

The Effect of RAFT Strategy on Developing EFL Creative Writing Skills for
the Third Year Governmental Language Preparatory School Students

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This study investigated the effect of RAFT strategy on developing EFL creative writing skills for the third year governmental language preparatory school students. Eighty students were randomly chosen and divided into two groups: the experimental group and the control group. After ensuring their equivalence, the experimental group students were trained on creative writing skills through the use of RAFT strategy, while the regular instruction was used with the control group. To achieve the aims of the study, the researchers constructed a creative writing pre/ post test to measure the students' creative writing skills. It was administered to the participants before and after the experiment. The mean scores of the pre and post administrations of the test were treated statistically. Findings of the study showed a significant difference between the mean scores of both groups in the creative writing skills test, in favour of the experimental group. There was also a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level between the mean scores of the experimental group in the pre- post administrations of the creative writing skills test, in favour of its post-administration. Moreover, RAFT strategy had a large effect size on all the required creative writing skills and on each of the required skills, thus achieving the aims of the study.

Key words: RAFT – Creative Writing skills

1. Introduction

Language is a very important means of communication between humans. People communicate their ideas, emotions, beliefs or feelings to others as they share a common code that makes up the language. As an international language, English is used by millions of people around the world. It means that English is a global communication for many activities.

One of the four skills of English is writing that helps make thinking visible. School is where students need to learn how to structure and communicate their analytical thinking. However, in order for others to follow one's thinking in all disciplines, ideas need to be logically organized and effectively communicated. Individuals cannot think clearly without using well-ordered language, let alone communicate with others (Amy 2010).

One of the distinctive types of communicating by means of written words is called creative writing. It is an integral part of daily life. The major goal of writers is to communicate their ideas with the readers. To achieve their goal, they are required to be skillful writers in that they need to use their unique imagination and innovative ideas in writing. Their writing styles should differ from other writers and present contents or ideas in a unique way to attract the readers (Surasith, 2014).

Creative writing is perceived as an open-ended design process which builds upon creativity and can help develop children's thinking skills (Chen & Zhou, 2010). Furthermore, creative writing can teach students to approach life with more creativity as declared and assured by Sternberg and Kaufman (2009).

1.1. The Nature of Creative Writing:

Kenny (2011) pointed that creative writing is guided by the author's own need to express rather than a set structures that typifies expository writing, and almost all kinds of academic writing. Educators, therefore, value systematic skill instruction and information learning, and emphasize process over product (Barbot, Tan, Randi, Santa & and Grigorenko, 2012). They prefer following certain process concentrating on form, organization and mechanic of writing rather than self-expression. These systematic procedures hinder the flow of ideas and the fluency which is one of the most important elements of creative writing. Such restrictions hinder imagination and the expression of feelings. Students concentrate on language accuracy over metaphorical language and imaginative, sensory language.

Kenny (2011) asserts that creative writing embraces the individual's need to move beyond boundaries and consider new ways of thinking. He ensures that it is exploratory in nature and self-affirming in the sense that the author is the major driving force in the creative quest. This is exactly what differentiates creative writing from other forms of writing like expository writing.

1.1.2. Definitions of Creative Writing:

Temizkan (2011, p.933) pointed out that "creative writing involves going beyond the ordinary without deviating from the normal values, creating ideas that are different from everyone else's ideas with the help of imagination, achieving originality, writing fluently while taking pleasure in the act of composing, and going beyond the standards".

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Besides, Kahan (2012, p.111) defined creative writing as “the use of written language to conceptualize, explore, and record experience in such a way to create a unique symbolization of it”.

In addition, Akdal and Sahin (2014, p.173) defined creative writing as “a form of writing that focuses on authenticity and imagination instead of standardization and the accuracy of thoughts. It is possessing language usage ability”.

From the above definitions the researchers of the present study defined creative writing as “the third year governmental language preparatory school students’ ability to put their ideas and feelings about a special topic on paper by using their imagination, producing different ideas, fulfilling originality, and fluent writing.”

1.1.3. Creative Writing Skills:

Starko, (2005) identified the aspects of creative main skills as follows:

***Fluency:** refers to the capability to produce a large number of ideas. The more ideas one has, the more likely it is that, at least one of them will be a good one.

***Flexibility:** indicates the ability to change the opinion of someone. Flexibility includes an openness to check ideas or thoughts in unexpected or different ways.

***Originality:** refers to thinking of unusual ideas of unique ways and solutions to a problem and the way the ideas are put together.

***Elaboration:** indicates the ability to add more details and to enhance ideas. Elaboration includes producing rich and more interesting ideas.

***Figurative Language:** words are tools of the writers. Those tools give form and shape to writing. So, teachers should attract their students' attention by using words that add colour and images to speech and writing. They should also be encouraged to use the words that tease the senses and feelings. These words are called figurative language.

In addition, Bennet, Clarke, Motion & Naidoo, 2008) state that writing poetry, fiction, drama, and creative non-fiction could be a study of creative writing and its contexts through creative production and reflection on method.

1.1.4. The Importance of Creative Writing:

Cummins (2009) presented the reasons for incorporating creative writing assignments in the writing classroom as follows:

- Creativity and innovation are required in the 21st century workplace.
- Different types of assignments can help diverse learners connect with and retain course material.
- The importance of literary genre, structure, style, and narrative perspective become clearer when one is crafting narrative, and characters can be comprehended more deeply when one imagines their unstated thoughts.
- Writing in different genres provides practice for students who will write as part of their career.
- Evaluation of new assignments enthusiasts' professors who get bored from working on and evaluating traditional assignments. Also, these creative activities change the learning atmosphere of the class and provide change that is appreciated by the students.

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- Moreover, Maley (2015) presented some benefits of creative writing as follows:
- Aiding language development at all levels, such as grammatical, vocabulary, phonology and discourse.
- Fostering “playfulness” which encourages learners to take risks with the language, to explore it without fear of reproof.
- Putting emphasis on the right side of the brain, with a focus on feelings, physical sensations, intuition and musicality.
- Developing self-confidence and self-esteem among learners.
- Leading to a corresponding growth in positive motivation.
- Feeding into more creative reading. By getting the process of creating the text, learners come to instinctively understand how such texts work, and this make them easier to read.
- Improving expository writing.
- Keeping teachers active and vibrant, as it helps keeping the primary resource still alive and well.
- Having an impact on the writer's level of energy, this tends to make teachers who use it more interested. This inevitably affects their relationship with students.
- In addition, (Demille & Kallio 2014) asserted that the process of creative writing leaves both the teacher and the students with a deeper understanding of each other and a more meaningful relationship. It also supports the affective domain of students learning through the free nonthreatening learning environment.

- Creative writing is beneficial for students with a low self-esteem, because it provides them "space for self-discovering and self-expression, and gradually motivation". (Dornyei, 2013 .p144)

In short, creative writing is a skill that needs improvement from time to time. Thus, the aim of the current study is to improve the students' creative writing skills through using RAFT strategy as an attempt to help students overcome their difficulties in creative writing courses.

1.2. RAFT Strategy:

RAFT strategy is the acronym of R (Role of the writer), A (Audience to whom the product is being directed), F (Format of the product being created), T (Topic of the product). RAFT strategy helps students understand their role as writers, the audience they address, the different formats for writing, and the topic they write about. Also, it encourages students to write creatively, to think a topic from various points of view, to a specific audience in a variety of formats. Furthermore, RAFT strategy gives the students opportunity to explore their imagination of what they want to do according to their creativity.

Santa as cited in El Sourani (2017) stated that RAFT strategy helps students make connection between their previous knowledge and the new one, connect concepts, and provide context for thinking deeply about the topic. Also, Sudarningsih & Wardana (2011) exhibited positive attitude, high learning motivation, as well as active participation in learning recount text writing. Alisa & Rosa (2013) added that RAFT strategy encourages creative writing by students and thinking of a subject or a topic starting from various points of view to specific audience in a variety of formats of text.

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Some studies about RAFT strategy have shown positive improvement in the students' writing. Groenke & Puckett (2006) stated that the RAFT strategy helps incorporate prior knowledge by connecting it to new knowledge while encouraging creativity in a structured writing assignment. They also found that using this strategy allowed students to demonstrate their content knowledge and ability to use content vocabulary, while making a claim and being able to support it with evidence. Lindawaty & Clarry (2014) showed that RAFT strategy improved the students' performance in writing a formal letter from cycle to cycle. It strengthened the students' sense of writers by making them aware of the impact of the topic on the format of their audiences.

Furthermore, RAFT strategy also helped the students write better expressions in writing formal letters and responding to the given writing prompts accurately. Umaemah, Latief, Irawati (2016) found out that RAFT strategy was successful at improving the students' writing ability. RAFT strategy addresses the teacher to concern with students' writing; moreover, it is a strategy for creating differentiated performance tasks and originally developed to help teachers think about and plan for teaching different kinds of writing.

Santa, as cited in Doubet and Hockett (2015) believed that RAFT is a flexible strategy that can be used to design sense-making activities, jigsaw, homework tasks, or summative assessments; also, the best RAFT has clear knowledge, understanding, and skill goals. A RAFT activity infuses a writing assignment with imagination, creativity, and motivation. It involves writing from a viewpoint other than that of a student, to an audience other than the teacher, and in a form other than a standard assignment or written answers to questions (Buehl, 2014).

Parilasanti (2014) pointed out that RAFT strategy is one of guided writing that can be applied to teaching writing and can be used to

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improve students' writing competence. This strategy can help the students understand their role as a writer, the audience they address, the varied formats for writing, and the topic they are writing about. In order to do RAFT writing, students have to think critically about taking a new role, matching the audience to the role, create a format that would fit that role, and cover specified topics from the content. It can be used in any content area with equally delightful result. RAFT product can be used for assessment, class presentation, or portfolio projects or a creative response to content.

Parilasanti (2014) declared that RAFT strategy can help students make connections between prior and new knowledge, and among interconnected concepts, and provide a context for thinking deeply about a topic. This strategy has potential to help students connect prior and new knowledge, to write in a rich context, and to develop literacy skills that will serve them far beyond the classroom.

To sum up, RAFT strategy can be the guiding strategy which enables students to have more focus about their written text by being aware of their role, audience, format of their writing, and topic.

1.2.1. Elements of RAFT Strategy:

According to Meredith & Steele (2011), applying RAFT is relatively easy once students understand its fundamental elements that pertain to the writing skills. These elements are as follows:

- 1. Role:** One critical element that students must understand about all writing is that it reflects perspectives or points of view, and there is no writing without bias. This idea affects students to be mature and they also realize the significance of the perspective in writing because students need to be familiar with the different roles they can act as writers.

2. **Audience:** It can be one of the most fun and challenging elements of writing. Students can learn some critical lessons about writing as a medium for communication by writing on similar topics but to varying audiences. Otherwise, students might be assigned a topic and a single audience to address and then compare their writing to see how each approached that particular audience. Another possibility is to present a topic and ask if writing varies according to audience and format. How might students present an issue if they were texting a friend, twittering or blogging, or writing a formal letter to the president?
3. **Format:** As students learn and become experienced with various writing formats, they are putting more tools in communications toolbox. Students are often eager to learn various formats for writing and seek alternatives to basic narrative writing. Varying formats offer opportunities for creative writing and avenues for expressions that might not surface, if students are limited to basic essay writing.
4. **Topic:** Selection of a writing topic often presents the greatest struggle in content area writing. Teachers usually have some specific essential questions for students to address. When considering topics, it is useful to think in terms of what kind of questions students should address; the students have to consider the conceptual ways in which that essential point can be approached. This can be determined through different topic prompts. Moreover, giving writers the opportunity to think through specific writing prompts, they might like to pursue in an effective way to engage them in writing about central issues for class.

5. **Strong verbs:** One adaptation to RAFTs is by adding —s| to make the acronym RAFT(s). The —s| refers to —strong verb| and suggests students should show how strongly they feel about a particular topic: whether they are bothered, angry, curious, confused, or relieved, for example. Because there are times when students' strong feeling about a topic may be important for the presentation, there are times when this might be unnecessary. However, it is an interesting adaptation to consider.

1.2.2. Definitions of RAFT Strategy:

Simon (2012, p.19) defined RAFT as a strategy that helps students to realize their role as writers and helps them to learn how to demonstrate their points and ideas effectively in order to make the readers understand what has been written. In addition, RAFT strategy helps students to be more aware of the audience, and different formats in addition to the points and topics which they are going to mention.

According to Urquhart & McIver (2015, p.23), RAFTs strategy is an acronym that refers to the writer's role (R): Imagine yourself as a writer, How are you? Audience (A): Who will read? Written product format (F): Which format your written product will take? Topic (T), who or what is the subject of this writing?, and which are the strong verbs (s)? The RAFTs writing strategy helps the writers make decisions while they are drafting. It can be said that the writers determine the purpose for their writing and the audience for whom the writing can maintain the focus during the drafting process. Knowing who the audience will be and the purpose for the writing will influence how the writers proceed with their work.

Buehl (2019, p.40) defined RAFTs as “a strategy that involves writing from a point of view which supports writing assignments to be

solved with full creativity, strong motivation as well as good and wide imagination". Students' writing goes to the audience not only for the teacher; they do their writing in a form not in a standard assignment. It means that the students will develop their ability in writing by expressing their ideas clearly and effectively in a certain form and for the audience that they choose as their target.

Based on the previous definitions, the researchers of the present study defined RAFT as an acronym of a structured strategy that combines different elements of writing which include imagination, creativity, and self-motivation and can be used to guide students' creative writing.

1.2.4. RAFT Strategy in Teaching Writing:

Teaching writing is teaching the students how to use the language for communicating, transferring idea and thought through written text. Parilasanti, 2014) stated that RAFT strategy provides opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding of a topic or subject through a writing experience that helps them to think about subject and communicate their understanding of it in creative and interesting way, encourages students to organize their thoughts and keeps the students' attention because they are focused on the writing activity.

Parilasanti (2014) pointed out that RAFT strategy encourages students to write creatively, to think a topic from various points of view, to consider a specific audience in a variety formats of functional texts. Alisa and Rosa (2013) also think that RAFT strategy gives a contribution in motivating students in writing activity. Melin and Schiller (2011) state that the RAFT strategy allows for differentiated choice in activities, which can be used as either formative or summative assessments. Differentiation based on choice is a great way to help motivate students into completing an assignment. The RAFT strategy can offer many choices while having students complete the same assessment. Students

can take different perspectives on the same issue by allowing a choice in the role or a change in the audience.

Senn, McMurtrie, and Coleman (2013) stated that RAFT writing encourages creative thinking and motivates students to demonstrate understanding in a nontraditional, yet informational, written format. This informative writing style is more motivating than the average essay that students are accustomed to and they are more likely to engage in new writing tasks.

1.2.5. Procedures of Teaching Creative Writing Using RAFT Strategy:

In practicing creative writing by using RAFT strategy and observing the process, the researchers followed the following procedures:

1. **Prewriting:** Prewriting activity would be associated with developing learner's comprehension strategies or stimulating student's background. Teacher introduces the students the topic of learning. RAFT strategy is also explained to them until students understand. (Buehl as quoted by Mayasari, 2014). After that, students write about their roles, audiences, formats, and topics. Teacher asks students about their choices and students read theirs. In this step, teacher observes the problem that might appear during the introduction or the beginning of teaching learning process of the implementation of RAFT strategy.
2. **Writing:** After students understand about their role, audience, format, and topic, teacher asks them to start writing. Teacher monitors the activity and lets them to work in groups but each student writes his/her own topic. Teacher makes sure that students do not forget about their RAFT by

asking them to write it on the top of their writing. The topic of their writing should be the one which can be mostly needed or appropriate to their audience. Students are allowed to apply their creativity in writing moreover, teacher tells them that their language use should be suitable to their audience. Furthermore, students have to recall about their role as the author and they should concern about the developing ideas of their text.

3. **Revising and editing:** After finishing writing, students work in groups to observe the organizing idea and vocabulary of their writing result; it means that students can exchange their work with their friend and they give comment, if it is necessary. Firstly, students must be focused on the punctuation. Then, they have to pay more attention to the vocabulary including spelling and grammar and creativity including fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration. After that, students must read the content and match their friends' work with the role, audience, format, and topic which have been chosen by them. Also, the language use in the text must be checked for it has to be appropriate to their RAFT. In editing, they should correct the errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage (grammar).
4. **Sharing:** When the students feel they have completed their texts, they can type it or decorate their paper. Teacher allows them to stick the papers on wall magazine at the school. Thus, the students develop the sense that they are writing for being read by other students or teachers and can be understood by them. Students are instructed to direct their product to the audience that they have chosen based on the RAFT. It means

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that they put the audience at the top of the paper such as to: teenagers.

In brief, the procedures of teaching creative writing using RAFT strategy were as follows:

1. **Prewriting** (developing learner's comprehension strategies or stimulating students' background knowledge)
2. **Writing** (developing ideas of the topic)
3. **Revising and editing** (concern is on organizing idea and vocabulary of students' writing result)
4. **Sharing** (showing their work to others)

2. Context of the Study:

In the light of the observation and experience of the researchers of the present study in the field of English language teaching, they observed that a little attention was attached to creative writing in EFL classes in governmental language preparatory schools. So, they analysed a random sample of third year governmental language preparatory school students' supposed creative writings in EFL. Results showed that most students were not able to generate many details to expand their ideas, present smooth flow of ideas or use a wide range of sentence structure flexibly.

There are also many obstacles that face the Egyptian students to be good at English creative writing; obstacles related to the teachers of English, obstacles related to the students as avoiding writing in English for many reasons such as the inability to employ the English language skills and obstacles related to the circumstances of learning English in general and writing and creative writing in particular. Some researchers have confirmed that these obstacles may cause a lack of the development of creative writing skills such as, (Ali, 2009), El- Geshi (2010), Temizkan (2011), Nasir& Meenoo (2013) and Ali (2016).

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3. Statement of the Problem:

The problem of the study could be stated in the low level of EFL creative writing skills of third year governmental language preparatory school students. In an attempt to solve this problem the researchers used RAFT strategy for developing these skills.

4. Questions of the study:

The present study attempted to answer the following main question:

*What is the effect of using RAFT strategy on developing third year governmental language school students' creative writing skills in EFL?

Two questions were derived from the main question:

1. What are the required EFL creative writing skills for third year governmental language preparatory school students?
2. What is the effect size of RAFT strategy on developing each of the third year governmental language preparatory school students' EFL creative writing skills?

5. Aim of the Study:

The present study aimed at developing Egyptian third year governmental language preparatory school students' EFL creative writing skills through the use of RAFT strategy.

6. Hypotheses of the Study:

1. There is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level between the mean scores of the control group students and the experimental group students in the creative writing skills as a whole on the post administration of the creative writing skills test, in favour of the experimental group.

2. There is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level between the mean score of the control group students and the experimental group students in each of the creative writing skills on the post administration of the creative writing skills test, in favour of the experimental group.
3. There is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level between the mean scores of the experimental group students in the creative writing skills as a whole on the pre and post administrations of the creative writing skills test, in favour of the post administration.
4. There is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level between the mean scores of the experimental group students in each creative writing skill on the pre and post administrations of the creative writing skills test, in favour of the post administration.

7. Method and variables of the study:

7.1. Method of the Study:

1. The study followed the descriptive analytical method in collecting data for the theoretical background on creative writing in EFL and RAFT strategy.
2. The study also followed the quasi- experimental method for the experimental aspect of the study. Two groups of students were chosen from a governmental language preparatory Egyptian school. One served as an experimental group and the other as a control group. The researchers administered a pre- post test to the experimental and control groups twice to test the effect of using RAFT strategy on developing the EFL creative writing skills for the experimental group students.

7.2. Variables of the Study:

1. The independent variable: - RAFT strategy
2. The dependent variable: - Creative writing skills

8. Delimitations of the Study:

1. The study was confined to developing third year governmental language preparatory school students' creative writing skills.
2. The study was confined to (80) EFL third year governmental language preparatory school students randomly chosen from a governmental language preparatory Egyptian school.
3. The study was conducted in the second term of the academic year 2019- 2020.

9. Significance of the Study:

The present study is expected to be beneficial in the following areas:

1. Helping the Ministry of Education to develop the outcomes of the EFL teaching / learning process in Egypt.
2. Providing supervisors and curriculum planners with the creative writing skills needed to be taken into consideration while planning EFL curriculum for the governmental language preparatory schools in Egypt.
3. Helping teachers follow suitable strategies for developing students' creative writing skills in EFL.
4. Paving the way for other researchers to conduct further studies on developing students' creative writing skills using RAFT strategy in the different educational stages.

9. Procedures of the Study:

In order to accomplish the aims of the present study, the researchers of the present study went through the following procedures:

1. Reviewing the related previous studies in the field of writing skills and RAFT strategy.
2. Reviewing the related previous studies in the field of creative writing and RAFT strategy in EFL.
3. Designing a checklist including the EFL creative writing skills required for third year governmental language preparatory school students.
4. Submitting the checklist to specialised jury members to identify the EFL creative writing skills, required for third year governmental language preparatory school students.
5. Preparing an EFL creative writing pre- post test for third year governmental language preparatory school students.
6. Submitting the test to specialised jury members and ensuring its validity before using it.
7. Ensuring the reliability of the test before using it.
8. Choosing a random sample and dividing it into two groups: a control group and an experimental group.
9. Pre-administering the creative writing test to both groups.
10. Using RAFT strategy with the experimental group and the regular instruction with the control group in teaching EFL creative writing.
11. Post-administering the creative writing test to both groups.
12. Collecting and analysing the obtained data.

13. Discussing the results of the study.
14. Presenting conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

11. The Creative Writing Skills Checklist:

Before developing the pre / post test of the required EFL creative writing skills, a checklist should have been designed to decide the required creative writing skills, for the third year governmental language preparatory school students, which should be tested.

11.1. Purpose of the checklist:

The checklist aimed at identifying the required EFL creative writing skills for third year governmental language preparatory school students.

11.2. Content of the checklist:

Having reviewed the related literature on developing students' creative writing skills, the researchers designed a creative writing skills' checklist and submitted it to specialised jury members in the English Language Teaching (ELT) so as to determine the degree of importance of each skill in the checklist. The list contained (14) skills. The jury members stated that the skills contained in the checklist would be generally adequate and appropriate to its purpose, after deleting some skills which had been considered above the third year governmental language school students' level. So, the checklist became valid, after it had been modified according to the jury members' suggestions to have (7) skills only as follows:

1. Presenting smooth flow of ideas.
2. Using a wide range of sentence structure flexibly.
3. Using figurative language.

4. Producing a variety of ideas to support the main idea of the topic.
5. Using vivid and unique words and phrases
6. Generating varied ideas and points of view.
7. Generating many details to expand one's ideas

Thus, the first sub-question of the study was answered.

12. The Pre- Post Creative Writing Test:

13.1. Purpose of the test:

The test aimed at measuring the required EFL creative writing skills for third year governmental language preparatory school students. The test was administered to both groups before and after the experiment.

12.2. Validity of the test:

To ensure the validity of the test, the researchers submitted it, in its initial form, to a number of specialised jury members. The test became valid when it was modified according to the jury members' comments and suggestions. One question only was changed to suit the level of students as suggested by the jury members.

12.3. Reliability of the test:

To establish the reliability of the test, it was administered to a sample of (30) third year governmental language preparatory school students other than the participants of the experiment of the study. Then, the same test was administered to the same group under nearly similar conditions after two weeks. The reliability coefficient of the test was estimated using Cronbach Alpha Formula. The estimated value (0.86) was considered reliable for the purpose of the present study.

12.4. Duration of the Test:

Duration of the creative writing test was estimated by calculating the time spent by calculating the time taken by all the students (30) used for piloting the test, divided by the number of the same students. Thus, the time allotted for the test was counted as in the following formula:

Summation of the time taken by all students

Duration of the test = _____

The number of the students

$$\frac{2100}{30} = 70 \text{ minutes}$$

Thus, the time allotted for the test was (70) minutes.

12.5. Description of the Test:

The pre-post creative writing test consisted of two sections. The first section of the test aimed at testing students' creative writing skills. It consisted of three types of creative writing tasks.

1. The first type of questions focused on producing a variety of ideas to support the main idea of the topic using vivid and unique words and phrases. The students were asked to read a topic sentence, and then write a variety of supportive ideas using vivid and unique words and phrases.
2. The second type of questions focused on generating varied ideas and points of view and generating many details to expand one's ideas. The students were asked to read a topic sentence about using the internet, and then generate varied ideas and points of view to expand their ideas

3. The third type of questions focused on using vivid and unique words and phrases and using figurative language. The students were asked to read a topic sentence, and then write a short paragraph using vivid and unique words and phrases and using figurative language.
4. The fourth type of questions focused on using a wide range of sentence structure flexibly, students were asked to rewrite four sentences using the words in brackets.

The second section of the test was a creative writing task. The students were asked to write a paragraph. It aimed at measuring to what extent the students were able to use the creative writing skills to write a creative paragraph.

13. The Scoring Scale:

13.1. Purpose of the scoring scale:

After reviewing a number of creative writing scoring scales, the researchers prepared the current study's scoring scale to evaluate each skill on the pre- post creative writing test. The scoring of the test was that every skill of the creative writing test was given 4 marks except the skill of using a wide range of sentence structure flexibly which was given 8 marks and all the skills were seven, so the creative writing test was scored out of 32 marks + 18 marks for the second section = 50 marks.

13.2. Validity of the scoring scale:

To ensure validity of the scale, the researchers submitted it, in its initial form, to seven of specialised jury members in the field of curricula and instruction (TEFL). The jury members were asked to comment on the suitability of the scale to assess third year governmental language preparatory school students' performance on creative writing pre- post

test two administrations. The scale was modified according to the jury members' few comments and suggestions which were very slight.

14. Verifying the Hypotheses:

14.1. The First Hypothesis:

In order to verify the first hypothesis of the study stating: " There is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level between the mean scores of the control group students and the experimental group students in the creative writing skills as a whole on the post administration of the creative writing skills test, in favour of the experimental group"

The following table shows that there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the control and experimental groups on the post-administration of the creative writing skills test.

(Table 1): t-test results of comparing the post administration total mean scores of the creative writing skills of the experimental group and the control group on the creative writing skills test.

| Overall creative writing skills | Group | N | M | Std. | t-Cal. Value | Tabulated T-Value | Sig. at |
|---------------------------------|--------------|----|-------|------|--------------|-------------------|---------|
| | Experimental | 40 | 59.08 | 1.94 | 75.596 | 2.639 | 0.01 |
| | Control | 40 | 22.98 | 2.31 | | | |

The above table confirms the following:

1. The experimental group students' mean score (59.08) was higher than the mean score of the control group students (22.98) on the post administration of the creative writing test. This great difference showed that the experimental group students attained remarkable higher scores than the control group students in the post administration of the test. Therefore, the development of the experimental group students' creative writing skills was due to the use of RAFT strategy.

2. The "t" calculated value (75.596) was significantly higher than the T tabulated value (2.639) with (78) degrees of freedom at the (0.01) level of significance. Thus, there was a statistically significant difference between the experimental and the control group students' mean scores on the post administration of the creative writing test in favour of the experimental group students as shown in the above table. Thus, the first hypothesis of the study was verified.

14.2. The Second Hypothesis:

In order to verify the second hypothesis of the study stating: "There is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level between the mean score of the control group students and the experimental group students in each of the creative writing skills on the post administration of the creative writing skills test, in favour of the experimental group", the researchers compared the mean score of the experimental group students after the experiment with the mean score of the control group students on each creative writing skill. The researchers used t-test for dependent groups to determine the significance of the difference between the mean score of two groups in the post administration of the test. The following table shows the results of the comparison.

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Table (2): t-test results of the post administration mean scores comparing the experimental group and the control group on each skill of the creative writing skills test.

| No. | Creative writing Skills | Group | N | M | Std. | t-Cal. Value | Tabulated T-Value | Sig. at |
|-----|---|-------|----|------|------|--------------|-------------------|---------|
| 1 | Presenting smooth flow of ideas. | Exp. | 40 | 8.50 | 0.78 | 28.382 | 2.639 | 0.01 |
| | | Cont. | 40 | 3.20 | 0.88 | | | |
| 2 | Using a wide range of sentence structure flexibly | Exp. | 40 | 8.20 | 0.91 | 22.865 | 2.639 | 0.01 |
| | | Cont. | 40 | 3.28 | 1.01 | | | |
| 3 | Using figurative language. | Exp. | 40 | 8.35 | 0.86 | 25.219 | 2.639 | 0.01 |
| | | Cont. | 40 | 2.83 | 1.08 | | | |
| 4 | Producing a variety of ideas to support the main idea of the topic. | Exp. | 40 | 8.65 | 0.53 | 27.165 | 2.639 | 0.01 |
| | | Cont. | 40 | 3.28 | 1.13 | | | |
| No. | Creative writing Skills | Group | N | M | Std. | t-Cal. Value | Tabulated T-Value | Sig. at |
| 5 | Using vivid and unique words and phrases | Exp. | 40 | 8.43 | 0.90 | 29.558 | 2.639 | 0.01 |
| | | Cont. | 40 | 3.48 | 0.55 | | | |
| 6 | Generating varied ideas and points of view. | Exp. | 40 | 8.63 | 0.59 | 30.894 | 2.639 | 0.01 |
| | | Cont. | 40 | 3.48 | 0.88 | | | |
| 7 | Generating many details to expand one's ideas. | Exp. | 40 | 8.33 | 0.92 | 24.321 | 2.639 | 0.01 |
| | | Cont. | 40 | 3.45 | 0.88 | | | |

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From table (2) the results showed that the mean score of each skill of the experimental group is bigger than the mean score of the control group. This indicated that the students of the third year governmental language preparatory school of the experimental group achieved an improvement and success during the experiment than the students of the control group.

Also, this table showed that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the control group students and the experimental group students in the post administration of the test on each creative writing skill at the significance level of (0.01). Thus, the second hypothesis was verified.

As the difference was highly significant on each skill, this indicated that RAFT strategy was successful in developing the creative writing skills of the experimental group of the third year governmental language preparatory school students.

14.3. The Third Hypothesis:

In order to verify the third hypothesis of the study stating: "There is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level between the mean scores of the experimental group students in the creative writing skills as a whole on the pre and post administrations of the creative writing skills test, in favour of the post administration"

For testing this hypothesis, the mean score of the pre and post assessments of the overall creative writing skills of the experimental group were compared and t-values were calculated as indicated by the following table:

(Table 3): t-test results of the difference between the experimental group's mean scores in creative writing skills as a whole on the pre and post administrations of the creative writing skills test.

| Test | N | Mean | Std. | t-Cal. Value | Tabulated T-Value | Level of Sig. |
|------|----|-------|------|--------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Pre | 40 | 15.13 | 2.64 | | | |
| Post | 40 | 59.08 | 1.94 | 103.4 | 2.704 | Sig. at 0.01 |

The above table indicates the following:

1. The mean score of the experimental group students on the creative writing skills test post administration (59.08) was higher than their mean score on the pre administration (15.13).
2. The "t" calculated value (103.4) was significantly higher than the T tabulated value (2.704) with (39) degrees of freedom at the (0.01) level of significance. Thus, there was a statistically significant difference between the experimental group students' mean scores on the pre and post creative writing administrations of the creative writing skills test, in favour of the post administration. Thus, the third hypothesis of the study was also verified.

14.4. The fourth Hypothesis:

The fourth hypothesis “There is a statistically significant difference at (0.01) level between the mean scores of the experimental group students in each creative writing skill on the pre and post administrations of the test, in favour of the post administration.”

In order to verify this hypothesis, the researchers compared the mean scores of the experimental group on each creative writing skill before and after the experiment. The researchers used t-test for dependent groups to determine the significance of the difference between the mean score of

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the two administrations of the creative writing skills test. The following table shows the results of the comparison.

Table (4) t-test results of the difference between the experimental group's mean scores on each of the 7 creative writing skills on the pre and post administrations of the creative writing skills test.

| N. | Summary writing Skills | Test | N | M | Std. | t-Cal. Value | Sig. at |
|----|--|------|----|------|------|--------------|---------|
| 1 | Presenting smooth flow of ideas. | Pre | 40 | 2.25 | 0.98 | 41.431 | 0.01 |
| | | Post | 40 | 8.50 | 0.78 | | |
| 2 | Using a wide range of sentence structure flexibly | Pre | 40 | 1.73 | 0.91 | 50.179 | 0.01 |
| | | Post | 40 | 8.20 | 0.91 | | |
| N. | Summary writing Skills | Test | N | M | Std. | t-Cal. Value | Sig. at |
| 3 | Using figurative language. | Pre | 40 | 2.38 | 1.03 | 42.403 | 0.01 |
| | | Post | 40 | 8.35 | 0.86 | | |
| 4 | Producing a variety of ideas to support the main idea of the topic. | Pre | 40 | 2.18 | 0.96 | 36.176 | 0.01 |
| | | Post | 40 | 8.65 | 0.53 | | |
| 5 | Using vivid and unique words and phrases | Pre | 40 | 2.18 | 0.78 | 53.238 | 0.01 |
| | | Post | 40 | 8.43 | 0.90 | | |
| 6 | Generating varied ideas and points of view. | Pre | 40 | 2.25 | 1.03 | 36.58 | 0.01 |
| | | Post | 40 | 8.63 | 0.59 | | |
| 7 | Generating many details to expand one's ideas. | Pre | 40 | 2.18 | 1.03 | 42.22 | 0.01 |
| | | Post | 40 | 8.33 | 0.92 | | |

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From table (4) the results showed that the mean score of each skill of the experimental group in the post administration of the creative writing skills test is bigger than the mean score of the experimental group in the pre administration of the test. This indicated that the students of the third year governmental language preparatory school students of the experimental group achieved an improvement and success after implementing RAFT strategy in the post administration.

Also, this table showed that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group students on the pre and post administrations in each creative writing skill at the significance level of (0.01). Thus, the fourth hypothesis was verified.

1.Answering the Questions of the study:

The main question was “What is the effect of using RAFT strategy on developing third year governmental language preparatory school students’ creative writing skills in EFL?”

In order to answer this question, the effect size was calculated according to the following effect size formula in (Morad, 2000: p.248)

$$t^2$$

$$\text{Effect Size } \eta^2 = \frac{t^2}{t^2 + df}$$

Where:

η^2 = the value of variance

t = the calculated value of "t"

The criteria to which the effect size is judged are:

The value of η^2 0.2= small effect size

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The value of η^2 0.5= medium effect size

The value of η^2 0.8= large effect size

Table (5) Effect size on developing creative writing skills as a whole for the experimental group students.

| Creative writing skills | Calculated t -Value | D.F | (η^2) | Effect Size |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----|--------------|-------------|
| Total | 103.4 | 39 | 0.19 | Large |

From table (5) the effect size of RAFT strategy shown above (0.19) is higher than the large effect size value (0.8) which indicates that RAFT strategy had a large effect size on developing the required creative writing skills as a whole for the experimental group students.

In addition, the effect size on developing each creative writing skill was calculated as shown in the following table:

Table (6) Effect size on developing each creative writing skill for the experimental group students.

| N. | Creative Writing Skills | Calculated t -Value | D.F | (η^2) | Effect Size |
|----|---|---------------------|-----|--------------|-------------|
| 1 | Presenting smooth flow of ideas. | 41.431 | 39 | 0.98 | Large |
| 2 | Using a wide range of sentence structure flexibly | 50.179 | 39 | 0.98 | Large |
| 3 | Using figurative language. | 42.403 | 39 | 0.98 | Large |
| 4 | Producing a variety of ideas to support the main idea of the topic. | 36.176 | 39 | 0.97 | Large |

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| | | | | | |
|----------|---|---------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|
| 5 | Using vivid and unique words and phrases. | 53.238 | 39 | 0.98 | Large |
| 6 | Generating varied ideas and points of view. | 36.58 | 39 | 0.97 | Large |
| 7 | Generating many details to expand one's ideas. | 42.22 | 39 | 0.98 | Large |

From table (6) the effect size of RAFT strategy on developing each of the required creative writing skill was larger than the effect size (0.8).

Thus, the second sub-question and in turn the main question of the present study was answered. So, all the questions of the present study were answered.

16. Discussion of Results:

In displaying the results of the study, the researchers presented an account of the development of the experimental group students' creative writing skills due to the use of RAFT strategy. This is shown in the difference between the pre and post administrations mean scores of the experimental group students. The difference between the students' mean scores in the pre and post administrations of the test was statistically significant. The positive results shown in the great improvement of third year governmental language preparatory students' creative writing skills might be due to the following:

1. Using RAFT strategy enhanced students' creativity skills in writing as the activities followed helped students to think, use their mind and act as if they were real creative writers
2. RAFT strategy had highly contributed to enabling learners to present smooth flow of ideas, use vivid and unique words and crystallize new thoughts about the raised topics, a fact that

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positively affected their performance on the creative writing test post administration.

3. Using RAFT strategy motivated the students to write good quality pieces of writing the creative paragraph.
4. Using RAFT writing strategy made writing assignment full of imagination, creativity, and motivation.
5. RAFT writing strategy helped the students to understand their role as writers and learned how to communicate their ideas effectively and creatively in order to make the readers understand what had been written.
6. RAFT strategy made students think and understand deeper about what they were supposed to write and to whom they would direct their creative writing.
7. RAFT strategy gave students a fresh way to think about approaching their writing and they wrote for a specific purpose.
8. RAFT strategy helped students to write more creatively as they were aware who they were writing as, to whom they were writing, what format their writing was and the topic of their writing.
9. Using RAFT strategy helped students generate many details that expanded their ideas.
10. Using RAFT strategy motivated learners to get involved in the learning process and express themselves freely without hesitation, since they were told that their ideas should not and would not be judged during RAFT session. Thus, they felt free while generating their ideas and came up with unique,

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unexpected ideas and unique thoughts that were completely different from one student to another.

11. Using RAFT strategy made it easy for students to express their ideas because this strategy provided opportunities for the students to demonstrate their understanding of the topic
12. RAFT strategy helped students produce a variety of ideas using their imagination and creativity.
13. RAFT strategy helped students in generating new ideas, organizing them, and developing them.
14. The steps of RAFT strategy activities made the students aware of what to do in creative writing.
15. RAFT strategy engaged students in creative writing by motivation and differentiation through choice or by adjusting the level of requirements depending on the student.

The study findings can be beneficial for the other researchers in future research as well, especially those who deal with difficulties pertaining to EFL creative writing or eager to use RAFT strategy for developing the performance of the students in EFL or ESOL.

Finally, it was found that the students who were treated by using RAFT writing strategy had active role in participating during the teaching and learning process. They created a good atmosphere among them in the classroom to stimulate them to be active and creative. These findings supported the findings of other researches such as; Parilasanti, Suarnajaya, and Marjohan, 2014; Lindawaty, Sudarsono & Sada, 2014; Umaemah, Latief & Irawati, 2016).

17. Conclusions: From what has been displayed, the present study came to the following conclusions:

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1. RAFT strategy was used in the present study to overcome the problem of the weaknesses of the 3rd year governmental language preparatory school students' creative writing skills.
2. The creative writing skills required to be developed for the 3rd year governmental language preparatory school students were determined to be (7) skills.
3. The statistical analysis of the obtained data through the creative writing skills test resulted in indicating significant differences in the experimental group students' mean scores on the post administration of the test due to the use of RAFT strategy. RAFT strategy caused significant statistical differences on the overall creative writing skills and on each of the creative writing skills, as well.
4. The 2nd sub-question of the study about the effect size of using RAFT strategy on developing each of the 3rd year governmental language preparatory school students' creative writing skills was answered as it was large effect size on each skill and so the question of the study was, in turn, answered as the total effect size was (0.99).
5. Writing in general and creative writing in particular can be developed in an encouraging environment through which students can express their ideas, feelings and opinions freely.
6. Creating a positive learner-centered environment with using RAFT strategy helped learners participate freely in a non-threatening environment.
7. The change in the teacher's role from an authoritarian to an organizer, facilitator, and a language adviser allowed students to share more responsibilities.

8. The RAFT strategy could be differentiated by readiness level, learning profile, and student interest. It could be tailored to meet the needs of every student. Students who required guided instruction benefited from being given the role, the audience, the format, and the topic. This allowed them to focus on one topic and one point of view at a time.

18. Recommendations:

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers recommended that the Egyptian Ministry of Education should:

1. Place more emphasis on developing students' EFL creative writing skills in general and in preparatory stage in particular.
2. Take RAFT strategy into account while designing English language curriculum due to its importance in motivating the students to get involved in the learning process.
3. Place more emphasis on teaching EFL creative writing as a process not only as a product.

19. Suggestions for Further Research:

The following suggestions for further research might shed light on understanding how to integrate RAFT into EFL learning:

Further research might use RAFT strategy to investigate its impact on developing EFL speaking skills, listening skills and reading skills.

It is also suggested to investigate the impact of using RAFTs strategy on students' attitude towards English language.

It is also suggested to investigate the effectiveness of using RAFTs strategy on students' motivation for English writing skill.

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Moreover, it is suggested to apply RAFT strategy to improve other types of genres of writing like descriptive, narrative, recount etc.

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