
**The Impact of Merging 6TS and Blogging on University Students
Critical Reading and Writing Skills**

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Abstract

The challenges that the whole world have to deal with since Covid-19 pandemic headed all systems in most countries to find solutions. Most countries continued the learning process through online platforms. As a result, there is a need to examine online applications in teaching EFL. Moreover, considering the impact of reflecting students' lives inside their schoolrooms so they can feel the relevance between real life and what is taught inside classrooms, teachers should echo the use of recent technology within the schoolrooms. Providing opportunity for EFL students to mirror their real communication, share experience and communicate through blogging is considered a significant footstep for developing their skills. The purpose of the current study was to examine the impact of merging 6TS approach and blogging in developing university students critical reading and writing skills. It was predicted that university students receiving training program based on merging 6TS approach and blogging would develop their critical reading and writing skills. Questions articulated to realize the aim of the study focused on: determining critical reading and writing skills suitable for university students and Finding out differences between experimental and control group regarding pre- and post- test for critical reading and writing skills. A critical reading checklist, writing skills checklist, pre-post critical reading test, and pre-post writing skills test were

used for data collection. The statistical analysis of the results verified that merging 6TS approach and blogging confidently impacts students critical reading and writing skills.

Keywords: *Blogging, 6TS, Critical Reading, Writing Skills*

اثر استخدام مدخل نموذج 6TS و المدونة الالكترونية في تنمية مهارات القراءة النقدية والكتابة في اللغة الإنجليزية لدى طلاب المرحلة الجامعية

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مستخلص

اجريت هذه الدراسة بهدف تحديد مدى فعالية استخدام كل من مدخل نموذج 6TS و المدونة الالكترونية في تنمية مهارات القراءة النقدية والكتابة في اللغة الإنجليزية لدى طلاب المرحلة الجامعية. تم تصميم خمس ادوات لاجراء الدراسة. تضمنت الادوات: استبانة بمهارات القراءة النقدية المناسبة لطلاب المرحلة الجامعية- استبانة بمهارات الكتابة المناسبة لهم- اختبار لقياس مهارات القراءة النقدية- اختبار لقياس مهارات الكتابة و مقياس تصحيحي للكتابة. وقد اظهرت نتائج الاختبار البعدي وجود فروق ذات دلالة احصائية بين متوسطي درجات المجموعتين التجريبية والضابطة لصالح المجموعة التجريبية .
الكلمات المفتاحية: مهارات القراءة النقدية، مهارات الكتابة، المدونة الالكترونية

Introduction

Practicing critical reading for understanding how words joined together in order to convey comprehensible ideas is the base of mastering writing. Likewise, evaluating the written text require critical reading skills. Hence, critical reading and writing are related skills and raise each other (Kurland, 2000). Critical reading is a fundamental factor of being skilled foreign language learners. Critical reading skills are means by which learners comprehend, analyze, evaluate, judge and critique the text in order to shape and transfer their own thoughts through writing instead of being passive receiver and end user of language (Wallace, 2003, and McCaw, 2008).

Up till now, most learners consider passing the exam is the target of learning reading and writing. Consequently, they tend to read superficially and memorize what they read and write without analyzing or practicing critical thinking. Therefore, they lack the capability to distinguish between proof, argument, claims, and purposes in addition to avoiding to be involved in class discussion. A number of scholars (e.g., Briskin, 2005; Elder and Paul, 2006; Evensen, 2008; Conroy et al., 2009) summarized the problems of learning critical reading and writing. They confirmed that no time is assigned for teaching critical reading and writing. Hence, learners do not have the opportunity to practice critical reading and writing strategies. They confirmed that learners take text as it is rather than analyzing it through their judgment and reasoning. Learners also tend to write irrelevant ideas. Furthermore, they lack writing strategies that enable them to integrate and write discussions in a form of logical thoughts using correct grammatical language.

Besides, they lack motivation and confidence when they write.

Knowledge acquisition necessitates critical reading capability that in turn improves learners' comprehension, critical thinking and writing skills (Kurland, 1998). Therefore, there is a long-lasting relation between critical reading and learners' academic performance (Duke & Pearson, 2002). It is through practicing strategies of critical reading that include: questioning, analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating and summarizing, learners develop their comprehension, thinking ability and writing skills (Kadir et al., 2014 and Yu, 2015). Analyzing ideas through reasoning then arranging thoughts in a logical order is the essence of good writing. In other words, critical reading and writing are related skills that foster each other. Moreover, developing these skills results in achieving advanced level of language proficiency and help learners to communicate effectively (Wallace, 2003; Elder and Paul, 2006). A number of researchers (e.g., Duke & Pearson, 2002; Khabiri & Pakzad, 2011; Kadir et.al., 2014; Yu, 2015) have verified the positive effect of critical reading on learners writing skills as well as critical thinking. Moreover, they assured the effect of critical reading on achieving better academic performance on the other courses.

6TS is a technique for teaching reading and writing molded by Allington (2002). The 6TS represent (Time, Texts, Teach, Talk, Tasks, Test, and Summary). Applying 6TS in Facebook wall, Permanasari (2017) proved that 6TS is effective in developing writing skills. The study proved that 6TS can be applied online in order for learners to use that method in and out of schoolrooms. Permanasari et al., (2019) confirmed the efficacy of using 6TS

scheme in developing reading comprehension skills. 6TS procedures provide learners with comprehensible themes that are relevant to learners and can form the base for their own writing thoughts. Stoller and Grabe (1997) assured that providing learners with set of well-chosen written topics that can meet their needs and interest motivate them to achieve higher academic level of proficiency. Nowadays communication through logging onto different applications and sites has become an indispensable activity of our daily routine. Kramarski and Feldman (2009) confirmed that technology enables students to be active and motivated learners. Yang (2009) has proved that internet motivated learners to enhance their reading skills. Millions of people around the world read and publish their blogs. Most students nowadays use internet for blogging. Among the countless features of blogging that it lets users modify, update and receive feedback to their themes. According to Ducate and Lomicka (2008), in order to expand the learning chances outside schoolrooms, teachers should integrate interactive software as blogs and wikis.

To sum up, the teaching process becomes effective when the learning venue is an echo and reflection to the global society which is now led by technology. As it is important for the academic content to be relevant to students, it is important for teaching tools to be known by students to motivate them develop their skills as well. The global and widespread features of online interaction make it an essential part of students' regular routine. Regarding the significance of increasing critical reading and writing skills and the limitless gains of using online interaction as a learning tool, the main goal of the current study is to provide a proof for the efficacy of merging 6TS

approach and blogging in developing university students' critical reading and writing skills. Moreover, since the spread of Covid 19 and the lockdown that happen as a containment strategy, most countries had to depend online learning as alternative solution for preventing the dissemination of the virus. Hence, most educational systems started using different available applications. This research aim is to investigate the impact of using blogging as an online mean of learning. Hence, 6TS was used as an approach for teaching reading and writing. Microsoft teams was used as a platform for teaching and learners were asked to create their own blogs through WordPress application in order to publish their writings.

The Context of the Problem

Without critical reading skills, learners fail to develop their writing. Unfortunately, Briskin, (2005) and Elder and Paul, (2006) stated that students tend to read to remember specific information for the purpose of passing the final exam which in turn does not help them to analyze, evaluate or use their critical reading skills that eventually affect their writing. Hence, learners fail to develop their critical reading and writing skills. Amanda, et.al, (2007) confirmed that most students unable to grasp what is behind lines. Therefore, they are incapable of differentiating between claims and facts. Moreover, they cannot judge the quality of written text which in turn affect their ability to evaluate or develop their own writing skills. Learners difficulties in writing include: inability to write grammatical sentences, inability to join sentences to make coherent paragraph, and lack of critical reading skills that enable students to evaluate a written text then produce ideas about their own writing (Grami, 2010; Al Fadda, 2012;

Amin & Alamin, 2012; Al Murshidi, 2014). Additionally, Abdel Gawad, 2003; El-Sherbini, 2006; Eid, 2008 and Conroy, et al., 2009) agreed that most students cannot express their ideas in a comprehensible way through writing. Furthermore, they do not think of English as a mean of communication but as academic course that they have to pass in the exam. Since they do not get training on writing for a purpose or audience besides the main concern of most teachers is the final written paragraph that should be grammatically correct, students lack the capability to choose words and link sentences to convey their ideas. Therefore, a student's final production is not a consistent or proper piece of writing. Taking into account the significance of developing critical reading skills that positively affect students' writings, the leading target of the current study is to provide proof for the efficacy of merging 6TS approach and blogging in developing university students' critical reading and writing skills.

Statement of the Problem

College students need the capability to read critically. Besides, they need to have advanced writing skills. Hence, the author advocates that merging 6TS approach and blogging might improve students' critical reading and writing skills.

Questions

- 1- What are the critical reading skills proper for college students?
- 2- What are the writing skills proper for college students?
- 3- What are the features of merging 6TS approach and blogging that helps increasing critical reading and writing skills?
- 4- What is the efficacy of merging 6TS approach and blogging in increasing critical reading skills?

5- What is the efficacy of merging 6TS approach and blogging in increasing writing skills?

Significance

1. Helping students to learn innovative schemes for increasing critical reading skills.
2. Assisting learners to practice different approaches for increasing writing skills.
3. Directing English language syllabuses designers towards the significance of incorporating 6TS approach.
4. Examining Word Press application as an educational tool that could be used within university students.

Hypotheses

1. There is statistically weighty dissimilarity between the mean score of experimental group and the control group on the post-administration of critical reading test favoring the experimental one.
2. There is statistically weighty dissimilarity between the mean score of the experimental group on the pre- and post- administration of writing test favoring the post administration scores.
3. There is statistically weighty dissimilarity between the mean score of the experimental group and the control group on the post administration of the critical reading test favoring the experimental one.
4. There is statistically weighty dissimilarity between the mean score of the experimental group on the pre- and post- administration of the writing test favoring the post administration scores.

Delimitations

1. A sample of the first year students from faculty of Engineering at

Horus University.

2. Critical reading skills classified in accordance with the cognitive domain of Bloom' Taxonomy (the higher order processes: analysis – synthesis –evaluation).
3. Four writing sub–skills (organization, word choice, coherence, and sentence fluency).
4. The spring semester of the academic year 2020/2021.

Review of Literature

Learners need to read with the goal of analyzing and filtering knowledge instead of taken it for granted. They need to take ownership of what they write in order to write meaningful ideas. Critical reading and writing are inseparable processes that foster and raise each other. Moreover, they are essential skills for learners to judge and filter knowledge in order to reflect and write their own logical and meaningful ideas. Hereafter, critical reading and writing are the base for fruitful communication which is the core aim of learning a foreign language.

Analytical and critical skills are indispensable for university students. Critical thinking is the base for higher–level learning beside improving writing skills (Qoura and Zahran, 2018). Riley (2006) and Ling Liaw (2007) confirmed that critical thinking enables learners to achieve proficiency in language learning. Al–Hazmi (2006) approved that writing and critical thinking are intellectual and interrelated skills that promote each other. Moreover, Lisa (2008) found that training university students on questioning and critical skills develops their critical reading skills. In the same vein, Içmez (2009) revealed that receiving training on critical reading skills not only develop critical

skills but also motivation towards reading as well. Since reading is a thinking process, critical reading capability reinforce and promote critical thinking practices and vice versa. Additionally, Zin & Eng (2014) reported that critical thinking reinforced through practicing critical reading. Moreover, various studies (e.g., Sultan, et al., 2017; Alqatanani, 2017; Karabay, 2015; Zin, Eng, & Hong & Zhiyuan, 2014; Khodary & Abdallah, 2014; Tsai, et al., 2013) examined the impact of critical reading on EFL students. It was found that critical reading positively affects students' critical thinking and academic development as well.

Producing a convenient final written text requires planning several intellectual processes through which learners discover and search ideas in order to reexamine, modify, evaluate and rearrange in a logical order (Ghaith, 2002; Elder and Paul, 2006; Riley, 2006). Those intellectual processes require critical thinking. Therefore, developing critical reading in turn enhance writing skills since critical reading includes critical thinking which is essential for writing. Likewise, people learn by doing consequently learning writing happens by practicing writing. According to National Council of Teachers of English (2004), writing should be practiced in and outside schoolrooms revealing various purpose and addressing different audience. Moreover, writing skills are developed through practicing different types of writing, depending different purposes, creating social network and getting feedback. Unfortunately, EFL learners face many difficulties concerning developing reading and writing skills. According to results of a number of studies (e.g., Conroy, et al., 2009; Al Fadda, 2012; Amin & Alamin, 2012; Al

Murshidi, 2014), the absence of purpose, skills, motivation, training and the lack of higher-order thinking that enable learners to logically develop and make their ideas visible through writing are among the difficulties that learners face when learning reading and writing. Receiving a methodical training on comprehending and evaluating ideas enable learners to become experienced in reading and capable of internalizing their experience in writing (Pasch and Norsworthy, 2001; National Council of Teachers of English, 2004).

In order for students to interact with real audience, write with different purpose, get feedback and produce meaningful writings that in turn motivate them towards developing their writing skills, teachers need to create opportunities for such interaction. The advancement of internet proposes that teachers should depend new methods for teaching reading and writing. Boling (2008) suggested encouraging students to create blogs and assured that blogs motivate students to read, write and interact with audience. Furthermore, Read and Fisher (2006) as well as Huang and Liu (2007) cross-examined students to explore why they use blogging. They confirmed that students prefer using blogs to communicate and share their experience with others. Consequently, it is anticipated that training university students using 6TS learning through encouraging them create their own blogs would motivate them to read critically in order to enhance their writings.

Critical Reading Skills

Wallace (2003) is convinced that critical reading is a social process where the schoolroom is community that create a close relation between writers, texts and readers. In such schoolroom, students learn to share, cooperate, relate their understanding. Kurland

(2000a) defined critical reading as deep, thoughtful and investigative reading that implicates analyzing the text in accordance with previous knowledge. Critical reading operationally defined as the capability to practice profound reading along with filtering information through deep thinking in order to accept logical facts and avoid what is ambiguous and it is measured by reproducing a well-developed piece of writing. Critical reading capability enables students to go beyond the written text rather than being a passive receiver and consumer of written ideas, going through pages without comprehending what is between lines (McCaw, 2008). It is believed that readers combine between process and product scopes. Process in reading refer to the relation between the readers and the written text in which the readers comprehend the association of ideas together to form a certain meaning. Product refers to the readers' trials to relate the written text to their prior knowledge (Alderson, 2000). Reading skill has significance impact in the process of foreign language learning as it is a process of investigation and searching for a meaning. It is a mixture of understanding the written text and originating intellectual comprehensive meaning from it.

The process of teaching reading at university level where English is a foreign language is divided into literal, interpretative and critical reading training. Moreover, Eanes (1997) Burns et al., (1996) confirmed that those skills are arising consecutively. In order to read critically, readers need to drive further than the informative conception of the scripts. Furthermore, it requires making decisions about the authenticity of the thoughts indicated by the authors. Critical readers do not take writers ideas for granted. They analyze

and judge the significance and reality of written texts (Douglas, 2000). It is through examining main thoughts, defining the purpose, distinguishing authors' tone and separating interpretations and proofs, learners manage to be effective critical readers (Walz, 2001). Karabay (2015) assured that when practicing critical reading, learners make critical notes, separate opinions and facts and evaluate written texts. As well, several studies have been done to improve learners' critical reading capability (e.g., Alqatanani, 2017; Ellozy & Mustafa, 2010; Camp & Camp, 2013; and Tomasek, 2009). Those studies initiated that learners who trained and practiced proper approaches and schemes have developed critical skills. Subsequently, those studies supported the idea of training learners how to practice critical reading.

Critical reading is seen as just interpreting text, saying words properly or training on using grammar. According to a number of scholars (e.g., Lehto et al., 2001; Britt and Sommer, 2004; Nassaji, 2003 MacMillan, 2014) there is a colossal difference between reading lines and between lines or shallow and profound reading. Reading lines means comprehending text while reading between lines means to find meaning that is intended but not directly stated in the written text. What is articulated outside of words is of a great significant for learners in order to comprehend the real meaning, evaluate, judge and differentiate between assumptions and facts. MacMillan (2014) explained that shallow reading is just reading the words while profound reading is going beyond the words. Full understanding of a written text requires both reading and critical reading: comprehending literal and intended meaning that include reading lines and between

lines. Critical reading as confirmed by Abbott (2013) and MacMillan (2014) requires practice. Teachers should train students how to analyze text in order to recognize the intended meaning of the author. Moreover, they should develop independent thinking of their students to be able to separate assumptions from proof and facts (White 2004).

In short, critical thinking capabilities which are developed through practicing critical reading positively impact critical reading skills. And due to the significance of being critical readers who are able to grow their understanding instead of inactive receiving information, students need to be trained on skills that are required for practicing critical reading.

Relation between Critical Reading and Writing and Critical Thinking

Critical reading is a critical thinking process. Thinking is the component that is responsible for creating a meaning to text. Analyzing, evaluating and linking what is read with previous knowledge require critical thinking. Furthermore, critical reading is directed by readers' intellectual interest and searching attitude that headed readers towards examining writers' thoughts. Fundamentally, thinking, reading and writing share the same strategic result which is producing a meaning to presented information. Critical reading requires thinking in order to analyze, judge, evaluate information and comprehend author's vision and indirect intended meaning. In the same vein, writing requires practicing critical reading and thinking in order to explore and extend ideas to build new knowledge (Ruddle, 2008).

The reader, text, prior knowledge, reading strategies and metacognitive awareness are main components of meaning-making process. When readers read a certain text, they tend to relate the information included to their own previous knowledge using metacognitive strategies (Linderholm et al., 2000; Geiger and Millis, 2004). Guterman (2002) and Eilers and Pinkley (2006) added that thinking is a dynamic component of meaning-making process as it is the key for building independent readers who are able to develop their critical reading skills. Critical reading is viewed as a process of critical thinking in which readers extract meaning from a text through making negotiation and dialogue with the text. A link between readers' prior knowledge and the text is also made to reach a full comprehension of a text. Therefore, thinking is the base of critical reading. Kurland (2000a) viewed critical reading as analytical process based thinking through which readers analyze the text in light of their former understanding. Furthermore, readers depend profound reading. They go further than the literal presented meaning through dealing with ideas as hypothesis that needed to be examined. Reader rely on thinking in order to differentiate between opinions and facts. It is through thinking, readers accept logical ideas and avoid unclear assumptions. Likewise, critical thinking is a critical reading process. Readers need to have information and knowledge about the topic in order to evaluate it. They need materials to think about. Therefore, developing critical thinking necessitates practicing reading. Consequently, practicing reading is the base for developing critical thinking which in turn results in developing critical reading skills. Both critical reading and critical thinking can be measured

through students' writings. In the same way, as writing is not only conveying words but also presenting certain theme in a logical and organized way that can convince the reader. And so, critical thinking is the base of good writing (Lee & Murray 2013). Thinking is shaped and presented through writing (Richardson & St Pierre 2005). Moreover, through well-developed writing, readers communicate and interact with the written text (Liamputtong 2013). Hence, writing is indispensable skill that transfer ideas, facts, meaning and thinking. Besides, Sultan et al., (2017) assured the accessibility of reading and getting information from countless online resources. Thus, the researchers confirmed the significance of training on and practicing critical reading skills in order to judge, evaluate then decide the proper thoughts and accepting them and rejecting unconvinced information.

Writing Skills

All the way through the different phases of school, students are asked to read countless text and write different typescripts. Consequently, reading and writing are inseparable skills (Snow, 2002). Furthermore, comprehension ability enables readers to write. Improved reading means improved writing. Improving reading basically is based on critical thinking (Kurland, 1998). Writing is the reflected shape of thinking and it is not separated from social and cultural context Paivi et al., (2004). According to Kelly et al., (2004), writing should be regarded as a process in which students use their thinking to reflect what they read in addition to their feeling, attitude and individuality. Ruddell (2008) defines writing as a process of deep thinking to express ideas in written text. Writing is operationally

defined as transferring ideas, thoughts, opinions and knowledge gained by critical reading into a meaningful and purposeful written context. According to Ling Liaw (2007), there is an adjacent relation between thinking and language proficiency. Thinking and writing are mental processes that strengthen and support each other McQuade (1998). Critical thinking, authentic materials and activities, cooperative groups and good relation between learners and teacher are significant factors in teaching writing Kelly et al. (2004). Yet, writing has seen as assigned topic on students by their teachers in which they have to tape information about that topic. The main concern when writing is using correct grammar and spelling in order to get good grades. Thus, writing has been considered as a task rather than a process for explaining views and ideas (Ruddell, 2008). According to Mayer (1999), teaching that stresses writing accurate spelling, punctuation, and grammar rather than building meaningful connected ideas decreases students' capabilities to communicate and extend their knowledge and interpretations. It is advocated that effective reading leads to effective writing. Reading fills readers' storage of knowledge and ideas so they can connect words properly to express their ideas. Thus, reading is the key for good writing. Additionally, Ruddell (2008) confirmed that authentic material strengthens writing teaching process since learners become able to link academic skills to real-life contexts. Besides, cooperation between students to accomplish a writing task is effective than working independently. Collaboration enable learners to access thinking of others (Kelly et al., 2004).

In sum, writing is a mean of communication which is based on

learners critical thinking which in turn necessitates practicing critical reading. Good writing is an image of critical reading and thinking. Writing is a process of thinking that results in building meaning and expanding knowledge. This process of thinking does not happen only inside classrooms. Writing for the purpose of addressing real audience requires working collaboratively that provide opportunities for group discussion, negotiation of meaning, developing thinking, engaging in authentic tasks and developing writing.

Factors causing the academic critical reading and writing difficulties

It was reported that the improvement of critical reading skills happens as a result of giving learners proper reading texts (Tsai et al., 2013). Yet, Khodary & AbdAllah (2014) found that learners lack the capabilities to identify the writer's main thoughts or aim. They also lack the ability to separate facts from personal opinions. The researchers stated that the lack of training and unsuitable strategies used in teaching can be the causes of learners' inability to practice critical reading skills. As for writing, according to Chou (2011), lack of training on being critical thinkers in addition to depending on their teachers are among the factors that make students especially EFL learners encounter problems in writing. Lack of motivation is among the causes of writing difficulties as well. Latif (2011) confirmed that EFL learning difficulties in writing are represented in the lack of writing strategies and students' tendency to study the examinable parts.

In investigating the strategies that might change negative attitudes and overcome the difficulties students face during reading and

writing, it was found that involving students in the reading process rather than the formative technique followed in teaching is the best method to motivate them to read (Nagy & Townsend 2012 and Earley 2014). Tasks and teaching that are based on active involvement of students result in positive interaction with the reading materials (Dousay et al. 2012, and MacMillan, 2014). In the same vein, addressing students' interests, giving them opportunities to choose the topics to write about, realistic context and writing about topics that are related to students' real life are factors that increase students' motivation towards developing writing (Alfaki, 2015). Riley (2006) explained that writing is a reflection of reading in which writers convert what they know into a printed text. Besides, (Cox 2012) added that feedback inspire learners to enhance their performance. Reading ability increase writing skills and vice versa.

To go over the main points, writing is not an image for correct use of grammar or punctuation. It is an echo for arranged ideas that include knowledge gained from reading and writers' clarifications. Likewise, critical reading is not an echo for correct pronunciation or answering some questions. It is a process of profound and critical thinking. Hence, training on being critical thinkers enable learners to evaluate the text and distinguish between opinions, facts, proof and insignificant details. Since learning is a social process plus reading and writing skills reinforce each other, involving learners and considering their needs is the base for developing their skills.

6TS Approach

Allington (2002) constructed a teaching method for developing reading and writing and call it 6TS (Time, Texts, Teach, Talk, Tasks,

Test, Summary). Permanasari (2018) used these steps to develop reading and writing skills. It was applied online in order for students to use it in and outside schoolrooms. Moreover, Permanasari et.al., (2019) showed that online usage of these steps were effective in developing reading since students had more time to read outside classroom. This approach is based on seven steps: (1) time in which the main concern is the number of texts that learners should read each week, (2) text that should be based on students' level and background, (3) teach that is planned in accordance with time and teaching materials that give priority to students' needs, (4) talk which means the interaction between lecturer and students that is based on problem-solving and discussions, (5) task that is centered on comprehension and designed for the purpose of developing reading and writing, (6) summary in which learners are trained how to categorize and pick the most significant information, evidences and data, and (7) test for evaluating learners reading and writing. Dissimilar to communicative approach and task-based approach, texts in 6TS approach offer chances for EFL instructional activities and for using language for communication. The selected tasks for the purpose of language learning should not be forced on the obtainable materials. The instructional topics and material should be well-matched with the academic goals then the chosen tasks can be assigned in accordance with the topics and academic goals. Accordingly, student's needs, teaching materials, teaching methods, interaction between teacher and learners, and the academic performance are reinforced through using 6TS approach. Texts which are the main source of curriculum design are chosen in

accordance with learners' interests, lecturer capabilities and course resources with the aim of reinforcing reading and writing. Teach and talk are linked to the topics and providing learners with chances to extend their knowledge besides using language. Tasks are instructional activities for teaching language skills, vocabulary and structure. They are prearranged and sequenced within the topics to achieve the academic goals. Summary is planned to teach learners how to pick significant details and information. Test is designed in light of studied topics and planned tasks that aimed at evaluating learners progress (Stoller and Grabe, 1997: Allington and Johnston, 2001: Allington, 2002).

6TS approach provides EFL teachers and learners with planned steps for supporting the learning of language and content as well. The teaching materials that are chosen in accordance with students' needs and interests results in increasing their motivation and engagement in the learning process. Permanasari (2018) investigated the impact of using 6TS approach in Facebook wall in developing reading and writing. An interview and a test were used for data collection. The results showed that students were motivated to read and write. It was proved that 6TS approach can be applied online on Facebook. It was mentioned that social media is an appropriate medium for developing language skills. Additionally, Permanasari et al., (2019) investigated the effectiveness of E-6TS learning in teaching reading for university students who study English language. The researchers applied the steps online in and outside the academic schoolroom. The results showed that the students of

the experimental group outperformed the control group. It was proved that E-6TS learning was effective for teaching reading.

Blogging

According to a number of scholars (e.g., Armstrong & Retterer, 2008, Kelley, 2008; Zhang, 2009; Fageeh, 2011; Van Epps (2012) weblog or blogging as a medium for language teaching is an effective educational tool and a mean for promoting critical thinking, literacy skills, motivation and positive attitude towards writing. Poling (2005) defined blogging as an educational application that reinforce communication between learners and enhance comprehension of academic course. It is operationally defined as educational tool that by which 6TS approach is applied for promoting critical reading and writing skills. Campbell (2003) classified blogs into three kinds; tutor blog that is constructed by teacher to motivate learners to read the uploaded texts and encourage self-study and exploration of other online materials that are related to these texts, learner blog which is mainly contain learners' response to reading texts and assigned writing, and class blog in which learners can upload their writings, summary and discussion that are related to academic topics. Through making interviews with students, Levin and Wadmany (2006) investigated students' opinions on blogs. They found that addressing real audience motivates students towards enhancing writing. According to a number of researchers (e.g., Simsek, 2009; Read and Fisher, 2006; Larson and Marsh, 2005; Glewa and Bogan, 2007), authentic tasks make instruction meaningful learning experience. Therefore, authentic writing is the key for comprehension and developing learners writing performance. Lee (2010) examined

the impact of using blogs on university students study writing skills. Results showed that students writings were developed and their motivation had increased as well. Furthermore, in a similar study, Bernstein (2004) assured that blogs increased students writing skills. The communication that takes place between students in blogs can be a method for getting a feedback and making modification on students' writings. Ware (2008) proved that blogs are medium for posting feedback and corrections for grammar mistakes. Therefore, the researcher recommended using blogs for developing writing.

Blogs offer opportunity for sharing reading and expressing ideas through writing. Moreover, blogs are accessible for many users. Contrasting online websites that display texts and images uploaded by web designers, blogs have platforms for sharing and communication (Armstrong & Retterer, 2008; Nepomuceno, 2011). Hence, different and real audience can read students writings which in turn results in motivating students and developing positive attitudes towards developing writing.

The Impact of Merging Blogging and 6TS Approach in developing Critical reading and Writing Skills

Reading and writing are comparable. Both reading and writing require having prior knowledge. Besides, reading and writing can be developed using the same strategies like questioning and paraphrasing Tompkins (1999). A number of studies (e.g., (Davis and McGrail, 2009; Larson and Marsh2009; Read and Fisher, 2006; Golder 2005). Godwin-Jones (2003) demonstrated that learning is a social and cooperative process that provides students with opportunities to share ideas and communicate with each other in

order to enhance comprehension and develop academic performance. Furthermore, blogging allows students to post their writings and access other blogs so they can read and write comments. Also, blogs make learners communicate with each other in a social network. Since social interaction is required for increasing communication between learners and teachers that in turn enhance understanding and learning, blogs can be effective educational venue that make learners experience sense of ownership and responsibility that motivates them towards developing their skills. In a study that examined students' response in online journals after reading e-books. Davis and McGrail (2009) found that creating their own blogs and accessing other blogs enable students to share ideas and promote sense of accountability and identity. Moreover, it was assured that collaborative and online social based learning helped students who needed guidance. Fisher (2006) as well as Simsek (2009) examined students view on blogs. It was found that learners do their best when they write on blogs because they address real audience. Baker et al. (2009), Read and Fisher (2006), stated that having real audience motivates students to enhance their communication skills and writings. Besides, it was found that students who practiced reading online books and journals were highly motivated to post their comments and discussions and express their ideas and opinions on their blogs. It is established that students who have opportunity to express their ideas and voices through their personal blogs experience a sense of individuality that reinforce confidence and make them feel like real writers who address real audience (Read and Fisher, 2006 and Davis and McGrail, 2009).

Additionally, being aware of social, political, economic and all activities that are happening in their country enable students to extend knowledge and write about real life which in turn help them develop writing as they can address real audience outside classrooms. DelliCarpini, (2006) confirms that reading and writing reinforce each other. (Christo et al., 2015) assure that reading is essential for writing especially for EFL students in order to extend their knowledge of words, phrases and meanings to be able to address local and non-local audience. Subsequently, blogging could be the platform by which students can share their writings, read, get feedback and address real audience outside schoolrooms. As for the proper approach that might enhance reading and writing, according to Permanasari (2018 and 2019), 6TS approach was proved to be effective in developing reading and writing. According to (Kurland, 2000) (Elder and Paul, 2006), good writing is a production of critical reading. The ability to evaluate a text enhance writing skills. Students who know how to arrange their ideas in a logical order to deliver a specific meaning are good writers. More specifically, Critical reading and good writing raise each other. Furthermore, both need critical thinking. Understanding how words are connected and presented to convey meaningful ideas is the base for writing. Thinking help understanding how language works which in turn results in good writing and necessitates a lot of reading.

The review of literature showed that critical reading and writing skills promote each other. On the other hand, it was confirmed that blogging motivates students towards developing their writings as they address real audience besides it makes them independent learners

who are responsible for choosing the topics. Likewise, 6TS approach proved to be effective in developing reading and writing since it considers learners' needs and interests. Therefore, it was anticipated that teaching reading and writing using 6TS approach and allowing students to create their own blog to share their writing might develop their critical reading and writing skills.

Methodology

Participants

A sample of faculty of Engineering students from Horus University was chosen and prearranged unintentionally to an experimental group (N =35), and a control one. Their age ranged from nineteen to twenty. The lecturer of the experimental group was the researcher herself.

Design

Implementing the quasi-experimental design, both groups pre-tested on the writing and critical reading skills. The experimental group was trained using 6TS approach, whereas the control group received the regular teaching. Both groups received the post application of critical reading and writing test to measure the improvement in their performance.

Instruments

The following instruments were designed by researchers:

- 1)- Critical reading skills checklist.
 - 2)- Writing skills checklist.
 - 3)- Critical reading test.
 - 4)- Writing skills test.
-

Validity of the tools was established through jury validation. Alpha Cronbach was used to size the extent of internal consistency for the tests. The value of alpha coefficient for the critical reading test was 0.732 that indicates satisfactory reliability. Alpha coefficient value for the writing skills exam was 0.715 which shows an adequate rate of the test consistency.

The Treatment: Merging 6TS Approach and Blogging for Increasing EFL University Students Critical Reading and Writing Skills

Objectives

Considering the review of correlated researches, a training program was constructed that purposes:

- 1- Improving college students' critical reading skills.
- 2- Improving pre-service teachers' writing skills.
- 3- Improving collaborative and self-regulating skills.

Description, Duration and Content

Based on 6TS approach and WordPress platform, the program was designed for students of the experimental group. The program consisted of ten sessions. Each session was 45 minutes. The program continued for 10 weeks (February, March and April) during the academic year 2020 /2021 from 8 /2 / 2021 till 23 /4 /2021. The teaching takes place using Microsoft Teams.

Evaluation

According to their participation and contribution in creating blogs through WordPress platform, students were evaluated. They were given remarks and recommendations that helped and encouraged them to write troubles they meet.

Results and Discussion

T-test was applied to measure and compare the performance of learners in the critical reading test in both groups as presented in table 1.

Table 1. Comparing the critical reading skills of the control and experimental group on the post test

	Groups	Test	Mean	SD	t value	Sig.
Critical Reading Skills	Experimental	Pre-test	15.03	5.81	8.680	0.001
		Post-test	25.27	2.09		
	Control	Pre-test	16.58	3.01	3.504	0.397
		Post-test	20.02	2.89		

Unsuitable teaching method can cause lack of critical reading skills as confirmed by Khodary & AbdAllah (2014). Teaching using 6TS approach motivated students to practice critical thinking as it considers their interests and needs besides critical thinking positively affect critical reading. That is why results showed that the experimental group developed their performance in critical reading. This result is supported by Permanasari et al., (2019) who confirmed that online application of 6TS approach was effective in developing reading skills since it gives students opportunities to read outside schoolrooms. The current study depends using blogs that encourage students to read critically in order to write as native writers. They were keen to use correct structure and at the same time use remarkable words and phrase, metaphors, idioms, and comprehensible ideas. Consequently, they developed their critical reading skills.

T-test was used to define experimental group performance before and after training using the suggested approach as revealed in Table 2.

Table 2. Comparing the critical reading skills of experimental group on the pre and post-test

Critical Reading Skills	Test	Mean	SD	t value	Sig.
Total	Pre-test	15.03	5.81	8.680	0.001
	Post-test	25.27	2.09		

As it is presented in Table 2 the experimental group outclassed the control one. Davis and McGrail (2009) confirmed that the collaborative attitude and sharing ideas enable students to develop their performance. Subsequently, the rise in the performance of the experimental group might be assumed that learners were taught using 6TS approach. Additionally, merging 6TS and blogging gave students opportunities to publish their writings that resulted in motivating them to practice critical reading in order to enhance their writings skills. The current result is in accordance with Larson and Marsh (2005), and Simsek (2009) who declared that creating their own blogs make students towards enhancing their writings as they talk to real audience in addition to being responsible for their blogs stimulate their motivation to improve their performance.

t-test was applied to state learners' performance in writing for both groups as exposed in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparing the writing performance of the control and experimental group on the post test

	Groups	Test	Mean	SD	t value	Sig.
Writing Skills	Experimental	Pre-test	8.09	3.87	6.783	0.001
		Post-test	17.31	1.91		
	Control	Pre-test	8.75	2.92	3.015	0.461
		Post-test	12.79	3.02		

The above results indicate that the experimental group outdid the control one. This result could be interpreted that experimental group

students had opportunities to choose the topics they want to write about. This result goes in line with Quantum and Chakraverty (2000), Alfaki (2015) who assured that writing about topics related to their interests stimulates students writing skills. Moreover, getting feedback from real audience drive them towards improving their skills which is supported by Cox (2012) who confirmed that feedback is beneficial for the purpose of making modifications. Accordingly, experimental group students managed to enhance their performance. Whereas control group did not train using 6TS approach. Moreover, they did not have an opportunity to publish their topics. So, they could not improve their writings as their counterparts in the experimental group as Chou (2011) and Latif (2011) confirmed that lack of training and lack of motivation that is a result of absence of real audience to address are significant factors that make students unwilling to write.

T-test was applied to define and compare the development of students' performance before and after training using 6TS and blogging as publicized in Table 4.

Table 4. Comparing the writing performance of experimental group on the pre and post-test

	Groups	Test	Mean	SD	t value	Sig.
Writing Skills	Experiment	Pre-test	8.09	3.87	6.783	0.001
		Post-test	17.31	1.91		

The related literature revealed that reading and writing reinforce each other. MacKenzie (2012), Nagy & Townsend (2012) and Earley (2014) demonstrated that instructors who involve their students in the process of reading succeed in motivating students to read. Training experimental group students using 6TS approach in addition to

knowing that they are going to publish their writing motivated them to practice critical reading in order to enhance their writings. This result is supported by Riley (2006) who confirmed that writing is a reflected image of reading. Training experimental group students how to read critically helped them reflect that experience in their writings. Thus, they managed to develop their writing skills as revealed in the above table.

Discussion

The statistical analysis of results revealed that experimental group students outperformed their counterparts in the control group which in turn confirms that merging 6TS approach and blogging ensured a progressive impact on learners critical reading and writing skills. The steps of 6TS approach are designed with the purpose of supporting instructional activities and tasks that are used for extending students' knowledge and using language for communication to develop reading and writing skills (Allington, and Johnston, 2001 and Allington, 2002). Teaching to the experimental group according to these steps offered planned and organized stages that helped them to use the language for communication and promote critical reading and writing. Due to the application of 6TS approach, learners could improve their writing and critical reading skills. Permanasari (2018 and 2019) applied 6TS approach online. The results of both studies proved the efficacy of 6TS approach in teaching reading and writing. The students in the current study needed to think critically in order to develop their writing. The literature confirmed that writing is a reflected image of practicing reading. Hence, experimental group students needed to be trained how to read critically in order to grasp

how language used to convey ideas. So, they offered a number of reading texts and trained to read critically using the 6TS steps. Moreover, they were asked to write about topics of their own choice and told that these writings would be published on their blogs that in turn gave them sense of authority and responsibility and encouraged them to develop their reading and writing skills. Kurland, (2000) and Elder and Paul (2006) considered writing as the end product of critical writing. Good writing requires comprehending how words linked together to deliver comprehensible ideas. To reach those results of the current study, students of the experimental group were trained using 6TS approach that follows structured steps and encouraged to create their own blogs to read and publish their writings.

There were some factors that spread using of the experimental group students' blogs among their colleagues in and outside the university which in turn participated in constructing a big number of real audience to experimental group writings. All events were canceled and postponed around the globe to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus, which originated in Wuhan, China, and had affected many people in all parts of the world. Consequently, universities and schools in Egypt as well as the whole world closed their doors starting March 15th for the safety of students. However, study was sustained through virtual meetings with students. The researchers depend Microsoft teams as a platform for training and meeting students. As all Horus university students –the community of the experimental group– used Microsoft teams as the primary mean for receiving lectures and meeting professors, experimental group were

inspired to have their own platform. Subsequently, they created their own blogs using WordPress platform to include all their reading and writings. Hence, getting feedback enhance writing as Cox (2012) confirmed, experimental group students made use of their audience comments and could enhance their writings. Moreover, realistic activities make learning beneficial as assured by many scholars (e.g., Baker, Rozendal, & Whitenack, 2009; Simsek, 2009; Read and Fisher, 2006; Glewa and Bogan, 2007). Writing for real audience was profitable for the experimental group. Additionally, as Bernstein (2004) Ware (2008) (Armstrong & Retterer, 2008) Lee (2010) and Nepomuceno, 2011) proved that communication that happens in blogs is a mean for reading and making corrections and modifications on students' writings. Therefore, experimental group students could enhance their critical reading and writing skills.

Conclusions

The relation between merging 6TS approach and blogging and enhancing critical reading and writing skills was examined. As stated by results, it was found that merging blogging and 6TS approach has a positive impact on critical reading and writing skills for a number of reasons. First, students practiced critical reading as a part of writing their own topics. They did not read critically for final exam purposes. Second, they given opportunities to choose the topics they would like to write about. Third, they addressed real audience and make use of feedback and comments. Fourth, they published their writing on their own blogs. Subsequently, they felt responsibility and were keen to improve their writings and motivated to show and publish their work before real audience. Fifth, blogging was the only mean of

communication between students due to quarantine that started in March to avoid Coronavirus infection which in turn helped in reading and interacting with blogs of the experimental group. As proved by (Armstrong & Retterer, 2008) (Nepomuceno, 2011) blogs are easily reached by many users and good platform for sharing reading and writing, experimental group students could address many readers so they were motivated to improve their skills. Literature about 6TS approach confirmed that the main concern of the approach is developing reading and writing. Furthermore, the literature about blogging explained that it is a virtuous platform for sharing writing, communication, and addressing real audience. Consequently, the current study tried to make use of merging both 6TS approach and blogging to develop critical reading and writing skills. Therefore, with regard to the results that proved the positive impact of merging 6TS approach and blogging in developing critical reading and writing skills, future research is needed to investigate the impact of 6TS approach on students critical thinking. Likewise, upcoming research is needed to explore the impact of blogging on students' motivation.

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