



The Roles of Teachers in Promoting 10th-Grade Students' Learner Autonomy in Learning English Writing Skills at Trung Vuong High School

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Abstract

Grounded in Sociocultural Theory, this study investigated how teachers and tenth-grade students perceive five teacher roles: Instructor, Facilitator, Resource, Assessor, and Co-learner in promoting learner autonomy in English writing skills among tenth-grade students in one upper-secondary school in Vietnam. The study used a convergent design of mixed methods to gather data from 4 English teachers and 450 tenth-grade students. The comparison between 2 sets of perceptions showed that both teachers and students acknowledged the Instructor and Assessor roles for their contributions to the development of learner autonomy by giving formative feedback and structured direction. The Facilitator role was preferred by teachers but disapproved by students. Although students indicated positive responses to the Resource role, teachers found it ineffective because of students' passive use of materials. Both groups voiced discomfort regarding the Co-learner role's practicality in a teacher-centered society, making it the least desired option. These findings propose the need for contextually adapted, autonomy-supportive practices in Vietnamese EFL writing instruction.

Keywords: learner autonomy, teacher roles, English writing skills, Sociocultural Theory, Vietnamese high schools.

INTRODUCTION

Learner autonomy is seen as a strategic goal for national development (Sinclair, 2000) and one of the main objectives of education (Chang, 2020; Dang, 2010; Shih, 2021). According to Phan (2015), learning autonomy includes students taking charge of their own learning processes, goal-setting, strategy selection, and assessment of progress. It is essential for shaping personal identity free from external influence or control. Developing efficient language skills depends on this concept since it encourages more involvement in the learning process. Valued highly in Europe, learner autonomy is supported by several assessment programs, including the European Language Portfolio, which acts as a tool for the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) set up by the Council of Europe (Little, 2010). The CEFR, realizing the importance of learner autonomy, promotes teaching methods

emphasizing “raising the learner's awareness of his or her current knowledge, setting realistic and valuable objectives, choosing appropriate materials, and self-assessment” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 6) to enhance the ability to learn and encouraging lifelong language learning (Raya & Vieira, 2015).

The concept of learner autonomy is often considered as Western and is increasingly popular in an Asian setting. Although nowadays the concept of learner autonomy is becoming more widely accepted in Asian educational settings, it still faces challenges because of cultural attitudes toward education and traditional, teacher-centered approach. According to Palfreyman and Smith (2003), Western educators have primarily promoted autonomy, so cultural differences are usually blamed for obstacles to implementation autonomy in other areas.

Johnston, Aliponga, Koshiyama, Ries, and Rush (2014) claimed that East Asian students often lack proactive autonomy because their knowledge is not typically regarded as the foundation for autonomy in learning. In fact, East Asian students are not inherently less autonomous than their counterparts, but educational and cultural norms can discourage the development of autonomy. Chan (2001) found that educational and behavioral norms at Hong Kong University also impede students' readiness and willingness to learn autonomously. Kubota (2001) also criticized that Asian students are often perceived as “reticent, passive, indirect, and not inclined to challenge the teacher’s authority” (p. 14). The stereotype of Asian students being passive is frequently highlighted when comparing cultural aspects of learner autonomy between Asian and Western contexts (Murase, 2012). Besides, Usuki (2001) suggested that this passivity can actually serve as a motivation for fostering Asian students' learning autonomy. Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to support students in becoming autonomous learners by increasing their awareness and re-adjusting learning approaches that currently inhibit autonomous learning (Chan, 2001).

Learning a language, particularly English, requires developing four skills: speaking, writing, listening, and reading in many Asian contexts. Of these, writing is often considered the most difficult for EFL students to handle, since it demands a great knowledge of the target language to successfully communicate with readers (Matsuda, 2019). Harmer (2004) asserted that this skill should be taught to students because the visual demonstration of language construction enables them to acquire the language and reinforce prior knowledge. The complex nature of English writing, combined with EFL learners' limited linguistic knowledge, makes the process of teaching and learning English writing in EFL contexts challenging (Derakhshan & Shirejini, 2020; Ghoorchaei & Khosravi, 2019; H. T. T. Nguyen, 2021; Syafii & Miftah, 2021).

In Vietnam, traditional teaching approaches such as teacher-centered (Duong, 2021) are still widely used, with students mainly concentrating on memorization of grammar and sentence structures, reading English texts, and rote learning of vocabulary (Trinh, 2005). Students in Vietnam, particularly during English lessons, often learn by rote English grammar and vocabulary to satisfy their test criteria without interest or freedom to create the language in the way they want (H. T. T. Nguyen, 2021). As a result, L. T. T. Nguyen (2021) expressed concern about challenges faced by high school students in their writing skills included their lack of ideas, lack of interest in learning English, and insufficient teacher feedback. Another study showed that students have difficulty in choosing words, sentence structures, and idiomatic expressions that best communicate their intended message in written form (Trinh & Le, 2024). This illustrates the habit of translating straight from their mother tongue without

adapting to particular situations, which results in vague ideas or strange wording. This contrasts with the learning task, which allows students to explore and discover the language from the beginning, gradually organizing their discoveries and testing their understanding of the language (Trebbi, 2008).

Trebbi (2008) emphasized that autonomy in education and language education should equip learners with the skills to take control of their own lives and development. Learner autonomy can be a part of language learning, including writing skills (Mubarokah, Riyanto & Mariono, 2021).

To overcome these challenges high school students faced in learning writing skills demands considerable effort from students themselves, highlighting the need for autonomy in their English studies, as successful learners are often autonomous (Little, 1993). Learner autonomy has become one of the expected learning outcomes of high school education training programs in the Vietnamese educational system (MoET, 2018). In order to promote learner autonomy, Lianzhen (2003) believed that the roles of English teachers should not be ignored.

Focusing on improving the practical application of learner autonomy in language education, this study aims at contributing to both language education theory and methodology. Theoretically, this study expands the knowledge of learner autonomy, especially in the context of learning English writing skills among high school students. The study explores the teacher's roles in promoting learner autonomy of students in learning English writing skills, which offers recommendations for

Additionally, understanding the teachers' roles will contribute to creating a valuable reference resource for teachers and education administrators, helping to promote the suitable roles of teachers in assisting students' learner autonomy, especially in learning English writing skills, at the early stage of high school education.

Therefore, the research was conducted to answer three questions:

1. *Research Question 1.* What are 10th-grade students' perceptions of the teachers' roles that can promote 10th-grade students' learner autonomy in learning English writing skills?
2. *Research Question 2.* What are 10th-grade English teachers' perceptions of the teachers' roles that can promote 10th-grade students' learner autonomy in learning English writing skills?
3. *Research Question 3.* Do 10th-grade students' perceptions and English teachers' perceptions on the teachers' roles that can promote learner autonomy in learning English writing skills differ?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of English writing skills

There are various definitions of writing offered by scholars over the years. Nunan (1991) defined writing as a dynamic thinking process, where inventing, expressing, and arranging ideas into coherent statements and paragraphs. Selvaraj and Aziz (2019) illustrated writing as a thinking process requiring creativity and imagination, as writers must organize their thoughts and transform them into written language. Yule (2022) further portrayed writing as the symbolic language through using the signs of graphics that can be acquired and learned through sustained conscious effort. According to Widdowson (1978), writing is conceptualized as the use of a visual medium to represent the graphological and grammatical

system of a language. Besides, writing is the use of language to express thoughts, feelings, or intentions in the form of text (Putri & Aminatun, 2021). Writing is also a means for personal expression (Muhanif, Suhartono, & Juhana, 2021) and a reflection for both creative and critical thinking (Karim & Mustapha, 2020). Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) defined writing as the process of producing written text that communicates ideas, information, or emotions in a readable and understandable way. This explanation is considered as the working definition for this research.

The importance of English writing skills in language education

Writing in English is crucial for intercultural communication especially in the era of globalization (Nasser, 2016). As a global language, English facilitates the exchange of information all over the world. When being used in the written form, it acts as the container for preserving and transmitting knowledge across generations and communities (Nasser, 2016). This makes English writing skill important in global mediation of knowledge (Fareed, Ashraf, & Bilal, 2016). Rao (2017) regarded writing as a communicative activity that should be nurtured and encouraged in language learning.

Writing allows people to express feelings, entertain, inform, and convince their readers (McMahan, Day, Funk, & Coleman, 2017). However, writing involves a complex cognitive process that transforms abstract thoughts into concrete text (Bozkurt, Aydin, Taşkiran, & Koral 2016; Miftah, 2015). This complexity comes from various elements such as vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation (Bitchener, 2008). Richards and Schmidt (2010) insisted that this complex process requires planning, drafting, reviewing, and revising. Harmer (2007) mentioned that writing enables individuals to express thoughts clearly and creatively, aiding reader comprehension.

In 21st-century language learning, writing skills contribute to improving students' competencies, including creativity and critical thinking (Gultom, Triastuti, & Purbani, 2022). Writing helps students gain knowledge as well as improve their intelligence, initiative, creativity, bravery, and willpower (Li, Chen, Zhang, Wu, & Huang, 2022; Myhill, 2018). The art of good writing is necessary to accomplish the varieties of academic assignments, such as compositions, essay tests, papers, laboratory reports, and project reports (Boardman & Frydenberg, 2002). Bailey (2014) argued that academic writing involves not only reporting research but also engaging with topics from a personal perspective.

To sum up, mastering English writing skills is a crucial goal for EFL learners (Harmer, 2004; Banat, 2007). English writing skills in language education have dual purposes: facilitating communication and enabling academic achievement. This research focuses on academic writing that engages learners writing topics from a personal perspective.

The current state of teaching and learning English writing skills among students in high schools in Vietnam

As found in Nguyen (2012) and Trinh and Nguyen (2014) and based on the recent test results from the Educational Testing Service (ETS), writing has been the most problematic to Vietnamese EFL learners. This issue could be explained by the quality of English Language Teaching (ELT) in Vietnam (V. C. Le, 2019), the impact of Vietnamese cultures and testing and assessment on learners' EFL writing (Nguyen, 2009; Trinh & Nguyen, 2014).

Nguyen (2022) further noted that the current state of high schools in Vietnam teaching writing exhibits a reliance on a product-based approach. Many Vietnamese EFL teachers see writing as a static object or text product—a coherent sequence of words,

sentences, and clauses created following a set of guidelines (Hyland, 2021). This approach emphasizes the imitation of model texts over involving students in the active writing process (Anastasiadou, 2014). Writing appears in this approach as the reproduction of input, thereby depriving students of many chances to seek creativity or develop independence in idea generation and organization. Teachers often prioritize textual accuracy over communicative functionality. Students are frequently required to reproduce the structure of sample texts, which means they lack guidance on important writing techniques such as brainstorming, revising, or selecting appropriate language use in context (Nguyen, 2022). Nguyen and Suwannabubpha (2021) also identified several elements restricting high school writing teaching in Vietnam, such as the multiple-choice test formats, the limited lesson time, the heavy textbook content, and the shortage of EFL writing instruction at elementary and high school levels. These teaching practices and systemic conditions shape the way writing is taught, with a focus on textual accuracy and imitation rather than assisting students to use the target language creatively and independently for real-life written communication.

Besides, students' insufficient knowledge of grammar and vocabulary was reported to challenge the teaching of this skill at the high school in Vietnam (Nguyen & Suwannabubpha, 2021). According to Asep, Titin, Ade, Dian, and Supriani (2014), vocabulary is the fundamental element in constructing sentences, which is the core of effective writing skills. Therefore, a lack of vocabulary has caused the students to face challenges in acquiring writing skills (Misbah, Mohamad, Yunus, & Ya'acob, 2017). Their difficulty on vocabulary tended to be compounded with having no ideas to write in English (Nguyen, 2021) as a strong vocabulary repertoire enables students to express their thoughts effectively (Morses & Mohamad, 2019). Students' insufficient exposure to reading materials is frequently attributed to a lack of ideas and language for writing (Magombo, 2015). Fareed et al. (2016) also argued that many students struggle to access sufficient and relevant sources of information for their writing. Common mistakes from verb tenses, articles, prepositions, word forms, and subject-verb agreement make grammar become another challenge students have in English writing (Misbah et al., 2017). Similarly, Aritanti and Fitriana (2017) identified grammar as one of the biggest challenges in writing classes, particularly in constructing sentences with the correct English structure.

Overall, the challenges that students have in writing typically arise from a lack of knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and idea generation, caused by the current state of writing teaching. The reliance on a product-based approach in Vietnamese high schools prioritize textual accuracy and imitation rather than promote creativity and independence in learning writing skills. Systemic elements including multiple-choice test formats, limited instructional time, and heavy textbook material also hinder students from writing skills development.

Therefore, a new approach to learning writing is required. Gultom et al. (2022) stated that autonomous learning is a modern approach for teaching all subjects, including language. This approach can be customized to accommodate an entire language program, including instruction on writing skills (Mubarokah, Riyanto, & Mariono, 2021).

Definitions of learner autonomy

Autonomy in the area of education, as Longman (2009) defined autonomy as the capacity to make independent choices free from external influence, with the emphasis on the personal liberation from external influence and the ability to decision-making. Likewise, Q. H. T. Le

(2019) interpreted autonomy as the ability for goal-setting, planning activities, resource management, and self-evaluation.

Benson (2001) further adjusted the concept by replacing “ability” and “responsibility” with “competence” and “control”. He proposed that learners would proactively guide their own learning processes provided they possess the capability and aspiration to do so, unaffected by material, social, or psychological barriers. Additionally, Benson (2006) indicated that freedom is essential for promoting autonomy. Hence, the term “competence,” coupled with “ability, desire, and freedom,” has evolved into a comprehensive descriptor for individuals who take charge of their learning (Benson, 2011). Furthermore, learner autonomy is a broad idea that can be relevant to both in-class and out-of-class settings (Benson, 2007). In a classroom environment, learner autonomy includes different degrees of control including management for learning, cognitive processes, and learning content, which shows in activities such group work, cooperative learning, and other creative learning approaches (Joshi, 2011). In the area of foreign language learning, learner autonomy has been characterized as being very complicated (Little, 2003), complex (Paiva & Braga, 2008), and multifaceted (Smith & Ushioda, 2009). Regarded as the father of language learner autonomy, Holec (1981) defined it as the ability to manage and take ownership of one’s own learning. Nguyen (2018) modified this by incorporating learning strategies, motivation, and attitudes towards learning English. Nguyen and Habók (2020) further added the teacher’s role, motivation, metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive skills, and the desire to learn English.

The importance of learner autonomy

According to Benson (2011), learner autonomy not only offers a practical solution to the complex problems in mass education, but it also assists in the development of the ability for students to self-regulate their education to fit their needs.

Globalization has raised the demands for foreign language learning, which causes more varied and dynamic educational settings than ever before. Learner autonomy therefore becomes vital to promote a more effective learning and greater degrees of satisfaction since it allows students to customize their educational experiences to fit their specific requirements and objectives (Le, 2023).

As EFL students frequently exhibit a lack of confidence and enthusiasm in writing, there is the need for learner autonomy in writing instruction (Aunurrahman, Hamied, & Emilia, 2017; Ariyanti & Fitriana, 2017). Also mentioned as students’ challenges in learning writing are limited writing experience in their native language and original ideas (Ariyanti & Fitriana, 2017). Their capacity to write independently may also be restricted by depending just on teacher’s directions and a lack of topic choice freedom (Gultom, 2023). He exemplified that students are often asked to write on assigned topics, limiting their exploration of personal ideas. Furthermore, some students participate passively in writing instruction, unaware of the purpose behind their writing tasks.

Positive effects of learner autonomy on learners’ English writing skills

Several studies have examined how learner autonomy and language competence relate to one another, consistently revealing a positive correlation between these variables (Myartawan, Latief, & Suharmanto, 2013; Masita, 2016; Genç, 2015). Focusing specifically on writing, Manurung, Hente, and Marzuki (2015) found that the application of autonomous learning not only improved students' ability to organize ideas in writing but also increased their interest in writing courses. Similarly, Bagheri and Aeen (2011) discovered that learner

autonomy enhanced the English writing skills among Iranian intermediate EFL students. The results indicated that students in the autonomous group employing self-directed approaches, like collaboration and self-evaluation, surpassed their non-autonomous counterparts. Thus, encouraging autonomy is believed to help improve writing abilities as it stimulates motivation, creativity, and independence.

According to Ghofur, Kisyani, and Yulianto (2019), learner autonomy generates a learner-centered environment that allows students to inspect and correct mistakes, produce logical ideas, and express themselves clearly. This leads to significant improvements in multiple aspects of writing, including critical thinking, problem-solving, sentence accuracy, creativity, and written communication skills.

Gultom's (2023) study revealed that learner autonomy improves English writing skills by encouraging independence, critical thinking, and confidence through cooperative, reflective, and independent learning approaches. Integrating learner autonomy with the process-genre approach and information and communication technology (ICT) tools significantly improved students' ability to organize ideas, write coherently, and express creativity in their writing. Additionally, Gultom et al. (2022) together with Masita (2016) found a positive correlation between learner autonomy and English writing skills. This proves that autonomous learners effectively set goals, choose strategies, and monitor their progress.

Learner autonomy is often misunderstood as self-instruction that minimizes the teacher's role; however, scholars argue that autonomy does not imply learning in isolation (Little, 1991; Esch, 1994; Joshi, 2011). Instead, learner autonomy is a socio-cognitive construct that is largely initiated and shaped by teachers. Teachers' perceptions of their roles strongly influence how autonomy is fostered in language classrooms, and without appropriate guidance, autonomy may become ineffective or disorganized (Hill, 1994; Yan, 2012; Crabbe, 1999).

Teachers' roles refer to the pedagogical, managerial, and interpersonal responsibilities they perform in learning contexts (Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). These roles are dynamic and context-dependent, requiring teachers to adapt their functions across different instructional phases (Harmer, 2001). Previous frameworks identify multiple roles, such as controller, organizer, assessor, prompter, participant, resource, facilitator, demonstrator, guide, observer, and tutor (Harmer, 2001; Rindu & Ariyanti, 2017). Collectively, these roles support classroom management, learner engagement, feedback, motivation, and independent learning.

Drawing on previous studies, this research assumes that certain roles are particularly relevant to promoting learner autonomy, namely demonstrator, tutor, guide, facilitator, resource, assessor, prompter, and participant. These roles align with key qualities of teachers of autonomous learners, including pedagogical awareness, reflective practice, learner involvement, and shared ownership of learning goals (Camilleri, 1999; Little et al., 2007). For analytical clarity, this study categorizes these roles into five functional groups: instructor (demonstrator, tutor, guide), facilitator, resource, assessor, and co-learner (prompter, participant). These five roles form the analytical framework for examining how teachers promote learner autonomy in the classroom.

The role of Instructor

The Instructor promotes learner autonomy in writing for students by introducing learner autonomy concepts (Le, 2023), helping students to formulate practical learning plans (Xu & Xu, 2004) and to adopt effective learning strategies (Bajrami, 2015), modeling practices

(Tahir, 2023), and illustrating real-life application of writing skills (Graham, Haris, & Santangelo, 2015).

The role of Resource

As a Resource, the teacher provides students with references, materials, and information that suit students' interest and English proficiency (Xu & Xu, 2004; Shaik, 2024; Yan, 2012). This role also involves helping students become aware of different sources of knowledge and how to use them effectively and independently (Alonazi, 2017).

The role of Facilitator

To promote learner autonomy, the Facilitator steps back and provides students with opportunities to take control of their learning (Han, 2014). Specifically, this role encourages students to take initiative in making decisions (Voller, 1997), setting goals (Ababo & Animaw, 2024), and solving problems (Voller, 1997).

The role of Co-learner

The Co-learner engages alongside students as a participant in the learning process, without dominating students' contribution (Naibaho, 2019). By listening to students' thoughts and solving learning problems together, co-learner can create a collaborative classroom atmosphere that encourages student involvement (Xu & Xu, 2004; Arafat, 2004). This role also promotes learner autonomy by providing space for students to actively use the target language for sharing ideas and opinions in class (Naibaho, 2019).

The role of Assessor

The Assessor monitors student progress and gives feedback to help students identify areas for improvement (Harmer 2001; Rindu & Ariyanti, 2017). This role promotes students' learner autonomy through written corrective feedback on grammar, vocabulary, and sentence construction (Kileri & Listyani, 2021), as well as encouragement to revise and reflect on their writing performance (Zahida, Farrah, & Zaru, 2013; Little et al. 2007).

Several studies have examined learner autonomy in the context of English language learning over the years. Previous studies consistently show that learner autonomy plays a crucial role in improving English writing skills. Research outside Vietnam indicates that students with higher autonomy demonstrate better writing performance, idea organization, and learning enjoyment, while teachers' roles as facilitators, motivators, and resource providers are essential in fostering autonomy (Seppänen, 2014; Manurung et al., 2015; Masita, 2016; Gultom et al., 2022; Shaik, 2024). Nevertheless, challenges remain, particularly in large classes, where collaborative strategies are needed to support autonomous learning (Shrestha, 2024).

In the Vietnamese context, studies similarly confirm the importance of learner autonomy in English learning. Teachers play a central role in guiding students through scaffolding, goal setting, and strategy use (Vo, 2020; Duong, 2021; Le, 2023; Duong & Nguyen, 2023; Ly, 2024). Furthermore, developing learner autonomy at the high school level is recommended to help students adapt more effectively to university learning (Phuong et al., 2024).

While the concept of learner autonomy has gathered significant interest from teachers, educators, and researchers globally since the mid-1970s (Chan, 2015), it has only recently begun to receive adequate attention from researchers in Vietnam (Nguyen, 2016). Various efforts have been made to investigate both teachers' and students' perceptions of autonomous language learning in higher education, but few studies have reported on those in

high schools, especially in the learning of English writing skills. To fill this gap, this study aimed to explore the specific contributions of teacher' roles in promoting 10th-grade students' learner autonomy in learning English writing skills at Trung Vuong High School.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

According to J. W. Creswell and Clark (2018) mixed methods research is an investigative strategy that includes gathering both quantitative and qualitative data. Additionally, J. W. Creswell and Clark (2018) noted that by combining the advantages of both quantitative and qualitative approaches, mixed methods research offers special advantages. This makes it possible to gather more detailed data, tackles challenging research issues, and offers deeper insights. Through a variety of publication options, this design also promotes methodological flexibility, real-world problem-solving, and improved academic results (J. W. Creswell & Clark, 2018).

This research aims to investigate the roles of teachers in promoting learner autonomy in 10th-grade students' English writing skills at Trung Vuong High School. The study initially aims to identify the specific roles of teachers, followed by an examination of how these roles are regarded by students and teachers alike. Ultimately, it seeks to examine the similarities and differences in views between the two groups. The study requires many data sources due to the four aims and associated research questions: general trends and patterns within the student population, alongside comprehensive insights into teacher viewpoints and explanations. Therefore, employing just a quantitative or qualitative method would have been ineffective. A mixed methods design is necessary to investigate both statistical comparison and contextual understanding, ultimately providing a more comprehensive and nuanced interpretation of the teacher's role in fostering learner autonomy.

Creswell and Creswell (2018) identified three main kinds of mixed methods research: exploratory sequential design, explanatory sequential design, and convergent design. The convergent design consists of simultaneous gathering of quantitative and qualitative data, separate analysis of each dataset, and result comparison to determine whether they are similar or different. This design is particularly practical and efficient due to the fact that it can incorporate the potentialities and generalizability of each data type. It further increases the validity of methodological triangulation and enables cross-level comparisons within the same research framework (Sharma, S. Bidari, D. Bidari, Neupane, & Sapkota, 2023). Therefore, the convergent design was utilized in this study as it completely aligns with the research aim and research questions, helping the researchers achieve a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the teacher's role in fostering learner autonomy.

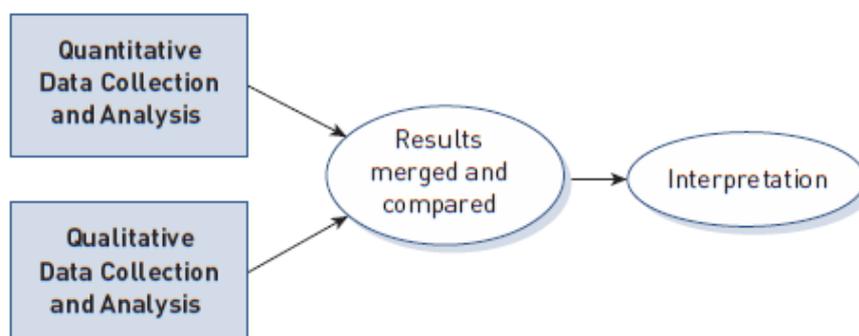


Figure 1. The convergent design (Cresswell & Clark, 2018)

In this study, both quantitative research and qualitative research employed the survey approach. This approach was chosen for its efficiency in collecting data from a large number of participants in a structured and consistent manner (Alderman & Salem, 2010). It is also beneficial for their capacity to generate generalizable findings with a suitable sample, simplicity of administration, and possibility for replication across contexts. Additionally, the results were generalizable to similar populations, which enhanced the study's external validity. High response rates also let large amounts of data be quickly gathered (Blaxter, Hughes, & Tight, 2010).

More specifically, the quantitative research examined the perceptions of 10th-grade students regarding the roles teachers play in fostering learner autonomy in English writing skills. The quantitative data was collected from an online questionnaire using Google Forms. The researchers then analyzed this data by using descriptive statistics to answer the first research question. Parallel to this, the qualitative research was conducted to explore the perceptions of 10th-grade English teachers regarding the roles they play in fostering learner autonomy in English writing skills. The qualitative data was collected from in-depth semi-structured interviews and was then analyzed by using thematic analysis to answer the second research question. The researchers finally compared these two datasets to answer the third research question.

Context of the study

Trung Vuong High School, located in District 1, Ho Chi Minh City, has a long and rich history. It was originally founded in 1917 in Hanoi as a teacher training school for women before becoming Trung Vuong Girls' High School. After the Geneva Accords in 1954, part of the school relocated to Saigon, officially moving to its current location in 1957. The school became co-educational in 1979 and has since developed strong academic programs, particularly in foreign languages.

In the 2024-2025 academic year, the entrance scores for grade 10 at Trung Vuong High School rank among the top 12 in the city. Currently, the school has 18 classes for 675 students in grade 10 and provides modern facilities and extracurricular activities that support students' English learning, making it a suitable setting for this research. In contrast to other public high schools in the city, students at Trung Vuong High School receive instruction in English writing and speaking skills from English native teachers.

Samples / participants

Multilevel sampling technique was utilized in this study. This technique requires choosing different people from different populations each phase of the study (Mertens, 2020).

Rationale for selecting 10th-grade students

The choice of 10th-grade students was based on several advantages. Firstly, grade 10 is a critical transition period in which students must adapt to a new learning environment and begin to develop self-study skills. This is also an ideal time for teachers to support the establishment of a long-term learning foundation, particularly in English writing skills, by providing guidance and promoting autonomy. Additionally, research at the Grade 10 level not only helps to understand how teachers assist students but also allows for long-term tracking of their development, assessing the effectiveness of learning strategies and the influence of the surrounding environment in the following years.

Sampling methods of the quantitative phase

The quantitative phase employed convenience sampling to collect the quantitative data. Convenience sampling (also known as Haphazard Sampling or Accidental Sampling) is a type of nonprobability or nonrandom sampling where members of the target population that meet certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, close proximity, availability at a given time, or the willingness to participate, are included for the purpose of the study (Dörnyei, 2007). It is also referred to as the researching subjects of the population that are easily accessible to the researcher (Saumure & Given, 2008).

In the quantitative phase of this study, approximately two-thirds of tenth-grade students from Trung Vuong High School were selected to participate. These students, including male and female students who specialize in either the natural science department or social science department, have just entered their first year at high school education.

Demographic information of the participants

While female participants comprised nearly half of the total population at 47.8%, male respondents constituted 38.7%, and 13.6% opted not to disclose their gender. Besides, most students started to learn English at an early age. The majority of the respondents, saying that they have been learning English for more than 10 years, accounted for 76%. A smaller proportion, around 24%, have been learning English for 5 to 10 years. There are no respondents in the category of less than 5 years. In terms of the frequency of studying writing skills, 69% of participants said they frequently study writing, and 13% said they always do so. These two categories together make up 82% of the total responses. In contrast, only 3% of participants study writing rarely, and 15% do so occasionally. Remarkably, none of the students said they never study writing.

Rationale for selecting 10th-grade English teachers

The choice of involving 10th-grade English teachers was due to their substantial influence on students during this crucial academic time. These teachers play an important role in helping students adapt to the high school environment, which demands a higher level of learner autonomy. They contribute to shaping students' study habits and establish the foundation for students' long-term learning, particularly in subjects like English. In addition to teaching knowledge, 10th-grade teachers guide effective learning strategies, contributing to the development of students' learner autonomy.

Sampling methods of the qualitative phase

The qualitative phase employed homogeneous sampling to collect the quantitative data. According to Mertens (2020), the homogeneous sampling involves selecting cases or individuals that share a high degree of similarity. This technique is used when the researcher intends to explore the experiences of a specific subgroup with common characteristics. It is completely suitable for the qualitative phase of this study, as the researchers aim to gain in-depth insights from 10th-grade English teachers about the strategies and practices they use to promote autonomy in students' English writing skills.

In the qualitative phase of this study, four tenth-grade English teachers from Trung Vuong High School were selected to participate. They are experienced educators dedicated to supporting students' academic and personal growth, employing innovative teaching methods to inspire confidence and motivation in learning English writing skills.

Table 1. Demographic information of the participants
Total experience in teaching English of four interviewed teachers

Teacher	Years of teaching English	Years of teaching 10th-grade students
Teacher 1	12 years	8 years
Teacher 2	15 years	4 years
Teacher 3	8 years	6 years
Teacher 4	10 years	7 years

As can be seen from the table, the total experience in teaching English of four interviewed teachers ranged from 8 to 15 years. One teacher had the longest experience, with 15 years, followed by another with 12 years. The remaining two teachers had 10 and 8 years of experience respectively. In terms of teaching the 10th-grade students, their experience varied slightly. One teacher had been teaching 10th graders for 8 years, one for 7 years, another for 6 years, and the least experienced had 4 years.

Research instruments

Rationale for choosing the questionnaire forms

The questionnaire served as the instrument of this quantitative phase for its cost-effectiveness, time efficiency, and adaptability (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2009). Dörnyei and Taguchi (2009) also mentioned that a questionnaire allows researchers to gather data from a large sample, making it possible to outline overall patterns in participants' beliefs and draw generalizations about the broader population.

The researchers utilized an online questionnaire for its benefits towards the environment. This paperless format helps reduce the need for printing and paper waste, hence becoming a sustainable and eco-friendly instrument. Besides, online questionnaires enable researchers to access broader populations, and ensure more consistent responses (McMaster et al., 2017; Wright, 2005). The questionnaire was delivered through Google Forms because it is familiar to Vietnamese students. This platform also supports anonymous responses and secure access controls, ensuring data privacy standards.

Design of the questionnaire

The questionnaire is employed to investigate the perceptions of 10th-grade students about the roles teachers play in promoting learner autonomy in learning English writing. Items in the questionnaires were mainly adapted from previous studies in the conceptual framework developed in Chapter 2, and were divided into two sections: *Demographic Information*, and *Roles Teachers Play in Promoting Learner Autonomy in Learning English Writing*.

Table 2. Details of the questionnaire

CONTENT	No OF ITEMS	SOURCES	FORMAT
Part 1: Demographic Information			
Gender	1	Self-developed items	Multiple choice
Years of learning English	1		
Frequency of writing practice	1		
Part 2: Roles Teachers Play in Promoting Learner Autonomy in Learning English Writing			
Instructor	9	Xu and Xu (2004), Bajrami (2015), Nunan (2003), Tahir (2023), Graham et al. (2015)	Three-point Likert scale
Resource	7	Xu and Xu (2004), Shaik (2004), Yan (2012), Alonazi (2017)	

Facilitator	11	Xu and Xu (2004), Voller (1997), Ababo and Animaw (2024), Chiu (2005), Purnama (2015)
Co-learner	8	Archana and Rani (2017), Xu and Xu (2004), Arafat (2004), Naibaho (2019)
Assessor	8	Naibaho (2019), Hattie and Timperley (2007), Nguyen (2024), Ferris (2014), Kileri and Listyani (2021)

Rationale for choosing the in-depth semi-structured interview

The in-depth semi-structured individual interview was selected for this research because it helps explore participants' lived experiences and professional perspectives flexibly as well as concentratedly. A semi-structured interview allows the researcher to explore more of the participants' responses based on a guiding set of questions (Deterding & Waters, 2021). Therefore, it was particularly suitable for seeking detailed insights into teachers' roles and strategies in promoting learner autonomy.

Furthermore, according to Knox and Burkard (2009), conducting individual interviews builds a private and comfortable setting that encourages participants to express their opinions freely without peer pressure. This is especially important when discussing personal beliefs or classroom practices that may be shaped by school culture or professional expectations (Knox & Burkard, 2009). Hence, using individual interviews was suitable for the research objective, which emphasized comprehending teacher perceptions.

Design of the instrument

The interview phase utilized a semi-structured set of questions comprising two main sections: *Background and General Perception*, and *Perceptions of Teacher Roles in promoting students' learner autonomy in English writing skills*. There are eight open-ended questions in total, formulated to address the research inquiry concerning teachers' perceptions of their specific roles in the classroom their roles in promoting 10th-grade students' learner autonomy in learning English writing skills.

The first section, *Background and General Perception*, aimed to collect basic demographic data about the participants, including years of experience in teaching English, years of experience teaching 10th-grade students, and their overall perspectives on the significance of learner autonomy in developing writing skills. These factors provided a contextual foundation for analyzing teachers' responses and identifying the relationship between teaching experience and their views on their roles in promoting learner autonomy.

The second section, *Perceptions of Teacher Roles in promoting students' learner autonomy in English writing skills*, consisted of five semi-structured interview questions focused on five primary teacher roles: Instructor, Resource, Facilitator, Co-learner, and Assessor. Each question included a brief definition of the appropriate role so that the participants would have a clear mindset of what they were talking about.

More specifically, questions related to the role of Instructor examined the extent to which teachers guide students in developing writing strategies, improving writing techniques, and adopting effective methods to enhance autonomous learning in writing skills. Questions concerning the role of Resource explored how teachers provide learning materials, resources, and tools to support students' learner autonomy. Questions related to the role of Facilitator investigated how teachers help students set learning goals, adjust personal learning strategies, and independently overcome challenges in learning to write. The role of Co-learner questions assessed the extent to which teachers engage in the learning process alongside students,

fostering a collaborative learning environment and supporting natural writing skills development. Lastly, the role of Assessor questions examined teachers' perspectives on evaluating students' writing proficiency, providing constructive feedback, and assisting students in self-assessment to improve their writing skills.

Data collection procedure

Quantitative data collection procedure

To gather quantitative data, the researchers sent a letter of survey permission request to the Head of the English Subject Group of Trung Vuong High School. With the permission of the Head of the English Subject Group, the English teacher in charge of each class assisted the researchers to conduct surveys. The researchers received the schedule of each class and discussed with the English teacher in charge the suitable period to visit the class.

The researchers visited the chosen classes, introduced to the students, concisely introduced the project and explained what the students need to do. The researchers also noted that all the participation were completely voluntary, and their information was kept private, according to ethical issues. A piece of Cambridge ebook series was embedded at the end of the questionnaire as an encouragement for them to answer the survey more enthusiastically. It took about 30 minutes to complete the survey in each class. The researchers received 450 answers for the questionnaire and the quantitative data collection procedure hence finished.

Qualitative data collection procedure

To collect qualitative data, the researchers sent the participants a consent form. Once receiving the confirmation, the researchers make contact with the participants via Zalo to discuss the suitable time for the interview. All these interviews were conducted at the cafeteria of Trung Vuong High School on separate days.

Before starting the interview, each participant was asked for permission to record the interview and once again was explained their information was used for the research only. The participants were offered some drinks during the interview process. It took about 1 hour for each interview. As a token for their participation, the participants were then given some drink coupons for the school cafeteria. The qualitative data collection procedure hence finished.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Students' perceptions teachers' roles that can promote 10th-grade students' learner autonomy in learning English writing skills

The descriptive statistics shown in Table 4.1 indicate that the Assessor role received the highest preference among students (M=2.63 and SD=0.42). The role of Instructor ranked second in the students' perception (M=2.58, SD=0.47). Resource was the third role that the students perceived as helping them promote learner autonomy in learning English writing skills (M = 2.45; SD = 0.55). In contrast, the roles of Co-learner and Facilitator were not preferred to promote learner autonomy in learning English writing skills regarding students' perceptions. The former received a mean score of 2.08 (SD = 0.58), and the latter had a mean of 1.90 (SD = 0.55).

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of students' perceptions of 5 teacher roles

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Instructor	2.5817	.47469	450
Resource	2.4556	.55056	450
Facilitator	1.9006	.54869	450

Colearner	2.0800	.57997	450
Assessor	2.6308	.42334	450

A repeated-measures ANOVA was employed to compare students' preferences for the five examined teachers roles. With $F(4, 1796) = 175.174$, $p < .001$ the results revealed a statistically significant difference in student ratings of the roles. This means that at least one of the roles was rated differently from the others. The partial eta squared value was .281, indicating a large effect size. This suggests that the differences in student ratings between the roles were not only statistically significant but also meaningful in size.

Table 4. The role of Instructor
Students' perception of the Instructor role

N ₀	Statements	Item-Total Statistics				Descriptive Statistics Valid N (listwise) = 450		
		Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
11	guides students in formulating practical plans for their English writing learning	20.65	14.572	.686	.892	450	2.59	.628
12	refines students' learning English writing techniques	20.66	14.678	.663	.894	450	2.57	.626
13	helps students identify the best English learning writing strategies suited to their needs	20.69	14.660	.664	.893	450	2.55	.629
14	enables students to adopt the most effective English writing learning strategies for their needs	20.64	14.511	.701	.891	450	2.59	.627
15	helps learners understand the rationale behind English writing learning strategies	20.63	14.803	.644	.895	450	2.60	.619
16	encourages experimentation with different English writing strategies for various situations	20.64	14.448	.705	.890	450	2.59	.635
17	models English writing practices for students	20.69	14.550	.653	.894	450	2.55	.656
18	explains how English writing is used in daily communication (e.g.,	20.64	14.672	.664	.893	450	2.60	.627

emails, messages, job applications, or social media posts)

19	encourages students to choose their own writing topics in class	20.64	14.463	.693	.891	450	2.60	.640
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Among the five teacher roles explored in this study, the Instructor role received the second highest levels of agreement from students in promoting learner autonomy in learning English writing skills. The analysis of nine questionnaire items for this role showed strong student agreement. The mean scores ranged from 2.55 to 2.60 on a three-point scale. The role of Instructor also showed highly statistical reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of .903 and corrected item-total correlations ranged from .644 to .705. These results confirm that students had a shared and positive view of the Instructor role.

Students agreed most with statements such as "The teacher helps learners understand the rationale behind writing strategies," "The teacher explains how English writing is used in daily communication," and "The teacher encourages students to choose their own writing topics." Each of these received a mean score of 2.60, and more than two-thirds of students chose the highest level of agreement. This shows that students value teachers who not only explain how to write but also why certain strategies are useful, and who give students choices in their writing. Even the items with slightly lower scores — such as "The teacher models writing practices" and "The teacher refines students' writing techniques" — still received strong support, which means most students appreciate step-by-step guidance from their teachers.

The distribution of responses also supports this view. Between 62% and 68.2% of students chose "Agree" for all items, while only a small percentage disagreed. One of the most highly rated items, which is about allowing students to choose their own topics, suggests that students connect learner autonomy with being able to make decisions in their learning. In this way, instruction is not seen as something that limits students, but rather as something that helps them take more control of their learning process.

Overall, the findings suggest that in this context, students believe the Instructor role is not a barrier to learner autonomy but rather a way to promote it. In Vietnamese English classrooms, particularly during writing lessons, students still expect strong teacher instruction that includes strategy use, clear explanations, and student choice can help students take greater ownership of their learning.

The role of Resource

Table 5. Students' perception of the Resource role

No	Statements	Item-Total Statistics				Descriptive Statistics Valid N (listwise) = 450		
		Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
R10	helps students become aware of diverse knowledge sources	14.73	11.051	.704	.880	450	2.46	.706

R11	designs informative educational experiences for students	14.74	11.041	.703	.881	450	2.44	.708
R12	offers references and materials for learning English writing skills	14.74	10.940	.712	.880	450	2.45	.721
R13	introduces digital resources for learning English writing skills	14.71	11.246	.688	.882	450	2.48	.681
R14	provides students with essential language input	14.75	11.098	.686	.883	450	2.44	.711
R15	carefully selects materials that align with students' interests	14.73	11.328	.669	.885	450	2.46	.680
R16	carefully selects materials that align with students' English proficiency levels	14.73	11.000	.725	.878	450	2.46	.700

The Resource role was viewed positively by students as a way to promote their autonomy in learning English writing skills. The seven statements that measured this role received fairly consistent levels of agreement, with mean scores ranging from 2.44 to 2.48 on a three-point likert scale. The statistical reliability was high (Cronbach's alpha = .896), and the corrected item-total correlations were also strong, ranging from .669 to .725. These results meant that the items worked well together and measured the same idea.

Students gave the highest level of agreement to R13 ("introduces digital resources for learning English writing skills"), followed by R16 ("carefully selects materials that align with students' English proficiency levels") and R10 ("helps students become aware of diverse knowledge sources"), with mean scores varying from 2.46 to 2.48. These items describe teacher actions that are easy to see in the classroom, such as sharing websites, giving useful documents, or introducing tools that help with writing.

R12 ("offers references and materials for learning English writing skills") also received a good level of agreement. However, many students selected the "Neutral" option for this item. This may be because while they are aware that these materials are available, they may not use them often unless the teacher directly tells them to. In this case, students may not fully connect the use of resources with their own responsibility in learning. A similar pattern appeared in R14 ("provides students with essential language input") and R15 ("carefully selects materials that align with students' interests"). Although these items were rated positively, the higher number of neutral responses may suggest that students are still getting used to the idea of using materials more independently, especially when they are not part of a required task.

One of the lowest-rated items in this group was R11 ("designs informative educational experiences for students"). Although students still agreed with the statement, the lower score may be because this item is harder to notice. Students might not always realize when a teacher designs an experience or activity unless it is clearly explained. It could also be that they

associate "resources" with tools like handouts or online links, rather than with the way a lesson is structured.

Overall, the role of Resource is believed by students to help promote their learner autonomy in learning English writing skills. They are aware when teachers offer materials that match their level, use digital tools, and introduce different sources of learning. These actions are helpful for improving writing skills and promoting learner autonomy for the students. However, the moderate quantity of neutral responses in some items may imply that students are still forming the skills or habits needed to use resources more independently.

**Table 6. The role of Facilitator
Students' perception of the Facilitator role**

No	Statements	Item-Total Statistics				Descriptive Statistics Valid N (listwise) = 450		
		Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
F17	aids students in planning their short-term writing education goals	18.95	29.697	.715	.886	450	1.96	.784
F18	aids students in planning their long-term writing education goals	18.93	29.904	.688	.888	450	1.98	.785
F19	supports students in formulating their English writing learning objectives	18.92	30.211	.697	.888	450	1.99	.740
F20	assists students in overcoming obstacles to their English writing learning	18.92	30.017	.678	.888	450	1.98	.781
F21	simplifies the English writing learning process for the students	18.93	29.968	.681	.888	450	1.98	.784
F22	raises students' awareness of the significance of autonomous learning	18.94	29.825	.699	.887	450	1.97	.785
F23	initiates decision-making processes in writing	18.94	29.885	.705	.887	450	1.97	.772
F24	employs a variety of media in teaching English writing	18.94	30.184	.675	.889	450	1.96	.763

F25	employs a variety of strategies in teaching English writing	19.21	31.732	.484	.899	450	1.70	.756
F26	employs a variety of methods in teaching English writing	19.20	31.458	.482	.900	450	1.70	.800
F27	provides students with the essential strategies for their English writing learning process	19.19	31.597	.477	.900	450	1.72	.786

Students in this study did not believe that the Facilitator role supports the development of their learner autonomy in English writing. Although the scale used to measure this role showed strong internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = .900), the students' responses across all eleven items (F17–F27) were low. Mean scores ranged from 1.70 to 1.99 on a three-point scale, with no item reaching the neutral midpoint of 2.00. This clearly shows that many students either disagreed or were unsure whether this teacher role helped them become more autonomous in their writing learning.

Slightly higher scores appeared in F19 (“supports students in formulating their English writing learning objectives”), F18 (“aids students in planning their long-term writing education goals”), and F20 (“assists students in overcoming obstacles to their English writing learning”), with means close to 1.98. However, these scores are still low overall, and most students selected either “Neutral” or “Disagree.” This suggests that while some teacher support may be present, students do not see it as a factor that increases their independence. Items such as F21 (“simplifies the English writing learning process”) and F22 (“raises students' awareness of the significance of autonomous learning”) observed a similar pattern. The high scale of neutral responses in these statements indicates that students may not fully understand or recognize how these actions of teachers relate to learner autonomy.

The strongest disagreements were shown in statements F25, F26, and F27, which focused on the teacher's use of various strategies and methods to support learner autonomy in writing skills. These statements had the lowest mean scores, from 1.70 to 1.72. A large number of students selected “Disagree” for these items, suggesting that they do not believe their teachers use diverse strategies or help them find ways to improve writing independently. These strategies may be practiced without explicit introduction or explanation, or students may not be motivated to apply them. Without that connection, students may not see these actions as helpful for promoting learner autonomy.

Overall, students did not view the Facilitator role as a way to promote learner autonomy in English writing. Although the teacher may provide help or guidance, students did not clearly connect these actions with becoming more independent. This finding shows a gap between what teachers may be doing and what students recognize. To close this gap, teachers could involve students more actively in goal-setting, strategy use, and decision-making, so they can better understand and experience what autonomy looks like in practice.

**Table 7. The role of Co-learner
Students' perception of the Co-learner role**

No	Statements	Item-Total Statistics			Descriptive Statistics		
Valid N (listwise) = 450							

		Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
C28	befriends students	14.54	16.561	.686	.875	450	2.10	.781
C29	builds collaborative relationships with students	14.52	16.544	.681	.876	450	2.12	.788
C30	plans to teach from the students' viewpoint	14.55	16.649	.673	.877	450	2.09	.778
C31	encourages students to express the difficulties they experience during the English writing process	14.56	16.772	.673	.877	450	2.08	.758
C32	works together with students to solve English writing learning challenges	14.56	16.857	.637	.880	450	2.08	.777
C33	actively participates in class discussions with students	14.59	16.826	.665	.877	450	2.05	.756
C34	offers constructive suggestions to students on their writing	14.58	16.850	.659	.878	450	2.06	.758
C35	maintains a balanced involvement in collaborative classroom activities without dominating student contributions	14.57	16.847	.655	.878	450	2.07	.762

Students in this study did not regard the Co-learner role as contributing to their learner autonomy in English writing. The scale had good internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = .891) showed that the items measured a shared idea. The actual responses showed only moderate support when mean scores for the eight items (C28–C35) ranged from 2.05 to 2.12 on a three-point scale. These results suggest that students were unsure or unconvinced that this teacher role helped them become more independent in their writing learning process.

The highest-rated items were C29 (“builds collaborative relationships with students”), C28 (“befriends students”), and C30 (“plans to teach from the students' viewpoint”), with mean scores between 2.09 and 2.12. These statements refer to teacher behaviors that focus on friendliness and student-centeredness. While a number of students agreed with these statements, many selected the “Neutral” scale. Other items such as C31 (“encourages students to express the difficulties they experience”) and C32 (“works together with students to solve writing learning challenges”) also received similar scores. This suggests that although students may recognize the teacher's supportive attitude, they do not clearly associate it with increased control over their learning.

The items that witnessed the least agreement were C33 (“actively participates in class discussions with students”) and C34 (“offers constructive suggestions to students on their writing”), both with mean scores around 2.05. C35 (“maintains balanced involvement without dominating student contributions”) was rated slightly higher at 2.07. These items relate to teacher participation and interaction in the classroom. The low levels of agreement may reflect the fact that students prefer teachers to lead class activities and may not yet be comfortable with teachers participating as equals. This may be especially true in contexts where the teacher is still viewed as the authority figure rather than a learning partner.

Overall, students did not consider the role of Co-learner as a way to promote learner autonomy in learning English writing. Therefore, teachers may need to show students how co-learning is not just about being friendly, but about helping students take more responsibility and participate actively in their own learning.

Table 8. The role of Assessor
Students’ perception of the Assessor role

No	Statements	Item-Total Statistics				Descriptive Statistics Valid N (listwise) = 450		
		Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach’s Alpha if Item Deleted	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
A36	guides students towards more accurate sentence structure	18.41	8.924	.603	.850	450	2.64	.605
A37	addresses common grammatical errors in students’ work	18.43	8.718	.657	.844	450	2.62	.613
A38	helps students understand the coherence of their ideas in writing	18.40	8.953	.635	.847	450	2.65	.575
A39	enables students to choose appropriate vocabulary for their writing	18.41	8.867	.636	.846	450	2.63	.594
A40	enables students to improve their sentence construction skills	18.42	8.974	.606	.850	450	2.63	.591
A41	clearly states how students’ writing will be graded	18.40	9.055	.614	.849	450	2.65	.567

A42	measures how well the students have met these writing criteria	18.41	9.093	.582	.852	450	2.64	.581
A43	provides students with feedback on their writing	18.45	9.023	.586	.852	450	2.59	.594

The role of Assessor has the greatest extent of agreement from the five explored roles. For each of the eight statements concerning the Assessor Role (A36–A43), the level of agreement was high ranging from 2.59 to 2.65 on a three-point Likert scale. These scores indicate students appreciated how the teacher used assessment and feedback to promote learner autonomy in learning English writing skills. The strong reliability (Cronbach’s alpha = .865), and all corrected item-total correlations above .58 showed that students’ consistency in answering the items.

The highest preferred items were A38 (“helps students understand the coherence of their ideas in writing”) and A41 (“clearly states how students’ writing will be graded”), which both scored an average of 2.65. These were followed closely by A36 (“provides clear assessment criteria”), A42 (“helps students identify specific strengths and weaknesses”), and A40 (“encourages students to reflect on their writing performance”). These results indicate that students especially appreciate when teachers give clear explanations, show how writing will be assessed, and help them understand what they do well and where they can improve. Such support appears to give students more confidence to review and improve their work on their own, which is a key part of learner autonomy.

Even for the least rated item, A43 (“provides students with feedback on their writing”), the average score remains a high 2.59. About 65% of students subscribed to this statement, while only 5.6% opposed it. This shows that written feedback is widely valued, though students may find it even more helpful when it is clearly connected to assessment criteria and goals.

Overall, the surveyed students in this research upheld that the role of Assessor promotes their learner autonomy in learning English writing skills. By giving straightforward criteria, comprehensive reflections, and detailed feedback, teachers assist learners in taking ownership of their writing process.

English teachers’ perceptions of roles teachers play in promoting 10th-grade students’ learner autonomy in learning English writing skills

The role of Instructor

Teachers believed that the role of Instructor could help students develop autonomy, particularly in the early stages of learning how to write. Through scaffolding techniques, such as modeling and brainstorming, teachers can divide tasks into reasonable steps to help students gradually grasp the ability to finish the tasks on their own. When instruction was gradually reduced, many students began to show more ownership of their writing. This scaffolding process was considered especially important for 10th-grade students who were still developing their skills and study habits.

“This role is essential in my classroom. I always start by walking students through the process, like how to brainstorm or structure a paragraph. After I model it a few times, I notice they are much more willing to give it a shot themselves.” (T1)

“I guide them step-by-step at first, and then I reduce the support. They become more confident over time.” (T2)

"I still rely on this role the most. Giving clear steps and examples helps students understand what to do. When I gradually reduce support, some become more confident." (T4)

The role of Resource

All teachers agreed that the role of Resource did not promote students' autonomy in learning English writing skills. Despite providing students with additional resources, such as handouts, model texts, and useful links, they found that students rarely use these on their own. Students tend to rely on teachers' orders and often ignore available materials until they are asked to use them. This pattern of behavior shows that just the availability of materials is insufficient to promote learner autonomy. Students need to nurture habits of exploration and responsibility, which are typically absent in this situation.

"I give them extra materials or model texts all the time: links, examples, even grammar tools. But unless I tell them to use it, most won't even look at it. They're just used to following instructions, not going off on their own." (T1)

"I usually suggest some extra things, like reading materials or useful websites, but I rarely see students use them unless I make it part of an assignment." (T2)

"Unless I help them, the majority of my students don't use the resource. They usually wait for instructions." (T3)

"Sometimes I give them links or extra writing tips and tell them they can check it out later. But let's be honest, most of them don't. Unless I tell them it's required, they won't bother." (T4)

The role of Facilitator

Teachers expressed a preference for the Facilitator role which helped students become more autonomous in their English writing. They found that when students feel free to establish their own writing goals, select learning methods, they are more involved and take more responsibility for their learning. Giving students the freedom to choose while still providing support when required is an advisable way to increase their commitment to their work. The freedom to make meaningful choices in writing tasks was seen as important to encourage students to become more autonomous learners.

"I give them the freedom to select their own writing goals or methods. I try not to make all of their decisions, but I still give them guidance. They are more committed to their work when they are given that kind of freedom." (T2)

"When I let students make decisions or lead parts of the process, they take ownership. It makes them more independent learners." (T3)

"I've tried letting students pick their own topics or goals, others really engage with the process." (T4)

The role of Co-learner

Teachers all disregarded the role of Co-learner as an effective way to promote students' learner autonomy in learning English writing skills. Students expressed discomfort when the teacher acted as a peer or collaborator. Moreover, this approach led to confusion and awkwardness among students as students held expectations that the teacher should maintain authority in class, not as their friends. Teachers found that efforts to build a more equal and collaborative relationship in the classroom did not result in greater student engagement or responsibility. This may be explained by the fact that cultural norms about teacher-student interactions remained strong.

“I once tried to share some of my writing mistakes, but students didn’t know how to react. Most of them still expect the teacher to have the right answers. It even made things more awkward.” (T1)

“I’ve tried writing along with them or talking about how I revise my own stuff, just to make it feel more equal. But honestly, they still wait for me to lead everything. It’s like they don’t take it seriously unless I’m giving direct instructions.” (T2)

“I’ve tried acting more like a co-learner during group tasks, but it felt a little strange. The students didn’t really know what to do with it. I think they’re more comfortable when I take the lead.” (T3)

“I’ve found that most students look nervous when I try to get closer to them during the writing process, such as by offering to sit next to them while they write or by giving feedback while they draft. They don’t want me to look at their work too soon. I believe it’s because they still expect some distance and we’re not as close as friends.” (T4)

The role of Assessor

Teachers expressed agreement that the role of Assessor helps students promote learner autonomy in learning English writing skills. Rather than simply a means to assign grades, teachers viewed assessment as a means for students to monitor their learning, spot areas of strength and weakness. According to the teachers, students were encouraged to assess and revise their work by using written feedback, clear criteria, and comprehensive rubrics. Particularly when students responded to peer or self-reflection, this gradual transfer of responsibility was seen as a step toward promoting autonomy. It was thought that this role would help students develop their critical thinking and autonomy in the long run, even though it required more preparation and scaffolding.

“Students begin recognizing their own errors when I use clear rubrics and provide written feedback. Some even revise without me telling them.” (T1)

“When students reflect on my feedback or assess their own work, I see their progress.” (T2)

“In my class, self-reflection and peer review are required during each writing section. They develop more quickly when they assess one another.” (T3)

Overall, teachers believed that the three roles of instructor, facilitator, and assessor would promote 10th-grade students’ learner autonomy in learning English writing skills. The Instructor role was perceived as establishing a foundation for students by scaffolding before gradually transferring responsibility. The Facilitator role promotes autonomy by granting students the chance to make their own decisions and set their own learning goals. The Assessor role promotes autonomy through structured feedback which allows students to reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses. In contrast, the Resource role was viewed as insufficient on its own, as students were just simply provided with the materials but lacked the ability to make use of these resources for their demands. Similarly, the Co-learner role was considered unsuitable due to the classroom culture that teachers should maintain authority rather than act as a peer to students.

Comparison between 10th-grade students’ perceptions and English teachers’ perceptions on the role of teachers in promoting learner autonomy in learning English writing skills

The role of Instructor

Students and teachers both agreed that the role of Instructor could help promote students' learner autonomy in learning English writing skills. This finding matches some recent studies. According to Su, Noordin, and Jeyaraj (2023), when properly applied, strategy-based instruction could enhance students' strategic competency, which was proven to be essential for promoting autonomy. Wang, Zhang, and Cooper (2024) had similar results, which showed that metacognitive instruction could help EFL students monitor their learning and strengthen their writing skills in aspects of lexical variety, accuracy, and fluency.

In Vietnamese education, teacher-centered instruction remains the norm, and students often expect structured guidance to deal with complicated tasks (Nguyen & Habók, 2021). This can cause the misleading belief that teachers' instruction is naturally opposed to learner autonomy. However, the findings of the present study show an opposite view. Students do not reject instruction. Instead, they value instruction from teachers when it includes clear explanations, model examples, and opportunities to make their own decisions. This was consistent with the studies of Nunan (2003) and Bajrami (2015), who believed that autonomy can be promoted through structured and supportive instruction. Likewise, Zhuang's (2010) research found that promoting autonomy involves helping students understand the purpose behind learning activities.

Overall, the findings in this current study mirror this cultural reality, in which learner autonomy does not mean to eliminate the complete presence of teacher control. By combining explicit strategy instruction and gradual withdrawal of support, teachers can promote learner autonomy that corresponds with local pedagogical norms and student expectations.

The role of Resource

There is a difference between teachers' and students' perceptions of the Resource role. While students agreed that this role promotes their learner autonomy in learning English writing skills, teachers expressed the disagreement. From the teacher's perspective, students rarely took the initiative to explore these resources autonomously, instead demonstrating a passive reliance on teacher direction.

This difference reveals that while students could recognize the advantages of these resources, they seldom employ them actively except under teachers' request. Although Vietnamese EFL students have access to and consider digital learning tools favorably, they struggle to utilize them independently without clear expectations, teacher involvement, or organized assignments (Tran, 2022). Additionally, Tran's (2024) research indicated that almost half of the surveyed students, despite having sufficient training, were unable to use online platforms for academic purposes, especially in terms of finding educational resources and using basic digital tools like word-processing programs. Likewise, Truong and Nguyen (2023) found that Vietnamese teachers are doubtful about the effectiveness of just offering learning materials since students usually ignore them unless their use is required.

However, the students' moderate agreement in this study signals a prospective change in learner attitudes. Students acknowledged that teachers do introduce useful materials (Dang, Le, & Bui, 2023). Moreover, when resources are aligned with students' interests, proficiency levels, or provided in digital formats, students are more likely to acknowledge their usefulness (Yan, 2012). When teaching EFL writing in Vietnam, especially for high school students, Nguyen (2009) also pointed out that before assigning writing assignments, teachers should focus on giving students sufficient input, which is thought to be the main driver of language acquisition.

Overall, the results show that the Resource role holds untapped potential. Although teachers might consider the role of Resource cannot promote learner autonomy because of students lack of initiative, students themselves thought this role helpful. Thus, there is a need for more organized instruction on resource ownership. The Resource role could reach its full potential to promote learner autonomy if teachers can scaffold students' habits of exploration and show how to use resources efficiently. Shi and Han (2019) noted that, as resources, teachers not only offer knowledge but also enable students to gain the necessary skills to use learning materials efficiently and effectively.

The role of Facilitator

The analysis results show that there is a difference between teachers' and students' perceptions on the role of Facilitator in promoting learner autonomy. Teachers believed that this role supports students in identifying learning goals, solving problems, and making learning decisions which are essential actions to develop learner autonomy (Han, 2014; Dörnyei, 2010). Similarly, the study of Dang (2023) showed there is a positive correlation between the role of Facilitators and the development of learner autonomy. Nguyen and Tran (2024) also found that teachers encourage learners to set personal language learning goals in order develop students' metacognitive awareness and decision-making skills, thereby fostering learner autonomy. Similar trends were found by Duong and Nguyen (2022), who found that teachers understood the importance of empowering students with the ability to make decisions by letting them select their own study materials and planning their own study method.

On the contrary, students deny that this role contributes to promoting learner autonomy for students in the process of learning writing skills. This denial can be explained by the fact that the implementation of the role of Facilitator in English classrooms in Vietnam is still limited. Although teachers are aware of the need to empower students, the pressures of standardized testing, large class sizes, and a tradition of teacher-centered instruction limit their ability to fulfill this role (Truong & Nguyen, 2023). Students get used to a passive learning style in which they follow teacher orders instead of setting their own objectives or deciding their own study plans. Therefore, promoting learner autonomy cannot depend just on teachers' efforts. It also requires initiative, awareness, and commitment from the learners themselves (Ababo & Animaw, 2024).

The role of Co-learner

According to the collection of teachers and students' perceptions, the role of Co-learners does not promote students' autonomy in their English writing skills. Nevertheless, the potential value of this role should not be ignored. Previous research indicated that when applied appropriately, the Co-learner role can promote mutual trust and understanding between students and teachers (Le, 2023). Additionally, Naibaho (2019) found that teacher participation in classroom discussions can create a more dynamic learning environment that encourages student involvement. However, several structural and cultural barriers made the enactment of this role difficult to happen. Könings, Mordang, Smeenk, Stassen, and Ramani (2021) emphasized that adopting this role can challenge established classroom hierarchies, which causes teachers to feel a loss of control and students to experience discomfort.

In the Vietnamese context, such tensions are made worse by more extensive cultural and systemic factors. Tanaka (2020) similarly characterized Vietnamese classrooms as environments where teachers are utmostly respected and practice control through strict orders and authoritative communication. According to Ma (2022), students in Confucian-influenced educational systems are often not prepared to take full responsibility for their

learning. Teachers are expected to guide, monitor, and organize the learning process in order to preserve classroom order, even when they make an effort to lessen social distance by taking on the role of a friend or co-learner (Ma, 2022). Although national reforms such as the MoET's 2018 General Education English Curriculum emphasize the development of student competencies, including learner autonomy, actual classroom practices suggest a continued dominance of teacher control (Ho & Dimmock, 2023).

Overall, although the co-learner role holds theoretical promise in promoting autonomy through mutual trust and shared participation, its effectiveness is limited by cultural expectations and classroom realities. In Vietnam, teacher authority remains rooted in educational practices shaped by Confucian traditions ((Pham & Do, 2018; Huynh, 2022). Without careful adaptation to correspond with students' expectations and the educational culture, the role of Co-learner may be regarded as inappropriate.

The role of Assessor

Both teachers and students in this study believed that the role of Assessor could promote learner autonomy in English writing. Students do not view assessment as a limitation on their learning, but as a tool for improvement, particularly when it involves clear criteria, constructive feedback, and opportunities for reflection (Naibaho, 2019; Kileri & Listyani, 2021). This implies that students use assessment not only for grading but also to determine how well they are now performing and how to better their performance.

Ferris (2014) further emphasized that effective feedback enhances both the accuracy and organization of student writing. According to Carless and Boud (2018), students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning when receiving written feedback. Nguyen (2024) further explained that teacher feedback helps students identify mistakes and encourage their involvement in such a supportive and interactive classroom atmosphere. This kind of encouragement drives students to get involved in the writing process, review and reflect on their work. It also pushes their creativity, curiosity, and interest, all of which are qualities needed for active involvement with the writing process (Zahida, Farrah, & Zaru, 2013). Furthermore, Akmilia, Purnawarman, & Rodliyah (2015) found that when students engage in self-directed feedback, they become more aware of their progress, indicating the behavior of autonomous learners. The introduction of clear multiple-choice assessment criteria is also advised to help high school students to self-evaluate and grade their writing performance (Pham & Truong, 2021).

Overall, the agreement between teachers and students indicated that the role of Assessor helps students to promote learner autonomy in learning English writing. Particularly when assessment includes clear criteria, constructive feedback, and reflection, it helps students monitor their progress and take greater ownership of their learning.

CONCLUSION

The study investigated students' and teachers' perceptions of teacher roles in promoting learner autonomy in English writing and identified both convergences and divergences between the two groups. Quantitative findings indicated that students viewed the roles of Instructor, Resource, and Assessor as supportive of learner autonomy, while they showed limited preference for the Facilitator and Co-learner roles. In contrast, qualitative data revealed that teachers emphasized the importance of the Instructor, Facilitator, and Assessor roles, but expressed reservations about acting as a Resource or Co-learner. Both groups agreed on the centrality of the Instructor and Assessor roles and shared skepticism toward the Co-

learner role. However, their views diverged regarding the Facilitator and Resource roles, with teachers favoring the former and students supporting the latter.

These findings yield several pedagogical implications and directions for future research, while also highlighting study limitations. Teacher-led instruction should not be seen as opposing learner autonomy, as the Instructor role can provide essential scaffolding for students' confidence and independence in writing, and the Assessor role underscores the importance of feedback as a reflective and developmental process. Teachers may need to make facilitative practices more explicit and participatory to enhance student awareness, while the Resource role should focus on guiding students in the effective use of learning materials. At the same time, the Co-learner role, although less compatible with prevailing Vietnamese classroom norms, may be gradually integrated to promote collaboration without undermining teacher authority. However, these conclusions are constrained by the study's limited sample, its focus on writing skills alone, the relatively underexplored Co-learner role, and the absence of perspectives from other stakeholders. Future research should involve broader and more diverse samples, examine other language skills such as speaking, and explore culturally appropriate enactments of the Co-learner role to better understand its potential in fostering learner autonomy.

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