A program Based on Discourse Analysis and Scenario Assessment to develop Secondary Stage Students' EFL Writing Skills

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Abstract

The present study aimed at developing some EFL critical writing skills for first year Formal secondary school students through a program based on discourse analysis and scenario assessment. The study adopted the quasi-experimental pre-posttest, experimental /control groups. Participants were first year formal secondary school students. Two groups (30 each) were selected from Omar El Farouk secondary school, Dakahlia governorate, Egypt in the first semester of the academic year 2022-2023. The experimental group was taught through the program for developing their critical writing skills. On the other hand, the control group received regular instruction. Instruments were: questionnaires designed for critical writing skills that was designed and approved by a panel of jury. A critical writing test was designed. By the end of the experiment, the test was post administered to both groups to investigate the effect of the program on developing the experimental group EFL critical writing skills. Findings of the study were statistically treated. It was found out that the experimental group achieved more gains in their EFL critical writing skills than the control one. The results of the study were positive; the hypotheses were accepted .

Keywords: Discourse analysis - scenario assessment- EFL critical writing Skills- secondary stage students- Egypt .

Introduction

Critical writing

Critical writing (C.W) is about developing a person's own academic voice within his or her subject area. It is the result of an ongoing process of reflecting, researching, note-taking, reading and writing. It needs a much higher level of skills. Critical writers participate in the academic debate. They need to weigh up the evidence and arguments of others and contribute their own opinions. They need to consider the quality of the evidence and argument they have read. They should identify key positive and negative aspects they can comment upon. They assess their relevance and usefulness to the debate that they are engaging in for assignment and identify how best they can be woven into the argument that they are developing.

Fuller (2019) mentioned that writing critically means actually thinking about what a piece of literature means and finding a way to express what it says. So,

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students must consider the word from opinions about what they have read, and think about how the ideas in the work connect to the world. In addition, they should provide analysis of specific points and explain how the events (quotes, actions, examples) demonstrate themes and ideas. Critical writing can lead to better critical thinking.

The ability to write in English as a foreign language is necessary for learners around the world. Not only mastering the basic writing skills is important, but also the critical ones. That is recommended by the Ministry of Education Directives (2018/2019) for English Language Syllabus at the Secondary Stage while stressing the importance of developing the students' critical thinking skills. The key to mature writing is learning to write critically. Without criticism, texts that you read have no life beyond that of the author. Ahangari and Sepehran (2014) indicated that critical thinking and writing are to be thought of as skills and students have to acquire these skills in order to learn how to reason and argue logically and how to face a problem from various perspectives. To Braun (2014), critical writing includes students' ability to develop perspectives on the work of others. This act is considered akin to critical thinking that is often advocated for our students, but more refined. Despite the importance of critical writing for EFL students, teaching writing critically has been undervalued and reluctance to participate in writing activities is observed in students' behavior; besides, critical thinking skills gained by EFL students seem to be unsatisfactory.

Stapleton (2002) and Alagozlu (2007) declared that EFL students lack critical thinking. They cannot express their own ideas in EFL writing because of their low critical thinking skills. They emphasized that critical pedagogy is really needed in EFL writing classes.

Cottrel (2003) identified characteristics for influenced critical writing as follows: 1- identifying the significant points of what happened, 2- evaluating the strengths and weaknesses attributed to something, 3- evaluating certain information against other research and the theories that are prevalent with the topic area, 4- discussing the relevance of theory in relation to the topic, 5- identifying exactly why the methods are useful for the certain type of research aims and questions. 6- Clearly identifying outside effects. 7- Critically comparing and contrasting each theory; which one is the most relevant to the research and essay question. 8- Drawing well defined and concise conclusions that reflect and summarizes the content of the essay and argument, and 9- clearly developing the link between each theory considering the effect of this understanding on the topic area.

Learning English aims to develop critical writing skills. So, critical writing learning inspires students to think critically and practice writing skills. They are directed to be able to express their own opinions based on logical thinking in the form of writing .In order to be able to express opinions; students should inspire things that may have never been thought of before. They did not only know about a

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particular thing but also understand it. Students must consider the work from opinions about what they have read, and think about how the ideas are connected to the world in a larger way. Thus, critical writing can be seen when an individual has a different way of thinking that is different from the other (Valentin, Ananthi, and Muliasari, 2018).

With critical writing, students face challenge. It requires the ability to adopt diverse perspectives on the same topic .Students need to read, evaluate complex concepts and step outside of one's daily work to view what can be taken for granted assumption through a critical lens. In addition, they should identify key positive and negative aspects. They can evaluate their relevance and usefulness to the debate. Moreover, they should identify how best these aspects can be woven into the argument they are developing .They make comparisons between materials and analyze why something do not work. Furthermore, they apply their own judgments, make links between areas of knowledge and weigh up alternatives (Joan and Phil, 2014).

Ananthi, and Muliasar (2018) mentioned that critical writing inspires students to think critically. They are directed to be able to express their own opinion based on logical thinking in the form of writing. So, students can inspire things that may have never been thought of before. Students do not only know about a particular thing but also understand about it.Thus, critical writing can be seen when a person can have a different way of thinking from the other. El Ganzoury, Ghanem&

Hafez (2019) stated that CW focused on presenting evidence, ideas and points of view in a clear manner. It is the process that involves using a wide range of writing abilities. Thus, it can be concluded that it is the job of a critical writer to consider all of these views in their essay to show their awareness of all the issues associated with their topic

Critical writing essay usually expresses either a positive or a negative point of view of a particular topic or a subject. On the other hand, essay critique evaluates an essay after reading it and is a sort of feedback to the author of the essay. Although they have few similarities, they are different in 1-While writing a critical essay, the writer has to research to find facts and examples associated with the subject to form an opinion on the subject and thereby have a strong point of view on the subject .As for critiquing essay, one of the main sources of information is the essay itself since writers have to read it repeatedly with great attention to details to form an opinion and provide feedback to him/her. It examines the argument in a text, the rhetorical strategies used, and the use of logical fallacies and evaluation of the quality of the argument (Mohsene 2018)

Cottrell (2011) indicated that the characteristics of good critical writing are 1- Content: background information/ description is minimal. It analyzes the evidence presented by expert writers and uses it to build arguments. 2- Selection of points: A good critical writer knows which aspects of the topic are the most debated and cover the range of opinions. This relies

on critical reading of the correct sources. 3- Clarity of language: Points should be presented clearly and obviously so that the reader can understand the significance. Good writers should check their writing several times through editing their products. 4-Structure: Students discuss similar viewpoints and analyze them before looking at alternative viewpoints. This is more logical for the reader. 5-Linking of points.

The most characteristic features of critical writing skills are: 1- a clear and confident refusal to accept the conclusions of other writers without evaluating the arguments and evidence that they provide; 2- a balanced presentation of reasons why the conclusions of other writers may be accepted or may need to be treated with caution; 3- a clear presentation of your own evidence and argument, leading to your conclusion; and 4- a recognition of the limitations in your own evidence, argument, and conclusion.(University of Leicester, 2009. Student Learning Development section, para).

Teachers need to choose among a number of different approaches to practice of writing skills, deciding whether they want their students to focus more on the process of writing than its product, whether they want the students to study different written genres, or whether to focus on creative writing or content (Hammer, 2015).

Cooney et al (2018) reported that Critical paper means the thought work that opens the new perspective and attends to deconstruct the old understanding into new understanding dealing with any topics. It

means that the learners should have this capacity; they can have it by practicing in daily activities in critical writing. Each of them will be able to find, to interpret, and to synthesize content across sources because of being a habit. Interest is the crucial point in learning to be able to write critically towards any topic. Therefore, he added that keeping students active in class through writing activities will help students think critically and talking about critical thinking, it also deals with as a way of conveying opinions to other people

Critical writing involves: analyzing information to understand a problem or topic from more than one perspective; making logical connections between ideas; offering students own perspective on the topic based on his evaluation of the available evidence.

Critical writing is writing which analyses and evaluates information, usually from multiple sources, in order to develop an argument. A mistake many beginning writers make is to assume that everything they read is true and that they should agree with it, since it has been published in an academic text or journal. Being part of the academic community, however, means that you should be critical of (i.e. question) what you read, looking for reasons why it should be accepted or rejected, for example by comparing it with what other writers say about the topic, or evaluating the research methods to see if they are adequate or whether they could be improved (Lane, 2021).

According to Cottrel (2003) and Allen (2004), critical thinking shares the following skills with critical writing:

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- Analysis: examine the materials by breaking it into parts to better understanding (identifying, classifying, categorizing).

- Synthesis: to combine materials from several sources, including prior knowledge, making connection between the parts of the whole.

- Interpretation: examining the connections between the parts and the whole to make inferences about the implications and meanings of the patterns (associating, inferring, decoding).

- Evaluation: forming judgments about meanings, qualities and values (justifying, critiquing, verifying, and deciding).

- Inference: seeking to understand what is suggested or implied, in order to identify elements to make reasonable conclusions.

- Explanation: stating the results of reasoning and justifying them according to different considerations.

- Self-regulation: applying skills in analysis and evaluation (cited in Bello Way, 2013).

The goal of critical writing is to directly assert ideas in the minds of the students to develop a concept and its influential aspects. The main purpose of critical writing is to represent views based on credible information translating that information into coherent piece of writing to produce an authentic critical work rather than merely presenting facts in a mechanical way. Critical writing is a different process from other types of writing, the most challenging part of this type is that the writer cannot dismiss or approve argument on the basis of personal opinion. The analysis of a writer should be logical when establishing facts, theories, research findings and events (Thenerd, 2018).

Ali (2021) examined the impact of a program based on collaborative learning theory on developing EFL critical writing skills and interaction among second-year languages and translation students. The study adopted a quasi-experimental design. One experimental group of 33 EFL students at second-year Faculty of Languages and translation in the academic year 2020/2021 was randomly chosen to participate in the study. They received instruction through Microsoft teams in the light of a program based on collaborative learning theory. Results showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group in the pre and post-test in overall critical writing skills and each sub-skill, favoring the post test scores. Therefore, the collaborative learning theory based program had a positive effect on developing EFL critical writing skills among second-year languages and translation students.

El-Ganzoury (2019) investigated the effectiveness of using virtual reality to develop the preparatory school students' critical writing abilities. Participants of were 30 preparatory school stage students (N=30). Instruments were: a test of critical writing skills used as a pre and posttest and critical writing abilities checklist. The

proposed program was administered to the participates in the summer vacation of the school year 2017-2019 at El Masria Integrated International School in 10 of Ramadan city, El Sharqia. Results proved that the program was effective in enhancing the participating students' critical writing abilities and writing appropriateness as well. Implications and recommendations, as well as suggestions for further studies were provided.

Zahran (2018) confirmed the effect of using project based learning on developing EFL critical writing and writing skills among students at the university level. Ibrahim (2018) revealed the effect of a suggested eclectic approach on developing EFL critical writing skills for English section students at the Faculty of Education- Helwan University.

Abdel Latif (2012) investigated that using a blended learning literature based program is effective in enhancing critical reading and critical writing skills and developing literature appreciation of first - year English majors at the Faculty of Education. Ahangari & Sepehran (2014) investigated the effect of intertextuality on learners' critical writing skill among advanced EFL students at the Iran Language Institute. Moreover, ATAÇ (2015) investigated the critical thinking skills and critical writing skills of the first year students registered at the ELT Department in Nevsehir H. B.V. University. Results of the study indicated that critical thinking and writing are interrelated and the students usually have a positive opinion about the relationship between them.

Discourse Analysis

Nowadays literacy has been understood as a social practice, as a complex set of reading, writing and technological skills which joins verbal, visual, and other meaning-making resources. McCarthy stated that discourse analysis is "the study of the relationship between language and the contexts in which it is used". Therefore, it also aims at setting the linguistic event in a communicative context with the intention of explaining and understanding the production and reception of texts. Harris (1952) was the first person to introduce the concept of discourse analysis in the scientific community, defining it as "a method of analysis connected to speech or (writing)".

Newman et al (2021) perspectives on discourse analysis broadened the action-oriented approach to discourses. He highlighted that discourses are fusions of text and social materiality. Social materiality points at how the written word is simultaneously a product and producer of social practice. What makes written text especially useful for analysis is that while other social practices produce meaning as a side product, language is constructed to create meaning. Written texts found in media, organizational documents like strategic plans and other types of texts are always meant for communication and, thus, meaning making. The text has a purpose, and the writer has specific intentions for writing the text or saying what they are conveying. The choice of words in a written text may contain traces

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of both intentional and unintentional world views, power structures and social codes that reveal important understandings of values and actions.

Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) stated that discourse analysis (DA) involves, for example, grammar discourse analysis, text linguistics, genre analysis and communication discourse analysis that look at language use within specific institutionalized contexts. The second aspect is applied discourse analysis, concerned with the implementation of analysis (such as speech analysis and genre analysis) for pedagogical purposes, for example, teaching writing skill. The context has a significant role in the analysis of WD. It is a basic source that helps interpretation through the appropriate realization of text-context relationship**.** Olshtain & Celce-Murcia (2000) argued that making discourse meaningful and unified in the reader's mind depends on realities of the world and on interaction between top-down and bottom-up processing

Discourse analysis is the study of language in either spoken or written form. Written discourse is considered an imperative aspect that needs to be analyzed. Cohesion, coherence, clause relations and text patterns are all parts of written discourse.

Spoken discourse analysis has been used by. Linguists and sociologists among others, to study various areas of spoken interactions, such as discourse genres (e.g. politics, media, education and medical), the role of. Context (e.g. religious settings

and sports commentaries in which different rules apply (Dakowska 2014).

Rahimi and Sharififar (2015) investigated the effect of using critical discourse analysis on students reading skills. One of Obama is political speeches was presented to the students as a reading text. The students were asked to analyze the text once before attending critical discourse analysis (CDA) lectures and then after the lectures. Based on the comparison of the students' performance in analyzing the text and also their perceptions of the effect of CDA on their performance elicited through a questionnaire, the researchers concluded that CDA facilitated studentsí critical thinking ability. As an implication of the study, they suggested that instead of presenting factual texts, both teachers and syllabus designers should prefer ideologically loaded reading texts. Accordingly, they argued that teachers should focus on inferential questions in their reading classes.

Paltridge (2018) raised the notion of genre that he thought to be useful for teachers in teaching writing. Practically, he proposed a number of ways for focusing on discourse in general and genre in particular in ESL settings listed as below:

1- Teachers can take a sample text and analyze it in the classroom to identify its rhetorical structures and moves. The outcome can be used as a model for students to draw on for their individual writings.

2- Students are given sample text/texts to be analyzed in terms of discourse structure in preparation for their own writings.

3- Teachers can cut up texts into their discourse structures and then jumble them to get reassembled by the students. The original text, then, can be presented to the students for comparison purposes.

4- Based on some key aspects of certain genres, students can be asked to write texts. They are then asked to critique each other's texts discussing their observations.

5- Students can compose a text based on notes. Drawing on what they have already been taught, students are asked to write up the information on the cards in an accepted manner. (A kind of consolidation practice).

6- Students can be guided to focus on the thematic progression of a given text to figure out the flow of information in a certain genre. Through carrying out these classroom tasks, the students are expected to become familiar with the ways of using language that are typical of different discourse communities (Ibid).

Kapanadze (2018) conducted research on the effect of discourse oriented teaching on improving student's cognitive and affective skills. The findings of her study indicated that this way of teaching improved students' reading comprehension skills, their textual analysis and language use abilities. In an effort to demonstrate the application of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in language teaching, Cots (2006) proposed some activities to be followed in teaching reading skills.

Scenario Based Assessment

Scenario-based assessment is a method of evaluation in which "a hypothetical situation is created in scenario-based assignments where students are required to apply their theoretical knowledge according to the scenario given". It is a method of assessing the quality and suitability of a system architecture by using realistic scenarios that represent the stakeholder's concerns and expectations. (Asian Association of Open Universities Journal, 2021).

One of the most outstanding characteristics of Scenario Based Assessment (SBL) is having both academic and psychological contributions. Similarly, Yetick et al (2012) articulated that implementing SBL contributes to boost student's motivation, self- esteem, and self-image, highlight their sense of interest, purpose, responsibility, satisfaction, participation, and academic achievement, modify their negative attitudes and perception, help them get rid of their shyness, inhibition, fear of failure and language anxiety, and work in amore communicative, collaborative and risk free environment.

Seker (2016). demonstrated that scenario-based learning strategy consists of three stages: planning, implementing and assessing. These are the most common stages of implementing SBL in different educational programs. In a similar context, Iqbal & Every (2005) pinpointed that SBL strategy incorporates a number of different instructional methods such as; cooperative, role play, simulation, game, experiential, and e- learning- based scenarios.

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Bardach et al (2021). classified the stages of SBL as following:

1- Analysis: it includes brainstorming of the future's visions, investigating trends and choosing driving forces.

2- Development & presentation of the scenarios: it includes forming scenarios' templates, developing the scenarios, and presenting them.

3- Reflection: it includes evaluating the scenarios, and formulating policy recommendations. However, Clark (2009) divided the stages of SBL strategy into five rather than three as follows:

1. Determining whether or not the SBL environment is the best design for learners and tasks.

2. Defining the tasks, skills, and associated scenarios that are the foundation of expertise in domain

3. Designing the learning environment.

4. Considering the media.

5. Implementing and conducting SBL implementing and assessing. First, in the planning stage, EFL teachers should prepare 11th graders for the proposed scenario through setting the most appropriate goals and objectives, designing the content to be taught, and utilizing instructional strategies, lesson delivery techniques and instructional aids. Second, in the implementing stage, 11th graders apply and interact with the lesson through using strategies and instructional aids. Third, in the assessing stage, 11th graders

answer the activities and reflect on their performance.

Errington (2011) Gonda et al (2015), Gutierrez (2015) Paige & Lloyd (2016), Roberts (2011) identified four main kinds of learning scenarios, which can be listed as follows:

1- Skills-based scenarios: students are required to practically demonstrate their knowledge by producing or acting on a set of procedures.

2- Issue-based scenarios: students are asked to explore debate, discuss and negotiate various concerns surrounding a real-world issue.

3- Speculative-based scenarios: students are allowed to deliberate on a range of past, present or future events.

4- Problem-based scenarios: students are asked to find alternatives, check possibilities, evaluate consequences to arrive at a solution.

Through the manipulation of the scenarios, students can be within a set of circumstances as an outline of events that "simulate real-world practice, providing opportunities which may be difficult for students to experience within the confines of a course" (Stewart, 2016, p. 1) Key aspects of learning scenarios have been identified by many researchers (Dadd, 2009; Rukmini, 2012, Stewart, 2016; Tupe, 2013). This can be listed briefly as follows:

1- Leaning scenarios are likely to comprise a storyline, conflict, plot or dilemmas. However, "unlike most stories, scenarios are usually offered incomplete. Indeed their very

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incompleteness can be cognitively motivating for students" (Errington, 2009).

2- Learning scenarios should be oriented on snapshots of real-life experiences. According to Stewart (2003), a scenario embodies "essential slices of reality" which can be modified, duplicated, reconstructed or deconstructed to assume a specific real-world situation.

3- Learning scenarios can take place at any time (the past, present, or future) and anywhere. Thus, students can travel in time or move from a time zone to another. Similarly, they can be located anywhere providing unlimited opportunities for students to work across space and time simultaneously.

4- Learning scenarios invite students' participation within situations taking on different perspectives or even opposing ones. Moreover, or issues can be explored and negotiated in details or on a broad sense.

The roles of the teacher and learner are different in teaching and learning scenario based learning strategy.

Thus, it is very significant to pinpoint these roles, according to Petro &Aggelia) 2011), Maria & Cristina (2012), Schramm (2010) stated the following teachers' roles: 1- Introducing each new step properly. 2- Pointing out the learning goals, requirements of each phase, procedures, and assessment's criteria to the students. 3- Emphasizing the quality of interactions between students and the role of values and emotions. 4- Promoting students to; explore 'what they do not know', get them out of their comfort zone, think outside the box, from various perspectives, and in extreme terms, and trust their intuition. 5- Maintaining the dynamics of the scenario process.

Sharman (2010) and Thomsen et al (2009) pointed out that the importance of using SBL is creating an engaging and collaborative learning environment in which students work in small groups in a realistic situation. They added that SBL enables a greater range of areas within methodology which aims to promote deep learning and awareness by involving students in realistic the curriculum to be covered, simplifies time management, and provides increased opportunities for formative feedback that students could apply in upcoming scenarios.

In a similar context, Norton et al (2012) stated that the importance of using SBL is based on the interaction hypothesis in which situations are created to enable learners engage in meaningful spoken interactions with computers, or persons and whose interactions could be negotiated in order to help learner develop their oral language.

Naidu (2008) stated that "scenario-based learning promotes the view that learning and teaching activities are optimized when they are closely embedded in the context, culture and the community within which learners line and work"..

Sabatini et al (2018) discussed the increasing role and importance of multiple source use in everyday and academic literacy activities in the 21st century. They described a new type of assessment called

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Scenario-Based Assessment that provides both a framework for assessing multiple source use and takes a step toward ecological validity in assessments, in that it establishes credible literacy purposes or goals for the individual, and a structured, sequenced set of tasks or sub goals toward achieving those purposes. To illustrate how multiple sources fit into assessment contexts, people employ a well-known, cognitive framework of multiple source processing, specifically the Multiple Documents – Text-based Relevance Assessment and Content Extraction. Now is a good moment to step back and remind ourselves of the relevant goals of assessment, in contrast to a cognitive model. The scenario-based, reading comprehension assessments which we call global, integrated scenario-based assessments can be useful for achieving a number of such construct and process goals, while maintaining psychometric integrity.

Deane et al (2019) the paper presented a theoretical and empirical case for the value of scenario-based assessment (SBA) in the measurement of students' written argumentation skills. First, they framed the problem in terms of creating a reasonably efficient method of evaluating written argumentation skills, including for students at relatively low levels of competency. They next presented a proposed solution in the form of an SBA and lay out the design for such an assessment. They described the results of prior research done within our group using this design. Fourth, we present the results of two new analyses of prior data that

extend our previous results. These analyses concern whether the test items behave in ways consistent with the learning progressions underlying the design, how items measuring reading and writing component skills relate to essay performance, how measures of transcription fluency and proficiency in oral and academic language relate to writing skill, and whether the scenario-based design affects the fluency and vocabulary used in an essay. Results suggested that students can be differentiated by learning progression level, with variance in writing scores accounted for by a combination of performance on earlier tasks in the scenario and automated linguistic features measuring general literacy skills. The SBA structure, with preliminary tasks leading up to the final written performance, appears to result in more fluent (and also more efficient) writing behavior, compared to students' performances when they write an essay in isolation.

Banerjee (2019) investigated the construct of topical knowledge in a scenario-based language assessment (SBLA) that simulates real-life language use of building and sharing knowledge. 41 L2 learners at the intermediate to advanced levels from an adult ESL program participated in the study. Topical knowledge was operationalized as content knowledge and lexical knowledge associated with the theme of the SBLA. Descriptive statistics, correlations, Rasch analysis, and repeated measures ANOVAs were used to examine the construct validity of topical knowledge in the SBLA. The

results show that L2 learners' topical knowledge encompasses both content and lexical knowledge, but they function differently in the process of building and sharing knowledge. Nevertheless, both play a role in the performance outcomes and should be recognized as an integral component of L2 proficiency. The findings also lend evidentiary support for the use of a highly-contextualized SBLA to broaden our understanding of the underlying construct of L2 communicative ability.

Guo et al (2020) investigated the effects of a scenario-based assessment design on students' writing processes. An experimental data set consisting of four design conditions was used in which the number of scenarios (one or two) and the placement of the essay task with respect to the lead-in tasks (first vs. last) were varied. Students' writing processes on the essay task were recorded using keystroke logs. Each keystroke action was classified into one of four writing states: planning, text production, local edits, or jump edit, and a semi-Markov model was fit to the data. Results showed that the single-scenario and essay-last design encouraged fewer but longer editing states compared to the alternative designs. Additionally, this task ordering appeared to have enabled more fluent and efficient text production when paired with a single scenario. These results seem explainable from cognitive writing theory, particularly with respect to working memory load. Limitations and future directions for research are also discussed.

Joo et al (2023) explored the feasibility of designing a scenario-based Korean writing assessment (K-SBA). A pilot study was conducted with 51 participants from a Korean as a foreign language program at a US university. Through a goal-oriented scenario of a study abroad program in South Korea, examinees were presented with a collaborative problem-solving task where they were expected to learn about two potential class trip destinations and write a summary of the pros and cons of each destination based on what they learned. Results indicated that the K-SBA was psychometrically sound, providing adequate evidence of reliability. It elicited construct-relevant performances reflecting features unique to the Korean language, such as sociolinguistic competence through the use of honorifics or rhetorical control through a range of cohesive devices. Additionally, variations in examinee performances were observed across the different course levels.

1- Context of the problem

The Problem of the current research has been emphasized in the following way:

1. Reviewing the previous studies that tackled critical writing skills (Ali (2021), El-ganzoury (2019), Zahran (2018), Ibrahim (2018). These studies revealed that there is a profound weakness in students' critical writing skills .

2. Interviewing some secondary stage EFL teachers to ask them about the importance of developing critical writing skills. They assured that students need more practice concerning critical writing skills of the English language because the traditional ways of teaching do not provide them with

opportunities to practice their critical writing skills.

4. Conducting a pilot study to diagnose and confirm the problem on a real, scientific basis. The researcher prepared an informal interview, a critical writing test for (30) of EFL students, enrolled in first year secondary school students. The findings of the interview revealed that 95% of the students lack some critical writing skills.

As a result, a program based on discourse analysis and scenario assessment will be proposed to develop some critical

writing skills appropriate for the first year secondary stage students.

A pilot study was conducted in order to affirm the lack of the critical writing skills. A critical writing pilot test (appendix A) was conducted to 30 students of the first year secondary stage students in Meet Ghamr, Dakahlia Governorate. The results clarified that the students lack the critical writing skills that are appropriate for secondary stage. The results are presented in tables (1),

Table (1) The results of critical writing skills pilot test

No	Critical Writing Skills	Percentage
1	Comparing ideas in a text between different ideas.	16%
2	Organizing and examining justification.	20%
3	Analyzing the events of the text.	22%
4	Making judgments on what is in the text.	19%
5	Connecting pieces of information.	22%
6	Evaluating what is in the text to reach to a conclusion.	32%

3- Statement of the problem:

Based on the aforementioned discussion, reviewing literature and the results of the pilot study, it could be concluded that EFL first year secondary stage students lack some critical writing skills. So, there is a need to design a program based on integrating discourse analysis and scenario assessment to develop some critical writing skills. The problem can be stated in the following main question:

"What is the effect of a program based on integrating discourse analysis and scenario assessment to develop secondary stage students' EFL critical writing skills?"

This main question is consequently sub- divided into the following

questions:

1. What are the critical writing skills targeted for the secondary stage students?

2. What is the actual level of secondary stage students in some critical writing skills?

3. How can a program based on discourse analysis and scenario assessment be designed to develop secondary stage students' EFL critical writing skills?

4. How could this program have an effect on developing EFL secondary stage students' some critical writing skill?

4- Aim of the research

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The main purpose of the current research is to develop critical Writing skills EFL secondary stage students through utilizing a program based on integrating discourse analysis and scenario assessment.

5- Significance of the research

The present research would hopefully be useful to the following categories:

1-EFL Secondary stage Students.

-The current study is hopefully expected to be useful for developing secondary stage students' some EFL critical writing skills.

-It can also be mentioned that giving the activities of discourse analysis and scenario- based assessment design might help in achieving high standards of skill mastery for the EFL students.

2-EFL Teachers

It may provide them with an applied portrayal of a program based on discourse analysis and scenario based assessment design that would help them in their future career as EFL teachers.

3-EFL Instructors

It may offer them with the suggested program and a practical description of the discourse analysis and scenario based assessment theories. It might be fruitful in teaching literary works, and in developing writing skills.

4-EFL Curriculum Designers

It may consider the suggested program and draw their attention to change the role of the student from a passive learner to an active one who is able to interact effectively with the text, analyze,

interpret, criticize, evaluate and appreciate literary works through adopting the program of the current research

5- EFL Researchers

It may provide them with a new program in teaching English language skills and competencies.

6- Delimitations of the study:

The present study is will be delimited to:

1- A group of EFL first year secondary school students in Meet Ghamr, Dakahlia Governorate Egypt.

2- Some critical writing skills that are approved by the jury members.

5-Seven chapters of the story (Treasure Island).

6- First term of the academic year 2022/2023.

7- Design of the study

The present study adopted the quasi-experimental design. Two classes were selected to represent the experimental group and the control one. The experimental group was instructed through the program. The control one received regular instruction. A pre-post critical reading test, a pre-post critical writing test and a pre-post writing apprehension scale were administered to the two groups, before and after the experiment.

8- Participants of the Study:

The participants in the present research were first year secondary students in Omar El-Farouk Formal secondary school of MeetGhamr city in the academic year 2022/2023. They were selected to develop their critical writing skills. They

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were divided into two groups: experimental group (N=30) "taught through the program based on discourse analysis and scenario based assessment " and control group (N=30) "taught regularly". To make sure that the improvement of the participants' critical writing skills in the experimental group was attributed to the use of the program, some variables were controlled. These variables included the participants' age, which ranged from (15), to (17) years old,

and economic level; both belonged to the same economic level.

Before the experiment, it was important to make sure of the homogeneity among the two groups. So, the researcher pre-administered the critical writing test. Tables (2) show the findings of the statistical treatment of the data gained from pre-administering the study critical writing test. So the participants were equivalence.

Table (2) Both groups' critical writing pre-results

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df
Experimental	30	15.7	3.2	13.6	29
Control	30	14.9	1.9		

Table (2) shows that there was no significant difference between both groups in critical writing, t being (13.6). This shows homogeneity between the two groups. That is to say, the two groups were almost at the same level of performance in the critical writing skills. Thus, any variance between the two groups that might happen after the experiment could be attributed to the effect of the experiment. The pre-test scores revealed that the participants had an average low proficiency in critical writing skills.

9- The Instruments of the study

After reviewing the related literature and the previous studies related to critical writing skills. The following instruments were designed by the researcher in the light of the study independent variable:

For critical writing skills "Variable:

A. Critical writing questionnaire.

B. Critical writing test.

C. Critical writing, scoring rubric.

10- Hypotheses of the study:

On the basis of the review of literature and the relevant studies, the following can be hypothesized:

A-) for critical Writing

1- There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and the control groups in the post-critical writing, in favor of the experimental group' results.

2- There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group in the pre / post administrations of the critical writing, in favor of the post results.

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3- The program would have a positive effect on developing students' critical writing skills.

11- Validating the study hypotheses

Hypothesis 1:

It has been hypothesized that" There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and the control groups in EFL critical writing test , in favor of the experimental group . "

Table (3) t-test of the mean scores of the post-measurement of the control group and the experimental group.

Skills	Group	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t. value	df
EFL critical writing	Control	30	22.6	1.9		
	Experimental	30	26.8	2.3	12	58

**Significant at (0.05)

Table (3) indicated that there is a statistically significant difference between the control and the experimental groups in favor of the later in the post administration of critical writing test. t. value being (12) and significant at (0,05). So, the first hypothesis was validated.

Hypothesis 2:

There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group in the pre / post administrations of the critical writing, in favor of the post results.

Table (4) t- test results of comparing of the pre- and post-measurements of EFL Critical writing Skills Test.

Skills	Test	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t. value	df
EFL Critical Writing	Pre	30	15.7	3.2		
	Post	30	26.8	2.3	15.8	29

**Significant at (0.05)

Table (4) indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the pre and the post of the experimental group in favor of the latter in writing skills test**.** T-value being (15.8). It is significant at (0, 05) level. So, the third hypothesis was validated.

Hypothesis 3:

The program would have a positive effect on developing students' critical writing skills.

Table (5) t- test results of comparing of the pre- and post-measurements of EFL critical writing skills test.

Skills	Test	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t. value	df	Effect size
EFL Critical Writing	Pre	30	15.7	3.2	15.8	29	0.79
	Post	30	26.8	2.3			

**Significant at (0.05)

The impact is measured through Cohen's equation.

As indicated in table (5), the final value of Cohen's equation for the experimental group, comparing its pre to the post administrations in the critical writing skills test is (0.79). Based on that, it has been concluded that there are impacts of the program based on discourse analysis and scenario assessment on the students' critical writing skills.

12- The Results:

1- There was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group in the pre and post administrations of the critical writing skills test results, in favor of the post- administration results.

2- The program was effective in developing Secondary students' Critical reading skills.

3- The program was effective in developing Secondary students' critical writing skills.

13- Conclusion

Based on the results of the current study, the following could be concluded:

1- The program enhanced some critical writing skills such as participants' ability to write an appropriate response to a given topic, use an appropriate style for a task, generate ideas to easy writing, think of ideas rapidly when given writing about a specific topic, write about an assigned topic without difficulty, manage time efficiently to meet a deadline limit, choose and defend a point of view, write long and complex sentences, find examples to support ideas justify ideas and write grammatically correct sentences.

2- In addition to the previous benefits of the program, it could be concluded the integration between discourse analysis and scenario based assessment showed a significant development in EFL critical writing skills. After the treatments students' were able to be involved in discussions without experiencing anxiety or apprehension.

Through group work, students learned cooperative rather than competitive work and they were able to take care of their own learning.

3-The use of role play, helped students to interact orally and enhance critical writing skills.

4- The teacher's role as a facilitator, co-learner, co-communicator, and counselor allowed students to share more responsibility for their learning, express themselves freely, feel secure, and get rid of their apprehension about writing in the foreign language.

5- Teaching critical writing skills technique promotes understanding the content of a text. The experimental group became more active in learning. They showed their contribution in the discussion and participated well in the teaching and learning process by giving some opinions and asking for some information they did not know. They enjoyed participating in the lesson.

6- Giving students' positive feedback through the writing process improved their writing scenarios and tasks.

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7- The program helped secondary stage students be good critical writers.

8- Working in groups in some sessions was an opportunity to encourage low achievers to participate positively in different activities.

9- The program used to facilitate the educational material and help create a positive learning experience.

10 - Using the program made students more excited about the educational material and helped them carry out their critical writing tasks with more enthusiasm and responsibility.

11- Creating a good social climate and a relaxed learning environment encouraged students to learn easily.

12- At the end of the experiment, the experimental participants asserted that they were interested in practicing activities during the sessions, so they could apply it to other academic subjects. Thus, it can be concluded that the program based on discourse analysis and scenario based assessment was effective.

14- Suggestions for further research:

In the light of the study results, the following are suggested for further researches:

1-Designing other program base discourse analysis and scenario based assessment learning to be used in developing the other language skills such as listening, speaking.

2- Developing remedial courses or programs for reducing students' writing apprehension.

3- Further studies are needed to design many training programs for pre- and in-service English language teachers to help them develop their students' critical writing skills.

4- Further studies are needed to determine the effect of psychological factors on critical reading, writing skills and writing apprehension.

5- Further research is needed to investigate the effect of the program on developing other writing modes rather than critical writing (e.g. creative writing- reflective writing) of the secondary stage students.

6- Designing a proposed program based on discourse analysis and scenario based assessment learning to train in-service teachers on how to teach the four English language skills (listening/ speaking /reading /writing).

7-Replicating the present study to promote students' oral proficiency and willingness to communicate.

8- Replicating the present study on 2 or 3 year secondary stage students.

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