

Teaching and Learning ESL Writing by Critical Thinking

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Abstract In traditional ESL writing class, the English teacher/lecturer just gives the students a topic, a paragraph or a series of diagrams and then asks the class to write the essays individually. According to the revised Bloom's taxonomy [1], there are six levels including Remember; Understand; Apply; Analyze; Evaluate; Create. When we apply the taxonomy in teaching ESL writing and create an innovative and interactive setting, we can lead the learners to go through all the critical thinking stages. As a result, they have widened their scope with more fun after brainstorming and better learning outcomes in writing. I have adopted this method in teaching the ESL undergraduates and adult learners in various universities in Hong Kong, Macau and Zhuhai and found it very effective. In this paper, I am going to explain and analyze how the creative and interactive ESL writing classes are structured with an example and the students' feedback.

Keywords: Bloom's Taxonomy, critical thinking, ESL writing, brainstorming, creative, interactive, effective

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1. Introduction

In the 21 century, critical thinking plays a very important role in education having direct connection with language teaching and learning as well as in our daily life [18] for solving problems and making decision. Since 1980s, critical thinking has been included in undergraduate general education requirements in US universities, and also become the main focus of schooling. Nowadays, when we identify academically successful students, instead of how many facts, knowledge and rules they memorize, how many difficulties they have overcome by applying intellectual knowledge and experience in thinking critically during learning are counted [7]. Towards the information age, good thinking skills in independent thought process helps adult students "critically analyze their social context" [19] to achieve life success. In other words, critical thinking is a key component for academic success as well as life success.

Writing, which is one of the four essential skills in language education, involves not only vocabulary, grammar and structure, but also the higher order of thinking, critical thinking. In order to generate a cohesive, well organized and meaningful writing, it is most difficult for language learners, and even more difficult for the ESL learners as they have to present in a second language (Nunun, 1999). We need intellectual thinking during the writing process, whereas specialized skills that are not earned naturally (Brown, 2001) are required in the revising procedures. The importance of promoting higher order of thinking in TESL has been advocated [8] with supporting evidence of the additive effects of teaching critical thinking in ESL classes (Davidson, 1994, 1995), in

which incorporating critical thought are more interesting and engaging [17].

In traditional ESL writing class, the English teacher just gives the students a topic, a paragraph or a series of diagrams and then asks the class to write the essays individually. Most learners have found writing class boring as there is neither interaction nor brainstorming between the teacher and the students or among students. As a consequence, the performance of the writing depends on the personal standards of individual ESL students, but no assurance of the quality, expressions and organization of their writing. In fact, the most effective way of teaching and learning ESL writing is building and establishment of critical thinking of the learners.

2. "Critical Thinking" and "Bloom's Taxonomy"

Regarding "critical thinking", the view of Atkinson [2] treated it as "a social practice", which is cultural specific based upon western values only, has aroused a lot of controversies and debates. In fact, to be competitive in globalization, no one can survive better without independent thinking, making evaluation and judgments, problem solving skills in thought process. Are these skills comprised in critical thinking?

2.1. What is "critical thinking"?

There are a number of different definitions for "critical thinking" in literature as follows: a "process of evaluating statements, arguments, and experiences" [9], "reasonably and reflectively deciding what to believe or do" [13], "the art of thinking about your thinking while you are thinking

in order to make your thinking better: more clear, more accurate, more defensible" [23], and "a process which stresses an attitude of suspended judgment, incorporates logical inquiry and problem solving, and leads to an evaluative decision or action" (NCTE Committee on Critical Thinking).

Moreover, Scriven and Paul (1987) define "critical thinking" as "the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action" (as cited in Foundation for Critical Thinking, 2009).

Among the above definitions, the last definition of "critical thinking" (Scriven & Paul, 1987) is the most detailed and well defined one. It is clear that "critical thinking" does not mean to be "critical" which is negative, but means that someone can think clearly and rationally through evaluation process in reflective and independent thinking. In reasoning with disciplined manner of thought, someone can understand the logic and involve a set of skills for organizing ideas, detecting inconsistencies, and solving problems systematically after analyzing and evaluating alternative possibilities in different stages of thought process. In which someone does not simply accept any arguments and conclusions without questioning and making reasoned judgments based on evidence, and then take action.

2.2. Bloom's Taxonomy

Although there are different approaches concerning critical thinking, Bloom's Taxonomy fits the definition suggested by Scriven and Paul (1987). According to the revised Bloom's taxonomy [1], there are six levels including Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, and Create. The first two stages for the process of remembering and understanding are the foundation for critical thinking only. In the higher levels, from the third up to the six levels, the processes facilitate the building and encouragement of critical thinking.

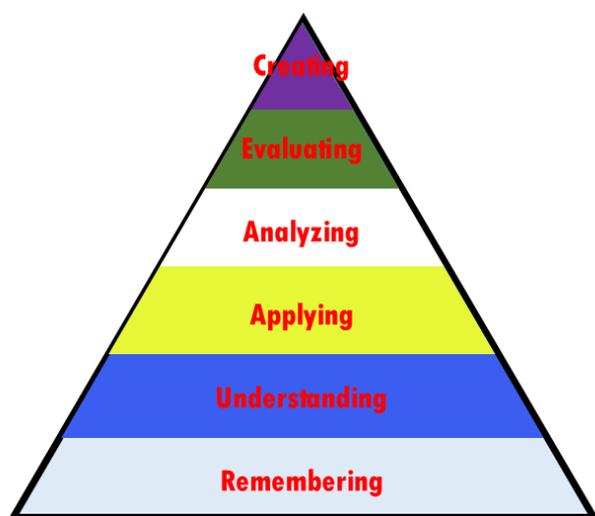


Figure 1. Revised Bloom's Taxonomy of Anderson and Krathohl [1]

However, the hierarchical approach of revised Bloom's taxonomy as above [1] reflects different forms of thinking, which is an active process, with six categories including

various subcategories. The category of Remembering consists of describing, finding, identifying, listing, retrieving, naming, locating and recognizing. In the process of Understanding, there are classifying, comparing, exemplifying, explaining, inferring, paraphrasing and summarizing. Applying means implementing, carrying out, using or executing. In Analyzing, the subcategories include attributing, comparing, deconstructing, finding, integrating, organizing, outlining and structuring. For Evaluation, the action of checking, critiquing, detecting, experimenting, hypothesizing, judging, monitoring and testing may be involved. Finally, constructing, designing, devising, inventing, generating, planning and producing are activated in the last category: Creating.

In the first stage of the cognitive process - Remembering, the students are able to recall relevant knowledge of formats, expressions, organization, and information related to the writing task from their memory. As move on to the second level of Understanding, the learners display the ability to explain ideas or concepts, understand information, compare and contrast facts, grasp meaning as well as determine the meaning of instructional messages. The third level is Applying which indicates the participants can use strategies, concepts, and theories to encounter a given situation, topic or theme effectively. In other words, they can employ the previously learned ideas, formats, information and order in handling new conditions in different writing tasks. When they enter the fourth stage of Analyzing, they argue and debate as they have different opinions in problem solving. They can break the material into various parts, and then detect the patterns how the parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose of the writing task. To the fifth level of thinking in Evaluating, the learners have to set up criteria for the defense of their different views in making judgment. They can make choices through evaluation based on reasoned argument in group discussion. Reaching the ultimate stage of creating, the learners finally are able to combine the elements together to form the conclusion in order to generate and hand in a cohesive, meaningful and original product in writing, such as an essay, etc.

3. IELTS Preparation Course

In this decade, I have been teaching a number of writing courses including Business Correspondence Writing, Practical Reading and Writing Skills, Practical Written Communication for Business, Advanced Strategies for English Writing, and Strategies for High-level Writers. Meanwhile, some other courses taught consist of writing component, such as GMAT English, IELTS Preparation course, Advanced English; and General English. However, I have adopted revised Bloom's taxonomy [1] in teaching and learning the ESL writing for undergraduates and adult learners in various universities in Hong Kong, Macau and Zhuhai and found it very effective. In this paper, I am going to explain and analyze how the creative and interactive ESL writing classes are structured using IELTS Preparation Course as an example accompanying with analysis of the students' feedbacks in overall comments of the course, and fostering and establishing of critical thinking based upon revised Bloom's taxonomy [1] in IELTS Writing.

IELTS Preparation course in CUHK SCS consists of Reading, Speaking, Listening and Writing, in which occupies about 12 hours out of the 30-hour course. Each 3-hr session of Writing is separated into two parts with the same format: Lecture & writing a report/ an essay, as minimum 150 words in each report in Task 1 and 250 words in essay writing in Task 2 is comparatively short. Before, during and after the lecture, there are interactions between the instructor and the learners. In the common practice, the instructor gives immediate verbal comments to the first writing of each group, and then discusses the sample in the class; the marked second writing will be returned to them with sample discussion next week. Each ESL writing class is divided into several groups of two to four students for brainstorming through discussion and they are asked to write a report in Task 1 or an essay in Task 2 together. Two classes either gave their written comments or answered the questionnaires concerning the IELTS Preparation Course and Writing at the end of the course.

3.1. Methods

As there are two different research methods, the qualitative method and quantitative method, both are employed in data collection. Last year, the students in an IELTS Preparation Course were asked to write down their brief comments on the overall IELTS Course and Writing at the end of the course. After analyzing the data using the qualitative method, we get the general ideas of the

participants towards the course and Writing section. In order to describe and explain the development of different stages in critical thinking during IELTS Writing class more precisely, the newly-designed questionnaires, the quantitative research method, with a 5-point scale for evaluation of the IELTS Writing section are sent to the learners of another class of IELTS Preparation Course this year. In this section, we are going to report the details and results that we have collected from the two types of methods.

3.2. The Qualitative Method: The Students' Comments of IELTS Preparation Course

3.2.1. The Participants

At the end of the IELTS Preparation course, one class of ten students consisting of two secondary students and eight adult learners participated in an observation research of writing their feedbacks on Writing and overall comments. The participants were two males and eight females varied from 15 to 37 years of age including three students, two for accounting, and one for each of the following jobs: Assistant Project Officer, English Teaching Assistant, Assistant Manager (Education Centre), Executive Assistant, and Analyst programmer. Their comments are grouped and listed in the following table (Table 1).

Table 1. The students' comments of IELTS Preparation Course

A. What have the IELTS students learned?	Number	Sex (Age)	Percentage
1. Increase a wide range of vocabulary & expressions	3	F(15,29, 32)	30%
2. Appropriate grammar, structure & strategies	2	F (29, 32)	30%
3. Organization	1	M(16)	
Introduction & conclusion	2	F(29, 32)	30%
4. Think & present in a clear & logical manner	1	F(32)	
List pros and cons for statements in Task 2	2	F(25, 20)	40%
Understand the correct way of writing Task 1 & 2	1	M(16)	
5. Learn the useful exam skills	1	F(15)	
6. Recognize their strengths & weakness	4	F(15, 20, 29, 37)	40%
Poor time management	2	F(26, 29)	
7. The easiest & most difficult parts	1	F(25)	30%
Listening (Easiest) & Writing Task 2 (Most difficult)	1	F(15)	10%
B. Comments on the IELTS Preparation Course			
1. Powerpoints & the learning materials are clear and informative.	1	M(16)	20%
	1	F(20)	
	1	M(16)	10%
2. New way of learning English	1	M(16)	50%
3. The course is good, scheduled & well planned:	1	F(32)	
Short but well separated into 4 parts: Reading, Writing, Listening and Oral	1	M(27)	
Reading & Listening are good	2	F(19, 37)	
Writing is good	1	M(16)	40%
4. Group discussion & Brainstorming is effective on learning writing	3	F(20,25, 35)	
5. The course is useful	1	M(16)	40%
Useful in different aspects	1	F(26)	
Plenty of practices for reading & writing	1	F(37)	
Very useful exercises in sentences & examples in connectives & adverbs	1	F(29)	
6. Enjoy & learn a lot	5	F(32, 26, 29, 20, 25)	50%
7. Other comments & suggestions:			
Thanks to Dr. Sham	3	F(32,20, 25)	30%
Demonstration of the marking scheme	1	F(35)	10%
Group discussion first, then individual writing	2	F(20, 37)	20%
Less time for writing, teach more complex thoughts & sentences	1	M(27)	10%

3.2.2. Results and Discussion

In Table 1, the learners' written comments are categorized and grouped into two parts: Part A. What have the IELTS students learned? and Part B. Comments on the IELTS Preparation Course. In each part, there are 7 items, while some items contain sub-items. Accompanying each item, the number of participants, sex and age (as no two learners' sex and age are identical), and also the percentage are listed.

A. What have the IELTS students learned?

In Part A, forty percent of the students have learned to think before they write, and then present their ideas in a clear and logical manner; and list pros and cons for statements in Task 2 as well as understand the correct way of writing Tasks 1 and 2, which means they have built and established independent thinking before present it in a proper way of writing. Meanwhile, the same proportion of participants (40%) learned the useful exam skills which will enhance their performance and bandings of scores in IELTS exam. In this course, thirty percent of IELTS learners master the micro skills comprising an increase of a large variety of vocabulary and expressions, and same percentage (30%) for appropriate grammar, structure with strategies, as well as the macro skills (30%) such as organization of reports and essays with correct approach of writing an introduction or a conclusion. However, critical thinking, significant knowledge and basic skills for writing are consolidated; and also thirty percent can recognize their strengths and weakness including poor time management, as only ten percent understand the easiest and the most difficult parts in IELTS.

B. Comments on the IELTS Preparation Course

Concerning the comments on the IELTS Preparation Course in Part B, half of the learners (50%) has found the course good as follows: the course is good, scheduled and well-planned; the course is short but well separated into 4 parts - Reading, Writing, Listening and Oral; Reading and Listening are good; and Writing is good. Meanwhile, half of the population (50%) enjoy and learn a lot from the course as they have been learning in the interactive, creative and innovative settings involving critical thinking skills tend to be more interesting and engaging [17]. Furthermore, forty percent of students have found that group discussion and brainstorming is effective in learning writing, the same proportion (40%) has reported the course is useful in providing plenty of practices for reading and writing as well as very useful exercises in sentences and examples in connectives and adverbs, and also, the course is useful in different aspects. Having teacher's charisma, Dr. Sham has got thanks from thirty percent of the students. Besides the lecturer, the high quality of teaching materials is essential, twenty percent point out Powerpoints and the learning materials are clear and informative. There are some suggestions including: Group discussion first, then individual writing (20%); demonstration of the marking scheme (10%); and less time for writing, but teach more complex thoughts and sentences (10%). Finally, ten percent of learners describe IELTS Preparation Course as "New way of learning English".

Overall speaking, the feedbacks of IELTS Preparation Course and Writing are very positive. From the comments, we have general impression of the IELTS course with some responses related to writing, but the feedbacks are

not very specific for the different steps in various levels of critical thinking in writing as the participants are not aware of. Whether the students have got the benefits from building and establishing critical thinking in different levels of revised Bloom's taxonomy [1] through brainstorming and group discussion for writing in a clear and logical way is not yet confirmed. Therefore, it leads to a change of research methods: from qualitative to quantitative. The newly-designed 5-point scaled questionnaires for evaluation the IELTS Writing aimed at exploring the stages of fostering and enhancing critical thinking were sent to another class of IELTS Preparation Course few months later.

3.3. The Quantitative Method: Questionnaires for Evaluation of IELTS Writing

3.3.1. The Participants

Another class of fourteen adult learners participated in writing their feedbacks on Writing at the end of the IELTS Preparation course. Among the participants, five males and nine females aged from under 20 to 50 years old: one under 20, five from 21 to 30, five 31 to 40 and three 41 to 50. They come from a number of professions including three clerks, two students, two jobless, and one for each of the following fields or jobs: human resources, and administration; teacher, auditor and project coordinator. Their education levels vary from two F.5, one high diploma student, one undergraduate year 2 students, six bachelors, and three masters.

3.3.2. The Questionnaire

Based upon the revised Bloom's Taxonomy [1], I have designed a questionnaire to assess whether the IELTS learners have gone through the six stages of critical thinking process in learning ESL writing, and overall, the writing ability and critical thinking has been developed. In the questionnaire, the statements are categorized into six levels orderly each comprises three independent statements with last part for overall only consists of two isolating sentences. In aggregate, each questionnaire contains 20 statements. The participants have to choose an option for each statement in the questionnaire which contains 5 points scale including 5=SA (Strongly Agree); 4=A (Agree); 3=N (Neither Agree nor Disagree); 2=D (Disagree); 1=SD (Strongly Disagree). The content of the questionnaire is as follows:

I. Remember:

1. You first remember the vocabulary and expressions taught.
2. The content, structure, and grammar of the samples are recalled.
3. You've learned from the mistakes and comments of the previous writing tasks.

II. Understand:

4. You have the ability to interpret the writing task.
5. Through group discussion, you understand the task from different views.
6. By comparing & contrast facts and information, you determine the meaning.

III. Apply:

7. The knowledge from recall and understanding can be applied to the present task.

8. In brainstorming, you can use strategies, concepts, and theories to encounter a given situation.

9. You are able to employ the previously learned formats, information and order in the present report or essay writing.

IV. Analyze:

10. You can analyze and break the material into its constituent parts.

11. The pattern how different parts related to one another is detected.

12. An overall structure or the purpose of the writing is found.

V. Evaluate:

13. Concerning an argument, you list pros and cons in order to have a balance of both sides.

14. In making judgments, you set up criteria for the defense of different views.

15. You can make choices through evaluation based on reasoned argument in group discussion.

VI. Create:

16. You are able to put the elements together after brainstorming

17. Afterwards, you draw the conclusion to generate a novel, coherent report or essay.

18. Finally, you create and hand in an original writing product.

VII. Overall:

19. You are able to think and present in a clear and logical manner.

20. This part establishes and enhances your critical thinking.

3.3.3. Results and Discussion

Table 2 shows the learners' evaluation of the Writing section of IELTS Preparation course in terms of numerals in descriptive statistics presenting in columns of Number, Minimum, Maximum, Mean, Standard Deviation and Variance according to the order of total 20 statements.

Table 2. The Students' Evaluation of Development of Critical Thinking in IELTS Writing

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
F1	14	3	5	4.21	0.579	0.335
F2	14	4	5	4.43	0.514	0.264
F3	14	3	5	4.29	0.611	0.374
F4	14	4	5	4.14	0.363	0.132
F5	14	4	5	4.50	0.519	0.269
F6	14	4	5	4.29	0.469	0.220
F7	14	4	5	4.36	0.497	0.247
F8	14	3	5	4.43	0.646	0.418
F9	14	4	5	4.43	0.514	0.264
F10	14	3	5	4.29	0.611	0.374
F11	14	3	5	4.29	0.611	0.374
F12	14	4	5	4.43	0.514	0.264
F13	14	3	5	4.21	0.699	0.489
F14	14	4	5	4.43	0.514	0.264
F15	14	3	5	4.29	0.611	0.374
F16	14	3	5	4.36	0.633	0.401
F17	14	3	5	4.14	0.770	0.593
F18	14	2	5	4.21	0.802	0.643
F19	14	3	5	4.36	0.745	0.555
F20	14	4	5	4.50	0.519	0.269
Valid N (listwise)	14					

In the above table, we note the students' development of critical thinking in Writing section of IELTS Preparation Course. The number of participants is 14, as the vast majority of adult learners strongly agree (maxi: 5), agree (mini: 4), or neither agree nor disagree (mini:3) that they have gone through the hierarchy including Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, and Create in revised Bloom's Taxonomy [1]. It is clear that the adult learners first retrieve vocabulary, expressions, grammar, samples and mistakes from their memory in the first stage of Remembering; and then interpret, discuss, compare and contrast to understand the writing task in second level of Understanding. Furthermore, they employ the recalled information using strategies in the new given situation through brainstorming in the third level of Applying, whereas they relate the broken components to have the overall structure in the fourth stage of Analyzing. Through debates of pros and cons from different views, they make judgments in the stage of Evaluating. At last,

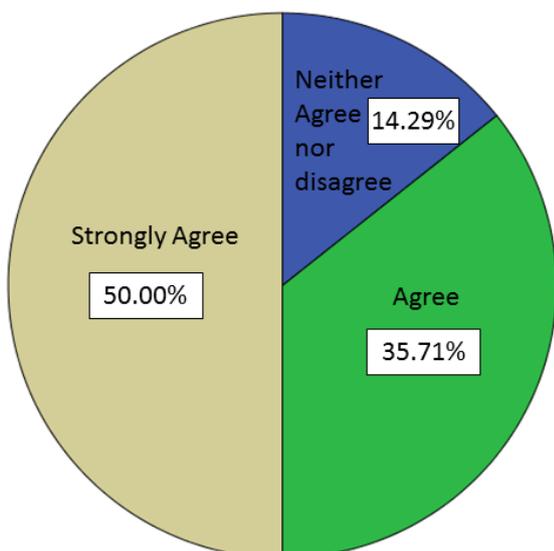
they arrange the elements and draw a conclusion for a cohesive writing, but a very small number of participants, one or two, disagree (mini:2) that they can create and hand in an original product finally in the ultimate stage of Creating.

While the means are all above 4, which are very high, it is significant that they confirm every step in reasoning with disciplined manner of thought in the whole critical thinking process in writing. The adult learners most strongly consent (mean: 4.50) that they understand the task from different views through group discussion and brainstorming in the level of Understanding, and their critical thinking is fostered and enhanced in Writing part overall; whereas least assent (mean: 4.14) that they have the ability to interpret the writing task in the stage of Understanding, as well as draw the conclusion to generate a novel, coherent report or essay in the ultimate level of Creating. Moreover, the farthest distance of the individual numeral from the mean (SD: 0.802) is that they can create

and hand in an original writing product at the last step in the level of Creating again, but the closest (SD: 0.363) is that they have the ability to interpret the writing task in the stage of Understanding.

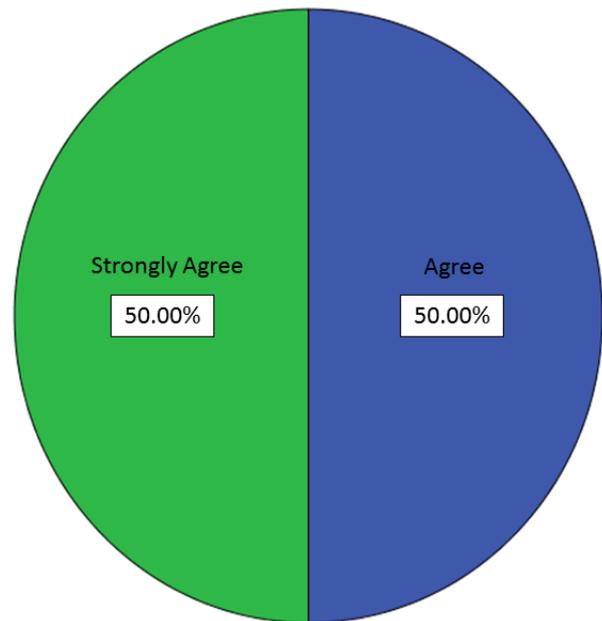
By comparing the different levels, we could find that there are some similarity and contrast between the stages of Understanding and Creating in the revised Bloom’s taxonomy [1]. Although the means of the three steps in second stage (4.14, 4.50, 4.29) are similar to that of the three in the sixth level (4.36, 4.14, 4.21); dealing with the minimum, it is clear all 4 for F.4, 5, 6, but there are the 3, 3, 2 for F.16, 17, 18 respectively. For the second stage - Understanding, all participants either strongly assent or assent that they have the ability to interpret the writing task, understand the task from different views through group discussion and brainstorming, as well as determine the meaning by comparing and contrast facts and information. In contrast, besides the majority strongly consents or agrees in the last level – Creating, some learners neither consent nor disagree they have the ability to put the elements together after brainstorming, and draw the conclusion to generate a cohesive and meaningful report or essay afterwards. Meanwhile, a small proportion even disagree that they can create and hand in an original writing product as it is challenging for ESL learners (Nunun, 1999).

As mentioned before (section 2.2), Understanding is a foundation stage, the lower order of thinking, comparatively speaking, much easier; whereas Creating is the highest level, belonging to the higher order thinking skills, the most difficult one, of critical thinking in ESL writing. Due to the gap between the education levels of the participants varied from F.5 (secondary school level) to master degree, it is not surprising that a very small sample of students may lack of confidence or ability in creating an original report or a cohesive essay though they have built and established critical thinking through the previous steps. Besides undergone through the six stages of Bloom’s taxonomy, overall, whether the IELTS learners have the ability to think and write in a clear and systematic way is our next concern. And also, whether their critical thinking has been fostered and enhanced in IELTS Writing section leads to the following pie graphs (Graph 1 & Graph 2).



Graph 1. The population of IELTS students agrees they are able to think and present in a clear and logical manner in writing

The distribution of the population in the pie (Graph 1) is based upon the result of F19: 50% of the IELTS students strongly agree, 35.71% agree, and 14.29% neither agree nor disagree that they are able to think and present in a clear and logical manner in writing, but none of the participants, zero percent, disagree and strongly disagree. This demonstrates that the whole population of the adult learners, either alerted or without alert, can think and write in a clear and reasoned way, which matches with the result in the previous qualitative study, as none deny the statement.



Graph 2. The population of IELTS students agrees their critical thinking is established and enhanced in the Writing section

Representing the result of F20, the distribution of the population in the pie (Graph 2) indicates that 50% of IELTS learners strongly agree and 50% agree that their critical thinking has been established and enhanced in the Writing section, but none, zero percent, neither agree nor disagree, disagree and strongly disagree. It is very clear that critical thinking of all ESL learners (100%) has been fully fostered and enhanced in IELTS writing.

Comparing the two graphs, it is the same that half of the adult learners strongly consent they are able to think and present in a clear and logical manner in writing, and their critical thinking has been established and enhanced. The percentage of assertion (35.71%) of thinking and presentation in writing in Graph 1 has become a larger proportion (50%) for establishment and enhancement of critical thinking in Graph 2. Meanwhile, the population owing the view neither agree nor disagree (14.29%) in Graph 1 disappeared in Graph 2. It indicates that they have more confidence in fostering and development of critical thinking in writing than that in their ability of writing in a clear and reasoned way after thinking. The results prove IELTS writing is a very successful example of building and establishment of critical thinking in ESL writing.

4. Conclusion

Based upon the results of both qualitative method and quantitative method, we acknowledge that two classes of

ESL students have enjoyed and learned a lot in IELTS Preparation Course. Meanwhile, they have undergone through the six stages according to revised Bloom's Taxonomy [1] for building and establishing critical thinking in writing section. Overall, the adult learners are able to think before they write in a clear and logical manner; and all confirmed that their critical thinking has been fostered and enhanced.

Although the ESL learners did not know that their critical thinking had been built underlying the procedure of revised Bloom's taxonomy in the first method, most of them enjoyed and benefited from brainstorming and group discussion in IELTS writing, which is apart from the traditional formats. On the other hand, the adult learners agreed that group discussion and brainstorming helps blooming of critical thinking through the hierarchy - Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, and Create in the second study. As a result, they have widened their scope with more fun after brainstorming and better learning with practice in writing as classes implementing critical thought are generally more interesting [17]. The positive results of critical thinking in this research align with the findings of critical thinking in ESL education by Davidson [10,11].

In sum, the students build their own thought through defense of different ideas, understanding of logic, and evaluation of judgments for solving problems through group discussion and brainstorming. Meanwhile, they have clear, independent and rational thinking before they create the ESL writing. Therefore, teaching and learning ESL writing by critical thinking employing revised Bloom's taxonomy [1] is creative and effective.

As recommended, IELTS Preparation Course, especially Writing, is a good example of teaching and learning ESL writing by critical thinking, the formats, course design with useful and well structured teaching materials, teacher's charisma, interaction between teacher and students, group discussion and brainstorming among students undergone through the hierarchy of revised Bloom's taxonomy [1] could be applied in other ESL writing courses to facilitate the development of critical thinking in production of creative and original writing products.

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