



Research Article

Examining Student-Generated Vocabulary Testing Factors Influencing Autonomy among Iranian EFL Learners

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ABSTRACT

The paper investigated the most and the least factors of student-generated vocabulary testing that can influence EFL learners' autonomy. This study applies mixed-method research. For the qualitative phase, the researcher used 30 purposive participants and had a semi-structured interview to find the factors and make a questionnaire. The researcher used MAXQDA to analyze the data. Then the researcher prepared a questionnaire and distributed it among 225 convinced participants, making it reliable and valid. The reliability of this questionnaire was 0.92. For the quantitative phase, the researcher used 320 EFL learners who participated. The study instrument was a research-made questionnaire about the factors of student-generated vocabulary testing that can influence EFL learners' autonomy consisting of two sections. The mean values of the four variables obtained from the participants' viewpoints reveal which factors of the student-generated vocabulary testing have the most and least effect on autonomy among Iranian EFL learners. After analyzing the questionnaire, the researcher used 30 participants (13 males, 17 females) by random sampling for the qualitative phase to ask them about their point of view of SGVT and its effect on their autonomy. For analyzing the data, the researcher again used MAXQDA. The results of this study show that the most influential factor was 'Personal characteristics. 'Teachers' role' was determined to be the second significant factor. 'Positive points of student-generated testing were in the third place, and the least effective one was 'Negative points of student-generated testing.

Introduction

Fostering learners' independence is significant in language teaching, whether in theory or practice. Learning a foreign language is not limited to a

specified time and place but a lifelong progress, so it would not solely begin and stop in the educational milieu. To develop language learning, learners should work in and out of classrooms. The idea of

learner autonomy or learner independence covers areas where learners can control their learning (Moore, 1972). In other words, the activities are done without teachers' immediate interventions. In this situation, learners set their own goals and do them according to the strategies they developed. Studying independently helps them become more efficient and effective. Learners are compelled to take responsibility for their learning; their independence requires involvement, which may cause better learning. Then one can argue that developing learner autonomy may begin in a classroom and continue beyond it.

Additionally, educators who support and encourage learner autonomy behave differently. When they assist learners in taking control of their learning by helping them create goals, organize practice opportunities, or assess their level of success, they operate more like counselors and facilitators. Teachers who want to encourage possibilities for students to become more autonomous may find various ways helpful. The duties of teachers and students must be defined and introduced from the outset. Teachers should give pupils the necessary resources and opportunities for practice in language classrooms. A teacher's duty is to facilitate the transformation, given that teachers are willing to switch from their knowledge-based teaching role to student learning-based monitoring. In light of this, the teacher's role in this process is crucial since "the ability to behave autonomously for students is dependent upon their teacher creating a classroom culture where autonomy is accepted" (Kanotra et al., 2001, p. 3).

McDevitt (1997) claimed that "the end product of language learning is an independent learner in every aspect of the language" (p.42). The ultimate goal of educators and teachers should be to foster a learner's independence or autonomy. Independent study and practice of the language are necessary for learners because classroom instruction alone might not be enough to ensure their success in learning. Despite the efforts made by English teachers, the learners' vocabulary proficiency continues to be low, and the efficacy of teaching English language vocabulary is always in doubt.

Learners of English as a second language will understand the value of encouraging learner autonomy to recognize and use words in various spoken and written situations once they comprehend that learning any foreign language requires learning its terms, spelling, and usage. According to Haddad (2016), learner autonomy is crucial for vocabulary learning since it grants the student a number of benefits, such as self-motivation, which promotes vocabulary learning. Additionally, learner autonomy helps meet the diverse needs of students at all levels and creates opportunities for English communication in a foreign setting. Student's readiness for active language acquisition is also aided by learner autonomy. As a result, the process of learning vocabulary involves the learners' reflection on and judgment of the most effective language learning techniques.

There are primarily two techniques to vocabulary learning: accidental learning and purposeful learning (Schmitt, 2000, 2008; Teng, 2014). For instance, Paribakht & Wesche (1993, 1997) found that purposeful vocabulary learning outperformed incidental vocabulary learning in some experiments. However, due to the short time in the classroom for the deliberate and explicit teaching of each word, many researchers have turned to incidental vocabulary learning. Incidental learning is a "by-product" of any instructional activity learned implicitly (Hulstijn, 2001). The acquisition of words occurs unconsciously as learners attempt to comprehend the inherent meaning in the context (Paribakht & Wesche, 1999). The effects of lengthy reading on incidental vocabulary learning have been the subject of numerous research (Horst, 2005; Teng, 2015; Webb, 2008). The amount of incidental vocabulary growth is modest (Teng, 2014). As a result, additional variables that influence vocabulary learning have been proposed, such as topic familiarity, learning time, learning intensity, and techniques (Nation, 2008; Pulido, 2004). The greatest method for experienced EFL learners to increase their lexical knowledge is incidental learning through prolonged reading and listening. However, some degree of explicit learning is also

advised to increase its efficiency in using the new vocabulary items. One such method is making a database of the vocabulary words being studied and utilizing it to practice, review, and test them. The current study aims to promote autonomy among Iranian EFL learners by investigating a model of student-generated vocabulary assessment.

Regarding student-generated vocabulary testing, not sufficient research has been conducted. Moreover, some researchers have examined the types and techniques of testing and not factors in this regard. Many studies have been carried out regarding autonomy in learning a language, and there is no research on SGVT and the extent to which its factors are influential (Mulyah, Aminatun, Nasution, Hastomo & Sitepu, 2020; Aminatun & Oktaviani, 2019; Godwin-Jones, 2019; Borg, Alshumaimeri, 2019; Rosell-Aguilar, 2018).

With this in mind, the present study attempted to find the most and the least influential student-generated vocabulary testing factors to foster autonomy among Iranian EFL learners.

Review of Literature

In theory or reality, encouraging learners' independence is important in teaching languages. Learning a foreign language is a lifelong process that does not only start and end in the educational environment. It is not restricted to a certain place or period. Learners should work within and outside the classroom to develop their language learning. The concepts of learner autonomy and learner independence cover learners' ability to direct their education. In other words, it indicates that the activities are carried out without immediate teacher involvement. In this scenario, students define their objectives and carry them out in accordance with the tactics they created. Independent study makes them more successful and efficient.

According to Holec (1979), who defined learner autonomy as the capacity to take control of one's learning, this control includes the capacity to choose learning management and organization, which includes choosing learning objectives, deciding on learning content and progress, selecting the best learning strategies, and evaluating the knowledge attained. In this sense, language

acquisition is the capacity to develop one's capacity to learn rather than one's capacity to learn. However, Holec's definition does not explicitly state the necessity for methodological and psychological preparation for autonomous learners. In other words, students must practice the material and methods they are learning. Benson (2007) highlighted that according to this definition, "Moreover, Little (1991) suggested that autonomy in learning implies that students can have flexibility in their education, but that other considerations constrain this freedom since "as social beings, our independence is always balanced by reliance ".

Learner autonomy, as described by Benson and Voller (1997), is "the recognition of learners' rights within educational systems "(p. 71). Additionally, they claimed that LA might be viewed as a "redistribution of power among participants in the social process of education." Therefore, promoting LA in a political context can be achieved through several teaching methodologies in which learners have more chances and opportunities to have the right to make a decision. Benson's work emphasizes identifying learner's political rights in autonomous learning. Regarding the definition of LA, Holec (1979) underlined the technical ability of learners, while little (1991) emphasized the psychological knowledge of learners. Yet Benson (2001) suggested that a learner's political right to learn is a critical element of LA, and based on what Smith (2008) said, autonomy will be triggered when learners "have the power and right to learn for themselves."

The encouragement of learner autonomy is greatly helped by teachers. Morrison (2011) further emphasized the value of peer and teacher assistance in language learning. LA must, in this regard, "not be a solitary experience but rather one in which the learner, in conjunction with relevant others, can make the decision necessary to meet the learners' need"(p.62). Therefore, independent learners should be in charge of their needs analyses, keep an eye on the teaching process, and assess the results. However, Morrison et al. (2011) argued that this was impossible to accomplish without the help of a teacher or a group of peers. Nunan (2003) said, "Teachers committed to

learner-centeredness and autonomy must help their learners develop this knowledge and skills "(p.18).

A further definition of LA is provided by Nguyen (2014): "Learners' willingness and ability to take responsibility, to plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate their learning with tasks constructed in negotiation with and support from the teachers." As a result, relationships and communication between students and teachers are crucial. Additionally, students must demonstrate a desire to participate in and engage in learning. In other words, kids should be engaged and assured in their academic endeavors. Dam argued that independent learners must be "active participants in the social process of classroom learning" in this regard. A person who actively interprets incoming information in light of what they already and specifically know. Additionally, learners need to take control of their learning and have the capacity to learn effectively after being motivated and prepared to learn. In conclusion, a teacher's connection and support of students are essential in fostering learner autonomy.

There are many reasons why LA should be fostered in language classrooms. First, as Jiao et al. (2023) argued, LA enhances motivation leading to more effective learning. It happens because learners can make decisions in classrooms as opposed to traditional classrooms, where teachers are the power source. In this manner, learners feel to be independent. Second, autonomous learners have more opportunities to use the target language, especially in nonnative environments. Van Esch (2003) supported this viewpoint and contended that the Internet and other multimedia resources provide students with several opportunities. It aids "learners in equipping themselves with tools and strategies to empower them to take advantage of the opportunities offered by their extended classroom." As a result, encouraging autonomy helps students' language abilities and allows them to develop and take advantage of all communication and meaning transmission opportunities. Thirdly, according to Jiao et al. (2023), LA "caters to the individual needs of learners at all levels." Therefore, learning will not only occur outside of the classroom when students

are autonomous; instead, every opportunity will present itself as an opportunity to learn a new language. The quote reads, "Some degree of autonomy is essential to successful language learning" (Scharle & Szabó, 2000). Also, the time learners spend in the classroom could vary; however, for having actual learning, 'practice' is necessary. Therefore, it can be achieved by helping learners become autonomous. When learners become autonomous, they will obtain a skill that lasts for a long time and turns into the habit of independent thinking.

Student-generated testing is an alternative way to assess learners' abilities and engage learners in test construction. Encouraging learners to review the content of a course is one of the essential goals of testing and is indeed the aim of student-generated testing. Student-generated tests usually push learners to review the content without knowing that they are reviewing it (Brown, 2004). Moreover, this technique is beneficial because teachers understand what learners regard as fair and essential questions and how well learners model answers to the questions they generate themselves (Angelo & Cross, 1993). Engaging students in the process of the assessment of their knowledge and decision-making would help to understand the expected learning standards better. Learners who know thoroughly what they are expected to learn and how they are assessed are more likely to have growth in learning. Student-generated testing is a formative assessment focusing on learners' knowledge and improvement during a study.

As an investigation regarding students' involvement in generating vocabulary tests to foster learners' autonomy, this study explores how student-generated vocabulary testing can influence EFL learners' autonomy. In other words, the most and the least influential student-generated vocabulary testing (SGVT) factors to foster autonomy among Iranian EFL learners are examined. Regarding the significance and benefits of student-generated tests, Crawford et al. (2020) maintain that it is helpful to detect trends and problems in learners' thoughts about a text. Additionally, students enjoy having their writing

and ideas dictate how their lectures or exams are conducted. Making them feel more engaged and their thoughts more respected gives them the impression that they are contributing to the creation of the class.

Moreover, this would be especially significant since the quietest learners may write the best, most insightful questions. In addition, as future teachers, students will learn about developing valid questions, which will help them master testing. The study by Ghasemi, Afraz, and Samimi (In Press) showed a relationship between the SGVT and the learners' autonomy. When students can improve their SGVT, they can improve their autonomy and vice versa. Thus, the present research is designed to find out answers of the following research questions:

- What are the influential student-generated vocabulary testing factors to foster autonomy among Iranian EFL learners?
- What are the most and the least influential student-generated vocabulary testing factors to foster autonomy among Iranian EFL learners?

Method

This study used a mixed method to explore the factors, on the one hand, and the most and least influential student-generated vocabulary testing factors to foster autonomy among Iranian EFL learners on the other hand.

Participants

The participants for the first phase consisted of 30 EFL learners (15 males and 15 females) studying or finishing teaching English at Qeshm Azad University in Hormozgan province, Shiraz Azad University in Fars province, and Bushehr Azad University in Bushehr province since 2020. They were studying or finished a Ph.D. program and thus considered to be at an advanced level. All of them had been learning English for at least ten years. The age range of the participants was 29 to 46. They had all experienced teaching to different age ranges, including children, teenagers, and adults, and also in different educational places such as language institutes, schools, and universities. The sampling method is considered purposive

sampling. Therefore, 30 participants were selected because no new theme would likely to be obtained from more participants due to data saturation.

To check the questionnaire, the researchers used 225 EFL learners studying or finishing the Ph.D. program in TEFL at Qeshm Azad University, Shiraz Azad University, and Bushehr Azad University. The researcher chose them via convenience sampling. This sample comprised 162 males and 63 females, ranging from 29 to 46.

Since the sample in this phase should be large, the convenience sampling method was used for the quantitative phase. The participants involved 320 EFL learners studying or finishing their Ph.D. in TEFL at Qeshm Azad University in Hormozgan province, Shiraz Azad University in Fars province, and Bushehr Azad University in Bushehr province. One hundred seventy females and one hundred fifty males ranged from 29 to 45 ($M=37$). Based on their proficiency test, 158 participants were at the high intermediate level, and 162 were at the advanced level.

For the last qualitative phase, the researcher used simple random sampling of the participants involved in the quantitative phase. According to data saturation, the participants involved 30 EFL learners. Seventeen females and thirteen males ranged from 29 to 45 ($M=37$). Based on their proficiency test, 16 participants were at the high intermediate level, and 14 were at the advanced level.

Instrument

Concerning the study's mixed nature, semi-structured interviews covering autonomy and student-generated testing issues based on the studies that have been done before, and they could find some of the factors were designed and conducted with the participants in a comfortable environment. The interview included some open-ended questions related to the objectives of the interview.

After analyzing and coding the scripts of the interviews, four main themes were identified with 23 sub-categories. These sub-categories contained 23 questions in the first draft of the questionnaire. After reviewing and scrutinizing the questionnaire

and consulting some colleagues and the participants in the first phase of the research, eight questionnaire items were removed because some items overlapped or were irrelevant. The final version of the questionnaire consisted of 15 qualified items. The main extracted themes consisted of 1- Personality characteristics (4 items), 2- Positive points of student-generated vocabulary testing (4 items), 3- Negative points of student-generated vocabulary testing (3 items), and 4-

Teacher's role (4 items). It was a five-point Likert scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree, with the neutral point being neither disagree nor agree. The second section includes information about participants' age and gender. In order to understand the questions thoroughly, the items were provided in their mother tongue (Persian). The reliability of the questionnaire was estimated by SPSS 26, and it was .92.

Table 1.

Item-total statistics for total factors

Items	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Personal Characteristics	4	.941
Positive points of student-generated vocabulary testing	4	.837
Negative points of student-generated vocabulary testing	3	.970
Teacher's role	4	.951
Cronbach's alpha	15	.924

In the main part of the study, the instrument was a self-constructed questionnaire based on the qualitative phase findings.

The researcher used a researcher-made questionnaire about the factors of SGVT that can affect learners' autonomy among Iranian EFL learners. It consisted of two sections. The first section included the participants' demographic information, like gender, age, education, etc. The second part asked questions regarding the factors that influence student-generated testing.

For the last qualitative phase, the researcher used the semi-structured interview to understand the point of view of the participants who answered the questionnaire about the factors of SGVT that can affect the learners' autonomy. The interview included some open-ended questions related to the objectives of the interview and based on the questionnaire.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

Online interviews were conducted via Skype lasting about 30 to 60 minutes. After transcribing the recorded interviews, they were transferred to the software MAXQDA (Kuckartz, 2007). The next step was to code and modify the data. Then, the researcher compared them to each other,

reducing the list to 23 categories with four themes. For piloting the questionnaire, each questionnaire took about 20 minutes to complete. After the data was gathered and coded into SPSS 26, this process included measuring the internal consistency of the items, reliability, and construct-related validity of the instruments measured through Cronbach's alpha and SPSS to determine whether these instruments measure the constructs they claim they are measuring.

In the quantitative phase, the questionnaires were distributed among 320 participants. They had experience of using SGVT in their classes for eleven sessions. The gathered data were coded into SPSS 26, and then analyzed and interpreted. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to find the most and the least influential student-generated vocabulary testing factors to foster autonomy among learners.

After preparing the final version of the interview guide for the last qualitative phase, the interview sessions were conducted through the Skype application. The interviews were conducted in the participant's mother tongue (Persian). After conducting the interviews, the recorded interviews were transcribed. For analyzing these data, the researcher used the

codes according to the questionnaire and used these codes in MAXQDA, and estimated the frequency of these codes in these transcribed files to ensure the quantitative part results were confirmed.

Results and Discussion

Personal characteristic is a factor that reflects an individual's patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. It has four subcategories: anxiety, interest, peers' affect, and motivation. Based on what personality they have, students react differently at exams.

After conducting interviews with the participants and coding them, they mentioned some positive points. In other words, they spoke of some factors towards which they had positive feelings. Moreover, after coding the data, this theme was further subcategorized into four factors: reducing anxiety, better learning, creating new content, and being updated.

Some interview participants aired negative points of view on the student-generated vocabulary testing. After conducting the interviews and coding procedures, three factors reflected this test's negative aspects: inability to produce content, inability to use a computer, and lack of responsibility.

One important theme from the interviews is the *teachers' role* in student-generated testing. Teachers play a significant role in a second or foreign language. Their teaching methodologies, strategies, characteristics, and behaviors demonstrate their effectiveness in class, and teachers act as observers and guides in the language learning and teaching milieu. They guide both the class topic in the students in the learning process. This theme has four subcategories: motivation, feedback, facilitator, and fostering creativity.

According to the interview results, the researcher prepared a questionnaire and made it pilot to ensure its factor structure. The following are the results of the quantitative section and piloting the questionnaire.

For construct validity and based on the results, the KMO measure and Bartlett's Test

significance for the instrument of this study are acceptable. KMO was 0.772, which is greater than 0.6; the significance of the was 0.7702, which is greater than 0.6 and Bartlett's Test significance was less than 0.5 (Sig = .000). Therefore, the results agree upon the suitability of the data in the questionnaire. Moreover, the correlation is statistically significant and supports the matrix's factorability. The Total Variance Explained where items loading results reflect the correlation of all items (both positively and negatively worded items) and confirm significant correlation among factors. The results generally reflect a sort of certainty among elicited responses that represents a common perception among the respondents concerning the student-generated testing questionnaire that displays a descending loading trajectory moving from the high end (6.810) to the low end (.047).

Table 2.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.781	51.872	51.872
2	1.507	10.047	61.919
3	1.228	8.189	70.108
4	1.119	7.458	77.566
5	.734	4.893	82.459
6	.566	3.772	86.231
7	.435	2.898	89.130
8	.375	2.503	91.633
9	.333	2.223	93.856
10	.272	1.813	95.669
11	.250	1.668	97.337
12	.131	.873	98.210
13	.117	.777	98.987
14	.089	.595	99.582
15	.063	.418	100.000

Horn's parallel analysis (Horn, 1998) is another method that helps keep track of the number of factors. This study employed a Monte Carlo tool to "compare the size of the eigenvalues with those obtained from a randomly generated data set of the sample size" (Pallant, 2016). The eigenvalues higher than those found in the randomly generated data set are kept. Below is a presentation of the Monte Carlo program's results.

Table 3.

Actual eigenvalues and their corresponding values from parallel analysis

Component number	Eigenvalue from PCA	Criterion value from parallel analysis	Decision
1	7.781	1.4668	Accept
2	1.507	1.3584	Accept

As evident, the results agreed with the findings in the first move regarding retaining **two** factors because, based on Table 3, the actual eigenvalues of these four factors were greater than the criterion value from the parallel analysis.

The third move in factor analysis is factor rotation and interpretation, where the loading patterns are presented. In other words, it reveals which items have high loadings on which factors. The results of the factor rotation and its loadings are presented in Table 4 as follows.

Table 4.

Rotated component matrix

	Component	
	1	2
Q1	.795	.128
Q2	.817	.184
Q3	.736	-.105
Q4	.808	.032
Q5	.624	.235
Q6	.509	.529

Table 5.

Descriptive Statistics of the Study

Variables	N	min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Significance level	Mean differences
Personal Characteristics	320	1	5	4.7742	0.89853	0.000	1.431
Positive points of SGVT	320	1	5	4.6383	0.96100	0.000	1.623
Negative points of SGVT	320	1	5	2.5938	0.99280	0.000	0.897
Teacher's role	320	1	5	3.6828	1.00471	0.000	1.512

According to the 320 participants who answered the questionnaire and determined their viewpoints, the mean value of these variables shows which factors have the most and which have the least impact on SGVT. Table 5 illustrates that the most influential factor is the 'personal characteristics' with a mean value of 4.77. In other words, the personal characteristic of the learners is the most effective among all. They believe that an

	Component	
	1	2
Q7	.802	.058
Q8	.805	-.050
Q9	.666	-.472
Q10	.665	-.340
Q11	.703	-.516
Q12	.801	.016
Q13	.732	-.040
Q14	.385	.704
Q15	.801	.033

According to Table 4, all items had significant loadings only on one factor. Therefore, it approves that the research questionnaire and its scales and items accurately measured what they aimed to measure. The findings of this research phase support the validity and reliability of the instrument of the study.

The descriptive statistics of all the measure variables are demonstrated in Table 5 as follows:

individual's characteristics, patterns of thoughts, and behaviors can affect the SGVT more effectively. This factor comprised four subcategories: 'Anxiety,' 'Interest,' 'Peer effect' and 'Motivation.' Regarding the anxiety subcategory, most learners opined that such testing could decrease their anxiety when they do the task in class. Moreover, they were more familiar with the

texts appropriate for their knowledge level when they had an exam.

We are somehow bored with the repeated teaching method, and before the teachers say what to do, we know it. We want something new. I am interested in new ways of learning vocabulary and am eager to be in a different situation in learning other than the repetitive ones.

Other classmates' opinions about how I generate the test dose not influence me that much on my performance. Because this is a new way and I try to focus hard on it, classmates' idea is not of great importance to me. The fact is that I only emphasize my teacher's opinion of my work.

The second most effective variable rank (see Table 5) is 'Positive points of SGVT' with a mean value of 4.63. After conducting interviews with the participants and coding them, they mentioned some positive points. In other words, they spoke of some factors towards which they had positive feelings. They said that they could generate new content and keep themselves updated. In addition, they could have better learning and less anxiety.

Sometimes we don't understand the content or subject 100 %. But I think in this kind of testing, I must study and learn the content in bits and pieces; first, I will have a good understanding of it and understand it in-depth, and then make a test out of it.

Well, I try to pick some materials with new and different subjects. As English learners, we should read other texts with various genres. As I remember, we have always read some content with nearly the same issues. We need to diversify into different subjects, no matter their low audience, because we may encounter an actual situation necessitating that content.

I think it's better to consider some less addressed subjects like particular branches of science, some topics we have no or less information about, and learn the related vocabularies.

The Teacher's role factor ranks third with a mean value of 3.68. In student-generated testing learners, teachers play a vital role. Their teaching methodologies, behaviors, and guidance

demonstrate their effectiveness in the goals of teaching as well as their influence on the learners' achievements and attitudes. Moreover, they direct students concerning both the topic and the learning process.

When I feel that the teacher verbally or non-verbally stimulates us to accomplish testing and correct our mistakes in the testing process, it drives me to do a task that I like.

Well, I get energy when my teacher, as my opinion is a source of knowledge, motivates me to do the test more confidently and with interest.

Negative points of SGVT are placed in the lowest rank among the variables, with a mean value of 2.593. However, some participants stated negative points of view on the student-generated vocabulary testing. Because learners have always undergone testing and are not experienced in designing and making tests, they think that they may not be sure if the test they generate is valid. Furthermore, they believe they are not sufficiently trained as test makers but as test takers.

Honestly, I had just passed some courses in testing at university, and it doesn't mean I know how to generate a test. At that time, we studied the testing book, which was more theoretical than practical.

I do not see myself as qualified to use computer knowledge in testing. I do not have enough skills to use new computer programs and software. I only use my system in routine matters and know the computer basics. And I think mastering these skills needs going to different classes. So, I cannot use the new software to make such tests.

According to the frequency results of the MAXQDA, the results of the quantitative phase are accurate, and both of the results are on the same side. Personal characteristics can be most frequent among the other codes (f=28). In the next level, Positive points of SGVT can stand by 23 frequencies. The next was the Teacher's role by 16 frequencies; the last code was Negative points of SGVT by nine.

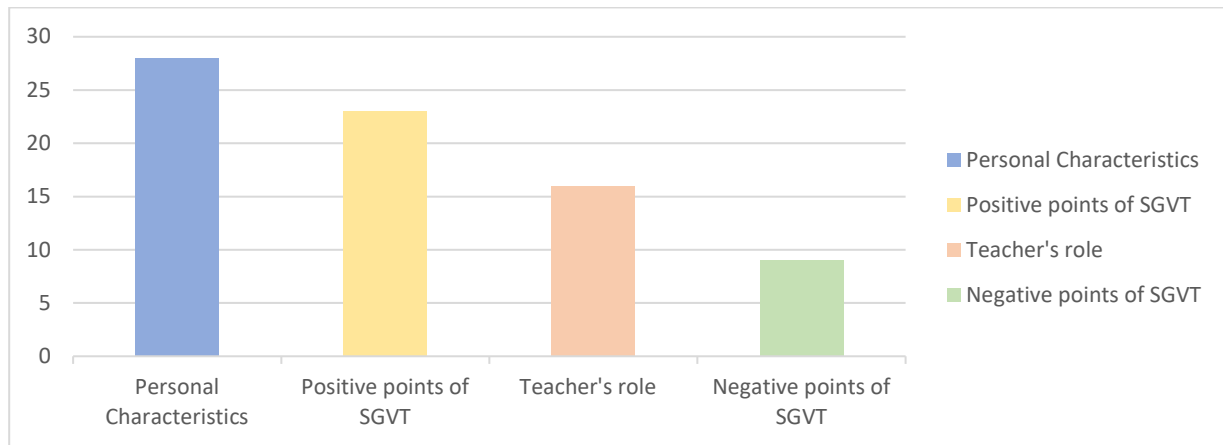


Figure 1. Frequency of the questionnaire codes in the interview

According to Woldeab and Brothen (2019), anxiety is a factor in students not getting good marks and teachers not evaluating the true scores during the exam. In this case, teachers should prepare a suitable and comfortable situation so that the students can pass the exam with true scores.

Furthermore, Blakey and Abramowitz (2016) stated that when students manage to decrease their anxiety in each session, whether it's a test or another situation, they can do their best. Shohmay (2020) suggested that when the text is interesting for students, and they connect with it, they can learn it better than other texts determined only by teachers. According to the participants' opinions regarding "peer effect", students try to be suitable mainly from the teacher's point of view and show off in class. Therefore, their classmate's opinions are not of importance to them. Deslauriers et al. (2020) believe that when students try to show off in style, they try to do their best and make no mistakes while teaching and preparing the materials needed for teaching. When students are free to choose a text for the class, they consider themselves a teacher who understands the student's needs and interests and try to be good teacher, promoting motivation. Lin and Chen (2017) pointed out that motivation causes students to decrease their nervousness and try to learn better.

Positive points of SGVT were in second place in this study ($M=4.63$). It has four subcategories: 'Reducing anxiety,' 'Better learning,' 'Producing new content,' and 'Being updated.' Most students had a positive point of view toward this test. They said

that because we had many practices on the texts and the texts were in good knowledge, we could learn better, and our anxiety decreased. Moreover, they stated that when they have less anxiety in class or test situations, they would get good marks and do the best-in-class activities leading to learning better. Students believe that when they want to choose the texts, they should have many searches and read a myriad of texts regarding the subject; therefore, it makes them updated, and they have a voice in class. After being updated, the students can make new texts, present them in the class, and test that topic well. Kusmaryono, Gufon, and Rusdiantoro (2020) claimed that their anxiety is reduced when students have some knowledge of the issue. Then, they can enhance their learning as well as their scores. As a result, they would get good scores, be motivated, and do their best in the following exams.

'Teachers' role' as the third most influential factor ($M=3.68$) includes four subcategories of 'Motivation,' 'Feedback,' 'Facilitator,' and 'Fostering creativity.' In accordance with the findings of this part, teachers act as observers and guide students in the language learning and teaching milieu. According to the results of this section of the study, teachers can facilitate learners' motivation to help learners develop their autonomy and competence. Moreover, learners accept and welcome feedback and are advised to create students' autonomous learning by providing them with opportunities to self-repair. Also, as a facilitator, teachers can help learners reach their goals without intervention. Elkington (2022)

asserted that teacher feedback is essential for students and can have positive or negative wash back on them. Hence, one of the critical roles of teachers is to give positive feedback to the students. By receiving positive washback, students can be motivated and try to get better scores for the subsequent evaluation. It can also help students to increase their self-esteem. In other words, they would be proud of themselves, try to be good in all situations, and tell their teachers and classmates that they are perfect.

Furthermore, Baker and Riches (2018) claimed that teachers could be a facilitator for students. They help students find their abilities and try to find a way to help them learn better, leading to good scores. That is to say, teachers facilitate the task of doing student-generated testing wherever students have questions. Glăveanu (2018) also argued that teachers have a vital role in helping students know themselves better and know their abilities and their talents. When students feel that there is a source of knowledge to whom they can refer whenever they have any problem, they know themselves better and find new ways to help them enhance their learning and become good creators.

The last factor was negative points of student-generated vocabulary testing ($M=2.59$), and it can reach fourth place. This factor has three subcategories: 'Inability to produce content,' 'Inability to use a computer,' and 'Lack of responsibility.' Some students thought they did not have the ability and knowledge to prepare appropriate content, present it to the class, and prepare for a good exam. They felt that if they did wrong, their classmates would laugh at them. They had low self-esteem, and they did not know their abilities and talents. Hence, at the end of the study, this group of students tried to enhance their knowledge and self-esteem to overcome this problem. Johnson (2017) pointed out that individuals with self-esteem always try to find the best and proper way. He asserted that people try to find themselves, and others' opinions are not of great importance to them if they believe. Some other students mentioned that they did not have enough skills to use a computer and had searched to find a good text and present it to the class. That

is to say, they did not know how to use a computer to prepare for the activities and tests. Therefore, at the end of the study, this group tried to learn using a computer and be updated. They believe they cannot be updated about everything in their life if they do not know how to use a computer. Accordingly, SO (2016) claimed that when students do not have enough knowledge about new technologies, they might have nervousness and anxiety and therefore get a low score.

Based on what researchers stated, individuals should be updated in all situations. Lack of responsibility was the last subcategory of negative points of student-generated vocabulary testing. Some students said they lost motivation when they did not know enough to find or prepare appropriate texts, activities, or tests for the class. As a result, they were not responsible for preparing a good one. Some of them also mentioned that when they could not use a computer, they were demotivated, and, in some sessions, they were absent or did not participate in class. Suryawati and Osman (2017) declared that students are sometimes demotivated and consequently lose their responsibility. Here the role of the teacher is to guide the students whenever they need help. Therefore, teachers should try to help them to be motivated again and participate in class activities.

Conclusions and Implications

Regarding the effect of Student-Generated Vocabulary on the learning autonomy of Iranian English language learners, four main factors, each representing some sub-categories, contribute to this aspect of language learning. These factors were extracted from a sample of EFL learners who had interviews. Overall, the Student-Generated Vocabulary factors impacting the learning of these participants were identified as follows: first was Personal characteristics, second was Positive points of student-generated vocabulary testing, third was Negative points of student-generated vocabulary testing, and fourth was the Teacher's role. The results were in many ways similar to Stoodley (2017), who found that people can determine what they want to learn, how to learn it, how to evaluate what they have learned, and how to put what they

have learned into practice. As a result, it was found that “Personal Characteristics” was the most influential factor in SGVT. Based on previous research, students would participate in different activities if they had sufficient motivation. When students get motivated, they try their best, prepare a good atmosphere for themselves in class, and make it enjoyable (Rahman, 2020; Johnson, 2017; Kalelioğlu, 2015).

The next factor was the positive points of student-generated vocabulary testing. Students believed that this new way of testing could decrease their anxiety and nervousness. They could be active participants in the classroom. Researchers claimed that when students can overcome stress and nervousness, their scores are near true and accurate. The test can measure their ability and knowledge in a good situation (Turner and McCarthy, 2017). The next factor was the teacher’s role. This study indicated that teachers have an essential part in teaching. They can help students increase their motivation and also decrease their anxiety. Teachers can give positive feedback to the students and help them find and believe in their abilities (Aldrup et al., 2018). The last factor was the negative points of student-generated vocabulary testing. Suppose students do not have enough knowledge and skill in using a computer, finding a text, and preparing activities and tests. In that case, they become demotivated and, as a result, lose their responsibility. Roorda et al. (2017) pointed out that teachers can help students by showing them new ways to improve their knowledge and skills.

This study presents some guidelines based on the findings. This study can help other researchers from other countries to have a study about this new issue. Testing is a vast area for research, out of which many researchers endeavor to find new and helpful points and relate them to learning. Accordingly, teachers in some countries, but in Iran, welcome new ways of testing, which lead to better learning. This new way of testing involving students could benefit not only the educational system, including universities, schools, and language institutes but also the students and their parents since the scores prove how much they could learn. For future studies, researchers can

conduct longitudinal case studies to investigate changes in learners’ understanding of behavior. Other studies can be undertaken to explore SGVT among school students. Different kinds of testing other than vocabulary can be applied to autonomy improvement.

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