The Effect of Using the Story- Mapping Technique on Developing Tenth Grade Students' Short Story Writing Skills in EFL

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Abstract

The current study aimed at investigating the effect of using the story- mapping technique on developing tenth grade students' short story writing skills in EFL.

The study attempted to answer the following questions:

1-What are the short story writing skills needed for tenth grade students in EFL?

2- What is the effect of the using the story-mapping technique on developing tenth grade students' short story writing skills in EFL?

Tools of the study included a checklist to identify the short story writing skills needed for tenth grade students in EFL as well as a pre- post short story writing test and its scoring scale.

Results revealed the effect of using the story mapping technique on developing tenth grade students' short story writing skills.

Keywords: Story- Mapping Technique, Tenth Grade, Short Story Writing

1. Introduction:

Promoting students' writing skills is considered to be one of the most important tasks which EFL learners need to develop throughout their schooling. Banat (2007) pointed out that writing is invaluable for helping students communicate and understand how the parts of language go together.

Conley (1995) noted that writing makes our thoughts and experiences vivid and long lasting and helps us learn things in every subject area. He added that "in many ways, writing is the way we make sense of our world".

Consequently, helping learners master the skill of writing and enabling them to write effectively and interactively is one of the main objectives of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) field.

Bello (1997) indicated that writing plays an essential role in promoting language acquisition as learners experiment with words, sentences, and large chunks of writing to communicate their ideas effectively and to reinforce the grammar and vocabulary they learn in class. He added that "one of the major failing in the traditional curriculum could be attributed to lack of attention given to writing, which is an important avenue for thinking".

In terms of its topics, Shorofat (2007) indicated that writing could be classified into two kinds: functional and creative. Creative writing is the writing through which individuals express their feelings, opinions, reactions, and ideas to the reader in a distinguished literary style. This kind of writing includes several genres such as writing short stories, poems, plays, novels, essays, and description. On the other hand, functional writing is that kind which aims at conveying a specific, direct and clear message to a specific audience. It includes several areas such as writing instructions, formal letters, notes, invitations, advertisements, and reports. (Note 1)

As for the relationship between writing and creativity, Tse and Shun (2000) pointed that creativity is an important aspect of writing.

They noted that creativity has been advocated as one of the six levels of language skills.

Among all the elements of language teaching, writing and creativity seem to be closely interrelated. Lin (1998) indicated that "writing itself is already a manifestation of creativity. On the one hand, writing is the best way to promote creativity of students. On the other hand, stimulating creativity and idea generation is the most effective way of teaching writing".

In addition, the stages of writing: pre- writing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing are expected to contribute to strengthening students' thinking skills because they engage them in processes such as connecting, analyzing and evaluating ideas, a fact that leads to sharpening students thinking skills.

As for the Jordanian educational system, the Ministry of Education pointed out that at the end of the basic stage (tenth grade) students are expected to be able to:

- Write a 3 well- developed paragraphs on a topic of general interest.
- Write a 3 well – developed paragraphs explaining a concept (E.g.: what good citizenship means to me)
- Write a story with a problem and solution.

1.1 Short story writing:

As for short story writing, Murdoch (2002) indicated that "short stories can, if selected and exploited appropriately, provide quality text content which will greatly enhance EFL courses for learners at intermediate level of proficiency". He added that based on short stories, instructors can create a variety of writing activities to help students develop their writing skills.

Besides, short story writing forces students to discipline their writing, emphasize conciseness, and sharpen grammar skills. Self-expression is also an important ingredient in all good essays.

Essex (1997) suggested seven reasons why children should write stories: 1- to entertain. 2- to foster artistic expression. 3- to explore the functions and values of writing. 4- to stimulate imagination. 5- to clarify thinking. 6- to search for identity. 7- to learn to read and write.

Thus, the researcher views short stories as an important ingredient in the curriculum because they could be used as a means to entertain students and develop their language skills.

1.2 Elements of the short story:

There are certain elements that should exist in the short story:

Setting: the time and place in which the story happens. Authors often use descriptions of landscape, scenery, buildings, seasons or weather to provide a strong sense of setting.

Characters: persons, or sometimes even animals, who take part in the action of a short story or other literary work.

The Conflict (problem): the struggle between two people or things in a short story. The main character is usually on one side of the central conflict. The main character may struggle against another important character, against the forces of nature, against society, or even against something inside himself or herself (feelings, emotions, illness).

The Plot (events): the systematic chain of events which make up the short story. Each link in the chain helps to build suspense and to solve a problem.

The Solution: the outcome of the attempts to resolve the problem or conflict.

The Theme: the theme is the controlling idea or belief of the story. It gives a basic meaning to a literary work. Generally, a theme is inferred from the other elements in the short story and often evolves through the conflict experienced by the main character.

Moreover, Tann (1991) pointed out that each story consists of three parts: beginning, middle and ending, indicating that the beginning includes the setting and the characters, whereas the middle includes the problem and events, and the ending includes the resolution and the conclusion".

Based on the above-mentioned argument, the researcher believes that developing students' short story writing skills has a clear impact on all other language skills, especially when students practice using figurative and literal language, their language becomes more concrete, more explicit and more descriptive as well.

1.3 The story mapping technique:

A story map could be viewed as a visual depiction of the settings or the sequence of major events and actions of story characters with the aim of enabling students to relate story events and to perceive structure in literary selections.

Li (2007) noted that a story map is a graphic organizer used to identify the main elements of the story and categorize the main events in sequential order.

The story- mapping technique could be used to enhance students' interpretative abilities by enabling them to visualize story characters, events and setting. Furthermore, the technique could be used to increase students' awareness that story characters and events are interrelated.

Consequently, the researcher believes that the story- mapping technique could play a key role in helping learners identify elements of the story, a fact that is expected to highly contribute to developing learners' short story writing skills.

2. Need for the Study:

In the light of the researcher's observations and experience in the field of English language teaching, little attention is attached to short story writing in EFL composition classes in Jordanian schools**.**

Moreover, the researcher analyzed a random sample of tenth grade students' short stories in EFL. Results showed that most students were not able to compose a short story based on clear elements (setting, characters, problem, plot (events), solution and theme)

Furthermore, the researcher interviewed a number of tenth grade English language teachers (10 teachers) and asked them about obstacles facing learners while writing short stories in EFL composition classes.

The teachers noted that most students face difficulties in writing short stories and stressed the need to place more emphasis on new techniques and methods to be followed in this respect.

As for studies conducted in the field, Khwaileh (1991) highlighted the importance of the pre-writing stage, pointing out that "nearly most teachers of English as a Foreign Language usually ask their students to write a short composition or a story without giving the adequate support or help apart from the meaning of a few related words". Accordingly, students who are not given the opportunity to generate ideas about the given topic, record them and refine them, usually face a great difficulty in writing comprehensive and logical sentences.

Moreover, Alsouqi (2001) stated that one reason for Jordanian students' writing problems might be the use of a traditional approach of composition instruction. He added "Through this traditional approach, teachers roughly explain what features characterize a good text, emphasizing the importance of correct grammar and spelling".

Despite all the efforts exerted by the Ministry of Education in Jordan to develop students' EFL writing skills in general and creative writing , including short story writing in particular, most students still face difficulties in executing their writing tasks and show low level in their abilities to write in the target language.

Thus, the current study comes as an attempt to examine the effect of using the story- mapping technique in composition classes on developing tenth grade students' short story writing skills, especially that the National Agenda of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (2006) has recently recommended creating a curriculum based on developing thinking skills, creativity and problem- solving in order to improve the outcome of the educational process in Jordan.

3. Statement of the Problem:

The problem of the study could be stated in **the low level of tenth grade students in Jordan in short story writing in EFL.**

Consequently, the current study attempted to answer the following two questions:

1-What are the short story writing skills needed for tenth grade students in EFL?

2- What is the effect of the using the story-mapping technique on developing tenth grade students' short story writing skills in EFL?

4 - Aims of the Study:

The current study aimed at developing Jordanian tenth grade students' short story writing skills in EFL.

5- Hypotheses of the Study:

1- There is statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group on the post- test in short story writing in favor of the experimental group.

2- There is statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group on the pre/ post-test in short story writing in favor of the post test scores.

6. Significance of the Study:

The current study is expected to help in the following areas:

1- ***Ministry of Education***: Helping the Ministry develop the outcome of the educational process in Jordan.

2- ***Supervisors and curriculum planners:***

-Providing them with the short story writing skills needed to be taken into consideration while planning EFL curriculum.

-Providing them with a new technique that could be used to develop students' short story writing skills in EFL.

3- ***EFL Teachers***: Helping them follow suitable techniques for developing students' short story writing skills in EFL.

4- ***Students****:* Developing their short story writing skills in EFL

5- ***Researchers****:* Paving the way for other researchers to conduct further studies on developing students' writing skills in general and short story writing skills in particular.

7. Limitations of the Study:

1-The study was confined to developing students' short story writing skills.

2- The study was confined to four classes of tenth grade students randomly chosen from Amman public education schools. (Two classes for the experimental group and the other ones for the control group)

3-The study was conducted in the first term of the academic year 2009- 2010, three months, a 45- minute meeting per week.

8. Tools of the Study:

1- A checklist to identify the short story writing skills needed for tenth grade students in EFL.

2- A pre- post short story writing test and its scoring scale.

9. Variables of the Study:

1- The independent variable:

The story- mapping technique, which was used during the experimental group's composition classes.

2-The dependent variables:

Performance of the experimental group on the short story writing post- test.

10. Method of the Study:

1- The study followed the descriptive method in collecting data on short story writing skills in EFL as well as on the story- mapping technique.

2-The study also followed the quasi- experimental design. Two groups were chosen from Amman public education schools. One served as an experimental group and the other one as control. The researcher administered a pre- post test to the experimental and control groups to test the effect of using the story- mapping technique on developing the experimental group's short story writing skills.

11. Definition of Terms:

11.1- Short Story:

A brief work of fiction that generally focuses on one or two main characters who face a single problem or conflict.

11.2.- Story Mapping:

A graphic organizer used to help tenth grade students identify elements of the short story in EFL composition classes.

12. Procedures of the Study:

1- To answer the first question: **"What are the short story writing skills needed for tenth grade students in EFL**?**"** the researcher has:

A- Reviewed the related literature in the field of creative writing in general.

B- Reviewed the related literature in the field of short story writing in particular.

C- Designed a checklist on the short story writing skills needed for tenth grade students in EFL.

D- Submitted the checklist to specialized jury members to identify the

short story writing skills needed for students of tenth grade in EFL in essay and short story writing.

2- To answer the second question: **"What is the effect of using the story- mapping technique in developing tenth grade students' short story writing skills in EFL?''** the researcher has:

A- Reviewed the related literature that includes tests to measure students' writing skills in general and short story writing skills in particular.

B-Prepared the pre- post test.

C-Submitted the test to specialized jury members to ensure its validity and made the necessary modifications in the light of their observations.

D- Ensured the reliability of the test.

E-Chosen a random sample (control and experimental groups).

F- Administered the short story writing pre- test to both groups.

G- Applied the story- mapping technique on the experimental group.

H- Administered the short story writing post- test to both groups.

I-Collected and analyzed data.

J- Discussed the results of the study.

K- Introduced recommendations and suggestions for further research.

13. Review of Related Studies

13.1 Reynolds (1983) conducted a study to determine the comparative effects that two methodologies (Expressive Writing Methodology and Traditional Writing Methodology) have on the ability of high school students to write stories and essays. The study also aimed at determining if an interaction exists between sex and method of instruction and English achievement level (high achiever or low achiever) and method of instruction on essay and story writing ability.

Subjects 'forty-eight students' were classified into two different groups: one group was instructed by the Expressive Writing Methodology and the other group was instructed by the Traditional Writing Methodology. They were given a pretest story and essay, received a twelve-week period of writing instruction, and then were given an identical posttest.

The main difference between the two groups was that the expressive group participated in expressive writing exercises while the traditional group participated in traditional worksheet exercises. Both groups were involved in the writing process.

No significant differences in story and essay posttest scores between the two groups were observed. No significant interaction effect on story instruction was observed, and no significant interaction effect on essay posttest scores between English achievement level and method of instruction was observed. However, a significant interaction effect on story posttest scores between English achievement level and method of instruction was observed. Further statistical analysis revealed no significant difference on story posttest scores between expressive high achievers and traditional high achievers, but a significant difference in story posttest scores between expressive low achievers and traditional low achievers was observed.

13.2 El Abed (1991) investigated the effect of selected prewriting activities (class discussion and pair discussion) and the effect of no prewriting activity on the quantity and quality of students composition.

The sample of the study consisted of sixty first year students in Hakama Vocational Training Center in Jordan. The students were randomly assigned to one of the three groups: 1) class discussion. 2) pair discussion. 3) No prewriting activity (as control group).

Students of each group completed four compositions, one in each week for four weeks. The first composition (pre-test) was followed by three treatments, each 20 minutes long. After each treatment, the students wrote a composition. The last composition was the posttest.

The compositions were evaluated for quantity (number of words in the composition) and quality (general impression holistic scoring). The composition writing time was ten minutes.

Results of the study showed no significant differences in writing quantity between the selected prewriting activities, class discussion and pair discussion, and the control group.

No significant differences were found in writing quality between the selected prewriting activities and the control group. No significant differences were found among the selected prewriting activities (class discussion and pair discussion) for either writing quantity and writing quality.

13.3 Meyer (1995) investigated whether there was any significant difference in test scores between students instructed in the use of graphic organizers during their creative writings and those students not instructed in their use.

Two third-grade classes from different schools in New Jersey were involved in the 13-week study, and were given many creative writing assignments. The pretest and the posttest were each graded using both holistic scoring and the Fry Readability Formula.

Results indicated that the students using graphic organizers showed an improvement in their creative writing. Graphic organizers helped writers keep to the topic by having their ideas in front of them as they are writing. They also helped the writers to keep things in the correct sequential order.

13.4 Holden (1996) compared the effectiveness of two approaches to teaching writing (formal grammar instruction and the process approach) in students' knowledge of grammar and writing improvement.

The sample of the study consisted of 70 college students divided into two groups: experimental and control. The experimental group was taught using the process approach. No formal grammar instruction was given to the experimental group.

Results indicated that the experimental group scored a higher number of correct answers on the posttest than the control group did. Furthermore, the experimental group attempted to answer more test questions on the posttest than the control group did.

Furthermore, findings revealed that the process approach to teaching writing, which deemphasizes formal grammar instruction, is more effective in improving students' knowledge of grammar than formal grammar instruction

13.5 Albertson and Billingsley (2001) examined the effect of an instructional package consisting of strategy instruction and self-regulation techniques on story writing.

The sample of the study consisted of two gifted, middle school students.

A number of points including story's length, fluency, story's elements, and time were observed before, during and after the application of the instructional package.

Results showed that both participants wrote longer stories, increased writing fluency, included more story elements, and wrote higher quality stories after the implication of the instructional package.

13.6 Ismail (2002) investigated the effects of an integrated process-product approach to writing instruction on developing the creative writing skills of first-year EFL majors at Sohag faculty of Education.

The sample of the study involved seventy-four students from Sohag Faculty of Education. They were randomly chosen from the population of first-year EFL majors and randomly assigned to a control group and an experimental group.

The experimental group students were taught writing using the integrated process-product approach while the control students did not receive such instructional treatment.

Findings of the study indicated that the process-product approach to writing instruction had significant effects on improving the experimental group EFL majors knowledge of the writing processes, their creative writing skills and products as well as their attitudes towards writing in English as a foreign language. The study recommended that 1- EFL teachers at various educational levels be trained in the implementation of the integrated process-product approach to writing instruction. 2- pre-service as well as in service EFL teachers be systematically trained in fostering and evaluating creativity in the language arts especially writing.

13.7 Sturm and Erickson (2002) examined the effects of two forms of concept mapping, hand-drawn and computer-generated on the descriptive essay writing of middle-level students with learning disabilities and their attitudes towards writing.

Twelve eighth-grade students composed descriptive essays under three conditions: no-map support, hand-map support, and computer-map support.

The essays were compared on four measures: number of words, syntactic maturity, number of T-units, and holistic writing scores. Writing attitude was also examined.

Results showed that student descriptive essays produced in the hand- and computer-mapping conditions demonstrated significant increases above baseline writing samples on number of words, number of T-units, and holistic writing scores.

Results also showed that students' attitudes toward writing were significantly more positive in the computer-mapping condition when compared to no-mapping and hand-mapping conditions.

13.8 Shorofat (2007) investigated the effect of using brainstorming and 'synectis' in developing creative writing skills of ninth female students and their attitudes towards writing in Arabic.

The study sample consisted of 132 students -from Zarqa Governorate Schools- and they were classified randomly into one control group and two experimental groups, one of them used brainstorming and the other group used 'synectis'.

The researcher applied a pre- test on the three groups, and then she taught them during a period of five weeks, after that she applied the post test to investigate the effectiveness of the used strategies.

Results showed that using brainstorming and 'synectis' were effective in developing students' creative writing skills in terms of content, organization, style and mechanics of writing. Results also showed that there was no effect of the used strategies on students' attitudes towards writing.

13.9 Al-Jarf (2007) inspected the impact of online courses on non-native freshman students to write poems and short stories in English as a foreign language.

The sample of the study consisted of 38 students, who were enrolled in writing, grammar, vocabulary and reading courses. They were also registered in an asynchronous online course that was used as a supplement to in-class instruction.

A sample of 54 poems, short stories, plays and essays were collected from the 38 students. Each was examined in terms of theme, spelling and grammatical mistakes, style and language sophistication level. It was found that online courses had a positive effect on the level of writing of non-native freshman students in poems and short stories genres.

Results also showed that the online learning environment had the most positive effect on students' creativity and on their attitudes towards writing.

13.10 Banat (2007) investigated the effectiveness of a program based on the process approach and learning style in developing EFL writing skills among Jordanian secondary stage students.

The sample of the study consisted of 90 male first secondary class, scientific stream students enrolled in the academic year 2006- 2007 in public schools in the city of Jarash, Jordan.

The students were allocated in three intact classes. The classes were chosen randomly. Two classes served as experimental groups and the third as a control group.

The students in the first experimental group received instruction through a program based on both the process approach to writing and learning style preference for developing their writing skills.

The students in the second experimental group received instruction through a program based on the process approach to writing only.

In the control group the students received instruction through the traditional method of teaching writing (the product approach). A pre-post test was given to the three groups before and after the treatment.

Findings of the study showed that the three groups achieved tangible progress in their writing skills on the post test as compared to the pretest. Moreover the two experimental groups outperformed the control group on the posttest in overall writing performance. Nevertheless, the process approach and learning styles group (the first experimental group) was better than the process approach group (the second experimental group) on the post test. This means that the program proved to be effective in developing EFL secondary stage students' writing skills.

13.11 El Sayed (2007) investigated the effectiveness of using the problem solving strategy in developing creative writing skills of secondary schools students in Arabic language in two aspects: short story and descriptive writing.

The sample of the study consisted of 69 students from El Sharkia Governorate. Subjects were randomly assigned to two groups: one control and the other experimental.

Over two months, the experimental group was taught using the problem solving strategy whereas the control group was taught using the traditional method.

Results revealed that the problem solving strategy was effective in developing the creative writing skills of first secondary students.

Commentary:

The related studies have contributed to enriching the current study in the following areas:

1 - Defining creative writing in general and short story writing in particular. Having reviewed the related studies the researcher could say that creative writing is viewed as one of language arts through which individuals can express thoughts, ideas, feelings, reactions, etc… in an attractive and distinguished literary style.

2 -Identifying genres of creative writing such as short story, essay, descriptive writing, poetry, etc…

3 - Identifying some short story writing skills such as:

-Clarity of story elements (setting, characters, problem, events, solution, and theme)

- Coherent content.
- Logically- sequenced events.
- Accurate use of words and expressions

4 -Underlining strategies and techniques that could be used to develop writing skills such as brainstorming problem solving, and group work.

5 -Recognizing the importance of creative writing especially for the tenth grade students (middle adolescents), who are in an urgent need to show their opinions and reflect their personalities.

14. Tools of the Study and Procedures:

14.1. Design of the Study:

The current study followed the Quasi- Experimental Design. Four classes were chosen randomly from Amman public education schools. Two classes served as an experimental group and the other ones as control.

Students of the experimental group received instruction through the story mapping technique, whereas students of the control group received instruction through the traditional method.

A pre- post test was administered to both groups before and after the use of the story- mapping technique.

14.2. Sample of the Study:

The sample of the study consisted of 84 tenth grade male students classified into four classes, two served as an experimental group and the other ones as control. (Note 2)

The students were assigned randomly from Amman public education schools.

The students' average age was 16 years old. They had been studying English for nine years. According to their school files, all the students were from a nearly similar socio- economic environment.

14.3. The Short Story Writing Skills Checklist:

14.3.1- Purpose of the checklist:

The checklist aimed at identifying the short story writing skills necessary for tenth grade students.

14.3.2 - Content of the checklist:

Having reviewed the related literature on developing students' short story writing skills, the researcher designed a 16- skill checklist and submitted it to specialized jury members in the field of curriculum and instruction (TEFL) so as to determine the degree of importance of each skill on the checklist.

Those skills which were agreed upon at least by 75% or more of the jury members were selected.

The jury members stated that the skills included in the checklist were generally adequate and appropriate to its purpose. Still, some skills were deleted since they had been considered above the tenth grade students' level. At the same time, some of the jury members suggested other skills to be added to the checklist.

The checklist was modified according to the jury members' suggestions. (Note 3)

14.4. The Pre- Post Short Story Writing Test:

14.4.1 Purpose of the test:

The test aimed at measuring the short story writing skills of the tenth grade students in English.

The test was administered to both groups before and after the use of the story- mapping technique.

14.4.2. Validity of the test:

Test validity refers to the degree to which the test actually measures what it claims to measure.

To ensure validity of the test, the researcher submitted it, in its initial form, to a number of specialized jury members to comment on its suitability as well as clarity of instructions.

The test was modified according to the Jury members' comments and suggestions.

14.4.3. Reliability of the test:

Reliability is the extent to which the measurement of the test remains consistent over repeated tests on the same subjects under identical conditions.

To establish the reliability of the test, it was administered, on April, 20th, 2009, to a sample of 25 tenth grade students other than the sample of the study. Then, the same test was administered to the same group under nearly similar conditions on May, 5th, 2009.

The reliability coefficient of the test was estimated using Cronbach Alpha Formula. The estimated value was (0.90), which is considered reliable for the purpose of the current study.

14.4.4. Duration of the Test:

Duration of the short story writing test was estimated by calculating the time spent by the fastest and the slowest students in answering the test divided by 2. Thus, the time allotted for the test was:

$$\frac{75+45}{2} = 60 \text{ minutes}$$

14.5.The Scoring Scale:

14.5.1 Purpose of the scoring scale:

Having reviewed a number of writing scoring scales, the researcher prepared the current study's scoring scale to evaluate each skill on the pre- post short story writing test. Students' short stories were scored out of 75 as follows: Content and Organization 30, Mechanics of Writing 15, Language Use 10, Creative Abilities 20. Each skill has a five- level scoring scale ranging from excellent to poor.

14.5.2 Validity of the scoring scale:

To ensure validity of the scale, the researcher submitted it, in its

initial form, to a number of specialized jury members in the field of curricula and instruction in TEFL field.

The jury members were asked to comment on the suitability of the scale to assess tenth grade students' performance on the short story writing pre- post test.

The scale was modified according to the jury members' comments and suggestions

14.5.3. Reliability of the scoring scale:

To establish the reliability of the scoring scale, the researcher followed two ways:

1- The inter-reliability of raters: The researcher and other two experienced raters used the scoring scale to evaluate students' short stories.

A sample of ten short stories was chosen randomly and scored by the researcher and other two raters independently. The inter-raters' reliability was computed using Cronbach Alpha Formula. It was (0.91), which is considered high and reliable for the purpose of the current study. (Note 4)

2- Intra-reliability of the rater: A sample of students' papers (ten papers) was scored by the researcher himself according to the scoring scale. The researcher scored the same papers after two weeks. The intra- rater reliability coefficient was computed through Cronbach Alpha Formula, it was (0.95), which is considered high and reliable for the purpose of the current study.

14.6. Equivalence of the experimental and control groups:

To establish the equivalence of the two groups, the pre- short story test was administered to the experimental and control groups before applying the story- mapping to the experimental group.

The t- test was implemented to compare the means of both groups on the pre- short story writing test.

Results of the test showed that the two groups were equivalent in their short story writing skills. There was no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of both groups, thus, any later significant change in students' short story writing skills will be due to the effect of using the story mapping technique. (Note 5)

14.7 Procedures of conducting the study:

- After reviewing the related literature and identifying the short story writing skills needed for tenth grade students, the researcher designed tools of the study, and checked their validity and reliability.

- A sample of 84 tenth grade male students was randomly chosen from Amman public education schools; namely Tareq bin Ziad Secondary School and Tawfiq Abul Huda Secondary School.

- The students were classified into four groups. Two groups served as an experimental group (42 students) and the other ones as control (42 students)

- On Sep.8th, 2009, the pre- test was administered to the experimental and control groups to assess the students' level before using the story- mapping technique.

- Over the study period, which lasted until Dec. 9th, 2009, the researcher kept visiting the schools to make sure that the story- mapping technique is being followed properly and to help the teachers overcome any obstacles facing them while using the technique.

- On Dec. 13th, 2009, the students of the experimental and control groups were exposed to the post- test to assess their level after the administration of the story- mapping technique on the experimental group.

- SPSS package has been used to analyze data and reach the results of the study.

14.8.The Statistical Methods:

The current study used the following statistical methods:

1- T- Test:

- To measure the difference between the mean scores of the experimental group on the pre- post short story writing test.

- To measure the difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups on the post – short story writing test.

2- Etta Square Equation. To measure the effect size, the following equation was used:

$$\eta 2 = \frac{T^2}{T^2 + D.F.}$$

15. Data Collection and Results of the study:

15.1 The First Hypothesis: "There is statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group on the post- test in short story writing in favor of the experimental group ".

Having analyzed scores of the experimental and control groups on the post-test in short story writing, it was clear that there was statistically significant difference at 0.05 levels between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups on the post –test in short story writing in favor of the experimental group. T value (2.882), η2 value (0.073) and level of significance at 0.05 equaled (1.66). (Note 6)

The outcomes prove that using the story- mapping technique had a positive effect on developing short story writing skills of the experimental group students in terms of content and organization, mechanics of writing, language use and skills emerged from creative thinking abilities (fluency, flexibility, novelty and elaboration).

15.2 The Second Hypothesis "There is statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group on the pre/ post- test in short story writing in favor of the post test scores"

Having analyzed scores of the experimental group on the pre-test and post-test in short story writing, it could be concluded that there was statistically significant difference at 0.05 level between the mean scores of the experimental group on the pre-test and post–test in short story writing in favor of the post–test scores. T value (11.517), η2 value (0.715) and level of significance at 0.05 equaled (1.67). (Note 7)

This also shows that the story- mapping technique had a positive effect on developing short story writing skills of the experimental group students.

The researcher believes that using the story mapping technique highly contributed to familiarizing the experimental group students with the elements of the story and helped them increase awareness that story elements are interrelated, a fact that positively affected their performance on the post- test.

Thus, findings of the study supported the two hypotheses presented by the researcher. It was proved that the experimental group performed much better on the post- short story writing test.

15.3 Conclusion:

The administration of the short story writing post- test to the experimental and control groups proved that the story-mapping technique had a positive effect on developing Jordanian tenth grade students' short story writing skills in

terms of content and organization, mechanics of writing, language use as well as in skills emerged from creative abilities (fluency, flexibility, novelty and elaboration)

Based on findings of the study, the following conclusions could be reached:

- The effectiveness of using the story- mapping technique in developing students' short story skills.

- The story- mapping technique could highly help learners identify elements of the short story, a fact that highly develops their writing skills and help them come up with well organized stories based on clear elements.

- Writing in general and creative writing, including short story, in particular, could be developed in an encouraging environment through which students get involved in the writing process.

15.4. Recommendations:

Based on findings of the study, the researcher recommends

The Jordanian Ministry of Education to:

1- Place more emphasis on developing students' creative writing skills in general, and short story writing in particular.

2- Take the story- mapping technique into account while designing English language curricula due to its role in motivating the students to get involved in the short story writing process.

3- Reconsider the in- service training programs and workshops so that more emphasis to be given to teaching writing communicatively.

Moreover, the researcher recommends **teachers of English language to**

1- Place more emphasis on teaching writing as a process not only as a product.

2- Place more emphasis on the pre- writing stage due to its vital role in the writing process.

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Table 1.Differences between creative writing and technical writing

	Creative Writing	**Technical Writing**
Content	imaginative, metaphoric or symbolic	factual, straight-forward
Audience	General	specific
Purpose	entertain, provoke, captivate	inform, instruct, persuade
Style	informal, artistic, figurative	formal, standard, academic
Tone	Subjective	objective
Vocabulary	general, evocative	specialized
Organization	arbitrary, artistic	sequential, systematic

Table 2. Distribution of study sample:

No.	School	Number of Sections	Number of Students	Method of Teaching
1	Tareq Bin Ziad School	1	23	Traditional Method
		1	23	The Story- Mapping Technique
2	Tawfiq Abul Huda School	1	19	Traditional Method
		1	19	The Story- Mapping Technique
total		**4**	**84**	

Table 3. Short story writing skills:

No.	The Criterion	Related Skills
1-	**Content and Organization**	
		1-Availability of story elements (setting, characters, problem, plot, and solution)
		2- Clarity of story elements. (setting, characters, problem, plot, solution and theme)
		3- Well- constructed plot.
		4- Relevant supporting ideas
		5- Coherent content.
		6- Logically- sequenced events.
2-	**Mechanics of Writing**	
		1- Punctuation.
		2- Spelling.
		3- Grammar.
3-	**Language Use**	
		1- Appropriate choice of words.
		2- Accurate use of expressions.
4-	**Creative Abilities**	
	(Fluency)	1- Many ideas.
	(Flexibility)	2- Varied ideas and points of view.
	(Novelty)	3- Unique title and ideas.
	(Elaboration)	4- Embellishing ideas with details.

Table 4. The inter- raters' reliability

The inter- rater correlation	Correlation coefficient
The inter-rater correlation between the first and the second rater.	0. 92
The inter-rater correlation between the second and the third rater.	0. 89
The inter-rater correlation between the first and the third rater.	0. 91
Average	0. 91

Table 5. Scores of the experimental and control groups on the pre-test

Pair	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	T	D.F	P-Value
Experimental	42	30.91	7.444	0.392	82	0.697
Control	42	30.37	6.187			

Table 6. Scores of the experimental and control groups on the post-test in short story writing

Pair	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**D.F**	**T**	**η2**	**P-Value**	**Level of Significance at 0.05**
Exp.	42	36.83	9.90	82	2.882	0.073	0.006	1.66
Cont.	42	32.15	6.76					

Table 7. Scores of the experimental group on the pre-test and post-test in short story writing

Pair	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	D.F	T	η2	P-Value	Level of Significance at 0.05
T1	42	30.91	7.44	41	11.517	0.715	0.000	1.67
T2	42	36.83	9.90					