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Թեմա**` Cooperative Approach to Teaching Writing**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Before the sixties and seventies writing language classes usually ignored the writing process. Teachers used to focus on the product so they attended to clarity and originality, but they did not attend to the writing process nor the writers.

Currrent approaches to teaching writing view it as the culmination of several steps in a long laborious process in which writers address several questions ranging from what to writeab out, who the audience is, how to organize the text, and how to write it? ESL teachers need to become familiar with this recent approach as it is certain that writing-as-a-process can improvestudents’ writing skills.

Generally students face difficulties in their writing skills such as making incomplete and meaning lessen tences, establishing incorrect topic sentences, adding ideas which do not support the to picsentence, and ordering words and ideas up so their writings were not consistent. In order to improve their writing skills, the principles of process writing were applied by using the cooperative learning technique.

On the other hand this strategy provides students with the appropriate environment tofoster concentration on the learning process itsel fandthe process of writing a text as well as examines the advantages and implications as a teachings trategy to get students involved in each one of the stages of the writing process.

**The aim of our research** paper is to find out the reasons for using the cooperative learning method reveal its effect on teaching writing.

The main objectives of the current study are:

**1**.to analyze the advantages of cooperative learning;

**2**. to find out how the cooperative learning impacts on developing the writing skills.

**3**. to indentify cooperative learning strategies which contribute to enhancing writing skills.

The aim and objectives of the research predetermine its structure . It comprises introduction , chapter 1, chapter 2 and conclusion.

 **CHAPTER 1 ''**THE ADVANTAGES OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING ''

presents the advantages of cooperative learning , how to develop the learner’s writing skills with the help of cooperative learning.

**CHAPTER 2** ''COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE WRITING SKILLS ''mainly identifies cooperative learning strategies how to enhance writing skills.

Conclusion summarize the main findings of the study.

References list the sources of literature used in the course of doing this research.

**CHAPTER 1**

 **THE EFFECT OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING ON** **DIVILOPMENT OF THE WRITING SKILL**

**1.1 THE ADVANTAGES OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING**

Lewis states that cooperative learning is a form of active learning where students work together to perform specific tasks in a small group. Each cooperative learning group should be carefully selected by the teacher so that a heterogeneous structure allows each student to bring his or her strengths to the group effort.

The teacher then gives the students an assignment, often helping them to divvy up the work that needs to be done so that each individual in the group has a certain role to play. The end goal can only be reached when every member of the group contributes effectively. The teacher should also spend time modeling how to resolve conflicts in a cooperative learning group.

While Slavin (1991) he states that cooperative learning is the activity that requires students to work in small groups to complete a joint project. Students work together as a team to not only learn the material but also help each other succeed. Much research has been conducted over the years to show the benefits of cooperative learning. He reviewed 67 studies concerning cooperative learning and found that overall 61% of the cooperative-learning classes achieved significantly higher test scores than the traditional classes.

Kelly mentions the list of five positive results from the effective use of cooperative learning in the classroom setting.

1. Sharing a Common Goal Students who work together as a team share a common goal. The success of the project depends on combining their efforts. Cooperative learning activities help students practice working in teams.

2. Leadership Skills Individuals within the group need to show leadership abilities in order for a group to truly succeed. Skills such as dividing out the tasks involved, providing supports, and ensuring that individuals are meeting their goals are all leadership skills that can be taught and practiced through cooperative learning.

3. Communication Skills Effective teamwork is all about good communication and a commitment to the product or activity. All members in the group need to practice communicating in a positive manner. These skills should be directly modelled by the teacher and reinforced throughout the activity.

 4. Conflict Management Skills Conflicts arise in all group settings. Sometimes these conflicts are minor and easily handled. Other times, though, they can rip a team apart if left unchecked. Keep an eye on the situation but see if they can come to a resolution on their own. If you do have to be involved, attempt to get all individuals of the team talking together and model effective conflict resolution for them.

5. Decision Making Skills Many decisions will need attention while working in a cooperative environment. Even though students are working in a group, they will also have their own responsibilities. This will require them to make many decisions that could affect their entire team. As the teacher and facilitator, you should stress that if a particular decision will affect other members of the group then these needs to be discussed together.

 Based on Johnson and Johnson (1991) there are three different types of goal structures in a classroom setting. These are competitive goals where students work against each other towards some goal or reward, individualistic goals where students work alone towards independent goals, and cooperative where students work with each other towards a common goal. Following is a list of ways that cooperative and traditional learning groups differ.

 In the end, cooperative learning activities take longer to create and assess but they are much more effective in helping students learn to work as part of a team.

1**. Interdependence**

In a traditional classroom group setting, students are not interdependent upon one another. There is no feeling of a positive interaction where the students need to work as a group to produce a quality piece of work. On the other hand, true cooperative learning provides students with incentives to work as a team to succeed together.

2. **Accountability**

A traditional learning group does not provide the structure for individual accountability. This is often a huge downfall and upsetting to those students who work the hardest in the group. Since all students are graded the same, less motivated students will allow the motivated ones to do the majority of the work. On the other hand, a cooperative learning group provides for individual accountability through rubrics, teacher observation, and peer evaluations.

3. **Leadership**

Typically, one student will be appointed the group leader in a traditional group setting. On the other hand, in cooperative learning, students share leadership roles so that all have ownership of the project.

4**. Responsibility**

 Because traditional groups are treated homogeneously, students will typically look out for and be responsible for only themselves. There is no real shared responsibility. On the other hand, cooperative learning groups require students to share responsibility for the overall project that is created.

 5. **Social Skills**

 In a traditional group, social skills are typically assumed and ignored. There is no direct instruction on group dynamics and teamwork. On the other hand, cooperative learning is all about teamwork and this is often directly taught, emphasized, and in the end assessed through the project rubric.

6. **Teacher Involvement**

In a traditional group, a teacher will give an assignment like a shared worksheet, and then allow the students the time to finish the work. The teacher does not really observe and intervene on group dynamics because this is not the purpose of this type of activity. On the other hand, cooperative learning is all about teamwork and group dynamics. Because of this and the project rubric that is used to assess the students' work, teachers are more directly involved in observing and if necessary intervening to help ensure effective teamwork within each group.

7. **Group Evaluation**

In a traditional classroom group setting, the students themselves have no reason to assess how well they worked as a group. Typically, the only time the teacher hears about group dynamics and teamwork is when one student feels that they "did all the work." On the other hand, in a cooperative learning group setting, students are expected and typically required to assess their effectiveness in the group setting. Teachers will hand out evaluations for the students to complete where they answer questions about and rate each team member including themselves and discuss any teamwork issues that arose.

**1.2 USING COOPERATIVE LEARNING FOR TEACHING WRITING**

Writing is the most concrete and precise version of the language. If the writing skill is more developed then an individual can write more systematically. A man can speak, read and write in a more accurate way (Iftanti, 2016).

There has been a shift in pedagogy of English in modern era from a teacher-focused to a student-focused learning. English writing and teaching provides an opportunity for active participation of students and teachers in the writing skills.

A valuable strategy for developing writing ability is cooperative learning. It provides an option for instructors to teach in many cooperative situation where social interaction is possible among students (Gomleksiz, 2007; Ning, 2011).

Cooperative learning might be used in the teaching procedure where teacher gives chance to students to actively participate in speaking and writing. Teachers need to know information and training to use cooperative learning method in a specific learning situation (Stevens, 2003; Zarei & Layeq, 2016).

Under cooperative learning method syllabus is renewed by using such activities and techniques focusing on active participation of students in learning process. This learning approach can be characterized where small, and mixed student groups help one another in learning subject which increases their confidence and their collaboration (Bloom, 1979; Yalçın, 2002; Gillies, 2016).

Cooperative learning has been recognized as a valuable instructive technique that keeps in mind students feelings, mental level and social background. Cooperative learning focuses on students’ self assessment, ensures group participation and increase learning (Brown & Ciuffetelli, 2009). In a situation of cooperative learning students are helping each other to complete a task (Siegel, 2005).

Cooperative learning techniques are useful for every racial group and all ability levels. The perceptions of students about other members in group are developed by providing them opportunity to work within group. Cooperative learning is a dynamic instructional method which makes students to comprehend ideas easily (Coleman, 2011).

The learning rates of the student may increase by the cooperative methods .This approach provides students opportunities for discussion and shared ideas in groups as a result academic performance of students has been improved (Slavin & Cooper, 1999). Students who completely take interest in group activities show cooperation and responsibility to complete a task. This cooperation with their group fellows provides them a chance of getting higher scores. Cooperative learning is an instructional method that makes it possible for both teachers and students to achieve academic goals.

Cooperative learning methodologies have to be proved effective in enhancing the standards of dependability among students , giving students' chances to write, learning by sharing and improving their academic performance (Cianciolo, Henderson, Kretzer, & Mendes, 2001; Almuslimi, 2016). Cooperative method motivates students to take part actively in the process of learning. Cooperative learning is different from Grammar Translation Method (GTM). In cooperative method students learn to know how to give and receive information during interaction .They can write and develop their understanding about academic tasks in a more effective and accurate way (Gillies, 2004).

**CHAPER 2.**

**COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE WRITING SKILLS**

In cooperative learning the student are given opportunity to write and to revive and rewrite what they have written. Peer criticism aids students sharpen their knowledge about essays structure and grammatical rules. In order to evaluate effectively someone else’s papers students must know what to look for and be able to justify their comments.

It also provides the student with the opportunity of evaluating his or her own work. They demonstrate more confidence in writing and decrease their apprehensions to wards writing.

Though cooperative learning strategies are difficult to practice as novel strategies of instruction. Teaching through this would be equally interesting both for the teacher and the students. The students working with partners ask each other for help and improve their attitude towards writing.

They will show high level of enthusiasm, curiosity and involvement in being taught through cooperative learning tasks. Thus, an incorporation of these activities will be of great benefit to the student community and help them enhance their writing skill

In order to get effective learning process, and to enhance students to work together, teachers adopt some cooperative learning methods.

**Buzz Groups:**

 Buzz groups are teams of four to six students that are for medquickly and extemporaneously. They discuss on a particular topic or different topics allotted to them. The discussion is informal and they exchange the ideas. Buzz Groups serve as a warm-up to whole-class discussion. They are effective for generating information and ideas in a short period of time. This technique could be used to write essays on current issues.

**Talking Chips:**

 In talking chips, students participate in a group discussion, surrendering a token each time they speak. This technique ensures equitable participation by regulating how often each group member is allowed to participate. This technique encourages reticent students to participate and solve communication or process problems, such as dominating or clashing group members.

**Critical Debate:**

 This activity could be used while drafting argumentative essays. In this individual students select their side of an issue in contrary to their own views. They form teams and discuss, present, and argue the issue against the opposing team. It exposes the class to a focused, in-depth, multiple-perspective analysis of issues. It can move students beyond simple dualistic thinking, deepen their understanding of an issue, and help them to recognize the range of perspectives inherent in complex topics. This technique is suitable for tertiary level students.

**Write Around:**

 For creative writing or summarizing, teachers could give a sentence starter (for e.g. If there were no plants on the earth------/ A man met a nlien on the sea shore---------) then all students in each team have to finish the sentence. Then, they pass the paper to the right, read the one they receive, and add sentence to than one. After a few round, four great summaries or stories emerge. Students should be given time to add a conclusion and/or edit their favourite one to share with the class.

**Praise**- **Question-Polish:**

In this technique the group members take turns to read aloud their papers as their other group members follow along with copies. Firstthe respondents are asked to react to the piece of writing by asking them to identify what they liked about the work (Praise), then identify what portion of the writing they did not understand (Question), finally offering specific suggestions for improvement of the writing (Polish). The students would be able to improve their own writing by critically evaluating the writing of their peers.

**Jigsaw**

This exercise enables learners to work in groups. Students are given some sentences which are scrambled; and then, they must organize the sentences within their groups. Following, one group member is selected as a representative. All representatives work together and tell the whole class the main outcomes that they have gathered.

**Three-Minute Review:**

In groups, learners are explained one single topic. Afterwards, they have a discussion regarding the subject given; consequently, they are asked to stop and review what has been said for three minutes and then share with the group.

**Write Around**

Learners work in groups. They are given the beginning of a story (could be a sentence).

They have to write their ideas for how the story should continue and pass the paper around for the other groups to write their ideas and continue with the story. For the future development of this classroom project, it will be taken into account all of the conceptions previously stated.

**Round Robin**

Learners make a circle. They are given a topic to think about. They start saying the first idea that comes to their minds; the purpose is to brainstorm and share thoughts about one single topic.

Cooperative learning will be regarded as a social learning process in which the people involved is responsible for their duties and commit themselves so as to reach the final objective under supervision of the trainee teachers while they use the set of cooperative learning strategies mentioned before.

As a way of conclusion the three constructs mentioned above are the main theoretical basis for the development of this classroom project; moreover, those concepts are supported with different authors who had guided multiple research processes in the areas of writing, learning strategies and cooperative learning. In the classroom project of implementing creative writing skills through activities based on cooperative learning the constructs of writing, creative writing and cooperative learning are going to be covered from the contributions of the last author in each concept:

**Conclusion**

Cooperative learning has been proven to be effective for all types of students, including academically gifted, mainstream students and English language learners (ELLs) because it promotes learning and fosters respect and friendships among diverse groups of students.

In fact, the more diversity in a team, the higher the benefits for each student. Peers learn to depend on each other in a positive way for a variety of learning tasks. Students typically work in teams of four. This way, they can break into pairs for some activities, and then get back together in teams very quickly for others. Dealing with writing texts, this cooperative learning is quite effective to help students during learning writing activities.

 It is important, however, to establish classroom norms and protocols that guide students to: contribute in every writing activities; stay on task that lead students in writing texts; help each other during writing texts; encourage each other, share their opinion about their texts in communicative discussion; solve problems that are faced during classroom activities; give and accept feedback from their peers.

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**INTRENET SOURCES**

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