
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Effectiveness of an Educational Program Based on Contract Learning in Developing Writing Skills among Tenth Grade Students in Jordan

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| ABSTRACT

This study aimed to identify the effectiveness of an educational program based on contract learning in developing writing skills among tenth grade students in Jordan, where the quasi-experimental approach was used. Its members consisted of two classes of tenth grade classes at Al-Khader Modern School affiliated with the Directorate of Education, Marka District, Amman, Jordan, in the first semester of the academic year 2024/2025, and their number was (40) students. The two groups were randomly distributed, where group (A) represented the experimental group (20) students who studied eight lessons from the book (Arabic is My Language) prescribed for the tenth grade using the contract learning strategy, and group (B) represented the control group (20) students who studied the same content using the traditional method. To achieve the objectives of the study, a writing skills test and a writing skills correction card were prepared, which were divided into two areas: content and style, and consisted of (50) paragraphs, which included the criteria for correcting writing skills, after ensuring their validity and reliability. The results indicated the presence of statistically significant differences between the averages of the experimental and control groups on the post-test for developing writing skills, attributed to the use of the educational program based on contract learning in favor of the experimental group. In light of these results, the researchers recommended a set of recommendations, the most prominent of which is the adoption of the educational program based on contract learning in teaching Arabic language courses for the secondary stage.

| KEYWORDS

Educational program, contractual learning, writing skills, tenth grade

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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Introduction

In our current era, due to globalization and successive revolutions in the fields of technology and information, the world is witnessing rapid developments and radical changes in all areas. This has clearly impacted various local, regional, and international sectors. In light of these transformations, the Ministry of Education, with its various institutions, has worked to adapt to these developments by adopting advanced educational programs and modern teaching strategies. These strategies aim to prepare a generation equipped with the necessary skills to keep pace with the various requirements of this era. These strategies are based on theories of learning, communication, and systems. The goal of these efforts has been to transition from an educational model based on the role of the teacher as the primary source of knowledge to a model that focuses on the role played by the student as an active participant in various learning processes. Dron and Anderson (2016) and Dhwan (2020) point out that modern educational trends at various levels of education focus on making learners the center of the learning process, with an emphasis on the learner's own activity, uniqueness, and difference, teaching thinking skills, and calling for individualized learning and self-learning, given that these are inherently personal and vary in their results, timing, and method from one learner to another. This trend has been activated by exploiting a set of modern teaching and learning strategies, most notably: inquiry, problem-solving, brainstorming, critical thinking, learning by contract between teacher and learner, and cooperative learning. On the other hand, curricula are the

educational tool for achieving this. They are an essential element in the structure of the educational process, playing a significant role in translating the outcomes of new thought by working to develop its components, including objectives, curricula, cognitive content, teaching methods and educational tools, and teachers and learners.

The developed Arabic language curricula rely on a competency-based learning and teaching methodology, based on the premise that developing the learner's linguistic proficiency is closely linked to activating their cognitive, social, and logical abilities, in addition to their imagination and aesthetic taste. Given the close connection between language, its purposes, and its uses, the developed Arabic language curricula, through the authoring process, have ensured that students acquire sound and continuous learning that extends beyond the classroom to functional practices and activities that reinforce the learner's belief that Arabic is a language of life, knowledge, and communication. School textbooks, particularly Arabic language textbooks, are in line with the modern philosophy of education and with twenty-first-century skills that aim to prepare and qualify students to interact with the requirements of the era with an open spirit and high efficiency, in a manner consistent with and proud of the Arab and Islamic identity, and openness to the cultures of other peoples and nations (National Center for Curriculum Development, 2023).

Writing is one of the arts of the Arabic language. It is not a linguistic activity independent of other branches of the language, but rather, its skills are closely intertwined with all other linguistic arts and skills (reading, speaking, listening). Writing is a true indicator of a learner's mastery of all linguistic skills, as it plays a pivotal role in an individual's life. It allows them to harness their imagination and personal vision, and enables them to choose appropriate vocabulary, formulate linguistic structures and styles, and organize and present ideas in a coherent and clear manner. This role accompanies the student after completing their studies and into practical life (Hanna, 2017). Writing is defined as "the expression of thoughts, feelings, sensations, experiences, and observations, whether spoken or written, in formal Arabic language appropriate to the level of learners in their various grades. It is the fruit of the literary and linguistic culture they acquire at this stage, a means of communication and understanding between them, and a tool for strengthening human and social ties between them" (Al-Hashemi, 2006: 60). Writing is "a literary and social activity through which a person can convey their thoughts, feelings, and needs to others in correct language and a beautiful style. It is the goal of language education, as all linguistic arts contribute to improving the student's ability to express himself and convey his ideas to others in correct language and a beautiful style" (Ta'ima, 2010: 189). It is "the process of arranging written symbols according to a specific system and placing them in sentences and paragraphs, while being familiar with the conventions of writing. It requires mental effort to organize these sentences, link them in specific ways, arrange ideas and information, and punctuate them" (Abdul Wahab et al., 2004: 109).

Al-Hashemi and Fakhri (2011) view writing as a complex process that proceeds in stages in which the writer uses language as a tool to discover and clarify meaning through projections. They then explore the ideas they have acquired, then reformulate the topic, information, arguments, and method of organizing ideas until they reach a stage where they feel that what they have written clearly conveys the intended meaning to the reader.

The importance of writing for the learner lies in its being an effective means of communication and interaction with others. Al-Khawli (2004) pointed to a number of educational aspects that, in turn, demonstrate the importance and necessity of writing, which can be summarized as follows:

1. Writing is a fundamental means of communication between individuals and an effective tool for strengthening social and intellectual ties between individuals and communities.
2. Writing is an effective tool for addressing problems at both the individual and societal levels, by providing an opportunity to exchange views and ideas.
3. Mastering writing skills builds self-confidence and promotes social and intellectual growth.
4. Acquiring writing skills is one of the measures of competence and success at work, as well as social intelligence.
5. Writing contributes to preserving human heritage, as it connects the present to the past.
6. Writing provides teachers with the opportunity to learn about students' linguistic skills, enabling them to enhance their positive aspects and address their weaknesses.
7. Writing showcases individuals' literary and linguistic talents and contributes to their social standing based on appreciation and respect.
8. It develops literary appreciation and artistic sensitivity.

The role of writing as an indispensable tool of communication between the individual and society is of great importance. Through it, the individual is able to communicate what he or she wants to others, while simultaneously being able to understand what is wanted and requested of him or her. Such communication is useless unless it is precise, correct, and clear. The importance and status of written expression for students increases as they expand their scope of use of the written language. Written expression plays a significant role in their lives, as it opens the door for students to exercise their imagination and vision, choose words and vocabulary, select structures and styles, compose and organize ideas and issues, and formulate them well. This role accompanies the student after completing their studies and into their professional lives (Muhammad, 2024). The researchers believe that developing students' writing skills is closely linked to achieving educational outcomes in the Arabic language. Mastery of these skills positively manifests itself in language integrity, the organization, depth, and presentation of ideas, the development of linguistic structure, imagination and innovation, and students' emotional values and constants. It also enhances multiple intelligence skills, particularly linguistic and social intelligence, and writing skills, which in turn enable students to communicate intelligently with individuals, communities, and local and global cultures. According to Al-Hashemi's (2006) classification, written expression skills are divided into four main groups, each with its own sub-skills, as follows:

1. Vocabulary-related skills: These include the ability to use standard Arabic vocabulary, avoid colloquial expressions, and avoid common errors in word choice. They also need to select appropriate words for the context, spell them correctly, and use proper grammar and morphology.
2. Structure and style-related skills: These include the precise use of sentence connectives, ensuring the completeness of the basic elements of sentences, correct grammatical structures, and the soundness of the expression styles used.
3. Idea-related skills: These include the clarity and precision of ideas, the accuracy of the information provided, the logical ordering and coherence of ideas, and the fulfillment of the basic elements of each idea in a sequential and coherent manner.
4. Organizational skills: These include the ability to organize writing using paragraphs, dedicating a paragraph to each idea, ensuring clear handwriting, the use of appropriate punctuation, and proper margin alignment to reflect a well-organized written text.

Abdul Wahab et al. (2004) identified a set of basic writing skills, the most prominent of which are: writing letters accurately and easily, adhering to spelling rules when writing words, formulating sentences and paragraphs that accurately express ideas and meanings, choosing appropriate ideas for each type of writing, and organizing these ideas in a manner consistent with the nature of the written text.

The actual use of these skills is achieved through the learner's practice of written expression in educational situations, as an activity that combines mental and performance processes, and is implemented through sequential stages and integrated teaching procedures that are interconnected with other linguistic skills. Amer (2023) and Hedge (1993) demonstrated that the writing process proceeds according to an organized and logical hierarchy, comprising a number of sequential stages, as follows:

The planning stage: This is known as the preliminary stage or "pre-writing stage," and includes practical procedures and mental performances that require generating dialogue and ideas, summoning appropriate language, and formulating them effectively.

The composition stage: This stage reflects the level of planning in its procedures and demonstrates the writer's ability to compose written texts through formulating sentences and paragraphs, and then producing the desired text. In this stage, the student employs linguistic and rhetorical devices, grammar and spelling rules, and punctuation to distinguish linguistic meanings and connotations. Revision Phase: This phase aims to address and review linguistic contradictions and irrelevant phrases, as well as organize ideas, their sequencing and coherence from a linguistic and semantic perspective, and their clarity and coherence. This is achieved by identifying and correcting spelling, grammatical, and syntactic errors, in addition to employing connective and punctuation tools. The branches and arts of the Arabic language, including writing skills, are taught through multiple teaching methods, strategies, and models, which take into account modernity and authenticity. The goal is to achieve the desired educational outcomes in the Arabic language subject, given that the teaching and learning process relies not only on the cognitive aspect of the language, but also on the methods and strategies of teaching it, which take into account the active and effective role of the learner. Accordingly, one of the primary roles of the modern teacher is to select appropriate teaching strategies that achieve the desired educational outcomes and contribute to modifying students' behaviors, attitudes, and values toward the Arabic language, in addition to developing their diverse intellectual skills and creating an effective, collaborative learning environment. Among these modern strategies is contract learning. Contractual learning is defined as an educational method based on an agreement between the teacher and the learner, in which the learner commits to achieving several specific educational goals within a framework of shared responsibility and effective interaction. The contract includes learning goals, content, learning activities, teaching methods, educational media, learning location and time, and assessment methods. It is signed and dated by both the teacher and the students. Thus, this strategy illuminates the path for the student to take calculated steps toward achieving the

goals, making them the primary driver of the learning process. The teacher is responsible for preparing these contracts in a simplified manner and presenting them convincingly to the students. Flexible modifications to the educational agreement are possible based on students' objective feedback, which reflects their interests, experiences, and the nature of the educational content. This shared interaction leads to the development of students' sense of self-worth and individual responsibility in the learning process. Contractual learning is: "A written, collaborative agreement between the teacher and the students to achieve specific educational goals. This contract includes the learning goals, educational content, the activities that the students will practice, the educational resources that they will resort to, appropriate teaching methods, and the evaluation method and timing, in addition to defining the roles of both the teacher and the learner in this contract. The students and the teacher are bound by the terms of the contract and by implementing what was agreed upon" (Al-Sarraf and Khayal, 2018: 137).

Contract learning is a form of individualized instruction advocated by Walton. It involves assigning assignments and tasks based on contracts. Contracts are binding agreements signed by students, who are then free to complete them at their own pace. No new contracts are permitted until the assignments under the current contract are completed. Dalton's plan includes concepts that can be considered logical outcomes that contribute to the application of the concept of learning for mastery. When the intended outcomes are clearly defined, the need for self-study becomes clear (Reiser 1987). Learning by contract is based on the humanistic philosophy that calls for the necessity of making the learning process centered and focused on the learner himself, and giving him the opportunity to choose, define and take responsibility for what he learns, and become self-directed, interacting in a positive way. This style of learning is based on the principle that each student has the ability to choose the learning style that suits his nature, taking into account the existence of individual differences between learners, allowing each of them to learn according to his abilities, inclinations and readiness (Abdul Basit, 2022).

The contract learning strategy is characterized by several salient features, the most important of which are: commitment to implementing what has been agreed upon, clarity in defining goals and responsibilities, a variety of learning sources, methods, and approaches, and flexibility in implementation (Al-Hatty, 2018). The contract learning strategy is based on a set of principles that stem from the foundations of self-learning and their practical implementation mechanisms. These principles include: positive interaction between the parties involved in the learning process, consideration of individual differences, enhancing intrinsic motivation, providing immediate feedback, empowering learners with freedom to make decisions, and motivating them to take responsibility for their learning (Hanna, 2017; Maabad et al., 2020).

Contract-based learning has four basic elements, as outlined by Amer (2023) as follows:

- 1) The two parties to the contract: the teacher and the student, each with a specific role within the educational process.
- 2) The subject of the contract (learning content): This is based on achieving specific educational objectives through educational content designed to support and effectively accomplish those objectives.
- 3) Contract alternatives (negotiation): This refers to the various forms and patterns through which the learning content and methods can be delivered, allowing the student the freedom to choose what best suits their needs and learning style.
- 4) The contract (document): This represents the final outcome of the negotiation process between the teacher and the learner, documenting the agreed-upon educational alternatives and the decision-making process. This document represents a formal commitment by both parties, defining their roles, means of implementation, and the tools used to implement what was agreed upon.

The contract learning strategy follows specific steps, including a set of elements, the most important of which are the desired learning outcomes or objectives, the methods used, the learning resources available to achieve the outcomes, and the evidence and testimonials indicating the achievement of the outcomes. Yassin and Raji (2012) demonstrated that the contract learning strategy goes through a series of sequential and organized stages that enable its effective implementation. These stages are as follows:

- Pre-negotiation procedures: This includes identifying and preparing the learning topic, vocabulary, activities, and educational objectives.
- Negotiation procedures and contract drafting: This stage involves the teacher explaining the learning objectives and clarifying their relationship to the learning content, along with presenting multiple options for content delivery methods, while allowing students freedom of choice according to their abilities and interests. The teacher also identifies a set of interactive learning activities, such as reports, written summaries, and group discussions, which contribute to enhancing active participation.

- The teacher exposes students to a variety of teaching methods and approaches, within a framework of diversity and interaction, with the aim of enabling them to choose what aligns with their interests and learning abilities.
- The teacher presents students with a set of suggested assessment methods and evaluation tools, giving them the freedom to choose the most appropriate ones that align with their needs and learning style.
- The teacher explains the appropriate educational technologies that students can use to support their learning during the lesson, enhancing the effectiveness of the educational process.

While Obaid (2017) identified three stages that the contract learning strategy follows:

1. The integration stage: During this stage, learners begin to form a comprehensive vision of what they will learn, understand the desired goals, and what they are expected to perform during the learning process. This stage also witnesses interaction and negotiation among students regarding the content of the learning and the methods for achieving it.
2. The exploration stage: During this stage, students begin to explore the learning path they will follow, identify the components of the sub-content and main topics, and identify appropriate learning resources, such as textbooks, websites, and laboratory experiments. During this stage, implementation steps and options are identified to accomplish the expected learning tasks.
3. Reflection Stage: This stage focuses on reviewing what has been learned, verifying the extent to which the desired goals have been achieved, and the extent to which the learner has benefited from the experiences they have acquired. This stage extends to include the learner's awareness of the new challenges resulting from learning, which contributes to developing their intrinsic motivation to continue learning. The researchers believe that contract learning represents a unique strategy in education, stemming from the philosophy of individual learning, which gives the learner the freedom and responsibility to manage his educational path in accordance with his abilities and special requirements, with a focus on achieving mastery and reaching creativity. This approach is based on the individualization of education, which is a fundamental pillar for ensuring the continuity and development of the educational process. This strategy is based on the principle of the student taking the initiative in determining the forms and patterns of his learning, and making decisions related to them, under the guidance of the teacher, through concluding a written document that binds both parties, the teacher and the student, and determines the path of the learning process and the acquisition of experience. In addition, the contract learning strategy contributes to strengthening the bonds of interaction between the teacher and the students, and between the students themselves, which results in the development of multiple educational skills among them, including writing skills. Based on these distinct characteristics, this study sought to investigate the effectiveness of an educational program based on learning by contract in developing writing skills among tenth-grade students in Jordan.

In this context, several previous studies have been conducted on the contract learning strategy, including the study by Sumarsono and Permana (2023), which aimed to apply contract learning as an approach to improving students' performance in academic writing. This study adopted a mixed-method approach (quantitative and qualitative), and its sample included 21 third-year students in the English Department at Mandalika University of Education. To assess the study sample's performance, participants underwent a diagnostic test in academic writing skills. The contract model and questionnaires were also used in qualitative analysis. The results revealed a positive effect of contract learning in enhancing students' learning and improving their performance in academic writing. In another study, Al-Sarraf and Khayal (2018) sought to explore the effectiveness of a proposed program based on the contract learning strategy in developing some creative writing skills among middle school students. To achieve the goals of this study, the researchers adopted descriptive and quasi-experimental approaches. This study was applied to a sample of 75 second-year middle school students at Abdel Salam Khayal School in the Arab Republic of Egypt. The sample was divided into three groups: two experimental and one control. After administering a creative writing test to the three groups, the results revealed that the program had a significant effect in improving students' creative writing skills. Hanna (2017) conducted a study to measure the effectiveness of the contract learning strategy in developing online reading skills among middle school students in Egypt. The study was based on a quasi-experimental approach and used tools including a questionnaire designed to survey experts' opinions on the appropriate online reading skills for first-year middle school students. It also used a test to measure these skills, which was administered to a sample of fifty-four female students, who were equally divided into two groups, one experimental and the other control, from Port Said Girls' Preparatory School. The results showed a statistically significant difference in developing online reading skills in favor of the experimental group. Hanna (2017) conducted a study to measure the effectiveness of the contract learning strategy in developing online reading skills among middle school students in Egypt. The study was based on a quasi-experimental approach, and used tools that included a questionnaire designed to survey the opinions of experts about the appropriate online reading skills for first-year middle school students, in addition to a test to measure these skills, which was applied to a sample of 54 female students, distributed equally into two groups, one experimental and the other control, from students of Port Said Middle School for Girls. The results showed a statistically significant difference in developing online reading skills in favor of the experimental group.

Regarding studies that focused on writing skills, Al-Khawaldeh's study (2024) sought to determine the effect of using the cubing strategy in improving the creative writing skills of tenth-grade female students in Mafrq Governorate in Jordan. The study followed the quasi-experimental approach, and its sample consisted of eighty-three female students from Bal'ama Comprehensive Secondary School for Girls, who were randomly divided into two groups: an experimental group (forty-two female students) and a control group (forty-one female students). Three tests were administered to them to measure creative writing skills in articles, stories, and thoughts. The results showed statistically significant differences in favor of the experimental group, and this was attributed to the teaching method represented by the strategy of Cubing.

In the same context, Al-Wajeeh (2024) conducted a study to identify the impact of employing some active learning strategies on developing the written expression skills of eighth-grade female students in the Republic of Yemen. The study adopted both descriptive and quasi-experimental approaches. A list of written expression skills was prepared, in addition to designing an achievement test that was administered to a sample of eighty eighth-grade female students in the capital, Sana'a. The students were randomly assigned to two groups: an experimental group and a control group. The results of the study revealed statistically significant differences in the written expression skills test in favor of the experimental group. Al-Rashidiya and Al-Ghatami (2019) conducted a study to verify the effectiveness of an integrated educational unit in developing written expression skills in the Arabic language among ninth-grade female students in the Sultanate of Oman. The study adopted a quasi-experimental approach based on designing two groups: an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group included thirty-five female students, while the control group included thirty-four female students. After administering a written expression test to them, the study concluded that the integrated electronic educational unit was effective in developing written expression skills, whether combined or separately, with the exception of the content skill, for the benefit of the students in the experimental group. In another study, Al-Harout (2019) sought to reveal the effect of using an interactive whiteboard in developing the writing skills of tenth-grade students, in addition to exploring the differences in these skills that may be attributed to the gender factor. The researcher used the quasi-experimental approach, and his sample included eighty-six male and female students from the tenth grade in a number of Jordanian schools, including Al-Hasad Educational Schools in Amman, and the Hosni Fariz Schools for Boys and Al-Khansa Schools for Girls affiliated with the Qasaba Al-Salt Education Directorate. The sample was divided into four groups: two experimental groups (the first twenty-three male students, and the second twenty female students) and two control groups (the first twenty-two male students, and the second twenty-one female students). (student), and after applying a test to measure writing skills, the results revealed the presence of statistically significant differences in favor of the two experimental groups, while no statistically significant differences were found attributable to the interaction of gender with the use of the interactive board.

Through this presentation of some previous studies, it becomes clear that the contract learning strategy and writing skills have received great attention from researchers, as the results of these studies indicate the educational importance of these two variables and their effective role in enriching the educational process. Some studies, such as the study of Al-Sarraf and Khayal (2018), have sought to integrate these two variables into a single research framework, which highlights the complementary relationship between methodology and content in education. In contrast, other studies, such as the study of Al-Rashidi and Al-Ghatami (2019), focused on writing skills independently. It is worth noting that all of these studies followed the quasi-experimental approach, and these studies constituted an important reference for researchers in this study, as It provided them with the theoretical foundations, research methodologies, and tools necessary to prepare their study, interpret its findings, and discuss them. This study is distinguished from its predecessors in that it went beyond the theoretical aspect, but rather developed a practical educational program based on the contract learning strategy. It implemented this program in the teaching of Arabic to tenth-grade students in Jordan. It also developed a unique research tool to measure the impact of this program on developing these students' writing skills.

Research Problem and Question

Writing skills, as one of the fundamental pillars of the educational skills system, contribute to supporting students' acquisition of 21st-century skills, which include critical thinking, effective communication, creativity, and self-learning. This imposes multiple roles on the teacher, different from their role in traditional teaching. Teachers are required to search for modern educational strategies that focus on the role of the learner, capitalize on their activity, and activate their positive participation. This has been confirmed by numerous studies, such as Dhwan (2020), Yaman (2018), and Kim & Kim (2018). On the other hand, the researchers, through their administrative and academic experience, noticed some weaknesses in the expressive writing skills of a number of students, which indicates the need to enhance and develop these skills through effective teaching methods, as some students, when they write in a correct language, show signs of fatigue in their language, and some of them may stop suddenly before they finish writing, and some of them even resort to the colloquial dialect to complete what they were unable to complete in the classical Arabic language. And some of them, when they write a topic in expression, we find that it is not free of grammatical and spelling errors. This weakness may be attributed to several factors, including the dominance of colloquial language in students' daily communication, their weak vocabulary, the lack of focus by some teachers on developing students' linguistic wealth, their lack of

training in proper conversational Arabic, and the lack of regular monitoring of their written work. Furthermore, there is a lack of appropriate teaching methods and strategies.

Several previous studies and literature have pointed to these factors, such as those by Al-Yazidi (2021), Ali (2022), and Salah (2018), which emphasized the importance of addressing these educational problems.

Based on this, the problem of this study crystallized in the need to verify the effectiveness of an educational program based on the contractual learning strategy in developing the writing skills of tenth-grade students in the Arabic language subject in Jordan.

The primary objective of the study was to measure the impact of this program by answering the following question:

Are there statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) between the average performance of students in the experimental group and students in the control group in developing writing skills in the Arabic language subject, attributable to the teaching method (the program based on contract learning versus the traditional method)?

Significance of the Study

First: Theoretical significance, which is represented in the following:

- Enriching the educational literature related to contract learning as an effective teaching strategy that may contribute to the development of writing skills.
- Developing a writing skills measurement tool, along with an educational program based on contract learning, which other researchers may benefit from in future studies.

Second: Practical significance, which is expected to be represented in the following areas:

- The results of this study may contribute to motivating Arabic language teachers to adopt effective educational strategies in teaching students, which enhances the quality of the educational process and raises the level of writing performance among learners.
- Educational supervisors may benefit from this study in developing educational programs similar to the study program for teacher training.

The results of this study may open up horizons for researchers to conduct further studies that address the teaching of the Arabic language through the use of educational programs based on contract learning, and expand their scope to include the content of other academic subjects, while linking them to additional variables that are subject to research and analysis.

Study Limits and Determinants

- Human Limits: Tenth-grade students.
- Spatial Limits: Al-Khader Modern Secondary Schools, affiliated with the Directorate of Education, Marka District, Amman Governorate, Jordan.
- Temporal Limits: The first semester of the 2024/2025 academic year.
- Subject Limits: The educational program adopted in this study included eight lessons selected from the "Arabic is My Language" book for tenth grade, from the first semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. Four lessons were selected from Unit Four (from Autobiography) and four lessons from Unit Five (from Classical Literature).

The assessment of written performance focused on two main areas of writing skills: content and style.

The limitations of this study are represented by the possibility of generalizing its results to the psychometric properties of the study tool used, the extent to which the conditions of validity and reliability are met, in addition to the objectivity of the sample members' responses to its items.

Study Terms and Their Procedural Definitions

Educational program: "A system of internal structures consisting of a set of activities, knowledge, and experiences, presented to a group of learners with the intent of engaging them in a manner that leads to learning, behavior modification, and the acquisition of skills and knowledge consistent with the program's objectives in a comprehensive and integrated manner" (Al-Kazemi, 2018: 13).

Contract learning: A learning strategy that involves "students' participation in decision-making related to their learning. This occurs through negotiations between them and the teacher regarding the forms of content presentation, teaching methods, time

required, available resources, materials used, and assessment methods. Contract learning provides the learner with the opportunity to participate in all learning activities while gradually reducing the teacher's role and increasing the learner's positive participation, making them more active. The teacher serves as a guide, mentor, and facilitator of learning. Furthermore, the learner participates in drafting the terms of the contract so that they are bound by its provisions" (Abdul Basit, 2022: 13). The researchers define the educational program based on contract learning procedurally as: an organized set of educational activities and experiences drawn from selected lessons in the prescribed Arabic language textbook, specifically from Unit Four (Autobiography) and Unit Five (Ancient Literature), directed at tenth-grade students in Jordan during the 2024/2025 academic year. This program was designed based on the stages of the contract learning strategy, which include: (the integration stage, the exploration stage, and the contemplation stage).

Writing skills: are "a set of literary and social activities through which the learner can convey their ideas, feelings, and needs to others in correct language and an attractive style. They are linguistic activities whose essence is information, ideas, opinions, and feelings, and whose outward appearance is written letters and specific marks. They include skills related to content and skills related to style" (Ta'ima, 2010, 113). Writing skills are defined procedurally as a number of skills related to writing, divided into two main fields: the field of content and the field of style. These skills were measured through the score obtained by tenth-grade students on the writing skills test, which was corrected using a correction card prepared specifically for the purposes of this study.

Study Methodology

The current study adopted a quasi-experimental approach with two groups: experimental and control, as it was considered the most appropriate to achieve its objectives.

Study Subjects

The study subjects consisted of (40) tenth-grade students at Al-Khader Modern Secondary School, affiliated with the Special Education Department of the Marka District Education Directorate, Amman, Jordan, during the first semester of the academic year (2024/2025). The school was intentionally selected because it includes more than one tenth-grade class, which facilitated the selection of the experimental and control groups, and due to the cooperation of the teacher and school principal. The two groups were randomly assigned to an experimental group, which studied the cognitive content according to the educational program based on contract learning, and a control group, which studied the same content using the traditional method.

Group Equivalence: Pre-Test of Writing Skills

To verify the equivalence of the control and experimental groups, the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the study subjects' scores on the writing skills test were calculated according to the group variable (experimental, control). To demonstrate statistical differences between the arithmetic means, the t-test was used, as illustrated in Table (1).

Table (1): Arithmetic means, standard deviations, and t-test for the study subjects' scores according to the group variable.

Study in writing skills test

Statistical significance	degrees of freedom	Value "t"	standard deviation	arithmetic mean	number	The group
0.116	38	1.610	6.312	107.200	20	empiricism
			10.465	102.800	20	The officer

Table (1) shows no statistically significant difference at the $\alpha=0.05$ level attributed to the group in the writing skills test. This result indicates the equivalence of the groups.

Study Tool

To achieve the objectives of this study, a research tool was developed, consisting of a writing skills test, in addition to preparing an educational program based on the contract learning strategy. Below, we will review both the tool and the program used in this study.

Writing Skills Test

A test was developed to measure the writing skills of tenth-grade students, based on the results of previous studies. This was done to ensure its alignment with the skills targeted at this academic stage, such as the Al-Khawaldeh Study (2024) and the Al-Wajeeh Study (2024). The test items were divided into two areas: content skills and style skills. The content area included (10) fields distributed across (28) paragraphs, while the style area included (10) fields distributed across (28) paragraphs. A writing skills scoring card was prepared for tenth-grade students following a set of procedures. The scorecard was divided into two areas:

The first area: Content skills. The scorecard included the following criteria: logical ordering of ideas and meanings, writing an introduction, adhering to a paragraph structure, clarity of ideas and their relevance to the topic, ideas supported by evidence, validity and accuracy of information, diversity of ideas within a single topic, expression of personal opinions, feelings, and emotions, adherence to the topic, and writing a conclusion.

The second area: Stylistic skills. The scorecard included the following criteria: selection of appropriate vocabulary, correctness of structures and sentences used, accuracy of linking tools, correctness of grammatical and morphological rules, correct spelling, clarity of handwriting, use of punctuation, page organization, technical expression, and paragraphing.

Validity of the Writing Skills Scoring Card

Its validity was verified using two methods:

1. Content validity: To verify content validity, the researchers presented the writing skills test and scoring criteria card to (12) experienced and specialized arbitrators in the fields of curricula and teaching methods, and the Arabic language, from a number of Jordanian universities, as well as Arabic language teachers and supervisors, and measurement and evaluation specialists. They were asked to provide their opinions on the test and the card, in terms of their linguistic formulation, and to verify the suitability of the basic skills to the objective, and their compatibility with the sub-skills of the card. Their comments were taken into consideration to modify or improve the wording of some items, ensuring the comprehensiveness of the instrument and its suitability for the study's objectives. The name of the card was changed to the "Writing Skills Correction Card" instead of the "Writing Skills Observation Card." Some paragraphs were deleted and reworded, and some paragraphs were added in the field of grammatical and morphological correctness. The final form of the card now consists of (50) paragraphs, divided into two areas: content skills, paragraphs (1-27), and style skills, paragraphs (28-50).

2. Construct Validity: To verify the internal construct validity of both the writing skills test and the correction criteria card, the instrument was administered to a pilot sample of (20) students from within the study community but outside its actual sample. Internal construct validity coefficients were extracted using Pearson's correlation coefficient between the score of each paragraph and the total score for the area to which it belongs, as well as between each area and the total score of the test, with the aim of measuring the consistency of the paragraphs in representing the target area. The correlation coefficients of the items with the instrument as a whole ranged between (0.329 - 0.904) and with the score between (0.529 - 0.914). These are statistically significant correlation coefficients, and no item was omitted from the test.

Reliability of the Writing Skills Scorecard

To verify the reliability of the Writing Performance Standards Card, which consists of (50) items, the researchers calculated internal consistency coefficients using Cronbach's alpha equation. This was done on a survey sample of (20) students from within the study community and from outside the primary sample. The card was applied to this sample to verify the reliability of the instrument as a whole and the consistency of its items in measuring writing skills. The Cronbach's alpha value reached (0.898), which is appropriate for the purposes of the study. Correcting the writing skills test: The total score for the test was calculated out of (150) points, with three points for each paragraph, and the test time was set at (45) minutes.

The Educational Program

The educational program, based on contract learning, included a set of organized and planned classroom meetings based on the contract learning strategy. These meetings were presented to tenth-grade students with the aim of measuring the effectiveness of this program in developing writing skills. The program was implemented during the first semester of the 2024/2025 academic year, with (24) lessons. The program was applied to eight lessons from the book "Arabic is My Language" for the tenth grade, from the first semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. These lessons included four lessons from Unit Four (From Autobiography), and four lessons from Unit Five (From Ancient Literature). When selecting the contents of the educational program, the researchers were keen to ensure that it is appropriate to the educational objectives that the program seeks to achieve, ensuring the integration of its elements and their consistency with the targeted learning outcomes, providing appropriate educational experiences, activities, means, and readings, ensuring modernity and accuracy in the program content and keeping pace with scientific developments, and ensuring that the activities are appropriate to the students' actual needs. The

educational program was prepared in light of a review of the educational and theoretical literature related to the contractual learning strategy, and previous studies such as the study by Amer (2023), the study by Ma'bad et al. (2020), the study by Al-Sarraf and Khayal (2018), and the study by Al-Hatti (2018).

Study Variables and Design

The study included the following variables:

The independent variable: This variable has two levels: the educational program based on contract learning and the traditional method.

The dependent variable: writing skills.

G1	O1	X	O1
G2	O1	-	O1

G1: Experimental group.

G2: Control group.

O1: Pre- and post-test of writing skills.

X: Experimental treatment: educational program based on contract learning.

- Conventional method.

Statistical Processing

After collecting the data, the results of the writing skills test were transcribed and statistical processing was performed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program to answer the main study question. Arithmetic means and standard deviations were used to analyze students' results in the pre- and post-tests. A one-way analysis of variance (ANCOVA) was employed to detect statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups.

Study Results and Discussion

To answer the study question: "Are there statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) between the average performance of students in the experimental group and students in the control group in developing writing skills in the Arabic language subject attributable to the teaching method (the program based on contract learning versus the traditional method)?" Arithmetic means, standard deviations, and the adjusted arithmetic mean were calculated for the writing skills test. To determine whether there were statistically significant differences between the averages of students' scores, a one-way analysis of variance (ANCOVA) was used to control for the effect of pre-test and to identify differences between the experimental group and the control group in the post-test.

Table (2): Arithmetic means and standard deviations for the experimental and control groups, as well as the total score in the post-test.

The group	number	arithmetic mean	standard deviation
empiricism	20	133.00	6.147
The officer	20	114.30	8.897
Total	40	123.65	12.109

The results after the post-application of the educational program showed that the arithmetic mean value of the performance of the students of the experimental group reached (133.00), with a standard deviation of (6.147), while the arithmetic mean of the performance of the students of the control group reached (114.30), with a standard deviation of (8.897). To verify the significance

of these differences statistically, the accompanying one-way analysis of variance (ANCOVA) test was conducted, and the results came out as shown in the following table:

Table (3): Results of the accompanying one-way analysis of variance (ANCOVA) to show the effect of the teaching method (the educational program based on contract learning/the traditional method) on students' performance in the writing skills test between before and after implementation.

Eta square	Level of significance	F Calculated	mean squares	degrees of freedom	sum of squares	Source of contrast
0.613	0.000	29.301	1752.853	2	3505.706	Associated variable
0.516	0.000	39.445	2359.639	1	2359.639	Interaction
0.555	0.000	46.218	2764.833	1	2764.833	The group
0.004	0.703	0.147	8.806	1	8.806	before
			59.821	37	2213.394	error
				40	617292.00	the total
				39	5719.10	Corrected Total

It is clear from the previous table that the teaching method showed statistically significant differences between the control group and the experimental group after applying the educational program based on contract learning, as the value of "F" reached (29.301) for the accompanying variable at a significance level of (0.000), and a value of (0.613) for the effect size, and (39.445) for the interaction between groups at a significance level of (0.000) and an effect size of (0.516), and between groups (46.218) at a significance level of (0.000), and an effect size of (0.555), and all of them are statistically significant at a significance level of (0.05); That is, the experimental teaching method explains (55.50%) of the increase in students' grades in writing skill, while the traditional method was not significant as the significance level value was (0.703) which is greater than (0.05), in addition to the fact that the effect size was weak (0.004); this indicates a noticeable improvement in the grades of students who received instruction using the educational program based on the contract learning strategy, which indicates the effectiveness of this program in developing their writing skills compared to the traditional method.

Table (4): Arithmetic means, standard deviations, and statistical significance of the interaction of the independent and dependent variables after correcting the values using the analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) method.

Statistical significance	Level of significance	standard error	Intermediate teams	standard deviation	arithmetic mean	The group
Dal	0.000	2.68	18.272	1.817	132.786	empiricism
			81.272-	1.817	114.514	The officer

It appears from the previous table that the difference between the means between the individuals of the control group and the individuals of the experimental group reached (18.272) with a standard error of (2.68) which is statistically significant, as the value of the significance level reached (0.000) which is less than (0.05) in favor of the experimental group, and to confirm the difference in the post-test, a univariate analysis of variance test was conducted as shown in the following table:

Table (6): Univariate analysis of variance for the educational program based on contract learning in the post-test

Eta square	Level of significance	F Calculated	mean squares	degrees of freedom	sum of squares
0.555	0.000	46.218	2764.833	1	2764.833
			59.821	37	2213.294

The calculated "F" value reached (46.218) at a significance level of (0.000), which is statistically significant, and the effect size was (0.555), which is a large effect; confirming that teaching according to the educational program based on contract learning explains (55.50%) of the improvement in the scores of the experimental group members on the writing skills test. This result is explained by the fact that the contract learning strategy represents a qualitative shift in placing the student at the center of the educational process, particularly in developing writing skills. The educational program based on contract learning allowed tenth-grade students

to play an active role in defining learning objectives and achievement standards, which enhanced their spirit of initiative and responsibility for their learning. This approach contributed to raising students' awareness of the quality of their written production, which was reflected in the ability of members of the experimental group to organize their ideas and express them in a coherent manner. They also developed their skills in text planning, logically linking sentences, and paying attention to the sequence of events and ideas through activities that encouraged them to write original texts based on their experiences and ideas, using a mind map or a written planner. These practices contributed to enriching their educational experience and enhancing their creative and communicative writing skills. The researchers believe that the educational program based on the contract learning strategy contributed effectively to deepening the critical thinking skills of the students in the experimental group, through the opportunities it provided for students to reflect, analyze, and make educational decisions related to their goals and learning methods, which enhanced their intellectual independence and conscious interaction with writing tasks. The written text was not viewed as a final product, but rather as a dynamic process that requires continuous review and modification. Through the application of the educational program based on the contract learning strategy, the student learned that the writing process goes through sequential stages that begin with planning, followed by the editing stage, then the self-assessment stage, according to specific and clear criteria. This sequence contributed to developing the linguistic and structural analysis skills of the students in the experimental group, it enhanced their ability to identify strengths and weaknesses in their writing.

This approach intersects with the "Text Editing" activities within the "Building My Language" component of the tenth-grade curriculum, as these activities encourage students to review sentence structures, choose words carefully, and control the use of punctuation marks. This makes their written output more precise and fluent. Consequently, the student becomes a critical writer, reflecting on and reconsidering their text, rather than simply conveying ideas or carrying out a linguistic exercise.

This may be due to the fact that the educational program based on contract learning provided a stimulating educational environment that enhanced the self-motivation of students in the experimental group towards writing, as the student felt that he had an active role in choosing topics and suggesting methods that suit his inclinations and abilities. This enabled him to make educational decisions that strengthened his internal motivation, which is a cornerstone in building the writer's personality. In the "Build My Language" activities, especially in the free writing activities, the student was given the opportunity to choose the writing angle that suited him from among the suggested topics. This deepened his relationship with the text and increased his interaction with it. Furthermore, learning by contract gave the student the opportunity to write outside of traditional frameworks, which opened up space for creativity and experimentation, and gave him confidence in his writing abilities. The researchers believe that the educational program based on contract learning contributed to building organizational skills and logical sequencing among the students in the experimental group, by training them to divide the writing tasks into clear stages, and to identify the components of the text, including introduction, body, and conclusion. Adhering to the text's structure and adapting ideas within this structure enhanced the student's ability to express themselves systematically and reduced the randomness that could deprive the text of its rhetorical and cognitive value. This approach is consistent with the functional writing exercises in "Building My Language," which included writing a report or official letter according to specific steps and a logical structure. Guiding the student in the educational contract toward these organizational skills also helped them understand the relationship between form and content, thus producing a text characterized by clarity and persuasion. This improvement in the performance of the students in the experimental group may be attributed to the fact that the educational program based on contract learning provided them with a safe space for written experimentation, away from the fear of making mistakes or being subjected to punitive evaluation. Once the student felt that the educational process was based on partnership, experimentation, and development, he became more psychologically comfortable and more prepared to discover his linguistic and stylistic abilities without the restrictions of traditional molds. This positive environment encouraged the students in the experimental group to engage in diverse experiences in literary expression, such as narrative, emotional, and dialogical writing, which contributed to developing their linguistic wealth and increased their flexibility in expression. This trend is clearly observed in the "I Build My Language" activities, where Students were given the opportunity to write texts in their own style, using various rhetorical images and structures, with the opportunity to review these texts based on the teacher's instructions or feedback from colleagues. These results are consistent with what Hanna (2017) and Abdul Basit (2022) indicated, that learning by contract takes into account individual differences among students, contributes to increasing interaction within the classroom, and stimulates motivation towards learning and achieving educational goals.

This improvement is likely due to the positive psychological impact of the program, as it enhanced the students' sense of true success through their active participation in the educational process, which increased their confidence in themselves and their performance, away from exam surprises, but rather on a path of agreed-upon personal goals and noticeable progress in performance. This sense of accomplishment enhanced the student's self-confidence and motivated him to continue developing himself and his skills, as he became primarily responsible for his development. In the "Building My Language" activities, this philosophy was clearly evident in the final tasks assigned to the student after each unit, which measure the extent of his development across the stages of learning, not based on momentary production only. Consequently, the student felt that his

writing was developing. Consciously and with a well-thought-out plan, this made him more committed and ambitious. This is what Al-Habar (2020) emphasized, as using the contract learning strategy contributes to achieving greater clarity in the goals of the educational process for students, which enhances their self-confidence and develops their ability to bear responsibility, in addition to enhancing their skills in confronting problems, whether they are general and related to learning, or specifically related to personal performance. On the other hand, the researchers believe that for the learner to accomplish educational tasks, it is necessary to provide educational contexts that encourage this, by creating a suitable learning environment that enables him to deal with knowledge and information by analyzing and reconstructing them, and then reach new relationships, and deduce information that was not previously known to him. This is what the educational program based on learning by contract provided, as the program worked on the students of the experimental group acquiring writing skills, and absorbing knowledge related to those skills. This is what Mahmoud (2020) confirmed that learning by contract brings together stakeholders, and each party has a point of view that carries his desires and ambitions, and may be met with rejection or obstacles, then everyone participates together to reach Satisfactory results for both parties, enabling everyone to achieve the best possible learning outcomes for the learner, based on the learning resources available to them. This result can be explained by the fact that the educational program based on contract learning worked to develop their self-review skills by enhancing their awareness of language as a tool for thinking and expression. When the student was asked to review his text according to previously agreed-upon criteria, he practiced detecting grammatical, spelling, and stylistic errors and learned how to modify and improve his linguistic production. This repeated exercise in self-editing provided the student with an advanced linguistic sense, worked to develop his linguistic taste in choosing words and constructing sentences, and comparing the text before and after modification, as is the case in some of the "Building My Language" activities, where the student realized the impact of review on improving the text and communicating the idea effectively.

In light of the study's results, the researchers recommend the following:

- Adopting an educational program based on contract learning in teaching Arabic language courses at the secondary level.
- Holding training courses for Arabic language teachers on employing the contract learning strategy in teaching Arabic language courses.
- Conducting further peer-reviewed scientific studies that address the contract learning strategy using other samples, topics, and variables.

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