

The Effectiveness of Some Educational Approaches on Developing English Creative Writing Skills of Secondary Stage Students*

Ashraf Ahmed El-Sayed Kaoud*

ashraf_kaoud123@yahoo.com

Keywords:

Educational approaches - EFL Creative writing skills - Secondary stage students.

The main aim of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of some educational approaches in developing English creative writing skills of secondary stage students in two genres, essay and short story writing. For this purpose, (90) EFL students enrolled in El-Kadima Secondary School for Girls in Kafr El-Sheikh City were randomly selected and randomly assigned to three groups; two experimental groups and a control one. The first experimental group was taught using the electronic teaching, via a website, based on the process writing approach whereas the second experimental group was taught using the face-to-face teaching based on the

* Thesis (Ph.D.), Institute of Educational Studies, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Cairo University.

* Lecturer of the English Language Department, University Requirement Unit, Misr University for Science & Technology.

process writing approach. As for the control group, it was taught using the traditional method. The experiment lasted for two months (nineteen school periods, 50 minutes each) in the second term of the academic year 2013/2014. Four hypotheses were formulated to be tested. The researcher's tools were a checklist to identify the English creative writing skills needed for first year secondary school students, pre-post English creative writing skills tests, and a scoring scale. The ANOVA and t-test were used to analyze the data. Research findings indicated that the electronic teaching, via a website, based on the process writing approach was more effective than the face-to-face teaching based on the process writing approach only or the traditional method in developing students' creative writing in the two genres, essay and short story writing.

Conclusion, Recommendations, and Suggested Researches:

This chapter presents a conclusion inferred from the findings, some recommendations of the study and suggestions for further research.

(1) Conclusions:

Results of this study showed that using the electronic teaching based on the process writing approach via a website proved to be effective in developing English creative writing skills of secondary stage students in the two genres of the current study: essay and short story writing.

The administration of the English creative writing pre-posttest to the two experimental groups and the control one proved that the electronic teaching based on the process writing approach via a website (the first experimental group) had a positive effect on developing first year secondary school students' English creative writing skills in the two genres of the current study: essay and short story writing. This positive effect was more than the second experimental group (face-to-face teaching based on the process writing approach) and the control group (the traditional teaching).

Results of this study indicated that the electronic teaching, using the techniques of the web site, its links and process writing approach, challenged the face-to-face teaching based on the process writing approach only, and the traditional method in developing students' creative writing. The electronic teaching helped the first experimental group students develop their English creative writing skills in essay and short story genres in terms of content and organization, vocabulary and language use, mechanics of writing, and originality.

The students had positive reactions to and perceptions of the use of the website because of the benefits they experienced. Their motivation was increased by the number and quality of responses they received, they cared about their writing and the presentation of their writing for audience view, and they felt they improved their writing by reading the examples of their classmates and the feedback they received.

Results of the study also revealed a change for the better in students' self-assessment of their creative writing skills in the experimental groups than in the control group. This implies that the teaching approaches and techniques adopted by the teacher in teaching creative writing affected the students' self-perception about their own abilities in writing. So, EFL teachers should carefully choose their methods of teaching and take into consideration their advantages and disadvantages.

On the other hand, the second experimental group (face-to-face teaching based on the process writing approach) had a positive effect on developing students creative writing more than the control group (the traditional teaching). This is due to the stages of the process writing approach.

In fact, incorporating the stages of the Writing Process Approach and teacher's electronic feedback on the revision process of EFL students' writings in collaborative learning environment via a website is a practical strategy to be implemented. The internet offers a host of possibilities for teachers in order to enhance student's learning, interaction, motivation, increase students' learning proficiency, promote students' performance particularly in creative writing skills. Through this encouraging environment and the constructive stages of the process writing approach, students can show their ideas, feelings, opinions and express their creativity.

Teachers ought to remember that the student holds the primary place and that the quality of the learning is more

important than the quantity that is taught or learned. It is hoped that more studies in electronic teaching will generate more insights, knowledge and information that will lead to a broader understanding of the electronic teaching and learning.

(2) Recommendations of the Study:

The insight gained from the study yields a set of pedagogical implications for EFL classroom practice:

Teachers and researchers are at the stage of using technology “pedagogically and effectively” in the classroom and are, therefore, encouraged to use websites for writing instruction. The challenge for all teachers and researchers concerned with FL writing and technology is to gain insight from this study and to venture into uncharted methodological and pedagogical territory with websites and any new technology that might be beneficial for FL learners. So, it is recommended that teachers use the electronic teaching based on the process writing approach via a website (online learning) to enhance the students' performance in essay and short story writing.

Although the process-based approach in teaching composition is used in some EFL classes, a major paradigm revision is needed in Egypt and an evaluation of the methods used in teaching students creative writing at schools is crucial. A need for a paradigm shift (from writing product to writing process) is highly recommended for the development of the teaching/ learning situation. We need to stop asking, what does the student write? But to ask, how does the student

write? EFL teachers should give primary importance to the teaching of the composition process, and not to the product of the process.

Teachers are urged to provide students with enough opportunities to express their ideas, feelings, opinions and reactions freely as teachers in the recent trends, are more than information givers; they are facilitators, guides and co-learners. Moreover, teachers have to take into consideration the concept of continuous evaluation from the start to the end of the process of teaching creative writing using formative and summative evaluation.

Formal and substantial supports from the Ministry of Education, are equally important for teachers who attempt to implement new pedagogical technology, such as teacher training programs, computer facilities, instructional guide and design menu of appropriate learning activities and so on. Also, more research and experimental instruction are needed to prove that the electronic teaching environment is a constructive environment to develop students' creative writing, not only in essay and short story writing but also in all genres of creative writing.

There's a need to establish an EFL Instructional Web Site, where curriculum designs are stored for free access, and where teachers can ask for help if they want to design their own homepage as a medium to deliver their EFL instruction as well as a personal database of personal instructional resources. There's also a need to establish an EFL discussion forum for teachers to exchange ideas and experience about

implementing the internet-integrated learning mode in real classroom instruction.

(3) Suggestions for Further Research:

The following are some suggestions for further research studies, in the light of the results of the study.

- Experimental research should be done to see the effectiveness of the means of web assisted instruction, like Chat Rooms, Bulletin Boards, E-mails, Pen pals in developing the creative writing skills.

- Further research can be done to investigate the gender differences of learning anxiety as well as their performance in conducting EFL on the internet.

- Another possible research area is to investigate the effectiveness of using the process writing approach in developing different creative genres, other than essay and short story.

- Experimental research can be done to investigate the effectiveness of using different approaches, other than the process writing approach in developing students' creative writing.

- Further research can be done to investigate the effectiveness of the electronic teaching based on the Problem-Solving Strategies in developing critical reading skills.