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Developing Efficient Writing Strategies Through The Cooperative Learning Approach

The case of: Third year Pupils of Mohamed Guerrouf secondary school "Scientific Stream"

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Dedications

This work is dedicated especially to my parents who have provided me with their encouragement, love, and understanding

This work is also dedicated to my best friend Ishak Jadí who has shown me what nobody else would have ever. He has been supportive, caring, and patient sometimes beyond his strength. He really was there for me, thank you for ignoring my faults, and encouraging my merits.

To my brother, and my sisters for their whole hearted support

To all my near friends ...Hakou, Rahim ,Mounir, Ramzi, Amer, Tarek,

To all my near family

To all my friends and teachers at the University of Biskra, I dedicate this simple work

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Abstract

Writing is considered as one of the most significant and challenging skill in language learning. Due to the complexity of this skill, learners encounter some difficulties in mastering its aspects, and in using those aspects appropriately. As a result, they fail to create their written productions. It is our belief that learners lack the appropriate strategies to write effectively, and they need to produce their compositions in a group work. The present study was done for the purpose of providing both teachers and learners with the effective writing strategies, and the necessary opportunities that learners need in order to work cooperatively. In order to check the cooperative learning method as a developing factor for student's writing abilities, we hypothesize that if secondary school learners work cooperatively while writing, they would learn how to write effectively. Our research population is third year secondary school students and teachers in Mohamed Guerrouf secondary school. To verify the validity of the preceding hypothesis, we have used two main investigation tools which in turn, are divided into two kinds of questionnaires the student's questionnaire, and the teacher's questionnaire. In addition, we have conducted the classroom observation which consists of three sub checklists about writing and cooperative group work. The discussion of the results has shown that secondary school learners write their compositions affectively when they work cooperatively i.e cooperative group or pair work helps students in learning how to write.

List of Tables

Teachers' Questionnaire Tables

Table 1. Teacher's teaching experience	43
Table 2. The sufficiency of the English Program of 3rd year secondary students.....	43
Table 3. Reading contribution in the development of the writing skill.....	44
Table 4. Teacher's encouragement of the students to read.....	45
Table 5. Good piece of writing's criteria.....	46
Table 6. Good piece of writing's criteria.....	47
Table 7. Teacher's encouragement of students to write	48
Table 8. Teacher's favourite teaching approach in writing	48
Table 9. Teacher's writing models provided for students	49
Table 10. Teacher's help for students while writing	50
Table 11. The writing's levels for student's help	51
Table 12. The occurrence of student's group work.....	52
Table 13. Teacher's basis in grouping students	53
Table 14. Teacher's focus on student's group work attitudes	54
Table 15. Learners' Use of the English language when working in groups.....	55
Table 16. Problems faced by students when they work in groups	55
Table 17. Group work as opposed to individual work	56
Table 18. Student's achievements from group work learning	57

Students' Questionnaire Tables

Table 1. Student's baccalaureat type	60
Table 2. Writing as an interesting skill.....	60
Table 3. Student's responses about writing	61
Table 4. Teacher's motivation of the students to write	62

Table 5. Teacher’s encouragement of the students to speak.....	63
Table 6. Student’s satisfaction of their writing’s level.....	64
Table 7. Students’ needed time to write their composition	65
Table 8. Writing’s levels before starting to write.....	66
Table 9. The next step after knowing the topic	67
Table 10. The final step after writing the composition.....	68
Table 11. The occurrences for working in groups or in pairs	69
Table 12. Student’s way of grouping	70
Table 13. Teacher’s focus when students work in groups.....	71
Table 14. Group work’s problems.....	72
Table 15. Student’s way of learning in writing.....	73
Table 16. Group work benefits.....	74
Table 17. Students’ learning degree from group work.....	75
Table 18. Cooperative learning method as opposed to individualistic learning method.....	76

List of Graphs

Teachers' Questionnaire Graphs

Graph 1. Teacher's teaching experience.....	43
Graph 2. The sufficiency of the English Program of 3rd year secondary students.....	44
Graph 3. Reading contribution in the development of the writing skill.....	45
Graph 4. Teacher's encouragement of students to read.....	45
Graph 5. Good piece of writing's criteria.....	46
Graph 6. Teacher's satisfaction about their student's piece of writing.....	47
Graph 7. Teacher's encouragement of students to write.....	48
Graph 8. Teacher's favourite teaching approach in writing.....	49
Graph 9. Teacher's writing models provided for students.....	50
Graph 10. Teacher's help for students while writing.....	51
Graph 11. The writing's levels for student's help.....	52
Graph 12. The occurrence of student's group work.....	53
Graph 13. Teacher's basis in grouping students.....	54
Graph 14. Teacher's focus on student's group work attitudes.....	55
Graph 15. Learners' Use of the English language when working in groups.....	56
Graph 16. Problems faced by students when they work in groups.....	57
Graph 17. Group work as opposed to individual work.....	58
Graph 18. Student's learning from group work.....	59

Students' Questionnaire Graphs

Graph 1. Student's baccalaureat type.....	61
Graph 2. Writing as an interesting skill.....	62
Graph 3. Student's responses about writing.....	63
Graph 4. Teacher's motivation of the students to write.....	64
Graph 5. Teacher's encouragement of the students to speak.....	65

Graph 6. Student's satisfaction of their writing's level	66
Graph 7. Students' needed time to write their compositions	67
Graph 8. Writing's levels before starting to write.....	68
Graph 9. The Next step after knowing the topic	69
Graph 10. The final step after writing your composition	70
Graph 11. The occurrences for working in groups or in pairs	71
Graph 12. Student's way of grouping.....	72
Graph 13. Teacher's focus when students work in groups	73
Graph 14. Group work's problems	74
Graph 15. Student's way of learning in writing	75
Graph 16. Group work benefits.....	76
Graph 17. Students' learning degree from group work.....	77
Graph 18. Cooperative learning method as opposed to individualistic learning method	78

TABLE OF CONTENTS

General <u>Introduction</u>	1
<u>1.Statement of the problem</u>	1
<u>2. Aims of the study</u>	2
<u>3. Significance of the study</u>	2
<u>4. Research questions</u>	3
<u>5. Research hypothesis</u>	3
<u>6. Research methodology</u>	3
<u>7. Structure of the dissertation</u>	4
<u>8. Limitations of the study</u>	5
<u>9. Literature review</u>	5
Chapter One : The Writing skill.....	6
Introduction.....	7
1. The writing skill	7
1.1.Conceptual definitions.....	7
1.2. The components of the writing skill.....	11
1.2.1. The starting point is the activity-notation	11
1.2.2. The second element is spelling	11
1.2.3. The third element is composing	12
2. Writing and the other skills.....	15
2.1. Writing and speaking	15

2.2. Writing and reading.....	17
3. Writing approaches.....	19
3.1. The free writing approach.....	19
3.2. The genre approach.....	19
3.3. The paragraph pattern approach.....	20
3.4. The modern approach to teaching writing.....	20
4. Learning strategies.....	21
4.1. Definitions.....	21
4.1.1. The cognitive strategies.....	22
4.1.2. Meta-cognitive strategies.....	23
4.1.3. Social-affective strategies.....	24
4.2. Cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies in writing.....	24
Conclusion.....	25
Chapter Two: The Cooperative Learning Approach.....	27
Introduction.....	28
1. Cooperative Learning.....	28
1.1. Conceptual Definitions.....	28
1.2. The Differences between Cooperative, Competitive, and Individualistic Learning.....	29
1.3. Cooperative Learning Versus Collaborative Learning.....	32
2. Theoretical Background of Cooperative Learning.....	33
2.1. The Cognitive Theory.....	33
2.2. The Piaget's View.....	34

2.3. The Vygotsky's View.....	34
2.4. Behavioural Learning Theory.....	35
3. Criteria that make Cooperative Learning Effective.....	35
4. Benefits of Cooperative Learning	37
4.1. Learning Strategies.....	37
4.2. Achievement Outcomes.....	38
4.3. Social Outcomes	38
4.4. Affective Outcomes.....	39
Conclusion	40
Chapter Three : Field Work	40
Introduction.....	41
1. The Population	41
2. The Means of The Research.....	42
3. The Teachers' Questionnaire	42
3.1. Description of Teachers' Questionnaire	42
3.2. Interpretation and Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire.....	43
3.3. Discussion of Teacher's Questionnaire Results.....	58
4. Student's Questionnaire	59
4.1. Description of the Student's questionnaire.....	59
4.2. Interpretation and Analysis of the Student's Questionnaire	60
4.3. Discussion of Student's Questionnaire Results	74
5. Classroom Observation (English Session).....	75

5.1. Description of Classroom Observation	75
5.2. Classroom Observation Analysis	76
5.2.1. Classroom observation checklist 1	76
Section 1: Teacher's activities	76
Section 2: The student's writing strategies	77
5.2.2. Classroom observation checklist 2	79
Section 1: Teacher and student's activities	79
Section 2: Student's group or pair work	80
5.3. Discussion of the results of the classroom observation.....	86
Pedagogical Suggestions.....	87
Conclusion	88
Some Recommendations.....	88
General Conclusion	90
Reference	92
Appendix A: Teachers' Questionnaire	
Appendix B: The student's questionnaire	
Appendix C: Classroom observation checklists	

ملخص البحث

General Introduction

It is commonly agreed that academic writing with its wide areas is designed for all students of all levels. Students at the level of secondary school are exposed to learn how to write several tasks, and other assignments. They usually aim to focus on some aspects of the writing skill, but ignore the appropriate strategies, methods, and techniques to produce a simple, correct piece of writing.

1.Statement of the Problem

Writing has a significant role in cultural, social, and academic contexts that have led to consider it as very important, and essential skill in the world of applied linguistics. Writing is a vast area that is still under research and debate. Students in different academic settings find writing very complicated skill. Due to the complexity of this skill, learners identify that it is very difficult to master all aspects of writing. As a result, they face a lot of problems to produce accepted paragraphs. Despite the fact that students have been taught the writing skill in different activities for a relatively long period of time, they used to make mistakes ,and produce irrelevant patterns .In other words, they do not use the words appropriately ,and ignore where exactly they would be using it. We believe that the issue is mainly due to the fact that students in different academic settings and levels lack the appropriate strategies that enable them to face the different writing activities, and tasks. Taking all of this into consideration may help students for producing a correct piece of writing, and improving their writing skill. Furthermore, they need to be provided with more clear strategies to overcome the mistakes that they might make while writing. It is our belief that learning to write correctly requires working cooperatively that means as a team, consequently, students will be able to produce a coherent piece of writing. Teachers should

provide students with the appropriate, and successful strategies for writing in English; putting in mind that writing is no more viewed as an easy process.

2. Aims of the study

Our study deals with the learner's difficulties in the written production as far as writing strategies are concerned. Our aim is to help students overcome the difficulties they encounter when writing. Such an objective may be achieved only if students apply the strategies, and the effective procedures of writing. Through this study, we also aim to make students aware that the improvement of the writing skill does not depend only on the correct use of syntax, grammar, vocabulary, but also on the need to work cooperatively. This leads to the student's awareness of the elements that make writing acceptable. The main objective of our study is to determine the needed strategies that help students controlling their writing skill. That is to say, we want to stress on the fact that writing as a separate skill which is almost overlooked in the different tasks and activities, and it is not given the right importance it deserves in several academic settings.

3. Significance of the study

The present study is intended to offer many views into theory and practice that underline effective writing productions. This research can benefit two main categories of people. First, it may help teachers who intend to use the cooperative learning method to teach writing in the classroom. Moreover, the study may encourage teachers to use the cooperative learning method as a regular activity when dealing with writing activities. Second, for students who wish to overcome the difficulties that may encounter them while writing. This study also intends to provide students with the effective writing strategies in order to improve their writing's skill as well as to solve writing difficulties. If the cooperative learning method tends to be a successful method in learning how to write, it would be considered as a

developing factor that may work inside or outside the classroom. This research may contribute in one way or another in examining how the cooperative learning method can improve the student's writing skill. It is logical to address the students of secondary school since they fail to write their productions as well as they prefer to work individually. The present study can benefit the teaching and the learning process. The views and the meanings of the cooperative learning approach developed in this research can be useful for teachers to implement this method in real educational settings. Several insights into how students cooperate, and work as a group to do several writing activities can contribute to a great extent in the development of the student's writing ability in the real world of the classroom.

4. Research questions

Departing from what precedes, we are undertaking to address the following questions:

- ✓ What are the appropriate strategies that may help students to write coherently?
- ✓ To what extent is the adoption of the cooperative learning approach important in preventing student's problems in writing?

5. Research hypothesis

Students face a lot of difficulties to create their written production. We hypothesize that if secondary school students work cooperatively while writing, they would learn how to write effectively.

6. Research methodology

The population of our research is third year secondary school students and teachers of Mohamed Guerrouf "Scientific stream". The total number of the students' population is 45 student out of 180, and the teachers' population is 7 teachers. We direct our choice towards 3rd

year secondary school students, because we believe that they may not write their written production in the baccalaureate exam. In addition, those students have experienced the cooperative learning approach since the teacher asks them to work in pairs, or in groups to write several paragraphs depending on a given topic. In this study, we are seeking for a correlation between two variables: cooperative learning approach and the writing skill. The procedure that is adopted is the descriptive study. To check the hypothesis we use the questionnaire as a tool. Through this tool we gather the adequate data for the study. For our research, two forms of questionnaires are used. The first one is delivered to teachers of English in Mohamed Guerrouf secondary school .The second questionnaire is administered to 3rd year secondary school students. Concerning the use of questionnaire as a technique of research, we believe that it is an appropriate tool for collecting data about student's written productions. We use the classroom observation as an additional tool to collect data about student's writing abilities while using the cooperative group work. The information we aim to gather is likely to be precise and clear; in which both teachers and students can answer the different questions that have a relation to the writing skill and the cooperative learning approach.

7. Structure of the dissertation

This dissertation is divided into two main sections: a theoretical part that is concerned with the literature review, and a practical part which is concerned with the analysis of the results, interpretation, and discussion. In the first chapter, we show writing as a complex and challenging skill. However, the second chapter is drawn to present the reader with a special focus on the cooperative learning approach as a developing factor that may influence student's writing. The third chapter is a practical part of the study. It is based on the analysis of data and the obtained outcomes to verify the research hypothesis.

8. Limitations of the study

This study has some limitations as Time constraint. Long period of time will help us to use different instruments of research. In addition, longer time would help us to extend our research through having more practice with students; it can be achieved through working as a group since this method would help students write their written production. The second limitation is the nature of the instrument being used. This research seeks for a correlation between two variables, consequently the experimental tool would be more helpful for getting more reliable and valid results. This is not the case of the questionnaire where most of the time the answers would not reflect the student's real position. The number of the sample, for sure would not represent the whole population. The teachers of English in H school also teach different streams, as a result several techniques and procedures would be used.

9. Literature review

Encarta dictionary (1999, 3) claims that "Writing in general means words in symbols, written down as a mean of communication." According to Vygotsky (1962;98) "written speech is a separate language function differing from speech in booth structure, and language mode of functioning. Even its minimal development requires a high level of abstraction, and it actually demands conscious work." Brooks and Grudy (2001;15) claim that "we often suggest that students should work in pairs ,or groups. There are two reasons for that:

1- To raise the student's awareness of the writing process by planning their work in the particularly conscious way that writing collaboratively involves.

2-To make writing a less lonely or secretive activity than it sometimes appears to be."

Gilbert (2004;54) argues that “The best way of learning any thing is to teach it to others.” Salvin (1995;2) defines cooperative learning as the “ variety of teaching methods in which students work in small groups to help one another learn academic content.” Walters (1983;17) argues that :”Writing is the last and perhaps the most difficult skill students learn if they ever do.” Writing is viewed as a separate cognitive activity that depends on knowing the following elements:

- A full knowledge of the alphabet

- Knowing how to combine letters to form words in order to understand the relationship between the word and its meaning

- Adopting the mechanics of writing throughout the text like spelling, capitalization, punctuation and other writing conventions.

- Mastery of the rules that govern the structure of sentences.

- Ability to combine different sentences to build an effective paragraph, and then combining paragraphs to produce different compositions-Awareness of the importance of transitions which achieve coherence throughout all types of texts (Al Mutawa and Kailani,1989)

Chapter One : The Writing skill

Introduction

Writing is thought to be an essential skill for success in many domains including the academic one. Many experts would go to say that without knowledge of the writing skill; the person's level would be somehow limited. Therefore, it is recommended that writing becomes a necessity for second language learners who wish to improve his or her writing's level. This can be achieved only through better reading of several passages, and better speaking with native speakers. The writing ability would be improved if learners study subjects of their interest. Writing shapes the individual since it requires from the learner making considerable efforts, and a lot of practice. It means being engaged in variety writing activities to see how writing takes place in language learning as well as understanding the nature of the writing skill itself. In addition, writing is significantly valued when comparing it to the remaining skills: listening, reading, and speaking. Writing is seen as the most effective skill that learners have to master in order to accomplish an acceptable writing's level. This chapter presents different definitions concerning the writing skill as well as its components that learners have to know in order to develop it. This chapter also deals with the relationship that exists between writing and the other skills. Moreover, it presents the different writing approaches.

1. The writing skill

1.1. Conceptual Definitions

People may communicate through written language, so that writing is related to what a learner or a teacher produce as texts, articles ... to be read by several types of audience. Written language is the activity of transforming language to symbols. As a result, writing is considered as a difficult skill to master. White and Arndt (1991:3) see that:"

Writing is far from being a simple matter of transcribing language into written symbols. It is a thinking process in its own right. It demands conscious intellectual effort which usually has to be sustained over a considerable effort of time.” The view of White and Arndt (1991) towards writing is based on that the writing skill needs high level of cognitive thinking, and awareness of what an individual thinks to do. In addition, writing demands from the human a developing device in his brain that can assimilate its basic structures easily, and consciously. To develop the writing ability, the learner needs both physical, and mental efforts that actually require from him much consciousness on both sides.

Byrne (1979) states that writing is transforming our ideas, thoughts, feelings, and beliefs into language. It is a very complex skill that needs both physical and mental abilities. He subdivides writing as being complex skill into three main categories:

1. Psychological aspect: the writer is exposed to the problems of frustration, self autonomy that have a great effect on writing.

2. Linguistic aspect: the writer encounters many grammar mistakes that lead him to express himself in unclear manner. This is due to the nature of the writing skill that prevents the writer from controlling what he would produce.

3. Cognitive aspect: the writer should acquire his ideas, and inspire his thoughts from well-structured instructions to master the writing aspects.

Therefore, writing can be seen from different perspectives, and what is more important is the psychological side. Widdowson (1981:26) states that:” The act of writing is related to the activity of producing correct sentences, and transmitting them through the visual medium as marks on paper.” This idea is based on that writing is the ability to transmit certain messages through graphic representation of ideas, thoughts, following the right grammar, vocabulary, and structures to convey your feelings clearly, and appropriately. In addition,

writing prevents both writers and readers from a huge misunderstanding that may happen. Speech is quite different from written speech in terms of structures, and functions. According to Vygotsky (1962:98)“ Written speech is a separate language function differing from speech in both structure and language mode of functioning. Even its minimal development requires a high level of abstraction, and it actually demands conscious work.” The writing development depends on the different mental processes that have several functions to do. Furthermore, it differs from speech in terms of structure and production. The writing structures need to be based on syntax (sentence and word structure) ; however, speech may be produced spontaneously, and without clear structures to be followed. Writing is no longer seen as the most complex and difficult skill since its fundamental basis rely to certain extent on conscious work.

Oshima and Hogue (1999) claim that academic writing is the writing activity that learners need to perform in school. This kind of writing activities differs from other kinds of writing in terms of audience, tone, and purpose.

1. Audience: is referred as teachers or instructors.
2. Tone: the nature of the given topic that depends on the learner’s style and strategies.
3. Purpose: The objective of writing(Why you are writing?)really determines its organization,

form, and style. It is noticed that academic writing is very complex since it involves practice, and concentration in order to be developed by second language learners. The main objective of academic writing is to determine the appropriate conditions to help students to be able to organize, write, and edit a composition in a relatively short period of time. The writing skill is regarded as a separate and complex activity that make the individual thinks, before he

would write what he has in mind. Al Mutawa and Kailani(1989) state that writing as a very complex cognitive activity depends on mastering the following points:

- 1.A full knowledge of the alphabet.
- 2.Knowing how to combine letters to form words in order to understand the relationship between the word and its meaning.
- 3.Adopting the mechanics of writing throughout the text like: spelling, capitalization, and other writing conventions.
- 4.Mastery of the rules that govern the structure of the sentences.
- 5.Ability to combine different sentences to build on effective paragraphs, and then combining different paragraphs to produce compositions.
- 6.Awareness of the importance of transitions which achieve coherence throughout all types of texts. Many aspects that concern the writing's ability need to be taken into consideration to clearly make the writing activities easy to learn.

Lado (1983:248) views writing as :”we mean by writing in a foreign language the ability to use structures, lexical items, and their conventional representation in ordinary matter of writing.” Writing in foreign language is mainly a matter of knowing how to use grammar structures (syntax), vocabulary, and being able to communicate with non-native speakers. In addition, learning the principles of the target language is important in terms of content, form, and organization. Mc Donough and Shaw(1993:383) claim that:” It is likely that in great majority of situations, our students still primary write for their teachers, or perhaps for an examiner. Both are acting in the role of evaluator.” Students have to communicate their thoughts, ideas appropriately, and clearly. As a result, they should focus on the type of the audience that they are writing for since the focus is primary on the teacher's area of interest.

1.2. The components of the writing skill

Writing mainly contains four main elements that shape writing: first, activity-notation, then spelling, moving to practice, and finally to the composing task where any student may use the different elements of a language.

1.2.1. The starting point is the activity-notation

The activity-notation is the act of putting of what someone has said in terms of graphic representations of sounds. In other words, writing is the concrete representation of ideas, and thoughts that means moving from the abstract to the concrete. Generally, before starting to write we think about what we would write i.e, language shapes thoughts. The latter can be concretely realized by the writing skill through producing several written assignment, and written discourse. Learning to write is similarly to learning to think, because the writer needs to organize his thoughts logically to be able to write down what he has thought properly. In addition to that, the writer should have efficient background of the different structures of the language (parts of the speech), this may enable him to write effectively in a good way. Brooks and Penn(1970:20) state that:”For one thing in writing, we must understand the structure of the language , what the parts of the speech do, how words relate to one another, what individual words mean, and the rules of grammar and punctuation.”

1.2.2. The second element is spelling

Most of the students do not give a great focus to spelling since it is one of the fundamental characteristics of writing. However, teachers take into consideration the features of spelling as criteria of evaluating the student’s work. They evaluate their students according to their spelling mistakes they make. To avoid such mistakes, students need to do a lot of practice by doing activities, grammar exercises with a major focus on either writing or reading skill as to express their ideas clearly; and communicate them in a conscious way. All of this

can be achieved through practicing. Rivers and Temperly (1978;297) state that:” Practice is needed to enable the students to learn about the various parts of the machine, and parts of the parts, and how these synchronize in action. The students need to set the machine in motion with the different parts active in weaning the intricate pattern of meaning.” If the learner has the ability to use the structures of a language (grammar rules, ideas organization, and lexical items) effectively, and intensively; he would for sure practice them as well as learn new words and expressions. Students should write, write, then write again; that leads to composing.

1.2.3. The third element is composing

It involves the different tasks of pre-writing where the learners start drafting, before the stage of revising. The latter is very significant for checking the learner’s mistakes. Finally we come to the stage of editing. When the learner starts writing, he focuses to a great extent on the grammatical side of the language; however, the previous stages must be given the priority from the student. Nunan(1989:36) suggests that: “A variable that is not important for those who use devices/machines such as, typewriters and computers. Beyond the sentence, the writer must be able to structure and integrate information into cohesive and coherent paragraphs and texts.” The sentence structure can be noticed by the mastery, or the control of content, punctuation, capitalization, verb tenses, vocabulary, spelling, and words combination. Furthermore, the writer should pay attention to the aspects that make a piece of writing acceptable in both sentence and discourse level. Rivers (1978:263) says that:” To write so that one is really communicating a message isolated in place and time, is an art requires consciously direct effort, and deliberate choice in language.” The intended point is that writing is a matter of transmitting a message as a kind of information, thoughts appropriately in a manner that enables the writer to establish the objective of such communication through clear thinking, and selective way of using words. Byrne (1988) stresses that the difficulty of

writing is not only limited to psychological problems, but also to the linguistic problems. In order to convey a communicative message, the writer is required to produce a piece of writing that fulfils the criteria of: sentence structure, mastery of language, and ordinary way of expressing ideas.

Lecki (1992:4) shares the same perspective by saying that:” Writing in the first language as the orchestration of countless skill and strategies.” In other words, acquiring first language requires a variety of competences that may be used to achieve the writing’s purposes. It can be applied in the second language. Raimes (1983) categorizes the components of writing as:

1. Content: involves relevance, clarity, originality, and logic.
2. The writer’s process: contains getting ideas, getting started, writing drafts, then revising.
3. Audience: The readers(learners, teachers, parents...)
4. Purpose: involves the reason behind writing(why you are writing? For what purpose?)
5. Word choice: requires the selection of lexical items, and vocabulary idioms.
6. Organization: in the paragraph, the topic sentence, and the supporting sentences must be clearly stated.
7. Mechanics: contains good hand writing, spelling, punctuation.
8. Syntax: includes sentence structure, sentence boundaries.
9. Clear, fluent, effective communication of ideas.

The students need to take into consideration the audience's knowledge, abilities, and interest. In addition, they also have to be aware of the value of what they are producing as writing drafts. Students need to learn about the writing styles and strategies by selecting the appropriate vocabulary items, and mastery of different grammatical rules in order to be able to achieve the writing purposes. Appropriateness and originality of what the writer produces also need to be taken into consideration since writing is seen as a complex cognitive ability. As well as writing needs a mastery of certain abilities and mechanical skills that are quite difficult. Heaton (1994) suggests the following aspects:

1. Grammatical skills: the ability to produce correct sentences.
2. Stylistic skills: the ability to manipulate sentences and use language effectively.
3. Mechanical skills: the ability to use appropriately these several conventions to the written language.
4. Judgemental skills: The ability to write in an appropriate way for a certain purpose with a particular audience; with the ability to select, organize, and order information that are relevant to the topic being discussed.

Applebee (1982) lists three main areas of knowledge that a writer may apply in writing certain assignments. First, The knowledge of the topic; the student has to be knowledgeable about what will be discussed latter on. Second, The knowledge of the audience; it is related to that student should know to whom he is writing, and what he shares with his audience. Finally, the knowledge of the conventions; writing is a difficult skill and contains a lot of challenges for both native, and non-native speakers. Learning how to write is not a matter of knowing and developing a set of mechanical strategies, but it also needs a mastery of certain cognitive aspects.

2. Writing and the other skills

Writing has a strong relationship with the other skills which are listening, speaking, and reading. They are completely correlative, consequently those skills affect one another.

2.1. Writing and speaking

Writing and speaking are mainly considered as productive skills since they are the outcomes of the individual's language; just as listening and reading are both receptive skills. Speaking as a separate skill differs totally from writing. Vygotsky (1962:98) notes that: "Written speech is a separate linguistic function differing from oral speech in both structure and mode of functioning." The way students learn to write is quite different from the way that they speak in terms of the nature of the productions (Written or oral), and the strategies used to produce certain outcomes. The students should pay attention to the differences that exist among the productive skills. In other words, being aware of what will be written or articulated. Grabe and Kaplan (1996:6) state that:" Writing abilities are not naturally acquired; they must be culturally (rather than biologically) transmitted in every existing environments." This means learning to write has some difficulties that may encounter students when they are practicing. This difficulty requires from students both efforts and practice to better development of the composing skill. Normally creating a piece of writing (either a paragraph or essay) requires from students the best selection of language forms in terms of words and expressions that totally differ from those used in spoken context. "Written production" is often difficult in grammar structure, and it is rich in its vocabulary.

Brown (1994) summarises some differences between writing and speaking:

1. Performance: Oral language is transitory, and must be processed in real time; whereas, written language is permanent and can be often read and re-read.

2. Formality: Since writing is ordinary used in both social and cultural situations, it tends to be more formal than speaking.

3. Vocabulary: writing contains variety of lexical items and vocabulary idioms than oral texts.

4. Complexity: writing is characterised by longer clauses, and variety of connectors; while spoken language tends to have shorter clauses as well as redundancy (repetition of such and such words as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs...)

5. Production time: writing requires time plan, draft, reviewing, and revising the written production before presentation; however, speaking requires only few time for planning, connecting speeches, and maintaining conversation.

The differences between writing and speaking can be stated as follow:

1. Writing is a learning behaviour that can be acquired through time; talking is natural.
2. Writing is a continuous process; whereas, talking is not.
3. Writing is technically conditioned; talking is organic naturally.
4. Writing most of the time is going slowly than most talking.
5. Writing is controlled; however, talking is inherently redundant.
6. The absence of audience in writing, and the presence of audience in talking(Listener is usually present).
7. Since writing is productive, it tends to be more authorised and restricted activity than talking.
8. The writing outcomes are visible products; talking is not usual visible.

9. Writing is to a great extent relying on form and background knowledge than talking relies.

Consequently, the relationship exists between writing and speaking is very significant in both learning and teaching.

2.2. Writing and reading

According to Raimes (1979), reading is quite important in forming the learner's personality, since it enriches his background. Teachers should not focus only on the written production of the students, but also on the reading skill as it is the study of what learners have written. Byrne (1979:10) argues that: "Reading of course can be a goal in itself, and in any case is likely to be more important one than writing, but the two skills can and should be developed in close collaboration." Writing and reading are two separated skills since reading is considered as a receptive skill, and writing is seen as a productive one. They complete each other, and they can be developed together. White(1981:101) claims that: "Any communicative writing course must contain a large component of reading comprehension of practice, that is, for writer as reader." The ability to write depends not only on reading but also on speaking, and listening. We cannot produce a piece of writing successfully unless we recognise what a reader has in mind about what we are going to say, and of course the interpretation of the words. Indeed those two skills are closely related.

Reading and writing are two complementary skills. Kroll (1990:88) states that: "It is reading that gives the writer "the feel" for the look and texture of reader based prose." Writing can be almost constructed on the reading of several passages, texts, and articles to develop the writing competence. Krashen (1984) sees that the writing competence comes from a self-motivated reading. It is noticed that writing and reading should be taught together "Related composing processes" as far as instruction is concerned. Squire (1983:581) claims

that:” Writing and reading can influence, and support the development of reading, writing, and thinking.” Since the aim of these skills is learning, through instruction readers develop understanding through their output as well as writers do. While writing, students keep thinking if the teacher will accept their piece of writing; they also need to know if what they have written is comprehensible. These kinds of expectations would better develop their writing. The fact is that the writing activities should be preceded by different reading activities by knowing that the learner has to be able to articulate words and expressions. At first, reading and speaking activities must be well developed to enable the learner to be a good writer. In addition to that, practice should be taken into consideration to get the appropriate way of producing an acceptable piece of writing.

The four language skills are totally related. Mackay (1965:463) sees that:” Before he can write, the learner must be able to both to read, and shape the letters of the alphabet. He should ideally be able to say sentences which he is expected to write.” As it is stated before, the learner must acquire the reading abilities in order to develop the competence of writing. Writing, reading, listening, and speaking are interrelated consequently, this leads to a whole study of language in terms of all components that language may include. Leki (1991:8) suggests that:” Writing is the natural outlet for the student’s reflection on their speaking, listening, and reading experiences in their second language.” It seems that the writing skill is to a great extent influenced by the other skills since it needs much more practice on those skills. Through this practice the learner would be able to master the possible components of the writing skill as well as producing correct, simple, clear piece of writing.

3. Writing approaches

3.1. The free writing approach

The free writing approach is often characterised by the great focus on content and fluency. When students write, they pay attention to the amount of information that should be written, and they do not make a little emphasis on form. The quality of writing is almost neglected. Getting started to write requires from students familiar subjects of their interest. In addition to that learners construct their written production on taking into consideration the flow of ideas, and the type of the audience (who will be the reader?). The different free writings of the students almost rely on two main criteria, the audience and the content.

3.2. The genre approach

This approach tends to focus on teaching different genres that learners need to control their writing, and of course succeed in producing that piece of writing. All of this requires the learner to focus on the linguistic aspect of the text, and the content in which this text is produced. The students use different writing genres to accomplish certain aims, and to fulfil certain language functions. Painter(1989;21) notes that:” Language is functional resource in that the language system can be viewed as having the form it does because of what it is called upon to do.” The genre approach views language as functional that it serves several purposes. Developing the learner’s writing skill requires:

- Understanding the different texts structures to better presentation of the information or idea.

- Achieving better interaction among them.

Furthermore, writing approaches in a way or another serve the learning and teaching process of the writing skill according to the specific needs of the student.

3.3. The paragraph pattern approach

This approach gives more emphasis on the organization of the language rather than the fluency of the content, the topic sentence, the supporting sentences, the concluding sentence, unity, the good connection of ideas are the significant aspects that must be acquired by learners. Students need to be provided by a model paragraph in order to copy down that given paragraph without even trying to write a simple sentence. The type of exercises given by the teacher may help the students to identify the right way of writing their own production instead of adapting classmates' sentences when dealing with paragraph writing.

3.4. The modern approach to teaching writing

This approach is based on combining of communicative approach and process approach. Raimes (1981:21) states that:” Writing is viewed as a process that goes through three different stages: pre-writing, composing, and revising.” When students are engaged in writing, they must follow the previous stages mentioned in order to write an acceptable paragraph that can be at least read. Chan (1986:56) claims that:” The modern approach to teaching writing is based on three assumptions which relate to the cognitive and social strategies: first people write to communicate with readers, second people write to accomplish certain purposes, and finally writing is a complex process.” Students or writers should consider two main points: the audience whose they are writing for; and the purpose of their writing (why?) since writing is seen as a communicative act. Raimes (1983) stated that in order to write, the students should follow this process:

1. Students should identify why they are writing.
2. They should identify whose they are writing for.

3. Students should gather material through observing, brainstorming, making notes, talking to others, and reading.
4. They have to plan to go about the task and how to organise the material.
5. Students should write the draft.
6. They read the draft critically in terms of its content.
7. Students revise what they have written.
8. They should prepare more drafts for a final revision.
9. Students proofread their errors.

4. Learning strategies

4.1. Definitions

According to Oxford and Crookall (1989), The term “learning strategies” refers to the steps or the skills taken by the learner for better acquisition storage, and retrieval of knowledge. They are also called” Learning techniques” that may help learners to behave, or to act appropriately. Those learning strategies are referred to as “Learning to learn” since these strategies can make learning more efficient and effective. O’Malley and Chamot (1990:1) define language learning strategies as:” The special thoughts or behaviours that the individuals use to help them to comprehend, learn, or retain information.” Those learning strategies are concerned with learner’s intellectual thinking, and their actions towards a learning activity. They can make learning much easier, and more effective. Later, Oxford (1993:18) refines her preceding definition by stating that:” Specific actions, behaviours, steps or techniques that students often intentionally use to improve their progress in developing second language skills.” Students need the appropriate learning strategies in order to improve

their language skills, and to reach the underlined objectives. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) classify the different learning strategies under three main categories:

4.1.1. The cognitive strategies

They are concerned with the learner's mental abilities to be engaged in certain learning task. O'Malley and Chamot (1990:138) state that these strategies:” Involve interacting with the material to be learned, manipulating the material mentally, physically, or applying a specific technique to a learning task.” They are the skills that can transform, or manipulate certain knowledge directly, or indirectly through applying several techniques as reasoning, more formal practice with language structures and sounds, analysis note taking, etc. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) identify the learning strategies and their definitions as follow:

1. Resourcing: using reference materials of the target language such as: textbooks, dictionaries, and encyclopaedias
2. Repetition: imitating certain language model through much practice, and silent rehearsal
3. Grouping: arranging or classifying words, concepts, terminologies according to their meaning
4. Imagery: using visual images either actual or mental to understand new information.
5. Deduction: applying previous rules to understand the target language, or build rules based on language analysis.
6. Key word method: remembering a new concept in the second language by identifying words in the first language that sound like the first one.

7. Transfer: using pre-existing knowledge or prior language skills to confirm production or comprehension.

8. Elaboration: relating the parts of the new information to prior knowledge to make meaningful relationships.

9. Note taking: writing key words or concepts in an abbreviated way(graphic or numerical) while listening or reading.

10. Inferencing: using prior knowledge to predict the new words meaning.

11. Summarizing: making written or oral summary of new information through listening or reading.

12. Recombination: combining two or more known elements to construct meaningful sentences in new way.

13. Translation: based on what a learner has in the first language, he may understand or produce second language.

4.1.2.Meta-cognitive strategies

These strategies involve organizing, planning, or monitoring a written discourse. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) identify the meta-cognitive strategies and their definitions as follows:

1. Planning: generating the main ideas that are related to the materials to be learnt.

2. Directed attention: deciding in advance to be engaged in a learning task and overlook the irrelevant answers.

3. Functional planning: planning for necessary linguistic components to fulfil a certain language task.

4. Self-management: arrange the learning conditions that help one to learn.
5. Monitoring: checking one's accuracy, or appropriateness of oral or written productions, and checking his comprehension during a listening or a reading task.
6. Self-evaluation: testing one's outcomes of a language learning task often it has been completed.

4.1.3.Social-affective strategies

O'Malley and Chamot (1990:45) state that these strategies involve: "Either interactions with another person or identical control over affect." It is noticed that interaction is a good example for such strategy. Furthermore, positive and negative feedback either from peers or teachers is also considered a good example of this strategy.

4.2. Cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies in writing

Writing is cognitively based on mental processes that involve many learning strategies. Flower and Hayes (1981) and Hayes (1996) focus on that writing consists of three main strategies of planning, translating, and reviewing. Planning is divided into three sub-strategies: generating thoughts, organizing them, and goal setting. The second part is referred as translating. It is actually when the writer writes down his ideas into visible language. Finally, reviewing is to check the way that sentences are related to the division of paragraphs. It is worth noting that writing in second language context is mainly complex when talking about composing. Candlin and Hyland (1996:86) claim that: "Writing involves complex mental processes when the form of written expression is sentences and paragraphs." Students encounter many difficulties to develop all aspects of writing. So that learners can develop certain learning strategies that can isolate the different mental processes in order to facilitate language production. Robert and Erdos (1993) state that cognitive strategies are helpful for an

individual to achieve certain goals for instance, understanding the main idea of a passage. Whereas, meta-cognitive strategies are used to make sure that those goals are accomplished. Butterfield, Albertson, and Jhonston (1995) state that distinguishing between cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies is to know the knowledge that helps the individual to solve problems, and to monitor and understand one's strategies. Pakhati (2003) views that meta-cognitive strategies may be similar to cognitive strategies since one is used to identify the underlying goals, and the other one is to identify the strategy.

Conclusion

In the learning and teaching process of the writing skill, students and teachers should be provided with the important information, knowledge that would make them capable and knowledgeable of the writing skill's importance. Furthermore, they should reveal what they have as background in order to master the different aspects of this skill. Writing should be taken into consideration since it is difficult task to do; it also needs much more focus from both teachers and learners on its aspects. Writing involves other conventions as coherence, cohesion, tenses, methodology, and especially the appropriate strategies that should be followed by the learner. As far as writing is concerned, it requires from learners to identify its several aspects that need to be applied in the classroom in order to write correctly. In addition, the students should follow the stages of writing to accomplish the academic goals. Writing as a separate skill has a strong relationship with other skills to help students to initially start writing. The different writing approaches also have a great impact on the writing's aspects. Furthermore, cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies affect also to a great extent the student's writing ability.

Chapter Two: The Cooperative Learning Approach

Introduction

Cooperative group work is no longer seen as an effective learning method in several academic settings in which the teacher is the controller of the classroom, and students were only considered as passive receivers of the information presented. Nowadays, the new approaches of teaching a second or foreign language focus that classroom output should be constructed from both teachers and learners. Furthermore, the classroom is seen as teacher-centered whereby the teacher is just a guide. The learner plays a role of discoverer, constructor, and transformer of the information mentioned in the given task. The main principle of the new approaches of teaching is communication inside the classroom. Teachers and learners exchange ideas during classroom interaction that leads to effective production of knowledge. Moreover, practice is also considered one of the effective learning strategies. Gilbert (2002;54) argues that:” the best way of learning any thing is to teach it to others.” This method can be applied in teaching and learning a second language. In addition, it gives more opportunities to learners to use their learning strategies. This chapter deals with conceptual definitions about cooperative learning as well as compare between collaborative learning and cooperative learning. We also differentiate between cooperative, competitive, and individualistic learning. This chapter presents the theoretical background of the cooperative learning, and the criteria that make the use of this method effective. In addition, we state the benefits of using cooperative learning in many academic and social situations.

1. Cooperative Learning

1.1. Conceptual Definitions

Salvin (1995:2) claims that cooperative learning is:” The variety of teaching methods in which students work in small groups to help one another learn academic content.” The cooperative learning approach is based on asking students to work in pairs, or in groups

according to the nature of the task instruction to accomplish their goals which are learning academic content. Johnson and Johnson (2005:117) state that:” The instructional use of small groups such that students work together to maximize their own and each other’s learning.” The intended idea is that students must share their ideas with their classmates, and contribute in the learning process for better understanding of each other’s point of view through applying the cooperative learning techniques. Brown (2001) characterizes cooperative learning as:

1. The contributions and responsibility: all students have to help one another when learning, and contribute as much as they can to get the desired outcomes

2. Interaction: all students must interact with their classmates, and accept each other’s opinions. Hill and Flynn (2006) state that through the use of cooperative learning, students may interact, understand, and use the new information. According to Brown (2001), cooperative learning is an interaction between learners. Both teachers and learners exchange thoughts and ideas. The teacher produces knowledge of the language as well as the students receive that knowledge. All of this would allow them to learn a foreign language or a second language effectively. Stevens (2008) states two main features of cooperative learning, the first is the way students are in charge of their learning and group mates. Secondly, it is how students receive the instructions given by their teachers.

1.2. The Differences between Cooperative, Competitive, and Individualistic Learning

Classroom structures include different learning methods. Williams and Burden (1997) refer to the teaching methods that teachers must follow in order to arrange their classrooms as well as their lessons to create the appropriate learning atmosphere. Classroom structures carry out many instructional methods including cooperative, individualistic, and competitive method. Those methods need to be applied in the classroom in order to increase the learner’s involvement in the different daily activities. The individualistic method of

learning is considered as one of the traditional ways of learning when comparing it to the cooperative method. Consequently, the teacher needs to take the appropriate method of teaching according to the learner's needs, and the nature of the activity itself. The competitive learning method is also required for the different classroom activities. As a result, it makes the learners engaged, and strongly motivated to work in the classroom.

Johnson and Johnson (2005:117) explain the three methods as follow:” Cooperative learning is usually constructed with competitive (students work to achieve goals that only a few can attain; students can success if and only if other students in the class fail to obtain their goals, and individualistic learning (students work alone on a goal independent from the goals of others.” Cooperative learning is a combination of two independent methods: competitive method, and individualistic method. The definition above includes that individualistic learning is to learn or work in isolation from other students; and the achievements of those working individually are not related to students who work together. However, competitive learning is a method of comparing one's rewards to the other's rewards. The achievements can be accomplished differently by who achieved the goals better than the other. All those classroom structures are used for the same purpose that is learning, although the methods differ from one student to another.

From another point of view, Smith (1996:71) claims that:” The differences between cooperative, competitive, and individualistic learning is based on “ The norm of interaction” through which learners perceive each other.” The view of Smith (1996) is based on that the way students exchange ideas, information, and thought determines the classroom structure. The way learners communicate with each other, or make discussions helps them to apply the right learning method to reach the desired goals. If student-student learning is competitive, the main classroom structure would be competitive. Moreover, if there is no interaction between students, the main dominant structure would be the individualistic learning method. It is

noticed that the competitive learning method would make students work against one another, and each one of them is looking for attaining his own goals. According to Johnson et al (1984), learners fear from making mistakes in front of their classmates, therefore they would not be engaged in the different activities presented by the teacher. Ames (1984:193) argues that:” In competitive situations, grades and rewards are given only for right answers which would increase the student’s fear of making mistakes.” Students would not feel motivated, less interested, and not engaged in the learning process. For Slavin (1995), the fear of making mistakes has several negative effects for students who are not able to express themselves freely. Less able students would keep their level low when using this method; whereas, their classmates make more efforts in learning.

Williams and Burden (1997) refer to individualistic learning as “master-based instruction”. In individualistic learning, the differences which exist between the student’s last performance and his real one are evaluated by giving grades, and rewards for best performance. Learning individually enables the students to attain their goals in a separate way from others. Cooperative and competitive learning are two interrelated structures that may enable the students to benefit from their learning. Attle and Baker (2007) suggest a method that combines cooperative and competitive learning. It is thought that this method would be more effective for students who aim to achieve best performances in the different given instructions According to Attle and Baker (2007), using cooperative learning in competitive environments where two or more groups are competing against each other would have many advantages in the learning process. Thus, mixing the two methods would be more beneficial for both teachers and students where certain rewards and grades are given.

1.3. Cooperative Learning Versus Collaborative Learning

Learning methods differ from one learner to another, for that learners use the appropriate learning method according to their abilities and capacities. According to China and China (2009), cooperative learning is often used in the same sense of collaborative learning, and sometimes are used as synonyms. Whereas, Pantiz (1996) sees that there are major differences which exist between the two of them. There is certain disagreement about those differences. Therefore, it comes from the similarities of the meaning of the two concepts. Pantiz (1996:1) defines collaboration as:” Personal way of life of exchange, and cooperative learning as ways of structuring an exchange.” The view of Pantiz (1996) is based on that the collaborative learning purpose is to build student’s consciousness, and make them in charge of their actions. It may include respecting peer’s contributions and capacities. Moreover, collaborative learning makes the learners responsible of their learning. As opposed to this method, cooperative learning is achieving specific goals as academic ones through jointly working together. In other words, cooperative learning refers to building learning strategies, and methods used with others to accomplish common objectives. Collaboration is seen as a system of beliefs which humans have about how they can help, or be helped by others. Collaborative learning also refers to what extent the individual values their beliefs. Hence, according to Pantiz (1996) cooperative learning is considered more specified than collaborative learning in terms of its purposes, and its instructional processes.

Collaborative learning is considered as one of the most effective learning strategies in the educational field. Smith and Mac Gregor (1992) think that collaborative learning is the super-ordinate concept of exchanging help either between students and students, or students and teachers. Thus, cooperative learning is one among the methods of organizing and structuring the collaborative learning approach. According to Bruffee (1995), collaborative learning and cooperative learning differ in two main aspects which are first the level of the

student, and the type of the knowledge that is seemed important when using this method. Cooperative learning is appropriately used in elementary and secondary schools, whereas collaborative learning is best used for adult and adolescent students like those in university. Mcwhaw et al.(2003) suggest from one perspective that collaborative learning is effective to explain” non-foundational” knowledge which is information that requires critical cognitive thinking, and more discussion. It has no finite answers. From another perspective, cooperative learning is more appropriate in defining” foundational” knowledge which is information that are related to real facts, consequently cooperative learning has finite answers. The view of Gibert (2002) is based on that teaching what you have learnt is a good method that can be applied in teaching and learning second, or foreign language. This method provides second, and foreign language learners with more opportunities to apply their learning strategies.

2. Theoretical Background of Cooperative Learning

Many learning theories have supported cooperative learning; each theory tries to give arguments for the effectiveness of cooperative learning in social and academic settings. Among these theories, we are going to state:

2.1. The Cognitive Theory

This theory is based on building knowledge through several cognitive processes. According to Cohen et al (2004:168) the cooperative learning sees learning as:” A process of constructing knowledge through cognitive processes like reflective abstraction, recognition and so on..” In other words, the learning process has a great effect on building the individual’s knowledge. There are two main ways to construct this knowledge:

2.2. The Piaget's View

An active role in the whole learning process was given to learners by Piaget view towards learning. Benthan (2002) states that Piaget thinks that when learners are engaged in situations where they can encounter "dis-equilibrium", they would have a cognitive conflict that may lead them to learn new knowledge. As a result, these situations need active interaction. The learners will realize that they have a cognitive conflict, if other learners' points of view are contradicted. Then they would compare the old knowledge to the new built one which is based on cognitive processes in different learning situations. Stevens (2008) argues that cooperative learning is a helpful technique either with peers, or with small groups for such contradictory views to occur. Learners interact in cooperative group work this will enable them to actively compare their information to their group mates' knowledge. This situation causes cognitive conflict that can be solved by the learners' agreement on one view. Consequently, a new knowledge will be appropriately constructed.

2.3. The Vygotsky's View

This theory comes to support the effectiveness of cooperative learning group. According to Slavin et al (2003), this theory has been found to support the use of cooperative learning strategies in which learners work in pairs, or in small groups. Hence, cooperative learning is a good example that adds social features to the learning activities. Bentham (2002) thinks that Vygotsky's theory focuses on the significance of competent peers who may help less able students because what a learner can do individually is quite different from what he would do with more help. Stevens (2008) states that cognitive apprenticeship can be implied during a cooperative learning work when all learners of all levels may benefit. O'Donnell (2002) suggests that more learning processes can be beneficial, if learners are engaged in

cooperative learning work. Learners discuss, explain, and argue when they learn in pairs, or in small groups. This would be a good way to gain knowledge.

2.4. Behavioural Learning Theory

Johnson and Smith (1998) suggest that learners become hard workers when there is any kind of reward; as cooperative learning emphasizes the individual and the group reward. It was an effective way for students to learn. According to Slavin (1995) and Slavin et al (2003), this theory can also be named "Motivational theory". It implies that individual and group learning work is based on the sum of individual's achievement since benefits are reached when group and individual objectives are achieved. This can enable students to be more motivated, and more helpful to do more activities. All those learning theories come to support the effectiveness of cooperative learning and its benefits to the learning process.

3. Criteria that make Cooperative Learning Effective

There are some circumstances which may make the cooperative learning effective in the entire teaching and learning process. It is considered as the most helpful way of learning. Johnson, Johnson and Smith (1998:28) claim that: "There are forms of group work like "pseudo groups", which causes competition at close distance and "traditional learning" which consists of individualistic learning with talk; both of them do no result in any cooperation." There are some criteria that make a group work cooperative as opposed to traditional methods of learning when there is no cooperation. According to Johnson and Johnson (2005), in cooperative learning students have to sit close to one another, discuss, explain, clarify, and teach what they have as knowledge to their classmates. Help must be exchanged among students to enable them to be more creative and productive. Therefore, this way is classified to be a good one for effective cooperative learning, and it is named "face to

face promotive interaction”. Cooperation requires from students conscious efforts in order to reach their goals where there is no need to social conflicts.

In cooperative learning, student-student interaction is almost required for best performance. Johnson et al (1984) claims that “face to face promotive interaction” would not attain its objectives without practising certain social skills which are also considered as an effective element of cooperative learning. These social skills are needed when learners work cooperatively for instance, decision making, communication, group management, and building trust skills. All of the previous skills build the student’s spirit of collaboration. Therefore, they increase the student’s self confidence. When students work in cooperative groups, they should have a feeling which makes them capable of doing many activities. Johnson (1984) emphasizes that this feeling of relying on one another can be positively helpful for students to reach their academic goals. As a result, this feeling is totally based on interdependence. Johnson and Johnson (2005) suggest some common objectives, assigned roles for each member of the group using different resources, shared rewards, and identify several techniques to build” positive interdependence”. In group learning goals, student’s work, contributions, and understanding should be assessed in a separate manner from others. Johnson et al (1984) states the characteristic” individual accountability” that is considered one of the most effective element of cooperative learning. Moreover,, many researchers focus on the importance of these two last elements which are” positive interdependence “ and “individual accountability”. For instance, Slavin (1995) states that these two characteristics are the only ones that are shared between the different activities and models of cooperative learning.

The different social relations applied among the same members of the group are the basis for effective cooperative learning. Miller (2008) also argues that individual accountability and positive interdependence are two main elements for cooperative learning to

work, because forming the group is fundamental of how much the group's members attain their present goals. Therefore, it is the appropriate way or method to grade both the groups and the individuals. Johnson and Johnson (2005) propose another criterion that makes cooperative learning effective which is "group processing". This criterion is based on that students need much time to discuss how they can better achieve their learning goals, and build effective working relations among the members of the same group. This can be achieved only through making control and managements of their actions, problems, and solutions to ensure the effectiveness of cooperative learning. Hill and Flyn (2006) suggest an additional criterion that may form groups in a good manner using small groups which include three or four members. Thus, these groups would apply cooperative learning consistently, and combine this method to other instructional methods.

4. Benefits of Cooperative Learning

4.1. Learning Strategies

The cooperative learning includes several strategies to be used in different academic contexts either directly, or indirectly. According to Hill and Flyn (2006), students use different learning strategies that are concerned with cooperative learning when they work in groups, or in small groups. For instance, learners practise those strategies of explaining, clarifying, arguing, debating, and repeating difficult new words. These strategies are considered as techniques of memory, and cognitive strategies. It is noticed that there are also meta-cognitive strategies. Brown (2001) suggests that autonomy and responsibility are two main meta-cognitive strategies that are the outcomes of well-planned cooperative group. In other words, when cooperative learning groups are well-structured, each student would be responsible of his actions. That is to say, he takes in charge of his individual learning and the cooperative group's learning. Students are responsible of the whole group benefits which may

make them autonomous. They use well-structured cooperative learning in order to achieve certain goals through following specific ways. All of this enables them to clearly understand each other's points of view, and consciously be aware of what others would feel or think. These strategies are classified under social strategies.

4.2. Achievement Outcomes

Cooperative learning is considered one of the most effective learning strategies. Gambrel (2007) argues that learners who are actively involved in cooperative learning groups have the larger achievements and rewards. They are also more active than those who participate in traditional learning groups. Furthermore, learners who work together gain more than students who work individually. Hoynes (2007:6) states that:” For English language learners, using cooperative group activities would help them achieve their academic goals because they are actively in “comprehensible output”, and at the same time receiving “comprehensible input” both have almost the same importance in learning a language.” When learners participate in cooperative learning group, they use different learning strategies as negotiating meaning, and exchanging points of view. They articulate their words, and express their ideas according to their peer's level and needs. Consequently, learners produce comprehensible output and receive comprehensible input from their group's members. As Hill and Flynn (2006) state for the same reason, interaction is seen as a significant element in cooperative learning group work that can enable learners to build good relationships with others.

4.3. Social Outcomes

The use of cooperative learning method could result many positive outcomes on the social relations. Hohn (2005) indicates that cooperative learning group provides much respect for others, and more collaboration among the same group's members. It would increase

respect, knowledge, cooperation, and help. When learners feel that they help their peers, and are helped by others; they start building good relationships with their classmates. So, they strengthen those group relations and maximize respect for them. Slavin (2006) thinks that these social relations would remain outside the school, and they are importantly positive for all members of the group work. The use of cooperative learning group has several social effects on both teachers and learners. Stevens (2008) states that these social learning strategies may go beyond time and place of using cooperative group work. That is to say, respect, cooperation, and help would last outside the classroom where they were built. Furthermore, this is an indicator of good interaction after finishing the cooperative work. In addition, good relationships are built outside the school.

4.4. Affective Outcomes

The cooperative learning method affects to a great extent the learners who are supposed to be the important part of the whole learning process. Brown (2001) claims that when learners use well-structured cooperative learning, they would feel secure, and safe from criticism. This feeling comes from the embarrassment that a learner would feel when his peer corrects his mistakes in front of the group members. As a result, Even the shy learners would become involved in the learning process, and be active participants. The effectiveness of cooperative learning depends on the learner's feeling of security. There are of course other feelings that make cooperative learning more effective. Johnson and Johnson (2005;118) notes that:" The feeling of commitment learners have when they are involved in the cooperative work will decrease their "disruptive" and off-task behaviour." It is all about the student's feeling towards meaningful activities. Being engaged in different learning activities would create a sort of commitment inside the learner who is supposed to participate, and get an active role in the learning process. The effect of cooperative learning on the student's feeling is significant for better achievement, and good learning outcomes.

Conclusion

We approach cooperative learning as a developing factor that can be used for all students of all levels in all subjects. Cooperative learning has a strong relationship with collaborative learning which is more general, and less structured than cooperative learning. It is also different from other classroom methods or structures to control learning such as individualistic learning where the student's achievements are totally different from those working in small groups. However, competitive learning is comparing one's rewards to other's rewards. Cooperative learning is supported by many theories as the cognitive theory, and the behavioural learning theory; they also come to support the effectiveness of the cooperative learning. Cognitive theory view learning as building knowledge through mental processes. Whereas, behavioural learning theory sees cooperative learning as individual, or group reward. The criteria that make cooperative learning effective are also compared with the right learning conditions in which this method really works. The cooperative learning benefits support positively the affective side of the learner.

Chapter Three :

Field Work

Introduction

The present chapter deals with the situational analysis of our research. It starts by describing the population of the study, then explaining the means used for this research. It is also devoted to the analysis of the teacher's questionnaire in which we describe it first, and how it was administered. The teacher's questionnaire results will be discussed. This chapter presents the student's questionnaire in terms of its analysis and interpretation in which students were asked to answer some questions that are related to the research's variables. Additionally, the classroom observation checklists will be analysed and discussed. The analysis of these checklists enables us to identify the effectiveness of the adoption of the cooperative learning approach, and how it may help students to write.

1. The Population

The whole population of the study consists of 3rd year secondary school students of the scientific stream at Mohamed Guerrouf secondary school of Biskra during the Academic year 2016/2017, and it is composed of 3rd year teachers of English at the same secondary school. The total number of the students' population is 45 students out of 180, who study Natural Sciences group 3, and the teachers' population is 7 teachers. The students are from different social backgrounds, and from different geographical regions in Biskra. In addition, they are also from different genders male and female. This population has been chosen for two main reasons. The first reason is that 3rd year secondary school students have already been taught different writing activities, thus they would have experienced working in groups in the English session. Hence they would have an opinion and attitude towards the cooperative learning method. The second reason is that 3rd year secondary school students will pass their Baccalaureat Exam, for they would be asked to elaborate a written production.

The syllabus consists of more practice in writing, especially teachers would have many opportunities to implement cooperative group work.

2. The Means of the Research

The present study aims at making correlation between two main variables: using cooperative learning method as a developing factor for efficient writing strategies. We have chosen the descriptive method to confirm our hypothesis. The tool used can fairly represent this method to undertake this research is the questionnaire. Moreover, we have chosen the classroom observation to notice the teacher and the student's activities in the classroom. It is composed of many checklists to observe many elements which are related to our research's topic. The questionnaire is composed of a series of written questions that particular persons would answer for the sake of gathering information. It is used to collect data about any topic from large, or small number of people.

3. The Teachers' Questionnaire

3.1. Description of Teachers' Questionnaire

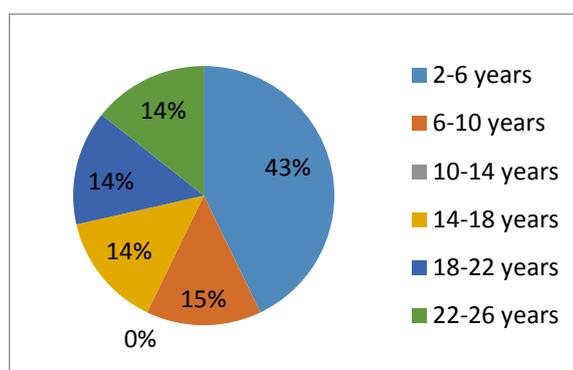
The questionnaire is divided into three main sections. The first section is composed of 2 questions which concern the background information of the teacher. The second section consists of 9 questions which concern the writing skill. The last section is about the cooperative learning method which consists of 7 questions. This questionnaire was done directly after the spring holidays with 7 teachers at Mohamed Guerrouf secondary school, and the time taken was for a whole day since they have sessions to teach. The participants were asked to answer the questions using of course the English language and write any comments concerning these questions.

3.2. Interpretation and Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire

Question 1. Teachers' Teaching Experience

Options	2-6 years	6-10 years	10-14 years	14-18 years	18-22 years	22-26 years
participants	3	1	0	1	1	1
percentages	43%	14%	0%	14%	14%	14%

Table 1. Teacher's teaching experience



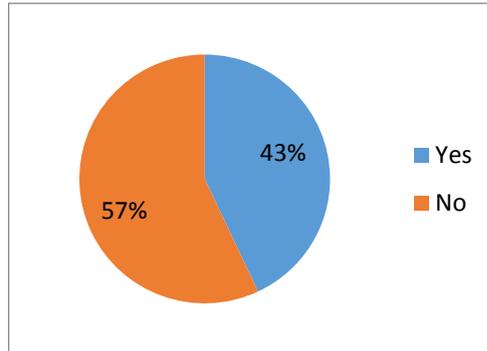
Graph 1. Teacher's teaching experience

The table below shows that 3 teachers (43%) have been teaching English for 4 years, and they are looking for more working experience years. However 1 teacher (14%) claims that he has been teaching English for 8 years as well as another one works for 23 years. As a result working experience years completely differ from one teacher to another.

Question 2. The sufficiency of the English program of 3rd year secondary students

Options	Yes	No
Participants	3	4
Percentages	43%	57%

Table 2. The sufficiency of the English Program of 3rd year secondary students



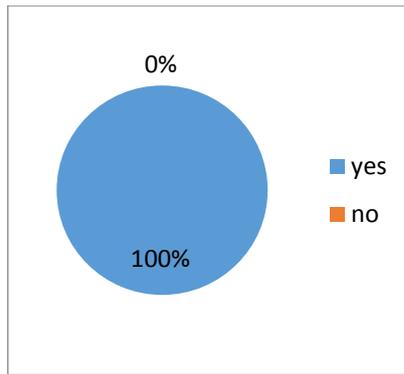
Graph 2. The sufficiency of the English Program of 3rd year secondary students

The graph below shows that 3 teachers (43%) see the English program of 3rd year secondary school students is enough to improve the student's writing skill since the program covers almost the important points related to the language skills. Whereas, 4 teachers (57%) indicate that it is not enough as the program lacks many topics, and it is loaded with difficult vocabulary. Moreover, the textbook is concerned with different skills in which learners need to practice. Another reason is the time where students need it for better performance.

Question 3. Contribution of the reading skill in the writing one

Options	Yes	No
Participants	7	0
Percentages	100%	0%

Table 3. Reading contribution in the development of the writing skill



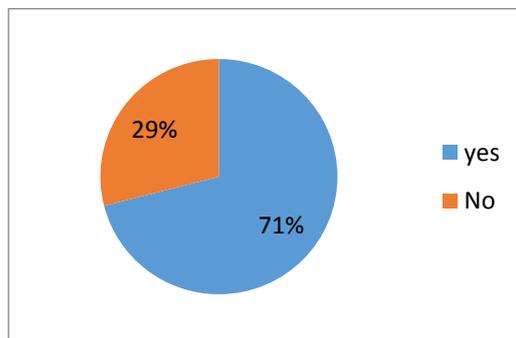
Graph 3. Reading contribution in the development of the writing skill

All the participants (100%) claim that reading strongly contributes in the development of the writing skill because reading will boost writing and vocabulary skills. Thus it enriches the student’s vocabulary to write coherently, and will continuously strengthen the student’s writing ability. Moreover, good readers are good writers.

Question 4. Teacher’s encouragement of students to read

Options	Yes	No
Participants	5	2
Percentages	71%	29%

Table 4. Teacher’s encouragement of the students to read



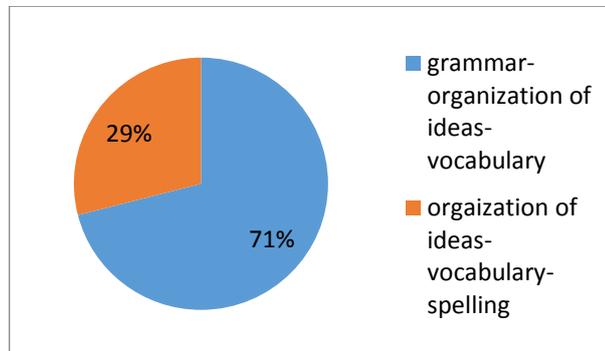
Graph 4. Teacher’s encouragement of students to read

The table below indicates that 5 teachers (71%) strongly encourage their students to read in the classroom, or at home to enrich their background for good writing, and have more new words to be used while writing. However, 2 teachers (29%) claim that they do not involve their students in different reading activities since they ask them to deal with more writing activities, and practice as much as they can.

Question 5. Good piece of writing’s criteria

Options	Grammar-Organization of ideas- Vocabulary	Organization of ideas- Vocabulary-Spelling
Participants	5	2
Percentages	71%	29%

Table 5. Good piece of writing’s criteria



Graph 5. Good piece of writing’s criteria

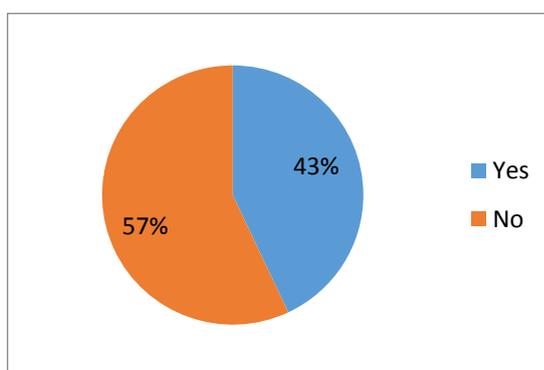
The table below shows that 5 teachers (71%) state good piece of writing is correct grammar, organization of ideas, and precise vocabulary where spelling is totally neglected because it has to do with the reading skill ; among those teachers one claims that examples and illustrations will improve student’s writing skill. Whereas, 2 teachers (29%) indicate that writing consists of three main elements that are “good organization of ideas”, “precise

vocabulary”, and “spelling”. As a result, vocabulary is seen as an important factor for good piece of writing.

Question 6. Teacher’s satisfaction about their student’s level of writing

Options	Yes	No
Participants	3	4
Percentages	43%	57%

Table 6. Teacher’s satisfaction about their student’s level of writing



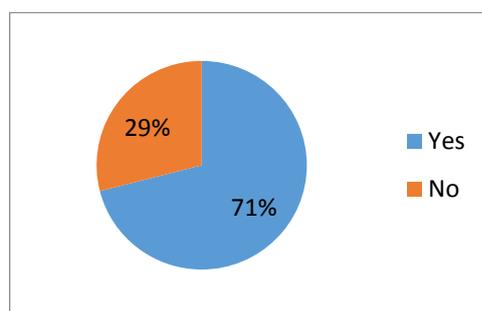
Graph 6. Teacher’s satisfaction about their student’s piece of writing

The graph below shows that 4 teachers (57%) are not satisfied about their student’s level of writing since students lack the basic elements of writing, and communicate with their native language. Moreover, students use word by word translation from native language to English language as well as they do not know how to use words in their real context. However, 3 teachers (43%) claim that they are satisfied of their student’s level of writing since they encourage them to get involved in different writing activities, and motivate their learners to read everywhere.

Question 7. Teacher’s encouragement of students to write

Options	Yes	No
Participants	5	2
Percentages	71%	29%

Table 7. Teacher’s encouragement of students to write



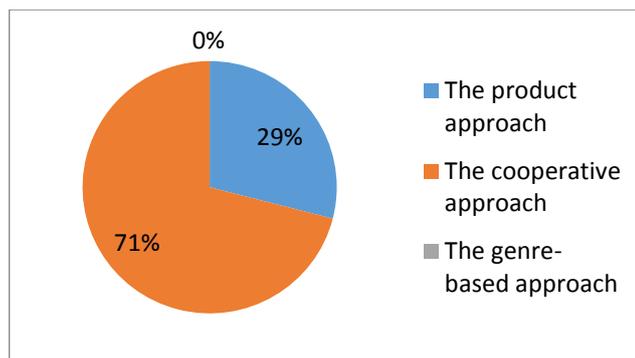
Graph 7. Teacher’s encouragement of students to write

5 teachers (71%) claim that they continuously encourage students to write at home as writing is considered as one of the most significant skill in the English language, and it requires strong focus from both students and teachers. However, 2 teachers (29%) state that they do not encourage their students to write since the majority of them have problems with English, and lack many grammatical structures.

Question 8. Teacher’s favourite teaching approach in writing

Options	The product approach	The cooperative approach	The genre-based approach
Participants	2	5	0
Percentages	29%	71%	0%

Table 8. Teacher’s favourite teaching approach in writing



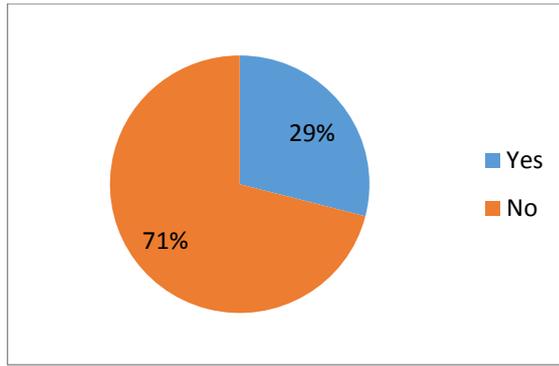
Graph 8. Teacher’s favourite teaching approach in writing

The table below indicates that 5 teachers (71%) claim that they use the cooperative learning approach in teaching writing as this approach encourages, and motivates students to work as well as exchange ideas. It is a good method that makes all students involved in the writing activities, besides it helps them to learn from each other. But 2 teachers (29%) state that they use the product approach to teach writing since students when they see a model of writing; they become motivated, and this model encourages them to write as well as collect ideas which are related to their interesting topics.

Question 9. Providing students with a model to write

Options	Yes	No
Participants	2	5
Percentages	29%	71%

Table 9. Teacher’s writing models provided for students



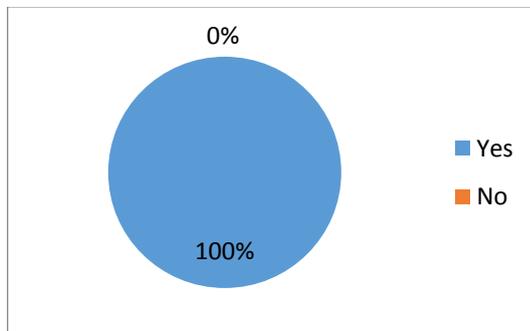
Graph 9. Teacher’s writing models provided for students

5 teachers (71%) state that they do not provide their students with writing models as they encourage them to create their own pieces of writing through working in groups, and be as productive as they can in order to reveal their knowledge. Whereas 2 teachers (29%) claim that they should provide their students with writing models because having a model in front of them makes the writing activity easy for students in terms of form and style.

Question 10. Helping students while writing

Options	Yes	No
Participants	7	0
Percentages	100%	0%

Table 10. Teacher’s help for students while writing



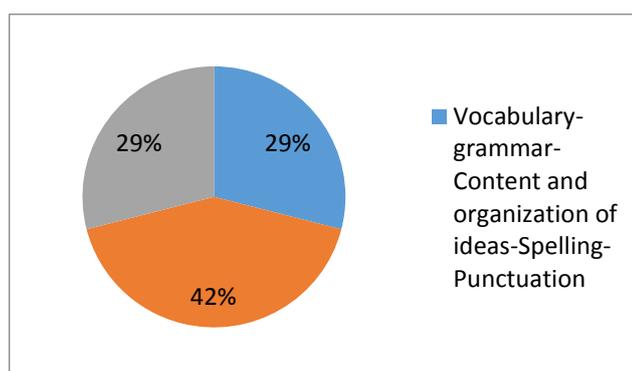
Graph 10. Teacher’s help for students while writing

All participants (100%) declare that they always help their students in writing since they are expected to present a good piece of writing. They should follow Their students when they write, and make them interested, motivated to write down their ideas. The teacher has to guide his students, and has to show the way for them in order to write correctly as it is required. However, students need to follow their teacher’s instructions in order to produce an acceptable written compositions.

Question 11. The different levels in writing where students must be helped

Options	Vocabulary-Grammar- content and organization of ideas-Spelling-Puctuation	Vocabulary-Grammar- content and organization of ideas	Vocabulary-Content and organization of ideas- Spelling
Participants	2	3	2
Percentages	29%	42%	29%

Table 11. The writing’s levels for student’s help



Graph 11. The writing’s levels for student’s help

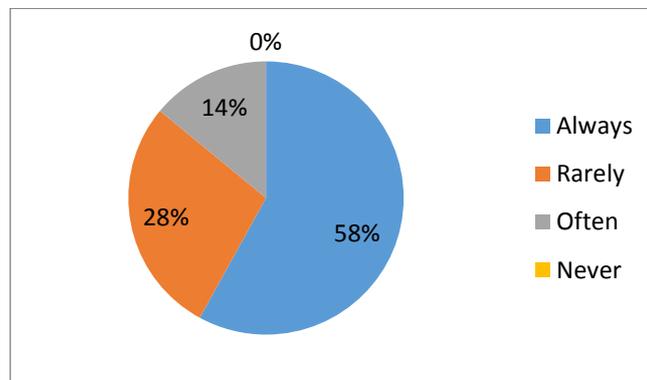
The graph below shows that 2 teachers (29%) state that all writing level including: vocabulary, grammar, content and organization of ideas, spelling, and punctuation must be taken into consideration when helping students in their writing as students must pay attention to all of them In order to create at least a good piece of writing. However, 3 teachers (42%)

report that vocabulary, grammar, and organization of ideas are the most important levels where students need help to be able to write correctly. 2 teachers (29%) respond that vocabulary, grammar, punctuation are the three main levels in which students need help, otherwise their pieces of writing would be full of mistakes. Consequently, all teachers agreed on that vocabulary, content and organization of ideas are the most significant levels in which students should be helped.

Question 12. The frequency when teacher asks his students to work in groups

Options	Always	Rarely	Often	Never
Participants	2	1	4	0
Percentages	29%	14%	57%	0%

Table 12. The occurrence of student’s group work



Graph 12. The occurrence of student’s group work

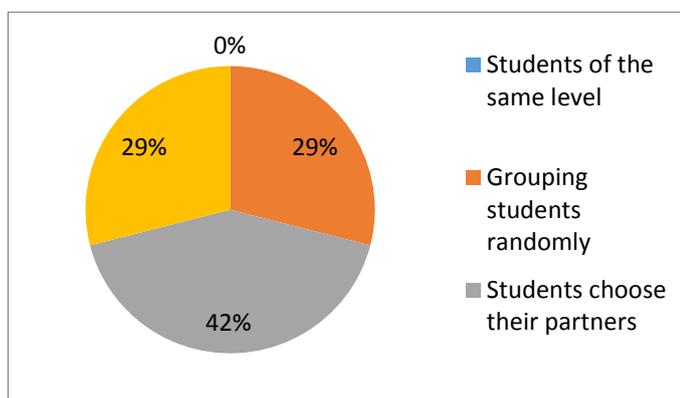
2 teachers (29%) claim that they always ask their students to work in groups, or in pairs; since the students do not learn much from individual work. Whereas, 1 teacher (14%) states that he rarely asks his students to work in groups perhaps those students prefer to work individually to enable the teacher to see every student’s level. 4 teachers (57%) report that they often make their students involved in group work as the students present good outcomes

through working in groups, and get enough opportunities to exchange ideas with their group mates.

Question 13. Teacher’s basis in grouping students

Options	Students of the same level	Grouping students randomly	Students choose their partners	Other basis
Participants	0	2	3	2
Percentages	0%	29%	42%	29%

Table 13. Teacher’s basis in grouping students



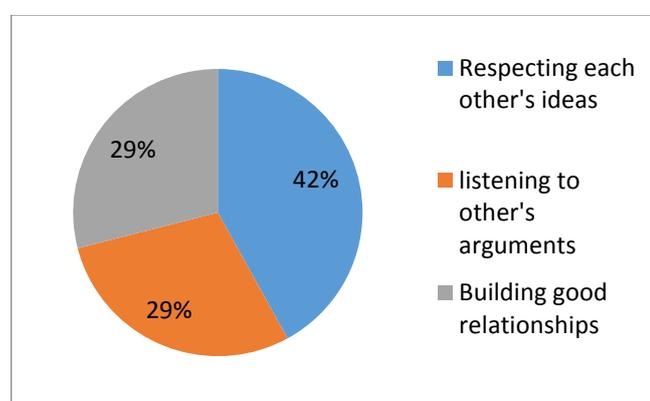
Graph 13. Teacher’s basis in grouping students

The table shows that 2 teachers (29%) claim that they usually group their students randomly; since it makes them more motivated, and engaged in the activity. However, 3 teachers (42%) declare that they let students choose their partners since students used to be more familiar with their group mates to work in good atmosphere. 2 teachers (29%) suggest another basis of grouping students since one teacher reports that he used to appoint one or two students of good level to help the others. In addition, the other teacher proposes the basic of proximity in the classroom to avoid movements, and to create the good learning atmosphere.

Question 14. Teacher's focus on student's group work attitudes

Options	Respecting each other's ideas	Listening to other's arguments	Building good relationships
Participants	3	2	2
Percentages	42%	29%	29%

Table 14. Teacher's focus on student's group work attitudes



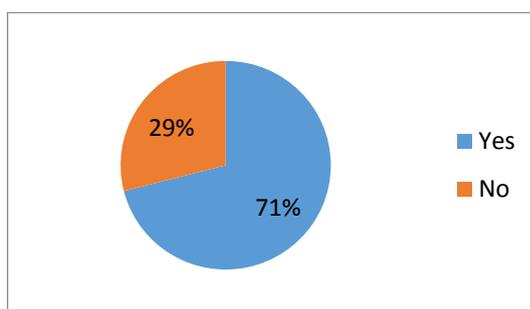
Graph 14. Teacher's focus on student's group work attitudes

The graph indicates that 3 teachers (43%) state that students respect each other's ideas when they work in groups or in pairs since they should work in appropriate learning atmosphere. Whereas, 2 teachers (29%) claim that students must listen to other student's arguments to collect as much ideas as they can to be more knowledgeable about several subjects. In addition, 2 teachers (29%) declare that group work enables students to build good relationships among them as it is the main concern of the teacher.

Question 15. Using the English language when working in groups

Options	Yes	No
Participants	5	2
Percentages	71%	29%

Table 15. Using the English language when working in groups



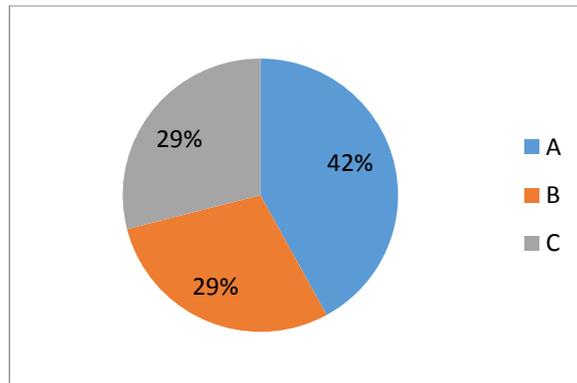
Graph 15. Using the English language when working in groups

The graph below indicates that 5 teachers (71%) claim that they insist on their students to speak in English when they work in small groups in order to improve their speaking abilities to be more familiar with this language. Whereas, 2 teachers (29%) state that they do not encourage students to use English. In contrast, learners have to express their ideas more clearly and get enough opportunities to speak in the classroom.

Question 16. Problems faced by students when they work in groups

Options	Difficulties in expressing ideas to group members	Fear of being corrected (Negative Feedback)	No opportunities to speak
Participants	3	2	2
Percentages	42%	29%	29%

Table 16. Problems faced by students when they work in groups



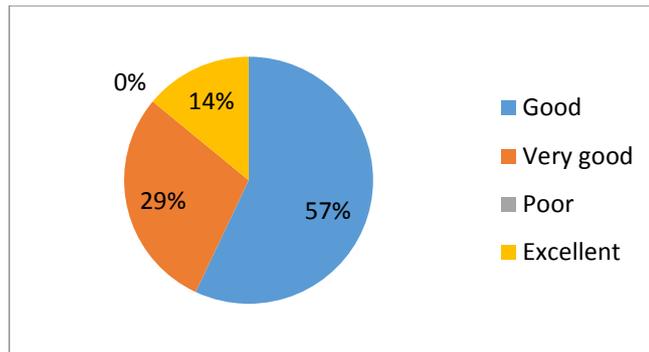
Graph 16. Problems faced by students when they work in groups

The table shows that 3 teachers (42%) report that students find difficulties in expressing their ideas to the members of the group when working in groups since they have problems in using the English language. However, 2 teachers (29%) declare that students are becoming afraid of being corrected either from their peers, or from their teachers. They do not accept criticism, and fear from negative feedback. 2 teachers (29%) claim that students do not have enough opportunities to speak with their group mates during the activity since they are shy, and refuse to speak in English.

Question 17. Group work as opposed to individual work

Options	Good	Very good	Poor	Excellent
Participants	4	2	0	1
Percentages	57%	29%	0%	14%

Table 17. Group work as opposed to individual work



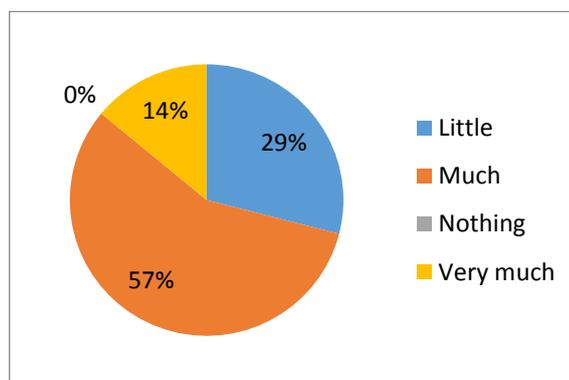
Graph 17. Group work as opposed to individual work

The graph indicates that 4 teachers (57%) claim that group work as opposed to the individual work is preferable by many learners since they get more opportunities to learn well. However, 2 teachers (29%) state that group or pair work enables students to get the chance to exchange more ideas, and to be exposed to several subjects. Moreover, 1 teacher (14%) claims that group work is better compared with the individual work because student's achievements will be increased.

Question 18. Student's achievements from group work learning

Options	Little	Much	Nothing	Very much
Participants	2	4	0	1
Percentages	29%	57%	0%	14%

Table 18. Student's achievements from group work learning



Graph 18. Student's learning from group work

2 teachers (29%) state that students learn a little from group work because they prefer individual work to create their compositions. However, 4 teachers (57%) report that their students learn much from group work since their learning outcomes are good compared with individual work. Furthermore, 1 teacher (14%) claims that his students become more familiar with group work learning because their learning achievements are getting better.

3.3. Discussion of Teacher's Questionnaire Results

The answers for the third question demonstrate that 3rd year secondary school teachers of English state that the reading skill strongly contributes in the development of the writing skill. This would be considered as a developing factor for students to write. However, a significant number of the teachers report that they are not satisfied with their student's level of writing. The answers for the seventh question state that teachers always encourage their students to write in the classroom, or at home. All teachers who use the cooperative group work think that it results in developing student's writing abilities. As a result, in teaching writing, the cooperative group work then can be used as a developing factor for students to improve their writing abilities. These results confirm our hypothesis which states that if secondary school students work cooperatively while writing, they would learn how to write effectively.

According to the answers of the eleventh question, teachers report that they help students in their writing in terms of: vocabulary, grammar, content and organization of ideas. Those levels are needed for good piece of writing. In addition, they insist on using English while working in small groups, or in pairs which learners would think that it is a good way to use English rather than using their native language to exchange ideas and information. Moreover, most of the teachers, as the question 16 demonstrates, report that their students face problems in working in groups, or in pairs since they find difficulties in expressing ideas

to their group mates. Teachers may not be aware of what happen in all groups, or may not be able to evaluate the student's real point of view towards the group work. The answers for the thirteenth question demonstrate that most of the teachers report that they let students choose their partners which in turn, would help them to build their writing ,and reveal their knowledge which may encourage them to develop their writing abilities. Consequently, the cooperative group work may benefit students in their learning. These outcomes confirm our hypothesis which states that if secondary school students work cooperatively while writing, they would learn how to write effectively.

4. Student's Questionnaire

4.1. Description of the Student's questionnaire

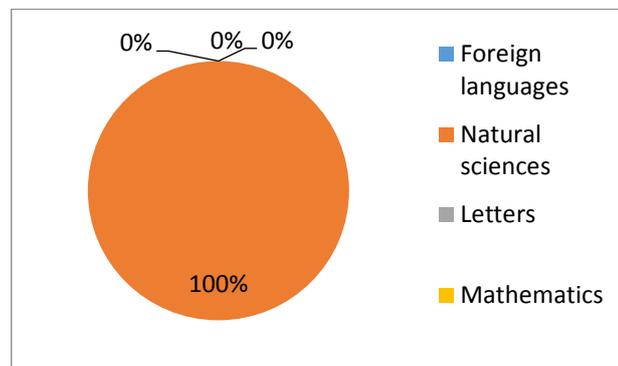
The questionnaire is divided into three main sections. The first section is concerned with the student's general information. It is composed of 2 questions. The second section which is composed of 8 questions, deal with the writing. The last section is about the cooperative learning method which consists of 8 questions. The questionnaire was done before the spring holidays with 45 students of 3rd year who study natural sciences, and the time taken was 1 hour in the English session. The participants were asked to answer the questions, and to write the appropriate answers. They were asked to seek for clarifications when they feel the need to from the researcher. Difficult words and technical terms were explained orally first for all students, and then for any learner if he asked for.

4.2. Interpretation and Analysis of the Student's Questionnaire

Question 1. Student's baccalaureat Stream

Options	Foreign languages	Natural sciences	Letters	Mathematics
Participants	0	45	0	0
Percentages	0%	100%	0%	0%

Table 1. Student's baccalaureat Stream



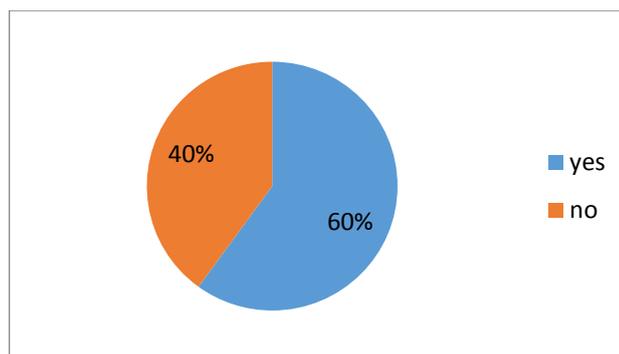
Graph 1. Student's baccalaureat Stream

The table indicates that all the students (100%) will pass their baccalaureat exam in the same branch (Natural Science). So learners have to work hard, and to be well-prepared psychologically. In secondary school, students should choose their branches when they pass to the 2nd year. As students of 3rd year are supposed to write a paragraph in the English module, they have to pay attention to their teacher's instruction.

Question 2. Writing as an interesting skill

Options	Yes	No
Participants	27	18
Percentages	60%	40%

Table 2. Writing as an interesting skill



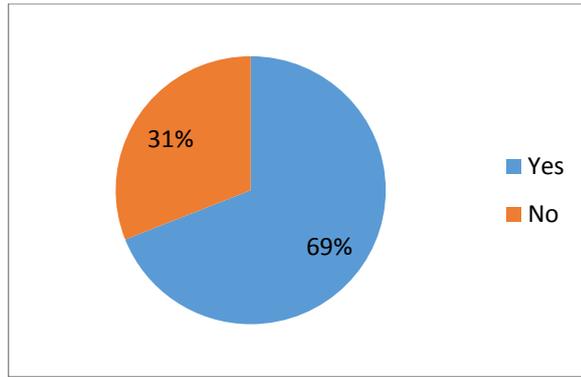
Graph 2. Writing as an interesting skill

27 students (60%) state that they find writing an interesting skill since they need it to perform different activities. Moreover, students are required to write correctly in order to present those activities properly. However, 18 students (40%) consider it as a secondary skill in the language because they are interested in other language skills such as: reading, speaking... to interact with native speakers.

Question 3. Student's responses about writing

Options	Yes	No
Participants	31	14
Percentages	69%	31%

Table 3. Student's responses about writing



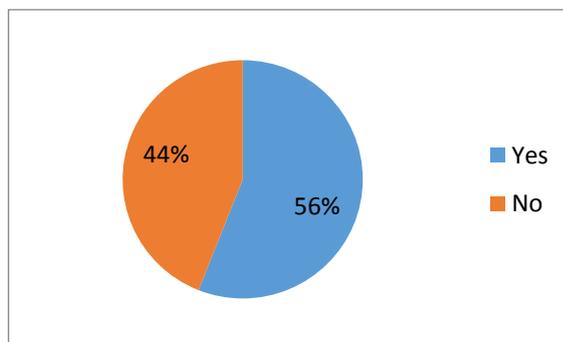
Graph 3. Student’s responses about writing

The table indicates that 31 students (69%) report that they like writing as it helps them to express what they have in mind, and even communicate with others. However, 14 students (31%) claim that they do not like writing since they face difficulties in expressing their ideas, or they do not find many words to use in their writing. They find it also boring and so difficult.

Question 4. Teacher’s motivation of the students to write at home

Options	Yes	No
Participants	25	20
Percentages	56%	44%

Table 4. Teacher’s motivation of the students to write



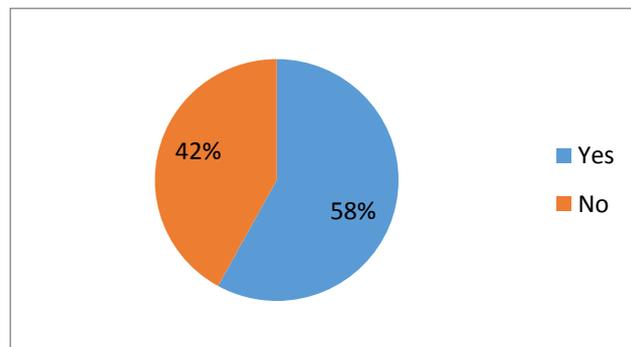
Graph 4. Teacher’s motivation of the students to write

The table indicates that 25 students (56%) claim that their teacher motivates them to write at home and practice more because if they learn to write, they can easily learn other skills. In addition, the teacher tries to make students interested in writing. However, 20 students (44%) state that their teacher does not motivate them to write, but he focuses on developing student’s abilities in other skills.

Question 5. Teacher’s encouragement of the students to speak

Options	Yes	No
Participants	26	19
Percentages	58%	42%

Table 5. Teacher’s encouragement of the students to speak



Graph 5. Teacher’s encouragement of the students to speak

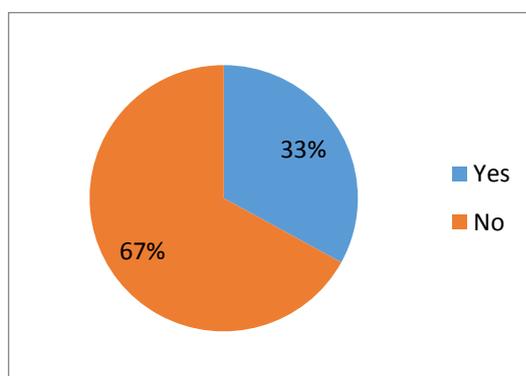
The graph indicates that 26 Students (58%) claim that the teacher always encourages them to speak and share their thoughts during the lesson since they need to enhance their language skills especially the speaking abilities, and to make their pronunciation better. However, 19 students (42%) state that their teacher does not encourage them to speak

because he just makes the students interested in learning by heart, and he is the responsible of doing all the activities.

Question 6. Student’s satisfaction of their writing’s level

Options	Yes	No
Participants	15	30
Percentages	33%	67%

Table 6. Student’s satisfaction of their writing’s level



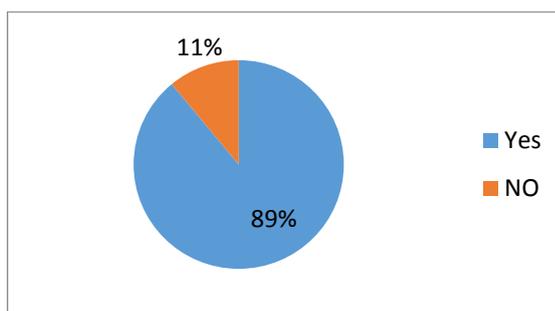
Graph 6. Student’s satisfaction of their writing’s level

The table indicates that 15 students (33%) report that they are satisfied of their writing’s level since they always try to write about their interesting subjects, and work on different writing activities to reach the desired objectives. However, 30 students (67%) declare that they need to improve their writing’s level since learners are required to perform different writing activities properly. They are not satisfied about their writing’s level, so it needs to be developed based on many aspects such as: grammar, vocabulary...so on

Question 7. Students' needed time to write their composition

Options	Yes	No
Participants	40	5
Percentages	89%	11%

Table 7. Students' needed time to write their composition



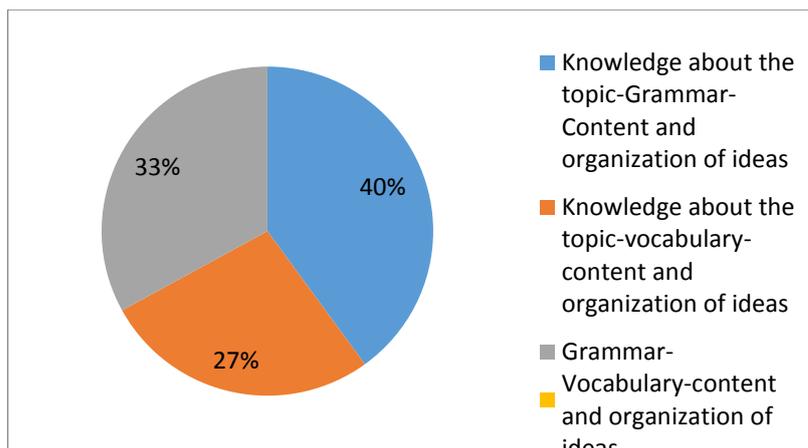
Graph 7. Students' needed time to write their compositions

The table indicates that 40 students (89%) report that the teacher provides them with the time needed for writing a whole composition since the time is considered one of the factors that affect student's learning achievements. Whereas, just 5 students (11%) claim that the time provided by the teacher is not enough to write a whole composition, so they suggest to give more time either for short tests or for examinations to enable them revise what has been written. In order to produce a successful piece of writing, learners need much time.

Question 8. Writing's levels that students look for before starting to write

Options	Knowledge about the topic- Grammar-content and organization of ideas	Knowledge about the topic- Vocabulary-content and organization of ideas	Grammar-Vocabulary-content and organization of ideas
Participants	18	12	15
Percentages	40%	27%	33%

Table 8. Writing's levels before starting to write



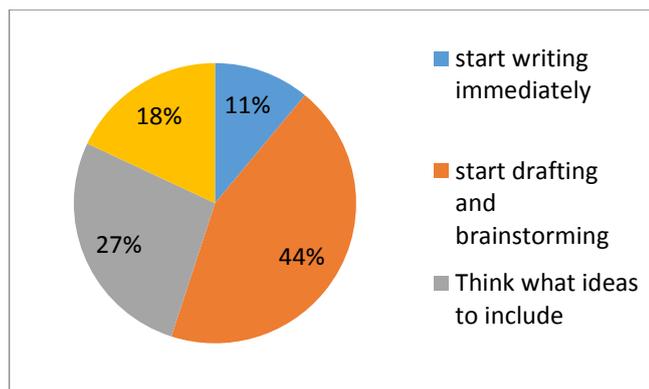
Graph 8. Writing’s levels before starting to write

The graph shows that 18 students (40%) state that before they start writing, they take the following criteria into consideration which are: having knowledge about the topic, mastering some grammar rules, and learning new words. Whereas, just 12 students (27%) report that knowledge about the topic, grammar, content and organization of ideas are the elements that learners should know before starting to write. As the table indicates 15 students (33%) claim that grammar, vocabulary, content and organization of ideas are the levels in which students have to take them into consideration.

Question 9. The next step after knowing the topic

Options	Start writing immediately	Start drafting and brainstorming	Think what ideas to include	Drawing an outline
Participants	5	20	12	8
Percentages	11%	44%	27%	18%

Table 9. The next step after knowing the topic



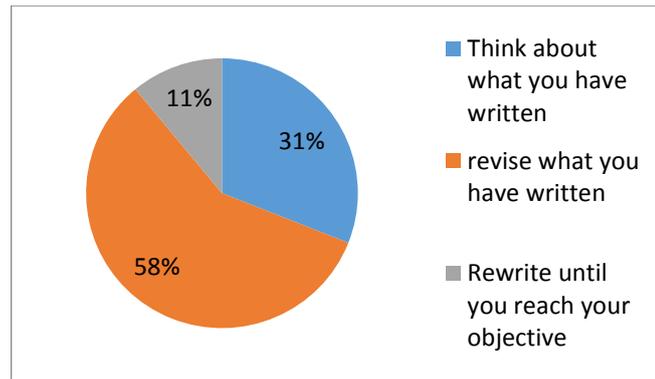
Graph 9. The Next step after knowing the topic

The table indicates that just 5 students (11%) report that after they know the topic, they start writing immediately since they used to deal with free writing without thinking about what they would write. However, 20 students (44%) state that they start drafting and brainstorming, that is to say, students generate ideas which are related to the topic, then write down those ideas to get a clearer idea about what to be mentioned. 12 students (27%) claim that they just think about what ideas to include in their writing. Whereas, 8 students (18%) claim that they draw an outline, or make a plan to write sentences that are related to the topic since outlining is one of the effective writing strategies.

Question 10. The final step after writing the composition

Options	Think about what you have written	Revise what you have written	Rewrite until you reach your objective
Participants	14	26	5
Percentages	31%	58%	11%

Table 10. The final step after writing the composition



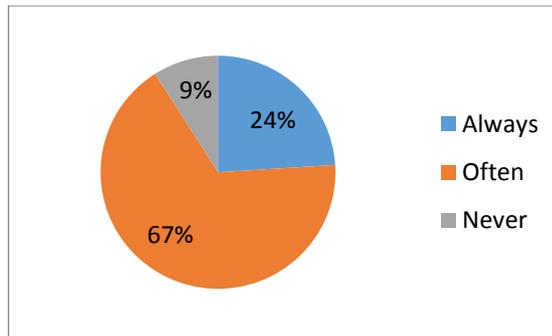
Graph 10. The final step after writing your composition

The table indicates that 14 students (31%) state after finishing the composition, they think about what they have written in terms of ideas, and their organization in order to present the complete work appropriately. However, 26 students (58%) report that they revise what they have written in terms of spelling mistakes, tenses...so on to gain the teacher's satisfaction. 5 students (11%) claim that they rewrite again what they have written until they got satisfied about their writing.

Question 11. The occurrences for working in groups, or in pairs

Options	Always	Often	Never
Participants	11	30	4
Percentages	24%	67%	9%

Table 11. The occurrences for working in groups or in pairs



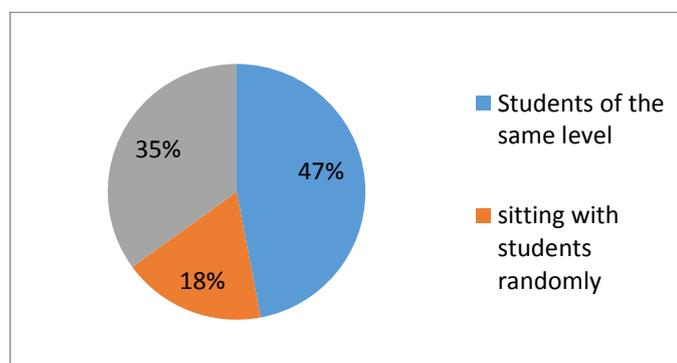
Graph 11. The occurrences for working in groups or in pairs

The table indicates that 11 students (24%) report that the teacher always asks them to work in small groups or in pairs since working in groups makes students learn many things from team work, and express different points of view for others. However, 30 students (67%) claim that they are often asked to perform their activities in groups since the instruction of the activity requires such learning method. Just 4 students (9%) declare that they are never asked to work in groups or in pairs because they prefer individual work learning.

Question 12. Students' way of grouping

Options	Students of the same level	Sitting with students randomly	Choosing your partner
Participants	21	8	16
Percentages	47%	18%	35%

Table 12. Student's way of grouping



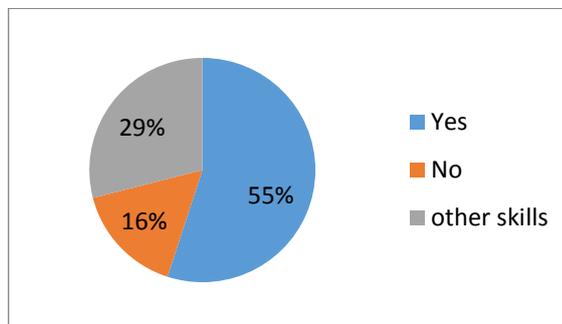
Graph 12. Student's way of grouping

The graph indicates that 21 students (47%) state that they prefer to sit with students of the same level as they interact and communicate in a way they understand each other's point of view. Whereas, 8 students (18%) claim that they prefer to sit randomly with others to learn new things. 16 students (35%) report that they choose their partners to work with them because they understand each other, and have more chances to express themselves with their group mates.

Question 13. Teacher's focus when students work in groups

Options	Yes	No	Other skills
Participants	25	7	13
Percentages	55%	16%	29%

Table 13. Teacher's focus when students work in groups



Graph 13. Teacher's focus when students work in groups

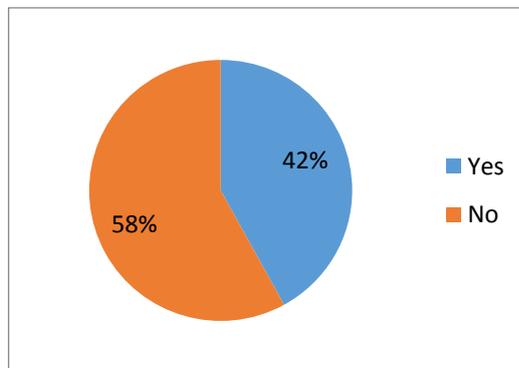
The table indicates that 25 students (55%) state that the teacher focuses on student's writing abilities when they work in small groups or in pairs as the type of the activity deals with writing, so much focus is needed from both students and teachers. However, 7 students (16%) claim that the teacher focuses on many things such as: group work criteria. In addition, 13 students (29%) report that the teacher does not only focus on their

writing, but also on other skills for instance, he emphasizes on the reading and the speaking to improve as many language skills as he can for students.

Question 14. Group work’s problems

Options	Yes	No
Participants	19	26
Percentages	42%	58%

Table 14. Group work’s problems



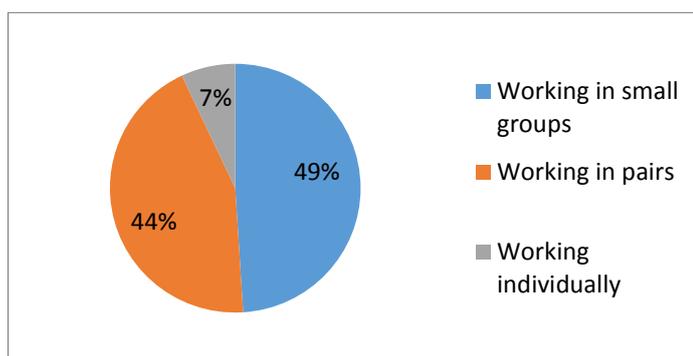
Graph 14. Group work’s problems

The table below indicates that 19 students (42%) claim that they face many problems with their group mates such as, they disagree in some points, and do not share the same ideas. Moreover, some students prefer to work with their partners to get more opportunities for expressing different point of views. However, 26 students (58%) report that they do not face problems when they work with their classmates because those students become more familiar with their group mates, and feel more comfortable in expressing their thoughts.

Question 15. Student's way of learning

Options	Working in small groups	Working in pairs	Working individually
Participants	22	20	3
Percentages	49%	44%	7%

Table 15. Student's way of learning in writing



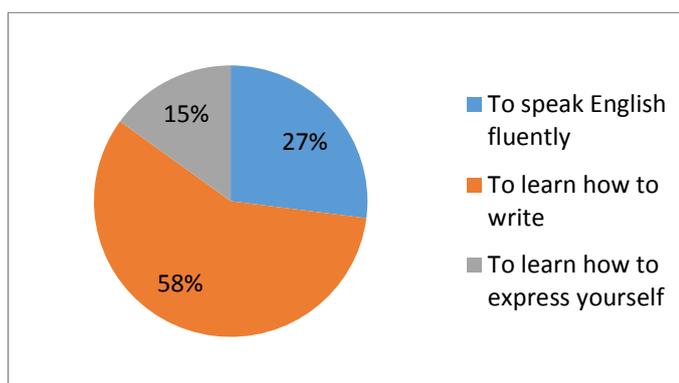
Graph 15. Student's way of learning in writing

The table indicates that 22 students (49%) claim that when they are supposed to write, they prefer to work in small groups, or in pairs in order to be able to share more ideas, and learn new things from others. However, 20 students (44%) report that they prefer to work in pairs especially in writing to benefit from peer-correction. 3 students (7%) declare that they want to work individually in order to state what they have as information.

Question 16. Group work benefits

Options	To speak English fluently	To learn how to write	To learn how to express yourself
Participants	12	26	7
Percentages	27%	58%	15%

Table 16. Group work benefits



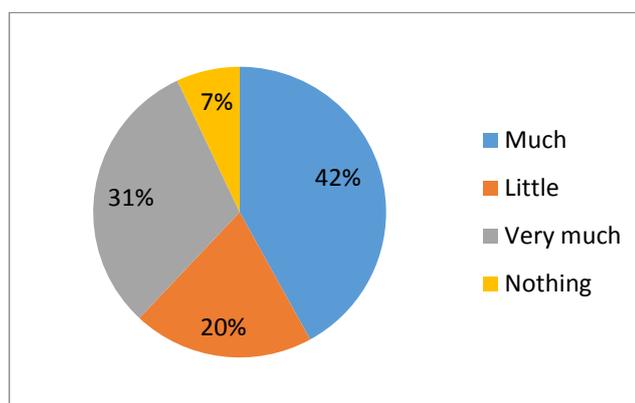
Graph 16. Group work benefits

The graph indicates that 12 students (27%) state that group work helps them to speak English fluently in order to develop their speaking abilities. However, 26 students (58%) report that they would learn how to write, and enhance their writing capacities through group work. Whereas, 7 students (15%) claim that the group work will benefit them in learning how to express themselves clearly to be understood by others.

Question 17. Students' learning degree from group work

Options	Much	Little	Very much	Nothing
Participants	19	9	14	3
Percentages	42%	20%	31%	7%

Table 17. Students' learning degree from group work



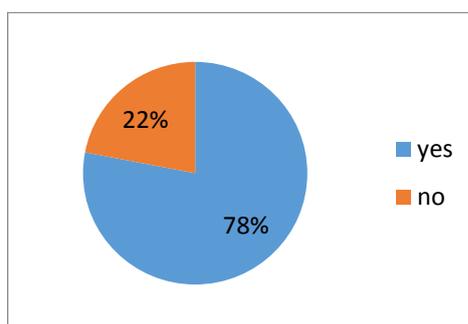
Graph 17. Students' learning degree from group work

The table indicates that 19 students (42%) state that they learn much from the cooperative learning method since they exchange more ideas with their group mates as well as accept other's arguments. However, 9 students (20%) report that they learn a little from the group work perhaps they look for the individual work. 14 students (31%) claim that the cooperative learning method is considered as one of the best learning methods as it helps them to form their background. Whereas, 3 students (7%) declare that they learn nothing from group work because they are used to learn in other atmospheres.

Question 18. Working cooperatively compared with working individually

Options	Yes	No
Participants	35	10
Percentages	78%	22%

Table 18. Cooperative learning method as opposed to individualistic learning method



Graph 18. Cooperative learning method as opposed to individualistic learning method

The graph shows that 35 students (78%) claim that the cooperative learning method is better than the individualistic learning method since students would talk about their ideas, and express themselves for others as well as they would share as much information as they can to improve many language skills. However, 10 students (22%) report that the individualistic learning method is better than the cooperative learning one since students think to gain best marks, and ignore improving their learning abilities.

4.3. Discussion of Student's Questionnaire Results

The answers to the second and the third question state that most of the students value the importance of the writing skill since they find it as an interesting one. The answers to the fourth and the fifth question indicate that teachers always encourage their students first to write as they want to improve their writing capacities, and second to speak in the classroom. In addition, teachers provide them with more opportunities to express themselves

when they work in groups, or in pairs. Since the sixth question report that learners are not satisfied with their writing level, they seek for developing themselves in all writing aspects, and care more about their writing abilities. Concerning the ninth question which would state that most of students after they are provided with a topic to write about; they use the planning as a cognitive strategy where they brainstorm and generate ideas, then start drafting.

In question twelve, students prefer to sit with students of the same level when they work in group. In addition, the answers for question thirteen and fifteen confirm that when students are dealing with writing activities, they prefer to work cooperatively to learn how to write as the question sixteen states. All these results confirm our hypothesis which is if secondary school students work cooperatively while writing, they would learn how to write effectively. In question eighteen, the majority of students think that group work is good if compared with individual work. This would be better explained by the fact that students learn much from the cooperative learning method as presented in the question seventeen. The answers for question fourteen report that most of the students do not face problems when working in groups since they have the opportunity to sit with students of the same level as stated in the question twelve.

5. Classroom Observation (English Session)

5.1. Description of Classroom Observation

Classroom observation is a useful tool for gathering adequate data about a research problem that naturally occurs in social situations. It aims to help us to confirm or reject certain hypotheses in language teaching and learning, and to find out solutions for particular research problem. The observation took place in the second trimester of the academic year 2016-2017 with English sessions in Mohamed Guerrouf secondary school. It lasted for three weeks and took 9 sessions for 3 sessions of English per week (Scientific stream). The study aims to find

out whether the cooperative learning method would develop the student's writing skill. The classroom observation checklist is divided into three sub checklists according to research variables. Each checklist has two sections, and each section consists of 5 features. We have noticed certain elements that have a relation to our research work as the teacher's reviewing previous lessons, his or her own method in engaging students in group work, and obviously his or her way of teaching in the classroom. However, we have observed for the students their working in small groups, writing, and brainstorming ideas. It was also observed how students did several writing activities, and how the teacher asked them to form their groups to perform these activities in terms of classroom interaction.

5.2. Classroom Observation Analysis

After carrying out our observation on 3rd year secondary school students of Mohamed Guerrouf of Biskra, we have attained the following results:

5.2.1. Classroom observation checklist 1

Section 1: Teacher's activities

Item 1: Teacher reviews previous day's lessons

It was observed that the teacher rarely reviews previous day's lessons since some lessons do not require the task of warming-up. The students are required to follow the teacher's explanation through being involved in different classroom activities.

Item 2: Teacher provides variety of topics to be discussed and employs group work

It was remarkable that every session the teacher regularly makes the students involved in variety topics to be discussed in the classroom in terms of group work. The later is determined by the type of the activity being presented by the teacher. The group work method may enhance student's abilities and capacities in the four skills and especially writing.

Item 3: Today's lesson content emphasizes on the speaking and the writing skill

It was observed that the teacher makes the students aware of what is going to be discussed in the session. Furthermore, the session has to be well-divided in terms of lessons and activities which are concerned with language skills. As a result, the lesson content determines the skill that the students need to improve.

Item 4: The teacher follows a specific procedure in engaging students in their groups

It was noticed that the teacher has not followed a particular method in making students engaged in group work since the nature of the instruction determines the way students should do the work. The classroom procedures differ in terms of instruction, learning method, and the teacher has also a significant role of the student's involvement in the learning and teaching process.

Section 2: The student's writing strategies

Item 1: Students are going to write and form correct sentences to get a cohesive paragraph

It was remarkable that when students are engaged in certain activities such as writing activity, they regularly try to create their own words as well as form correct statements. Consequently, students build their written productions. Writing a paragraph is linking words together to get a full correct sentence, then linking sentences is getting well-structured paragraph.

Item 2: Students take notes while the teacher explains the instruction of the work

It was observed that the students do not use the strategy of note-taking when the teacher explains the instruction, consequently their writing abilities are going to be decreased

in one way or another. Students need to apply several strategies to improve their writing as well as to create at least correct written production.

Item 3: Students rely on books, dictionaries to find difficult words' meaning

It was rarely noticed that students use dictionaries, and external books as helpful tools in learning or doing certain writing activities. Those tools should be presented in the classroom to help students checking the meaning of difficult words that may encounter them. This leads to the student's development of the writing skill.

Item 4: The teacher plays the role of "Guide" to show the way for students to write

It was observed that the teacher always plays the role of a guide to help students in their writing. He shows the way for them to write in a good manner to satisfy first themselves, and of course their teachers. When students are engaged in the writing activity, the teacher checks them from time to time and sees what they have written. Furthermore, he explains only the instruction of the activity and motivates students to write even if they do not know.

Item 5: The teacher encourages the students to create their own words and participate while writing

In the learning process, it was observed that the teacher regularly encourages his students to write, and motivates them to create their own words in order to participate in the writing activity. He always tries to strengthen their involvement in the different classroom activities as well as motivate them to construct their written productions properly. Students should write down what they have as information in order to develop their writing abilities, and capacities.

Item 6: Students face difficulties to write what they have in mind

It was remarkable that students face several obstacles to write down what they have as information or ideas. They lack vocabulary, and they do not master many grammar rules. Students must be cognitively aware about how they would transform their ideas into written speech. As a result, they increase their level in writing, and know how they may express themselves.

Item 7: Students rarely use new words (lexical items) in their writing

It was observed that students rarely use new vocabulary when they write as they would not have many words to create their paragraphs. Students can improve their pieces of writing if they have enough vocabulary about a given topic; grammar rules, organization of ideas must be also taken into consideration. Students should learn at least two or three new words a day in order to enrich their vocabulary.

5.2.2. Classroom observation checklist 2

Section 1: Teacher and student's activities

Item 1: Teacher and students are prepared

It was remarkable that the teacher and his students are always prepared when it comes to classroom learning. The teacher presents the lesson in his own way in which students become familiar with, and students are engaged in the learning process. Teacher and students are obviously significant elements that can make learning and teaching two interesting processes.

Item 2: Teacher’s role in defining unfamiliar words, terms, and concepts to students through using good examples for more clarifications.

The teacher has a great role in the teaching process where we can notice that he uses illustrations and examples to clarify things to students. He always plays the role of being the source of information, but now he adapts the role of “the guide” who shows the learning path for students.

Item 3: Student’s perception of those unfamiliar words is totally related to the topic being discussed.

It was remarkable that the teacher did his best to clarify and explain words to students, whereas those students rarely understand unfamiliar words for the aim of understanding these new words is to use them in writing. Vocabulary is considered as one of the effective factor that can improve writing, as a result it must be taken into consideration.

Item 4: Teacher’s presentation of the lesson is based on: student’s level, and course purpose

It was observed that the teacher is regularly presenting his lesson based on two main elements which are student’s level and course purpose. The lesson should be presented according to student’s needs, their interesting subjects, and the lesson objectives that the learner must accomplish.

Section 2: Student’s group or pair work

Item 1: The teacher actively encourages cooperative learning over passive learning

It was noticed that the teacher makes students involved in group or pair work especially when it comes to the writing activity. He strongly motivates them to form groups, and work cooperatively. Writing activities require working in groups, as a result students can

effectively learn how to write a paragraph. The teacher prefers cooperative learning over passive learning since students can interact more.

Item 2: The teacher provides students with hints to write several sentences about today's topic

It was remarkable that the teacher does not always encourage students to write sentences to form a paragraph since the nature of the topic determines the type of the activity. When the lesson needs the student's speaking skill, there is no need to write but students should perform the given task.

Item 3: Students prefer to work individually and get knowledge as passive receivers

It was observed that the students do not prefer working individually. They do not like to be passive receivers of information given by the teacher. Students would like to work in groups and exchange ideas with their classmates as well as they learn new things from them. Individual work is almost neglected by students when it comes to writing.

Item 4: Teacher often asks students to form groups and work collaboratively.

When the lesson deals with the writing skill, it was noticed that the teacher is regularly asking students to form their groups and start writing. He actively encourages them to work collaboratively as this method of learning can make them involved in the group learning atmosphere, and enable them to express themselves freely. Students can benefit from cooperative learning.

Item 5: Students sometimes speak Arabic when working in small groups

It was observed that students use the Arabic language instead of English when they interact and express their ideas. Students find some difficulties when it comes to English language; they cannot find words in English, so they use Arabic when working in groups or in

pairs. The teacher encourages them to speak and express themselves in Arabic when they feel the need to since the session is English.

Item 6: Students face problems when they work in groups or in pairs

It was noticed that learners rarely face problems while they work cooperatively. Their classmates motivate and encourage them to be involved in the group work as the teacher does so. Sometimes they disagree on some points, and cannot give arguments to prove their points of view. Furthermore, students cannot express their ideas in a manner which others may understand as well as they prefer to choose their partners to do the work as one team.

Item 7: Teacher's satisfaction of student's collaborative learning

Collaborative learning is a good way of learning that may help students in their learning. It was remarkable that the teacher is always satisfied of his student's written production when they are involved in collaborative learning. He makes sure that his students are really working, consequently he feels satisfied of their learning outcomes. Collaborative learning is a helpful learning method to face all the problems either inside or outside the classroom.

Item 8: Cooperative learning is a good way for learning and a clearer understanding of a lesson

Learning is a conscious process that students have in a certain level. It was observed that cooperative learning method is a good way for students to learn new knowledge. They can clearly understand the lesson when they interact in small group, as a result learners can obviously express what they have as ideas.

5.2.3. Classroom Observation checklist 3

Section 1: Student's group work learning

Item 1: the teacher reviews previous day's lesson

It was observed that the teacher rarely reviews the previous lesson that is strongly related to today's one in order to enable student's to link knowledge together as well as to make a small revision in a short period of time. Students are required to follow their teacher, and do what they are asked for.

Item 2: Students are passive in the classroom in terms of being engaged in today's activities

It was noticed that students are not all passive in the classroom since some of them are directly engaged in the lesson without asking for their attention. They follow the teacher's instruction, and the explanation of the lesson consequently they would do their activities better. The student's involvement in the classroom activities is the best way for better learning and teaching.

Item 3: The teacher asks students to work in groups and share variety of ideas related to today's topic

Cooperative learning is a good way for better learning and understanding of information as it was noticed that students arrange their groups, and share ideas according to the teacher's instruction. They start brainstorming and collecting ideas which are related either to the lesson or the work given by the teacher. Students get more opportunities to share ideas with their classmates, and for sure express themselves in many different ways.

Item 4: Students cooperate with each other and create their own language

When students choose their partners and start working in groups or in pairs; it was regularly noticed that they find the way to state their knowledge, and exchange it with their classmates. After that students write down what they have collected as data at the same time accept or reject other's point of view.

Item 5: Students work individually to be able to perform their tasks appropriately

Individual learning is preferred by some learners whereas it was observed that other learners like to present their tasks in cooperative learning group. They do not like working individually since group work learning enables students to perform tasks in a good way as well as they gain the teacher's satisfaction.

Section 2: Student's writing strategies

Item 1: The teacher provides opportunities for students to work in groups or in pairs

It was remarkable that teacher provides students with opportunities to present their knowledge in groups or in pairs. Those opportunities are determined by the nature of the activity where students are required to form groups and work when the activity needs that; however, it is adapted by learners since they feel comfortable and learn better.

Item 2: After being provided with a given topic, students start thinking about information or ideas to be related to such topic.

It was observed that students regularly start thinking about the topic to write about. They began collecting ideas and information which may help them controlling their writing. Students exchange ideas, information, and benefit each other.

Item 3: Students immediately start writing their production without brainstorming

In many different writing activities students are required to think and outline before writing. It was noticed that students do not start immediately writing their paragraphs. They first collect ideas and draw an outline that may help them to organize information. Brainstorming is the first step which students follow before they start writing what they have as knowledge.

Item 4: Students speak English while discussing to express their ideas

It was observed that students rarely use English to express themselves for their classmates. They find some difficulties in translating words from Arabic to English, consequently students use Arabic language instead of the English one. They have many ideas in mind to express them for their partners. It is somehow difficult. Language interference plays here a great role in student's learning.

Item 5: While working in groups, students follow steps to produce their composition which are: brainstorming-writing first draft-revising what has been written-editing final draft

Learners should follow certain steps in order to write coherently. It was observed that students rarely follow these steps in writing. They generally generate ideas, then write them directly without revising or editing the final draft. As a result, their compositions would contain some mistakes which normally should be totally avoided. Learners prefer free writing where they write down everything once without paying attention to other steps.

Item 6: Students pay attention to the content and organization of ideas

There are certain criteria for writing that should be taken into consideration from both teacher and students. It was regularly noticed that students focus on their production's

content and organization of ideas, whereas other elements are totally neglected. Learners make sure that their written production is full of ideas, but they do not emphasize on grammar, vocabulary, and punctuation. Good writing is a combination of many elements which make it acceptable and be read by audience.

5.3. Discussion of the results of the classroom observation

The first item in each checklist demonstrates that it is regularly observed that the teacher reviews previous day's lessons. In the checklist 1, item 5, 7, 8, 11, and 12 report that it was regularly noticed that students are actively encouraged to work in groups, and they do not prefer the individualistic learning method. However, item 10 states that students rarely face problems when working in small groups since the teacher shows his satisfaction about student's collaborative learning. Concerning the checklist 2, the item 2, 3, and 4 demonstrate that the lesson is concerned with writing. Moreover, students try to write their paragraphs as it was observed in item 6. However, item 7, 8, and 12 show that students do not use the necessary writing strategies to improve their writing. The checklist 3 demonstrates that item 3, 4, and 5 report that students are engaged in cooperative group work to create their own pieces of writing as well as to be able to perform their tasks appropriately regardless the individual work. In addition, item 7, 8, and 10 state that students use some cognitive strategies in writing while in groups. Students rarely speak English when they discuss with their group mates to express different thoughts. Moreover, item 11 shows that students pay attention to the content and organization of ideas. All these results confirm our hypothesis that if secondary school students work cooperatively while writing, they would learn how to write effectively.

Pedagogical Suggestions

It is argued that group work is not only cooperative, but also collaborative and competitive. The cooperative learning method can be actually achieved with some conditions that make it more effective as well as writing requires certain way of learning to develop it in a good manner. After analyzing the student's answers and the teacher's point of view towards the two variables, we may give some suggestions for using cooperative group work in writing. First of all, some students face problems with group or pair work in general, so in order to make students involved in a group work teachers should provide some periods of time to help students discovering the real value of the cooperative learning, and support the necessary learning skills that can make it different from other ways of learning or grouping. It is common for teachers that they should use group, or pair work in teaching writing in order to be able to manage students, and help them mastering the writing skill in terms of knowing how to work first with small number of students, then move to work in large groups. Moreover, students can be given the opportunity to deal with different writing activities in order to enhance their writing abilities through choosing their partners instead of imposing on them the same group members who are usually students sitting together.

Learners would manipulate their writing in English and the teacher is required to provide them with the effective writing strategies to be able to improve their writing. In addition, they should work with different people and experience working in different small groups, so the teacher must be aware about student's favourite way of grouping. Two main other problems were stated in the student' and the teacher's answers which are the unsatisfaction about the writing's level, and the criteria that can make writing acceptable. These two problems can be solved if students use cognitive writing strategies as planning, translating, and note taking as well as take into consideration all the writing levels. The first solution would be used to improve student's writing by encouraging them to generate ideas,

and brainstorm before writing, and the second one supports writing in all levels. To sum up with, teachers can make the cooperative learning method effective by encouraging learners to do different writing activities. They can at the same time ask students to manage their groups, and work as a team for better learning achievements.

Conclusion

This chapter is concerned with collecting real data about student's writing skill as well as about the cooperative learning method in teaching and learning writing. The information or data were collected through three steps. The first step is the student's questionnaire which is administered to a sample taken from the whole population to check how much their answers would serve our study. The analysis of the student's questionnaire confirms our hypothesis. The second step is the teacher's questionnaire which aimed at checking the effectiveness of the cooperative learning method, and what they think about their student's writing abilities. The last step is the classroom observation as another tool to check the teacher' and student's activities in the classroom concerning writing and the cooperative learning method. This study has some consequences which are presented in terms of some pedagogical suggestions about using the cooperative group work in writing

Some Recommendations

The obtained results could confirm to a large extent the hypothesis which states that if High school students work cooperatively when writing, they would learn how to write effectively. In the light of the obtained results, we recommend the following:

1. The cooperative learning method should be given more care by the teachers of the English in High school. In addition, teachers should emphasize on the importance of the

writing skill as a separate one from the other language skills, and inform them that all internal and external features have a significant role in creating a good piece of writing.

2. Teachers should provide enough time, and devote many efforts for dealing with writing activities.

3. Teachers should motivate students to apply the necessary writing strategies when writing their compositions by giving good marks for those who use them appropriately.

4. Teachers should not teach writing as a separate skill when students work in groups, but they should include it in many other lessons, and should keep in mind that it should be well-developed.

5. Teachers should encourage students to write in several academic settings by creating many writing activities to make it useful and practical.

6. Students should be aware about the group work's importance and role in developing their writing abilities. They should also be regularly informed that the more they learn in groups, the more they develop and produce better writing.

7. Students should be cognitively prepared for producing their pieces of writing in a cooperative way.

General Conclusion

Writing is considered as very difficult and complex skill. Some students find writing in different academic settings something that is difficult to master. Therefore, they fail to produce acceptable paragraphs. Since students in secondary school have dealt with writing for a long period of time, they still make mistakes and create irrelevant patterns. This is mainly due to the fact that students lack the necessary strategies that enable them to write effectively. They need to deal with different writing activities, and communicate through writing. The present study seeks for a correlation between two variables: the cooperative learning method as a developing factor for student's writing abilities. At the beginning of the dissertation, we have dealt with the components of writing and its relation with the different other skills as well as we have tried to point out the different writing approaches, the cognitive and the meta-cognitive strategies in writing. We have also shown the cooperative learning method as an effective way in developing the student's writing skill in general by stating the benefits of the cooperative learning. It is by means of questionnaires administered to both teachers and students, and the classroom observation where teacher' and student's activities were observed. The research findings in the study support our hypothesis, and revealed that many learners do not have the needed writing strategies to write correctly. Therefore, they need to be provided with the appropriate strategies to improve their writing. The research has also confirmed that the adoption of the cooperative learning method is important in preventing student's problems in writing. We have noticed that students can improve the accuracy of their writing if they work cooperatively. Consequently, we believe that the cooperative learning method motivates students to write, and when they practice writing more, they improve not only the content, but also the language as well. When students deal with writing, they should not be expected to produce correct piece of writing from the beginning since their written compositions is a combination between their writing proficiency, and the cooperative

group work. On the basis of our findings, writing can be clearly developed through being exposed to cooperative group work. Moreover, students should be strongly encouraged to deal confidently with the strategies of: brainstorming, planning, translating, revising, and editing. The findings of the present study are derived from both student' and teacher's questionnaire, and the classroom observation. They suggest that students need to work as a group in order to develop their writing abilities. This study provides the Algerian secondary school teachers and students with clear idea of the possible methods that might improve writing. Students should always practice writing, and develop the cognitive understanding of writing as a complex skill that requires both mental and physical efforts. They should also work cooperatively with their group mates till they reach the ability to write correctly.

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Appendix A: Teachers' Questionnaire

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear Teachers,

We would be very thankful if you sincerely answer this questionnaire that aims to gather information needed for the fulfilment of a Master dissertation which is titled as “Developing Efficient Writing Strategies Through The cooperative Learning Approach”

Please, be sure that the answers you provide will certainly remain confidential, and will only be used for research purposes.

Thank you for your time and for your collaboration

Tick your answer (s) in the corresponding box (es), and make full statements whenever necessary.

Section one: Background Information

1.How long have you been teaching English?

..... year (s)

2.Do you think that the English program of 3rd year High school you are teaching is enough to improve the student's writing skill?

a- Yes

b- No

. If “No”, please explain why?

.....
.....

Section two: The writing skill

3. Does the reading skill contribute to the development of the writing skill?

a- Yes

b- No

. If “yes”, please explain how this skill improves the writing one?

.....
.....
.....

4. Do you encourage your students to read?

a- Yes

b- No

5. According to you, Good writing is: (You can tick more than one box)

a- Correct grammar

b- Organization of ideas

c- Precise vocabulary

d- Spelling

. If other criteria, please specify

.....
.....

6. Are you satisfied with your students’ level of writing?

a- Yes b- No

. If “No”, please explain why?

.....
.....
.....

7. Do you encourage your students to write?

a- Yes b- No

. If “No”, please explain why?

.....
.....
8. What approach do you use in teaching “ Writing” ?

a- The product approach (Providing students with a model and encourage them to write)

b- The cooperative approach (Encouraging students to work in groups or in pairs)

c- The genre-based approach (Providing students with a model and asking them to analyze)

. Please, explain the reason behind using this approach?

.....
.....
.....

9. Do you provide your students with a Model to write their compositions?

a- Yes

b- No

. If “Yes”, please explain how can this model of writing improve their writing skill?

.....
.....

10. While the students write, do you help them?

a- Yes b- No

11. At which level do you help your students in their writing?

a- Vocabulary

b- Grammar

c- Content and organization of ideas

d- Spelling

e- Punctuation

Section three: The cooperative learning method

12. How often do you ask your students to work in small groups or in pairs?

a- Always b- Rarely c- Often d- Never

13. On what basis do you usually group your students?

a- On grouping the students of the same level together

b- On grouping students randomly

c- On letting the students choose their partners

. If there are other basis, please specify?

.....
.....

14. When students work in small groups or in pairs, which attitudes do you focus on:

a- Respecting each others' ideas

b- Listening to other arguments

c- Building good relationships among students

. If there are other attitudes, please specify?

.....
.....

15. Do you insist on your students using English while working in small groups or in pairs?

a- Yes b- No

16. Which problems do usually face your students when working in small groups or pairs?

a- Finding difficulties in expressing ideas to the members of the group

b- Fear of being corrected (Negative feedback)

c- No enough opportunities to speak with the members of the group

.If there are other problems, please specify?

.....
.....

17. In your opinion, group work as opposed to individual work is:

a- Good b- Very good c- Poor d- Excellent

18. How much did your students learn from group or pair work?

a- Little

b- Much

c- Nothing

d- Very much

Thank you for your collaboration.

Appendix B: The Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire

Dear students,

We would be very thankful if you answer the following questionnaire that attempts to gather information needed for the fulfilment of a Master dissertation. The designed questionnaire aims to gather information about the writing skill as well as the cooperative learning method.

You would be very helpful by typically answering the following questions. You are expected to carefully read the questions, and write sincere answers.

Thank you for your time and collaboration.

. Please put a tick in the right box, and write full statements whenever necessary.

. Section one: General information

1. What type of baccalaureate do you hold ?

a- Languages b- Sciences c- Letters d- Maths

2. Do you find " Writing" an interesting skill ?

a- Yes b- No

. Section two: The writing skill

3. Do you like writing ?

a- Yes b- No

. If “ No” ,please explain why?

.....
.....

4. Does your teacher motivate you to write at home ?

a- Yes b- No

. If “ Yes” , please explain why ?

.....
.....
.....

5. Does your teacher encourage you to speak in the classroom ?

a- Yes b- No

. If “ Yes” , please explain why ?

.....
.....
.....

6. Are you satisfied with your level of writing ?

a- Yes b- No

. If “ No” , explain why ?

.....
.....
.....

7. Does your teacher provide you with enough time to write your composition ?

a- Yes b- No

. If “ No”, please state some suggestions ?

.....

.....

.....

8. Before starting to write, are you looking for: (You can tick more than one box)

a- Knowledge about the topic (What to write about)

b- Grammar (Tenses, sentences...)

c- Spelling

d- Vocabulary

e- Content and organization of ideas

9. After knowing the topic you are going to write about, do you:

a- Start to write your composition immediately?

b- Start drafting, and brainstorming?

c- Think what ideas to be included?

d- Drawing an outline and write sentences related to the topic?

. Others, please specify ?

.....
.....
10. After writing your composition, do you:

a- Think about what you have written?

b- Revise what you have written?

c- Rewrite until you accomplish your objective?

. Others, please specify ?
.....
.....

. Section three: The cooperative learning method

11. How often does your teacher ask you to work in small groups/pairs ?

a- Always b- Often c- Never

. If “ Always or never “, please justify ?
.....
.....
.....

12. Which way of grouping do you prefer ?

a- Sitting with students of the same level

b- Sitting with students randomly

c- Choosing your partner

13. Does your teacher focus your writing skill when working in small groups/pairs ?

a- Yes

b- No

. If other skills, please state them ?

.....

14. Do you face problems while working in small groups or pairs ?

a- Yes

b- No

. If “ Yes”, state some problems that you face ?

.....

.....

15. When writing in class, do you prefer:

a- Working in small groups

b- Working in pairs

c- Working individually

16. Do you think that working in groups or pairs helps you:

a- To speak English fluently

b- To learn how to write

c- To learn how to express yourself

. Others, please suggest ?

.....
.....
17. How much do you learn how to write from using the cooperative learning method ?

a- Much

b- Little

c- Very much

d- Nothing

18. Do you think that working cooperatively is better than working individually?

a- Yes

b- No

. If “ Yes” , please explain why ?

.....
.....
.....

Thank you.

Appendix C: Classroom Observation Checklists

Classroom observation checklist 1

Location: Med Guerrouf High school

Date: 12th February, 2017

Presenter: Mrs. Boubakeur Abir

Time: 15:00h-16:00h

Class observed: 3 Science 3

Observer: Merzougui Abdellah

Topic: Developing efficient writing strategies

Role: Students writing strategies

Through the cooperative learning approach.

Features	Not observed	Rarely observed	Regularly observed
1.Reviewing previous day's lesson			
2. Teacher provides students with variety of topics to write about, and employs group work.			
3. Today's lesson focuses on the speaking, and the writing skill			
4. Today's lesson focuses also on the listening skill.			
5. The teacher follows specific procedure in engaging students to their groups(Excellent students working together, Multiple group...)			
6. Students are trying to write, and form correct sentences to create acceptable paragraph.			
7. Students take notes when the teacher explains the instruction of the task.			

8. Students rely on books, dictionaries to find difficult word's meaning.			
9. The teacher plays a role of a "Guide", and shows the way for students to write			
10. Teacher encourages students to create their own words, and share ideas.			
11. Students face difficulties to write what they have in mind.			
12. Students rarely use new words (vocabulary) in their writing.			

Classroom observation checklist 2

Location : Med Guerrouf High School

Date: 5th February, 2017

Presenter: Mrs. Boubakeur Abir

Time: 15:00h-16:00h

Class observed: 3 Science 3

Observer: Merzougui Abdellah

Topic: Developing efficient writing strategies

Role: Group/pair work

Through the cooperative learning approach

Features	Not observed	Rarely observed	Regularly observed
1. Teacher and students are prepared. . Teacher: Presenting an overview of the lesson. . Students: Having a background about today's topic.			
2. Teacher's role in defining unfamiliar words using good examples for more clarification.			
3. Student perception of those unfamiliar words totally related to the topic being discussed.			
4. Teacher presentation of the lesson is based on: a- Student's level b- Course objective			

5. Teacher is actively encouraging cooperative learning over passive learning.			
6. Teacher provides students with hints to write several sentences about today's topic			
7. Students prefer to work individually ,and get knowledge as passive receivers.			
8. Teacher often asks students to form groups and work collaboratively			
9. Students sometimes speak Arabic when working in small groups.			
10. Students face problems while working in groups or pairs.			
11. Teacher's satisfaction of student's cooperative learning.			
12. " Cooperative learning" is a good way of learning to a clearer understanding of the lesson.			

Classroom observation checklist 3

Location: Med Guerrouf High school

Date: 8th February, 2017

Presenter: Mrs. Boubakeur Abir

Time: 15:00h-16:00h

Class observed: 3 Science 3

Observer: Merzougui Abdellah

Topic: Developing efficient writing strategies

Role: Creating written productions when

Through the cooperative learning approach

working cooperatively.

Features	Not observed	Rarely observed	Regularly observed
1. The teacher reviews previous day's lessons.			
2. Students are passive in the classroom in terms of being engaged in today's activities.			
3. The teacher asks students to work in groups, and shares with them variety of ideas related to today's activity.			
4. Students cooperate with each other, and create their own production.			
5. Students prefer individual work to be able to perform their tasks appropriately.			
6. The teacher provides opportunities			

for students to work in pairs or groups.			
7. After being provided with given topic, Students start thinking about what information or ideas to be included.			
8. Students immediately start writing their production without brainstorming.			
9. Students speak English when discussing to express their ideas.			
10. While working in groups, students follow these steps to produce their compositions: a- Brainstorming “ Generating ideas” b- Writing first draft c- Revising what has been written d- Editing final draft			
11. While writing, students pay attention to the content and the organization of ideas.			