυπώνουν προσωπικές απόψεις,
- να συμμετέχουν, χρησιμοποιώντας την ξένη γλώσσα, σε καθημερινές περιστάσεις διαπροσωπικής επικοινωνίας,
- να παράγουν σύντομα και απλά δομημένα μηνύματα (στον γραπτό και τον προφορικό λόγο) στην ξένη γλώσσα, έχοντας ως ερέθισμα γραπτά κείμενα στην Ελληνική, ή και αντίστροφα.

Για τους/τις μαθητές/-ήτριες οι οποίοι/οποίες στο τέλος της Γ' Γυμνασίου θα έχουν κατακτήσει το επίπεδο B2-, ενδεικτικά, αναμένεται να είναι ικανοί/-ές:

- Να κατανοούν τις βασικές ιδέες/πληροφορίες σύνθετων κειμένων, τα οποία μπορεί να περιλαμβάνουν αφηρημένες έννοιες σχετικές με ποικίλους τομείς κοινωνικής εμπειρίας ή και τεχνικές πληροφορίες (π.χ. πώς να χρησιμοποιήσει κάποιος μια ηλεκτρική συσκευή).
- Να παράγουν λεπτομερή, ορθά δομημένα και συνεκτικά κείμενα σχετικά με μια ευρεία γκάμα θεμάτων, αναπτύσσοντας κατάλληλη επιχειρηματολογία προκειμένου να υποστηρίξουν τις θέσεις τους ή αναφέροντας τα πλεονεκτήματα και τα μειονεκτήματα μιας άποψης.
- Να συζητούν στη γλώσσα-στόχο με σαφήνεια, με αμεσότητα και ευχέρεια για ζητήματα που αφορούν τους νέους και τους ενήλικες πολίτες της δικής τους ή μιας ξένης κοινωνίας.
- Να επιλέγουν πληροφορίες σχετικές με τον επικοινωνιακό τους στόχο από ένα ή περισσότερα κείμενα γραπτού ή προφορικού λόγου στην Ελληνική ώστε να παράγουν ένα σχετικά σύνθετο κείμενο στην ξένη γλώσσα ή αντίστροφα.

Senior High School

Τέλος, ιδιαίτερα στο πλαίσιο της διδασκαλίας του μαθήματος της αγγλικής γλώσσας στη Γ΄ ΓΕΛ προτείνεται ο/η εκπαιδευτικός να αξιοποιεί δραστηριότητες που αφορούν στην εξέταση της αγγλικής γλώσσας ως ειδικού μαθήματος στις πανελλαδικές εξετάσεις. Για την εξέταση του ειδικού μαθήματος της Αγγλικής γλώσσας στις πανελλαδικές εξετάσεις προβλέπονται τα εξής:

Οι μαθητές/-ήτριες θα πρέπει να είναι σε θέση να ανταποκριθούν σε δοκιμασίες α) κατανόησης γραπτού λόγου, β) γλωσσικής επίγνωσης και γ) παραγωγής γραπτού λόγου, ως ακολούθως:

I. Κατανόηση Γραπτού Λόγου

Ο/Η μαθητής/-ήτρια απαντά γραπτά σε ερωτήσεις που αφορούν ένα γραπτό κείμενο (320-400 λέξεων), κατανοώντας σημαντικές πληροφορίες στο πλαίσιο καθημερινών επικοινωνιακών περιστάσεων (π.χ. σχετικά με την εργασία, το σχολείο, τις δραστηριότητες του ελεύθερου χρόνου κ.λπ.) και γενικότερων θεμάτων κοινωνικο-οικονομικού, και πολιτισμικού περιεχομένου. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, ο μαθητής/-ήτρια πρέπει να είναι σε θέση να εντοπίζει το θέμα, να κατανοεί το περιεχόμενο του κειμένου, την άποψη του συγγραφέα και την ομάδα-στόχο στην οποία απευθύνεται το κείμενο, καθώς και να διατυπώνει προσωπική άποψη επί συναφών θεμάτων.

II. Γλωσσική Επίγνωση

Ο/Η μαθητής/-ήτρια πρέπει ενδεικτικά να είναι σε θέση να:

- εντοπίζει τα βασικά μέρη ενός κειμένου ως προς την οργάνωση και τη δομή,
- να αναγνωρίζει τα μέσα με τα οποία επιτυγχάνεται η συνεκτικότητα και η συνοχή ενός κειμένου (διαρθρωτικές λέξεις, φράσεις κ.ά.) και να τοποθετεί στη σωστή σειρά μέρη ενός κειμένου αναγνωρίζοντας την αλληλουχία των νοημάτων και τα γλωσσικά στοιχεία που διασφαλίζουν τη συνοχή του κειμένου,
- να αναγνωρίζει και να αξιολογεί την ακρίβεια και τη σαφήνεια του λεξιλογίου,
- να βρίσκει συνώνυμα, αντώνυμα ή/και ομόρριζα, να αντικαθιστά λέξεις ή φράσεις του κειμένου με άλλες, να χρησιμοποιεί συγκεκριμένες λέξεις για τη συμπλήρωση φράσεων, προτάσεων κ.ά.

III. Παραγωγή Γραπτού Λόγου

Ο/Η μαθητής/-ήτρια πρέπει να είναι σε θέση να:

- παράγει γραπτό κείμενο (180-200 λέξεων) σε συγκεκριμένη επικοινωνιακή περίσταση, σύμφωνα με στοιχεία που δίδονται,
- να αναπτύσσει μια άποψη ή/και να επιχειρηματολογεί σχετικά με ένα θέμα.

Author's Statement:

I hereby expressly declare that, according to the article 8 of Law 1559/1986, this dissertation is solely the product of my personal work, does not infringe any intellectual property, personality and personal data rights of third parties, does not contain works/contributions from third parties for which the permission of the authors/beneficiaries is required, is not the product of partial or total plagiarism, and that the sources used are limited to the literature references alone and meet the rules of scientific citations.