

**A Program Based on Self-Regulated Strategy Development Approach
for Developing the Teaching and Writing
Performance of EFL Student Teachers**

A research
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Abstract:

Developing English as a foreign language (EFL) prospective teachers' teaching skills is essential for qualifying them for their future careers. A training program based on Self-Regulated Strategy Development approach was designed for developing EFL student teachers' teaching and writing performance. The program comprised mainly two sections, theoretical and practical. Two main writing genres were considered, Persuasive essay and story writing. A pre-post observation checklist and a writing test were administered to twenty one second-year EFL student teachers at Women's College -Ain Shams University. Results of the study indicated that the proposed program is effective in developing the study participants' teaching and writing performance. The study results supported the study hypotheses. Recommendations and suggestions for further research were presented.

ملخص:

يعد تنمية المهارات التدريسية لدى الطالبات المعلمات مطلباً ضرورياً لتأهيلهم للعمل بمهنة التدريس، لذلك هدفت الدراسة إلى تصميم برنامج تدريبي قائم على مدخل نمو الاستراتيجيات المنظم ذاتياً لتنمية مهارات التدريس والأداء الكتابي لدى الطالبات معلمات اللغة الإنجليزية. واشتمل البرنامج على قسمين رئيسيين: القسم النظري والقسم التطبيقي، وتناولت الدراسة نوعين فقط من الكتابة: كتابة القصة والكتابة الإقناعية. أجريت الدراسة على إحدى وعشرين طالبة معلمة بالفرقة الثانية قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية البنات، جامعة عين شمس، طبقت عليهن الأدوات الآتية: بطاقة ملاحظة للأداء التدريسي، واختبار الأداء الكتابي. أسفرت نتائج الدراسة عن وجود فعالية للبرنامج المقترح في تنمية الأداء التدريسي والكتابي لدى المشاركات في الدراسة. تم مناقشة النتائج في ضوء الاطار النظري والدراسات السابقة وفروض الدراسة، وانتهت الدراسة بمجموعة من التوصيات والمقترحات البحثية.

Introduction

English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers have a basic role in building EFL learners' language proficiency. Since most of these learners do not have first-hand experience with the foreign language, teachers are the responsible vessels for not just transforming but also formulating students' both macro and micro language skills. It is important, therefore, to train and prepare those teachers to be able to fulfill their mission competently. Developing prospective EFL teachers' teaching skills and capabilities is a one important step for preparing those teachers to be ready for their future careers.

One of the essential skills that EFL student teachers need to be competent at is writing. The importance of writing not only in the field of education but to survive in today's society makes the ability to write and teach writing indispensable for a language teacher. Writing involves the discovery of the very best language to express one's thoughts, ideas, and information. It entails an interaction between the writer, the text, and the reader and in doing so, it includes a purpose and an audience (North

Carolina State Dept. of Public Instruction, 1998). The act of composing, hence, requires thinking-about suitable words for the writer's message, audience, purpose- so that the writer would be able to communicate the intended meaning and at the same time achieves the intended purpose.

Writing is a demanding skill for native and nonnative language learners. Saddler (2006, 291) demonstrates why writing poses challenges for many students. While composing, a writer must manage complex problem-solving writing processes that include planning, considering the audience's needs and perspectives, generating organized content, and revising for form and ideas.

Admittedly, if writing is a challenging work, teaching others how to do it is likely even more so (Rossi, 2014, 23). As our understanding of writing has become more comprehensive and more complex, the challenge for teachers of second language writing has also increased. Their pedagogy has to focus on many more aspects of writing than sentence-level grammatical accuracy Kiely (2013). Hence it is evident that writing teachers are faced by a task requiring a great effort and perseverance.

Much research have proved and called for the necessity that in order to teach writing effectively, teachers must themselves be writers first. They must experience and go through the different stages of the writing process to be able to teach this process to their students (Bowie1996, 3). But this seems to be insufficient as Martin & Dismuke (2013, 106) recommend that future teachers should *write* with their students. They should model for their students how to create a product in an intended genre.

To be successful, writing teachers should be knowledgeable about what research says about effective writing instruction and this knowledge should be reflected in their writing classes. Asserting this point, The Writing Study Group of the NCTE Executive Committee (2008) recommended that teachers of writing should be well-versed in composition theory and research, and they should know methods for turning that theory into practice.

Moreover, qualified teachers need to be cognizant of their role in the writing class. Rickards & Hawes (2004) state that teaching students to write is a complex process that requires teachers to play five important roles: model, coach, assessor, planner, and consultant.

Therefore, Prospective EFL teachers are in need for effective preparation in order to be qualified as good writing teachers. The crucial role of teacher educators is therefore emphasized. Graham (2008,1) states that writing teacher preparation is extremely important as research revealed that those who were better prepared, were more likely to use writing practices with a proven record of success and to make needed instructional adjustments for students.

Hence, it is crucial to rely on research-validated approaches to writing instruction for preparing EFL student teachers for their future careers. One of these approaches is Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD). SRSD is an instructional approach that combines explicit instruction in self-regulation procedures with strategy instruction (Harris, Graham, & Mason, 2003). Pioneered by Karen Harris and Steve Graham, SRSD for writing integrates three areas: (a) six stages of explicit writing instruction across a variety of genres; (b) explicit instruction in self-regulation strategies; and (c) development of positive student attitudes and self-efficacy about writing (Regan & Mastropieri, 2009)

Six flexible, recursive stages of instruction (Develop and Activate Background Knowledge, Discuss It, Model It, Memorize It, Support It, and Independent Performance) provide the framework for strategies instruction in the SRSD model. Throughout the six stages, teachers and students collaborate on the acquisition, implementation, evaluation, and modification of writing and self-regulation strategies (Zito, Adkins & Gavins, 2007, 82). The goal of such instruction is to make the use of strategies automatic, routine, and flexible (Harris, Graham, Mason, & Saddler 2002, 110).

The heart of SRSD is establishing that every child can write, and validating powerful strategies for planning, writing, revising, editing, and managing the writing process. In tandem with composition strategies, children develop self-regulation strategies and abilities crucial to orchestrating the writing process-including goal setting, self-instructions, self-monitoring and self-assessment, and self-reinforcement (Harris, Schmidt, & Graham, 1998).

Becoming an adept writer involves more than knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, it depends on high levels of personal regulation because writing activities are usually self-planned, self-initiated, and self-sustained (Zimmerman & Risemberg, 1997). Self-regulation of writing refers to self-initiated thoughts, feelings, and actions that writers use to attain various literary goals, including improving their writing skills as well as enhancing the quality of the text they create (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1997).

Numerous studies have been conducted to test the effectiveness of SRSD. According to a meta-analysis by Graham, Harris and McKeown (2013), SRSD appears to be a very versatile tool as research indicates that it is effective with young and old students; normally achieving students and students with learning disorders; individually, in groups, or with whole classes; and across several writing genres. Most importantly, initial research indicates that classroom teachers who receive professional development are able to apply SRSD effectively. Studies utilizing SRSD revealed that this model of instruction resulted in improvements in five

main areas of students' performance: genre elements included in writing, quality of writing, knowledge of writing, approach to writing, and self-efficacy (Harris, Graham, Brindle and Sandmel, 2009, 145).

Among these is the study of Hoover (2010) that investigated the effectiveness of SRSD for POW + TREE for persuasive quick writes with four high school students with Learning Disabilities (LD). Results indicated an increase in the number of response parts written and increased stability in the number of words written. The social validity of the intervention was also deemed positive by the participants.

El-Henawy (2012) investigated the effectiveness of implementing a program based on SRSD in treating writing difficulties in three areas: writing performance, writing meta-cognition, and writing self-efficacy of EFL prospective teachers. Thirty third-year English prospective teachers in Port-Said University participated in this study. Findings demonstrated that the SRSD is effective in treating writing difficulties of EFL prospective teachers. Also, gains in writing performance were maintained. Furthermore, the SRSD proved to be socially valid and acceptable by the participants

Chenard (2014) investigated the efficacy of a web-based version of SRSD writing revision strategies provided to college students in freshman writing classes. The three SRSD revision strategies chosen to investigate were REVISE, SCAN, and Compare, Diagnose, Operate. The results indicated those participants who reported using at least one of the revision strategies at some point during the semester received higher course grades in their writing classes, in comparison to those participants who did not use the strategies; secondary analysis indicated that although the SRSD students' grades were higher, when group size was controlled, the difference in grades was not statistically significant.

Festas, Oliveira, Rebelo, Damiao, Harris & Graham (2015) examined the effects of SRSD on opinion essay writing among 380 eighth grade students in six urban middle schools in Portugal. Fourteen teachers participated in the study; 7 of these teachers participated in practice-based professional development (PBPD) in SRSD before implementation. Schools were matched in pairs; a member of each pair was randomly assigned to either: (a) teacher led SRSD instruction for opinion essay writing; or (b) teacher implementation of the schools' existing curriculum and language program prescriptions for opinion writing. Results indicated SRSD instructed students made statistically greater gains in composition elements than the comparison students immediately after instruction and two months later. Teachers implemented SRSD with fidelity and teachers and students rated the intervention favorably.

Context of the problem

The researcher's work and direct interaction with EFL student teachers were indicators that they are in need of effective training in how to write and teach writing. When the student teachers are given the freedom to choose the language skills they would teach and tackle in their lesson plans in micro teaching, they focus on grammar, structures, vocabulary and sometimes reading. They noticeably refrain from teaching writing. The researcher noticed that the student teachers only mention written expression -as they practice teaching during microteaching- when they assign homework and that's all. Totally avoiding to practice teaching writing might be an evidence of lacking effective methods, strategies and techniques for teaching writing.

This shortage in methods, strategies and techniques for teaching writing might be ascribed to the way methods courses are delivered in teacher education programs. Khater (2008) reports on the inappropriate way prospective teachers are prepared through methods courses. She mentions that the main focus in EFL methods courses is on knowledge about teaching. The instructors depend mainly on transmitting knowledge to student teachers whose role is to keep the content by heart for the final exam. Turning such knowledge to practice is not considered.

As an attempt to explore the current situation, the researcher conducted a pilot study that consisted of an informal open-ended questionnaire to identify the procedures employed by EFL student teachers when they write or teach writing. It was applied on a sample of 46 4th year EFL student teachers at Women's college, Ain Shams University. Results of the pilot study revealed that:

- The only strategy they use when writing or teaching writing is brainstorming.
- Fifty percent of the student teachers -during field training- just ask their students to write on a certain topic and tell them to organize the ideas that come to their mind. They ask them to write a draft and edit their papers for mistakes in mechanics and grammar.
- Fifty percent of the sample mentioned that they do not teach writing at all.

Reviewing previous studies in the Egyptian context such as the studies of (ElBassuony, 2005; Farahat, 2006; Salem, 2007; Mohammad, 2010) revealed EFL student teachers' weakness in writing performance as well. This weakness was attributed to the methods, techniques and strategies used for teaching writing, the threatening atmosphere in which students were required to write and the fear of grading.

Statement of the problem

The study problem can be identified in EFL student teachers' -at the Faculty of Women, Ain Shams University- ineffective teaching of writing as well as their poor writing performance. This might be attributed to the shortage in methods course that do not expose student teachers to a variety of effective approaches to writing instruction or opportunities to practice teaching writing using these approaches.

Hence the current study seeks to answer the following main question:

How far would a training program based on Self-Regulated Strategy Development approach be effective in developing EFL student teachers' writing teaching skills and in improving their writing performance?

From this main question, the following sub-questions emerge:

- 1- What are the writing teaching skills in the light of SRSD that EFL student teachers need to be trained on?
- 2- What are the theoretical bases of a training program based on SRSD approach for developing EFL student teachers' writing teaching skills and improving their writing performance?
- 3- What steps should be undertaken for designing the proposed program based on SRSD approach for developing EFL student teachers' writing teaching skills and improving their writing performance?
- 4- How far would a training program based on SRSD approach be effective in developing EFL student teachers' writing teaching skills?
- 5- How far would training EFL student teachers in a program based on SRSD approach be effective in improving their writing performance (overall quality, number of genre elements, and number of words written)?

Hypotheses of the study

- 1- There is a statistically significant difference between the mean rank scores of the study group subjects in the cognitive achievement test before and after the treatment in favour of the post administration.
- 2- There is a statistically significant difference between the mean rank scores in the overall writing teaching performance of the study group subjects on the pre-observation and post-observation in favour of the post-observation.
- 3- There are statistically significant differences in the mean rank scores of EFL student teachers in writing performance (overall quality, genre elements and length) before and after the treatment in favour of the post scores.

Delimitations of the study

The current study was delimited to:

- 1- 2nd year educational EFL student teachers for the following reasons:

The research will provide them with:

- Experiences in a research-validated approach for teaching writing which they can use when they start teaching during the field training and then when they start their careers as teachers of English.

- An effective way for enhancing their writing performance which is necessary for them as English language majors.

2- Training EFL student teachers in two writing genres namely, story writing and persuasive essay writing.

3- A period of one semester to implement the training program.

Significance of the study

The study results may contribute to the field of TEFL through the following:

- Provide EFL teacher educators and supervisors with a training program that would help them in training EFL student teachers as well as in-service teachers in teaching writing.

- Provide EFL teacher educators, supervisors, EFL student teachers and in-service teachers with a list of SRSD writing teaching skills.

- Since SRSD approach is not common in the Egyptian EFL teaching context, it is hoped that the current study could measure its effectiveness in developing the writing teaching skills and writing performance of EFL student teachers.

Definition of terms

- **Self-regulated Strategy Development (SRSD)** is an instructional approach that combines explicit instruction in self-regulation procedures with strategy instruction (Harris, Graham, & Mason, 2003).

It is operationally defined in this study as an approach to writing instruction that involves teaching students a variety of planning and writing strategies in combination with procedures for regulating these strategies and the writing process. Six stages of instruction are employed to explicitly teach the strategies, gradually releasing responsibility for applying the strategies from the teacher to the students (scaffolding).

- **Writing performance** is the students' ability to compose in the English language. In this study, overall quality, genre elements, and length are the components of writing performance. These components are defined as follows:

Genre elements refer to the presence or absence of basic genre parts in a composition.

Overall quality reflects the holistic value of a student's paper. It can be assessed through holistic rating scales. A piece of writing is assigned a score representing the rater's general impression of overall quality.

Length refers to the total number of words written in a composition.

Method and procedures

Design of the Study

The current study adopted the one-group quasi-experimental design for administering the proposed training program and measuring its effectiveness in developing the writing and teaching performance of EFL student teachers.

Participants

Participants in this study were 21 second-year student teachers of the English department, Women's College, Ain Shams University in the academic year 2013-2014. Specifically, the study was implemented in the second term. Their age ranged from nineteen to twenty. EFL student teachers are first exposed to English language methodology during the second year through microteaching. Because writing teaching is one of the demanding tasks, the researcher noticed through her experience in microteaching that it is scarcely chosen by EFL student teachers when asked to perform a lesson in microteaching. They lack an adequate knowledge and competence concerning writing and teaching of writing. Hence, a training program based on SRSD was proposed to develop their writing and teaching of writing.

Tools of the study

The study made use of the following tools:

- 1- a list of writing teaching skills necessary for EFL student teachers
- 2- a training program designed in the light of SRSD approach to develop EFL student teachers' writing and writing teaching skills
- 3- An achievement test for measuring EFL student teachers theoretical knowledge concerning written expression (different genres, stages, skills, assessment, e.g.), self-regulation, strategy instruction and self-regulated strategy development.
- 4- An observation checklist for observing the teaching performance of EFL student teachers in teaching writing.
- 5- Pre-post writing test and two holistic quality rubrics for measuring EFL student teachers' written expression skills in story and persuasive essay writing.

1) The list of writing teaching skills

- Purpose of the list:

This list aimed to

- a) Determine the most important writing teaching skills essential for EFL student teachers. This enabled the researcher to construct the suggested training program.

b) Design an observation checklist. This checklist was designed in the light of the teaching skills chosen by the panel of jury as the most important writing teaching skills to be developed throughout the training program.

- Content of the checklist:

The list is composed of four columns. The first column included 16 writing teaching skills arranged in two main categories; theoretical skills and practical skills. These skills were rated by a panel of jury according to a rating scale containing three alternatives representing the other three columns of the checklist): very important, important and less important. Each level of importance was given an estimated value to be scored by the researcher. The first level (i.e., very important) took (3). The second level (i.e., important) took (2) and the third level (i.e., less important) took (1).

2) The achievement test

- Purpose of the test:

After deciding on the topics as well as the content of the theoretical sessions of the proposed program, a pre-post achievement test was constructed and administered by the researcher. The pre administration of the achievement test aimed at appraising EFL student teachers' knowledge related to the study variables. The post administration of the same test aimed at measuring the effectiveness of the training program (its training sessions in particular) in achieving its objectives. That is the progress in the student teachers' theoretical knowledge could be attributed to the sessions of the training program.

- Description of the test:

The pre-post achievement test items were constructed in the light of the content and objectives of the proposed programs' training sessions. Different types of questions were made use of to avoid boredom. The achievement test had mainly 4 types of questions; "multiple choice", "complete the following sentences", "true or false", and "answer the following questions". These four types of questions were arranged from the simpler to the most demanding.

- Validity of the test:

To measure the test content validity, the first version of the test was given to five TEFL specialists to evaluate the appropriateness of the test items. Moreover, they were requested to evaluate the test as a whole in terms of correctness, number of items, and the level of difficulty of every test item. The test proved to be a valid one as the jury approved almost all the questions and suggested the following:

1. Omitting some items to make the test shorter and more manageable.

2. Modifying some distractors of multiple choice questions to be more comprehensible.

3) The observation checklist

- Purpose of the observation checklist:

The observation checklist aimed at: a) determining the most important writing teaching skills necessary for EFL student teachers in the light of SRSD; b) training a sample of EFL student teachers in the light of these skills; and c) measuring the improvement in the EFL student teachers' writing teaching performance after the training program.

- Content and validity of the observation checklist:

The observation checklist is composed of four columns. The first column includes twenty five writing teaching skills arranged in six stages (Developing background knowledge, discussion, modeling, memorizing, supporting, and independent practice). These teaching skills were rated by a panel of jury to determine their importance and relevancy to EFL student teachers. They were rated according to a rating scale containing three alternatives (representing the other three columns of the checklist): very important, important, and less important. Each level of importance was given an estimated value to be scored by the researcher. The first level (i.e., very important) took (3), the second level (i.e., important) took 2, and the third level (i.e., less important) took (1). Moreover the panel of jury was requested to add to the list any writing teaching skills they considered important. Only a few suggestions concerning the phrasing of some skills were made.

4) The writing test

The study group had a story writing test and a persuasive essay writing test one at a time. They were asked to choose one of two prompts and write a story or a persuasive essay according to what the task required. These prompts were chosen from a list prepared by the researcher to be used for the pre-post writing test and to be used as writing prompts throughout the study as well. For the persuasive essay prompts to be suitable to the study group's age and interests, they were asked to brainstorm topics they wish to express their opinions about. Moreover the researcher reviewed related studies and surfed the internet to find more interesting topics. The list was then submitted to the jury to specify the prompts most relevant to the study group. The time allowed for each genre writing test was 60 minutes. Essays and stories were scored for overall quality, genre elements, and length.

Scoring the test

Student teachers' writings were independently rated by two raters, the researcher and a second rater. Before scoring, the researcher discussed what holistic scoring is, the holistic quality rubrics, the structural elements checklists, and the writings' length with the second rater. Before the actual scoring process, the researcher discussed with the rater how some samples written by EFL student teachers could be scored for overall quality, genre

element and length. Becoming familiar with the scoring procedures, the raters started rating the study participants' writings.

After independently rating students' writing, the rater met with the researcher and discussed the scores for completeness, quality and length. During this discussion, the two made an attempt to reach consensus in the event of a disagreement in the scoring. Inter-rater reliability for all assessments was calculated as agreements divided by agreements plus disagreements, multiplied by 100. Inter-rater reliability was 80% for writing quality, 85% for writing elements, all of which are considered high coefficients of reliability. Scores given by both raters were added together and divided by two to obtain the average score for each student before analyzing the data statistically.

5) The Training Program

The following is a description of the steps the researcher went through to design the proposed training program.

- Aim of the training program:

The proposed training program aims at developing writing teaching skills necessary for EFL student teachers in women's college in the light of SRSD approach. This was carried out in conformity with the Egyptian standards for EFL student teachers, previous studies and the writing teaching skills list suggested as being necessary for EFL student teachers. Specifically, the training program aimed at enabling EFL student teachers to:

- Acquire the necessary background knowledge concerning writing (e.g., writing genres, traits of effective writing, and stages of the writing process).
- Be self-regulated learners.
- Acquire effective writing strategies to enhance their capabilities as writers and teachers of writing.
- Develop their narrative and persuasive writing performance.
- Develop their narrative and persuasive writing teaching skills.

- Content of the program

The training program has two components as follows:

One: The **theoretical part** that consists of the following training sessions:

1. Writing
2. Writing instruction
3. Self-regulation
4. SRSD approach and the role of the writing teacher
5. Persuasive essay

Two: the **practical part** has mainly two sections:

- a) A story writing strategy that consists of 5 workshops aimed at helping EFL student teachers practise and develop their story writing and teaching skills.
- b) A persuasive essay writing strategy that consists of 8 workshops aimed at helping EFL student teachers practise and develop their persuasive essay writing and teaching skills.

Each workshop contained a lesson plan with the exception of workshop three that had two lesson plans, lesson 3 and 4. This was because of the time constraints on one hand and the less demanding nature of these two lessons. It should be noted that these lesson plans were adapted from Harris et al., (2008).

- Evaluation of the program

The current study made use of three categories of assessment, namely diagnostic, formative and summative to assess EFL student teachers' writing teaching performance, writing skills and theoretical knowledge.

Diagnostic assessment was conducted before the inception of the training program. This included the administration of the writing teaching observation checklist to measure student teachers writing teaching performance. It also included the administration of a writing test to measure the study subjects' writing skills before implementing the training program. An achievement test as well was administered to assess EFL student teachers' theoretical background knowledge related to the study variables. Diagnostic assessment helped in identifying the participants' current level of performance and hence setting appropriate goals for their learning. Basically, the major goal of this type of evaluation is to measure the level of achievement in the study dependent variables before the program implementation so that any improvement in these variables would be attributed to the training program.

The second type of evaluation was formative. This occurred during executing the training program for tracking study participants' progress and to provide them with ongoing feedback on their performance. Formative assessment took different forms throughout the training period. At the beginning of the program sessions and workshops, student teachers were required to answer questions in pairs or groups. The observation checklist was also used to reflect on student teachers' teaching performance using reflective journals.

Lastly, summative evaluation included the administration of an achievement test, a writing teaching observation checklist, and a writing test. These tests were pre-post administered to investigate the effectiveness of the current training program in achieving its aims.

Results and discussion

Data were discussed and interpreted in relation to the study hypotheses.

The first hypothesis:

Hypothesis one states *“There is a statistically significant difference between the mean rank scores of the study group subjects in the cognitive achievement test before and after the treatment in favour of the post administration.”*

In order to verify the validity of this hypothesis, nonparametric Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test was used. Table (1) indicates the mean ranks, “Z” value (Z value is the nonparametric equivalent of the paired samples t value) and the significance of the research group scores in the achievement test.

Table (1): Results of Wilcoxon in theoretical knowledge

		N	Mean rank	Sum of ranks	Z	Sig.
Theoretical background	Positive ranks	21	11	231	4.01	0,01
	Negative ranks	0	0	0		

Table (1) above shows that all ranks were positive. This means that all the study participants' scores in the achievement test developed after the treatment. This demonstrates that there is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level between the pre and post administration of the achievement test in favour of the last one. Consequently, it can be said that the first hypothesis was confirmed and the treatment was effective in improving the student teachers' theoretical knowledge related to writing and SRSD approach.

To find out how much variance in theoretical knowledge size was a result of the proposed program, effect size of nonparametric samples was calculated using the following formula:

$$r = \frac{z}{\sqrt{N}}$$

The effect size was 0.87. This value of effect size, according to the referential framework, can be interpreted as a large one.

The second hypothesis:

Hypothesis two states *“There is a statistically significant difference between the mean rank scores in the overall writing teaching performance of the study group subjects on the pre-observation and post-observation in favour of the post-observation.”*

This part of the study results is subdivided into two more points. The first deals with story writing teaching performance, whereas the second is concerned with persuasive writing teaching performance.

Story writing teaching performance .

The nonparametric Wilcoxon Test was conducted to examine the treatment effect on story writing teaching performance. The results of Wilcoxon test are indicated in table 2 below.

Table (2): Results of Wilcoxon test comparing performance in story writing teaching before and after the treatment

		N	Mean rank	Sum of ranks	Z	Sig.
Story teaching	Positive ranks	21	11	231	4.01	0,01
	Negative ranks	0	0	0		

Results above yielded a “z” value that is significant at 0.01 level. This means that the differences in story writing teaching performance of the EFL student teachers before and after the treatment were significant; consequently, it can be said that hypothesis two was confirmed and the intervention had real effects on promoting story writing teaching performance among student teachers.

The effect size was calculated to find out how much variance in story writing performance was a result of the current study intervention. The effect size value was 0.87 which is a large one.

Persuasive writing teaching performance:

The nonparametric Wilcoxon Test was conducted to examine the treatment effect on persuasive essay writing teaching performance. The results of Wilcoxon test are indicated in table 3 below.

Table (3): Results of Wilcoxon test comparing performance in persuasive writing Teaching before and after the treatment

		N	Mean rank	Sum of ranks	Z	Sig.
persuasive	Positive ranks	21	11	231	4.02	0,01
	Negative ranks	0	0	0		

Results of Wilcoxon test above indicate that there were no negative ranks, which means that all the students’ scores were better after the treatment. Additionally, the results of Wilcoxon test in table 5.3 yielded a “z” value of 4.02 which is significant at 0.01 level. This means that hypothesis 2 was accepted, and the treatment held in this study had a significant effect on persuasive writing teaching performance of the EFL student teachers.

The effect size was calculated to find out how much variance in persuasive essay writing performance was a result of the current study intervention. The effect size value was 0.87 which is a large one.

The third hypothesis:

Hypothesis three states *"there are statistically significant differences in the mean rank scores of EFL student teachers in writing performance (overall quality, genre elements and length) before and after the treatment in favour of the post scores."*

Writing performance was measured for both story and persuasive essay. It was measured in terms of three characteristics of the study participants' writings; namely overall quality, genre elements, and length.

Story writing performance:

The non parametric Wilcoxon test was used to examine the treatment effect on story writing performance. The results of this test for story writing can be shown in Table (5).

Table (4): Results of Wilcoxon test comparing performance in story writing before and after the treatment

		N	Mean rank	Sum of ranks	Z	Sig.
Quality	Positive ranks	21	11	231	4.038	0,01
	Negative ranks	0	0	0		
Elements	Positive ranks	21	11	231	4.021	0,01
	Negative ranks	0	0	0		
length	Positive ranks	18	12.33	222	3.70	0,01
	Negative ranks	3	3	9		

The above table shows that all ranks in quality and elements were positive. This means that all the study participants' performance in story writing in terms of overall quality and story elements significantly increased after the treatment. In the length of writing, there were three negative ranks, which means that three of the participants showed a decrease in length of writing after the treatment. However, in all cases results yielded "Z" values which are significant at 0.01 level. Thus, it can be said that the treatment of the study was effective in improving EFL student teachers' story writing performance. Consequently, these results proved to be consistent with the third hypothesis.

To determine the size of experimental effect, size effect values of the preceding variables were calculated. The results showed that effect size values were: 0.88 in story quality, 0.87 in story elements, and 0.80 in story length. All these values proved to be large ones.

Persuasive essay writing performance:

The non parametric Wilcoxon test was used to examine the treatment effect on persuasive essay writing performance. Table 6 below shows these results.

Table (5): Results of Wilcoxon test comparing performance in persuasive writing before and after the treatment

		N	Mean rank	Sum of ranks	Z	Sig.
Quality	Positive ranks	21	11	231	4.028	0,01
	Negative ranks	0	0	0		
Elements	Positive ranks	21	11	231	4.024	0,01
	Negative ranks	0	0	0		
length	Positive ranks	19	11.95	227	3.88	0,01
	Negative ranks	2	2	4		

The results shown above demonstrate that all ranks in quality and elements were positive. This means that all the participants' performance in persuasive writing in terms of quality and elements significantly increased after the treatment. In length of writing, there were two negative ranks, which means that two of the participants showed a decrease in length of writing after the treatment. Generally, in all cases, results showed (z) values of 4.028, 4.024, and 3.88. These values proved to be significant at 0.01 level, which means that the treatment used in this study was effective in improving EFL student teachers' persuasive writing performance.

To determine the size of experimental effect, size effect values of the preceding variables were calculated. The results showed that effect size values were: quality 0.88, elements 0.87, and length 0.84. All these values proved to be large ones.

Discussion of the Results

Findings of the study revealed that the suggested program based on SRSD proved to be effective in developing the writing teaching performance of the study group student teachers and their writing proficiency as well. These positive findings might be attributed to several factors:

- **Providing practical examples:** points introduced in the theoretical part were supported by practical examples whenever possible to enhance understanding. For example when presenting the topic "the traits of effective writing", the researcher read pieces of writing and discussed with the student teachers how the presence or absence of each trait affects these writings. This result was maintained by Attia (2010).

- **Practical teaching practice through microteaching** not just providing knowledge about teaching played an important role in developing the study participants teaching performance. Each student teacher took a turn performing a part of the lesson plan while her colleagues acted as the students. They were also encouraged to reflect on their teaching performance. This is consistent with Ogeyik (2009), and Ismail (2011).

- **Students learn to write by writing:** getting better at writing requires doing it. Hence effective writing instruction must include ample opportunities for students to write. The student teachers were provided with authentic writing opportunities especially during the "support it" and "independent performance" stages. This is maintained by Salem (2007) who proved that students' writing can be improved through meaningful practice not through listening and reading about writing.

- **Scaffolding:** the gradual release of responsibility for applying the writing and self-regulation strategies from the researcher to the student teachers scaffolded their ability to use these strategies independently. This is maintained by Riazi & Rezaii (2011).

- **Think-aloud technique:** actually students need to see how to write. Therefore during modeling the writing and self-regulation strategies, the researcher employed the think-aloud technique to show the study participants how such strategies can be used for writing. It made the mental processes that occur during writing visible. This is in line with Dombey (2013).

- **Strategy instruction:** writing strategies simplified the complex tasks of planning and generating content. This is because these strategies defined a course of action that helped the student teachers organize their behaviour as they completed the writing assignments. That defined course of action also helped the student teachers while teaching writing as it provided a framework when modeling how to write. This goes in accordance with the results of other studies as Albertson & Billingsley (2001), De La Paz & Graham (2002).

- **Self-regulation:** self-regulation strategies like self-statements, goal setting, self-monitoring and self-reinforcement were of critical importance during both writing and practicing the teaching of writing. Self-statements helped Student teachers to be creative when thinking about ideas, to believe in their ability in doing difficult things if they took their time and exerted the genuine effort, to remember their goals, and to reinforce themselves when these goals are attained. Having goals encouraged the student teachers to work and be on task to achieve these goals. Goal setting also stimulated student teachers to self-evaluate to see if the goals are met. Self-monitoring encouraged the student teachers to self-evaluate their writing performance. Self-recording was motivating for student teachers as they could see their improvement. Self-reinforcing encouraged the student teachers to keep up the good work. This result accords with Garcia-Sdnchez & Fidalgo-Redondo (2006) and Glaser & Brunstein (2007).

Recommendations

In the light of the study results, the following recommendations are made:

- Teachers and student teachers should be trained in teaching writing using research-validated approaches like SRSD approach.
- Strategy instruction approaches such as SRSD approach are strongly recommended to be employed by teachers for enhancing learners' writing proficiency.

- Teacher education programs should strike a balance between both the theoretical and practical aspects in teacher preparation.
- Language teacher educators are recommended to use Modeling, Thinking aloud, and scaffolding when training EFL student teachers in teaching and learning language skills.
- Teachers should train students as early as possible to be self-regulated learners.
- Teachers should support theoretical knowledge with practical examples when ever possible.

Suggestions for further studies

- Similar programs based on SRSD can be developed for enhancing the writing skills of other student populations at different levels of education.
- Further research is needed to explore the effectiveness of the proposed program in training in-service EFL teachers.
- While the current study was limited to story writing, further studies are required to investigate the effectiveness of applying similar SRSD programs with other writing genres.
- More studies are needed to investigate the effect of similar SRSD programs on student teachers' writing apprehension, self-efficacy, and attitudes toward writing and teaching of writing.

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